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students for a democratic society

# NEW LEFT NOTES

Let the People Decide

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## 100,000 turn out for days of protest

As many as 100,000 Americans participated in the March 25-26 International Days of Protest in 80 demonstrations staged from coast-to-coast. It was the largest manifestation of opposition to the war in Vietnam yet staged.

In New York City, 50,000 marched down Fifth Avenue in a peace parade doubling the turnout of the October 15th demonstration. In Berkeley, after hearing Ambassador Arthur Goldberg defend Administration policy, the students overwhelmingly voted to condemn that policy. And in 32 other countries, demonstrations and rallies were held, including a 50,000-person rally in Rome at which SDS President Carl Oglesby and California Congressional candidate Robert Scheer spoke.

SDS participated heavily in the events. In Chicago, where a broad coalition of labor, church, civil rights, student, and anti-war groups staged a 5,000-person parade and rally, it was generally acknowledged that SDS had brought the largest group. In Boston, Ann Arbor, and Chicago, SDS anti-draft demonstrations resulted in arrests; in Boston it was a draft-board sit-in, in Ann Arbor a demonstration in front of the draft board, and in Chicago a demonstration at Science Research Associates, the draft-exam company.

### Berkeley

At Berkeley, 1,000 people walked out of a ceremony at which UN Ambassador Arthur Goldberg was receiving an honorary degree. After the ceremony, Goldberg accepted the challenge to debate issued by the Faculty Peace Committee. 8,000 people packed Harmon Gymnasium to hear Goldberg and Prof. Franz Schurmann of the University's China Institute. Schurmann teaches at the SDS New School in San Francisco and participated in the SDS ideology conference held recently at Asilomar. In contrast to Schurmann's extremely factual presentation and the reserved demeanor of the audience (no

heckling was allowed), Goldberg argued on a highly emotional level. There was a vote taken at the end of the meeting, and even the local press reported no more than 200 votes for the U. S. policy, against upwards of 7,000 opposed.

Other large demonstrations included 10,000 in San Francisco, 1100 in Detroit where Tom Hayden spoke, 1,000 in Newark, and 1,000 in Los Angeles.

Although a number of SDS chapters were on vacation (including Michigan State, Buffalo, and the U. of Chicago), outside the big cities SDS helped build local demonstrations in many cities. These include Seattle, Miami, Portland, Oklahoma City, Lancaster, Evanston, Providence, Philadelphia, Gainesville, Binghamton, Toledo, Baraboo (Wisc.), Iowa City, Bloomington, Muncie, Lawrence (Kans.), Des Moines, Eugene (Ore.), Ithaca, E. Lansing, Milwaukee, Riverside (Calif.), River Falls (Wisc.), and Champaign (Ill.).

### fasts

SDS chapters continue to carry on



Richard Chapin (right) River Falls, Wisc. SDS member pulls back sign from counter-demonstrator



SDS contingent at Chicago march

photo: Ron Henig

end-the-war fasts. 17 fasted at the U. of Rhode Island, 63 at Queens College, and several at Arizona State (Tempe).

### international

In several countries allied with the U. S. in the war in Vietnam, the weekend contributed substantially to opposition strength. 20,000 Filipinos took to the streets in Manila. In both Australia and New Zealand, demonstrations against the participation of those countries were held.

In Western Europe, demonstrations were held in hundreds of cities. In West Germany, marches were staged in thirty cities, and in France, 77 demonstrations were held. The demonstrations in Belgium, Sweden and Denmark were the largest peace demonstrations in their history according to the claim of the National Coordinating Committee to End the War.

In Japan, the NCC says, 600,000 people demonstrated. Other demonstrations were held in Guinea, Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, and in Eastern European countries. A small (by their standards) rally in China was held explicitly to praise the efforts of U. S. protest groups.

Ithaca, N. Y.: Recently the Cornell Committee for Support of U. S. policy sponsored a speech by the Saigon Ambassador to the U. S., Vu Van Thai. Tensions were high with more than 200 picketers marching before the event. The Ambassador spent most of the time reconstructing the history of the war concluding by attacking the Diem Regime, then praising Ky as a benevolent dictator.

East Lansing, Mich.: Four Michigan State SDS members went to jail Tuesday as the Circuit Court decided that they had committed trespassing last October 13th during anti-war action. The four had sold copies of Viet-Report in front of the U. S. Marine Corps booth at the

annual Career Fair of the University.

Two of the demonstrators were given one month; this was because both Howard Harrison and Albert Halprin had previously been convicted in civil rights demonstrations. The others--Fred Janvrin and James Dukarn--are serving ten days.

Flushing, N. Y.: The fast against the war at Queens College ended recently. Participants remained in a university lounge for the entire duration except to attend classes and meet other obligations; and about 40 persons fasted for the entire 56 hour duration. The fast, in conjunction with films, imported speakers, and panel discussions was designed as an educational effort rather than an opportunity to deeply re-evaluate one's life, or to re-examine their failure to stop the war.

Houston, Texas: The Houston Citizens for Action on Vietnam, in which several SDS people work, will hold a vigil at the LBJ Ranch while he attends Easter services there.

