

Editorials—commentary

A grave is dug

Student Court dug a grave for political parties. By refusing to order election commissioner John McCollister to place party affiliation on the ballot, the Court recognized the fact that parties are useless in ASUN student government.

Ed Icenogle

Thoughts and work

Wayne Williams, the articulate leader of this week's demonstrations for a New Deal for blacks, has given a useful goal for the activity: that real progress will be visible by June.

Ed Icenogle

Standing Head

... by George Kaufman

Ours (or perhaps, now that I'm graduating, theirs) has been labeled the "Disillusioned Generation." Now, the rampant illusions embodied in that label notwithstanding, there seems to be much basis for the term, and much during the recent years has made this more true than ever.

The Ted Kennedy's and Julian Bond's are getting fewer and seemingly more impotent in leading change. But, since we must believe in something, I have drawn up a list of what has been and what's left:

You can no longer safely believe in—

- Political conventions and primaries
-Nice Eastern universities.
-Light at the end of the tunnel.
-Martha Raye.
-CO status.
-Hubert Humphrey.
-California.
-Television as a public medium.
-"Quiet" University of Nebraska.
-Camelot.

If you still care (if you're careful) you may continue to believe in—

- Julian Bond.
-John Lennon.
-Paul McCartney or Eugene McCarthy (Pick one).
-Hair.
-The Last Kennedy.
-Dr. Spock.
-Steve Abbott, etc.
-Peanut Butter sandwiches.
-Smother Things.
-Ramsey Clark.
-The Vanishing American.
-Four-letter words.
-Old Friends.
-A and B.
-None of the above.



Landmark

Problems the veterans will bring home

By Flora Lewis

Saigon — The war hasn't really begun to end. But some grave political trouble which the veterans will bring home when it's over can be foreseen here in the field.

There are two kinds of trouble ahead from veterans and though it is a drastic exaggeration, it helps to outline them by comparing them to France's agony with the O.A.S. and the F.L.N. arising from the Algerian war.

ONE KIND of trouble looms from military professionals. They have fought hard and on the whole they feel they have fought well. They learned totally new ideas about how to fight guerrillas, how to fight in jungles, how to orchestrate air, land and sea power.

Already many officers rumble at "having one hand tied behind our backs." They chorus disgust at the strategy of "limited response" and "escalation." It only gave the enemy a chance to catch up, they say, if you get into a fight, the only sensible thing is to use all the strength you have to knock the enemy out right away.

There are military examples to support the argument. The best is the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. If the Russians had started cautiously, the Czech army might well have resisted. It didn't move because the Russians actually used overwhelming force from the start.

So a good many American officers feel that if the U.S. writes off the Vietnam war as less than a success, it won't be their fault at all. And they smart at the wide, sharp criticism they must take from an American public whose interests they believe they have served.

They don't speak loudly now because the war goes on. When it is over, many of them will. And they will look for people on whom to put the blame for failure which they feel unfairly heaped on them. The more U.S. armed forces are reduced, the more vocal, angry men there will be because promotions will become much scarcer, early retirements more unavoidable. This will be especially true if President Nixon puts through his plan to abolish the draft and cut back to an all volunteer army.

The Joe McCarthy hunt for scapegoats and traitors in the wake of Korea may seem a picnic in comparison because Vietnam has aroused far more bitterness.

The other kind of trouble may come from black veterans. Unlike the gangs of Watts and Harlem and Detroit, they know how to make an ambush, how to handle complex weapons, how to organize force, how guerrilla war is fought.

The black soldiers here, officers and enlisted men, aren't going home to fight. But they know what fighting is really like, what the risks are and how elusive the gains, what superior firepower means.

ABOVE ALL, they are keenly aware that they are Americans. In the field, they have found they can get on easily with whites. Under fire, it's a matter of blood and guts and everybody's blood and guts are the same color. In the bases and on leave, skin color gets noticeable again, but still the comradeship of survival leaves its mark on men's minds.

