

or call the Center for more information.

Of course, if you do a fair amount of reading each week, the best sources of up-to-date economic information are the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week*. Written for businessmen and government officials, the reporting is straight-forward, in-depth, and usually free of the Chamber of Commerce cant which fills speeches and messages aimed at the general public.

Beyond these periodical sources, it might be worthwhile to check out a few new books in political economics: for example, *Economic Concentration* (Harcourt Brace Janovich) by John M. Blair, former chief economist of

the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly. Blair was the man-behind-the-scenes in Sen. Kefauver's famous hearings on monopoly in the Fifties. His is one of the definitive works on monopoly and the possibilities for decentralization created by new technologies. Robert Heilbroner, one of the more lucid political economists writing today, has a new book of essays entitled *Between Capitalism and Socialism* (Vintage paperback). Also worth a look: *Modern Capitalism and Other Essays* by Paul M. Sweezy and *The Dynamics of U.S. Capitalism* by Sweezy and Harry Magdoff (Monthly Review Press).

Most of the Sweezy and Magdoff

essays appeared first in the magazine *Monthly Review*, which they edit. This independent socialist journal has been appearing since 1949, and if you are not familiar with it, you should pick up a copy. (Subscriptions \$7 a year, *Monthly Review*, 116 W. 14th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.) For over two decades now, MR has kept up a sophisticated, yet unshrill, analysis of economic issues from a socialist perspective. ●

News of political work, including publications, films, slide shows, etc., should be addressed to Derek Shearer, RAMPARTS Magazine, 2054 University Ave., Berkeley, California 94704.

THE LATE NIGHT SHOW FROM MUNICH: A REVIEW

by peter collier

THE TWENTIETH OLYMPIAD WAS to be an international celebration of peace. The good people of Munich were determined to stage these games so scrupulously that lingering memories of Berlin, 1936, when Hitler's soldier-athletes had tried to emblazon the swastika over the interlocked Olympic rings, would be effaced forever. Then it had been Teutonic gods of war that were being supplicated; but now, thirty-six years later, it was to be the milder dieties of Mt. Olympus, as thousands of the world's greatest athletes gathered in gentle Bavarian surroundings to return the Olympic ideal to German soil. Although competing in futuristic, computerized surroundings, they were to be the very incarnation to an ancient drama: defying gravity, venturing into the unpredictable environment of water, and challenging the iron law of physics with nothing more than grit, muscle and grace, they contended not as nation against nation, or even man against man, but as man against himself, each athlete pushing himself to the breaking point to discover hidden truths about his own and others' humanity.

This—or something like it—was the

message of the American Broadcasting Company, which had outbid the other networks to gain rights to the games. It was a message given out repeatedly and in dozens of ways, by several different voices, and from a variety of camera angles and speeds (including commercials with grainy footage of pseudo-athletes in a mime of competition) during the more than sixty hours the Olympics were on the air, not to speak of the weeks when they were still a coming attraction. This would be a modern epic, and it would unfold in unprecedented detail before the wondering eyes of millions of Americans to whom it otherwise would not have been available. For if Munich was to be a showcase for the greatest athletic competition of all time, it was also to be sportscasting's finest hour. For weeks before the nations had even assembled at Olympic Village, ABC was boasting how it would match their verve and daring with an equally dazzling technology and reportage. (The network was a little like the U.S. team itself—so certain of success that it took along three employees whose only job would be to make up daily press releases in Munich showing the ABC landslide in the previous night's Nielsen ratings.)

ABC goes to Munich. It was a collision of the ridiculous with the sublime. But such contrasts between those who compete and those who capitalized on them had long since become an enduring feature of this event. The Games had over the years become a sort of moveable host inhabited by

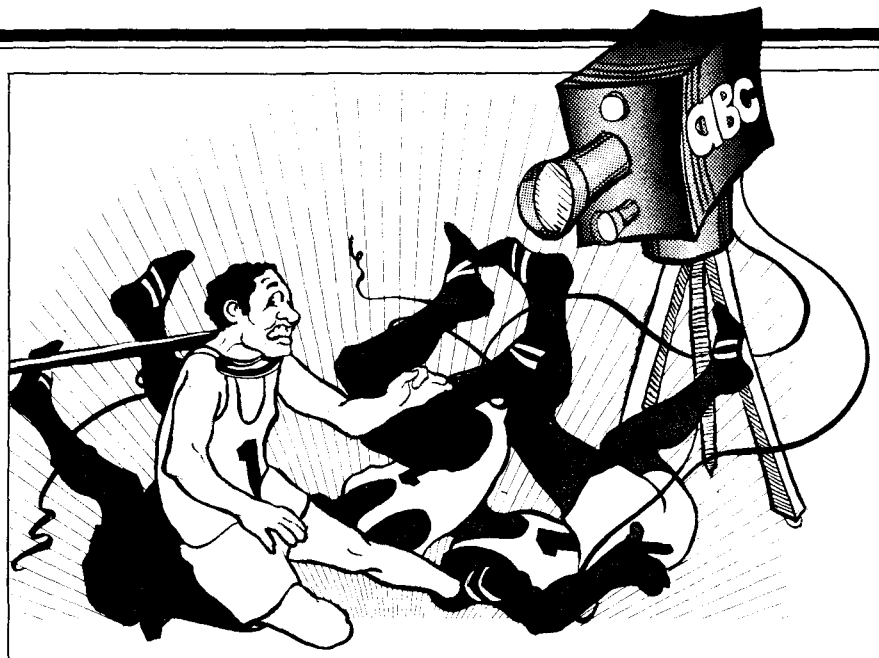
growing numbers of parasites. For what seemed like an eternity, 85-year-old millionaire Avery Brundage and the gerontocracy sitting on the International Olympic Committee had capriciously controlled the fortunes of young athletes like jaded Renaissance princes. And for all that had been said about the attempt to make the Berlin Games a eugenics laboratory for the Third Reich, Hitler was hardly the last to inject politics into the Olympics. Especially since the Soviets had burst dramatically into the international sports scene in the fifties, the Games had become a sort of dumb show for the Cold War.

Miraculously, however, the athletes managed every four years somehow to keep some small part of themselves and their art immune from these forces; they managed to retain a vestige of purity and magnanimity although surrounded by cynicisms. Thus it was possible to look forward to the beginning at the Munich Olympiad believing that the Games still had a sort of mystery at their core, and that indeed it was one place where an individual's will and adrenalin might for a brief moment overcome the political world which routinely uses athletes as shabbily as everyone else. In addition, ABC had spent millions of dollars and thousands of man-hours in Munich. Perhaps the network would seize this unparalleled opportunity to cut through all the petty nationalism and breathe some sanity into what had become far closer to the bread and circuses of Rome than the Greek ideal.

But even before the Arab murderers entered the sanctuary of Olympic Village to slaughter half the Israeli team, it had become clear that television was not going to offer solutions to the difficulties that have plagued the Games; instead it came to exemplify the problem.

From the onset it was clear that ABC's vaunted team of experts had gone to Germany determined to report the happening as if it was all a tedious squabble in a U.N. Security Council meeting. In retrospect it is astonishing that the network was able to assemble a group of reporters so unanimously at odds with what they kept puffing up as the "Olympic ideal." Anchorman Chris Schenkel was the least offensive of the group only because he was farthest from the competition and because there was something almost endearing in his intimidation by the electronic juggernaut he was supposed to control, and in the fact that he seemed never so confident as when announcing station breaks. It was the field men who were in charge of injecting the propaganda into the coverage. Howard Cosell alternated between covering the boxing matches as if he were Edward R. Murrow reporting the Blitz from wartime London, and grilling American athletes and coaches who had "failed" as if they were heretics, and he was leading them through the *auto da fé*. Jim McKay, who habitually referred to the most polished women athletes in the world as "girls," reported on track and field like an aging cheerleader, and the only thing Keith Jackson's coverage of the water sports lacked was the soundtrack from *Victory at Sea*. If anything, the former athletes providing the "inside" dimension were more competent and dignified than the pros, although, even so, one of them managed to refer to a Polish wrestler as a "Polack"; and Erich Segal provided the ultimate absurdity in informal interviewing by trying to talk to distance runners while jogging along bowleggedly beside them, quite out of breath.

ABC never intended to cover what actually happened in Munich; instead they were there to stage a happening of their own. The cameras and commentators were sent to the Games on



STEVIE LIPNEY

an assignment not unlike the one Hitler gave filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl in 1936. They were mandated to record what was to be another athletic summit meeting at which America would inevitably dominate—not to the extent that it had in the past, perhaps (for as one of the U.S. women's swim coaches said in Munich, the rest of the countries have caught up with us in missiles, standard of living, and practically everything else, so why not sports?)—but still come out ahead. Largely ignoring the sports and events where Americans were not expected to do well, they instead positioned their cameras to record the moments of triumph. But instead there was defeat—inexplicable defeat for a nation that has spent a history coping only with victory. And if a note of petulance entered the voices of some of the American athletes, with ABC it became a crescendo of hysteria. For they did not have the option Leni Riefenstahl adopted when things didn't go according to Hitler's plan: scrap the propaganda film and create a work of art. As things went badly for the Americans, ABC's coverage went from propaganda to polemics. The lessons of the bloodshed it covered live and up close were lost on the network itself.

For a while they toyed with voodoo as an explanation; the U.S. "failures" were a sort of hex, a bad athletic karma afflicting the team for reasons that couldn't be fathomed: Eddie Hart and

Rey Robinson not getting to their 100 meter heats on time; Cathy Rigby sacrificing her chances for an individual gymnastics medal to aid an already doomed team effort; Jim Ryun tripping near the final lap of his 1500 meter quarter final; Wayne Collett and Vince Matthews being barred from the 1600 meter relay because of the bad posture Avery Brundage decided was a victory stand protest.

