

# THE MILITANT

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## The U.S. Record in Vietnam — 10 Years of Aggression

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# Why Are the People Denied a Voice On Crucial Issue of War In Vietnam?

## Bombings Evoke Int'l Protests

By Barry Sheppard

Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam has provoked protests in many cities here and abroad. Further demonstrations have been planned by student, radical and peace groups in this country and more will probably be taking place around the world.

In New York on Feb. 13, some 2,000 persons responded to a call by Women Strike for Peace and picketed at the UN. Various groups brought down their own signs. Participating were the Young Socialist Alliance, the Socialist Workers Party, W.E.B. DuBois Club, Progressive Labor Movement and others.

On Feb. 15, the YSA at Columbia University called a street meeting, and challenged any Columbia student or professor to debate on the resolution that the U.S. should withdraw from Vietnam.

A number of demonstrations took place in Boston. Over 300 students and young workers joined to protest on the Boston Commons Feb. 13, in a demonstration called by the Ad Hoc Committee Against the War in Vietnam, composed of the Young Socialist Alliance, Students for a Democratic Society, and the May 2 Committee. Participants carried signs such as "U.S. Profits Depend on Puppet Dictatorships," "Strategic Hamlets — Concentration Camps," and "Vietnam Is Not Our Country — Mississippi Is."

While the demonstrators chanted "Stop the war in Vietnam," and "Send the troops to Alabama, not to Vietnam," there was counter-picketing by about 30 rightists with signs reading: "Johnson is carrying out Goldwater's Policy in Vietnam." They were obviously pleased by the truth of this statement.

"Saigon NO! Selma SI!" was  
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NEW YORK DEMONSTRATION. Several thousand New Yorkers answered Women Strike for Peace call for anti-Vietnam-war demonstration at UN Feb 13. Then contingent of demonstrators marched to Soviet, British and French UN missions to present call for negotiations on issue.

## Student Group Urges Step-Up In Opposition to Vietnam War

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 — The Students for a Democratic Society today called on students to "continue to demonstrate" against the "dangerous and foolish" policy that the Johnson administration is pursuing in Vietnam. In a press release issued here, SDS urged students to "continue to demonstrate as long as the present provocations continue," and urged increased efforts in preparing for the March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam. The Wash-

ington demonstration will be held Saturday, April 17, and is being organized by SDS.

Paul Potter, president of SDS, sent a telegram to President Johnson today which says: "In times such as these it is difficult for rational men of good will to know how to speak to you. Before us spreads daily the specter of world war, brought on by your administration's seeming inability to grapple with reality. Rather than facing the ugly facts as the Amer-

ican position in Vietnam deteriorates, your response has been to lash out wildly at straw men. No matter how many Cambodians, North Vietnamese, or Chinese you may choose to bomb, the war in South Vietnam will go on — for it is they, the people of South Vietnam, that we are fighting. Sane men in capitals throughout the world today are hoping and praying that you will not escalate this mad war further. Peace de-

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## Should One Man Endanger Lives Of All Mankind?

By Fred Halstead

FEB. 17 — President Lyndon B. Johnson, having taken the first steps in an undeclared war by ordering U.S. attacks on North Vietnam, is now making the decision in secret on whether to proceed with an escalation which could push humanity over the brink into world nuclear war.

The people are not being allowed to decide, discuss, or — all indications are — even to be informed of Johnson's reasoning before the fateful decisions are made. As this fact becomes increasingly clear, misgivings, fear and indignation are being expressed almost universally overseas, and even among officials in Washington, and by the most sober and authoritative capitalist journalists.

In starting the undeclared war against North Vietnam with air strikes Feb. 7, 8 and 10, Johnson has already shown himself to be as reckless in action as Goldwater ever was in words. By proclaiming these bombings to be demonstrations of a new policy of "retaliation" in response to activities of the revolutionary forces of South Vietnam, Johnson has started down a one-way road. He has placed himself in a position where it will be difficult and clumsy to turn around, and horrifyingly easy to slip into world war.

An open letter to Johnson, printed as an advertisement in the *N.Y. Times* Feb. 16 and signed by 400 faculty members of New England universities, points out: "A few guerrillas can trigger American reactions that widen the war. The events of the past week are leading step by step along the path of war with China."

These faculty members urge negotiations to end the war in Vietnam and point to the over-

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## AN EDITORIAL

# The Basis for Building an Effective Opposition to the Vietnam War

In the present war crisis provoked by President Johnson's bombings of North Vietnam, it is of the utmost urgency to organize the biggest possible protest. If the protests are big enough and if what the protesters say is clear, unambiguous and has the ring of truth, public opinion can be influenced enough to give pause to war-makers in Washington.

A realistic appraisal of the situation shows that the forces for organizing such a protest movement at present are small. They consist mainly of the left and peace groups. But there is also a favorable factor. Never before in American history has a President's war moves met with such widespread misgivings. Despite the propaganda barrage of the press and TV, despite the parroting of the official handouts by many, Johnson's course has caused a clearly discernible wave of fear and uneasiness throughout the country.

But before these tens and hundreds of thousands can be influenced and won to active opposition to the war moves, the forces of the left and the peace groups must

mobilize themselves and be clear about what and whom they are opposing.

This is not as simple as it sounds, for these forces are in a state of confusion and disarray. Most of this results from the Presidential campaign when sections of the left — particularly the Communist Party and the Socialist Party — and many leaders of the peace movement urged their members to vote and campaign for Johnson in the interests of peace. The rationale for this was the old, but still unburied, theory of political support of the "lesser evil." Wishful thinking soon made the lesser evil appear as a positive good, and Johnson as a sober, responsible, trustworthy "man of peace."

### 1964 Election "Mandate"

Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party's leading spokesman, made a national tour urging support of Johnson. The *Worker*, which reflects the Communist Party's views, went all out to prettify and support Johnson. In its Nov. 1 issue, for example, George Morris gleefully wrote: "Pres-

ident Johnson, in the final whirl of the campaign, hammered away on the peace issue and the danger of 'brinkmanship' . . ."

The same issue of the *Worker* warned against voting for a "so-called minor party" (i.e., a socialist party), and urged readers not to be complacent about a Johnson victory but to get out "every vote against Goldwaterism." A similar call for not mere victory, but for an overwhelming victory for Johnson, was voiced by SP National Committee member David McReynolds at a Sept. 4 symposium. "If Johnson wins by 55 to 45, we have all lost," he declared.

McReynolds, also a leader of the War Resisters League, described the election as a "referendum" on peace, among other things. In its issue just after the election, the ecstatic *Worker* hailed the Johnson landslide as "a far-reaching mandate for peace." It exulted: "This was no ordinary election . . . This election was actually a great people's referendum . . . for peace and against the

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# Cubans Oust Rodriguez From a Key Gov't Post

By Harry Ring

The Feb. 15 announcement that Carlos Rafael Rodriguez has been removed as head of Cuba's Agrarian Reform Institution (INRA), represents a significant personnel shift by the country's revolutionary leadership.

Rodriguez, who will remain in the Cuban cabinet as a minister without portfolio, long shared the leadership of the old Popular Socialist (Communist) Party with Blas Roca.

His replacement in the key agricultural post by Fidel Castro follows on the heels of the removal of a number of other old-time Communist Party figures from leading positions in the Cuban government and in the leadership of Cuba's United Party of the Socialist Revolution (PURS).

Rodriguez had been a member of the Communist Party since 1932 and moved into its national leadership in 1940. He followed the twists and turns of party policy, apparently without dissent, serving as a minister without portfolio in the first Batista regime of 1940. He was said to have disagreed in 1957 with the party's refusal to support the July 26 Movement, then gaining rapid support through its struggles based in the Sierra Maestra mountains. Several months before the Jan. 1, 1959 seizure of power, he joined the guerrilla forces in the mountains.

Other old-time CPers dislodged from their positions recently include Joaquin Ordoqui who was suspended last Nov. 18 from membership in PURS pending an investigation of his political record from 1957 to the present. Ordoqui



Fidel Castro

had been a member of the national directorate of PURS.

A struggle has been evident for several years now in Cuba between the revolutionary-minded *fidelistas* grouped around those who had fought in the Sierra Maestra and those in the political machine of the old-line Stalinists of the Communist Party.

The differences were first publicly expressed in a dramatic speech by Fidel Castro March 26, 1962, announcing the suspension of Anibal Escalante as secretary of the Integrated Revolutionary Organization, predecessor of PURS. Escalante, an old-line CPer, was denounced for bureaucratic and sectarian practices.

Since then, Castro and other revolutionary leaders have waged a persistent campaign against bureaucratic practices and conservative politics among government and party officials.

## ADDRESSES HARLEM RALLY

# Malcolm X Discusses Bombing of Home

By David Herman

NEW YORK, Feb. 16 — Malcolm X described the bombing of his home to about 700 people at a Harlem meeting last night sponsored by the Organization of Afro-American Unity. He said the bombing early on Feb. 14 had been ordered by Black Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad.

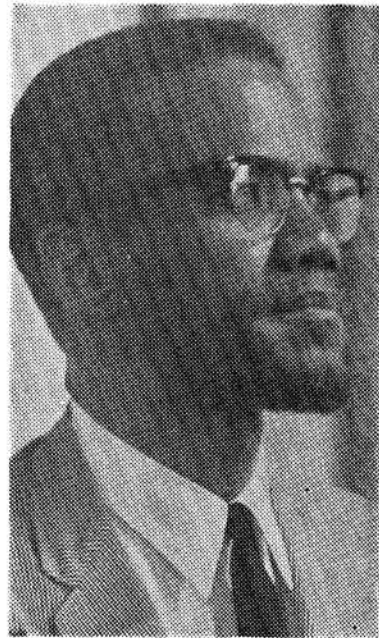
Malcolm X charged that the attackers obviously knew the layout of his home, and had attempted to seal off both the front and rear exits to the house with fire bombs. He said the lives of his wife and children and his own had been saved because the bomb meant to seal off the rear exit, glanced off the window — instead of breaking through — and burned harmlessly outside. The attackers broke the window of the living room and succeeded in throwing a fire bomb inside, he said.

The black nationalist leader described a series of attempted attacks on him by the Black Muslims in the past weeks: an attempt to jump him in front of his home on Jan. 22; an automobile chase on Los Angeles' expressways at 80 miles an hour, and two attempts to attack him — despite the presence of police — when he appeared at television broadcasts in Chicago and New York.

### Cops Knew; Did Nothing

He charged that the police knew of the plans of the Black Muslims to attack him — since they had thoroughly infiltrated the Black Muslim movement — but had done nothing to prevent the attacks. This was despite the fact that Raymond Sharrieff, supreme captain of the Fruit of Islam, the Black Muslim defense guard, had threatened him in a public telegram.

The former follower of Elijah Muhammad declared that the



Malcolm X

Black Muslims had become "a criminal organization — in the hands of a man who's senile." He said he knew "how bad it makes me look" to attack an organization he had been so closely connected with. But, he added, "I'm going to expose them — let the chips fall where they may."

