

KIPPLE

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JOTTINGS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

THE SPRING OPTIMISM regarding this country's misadventure in Vietnam, an annual phenomenon to which I alluded in Kipple #119, continues to permeate the atmosphere. One might think that a heterogeneous group of government officials, military spokesmen and Hawkish journalists had been engaged in a deliberate campaign to saturate the press and air waves with "victory propaganda". Presidential assistant William Komer returns from a visit to South Vietnam and offers a glowing report on the progress of the pacification program; Lieutenant-General Lewis Walt (USMC) points to the increasing number of civilian refugees (most of whom, as a matter of fact, are refugees from United States "search-and-destroy" operations), and claims that the presence of North Vietnamese regulars in the Central Highlands is alienating native southerners (do South Vietnamese, I wonder, look upon North Vietnamese as being more "foreign" than Americans?); an AP dispatch dated February 22nd quotes a "high American official" who does not wish to be identified as recognizing a "victory psychology" in Saigon; and William F. Buckley, Jr., in a statement which must be considered ridiculous even when judged by the standards normally applied to this particular commentator's views, asserts that there is virtually unanimous agreement on the part of press correspondents in South Vietnam that the United States is "winning" the war. And so it goes. The only thing missing is a long editorial in the Hearst press assuring us that Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky is a great popular leader, loved and respected by the simple folk of Vietnam, and I have not the slightest doubt that such an editorial will appear within the month.

Much of this optimism appears to be based upon the success of US military forces in conventional operations against NFL units, a success which is reflected in the statistics which Administration spokesmen are fond of citing. Actually, the raw statistics are anything but encouraging when considered as a whole, but of course US government officials do not generally consider them as a whole. Instead, they select for emphasis one particular set of statistics, the so-called "kill ratio" (a hideous phrase if there ever was one). According to the figures compiled by United States authorities, the NFL and DRV forces lose about five or six soldiers for every American or South Vietnamese troop killed. Since, for several reasons, the "enemy casualty figures" released by US spokesmen in Saigon are exaggerated (field commanders always exaggerate enemy

losses, in addition to which there is a temptation to classify civilians killed by artillery and air strikes as "Viet Cong"), the actual ratio is probably closer to four-to-one. Still, in military terms this is impressive. But actually it merely confirms what has never in any case been disputed: viz., that well-armed, well-equipped US troops backed by immense artillery and air firepower can inflict severe casualties on a poorly-equipped, undernourished peasant army. The "kill ratio" is actually of limited importance in itself. What is important is the impact of enemy casualties on the total numerical strength of their forces--i.e., their success or lack of success in replacing the losses--and this statistic, also meticulously kept by the US command, offers no basis for American optimism; quite the contrary. On January 1, 1965, just before the United States undertook a substantial combat role in the war, US Intelligence estimated that the National Front of Liberation's full-time fighting strength numbered 103,000. During 1965, United States and allied forces killed (or at least claimed to have killed) 35,000 Viet Cong. During 1966, another year of escalation, the number of enemy dead was placed at 57,000, and an additional 19,500 perished during the first eleven weeks of 1967. Thus, the claimed total of NFL and DRV soldiers killed between January 1, 1965 and March 18, 1967 is 111,500. And this not take into consideration the additional 43,000 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops who defected or were captured during the same period. But far from shrinking away to nothing, the full-time fighting strength of the enemy has increased from 103,000 on January 1, 1965, to 286,000 on March 18, 1967 (4000 of the increase coming in the week of March 12-18, when the NFL suffered its "worst" week of the war). Admittedly, the rate of increase is descending, and no doubt the trend will eventually be reversed; they cannot indefinitely continue to replace men faster than the US kills them. But how many Americans will die reducing their forces from 286,000 to 100,000, i.e., to the number that existed prior to the big US build-up in 1965? Perhaps by 1975, after 150,000 Americans and several million Vietnamese of all ages and political shadings have died, the NFL may be reduced to a grim, lurking underground waiting for the Yanks to leave so they can start all over again. And this is the best the US can hope for, barring such miracles as a long succession of democratic, reform-minded governments in Saigon.)

The Administration's fondness for stressing "favorable kill ratios" and playing other numbers games reminds me of an anecdote, probably apocryphal, told by the late Dr. Bernard B. Fall. I listened to Dr. Fall on a four-hour radio interview prior to his last trip to South Vietnam, and one of the other listeners telephoned the station (in Philadelphia) to express his amazement that the guerillas could continue the struggle when they suffered so many more casualties than the United States troops. Dr. Fall told this story: During the Sino-Japanese War, a Chinese and a Japanese were both passengers on a (neutral) American ship plying Asian waters. Every morning after breakfast, the Japanese would rush down to the radio shack to hear the latest war news and return, elated, to report to his Chinese fellow traveller: "Big battle yesterday," he would say, "200 Japanese soldiers killed, 1000 Chinese soldiers." "Another big battle yesterday," he would report the next morning, "500 Japanese soldiers killed, 3700 Chinese soldiers." This continued for weeks, with the Chinese traveller never responding to the Japanese man's battle reports. Finally, one day, the Japanese said, "Look, every day I tell you how many more men your country is losing than mine. Don't those figures mean anything to you?" The Chinese smiled broadly and nodded his head. "Yes. They mean pretty soon there be no Japanese soldiers left."