Along with this series of inexplicable misfortunes went the network's sudden discovery of politics in the Olympics—not the star-chamber politics that decides which nation "gets" the next Games, or the authoritarian politics of Brundage, which favors allowing racist regimes like South Africa and Rhodesia to compete, and which not only barred Collett and Matthews from the 1600 meter relay but excommunicated them from the Olympics *forever*—but the mundane politics that have come to rule much of the competition itself. Thus Howard Cosell began to rave about bad boxing decisions, even though U.S. boxers got more than their share of good breaks (and one of them, gold medal winner Ray Seales, appeared actually to have lost at least three of his bouts). Keith Jackson kept hammering home the fact that East European countries sent judges to the Schwimmhalle who blatantly favored their own divers (and indeed, they did rig the scoring, but so did the single American judge in the men's platform

event). And finally, in post-mortemizing on the judging of the gymnastics and wrestling, the ABC consensus was not that some means had to be found to purge such politics from the Games, but that more Americans had to get involved in the international committees appointing the judges, presumably thereby being able to get in on the fix themselves without having to depend on free world allies. The hysteria mounted from day to day until the U.S. basketball team lost its disputed game to the Soviets, when the implied connection between the bad luck of the U.S. competitors and the politics clicked into place: we were being robbed.

If the first casualty of all this was the truth, the second was the athletes themselves. ABC picked up the central hypocrisy of the Games: that the U.S. team is a group of easy-going, talented amateurs making a gutty stand against nations that unloose a legion of driven professionals from behind the Iron Curtain every four years. This was the rationale for an almost xenophobic attitude toward East European athletes. (Even "little" Olga Korb, the Russian gymnast whom Jim McKay patronized, was de-personalized into a "cute," fey creature somehow not part of the grey menace of the Soviets). For instance, one of the most remarkable achievements of the Games, the Russian Nikolai Avilov's performance in the decathlon, was downplayed; when it became clear that he might break the record in the last of his ten events but that no U.S. competitor would be close enough to challenge him, Jim McKay arranged for an American—1968 winner and record holder, Bill Toomey—to be the shadow competition as Avilov ran the final 1500 meters. When Wolfgang Nordwig won the pole vault, it was noted that the East Germans worked full time for years to gain their expertise, and instead of Nordwig's victory, the emphasis was on Bob Seagren's "unfair" defeat. The Soviets were robots; the East Germans a new athletic Wehrmacht. But the fact is that the U.S., which sent over 400 participants—the largest contingent in Munich, and, with 111 "officials," probably the largest group of hangers-

on as well—does not lack for a system of rewards to goad its athletes on to victory. When Mark Spitz (whom ABC helped apotheosize into the American "ace" of the Games with seven gold medals) finished his last race, he could hardly wait to vault out of the water and get about the business of parlaying his hero's status and marketable face into a career estimated to be worth \$5 million.

American athletes suffered too—Spitz with his mind-bending malapropisms, among them. Time and again the commentators worked them into their jingoistic act, placing them in a crossfire where it seemed that the only choice was between being a fool or a crybaby. Certain moments stand out vividly; cooperating in building up heavyweight boxer Duane Bobick as the next great white hope and a likely winner in the Games, only to have him get badly beaten in his second match; showcasing mammoth wrestler Chris Taylor as a kind of ursine, good-natured freak; catechizing 800-meter winner Dave Wottle about why he didn't take his golfing cap off when on the victory stand, only to let him off the hook by saying that actually it was alright because the American people had noticed that his hand was over his heart; condemning the IOC's vendetta against Collett and Matthews even though ABC itself had banished the two black runners from its nightly summary where all other gold medal winners were featured; insisting on one more demeaning interview with a distraught Jim Ryun, who God knows has already been used enough by sports and sportcasters.

In spite of all this, there were great moments, of course—the *élan* of the Japanese women's volleyball team, the grace and sportsmanship of boxer Jessie Valdez, the great victories of the Finnish distance runners—which not even ABC could banalize. But in the last analysis, these moments came too seldom to save the Olympics from the omnivorous eye of the television camera. Events started to melt into each other—the 1500 meters, the murders at the airport, the boxing semi-finals: it was a marathon meal where each course looked different but tasted the same. The only thing of importance

was the fact that the U.S., by hook or crook, was faced with becoming a second-rate sports power. It was as if the killing of the Israeli athletes was somehow subliminally connected to a larger athletic tragedy.

The Games are over now. While television writers praise the ABC coverage, sportswriters wonder if there should be another Olympiad now that blood has stained the Olympic flag. The question is natural given the horrendous events that night at the airport. But the fact is that it should have been asked even if there had been no carnage at Munich. For the Arab assassins were not, as ABC and everyone else claimed, an alien intrusion into an otherwise peaceful and cooperative atmosphere. They were more the final apocalyptic acting out of the vicious nationalism that has now been permanently ingrained as an enduring feature of this spectacle. The medium was the message, and nothing the athletes could do would change that. ●

RUSSO (From page 42)

ing American reporters to the RAND villa to get the inside dope. They even had Goure present "Backgrounders" to newsmen; these are briefings where the source cannot be identified. Out of this came news reports such as Jack Foisie's of the Los Angeles Times, who in 1966 (without identifying RAND or Goure) said that Goure's work indicated a decline in the morale of the enemy and a belief the communist forces have lost the Vietnamese War. . . . The findings of the survey supported allied military tactics in almost every respect, and gave an encouraging overall picture of progress in the ground war.

Denis Warner called it, "A work of tremendous importance." Carl Rowan, writing in a column in 1966, referred to the Goure study as "this secret study which lies at the heart of President Johnson's present strategy. . . ." He finished his column by saying.

It is this study that reportedly has convinced President Johnson that, as long as Hanoi refuses peace talks, he has no alternative to continuing the bombing and the military pressure. The hope is that, sooner rather than later, the communists' morale will descend past the breaking point.

This, no doubt, was a result of Goure's briefings of Walt Rostow.

In the summer of 1965 I left Saigon and went for a vacation to Bangkok, where I was greeted by a headline in the *Bangkok Post* (an English language daily) which said "VC MORALE PLUMMETS." Goure had been giving "backgrounders" to newsmen: the Saigon American Embassy knew they had a good thing going.

Tying NLF morale to bombing was the chief contribution Goure made to the aerial genocide campaign. In 1965-66 there was a "great debate" in official American circles in Vietnam. Some people felt that bombing infuriated the Vietnamese so much that it only stiffened their resistance. Goure argued against this, using the authority of the RAND image and the interviews to back it up. According to Goure the bombing didn't cause a backlash at all. In fact, it tended to separate the villagers from the NLF: "The more knowledgeable interviewers indicated an increasing tendency among the villagers to blame the Viet Cong for drawing such attacks upon them. . . ." This statement is absolute hogwash; Goure gave the impression that interviewers' statements were neatly collated as to their knowledgeability. Nothing like this was ever done.

Neither Goure nor Thomson knew much about Vietnam; they weren't interested in reading outside material. This represents a curious aloofness that seems quite common to people with official security clearances. They have an air of being in on the really important affairs of state, a kind of priesthood which disdains the attitudes of outsiders as though to say, "How could you have an attitude if you don't know what's really happening?"

Goure spent virtually all his time flying back and forth between the U.S. and Saigon and talking to Americans. Thomson spent most of his time in the RAND villa; he went home shortly after RAND president Frank Collbohm visited Saigon in May 1965. Collbohm was given the VIP tour of the battlefield. He was briefed, flown around, and helicoptered into a battle zone to inspect a cache of captured weapons. He left pleased as punch with Goure; the project sailed merrily on.

My own job on the Motivation and Morale Project was to supervise three to four of the Vietnamese interviewers of which there were around ten. Traveling around the country on American airplanes was impossible for Vietnamese alone so it was necessary for me to accompany them. Generally Americans didn't trust Vietnamese and considered them all to be "VC" until vouched for by Americans. Prisoners were held in all parts of Vietnam in provincial jails. The higher level cadre were sent to Saigon where they could be found at the CIA-sponsored National Interrogation Center or the Military Interrogation Center run by the Vietnamese. Every third week or so I would arrange to take my group of interviewers on a trip to the provinces where we would stay for three or four days conducting interviews. Invariably the trips would turn up some kind of adventure, anything from terrorist bombings to fire fights to the discovery of esoteric Vietnamese dishes that were not available in Saigon. On my first trip in the spring of 1965, four of us went to Qui Nhon, a port town on the coast of central Vietnam which came to be controlled by the notorious Korean troops. We stayed in a small hotel and borrowed a Land Rover from the local AID contingent to use in going back and forth to the prison. One evening, as we were leaving the hotel for dinner, Thang, an interviewer, opened the door to the Land Rover, shouted, and waved us back. Someone had placed a North Vietnamese coin on the front seat; it was a Ho Chi Minh piastre (bearing his likeness) which, unofficially, was worth about ten Saigon piastres. Thang was afraid the Land Rover had been booby-trapped. We checked it thoroughly and found nothing. The Vietnamese were convinced it was a warning from a terrorist and spoke uneasily of it for the rest of the trip.

That very day we had attempted to interview a man alleged to be one of the terrorists who had bombed the American B.B.Q. in Qui Nhon about two months before, for which, according to the Pentagon Papers, the U.S. launched reprisal raids on North Vietnam under the code name of Flaming Dart II. The interview had not lasted

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long because the man had been beaten so badly. He wept throughout the interview and kept asking us if he was going to be executed: "Are they going to kill me tomorrow?" His thumbs were swollen very badly; the man had been hung from his thumbs and beaten while suspended. This was my first brush with the effects of torture. Later it would become apparent that virtually every prisoner was tortured.

