

As We See It

New Pro War Group Oversimplifies Question

There's a new group on campus now — the National Student Committee for Victory in Vietnam — which in a 55-word, three-exclamation-point petition has managed to produce a rather gross oversimplification of the Vietnam question.

The statement reads: "We the undersigned citizens of the United States urge President Lyndon Johnson to stand firm on the war in Vietnam. The United States must not allow communism to engulf South Vietnam. The Viet Cong must be defeated! South Vietnam must remain free! The United States and her allies must win the war in South Vietnam!"

The group will begin circulating this petition Monday. At the same time, its leader says, they would also like to somehow display some of the atrocities which the Viet Cong have been committing.

And between students' hoped-for support of U.S. posture in Vietnam and their rejection of atrocities, the group wants to show the world that everybody at Carolina doesn't think like the vocal Students for a Democratic Society who oppose the war.

Well, that's nice. After all, it would be a shame if the people of North Carolina thought that perhaps there were serious doubts on

this campus about the U.S. position.

That, however, is exactly the case. There are doubts — serious ones — about our stand in Vietnam. And these doubts are spreading. They are popping up on college campuses throughout the land, in Congress and almost wherever people gather to talk about the war.

The Vietnam conflict has, in fact, become the grayest moral question of our time.

This is not to say that the United States' position in Vietnam is unjustified. Neither is it to say that this is a totally holy war.

It is to say, though, that there are indeed questions being asked about Vietnam, that there is indeed room for these questions and that the answers to them do not come easily.

It is a very complicated war — both militarily and morally. It is being fought with both crossbows and napalm at the same time. And it is being argued by everyone from garage mechanics to philosophy professors.

But petitions such as the one to be circulated by the National Student Committee for Victory in Vietnam provide no answers — only emotions and exclamation points.

How Mellow The Yellow?

Those ever-so-slippery banana peels have slipped out of the monkey cages and into the hands of the hippies, Newsweek Magazine reported this week.

From the realm of slapstick comedy where funny men used to step on them and go spinning head over heels, the banana peel has moved into the realm of things psychedelic where hippies drag on them and claim to go spinning mind over matter.

The whole thing started when the underground newspaper Berkeley Barb offered its readers a "kitchen-tested recipe" for converting banana skins into a poor man's hashish, said Newsweek.

The recipe is simple: scrape the white fiber from inside the banana peel, dry it slowly in a 200-degree oven and then smoke the stuff.

And suddenly everybody was buying bananas.

Bob Travis: A Mover

If there's one thing that Bob Travis will do this year as student body president, it will be to get things done.

He showed this very clearly yesterday when he had himself inaugurated with little pomp or ceremony in his office so he'd be in a position to present his appointment of David LeBarre as Attorney General to the first meeting of the newly elected Student Legislature last night.

There will of course be a later and more formal swearing-in ceremony complete with all the expected officiousness of officialdom.

But we were glad to see Travis take his oath yesterday and get started early.

If this attitude of do-it-now continues, Travis' administration will make student government a meaningful and moving force.

War In Vietnam Capsule

The Blood, Tears And Sweat Ravage The Soul Of U.S.A.

From The Cheraw Chronicle

WAR IS UNPOPULAR

Random conversation with people these days reveals a deep and instinctive dislike for the Vietnam war. This dislike is growing. It comes from both sides and the middle, from those who have a ready answer for everything and from those who admittedly do not know how on earth the country can withdraw from the bloody business but who like it no better than the others.

This war is gnawing at the conscience of the people. Many have a growing sense of disquiet that a land war in the jungles and swamps of southeast Asia is not really in the national interest. But they hesitate to grow too vocal about it, lest they inadvertently give encouragement to the leaders of North Vietnam and prolong the conflict.

Others who believe the United States has a vital stake in the course of events in Asia nonetheless do not like the way our leaders are pursuing their objectives. Many who support the President's policies experience a deepening revulsion to the bloodshed and slaughter.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

President Johnson and his chief advisers are surely aware as anyone else of the political implications of this dissatisfaction. As the casualty lists grow longer, this dissatisfaction will grow. If the war is not won or settled through negotiation by 1968, the Democrats can be in real trouble. It is grossly unfair of the President's critics to suggest that he is enjoying the war and does not long to secure an honorable settlement. Mr. Johnson is a humane man as well as a sensitive politician. Of course he wants an early end to the fighting, but he wants it on his terms.

The nation may be nearing one of those historic sea changes in its political affairs. If our military commitment cannot be curtailed without dangerous loss of face, the electorate might decide to give the other major party a chance to see what it can do. It may be an unfair and fickle way to behave, but that is the way the American people are sometimes. They did it in 1952, when, thanks to an unhappiness with the Korean War, almost any respectable GOP candidate, even had he not been a war hero, might have won.

