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JOTTINGS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

THE BATTLE OF DIEN BIEN PHU has become of considerable interest to Americans since our own country became deeply involved in what is increasingly not merely a Vietnamese but an Indochinese war. Every year, the anniversary of the capitulation of the entrenched garrison is marked by a few well chosen words by the television newscasters or at least a brief squib in the daily newspapers. Although the French position in Indochina was hopeless long before Dien Bien Phu, the incident is considered by most Americans to have been militarily decisive, and I suppose that, despite the protests of historians, Dien Bien Phu will always remain in the minds of most laymen the decisive battle of the (First) Indochinese War. And as long as Dien Bien Phu is discussed, there will also always remain a controversy regarding the competence of the French Commander in Chief in Indochina, General Henri Navarre: whether, as some suppose, he was a capable if overly conventional strategist whose failure was attributable to his unfamiliarity with the region, his opponents and their unconventional style of warfare; or whether, as others claim, Navarre was a military idiot. Personally, I incline toward the latter opinion. Ironically, the Communists avoid or at least de-emphasize the shortcomings of General Navarre in giving their appraisal of the battle. This is understandable. A victory, after all, is much more satisfying if you believe (or at least can convince others) that your opponent was formidable.

It should be noted that General Navarre accepted his appointment as Commander in Chief in Indochina with the utmost reluctance, as well he might have. He possessed no visible qualifications for such an important post. As he himself readily admitted with disarming candor, he knew nothing about Indochina or about the enemy his troops were facing. Moreover, his career up until the time of his appointment had been spent in staff and in the military intelligence; his military expertise had been tested only in paper battles, at which of course it is frequently possible for completely inadequate officers to excel. But his evident lack of qualification for the assignment did not bother the French government, because they did not expect the new Commander in Chief to fight battles. The instructions Navarre received in Paris were simply to extricate the French from Indochina with the minimum possible loss or embarrassment. He was informed that he could expect to receive no reinforcements, that the government and people of France were tired of the interminable conflict. He neither requested nor received authorization to provoke what even then was to be termed a "decisive" battle; his in-

structions included a vague admonition to defend Laos, and Navarre simply interpreted this as giving him authorization to establish himself at Dien Bien Phu and invite attack by the Viet Minh.

Acting therefore on his own initiative, General Henri Navarre proceeded to lay detailed plans for what has become known as one of the greatest follies in military history. Dien Bien Phu is a valley completely surrounded and dominated by jagged mountains. Approximately eleven miles long and three miles wide, the valley contained, in 1953, about a hundred hamlets and ten thousand inhabitants. There were several reasonably passable roads and two airfields originally constructed by the Japanese. The valley was occupied by French paratroopers on November 20, 1953, and the basin secured after brief fighting with Viet Minh units on the scene. For the next two months, reinforcements and tons of supplies were brought in, first by parachute and later, when the air strips were repaired, by transport planes. The French troops confined themselves to the basin; the possibility of securing the heights was never seriously considered, and probably could not in any case have been successfully carried out. The absolute lunacy of occupying the low ground and leaving the high ground to the enemy has been recognized ever since the invention of artillery, but the French were not worried on that account. They said, first, that the Viet Minh probably did not possess any heavy artillery; that, even if they possessed it, they could not transport it to this isolated valley; that even if they brought it to Dien Bien Phu, they could not place it on the mountains without modern motorized equipment, which they didn't have; and, finally, that even if by some miracle they succeeded in establishing their artillery on the slopes, its position would be given away as soon as it fired and it would be destroyed by the French guns (all twenty-eight of them). This was not merely Navarre's delusion; it was shared by virtually the entire officers corps in Indochina. They similarly underestimated the Viet Minh and its commander in chief, General Vo Nguyen Giap (now DRV Defense Minister), with respect to the number of troops which might assault the French entrenchments. Navarre believed--and his subordinates were eager to believe--that the Viet Minh could supply no more than a reinforced division so far from their bases. He therefore expected to face the enemy with numerical parity, with the 13,000 French and allied troops having the advantage of good defensive positions. Actually, General Giap was marshalling the equivalent of five divisions for the attack on Dien Bien Phu. The logistics problem was overcome with ingenuity, hard work and a dedication which the French would have found incredible.

Not all of the French officers were completely blind to the peril of their position, of course. Intelligence officers under General Cogny, who commanded in the Tonkin delta, pieced together from the reports of spies and intercepted radio messages an accurate picture of the scale of the effort the Viet Minh were making to surround and destroy the Dien Bien Phu garrison. Navarre refused to believe them. Air force officers were also pessimistic about the entrenched camp. It was the air force, after all, which was given the task of supplying the garrison, harrying the enemy's supply routes and augmenting the French artillery with air strikes against Viet Minh positions. Some of the air officers were appalled at the idea of deliberately placing a garrison into a valley so far from French bases where the enemy controlled the high ground. On a visit to the entrenchments, the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Fay, bluntly stated that the position was hopeless. The air force called the place "The Chamber Pot", and could guarantee to supply the garrison only so long as the air fields remained usable and no enemy anti-aircraft guns occupied the heights.

Any French general, schooled in conventional military thought, might have devised "Operation Castor", the occupation of Dien Bien Phu,

and decided that it showed promise of success. Any French general might have underestimated (as virtually every commissioned officer in the French Expeditionary Corps did underestimate) the ability of the Viet Minh to concentrate large numbers of troops and heavy guns against the French camp. Henri Navarre's particular claim to have been, in military terms, a nincompoop derives from his failure, once the true nature of the situation had become clear to him, to do anything about it. By the middle of January, even Navarre must have realized that the Dien Bien Phu garrison was confronted by an overwhelming enemy force crouched up on the rim of the "chamber pot" ready to spring. A significant French victory over the forces Giap had assembled was out of the question, but the garrison could at least have been rescued had Navarre acted. Even after the Commander in Chief began to speak of Dien Bien Phu as the "decisive" battleground, he adhered to the previously formulated plan according to which, simultaneous with the battle of Dien Bien Phu, twenty-five French battalions and one-fifth of Navarre's air force were involved in the futile "Operation Atlante" in the Mekong River area. (By mid-March, 1954, a total of thirty-three battalions had been committed to "Atlante".) This operation should have been closed out no later than March 1st, when the attack on Dien Bien Phu was known to be imminent (it actually began on March 13th), and these battalions or a substantial portion of them shifted northward. They could not have been employed for the direct reinforcement of the camp, since it was already crowded and since, in any case, the air force was strained to the limit supplying the forces already at Dien Bien Phu. But a force of only ten or fifteen battalions could have taken the pressure off of the garrison by operating against the Viet Minh lines of supply and communication. Even a genius like Giap could not have maintained the investment of Dien Bien Phu with his supplies of food and ammunition choked off. He would have been compelled to turn his attention to the French battalions harassing his rear, and they could have maneuvered against him while falling back to the coast, thereby relieving the pressure on Dien Bien Phu long enough for the evacuation of the garrison. If all thirty-three battalions from "Atlante" had been utilized in this way, even more favorable results would have been within reach. This force would have possessed numerical parity with General Giap's army, and after smashing his supply lines could have advanced on Dien Bien Phu and relieved it directly. Giap would have been compelled to withdraw, possibly with the loss of his heavy artillery.

This would hardly have affected the eventual outcome of the war, but it might have strengthened France's position--at least psychologically--during the Geneva talks and it would, in any event, have prevented the name of Dien Bien Phu from going down in the annals of military history as perhaps the greatest self-inflicted catastrophe of modern time.