I wasn't quite sure that the American advisers knew this kind of thing was going on, so after we finished the interview I walked across the courtyard and told the American captain who was my contact about the fact that prisoners were being tortured. He responded by acting busy and hastened off. Later that night over a beer, I found him unwilling to discuss anything that was going on in Binh Dinh province; he kept talking about how much money he was saving up and how, when he got back to the States, he was going to take it all out of the bank in the form of cash and buy a Corvette. Repeatedly he imagined the look on the salesman's face when he

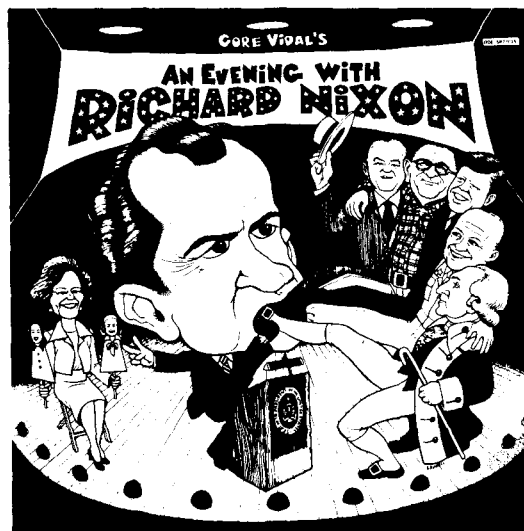
would, as he put it, pick out a Corvette and pay for it on the spot with cash and the correct change. After being treated to this fantasy about three times I excused myself and went back to the hotel. It occurred to me that the Corvette dream grew out of the captain's feelings of powerlessness: at the time, the U.S. Army advisers listed every village and hamlet in the province as being NLF-controlled. In retrospect it occurred to me that the reprisal raid of Flaming Dart II grew out of the same feelings of powerlessness.

The first field trip to Qui Nhon was loaded with qmens. When we went out to the airport we were almost killed by American rockets. An L-19 (the small spotter plane) pilot had accidentally hit the fire button while taxiing down the runway and two smoke rockets had soared off over our heads, missing us by a matter of a few feet (inches?). We immediately hit the deck, not knowing exactly what had happened but feeling sure the airport was under NLF attack. After lying there a few minutes while nothing more happened we

got up to check out the explosion. After hearing what had happened we celebrated our continuing good health with soft drinks from a machine and waited until the C-123 transport took off for Saigon on what was called the "milk run." Later on during my stay in Vietnam, after several other near-misses, it occurred to me that the only honorable death for an American might be an absurd one like being shot by another American. Most of the death in Vietnam, in any case, is absurd. And most of it is perpetrated by Americans.

Several months later I ran into an American adviser in Saigon who was stationed in Qui Nhon; he said both the rockets that had nearly hit us had soared across the town, one landing in the water off the beach and the other striking a sandbagged emplacement outside the U.S. Army compound that sits by the beach, badly burning an American M.P. He also said the town had undergone a mortar attack the week after we left, with one of the shells landing in the street in front of the hotel where we had stayed.

HE REALLY DID



"An Evening With Richard Nixon" by Gore Vidal is a bird's eye view of Nixon's career from the beginning...this is accomplished with the help of Kennedy, Eisenhower, Washington, Agnew, Humphrey, and the like, acting as advocates pro and con, commenting on the "action" (so to speak) of Nixon's political aspirations. All that Nixon says, he has said in real life, nothing has been invented, nothing has been taken out of context. Gore Vidal, in researching this play, carefully footnoted each of Nixon's statements for time, origin, and nature of the speech. An annotated bibliography is available on request.

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The field trips I took in Vietnam revealed a lot about the war. Everywhere the American advisers seemed hassled, powerless, and isolated from the Vietnamese, as they stuck together in their compounds. I felt much more in touch with the country than most of them because I traveled with Vietnamese, stayed in Vietnamese hotels (which averaged about fifty cents per night before inflation hit), and ate in Vietnamese restaurants. The food was delicious; I had never dreamed there were so many varieties of rice. Usually, after we arrived in a place, I would leave the Vietnamese to the interviewing and explore the area, talking to Vietnamese and American officials and going out into the countryside whenever possible. I felt the presence of an American would have a questionable effect on the interviews so I limited my participation as much as my curiosity would allow.

WE INTERVIEWED THREE CATEGORIES of people: prisoners, defectors, and refugees. Defectors were easiest to interview because security was lax at the *chieu hoi* camps. *Chieu hoi* means "open arms" in Vietnamese and is the name the Saigon government gave the defector program. The theme is that the government welcomes its errant children back to the "just cause" with open arms. Every province town has a *chieu hoi* center where the defectors stay for a period of several months after turning themselves in. Generally, when we got to a *chieu hoi* center, we would chat with the director for a while in an attempt to find out which people might be the most interesting to interview. Sometimes we would take the interviewees to cafes or back to the hotel where we would sip beer and develop better rapport. Generally those who deserted the NLF ranks did so because they could no longer stand the hardships, rather than because they became disenchanted with NLF aims. Everyone we interviewed, in fact, spoke of the incredibly difficult living conditions Front people had to deal with: about marching long distances almost every day and then having to dig in, about constantly being bombed.

Few, if any, had illusions about the Saigon government; many were frank enough to say they still thought the NLF had the best program for Vietnam.

Generally the atmosphere around the *chieu hoi* camps was that of a group of anywhere from ten to a hundred people loafing around a courtyard. Many Americans saw the *chieu hoi* programs as being "rest and relaxation programs for the V.C." No doubt many of the defectors would rejoin the NLF via the route they had taken the first time around because in rural Vietnam "all roads lead to the NLF," but most were men broken in spirit and would not. Generally the defectors, as would be expected, did give more pro-Saigon responses than did the prisoners; for example, on the question of whom villagers blamed for the air attacks, the defectors were much more likely to say the people blamed NLF units for drawing the attacks. The prisoners, on the other hand, almost unanimously said that villagers blamed the Americans and their client government in Saigon. The approach of counting the noses of who blamed whom borders on the absurd and was part of the obscurantist dialogue started by Goure, who wanted so much to calm official fears of air war backlash. Actually, if some villagers did blame NLF units for drawing fire, it was a matter quite distinguishable from expressing anger at the Americans and their Saigon puppets, because the spirit of criticism/self-criticism is deeply imbued in the NLF; its day-to-day relationship with the villagers constitutes its *raison d'être*. The point is that the NLF cadre encouraged the villagers to be openly critical of them.

A fundamental aspect of the Vietnamese Revolution is its dialogical nature, and that, most importantly, means dialogue with the people based on the principles of *kiem thao* (Vietnamese for criticism/self-criticism). If the villagers were not critical there could be no dialogue. This does not mean the NLF should be completely idealized in the eyes of Americans; they have had their share of ego-tripping cadres, too, who at times lord it over the villagers. But *kiem thao* grew to be an



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integral part of the Revolution because it was absolutely necessary. There is no doubt that there were times when guerillas were soundly criticized for drawing fire, but it was the kind of criticism reserved for "little brothers," which is how the people referred to the hamlet cadre. The words of a young NLF woman give the sense of how villagers felt about American aerial firepower:

In Bau Ban the villagers had already complained to the Ben Cat District headquarters because GVN [the Saigon "government"] had fired repeatedly on innocent villagers instead of on the forest, where the "VC" purportedly lived.

What do villagers do in case of air attack?

They run away. They hide themselves in the forest. Only the old people stay in the village.

Who do the villagers think fly the aircraft and helicopters?

Mostly Americans—especially in the attacks in which the shooting is ferocious. They thought only Americans could shoot like that—"like asses," they said.

Just as "only Americans could shoot like that," only Goure could rationalize the air war in the way he did. The glib obscurantism, the apologia delivered to civilians in support of the Air Force, all amounted to a whitewash of genocide at a time when the Air Force was straining not to become irrelevant in the context of guerilla warfare in the jungle. "The devastation caused by the B-52's has made a profound impression," Goure would write in a classified report in 1966, and in the very next sentence say, "Nevertheless the interviews indicate no widespread or deep-seated popular hatred for the GVN or the Americans as a result of air and artillery attacks." This boiled down to justification of genocide, cloaked in the quite influential mantle of RAND social science. In an article about the RAND project in *The Reporter* in December 1965, Denis Warner, without identifying RAND or Goure, quotes "the analyst" (i.e., Goure):

We ought to increase our night-time interdiction of the waterways in the Delta and maintain the B-52 attacks

on Vietcong base areas. Interference with mobility will break the Vietcong's back . . . Don't just kill. Interfere with the Vietcong.

In the body of this article Warner wrote:

. . . to ignore the opportunity (created by refugees abandoning liberated areas) would be to discard the only practicable and immediately available means of dividing the Vietcong from the population. . . .

He ends his article on a note of high praise for the RAND project, which he sees as having

revealed much more about the Vietcong than we have ever known before . . . there are guidelines for action and a whole body of information on matters that until now have always been either a matter of guesswork or woefully inadequate intelligence. We are getting to know the enemy.

The Americans were not getting to know "the enemy." In fact, with RAND's help, quite the opposite effect was being achieved. Americans were repressing what they sensed to be true and thrashing away at the rural environment with all the technological sadism they could muster, while at the same time they ignored the outright torture (not just mistreatment) of NLF prisoners.

Prisoners were tortured as a matter of course, even those who tried their best to be cooperative. The men we interviewed could not understand why torture was so widespread, for it was imprudent aside from the fact that it was inhumane. In the ranks of the NLF it was well-known that if you were captured you would be tortured. Knowing this they would be more likely to carry the struggle to the death rather than surrender. I constantly spoke of this with Goure and other American officials, both military and civilian. If I got a response it was likely to be the kind of racist interpretation that pointed to cruelty as an attribute of Asians.

Torture of NLF prisoners has a special poignance in the present political climate because of the way Nixon has manufactured a phony issue out of the plight of American POWs in North Vietnam. He has accused Hanoi re-

peatedly of withholding the names of prisoners, while throughout Vietnam I found one prison after another that had no record of the people caged up inside. Even more outrageously, he complains of mistreatment of American prisoners when throughout South Vietnam, in the nearly two dozen prisons I visited, the prisoners live an indescribably inhumane existence. When I hear Nixon talk about American POWs I think of the American who worked at the CIA interrogation center in Saigon; he told me on numerous occasions in great detail how prisoners were tortured. One prisoner, he said, was hung by his feet in a tree while a piano wire noose was slipped around his genitals. He was told to talk or the noose would be pulled tight. The CIA man said the prisoner never did talk; he grinned as he added the punch line. On another occasion this same man told me about his treatment of a student arrested in Hue for alleged activity with the NLF:

I didn't hurt him [he said]. I just told him I was going to find his mother and kill her. Next I'm going to have his mother sent down here from Hue [the woman was in jail there] and I'm going to tell her I'm going to kill her boy if he doesn't talk. Then I'll let her visit him.

