

Vietnam speech: same old Nixon

President Nixon's long-awaited speech on Vietnam said nothing new. He merely reiterated his stand on the war, a position which has so seriously divided the country the past few months.

The speech, however, did show the country that the President is seemingly sincere in his position and believes the majority of the public agrees with him. Further, it was an opportunity for the public to hear arguments for an "honorable peace" in a rather reasoned, low-key manner.

There were ironies in the speech. One, pointed out by a CBS news commentator, is that Nixon in one breath talked of keeping up the reputation and respect of the United States to countries abroad, and in the next breath indirectly admitted that complete military victory isn't possible because the United States is withdrawing troops.

Another irony is that Nixon talked of Vietnamization of the war, preparing South Vietnam troops to take over the fighting and then withdrawing American troops. He then said that if infiltration or fighting is increased by the enemy in the south, the United States would not stand back or sit still. If the South Vietnamese forces are really prepared, why would the United States have to worry if fighting increased in South Vietnam?

The reaction to the speech has been firming of positions, both pro and con. For example most of those national leaders opposed to Nixon's policy in Vietnam, but willing to wait until after the speech to voice additional criticism (hoping for a new troop withdrawal or change in policy), have said the speech was a disappointment and that renewed criticism is in order.

In another sense, one feels sorry for Nixon. As national editorial columnist Rowland Evans said in Lincoln Sept. 30, Nixon has done more to get the United States out of Vietnam than Johnson did during his entire administration. Nixon has shifted the direction of the war to Vietnamization and has started troop withdrawals.

But, Evans said, the tragedy of the situation for Nixon is that this change in policy has come too little and too late. Nixon is forced to take all the criticism for a situation with which he really had little to do. Vietnam is a type of disease, Evans said, which has infected Nixon just as it has infected all those with whom it comes in contact.

The real question remains: exactly where does public opinion stand in the country. Does a majority of the American public want us to get out now? Nixon had his say.

Now it is time for the other side to have its say.

Roger Boye

Where is pride?

Cleanliness is next to Godliness. In this age of the "God is dead" theory, one questions where that leaves cleanliness — especially in the Union's main lounge.

It is somewhat revolting to observe the disarray of furniture and the garbage littered on the floor there between Union opening and closing times each day.

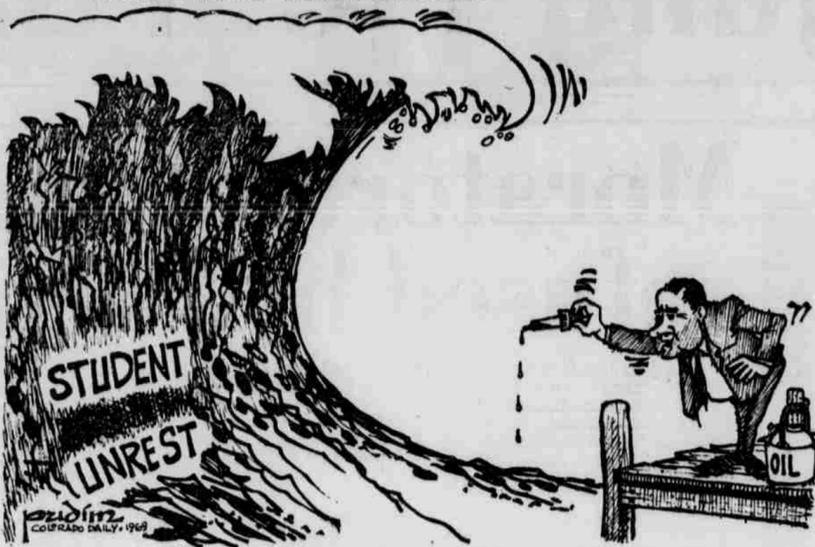
Outsiders no doubt wonder at the lack of pride that so many students openly display in keeping their University clean. The city dump is about a mile north of Lincoln. Let's keep it there.

Kent Cocksion

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... AND HERE'S A TROOP REDUCTION AND HERE'S NO DRAFT CALL FOR OCTOBER AND HERE'S ...



Nebraskan editorial page

Meanwhile, in Vietnam

Banned pesticide used by U.S.

by Frank Mankiewicz and Tom Braden

Washington — Those who are concerned over a possible massacre—even of women and children in South Vietnam when U.S. troops depart might consider the fact that we now spray enormous amounts of an anticrop chemical throughout South Vietnam which has been known for three years to cause deformed births in test animals — at a rate of 100 per cent.

At least four newspapers in South Vietnam printed stories — and pictures — last summer of deformed babies born in villages sprayed with the chemical (called 2, 4, 5T), and the newspapers were promptly closed down by the Thieu government for "interfering with the war effort."