ROBERT STRANGE McNAMARA, as a consequence of his station as overlord of the Defense Department, is the principal bête noire of opponents of the Vietnam war. He is criticized and condemned more vigorously, in many instances, than the President himself. There is a good deal of irony in this, for within the narrow range of opinion in the Administration itself McNamara is considered a Dove; he has argued against the steps of escalation for which he has been most sharply criticized, and has consistently opposed the views of the Administration's more influential Hawks, notably Secretary of State Rusk. I personally appreciate the irony of much of the anti-McNamara sentiment in particular because Robert McNamara is the only high-ranking member of the present Administration for whom I have any intellectual respect. This is not to say, of course, that the criticism directed at McNamara is unde-

served. While he may argue against various Hawkish proposals for expanding the war and accelerating its brutality, he undertakes as Secretary of Defense to put into practice such proposals when they are authorized by the White House, and the fact that he does so with consummate efficiency and skill merely increases his burden of guilt for the consequences. But whatever I may think of the policies he carries out, I cannot avoid admiring Robert McNamara. He will probably be considered in later years the greatest Secretary of Defense this nation has ever had. He is a superbly competent administrator and technician, the sort of man who was born to direct some mighty enterprise, whether it be an automobile corporation or an executive department of the government. Calm, a bit priggish, with a coldly incisive intellect--the classic bear-trap mind--I find it impossible to feel personal antipathy toward this man, engaged though he is in perpetrating the greatest evil in which this nation has ever participated. I even like his news briefings. McNamara may lie, but at least he isn't maudlin and petty like Johnson or suffering from rectal-cranial inversion like Rusk or full of sound and fury signifying nothing like Humphrey; he says what he has to in a no-nonsense burst of unemotional words, and stops talking when he has nothing more to say (something politicians should learn).

Of course, with all of these fine qualities, Robert S. McNamara has one outstanding fault, the one which led him to his present position as an efficient agent of horror: he is amoral. He is both a product and an exponent of that morally bankrupt "administration liberalism" described by C. Wright Mills in the excerpt printed in Kipple #117. I am reminded of another such personality, a German bureaucrat named Oswald Pohl. Pohl, like McNamara, was a supremely gifted organizer and administrator, a former naval paymaster who during the war ran Hitler's Economic Administration Head Office with an efficiency bordering on wizardry. Even near the end of the war, when transport and production had been virtually shattered, Pohl quietly carried out instructions and met quotas with ingenuity and determination worthy of a true administrative genius. The nature of the instructions he was efficiently carrying out was something he did not think about. Policy-making was somebody else's province; his only concern was in seeing that the policies were implemented with maximum efficiency. Pohl and McNamara could easily have changed places in history; McNamara would have functioned brilliantly as the overseer of Nazi Germany's wartime economy and slave-labor industries, and Pohl would have applied himself diligently to solving logistics problems in order to make it easier for Lyndon Johnson to kill peasants 12,000 miles away.

THE CASE OF THE CARLYSLE CAPER: (Synopsis: Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, has joined a happy band assembled by Lord Leslie Trenchfoot to pilfer the crown jewels of Upper Volta. His confederates include Dr. Bertram Bedsore, former USAF Captain Niles Needleman, Freddy Nkakamwakam, an urbane Bantu with a teddybear under his arm, Linda Luscious and Sister Mary Theresa, who is to smuggle the stolen property out of the country beneath her habit.)

"My skin positively tingles with excitement whenever we begin an operation," Lord Trenchfoot observed to Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, as they stood on the deck of the liner steaming out of Portsmouth. The entire group was leaning against the rail on the first class observation deck, except for Sister Mary Theresa, who was to remain apart from the others until the time arrived to transfer the jewels to her.

"I still don't see why we didn't just take a plane," Linda Luscious pouted.

"You know why, my dear," Dr. Bedsore replied, giving Linda a fa-

therly if rather prolonged pat on the rear. "Former Captain Needleman gets airsick."

"But damn it, Needleman, a ship goes up and down, back and forth, and up and down just like a plane in rough air currents."

Former Captain Needleman blanched perceptibly on each "up and down", peered down at the waves lapping hungrily at the side of the ship, then looked up again at Linda, rather pathetically. His face began to change color, from its normal fishbelly white to a slightly iridescent green.

Falquon shook his head reprovingly at Linda. "It might have been better if you hadn't said that to him..."

"Anyway," Trenchfoot commented cheerfully, more to change the subject than anything else, "we're supposed to be nothing more than care-free tourists, so a nice, slow cruise seemed just right. It won't matter that we won't arrive in Upper Volta for three weeks. It's more important that we do not raise any suspicions among either our fellow passengers or the customs authorities in Ougadougou. Travelling this way, we won't incur any unwanted attention."

Renwood looked at the motley company attempting to pass for a group of normal, carefree tourists. Needleman was dressed in a pair of mauve corduroy slacks, a flak suit and a flying helmet with goggles, to "remind me of the good old days", as he put it. Linda's bosom had grown perceptibly since he had first met her at Trenchfoot's country house, and he conservatively estimated that it might now measure 52 inches. He supposed that in addition to the usual paraphernalia in her brassiere, she was probably carrying an inflatable life-raft or a week's rations--just in case the ship sank. Freddy Nkakamwakam was dressed in a maroon suit with seven-inch lapels and wore a chartreuse panama hat; in his arms he carried the soiled teddybear named Victoria which was never out of his sight and which he introduced as his daughter. Lord Trenchfoot was dressed normally enough, except for his polka-dot combat boots, but his pasty false nose and purple goatee were somewhat out of the ordinary and the pet iguana which he had on the end of a rhinestone encrusted leash had drawn a few peculiar glances from fellow passengers, especially when it attempted to rape an alligator handbag belonging to the first mate's mother. Falquon himself was attired nattily in a pair of bell-bottom trousers, a Spanish serape and a fire engine red pith helmet. Looking over the entire group, he concluded that they would probably pass for ordinary tourists--except for one small detail.

"Leslie," he began hesitantly, turning to Lord Trenchfoot, "I don't mean to criticize your demeanor or apparel, but there is one minor thing..."

"Don't be bashful, Renny old turd. Let me have it straight from the shoulder."

"Well, it's your purple goatee. Now, I know this sounds silly, but a few of our fellow passengers have actually noticed it."

Fingering his chin whiskers speculatively, Trenchfoot replied, "Why, you're quite right. It hadn't occurred to me. I shall attend to it immediately. I'll die it green." And with that he was off to his cabin, still nodding in appreciation of Falquon's brilliant powers of observation and lightning mind.

"You know," Linda mused, licking her lips, "all of a sudden I feel like a nice, thick, creamy milkshake."

Falquon was about to ask what a nice, thick, creamy milkshake felt like, but at this point Needleman finally surrendered to the growing urge and threw up, hanging his head over the railing. Unfortunately, since the first class deck was recessed from the lower decks, the young women in the deck chairs below had every justification for shouting a stream of obscenities in the direction of those standing above.

One of them, particularly attractive, was in the process of hurling an ashtray at the still prostrate former Captain Needleman when Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, gallantly offered her his pith helmet. She calmed down then, and in a subdued and faintly accented voice told Falquon, "Come to my cabin at 10:00 tonight. It is number 203."

(To Be Continued)

ANOTHER VIETNAM LETTER: Steve Mooser, soon to be Kipple's man in Pernambuco, is the sort of conservative I admire: a conservative, that is, who stands somewhat to the left of Derek Nelson, being in favor of racial justice with no ifs, ands or buts, conservatively opposed to the war in Vietnam, and given to constructive criticism of the welfare state bureaucracy. Since he began reading Kipple some months ago, Steve has moved slightly leftward with respect to foreign policy. Perhaps the magazine should be given some of the credit for that, though the fact that in those months this country's war in Vietnam has become considerably nastier and more brutal is no doubt chiefly responsible. In any event, Steve's present position is outlined rather well in a letter of his which appeared in the January 8, 1967, issue of the Santa Cruz Sentinel:

"The recent reports about our bombing of Hanoi reveal yet another dark chapter in the Vietnam tragedy.

"There are three characteristics that exemplify the Vietnam war--its waste, brutality and futility. No excuse about the brutality and civilian casualties of war can condone the napalming and slaughtering of thousands of innocent people and the destruction of villages and crops because of a few 'suspected' Viet Cong in the area.

"The futility of the war is best shown in our ambiguous goals. This is perhaps the most distressing point. Unlike previous wars, we are not fighting for anything. One asks, 'What are we really fighting for?' Freedom and self-determination? Hardly. Our aid has bolstered the tyrannical Diem and Ky regimes and blocked the scheduled national elections of 1956. To stop aggression? We are the ones that have broken the Geneva Agreements and the United Nations Charter. North Vietnam's involvement occurred years after we made Vietnam 'our business'. To defeat the North Vietnamese? We certainly have the capability of defeating North Vietnam, and to 'flatten' Hanoi. But what effect this would have on the war in the South is dubious. According to United States authorities 75 percent of the Viet Cong's arms were made in the United States (they were captured from the South Vietnamese forces). To check Red Chinese expansion? There have been no indications that Red China is promoting or directing the Vietnamese conflict. History indicates that the Chinese and Vietnamese have been ardent enemies for centuries. To defeat communism? We will never defeat communism in Vietnam by bombing Hanoi and villages in the south. The key to defeating communism and avoiding future 'Vietnams' is fighting for, instead of against, the elimination of poverty, disease, unfair land distribution and

tyranny. The Vietnamese war did not start by infiltration from the North, it started when some South Vietnamese rebelled against the plight of the average peasant. Instead of showing our willingness to help solve these problems, we showed our willingness to help Ngo Dinh Diem build a police state. These problems still exist, and as long as war continues they cannot be met.