THE RAND INTERVIEWS were classified until the spring of this year. This is an example of how the object of the secrecy system is to keep information away from the American public; there is no conceivable way these interviews could aid the "enemy," but they could educate the American public, and the more the public knows about the Vietnam situation, the more likely it is to oppose U.S. policy. The classification of the interviews has helped keep the Vietnamese depersonalized in American eyes.

Along with having made the interviews partially public, RAND has issued the official party line on the Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Project in the form of a report entitled *User's Guide to the RAND Interviews in Vietnam*, R-1024-ARPA. The *Guide* gives a history of the project and tells a little about the processes integral to

its purposes. Generally, however, it is RAND's bland way of saying "it never happened"; just like the Party in Orwell's 1984, the *Guide* is an exercise in the mutability of the past. The most telling fact about the *Guide* is the existence of a counterpart version which is secret. The secret version is a history of the VC M&M project written by Al Goldberg of RAND's Washington office; it is available on a "need to know" basis only. Could Goldberg's history help the "enemy?" It might give the Vietnamese a good laugh but nothing else; it is simply another example of how the public is kept in the dark. The very existence of Goldberg's history proves that the *Guide* tells much less than the entire story.

The *Guide* was written by W. Phillips Davison, RAND consultant, professor of journalism and sociology at Columbia, and member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Davison is a liberal, tweedy pipesmoker who commutes to the classroom in Morningside Heights from his country home just outside fashionable Princeton, New Jersey. Davison spent the summer of 1965 in Saigon subbing as director of the RAND project while Goure was back in Santa Monica and Washington giving his air war sales pitch. A quiet, easy-going and kindly fellow, and never one to rock the boat, Davison has delivered up a slick whitewash of the RAND project. One thing in the report is helpful, however; Davison documents the fact that the U.S., though loudly criticizing Hanoi for not providing timely lists of POW-MIA's, does not have lists of the prisoners it takes either:

"The most serious drawback (in finding knowledgeable prisoners to interview) was that no comprehensive or reliable lists of either prisoners or defectors could be found in Saigon."

It's not often that RAND is so helpful in proving Nixon to be a hypocrite but there it is—in black and white and stamped with the RAND imprimatur. But that is about as far as the report goes in getting to the real essence of things. Davison never mentions Goure but shows again that RAND's position is defensive on the matter. "If anyone

had inferred from the interview reports that the Viet Cong movement was about to crumble," writes Davison, "the error owed to a misinterpretation of the data, not to faulty data." Davison knows perfectly well what impressions were being given by Goure, but none of this is ever discussed.

Davison portrays the project as having had three phases. Goure's phase (the second) is euphemistically described as having "inquired into the Viet Cong's military organization and conduct of operations" and as having dealt with "the way the Viet Cong responded to South Vietnamese and U.S. efforts to crush them militarily." That's about as far as he goes. In discussing working conditions in Vietnam Davison complains that "... few Vietnamese or American officials in Saigon ever really understood the purpose of the project. Most of them seem to have regarded it as an intelligence-gathering undertaking rather than a long-range study of political, social, and psychological factors." The "Vietnamese or American officials" were

quite hip in this regard because intelligence gathering was precisely what the project was all about. Goure used to say around the office, "We got the best damned intelligence in the war!"

In the preface (apparently not written by Davison) to the *Guide* it is stated that any information that could identify the interviewee is excised because it could lead to reprisals. "Researchers have an ethical responsibility to ensure that no one suffers from having been a subject of research," it says on the very first page. In the light of what Goure did with the project the hypocrisy of that statement needs no discussion. Actually, books are already in print which cite RAND interviews by the name of the person interviewed. The *Guide* says, "No material other than the above described deletions (i.e., material identifying the person interviewed) has been removed from the interview reports being released." That statement is a lie; material on torture of prisoners or brutal treatment of civilians by Americans, Koreans, or Saigon troops was removed when the

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interviews were being typed up in Saigon. The policy, set by Goure, was the subject of bitter disagreement between him and me; I would never remove any material from interviews that went through my hands, nor would several others, but most complied with Goure's censorship policies.

The story by James Otis ("Seoul's Hired Guns") in the September 1972 RAMPARTS refers to a RAND study entitled "Mention of Korean Troops' Activities in RAND Interviews" and gives quotations from the interviews describing the barbarous behavior of the Korean troops in the central Vietnam provinces of Tuy Hoa and Binh Dinh. This report was put together quickly by Goure in December 1966 in response to a special request from General Westmoreland. Most if not all the quotations had been censored out of the RAND interviews, giving the report a distinct bias on the subject of war crimes. American atrocities appeared in the interviews and were likewise censored. American troops, My Lai to the contrary notwithstanding, tended to do their killing from greater distances. As a North Vietnamese lieutenant (a defector) said:

"... every time they planned to attack somewhere, they would first bomb and shell the place until it was completely demolished; only then would they dare to come."

(It is unusual for a northerner to defect. I didn't interview this man, but I saw him in the Binh Dinh province defector center. He looked as though he had been through absolute hell.)

But RAND was not all Goure, Thomson, Collbohm, Pauker, Hosmer, Zasloff, Donnell, and Kellen. The reports they wrote will end up in history's incinerator, with the exception of Kellen's. The interviews will stand, however, because with all their faults (and there are many) they are still a good representation of what the Vietnamese said about the war, the Americans, the glories of liberation, and the crimes of oppression. The interviews were brought back by the team leaders—my peers on the junior staff level who, for whatever reasons, risked their lives repeatedly over the course of months and years. Some did it because they didn't seem to fit anywhere else

and the money wasn't bad, but most of them, if not all, did it because they felt it was important to bring back the truth about this war.

One of the team leaders, John Harbut, was permanently disabled in both a leg and arm when a mortar shell exploded against a cinderblock wall, while he was huddled against the other side of it during the TET attack on Saigon. The neighborhood where he lived was occupied by NLF troops for several days. The shell which exploded the cinderblock wall, sand-blasting John, very likely came from a U.S. Air Force mortar tube on Tan Son Nhut air base. John lost a finger and suffered severe permanent nerve damage in one of his legs. This happened four and a half years ago. I saw John last spring in Chicago; he walks with a very bad limp and keeps his hand in his pocket. RAND paid for his operation and then fired him. A sentence in Davison's *Guide* says "... no interviews or team leaders were actually injured as the result of military action, although there were several terrifying near misses." [emphasis added] Is this sentence the result of Davison's shoddy research? He is a pro and probably gets at least \$200 a day. Or is it the result of RAND's lawyer's advice. John should, after all, be receiving a full pension, but he's not. I wonder whether or not Goldberg has a section on personnel in his secret study of the project; it's hard to see how he could neglect John's case, because the project director after Goure, William Jones, devoted considerable effort to it.

Perhaps RAND fired John because they are sensitive to accumulating bureaucratic fat over the years. They desperately want to stay young and lean. If the State Department is an obese senior citizen, RAND is a young jack-booted soldier who can't carry excess baggage on his mission.

RAND HAS SPENT MILLIONS of dollars on Vietnam research that has ranged from the design of weapons, to the study of Montagnard tribesmen, to a project on the organization of Vietnamese student movements. When I was in Vietnam in 1965 and 1966, a liberal, easy-going gentle-

man by the name of Ted Britton was in Saigon, occupying a huge villa, doing a study of Vietnamese students as a RAND consultant. His house became one of the principal gathering spots for Saigon students. Britton, who never talked about his work much, was a frequent visitor to the RAND villa at 176 Rue Pasteur. He was the butt of considerable criticism from RAND personnel because, as of 1968, he had never gotten around to writing up his study. Although little was said specifically, the criticism of Britton was muted by the fact that some people credited him with pacifying the Saigon student movement: "If he keeps those kids off the streets he will have earned his keep by that alone." Britton, a professor of education at Sacramento State College, has the easy-going demeanor of a Scout Master and seems capable of playing such a role. In the summer of 1966 he organized a "peace corps" type operation designed to put about ten thousand Saigon students in the countryside to work with pacification programs. He was also a close friend of General Nguyen Chanh Thi, the controversial I Corps Commander who figured prominently in the 1966 Buddhist crisis. Thi is now in exile, living in Washington, D.C. Britton is the epitome of the "Quiet American" and seems to have been something of a second-string "Ed Lansdale" figure.

In 1970, a RAND study authored by one of the original organizers of the Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Project, Stephen T. Hosmer, received an important splash of publicity concerning the "bloodbath" issue. Hosmer, who is as close to the Air Force as Goure and just as biased on the Vietnam question, speculated that 100,000 would be executed if the NLF were to come into power. The Nixon Administration, along with other opponents of self-determination in Vietnam, seized upon the Hosmer study as evidence supporting their position. Actually the "bloodbath" of most significance was the one perpetrated in the years following the end of the first Indochina war, when Colonel Lansdale provided the support needed by Diem in putting down the rebellious religious sects and instituting the campaign of repression against the ex-Viet Minh. The

RAND interviews show that Diem's bloodbath was a central factor in stoking a rebellion that grew into the second Indochina war. The bloodbath that is most presently relevant is the one that continues daily. Even Hosmer acknowledges in his report that, were the PRG to come to power via negotiations and a coalition government, the chance of a bloodbath would be greatly mitigated. His bloodbath of 100,000 was based on the assumption the PRG would take over by force, something they would prefer to avoid.