Lafayette, Ind.: On March 16, Joffree Stewart, an anarchist from Chicago who renounced his citizenship in 1950 (to any government), spoke to a meeting at Purdue sponsored by the SDS chapter. Mr. Stewart had promised the organizers of the meeting that he would not burn the U. S. flag (a normal feature of his presentations), but when he spit, stomped upon, and tore the flag in half, several folk got upset. Since then, the Indianapolis Star, Chicago Tribune, Paul Harvey, and Fulton Lewis, Jr., among many, have picked up the story, each adding his own touches to the facts. It should be noted that destroying a U. S. flag is not a Federal crime--but merely a misdemeanor under Indiana law, carrying a \$5 to \$10 fine. Destroying a draft card is a different matter--so say the fetishizers anyway.

### National Secretary's Report

## Hayden and Lynd to outline summer project

by Paul Booth

Summer projects. Tom Hayden and Staughton Lynd have proposed a Vietnam summer project to turn America into a town meeting against the war. The project will be launched with considerable fanfare with an announcement of the commitment of a group of Americans who have been to Vietnam to bring the facts to the people; Staughton and Tom are organizing that group. Its members will spend a lot of time this summer speaking around the country.

The proposed summer projects would operate under that rubric in local areas. The National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam, where it has strength, will be sponsoring summer efforts. SDS regions may do the same in other parts of the country.

These projects can work effectively to broaden the base of opposition to the war, and construct the connections among people moving in opposition that can lead to concerted activity in other areas. Where there is no peace candidate or radical electoral campaign, a summer project can be the focus for accelerated efforts in sending speakers around to community groups, unions, churches, and clubs, in building group of opponents

of the war at the most local levels, in campaigning around the draft issue, in making links to community groups whose own social programs and priorities are being jeopardized by the national defense priority, in doing research and publications on the war and its causes, etc.

The NCC summer projects will frequently involve their sending activists to reinforce local end-the-war committees with full-time people. A simpler model for summer projects would be for chapters to arrange with other anti-war groups in the same area for a summer program requiring full-time students.

It has been suggested that SDS take on responsibility for a training session at the beginning of the summer for people embarking on these projects. The NC will have to make a judgment on the extent of demand for this kind of activity.

Last spring, following the April SDS March on Washington, we launched summer community organizing projects around the war. Although a number of these community projects began with the goal of door-to-door methods of building local committees, a number of developments resulted in their transforma-

tion into city-wide single-issue committees based primarily on highly politicized people ideologically opposed to the war. First, some old-left groups operated within the committees to aim that in that direction. Secondly, the Assembly of Unrepresented People called for Washington, August 6-9, forced local committees to concentrate on bringing out the already-committed people.

This summer the war will be much more a part of the daily concern of Americans than it was last year, and developments over the year have made the country open to the arguments we wish to forward.

BEACON PRESS ANTHOLOGY. An anthology of writings of the New Student Left, with that title, and edited by two students at Oberlin College, Dennis Hale and Mitchell Cohen, has been published by Beacon Press. The anthology includes 14 pieces (half the volume) that were originally published by SDS, including large extracts from The Port Huron Statement, and various studies including "An Interracial Movement of the Poor," a couple of papers by Potter, by Hayden, by Haber, etc. The editors did not ask SDS for permission to reprint these items, nor have they given any indication that they want to make

their volume available to people in the movement or in SDS through any special arrangement. In fact, no communication was ever received relating to this anthology. The editors are associated with a magazine published at Oberlin, The Activist. The anthology sells for \$5 in hard cover. Beacon Press is the publishing house of the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

SDS is in desperate financial shape. This is true of the National Office, almost all the regional offices, the printing office, and some of the community projects. Outstanding debts run to several thousand dollars, and our ability to proceed with the organization's program is severely restricted. This is true, in large measure, because the organization in the past months has placed a conscious priority on internal service functions. We have New Left Notes appearing regularly, there are five regional offices, and the membership file is up-to-date. If SDS is to survive, its members will have to sustain it. If every member sends one dollar, we can pay our debts, and proceed.

-- the staff

I want to counterpose two ideas about man's fate, each the prophecy of a Western humanist. One is Leon Trotsky's. "This is the age," he wrote, "of permanent revolution." The other prophecy, equally large, is founded on an equally impressive fund of evidence. "This," wrote Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "is the American century."

In each of these ideas, there seems to be an appealing eagerness for the future. I do not presuppose that one is mean and the other heroic; that one is on its face the wiser or the more humane. I am not trying to set the stage for an ideological melodrama. Our situation is of course too serious for that.

It becomes clear these days to many of us that it is in the collision of these two prophecies, of the opposite politics they rationalize and activate, that we confront the more violent realities of our time in life. Quite apart from any judgments about the right and the wrong of the matter, we can simply observe that it is this collision of two high hopes that now destroys Viet-Nam, and that deflates our expectations of a better country and a better world. Unless something changes, we suspect that this collision will recur elsewhere. There is just now no particular reason to believe that it cannot finally undo us all.

At least we can try to understand this possible destiny of ours. And at this especially bad moment, this means that we who protest American policy in Viet-Nam must try to understand it not as the product of the morally crippled, the intellectually defunct, the ignorant, or the self-serving--as I think some of us in the peace movement have been driven by desperation to do--but instead as the sometimes almost poignant attempts of good men to make a better world more possible. As I assume you know, I think these good men have failed. And much more: that if their failure could be reversed at this moment, it would still stand as a permanent historical fact--one that has fastened itself once and for all into our national history, and the horror of which has long since cost us the right even to dream of national atonement. I am not here to flatter exhausted men with condolences offered in the name of their victims. I am only trying to understand this tragedy that we are forced to behold, and to see if there are ways in which it might finally be ended.

