

Editorials

THE DAILY NEBRASKAN

Commentary

The other side of Columbia

Editors Note: Harvey Fleetwood, a student at Columbia, was inside the Columbia University administration buildings during most of the protest. The following is his view of what happened.

NEW YORK (CPS) — Columbia University professor of International Affairs Dankwart Rustow stood before a faculty meeting and announced, "It is out of the question that we resume classes . . . that we take up the next paragraph on the syllabus as if nothing had happened . . . this is not humanly possible."

There was an electric feeling in the air. Professors who just hours before had been denouncing the strike leaped to their feet, applauding. The whole faculty meeting started chanting "Kirk must go. Kirk must go. Kirk must go."

The calling in of police by President Grayson Kirk had turned many faculty members against him. In open meetings the police action was characterized as "a brutal bloodbath" by faculty members, many of whom were beaten and arrested for placing themselves bodily between students and police. (More than 145 students and faculty received hospital treatment, and, according to a police sergeant, 89 per cent were treated for head wounds.)

At the press conference after the arrests, Kirk stated that such action was "necessary to permit the university to resume its operations."

Exactly the opposite happened. The student governments of all divisions of the university called for support of a student strike. Many faculty members supported the strike. The student newspaper supported the strike. Except for some faculty members and a few students, there was little support for Kirk's call to "resume operations."

What brought this great university to an apparently suicidal act?

It has a long history. Over the past several years Students for a Democratic Society, the Student Afro-American Society and various community groups have conducted a continuous campaign against plans for Columbia gymnasium on Morning-side Heights, a Harlem Park.

This past year SDS and other groups have also protested the university's institutional affiliation with the Institute for Defense Analyses. Sit-ins, demonstrations, petitions with thousands of names, formal requests from the Columbia Citizenship Council (an arm of the student government), and other forms of protests were used.

To all these legitimate protests the university turned a deaf ear. Its answer to the Citizenship Council early last fall was that construction of the gym could not be halted and that "it was as good as built."

But it was a minor event that set off the chain of events.

On March 27 SDS staged an indoor demonstration in Low Library against the IDA. Five of its members were to be brought up for university punishment, charged with violating a recent, and sometimes ignored, edict against indoor demonstrations.

In an effort to win an open hearing for the students SDS sponsored a rally at the sundial in the middle of campus. After about half an hour the demonstrators proceeded to Low Library, the main administration building, to test the edict on indoor demonstrations en masse. They were turned away by campus security guards and went to the gym site where several of them were arrested.

Re-assembling at the sundial, they decided to confront the dean of the college Henry F. Coleman at Hamilton Hall. The dean was not there when they arrived, so about 300 of them waited for him in a hall outside his office. When he finally made his way through the crowd of students, he was presented with a list of demands and answered "I have no intention of meeting any demands under conditions such as these."

As the evening wore on, black community-members from Harlem began joining the demonstrators. By 8 p.m. the militant blacks occupied the strategic position around Coleman's door and around the entrance to the hall. One black took over the microphone and reaffirmed the six demands, and said, "We're going to do whatever is necessary to get them met. The black community is taking over."

At 5 a.m. Mark Rudd announced to the white students that the blacks had asked them to leave. Some of the white students were shaken by the action of the blacks but they left anyway, going to Low Library, where they broke into the building and entered President Kirk's office.

Within an hour after the students entered Kirk's office, 50 city police came on campus for the first time in three years.