Still as contract-hungry as ever, RAND continues its research on Vietnam and other parts of the American empire. Its involvement in the current air war is no doubt extensive. By providing elaborate justification for the Air Force's role at the beginning of the major escalation in 1965, Goure helped put the Air Force generals firmly in the saddle for implementing a new kind of punitive foreign policy: nation busting for those Third World countries who want none of the "nation building" farce that serves only to harness them to corrupt military governments. The advance in air war technology has given Henry Kissinger, a man close to RAND over the years, the kind of independence from Congress, the bureaucracies, and the public that he wants in order to continue carrot-stick methods of big power diplomacy. Air war technology has made it possible to take the war out of the public eye. Reporters don't go along on air strikes and don't see the victims; they become themselves victims of official secrecy. This is how Nixon is able to continue the war the American people voted against in 1968. The more RAND improves Air Force technology, the more "efficient" and centralized the process of Presidential decision-making becomes; the soldiers are brought home to pull the triggers from the laboratory. The more complex the technological process, the more insignificant the individual feels as he or she becomes a clerk in the process of murder. Eventually the entire operation could be managed by a bank of computers at RAND while the President deals with the messy problems of authorization and legality. The body politic will have become

irrelevant. The time is quickly approaching when the Orwellian equations—War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, and Ignorance is Strength—will be universally accepted. Nixon is at the point now where he can escalate the air war behind the cloak of executive privilege (which makes Kissinger *et al.* immune to congressional subpoena) and executive order. (The whole system of classified secrets is based solely on presidential decree; it is not backed up by congressional statute).

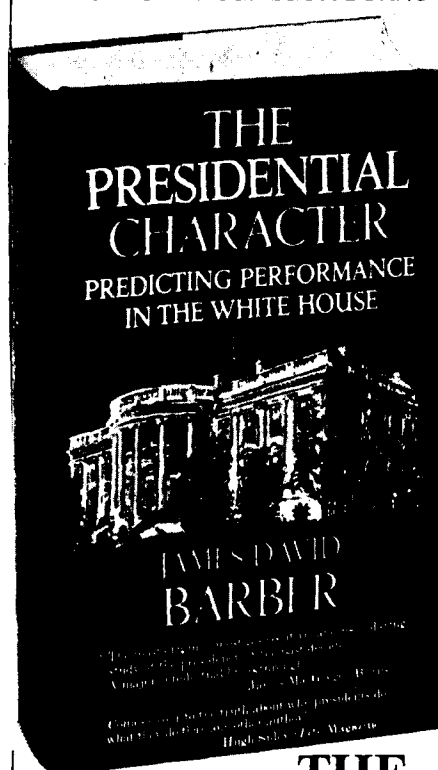
The air war, equivalent to a war by robots, can be turned on and off at will by Henry Kissinger and his boss, as been demonstrated this year in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Air war technology is the most efficient way to practice the modern strategy of tacit bargaining, the brainchild of RAND consultant Thomas Schelling (also of Harvard). Fundamental to tacit bargaining is, ironically enough, the concept of credibility which, according to the tenets, is promoted by signalling threats to other nations through concrete acts rather than words. Kissinger, an adherent of this approach, has convinced his boss of its utility, as evidenced by Nixon's statement last spring; "Watch what I do, not what I say." Thus Nixon "talks" to Hanoi with bombs.

Recently it has come to light that the Pentagon has been using weather modification as a military weapon in Vietnam and is engaging in extensive research to expand and refine that practice. The implications of that are stunning; seen in the context of tacit bargaining, the President will become a kind of god-king, parceling out floods, hurricanes, and other "acts of god" to nations recalcitrant about joining the imperial club, while sunshine and blue skies are the reward for the obedient. RAND, of course, has been involved in atmospheric environmental research for a long time. The implications for secret work in this area are obvious; the corporate power structure which commands such a powerful influence on the environment now could end up seizing control of it, especially if research in that area continues to be withheld from public discourse.

All of this serves to indicate that

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RAND, and other organizations like it, are serving to hasten the trend to political absolutism, i.e., no substantive popular participation in social planning or decision-making. "Hard choices," a pet RAND phrase, are made much easier to deal with by keeping the public in the dark, especially in crisis situations. For example, in 1966, according to Paul Dickson in his book *Think Tanks*, RAND suggested that, in a post-nuclear attack situation, the survivors would be better off without the old and feeble and that governmental policy should be to abandon them. I had not heard about this while I was at RAND. Even after the welter of numbing double-think I experienced there, I was shocked to read this. Dickson, a quite able journalist, quotes the conclusion of the RAND report as follows:

The easiest way to implement a morally repugnant but socially beneficial policy is by inaction. Under stress, the managers of post-attack society would most likely resolve their problems by failing to make any special provision for the elderly, the insane and the chronically ill."

Such examples serve to expose one of the best kept secrets of the 60's: *Dr. Strangelove* was not really a satirical film; it was a documentary. ●

RAND's WAR (From page 37)

of the interview material itself:

The intensification of military activities by the GVN and U.S. forces have had an adverse effect on VC morale and combat effectiveness. The devastation caused by the B-52s has made a profound impression. Nevertheless the interviews indicate no widespread or deep-seated popular hatred for the GVN or the Americans as a result of air and artillery attacks. The villagers seem grateful for advance warning of attacks and sometimes seize the opportunity it offers to move to GVN-controlled areas. As long as warning is received, the villagers tend to blame the presence or actions of VC troops for provoking GVN/U.S. attacks, rather than to find fault with the attackers themselves.

Further, by way of commentary on "urbanization," the mass bombings in

the South Vietnamese countryside:

Fear of attacks is a major reason why the farmers have overcome a natural reluctance to leave their lands and ancestral tombs and, no longer deterred by fear of VC reprisals, have taken refuge by the hundreds of thousands in GVN-controlled areas. . . . Generally, conditions of village life and protracted insecurity appear to have made death a commonplace and to have led the villager to a fatalistic attitude. He sees himself as "a fly caught between two fighting buffaloes." He expects to suffer from the acts of both sides and he recognizes that he cannot afford to choose sides on the basis of programs or promises for the future but that his actions must be guided first of all by considerations of survival and security, regardless of his sympathies. Military activities and fear of attacks tend to disrupt farm work and reduce the villager's interest in continuing to work his fields, since he is less able to earn a living from his labors.

As early as March 1965, when the first Goure paper appeared, there was considerable controversy at RAND on the quality of Goure's work. According to several RANDsmen, a fair number of analysts were convinced that Goure was interpreting selectively from the interviews, and that in his concrete recommendations on air involvement, he was, as one senior RANDsman put it bluntly, "pandering to McNamara's prejudices." Worse, this man added, Goure "was not careful enough for my taste to avoid the appearance of that." [emphasis his] The observation is particularly striking. Those at RAND have never liked to think of themselves as a social-scientific rubber stamp for the Pentagon, yet what worries these men even more is that, when RAND becomes a rubber stamp, the submission will be a visible one. What bothered the anti-Goure faction most was that RAND had become an undisguised pawn in the eyes of other officials and agencies connected with the government. Yet through 1965 and 1966, Goure's work satisfied the President and Trustees of RAND, and he remained at his post. Frank Collbohm visited Vietnam in May 1965; he re-

members that General Westmoreland spoke highly of Goure's work, saying it supplied helpful intelligence information for U.S. and South Vietnamese ground operations. "I thought the quality of Goure's work was okay," Collbohm said recently. "I know there were some who disagreed, but I thought it was all right."

So did many officials in the government who requested briefings on the RAND project through 1965 and 1966. Goure himself remembers that he briefed Robert McNamara, McGeorge Bundy, Walt Rostow, all the military and embassy officials in the field—that is, virtually everyone except Secretary of State Rusk and the President. Goure was a talented and thoroughly enthusiastic briefer—witty, articulate, *très charmant*, a man of dignified appearance and presence who was given to skillful, almost theatrical gestures and broad, sweeping claims. According to those who attended the briefings, both in Saigon and in Washington, he was a relentless optimist, "the Joe Alsop of RAND" as one official would later describe him, one whose message was that all of the military might was working and that additional strength would be even more effective, for the enemy was on the brink of collapse, and one more infusion of force would send him screaming to the peace table. Gone was even that trifle of circumspection which had led him to include in his written reports such perfunctory caveats on the interview material as, "The data do not provide information on the war as a whole or allow us to assess how the war is going." On paper, at least, Goure would not be found lacking in competent methodology. But few such cautionary innuendoes appear to have crept into his briefings, and it was in the briefings where Goure had his greatest impact.

The support given to the project by Secretary McNamara was of particular importance. A man who held firmly through most of 1965 to the thesis that the opponent would succumb to America's air might, McNamara was captivated by the extravagant promises, the largely irrelevant facts and figures, that Goure's work yielded, and he was interested in a way he never would have been with Zasloff's and Donnell's nonquantitative (hence, abstract and

speculative) finding that the NLF was a popular and powerful political force. Goure recalls that on one of McNamara's trips to Vietnam early in 1965, the Secretary of Defense requested a paper from the RAND group. The request came at 10 p.m. one night, and McNamara wanted the paper delivered by 7 the following morning, so Goure and others stayed up all night working feverishly on it. Thereafter, McNamara was "an enthusiastic supporter of the project," as Goure would later put it. The Secretary was treated to several Goure briefings through 1965 and 1966. He was so impressed with the work that in June 1966, as Goure tells the story, he asked Goure, Could you expand your sample of interviewees if you had more financial support. Of course, Goure replied. And so McNamara intervened with the Advanced Projects Research Agency, which by then had taken over the funding of the project, and instructed that the amount of money available to the Goure team be more than doubled.

Like that of the military, McNamara's support for the project took a toll; RAND paid the cost in sacrificing professional integrity. Goure says today that, when he undertook the project, he thought in terms of a one-year interval between the submission of reports--one year in which he and others could sit back and collect their thoughts, and then circulate drafts of a final study among their RAND colleagues to ensure that responsible intellectual standards would be met. But McNamara demanded quarterly evaluations of the project and, to the chagrin of many RANDsmen, President Collbohm and the trustees allowed Goure to comply. With a paper being ground out once every ninety days, to accompany the quarterly briefing tour from Saigon to Honolulu to Santa Monica and on to Washington, the work of the project was to be exempted from RAND's strict quality control procedures. Goure's work would be circulated under RAND's official imprimatur, but it would be immune from the internal critical commentary which typically preceded the circulation of any RAND report outside Santa Monica. A number of RANDsmen confessed shock at the acquiescence to this breach of normal practice by Frank

Collbohm, a man who had been admired even by his intellectual opponents in RAND for having behaved with considerable care and circumspection in the face of official, and particularly Air Force, demands. Today, Collbohm defends his decision by saying that the procedure requested by McNamara was appropriate to wartime, and that RAND had acquiesced in a similar way at the time of the Korean war. Whatever the case may be, the RAND project had metamorphosed from a careful, thorough study of NLF strength and influence into a quarterly compendium of somewhat refined military intelligence reports.