"The cost of this war on the American people is staggering, about \$125 per year for every man, woman and child. This money spent otherwise could: provide a ten percent salary increase to every United States public school teacher. It could more than double the Social Security benefits for about 25 million Americans. It could make tremendous inroads into the problems of poverty, inadequate education, disease, mass transit, pollution and so many others.

"The logical question is: 'What policy should we follow now?' Complete withdrawal? Certainly not. This would neither benefit the cause of peace nor that of the free world. We must, however, direct our efforts toward achieving a cease-fire and the institution of a Geneva or All Asian conference. The war against the real pressing problems of South Vietnam and the United States depends upon how soon we are successful in ending the present hostilities."

I find myself in agreement with everything in this letter except the portion of the final paragraph where Steve rejects out of hand (and without offering reasons or arguments) complete withdrawal. In reading this letter, I experienced somewhat of a feeling of deja vu, for these observations, including the reservation concerning complete withdrawal, exactly represent my own position as of eighteen months ago. As late as November 11, 1965, I noted (Kipple #90) that "my own position is, briefly, that United States involvement in Vietnam was ill-advised from the beginning and should never have been authorized; but, while it is obviously desirable to negotiate some sort of peaceful settlement, there are circumstances which render unilateral withdrawal an unacceptable alternative."

This reasoning, I now recognize, is fallacious, as well as, in a sense, intellectually dishonest. Eighteen months ago, my essays on the Vietnam conflict, like Steve's recent letter, would enumerate many arguments against the Administration's policy and program in Vietnam (there are more cogent arguments against this than against any policy in which the United States has ever engaged), but would draw back at the last moment from the inevitable conclusion with a "But..." The arguments following the "But..." invariably pertain to prestige: that, having committed ourselves to this conflict, we cannot pull out since our prestige is now at stake, and since "giving up" would encourage the view that the United States is a "paper tiger". These are not exceptionally compelling arguments; what they assert, in essence, is that when you're doing something stupid, and realize that it is stupid, you must continue doing it anyway rather than admit its stupidity. But whatever limited appeal this argument does have depends upon the wholly fallacious assumption that the alternatives are either withdrawal or continuing to fight at a certain, stable level of violence. It has become clear to me--and shall, I hope, become clear to Steve--that the actual alternative to withdrawal is not continuing the war at the level as of January,

1965, or January, 1966, or today; but rather unlimited escalation ultimately resulting in genocide. At present, to preserve our "prestige", we are murdering (counting ground and air action in South Vietnam and air action in North Vietnam) something on the order of 2000 people every week. How long will it be, if the Administration continues to cave in to the demands of the Hawks, before we manage to kill 20,000 in a single week for "prestige"? Will considerations of "prestige" still be decisive when--as will surely happen when the suggestions of Barry Goldwater, Curtis LeMay and Mendel Rivers are carried out--the toll reaches 200,000 in one week?

Eventually, a point must be reached when our "prestige" is no longer worth the measures we take to preserve it. I believe that point has already been reached. I believe that humanity demands and decency requires that we choose to get out, with or without "face", at the earliest possible moment.

MEMORIES OF P.S. #99: In the northern section of Baltimore's black ghetto, at North Avenue and Washington Street, stands P.S. #99, the Christopher Columbus Elementary School. It is one of the dreary and decrepit inner city schools which, through inadequate education, helps to create the welfare recipients of tomorrow. P.S. #99 is not the most blighted school in Baltimore City, nor is it one which civil rights organizations have singled out for special attention. But it is the school about which I am best qualified to write, for I attended it for six years, kindergarten through sixth grade.

We kids had a running joke when I went to good old P.S. #99, to the effect that it had been named the Christopher Columbus Elementary School because he, Columbus, had built it. That of course was an exaggeration, but it wasn't much of an exaggeration. My mother attended P.S. #99, and her father attended it a generation earlier--and it was not new during his stay. The school building was a depressing, dirty, red brick structure with bare wooden floors and a corrugated metal fire escape which could not be used by more than twenty children at one time for fear of its collapsing. With its arched entrances on Washington St. and the blockhouse-like cupola at the corner, the building resembled a nightmare rendition of a medieval fortress. I remember many things about my elementary education in P.S. #99. I remember that at least once or twice every winter the coal furnace would malfunction for a day or two at a time, and we kids would sit at our desks in our winter coats and hats, sending up a chorus of sniffles and sneezes and attempting to write with stiffened fingers. (Such interludes, quite naturally, were invariably followed closely by outbreaks of colds and virus infections which would practically depopulate the school for the next couple of days.) I remember a gaping hole in the floor near the rear stairs which was roped off but not repaired for two months, during which it was at least a third-degree miracle that some kid didn't break his leg. I remember the spring sun making a valiant but hopeless effort to penetrate the sooty windows and brighten our lives a little. I remember the latrines, reachable only by passing through the dark and (for a child) fearful furnace rooms in the basement, the private domain of Mr. Krebs, our mysterious and thoroughly disreputable janitor. I remember the "playground", a small fenced-in area of cracked concrete without facilities of any kind save some faded hopskotch marks chalked on the ground. And I remember the cafeteria. Ordinarily, the word "cafeteria" conjures up visions of steam tables, eager lines of patrons and hot food being dispensed. P.S. #99 had none of that, of course. The "cafeteria" was merely an unused classroom equipped with tables instead of desks, and the cuisine consisted of whatever you happened to bring from home in a greasy brown paper bag. Whenever possible, the kids ate outdoors, eith-

er in the "playground" behind the school or in the street in front of it; the cafeteria room was employed only when it was raining or prohibitively cold. When it wasn't being used as a cafeteria, this room doubled as the detention room, the place where misbehaving kids were sent until the principal, whose office was in the next room, got around to calling them in and shouting at them. Being sent to the detention room was a rather boring punishment except for one constant source of entertainment: if you sat very still and very quietly for a long time, the rats would creep out to devour the crumbs of food left over from the last cafeteria period.

It wasn't all bad at P.S. #99, of course; sometimes you could ignore the lice, chinchies and cockroaches for as long as an hour at a time and concentrate on getting an education. And I, at least, was fortunate enough to have encountered some remarkably dedicated and competent teachers--which no doubt explains how I was able in such sordid surroundings not only to graduate but actually to skip a grade. But it has been nearly fifteen years since I graduated from that academy of gloominess, and in the nature of things P.S. #99 has deteriorated considerably--if you can imagine such a thing--in that span of time. Another generation of children, different only in that they have black faces instead of white, are now attempting to learn in P.S. #99, while the affluent suburbanites sit on the porches of their ticky-tack houses, pat their bellies in satisfaction and gaze upon their modern glass, steel and concrete buildings with the well-equipped labs and shop facilities and the new, undefaced textbooks.

HOW TO SPOT A PRO-COMMUNIST: William F. Buckley, Jr., devoted the January 24th installment of his syndicated column, "On the Right", to a consideration of the question, "Who are the new pro-Communists?" Buckley begins by bemoaning the apparent obsolescence of the former criteria (viz., membership in "officially classified Communist-front organizations" and appearances "before a congressional committee pleading the Fifth Amendment"). The current crop of pro-Communists, he thinks, are a different breed, motivated less by ideological conviction than by "positive animosity towards the West". This pro-Communist is the man whose "attachment to the proposition that we are wrong for fighting Vietnam has translated it into a desire to see his views confirmed by the maximum shedding of American blood." (Incidentally, I suspect that Buckley's fellow conservatives would blanch at his presumably careless phraseology, since it is their contention that we are fighting a small minority of Vietnamese, not "fighting Vietnam"...) "On the Right" is constantly endeavoring to serve an educational as well as an entertainment function, so Mr. Buckley offers a set of criteria for identifying this new breed of pro-Communist:

"To him the issue of the morning newspaper would be absolutely ideal which carried the news of the total breakdown of the western position. Such a paper would bring the news to his breakfast table that 100 American planes had been shot down over North Vietnam the day before; that the North Koreans had renewed their aggressions into South Korea; that the Communists had scored enormous gains in the Indian elections; that Juan Bosch and Joao Goulart had counter-revolutionized their way into power in the Dominican Republic and Brazil; that the OAS had decided to rescind its boycott against Cuba; that the Communist vote in West Germany had trebled; that the Lumumbaitees had recaptured control of Central Africa; that Rusk was booed in In-

dia and Ho Chi Minh cheered there; that Alger Hiss was exonerated, and J. Edgar Hoover indicted for perjury; that Bertrand Russell's war crimes tribunal had captured the sympathetic attention of the West; that the Pope had announced that modern research proves that Christ was a mythological allegory; that T.S. Eliot's last will and testament disclosed that his defense of Christianity was an elaborate literary hoax."