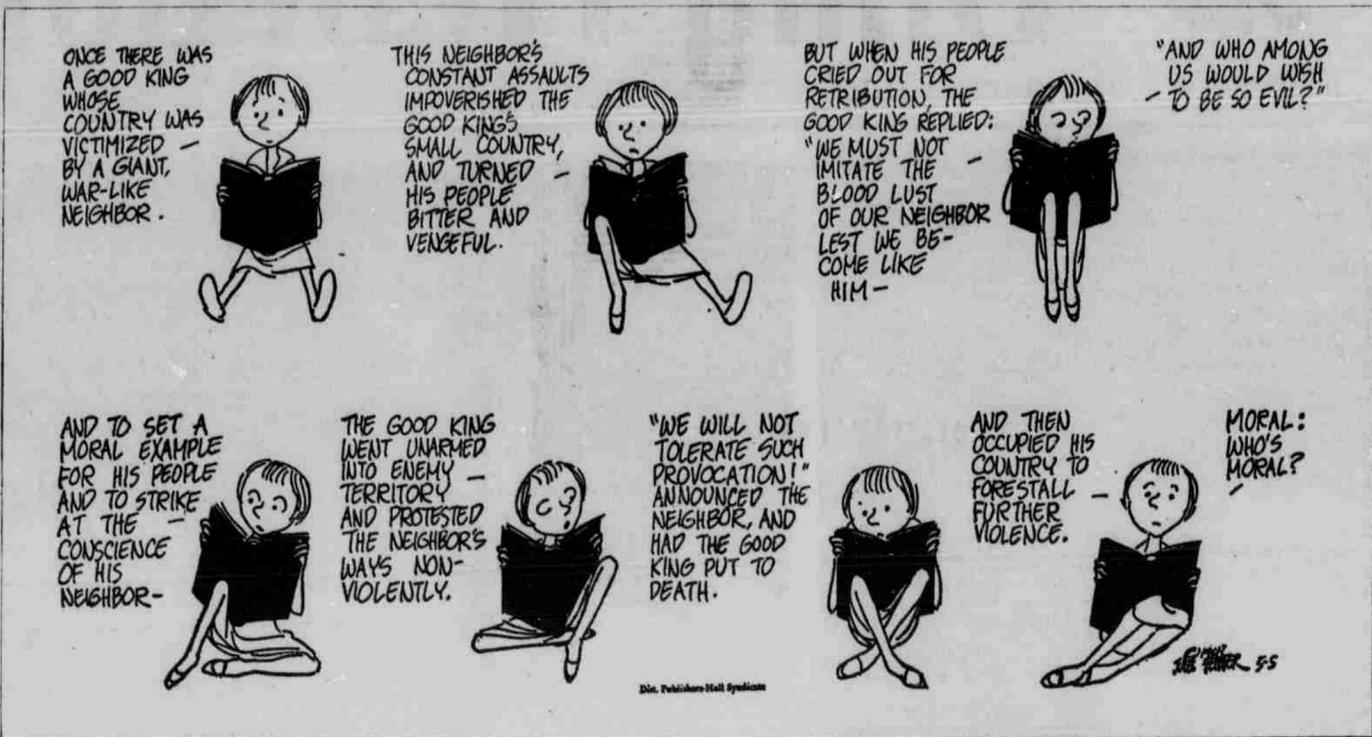
Wednesday the administration tried to come to an independent agreement with the black students. They promised them that construction of the gym would be halted and that none of the blacks would be suspended.

But it didn't work. The blacks rejected the offer unconditionally, saying that they were staying until all students received amnesty.

Each of the liberated buildings had representatives to a central strike committee, which was organized to coordinate activities. From the first it was agreed that all negotiating was to be handled together and that no building under any circumstance would take individual action. The blacks in Hamilton Hall never sent representatives to the central strike committee, but remained in constant informal communication.

The faculty from the beginning, though, did take the strong position that the police should not be sent on the campus. Several faculty members took up positions outside the occupied buildings and vowed to stand there keeping the police off. Thursday night several plainclothesmen moved through the huge crowd with night sticks concealed under their raincoats. Without identifying themselves they asked 30 faculty members to move. Then they started swinging their night sticks, and several faculty members were viciously clubbed.

At Avery the next Tuesday came the first police violence. Faculty and groups of supporting demonstrators stood on the front steps when the police charged. Only a few policemen carried night sticks, but most carried handcuffs, which were used-as brass knuckles. Students and faculty who remained on the steps were smashed and bloodied in full view of reporters.



William F. Buckley

You have, I hope, meditated the meaning of the charges that have been levelled against the New York policemen who liberated Columbia University Brutality.

It apparently has not occurred to a living soul, to judge from published reports, that the catering students who are charging brutality because the police interrupted their week-long, whickey-fed stereotypical occupation of other people's property could very easily have avoided brutality by simply obeying the policemen when they were finally dispatched to uphold the law.

In the flat words of the newspaper account, "The policemen had first read a statement urging the students to leave voluntarily, and the protesters had refused." Other words, the police had even been instructed to permit

the students to leave with impunity — to get off without arraignment on the charge of criminal trespass. But the students refused.

So, under the vigilant eyes for having called in the police of radio, television, faculty, press, the Commissioner of Police, and the head of the local Mau Mau, they were dragged away. Oh yes, there were also representatives there of Mayor Lindsay, whose comment the next morning will never perish from this earth. "Mayo Scores Columbia Sit-Ins-But Backs the Right to Dissent."

That is as if, stumbling into Buchenwald with the liberating army, General Eisenhower had said, waving in the general direction of the demonstrators, and now are criticizing President Kirk that is what we were doing, we would simply arrest the

process. One is tempted to observe corpses, "I do deplore all of this, but I stoutly defend German dissent from the Versailles Treaty."

What is going on? One is increasingly reminded of the observation of Albert Jay Nock, that it would be fascinating to write an essay on how one can tell one is slipping into a dark age. His point is that if we knew collectively that after six days. But it is not incredible any longer: incredible though that may be.

Everybody's doing it. Not quite everybody, but, for instance among the students all the leaders of the various student body groups appear to be unanimous in their condemnation of Mr. Kirk.

