



The Politics of Peace

by Sam Brown

When I visited the North Vietnamese and NLF representatives in Paris last February, they made it clear that they had never counted on the American left to end the war. Madame Nguyen Thi Binh, the foreign minister of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (of the NLF), remarked that she found student radicals very sectarian and reluctant to touch political power. She continued that the confused assortment of political objectives on the left—from legalizing marijuana to overthrowing the government to providing free abortions—dilutes the political impact of the peace movement. The result, she suggested, is that the Vietnamese people and American soldiers carry the burden of America's social problems. Insofar as unrelated issues are tied to the peace movement, weakening it, Vietnamese people and American soldiers die every day because

the peace movement has exported the costs of America's social problems to Asia.

I found these Vietnamese revolutionaries far more thoughtful than most young American revolutionaries. Their private conversation was radically different from their strident, ideological press releases, and they seemed to bear little malice toward the American people. They didn't express hatred for Middle America, or even for the soldiers in Vietnam. The negotiators seemed to be tough-minded realists, who expect a long war and don't believe that America is anywhere near collapse. In short, these communist leaders are very connected to reality, where political self-delusion can cost people their lives.

One such delusion within the American peace movement has been the notion that we can retain a private dimension of political morality for ourselves. We define the significance of peace rallies in such a way that we cannot lose our purity. So if Jerry Rubin or the Black Panthers offend people from a

Sam Brown left Harvard Divinity School to organize Students-for-McCarthy and was coordinator of the Vietnam Moratorium. He has just returned from a trip to Vietnam and is working on a book.

peace platform, we conclude that Jerry Rubin's style is his own business and the Black Panther platform is logically separable from the war—therefore the offended people should pay attention to the anti-war political message independently of its context. We cannot be responsible for their confusion or stupidity.

Thus doves reason that they have the best of situations: if the war ends, they can take credit for political effectiveness; if it continues, they have personally separated themselves from the war policy. The problem, as Madame Binh pointed out, is that there is no private realm for people dealing with the politics of war. The significance of our acts in the peace movement is politically determined, not privately defined. Every time a 16-year-old high school student steps off the curb for a demonstration, there is a political effect. The war may be nearer or further from its end, according to the political impact of his action. This places an awesome responsibility on those who

lead others into action.

The responsibility will be increasingly important as it becomes clearer that President Nixon is committed to some kind of non-defeat in Indochina which he calls "winning the peace." There is no evidence in his history that he could withdraw all troops from Vietnam and stop all bombing if doing so would be described as a defeat. This means that building peace politics is not superfluous. American, Cambodian, and Vietnamese bodies are still being blown apart every day, and only a peace movement which reaches Richard Nixon's constituency can stop it. Doves must find lessons in the past five years of anti-war activity to avoid both the errors of previous strategies and the fiction that the war will dissolve of its own accord. Neither Vietnamization nor a naive peace movement can end the war.

Since November, 1969, the President and Vice President have used the apolitical purism of many committed peace people to split the non-moral opposition

“The President is committed to a non-defeat in Indochina which he calls winning the peace.”

to the war away from the anti-war activists. They realize that most American voters make political decisions largely on issues of tone and style rather than on the basis of rigorous foreign policy analysis. The right wing of potential peace supporters—those opposed to the war for a variety of non-moral reasons, ranging from its economic cost to the futility of seeking a conventional military victory—tend to cave in to Presidential authority, especially when the tone of his message is more congenial and positive than that of the doves who hold that we cannot grind an honorable peace out of a dishonorable war. The potential peace voters respond favorably to the calm, authoritative demeanor of the President behind the mahogany desk during a television broadcast, and they like neat, clean, thoroughly American behavior. They don't like long hair, campus protest, or, in short, anything which irritates the nerve endings of middle-class values. They may dislike the war, but they dislike radicals far more. Moreover, they inherit this country's anti-intellectual legacy, so that if the President calls for “team spirit” and the peace movement calls for “communal solidarity,” they go with the President. For them, “communal solidarity” smacks of the red specter and academic snobbery.

The Middle Americans who favor an early end to the war hold the political balance between continued Nixonian Vietnamization or worse, and an early end to the war. A substantial majority of them would vote for “withdrawal from Asia as rapidly as possible commensurate with the safety of the troops” if the arguments pro and con were presented in

equivalent styles. But the President can commune and communicate with the non-ideologues who want to end the war, and his message is not one of rapid withdrawal but of “winning the peace” and avoiding humiliation. And except for the 1968 campaigns and a brief moment last October 15, the peace movement has *not* been able to talk with, or feel with, its potential allies. The apparent result is that the President has disarmed his domestic critics while the peace constituency has grown larger than ever. I think he will lose on his peace-with-victory tightrope in the long-run; but for now, even after Cambodia; the combination of support for this President and a peace majority is another paradox in the string of Catch-22 insanities which have characterized the war—*as by the Truman-Lincoln* prepared by a liberal President who spoke of ending the Cold War, begun by a President elected on a peace platform, waged by executive order to export democratic self-determination to half of another country, escalated in the interest of protecting the troops, and continued on the grounds that it is the shortest road to peace.

Those of us in the peace movement who have worked for five years on campuses, in campaigns, and in community activities like the Moratorium bear a large share of the responsibility for our alienation from the potential doves in Middle America. The fact that they support the President in a crunch follows partly from historical accident, partly from errors in political judgment by the morally committed, and partly from a lack of courage among the politically astute.

Insofar as the split within the peace movement stems from the student base of most anti-war activity, historical accident is largely to blame. I do not

“Bodies are still being blown apart, and only a movement which reaches Nixon’s constituency can stop it.”

think students would have taken themselves seriously as a political force had the war not begun during the civil rights movement. In the early Sixties, young people learned that voting and precinct meetings were not the only effective forms of political activity, that extra-legal demonstrations worked in the face of a moral horror, and that American leaders often displayed both cowardice and hypocrisy in race relations. The civil rights movement, with all its implications about American politics, was almost a necessary condition for anti-war activism on the campuses.

It was also important that the war was begun by a Democratic President, for Lyndon Johnson’s presence in the White House silenced many of those who are now doves against a Republican President. Hubert Humphrey, Arthur Goldberg, Edmund Muskie, Larry O’Brien, Adlai Stevenson III, Birch Bayh—none of the party establishment came close to breaking with Johnson. Even the intellectual community, which might have been expected to provide some leadership was so closely tied to the Administration that its members—McGeorge Bundy, Francis Bator, Richard Neustadt, Zbigniew Brezezinski, and so on—were reluctant to speak out at first. So were the foreign policy experts, such as Roswell Gilpatric, George Ball, Averell Harriman, and Cyrus Vance. The result was that students were the original peace constituency almost by a process of elimination. Through the draft, we felt the war with the kind of harsh self-interest which motivates most political activity. The first major anti-war demonstration took place in front of the White House in the spring of 1965, organized by SDS. Senators Morse and Gruening spoke, sealing the alliance between students and brilliant eccentrics. When

Eugene McCarthy announced his candidacy in November of 1967, everyone assumed that students would be his most consistent supporters, although all the pros, including Robert Kennedy, advised McCarthy against stressing student support.

To say that students have formed the core of anti-war activism does not mean that young people are overwhelmingly dovish relative to other age groups. That is part of the silent majority myth. But I do think that young peace activists tend to have made certain moral judgments about the war, beyond pragmatism. This is a source of strength for the peace movement in that it provides the strongest motive for opposition to the war and also removes the recurrent trap of wavering doves: the victory wish. People who believe that the war is immoral are not tempted to dampen their activity when a vision of conquest is dangled before their eyes. In fact, most of us who have worked to end the war for some time, believe that any semblance of a military victory in Vietnam would be disastrous for the United States. It would convince many Americans that the war was right, and that it could be successfully repeated elsewhere. Also, a military triumph would go a long way toward replacing the Jeffersonian-revolutionary image of America as a place of hope with a Roman image of this country as a conquering empire.