In addition to the statistical evidence of "favorable kill ratios", several other factors are noted by United States officials who are

now once again coming perilously close to predicting "victory" in Vietnam. These include the reputed success of the pacification program, increasing security of road and rail transport, relative stability of the government in Saigon, and the capture of a Viet Cong document acknowledging that the NFL had "lost control" of approximately one million people during 1966. The true importance of these factors is questionable, to say the least. I am not, in particular, impressed by the claims of government spokesmen that the pacification program is now beginning to be successful. Such claims have been heard before. It is worth noting, too, that Defense Secretary McNamara reportedly admitted to listeners at a private "defense seminar" at Harvard last November that "we have yet to pacify a single village". Whether you choose to believe what Secretary McNamara says in private or what he says in public is a matter of personal preference; you pay your money and you take your choice. We can only observe that most more or less objective commentators are not impressed by the success of the programs for pacification, and that all previous claims by government spokesmen regarding the effectiveness of pacification efforts have proved wrong. The asserted improvement in road and rail transport I am willing to accept at face value; this of course is a consequence of improvement in a purely military aspect of the war, which not even the most enthusiastic Dove has denied. Naturally, with over 400,000 troops occupying the country, the United States manages to maintain reasonable security over some of the major roads. Nor is the relative stability of the South Vietnamese government of critical importance; this war is now so much an American war that the South Vietnamese government is largely irrelevant. The United States could make an illiterate eunuch with an IQ of 45 the government of South Vietnam if it chose to support him. As to the captured document, I haven't seen more than the assertion that it exists, and without knowing exactly what sort of document it is or how it was phrased it isn't possible to make any definitive comment. However, it is quite possible that the NFL has lost physical control of that many people. There were, during 1966, approximately 780,000 immigrants to urban centers, and along with peasants living in villages now within the defense perimeters of permanent US bases, that probably adds up to a million people. Most of the "immigrants" are actually refugees, a substantial number of whom were forcibly removed from their homes by US forces and are Viet Cong sympathizers. Having physical control of these people means very little; winning their loyalty requires changing their entire attitude, and the difficulty of this can best be grasped by recalling that the French had absolute physical control of these people and their whole social environment for several generations, yet did not manage to instill enough loyalty and devotion to the colonial government and the landlords to avoid losing. Any reasonably competent pacification effort will probably win over some tens of thousands of these dislocated peasants, but of course "tens of thousands" still constitutes only a small percentage of the people involved. Most of the others will, lacking a government in Saigon capable of earning or deserving their respect and allegiance, remain Viet Cong at heart.

KEEP THE FAITH, BABY: Future historians may be either amazed or amused, depending upon their temperament, when they examine the events surrounding the exclusion of Adam Clayton Powell from the House of Representatives. I think the episode is over, though the scars will linger; the House will not make a second attempt to exclude Powell now that he has been dutifully returned by his constituents, and he will lose the court case aimed at restoring his seniority. Thus, Harlem will retain its representative, diminished in power, to be sure, but still there, and the House will have made its gesture for White America. And

everybody, presumably, will be happy--or at least not actively unhappy. One wonders, on second thought, if future historians, living as they will in a more rational society, will even comprehend this remarkable episode. Surely it is not the mark of a rational society that men like Dick Gregory, Floyd McKissock and Stokely Carmichael have left to the defense of a disreputable demagogue like Powell, presumably on the theory of "Sure he's a bastard, but he's our bastard." For certainly Adam Powell is nobody's idea of an ideal representative, although he has been an effective one. He is clever, flamboyant, likeable, cultivating the aura of the politician/folk-hero, and but for the limitations imposed by his skin color, severely restricting the size of his constituency, he might have become another Huey Long. But the civil rights militants who have taken up his cause must realize, at some level of perception, that a political boss of Powell's nature is as much out of date as a Negro hero and "image" as Step'n Fetchit.

The peculiarity of the Powell case is that the question of his moral character, his guilt or innocence of the charges, is irrelevant to attackers and defenders alike. The question of guilt is always irrelevant to a lynch mob, and the House of Representatives made itself collectively that when it undertook to investigate Powell. The Harlem representative is probably guilty of everything the select committee accused him of, but no one seriously asserts that there have not been, in any given year during the past two decades, dozens of representatives who have engaged in the same or comparable practices. But only Adam Clayton Powell was singled out for punishment, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he was censured not for misusing Education and Labor Committee funds, not for taking too many plane trips to Miami, not even because of his legal difficulties in New York City, but rather because the House wanted to "put an uppity nigger in his place". That Powell's guilt (or innocence) is equally irrelevant to his legion of defenders requires no documentation beyond noting that supporters nearly always begin their statements with: "I don't approve of everything he did, but..." This sort of thing is inevitable whenever events are conceived of primarily in terms of in-group/out-group relations. (Note, for example, the outpouring of sympathy for Buell Wortham, the Arkansas man convicted in the Soviet Union of currency manipulation and stealing a statue from his hotel room. Of Wortham's guilt there was not the slightest doubt, but the only way that most Americans could conceive of his case was: he is one of us, and they are prosecuting him.) Powell could be accused of mass murder, and so long as he was attacked not because of the charge but because he is black, he would be defended in the same spirit by other black Americans (and by the minority of white Americans who oppose lynch mobs even when they convene in the hallowed halls of Congress and exact their due with more civilized tools than the knotted rope).

And this was indeed a civilized lynch mob--sufficiently civilized, in any event, to recognize the necessity of basing their act on some fine, universal principle and making at least a gesture toward applying it without bias. The lynch mob, in other words, needed a white body to hang beside Powell's, to demonstrate before the angered gaze of aroused Negroes and the more detached but also more shriveling gaze of history that they were not prejudiced. Senator Thomas Dodd of Connecticut was nominated, chiefly because he was handy (the Senate was already investigating him) but also because he has powerful enemies among his fellow Democrats. Discipline in the upper house being less crude, Dodd's punishment, when it comes, will be less severe than Adam Powell's, but it will be sufficient to satisfy a few Negro "spokesmen" that there really is justice in Washington. The principal charge against Dodd is that he collected money from testimonial dinners and used it for personal rather

than campaign expenses. Here, again, it is hardly questioned that Dodd actually did what the investigating committee claim he did (he says he feels he has done nothing wrong, and I believe him, but Bobby Baker could probably also make that statement). Other Senators have engaged in ethically dubious practices far more injurious to their function as public servants (like accepting money from various private interests and lobbies in return for legislative "favors"), but only Dodd has been censured. Both Dodd and Powell are being punished for reasons totally irrelevant to the charges against them--Powell because he is colored, and Dodd because Congress needed to punish a white member to "prove" that it didn't act out of racist feelings in the Powell case.