It is true that the GOP is just as full of hawks as the Democratic Party and that Republican criticism of "Johnson's War" may create the kind of political climate which will not permit the Administration to "surrender" additional real estate to the communists. A change of parties and a new administration sometimes unfreezes static po-

litical positions and provides the new government more flexibility.

DANGERS OF ESCALATION

There are those who fault President Johnson on his original decision to escalate the war in 1964, when he apparently had a mandate from the people not to follow the war-risky policies advocated by Sen. Goldwater, the GOP standardbearer. Others argue that he is interested in victory, not negotiation, and that he is therefore wrong in refusing to utilize the full strength of American military power to force a decision.

Prudent people, however, will think a long time before advocating all-out war in Vietnam. Caution and judgment are needed not to push American dominance in southeast Asia to the point of forcing Chinese or Soviet intervention. Even further escalation is risky, for every time we increase the tempo, the communists appear able to match it.

UNEXAMPLED SAVAGERY

We have been exposed to two new opinions in recent days on Vietnam. One soldier, just back from the war zone and decorated for heroism, says that both sides practice unexampled savagery. There is nothing inspirational about it, he says. He believes the war originally was a civil war, much as the American Revolution or the War Between the States was a civil war. Vietnam has now become a battleground between hostile, rival big powers who have little interest in the welfare of the Vietnamese people.

Although field commanders have issued orders against it, it is not uncommon, he says, for American soldiers, in rage against Viet Cong atrocities, to commit atrocities of their own, including the cutting off of ears of slain soldiers and the stamping of American uniform insignia into the forehead of a fallen foe with the heel of a military boot. It is no place for American military personnel to be, he argues, although he admits that wholesale slaughter of civilians would follow a communist victory in the South.

AN ENGLISH EXAMPLE

Our brother-in-law, who was born in England, raised in South Africa and educated in Canada, says America could borrow a leaf from the English during their days as the world's leading power and keeper of the peace. Now a psychiatrist in New York State, and long since an American citizen, he feels that the United States has made a serious mistake in waging this war with American troops.

The English, he points out, defended their national interests, spread English custom and culture throughout Asia and Africa, and maintained law and order without the

wholesale sacrifice of young Englishmen. The outposts of the British empire were defended with colonials and hired mercenaries. Even in their recent successful defense of Malaysia, native troops, not Englishmen, were used. In Asia, where so much capital can be made about a white man's war, the white man's burden, and the yellow and brown peril, it would make more sense to finance the war from the West but utilize mercenaries and adventurers, mostly from Asiatic nations, to do the actual fighting.

Like the British, the United States might furnish the technicians and the officers, but that would be all. Even in the Boer War the English relied entirely upon volunteers. It was not until World War I that the English resorted to conscription, and it was half-way through the war, at that,

CONSERVE OUR MANPOWER

It wasn't until World Wars I and II that both the British and the French committed the flower of their manhood to the battlefield, and after these two great bloodlettings, both of these major world powers sank to second class rank.

In the present conflict, neither Russia nor China has sent troops to Vietnam, and Russia was careful, after her dreadful losses in World War II, not to send any men to Korea. In the civil war in Spain, both the fascists and communist powers sent equipment, supplies, advisers and officer cadres but made no large scale manpower commitment.

It may be that the United States, if she is to remain the world's policeman for any length of time, will have to be more practical and conservative in her use of manpower. There should be additional manpower resources to be found in non-communist Asia that could be used in battle.

There is another argument against the use of ones own men in a place such as Vietnam. It is difficult to extricate ones self from a commitment if ones own nationals are committed in great strength. If the fighting goes badly, or if for some reason or other, a decision is made to cut ones losses or strike out in a new direction how can you get out of the place with national honor intact? Self-respect and world opinion are important to great nations. If a nation has not committed large land armies to battle, her leaders can stop the supplies, pull out the advisers and technicians, and call off the mercenaries without seeming to surrender.

Perhaps the battle was too far gone to permit such a stratagem in South Vietnam. Perhaps now it is too late to

resort to them. The political implication of using soldiers of the National Chinese from Formosa might be too provocative.

ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

One cannot dismiss President Johnson's policy as a wholesale failure. Whether due to American military presence in Southeast Asia or to inner stress, great changes have occurred in Asia, the three most important being the Sino-Soviet split, the internal pressures within China itself, and the anti-communist comm in Indonesia. The American military effort in Asia, which saved South Vietnam from certain defeat two years ago, may have contributed to these great events and also may have stopped communist infiltration and aggression in Cambodia, Thailand, Burma and India. It is difficult to judge because one cannot exactly measure what has not happened, only that which has.