If the conviction of young people has been a source of strength, it has also been responsible for much of the self-containment of the peace movement. And the significant fact is not that active dissent began on the campus, but that it has largely stayed there.

When anti-war activities began on the campuses, most of us were convinced that political education could end the



**“Most voters
make decisions
largely on the basis
of tone and style. . . .”**

war and that America was sufficiently biased against foreign conflicts to make it impossible for the government to wage war with substantial internal opposition. The draft forced us to confront the war early; and since we reached our decision to oppose American Vietnam policy largely through an intellectual process, we were confident that the country could do the same. So there were teach-ins on Vietnam in 1965 and 1966, and the Vietnam Summer of 1967 was originally called Teach-Out, a campus effort to reach into the community.

The weaknesses of the citizen education campaign became apparent very soon. For one thing, students presupposed a level of basic knowledge about Vietnam that simply didn't exist in most voters. If, in 1965, a student went to a doorstep and the lady said, “I don't know, the President knows more than we do,” he became quickly frustrated with such blind deference in the face of facts about the war.

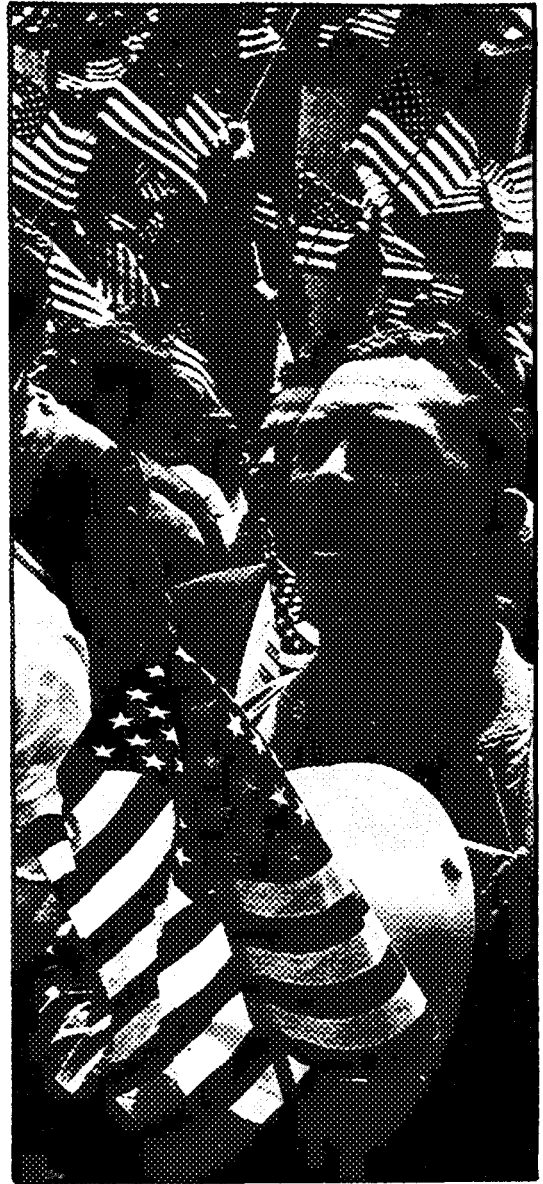
Students found that most voters employed a contorted decision-making process to analyze American involvement in Vietnam. It seemed that they should have been against the war until they knew enough about the issues to argue for it. Instead, people supported the war until convinced that America was wrong, placing the burden of proof on the students and then being fairly complacent about studying the evidence. Many students found it morally repugnant that a citizen could support Lyndon Johnson's war without having read Bernard Fall, the Vietnam hearings, or even Douglas Pike and the SEATO Treaty, without knowing the history of the Viet-Minh or of French colonialism in Indochina, and knowing little about Ho Chi Minh, Marshal Jean De Lattre, or Ngo Dinh Diem.

It became quite easy for students to react against Lyndon Johnson's use of Middle America's historic anti-intellectualism with a kind of academic chauvinism readily learned from prominent professors. Thus it followed that since every intelligent person was against the

war, anyone who supported LBJ was a fool, immoral, or both. With President Nixon reduced to visceral patriotism and respectable demagoguery to carry the war, the argument has been pushed to its conclusion: that people who support the war for immoral or irrational reasons should not count. This judgment is often felt but seldom expressed, because it runs headlong into the left's emphasis on participatory democracy. Unfortunately, irrationalities matter in democratic politics, and peace is not here just because we want it, or even if we can demonstrate on paper that it's a good idea. In order to build a successful peace movement, one must believe that Middle America should count, even after a week's canvassing in Ogallala, Nebraska, or Peoria, Illinois. The alternative is to join with classical aristocrats, who find the paper ballot a rather crude and absurd method of making political decisions.

Students found it difficult to break the ethos and life style of the campus in order to spend their time in homes and businesses. Canvassing operations and education campaigns require a great deal of organization and commitment to work which is generally tedious. A demonstration, on the other hand, only requires going someplace for a few hours, at least for the non-organizers. The atmosphere at a demonstration is one of a communion of peers, often with recreation and a heady emotional sense of solidarity. Moreover, the civil rights movement had given demonstrations an overtone of moral outrage, and that was precisely the message that the peace movement wanted to communicate: that the Vietnam War is a moral outrage.

Unfortunately, anti-war demonstrations did not succeed in dramatizing the moral aspects of the war, largely because the war was taking place halfway around the world. The sit-ins in the South could demonstrate the moral imperatives of the civil rights movement. One could see the violent clash of behavior against principle, and the connection to the law was clear. Peace demonstrations at draft



Fred W. McDarragh

**“... they may
dislike the war,
but they dislike
radicals far more.”**

“Burning the flag is a shortcut for the years of hard work which would make real enemies on substantive issues.”

boards and troop shipping stations attempted to make the same point regarding Vietnam, but the appeal to conscience was too vague or too strained. McGeorge Bundy and Robert McNamara were tucked away in an impeccably proper bureaucracy. They never delivered any napalm in person, and certainly never wore the coarsely hostile face of a Bull Connor.

Civil rights demonstrations had another advantage: they could appeal to the political self-righteousness of 75 per cent of the country in order to defeat the South. This was a significant political lever which the anti-war movement has never had. In order to accept the idea that the Vietnam war is immoral, one must admit that his whole country is capable of perpetrating great wrongs and that he himself is partly culpable. This is difficult for any of us to do. It is far more difficult than deciding that the South's brutal racism is immoral in the face of the non-violent courage of Martin Luther King.

Vietnam demonstrations also developed a high existential content, especially as the war dragged on beneath Ruskian platitudes. At some point it became necessary for all of us to *do* something, regardless of the political effect, in order to separate ourselves from the government. This year's May 9 demonstration was a good example. There had to be some response to the Cambodian invasion and Kent State. Because something had to be done and peace people knew how to produce demonstrations, a quick demonstration was put together. The May 9 rally in Washington was cathartic for everyone already committed against the war—a communion of the wounded, complete with a mass swim-in in the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool and speeches

about every conceivable issue on the left. But the rally had little political effect on those not already on our side.

The failures of demonstrations as a peace tactic tended to restrict the morally-based anti-war movement to the campus. And, during gestation on the campus, it continually moved toward the left. The enemies became generalized into the System and the solution into revolution. Anyone who added a new plank to the canons of the left was considered purer than his predecessor, and the movement shifted in order to identify with its purest elements. People became unwilling to accept those opposed to the war for less comprehensive reasons. They had to be written off as opportunists and moral reprobates.