Malcolm X went on to accuse the Black Muslims of having friendly relations with the Ku Klux Klan and Lincoln Rockwell's Nazis, and of getting money from the same sources which support those racist organizations.

He described a meeting in Georgia he attended in Dec. 1960 between the Black Muslims and the leaders of the Ku Klux Klan. At this meeting there were negotiations to give the Black Muslims a county-sized tract of land to be used by them as a showcase for their program of a separate nation.

After this meeting, he said, he was never permitted to return to the South while he was in the Black Muslim organization — and so he had no direct knowledge of the further relations between the organizations. He pointed out, however, that from then on the Black Muslims were allowed to organize in the South without interference from the Klan. He asserted that Jeremiah X, head of the Black Muslims in the South, attended Klan rallies and that *Muhammad Speaks*, the Black Muslim newspaper, refrained from attacking the Klan or American Nazi Party leader Rockwell.

Malcolm X declared that Rockwell corresponded regularly with Elijah Muhammad and was permitted to attend Black Muslim meetings despite the resentment of many Black Muslims about this.

Malcolm X had declared at an earlier meeting of the OAAU that, had it been up to him, the Klan would have been run out of the country by the Black Muslims — who, he said, were capable of doing so. Since his break with the Muslims, the black nationalist leader has denounced both the Klan and Rockwell.

Malcolm X charged that the Black Muslims had been ordered to attack any of their members who defected to Malcolm. He cited a series of such beatings and shootings that had taken place recently.

The speaker described his recent trip to Alabama. He spoke at Tuskegee Institute. Afterwards students there in SNCC had insisted he go with them to Selma. In Selma, he said, Martin Luther King's spokesman had not wanted him to address the children, but the children and SNCC students insisted that he speak. "I promised them I'll be back — we'll be back," he said.

At a press conference in Selma, Malcolm X recalled President Johnson's campaign promise to "take the sheet off the Ku Klux Klan." Malcolm declared that the government would never do so, but that "we will."

### Barred From France

He also described his recent run-in with the French government which refused to let him land in France to address a meeting of Afro-Americans and Africans in Paris. He said that the French Communist-led trade unions had refused to rent a hall to the Afro-Americans for the meeting and had applied pressure to prevent others from leasing them a hall. The rally in France was to have been held in conjunction with the First Congress of the Council of African Organizations which Malcolm addressed in England last week.

He ascribed his being barred from France in part to the de Gaulle regime's displeasure over the fact that Afro-Americans there had recently formed a chapter of the OAAU and begun uniting with the Africans there as well.

The presentation of the OAAU's program, which was to have taken place at this Harlem meeting, was postponed to a meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 21, at Audubon Ballroom, 166 St. and Broadway.

## Weekly Calendar

**BOSTON**  
IS JOHNSON CARRYING OUT GOLDWATER'S PROGRAM — VIETNAM AND THE CONGO. Hear Barry Sheppard, editor of the Young Socialist. Fri., Feb. 26, 8 p.m. 295 Huntington Ave. (one block from Mass. Ave.) Contrib. 50c. Ausp. Militant Labor Forum.

**CHICAGO**  
HOW CAN RACIST VIOLENCE BE STOPPED? Speakers: Hanaz Rogers, vice-chairman, Chicago ACT, and radio disc jockey. Lew House. Fri., Feb. 26, 8 p.m. Debs Hall, 302 S. Canal St. Ausp. Friday Night Socialist Forum.

**CLEVELAND**  
CAN THE BLACK GHETTO BE TAMED? Hear Robert Vernon, contributor to *The Militant*. Sun., Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m. 5927 Euclid Ave., Rm. 25. Ausp. Militant Labor Forum.

**LOS ANGELES**  
THEODORE EDWARDS presents a Marxist view of the news in his bi-weekly radio commentary. Tues., March 2, 6:30 p.m. (repeated Wed., March 3, 9 a.m.) KPFK-FM (90.7 on your dial).

**MINNEAPOLIS**  
CUBA AND THE COLONIAL REVOLUTION. Speaker, John Benson. Fri., Feb. 26, 8:30 p.m. 704 Hennepin Ave. Hall 240. Ausp. Friday Night Socialist Forum.

**NEW YORK**  
"LUMUMBISM:" IS IT THE ANSWER FOR THE CONGO? A Debate: Affirmative: Dan Watts, editor of the *Liberator*. Negative: Dr. Ernest Van Den Haag, Prof. of Sociology, New School, contributor to the *National Review*. Moderator: Dick Roberts, ass't editor of the *International Socialist Review*. Fri., Feb. 26, 8:30 p.m. 116 University Pl. Contrib. \$1. Ausp. Militant Labor Forum.

**A SOCIALIST VIEW OF THE NEWS.** Hear Harry Ring, Militant staff writer, on WBAI-FM (99.5 on the dial). Thur., Feb. 25, 7:45 p.m. (repeated Fri., Feb. 26, 9:30 a.m.)

**SAN FRANCISCO**  
JOHNSON'S DIRTY WAR IN VIETNAM. Speaker, Mary-Alice Styron, nat'l comm. member, YSA. Fri., Feb. 26, 8:15 p.m. 1722 Page St., Pioneer Book Store. Ausp. S.F. Young Socialist Alliance.

# Jailings Fail to Stem N. Y. School Boycott

By Tom Leonard

NEW YORK, Feb. 17 — The arrest of ten adult leaders of the boycott of some of the schools in this city and the jailing of its principal organizer, Rev. Milton Galamison, failed in its purpose. That purpose obviously was to destroy the boycott and its exposure of continuing segregation and inferior education for minorities in the school system.

Latest victims of legal harassment include eight clergymen who staged a sit-in at the Board of Education Feb. 10. One of them, Rev. Leon H. Watts, explained the sit-in as "an attempt to symbolize and dramatize the despair we feel in our communities."

Prior to ordering their arrest, School Superintendent Calvin Gross told the clergymen they ought to "inform" themselves of the board's integration plans. Rev. Richard J. Newhaus responded: "We felt this was very insulting and offensive."

Even cruder were the remarks of Judge Charles Ramsgate who ordered Rev. Galamison's arrest last week for violating the conditions of a suspended sentence by appearing on a school picket line. Galamison was in the courtroom Feb. 11 to observe the arraignment of the eight clergymen. Outside the courtroom, Judge Ramsgate asked a truant officer, "Where's your guts? There's no question the man is contemptuous. Why don't you arrest him right here?"

The officer complied and Galamison spent three days in jail before release pending a hearing on transferral of his case to a federal court. Boycott leaders charge violations of the Civil Rights Act.

Despite the victimizations, the

boycott remains effective. Although the number of students participating remains around 6,000 at least six more schools have been hit by demonstrations, bringing the total to 26, including one high school, as of Feb. 17. The original targets were 31 segregated junior high schools and 15 of the notorious "600" schools. These latter, supposedly for troublesome and problem pupils, derive their name from the city's school-numbering system.

The boycott is the first broad civil-rights action here since Negro leaders called for a "moratorium" on demonstrations during the presidential campaign. One of the reasons for the legal harassment is the politicians' desire to prevent resumption of mass actions.



Rev. Milton Galamison

## Texas Students Hear Young Socialist Assail U. S. Aggression in Vietnam

AUSTIN, Texas — Audiences at two Texas colleges heard a representative of the Young Socialist Alliance denounce President Johnson's policy in Vietnam this week. Joel Britton, YSA spokesman now on a speaking tour, addressed meetings at Rice University in Houston Feb. 7, and at the University of Texas here today.

The topic of the meeting here, sponsored by the local unit of Students for a Democratic Society, was "The War in Vietnam — a Socialist Analysis." It was highly pertinent because of the U.S. bombings of North Vietnam. Britton summarized the history of French colonialism in Indo-China from the mid-19th Century to 1954 and the U.S. intervention which followed the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu that year.

He called for pulling the U.S. troops out of Vietnam and condemned the bombing of North Vietnam. He declared that the YSA is supporting the April 17 March on Washington to End the War in Vietnam which has been called for by the SDS.

Many of the U of T students

were surprised to find out about the struggle — both political and in the form of guerrilla warfare — which the Vietnamese have been conducting intermittently for almost 100 years against French and now U.S. domination.

### 150 Students Hear Socialist

The meeting at Rice University, attended by some 150 students, was entitled "A Marxist Looks at U.S. Foreign Policy." It dealt with and denounced U.S. policies toward Cuba and the Congo as well as towards Vietnam.

Britton also addressed a meeting of the Houston Socialist Forum. There he related the history of the Bloomington Case in which three YSA members at Indiana University were indicted under that state's "subversion" law. He alerted the audience to the recent defeat for the defendants and the cause of civil liberties in the Indiana Supreme Court. Also discussed was the YSA's support in last November's election of DeBerry and Shaw, the presidential ticket of the Socialist Workers Party.

# ... Johnson's Vietnam War

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whelming evidence that the U.S. is losing the war there because it is backing an "unpopular cause."

This is the key to why Johnson makes his decisions on the Vietnam war in secret and why he acted in clear and direct violation of the U.S. constitutional provision that only Congress can commit this country to war. Johnson won't allow a congressional debate — let alone a democratic discussion and decision by the people — on the situation in Vietnam because he is trying to cover up the brutal, unjust aggression the U.S. has perpetrated there from the beginning of its involvement. (See story page 4.)

James Reston of the *New York Times* pointed out Feb. 14: "President Johnson has not made a major speech on the details of this war since he entered the White House. Neither did President Kennedy. We have had one long speech on the subject by Secretary of Defense McNamara on March 26 of last year, and a lot of statements here and in Saigon, many of them highly optimistic and misleading. But the fact is that we are in a war that is not only undeclared and unexplained, but that has not even been widely debated in the Congress or the country."

### No Explanation

In its editorial columns the *Times* has been virtually begging Johnson to explain his course and to move toward negotiations. A Feb. 15 dispatch to the *Times* from Washington reports: "Beneath the surface silence about Vietnam this weekend, there is an air of anxiety and torment here . . . Normally influential officials are maneuvering to discover who is giving what advice, and to affect the course of the discussion."

Pressure from the press has given rise to promises by some White House spokesmen that a policy statement on Vietnam can be expected, but it is clear that Johnson's decisions on this matter will already be made and implemented before he announces them publicly.

Since Johnson became President, many liberals have been trying to sell the idea that this Southern machine-politician and servitor of the oil interests somehow had a change of heart and has come to look upon himself as a great social reformer. The question now arises whether Johnson regards himself as a social reformer or as another Napoleon.

What statements he has made during this tense crisis as he teeters the world on the brink of nuclear war have not been reassuring as to his judgment or modera-



Johnson

tion. For example, on Feb. 12 he said, speaking of the U.S.: "No other people in no other time has so great an opportunity to work and risk for the peace and freedom of all mankind."