THE BLACKBOARD JUNGLE: In late February, a fifteen-year-old white girl was beaten up by two Negro girls at Baltimore's Woodbourne Junior High School. Two weeks later, in an unrelated incident, a fourteen-year-old white boy had his nose fractured in a fight with a Negro student on the playground of the same school. There were probably two dozen fights of one degree of seriousness or another in and around Woodbourne during the period encompassed by these incidents, and the two mentioned above were of no special significance. But the Baltimore News-American decided to feature these two encounters on the front page of its local news section, and from the tone of the accounts one who was not familiar with a second-rate journalist's propensity for exaggeration would infer that the junior high school was a hotbed of violence with race riots on alternate Tuesdays. "The playground has become a battlefield," proclaimed the News-American, a Hearst newspaper which, despite a discernible improvement in the quality of its reporting over the past couple of years, still occasionally reverts to its earlier penchant for sensationalism. "White boys gather at one end; Negro boys at the other." This state of incipient racial warfare was, according to the paper, earnestly covered up by the school officials, but the News-American felt an obligation to bring the matter to the attention of the public.

My own interest in this matter extends considerably beyond the normal, everyday disgust at sensational journalism. Woodbourne Junior High, as it happens, is your obedient servant's alma mater. I attended the school the year it was constructed--1956, I believe--and most of the students were white "refugees" from the inner city. There weren't many motorcycle jackets and switchblades in evidence, but still, with most of the students being children of working class parents recently arrived from the central city, it was a fairly "tough" school from the outset. There were plenty of fights (in which the News-American's linear ancestor, the News-Post, displayed not the slightest interest), and even a nasty little "protection racket" (one gang of about fifteen boys collected portions of other kids' lunch money in return for not beating them up). There was no racial problem, real or alleged, because at this time there were only about twenty colored kids at Woodbourne in a student body of approximately 1900. It was at Woodbourne, in fact, that your beloved editor, then a callow youth of fourteen, for the first time came to know a Negro as an individual. (It was a kid named Calvin who was in my gym class, and if this were a Hollywood movie or a third-rate novel the situation would be that I started out hating Calvin and learned to respect him when he beat me at broad-jumping or something equally ridiculous. Actually, our friendship grew out of a mutual distaste for running around the playground like idiots kicking a soccer ball. So we would sort of loiter in the locker room until the rest of the class went outside without missing us, then spend the gym period smoking, playing poker and exchanging dirty jokes. We got away with this twice a week for two months.)

I also know a little about the present situation at Woodbourne. In addition to being acquainted with a couple of students at the school, I have occasion to ride down Woodbourne Avenue at least a couple of times every month just after the school day ends, and I always notice the groups of kids leaving school. Woodbourne Junior High has always impressed me as a particularly successful example of school integration. It is absolutely not true that the playground is a "battlefield" in which white and colored kids separate at different ends, and there is no apparent tension within or between the (generally) racially mixed groups which hang around the exits and nearby corners after the final bell has rung. (There may be some question as to whether a man in a car waiting for a traffic light to change would be able to perceive tension if it did exist. I assure you that I would. Having attended a school--Clifton Junior High--in which the student body was divided into warring gangs, I know how to distinguish between groups banded together for self-protection and groups standing around having a friendly chat about girls and second period English and the Rolling Stones.)

The News-American's principal interest, of course, lies in selling lots of copies of every issue, which is why it is and will always remain far inferior to the Sun, Baltimore's other major daily. Fights in schools are news, if the students involved happen to be of different races. (One white kid who attends Woodbourne and lives up the street grinningly told me that another white boy "beat the bejesus out of me two weeks ago and I didn't even get mentioned in the papers".) But the city of Baltimore needs this kind of journalism like it needs a new chapter of the Ku Klux Klan.

THE CASE OF THE CARLYSLE CAPER: (Synopsis: Lord Leslie Trenchfoot has recruited Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, for a daring escapade: the theft of the crown jewels of Upper Volta. Along with the other members of the adventuresome group--Dr. Bertram Bedsores, Linda Luscious, former USAF Captain Niles Needleman, Freddy Nkakamwakam and Sister Mary Theresa--they are aboard a ship bound for Africa. Renwood is invited to the cabin of a beautiful and mysterious woman, whereupon he is knocked unconscious by her hulking companion. Freddy and Linda interrupt Falquon's assailants as they are searching him, rescue the greatest jewel thief and take him to his own cabin, but upon being revived he makes the shocking discovery that his Little Orphan Annie Code Ring is missing.)

"Great heavens, man, tell us," Freddy demanded, grasping Renwood by the shoulders. "What was in the secret compartment of your Little Orphan Annie Code Ring?" Trenchfoot and Linda crowded around, concern clouding their faces.

"A ticket," Falquon explained dejectedly. "A ticket that I must have to retrieve my mink-covered billiard balls from a pawnshop in Leningrad."

Trenchfoot sighed in relief, his face unclouding. "For a moment I thought it was something important." Seeing that Falquon was about to protest the importance of his billiard balls, Trenchfoot hastily amended, "I mean, important to our caper in Ougadougou."

Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, walked over to the liquor cabinet and poured himself a stiff drink to clear his head, which was still ringing from the beating he had received. "Our operation may very well be in jeopardy," he informed Trenchfoot. "That girl--she called herself Connie Lingus--knew my real name and asked why we were going to Africa."

"It's no surprise that she knew your name," Freddy pointed out. "You spent the entire afternoon handing out your personal cards to every passenger on this ship. And asking you why you were going to Africa

may have been nothing more than an attempt to make friendly conversation."

"Nonsense!" Falquon retorted. "Her friend Mound wasn't making friendly conversation when he banged my head against the ceiling. They know too much and they're out to make trouble."

"We may have to call off the caper," Lord Trenchfoot said glumly. He pulled his green-dyed goatee nervously.

"All right, I'm taking charge of things now," declared Falquon firmly, taking charge of things. "We are going to pay Miss Lingus and her simian sidekick a visit." He opened a dresser drawer and withdrew a pistol, fondly caressed it for a moment and then shoved it into the waistband of his trousers. "It belonged to my Aunt Gertrude," he wistfully commented. "She carried it all through the Spanish Civil War."