We therefore have fourteen criteria for identifying what the John Birch Society terms "Comsymps", i.e., Communist sympathizers. It might be interesting to examine in this context the pro-Communist credentials of a known "peacenik" or, as more impolite conservatives put it, "bearded beatnik bastard": your obedient servant. I cannot conceive of myself being elated by the news that 100 American planes had been lost over North Vietnam the previous day. The deaths of my fellow countrymen in that pointless war are as regrettable as the deaths they inflict; if I devote more words to the Vietnamese we burn in their homes, it is only because the deaths of innocent civilians are more immediately shocking than the deaths of soldiers transported halfway round the world specifically to shoot and be shot at. The news that the North Koreans had invaded South Korea would again simply deepen my sadness; I do not, in general, "enjoy" wars, especially those into which the United States would inevitably be drawn. Far from being elated by any enormous gains scored by the Communists in the Indian elections, I would, on the contrary, be quite happy if their share of the vote was reduced to two retired yogis and a three-legged water buffalo. The next pair I'd like to split: I would applaud a Goulart counter-revolution against the Brazilian military dictatorship, but not a Bosch counter-revolution against the Balaguer government. Dr. Balaguer was elected, the election was apparently a fair one, so that's that. I would be pleased, however, if the OAS rescinded its boycott of Cuba. The next three I can confidently dispose of in one sentence: I would find the trebling of the Communist vote in West Germany and the return to power of the Lumumbaitees in the Congo mildly surprising but hardly pleasing, and while I would not be at all surprised were Dean Rusk booed and Ho Chi Minh cheered on a given day in India, it would not make me wildly happy. Would I be elated by the news that Alger Hiss has been exonerated? Certainly, if he is innocent. The exoneration of a falsely-accused person should be gratifying to all who desire the strengthening of justice--a category which may even include Mr. Buckley. And I must concede that a headline announcing that J. Edgar Hoover has been indicted for perjury would bring a wide grin to my face. I would also be pleased to hear that Lord Russell's war crimes tribunal had "captured the sympathetic attention of the West". An announcement by the Pope that modern research proves Christ to have been a mythological allegory would be pretty ridiculous, really; even among us heathen it is pretty well established that Jesus of Nazareth existed. And I am completely indifferent to anything pertaining to T.S. Eliot; I shouldn't even bother to read a newspaper story about his last will and testament.

So it appears that only five of Mr. Buckley's fourteen criteria for identifying pro-Communists are applicable to your obedient servant. Perhaps I ought to be proud, but I'm not so sure. Considering who devised these standards, I'm actually rather ashamed of failing to qualify under at least a numerical majority. (I'll bet that John Boardman would score at least eight or nine out of a possible fourteen...) Let me suggest, therefore, some additional criteria. The "absolutely ideal" morning newspaper, for me, would also carry the news that Ian Smith had strangled to death on a prune pit; that Governor Lurleen Wallace is su-

ing her husband for divorce; that a couple of avowed Communists have just been elected to the House of Representatives; that William F. Buckley, during a radio interview heard by eight million radio listeners, slipped in the heat of emotion and used the term "n-----"; that Bettina Aptheker was named University of California Homecoming Queen (a little humor there, folks); that Lyndon Johnson, having decided for personal reasons not to run again in 1968, drafted as his final act in office an order removing all United States personnel from Vietnam; that every anti-democratic regime in the world, from Argentina to the USSR, had been overthrown the previous night by social democrats; and that Ronald Reagan had been indicted on nine counts of violating the Mann Act.

SHORT NOTES ON LONG SUBJECTS: In order to understand how an insurgent or counter-insurgent military force should operate, it would seem reasonable to consult experts. (An "expert" is defined as a person who has been in a position of command on the winning side of such a struggle, not a shoe salesman from Pawtucket who's gotten himself a soft job as an instructor at the US Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg. Ho Chi Minh, Gen. Nguyen Vo Giap, Gen. Edward Lansdale, Che Guevara and Mao Tse-tung are experts; Gen. Curtis LeMay, Gen. Maxwell Taylor, Gen. William Westmoreland and Lyndon Johnson are not.) Discussing proper behavior for insurgent troops, Mao outlines Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention. The former are: (1) Obey orders in all your actions; (2) Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses; (3) Turn in everything captured. His Eight Points for Attention are: (1) Speak politely; (2) Pay fairly for what you buy; (3) Return everything you borrow; (4) Pay for anything you damage; (5) Do not hit or swear at people; (6) Do not damage crops; (7) Do not take liberties with women; (8) Do not ill-treat captives. Sounds like a straight-laced schoolmistress instructing a kindergarten class, doesn't it, Derek? But it works. Naturally, all of the soldiers will not obey all of the rules all of the time, but the important thing is that the effort is made. +++ I see by the papers that Richard Nixon may be travelling to China with the Prime Minister of Newfoundland. Mr. Nixon, as we all know, is noted as a shrewd grasper of opportunities. Presumably he would like to be on hand in the event that the deadlocked struggle between Mao Tse-Tung and Lui Shao-chi offers a suitable opening for a darkhorse candidate. +++ Most of the elements in the Periodic Table were, quite naturally, discovered by men, women not having, even today, equal opportunity in most branches of science. Still, women were involved in the discovery of five elements. Everybody knows that Marie Curie (with her husband, Pierre) discovered radium (#88) and polonium (#84), and that Lise Meitner (with Otto Hahn) discovered protactinium (#91). Additionally, Ida Tacke (with Walter Noddack and Otto Berg) discovered rhenium (#75), and a French chemist, Dr. Marguerite Perey, discovered francium (#87), and is the only woman to hold alone the honor of discovering an element. How 'bout that? +++ Last week, Dean Rusk admitted that he didn't understand what was going on in China; next week he may admit that he doesn't understand what's going on in Vietnam, either. +++ If there is any Kipple reader who doesn't follow Brant Parker's "Wizard of Id" in the comics section of the local newspaper, he is advised that he is missing something worthwhile. It isn't as good as "BC" or "Peanuts", but still... Id is a feudal kingdom inhabited by its absolute monarch, the wizard and his shrewish wife, a drunken court jester, a disreputable jailbird and a turnkey who feels sorry for himself, a cowardly knight, a collection of sorry looking peasants, and other assorted types. One of the gimmicks Parker has been using lately is to have his characters

(Continued after "Matter in Motion")

The year 1967 will see the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of Canada as a nation. Although millions of Americans will attend the Montreal fair which Canada is holding to celebrate its centennial, the full meaning of this anniversary undoubtedly escapes most of our fellow citizens. To too many Americans, Canada is a vast wasteland populated chiefly by Mounties, Eskimos and Dionnes.

The extensive and richly endowed nation which lies to our north did not seem a good actuarial risk at the time of its founding in 1867. The diversity of its population was greater than anything with which the United States has had to contend. The United States has had in its history nothing resem-

bling the divergence of interests between the French-speaking, devoutly Catholic, parochial Quebecois and the English-speaking, largely Protestant, fiercely royalist inhabitants of most of the other provinces. Nor do these elements, whose mutual antagonism has made so much Canadian history, constitute all of Canada. There are the aboriginal peoples, who seem to swing more weight north of the border than do their kinsmen here; the immigrants, chiefly Irish and Scots in the Nineteenth Century, and now largely eastern European; and Americans, whom geography forces to be a strong influence on Canada, and who have sent emigrants thither from the royalist refugees of 1776 through the fugitive slaves to the draft avoiders of today.