Use of the chemical, described by our government as "probably dangerous," is now banned in "populated areas" and on or near food-products in the United States, but the Pentagon announced last week that it would continue to use it in Vietnam, where Army Service Manuals set forth its appropriate use against food supplies.

In addition, it is widely used in areas where the population captures its drinking water from rain, by the use of roof gutters and barrels, and where wells are sunk into soil saturated with the chemical.

This chemical, along with other herbicides and defoliants, was developed by the Army at Fort Dietrich, Md., in the 1950s, and it quickly found acceptance in agriculture. After an early refusal to do so, the United States began to "defoliate" in a small way in Vietnam in 1963, and we also sprayed 741 acres of rice — a program to "deny" the VC the crop (i.e. to starve the families who lived there).

But by 1967 we attacked 221,000 acres of crops and were defoliating nearly 1.5 million acres in Vietnam and — to be sure — in Laos. There was only a slight drop in 1968.

Army Training Circular TC 3-16, dated April, 1969, describes the "antiplant" chemicals along with what are called "riot control agents." Specifically, what is used in Vietnam is called "Orange," a 50-50 mixture of 2, 4, 5T and another defoliant called 2-4-D. Troops are instructed to spray it on

"mangrove or highland trees or broad-leaved crops (such as beans, corn, bananas and tomatoes) and rice." "Orange" and other chemicals are described as having a "high offensive potential" to destroy food supplies and to deny the enemy food by rendering the soil sterile.

Just how high an "offensive potential" this chemical warfare had was not really known until 1966 when, for the first time, the National Institutes of Health commissioned tests on pregnant animals.

The study showed that severe malformation of offspring occurred in rats at the rate of 39% — as against a normal rate of 10% — when they were given a small dose. When this dose was increased to the level a Vietnamese woman might consume in a few days in her drinking water, the rate of fetal malformation rose to 90% and beyond.

Whether the rate of human malformation from contact with this chemical is greater or less than with rats is, of course, unknown. In the case of Thalidomide, it turned out to be greater.

It was this that prompted the finding that 2, 4, 5T was seriously hazardous and "probably dangerous" and caused its removal from the domestic market in the United States. The President's science adviser, Dr. Lee du Bridge, perhaps adumbrating the Pentagon's refusal to cut down its use against Asians, said only that the rate of fetal malformation was "greater than expected." If you expect 10, one would imagine that 100 would rate stronger language than "greater than expected."

What amazes the scientists who discovered the report only by chance is that for 15 years no thought was given to testing the chemical on animals, that for three years a finding of "probable danger" was ignored or hidden and that we continue to use it in Vietnam against the civilian population.

Not since the Romans salted the land after destroying Carthage has a nation taken pains to visit the war upon future generations.

Los Angeles Times

OUTSIDE the tower

by Michael Egger, David Paas, Tom Siedell

What with the militant student protest over Vietnam, civil rights, poverty, and campus reform, student government as an institution has been shoved aside. And rightly so.

The most obvious fault of student government is in its organizations. The premise is that the trappings of power assure success; abundance of form triumphs over lack of substance. Thus we see the proliferation of institutions, committees, and ad hoc assemblies.

Student leaders fall into thinking that if only they observe proper parliamentary procedure (according to Robert's Rules of Order) the administration will note their desires, and Student Senate will have instituted the millennium.

If this were the sum of student government, then it could be written off as a harmless extracurricular activity. But advocates of student government make three claims in its favor: communication with the administration, arbitrating university regulations, and general curriculum reform.

Concerning communication with the administration, Student Senate is seen as a half-way house for student opinion. Senate is elected by students and therefore reflects the range of campus opinion (which is sheer sophistry). Our elected representatives can then make known to the administration the opinions of the student body for its consideration.

But general experience of university life informs us that this is not the way things operate. Individuals and groups outside student government have considerably more influence on administrations than any Student Senate in its present form ever will have.

Student governments are also held to be responsible for enforcing certain university regulations (e.g. cheating on examinations) by means of student courts. First, many students would rather be judged by their academic superiors than their peers.

Secondly, student courts amount to playing at life. The decisions of any student court are reviewable by the faculty and administration. Further, the student courts are so closely watched over by the administration as to be rendered incapable of independent judgment.

Finally, the claim is made that Student Senates are a vehicle for reform of curriculums and general university hiring policies. Student government will amass the legitimate grievances of students in these areas and present them for action to the proper university officials.

But here again one runs up against the limitations of contemporary student senates. Constitutionally, student governments are political structures containing highly political individuals. Yet the decisions to be made are non-political in the extreme, requiring diplomacy, tact, and any number of intellectual virtues not present within a political institution.