Bold, determined, courageous and resolute, Renwood Falquon III left the cabin, followed closely by Linda and Freddy, who was checking his own "Cadwalader and Leidenbaum" .38 special to make certain it was loaded. Trenchfoot, a devout physical coward, hung back slightly but kept within sight of his friends.

Outside the door of cabin 203, they paused to listen. Hearing nothing, Renwood tried the door, but it was locked. "Stand back," Freddy warned. He retreated across the passageway, got a running start, and smashed into the door with his shoulder. The door held. Slightly dazed, Freddy made a second attempt, and this time succeeded in missing the door altogether, smashing into the wall and sinking to the floor in a semi-conscious state. "Shoot the lock off," he advised weakly, attempting to use Linda as a ladder to climb back to his feet.

"This calls for intelligence and expertise rather than muscle," Falquon observed, drawing his leather case of lockpicking tools from his pocket. He set to work, cheerfully humming the First Bach Prelude.

Twenty minutes later, he was still crouched in front of the door, working furiously, his cheerful humming interrupted occasionally by vigorous profanity. "Shoot the lock off," Freddy advised wearily, for the sixth time. Falquon turned to him, irritation clouding his handsome features. "All right, if you want to shoot the damned lock off, do it."

It took Freddy five shots, but he did it. Stepping inside, they thoroughly searched the empty cabin. Apart from a few articles of clothing, including a three-cup brassiere, and a few cigar butts with lipstick stains, the cabin was completely bare. It was apparent that Connie Lingus no longer lived in cabin 203.

As the puzzled quartet left the cabin, they encountered a steward in the passageway. The stitched nametag on his shirt pocket informed them that he was named Clark Kerr. "Say, Clark," Freddy began cheerfully, putting his arm around the startled steward's shoulder, "do you happen to know the young lady in cabin 203?"

"You mean Miss Lingus?"

"Yes. She seems to have moved out of her cabin. I wonder if you could tell me where she's gone?" Freddy slipped a five-pound note into his pocket to give the question additional force.

"She and her brother have left, sir." The steward started to walk away as if that were a perfectly satisfactory answer, but Lord Trenchfoot's bulk blocked his path in the narrow passageway. "What do you mean, she's 'left'? How does one leave a ship a day from the nearest port?"

"Oh, there are a number of ways," the steward replied brightly. "One can jump overboard and swim, though of course that isn't recommended. One can take one of the lifeboats. Then there's always the possibility of a seaplane, and of course..." Falquon interrupted by grasping the steward's shoulders and pushing him back against the bulkhead. "How did Miss Lingus leave?" he asked, an ominous overtone in his voice.

"By helicopter, sir. It landed on 'K' deck less than an hour ago and removed Miss Lingus and her brother."

"Wasn't that a trifle unusual?" Linda asked.

"No, not actually. It was a Royal Navy helicopter, so I assume it must have been a matter of some urgency. Not an everyday occurrence, certainly, but perfectly reasonable and proper."

They stared at each other after the steward departed. "The plot thickens," observed Freddy, always the one to produce an appropriate aphorism when one was called for. "Well," Linda offered hesitantly, "if they're gone, I suggest we forget about it. No one can suspect what we plan to do, and as long as they're no longer on board there's no point in concerning ourselves with them."

"There's still the matter of my mink-covered billiard balls," Renwood Falquon III, World's Greatest Jewel Thief, pointed out.

"When we pull off this caper," Trenchfoot promised him, "I'll buy you some solid mink billiard balls."

"Gee," Renwood mused, his face brightening. "Gee..."

(To Be Continued)

CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO was on an automobile tour of rural areas with French journalist Jean Daniel on November 22, 1963, when news reached him of the assassination of President Kennedy. Castro spoke to Daniel at length about Kennedy, US-Cuban relations and the tragic incident as they listened to radio bulletins from Miami. Among other things, the Cuban leader assured Daniel that he, Castro, would no doubt be blamed for the assassination. Well, it's taken three-and-a-half years, but it is beginning to look as though Fidel was right. It is apparently New Orleans District Attorney James Garrison's belief, as noted by John Boardman in #120, that the assassination was ordered by Castro in response to a CIA attempt to send the Cuban premier prematurely to his grave. (We pause here for a moment of silent pity for the poor American rightist, who is now confronted with a difficult choice between two equally compelling alternatives: to support the government's original "lone lunatic" theory--not because he approves of the government in particular, but simply because most of the opponents of that theory are those terrible bearded beatnik types--or, on the other hand, to ascribe the assassination to the machinations of Fidel Castro, who is the American Right's second most hated figure after Stokely Carmichael.)

Of course, we really shouldn't discuss the matter of Castro's supposed involvement in the conspiracy until some hard evidence is produced. I should imagine that, on the theory of "Once burned..." etc., those who heartily embraced the original Authorized Version and have recently been dining on crow would be especially hesitant about leaping into this latest conclusion. Personally, I don't mind admitting, I would be highly surprised if any such hard evidence came to light. Mind you, I don't claim that it isn't possible that Castro, angered by a CIA attempt to assassinate him, responded in kind by ordering the murder of President Kennedy; but I certainly don't believe it probable, unless Fidel Castro is clinically insane. For this certainly would not be a sane act. Consider the situation from Castro's viewpoint. He is the leader of a nation, and regardless of what most Americans may think of his philosophy, it is clear that he acts responsibly in the sense that he formulates policies on the basis of what he believes to be best for Cuba. The central fact of life for Premier Castro--the thing that he goes to bed with every night and wakes up with every morning--is that his country lies ninety miles from the greatest power on the face of the earth, a power that is already hostile to his regime and which has

recently sponsored an invasion of his country. Is it conceivable that he would associate his name with a conspiracy to assassinate the President of this super-power? Surely Castro, the imperialist hater, the rabid anti-Yankee who blames the United States even for wayward hurricanes--surely Castro, better than anyone, would realize that if his direction of the assassination became known the US would be quite capable (both physically and morally) of utterly destroying his country in retaliation.

There are other questions raised, as well. If the aborted CIA attempt and Castro's counter-plot occurred shortly after the Bay of Pigs, why did it take over two years before an attempt was made? And what of Clay Shaw? Lee Harvey Oswald and the appropriately named David Ferrie I can picture as Castro agents. But Shaw is a retired army major, a successful businessman, a New Orleans civic leader (i.e., part of the city's power structure). What more unlikely tool of an up-from-the-barrio revolutionary like Fidel?

