

The Alliance for Progress Was Not Supposed to Buy Latin American Troops for Vietnam

"It is difficult to understand the legal right which the U.S. professes in extending an invitation to Latin American countries to join us in the fighting in Vietnam. . . . The pressures exerted by the U.S. . . . will seriously retard the Alliance for Progress and cast doubt upon its very objectives. Our neighbors to the south . . . have a long way

to go in correcting the social and economic inequalities with which they are beset. . . . We should not be encouraging them to spend additional sums in the empty gestures of 'showing the flag' in a war not of their concern thousands of miles away."

—Gruening (D. Alaska), in the Senate Jan. 15.

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It's Been A Faked Class B Movie From the Beginning

Associated Press correspondent Peter Arnett drove south of Saigon Jan. 14 to check reports of a battle and found U.S. Information Officers staging fake war scenes for a propaganda film. "We don't want to show cruel things like bodies," an information officer in charge explained, "And we will avoid references to tanks, fighter aircraft and artillery. This is a people-to-people film. . . ." When the story broke, the film was, of course, disavowed by USIA Director Carl T. Rowan. Only those with short memories will be taken in by the disavowal. The Vietnamese war, as far as the information given the American people is concerned, has been a faked class B movie from the beginning. The Moss subcommittee of the House two years ago protested the information practices of the State Department on Vietnam. It called attention to a speech by Mr. Rowan in which he spoke of the public's "right *not* to know in a period of undeclared war." Even this cynical statement misstated the facts. What is involved is not just "the right *not* to know" but the government's right to deceive. President Kennedy himself (see box on p. 3) tried at one point to get a New York Times man transferred from Vietnam because he was reporting the war too independently for the government's taste.

Doctoring The Record

Every agency of government is drawn into this campaign of deception. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week put out what purported to be an objective volume of "Background Information" on the war in Vietnam. It is supposed to be a compilation of the important official statements. But the record is tailored. The fullest official reports to the public on the war were the Blue Book the State Department issued in the Fall of 1961 to explain Kennedy's decision to intervene; Secretary Rusk's speech to the Economic Club in New York April 22, 1963, and Secretary McNamara's speech to the National Security Industrial Association (an arms lobby mouthpiece) on March 26 of last year. All three pictured South Vietnam under Diem as a model of progress and democracy, an "economic miracle" comparable to West Germany (no less!), a land of such contented people (land reform, educational expansion) that the Communists in desperation resorted to invasion as their only hope of reunifying the country. This notion that guerrilla war can successfully be carried on in a prosperous country, amid a happy people, is so preposterous

The Wild Far East and The Wild Far West

"Americans in Asia are basically aliens, of a different race, religion and culture. Moreover, the Vietnamese are nationalistic and race-conscious in their outlook. As one on-the-scene observer pointed out, 'If you imagine a Chinese Sheriff speaking Cantonese and trying to keep order in Tombstone, Arizona, in its heyday, you will begin to get the problem.'"

—McGovern (D. S. Dak.) in the Senate Jan. 15.

that even a public as doped-up as ours could no longer be expected to take it seriously. In the Foreign Relations handbook not a scrap remains of the two-volume Blue Book. Rusk's speech has disappeared altogether. Discreet editorial scissors have cut out of McNamara's speech the whole opening section with its glowing picture of what McNamara called the Vietnamese "success story." Why should the Foreign Relations Committee, which is supposed to provide some check on the State Department, help to hide this record of deception?

Even Senators Uninformed

Even members of Congress, who get private briefings, show an extraordinary ignorance of what has been going on. McGovern of South Dakota made a good speech in the Senate Jan. 15. It echoed de Gaulle's suggestion that the war be ended by negotiating the neutralization of the area. McGovern opposed expansion of the war. "Attacks on North Vietnam," he said, "will not seriously weaken guerrilla fighters a thousand miles away, fighters who depend for 80% of their weapons on captured U.S. equipment and for food on a sympathetic local peasantry." But then he went on to make a suggestion which shows how little Senators are told. He said that "the most practical way" to put pressure on North Vietnam was "quietly through infiltration and subversion by South Vietnamese units" into the North with the aim not of "military victory" but of "bringing Ho Chi Minh to the negotiating table."

This is doubly ludicrous. Ho Chi Minh has been trying to get to the bargaining table for two years. The problem is to get the United States to the bargaining table. He has made clear his readiness to accept a neutralized independent South Vietnam in return for peace and resumption of North-South

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RR Nationalization: For the First Time in Years A Radical Proposal from U. S. Labor

"I Ain't Got Much Confidence in Mississippi Doing Anything Right"

For years the FBI and the Justice Department have excused slack follow-through on Civil Rights complaints against police brutality in the South on the grounds that indictments and convictions could not be obtained. The arrests in the murder of the Martyred Three in Philadelphia, Miss., show that if enough evidence is mustered, Southern grand juries will sometimes indict. Maybe petit juries will convict. In any case what is happening to the Sheriff of Neshoba county and his deputy puts similar types in the South on notice that the murder and beating of Negroes and civil rights workers may not be quite as safe as it used to be. Still we hold our breath and agree with the redoubtable Mrs. Lillie Jones who keeps a shotgun handy in Philadelphia, Miss. She told Homer Bigart (*N.Y. Times* Jan. 17), "I ain't got much confidence in Mississippi doing anything right."