We do not know what our decision-makers say to one another when they make decisions. We have no access to the inner chambers or the memoranda of state. For the Viet-Nam war, we have only the official explanations, the public ones. They are rather like television commercials. One of these has it that we are fighting for South Viet-Nam's independence. We say this in the same breath in which we pledge our support of those Geneva accords that assert the unity of all Viet-Nam, that explicitly deny the permanent division which the notion of an independent south affirms. Another commercial shows us defending the freedom of the South Vietnamese--in the person of a military strongman whose hero is Hitler and who believes his enemy, and ours, to be closer to the people's aspirations than his own government. Still another is that we are defending that country against an outside aggressor, a view that the Britist might have taken with equal reason, by the way, when she supported the Confederacy in our own Civil War.

These very sentimental arguments are not really arguments at all. They are only pieties: good reasons for fighting some war, they are therefore attached to this one, with whose history and politics, however, they have nothing

watched horrified as East Germany and Poland and Hungary stood up only in order to be crushed. And Russia's horror must have been at least as great as she watched the New Germany come alive and the erection of a totally-encircling political and military arsenal, and as she heard her enemies speak loudly of "rollback" and "liberation." We all learned, on both sides, how to live with our own ghosts at perpetual attendance. The war that did not take place became a way of life.

By about 1950, the territorial lines of the European Cold War had been fitfully and sometimes bloodily agreed upon. Stalin had kept his wartime promise to Churchill and had made no move to protect the 1944 Greek rebellion. The United States had made no move to protect Czechoslovakia from the Red coup of that same year. It was a period in which the wary understandings of our own time were taking shape--each side remaining confident of final victory, confident that the other side was wrong about history, wrong about economics, wrong about human nature, and wrong, above all, about the future.

But at some point, the metabolism of the East-West Cold War changed. Perhaps the decisive year was 1962, in which the Soviets accepted the humiliation of the missile showdown, we accepted the permanence of the Cuban revolution, and both sides together produced the limited nuclear test ban treaty.

Today, we are the bewildered witnesses of a Russian foreign policy that can tolerate with little apparent anguish and less outcry our nuclearizing of West Germany, our Viet-Nam outrages and our Dominican theft; and of an American foreign policy, equally bizarre by Cold War standards, that can applaud the Soviets for their diplomatic success at Tashkent, that can call openly in a State of the Union address for more trade with the Red Bloc, that can even cast furtively hopeful glances to the Soviet Union as a maker of a Viet-Nam peace--and that meanwhile says nothing at all when this same Soviet Union undertakes the arming of our Vietnamese enemy, makes the most energetic and effective diplomatic incursions in our Asiatic influence sphere, and promises at the recent Havana conference to supply arms to Latin American revolutionaries.

All this is evidently quite all right with us. Our anger is now reserved for China--the same China which, compared to Russia, does nothing but make speeches, does nearly nothing for the Vietnamese, does not have a single foot-soldier on foreign soil, and which poses no offensive military threat to the United States whatsoever.

Our relation with the Soviet Union seems to have become an arrangement of convenience. Perhaps even a clandestine marriage of state, in which hostility is no longer fundamental to our encounter, in which military conflict becomes historically outmoded, in which threats become manageable with computers, and in which political objectives even begin noticeably to converge. The Cold War no longer finds us peering at each other through gunsights. Instead, we verge on an integrated aid program in Afghanistan; we may take equal relief from the bloodbath in Indonesia; we are in spiritual solidarity on the Kashmir question; we congratulate one another on our super-scientific exploits in the allegedly nonpolitical vicinity of the moon. In the Soviet Union, the Great Capitalist Economic Collapse is no longer anticipated daily. Over here, our own political cognoscenti have got the signal. The New Propaganda is abroad. We are allowed the information that Brezhnev and Kosygin are

# WORLD REVOLUTION AND AMERICAN CONTAINMENT

by Carl Oglesby

to do. They are merely the first line of state propaganda, used because they are easy, convenient, popular, and effective. But not because there is no better argument.

There is a better one, I think, one that remains somewhat in the background just because of its greater complexity, and that has never to my knowledge been made wholly explicit. I am going to try to reconstruct it--to describe what I imagine may be the humane, hopeful, and liberal vision that convinces humane, hopeful, and liberal intellectuals of the need to fight in Viet-Nam, whatever the cost. I do this for the simple reason that this war-protest is a protest of persuasion. Our assumption is that if this was can be deprived of its reasons, it will be forced to disappear. It is important, then, to get at the good reasons for the war, the ones that move good people to support it.

## the cold war matrix

To understand the Viet-Nam war, we have to put ourselves again at the threshold of the East-West Cold War.

Two enemies of long-standing face each other across a devastated Europe. Their grievances ran deep, and their wartime alliance had finally done as much to increase as to diminish their mutual distrust. One saw the other as threatening it with a powerful idea that could reach like acid into Europe's exposed and desperate heart. In Italy, Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and France, there were hard signs that men would no longer be satisfied with a return to the ante-bellum ways of organizing society or the old alliance patterns. In the vanguard of this restlessness, spreading it and using it, was the Communist Party--a centralized international bureaucracy under the direct control of Moscow. The United States had fought a war in Europe and another in Asia to preserve certain values and institutions and an idea of social order that simply were not idle matters for her. She wins the war only to see those values threatened again--perhaps more menacingly in 1945 than in 1940.