WHOSE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS? In "An Essential Liberty", elsewhere in this issue, Bob Vardeman presents the case against firearms control legislation. This article was apparently inspired by my offhand remarks to Bob in the letter section of Kipple #119. Although I asserted then that I favored some sort of comprehensive regulation of firearms ownership, this is actually an issue on which my opinions are mixed; it is not one of my major concerns, like racial justice or the war in Vietnam, and I am entirely open to arguments in favor of unrestricted possession of firearms. So this essay is not intended to present the case for firearms control legislation, but is rather an assortment of random notes on various points brought up by Bob's article.

The Second Amendment to the Constitution, quoted in full in the initial sentence of the Vardeman essay, does indeed clearly state the position of our Founding Fathers with respect to individual ownership of guns. It also rather clearly establishes their motive for this view, and there is obviously much doubt as to the current relevance of that motive. The unrestricted private ownership of firearms today has very little to do with the necessity of a "well regulated Militia". Perhaps even men such as Adams, Jefferson and Monroe, if disinterested to testify before a Congressional committee tomorrow, would question the present necessity for every citizen to possess a deadly weapon.

If Bob Vardeman's citing of the Second Amendment provides dubious support for his case (which has to do chiefly with the practical value rather than the constitutionality of unrestricted firearms possession), his citing of statistics to bolster his case is positively ingenious. He dismisses the "emotional" statement of gun control proponents that 17,000 Americans will die of gunshot wounds this year by observing, first, that nearly half of this total represents suicides and the people involved would presumably employ some other method if a gun were not available, and, second, that the number of homicides involving firearms has decreased by one-half since 1930. I will not dispute the first part of this statement, though I think it extremely likely that at least a few of these people would reconsider their suicidal desires if compelled to employ some other means (the advantage of a gun for suicide is that the act is more or less instantaneous, whereas in ingesting poison or exhaust fumes or jumping off a tall building the potential suicide must be willing to endure a certain period of time after it is too late to change his mind but before oblivion comes). But the statement that homicides involving firearms have declined by one-half cannot be allowed to pass. While true, this statistic is deceptive. It avoids mentioning that, even after the decline, the number of firearms deaths per 100,000 population is still far higher in the United States than in

the countries of Western Europe which have for some time possessed comprehensive firearms control measures. It might also be interesting to know if this impressive decline in firearm homicides has anything to do with the "more than 20,000 gun control laws already on the books"--laws which Mr. Vardeman dismisses as ineffectual. The means by which Bob demonstrates through statistics the ineffectiveness of gun control ordinances are also most ingenious. "In New York City the homicide rate was up 6.1 per 100,000 population in 1964 while in Milwaukee, which has moderate gun control ordinances, it was up only 2.6 per 100,000. Philadelphia has possibly the most restrictive gun law of any city in the country and yet has the fifth highest rate of crime increase of any major city." These are interesting figures, but they are not correlated. What is important is not how the homicide rate in Milwaukee compares with that in New York (no one has ever suggested that gun control will eliminate murder), but rather how the number of homicides in which guns are used compares as between the two cities. Similarly, it is not Philadelphia's high rate of crime increase which is significant, but rather what impact--if any--its restrictive gun law has had on the number of crimes in which firearms are used. I note that these comparisons of major American cities also manage to avoid mentioning Phoenix and Dallas, two cities where firearms are notoriously easy to acquire and notoriously commonly used.

Commenting on the NBC television documentary which bore the same title as this essay, Bob accuses it of being "one of the most biased and emotion-filled pieces of blatant propaganda to reach the American public this year". The original "Whose Right to Bear Arms?" may not have been a candidate for the most objective documentary of the year, but it hardly deserved this kind of condemnation. Fully one-quarter of the program was devoted to the statements of a spokesman for the National Rifle Association. Admittedly, this spokesman, a certain Mr. Orth, was so inept that he probably accounted for convincing more people that firearms control is necessary than the rest of the documentary, but that is hardly NBC's fault. The program made several excellent points which Bob regrettably has overlooked in his comments on it. It showed, for example, an NBC reporter walking into a Phoenix gunshop and purchasing a twenty millimeter anti-tank gun with armor-piercing shells, then placing it in the back of a pickup truck in plain view of anybody walking down the street. Presumably even Bob Vardeman does not approve of a situation where any nut can purchase a fully operable heavy weapon with shells the size of bananas designed to pierce twelve inches of armor plate. The documentary also demonstrated how simple it was for anybody, including the producer's twelve-year-old son, to acquire a rifle through a mail order house.