As for what concrete influence Goure's work had on policymaking through 1965 and 1966, we may only speculate. Goure's findings, of course, were read and cited widely by those who agreed with them--so much so that, at one point, Carl Rowan, a former head of the United States Information Service, wrote in a syndicated column of August 16, 1966, that the RAND study "lies at the heart of President Johnson's strategy." Wherever it lay, it is unlikely that the project actually caused certain decisions to be made; that, at least, is the overwhelming consensus of middle-level officials from that period who were questioned by this writer. But what it did do was fuel the prejudices of high government officials by invoking the guise or cover of social science, and in so doing, it reinforced and legitimized the policy inside the bureaucracy and helped make it virtually impossible to overturn. There is more than a casual connection between Goure's work and the Ikle memorandum: both are clear-cut instances of social science groveling before established power, and one elucidates a policy that the other has helped institutionalize. They are both part of the same story of active complicity in a bad policy, of self-styled independent authorities who willingly succumb to the conventional wisdom of ignorance simply to be able to stay on the inside. And yet perhaps the most frightening fact is that the RANDsmen were almost certainly correct in judging that they would have to alter their private judgments on many matters in order to remain "effective" insiders. At the core

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of this story remains the fact that our heads of government have always been intolerant of any advice which violates *their most closely-held prejudices*, and that there is no single group or force in the country today which is influential enough or powerful enough to alter that reality.

Our story has a predictable ending. By early 1967, Goure's unbridled optimism had become unfashionable inside the government. McNamara and others in the Pentagon had all but become convinced that no amount of bombing could force the opponent to capitulate. This development happened to coincide with the retirement of RAND's President, Frank Collbohm, a strong supporter of Goure. Collbohm's successor was none other than Henry Rowen, the man who had first guaranteed Defense Department support of the project. By now, however, Rowen was unconvinced by its findings, and, as RAND's incoming President, was downright embarrassed at the low-level quality of the work. Goure was removed from the project and, later, from RAND. He now teaches history at the University of Miami. The new head of the project was a man who held to Rowen's view that the war was now a mistake, but that it must be ended "honorably"—a line of reasoning that characterized most of the project's work until its demise in 1969 (and which was the basis of the Ikle memorandum cited earlier). Yet, despite the fact that the interviews are now public, that the Zasloff-Donnell-Pauker paper, as well as almost all of those written after 1967, are now de-classified, the Goure material, which is the key to the interviews' greatest impact, remains secret. By keeping the material under wraps, RAND is most likely trying, as Anthony Russo points out, to re-write history. But in doing so, RAND still protects its own. ●

HIDING THE WAR (From page 44)

On April 11, just nine days after the fighting had flared up again all over South Vietnam, the Pentagon made a very important announcement that was almost completely ignored in the press. Henceforth, the U.S. command in Saigon would no longer be obliged to announce on a daily basis even that

bombing raids had occurred over North Vietnam. Instead the press would receive "periodic reports," the form and content and frequency of which would be left to the discretion of the American commander.

As things have turned out since then, the people in Saigon tend to say something about the bombing of North Vietnam every day, but what they say is roughly analogous to those two revealing sentences that are routinely released (and, what is worse, reported in the press) about Laos and Cambodia. For example, they will tell where some of the bombs were dropped; what — allegedly — was attacked; what the returning pilots said (to the military's PR men) about the "success" of the raids; and from what point the raids originated. Occasionally, but by no means frequently, a general approximation of the tonnage associated with a specific raid will also be released.

All of this "information" is dispensed in short sentences in the daily MACV press release. This is why daily accounts of the bombing (the stuff that reaches most people in this country regularly) are never more than a few paragraphs long. Shortly after he returned to this country from his two-week visit to North Vietnam this summer, former Attorney General Ramsey Clark said that Haiphong, after one raid, could pass for any of the German cities he had seen after World War II. Yet the day American planes did the damage which he inspected, most of the American people read about it in four paragraphs of dry news copy that ran in the general news summary from Saigon after an account of another day in the struggle for Quang Tri City.

It was no accident of either journalistic or governmental behavior. It happens every day.

Where more specific issues and problems connected with the bombing are concerned, such as the attacks on the Red River Delta dikes and on other non-military facilities, the situation is a bit more complex, but the result—almost no hard information and tons of bullshit—is the same.

The information-suppressing technique used by the government here is

a bit more subtle, but just as effective as the tonnage ritual. It is based on the accurate assumption that almost all of the American press will downplay what the North Vietnamese and other eyewitnesses say for the most part, will not follow up specific charges of attacks on civilian targets in a way that forces the Pentagon to respond, and will faithfully regurgitate canned quotes day after day, scarcely bothering to check whether one day's statement differs at all from some previous day's.

Within weeks, charges of bomb damage to undefended villages, hospitals, schools, and dikes began filling the air, whereupon it was decided to soften the line just a touch. During a pre-arranged question-and-answer session at John Connally's Texas ranch, Nixon was asked about the dikes. He raised a rhetorical distinction between civilian and military targets, but he would only say that he didn't think a sustained period of strategic bombing was "necessary."

Then came the massive escalation of May and June, and by the end of that month, detailed eyewitness accounts were beginning to filter through to the West from unimpeachably professional people. Nixon was asked about these accounts at a nationally televised news conference; well aware that this form provides newsmen no chance to follow up an evasive answer with another direct question, he lied. He claimed with dexterous vagueness that the reports were "inaccurate," and then delivered the ancient line about how U.S. pilots are only supposed to bomb military targets.

The Pentagon, meanwhile, was dodging the issue by saying that "dikes and dams have not been targeted," whenever anyone asked whether they had been *hit*. Every so often an editorial writer for, say, the *New York Times*, would allude to the distinction, but the news most people in the country read and heard faithfully spewed forth the ever-available quote.

In July, the party line shifted again, this time to a grudging admission that a bomb or two may have fallen on a dike or two, but only where the facility in question (unnamed of course) was in very close proximity to a military

target (also unnamed). What's more, the government became fond of claiming that all the damage had been slight, and that any danger of flooding in the late summer, after the rainy season, stemmed solely from the failure by the North Vietnamese to repair the dikes damaged during the massive floods of the previous year.

At the end of July, the line changed again. This time, the Administration, with Nixon himself leading the way at a news conference, went on the offensive, resurrecting such famous terms of the past as Communist propaganda, dupe, and the like. It was all topped off by the solemn release at the State Department of a brief report from the "intelligence community," 95 percent of which could have been written by anyone with access to an atlas and a Southeast Asian history book. The press faithfully reported the important part—an assertion that U.S. reconnaissance planes had taken pictures showing only 12 dike installations hit by bombs; in each case the damage was said to be minor and easily repairable.

Needless to say, no pictures accompanied the report, and a simple reading of it showed that it only covered the results of two days of picture-taking, of unknown scope, in mid-July. However, the Administration's PR men knew that the tidbit about the 12 dikes would dominate the press accounts, and they were right. The gambit worked, and gradually the dikes were forgotten.

Then Ramsey Clark went to North Vietnam, and the Nixon air war propagandists geared up to their biggest coup of all. The carefully orchestrated campaign of denunciation, which came from every pro-war quarter imaginable, began with his arrival in Hanoi, and continued without interruption until the morning he testified before Sen. Edward Kennedy's refugee subcommittee, whereupon it stopped with remarkable but only casually noticed abruptness.

The sole sign of an Administration presence as Clark testified was docile Sen. Hiram Fong of Hawaii. The only Republican on Kennedy's subcommittee to show up, he carried with him a few pictures, provided by the Pentagon, which showed frightening mili-

tary items, like oil drums and small anti-aircraft weapons, located near dikes. Kennedy had been trying for weeks to get pictures from the Pentagon that might show after-action damage to non-military facilities. He did not appreciate Sen. Fong's snapshots.

Kennedy had hoped that Clark's appearance might enable him, for the first time, to hold hearings—in the presence of Administration witnesses—on the impact of the air war on the civilians of North Vietnam.

He should have known better. The libelous campaign waged against Clark was designed solely to discredit the former Attorney General in advance of his return to this country. The Nixon people never had the slightest intention of making a specific reply, much less of submitting to questions before a Congressional subcommittee.

The same thing has happened with regard to the bombing of the North in general. Every day Radio Hanoi offers dates and places where atrocities are said to have occurred. Within hours of the transmissions, transcripts are available to both newsmen and government officials through the State Department, but not once has the Administration ever replied to a specific charge, and not once to my knowledge has a newsman ever forced it to provide even a prim "no comment."

Nothing is ever pinned down. Each day's war news is quickly consumed by the next day's, and so on. Hardly anyone ever looks back to add it up. When someone does, like Fred Branfman's Project Air War or the study group from Cornell, their work is largely ignored except among the cognoscenti. To the extent it gets more widely reported, it is always a one-shot deal, quickly forgotten by whatever portion of the mass audience it reaches fleetingly, and always ignored by the Administration.

Take, for example, the matter of North Vietnam's dikes. When full-scale bombing resumed in the second week of April, Nixon sought to convey to Hanoi the toughest message he could dream up. As he maintained public silence during this period, it fell to the Pentagon's Melvin Laird and the State Department's William P. Rogers to get the word across. Their

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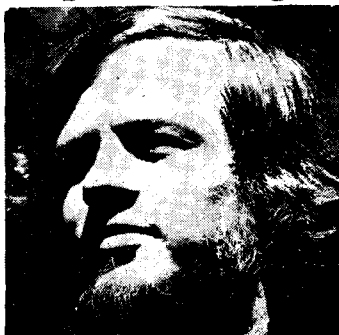
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message: The United States will only rule out two courses of military action as long as the other side keeps fighting — the use of nuclear weapons and the reintroduction of ground combat troops. In short, everything else was possible.