This is the first vicious cycle of the student peace movement: the longer it fails to end the war, the farther left it moves, splintering itself into multiple groups in the process, which in turn makes it more difficult to develop the new constituencies necessary to end the war.

I cannot argue strongly for a single-minded peace strategy without considering the emotional costs. Obviously, there are reasons for leftward sectarian impulses, growing out of the history of the Sixties—when this country identified many domestic problems and solved almost none. There is good reason for a healthy cynicism. A young person in this country has seen little but war, the draft, riots, racism, assassinations, pollution, and governmental ineptness since he came into political awareness. A person who is 21 has dim memories, if any, of the early Sixties, when there was a great deal of hope in America.

On a deeper level, there is a strong

**“Most Congressmen want to be helpful
if they can get big press coverage,
but not otherwise.”**

sense among young people of alienation from the values which built the American economy—impulse repression, acquisitive drive, and status mobility. These frustrations add up to a strong motive for believing that America's problems are insoluble, and that the war is but a symptom whose termination will be of little use.

Finally, there is a feeling that the war cannot be ended on terms other than the Carthaginian Peace acceptable to the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Obviously, any tough-minded political discipline toward ending the war is senseless if the chances of success are zero. The existential alternative is to keep one's purity, protect one's life style, and demonstrate a personal separation from the war policy.

This is a dilemma for those who believe that the war is wrong: defeat appears likely and recommends that people withdraw into a personal purity, while ending the war requires that people move toward Middle America and become politically effective.

To unravel this problem, I think a few false issues must be separated out. First, personal appearance, language, and life style have nothing to do with the substance or purity of one's political views. Behavior that is offensive to Middle America neither establishes nor identifies real political differences; it merely offends Middle America. Burning the flag or shouting obscenities at an anti-war rally is for many doves a shortcut for the years of hard work which would make real political enemies on substantive issues. If done for its political effect, such action creates needless liabilities and fosters the self-deception that one is politically righteous in proportion to how much he is despised.

Another kind of false purism follows from an inquisitorial tendency on the

left to exclude as many people as necessary to insure the holiness of the group. This is the opposite of the political instinct, which is to include as many people as possible in the interest of achieving an objective. You take your allies where you can, not necessarily making heroes of them, but keeping them in the camp.

It's very dangerous to generalize a personal code of moral absolutism into politics. Many of us cannot accept the draft for this war on personal, moral grounds. But I find it ethically untenable to suggest that everyone who doesn't agree with us is automatically immoral—unworthy of respect and human consideration.

Such absolutist judgment would represent a curiously non-situational ethic for a generation which accepted and popularized situational ethics in sexual relationships. Middle America is still sexually Victorian on the whole, but politically pragmatic, while students are politically absolutist and sexually situational. One could, as Richard Nixon has, drive a truck through the gap.

On either side of this gap the combatants act like members of the old religious sects, where different rules govern one's conduct toward people outside the group as opposed to those within it. Thus, it becomes possible for an honest, fair-minded judge to display a total disregard for due process in dealing with a long haired radical. On the other hand, it is possible for people on the left—whose internal ethic calls for a loving ethos, an understanding of human weaknesses, concern for the poor, and non-violence—to direct blind hatred toward Middle America, to call people pigs, to glorify militance, and to display considerable cultural condescension toward “hewers of wood and drawers of water,” from

well put

tobacco farmers to cab drivers to hard hats. The reponse is obvious.

Sect-like behavior is the source of a second vicious cycle within the peace movement. People in the middle respond to the sign language involved and to the external codes of conduct, not the internal ones. Sectarian violence on the left is the most salient aspect of what the press calls a peace-youth cult.

Perhaps strategic violence in the anti-war movement is yet another legacy of the civil rights movement, during which young people have seen that pompous official statements on the futility of violence consistently ring false against the scramble of politicians to throw money and concern into any urban riot area. But most Americans don't feel guilty about the war, nor do they feel that young demonstrators are its victims. Again, the moral imperatives of the peace movement have been different and weaker than those of civil rights. In any case, I find political violence wrong in principle, and anti-war violence is also strategic nonsense, creating even more needless enemies than flag-burning.

✓ Sectarian violence on the left is the complement of the hard-hat phenomenon on the right. They represent the culmination of the familiar process of polarization.
✓

The real crux of the dilemma over protecting principles comes when it is necessary to make judgments about issue priorities—to choose among contending goals in the interest of effectiveness. This is particularly difficult for young people, who dislike the notion of effectiveness itself because it represents to them the very craving for success that alienates them from America. They have seen too many allies announce with supercilious dignity that they are going to be effective within the system and then drown all moral commitment in self-advancement.

Many older doves not so alienated from success or the work ethic are also wary of the effectiveness trap. Some can remember the Cold War Fifties, when liberals adopted Brooks Brothers suits to



**“Priorities must be chosen:
Jerry Rubin may have
to be excluded
to keep John Lindsay.”**



Michael Salzberg

“effectively” protect those falsely accused by Joe McCarthy. And liberals continued to adapt themselves to the times until they decried the missile gap in 1960 so they could be effective in making social reforms and finally (began) the Vietnam war to demonstrate that they were more flexibly effective anti-communists than the hawkish Republicans. In a sense, the trap is responsible for the whole Vietnam mess; for the last generation of liberals made an ideology of effectiveness and finally came to believe in their own tactical compromises.

In order to handle the effectiveness trap, people must have enough self-confidence to believe that the steps necessary to end the war will not erode their commitment to other issues. Adopting a style that does not offend Middle America is itself no compromise of principle. The danger comes when liberals transform Brooks Brothers suits into political disaster, and today's doves must be able to tell when an acceptable style becomes a substantive sell-out.

People must also believe that the war can be ended. Otherwise, they join many students in the non-effectiveness trap—if you decide that it is impossible to win on anything, it makes sense to go down to defeat shouting the pure gospel on as many moral issues as possible. If, on the other hand, doves decide that the peace movement can in fact end the war, then the purest anti-war position is the one which ends the war fastest without compromising the principle that the war is wrong. That position would undoubtedly be tough-minded in that priorities must be chosen and sacrifices made in the interest of ending the war. Jerry Rubin may have to be excluded from a platform to keep John Lindsay, because, coldly, Lindsay is far more politically valuable than Rubin in any successful anti-war strategy. The position would also be painful—it would even be necessary to cultivate dovish potential among racists. But the position would also recognize the daily blood-cost of the non-effectiveness trap.

“Education campaigns require a great deal of commitment to work. . .”

I think everyone who has a moral commitment against the Vietnam war feels some of these drives toward left sectarianism. Certainly I do. On the night of the Cambodian invasion, part of me wanted to blow up buildings, and I decided that those who have waged this war really should be treated as war criminals. There must be a certain point in the midst of an insanely malevolent situation at which any sane person wants to become a maniac. Discipline and caution appear deceitful.

But despite past frustrations and failures, I think that political self-discipline is precisely what is necessary to end the war. My own feeling is that this war is in fact less intellectually intractable than the long-run problems of pollution or the distribution of wealth in America, and less emotionally deep-seated than alienation from the Protestant work ethic or the overwhelming problem of race. But it throws up an enormous psychological barrier to the perception of these problems, simultaneously draining the nation of lives, resources, hope, and conscience. Therefore, I think that ending the war is a necessary first step toward meeting more difficult problems, even though ending the war may mean short-run sacrifices of efforts to cope with them.