In 1867 the prospects for a united and peaceful Canada were faint. French-speaking Canadians suspected a plot to deprive them of their cultural heritage and remold them into imitation Englishmen. Their fears were confirmed by a faction of Anglo-Canadians who announced their intention to make Canada thoroughly English in language, culture and economic affairs. The Fathers of Confederation met under the shadow of annexationist feeling in America, possible Quebec revolt and the recent, fantastic "Fenian Invasion of Canada".

This last was a plot of Irish nationalists who had come to the United States in the years preceding the War of the Rebellion. Thousands had enlisted in that conflict, mainly on the government side, in order to get the military training which would be necessary to throw the English out of Ireland. After the defeat of the rebels, a group of Irish-American veterans met in New York City and hatched a fantastic plot to recruit other Irish-Americans, invade and conquer Canada, and then "exchange" it back to England for the independence of Ireland.

(The relation of Canada to England has always been a mystery to the more politically ignorant Americans. In September, 1939, the isolationist Senator Nye grumbled that Canada "ought not to have been allowed to bring war to the Western Hemisphere". And, after the war, American congressmen opposed to the \$4,000,000,000 loan to Great Britain suggested that Canada ought to be a pledge for its repayment.)

The welding of such diverse elements into a nation is a tribute to the genius of several generations of Canadian politicians. At the present time, the chronic dissatisfaction of Quebec is comparable to the chronic dissatisfaction of white southerners and Negroes in America, or Welshmen and Scots in Great Britain--a problem worthy of attention, but nothing likely to shatter the unity of the country. And the European immigrants of the present century--now numbering well over a mil-

lion--are as deeply involved in the politics of their native lands as the Irish-Canadians of the last century were in theirs, but Canada will probably be able to survive the Hungarian Greenshirts and the Ukrainian nationalists as it survived the Fenians.

The most persistent fact in Canadian national life is the United States of America. With ten times Canada's population, and an even greater edge in capital, the influence of the United States is felt in Canadian business, culture, sport and foreign policy. This is, naturally, a source of some concern to Canadians. It is claimed that the two countries' proud boast of their unarmed 5000-mile frontier is possible only because the US dominates Canada so thoroughly economically that political domination would be superfluous. A few years ago a nationwide dis-

A COLUMN BY JOHN BOARDMAN

cussion was stimulated by the Massey Report, an analysis of Canada's cultural life. The Report stimulated efforts to bring more uniquely Canadian material to Canada's theaters, movies, magazine stands and television sets.

Yet Canada can take pride in the high quality of its own cultural productions. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, a unique combination of public and private enterprise, presents a consistently higher standard of programming than do American radio and television networks. And the short films of the National Film Board of Canada are famous throughout the world, particularly Norman MacLaren's animated creations and the films which explore the ways of life of Canada's Indians and Eskimos.

In some respects, Canada is considerably ahead of the United States. For more than thirty years Canada has had an effective and valuable Family Allowance Plan, by which all families without regard to need receive supplementary income from the government for the raising of their children. Canada was also ahead of the United States in health insurance and other forms of welfare aid, probably because the Canadian political spectrum is canted towards the left of that in this country by the presence of a large and influential socialist party. (TRB, the New Republic columnist, has gone so far as to suggest facetiously to the right wing in this country that the real danger comes, not from Moscow, but from Ottawa.)

As it was before the War of the Rebellion, Canada is once more a shelter for political refugees from the United States. The French-speaking population is strongly opposed to military conscription, which is why Canada has no peacetime draft and even in wartime has a less rigid draft than most nations. This means that an American who risks being conscripted in this country can go to Canada to work or study, and run no risk of being extradited and conscripted or jailed. (Of course, he must take his chances with US law if and when he returns.)

The largest nation in the western hemisphere is going all out to celebrate its centennial. The biggest single celebration will be Expo 67, the Montreal World's Fair. Other special observances will be commemorative coins and postage stamps. However, the oddest will be made by Canada's radio amateurs. To mark the centennial, they will be allowed to use, in addition to their usual prefix "VE", a special centennial prefix "3C". For example, an Ontario amateur whose call letters are normally VE3BAY will during 1967 also be able to use 3C3BAY.

One overlooked advantage to America in the existence of this prosperous and closely related neighbor is Canada's independent critical voice. Of all the nations of the world, it is the most similar to our own in culture, history and outlook. Thus, Canada provides a valuable critical voice, a standpoint close enough to America to appreciate its problems, yet removed enough to offer an independent appreciation

of them. Listening to those independent critical voices can give Americans, both officials and private citizens, a very interesting perspective on the role of their country in North America and the world.

--John Boardman

JOTTINGS-----CONCLUDED

use hip slang. Consider this exchange between the soused court jester and the king: Court Jester: "For my next death-defying trick, I will go over the falls in a barrel of rum." King: "You idiot!...You will be smashed on the rocks!" Court Jester: "I'll be smashed long before I get to the rocks, baby." Or this between Sir Rodney and the king: Rodney: "Sire, the castle is full of rats... It's time we sent for the pied piper." King: "What does he do?" Rodney: "He plays the flute and all of the rats jump in the moat." King: "The heck with the rats... If he's that groovy, we'll push his albums." +++ Stokely Carmichael, among others, tells us that integration is irrelevant, and all of a sudden I am being informed by some militant Negroes that I shouldn't continue to think of myself as an integrationist. Well, I suppose it doesn't much matter what label I wear, but all the same it's an annoying kind of criticism. Integration isn't irrelevant, and it won't be so long as there is a single person in America who is treated differently than the mass of his countrymen merely because of the shade of his skin. I am an integrationist. I wasn't ashamed of that title in all the years that other whites treated me like an escapee from a leper colony, and I'm sure as hell not about to start being ashamed of it now just because some Negro leaders have decided it's no longer a hip thing to be. +++ Anti-war groups have lately been making increasing use of photographs which illustrate the effect of napalm on human bodies. Hopefully, this will goad into action some of the basically decent people who have simply been ignoring the war in the hope that it would go away. But of course such pictures will not have any impact on the outspoken defenders of Administration policy, who pride themselves on being hard-nosed realists. A hard-nosed realist is one who, in his infinite wisdom and dedication to the long view, is wholly indifferent to the injury and suffering of others. (I specify "others" because, ironically, it is frequently the case that these same people tremble like a bowl of jello when they get a nosebleed.) +++ Overheard at a Dull Party Dept: "Certainly I'm religious. I gave up fried eggplant sandwiches on Italian bread for Lent, didn't I?" "Sure Romney's a bastard, but he's our kind of bastard anyway." "I know you'll like my niece, young man. She's not the most beautiful girl in the world, but..." "Oh, you mean our Germans, I thought you meant their Germans..." "How about cutting out of here, Felice, and coming up to my apartment? I'd like you to see my collection of 'Pogo' comic strips." "This 'New Mathematics' is a lot of crap. If the old mathematics was good enough in my day, it ought to be good enough now." "Yes-sir, Ralfie, if they'd had birth control pills when I was a youngster, Martha and I might never have gotten married." "I don't know about Margaret Meade and Dr. Spock, but my brother-in-law says the only to keep 'em in line is to belt 'em once a week." "The solution, as I see it, is to admit South Vietnam as the 51st state..." "So I says to him, it's not me, son, God knows I'm as liberal as they come, it's what the neighbors will say if you marry this nig...uh, this colored girl." "Don't tell me I've had enough to drink, Alice, I'll know when I've had enough."

--Ted Pauls

WHAT I MEAN

Somebody said something and I said something and somebody asked me what did I mean. It was you. I said I would tell you later, and got you to help me lift the baby up the stairs. And now it is later, but I can't tell you yet what I mean.

It's not what I meant five minutes ago. What I meant then has changed me a lot, and what you meant then when you said, "I don't understand what you mean" has changed you, too. It's no use giving that matter a second thought; we change fast, and faster all the time, and the only way to change that is to die. That's what I mean: Don't die. Give me a hand here. At a time like this, which is all the time, babies are heavy first and darling afterward. And babies can die. Up to now, they can die, any time, any way, of anything, and very often do so.