Within South Vietnam itself, the Saigon generals on Feb. 16 appointed yet another premier, Dr. Phan Huy Quat. There have now been eight changes of government by military coup or decree in the last 15 months. Indications are that the threat of the political collapse of the U.S. position in Saigon was a major factor in Johnson's decision to bomb North Vietnam.

A Saigon dispatch to the Feb. 16 *Wall Street Journal* reports: "Diplomats fear the failure of another government would increase the danger that some day a war-weary South Vietnamese regime will simply make its own peace with the Communists and ask American troops to go home . . . There is wide agreement that prior to the air strikes the successive Saigon regimes were slowly drifting toward neutralism and independent negotiations with the National Liberation Front, the Vietcong's political arm . . . Whether the political turmoil can be halted and the trend to neutralism reversed is anybody's guess. Certainly the basic causes of South Vietnam's political instability persist."

### Increased Instability

A reflection of the increasing instability is the rapid decline in the economy reported in the official Saigon publication *Vietnam Press* of Feb. 13. South Vietnam now spends seven times as much on imports as it earns in exports. Exports last year dropped by more than one third because of increased control of the countryside by rebel forces.

The complete lack of popular support for the Saigon regime and its American "advisers" is underlined by a Feb. 14 AP dispatch describing a Feb. 10 battle at Ducphong. South Vietnamese home guard troops, 130 of them, just walked away, abandoning their four American "advisers" when rebel forces advanced shouting through loudspeakers: "We only want to kill the Americans. All the rest can go free if they leave their weapons." Three of the Americans were killed.

One of these was U.S. Army Captain Carlton J. Holland of Junction City, Kansas. The deliberate non-cooperation of the South Vietnamese dragooned into Saigon's military forces is reflected in a letter Holland's wife received from her husband the same day she was notified of his death. He had written of the troops he was "advising": "They are the dumbest, laziest, weakest, unpatriotic I have ever seen . . . they got paid the day we got back [from a four-day operation] and now they have 30 deserters — that leaves 46 in the company."

## DeBerry Rips Johnson on Vietnam

# Hits Negro Leaders for Failing to Speak Out

[The following excerpts dealing with the Vietnam crisis are from the speech delivered Feb. 12 at the New York Militant Labor Forum by Clifton DeBerry, the Presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party in the 1964 election.]

Before going into the topic for tonight, *The Black Man's Fate in Johnson's 'Great Society,'* it's necessary to speak about the current war crisis.

The bombing of North Vietnam was an unprovoked, unwarranted act of aggression by the United States against the people of North Vietnam. It violated the rights of the Vietnamese people, it violated the Constitution of the United States, it violated the United Nations Charter, it violated the Geneva Agreement of 1954, and it also violated the laws of humanity.

Furthermore, these trigger-happy warmongers in Washington have initiated an action which once again brings the American people close to a nuclear war.

The American people have been consistently lied to about what the U.S. government has been doing both in South Vietnam and in North Vietnam. I'd like to go briefly into a little of the background of this.

We've been told by the daily press and all the mass media of communication that the Saigon government had asked the United States to help it in a fight for "democracy" and against the "Communist conspiracy." What we should ask ourselves is: "Who are these self-styled champions of democracy?"

By now almost everyone knows that they are a gang of military dictators holed up in Saigon in fear of their lives from the people of their own country. They have been responsible for the denial of political freedom and rights to the people of Vietnam. They have lined their pockets from the profits they have usurped from the people of Vietnam. These are the "democratic" allies of the United States government.

The people of the United States have been paying a dear price in defending these military dictators, enabling them to maintain their rule against the people of South Vietnam. Already they have sent more than 23,000 American soldiers there, many of whom have been killed or wounded or are missing in action. Almost \$10 billion of U.S. taxpayers' money has been spent there already. Each day it is costing the U.S. taxpayer \$2 million in payoffs to the military dictatorship in that country, not counting the huge costs of the U.S. troops there and their equipment, munitions, etc.

The American forces are participating in the bombing, the napalm-burning and killing of men, women and children in Vietnam. They have sprayed the countryside with defoliation chemicals which destroy crops and vegetation and sicken people. They have destroyed villages and burnt people alive with their napalm bombs. And at the same time they have done little, if anything, to prevent the brutal tortures and murders carried out by the tyrannical military rulers there.

Now we've been told that in Vietnam the U.S. is fighting to hold off the Chinese, the Red Chinese. This was exposed by Senator Wayne Morse in a speech in which he stated categorically that the only foreign troops in Vietnam are those of the United States.

Upon closer examination — who are the so-called communist conspirators supposedly carrying out this plot to overthrow South Vietnam's "democracy"? They are, in fact, the majority of the people in South Vietnam.

They are the workers and farmers of South Vietnam who are fighting for their freedom, who are fighting for their right to have



Clifton DeBerry

enough to eat, to have decent clothes, to be able to educate their children and to have a better way of life. They are fighting for the right to decide their own fate and they are consistently demonstrating their determination to continue doing so.

The freedom fighters of South Vietnam are organized into a movement called the National Liberation Front, which has an army and a civil administration. They have a full-time army, armed with captured U.S. weapons and weapons they make themselves, and a reserve force of about 100,000 part-time guerrillas. They are consistently demonstrating their high morale and knowledge and understanding of warfare by the way they have fought the U.S. forces and the military rulers of Vietnam to a standstill.

This gives us an insight to the motive behind the recent attack on North Vietnam. We are told that the air attack on North Vietnam was a retaliatory action for an attack by North Vietnam against the U.S. troops. Yet there is no evidence to verify this charge.

The reality is that what happened at Pleiku and Quinhon was the same type of guerrilla action that has been going on since 1958. But Washington parlayed these recent guerrilla attacks into something else, to use them as the pretexts to bomb North Vietnam.

The Johnson administration felt the need to attack North Vietnam and had been planning to attack North Vietnam as a substitute for not being to retaliate effectively against the freedom-fighters in South Vietnam.

### Formally at Peace

It's interesting to recall that in World War II the U.S. denounced the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor as an infamous and criminal act by one nation against another because the two countries were formally at peace. This is exactly the situation that existed between North Vietnam and the United States when Johnson ordered the bombings. The two countries were formally at peace.

Now this whole business of a retaliatory action is a smoke-screen. It's just a pretext. Just as the mysterious, alleged attack on U.S. warships by P-T boats in the Gulf of Tonkin last year served as a pretext for the first U.S. air attacks on North Vietnam.

What is the motive behind these attacks? If it's not a deliberate move to escalate the war, but a power move by the U.S. to get itself into a position of strength for driving a ruthless bargain in future negotiations, it's a bloody and reckless gamble. It not only risks full-fledged war with North Vietnam, but with China, not only a Korea-type war but a nuclear world war . . .

Lyndon B. Johnson has cut the ground from under his right-wing critics by carrying out the same kind of action which would have

been carried out if Goldwater had been elected.

It reminds me of a conversation I had with a young man on the subway. He said: "You know, it's a good thing that Goldwater didn't get elected; because if he had we'd be at war with Vietnam." And he added: "Goldwater didn't get elected; LBJ got elected and we know he's the lesser of two evils, so we're not really at war with Vietnam."

Now, amusing as that sounds, this is what they're telling the American people — that we're not really at war. And it showed up in the *Herald Tribune* in a report that some nine American GI's were detained — rather than saying they were captured. The reason being that they couldn't be captured since, technically, we're not at war. This is what they're trying to sell to the American people . . .

I think the Vietnam crisis demonstrates another lesson — the bankruptcy and decay of the official Negro leadership. As far as I am concerned, I find it hard to understand how a person who considers himself a leader — who is concerned with brotherhood and the survival of mankind — cannot say a word about the atrocities against the people of Vietnam.

### Can't Defend Rights

A leader who would not seek to use the example of Vietnam to drive home the point. To say to Johnson: "Look, what do you mean, you can send troops 12,000 miles from these shores to defend freedom and democracy, when right in my home town, as well as in other parts of the South, you will not defend the rights of American citizens?"

The reason these leaders won't do this is that if they were to take such a stand, they would also have to say: "We are opposed to your policy in Vietnam, we are opposed to your policy of rape and murder of the people of the Congo, we are opposed to violence perpetrated by the United States against oppressed people anywhere in the world."

And at the same time they would have to say: "We are opposed to you and your policies and therefore it is necessary to break with these policies and begin to organize and build an independent movement to take the road to independent political action."

They would also be compelled to say: "Since you, since the federal government, which claims to be concerned with freedom, justice and equality — to the extent that it can send troops all over the world to protect them — will not protect the lives of Negroes here in the United States, we must alert our people. We must tell them that the government refuses to defend the rights of the Negroes here in this country — that they themselves must therefore arm for self-defense."

But then, if they said this, they'd be in an awful position. They would have to go back and withdraw the letter they sent to LBJ hailing his victory in November . . .

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# THE MILITANT

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## ... The Vietnam War

(Continued from Page 1)

reckless policies of brinkmanship . . . This election . . . is a mandate to the President . . . The mandate calls for an end to the cold war . . ."

Even the *National Guardian*, which in previous elections staunchly opposed both the Democratic and Republican parties, succumbed in the course of the 1964 campaign to the wave of lesser-evilism to the point that it dropped its unequivocal support of independent political action for an ambiguous position.

The bombings in Vietnam should have exploded campaign and post-election illusions that Johnson is a "peace" president, that the policy of brinkmanship was defeated at the polls. What really happened in the Johnson landslide is that he was given a free hand to do as he and the military-industrial complex choose — with little or no regard for what the left or the peace movement may think about it.

Supporting Johnson, whitewashing him as a "man of peace," and celebrating his victory as a "mandate" for peace has disoriented and confused radicals and peace advocates. Their thinking and that of people they have influenced cannot be turned on and off at will. Dismay and discouragement is one result. The illusion that somehow Johnson is still working for peace, though in a bloody and devious manner, is another. Others seek rationalizations lifting the blame from him. This blunts the protests.

The line of such rationalizations is to put the blame not where it really belongs — on Johnson and the American ruling class he represents — but on some mysterious group of "wicked advisers" who are leading the well-intentioned President astray. The Feb. 9 *Worker*, for example, insinuates that it's really the ultra-right forces working behind the scenes which are responsible for the bombings in Vietnam. Thus: "The latest bombings raise the danger that the war-spreading forces in the Johnson administration may be winning their campaign." Others speak of the "war hawks" and Johnson's yielding to their "insistent proddings."

If there was ever a politician versed in all the intricacies of Washington politics and in the art of using people, it's Johnson. To imply that he isn't the undisputed — indeed, autocratic — ruler of his administration and that he doesn't deliberately choose which advisers to listen to, is laughable.

Instead of covering up or mitigating Johnson's guilt for bombing North Vietnam and bringing the U.S. to the brink of a Korea-type war or world war, protests must be aimed directly against him and his party. He and the Democratic Party must be exposed and branded as U.S. imperialism's most culpable brink-of-war strategists and practitioners. This is important for making as effective a protest as possible in the current crisis, and — if the world survives this one — in future war crises.