Also, you have to have faith that the American people will choose the more humane political path when confronted with clearly stated alternatives, and then you work to state the peace choice persistently in the most acceptable style. Until you lose that faith permanently, left sectarianism must be regarded as politically foolish, and only lack of courage causes people who believe so to remain silent.

These realities have been clear for some time. They were paramount in the

plans for the Vietnam Moratorium, drawn up in the spring of 1969, when the politics of Vietnam were considerably less carnal than they are now. Nixon and Agnew had not wrapped their policy in the flag, nor had polarization proceeded to the point at which many hawks would cheer the killings at Kent State. But it was clear, at least to our ideological minds, that the President was not going to withdraw from Vietnam quickly and blame the consequences on the Democrats. This option, which so many commentators thought likely because of its “peacemaker” attractiveness and the fact that it would direct any McCarthyite backlash at the Democratic Party, was rejected in favor of a Presidential desire for an outcome with victory written on it somewhere. It seemed that he was going to get out of Vietnam as slowly as possible, while selling the idea that he was getting out as fast as possible.

By spring, many doves had recovered enough from the doldrums of the 1968 campaign to consider new peace initiatives. Jerry Grossman, a Massachusetts businessman, first suggested the outlines of what became the Moratorium. Beginning with a student base, because that was all we could count on, we wanted to develop a single-issue citizen organization with sufficiently eclectic appeal to create a majority for withdrawal from Vietnam.

When we announced the Vietnam Moratorium in June of 1969, the four coordinators felt that it would indeed take a great deal of political self-discipline to succeed with our strategy: to gradually attract new peace constituencies on the right without either making unacceptable compromises or

“... a demonstration only
requires going someplace
for a few hours.”

cutting off the left. We had to avoid following the ADA path (drifting to the right ideologically *without* gaining new support) and alienating the left at the same time.

The Moratorium plan for October 15 was to start on the campuses and organize outward into the community, seeking to slowly build peace constituencies. The public message was immediate withdrawal, which was then a radical position relative to the entire American political spectrum. We hoped to start in October with one day's cessation of “business as usual” and increase the moratorium period cumulatively by one day each month until the war ended. The initial call and the founding statement were very centrist documents. We tried to set a moderate tone in everything—from the choice of the word “moratorium” rather than “strike” to our constant encouragement of activities that would appeal to people just to the right of our student base—such as vigils, church services, candlelight ceremonies, and community canvassings. If we had started with more money, more visibility, or more Congressional support, we would have de-emphasized our campus base even more; but, lacking all three, we had to organize from the campuses outward. Our specific targets for October were the social groups which had displayed sympathy for the peace movement—the clergy, women, senior citizens, doctors, lawyers, and educators—and we also attempted to reach labor unions and minority groups.

Across the summer of 1969, we received little press coverage and less support from Congressmen and Senators. David Mixner did most of the browbeating on the Hill and got nothing but smiles and encouragement from everyone but the handful of consistent doves, such as Congressmen McCloskey, Adams,

Brown, Reid, Edwards, Koch, Ryan, Fraser, Riegle, and Ottinger and Senators McGovern, (Hughes), McCarthy, Hatfield, and Goodell. There was a perceptible lack of raw courage on the part of most elected officials. Part of it was rationalized by the “extended honeymoon” argument that President Nixon would extricate us from the war if he had time enough. There was also a strong reluctance to criticize the President, growing out of a contagious inability to distinguish between the office and the man in it.

Two things happened in the fall of 1969 to make a summer's worth of (low-profile) organizing pay off in October. One was the Labor Day recess, when most Congressmen went home and discovered a great deal of disgruntlement with the war. They often found anti-war activities being supported by surprisingly “straight” people. Congressmen react very quickly to broad-based constituent pressure, and endorsements came in rapidly during September.

Also, Congressmen react to an informal perception of national mood, which they get from the media. Washington is a funny town, and things often occur largely because the right people say they will. Averell Harriman began saying that he thought the Moratorium was a good thing, and so did Ramsey Clark. Bernard Nossiter wrote an article in *The Washington Post* in which he struck a favorable tone and anticipated widespread activity on the 15th. A few columnists responded, and soon the mood became right in Washington. With the (luck) of this favorable mood, we convinced enough media people that a lot of things—really *were* going to happen on October 15. Once the media began doing Moratorium previews, Congressmen with sensitive noses for publicity began to

nibble at the Moratorium in the interest of a good headline. Most people on the Hill want to be helpful on the day they can get big press coverage—but not otherwise, or the next day.

October 15 was far more successful than we had even hoped, as Moratorium activities took place in more than 500 towns across the country and on most of the nation's campuses. The events were well covered, the tone was good, and many new groups were brought in. There were a lot of professionals: 700 attorneys in Boston, 25,000 people at a Wall Street rally, businessmen in Chicago, government and social workers, advertising and publishing people. Walter Reuther and Roy Wilkins participated, and the Moratorium was endorsed by many of the establishment Democrats who had been so reluctant to break with Lyndon Johnson over the war. There was a great deal of euphoria within the ranks of local Moratorium groups, and we at the national office found that success spawned an atmosphere of hope that new constituencies could be won over and that the movement would snowball. Although October was far bigger than we anticipated in terms of national impact and therefore did not fit in well with our plan of escalating peace actions, the four coordinators were quite optimistic.

Within a month the bubble had burst. The President's speech of November 3 and the reputation of the Mobe (New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam) neutralized many of the new peace activists in the Congress. Many of them felt that they had done their bit for peace in October and that it was prudent to coast for a while. The New Mobe leaders—Ron Young, Stewart Meachem, Cora Weiss, Fred Halstead, Richard Fernandez, and others—did their best to establish a non-violent commitment through the press, short of excluding hard left groups from the platform; but many people in Congress and the press still chose to see them as simply a bunch of Trotskyites, socialists, draft-dodgers, and militants. They conjured up

visions of the leaders of the Pentagon march of 1967 and the Chicago demonstrations of 1968 descending on Washington for November 15, 1969.

The mood in Washington before November 15 was very tense. The press dwelled on the threat of violence, the Administration stalled negotiations on demonstration permits, and the citizens of Washington were afraid to open their doors to peace marchers. Meanwhile, we tried unsuccessfully at the Moratorium to keep our activities on November 13 and 14 separate from the Mobe's large demonstration in Washington. But the Moratorium became a generic term for all anti-war activity, including the big march. We decided to support the Mobe activities, partly because we thought they clearly intended to have a non-violent demonstration, and partly because the events were going to happen anyway and would reflect on the whole peace movement. We doubted the wisdom of centralized marches and demonstrations at that time, but we found it impossible on balance to publicly criticize or abandon the demonstration of November 15, thereby splitting the peace movement and isolating the demonstration's sponsorship farther to the left.