For her part, the exhausted Soviet Union found her revolution still under siege. Condemned by the West from the time of her revolution, the victim of a large-scale Western military intervention in her Civil War, ostracized throughout the '20s and '30s from the political and economic affairs of Europe, offered up sacrificially to the Wehrmacht through Chamberlain's appeasement policy, battered for five years by the big part of Hitler's power and Churchill's politics, her principal cities smoking and her farms wasted, her industry sick from war and her people in pain, she looked out over that Germany whose invasion she had so expensively repulsed only to see another enemy more powerful than the first.

And the rumor ran through Europe, even as Nazi Germany was about to fall, that these five years of war will prove to have been mere prelude to that more fundamental, that more fateful and "historical" of wars, the one that will make the whole world safe again for democratic capitalism. In spite of San Francisco, Potsdam, Bretton Woods--who did not know what was coming?

But the Russian-American war was of course not fought. Rather, it was transfigured. Stalin's seizure of East Europe as a buffer zone against aggression from a rebuilt Germany would be allowed--at least for a while. The West would emplace its own iron across that iron frontier and bide its time. We

Above is the first part of a speech SDS President Carl Oglesby made on a recent tour of Eastern schools. It will be included in a book that Macmillan is publishing in May. Copyright © 1966, Carl Oglesby. All rights reserved. Permission given to SDS chapters to reproduce.

skilled bureaucratic technicians--an improvement over the devils of yesterday; we are told how one obscure and curious Professor Libermann, in the name of the profit motive, has triumphantly challenged the Marxist economists in their lair. And C. L. Sulzburger of the New York Times just now suggests that the explicit Soviet-American animosity may begin to be only the facade that conceals, for political reasons, a more fundamental implicit alliance.

The fact that the seemingly predestined war did not take place is perhaps what now beguiles us. A substitute for war had evidently been created. Most often with an edgewise and devious motion, power came to understand itself in distinctively new ways, came to accept in new ways the existence of other power. This was not a mere renovation of 19th Century sphere-of-influence politics. The demands of power slowly lost their metaphysical status and become historical--and therefore subject to change. Positions became negotiable, attitudes mutable, antagonisms permeable. Politics is detheologized in our generation; it becomes secular and pragmatic.

How did this happen? By what luck of wisdom was the inevitable reduced to the problematic? The problematic to the improbable? And above all, what lessons are to be learned from that transformation?

I believe that there is a model for conflict management that statesmen can now construct on the basis of our European experience of the last 20 years. This model is constructed in response to the question, "How can we so manage global conflicts of interest that they will not erupt into global warfare?" I will argue that it is the application of this model to the Asian situation that represents the fundamental mistake of American foreign policy.

Let me describe this model. It consists, I think, of four main elements.

First, each side must commit itself to the view that global war is an unsatisfactory means of securing global objectives, since what that war may win is always less than what it will lose. This commitment **must** be established. But certain naive nations may not understand this. Such naivete is dangerous. It therefore becomes essential for the wise nations to produce that commitment among the unwise. The wise do this by producing military power, and by so exhibiting and manipulating that power before the eyes of the naive that they become convinced that its use against them, under certain clearly specified conditions, is entirely automatic. Power plus the credibility of its use equals deterrence, which makes all nations pacifists. "Peace," says our Strategic Air Command--and it says this without a snicker--"peace is our profession."

Second, it is mandatory that a global truce line be unambiguously drawn and unswervingly respected. Maintenance of that truce line is a top-priority matter. Under most conditions, in fact, no political objective is more important than its protection.

Third, the process of defining and securing that truce line is identical with the process in which the rival powers build up information about each other and set up a communication system whose channels are continuously being regularized and made more secure. Above all, it is through this process that a common experience of a common task is created. That experience becomes the basis of trust. We begin to know this enemy of ours. We begin to learn how to dance with him. We begin to trust him not to expect too much. In his actions, we recognize our motives. We grow sensitive even to his special internal problems. We see him return occasionally to the temple of his nation's myths and enact there for the benefit of the unsuspecting masses--and those narrow-eyed old priests, the generals--the eternal drama of his patri-

otism, his heroism--his tribalism. But we understand. We do this ourselves. We avert our eyes, pretending not to notice. He will return the favor. We are all men of the world, who know that tactics can sometimes be ordinary tactfulness.

And finally, the dividend of this patience is that the slowly-incubated common interests so necessary to a more productive relationship will have had time to take root. I think this is the crux of a distinctively liberal understanding of power politics. There is an underlying faith that men can work together in the world, that nations can secure peace, if only they can escape from their own past. This means that there must be a period in which history does not take place. There must be a silence, a pause, a stillness between us, a kind of sleep. If history is the interruption of war by truces, then what we call the Cold War, being neither war nor peace, is most fundamentally an absence of history. If history is the continuous rearrangement or reconfiguration of boundaries and the power clusters they stand for, then the Cold War is--again--an absence of history.

Put in another way, the Cold War represents a global attempt to interrupt an all-too-continuous flow of history--to interrupt it, to allow the pulsing violence of its energies to stabilize, to dissipate, and in dissipating, to make possible for the first time a new round in history--one in which peace is not merely a lull, the end papers one turns through rapidly on the way to a new volume about a new war, but instead a purposive union of the people of the earth on the tide of a universal consensus; one in which violence is abandoned once and for all, and in which all human energy may be invested in the happy struggle to master and make more beneficent the total human environment.

