

TV exposure

The televised Watergate hearings once again are underway and the select committee has begun trudging through the muck and mire which surrounded the 1972 Nixon campaign.

It is a wonder the hearings resumed. The seven-member probe team and its staff of attorneys have been under intense pressure to halt the hearings and turn the job over to the courts. By not doing so, the committee has asserted its mandate to disclose fully the campaign's abuses of government power.

The committee has been attacked indirectly by President Nixon in his "let others wallow in Watergate" statement. Arizona Sen. Barry M. Goldwater has said the "television spectacle...holds the United States government up to criticism and ridicule." Vice President Spiro Agnew, in typical style, has referred to the hearings as Sen. Sam Ervin's "rain dance in that Washington committee room." Even Nebraska Sen. Carl Curtis and Rep. Charles Thone have called for an end to the congressional probe.

All these statements ignore the fact that the hearings are a legitimate government function, aimed at exposing abuses of the

democratic process. While the courts have served their role by dealing with those who have broken the law, they cannot perform the more important task: showing to the public the entangled scandals and violations of ethics which are the "Watergate mess."

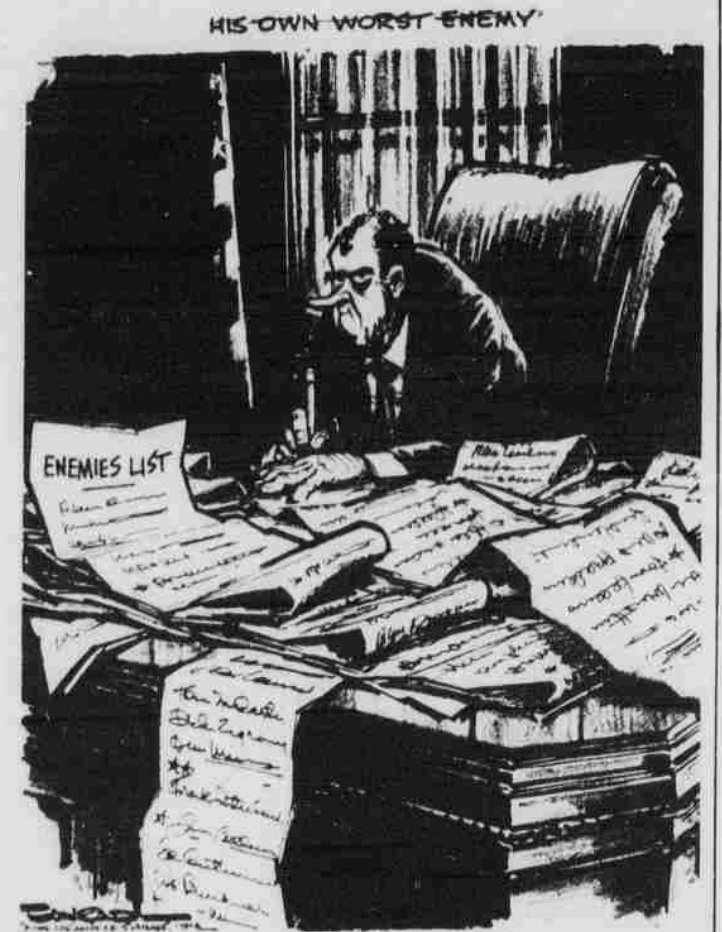
One of the most erroneous attacks on the committee thus far has come from Thone. On an Omaha television news program he said "I have traveled all over my district. And people are saying 'Can't you get that Watergate stuff off the television...and into the courts?' I agree." Thone went on to say that the hearings are damaging our national image overseas.

Nothing could be further from the truth. In an Associated Press story published Sept. 16, a foreign correspondent said the hearings are improving the U.S. government's image with other peoples. The probe has sparked renewed interest in American internal affairs and the democratic process.

It would seem that Thone, a man who won much support in the last election because he had remained fairly independent of the Nixon administration, has fallen victim to the President's propaganda. While Nebraskans can expect Curtis to belch forth the GOP line, they should be able to expect better from the First District Congressman.

Michael (O.J.) Nelson

HIS OWN WORST ENEMY



Columnist accused of conservative rhetoric

By Chris Lyford

Chris Lyford is a junior majoring in history and former editor of the Doane College Owl.