## Johnson and the Dock Strike

President Johnson took time out from his undeclared war against North Vietnam to deliver a crippling blow against striking members of the International Longshoremen's Association. His weapon was a presidential panel of inquiry which met Feb. 12 and succeeded in cowering ILA leaders into ordering strikers into returning to work in ports where local agreements had been reached.

By acceding to presidential pressure, ILA President Gleason not only violated the union's long-standing rule that no port would work until all ports had a contract, he also seriously weakened the bargaining position of union locals still without contracts.

Even more ominous is the threat to other nations like the Steelworkers who are approaching contract negotiations this year. If Johnson can intervene to force the ILA to settle on a port rather than on a coast-wide basis, what is to prevent him in the event of a strike from intervening to order the steel workers to negotiate on a piecemeal rather than on a national basis?

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# The U.S. Record in Vietnam

By Dick Roberts

## I. 1954-1955

In a rare moment of truth, former president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, made the following observation in his memoirs about the feelings of the Vietnamese people in 1954, during their struggle against French imperialism:

"I have never talked or corresponded with a single person knowledgeable in Indo-Chinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held at the time of the fighting, possibly 80% of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader rather than Chief of State Bao Dai."

Eisenhower's observation has more than passing validity. It confirms that from the very beginning of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the vast majority of the people there have been opposed to the regimes set up by foreign imperialism. This held true for the French puppet Bao Dai regime in 1954; it holds true today, for each and every U.S. puppet government temporarily holding sway in the palaces of Saigon.

A decade ago, however, Eisenhower's attitude was not one of philosophical detachment. The daily retreats of the French armies before the revolutionary Vietminh, led by Ho Chi Minh, sent a wave of fear through the financial capitals of the world. The revolutionary sentiments of the Vietnamese people were no secret.

"The majority of the Vietnamese people want peace at any price," the *New York Times* stated April 4, 1954, "and a large proportion, now as in the past, seem to want the Vietminh to win." The handwriting on the wall was clear enough. Over a billion dollars of U.S. aid, accounting for 78% of the total French military budget for the Indo-China war, had failed to stem the revolutionary tide.

### U.S. Considers Intervention

Eisenhower considered a new course of action: direct military intervention of U.S. forces. On March 19, Dulles told the Overseas Press Club in New York, "The imposition on Southeast Asia of the political system of Communist Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by whatever means, would be a grave threat . . . The U.S. feels that this possibility should not be passively accepted but should be met by united action.

"This might have serious risks," Dulles advised, "but these risks are far less than would face us in a few years if we dare not be resolute today."

Wall Street was jubilant and ready to go whole-hog. The *Wall Street Journal* stated March 30, "the U.S. would, if necessary, throw in U.S. troops." Nixon was adamant: "The administration must face the issue and send the troops."

There was only one trouble with Eisenhower's plans. In his readiness for another war, the ex-general had overlooked the question of troops. Having just finished the long and bitter struggle in Korea, American soldiers were not about to buy a war which to every eye looked equally futile.

James Reston, *New York Times* columnist, put it bluntly: "Public opinion in this country is not prepared for armed intervention by the U.S." And it wasn't only in America. "In Britain there was open opposition reflecting overwhelming public pressure against new hot war," the *Times* noted on May 2.

Even greater was the reaction among the French, who had been struggling in Indo-China eight years. The French people, in fact, coined the term "dirty war" for the Indo-Chinese struggle — and the French felt that they had been there as long as they had only because of U.S. pressure. "We French are no longer fighting in

our own interests," a correspondent declared. "We are fighting because you Americans won't let us stop."

The French government demolished the Eisenhower-Dulles propaganda about "Chinese Reds" when French military authorities in Hanoi stated they had no evidence of Communist Chinese infiltration at Dienbienphu. They noted that not one combatant in the Vietminh had ever been captured who could be identified as Chinese.

Later, on June 10, Pierre Mendes-France, soon to become the French Premier, revealed how close the danger of U.S. entry and atomic war had been. He told the French Assembly:

### U.S. Intervention Averted

"U.S. intervention was to have taken place on the request of France April 28. The warships carrying atomic aviation materiel were loaded and en route. President Eisenhower was to have asked Congress April 26 for authorization. Luckily, the project of the United States was set aside by Britain and public opinion in the U.S."

On May 7, 1954, the Vietminh army dealt the imperialist aggressors a heavy blow, culminating weeks of battle at Dienbienphu. Barefoot, wretchedly equipped Vietminh troops stormed positions held by professional armies, armed with tanks, heavy artillery, automatic weapons and the air support of bombers. The Vietminh smashed the French army and captured 8,000 prisoners.

This victory had a tremendous impact on the Vietnamese people. The June 24 *Times* stated categorically, "elections in Vietnam, if held now, would in all probability result in a Communist victory." The July 3 *Christian Science Monitor* reported that whole units of the French Indo-Chinese army were going over to the Vietminh: "The desertions [are] reaching an almost uncountable rate."

Dienbienphu forced the imperialists, however reluctantly, to the bargaining table. The result was the Geneva Accord of July 21, 1954, which partitioned Indo-China along the 17th parallel into North Vietnam, which would have a government organized by the Vietminh, and South Vietnam, which would remain under the rule of French puppet-emperor Bao Dai.

Included in the agreement was the guarantee that national elections would be held two years later in which the Vietnamese people would democratically determine their government. From the very beginning, however, it was evident that Washington — which refused to sign the accord — had no intentions of going along with this part of the decision.

### Thousands Executed

Immediately after the Geneva Conference, the South Vietnamese regime, bolstered with U.S. aid, set about to destroy every manifestation of support for the Vietminh. The Aug. 4 *Times* reported that the Bao Dai government had instituted "sedition" courts, and a reign of terror followed designed to weed out all militants among the populace.

Thousands were executed, and thousands of others were thrown into prisons where many remain to this day. Graft and corruption ran rampant in the country-club and cabaret crowd that made up the regime. Bao Dai himself spent most of his time lavishing U.S. millions on the French Riviera, leaving the powers of government to his appointed premier, Ngo Dinh Diem.

Joseph Alsop, today one of the most blatant Washington war mongers, was in South Vietnam at the time, and described the reaction of the populace in his syndicated *Herald Tribune* column: "The communists have scored a whole

series of political, organizational, military and — one has to say — moral triumphs . . . What impressed me the most, alas, was the moral fervor they had inspired among the non-communist Vietminh cadre and the stout support they had obtained from the peasantry."

As has since become the norm, Washington's reaction to the visible crumbling of the Bao Dai government was to stage a coup. Bao Dai was replaced by his premier, Ngo Dinh Diem. On April 30, 1955, the rival puppet forces fought it out on the streets of Saigon, and Diem took over the leadership of the prized Binh Xuyen — the private army which ran all prostitution, gambling, narcotics and other rackets, as well as the police department.

When Diem was bumped off by his colleagues of the Saigon palace-gangster crowd eight years later, he was in the midst of building his wife a \$750,000 dwelling and had amassed a private fortune valued at \$50,000,000.

But in his heyday, this "man of simple tastes" was hailed by Dulles as the savior of Vietnam. On Aug. 30, Dulles informed a press conference that elections in South Vietnam would not be possible. On May 31, 1959, Eisenhower explained to Congress that the South Vietnamese economy would collapse if Diem did not receive aid.

## II. 1960-1962

Beginning sporadically in 1958, and in ever-increasing numbers, the South Vietnamese peasants organized units of open rebellion against the Diem dictatorship. This formation was concretized in the establishment in December, 1961, of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF), which for propaganda purposes has been dubbed the "Viet Cong" ("Vietnamese Communists") by American papers.

Descriptions of NLF operations have leaked through the heavily-censored U.S. press, of which two may be cited. Homer Bigart, the noted war correspondent, gave this description in the *Times*, Jan. 17, 1962:

"The South Vietnamese government is still losing its fight with the Communists for the minds of the civilian population . . . At the village level, Viet Cong agents preach discontent by pointing out the government's inability to provide medical care and other social services. Among farmers they can exploit the anger over soaring prices . . . Another touchy point is, that of the hundreds of millions of dollars of U.S. aid poured into South Vietnam, only a small trickle has penetrated to the grass roots."

In the same year, the *Times* printed a fuller description by Jerry A. Rose in its Sunday magazine section, April 8:

"The Viet Cong comes into the field to work with you," a peasant says. "Or if there is no work to be done, he'll even wash out the rice bowl for you. The Viet Cong live like us, look like us, live in our homes. How can we inform on them?"

### Immediate Land Reform

"The Communists in Vietnam have long recognized the value of an immediate land reform . . . in fact, the Communists do take land from the rich and give it to the poor . . . They seize rice fields from the absent owners and divide the land among the working farmers."

A revealing description of Diem's frustrated attempts to overcome the NLF was given by a *Newsweek* correspondent, Feb. 12, 1962, who was allowed to go out with the government forces:

"As we advanced, the Vietnamese kept as quiet as they could, but their boots made a dry, crunching sounds in the rice-fields.

# Vietnam — 10 Years of Aggression



**"ENEMIES"? South Vietnamese peasant grips her children in fear as government soldiers invade her hut to grill her about her husband who they suspect is a guerrilla supporter.**

From farmhouse to farmhouse, the peasants signalled with lamps, reporting our advance. Shortly before dawn we met another Ranger company. Nobody had found any guerrillas."

Diem's unpopularity and his inability to oppose the growing liberation struggle greatly disturbed the new Democratic administration in Washington. What Eisenhower had been unable to achieve overtly, Kennedy attempted to accomplish covertly. For months, without consulting, or for that matter even informing, the American people, Kennedy secretly sent U.S. troops into South Vietnam.

### U.S. Military Presence

By late 1961, however, word was beginning to get out. On Dec. 20, the *Times* reported, "about 2,000 Americans in uniform are in South Vietnam, instead of the officially reported 685 members of the military advisory group"; and Dec. 31, "Washington is prepared to add considerably to the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam.

"The recent arrival of 40 troop-carrying helicopters to be operated by U.S. Army units . . . was believed to be only the beginning of direct American assistance for a tactical role. It is understood in Saigon that Washington stands ready to provide all the military muscle needed to beat the Viet Cong, including ground troops if necessary."

American newsmen forced Kennedy's hand at a Feb. 14 press conference, where he quibbled that while the American people had not been informed about U.S. operations in Vietnam, the leaders of both parties had been. Nixon chimed in with Republican Party support the following day, adding "I only hope he [Kennedy] will not stop the build-up."

What Kennedy was interested in hiding, however, was not so much the fact that American boys were being sent to South Vietnam — as "advisers" — but the real nature of the Vietnamese struggle. In this same period the U.S. began a massive concentration-camp campaign, sentimentally called "Operation Sunrise," which was designed to force every last Vietnamese peasant into strongly guarded stock-

ades, thus cutting them off from contact with the NLF.

