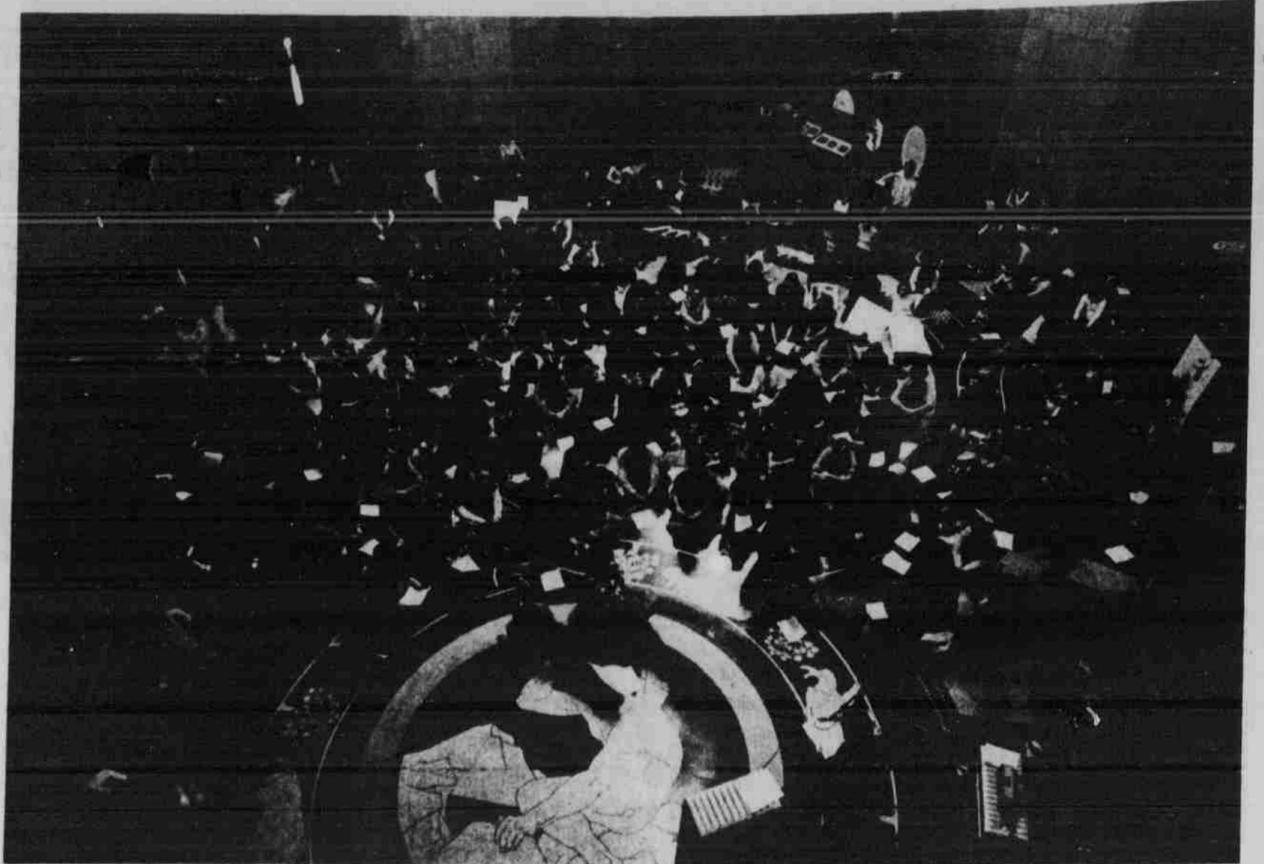


Long time comin'

photos by
Dan Ladely



by Sara Schwieder

The crowd filed into the Capitol Building Saturday, whipped by a cold breeze, hardly noticing the engraved letters high above them that read, "Watchfulness in the citizen is the salvation of the state."

It was a scene that has become common in American life: a demonstration against the Vietnam War. The rally was held on President Nixon's inauguration day to protest the continuation of the Vietnam War, according to rally organizers.

The capitol demonstration was sponsored by the Nebraskans For Peace, while a march preceding the rally was sponsored by the *Lincoln Gazette*.

The 400 demonstrators that included both gray-hairs and long-hairs, packed into the corridor and sprawled on the mosaic tile of the Capitol.

Rev. Charles Stephen of the Unitarian Church paused a full minute for everyone to settle themselves. He began quietly, speaking in a clipped, Boston accent, and read a poem that asked, "Do the

people of Vietnam use stone lanterns? Do they dream any dreams?"

Stephen then gave a short address in which he called the Vietnam War "the most brutal assault a nation has ever launched against a helpless country 10,000 miles away."

"Peace will come, but we will not rejoice," Stephen told a silent and pensive audience. "There will be no parades, no heroes, but quiet gratitude mixed with tears, anger, frustration and doubt."

June Levine, UNL English professor, added to Stephen's comments.

"The least we can do is to end our multilateral involvement in Vietnam and help rebuild," she said. "History will record not only the blood spilled but the blood spilled in vain."

She said her chief concern is that the Vietnam War has made Americans "callous" to human suffering, and urged fellow activists to "be as humane as possible."

Throughout the rally, one man, dressed in a dark

blue suit, stood on the fringes of the group. He appeared solemn, and distinguished. A silver-haired woman, wearing a fur hat, flanked the man. The two persons were former Gov. Frank Morrison, and his wife, Maxine. He stepped up to the microphone.

"The chief reason I was defeated by the incumbent in the Senate was because I demanded an immediate cease-fire to the war," Morrison said. His listeners cheered.

He criticized President Nixon for not consulting Congress about Vietnam, and said that "the U.S. has vested the war-making power in Congress and Congress alone." More cheers.

Morrison called Nixon's inauguration ceremonies "the most extravagant and pompous inauguration in the history of the nation." He added that the ceremony was more disgusting because it took place "in the face of poverty and suffering."

"We demand and request that the United States declare against the war as a national policy," he said.