"Thus, like Communist and Socialist governments everywhere, the Allende administration labored under the delusion that it knew more than the people it ruled and was beyond reproach." This generalized, simplistic approach by John Vihstadt's column (*Daily Nebraskan*, Sept. 19) concerning Chile's recent military takeover is typical of conservative rhetoric. It assumes that all socialist reform is evil. It assumes that a Socialist government evolves, not from a public mandate, but by political design. It assumes that all Socialist reforms automatically result in economic ruin, which fails to explain the mess we are in under the conservative Nixon administration's

multiple-phased policy. And, it assumes that any alternative, no matter how corrupt or dictatorial, is an acceptable "last resort". In Chile's case, Vihstadt says that the takeover by a fascist military dictatorship is "a manifestation that Chileans had finally had enough."

Allende's downfall cannot be attributed largely to inherent weaknesses in domestic policies. Vihstadt points out that most of Allende's programming never went into effect, that opposition efforts "to arrest or impede many of Allende's socialist schemes" were highly successful. One of Allende's most important undertakings, his plan to achieve a more equitable return from Chile's foreign-owned business concerns, falls into this category.

It was the foundation for financing

much of Allende's social programs, but the Chilean legislature blocked repeated efforts to legally institute it. Facing the possibility of losing its exceedingly high profit margin, the foreign business circle within Chile began to force legislative defeat of Allende's domestic program. The most celebrated example of this kind of overseas meddling in another nation's affairs was provided by America's giant conglomerate, International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT).

Already under UN suspicion for attempting to finance political opposition against Allende in the 1970 election, and later revealed to have approached CIA officials with a proposal to illegally oust the Marxist president, ITT sought to funnel huge sums of money in support of anti-Allende candidates for the Chilean

legislature. So, there is substantial evidence that the legislature's opposition to Allende was representative of overseas corporate interests, not the people's will. It is important that President Nixon, who originated the U.S. government's intense anti-Allende stance received a huge campaign contribution from ITT, almost \$500,000.

Vihstadt also ignores a major development now taking place in Latin America, a development historically commonplace to that region. A heated arms race currently is in full swing between Argentina, Brazil, and Peru. All three nations have ordered many ships, planes and electronic components from Europe and the United States.

Allende opposed this kind of ego-oriented arms race. He repeatedly rejected military demands to increase the size and scope of Chilean armed forces.

This helps explain the brutal swiftness of the military involved in Chile's coup and the crackdown on political dissidents, the decree against long hair, the banning of political parties, the replacement of college professors with military instructors, the firing of local governors and mayors and their replacement by military officers, and the forced detention of thousands of political prisoners.

No one knows how many citizens were gunned down in this last resort which Vihstadt said was "a

manifestation that Chileans had finally had enough."

Apparently, Nixon wasn't appalled by this situation either—the United States was one of the first nations to extend diplomatic recognition to Chile's new fascist junta.

guest opinion

Vihstadt again issued a typically sweeping statement that "India's Indira Gandhi may well be the next leftist leader to go the way of Salvador Allende" (*Daily Nebraskan*, Sept. 26). Vihstadt rattles off employment, agricultural and price-index statistics to prove what India and the whole world already knows—a completely uncontrolled population growth rate is a threat to any nation's health and well being.

But does this enter the minds of conservative observers? Of course not. In their opinion, India's problems result from the insidious policies of a "leftist" regime. What Vihstadt and others ignore is that for years statistical data on India reflected only a tiny cross-section of India's sweltering population.

The answer to India's impoverished plight lies not in politics, but in medicine and sociology. India's only hope for reversing her present condition rests on effective birth control.

Vihstadt calls his column the "Different Drummer", but there is nothing different about it. His philosophy is filled with the same old worn-out conservative rhetoric based on a need to find a scapegoat for our social ills rather than facing them squarely.

Rhetoric requiring continuous paranoia toward any thought or change in the status quo, for conservatism thrives on what Franklin Roosevelt termed as "standing still on the same old spot and (therefore) never run the risk of getting lost." All of this, of course, is at the expense of millions of impoverished people who must remain so within the quagmire so loved by those who fear responsible social change.

ALPHABET STEW