Just before the lid was clamped down on news coverage of the Vietnamese war, correspondent Homer Bigart wrote the following description of "Operation Sunrise":

"The operation is subsidized directly with United States money, military planning and technical aid. In this region, 1,200 families are to be moved voluntarily or forcibly from the forests controlled by the Viet Cong and resettled in new strategic villages. The abandoned villages will be burned to deprive the Viet Cong of shelter and food.

"The first step in Operation Sunrise involved encirclement of half a dozen settlements . . . The government was able to persuade only 70 families to volunteer for resettlement. The 135 other families in the half dozen settlements were herded forcibly from their homes . . . A young woman stood expressionless as she recounted how the troops had burned the families' two tons of rice." (March 28) Concentration camps, surrounded by "grim soldiers with machine guns," now dotted South Vietnam from one end to the other.

That popular hatred of the Diem regime and the true role of the U.S. "advisers" was not deemed fitting news for Americans, was revealed through a leak a year later. It came out that Secretary of State Rusk had ordered the U.S. Ambassador in Saigon:

"1. Keep American reporters away from areas where fighting is being done entirely or almost entirely by U.S. troops.

"2. Keep American reporters away from any area which will show the extent of President Ngo Dinh Diem's failure to attract the full allegiance of the South Vietnamese people." (AP, May 5, 1963)

From this period on, in spite of several protests by American correspondents, press coverage of the war was handed over to Madison Avenue. "For American reporters in embattled South Vietnam," the *Wall Street Journal* wrote, "the men to see to arrange interviews with Vietnamese officials are two on-the-scene representatives of the

New York public-relations firm of Kaster, Hilton, Chesley, Crawford & Atherton.

"The Kaster-Hilton operation performs many such operations for President Ngo Dinh Diem's government, always with the goal of enhancing the regime's image in the U.S. For these services, South Vietnam pays the concern \$100,000 a year plus expenses." (May 8, 1962)

### III. 1963

Kennedy's hopefully secret honeymoon with the Diem clique came to an abrupt end in the first week of 1963 when NLF forces surprised a contingent of U.S. ground troops and helicopters at Ap Bac, destroying five of 15 helicopters and killing 13 Americans. This engagement was a turning point of the war. AP correspondent Malcome W. Browne described the change:

"Only a few months ago, the average Viet Cong guerrilla had to rely on his homemade shotgun or old French rifle to blast away at the big American machines wheeling down on him with loads of troops. Now, thanks to captured American weapons, the guerrilla has a good chance of making trouble for the helicopters."

### Napalm Bombing

It was one thing for the U.S. to conceal the concentration-camp nature of the "strategic hamlet" program, quite another to conceal open battles with guerrilla forces who shot down helicopters. Madison Avenue's first reaction was to try and sell the war to the American public through the blazing color photography of *Life* magazine.

It ran a gorgeous photograph display of the mountainous countryside being bombed with jellied gasoline (napalm) from U.S.-flown and manufactured airplanes. The caption read: "Sweeping low across enemy-infested scrubland, U.S. pilot inspector watches Vietnamese napalm strike. Object of fire bombing is to sear the foliage and flush the enemy into the open. U.S. airmen train Vietnamese to handle T-28 fighter-bombers — which retain U.S. markings — and lead to target."

Also shown were peasants, tied by ropes around their necks, being led by Diem's troops; tortures of various varieties — always of young people; and troops burning a village because, according to *Life*, "Communist literature" had been found in a hut. These tactics were explained by Arthur Hurwich in the *New York Post* over a year later:

"When a Communist concentration was reported in a village, the homes and rice fields were machine-gunned and napalm-bombed from the air. Statistics on non-combatants killed are not available but there must have been thousands." (March 15, 1964)

Since then, photographs of tortures there have become common in the American press — always, of course, with a quick-sell line. The Nov. 9, 1964, *Newsweek*, for example, showed a peasant being tortured with a knife; the caption read: "Getting the point: South Vietnamese Rangers interrogate a prisoner."

### Water Torture

A photo in the *Times* showed a prisoner being held upside down in a barrel of water — the notorious "water cure" used by the French to torture Algerians. Another widely-publicized picture showed a captive chained to a tractor which was about to drag him under water along a canal.

Kennedy's effort to conceal the true nature of the Vietnamese civil war was further frustrated by the heroic struggle of the Buddhist students and intellectuals in the cities which emerged in the summer of 1963. That leading figures would sacrifice themselves to pro-

test the abominations of the Diem regime could not be easily ignored.

Nguyen Tuong Tam, who killed himself on July 8, was a hero of the Vietnam resistance against the French, a leader of the underground, and the author of many novels which are studied in Vietnamese universities. His death was not that of a religious fanatic, as the American press implied.

The Buddhists represent 80% of the Vietnamese population. Their struggle involves the leading intellectuals and the bulk of the student population. In an attempt to suppress it, Diem established martial law in the cities, stormed the temples, and arrested thousands. The revolution had spread from the countryside into the cities.

Once again, Washington found it desirable to find a new puppet. This time it was not so easy. Diem didn't want out. In the course of the CIA's hunt for a new man, Diem and his cronies spilled the beans on the CIA activities.

On Sept. 2, Diem revealed that the CIA was offering the spectacular sum of \$20 million to the gang that would throw him out. A week later, an inside source disclosed the CIA was paying the secret police \$3 million per year. Kennedy was embarrassed. But after a few weeks, the Diem problem was solved. He was killed Nov. 1, and Gen. Duong Van Minh, a product of the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, took over.

### IV. 1964 to Pleiku

In January 1964, the total American force in Vietnam was estimated at 17,000. Official figures reported 166 dead, and 400 wounded. The Feb. 10 *Toronto Globe and Mail* put the NLF forces at 30,000 regulars and government troops at about 200,000 "equipped with the latest in automatic weapons, helicopters, napalm and weed-killing chemicals."

Twelve months and several Saigon coups later, James Reston made the following estimates in the *Times*: Guerrilla forces, between 28,000 and 34,000 regulars, which lead between 60,000 and 80,000 night raiders in small units all over the country; 240,000 South Vietnamese in the combat forces; and, 23,000 U.S. troops, "who have overwhelming superiority in fire power and naval power." (Feb. 10, 1965)

### U.S. Troops

American casualties were estimated at over 300 dead, over 1,000 wounded.

Two things are striking about the comparison: the increase by a third of U.S. troops committed to the Vietnamese civil war; the increase by threefold of forces active in or available to the NLF. The year witnessed a series of major victories for the Vietnamese revolutionaries — of which Bien Hoa, Binh Gia and Pleiku are only the most outstanding.

Of 35 provinces, barely three are presently controlled by the U.S.-Saigon regime. On April 10, 1964, the *Times* stated, "nine out of ten Vietnamese in the Mekong Delta are convinced the Communist Viet Cong have won the war"; and on April 27, "roughly 80% of the peasantry now live in one form or another under a Communist shadow of government."

The same day, the *New York World-Telegram* stated:

"We never have been really told the truth in Washington about South Vietnam. Since New Year's Day the downhill slide has seen untold thousands of hamlet militia . . . defect or simply desert in fear and disgust, and our side controlling very little beyond the center of Saigon and some provincial capitals."

Further, the bulk of the killing was by American hands. The sit-

uation is "worse than the public has been told — far worse," a Scripps-Howard correspondent wrote from Washington May 17. "Americans — not Vietnamese — are accounting for 60 per cent of the casualties inflicted on the Communist Viet Cong."

"The most striking fact," the *Times* observed, about McNamara's early May visit to Vietnam, was that for the first time "he had to wrap himself in a bullet-proof vest to drive through the streets of Saigon." (May 15)

At Bien Hoa in November, a handful of liberation fighters wound their way through a network of U.S. defenses to destroy five B-57 bombers, and damage 15 others, costing the U.S. at least \$25 million. In Binh Gia, six weeks later, the NLF demonstrated its ability to fight and win a pitched battle against U.S. and Saigon forces.

### Student Protest

Furthermore, the urban struggle had resumed at full force. In the summer of 1964, General Khanh appointed himself "president" with dictatorial powers and banned all demonstrations after firing on a student protest.

The recent surprise attack at Pleiku demonstrated more than anything else the total lack of popular support for the U.S. in Vietnam — even among the ranks of the Saigon army. Walt Friedenberg, a Scripps-Howard correspondent in Washington, drew this obvious conclusion, and noted the White House reaction:

"The administration is urgently considering sending more U.S. troops to South Vietnam to defend American headquarters, compounds and installations against sneak Viet Cong attacks.

"The virtual absence of effective protection, supposed to be provided by South Vietnamese forces, again has been demonstrated with the demolition of the U.S. advisers' billet at Qui Non."

In ten years, the sophists in Washington have come full circle. The Vietnamese war is not today, and it never has been, one in which the people could be "trusted" to act in U.S. interests. Washington had to force Bao Dai down their throats in 1954; Khanh, today.

Democratic elections have never been dared.

Ten years of brutal aggression — napalm bombing, defoliation, concentration camps, tortures, and puppet dictators — these could not possibly have produced any other reaction from the Vietnamese masses than what now exists: Deep and bitter commitment to the total and final destruction of U.S. control in South Vietnam.

Johnson's administration bears complete responsibility for American forces remaining in Vietnam and for expanding the war to North Vietnam.

The U.S. forces should be immediately withdrawn.

The Vietnamese people must be allowed to choose their own form of government.

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## An Analysis of Vietnam Crisis

# Bombings Intended as Threat to Moscow?

By Joseph Hansen

PARIS — When American planes, on an order given by President Johnson, swept in from the Gulf of Tonkin, Feb. 7-8 to bomb targets in North Vietnam, a wave of fear swept the world. Was this the action that could escalate into atomic war?

The answer is still not known although the earth's inhabitants breathed easier when neither the immediate victim, North Vietnam, nor the People's Republic of China nor the Soviet Union responded to the violent provocation.

Why did Johnson take this maniacal "calculated" risk?

The State Department has been busily explaining in the corridors of the United Nations and in the embassies throughout the world that the military attack on North Vietnam was not intended as a challenge to the Soviet Union — which has an effective atomic power equal to that of the United States — but only as a "reprisal" on the tiny little country of North Vietnam, which the White House has decided to hold responsible for the actions of the freedom fighters in South Vietnam, particularly if they dare to attack any of the 23,000 acknowledged American military "advisers" of the puppet government and its mercenary forces. Such an attack occurred at Pleiku Feb. 7, leaving 116 American casualties. Johnson offered this as an "excuse" for bombing North Vietnam.

### Pressure on Moscow

Despite the State Department explanations, the bombing was clearly intended not only as "punishment" of North Vietnam but as pressure on Moscow. Soviet Premier Alexei N. Kosygin happened to be in Hanoi when Johnson ordered the assault on North Vietnam. Johnson could hardly have dealt him a more stinging slap unless he had ordered Hanoi itself bombed.

The timing of the assault would thus tend to show that Johnson did not intend to start a course of action that would escalate into atomic war although he took the risk that this might happen.