From time to time complaints have been raised about all the secrecy and the evasiveness. On the bomb tonnage matter, complaints were made last year by the major wire services and the correspondents based in Saigon, but their pro forma gripes were returned with pro forma replies and that was that.

At my own paper, the tonnage ritual produces a front page piece once a month containing the number, the latest trends, and an explanation of the secrecy system. A day or two later, an editorial will bemoan the continuing slaughter and denounce the lack of regular and adequate statistical information, but after 11 months of this, nothing has happened.

Meanwhile, over at the Nixon Administration, the whole thing is treated pretty much as a joke. How else can one explain the comment of White House flak Herbert Klein to my editor, Thomas Winship, "explaining" why the government could disgorge weekly body counts but not weekly, broken-down, tonnage totals: "Munitions statistics, on the other hand, satisfy an essential but less urgent logistics management requirement."

And then there was the letter from Jerry Friedheim to Rep. Robert Leggett: "U.S. commanders feel that such information about bomb tonnage and sorties would fill gaps in the enemy's intelligence collection efforts and confirm some data which he may already have obtained but which remains still unverifiable. These confirmations could be used by the enemy to increase the danger to our airmen because such data would provide more refined planning data for enemy defense commanders." In other words, if the North Vietnamese should find out how many bombs were actually being dropped on their country, they might somehow use the information to shoot down more U.S. planes.

There is no point in pleading with men such as these. The most a con-

scientious reporter can do is quote them regularly, and make sure their refusals to cooperate are placed on the record.

Clearly, American journalists are not going to get the truth about the air war from official sources, and so they must look for it somewhere else. They could find it in North Vietnam, if the North Vietnamese could arrange for regular inspection teams or even the permanent stationing of U.S. news teams in their country. Correspondents, after all, develop expertise and the ability to generate copy mainly by staying put for a spell.

The press *can* find a way to gather information which the MACV never mentions. If it does, and if the information starts to flow on a regular, day-in-day-out basis, the great mass of Americans will draw the appropriate conclusions. Far-fetched? Some of my colleagues in the media and acquaintances in the anti-war movement chuckle with knowing cynicism at the importance of information in ending the war. But I wonder. If none of this really matters, why does the Administration force us — by careful prearrangement — to play the tonnage ritual every month? ●

VIET BETRAYAL (From page 8)

tary resources of the U.S. and thereby lessening the damage inflicted on Vietnam, but also in maximizing the image of danger associated with Nixon's escalation, thereby increasing its political costs. This would have had immense implications domestically (as the invasion of Cambodia showed), even before the 1972 campaign got under way. At the very least it would have stimulated a constant challenge to the viability of the Nixon Administration and imposed serious constraints on its ability to prosecute the war.

Unfortunately, as the RAND report notes, the prospect of the Soviet Union and/or China stepping up their support was, even in 1969, fairly remote:

"However, Hanoi's direct leverage on Moscow and Peking is of course very small, and as long as North Vietnam is reasonably 'secure', not likely to produce new exertions on their part."

(The point about North Vietnam's security alludes to a situation that is

not well understood by the left, which tends to measure the revolutionary solidarity of the Soviet Union and China in terms of supply levels of aid to North Vietnam. From a narrow security point of view, the question of the stability of North Vietnam is qualitatively different from the question of promoting the success, or even the survival, of a revolutionary movement that has not achieved state power. The stability of a bloc state, and particularly a border state, is an issue of national security which any general staff, revolutionary or otherwise, is bound to recognize. So the Soviet Union and China are unlikely to abandon North Vietnam altogether in the face of the American threat. But by the same token, the supplies they send to North Vietnam are not adequate measures of their support for the revolutionary struggle in the South. Their aid to that struggle is largely an effect of North Vietnam's own support for the PRG, and for the goal of a unified, independent Vietnam.)

We can appreciate from the RAND document, then, the effect that Nixon's reception in Peking and Moscow had on the options available to the Vietnamese to counter American escalation. These visits in fact gave Nixon enormous flexibility in carrying out his war plan while campaigning for re-election. It is difficult to believe that he could have achieved as much without them. Once détente became the posture in Moscow and Peking, the options of creating crises and stepping up significant support were obviously precluded. It is not that the Chinese, for example, necessarily concluded agreements with Nixon not to create diversionary crises or respond to escalations in a dramatic and politically effective fashion. It is, rather, that if that were their intention, there would have been no point in inviting Nixon to Peking in the first place. Obviously the trade and diplomatic channels that were opened on that visit would have been closed rather precipitously by any Chinese counter-offensive or stepped-up involvement in the conflict. In short, it is impossible to pursue coexistence and confrontation at the same time. They have to be pursued in sequence if they are not going to involve sacrificing revolutionary interests—like those of the

Vietnamese. The betrayal of the South Vietnamese liberation struggle by Moscow and Peking is a consequence of their acceptance of a reconciliation with the U.S. without making a prior condition of that reconciliation a settlement of the war on terms acceptable to the PRG; in particular, a coalition government without the Thieu regime.

Many of these points were made in the August RAMPARTS and were subsequently criticized on the rather shaky grounds that the Vietnamese themselves hadn't raised them. As we pointed out then, the Vietnamese are constrained from public expression of their feelings by the fact that the Soviet Union and China are still providing them with material aid. We felt, however, that it was the duty of the left in this country to exert a moral and political pressure on Moscow and Peking to try to limit their maneuvers which were helping Nixon achieve his goals.

Shortly after the appearance of our article, an editorial appeared in *Nhan Dan*, the organ of the Peoples Army of North Vietnam, which clarified the Vietnamese view on these matters. As few Americans will get the chance to read the editorial—"Victory of the Revolutionary Trend"—we will quote the relevant passages:

"As the political representative of American military-industrial corporations, the clique of the biggest reactionaries and war-maniacs headed by Nixon is carrying out a new global strategy called the 'Nixon doctrine.' In the context of this strategy, an equilibrium of forces among the big powers and the division of the main components of the socialist system [a clear reference to the Soviet Union and China] is conceived as a shield to give U.S. imperialism complete freedom of action in checking, by means of violence, the national liberation movement, first of all hurling back the patriotic struggle of the nations on the Indochinese peninsula."

In the August RAMPARTS, we suggested that the Vietnamese offensive was a strategy to defeat the calculations of Nixon and Kissinger, by undermining militarily the settlement that they were preparing for the conference table. The *Nhan Dan* editorial tends to confirm this analysis:

"The offensive and uprising that has been going on without interruption

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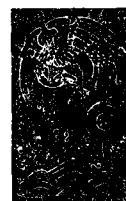
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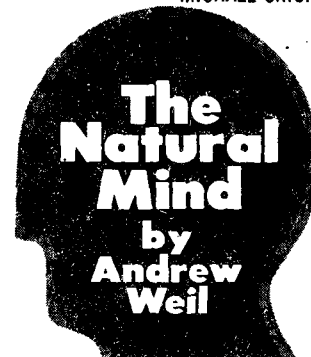
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in South Vietnam since March 30 is breaking the backbone and shattering by big chunks the 'Vietnamization' strategy. The aggressors have had to hurriedly re-Americanize the war by throwing in a huge American air-naval force, going far beyond the limits the 'Nixon doctrine' has set to the war."

The editorial makes a distinction between "genuine reconciliation among countries based on respect for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of all nations big or small" and Nixon's coexistence diplomacy:

"However, for the U.S. imperialists, reconciliation is but a Machiavellian policy to materialize designs of aggression, enslavements, subversion and peaceful evolution by new methods. In other words, to carry out the 'Nixon doctrine' U.S. imperialists have

applied the policy of reconciliation toward a number of big powers in the hope of having a free hand to consolidate their forces, oppose the world revolutionary movement, suppress the revolution at home, bully the small countries, break the national liberation movement while not relinquishing its plan to prepare a new world war."

The editorial also distinguishes between principled coexistence and unprincipled coexistence in a period where genuine reconciliation between countries may not be possible, and confrontation may not be tactically advisable:

"A policy of principled reconciliation with the imperialist powers must aim at consolidating and strengthening the revolutionary forces, isolating and differentiating the enemy of the class, directing the spearhead of the revolu-

tion at opposing the schemes of the bellicose forces of the imperialist ring-leaders."

A policy of principled coexistence is therefore possible in some situations, if its aim is to accelerate the offensive of the revolutionary forces.

"But, if out of the narrow interests of one's nation, one tries to help the most reactionary forces avert the dangerous blows just like throwing a life-buoy to a drowning pirate, that is a cruel reconciliation beneficial to the enemy and not beneficial to the revolution."

It is clearly the responsibility of the international left to speak out in the strongest terms against the cruel reconciliations between Moscow/Peking and the enemy in Washington, and to expose a policy that betrays the Vietnamese people and their revolution. ●

NIXON CRISIS (From page 12)

ined itself to a few opaque hints ("the contradictions of imperialism," "the chieftains of finance capital") as to the structure, content, size, vulnerability, etc., of these differences. Following is my speculation on this:*

1. The North-South contradiction is primary and constant in white American history. It comes out right away, it persists through all other conflicts, it is always visible, it is usually conspicuous, it enters and helps organize everyone's experience, it is possibly the result of some backbrain disturbance, psychic or somatic, tribal, racial, species, or animal, but whatever its totality, it has a *presence* of uncommonly intense aura in today's stream of events.

2. The roots of this conflict, explained by everyone and no one, seem clear and mysterious at the same time. We have to gamble if we want to talk about it. I can't see how My-Lai is not a version of Wounded Knee. Has there been a single long stretch in our history in which the Vietnam war was not coming or going? The founding genocidal saga is ineradicable, irreversible, and irrepressible. Red genocide and black slavery are the parallel sub-



themes of the white conquest of America. We have no right to be startled at the violence of the current genocide-minded assault on Vietnam; it is the basic U.S. technique. Knowing this imparts a twist to the idea of the national experience and the experience of the national idea.