Godot died. He fell through a skylight, at home, but it was in the hospital that he died. Terry died the same day. He died at the moment his head and the pavement and the wheel came together when he fell off the kerb which is the end of the playground, here where babies die. And in Saigon there's a baby who's dying just now of burns inflicted by some dead man who used a spray of flaming, sticky jelly, lying beside another baby who just now died of multiple wounds received at the hands of a boy who let fly a strange device that explodes into hundreds of flying switch-blade knives--a boy who believed that if he did not, the baby might kill him. And this particular baby of whom I speak, the one who is dying of burns, was offered a bed in a modern European hospital where his life, though near gone, might not go out, but there is no way to get him there. The planes to Europe all belong to the dead man, to the boy.

And here, and now, too, a boy-child died in surgery and somebody missed him, grieved for him and was changed into a new sort of person by the loss; and filled the hole in the new person with tears; and out of that well poured a poem for those who are not dead, or who are not babies, or who in some way are still dear and lovable and can be supposed to hear poems.

The world today is a village. Maybe it wasn't yesterday, but tomorrow it will be a very small village, where nobody has any secrets from anybody else. In the village, if your child should die, you would weep, and all would mourn. The day after tomorrow the village will be one where children never die. Till then, do not suppose you will run out of tears if you happen to let one fall. If you suppose the one who brings the sad news wants you to cry, you are living in a dream. The crier is already crying. If he wanted to make you cry, it would be very easy for him. He would only have to tell you that you are not as important to him as you are to yourself, and you would cry. And you will still cry each time you discover again that it is only to you that your tears count; over and over you will cry at that news until, one day, you will catch your breath and notice the meaning of it, and at that moment you will start to laugh, and if someone calls you hysterical, you may change your laugh to a smile, and after that, as long as children die, you will cry when you hear the news, because you belong to the village

and know there is no reason why any child should ever die.

Death is for the end of life, not its beginning. Now, you are just beginning. Like the little girl of Hiroshima, like the little boy of Saigon, like the little boys and girls of any American city, your life is in danger before your time has come. You are going to change all that, at once, now that you don't want to die. That's not what I mean, but what we mean has no effect. What we do, on the other hand, we do or don't do all the time, and that is what does have an effect, whether we mean it or not.

--Frances Bukowski

"Once I would have been afraid to go out in that white man's world without my diploma, but now I knew that it really didn't matter. I'd been around. I'd seen Negroes who had been graduated from white men's colleges with that piece of white paper driving cabs and carrying mail. I'd seen Negroes who got all A's in accounting go downtown to the big department stores only to hear, 'Sorry, we're not hiring porters today.' That piece of white paper isn't enough unless they graduate you with a white face, too." --Dick Gregory, in "N-----".

"Cotton goods (after the industry became scientific) could find a market in India and Africa: this was a stimulus to British Imperialism. Africans had to be taught that nudity is wicked; this was done very cheaply by missionaries. In addition to cotton goods we exported tuberculosis and syphilis, but for them there was no charge." --Bertrand Russell, in "Impact of Science on Society".

"Laws are self-imposed restrictions which are too unpopular to be effective without cops." --Johnny Hart, in "BC".

—SONG OF A MODERN VIGILANTE—

I sometimes fancy, as I spy,
That I excel the FBI.
Right now I'm making little lists
Of folks I think are Communists.
I have no proof on anyone
And yet the lists are lots of fun.
All friends of foreign aid, I think,
Must be set down as rather pink.
A little pinker, not far off,
I list perforce the college prof.
And pinker yet the student crowd
That lauds the Bill of Rights out loud.
U. N. supporters, as I've said,
Are always ipso facto red.
And redder still on my red lists,
Are all the integrationists.
Just for good measure, in my labors,
I add a few of my close neighbors.
Thus I rejoice that loyalty
Resides alone in you and me
Although before my work is through,
You may, good friend, be listed, too.

(The Twin City Secularists, Box
5132, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55104)

DISSENTING OPINIONS

LETTERS

TOM DRAHEIM :: 2122 SECOND STREET :: WYANDOTTE, MICHIGAN, 48192

I guess my "little jeremiad" in #115 was just that, a lamentation. My point was that the government has too much power--the same old conservative lament. I think you will agree that the government has a lot of power. I know that this is bad; you think it's good and, I gather, you'd like to give it more.

I say limit central government power, leave things up to the people, but the way I've put down the human race rather rules this out. To clarify my position on the merits of Americans: no worse than anybody else, probably better. My point was that many problems, especially those concerning "races" and "rights", are the result of people rather than policy (though the policy is made by people, of course), and that it is the liberal attitude that has made people this way. The liberal acknowledges the un-equality of races by saying that he will try to correct it; I don't. The conservative allows no room for un-equality: either you make it or you don't; there are no "handicappers" trying to fix the odds. (What the liberal acknowledges is a massive inequality of opportunity, which must be rectified by, as you put it, fixing the odds. I don't doubt that you sincerely believe the conservative idea of "either you make it or you don't" to be just and moral, but the laissez faire concept is valid only when everybody starts out even and has the same opportunities. When this is demonstrably not the case, laissez faire is a travesty. In plumping for an end to government "interference" with the "odds", the conservative is demanding of the government that it remain neutral as between the foxes and the chickens. Consider two individuals. One is John D. Rockefeller IV. The other is a Philadelphia Negro from a family of eleven with a seventh-grade education. The conservative, allowing no room for un-equality, as you say, says: "Leave them both alone; either they make it on their own or they don't." Oh, come now!))

A while back (#112) you had a short story about our Revolution, and if I recall correctly you said the French were, more or less, instigators of the war. My brother liked the story, but as a degree holder in American History said that you were wrong on this point (plus others). I realize that you "dramatized" the events so they could be better compared to Vietnam, but even the way you wrote it the situations are not the same. (Your brother is quite correct, of course. The point is not that I believe the Revolution to have been instigated by France, but rather that, in the story, General Clinton believed this. As you

perceived, I was attempting to make some points concerning the war in Vietnam by drawing parallels to our own Revolution. Clinton's conviction that the American rebellion was inspired and directed by France is no more absurd than the belief of many American politicians and generals that the Vietnam war is primarily a Chinese challenge to US power. (Incidentally, to satisfy my own curiosity, could you tell me what "other" errors your brother found in the story? I attempted to make its details as accurate as possible; e.g., 5000 French troops actually did land at Newport in July of 1780, and André probably was in Clinton's headquarters on September 19, 1780, two days before his fateful meeting with Benedict Arnold. Literary license was employed, of course, in depicting the personality of Clinton, about which I know little, and his implied peccadillo would have been more characteristic of his immediate predecessor, Howe.))

In #114 you discuss the Warren Report. I would say the most important question is not how many bullets but where they were fired from. Two-thirds of the witnesses interviewed said the shots came from the grassy knoll ahead of the car. Men standing on the railroad overpass saw smoke puffs (as there would be from rifle shots) after they heard the shots. Two policemen ran past the School Book Depository to the knoll to set up a base of operations. I don't think the Commission deliberately covered up, as some critics have charged; they were just willing to accept anything to get the job done.

"Johnson's best hope for re-election lies with the Republican likes of Jerry Ford. The Republicans had their own little press conference after the President's State of the Union message, and Kenneth Clark commented that the Republicans have a positive genius for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. Senator Dirksen is at least a colorful fraud. Rep. Ford is a bore. He's made the same speech at every press conference he's ever had and it still doesn't make sense." --Mary Jean Lord, in The Democratic Journal.

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Kipple #115: I thought your analysis of "Marx and the Evolution of Society" to be very good. Even though Marx used a complete and fairly consistent development of society as the basis of his vituperations against capitalism, he pirated the basics from Hegel. And Hegel was much more scholarly and less fanatic than Marx, which I think helps Marx's cause by showing little pieces of sanity in the general morass of hatred.

The present day Communists (in their guise as Marxists) feel that we bloody capitalists have just "bought off" the workers temporarily by inflicting our "imperialism" on foreign countries. When our influence on these "poor, downtrodden" countries is broken, then the masses in the US will rise up a la Marx in a "grand revolution of the proletariat". The present day Marxists are even worse than Marx was. He was a miserable flop financially, and spent his entire life showing why no one could get a fair break from capitalism; for his inability to earn a living we might excuse him. But the present day Marxists have seen that Marx was totally wrong regarding capitalism and yet continue to invent theories woven with the flimsiest of suppositions to support him; they waste their efforts in hanging onto a long-dead ideology of a warped (though brilliant) mind.