But why did Kosygin choose to visit Hanoi at this particular mo-



Kosygin

ment? The Soviet diplomats, the press has reported, have gone to extraordinary lengths to explain to the White House that the visit in no wise contradicts their policy of "peaceful co-existence" or their hope for a "summit" meeting with Johnson later in the year. In fact, Alain Clement, the well-informed Washington correspondent of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, reported Feb. 1 that a "Soviet representative" at a "private meeting, and in his personal name" was reported to have said that "he believed that his government was seeking in the North Vietnam capital to help the Americans retire honorably from South Vietnam."

This ties in with a spate of recent rumors that Washington has decided to seek a "disengagement" in South Vietnam from the military conflict through some kind of negotiated settlement that would provide a "face-saving" formula for the American colossus.

Khrushchev's heirs may well have envisaged this as a shrewd move through which they could deliver something substantial to

Johnson, while at the same time demonstrating the realistic nature of the policy of "peaceful co-existence," thus gaining better leverage in their dispute with Peking.

But Johnson, or one of the wings of the policy-makers to whom he lends ear, saw another possibility. The reality in South Vietnam is that American imperialism faces a major defeat. Its position is becoming more and more untenable. If the U.S. withdraws, what is to prevent Moscow from moving in? Kosygin's trip can thus be interpreted as a reassertion of the Soviet stake in Southeast Asia; and while it is preferable from Washington's view to have Moscow there instead of Peking, it is a defeat for world capitalism in either case.

The bombing of North Vietnam can thus be interpreted as serving a double purpose in Washington's diplomatic game. It serves to strengthen Kosygin's hand in dealing with Hanoi and Peking by flagrantly displaying what madmen the Americans are — willing to risk atomic war over any kind of "undisciplined" action undertaken by the South Vietnam freedom fighters. And it serves to remind Khrushchev's heirs, too, that they are dealing with the same power that precipitated the crisis in the Caribbean in 1962. With his bombs, Johnson told Kosygin not to try any genuinely independent moves in Southeast Asia.

### Dependents Withdrawn

The bombing of North Vietnam could serve still another purpose. Under cover of this "advance," Johnson ordered the withdrawal of American women and children from South Vietnam. While this fits in with a move to escalate the conflict, it also fits in with the first step in a staged withdrawal. It makes perfect logic to the military mind of the Pentagon to use an attack as a screen for a retreat.

However, some unexpected consequences may arise from Johnson's brinkmanship. First of all, Kosygin may now find it more difficult to push a policy of "peaceful co-existence" with American imperialism. One of the deadliest criticisms levelled against Khrushchev was his failure to provide North Vietnam with adequate military aid and to defend the beleaguered country against American aggression. Johnson's move now places Khrushchev's heirs in the spotlight on this very question. It will not be easy for them to wriggle out of it with mere platitudes. Something much more substantial is now required. Thus Johnson, perhaps inadvertently, strengthened Peking's hand and along with it, most likely, the military defenses of North Vietnam.

### Effect on World Opinion

On another level, too, Johnson may have miscalculated. What is the effect on world opinion? So soon after his inauguration, Johnson shows that he feels completely free to bomb another country whenever diplomacy requires it — without a declaration of war, without consulting Congress, simply on his own personal whim. Isn't it high time to call for a strait jacket?

As for the freedom fighters in South Vietnam, they will feel more than ever that their cause is not only a just one. It represents the cause of all humanity against a power that does not hesitate to risk turning our entire planet into a gas chamber.

In the United States itself Johnson's "popularity" can suffer a precipitous decline. The huge vote which he reaped in the election was cast primarily against Goldwater and it was cast in hope of blocking the kind of atomic brinkmanship which Johnson is now engaging in.

## ... Bombings Evoke Protests

(Continued from Page 1)

chanted by some 280 marchers in a demonstration through downtown Los Angeles. Participating organizations were the SWP, YSA, SDS, SNCC, CORE, DuBois Clubs, and Women Strike for Peace. The march ended at the Federal Building where various speakers addressed the demonstrators.

Margaret Thorpe of SDS urged everyone to join the March on Washington which SDS is planning. Other speakers included Irving Kirsch, SWP candidate for the board of education, who stressed the importance of not voting for the "lesser evil" but for candidates opposed to imperialist war.

The marchers encountered seven uniformed Nazi Party members at the Federal Building. The Nazis carried anti-Negro, anti-Jewish and pro-war-in-Vietnam placards. When they shouted "Death to Traitors," the protesters drowned them out with sarcastic "Sieg Heils."

On Feb. 8, 1,000 students at the University of California at Berkeley attended an outdoor protest rally. Almost every day since, demonstrations of about 300 have been held in San Francisco, supported by the DuBois Clubs, YSA and May 2 Committee.

### SPU Holds Rally

On Feb. 11, the Student Peace Union at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia held a three-hour rally. The SPU called for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. Members carried such signs as "Dien, Khanh — How Many More Murderers?" and "Kill Jim Crow, Not the Vietnamese." The crowd varied from 150 to 600. Leaders of the rally were interviewed on station WXPB.

On Feb. 13, Swathmore SDS joined with Haverford and U of P students in a march from Independence Hall to City Hall. Despite last-minute organization, 350 people, mostly students, participated.

In Kent, Ohio, a small demonstration called by the Young Socialist Alliance was met by a large mob of right-wing students. Despite violence and attempts to disperse them physically, the YSAers and sympathizers continued to demonstrate as they had planned. They carried signs reading "The Lesser Evil Strikes Again," "Run for Shelter, Johnson Is Not Extending the War Again," "Drop Johnson, Not Bombs," and "Save Vietnam from Johnson's Great Society."

### Demanded Protection

Tony Walsh, a liberal student senator presently running for student senate president, passed out leaflets with the demonstrators. He demanded protection three times from campus cops who just stood by while the protesters were roughed up.

Public Square in Cleveland was the scene of picketing Feb. 13 called by an ad hoc committee of Oberlin College students. About 100 students came from the area's schools. The protest brought out the Cleveland Police's "subversive squad" as usual. Although the organizing committee forbade slogans demanding U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, there was a very sympathetic response when a speaker demanded the immediate bringing home of U.S. troops.

In Denver, about 50 people staged a protest march Feb. 13, organized by the Committee Against the Vietnam War. The Socialist Workers Party supported this march. About 25 pro-war demonstrators from Soldiers of the Cross and Christian Youth of America heckled the marchers.

Repeated demonstrations have taken place in Jakarta, Indonesia. Demonstrators shouted "Crush America" and carried cardboard caricatures of Uncle Sam and President Johnson, and then burned them. The Sukarno regime



Sukarno

seized a U.S. Information Service Library, and turned it over to the Indonesian Students and Youth in Solidarity with Vietnam.

Several hundred African, Asian and Bulgarian students stoned the U.S. legation in Sofia, Bulgaria. Numerous windows were smashed. Some 2,000 students in Budapest, Hungary, reportedly led by a Vietnamese girl and a Cuban, attacked the U.S. legation with stones and ink bottles, and wrecked its recreation center.

Forty South Vietnamese students in Japan were joined by sympathetic students from Malaysia, Burma, Thailand and Japan in a demonstration in central Tokyo. About 10,000 workers responded to a call issued by the Japanese Socialist and Communist parties and demonstrated against U.S. bombings in North Vietnam and the docking of American nuclear submarines in Japan.

### Paris Demonstration

About 800 young people in Paris clashed with police in front of the U.S. Embassy. Police also dispersed about 150 demonstrators at the U.S. Embassy in Oslo, Norway. In Vienna, 50 Austrian Communist Party members were kept away from the U.S. Embassy, but a delegation handed a petition to U.S. officials.

In Buenos Aires, Argentina, 100 young people tar-bombed the walls of the First National Bank of Boston. At Cordoba, Argentina, another demonstration was held, and tar-bombs were thrown at the U.S.-Argentine Cultural Exchange.

In Malaysia, 1,000 youth supporters of the Socialist Front paraded through Kuala Lumpur and smashed the windows of the U.S. Information Service building. Demonstrators carried red banners declaring "Yankee Go Home" and "Tommy Go Home."

In Britain, 50 Labor Party members of Parliament signed a motion urging the British government to bring about a cease-fire. About 1,000 demonstrators marched in front of the U.S. embassy in London shouting "Hands off Vietnam!" and "Yankee murderers go home!"

Italian Communist youth demonstrated in Rome, Florence and Turin on Feb. 10. They stoned the U.S. consulate in Turin.

## ... Student Group Urges Demonstrations

(Continued from Page 1)  
pends on you and you alone."

The SDS statement says, "The March on Washington is expected to involve thousands of students and will be a massive protest against the present Vietnam policy." The March will begin with picketing at the White House, and will hear such speakers as Senator Gruening of Alaska, who has urged withdrawal from Vietnam, and journalist I. F. Stone.

The Young Socialist Alliance has endorsed the SDS march on Washington, and is urging all other student groups which are opposed to the U.S. war in Viet-

nam to do likewise. So far, the DuBois Club and the May 2 Movement have also come out in support of the march.

The SDS helped to organize demonstrations against the bombings of North Vietnam at Harvard, Yale, Brandeis, Rutgers, University of Wisconsin, University of Michigan, University of California, at Berkeley, University of Minnesota, and Oberlin.

A "fast for peace" was started on Feb. 11 by seven students at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Four men and three women students have set themselves up in the university's Student Union cafeteria. They said that they will fast for at least 48 hours and would continue until replaced by a student at George Washington and one other school.

In St. Louis, students staged a sit-in at the federal court, demanding a negotiated settlement in Vietnam. They were eventually kicked out.

The SDS plans to hold co-ordinated demonstrations on Feb. 20, along with other groups, including the YSA, in San Francisco, Austin (Texas), Chicago, Boston, New York and Washington.

Jack Barnes, YSA national chairman, urged student groups to begin organizing for the March on Washington. Busloads of students are expected from all over the country. For more information, write: Students for a Democratic Society, 119 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10003.

### A New Pamphlet

including

## Khrushchev's Downfall

Statement by United Secretariat of Fourth International and

### New Deepening of Sino-Soviet Rift?

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# Letters From Our Readers

[This column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Writers' initials will be used, names being withheld unless authorization is given for use.]

## Q and A on LBJ

Red Bank, N. J.  
Question: What very large and very obvious fact is not being mentioned these days by those

progressives and "socialists" who supported the LBJ presidential campaign?

Answer: The fact that those progressives and "socialists" were most ignominiously hoodwinked and that what they should have done and what they should do now is to work for a socialist political party.

Enclosed is \$5 in gratitude for your fight against the jingoist Johnson.

Allen Strasburger

## A Strike at GE

Boston, Mass.  
On Jan. 22, Local 201 of the International Union of Electrical Workers was forced by extreme rank-and-file pressure to strike the River Works and Everett plants of General Electric. The walkout came as the result of continuing failure of the "IUE-GE team" to successfully negotiate long-pending grievances over rate-cutting.