This is not a bad vision, this new history. And the drift of Soviet-American relations over the past 20 years--at least one may so imagine--is full of good lessons on how to get there. To sum up that recipe: First, there must be common acceptance of the unacceptability of global warfare as an instrument of policy. Second, a truce line must be established and made secure. Third, that line having been drawn, both sides must cooperate in superintending it. This is the only way to turn suspicion into trust. Finally, the former foes, now linked to one another by this shared experience, begin to dismantle the barriers between them--very gently, of course, as indefuzing a bomb--and start moving toward that final rearrangement of the terms of their relationship which allows them to work together in a world made human and secure.

Look now at Asia through the structure of this model.

Red China and the United States glower at one another across the Pacific--rather, across the Formosa Strait. They are enemies, no question of it. As the Western Democracies had tried to reverse the Russian revolution with their military power, so the United States had tried to reverse the Chinese revolution. Frustrated in that venture and nursing perhaps a bitter shame for having failed, we confront in the Korea years a question quite like the question of 1946: Will we unleash our power and do the deed to China once and for all by the straight-ahead application of our strategic force? Or shall we have an Asian Cold War, too? For a while, there is a political twilight in the world. But for one or another reason, we decide for another Cold War. By 1954, we are copying our European policy in Asia treaty for treaty, bastion for bastion. China is another Russia. This Asian Europe of ours is fragmented, but discernible at last: partly in Korea, partly in Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, India, Southeast Asia. We stare perplexed at this geopolitical Rorschach test, and gradually find a gestalt, discover a pattern and a meaning.

The first principle of the European wisdom is applied: No big war with China. General MacArthur is removed. The second principle must now be driven home: We hold here, they there. The truce line is fixed. No violence must be done to it. It is the only hope we have that Chinese people decades from now will at last clasp hands with American bankers. Nor is this truce line a one-sided matter. Korea remains only divided. Chiang Kai-shek remains present but pent up. We wring our hands for the rich ruling clergy of Tibet, but make no move to intervene; it is simply the Asian Hungary. Peking can trust us to make no sudden moves against the northern half of Viet-Nam. Let the socialist government there make what it will of its opportunities. But let there be no incursions on this border. Let Cambodia "lean to one side" in her neutralism; but let there be no touching of the Thailand status quo. This line must hold. Accept this line, Red China, and we can begin to talk of other matters: of doctors and reporters; of your participation in the disarmament talks; of a somewhat freer economic arrangement with our industrial proteges in Japan; of your membership, even, in the United Nations. There will be difficulties, of course, but perhaps with a little time and cooperation, all these, and much more, can be arranged. But the line of truce in the Asian Cold War must not be shaken, we say; and until that fact is accepted, there is no sense in talking yet about the future.

Those who see Asian affairs in this way must be very exasperated--both with China and the American peace movement. They do not need to be reminded of the carnage in Viet-Nam. They have seen it closer than we beatniks, peace-niks, and Vietniks ever shall. They are men, these Cold War dialecticians; they have sons; they are as anguished as the next one at the sight of scorched earth and burnt flesh and torture. We inform them that their war is not helping the Vietnamese. They want to say: "Of course we know that, do you take us for idiots?" We tell them they are in fact laying the nation waste and in so doing are even making more communists there. They want to say: "Obviously! We struggle with this problem day and night. But why can't you see," they say to us critics, "that Red China must yield to the partition of Viet-Nam? Of course that's hard for Viet-Nam to take. But is it really more than history demanded of the Germans, whose society was after all mature and a million times more integrated than Viet-Nam's? This tiny sliver of a country that has been partitioned for most of its life--is its present partition really so high a price to pay if in return for that we purchase stability in Asia? And if the price of refusing partition is the undermining of that truce line upon which we build all our hopes for an Oriental reconciliation? "Be realistic," they say to us naifs; "this is an imperfect world, and history is all against us. We are doing everything we can to change man's fate. We do this not only in the teeth of China and this scandalously persistent Vietnamese rebellion, but here at home we must also fend off you idealists who want an impossible peace and those Steve Canyons yonder who want an unthinkable war."

Some of us object: You have not proved that this Viet-Nam war is China's fault. Even now, your gravest charge has to do with a half dozen MIG-21s sitting on an airfield near Hanoi and a few thousand technicians who only build roads--in the north, by the way, not the south. It is a revolution, we say, and it came not from China's export commissariat, but from the torpid colonial feudalism of that society; and no one at all familiar with the history of Viet-Nam could question this.

#### the NLF break our rules

But for such an argument, there is now a quite intriguing answer. The answer is not that this description is untrue. Just now, in fact, General Maxwell Taylor tells the Rotary Club of New York that, "to Hanoi, China is the traditional, distrusted enemy." Presumably, this means to him that Hanoi and Peking are not quite bound up in conspiratorial solidarity. So perhaps it is not the case that Mao Tse-tung made a secret decision years ago through the mountain gates of Yunnan into the hands of Ho Chi Minh, who sent it south to a hidden headquarters deep in Nam-Bo, where the old Vietminh guns were laying

in wait for the highsign. The answer is merely: so what? The answer is that this does not matter. Our policies cannot be asked to react to speculations about structures; they must react to events. And the very plain fact of the matter is this: If the Chinese **did** control Hanoi, and Hanoi, the NLF, then the situation in Viet-Nam would look **exactly as it does!** Whether we confront in Viet-Nam a replica or an extension of the Chinese will, whether this rebellion is an intentional or accidental copy of China's policy or the thing-in-itself--this makes no difference. China is the threat, and the appearance of her spirit within the forbidden zone, at whatever time and through whatever agency, must be denied. Thus, to speak of the "origins" of the war is politically frivolous. In substance, in aspiration, and in effect, Chinese-like or plain straight Chinese, this war remains indistinguishable from the war the Chinese want; and consequently, it must be treated as if it **were** a Chinese war.