"I am disillusioned with the army," Capt. Clyde Counts of West Middlesex, Pa., told me, "but I am still, would you believe it, a liberal Negro." He's impatient and sometimes angry, but he wants to live in his own country, not to burn it. His attitude is widespread.

It could change drastically if he found himself caught up in an "us and them" turmoil of unexpected violence when he gets home. He wants another career outside the Army, but he doubts that white America is ready to accept him "simply as a person, with whatever intelligence I have." And if sides have to be chosen, "I know who I am—Black."

Comfortable America which never tasted the war needs to prepare wisely for both sets of veterans. The unhappy professionals did their best with policies not of their making, which should be acknowledged. The blacks here have been at the least equal in effort and sacrifice, and need to feel they have an equal chance for civilian success at home.

WHEN THE war finally does end, the new peril for America will be to lapse in self-indulgent relief and forget the feelings of the men who fought it.

ANY STUDENT who wishes to differ with his instructor had best be hypocritical when writing papers; he should be careful not to write what he thinks, but what the instructor thinks. One may say that this is a harsh statement; well, it is. It is also true. (Of course, I'm speaking in generalities.)

English teachers have more opportunity to judge a student on what he thinks — I mean — how can the math teacher grade on the students' opinion? Math deals with facts.

The only fact in English is the fact that the teacher believes one way, and no matter how hard he may try, he will be more inclined to be kinder to the grade of a student who believes similarly. (Or pretends to believe similarly.)

A friend told me that in order to become a writer, one must be well-read, and then it follows "as the day the night," one must take numerous English courses. (I never even knew English was literature until I had read more than half the books on the suggested reading lists!)

"WELL," HE said, "You must take English courses to acquire an ability to appreciate and realize good literature." He may have a point there; the only thing I have learned in English is that good literature is what is not taught in English courses.

English teachers are frustrated writers; they can't write profitably so the next best thing is teaching how to write. (Being well-read, they are able to teach students how to write.) That is, the students learn to write only critical papers which cannot contain terrible things like: the use of anything but third person.

In critical papers, this may be fine, but a friend once asked his English teacher to criticize an article he had written. The student wrote: "Without electricity, there would be no radios. Have you ever turned on a radio and heard a bunch of nothing?" Quickly the instructor crossed out "you" with orders that it be replaced with "one."

Ex post facto by Jack Todd

The student rebellion, quite unlike the revolt in the cities or the desperate strike of Cesar Chavez's people in California, is like a page from the American rococo novel. White students indulge in rebellion with the macabre glee of the Marquis de Sade dreaming up an exquisite new torture.

Though black students at Nebraska have not yet picked up the fine edge of cynicism that comes of being committed to death by this administration it is assumed that the failure of their excursion into confrontation politics, within a year or two, will destroy their idealism as thoroughly as it has destroyed ours.

Any attempt at radical or reform politics in Nebraska takes on the character of the theatre of the absurd. After watching Bruce Hamilton's New Party campaign, the squelching of Government Bill 24, the SAF document, and the death of Eugene Ionesco is at work, carefully constructing plots beginning in reality and ending somewhere between pop art and the cosmos, in a void where rhinoceroses gambol in the state capitol and headless leaders march to the cheers of their people.

The nature of the latest rebellion is idealistic enough (one is tempted to say imaginary.) Black students are trying to achieve some very meaningful, tangible goals which would benefit, not them personally, but their cause and their people. What they have not taken into account is the basic immobility of institutions and large bureaucracies.

The script Joe Soshnik is writing is obvious enough — offer them a committee and talk the situation over until all those damn trouble-makers either graduate or become too cynical to walk out of the Union. Wayne Williams will go along, will probably even serve on the committee himself until his ears are filled with so many reasons why not that he can't remember the reasons why.