3. Present as soon as there is a *white America* in the egg, the North-South split always changes and never disappears. A pro-imperialist Southern elite dominated Colonial affairs, tried to hold back the mainly Northern movement toward independence, joined it at last in order to betray it, took power violently in the Constitutional Coup of '89, and ran the country from then on according to the interests of the slaveocracy and against the interests of a nevertheless rising North, until the middle of the next century, when Yankee industrialism finally took command.

4. In the long aftermath of the Civil War (this is still it), the adverse forces rematerialized along the present Northeast-Southwest axis. The rise of the Yankee dynasties through the huge modern corporations is well known. The defeated Rebel reappears in the West, soon emerges as John Wayne, throws himself as such into the tasks of insular expansion, and learns that America's manifest destiny is to continue the triumph of Western civilization, fulfilling the mission of the Renaissance, of Marco Polo and Columbus.

5. The current institutional seat of Yankee class power is the multinational corporation with its proliferating regulatory international bureaucracy.

6. Cowboy power boomed in the antifascist alliance of World War II,

* I see the inadequacy of apologizing only once, and in a hand-waving kind of way, for what will strike a lot of people as a sophomoric indulgence of ill-informed historic fantasies. But everyone has to swallow their doubts sometime. In the end I see things in the following way not because I can prove anything, but because this is the way things keep seeming to me, proof or no proof.

then grew monumental on Cold War business. Its current economic base consists of the "independent" oilers of the Southwest (non-Rockefeller, non-Arabian), cattle, grains, the agribusiness generally, and the military-industrial complex.

7. The Yankee sees Vietnam across the Atlantic in Europe, whose industrial democracies—plus Japan—constitute his central galaxy. Integration of the world economy, particularly of the industrial countries, particularly as the Yankee can contrive to dominate the new relationship, is the main current motive. The Yankee has long dominated Latin America without native, domestic or foreign rival (although today things may be changing); but the primary arena of Yankee operations is the North Atlantic community. Expansion on through the Pacific to the Orient is desirable on principle, and the Yankee is traditionally at the center of U.S. attempts to open China and Japan. In Vietnam, the Yankee would surely have been happy to win. But still the Atlantic system always comes first over the problematical Pacific system, if ever there is a conflict. Hence, the source of apprehension over the Vietnam war.

8. The Cowboy sees Vietnam across the Pacific in Asia, whose mysteries and teeming millions are important to his notions of the world, often as the basis of a keen sense of present menace. The Cowboy bourgeoisie is much smaller than the Yankee, is without a comparable foreign empire of commerce, is fiercely hostile to Yankee and European values, (there is an old-rich/new-rich component), and draws its social ego from its self-mystifying Wild West mythology, producing its own images of man apart from the European culture stream. John Wayne again, who refused to participate in the Freudianizing of the Cowboy during the fifties, and thus saved that whole kingdom of meanings from the methods of Yankee skepticism.

9. Like the Rockefellers who epitomize them, Yankees are as diverse politically as the Cowboys. Some main Yankee names: the Ford Foundation, the Bilderberg Group, Lindsay, Javits, Kennedy, Lodge, the Securities Exchange Commission, John Gardner and Common Cause, the International Monetary Fund. Some main Cowboy

names: Nixon, Connally, Reagan, Eastland, Westmoreland, Murchison, Picos Ranch, CINCPAC, Honolulu, Lyndon Johnson, Scoop Jackson, and Poseidon.

10. The left Yankee apostrophizes rationality and progress; the right Cowboy, lawfulness and social order. Cowboy power manifests its spirit in the movement of authoritarian consciousness which parallels the career of Consciousness IV in the sixties and today.

11. We can interpret JFK as a victim of Cowboy militarism, of a force

which he intuitively opposed but understood too late, maybe never. The irony of his career is pure, clear and classical: More adventurer than zealot, he seeks the presidency because, as he said, it's where the action is; yet what does he find if not, finally, that the office is powerless? By his last summer he was at war with the right wing, the Cowboy wing, of the governing group. Johnson, Rusk, Bundy were reduced. McNamara was hammer and tongs with the Joint Chiefs to make them accept civilian discipline. Bobby was frantically trying to create a



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parallel FBI, a parallel CIA, a parallel State Department—all in hopes of finding out what was happening and acquire control over events.

12. Around the first of November 1963, Diem was assassinated. Events took a marked turn towards a political settlement of the war. Three weeks later, Dallas brought an end to the turnabout and restored direct Cowboy authority over the executive branch. The Pentagon shortly began implementing its preferred war plan under the cover of "peacenik" Johnson's "liberalism." And just as the left was prophesying at each step, the war grew and grew. Then came the crisis of 1968.

13. For present purposes, we need only note the Tet offensive of February, which blew out Johnson's military illusions, and the gold-outflow crisis of March, which blew out his financial illusions. When the meanings of these two blowouts merged, which was quickly, some unknown-to-me, forever-mysterious mechanism of Yankee decision-making appears to have been activated. The next thing you knew, the superheavy mainline Yankee gun-slingers, Clark Clifford, Averill Harriman, and Cyrus Vance, were conferring with Johnson. Who knows what they told him? By April the bombing of the DRV was stopped (never to happen again, some dared to hope), negotiations were at last commencing, McNamara was on his way to manage the monetary crisis, Johnson had abdicated, Clifford was about to assume de facto command of the government from the Defense Department, reasserting the principles of the Yankee line, and Cowboy forces seemed scattered. Bobby's exquisitely orchestrated presidential campaign soon became unbeatable except by the means fate discovered. Upon his June assassination in Los Angeles, the elements of his New Deal-style coalition parted and control over war policy soon reverted to the Cowboy right.

[THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF THE NIXON CRISIS]

In brief: An American multinational Yankee bourgeoisie has lost control of the state policy apparatus to a domestic or national Cowboy bourgeoisie;

and the latter has pursued stubbornly a war, which is necessary mainly in its own eyes, to the point at which a North-South conflict again threatens to spill over the banks of the electoral system. The conflict is deep because the differences are deep. The Yankee can review today nearly a decade of straight Cowboy administration. He sees in part:

—The rise of China in spite of all the costs of the Pacific Cold War campaigns.

—The inability of the U.S. military to produce a stable base in Southeast Asia.

—The decay of the alliance with Japan.

—The emergence in more than embryo of a fateful Japan-China alliance.

—The slackening of spirit of European-American relations; the deepening of the movement of European nationalism—America still strong but the prestige and role of the USSR over-all on the rise.

—Domestically, the exhaustion of known remedies. Whatever is happening to the cities is out of control. There are no believable plans afoot. Spirit is on the defensive. The people are unhappy.

McGovern is of course a plains democrat, not a Yankee (his relationship to Yankee power somewhat resembles Lincoln's); but the new-style populism that made his candidacy real cannot influence policy directly except through a coalition. Hence, the logic of "Yankee populism," full of contradictions and dangers but a logic nonetheless: the logic of *realignment*.

Realignment: the lib-to-lib, con-to-con polarization of a party system which normally pits a lib-con coalition against a con-lib one. The Republican Party "realigned" in 1964, the Democratic Party this year; the Republican liberals like Rocky, Javits, and Brooke, are as out of pocket with Nixon as the conservative Democrats with McGovern. The campaign role in which Nixon has cast arch-Cowboy Connally further makes clear what is happening.

After all this, however, I'm still much more certain that realignment is the major and long-term force acting at this moment. If McGovern wins, the military could bolt; they seem to have threatened this before—to have done it before—for less. If he does not, and

militarism decides to see Nixon's re-election as a mandate, new energies will surely form in more urgent opposition. It may help in thinking the situation through, however, to know that in some very real sense the McGovern campaign is much less the pre-emption or co-optation than the continuation of the movement launched ten years ago with the publication of a few thousand mimeographed copies of *The Port Huron Statement*, SDS's founding manifesto. Consider the following as a strategy, then think of the pattern of development in the ten years since it was written:

"A crucial feature of the political apparatus in America is that greater differences are harbored within each party than . . . between them. Instead of two parties presenting distinctive and significant differences of approach, what dominates the system is a natural interlocking of Democrats from Southern states with the more conservative elements of the Republican Party . . . What emerges from the party contradiction and insulation of privately-held power is organized political stalemate . . . Congress becomes less and less central to national decision-making especially in the area of foreign policy . . . No one is demanding structural changes such as the shunting of Southern Democrats out of the Democratic Party . . ."

"[Meanwhile], discontented super-patriotic groups . . . emerge through political channels and explain their ultra-conservatism as the best means of Victory over Communism. They have become a political influential force within the Republican Party, at a national level through Sen. Goldwater . . . But ironically, it is somewhat to the interests of the United States that such a movement should be a public constituency pointed toward realignment of the political parties, demanding a conservative Republican Party in the South and an exclusion of the 'leftist' elements of the national GOP."

This seems to be the pass things have come to. Currently, forward action is preeminently dependent on McGovern's power to move the energies of realignment with the Kennedy House of the Yankee, Atlanticist bourgeoisie. ●

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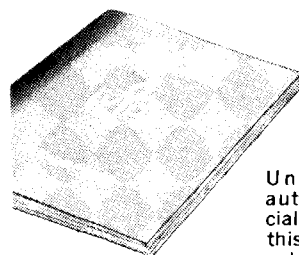
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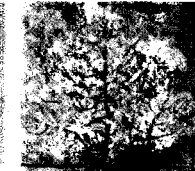
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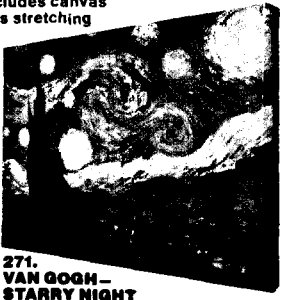
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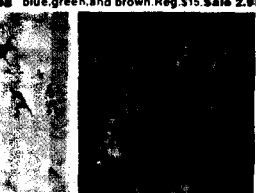
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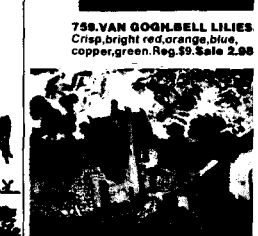
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