Public Ownership Long Overdue

The railroad brotherhoods have let a fresh breath of air in on a stale problem by demanding nationalization of the railroads. The glamorous improvement in service between Boston and Washington, on which the President touched in his State of the Union message, is impossible under present management. The railroads have too long been in the hands of a banker-lawyer bureaucracy devoid of business enterprise. At the end of World War I, the entire labor movement and many farm organizations campaigned for public ownership, under the once famous Plumb Plan. "A low degree of managerial skill," Glenn E. Plumb wrote about his plan in *The Nation* (Aug. 16, 1919), "cannot be taken into account at a rate-hearing." A great national resource has been plundered and run down by incapable hands.

Congress may soon authorize four new judges for the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals which covers the deep South. These with two vacancies on the present bench will make way for six new appointments, and may change the character of this hitherto liberal court, on which civil rights enforcement so much depends. Negro organizations are petitioning for the nomination of Clifford Durr of Montgomery, Alabama, an outstanding Southern liberal, one-time New Dealer and ex-FCC Commissioner for the Court. Unless pressure is built up, all the new appointments may go to segregationists.

An Echo of McCarthyism

At the end of a first-rate speech in the Senate Jan. 12 on the radical right by Church of Idaho, Morse boasted that in 1954 he co-sponsored a bill to outlaw Communism "which is the law of the land today." This referred to a shameful incident of the McCarthy period. The right-wingers had put in a bill to subject labor unions to the Subversive Activities Control Board. Most of the liberals were afraid to oppose it directly. They offered as substitute a bill to outlaw the Communist party. When this maneuver failed, they accepted both the original bill and their amendments. The purpose, as Morse said on the Senate floor at the time, was "to remove any doubt as to where we stand on the issue of communism." The law was never applied because so loosely written as to be clearly unconstitutional. It defined membership in the Communist Party so broadly that the liberal sponsors could themselves have been outlawed under it. They made it unlawful to indicate "by word, action, conduct, writing or in any other way a willingness to carry out in any manner and in any degree" Communist "plans, designs, objectives or purposes." This is broad enough to label Morse a Communist for advocating withdrawal from Vietnam. Only Kefauver and John Sherman Cooper had the nerve to oppose this cowardly nonsense at the time. We did not expect to hear Morse boast of it.

The appointment of freshman Congressman John Conyers (*D. Mich.*) to the House Judiciary Committee is auspicious for civil rights. Conyers is a Negro lawyer from Detroit who worked last year in the Mississippi Summer Project. Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer went to Detroit to campaign for him. . . . The assignment of Maurine Neuberger (*D. Ore.*) to the Senate Commerce Committee strengthens the hand of its chairman, Magnuson (*D. Wash.*) in his campaign to put a cigarette labelling bill through Congress. . . . We applaud Dom Bonafede for his story in the *New York Herald-Tribune* Jan. 14 exposing the close connections between W. Ellis Meehan, chief investigator for the Senate Rules Committee in the Baker inquiry, and Thomas D. Webb, friend of Bobby Baker's and Washington man for the Murchison empire. . . . We mourn the death of our old friend, Fowler Harper of Yale Law School, a lifelong fighter for civil liberties.

Why Is The Supreme Court So Timid When Confronted With The First Amendment?

Mr. Justice Stewart's opinion for a unanimous court in the case of *Stanford v. Texas* last Monday was disappointingly narrow. Stanford did a mail order book business in San Antonio under the trade name, "All Points of View." His premises were raided and some 2,000 of his books and pamphlets seized. The raid took place under the Texas Communist Control Law of 1951. The search warrant was issued in response to an affidavit by two Assistant Attorneys General of Texas asserting that mailings by Stanford of "pro-Communist material and other information received in the course of investigation" indicated that Stanford "has in his possession the books and records of the Texas Communist Party." A four hour search turned up no such records but the police made off as consolation with the works of suspect authors as diverse as Marx, Sartre, Pope John and Justice Black.

The conviction was attacked on First Amendment grounds as an invasion of political freedom. But the Court chose instead to rule under the Fourth amendment which makes search and seizure under general warrants unconstitutional. This gave Mr. Justice Stewart occasion for much romantic rhetoric about James Otis and John Wilkes and how in Tudor England general writs were used "to suppress and destroy the literature of dissent." But all the Court ruled in ordering Stanford's books returned is that "the constitutional requirement that warrants must particularly describe the 'things to be seized' is to be accorded the most scrupulous exactitude when the 'things' are books." So what if the Texas warrant had asked to seize Marx's Capital or Lenin's Imperialism? Would that have made the seizure constitutional? How pusillanimous to leave the question open.