Such a tour de force provides then for the further and quite reasonable complaint that if China does **not** control Hanoi, and through Hanoi, the NLF, **then by God she should!** The politics of Cold-War peace-keeping makes it essential for major powers to control the events within their spheres of influence. For a great state not to have control over minor confederate states is inexcusable. Without that control, the means through which conflict can be managed no longer exist. Statesmen are then faced with an unpredictably turbulent environment. Less control means greater danger. It thus becomes essential, in the name of peace, for China to commit the expansionist crime of which she stands accused. And the American refusal to accept the NLF as the responsible agent in this war begins to seem not obtuse at all, but instead an almost exquisitely subtle profundity: for this refusal is a concealed attempt to extend Chinese authority into North Viet-Nam.

This leads us to speculate further than an aim of American policy there, one that just recently begins to shape itself from the quickening difficulties of that struggle, may in fact be the restoration in Asia of Soviet influence. China, the reasoning may go, has been given chance after chance to prove herself a realistic and responsible world power--clue after clue, signal after signal, whose meaning she is either too inexperienced to understand or too intransigent to accept. Having proved herself ineducable, having flunked the grammar of modern power, she may not be trusted. Russia, that old and trusty scholar who knows all the rules, must be brought in to rescue the grave situation. Just now she commits more military aid to Hanoi. Do we cry murder? Not at all. We quite well understand. She must whisper to these cocky rebels the truth that she has learned about America. She must procure influence among them to make that truth take hold. To get that influence, she must be their friend, help them out, give them assurances against Chinese reprisals. She must renew her revolutionary certificate. Russia, whom we have never blamed for this war, and whom we do not yet blame even as she makes Viet-Nam's skies more hazardous for our young pilots, becomes our concealed ace in this most Oriental of games.

The defense of the Viet-Nam war that I have tried just now to describe seems to me deeply wrong, although I think it is quite reasonable. In fact, it is just that reasonableness that strikes me as its peculiar danger--the allure of the depths. But some of you may find it hard to accept that such a view of our affairs may have anything very much to do with the Viet-Nam war.

On the 30th of January, Under Secretary of State George Ball made a speech at Northwestern University. The *New York Times* of the following date quotes him as saying that our commitment to fight in Viet-Nam "without tearing and weakening the entire structure on which the world's security depends." The news-story goes on: "That postwar structure," Mr. Ball said, "embraces several provisional boundaries and lines of demarcation, in Viet-Nam as in Korea, Berlin and Germany, drawn only until political settlements may be found. "But these settlements have not yet been achieved and we cannot permit their resolution to be pre-empted by force," he asserted. "This is the issue in Viet-Nam. This is what we are fighting for. This is why we are there." "Our resistance," he continues, "is part of a continuing struggle to prevent the Communists from upsetting the fragile balance of power through force or the threat of force." The story summarizes: "A main focus of the struggle," he suggested, "has shifted recently from Europe to Asia because the Soviet Union, having grown powerful, has begun to 'have a stake in the status quo' and in avoiding war." "The purpose of the forcible containment of Communist China," he said, "is to induce a similar change in its outlook." (Johnson in Honolulu; James C. Mellon today in Hearings: ditto: Europe - Asia)

I am intrigued by the growing prevalence of this habit of thought in America. I should like to speculate a moment on its origins.

The overwhelming tendency of our statesmen to hold **someone else** responsible for the Viet-Nam revolution is already fully in view. If we cannot win in the south, the theory goes, that must be because the war really exists in the north; if we cannot win in the north, that means the war must after all be hiding its heart elsewhere. Cambodia? Laos? And if not there, then where? Is it any wonder that this trail quite soon leads our pragmatists to China? Perhaps this stems from our difficult national experience from the '20s and-through part of the '50s with what we call the international Communist conspiracy. It was apparently once true that events in the Socialist world were commanded from Moscow; and although we note the slow dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the emergence to new independence of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, the downright rebelliousness of Albania, and overall the Sino-Soviet split, we really do not take these signs very seriously. Alliances are dominated by leader nations that tell other nations what to do. That's that. We add to this legend and this partial truth, first, the supreme domestic political power of anti-Communism, and second, the still-burning trauma of our McCarthy days. These form a main part of the intellectual ambience of our policy bureaucrats. The result is that for them there are such things as privileged interpretations, favored theories, preferred explanations. That is, if an event in the world can be explained in a number of ways, and if one of those ways makes use of the Red conspiracy theory, then **that** way will be preferred and accepted even when it is not conclusive. The Cold War produces a mind that prefers the dramatic, the sinister, and above all the **rational**--conspiracies have all these spooky qualities--and a mind that believes what is by no means true, that it is always safer to be too suspicious than to be too accepting.

