

## Lost hope

Any hope America might have had for peace in Vietnam in the near future was lost last week. Any hope for an end to the killing of American and South Vietnamese youth, an end for the need of anti-war rallies, an end to the burden on a sagging American economy has been lost in light of the now-Indochina War involving Cambodia and Laos. Two weeks ago, casualty lists were changed from "American dead in Vietnam" to "American dead in Southeast Asia."

Even more discouraging was President Nixon's address on Vietnam. Behind the soothing rhetoric and welcomed troop withdrawal statement is the ominous warning that hostile action by the enemy might slow down the withdrawals and even force another "commitment" in Southeast Asia. In short, there very well might not be a withdrawal of 150,000 men by 1971.

Sources in Washington are reporting that President Nixon has been advised by Gen. Creighton Abrams and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the troop withdrawal is too risky. The generals say that Vietnamization has failed. What is worse, despite his speech and apparent determination to carry on Vietnamization, the sources say Nixon has bought the military's argument.

So the war will go on. By 1971 when the U.S. is supposed to have 150,000 fewer troops in Vietnam, another five to ten thousand Americans will have died. President Thieu — one of many impediments to the political settlement necessary to end the war — will be in power. No truce will have been called by Nixon to reach the "political settlement which is the heart of the matter."

And while the President refuses to take the initiative in calling a cease fire and beginning meaningful negotiations to end the conflict, the possibility of prolonged, even expanded American involvement increases. Red China is now considering direct military aid to "the peoples of Indochina" and, according to an unconfirmed report, is raising volunteers to fight in Cambodia.

But, says the President, "Pacification is succeeding. We finally have in sight the just peace we are seeking." Peace is about as "in sight" as the lights that were at the ends of all the tunnels seen by Dean Rusk, William Westmoreland and Lyndon Johnson. The U.S. must take the initiative to end fighting and solve the political question in Vietnam if the war is ever to end. Nixon apparently won't take that initiative. It is Nixon's War now.

—Jim Pedersen

# our man hoppe

by Arthur Hoppe

In his "A Brief History of the Mediocre Party — 1970 to 1984," Professor Greenleaf Grommet traces the beginnings of the movement to the day Judge G. Harrold Carswell announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate.

"Having been officially certified as mediocre by the Senate itself," writes Professor Grommet, "Judge Carswell felt this qualified him to be a Senator."

Having no choice, Judge Carswell waged a hard-hitting, positive campaign. "Don't vote for an unknown, untested, unproven mediocre candidate," cried his billboards, "vote for Carswell!"

THE JUDGE stumped the state, hammering home his mediocrity again and again in brilliantly mediocre speeches, resoundingly mediocre television appearances and stupendously mediocre press conferences.

His opponents, being professional politicians, took the traditional tack — each stressing his own exceptional

courage, extreme intelligence and outstanding abilities.

Judge Carswell won in a landslide.

"The Silent Majority," he said with a smile, "has finally spoken."

HE WAS, of course, right. For the outstanding quality of The Silent Majority — the one attribute that bound them all together — was mediocrity.

Its millions upon millions of members were neither too rich nor too poor, neither illiterate nor well-educated, neither left wing nor right. Their tastes ran to mediocre books, mediocre movies, mediocre architecture, tee-vee dinners and cars made in Detroit.

Here, at last, was a candidate they could identify with — a man who would honestly represent them as they were.

Once the truth of this was realized, the Mediocre Party was founded at a five-day convention in Des Moines, Iowa, during which the delegates remained mildly drunk, moderately bored and mostly confused.

POLITICIANS across the

country, recognizing the trend, managed to switch their registration to the new Mediocre Party without changing their stand on a single issue. They were swept into local offices in the 1971 elections.

Carswell, meanwhile, was building a sound reputation for mediocrity in the Senate. The party nominated him for President by acclamation in 1972. To repay an old political debt, he picked Senator Roman

L. Hruska of Nebraska as his running mate.

The worried Democrats, hoping to beat the Mediocrities at their own game, re-nominated Hubert Humphrey. The grim Republicans, however, were unfortunately stuck with Nixon and Agnew.

THE CAMPAIGN was unique with both Carswell and Humphrey accusing each other of hidden abilities, cleverly disguised intelligence and

secret reservoirs of courage. Nixon and Agnew, being incumbents, had no other course than to run on their four-year record in office.

The results, Professor Grommet points out, proved once and for all that genuine, proven, dyed-in-the-wool mediocrity — the kind that offends no member of The Silent Majority — will win every time in American politics.

It was, of course, Nixon and Agnew in a landslide.

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