Thus we see the creation of our own Council on Student Life, which is charged with duties that Student Senate itself should see as its own major responsibility.

Students are dissatisfied with governments that claim to have legislative and policy powers, but in reality function as bureaucracies. Student Senate pretends to be what it is not and promises to deliver what it cannot.

Even though covered with a multitude of sins, there is still room for some type of student government in the university. But first students themselves must get over their delusions as to what such an organization can accomplish. It cannot single-handedly accomplish anything.

Its success is dependent on the confidence that the administration and faculty have in individual student leaders. And there is not much confidence when Student Senate is more concerned with the mechanics of rewriting its constitution than with developing realistic and meaningful goals.

Radical conference confronts issues in face of heated rhetoric

By Rick Fitch

Toronto — (CPS) — More than 500 radicals representing six countries and every conceivable political orientation within the New Left gathered here Oct. 23-26 for what amounted to a mass psychoanalysis of the student protest movement.

Meeting at York University's Glendon College for a conference titled "Year of the Barricade," the delegates struggled, sometimes far into the night, over such subjects as the feasibility of a student-worker alliance, women's liberation, cultural oppression, the value of a liberal university, the effect of American capitalism on Canada, and the oppression of French Canadians in Quebec.

Most of the delegates were from Canada and about 200 were from Glendon College itself. Included in this group were many of the more "moderate radicals" who determined in large part the direction, scope and tone of the conference. They forced purely ideological struggles between the followers of Marx, Mao, Trotsky and others down to a more personal level.

Instead of concentrating on the tactics and strategy of combating U.S. imperialism, the conference was plunged into a deep and introspective examination of fundamental issues.

For example, early in the conference some delegates decided to organize a demonstration against a Toronto newspaper, The Globe and Mail, because of its guilt in whipping up an atmosphere of fear and hysteria in the province of Quebec by calling members of the French liberation movement there anarchists and nihilists.

The issue came to the floor during Saturday's plenary when a member of the SDS Weathermen faction suggested the demonstration be conducted under the Viet Cong flag to show solidarity with the Third World's revolutionary struggles. He also said a U.S. business such as Standard Oil Company in Toronto should be a target since capitalism is the underlying force behind all oppression.

Initial debate was limited to the time, place and logistics of the demonstration. But there followed an outpouring of resentment, apparently built up during the first two days of the conference, against those vaguely referred to as leaders of the movement who would drag all the rest in a flash of fiery rhetoric out to confront the establishment.

One high school student, in a moment of rare poignancy, said, "I don't even know whether I'm right or left or what. And you want us to get our heads bashed in by the Pigs — I use that because you understand, eh? — so we'll hate Pigs

for the rest of our lives. So we smash the Toronto Globe and Mail!"

A girl drew loud applause when she accused the radical leadership of being unable to relate to people. "This place is cold," she said. "People can't be treated as objects to be manipulated; they have to feel things."

Those who had previously taken the body's will to demonstrate for granted then turned their efforts toward convincing the less radical students of the need to educate people by having the action. Mike Klonsky, active in America's Revolutionary Youth Movement II, a wing of SDS, said the Globe and Mail is involved in the oppression of the French not only through its slanted news coverage, but because its owners are members of Canada's elite ruling class, which perpetrates an exploitative capitalist system.

Others said that the English Canadians who control Canada are inextricably tied with American capitalism which has fostered U.S. imperialism abroad and political oppression, racism, militarism and poverty among the masses at home. They advocated putting abstract theory into practice by protesting.

About half the delegates participated in a peaceful march to the newspaper Sunday night,

carrying signs protesting the falsehoods about the Quebec situation disseminated through the press and supporting the French Liberation movement.

The march was evidence of another turmoil of the conference, that concerned with women's liberation. Women attending the conference, acting in a manner reminiscent of the Black Student Unions at U.S. colleges, banded together and planned their action themselves, inviting males if they cared to come.

The issue was easily the most controversial of the conference. During Friday's plenary on "Women's oppression," charges of male chauvinism flew as fast and hard as did charges of bourgeois elitism in the more ideologically oriented sessions.

Panelists from New York and Canadian women's movements agreed that women are trapped in their roles as sex objects, mothers, housewives, the weaker sex, and workers capable of only menial tasks like baby-sitting and secretarial work. "This fact is coming down on every woman like the draft is coming down on American men," said one panelist.

Others pointed out that North Vietnamese women have formed the backbone of Viet Cong resistance and called for better birth control pills, legal abortions, and movement day care centers



"WHERE DO THEM PUNKS GET THEIR IDEAS?"