There is also the lustre of the successful. Our assumption that Moscow master-minded the Red Bloc led to policies that we imagine to have worked very well. Confronted with a similar-seeming situation, policy-makers naturally incline to rely on battle-tested--one might better say battle-**hardened**--beliefs. This drift is of course reinforced by the superficial similarities between the near European past and the Asian present: both areas dominated by a huge revolutionary state that considers us to be its enemy, in both of whose revolutions we played an antagonistic and frustrated role; each holding in its sphere a number of vassal states; each espousing the export of revolution into our own international turf. These similarities are rich and numerous enough to exert a quite hypnotic and thought-killing influence, even to produce, in reminding us of Europe, what we might call a politics of nostalgia--if not a politics of dejavu.

But I think the strongest reason for our plot-theory's acceptability is just that we ourselves have become such a manipulating power, and such a manipulated people. WE conspire, WE wheel and deal, twist arms, employ surrogates;

(continued on page 4)

## Oglesby

(continued from page 3)

then why not China, too? We are intrigued to find that North Korea's Kim Il-sung seems to wend his own political way; but we prefer to understand that either as a cunning Chinese trick or in terms of a moment's uncertainty in the Sino-Soviet power struggle. It is surely not what it seems. Appearances are deceiving. The strong are always relentless; the weak are always submissive.

## an American Dream for Asia

Hence, the New American Mentality, which Prof. Marshall Sahlins has called "the hard-headed surrealism."

Let me go into this surrealistic Asian politics of ours. It seems to me that it suffers from four difficulties. One is the insufficiency of its ideological base, a form of pluralism. A second is that it badly misreads the history of the East-West Cold War. A third is that it tries wholly to conceal the important economic aims of American foreign politics. And fourth--the most serious--is that it fails to reckon with the enormous differences between Europe and Asia.

Let's consider these in that order.

The theory bases its hopes for the future on the belief that powers A, B, and C can be "counter-vailed" by one another to produce a stable environment in which the important demands of each are satisfied--a theory that happens to be very popular at the moment among some Harvard graduates, not to mention certain lower intellectuals. This is the theory by which we now explain the harmonious balance of forces in our own society. The global version of this pluralism depicts the West and East as leaning against each other in such a way that equilibrium is achieved, struggle transcended, and sufficient common satisfaction guaranteed that violent, abrupt, or massive alteration of the present situation are no longer attractive. Only recall Mr. Ball's comment about the Soviet Union: power brings an investment in the status quo; China too must learn not to rock the boat.

## critique

I will not make an extended critique of this notion. Let me make just two points. The first is philosophical. The theory assumes that struggle will always arrange itself in a kind of draw, and this draw is in effect a dynamic equilibrium that is always in the general interest. Dynamic equilibrium may be a quite valid concept for physical mechanics, but for history it is a loud contradiction in terms. The concept treats history as if it were something like a cathedral, in which the force of one buttress, flying against an opposing one, holds the center in place. But the architectonic model is a static one, and history is not static. Struggle produces change, not stillness, and change flows forward toward other struggle and the generation of new historic forms: history does not finally come to an end. Since you will recognize this as an Hegelian idea, I may as well suggest, too, that pluralism is at bottom an attempt of the conservative society to rescue itself from change by trying to encompass change in a steady-state system.

## pluralism of the strong

The second point about pluralism is more practical. All the evidence that can be assembled to prove, for example, that the government-business-labor

struggle has been essentially resolved, and permanently so, can be quite differently interpreted. What seems a much better inference is that we have just now a coalition of the big and the organized against the small and the scattered, the latter existing in the person of the urban and rural poor, the struggling small businessman, and above all the almost wholly excluded Negro. There is no pluralist balance here. There are a victory and a defeat that may amount really to nothing but a momentary lull after the turbulence of the American '30s. Anyone who does not believe that turbulence has made roots in this country should take a long slow walk some day in the streets of the American underclass.

## the reality--revolution

The pluralist model of international politics is an even greater pipe dream. This country will not be allowed to remain as it is. We cannot continue to hold ourselves half way open to change. We will either open or close entirely. Asia, Africa, and Latin America are just now beginning to groan awake. They will ask us impolitely to make up our minds as to whether they will be granted their humanity. The new lines will be drawn from our answers.

My second objection to the power-politics-for-peace defense of our Vietnam war is that its principles are based on a much too generous reading of our own motives and far-sightedness in the European Cold War. We have no right at all to pretend now that reconciliation was our objective. Even many American statesmen saw the Truman Doctrine of 1946 as falling little short of an outright declaration of war. The Marshall Plan, which had more complex and I think better motives, could itself be seen as the reconstruction of super power in Western Germany--the sort of power that would become a bulwark, a magnate, and an outward thrust, and that made mandatory the Russian securing of its position in East Germany. Through the Eisenhower-Dulles years, our containment policy was still struggling to remain militant. The fact that containment turned into co-existence instead of so-called liberation--or war--has little at all to do with Acheson or Dulles or Rusk or Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, or least of all Johnson; but rather with Europe's refusal (barring Germany) to accept the Atlantic military alliance as a permanent and dominant feature of European politics. Even now, we continue to seek the total integration of the Atlantic world, continue to arrange that integration in terms of a Washington-Bonn axis, and continue, via the multilateral nuclear force proposals, endlessly redecorated, to perpetuate the vision of a West Europe bristling with armed hostility for the East. Containment, then, cannot be seen as having done its moment's job of work and having gracefully yielded to co-existence. Containment wanted to become liberation and may still pine for such a destiny. If something else happens, if co-existence carries the day, that is because containment failed, and it failed because its heart was broken in London and Paris. Where is the London or Paris of Asia? Seoul? Manila? Taiwan? Singapore? Bangkok? Even Tokyo? The only remote candidates are Phnom Penh and Djakarta--and that happens to be a very gloomy observation.