The weekend of November 15 came off well, even with the Weathermen in town. On Thursday their leaders came to the Moratorium requesting an "expression of fraternal solidarity" in the form of \$20,000. In return, they offered to give us an expression of fraternal solidarity by making the case for non-violence at the Weathermen strategy sessions. We refused. The next night there was a great deal of window-breaking around Dupont Circle and an assault on the South Vietnamese embassy (reportedly led by a police agent known as Tommy the Traveler). The police responded with tear gas and billy clubs. The Saturday crowd of some 300,000 was peaceful—governed by its own mood of flower-calm protest. There were (no) confrontations with the police (in fact, there was scattered fraternization) until the demonstration at the

Reprints

Quantity

- _____ **Arnold, Mark R. and Clark Holmes**—"Whatever Happened to OEO?" (D)
 _____ **Baker, Russell and Charles Peters**—"The Special Assistant" (B)
 _____ ***Barber, James David**—"Analyzing Presidents: From Passive-Positive Taft to Active-Negative Nixon" (E)
 _____ ***Bell, William**—"The Cost of Cowardice: Silence in the Foreign Service" (A)
 _____ **Bendiner, Robert**—"The Impotent School Board" (E)
 _____ ***Bennett, Meridan**—"The Concept: An Answer to Addiction" (A)
 _____ **Benson, Robert S.**—"How the Pentagon Can Save \$9,000,000,000" (C)
 _____ ***Bethell, T. N.**—"Conspiracy in Coal" (A)
 _____ ***Boyd, James**—"Legislate? Who Me? What Happens to a Senator's Day" (A)
 _____ ***Broder, David S.**—"Political Reporters in Presidential Politics" (A)
 _____ **Butler, Robert N., M.D.**—"The Burnt-out and the Bored" (B)
 _____ ***Church, Senator Frank**—"The Only Alternative—A Reply to President Nixon on Vietnam" (10¢ per copy)
 _____ ***Clerk, Joseph Porter, Jr.**—"The Art of the Memorandum" (A)
 _____ ***Commoner, Barry**—"Can We Survive the Environmental Crisis?" (A)
 _____ **Downie, Leonard, Jr.**—"Crime in the Courts: Assembly Line Justice" (D)
 _____ ***Ehrenreich, John**—"The Blue Cross We Bear" (A)
 _____ **Galbraith, John Kenneth**—"What Happened to the Class Struggle?" (B)
 _____ **Goodwin, Richard N.** (Interviewed by David Gelman and Beverly Kempton)—"New Issues for the New Politics" (D)
 _____ **Green, Michael**—"Nobody Covers the House" (B)
 _____ ***Hapgood, David**—"Diplomatism" (A)
 _____ **Hapgood, David**—"The Health Professionals: Cure or Cause of the Health Crisis?" (D)
 _____ ***Hersh, Seymour M.**—"The Military Commitments" (A)
 _____ **Hirschman, Albert O.**—"Exit, Voice, and Loyalty" (B)
 _____ **Jacobs, Jane**—"The Valuable Inefficiencies and Impracticalities of Cities" (D)
 _____ ***Kalish, James**—"Flim-flam, Double-talk, and Hustle: The Urban Problems Industry" (C)
 _____ **Karmin, Monroe W.**—"Polish Hill: The White Ethnic's Complaint" (A)
 _____ **Karp, Richard**—"The Marginal Nuclear Utilities" (B)

Quantity

- _____ **Kempton, Murray**—"Proclaim and Abandon: The Life and Hard Times of the Teacher Corps" (C)
 _____ ***Kohlmeier, Louis M., Jr.**—"The Regulatory Agencies: What Should Be Done?" (A)
 _____ **Komisar, Lucy**—"Violence and Masculinity" (C)
 _____ **Kotz, Nick**—"Jamie Whitten: The Permanent Secretary of Agriculture" (C)
 _____ **Landauer, Jerry**—"Seafarers' Union" (B)
 _____ ***Love, Kennett**—"Tax Resistance: 'Hell, No—I Won't Pay'" (A)
 _____ **Lowenstein, Congressman Allard K.**—"Polarize or Persuade" (B)
 _____ **McCarthy, Congressman Richard D.**—"Chemical and Biological Warfare: Policy by Default" (B)
 _____ **McGarvey, Patrick J.**—"Defense Intelligence Agency: Intelligence to Please" (B)
 _____ **Miller, Norman C.**—"The Machine Democrats" (A)
 _____ **Mintz, Morton**—"Rebuke at HEW" (B)
 _____ ***Moyers, Bill** (interviewed by Hugh Sidey)—"The White House Staff vs. the Cabinet" (C)
 _____ **Oudes, Bruce J.**—"USIA: The Great Wind Machine" (C)
 _____ ***Peabody, Malcolm E., Jr.**—"Funding the People" (B)
 _____ **Percy, Senator Charles H.**—"Paying for NATO" (B)
 _____ **Prouty, L. Fletcher**—"The CIA and the Secret Team" (C)
 _____ **Pyle, Christopher H.**—"CONUS Intelligence: The Army Watches Civilian Politics" (D)
 _____ **Ripley, Anthony**—"Atomic Power Abuse: The AEC in Colorado" (B)
 _____ **Rothchild, John H.**—"The Great Helium Bubble" (B)
 _____ **Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr.**—"From Clean to Antiseptic: Eugene J. McCarthy" (A)
 _____ **Slater, Philip E.**—"Spocklash: Age, Sex, and Revolution" (D)
 _____ ***Stern, Philip M.**—"The Loyalty Program: A Case for Termination" (A)
 _____ **Thayer, George**—"American Arms Abroad" (C)
 _____ **Thomson, James C., Jr.**—"The Missing Ambassador" (B)
 _____ **Walters, Robert**—"Locking the Barn Door: Secretary Shultz and the Miners" (C)
 _____ ***Warnke, Paul C.**—"National Security: Are We Asking the Right Questions?" (B)
 _____ **Wicklein, John**—"Whitewashing Detroit's Dirty Engine" (C)
 _____ **Wicklein, John**—"The Oldest Established Permanent Floating Anachronism on the Sea: Attack Aircraft Carriers" (D)
 _____ **Young, Hugo; Bryan Silcock; and Peter Dunn**—"Why We Went to the Moon: From the Bay of Pigs to the Sea of Tranquility" (100 copies—\$85, 200 copies—\$125)

50 reprints: A—\$10, B—\$22, C—\$31, D—\$42, E—\$45
 100 reprints: A—\$15, B—\$26, C—\$38, D—\$55, E—\$66
 200 reprints: A—\$20, B—\$34, C—\$51, D—\$70, E—\$91

Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Payment enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> Bill me <input type="checkbox"/> Bill organization The Washington Monthly 1150 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036	
Title		
Organization		
Street		
City	State	Zip

* Single copies available @ 35¢.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
 ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

“Students came to the national office arguing that the system had failed to respond to their efforts. . .”

Justice Department against the Chicago conspiracy trial. Before 4:00 p.m. on Saturday there were no arrests—very unusual for a crowd that large.

But the tone was still wrong. The press focused on Saturday because it was going to be big and virtually ignored the impressive two-day March Against Death. Almost 50,000 people walked from Arlington Cemetery past the White House to the Capitol steps in a continuous, single-file procession. Each person carried a candle and a placard bearing the name of an American GI killed in Vietnam or of a dead Vietnamese or a destroyed village. The placards were dropped in coffins at the steps of the Capitol as the candles were blown out. But the press concentrated on the big demonstration, previewing it with speculation about the extent of violence and reviewing the day with crowd estimates and the usual line about the day's being generally peaceful with a few spicy violent actions by radicals.

The Saturday crowd was overwhelmingly young, partly because many young people had been angered by the President's first super-patriotic defense of the war in his November 3 speech. The Vice President made his barroom debut on November 13 with his first roundhouse at the media. The wedge was driven between the young moralists and (the temperate pragmatists.) The latter were partly neutralized by the November polemics from the White House, so they stayed away in even greater numbers than non-students usually stay away from demonstrations.

After November 15, Middle America saw the peace movement more than ever as a youth-based effort, with a sizable element of what seemed to them to be kooks, freaks, and lazy hippies. They saw it that way, even though it was

largely untrue, and what they saw became operative for skittish Congressmen. Between then and the Cambodian invasion, virtually no one on the Hill did any peace work. Even committed doves were asking to be let off from speaking engagements on April 15. That is not only a bitter commentary on the state of the peace movement but also an indictment of the responsibility of traditional leaders on vital questions of peace and war. They were coming to *us* to be let off, and we were going to them pleading for support. We couldn't agree on a strategy, but it was generally assumed that we would provide the initiative and they the support. The world was upside down.