I have finally decided that you don't see what you implied in your rebuttal to my stand on the electoral college. So... Would you agree that it would be easier to subvert or corrupt one man than 270? (Yes.) Then why not let the electors pick the President and try to buy

him? They ("they" being whoever is behind this insidious plot) could do it in absolute secrecy if the President played along with them and, let's face it, they would have much more to offer an ambitious man in the White House than could ever be given to 270 electors. The promise of the richest country in the world under your control for 10 or 20 years would be a powerful inducement. Of course, this would be conditional, depending upon the cabal's influence. Not only could the President refuse to surrender any executive records to Congress if an investigation was started, but the President is in a most advantageous position to further subvert key Congressmen--the smell of extra power would be as strong in their nostrils. No, Ted, the trouble is not in the Electoral College (though I agree that it is too cumbersome and should be abolished, as it serves no functional purpose) but rather in giving the man elected President too much power. I'm not saying any President would ever try such a move, but as you say: "Unlikely? I freely grant it. But the potential is there in our system."

As for what Mr. Boardman would have against Volkswagens, I figured his warped logic would lead him to the conclusion that patronizing a German company would be aiding and abetting the incipient neo-Nazi movement. This doesn't seem to far off his line of thought--look at what he thinks of a cartoon show with a moose and a squirrel.

Kipple #116: Now I think you have gone too far, when you say, in "Short Notes", that "The US has declared...that the majority of the Vietnamese people would be better off dead than under a Communist government." I don't like the way the war has been conducted because of the fact that non-combatant women and children have been killed, but this has resulted from inefficient and ineffective use of air power against guerilla units. Those planes should have been bombing the air bases, (SAM) missile sites and the numerous factories of the other Communist-bloc countries in North Vietnam. But your statement implies--declares--that the US is willfully and knowingly murdering South Vietnamese villagers. This is so obviously an outright lie that I consider no reply necessary. I find it hard to believe that you can seriously and in all honesty make such an allegation and hope you will clarify what I hope is a misinterpretation on my part. (Whether the US is "willfully and knowingly murdering South Vietnamese villagers" is a matter of interpretation. The guerillas are mostly South Vietnamese villagers, and the US forces are certainly "willfully and knowingly" killing them. Nor is it denied by most observers that a lot of villagers who aren't guerillas are killed by US forces. American officers don't get together every Friday in Saigon and say, "Let's see how many villagers we can kill this week," of course, but the net effect of what they do is the same. The bombing, destruction of crops, napalming of women and children, burning of villages, dislocation of tens of thousands of peasants--all is justified on the ground that, if we stop doing it, South Vietnam will be taken over by the NFL. We are literally destroying the country--wrecking its economy, its agriculture and its social structure, and killing thousands upon thousands of its people--because we have unilaterally decided that this is preferable to permitting it to fall into the hands of the insurgents. I put it rather bluntly in #116, but I submit that the statement was completely accurate: we have decided that they are better off dead than Red.)

And while still on the subject of the war, the country was treated by Cardinal Spellman to a glimpse of how the Crusades and the Thirty Years War were started. A man of religion--Mars would be pleased to have such a priest. Is this Catholicism in action, Marty Helgesen?

Regarding the local political scene, there is a rumor going around that David Cargo will be New Mexico's best one-term governor. And the way things are going, it sure looks like it. The Democratic-control-

led legislature is intent on blocking anything sponsored by Cargo. And Jack Sneer could take lessons in nit-picking from those boys in Santa Fe. They spent almost a week legislating the newsmen off the senate floor--mostly because the majority of the newspapers supported Cargo. If Cargo can get anything past the legislature and the attorney general, he'll have accomplished something. It remains to be seen if they'll let it be anything worthwhile.

I've just finished the first two installments of "Death of a President" and can't help but wonder how this bit of sensationalism can be passed off as serious literature. Manchester states things as concrete fact that would necessarily be the sheerest conjecture. For example: "Apparently, he /Oswald/ was intent upon the flickering screen. In fact, he was going mad. Madness does not strike all at once. Lee Oswald's disease had been in process all his life." A psychiatrist sitting in the same room as Oswald couldn't have said if Oswald "was going mad". And the statement that "Madness does not strike all at once" overlooks berserker killings like Charles Whitman committed. The term "yellow press" seems to have been invented for this "epic".

"The projects in Harlem are hated. They are hated almost as much as policemen, and this is saying a great deal. And they are hated for the same reason: both reveal, unbearably, the real attitude of the white world, no matter how many liberal speeches are made, no matter how many lofty editorials are written, no matter how many civil rights commissions are set up.

"The projects are hideous, of course, there being a law, apparently respected throughout the world, that popular housing shall be as cheerless as a prison." --James Baldwin, in Esquire, July, 1960.

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A little incident occurred recently which certainly reflects on this country's public image. A friend, a foreign graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, phoned me in a state of great anxiety. His college courses would begin soon, and he could find no apartment. Why not? He was a dignified thirtyish man, spoke British English, honest, sober, highly learned, had taught college, was (and is) connected with the United Nations diplomatic corps. All of this was cancelled out, however, by the fact that he was an African. The college's housing service did not extend to students in the Evening College, and JHU would make no exceptions. The student was unfamiliar with Baltimore, and did not know which neighborhoods would accept him. In a Negro ghetto, he would be ridiculously misplaced. A further complication was fear. Somehow, from his impressions of Baltimore, he contracted the fear that a lone walk through most sections of the city would mean an almost-certain mugging or knifing. Partially true, of course; but his unfamiliarity with the situation had led him to magnify this danger.

I got the Sun classified section and began calling apartments, and of course I had to describe the potential tenant. The typical response was "Uh-mmm-sorry, it's been taken" or "I'll call you back." Finally, I had to discard the Sun and switch to the Afro-American. The embarrassing incident resolved itself when the man was finally able to obtain a highly unsatisfactory pair of rooms in the area of Guilford Avenue and 33rd Street. The whole incident certainly points to the absurdity of our situation. (Did you emphasize your friend's diplomatic connections when contacting prospective landlords? A sense of patriotic duty is sometimes stronger than prejudice. Recall a few years ago when an attempt was being made to integrate restaurants on Route 40. Even the

egregious bigots on the Eastern Shore finally agreed to do their part to preserve the "image" of the United States by serving African diplomats travelling between Washington and New York.))

Recent matters have driven me to another rant against the Nine Court Jesters who comprise that supreme conspiracy known as the Supreme Court. Five against four, they knocked down the door which allows New York (and, projectedly, a dozen other states) to shut out subversives from the public schools. Granted that 5-4 is the majority of the Court, the fact remains that Americans have forfeited a crucial protection because of one man.

What do we do with the minority of four? Again it is a case of liberals trying to throw the minority out the window, like court liberals succeeded in doing in their order for reapportionment of state legislatures, like Congress liberals would like to do in their proposals to abolish the Electoral College, like Senate liberals tried and failed to do in their recent efforts to dilute the filibuster. ((In a democracy, the majority must rule. Obviously, a democratic political system must include built-in guarantees of basic individual rights to protect minorities, but on all matters of specific policy or program, the will of the majority must prevail. The liberal innovations to which you object are designed to narrow the gulf between our political structure and this ideal. Consider reapportionment. Why should the vote of one man be worth two or three or six or ten times more than the vote of another merely because they live on opposite sides of an arbitrary boundary line? Are you honestly willing to speak in defense of a situation where the "Yes" vote of a state senator representing 38,000 people is offset by the "No" vote of one representing 4,763? I believe it is self-evident that every citizen's vote should carry equal weight. Application of the same principle to the executive branch of the government requires the abolition of the Electoral College. It is totally unacceptable in a democratic country for there to be any possibility of the candidate receiving the largest number of votes for President or Vice-President failing through some nonsensical device to be elected to that office. This occurred twice in the Nineteenth Century, and as long as the Electoral College exists it is a threat to happen again. Finally, let us take up the matter of the filibuster. Conservatives speak fondly about the "checks and balances" of our governmental system, apparently without realizing that the filibuster is an abomination grafted on to this system. As established by the Constitution, Congress consists of a House of Representatives, which through equally apportioned districts and a biannual turnover directly represents the people but which requires a two-thirds majority for passage of bills, and a Senate, apportioned to represent the states but requiring only a simple majority for passage of bills. This system was in balance until somebody got the idea of requiring a two-thirds majority in the Senate for cloture, thereby abolishing one of the "checks" creating the "balance" and canting the entire system toward minority rule.))