A still more basic objection to the theory I have described is that it presumes America to want only peace. But that is not true. We want a certain kind of peace. I want to say this very bluntly: We want a peace in which the world will be safe for the American businessman to do his doings everywhere, on terms always advantageous, in environments always protected by friendly or puppet oligarchies, by the old foreign grads of Fort Benning, or if push comes to shove, by the Marines themselves. We want a world integrated in terms of the stability of labor, resources, production, and markets; and we want that integrated world to be managed by our own business people. The United States, that is, is an imperialist power.

(continued next week)

## NAC MINUTES

submitted by Paul Booth

**Finances.** The financial situation once again is atrocious. While taking an average of \$30 a day, we are running up debts for minimum fixed costs of \$2500 a month not counting printing, etc. We are now \$4600 in debt, including two issues of *New Left Notes*, two weeks back salary, etc.

Booth was commissioned to write a letter to the membership asking for \$1 a piece, and explaining the situation. He was also commissioned to place an ad in the *Guardian* for this week. Webb will make a proposal to the NC for the national showing of *Salt of the Earth* (for political as well as money reasons).

The N.O. and the U. of Chicago chapter will hopefully cooperate soon on arranging that. Judy Kissinger is still trying to get three concerts for one weekend in May for Phil Ochs; U. of Illinois at Chicago and U. of Wisconsin can both do it but not at the same time.

**Chapter Institute.** Kittredge and other staff will push hard this week to increase attendance at the pre-NC chapter institute.

**Staff.** Due to the financial straits, the NAC decided to cut down on staff, "laying-off" three: Elie Caukins (typist); Bruce Schmiechen (printer); and Jeff Segal (office mgr.). Typing will have to be improvised, and there already exists a backlog of literature that can be printed if we had printing going on. For the time being we will have to go without a printer, but the NAC decided to advertise for applications for the position assuming that it will re-open eventually. Office managerial functions will be improvised: Judy will do the mail, Speck will order supplies, fix electric staplers, etc.

**Jack Kittredge.** Jack announced his impending (1 month hence) move to Madison to set up a local operation for the National Student Christian Federation. He volunteered to go off salary for the month, and subsist on back salary payments.

**Kansas printing office.** Booth was asked to investigate the printing operation at Kansas to ascertain the source of its slow performance.

**Chicago region relations.** A number of advantages have accrued to the local people that do not accrue to other regions, and that cost the N. O. money in dribs and drabs. For instance the bill for their participation in the March 26 Parade ends up here; this was for banners and posters and a postcard mailing. Although he has reduced his time with them, they are serviced by national staff member Greg Kaslo. They have free office space in the back of our office. One

local member was overheard saying that the office was "easy to steal from" to supply his chapter. At any rate, the bulk of the local people want to move their regional office out of 63rd Street, and the NAC commends this intention. Rigid rules to cut out previous inequities will be promulgated; Speck will draw them up. And Booth will go to the next Regional Council to discuss the situation. (One opinion on the NAC was that all could be forgiven if the region supplied volunteer labor for the office, but it doesn't do that either). Recent mail from New York and other regions has reinforced the impression that financial difficulties are spread throughout the organization.

**Printing of New Left Notes.** The following proposal by Speck for NLN was presented. That it be moved to Carol Ackerman's composing shop, at the weekly rate of \$190. This would cover composing and printing, for which we now pay \$175 and up depending on the number of headlines and photos (\$190 would be flat regardless of photos). It would also include the paste-up job, currently done here. This would be done at her shop with the guidance of our editor every Thursday morning or afternoon. It would

LA JUNTA, Calif.

Some time ago I sent you a postal money order for \$3 for membership in SDS. Then I decided not to join after all -- and I wrote you to that effect.

Well, after reading about SDS in the latest issues of *Cavalier* and *Playboy*, and reading over all the SDS literature I have, I came to the conclusion that SDS most of all would be the only organization on the democratic Left that I could join. My views are somewhat muddled but float in and near the general democratic Left position -- mostly to your political right and I think that SDS is about the best group I could join now.

So on the \$3 I sent in, I would like an SDS membership card and button. . . .

be done Friday at 1:00 promptly; we have currently had some problems with schedule at the printer -- partly our fault. It would be delivered to our door -- at present we have to trek 20-25 miles each way. Instead of the price being double for an 8-page issue (this has been proposed as a way to put out "Bulletin"-type material), it would cost \$325. The price for an extra thousand at 4 pages is \$15. We will have to pay 1/2 of it in advance each week, and the other half on delivery. And they do an extra fold, so we only have to fold the paper once before stapling it -- that last fold is done by our machine, reducing the mailing job considerably. And it's nearer.

However, on the next day, Russell by phone got NAC members to change their decision by explaining a new printing arrangement he had worked out without their knowledge that incorporated the advantages of the Speck proposal and yet cost \$10 less per issue. It amounts to changing printers while still having it verityped at The Woodlawn Organization shop. That was seen as more convenient all the way round since they are located a half block down the street and a good working relationship has been developed with the people working in their shop.

## NEW LEFT NOTES

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