This is a third kind of vicious cycle within the peace movement: if you can't get straight, Middle American, Congressional support, the peace movement is seen largely as a youth cabal, which makes it impossible to attract Congressional support. Only a fortuitous national mood with the proper temperate tone or strong Congressional leadership can overcome that problem.

If polarization and the peace movement's youth identity had removed Congressional support after November, the Moratorium was also afflicted with fatigue. November 15 was a hard act to follow. There was a kind of huge peace orgasm in Washington that Saturday, and everyone went home to sleep it off, convinced that the war would never end if that demonstration had no effect. For the previous several months, families had been strained and studies neglected to generate the enthusiasm and organization for two months' demonstrations. The people were simply tired and resigned to the nation's acceptance of

“...but these efforts often were little more than canvassing for a weekend and going on some marches.”

Nixon and his Vietnamization program.

There was also a fairly strong backlash against October 15, which took place in many little towns and went largely unreported. There were many places where October rallies had been put together in rather bizarre fashion by people regarded locally as the oddball biology teacher, the left-wing minister, and the kooky lady. After November, patriotic solidarity rose to attack such people by firing teachers who wore black armbands, harrassing participating students, and passing anti-demonstration ordinances. We spent a great deal of time trying to help the victims of this backlash.

We had trouble generating any enthusiasm out of the national office, and we really didn't have much to give. We discovered that our plan for a continuously building peace movement had succumbed to the cyclical rhythm of campus protest, the political season being fall and spring. December Moratorium activities were small in most places, and we abandoned the idea of escalating the Moratorium period each month. We fell back, regrouped, and made plans for a series of spring actions at income tax time focusing on the cost of the war.

During the period between November and April, the other coordinators and I found ourselves trying to cope with some of the Moratorium's failures, and recognizing new ones. For one thing, I became convinced that there was a serious lack of long-term commitment among many students. Time after time, students came to the national office arguing that the system had failed to respond to their efforts, but it almost always turned out that the students' efforts had consisted of little more than canvassing for a weekend in a 1968 pri-

mary, attending an October rally, and participating in some marches. They had not yet accepted the fact that ending the war would take a long time and a great deal of dirty work.

The Moratorium also had severe bureaucratic problems. The organizational structure followed from a kind of three-pronged anti-authoritarianism within the peace movement. There was a good deal of genuine intellectual anti-authoritarianism among those who had been active long enough to see (an Administration composed of all the great humanitarian liberals in the country) start a war, who had personally witnessed the Mississippi Freedom Democrats' challenge being sold out (by Hubert Humphrey) at the 1964 Convention or who had found the CIA in control of the National Student Association in 1967. Who wouldn't develop an anti-leadership bias? This source of anti-authoritarianism inspired a great deal of the enthusiasm for McCarthy in 1968.

There was a purist branch of anti-authoritarianism, which taught that organizational discipline was in fact essential to the cause—but only after one made absolutely sure that the leadership was selflessly concerned with the pure gospel and not playing petty reform politics. The problem was that the Moratorium was playing reform politics in the sense that we were seeking political alliances with anyone against the war. We didn't feel we were operating in the wheeler-dealer school of political self-advancement, but some of the activities of the Moratorium clearly resembled traditional political bargaining. I considered that part of being serious about ending the war.

Finally, there was the normal amount of scrambling for leadership posts in all the Moratorium offices. People always

debunked and frequently deposed the leadership if they felt they could do a better job.

The leadership problem was inherent in any organization of people who were peers in age, especially since there was no one of stature to offer himself as a full-time organizer for peace. Unlike 1968, there was no candidate to rally around. At the Washington office, we felt that young people always respond better and work harder if they have a part in formulating their objectives. At the same time, we felt that organizational efficiency is wiped out unless you reach a kind of consensus that discipline is necessary for operation. Otherwise, it's really impossible to organize a worthwhile canvassing campaign, for example, where discipline is critical for getting people where they are supposed to be, at the right time, with the right opening lines, and with the information processed so that it will be useful.

The leadership question was most important in dealing with the left. I found it absolutely imperative that the Moratorium define itself away from the hard left in order to regain the constituencies we had reached briefly in October.

But White House polemics had made it futile for us to try to organize these groups because we were tied to what Middle America regarded as militants. Strategy aside, the labels pinned on the peace movement made it impossible to establish a credible commitment to non-violence, which was important to all four of us at the national office. It was incredible to me that President Nixon had managed to label us as the source of violence in the United States. Every month, he in effect takes \$30 from every American taxpayer to ship across the Pacific Ocean along with 20,000 draftees. This is the installment payment on the (400 or so caskets) and several thousand amputees and cripples that come back across the ocean (each month). Every month tons of bombs are dropped on Vietnamese villages at the President's order, and yet he can find 10 sticks of



**"The President has
labeled us
the source of violence
in the United States."**



Michael Salzberg

dynamite on West 12th Street in New York and speak as though the apocalypse were upon us because the peaceniks are at it again.

One of the reasons the President can get away with such nonsense is that many of us in the peace movement failed to dissociate ourselves strongly enough from violence on the left. While I thought it morally necessary to separate ourselves from those who advocate violence, I found it very difficult to do. After the Dupont Circle violence of last November 14, I said for publication that I thought those people should be arrested and processed for criminal charges. I also said that it is outrageous to gas, beat, and press inflated multiple charges against window-breakers and petty vandals, but that part never got reported. The press stories came out to the effect that I thought the people had gotten what they deserved. Similarly, I've said on numerous occasions that the country will fall apart of internal hemorrhage if the war is not ended, and it always comes out: "If the President doesn't end the war, we're going to tear the country apart."

Splitting from the left was one of those tough, grisly decisions forced upon the peace movement by the politics of war. Although I couldn't buy the purist argument that only the hard left deserved credit for peace activities (an argument used to exclude people like Senators Harris and Mondale), it was personally difficult to break with friends in the Mobe and politically dangerous to split the peace movement when the chances of attracting real Congressional leadership seemed so low. And it also involved clear responsibilities for what happened afterwards, because I believe that if the hard left is really isolated, it will be repressed. If the moderate peace leadership stands up and says, "We intend to create a peace organization with a strong commitment to non-violence," the political impact of that will be to say "and that makes us a lot different from those kooks." No matter how hard you emphasize to the press that you will

“We were in danger of becoming peace bureaucrats. . . so we decided to disband.”

fight for the civil liberties of the people on your left, they will divide the groups into good guys and bad guys, leaving the latter fair game for Mitchell and Kleindienst.

It almost takes the press clout of the President to draw fine distinctions in the media. At the Moratorium, we could draw the coverage, but we could never really control how it came out. This made it impossible to move to the right without baiting the left with Agnew rhetoric, which we refused to do.

The responsibility question weighed heavily in our strategy sessions this past winter, even though we may have vastly overestimated the Moratorium's effectiveness as a buffer between the government and the Mobe. We have argued for some time that we on the left have to take responsibility for the consequences of what we say. When William Kuntzler says we've got to overthrow the government by force, but not by violence, to a 15-year-old kid that means break windows and throw bricks. You can't retreat into academic distinctions between moral force and physical violence after speaking on a political platform.

All these problems—Nixonian polemics, Vietnamization, fatigue, the question of the left, bureaucracy—plagued the Moratorium during the peace movement's “low profile” period from November until Cambodia. At the Washington office, we tried to resist the opening to the left which tempts all groups on the left that don't hold power. In order not to become another SNCC or SDS, the national coordinators had to repeatedly say no to the left options within the Moratorium. David Mixner was the toughest on this question, and I was second house rightist. Local Moratorium offices commonly fought the same battles that were going on in

the Washington office.