The main bone of contention is the cutting of the rate for work performed on tape lathes from \$3.25 to \$2.75 an hour. While the job remains substantially the same, these new lathes have increased output, lowered operating costs, and reduced wages 23½ cents an hour.

The original grievance was filed, amazingly enough, over a year ago. Last October, as a result of the IUE in essence tabling the grievance, some workers went out on what the union called a wild-cat strike. The union forced them back into the plant where they languished for two months more while the IUE again reviewed the proceedings.

Eventually, in December, the workers "filed suit" and were able to obtain a strike vote, the result of which was a better than two-to-one plurality in favor of strike.

Still the IUE, borne on the winds of collaboration with the bosses, and judiciously following their history of capitulation, balked at the thought of strike and again entered negotiations. With the stigma of the Schenectady sellout still fresh in all minds, the union couldn't come to terms and grudgingly submitted to the will of the members.

While the River Works and Everett plants are now on strike, the West Lynn GE plant, also represented by the IUE and just a stone's throw from the River Works, is still in full operation. IUE claims that West Lynn is a separate bargaining unit with no grievances to strike over. By this same rationale, the office and salary workers of the striking plants also remain at work.

But, alas, as District President Earl Riley and International President James Carey will tell you, "The union's job is to fight communism." Hence the justification of collaborating with the bosses and the sacrificing of membership demands.

Once again the union finds itself at the mercy of GE. The union is torn by bureaucratic faction fights (Messrs. Hartnett and Jennings), and coupled with the growing disenchantment of the membership, James Carey and GE sincerely hope that the IUE can carry on its tradition of red-baiting and collaboration by a marriage with the United Auto Workers of Walter Reuther. This would culminate in a greater victory for company unionism and still leave the workers on a cold picket line.

M. T.

## Too Much Birch Beer?

Yellow Springs, Ohio  
William Schepler, Ohio regional director of the John Birch Society, spoke here at Antioch College on Feb. 12. There are at least two things he said which might be of some amusement value to readers of *The Militant*.

First, he said that the Moscow-Peking dispute was not real. "A phone call from the Kremlin would be enough to fire the Chinese leaders at any time."

Secondly, he asserted, "The Socialist Workers Party is just an action arm of the Communist Party."

It takes an awfully sick society to produce sickies like Mr. Schepler.

Arthur Maglin

## New England Rights Parley

Boston, Mass.  
About 1,300 students registered for the four-college (Amherst, Smith, U. of Mass. and Mount Holyoke) civil-rights conference this weekend. They came from Bates College in Maine, Colby in New Hampshire, from Cornell and St. Lawrence in upstate New York, from Wesleyan and U. of Conn., from Middlebury College in Vermont, from Lincoln in Pennsylvania, and from numerous other campuses in the New England

area — Boston campuses sent three busloads and some cars. The size of the conference and the thinking of the delegates reflected some of the changing mood of those active in civil rights, at least on or around the campuses.

Though there was a great deal of disappointment because many of the major speakers could not be there (Malcolm X was held up in London; William Worthy, Milton Galamison and Michael Harrington couldn't come either), the attitude of many delegates reflected an acceptance of radical ideas as a legitimate part of the Negro struggle.

Three examples will illustrate: 1) In one of the Saturday morning sessions, after a speaker had made some far-reaching proposals, a student questioned from the audience: "If you believe that socialism is the answer — for God's sake admit it!" This remark met with resounding applause. 2) When a government administrator for "community improvement" made only the mild proposals that could be expected from that breed, and implied that the government was taking steps to solve the problems of the ghetto, he was received coolly, and even with laughter at times. 3) When Harlem rent-strike leader Jesse Gray declared that he was a "black working-class radical," a "socialist," his remarks

were accepted as nothing out of the ordinary, and he was very much respected.

The conference opened and closed with talks (Ossie Davis and Noel Day spoke), and on Saturday there were three panels in the morning and early afternoon, followed by seminars in the late afternoon. There were about 20 seminars; many had more than 50 in the audience.

One of the most interesting of these seminars was Jesse Gray's. He said he had no illusions about the ability of rent strikes to solve the problems of the ghetto completely — socialism would be needed for that; but the rent strikes were a first step in organizing the black masses of the ghetto and were able to make some gains.

Then he said that the next step he was hoping for was for the ghetto to run a black candidate for mayor of New York this year in opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties. The need was for the black ghetto to consolidate itself. Then it would have the potential of giving leadership to the country on issues like peace, the war in Vietnam, and other issues as well as on the problems of the black ghetto.

In the seminar, his ideas were discussed with interest.

G.H.

## 10 Years Ago In The Militant

"Less than two years after Stalin died, the second post-Stalin regime of Khrushchev-Bulganin-Zhukov formally assumed power in the USSR. When Stalin was entombed, the Soviet bureaucracy closed ranks around Malenkov-Beria-Molotov. In funeral orations on March 9, 1953, this trio proclaimed their platform of rule . . .

"Malenkov promised abundance. Beria vowed a 'liberalized' regime, under which Soviet civil liberties would be fully and unconditionally safeguarded. Within 100 days Beria was arrested and later shot. On Feb. 8, 1955, came Malenkov's turn. His purge took the shape of resignation . . .

"And how secure can Khrushchev's associates feel, not to mention those of Bulganin? . . . The aggravation of the crisis of succession will bring even more sharply to the fore in the next period the political function of the purge under the Stalinist system. In the nearly two years since Stalin died it has been amply demonstrated that the bureaucracy cannot devise any new methods of rule." — Feb. 21, 1955.

## 20 Years Ago

"After the civil war which raged for over a month in and around Athens, the Allied invaders and their Greek quislings have succeeded in imposing savage terms upon the defeated ELAS forces . . .

"According to the provisions of this agreement, the ELAS forces have been ordered to 'stack their arms within 14 days.' . . . As a condition for surrendering their arms, the ELAS leaders demanded the simultaneous disarming of the reactionary brigades which had shot down Greek workers for the Nazis during the occupation. Churchill . . . flatly rejected this demand. . . . The government also rejected the demand by EAM-ELAS for a general amnesty . . .

"Ever since the 'truce' imposed upon the Greek people on Jan. 15, 'a full-blooded terror is raging against all who are suspected or denounced for having aided ELAS during the war,' reports the Jan. 19 *London Tribune*. 'Thousands of ELAS supporters have been imprisoned and are being held now by the self-same security police which hunted them on behalf of the Germans during the occupation.' . . .

"The Stalinist leaders of the EAM-ELAS bear direct responsibility for giving Churchill-Scobie-Plastiras these sweeping powers to hunt down the Greek workers and peasants . . . The Stalinist organ in Greece, *Rizopastis*, hails the sell-out of the Greek workers to their worst enemies . . . The Stalinist paper brazenly boasts that this deal was made with the consent of Stalin in 'the historic decision of the Crimea conference.' Here is one of the first bitter fruits of the 'Big Three' conspiracy against the European masses." — Feb. 24, 1945.

## It Was Reported in the Press

**In Case You Think It's You That's Crazy** — We thought the lead headline in the Feb. 12 *New York Times* was pretty wild. It read: "160 U.S. and Vietnamese Planes Attack Military Bases in North: Washington Seeks to Limit War." Then we read a head further down the page: "Limit on Conflict Stressed by U.S. — Officials Point to Distinction Between Retaliatory Raids and Outright Hostilities."

**Double-Speak Dep't** — GIs held prisoner by the guerrilla forces in South Vietnam are referred to by the Pentagon as being "detained," rather than "captured," because technically the U.S. is not at war in South Vietnam.

**Progress in Indiana** — The three students facing "sedition" charges in Indiana may be interested in the following Feb. 9 *UPI* dispatch from Indianapolis: "Despite a warning that the action might lead to lynchings, the Indiana Senate approved and sent to the House today two bills abolishing the death penalty for specific crimes. A bill abolishing the death penalty for first-degree murder was approved 29 to 19 after a long debate. A companion measure abolishing the death penalty for treason against the state, lynching, dueling and kidnaping for ransom was approved 35-to-9 without debate. The bills were expected to face heavy opposition in the House."

**Sweet Smell of Success** — The *New York Times* offers this explanation of why the sales of men's toiletries have increased 60 per cent in recent years (\$300 million worth in 1963): "The young American male is more affluent, better educated and more sophisticated for his age than his sires and starts thinking about smelling good before he is out of high school."

**Togetherness** — John T. O'Connor, the new Secretary of Commerce, hopes his department will establish closer relations with big business. This reminds us of the old Marx Brothers picture where Groucho is hugging a lady and she asks him to hold her closer. Replied Groucho: "If I hold you any closer I'll be in back of you."

**The Civilization-Builders** — "It is unlikely that any readers have ever tried to telephone from Kigoma on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, to Honolulu, 12,000 miles away in the Pacific Ocean. But it can be done. The routing of the call is simplicity itself: Kigoma-Nairobi-London-Honolulu . . . If, on the other hand, you should ever wish to phone from Kigoma to Albertville, about 70 miles away on the other side of Lake Tanganyika, the routing is somewhat more complex — to wit: Kigoma-Dodoma-Dar-es-Salaam - Zanzibar - Nairobi-London - Brussels-Leopoldville-Albertville . . . Kigoma, you see, is in Tanzania, ruled until recently by Britain. Albertville is in the Congo, lately Belgian. And never, until now, were the twain allowed to meet. Not by telephone anyway." — *The Manchester Guardian*.

**Youthful Victims** — Forty per cent of those classified by the government as in the poverty bracket are 21 years of age or younger.

**Whatever Happened to the War on Poverty?** — The Huntington Park, Calif., *Daily Signal* carried this front-page appeal to readers: "St. John's Indian School and Mission, Komatke Village, Leavenworth, Ariz., is in critical need of food, clothing and financial aid to help support the 400 Indian children and adults at the mission."

**Free-Thinking New York Times** — A Feb. 14 Havana dispatch to the *New York Times* chided the Cuban regime for providing free Valentine Day marriage ceremonies for couples not legally wed. The *Times* article began: "The regime of Premier Fidel Castro, which maintains that it emancipated Cuban women, married off many of them today." The article suggests that the widespread lack of formal wedding ceremonies in pre-revolutionary Cuba was due to the "easy-going disposition" of the Cuban people. Nowhere does it report the simple fact that even the *New York Daily News* saw fit to print, namely: "In pre-revolutionary Cuba, many people unable to afford the relatively high costs of a civil ceremony dispensed with the official requirement."

**Better Luck Next Time** — Somebody walked off a ship in Great Britain with more than \$2 million in gold that the government of South Africa was shipping to a British bank. Unfortunately, the shipment was insured.

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## Thought for the Week

"One of the most perplexing questions about today's [White House] statement was that it listed unspecified ambushes, assassinations, railroad attacks and assaults on South Vietnamese army units among the provocations that caused American retaliation. Such Vietcong operations have been regular parts of the war since the United States intervened militarily in November, 1961." — From a Feb. 11 *New York Times* Washington dispatch.