The president of New York University, though declining to promise that under no circumstances would he ever

call the police, professed himself as "revolted" at the use of the police at Columbia, and stuffed a dollar bill into a jar being passed about to collect money to defend the students.

A young rabbi recently appointed as chaplain to the Jewish students of Columbia was heard declaiming — get this: "No amnesty for Kirk and the Board of Trustees!" They are not to be forgiven for restoring order to the campus by invoking those whose job it is to restore order when there is disorder. And then the rabbi attempted to assert his impartiality: "I want to show you I'm going to be consistent," he said, reminding his audience that he had sided with all of the demands of the rioters except their call for amnesty for themselves.

SAF document is revisited

After almost two years of being coddled, revised and lengthened the Student Bill of Rights (now labeled the SAF document) finally is ready to face the Faculty Senate May 14.

Although students twice have approved by a large majority a statement of rights, many unsatisfied students are still grumbling in the ranks.

It should be remembered, however, that the Faculty Senate is notoriously conservative as a whole and active student support of the SAF document will probably be needed if the document is to be passed.

Probably very few Faculty Senate members have read the SAF document in its entirety or understand the far reaching effects it could have. And their opinions of the document are certainly not being enhanced by the uniformed name-callers who say the statement is nothing but garble generalizations.

It is the responsibility of both students and faculty members who are familiar with the SAF document to approach the faculty and attempt to orient them with the proposals and highly encourage them to attend the next Senate meeting.

Also, some administrators and faculty members and students have placed themselves in precarious positions for encouraging and supporting a document, which would prove to be one of the most progressive and liberal accomplishments ever to make its way through the University's red tape and chaznells.

Their work can not be allowed to fail because of a balking Faculty Senate which may not understand the issues.

Every effort must be made to insure the SAF document is passed by an overwhelming majority next week.

Cheryl Tritt

Marat-Sade

Teamwork molds production

Editor's Note: Ken Pellow, who contributed the following, is an instructor in the department of English.

Peter Weiss' play, The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis De Sade, is both a good and a poor choice as one of this season's productions by the University's Department of Speech and Dramatic Art.

First of all, the play — although, admittedly, it is probably one of the best plays of our time — has been subjected to a great deal of exposure. In Lincoln alone, it has been seen in two different productions within the last year or so: on stage at Nebraska Wesleyan and in a filmed version of the London stage production.

Certainly there are periods other than contemporary from which some choices could have been made; in the past half-dozen years, University Theatre has done precious little 20th-century drama other than contemporary (no Arthur Miller, no Tennessee Williams, no Synge, Yeats, Pirandello, Strindberg, O'Casey, and only one play each by Chekhov, Shaw, Ibsen, and O'Neill).

During the same span, there has been no Restoration-era English comedy done and only one 18th-century play. There has been no Renaissance drama other than Shakespeare, etc., etc. In short, it hardly appears necessary to have chosen a play that has been pretty well "worked over" while excluding so many that have not been seen by local college audiences.

On the other hand, there are some excellent justifications for the choice. Not only is it good theatre, but it is of extreme social value. And perhaps even more important, it provides an entertaining vehicle for the kind of theatre in which Director Stephen Cole is most expert and, at the same time, provides opportunity for a large number of competent student-actors to display their talents.

The result is a very polished production, notable for some outstanding acting and — above all — for excellent "teamwork." So well, in fact,

does the production go that one can easily forgive the "overexposure" charge (though the box-office results may be more difficult to overlook).

Marat-Sade is an extremely difficult play, for players and producers as well as for audiences. It examines the nature of revolutions and, more important, the nature of human responses to revolutionary motivations; it conducts this examination from almost every possible viewpoint, and reaches "conclusions" that are at best, paradoxical.

Always ambiguous, sometimes ambivalent, the play manages to cancel out "answers" almost as fast as an audience can form them. This, of course, makes for odd "structure" as far as standard theatrical notions of "rising" and "falling" action are concerned. In the play, as in revolutions themselves, motivations are frequently obscure; if the play does not always progress in logical fashion, neither does the subject it examines.

But what makes this play even more difficult than its themes alone would be the form in which those themes are expressed. A "play within a play" when it is set in an early-nineteenth-century French asylum presents numerous problems; when musicians, dances, pantomimes, and an audience-within-an-audience are added, the result is one of the wildest exercises in Brechtian theatre yet written (the era of "Brecht on Brecht" may have given way to "Brecht on acid").

It is this challenge which brings out the best in this University Theatre production Marat-Sade provides the finest "total-theatre" effort we have had here since Mother Courage was performed a couple of years ago.

The acting in this production is outstanding all the way down to the most minor roles. At the top, performances are predictably competent; but the minor roles are perhaps the most significant aspect of the production's quality.