Two conclusions became obvious in April. First, the national Moratorium office was more of a burden on the local groups than a help. We were in danger of becoming peace bureaucrats, full of jurisdictional squabbles and petty fights, with no sense of joy or purpose in what we were doing. So we decided to do what all stale organizations should do—disband, and let the good local groups survive on their own and the bad ones fade away.

The second conclusion was more fundamental: that our strategy was right but that our base was wrong. I am convinced that it is not possible to build a successful peace movement simply on a student base. Not enough students have the stature, capacity, or inclination to run a tightly-disciplined peace movement, which would be required to make them effective and keep them moving toward Middle America. Even if such an organization were possible, students *alone* would be unable to attract a majority of the American people to any politically effective peace position. Students can have an impact, since most Americans still don't want to hate their own children. But you must have strong leadership off the campuses to set the tone and direction of the anti-war effort and to give it hope.

This second conclusion made it easier to go to Capitol Hill in April and tell the hesitant doves that if they cared about peace in Vietnam *they* could provide the leadership. Through the entire history of peace politics, Congressional doves had very seldom spent a full day's effort on the war. They gave speeches on occasion. But within the Senate there was no organization, no regular meetings, no commitment to get together and sublimate their egos to produce a piece of

“I think the President has won a large part of the Vietnam debate merely by naming the teams.”

legislation, no serious intention to debate the war on the floor of the Congress, no effort to raise the money to use television in response to the President, none of that. This was particularly galling right after the Carswell vote in April, when these same Senators had come from nowhere to beat him with hard work and internal organization. They had also undercut the moderate peace leadership and the new constituencies of October. In October, we had one resource to use in dealing with the left—we could deny them speakers and publicity if they didn't move toward the center. But in April we had no cards: a rally of 80,000 people was held in Boston with no control over hard-left factions because our support on the Hill had evaporated.

Our message had paltry effect compared with the invasion of Cambodia, of course. But even Cambodia failed to provoke the kind of leadership necessary to move the Congress and take the war to the country. The initial spurt of enthusiasm in the Congress, especially in the Senate, has largely ebbed. Regular meetings of anti-war Senators have ceased, and there is little evidence of the cooperation or initiative necessary to effect a strategy to end the war.

The outline of a successful anti-war strategy, it seems to me, is clear: the appeal must be made in such a way that Middle Americans will not ignore the substance of the argument because of an offensive style. Support for such an appeal exists. After all, immediate withdrawal is not a radical proposal in this country today, and careful analysis of the polls shows that all political stances on the war must be couched in terms of reaching the quickest possible termina-

tion. This indicates that a quick political settlement or immediate withdrawal can become a majority position if the message is presented in a strong but palatable fashion.

While peace activists should not underestimate potential support for an anti-war position, we should also avoid underestimating President Nixon's commitment to some sort of victory in Southeast Asia. I believe that the President's "new" image as a cool, neutral majority-maker, a consummate politician who responds and shapes rather than leads, considerably understates his ego commitment to the war. We are dealing with a man who has a full-time awareness of himself as history—the first President ever to name his own doctrine, the Nixon Doctrine, which I suspect was motivated as much by the simple desire to place his name on the books as to enunciate whatever its meaning is. We are dealing with a man who felt called upon by the world to issue a "State of the World" message, to dwell upon its historic primacy, and to quote himself 27 times in the document while citing all other human beings in history only three times (all three of these quotations were of Secretary of State Rogers agreeing with the President). The President has read the history books and knows that the great Presidents of the United States won wars. He even knows what room of the White House was used to announce the great wartime decisions.

These ego commitments are very harsh terms in which to describe a crucial motive for the Administration's continuation of the war, but I find no others which make as much sense. There is no more plausible way to explain why the President did not end the war right after he came into office, with little or no political risk. Nor can I otherwise ex-

“Americans will not respond favorably to violence committed in the name of ending the war.”

plain his total aversion to Congressional moves toward sharing the political responsibility for ending the war.

The President's personal commitment to the war helps explain why he goes for the political groin to justify his actions. He uses patriotism and the flag, which are deep-seated loyalties for most Americans, to stimulate support for a war which clearly calls forth no such loyalties. He uses the media presence of the Presidency to characterize the opposition as near traitors. I think the President has won a large part of the Vietnam debate in the past merely by naming the teams. When it's the Silent Majority versus the Loud-Mouthed Militants, the Silent Majority wins every time. He and the Vice President have also managed to sell the incredible notion that the press of the United States is left-wing. People who believe that have obviously never attended a convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, where the sentiment is overwhelmingly conservative, verging on outright jingoism.

Since the country drifts toward impatience for withdrawal as the war drags on, the President will have to continue seeking the jugular if he clings to the victory wish. This is one of the greatest dangers to the peace movement; for when the dialogue over the war is degraded past a certain point, it ends. (Liberals should remember the converse: that when the dialogue is elevated to a certain level of generality, involving, for example, petty squabbles over doctrinal minutiae, then the talk goes on forever without action.) People can no longer talk to each other, and confrontations based on tribal sign language become the norm. In all political likelihood, most of Middle America would line up with the President in any such jungle warfare.

The atmosphere of debate over Vietnam is already so debased that it will be very difficult to take the high road—to offer the American people the kind of positive tone and hope which would stand out by contrast with the President's increasingly defensive and visceral statements. It will be impossible to do so without very strong leadership. I suppose that is the heart of my feelings about the peace movement—that the strategy can be devised, that the constituency is there, but that these assets are useless without strong, non-student leadership. The money will follow evidence of leadership. If my analysis of President Nixon's objective in Vietnam is on the right track, the task will be very difficult, but all the more imperative.

The leadership must have the media presence to counter the President's enormous TV influence. Someone must respond to his smears on the patriotism of doves. A figure like (Harold Hughes) would have great impact if he said in effect: “Look here, Mr. President, we're not talking about campus bums. We're talking about whether Vietnam is worth continued killings and maimings. I fought through Europe in World War II and consider myself as American as anyone, but that was 25 years ago. And the fact is that Vietnam stands between us and everything America hopes to become.” The leadership must be willing to talk about Vietnam in terms that will appeal to Middle America—to rename the teams so that we start on ground zero with the hawks, rather than at an emotional disadvantage.

Part of the new message must be the destruction of the silent majority myth. The only clear lesson of the polls is that most Americans want an end to the war. If the President were to use television to justify withdrawal on the grounds that

“Students could make it clear to Nixon that they will write his history.”

(v) we had done all we could or that the South Vietnamese government was corrupt and unworthy of support, I believe he would receive 70 per cent support. The silent majority is largely produced by the American propensity to defer to the President. In March of 1968, for example, the Gallup poll showed 40 per cent for and 51 per cent against stopping the bombing of North Vietnam. After President Johnson stopped the bombing, the polls showed 64 per cent for and 26 per cent against his decision. The silent majority appears quite malleable.

middle-aged
Americans ✓
Not only must the silent majority argument be exposed as a sham, but the popular characterization of doves as militant, long-haired kids and the silent majority as middle-aged and middle-class must be dispelled. Young people as a group are *not* more dovish than old people, nor do overeducated eggheads tend to be more dovish than “the folks.” In fact, the polls show that college-educated people in their twenties are consistently more hawkish than older non-college graduates, by a significant margin of about 20 per cent.