## N. Y. Court Sets Review Of Whitmore 'Confession'

By Herman Chauka

NEW YORK, Feb. 16 — George Whitmore, the young Negro who has been exonerated in the murders of Janice Wylie and Emily Hoffert, to which he had confessed after being beaten by cops, won a new round in court in another case in which a confession had been forced from him. But meanwhile the Brooklyn NAACP was reported readying a charge that a relative of Whitmore's had been subjected to police harassment in a third case where Whitmore had been coerced into admitting "guilt."

At the same time, the exposure of the Whitmore "confession" in the Wylie-Hoffert murders has forced the reopening of another case, that of David Coleman, who has been sitting in Death Row since his conviction in a 1960 murder case. Among the cops who extracted the confession from Coleman was Detective Edward Bulger who was also party to the grilling session in which Whitmore confessed to three killings and an attempted rape after being "hit many times."

In announcing the reopening of the Coleman case, Brooklyn District Attorney Aaron Koota insisted his decision had "nothing to do" with an NAACP demand that he do so. Just 24 hours previous, the NAACP had publicly demanded that the Coleman case, and all others where Detective Bulger had been involved in obtaining confessions, be reopened.

The number of similar cases may prove considerable. The decision to review Whitmore's confession of the attempted rape of Mrs. Elba Borrero and the court order to review the Coleman confession are based on a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that judges hold hearings on confessions and not permit juries to hear those deemed to have been coerced.

The extent to which confessions are forced out of helpless victims may be indicated by a revelation that between 500 and 700 convicts in the state have already applied for such review.

The latest charge of such police methods involves Mrs. Barbara Watson, a distant cousin of Whitmore's. She is reported to have told the Brooklyn NAACP that members of Prosecutor Koota's staff grilled her for seven-and-a-half hours without letup.

She said they were trying to get her to say that Whitmore had admitted to her that he had mur-



Wagner

dered Mrs. Minnie Edmonds last April.

Mrs. Watson was firm in her denial of this even though, she said, her interrogators called her a liar, threatened to hold her indefinitely as a material witness and to bring her before a grand jury where she would be tried for perjury.

Meanwhile, new evidence confirming Whitmore's innocence in the attempted rape of Mrs. Borrero has come to light. Whitmore's fiancée and her mother have told newsmen that he was visiting them the night of the crime and that within a very few minutes after he had left their home they, along with many other residents of the area, heard the shots of the policemen who had made an unsuccessful pursuit of the assailant.

The attempted assault had taken place a good mile and a quarter from their home. Walking rapidly and taking every possible shortcut, newsmen were not able to get to the scene of the crime from there in less than 14 minutes.

Why then did young Whitmore confess? Speaking at Antioch Baptist Church in Brooklyn last Sunday, Dick Gregory put it this way: "George Whitmore is lucky. When they got through with him, he was lucky he didn't confess to the Crucifixion and the sinking of the Titanic."

Meanwhile, Mayor Wagner, who has remained silent on the Whitmore case, has announced he's adding another thousand cops to the force to "protect" the citizens.

## Selma Rights Fighters Insist Johnson Act

# Federal Intervention Demanded

By William Bundy

FEB. 14 — Negro citizens of Selma, Ala., have demanded that President Johnson intervene in the voter-registration situation there by placing the area under federal martial law. This demand was voted at a Feb. 10 mass meeting the day after Dallas County Sheriff James Clark and his notorious volunteer posse, using cattle prods and clubs, herded some 170 Negro children and teenagers on a double-time forced march into the countryside.

The demand that Johnson send federal troops was proposed and voted independently of Rev. Martin Luther King, who has been the most prominent leader of the voter-registration drive which began in Selma Jan. 17. Parents of many of the youngsters who had been on the forced march were at the meeting. The vote was taken as the meeting was waiting for a speech by Dr. King. When King spoke, however, he made no mention of the motion calling for federal troops.

King had just returned from Washington where he presented to federal officials proposals for new federal legislation guaranteeing Negro voting rights, and had been allowed to see President Johnson for 15 minutes. King said Johnson promised to send a message to Congress on the subject.

### Difference on Strategy

The difference between the meeting's call for federal troops and King's call for more legislation underlines an important difference over strategy for the entire civil-rights movement. The demand for federal action now against local racist officials puts the heat where it belongs — directly on President Johnson who, like his predecessors for over half a century, has failed to enforce existing laws and provisions of the U.S. Constitution on voting rights.

King's emphasis on new legislation lets Johnson off the hook, allowing him to stall for another protracted period of getting yet another bill through Congress.

The demand sparked by the angry Negro parents came in the course of a week which highlighted the brutality of Sheriff Clark. In the month since the demonstrations began, there have been some 3,400 arrests. During the period of their detention, most of the Negroes have been confined at Camp Selma, a chain-gang barracks built by the State Highway Depart-

### Bobby Kennedy Has a New Buddy

Remember a few short months ago when Robert F. Kennedy was running for U.S. Senator from New York as a great liberal with an undying dedication to civil rights — even singing "We Shall Overcome" at a Harlem rally? Here's how syndicated Washington columnist Roscoe Drummond described him Feb. 8:

"To his colleagues it is pretty breath-taking and a little awesome to watch the way Senator Robert F. Kennedy is plunging into his job and also working for Robert F. Kennedy . . . RFK is cementing his relations with a number of Southern Democratic Senators including the powerful chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi, who is now remarking to colleagues, 'Bobby suggests this,' 'Bobby thinks that,' etc."

In the forced-march atrocity, the youths involved had been demonstrating silently outside the courthouse with crayoned signs urging voting rights for Negroes. The sheriff led them off as if to jail, as he had other demonstrators in past weeks. Instead, however, he marched them out of town and blocked newsmen from following. He and his men herded the youngsters along at double-time, using cattle prods and clubs to force the youngsters to keep up the pace. The sheriff and his deputies spelled each other off, riding in cars. After about three miles, the exhausted youths rebelled and ran off the road. The sheriff then returned to town saying he had arrested the youths but that they had "escaped."

### International Indignation

Indications are that the international indignation aroused by these incidents and the demand sparked by the irate parents for federal troops brought quick behind-the-scenes efforts from the Johnson administration to cool off the Selma situation. The next day, Feb. 11, was the first since the vote drive began that Negro demonstrators were not arrested. Then, on Feb. 12, Sheriff Clark was removed from policing the demonstrations on the transparent excuse of hospitalization for "exhaustion."

The Selma campaign has gained much publicity — but few Negroes have been registered. It has underlined the fact that last year's Civil Rights Act has had virtually no effect on voting rights precisely where such rights might have the most effect in upsetting the local capitalist power structure — in the South's black-belt counties where Negroes are a majority. In Dallas County, of which Selma is the seat, Negroes are 57 per cent of the population, but less than one per cent of them are registered to vote.

### Federal Foot-dragging

This situation is typical of the black belt as a whole. It is a result not only of local racist intimidation and violence, but of the deliberate refusal of the federal administration to take effective action. Two current court cases underline the federal foot-dragging. One is the case challenging the constitutionality of Mississippi's voting laws. In a hearing this month, Justice Department attorneys refused to press the case before the Supreme Court and, instead, asked that it be sent to a lower court for trial. This means two years more of delay. And this was in face of a virtual offer by a majority of the Supreme Court Justices to rule against Mississippi if the Justice Department asked for a decision.

The second case is the NAACP's suit against the Census Bureau seeking enforcement of Section 2 of the 14th Amendment. This section says states shall be deprived of congressional representation in proportion to the number of persons denied the right to vote.

The Justice Department is opposing the NAACP's suit on the flimsy excuse that the Census Bureau doesn't have enough money to collect statistics on the number of people denied the right to vote. Commenting on this case, the Feb. 15 *Nation* magazine points out: "Officials of the state of Alabama must be much encouraged in their defiance of the Constitution when they see it violated by subterfuge in the nation's capital."

Clearly, new legislation is strictly a secondary matter. The real problem is the administration's policy of avoiding effective enforcement of Negro voting rights in the black belt.

## POLICE BRUTALITY CASE

# Detroit Jury Clears 2 Negro Socialists

DETROIT, Feb. 11 — After a three day trial, an all-white jury on Feb. 9 handed down a ruling of "not guilty" in the case of two Negro socialists, Richard T. David and Robert Higgins, accused of assault and battery against two off-duty policemen.

The incident occurred on Oct. 24, 1964, when David, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, and Mrs. Dorothea Breitman, a white supporter, were in a parked car in front of the party headquarters. They were insulted by two off-duty white policemen walking by on the sidewalk.

David approached the two, protesting their insults, and a tussle ensued. Robert Higgins, a young supporter of David, emerged from the headquarters and went to David's aid. It was at this point that the men first identified themselves as police officers.

In a letter to Robert Himmel, SWP Wayne County Chairman, Police Commissioner Girardin

stated that "off-duty members of the Detroit Police Department may have precipitated the incident by making uncalculated racial remarks." He indicated that he was "not satisfied with the conduct of the officers."

During the scuffle, three police cars pulled up and David and Higgins were placed under arrest. Mrs. Breitman, who had attempted to stop the fight, was arrested for interfering with an officer. Three young socialists who asked for information from the policemen were also arrested. Charges against one, James Griffin, were later dropped.

### Earlier Charge Dropped

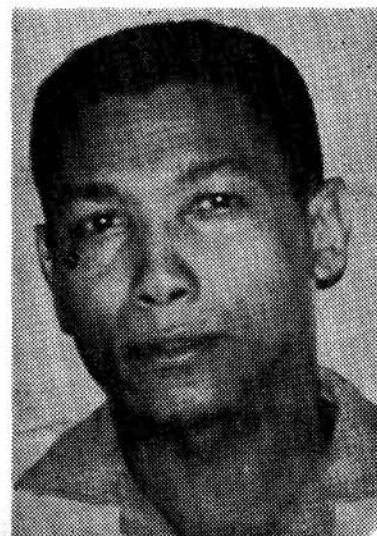
Higgins and David were tried in Records Court by Judge Vincent Brennan on Feb. 5. An earlier charge of malicious destruction of property against David was dropped at the beginning of the trial. He had been charged with smashing the window of the police officer's car, although a doctor's

examination showed no marks on his hands.

Milton R. Henry, attorney for the defendants, ably pointed out contradictory stories told by the policemen in court. He charged the jurors to set aside racial and political prejudices, saying that "the political ideas rejected today are accepted tomorrow." He went on to state that "young people like these are the hope of this sick world, and you should not allow these policemen to force the mold of a decaying society on their heads. This whole case was really created by the hate that comes from this system. You can take a stand right here today and begin to create a better world by refusing to allow an injustice like this to be carried through."

After a relatively short two-and-a-half hours of deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty for both defendants. Dorothea Breitman, Edward D'Angelo and Daniel Rosenshine, the other

defendants, will go on trial on March 16 for "interfering with an officer."



Richard T. David