Never, throughout the entire evening, can one spot an actor getting out of character, even momentarily! Even the musicians stay with the ties, vacant stares, spastic

movements, etc., designed to designate them as residents of Charenton. Jean McLaren and Roni Meyer, as the wife and daughter of M. Coulmier, the Asylum's Director (performed ably by Phil Zinga), are representative of the ability of this whole cast to remain in the play.

They must sit through the whole performance, reacting to lines and actions of the other actors, and giving no lines of their own. Their attentiveness never diminishes. In many cases, actors in this play are required to do about a week's work each evening. Bill Szymanski, for instance, turns in a consistently excellent performance, though he's on stage about twenty minutes early and stays.

Donald Hunter creates a frighteningly real "Mad Animal" and sustains the character beautifully. That these two actors can perform their roles four nights in succession is a tribute to the physical conditioning which people have to undergo to act in a Steve Cole play.

Several young actors who have been in several NU productions do their finest work in Marat-Sade. Skip Lundby (as the Herald) and John Jessup (Jacques Roux), both strong in Scapin, are even better now. Janet Jensen continues the steady improvement she has shown through such roles as those of Lady Macbeth and of Edna in Delicate Balance. As Simonne, she is at her best. Most of all, this achieving of new highs is evident in Susan Vosik who plays alternate performances as Charlotte Corday.

The expectations of many people, which Susan may not have come up to in previous performances, have now been fully justified. Her Corday was sometimes electrifying, always fascinating. In addition, out an outstanding new young star in Cheryl Hansen who plays the part on Thursday and Saturday evenings.

Although a considerably different character than Susan's, Cheryl's Corday certainly does not weaken the play. Indeed, she plays a stronger Charlotte than Susan does (necessarily, perhaps, since her voice is stronger), and if not

quite as believable as a melancholic patient with sleeping-sickness, she is certainly incredible as a political murderer.

The four clowning Singers can make or break this play; led by "seasoned veteran" Mike Dobbins, this quartet is largely responsible for the success of this production. Ric Marsh continues to become more and more competent as he becomes more confident; he, too, is outstanding. Nevertheless, despite all the stage savvy of these two, Linda Riggs and David Landis — the other two singers — are not to be outdone. The rapport and interaction among this group is great.

Ultimately, of course, Marat-Sade must depend on the two characters named in its title. NU Theatre is fortunate to have two such mature, skillful performers, for these key roles, as Denis Calandra (Jean-Paul Marat) and Jim Baffico (the Marquis de Sade). Calandra's opening-night effort was somewhat uneven (he started "big", appeared to tire somewhat, then came back strong), but his second-night performance was perfectly steady. He plays the rhetorically skillful Marat with considerable passion, yet is completely articulate — a difficult combination.

Baffico's Sade is something of a surprise. One expects to be overwhelmed by a powerful Marquis; instead, Baffico brings to the role a quiet, rational, almost passionless, calm. A bit difficult to accept at first, his treatment of the role becomes more plausible as the show goes along. Sade becomes a masterfully self-controlled, diabolical figure in Baffico's presentation; while this interpretation can, I suppose, be questioned, his performance is as impressive as always.

The only drawback I can think of, in seeing this show, is that same one I always encounter when attending a big circus — I have trouble deciding which ring to concentrate on. In the University Theatre's Marat-Sade, however, this is no major problem.

So, despite the play's having been much played, Marat-Sade is worth seeing again — and again.

Andy Corrigan Eight days a week

Since this is the last time "thirty cents worth of love" will be appearing in print I view this column as my swan song. It would be an appropriate time to review the semester but I feel that last week was exemplary enough and so I shall confine my rantings to the not so distant past.

Monday: nothing. Tuesday: nothing. Wednesday: nothing. Thursday: nothing. Friday: less than nothing. Saturday: it really didn't happen, did it?

Campus Opinion

Dear Editor: A thinking President would be a great anomaly in the United States. Under the gloss of an expensive publicity machine, JFK probably was this kind of man, though we will never know. Eugene McCarthy is a thinking man.

With a quiet sureness, courage, sincerity, he's won over people all over the nation. From bored and disinterested intellectuals to disenchanting pros, he's collected a following in the name of peace, honor for America, a broad civil rights program, greater local control in welfare, support for the farmer.

The largest and most outstanding issue, of course, has been Vietnam, simply because it has been the largest and most outstanding issue in the national consciousness. If any peace efforts have brought about a slowing down of the war, it has been McCarthy's successes in Wisconsin and New Hampshire. These contests have shown that a vote still can express the wishes of the people.

I sincerely hope the wishes of the people of Nebraska are for an enlightened, thoughtful, peaceful, honorable Presidency in 1968—with Eugene McCarthy.

Mrs. Nancy Magee