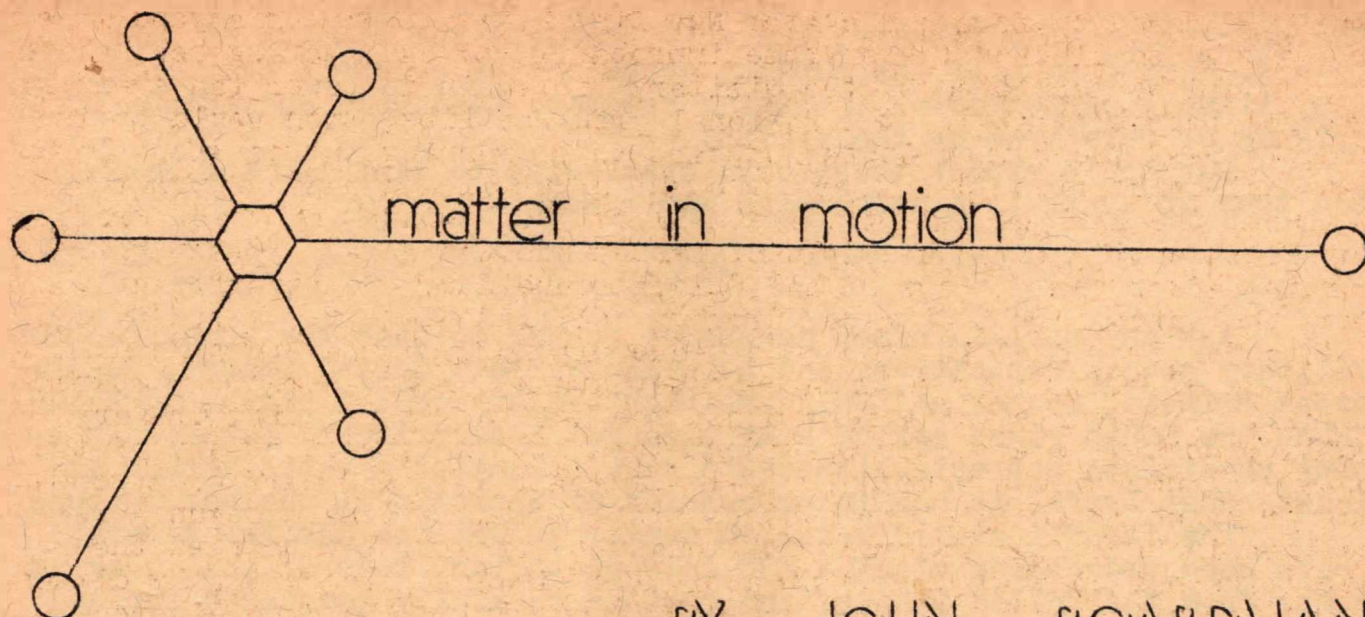
"An Essential Liberty" is guilty of some bias of its own when it refers to proponents of firearms control as presenting "evidence for the outlawing of firearms". The "outlawing" of firearms is not advocated by any responsible spokesman, and certainly not by Senator Dodd, the chief proponent of firearms control. Even the harshest such legislation proposed would by no means abolish the private ownership of rifles and pistols. The basic aims of most such bills appear to be, first, to require the registration of guns--especially handguns--and, second, to restrict the mail order purchase of such weapons. The argument against registration made by Congressman Battin and quoted approvingly by Bob Vardeman does not impress me. Automobile registration might be opposed on similar grounds: when an auto is involved in a crime and the license number noted, the police of course begin their investigation with the car's registered owner. It may be, in any given case, that the owner is an innocent bystander whose automobile was stolen by the criminal; if so, this is generally determined by the investigating officers, and I doubt

that there have been many cases in which the owner has been unjustly convicted of a crime somebody else committed using his automobile. The same would be the case if all firearms were registered. The very possibility of a gun owner getting into trouble because somebody else committed a crime with his weapon would tend to make people more careful about keeping guns in a safe place and promptly reporting their theft.

SHORT NOTES ON LONG SUBJECTS: In #120, I stated that F4 and F4C Phantom jets were not employed to bomb ground targets in North Vietnam. This is not quite accurate. The F4's do occasionally see service of this type, though the vast majority of such missions involve other planes, such as the Air Force F-105 (Thunderchief) and the Navy A-6 (Intruder). +++ A tragedy was given a grotesquely irreverent aspect recently. One of the chaperones of the nine Wisconsin school girls killed when a jet crashed into their New Orleans motel was trying to locate the small town from which they came for an NBC reporter, and he said: "It's about twelve miles from Monroe, the Swiss cheese capital of America." +++ Chay Borsella notes that she was surprised to receive a birthday card from me--exactly one month after her birthday. Well, I didn't know when your birthday was, but--as they say--it's the thought behind it that counts, and I figured I had an outside chance of hitting within a couple of days one way or the other. (If I were a mathematical genius like Charles Wells or Tom Seidman, I could quickly tell exactly what my chances were; but since I'm not I'll make an offhand guess that it was 73-1 against.) +++ The local political scene has been rather quiet of late. This is the year for municipal elections, which have traditionally been held in the spring, but they've been postponed until fall--the primaries in September, the general election in November. I haven't the slightest idea why. +++ It is entirely coincidental that both John Boardman and Bob Vardeman, writing on different topics in this issue, refer to the number of murders recorded in New York City in 1965. John states that there were 633, but Bob claims 702. Care to split the difference? +++ Kim Ung-yong, of Seoul, Korea, has an IQ of 200+, is bilingual, has published two books and excels at differential calculus. He is four years old. Kim has applied for entry to Baker High School in Van Nuys, California, and though his presence on the campus would cause some obvious difficulties, he apparently has the legal right to attend. California schools have a regulation stating that a child must be at least $4\frac{1}{2}$ before he can enter elementary school, but that regulation doesn't say anything about high school (an understandable oversight). I wonder if Kim Ung-yong will turn out to be a campus activist? I can see it now: President of Baker High SDS at the age of five, UCLA Young Democrats chairman at six, Young Democrats state chairman at eight, Governor of California at nine, and retirement to the state supreme court at seventeen! +++ Prostitution may be an ancient profession, but there's always a new wrinkle. In the March 24th issue of the Berkeley Barb appears a classified ad from a chick named Toni West who offers herself for hire as a correspondent. For \$10 per month, you are guaranteed "thought, consideration (and) at least one fairly long letter a week". It is difficult to imagine the psychological desolation of any person who would pay \$10 per month to have somebody write to them. +++ Would you believe that there is a 350 pound "topless" dancer named Baby Jane who is in reality the happily married mother of eight? +++ The AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) strike had an interesting sidelight. David Brinkley picketed NBC, but his partner, Chet Huntley, led the scabs (or, as George Price would prefer to call them, "network loyalists"). +++ Phan Khac Suu is the first announced and probably the most important civilian candidate for president of South Vietnam in the elections scheduled for September 1st. Suu is a liberal who