Perhaps the Afro-American society, the most tightly-knit and committed group to lock horns with the administration yet, can succeed where SDS and ASUN failed so miserably. Perhaps. But only if they learn to use their power while it is there, to avoid the committee and the endless dialogue while the sweating bodies are still willing to line up in the hall of the administration building, to keep asking for freedom while everyone still remembers what it's all about.

One thing the Afro-American society must understand. As long as they avoid being trapped into a useless committee, as long as they keep up the fight, the white students who have suffered through so many bitter disappointments will sit through the long hours in the administration building with them, will march each day if necessary, will keep their mouths shut and follow Williams' lead.

If the blacks are outfoxed as the whites have been outfoxed before, however, the entire coalition will dissolve into a group of coffee-drinking cynics.

And then the play will have its usual end. The University will turn into a giant Campbell's tomato soup can being carried on Addie Bundern's wagon, pulled by a rhinoceros riding a tricycle. In other words, the reign of the absurd will begin anew among the rolling plains and cottonwood-shaded rivers of Nebraska.

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Campus Opinion . . .

Mini-skirts: serious threats to education and economics?

Dear Editor:

I ran into my old friend the Professor of Libido Economics in the Union the other day and by chance succeeded in forcing the conversation to fall upon ladies skirts. "This is a matter of the gravest import to our society and nation," he warned.

"You mean we must abandon the dress in favor of the veil and the sari?" I asked fearfully.

"Not at all. The skirt is justified by history as the most practical compromise between protection and enticement. However, escalation of the hemline threatens the foundations of education as well as undermining our economic system.

"I SPEAK," continued the Professor, "Of the present menace to the grading system. How can we maintain the validity of grades based on examinations when we bring in three graduate assistants to help monitor and, as soon as the first coed in her intellectual agony contorts herself to reveal the quality of her Munsingwear, we find all three along with the professor supervising her while the other 239 in the section go unwatched?"

"You've got a point there. But about the economics?"

"Simple. When a skirt can come out of a couple of 8 1/2 x 11 sheets we are only a half-step away from making them disposable and vending them in Kleenex boxes. Then what of support for cotton, or of textile mill employment, or of the laundry business, and so forth?"

"NOR IS the more distant prospect less terrifying," continued my friend, his tone still more urgent. "Exposure of all that epidermis to our present glacial climate creates selection pressure in favor of hereditary insulation. Imagine a campus full of hirsute legs!"

"Professor, count on me, I'll enlist in your campaign. But wouldn't the extra electric shaver business tend to counteract the depressed cotton and textile activities in the overall picture?"

"You amateur economists all try to simplify

problems with untested assumptions. Actually, probabilities are the barbers would wreck things by performing this service for nothing."

"I see what you mean. Are these then your only causes for concern in this matter?"

"There is the sociological aspect. It is brutalizing the way we ignore the spiritual havoc wreaked on others by the miniskirt. The competition is driving them right up the wall."

"YOU MEAN the walls they are writing on?" I asked doubtfully.

"Strictly figurative. Then there is also the angle of conservation. Resources of scenery are limited and should be conserved. I mean that over-exposure cheapens things — look at the Smothers Brothers.

I remember when an ankle affected the pulse and a knee was a threat to sanity," explained the Professor. "For most of this century a fellow had to wait until a lady fell downstairs to make observations on comparative anatomy and it called for a certain quickness. Now the slowest oaf has the same opportunity hundreds of times daily at the foot of any staircase.

As I said, I deplore this depreciation of values on the visual scale," he concluded as we parted. "After all, how much else is there?"

—T. H. Stevenson

Dear Editor:

The English Department has succeeded in winning the "Bungling Boob" prize for the year. (This prize is annually awarded to the English Department.)

The prize is awarded on the basis of: 1. Teaching material not pertinent to the education of students, 2. The success of the department in molding ideas and opinions in the instructor's mold, and 3. Upholding the tradition: "Those, who can, do; those, who can't, teach."

No one, absolutely no one, is qualified to judge writing by members of the English Department. Not only are they qualified to judge writing, but their judgments are correct.

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