

## These Days

Or - Behind The News  
From Washington  
By -  
John Chamberlain

Just why the Nixon Administration, which had nothing to do with the decisions that committed 500,000 Americans to jungle fighting on the Asian mainland, should be really concerned about the New York Times' articles on the Pentagon's study of our Vietnam involvement is something of a mystery.

True, it is a bit disconcerting for President Nixon, both as the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and the nation's chief diplomat, to know that the security of classified information can be broken by enterprising reporters. But the net effect of the Times' scoop is to make the leaders of the Democratic Party during the Johnson years look like those used car salesmen who habitually take beat-up automobiles across state lines in order to turn the speedometers back without breaking local laws against tampering with recorded mileage.

Mr. Nixon, who has suffered from the Democratically-inspired "tricky Dicky" image for more than a decade, must be secretly smirking at the picture presented in the Times of a Democratic regime committed to engaging the nation in a war by stealth and with the use of strategies not approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As for Barry Goldwater, who was so badly wronged during the 1964 campaign as the "trigger-happy" fellow who would blow up little girls as they plucked the petals from daisies, he can now feel vindicated. If he had been elected we might still have gotten into war in Asia. But it would have been with the nation's consent, and the war would have been fought by means approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Times speaks of the "covert" war, which is its polite way of saying something that could have been presented in harsher terms. I sympathize

When you think of prescriptions, think of VARNER'S, adv.

with the Times' copy desk, for I am not temperamentally a willing killer of men's reputations. Let us be charitable and say that Lyndon Johnson and his Secretary of Defense started their "clandestine" plans for "squeezing" the North Vietnamese for reasons that seemed entirely honorable to themselves.

However, if a Commander-in-Chief and his deputy cannot be convicted of any crime for doing what they think best for the security of the nation, even if they do it without consulting Congress or asking for the appropriations to sustain their course of action, they can be convicted before the bar of public opinion for stupidity.

Back in World War II times I used to hobnob with Major George Fielding Elliot and Fletcher Pratt, who did a thriving business of "experting" on military strategy and tactics for various publications. Later on I helped MacArthur's G-2, General Charles Willoughby, and General Albert Wedemeyer put their hooks in shape. Again and again I heard the classic maxims of warfare reiterated. Some of the maxims stressed the principle of surprise. Others stressed the principle of concentration. ("A linear defense is no defense." "To seek to be strong everywhere is to be strong nowhere.") This is the sort of stuff that used to be kindergarten wisdom to any military man worth his salt.

Robert McNamara and Johnson must have heard the maxims, for the Joint Chiefs, as revealed by the New York Times, argued that the plans for "squeezing" Hanoi or relying on bombs directed at political targets were no substitute for hitting hard at the enemy's "capabilities." The Joint Chiefs and the C. I. A. wanted the U. S. to demonstrate a willingness to apply "unlimited force" (the principle of concentration) by taking out all of North Vietnam's major airfields and its petroleum supplies "in the first three days." (Moshe Dayan, you would have approved the Joint Chiefs' thinking.) But the thinking of the military and the intelligence people was shunted aside by LBJ and McNamara and their civilian-trained advisers.

The plans were for "graduated response" in hopes that Ho Chi Minh and General Giap would be intimidated. Such plans ignored the whole history of guerrilla warfare, which admits of no intimidation. None of the plans were surfaced in time to become points for discussion in the 1964 campaign. The idea was to eliminate Goldwater as the "trigger-happy" man, and then, after the new Presidential term had begun, to

## Science for You

BOB BROWN



**PROBLEM:** Solvents.  
**NEEDED:** Carbonated soft drink, salt, a dime.  
**DO THIS:** Make sure the mouth of the bottle is wet. Drop a little salt into the drink, place the dime on the mouth of the bottle, and it will move up and down, showing that gas is coming out of the bottle.  
**HERE'S WHY:** The water of the soft drink has carbon dioxide, a gas, dissolved in it. Salt water can hold less carbon dioxide in solution than can plain water. So when the added salt dissolves in the water, some of the gas has to come out.  
This does not mean that water cannot hold, dissolved in it, many different substances. It can. In the soft drink, there are many dissolved substances in addition to the salt and the carbon dioxide. It just cannot hold as much carbon dioxide when salt is added.  
Incidentally, if there are possibly harmful chemicals in the drink, carbon dioxide is not one of them.  
This special "Science For You" feature is sponsored by Olin Corporation at Pisgah Forest in co-operation with The Transylvania Times.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

### Questions And Answers

By  
NORRIS G. GRUBBS  
Field Representative

**Q.** I'm age 62 and disabled. Can I draw my full social security amount?  
**A.** You can draw reduced retirement benefits now, and after six month waiting period, if it is determined that you are totally disabled, you would be changed over to disability benefits which are about 20 percent higher.  
**Q.** I have a younger daughter, age 14. Can she get social security benefits on my record?  
**A.** Yes, and also your wife, if she has the child in her care and is not working.  
**Q.** My wife and I are divorced, but she has custody of my daughter. Can my ex-wife get benefits on my record?  
**A.** No, only the child.  
**Q.** Do I have to have my husband's death certificate to file a claim?  
**A.** Not if the lump sum death payment was made on your husband's account. However, if you have the death certificate, it can help to

put the "covert" plans into effect.  
The outlines of both the military stupidity and the political deception have long been obvious without the corroboration of the Times' scoop. Fighting a war that used 500,000 men for what amounted to the linear defense of South Vietnam's boundaries (there was no "concentration" until we went into Cambodia) was no more conclusive than fighting the same war with 200,000 men. The guerrilla enemy, filtered between our forces, simply followed Willie Keeler's classic baseball maxim by "hitting them where they ain't." Any GI could have told LBJ that you can't win if you don't demolish an enemy's "capabilities" (i.e., the docks at Haiphong, the oil tanks before they were dispersed, the food supply in the Red River delta). But LBJ never cracked a strategic textbook.

No crime there. But who was it that said something about blunders being worse than crimes?  
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In the General Court Of Justice Superior Court Division State of North Carolina Transylvania County  
Having qualified as Administrator of the estate of Betty S. Williams of Transylvania County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said Betty S. Williams to present them to the undersigned within 6 months from date of the publication of this notice or same will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment. This the 1st day of July, 1971.  
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