was imprisoned by former dictator Ngo Dinh Diem. If Suu or anyone like him should be elected (an extreme improbability) and, having been elected, should be permitted by the military to remain in power (an even more extreme improbability), the National Front of Liberation would be in trouble. +++ The United States appears to be running out of space in its national cemeteries. Has anyone thought of utilizing, as an emergency measure, the La Brea Tar Pit? +++ I'll bet you thought my "Dick Gregory for President!" slogan a couple of issues ago was a gag. Not at all. The morning after the failure of his Chicago candidacy to significantly affect the outcome of that race, Gregory declared himself a write-in candidate for President in 1968 on a peace platform. To say that he hasn't a chance of winning is to engage in leviathan understatement; compared to him, Goldwater's was a near miss. The hell of it is, Dick Gregory would probably be a better President than either Johnson or any of the potential Republican contenders. +++ On April 5th, NBC carried a report, so far unconfirmed by other sources, that Communists have begun a rebellion in Cambodia. If true, this ought to finally lay to rest the conservative notion that Communist activities in Asia are centrally directed. A Communist uprising that would alienate Prince Norodom Sihanouk and perhaps even result in US troops operating in Cambodia ought to be about the last thing that the North Vietnamese or Viet Cong would desire. If such a rebellion is actually underway, I predict that "Snooky" (as the irreverent call Sihanouk) will win it without a foreign expeditionary corps or B-52's. +++ On the third page of John Boardman's column in #120, the sentence concerning the "quotation...which appears frequently in Soviet literature" should of course read "appears frequently in anti-Communist literature". +++ On the day I assembled and addressed #120, in which I noted that I did not recall George Price ever advocating abolition of the draft, I received a letter from George in which he quite unequivocally condemned conscription as an infringement of individual liberty. However, it remains true that he has never gone to prison for opposing it and did serve during the Korean War. +++ Other people make mistakes, too. Noam Chomsky, reviewing a book in the April issue of Ramparts, notes that the Viet Cong had been in control of large parts of the Mekong Delta "prior to the brutal American and South Korean campaigns of the last few months". Actually, they still are; American troops have done little in the Delta as yet, and there have never been any South Korean troops in that area. +++ You'd think that after these years of substantial US involvement in Vietnam American politicians and journalists would have learned something about the language, but they go right on making the same mistakes that were common five or six years ago. Only Senator Dirksen has trouble pronouncing the name of the country ("Veetnaam"), but everybody blows Bien Hoa: it comes out "Bean Ho-uh" instead of "Bee-en wha". The names of monks are prefaced, with magnificent redundancy, "the Venerable Thich..." when of course "Thich" means "venerable". And every Vietnamese figure whose middle name is "Van" is referred to by two names ("Van Minh", "Van Thieu") as if that Van were the same as the one in Van Fleet or Van Dyke. +++ From 1952 to 1964, Bolivia was ruled by the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) of Victor Paz Estenssoro, which included both Marxist and liberal democratic elements. Communists outside this coalition had little support and no opportunity to foment insurrection. But in 1964, Paz was overthrown by Air Force General Rene Barrientos, who later legitimized his seizure of power with an election. Barrientos recently declared martial law in two provinces and called on the US for assistance in fighting a well-established Communist-led insurgency. Does this suggest anything to you, Derek Nelson and George Price?

--Ted Pauls



BY JOHN BOARDMAN

The New Yorker who travels outside his city soon finds that many people hold a bitter animus of hatred toward New York City. One way in which this hatred expresses itself is the prominence given to New York City crime news by small-town and regional newspapers. The impression thus spreads that New York City is a dangerously unsafe place in which to live.

I encountered this feeling in Texas three years ago while attending a scientific conference. When I mentioned that I came from New York, Texans expressed concern over the city's high crime rate and asked if it were true that people are not safe on New York's streets. I usually replied that we have never had a President killed there, which quite effectively ended that line of conversation.

Part of the anti-New York feeling is the traditional antipathy of rural and small-town dwellers which has been with us since long before the prophet Amos shocked the yokels of Galilee with stories about the big wicked city of Jerusalem. The tight little homogeneous and conservative societies in the hinterlands have always distrusted the innovations which arise in the melting pots of the cities, where old family ties and orthodoxy in the currently established faith are not as important as personal ability and ambition. And, in the United States of America, New York is the quintessential City. Even among cities it is a giant. According to the census bureau, any town with a population of over 100,000 is a city. Yet New York City compares to a city of 100,000 (Peoria, say, or Wilmington) as that city would compare to a small town of 1250 inhabitants.

Human nature being what it is, rape statistics are quoted with glee whenever "wicked New York" is the subject of a news story or small-town conversation. The parks are supposed to be particularly bad in this respect. Yet there has not been a forcible rape in notorious Central Park in over twenty years.

New York City Police Commissioner Howard Leary recently released a report on homicide in this city in 1966. There were 654 murders in New York that year, as compared with 633 the year before. But when this large figure is computed on a per capita basis, it shrinks into proportion. A town of 10,000 which had one murder in 1966 had a higher murder rate than in New York City. Nor are the murders linked with robbery or gang violence, as the stories about New York are designed to make you

believe. Sixty-three of these murders--less than 10%--took place during the commission of a robbery, and only two were the results of gang fights. More than half the murders arose out of quarrels over money, women, liquor, narcotics or insulting remarks. Most were committed by friends or relatives or the victim.

But don't expect these cold statistics to diminish the anti-urban tone of small-town newspapers and gossip.

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Ask any well-informed newspaper reader to name the countries with military atomic capacities, and he will recite: "United States, Russia, Great Britain, France and China." (Dick Gregory adds a sixth, the NAACP. "When the South rises again, will they get a surprise!") But gossip among physicists has established--to your columnist's satisfaction at least--that Israel is now in possession of operational nuclear weapons.

The Israeli atomic research center at Daimona has for several years been processing uranium 238 into plutonium. Some of this uranium comes from the United States, and must be carefully accounted for and returned in the form of plutonium. This means that Israel knows how to produce plutonium, and could produce some for her own use by presently existing equipment if she got uranium from somewhere other than the United States.

In all likelihood uranium from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Canada is not available to Israel, though in view of Canada's role as an international broker this last source is not to be ruled out. However, Israel has had a great deal of success in leaping over the ring of Arab states around her, and establishing good commercial and diplomatic relations with the non-Arab states around them--Turkey, Iran and the black African nations. Among these African nations is the Congo, which possesses rich uranium deposits.

The Arab states will, of course, continue to fulminate about the existence of Israel. But they are not likely to embark upon a war whose end will be signalled when some enterprising Israeli opens a gravel pit on the former site of the Ka'ba stone.