Much less damage has been done in Congress where checks and balances more or less exist. But something is badly needed to check the power of the Supreme Court, where the vote of one man can have such far-reaching effects. I won't suggest any remedies now, but I would like to submit two thoughts. First: It takes a 12-0 jury decision to convict a solitary criminal; but a 5-4 decision suffices for steering a nation toward an ideological direction. Second: The Senate and House are constantly beset with proposed reforms, but the judiciary branch remains untrimmed.

You remember Richmond Flowers, the Alabama attorney general who was liberal on civil rights and who subsequently did not get re-elected? A couple of weeks ago, I visited that fair state and was much surprised

to find that Flowers' name was in the headlines of all Alabama papers; a criminal warrant had been drawn out against him for some kind of business crookery involving crude oil. For three days, this news blared out of radio and television stations in Montgomery. Flowers' comment was that he didn't know what it was all about. My own surprise was even greater when, returning to Baltimore, I could not find a word of this affair in Baltimore newspapers. I suppose this is how they get rid of unpopular politicians in Alabama.

Responses to the Warren Commission's report seemingly reveal a liberal/conservative political alignment. I've read countless discussions of the issue in countless magazines and newspapers of all political leanings, and invariably the rule is this: The liberal press believes the Warren Report to have been too hasty, something is possibly covered up, the investigation should be reopened. The conservative press would accept the Warren Report, and let the matter rest. Different individuals with whom I've discussed the matter, possibly reflecting the same views as the publications which they would most likely read, have formulated their opinions of the case along the same political alignment. Oddly enough, the issue didn't strike me as being political (or ideological) at all, so I tried to analyze the matter and I could only come up with this: The fact that the assassin, Oswald, proved to be a leftist when one could have quicker guessed that the deed would have been done by one of the Dallas rightists; accordingly, the liberals' desire to investigate further, with unconscious or otherwise hopes of proving that the latter was actually the case--and the conservatives' desire to investigate no further, with unconscious or otherwise fears of discovering that the former was not actually the case. (There must be a better explanation, but it's the best I could do.)

"Don't be afraid to ask dumb questions. They're more easily handled than dumb mistakes." --William Haines, in "High Tension".

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The comments on the assassination of President Kennedy which have appeared in the past couple of issues of Kipple have caused me to end my long silence, for which I offer sincere apologies. (The silence, I mean, not the ending of it.) I still, really, don't have time to comment on recent issues as I would wish. Both Kumari and the baby have been sick during much of the past year, and between taking care of them and working eight hours a day--well, it gets pretty hectic around here.

I was surprised and pleased to read in #114 your calm, clear, indisputable analysis of the Warren Commission's peculiar theory concerning the assassination bullets. I'd just about given up waiting for you to discuss the assassination. You disappointed me by having nothing to say after the event itself or after the Warren Commission Report was released; you disappointed me in the months following, writing articles about all sorts of things, not always of earth-shaking importance, while neglecting the foremost issue of our generation. Because, make no mistake, that's just what it is. Not Vietnam or poverty or racial justice, but the question, Who murdered the President of the United States? is the political issue of this decade and maybe of the whole century. (It's also likely to be, if the controversy keeps growing between now and then, the issue that blows Lyndon Johnson right out of office in 1968.) Oh well, I suppose it's better late than never. But knowing you as I do, I find it remarkable that you seemingly waited until Life and Look had made the controversy "respectable" before offering your thoughts. (The assassination of the President was an emotional shock to me, as it was

to a great many Americans (and others), and I found myself unable to write about the event as I would any other significant event. It is still extremely difficult and painful for me to write about things like "entry wounds" and bullets which "strike tangentially, shattering the skull". It is only in the past couple of months that I have been able to do such writing at all.))

Roy Tackett's view, expressed in #116, that the Warren Commission's conclusions must be substantially accurate because if they aren't this implies a conspiracy of unbelievable proportions may be typical of those who accepted the Warren Report. I suppose people who accept the Report as Truth are the same psychological type who accept the Bible (both books being about equally contradicted by known facts and lacking self-consistency): the supreme act of faith required is worth the effort because it avoids having to consider an alternative which is literally unthinkable to those involved. And I grant you that there is something terribly frightening about the idea that literally hundreds of influential and dedicated people in public life are involved in suppressing the truth about the assassination. But not being the type to rely on faith, I'm at least willing to examine the "unthinkable" alternative and see if maybe it's thinkable after all.

The idea is not really so fantastic provided you bear in mind at all times the likelihood that there were two separate conspiracies, not one. First, of course, there was the conspiracy to murder President Kennedy, about which we know practically nothing save what reasonable speculation may suggest and which may have involved only two or three people. (This letter was written February 4, 1967, two weeks before New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison promised the arrest of conspirators.) Oswald was probably one of them, though it seems likely to me that his role was that of a convenient kluck nominated to take the blame. Whether he actually fired any of the shots is questionable. Nobody really knows who instigated the plot, but there are plenty of candidates from among whom to choose: Chinese agents, right-wing kooks of the "Minutemen" variety, the more "respectable" (that's a laugh!) rightists represented by Texas oil interests, or of course Mr. Kennedy's notoriously ruthless and ambitious successor. It is the latter idea which so many Americans find unutterable, almost blasphemous, though if a chief of state were assassinated in practically any other country most Americans--and especially the press--would quickly cast the fishy eye in the direction of the man who replaced him.

The second conspiracy was the conspiracy to suppress the truth, to frame Lee Harvey Oswald as the sole assassin. It is this conspiracy which involves so many well-known and reputable people, and is therefore so difficult to accept. But of course these people are not part of some ominous organized plot, and they have nothing to do with the assassination itself. On the contrary, they are victims and pawns of events rather than prime movers. Perhaps the nature of this second conspiracy can be understood by recalling the somewhat similar Dreyfus case. Alfred Dreyfus was deliberately railroaded by army officers anxious to cover up their own guilt. But once he was condemned, however falsely, his guilt or innocence became irrelevant, Dreyfus himself literally became irrelevant. The important thing was that the government and the military hierarchy had committed itself to the view that Dreyfus was guilty, and to uphold those in authority and prevent them from having to admit error became the highest mark of patriotism in France. The same thing occurred after Dallas. With all of the authority vested in it by 190 years of tradition, the government of the United States firmly committed itself to one particular version of the assassination. It automatically became the patriotic duty of every American to accept this Authorized Version of events, and moreover to support that version in any way pos-

sible and suppress any evidence to the contrary. The hundreds of important people who have become enmeshed in this conspiracy have no political axe to grind; they do not believe themselves to be doing anything wrong or even dishonest; they have simply become convinced that the highest duty they have to the public weal is not to rock the boat. My country, right or wrong, remember...?

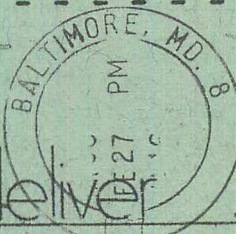
And these people really are patriots. The truth about the Kennedy assassination could literally tear our society apart. Hundreds of dedicated people are determined to prevent this, and so condone the temporary suppression of the truth. As Chief Justice Warren said, there are things about the assassination that cannot be made public in our lifetimes.

(Incidentally, Ted, I think you dismiss too casually the possibility of the conspiracy having been directed by Communists. It is not entirely true that "no communist" would have deliberately replaced John Kennedy with Lyndon Johnson. Admittedly, it does not seem a rational course, but the Chinese, at least, might have found it to their liking. Their preference for an American leader is the greater, not lesser, evil--as Marxists would judge our Presidents--so as to "aggravate the revolutionary situation". They would prefer Lyndon Johnson to John Kennedy, Goldwater to Johnson, Wallace to Goldwater, Lincoln Rockwell to Wallace--the farther right the better, from their viewpoint.)

FROM:

TED PAULS

1448 MERIDENE DRIVE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, 21212
U. S. A.



deliver to:

Rosemary Hickey
2082 W. Estes
Chicago, Ill., 60645

printed matter only

may be opened for inspection

return requested

SIMPLIFIED 1966 INCOME TAX RETURN

1. How much money did you make during 1966?
2. How much money did you spend during 1966?
3. How much have you got left?

SEND IT!
(Thank You)