The question is whether it matters greatly to the United States if Asian communism were to engulf the southern reaches of the Asian mainland. If it did, would it not be beyond China's ability to harness this political power? Might not this communist movement contain the seeds of diversity, contradiction, and dissension and lead to the same kind of national schism that affects Sino-Soviet relations today? Might not the military and administrative burdens of trying to regulate this huge area prove hopelessly burdensome to a country as poorly organized and desperately hungry as Red China?

A DECISIVE DIFFERENCE

There is a difference, in our mind, between a civil war, even one backed by a hostile communist power, in southeast Asia, and the aggression against the free Western world by Nazi Germany. There is a difference, from a military, political, economic and cultural view, between the threat posed to Western civilization by Hitlerism and the threat of further communist expansion in southeast Asia. In 1940 Roosevelt made the right choice. In 1964, Johnson may not have.

The threat to America and to her major allies in Asia lies not so much from direct military aggression as from communist subversion. Efforts to strengthen the domestic economy of these nations and their social institutions, a significant effort on behalf of education, health, diet, and a modern technological society, would probably do more to win the battle against communism than any amounts of dynamite, bullets, and bombs. Before such aid can be effectively administered, of course, the area must enjoy security from external aggression.

President Johnson's interest in restructuring the eco-

nomie and the social fabric of those areas of South Vietnam now pacified and secured against the communists is well placed. A military victory not accompanied by such reforms would be hollow. It is said that the Guam Conference now underway will concentrate more on postwar redevelopment than on new ways of waging war. Perhaps. It is unfair to offer criticism if one does not have a constructive alternative. The complexities of the Vietnam situation are so great and the errors of past and present administrations so compounded that it is exceedingly difficult to make any recommendations. There may be no way out at this juncture save to continue the killing until both sides have wearied themselves to the conference table.

SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS

The questions to be asked now are these: What are our real national interests? What compromise can we afford to accept? How can we cut our commitment without too great a loss of national prestige? How can we guarantee the safety of the millions of South Vietnamese now in our care? Above all else, what have we learned in Vietnam that we can apply elsewhere? How can we avoid such future entanglements?

Does our whole basic concept of world affairs require review? Does "collective security" with uncertain allies in Asia make sense in the same way that collective security in Europe makes sense? Can the United States afford to be the "policeman of Asia" and provide the bulk of the manpower in a series of undeclared wars in the Far East? Which is more important, the spread of Asian communism and - or socialism in alien lands which have little in common with the highly developed and sophisticated diplomatic "talk with Soviet Russia?"

Which is more dangerous to U. S. security, the spread of communism in the lesser lands of southeast Asia or the development of nuclear power by an unreformed and unrepentant China? When does the use of American military power reach a point of diminishing returns, and when is it clearly within the national interest to curtail such military efforts and use the money formerly committed to war for economic and social reconstruction? At what point are American resources dangerously eroded?

If President Johnson cannot do better than return from the Far East this time with a proclamation that we are going to "nail the con skin to the barn house door," he will have failed to meet the mood of the American people. The times clearly call for something more than chauvinism, militarism, and nationalism.

"Of course we're being open-minded. You a commie or something?"



Pompous People Pass-By Christ

Easter Sunday. Eleven o'clock. Washington Cathedral. Suddenly trumpets blare, the organ blasts out a deep and magnificent chord which shakes the very foundations of the cathedral, the procession, with banners flying, solemnly passes before the colorfully decked congregation, and the Easter entertainment has begun. Isn't it grand! Better than the circus! Such magnificence, such beauty, such precision in the maneuvers.

It is a real spectacle. Every Easter, Washington Cathedral plays it up for the crowds. Whole gardens of blooming trees and shrubs are brought into the cathedral (quite unique and quiet beautiful). Everything is polished and ornamented and exalted and whatnotted to the greatest possible extent. Here is the Church Triumphant. Glory be to God, world without end, Amen.

But somehow a thought comes stealing across my mind: Is God really a part of this service? To whose glory do the trumpets blast? Does the pageantry provoke us to feelings of humility before God? Do the Easter bonnets remind us of the agony that

the man-god went through for us? I think not.

I think the service is designed to awe the masses, to show the glory of Washington Cathedral. Why else would the front rows be reserved for dignitaries and people of society (making their once-a-year appearance)? The front rows absolutely sparkle with colors and decorations and polished shoes and shining clean faces. "Isn't this lovely?" the smiles all say. But no one thinks about Easter in the Christian sense. "Let us not wish to gloss over the Christian requirement, so that by suppression or by falsification we may bring about an appearance of decorum which is in the very highest degree demoralizing and is a sly death - blow to Christianity." It is a pagan production. See them leaning right and left to see the procession a little better! See the flash bulbs flashing the second that the service is over! See the mobs surging into the crossing to get a glimpse of the flowers on the altar! Where is Christ? Christ is hanging on a cross many feet above their heads, but the people never think to contemplate that figure. After all, what does Christ have to do with Easter?

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