In addition to establishing a tone acceptable to Middle America, renaming the teams, and destroying Presidential myths, the peace leadership should use the media to make becoming a dove more psychologically attractive to Middle Americans. Prior emphasis on the moral aspects of the war has meant that the first psychological step toward an anti-war position has of necessity been the admission that the United States is somehow evil. Since many people are unable to make that jump, an admission of American guilt should not be asked of all potential supporters. To the extent that we in the peace movement have played down the pragmatic arguments for peace, we have weakened our case—

and lessened our chances of ending the war. It is in no way inconsistent with our moral opposition to the war to lay much greater stress than most of us have as yet on the great practical benefits of peace.

This new peace leadership should be composed of Senators, Congressmen, governors, mayors, businessmen—all the straight people who are willing to make a firm and unequivocal commitment against the war. The spokesmen should be those most visible and most attractive to Middle America, those who can speak intelligently about the war with strength rather than condescension or aloofness.

The five co-sponsors of the Amendment to End the War already have a list of some 75,000 people who responded to the Senators’ television special after Cambodia, which could be the beginning of a peace constituency. What is needed is commitment from a large number of people willing to cast a “bullet” vote for peace. This commitment may be less organized than a party or formal corporate structure.

The new peace leadership must make it clear that it is in for the duration—until the end of American involvement in Indochina. The cyclical activity of the anti-war movement has had a double disadvantage in the past: during periods of upswing, the peace movement has overestimated its effect and thus paved the way for subsequent acute frustration and resignation; during the downswing, the government has underestimated latent anti-war sentiment, and this has possibly contributed to adventurism.

If the focus of the peace movement could be shifted to the new and long-awaited leadership, young people would be far more effective politically. I don’t think we have to hide who we are, or even what we say. We should merely recognize the fact that the political bal-

“The system should not be applauded even if the war were to end tomorrow.”

ance on the war is held by people with different life styles. Students could be a left, moral pressure on the coat-and-tie leadership. Students could make it clear to Richard Nixon that *they* will write his history and that all wars are not heroic. They could make it clear that there are *costs* held against those who wage this war. Those who wage the war should be constantly reminded that they are responsible for a moral horror—like the British Viceroy in colonial India. Every time the Viceroy showed his face in public, he saw a silent Indian holding a sign which read “Assassin.” Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon should be subject to the same treatment. We should make them aware that there are large numbers of people in this country who hold them responsible for criminal activities and who believe that those who wage the war cannot cast off the responsibility merely by leaving office.

There is no assurance at present that a new peace leadership is forthcoming, although recently several prospective leaders have been leaning toward conscience and away from conservative careerism. If these people were to emerge, I believe that it is quite possible to build a peace constituency and create a national atmosphere in which it would not be possible to wage the war. This would be partly a matter of national mood, which is highly volatile and (heavily influenced by unexpected events.)

A renewed peace movement would also exercise political clout, apart from its impact on the nation's war temperature. The National Rifle Association is an unpleasant model; but if a tiny fraction of the population can stop gun control with organization and the bullet vote, then the peace movement can stop the war. The new constituency would have obvious potential in 1972.

All these ruminations have been predicated on certain (traditional assumptions:) that people's political opinions should count, that democracy can be made to work, that there is enough good will left in the country to make it work, and that (given a choice between rational alternatives, Americans will choose the most humane course.) At the same time, the American people have shown that they will not respond favorably to violence committed in the name of ending the war, or to a version of democracy that romanticizes about participation of the poor and the black but ignores the middle, or to peace advocates who think demonstrations are a substitute for the sustained work of peaceful persuasion.

But the “system” should not be applauded even if the war were to end tomorrow. For five years, it has provided no real way for people (to express their views) on a war which was presented to them as a test of manhood. The system provided no public debate over whether we should enter the war, but instead permitted our leaders to involve us by stealth. This critical failure gave inertia to the propagation of the Vietnam war and sneaked the flag onto the battlefield—leaving the peace movement at an enormous political disadvantage. The system has provided poor information to voters and little active leadership for a position of obvious principle.

If the war is now ended by political action, as I believe it can be, some will undoubtedly argue that the system has vindicated itself. That argument, however, is self-deceiving; for in many crucial respects our system has already failed and requires radical reconstruction.

But that is premature retrospection. If the war can be ended only with such self-delusion, we should end the war now and fight the delusions later. ■

Designed to let the outside
in, this book of specially selected
articles from
THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY
will be available in August.

\$2.95 paperback \$8.95 hardcover

Praeger Publishers, Inc.

INSIDE THE SYSTEM: A Washington Monthly Reader

with introduction by Richard H. Rovere

FROM THE TABLE OF CONTENTS:

The White House Staff vs. the Cabinet

Bill Moyers interviewed by Hugh Sidey
The most celebrated of the Johnson
assistants talks about the growing power
of the White House staff.

A Senator's Day

by James Boyd
The most pressing business in the Senate
has little to do with lawmaking.

**Behind the Scenes and
Under the Rug**

by Howard E. Shuman
The Douglas Commission's life and hard
times. Starring: the American city. Featuring:
Paul Douglas, LBJ, Robert Weaver, Joe
Califano, Robert Wood.

**The Cost of Cowardice:
Silence in the Foreign Service**

by William Bell
What happens when good men don't speak
up. Why they don't.

The Highwaymen

by David Hapgood
In the battle over urban highways, much of
the government is aligned with the highway
lobby. This explains why.

**Jamie Whitten: Permanent Secretary
of Agriculture**

by Nick Kotz
How one Congressman from Mississippi uses
his power as chairman of an appropriations
subcommittee to preserve malnutrition as our
most inexcusable national problem.

The Data Game

by Arthur M. Ross
How statistics can bring good men to grief.

The Special Assistant

by Russell Baker and Charles Peters
Washington's right-hand men: as Iago,
as Informer, as Thinker, as Speechwriter,
as Nitpicker, as Yes-Man.

To: The Washington Monthly, 1150 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Please send _____ copies of **Inside the System** at _____ \$2.95 _____ \$8.95 to:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Claude Pepper's Crime Stoppers

by Eric Lax

On May 1, 1969, Law Day, a day during which, if it was statistically normal, some 30 murders, 75 forcible rapes, 550 robberies, 700 aggravated assaults, and 4,400 burglaries were reported in America, the House of Representatives created, by a vote of 345 to 18, a Select Committee on Crime, which was a sensible thing for it to do. The Committee took three months to get organized, by no means an excessive amount of time to spend on assembling a staff and laying out a program, and on July 28 it formally began work with a series of "overview" hearings in Washington. Now, a year and \$900,000 later, it has held altogether nine sets of hearings, whose recorded proceedings run to more than 2400 printed pages, in various parts of the country—including the well-known crime capitals of Columbia, South Carolina, and Omaha, Nebraska, which also happen to be the stamping grounds of the Committee's two most active Republican members—and it has introduced two bills, one to limit the production of amphetamines and one to

authorize a medical study of the effects of marijuana.

That's all it has done. It has not developed a legislative program for reducing crime. It has not inquired into, much less analyzed, the Executive Branch's anti-crime activities. It has not increased public understanding of the complexities of crime and crime control. It has not even developed within its own membership any particular expertise about crime. And it is unlikely that it ever will do any of those things.

This is not a surprising story, of course. Anyone familiar with the daily happenings on Capitol Hill can tell a dozen similar ones. However, it is (like the dozen similar ones) an instructive story for the way it illustrates the unabashed frivolity with which Congress all too often fritters away opportunities for significant public service. The Select Committee on Crime certainly had—indeed may still have—such an opportunity. Though just about every Congressman at one time or another has intoned that crime was one of the most pressing social problems in America, though the 1968 elections demonstrated

Eric Lax is a freelance writer who lives in Washington.