-oOo-

Most Americans are of the opinion that the Soviet Union harbors aggressive intentions toward this country, and that only a large American military establishment and a worldwide network of bases prevents a Soviet attack. This chimaera has been conjured up out of the Communist belief that eventually the whole world will be Communist, but manages to ignore the corollary belief--as old as Communism itself, and still maintained by the Soviet government--that the transition from capitalism to socialism must be accomplished in each country by its own inhabitants.

However, the equivalent Soviet belief that their country is threatened by United States aggression has some basis in fact. In 1959, the United States Congress solemnly and unanimously passed a resolution for the partition of the Soviet Union. Every year since that date, this resolution has been reaffirmed by Congress, amidst commemorative ceremonies.

The text of this resolution makes interesting reading. In it, the precise segments into which the Soviet Union is to be carved up are delineated. One of them is called "Idel-Ural", which I defy anyone to find on a map or identify as a historical entity. Another is called "Cossackia", which sounds as if it would be a separate Cossack state. There has never in history been a separate Cossack state, for the rea-

son that the Cossacks are not a people. They were a branch of the Tsarist armed forces, settled in border areas and intermarrying with the local inhabitants much as the XX Legion did in Britain under the Roman Empire. To carve out part of Russia as a separate Cossack state would make about as much sense as to carve out part of the United States as a separate nation for the Marines.

Let us turn this situation around and suppose that the Supreme Soviet and the Presidium had solemnly passed a resolution for the partition of the United States. Said resolution might re-establish Texas, California and Hawaii as independent states, restore the independence of most Indian tribes, and acknowledge an occasionally made Cuban claim to the Florida Keys. The furor that such a Soviet policy would cause in Washington and throughout the nation would be unimaginable. The Soviet Union has shown a remarkable amount of maturity in international affairs, or perhaps merely the sobriety which has affected all nations since the coming of the atomic bomb, by not breaking relations with the United States over this belligerent, ill-considered and futile partition resolution.

-oOo-

Even this partition resolution was not enough for one of the most dedicated bands of left-over Nazis: the Ustashi. When German troops moved into Yugoslavia in 1941, they were met with considerably more resistance from the Orthodox Serbs than from the Catholic Hravats. The Nazis exploited and exacerbated tensions between these two groups, which have a common language but divergent cultures and histories. Hravatia was established as a separate nation, nominally a kingdom under the rule of a distant relative of the King of Italy but actually a Fascist dictatorship under Ante Pavelić. Dr. Pavelić was leader of a home-grown Fascist movement, patterned after German and Italian models, called the Ustashi.

Pavelić was a dedicated Fascist, rather than merely an opportunist like other collaborators such as Laval or Tiso. He persecuted and murdered not only Jews, Gypsies and Communists, but also Serbs and Freemasons. On one famous occasion he showed a reporter a basket full of eyeballs torn from Serbian enemies of his regime.

When the forces of Tito--also a Hravat--drove out the Ustashi, they tried to keep contact with one another. This they have managed to a considerable extent. Pavelić went to Argentina, where he died a few years ago. Buenos Aires remains a center of Ustashi activity, some of which is financed by the printing and sale of gaudy--and postally worthless--Hravat stamps.

A second Ustashi center is Malmö, Sweden, where a number of other European Fascist exile groups are also quartered. The Malmö Ustashi engage in desultory plotting, which the Swedish police crack down on whenever it gets too near the operative stage. It is not known whether this center of Ustashi activity is connected with the anti-Communist Ustashi underground, which propagandizes among Yugoslav migratory workers and manages an occasional attack on Yugoslav diplomatic offices.

However, it is in the United States that the Ustashi find their most congenial home. American opinion is strongly anti-Communist, and as certified anti-Communist exiles from a Communist country the Ustashi can pose as innocent victims of the Reds. (Some of them are even veterans of an Ustashi combat force which fought beside the Germans on the Russian front.) Their American leader is Andrija Artuković, a member of Pavelić's cabinet, who came to this country under the sponsorship of Representative James B. Utt (R., Calif.) and lives in Utt's district.

CONCLUDED AFTER "AN ESSENTIAL LIBERTY"

Amendment two of the Constitution states: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Basic, straight to the point and yet this right of owning firearms is being threatened. The threat comes mainly from those who desire security at any price and are willing to sacrifice anything for it. Benjamin Franklin has described such people adequately when he said, "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." And yet the current panic for firearms restriction and prohibition is not a new thing, in fact it comes in cycles not unlike sunspots. After World War I, the anti-firearm proponents tried to take advantage of a general passion for total disarmament, in the twenties and thirties the rise of crime czars like Dillinger brought much publicity to the issue, and after World War II there was a scare that returning veterans would unleash mass destruction on the US through their war trophies. Needless to say, only the starry-eyed idealists and the sincere but misinformed humanitarians have been taken in by the emotion-laden appeals of the anti-gun faction. During the twenties and thirties crime rates dropped in areas where the populace was unhindered in the possession of firearms. After World War II, homicide by firearms

AN ESSENTIAL

decreased without the aid of any new Federal law disarming veterans or any other citizens.

Recently on NBC there was a documentary purporting to be an impartial look at the need for firearms restriction. This program, however, started with the premise that in no case should a free, sane, responsible person own a gun and then went on to present one of the most biased and emotion-filled pieces of blatant propaganda to reach the American public this year.

Presented as one of the most damning pieces of evidence for the outlawing of firearms was the fact that in 1967 approximately 17,000 people will lose their lives due to gunshot wounds. It went on to say that nearly half of this total would be due to suicide. If a person is deranged enough to want to commit suicide, any means will serve whether it be poison, jumping from a tall building or carbon monoxide gassing. To attribute the suicides committed by guns to the weapon or its availability is to overlook the basic cause entirely--namely, that the person is mentally ill.

As to the other nearly 9000 deaths, it is no deep, dark secret that crime as a whole is increasing. But it has been kept from public view that homicide by guns has decreased by one-half since 1930. In 1930, there were 5.7 deaths per 100,000 population. In 1965, there were only 2.9 deaths by firearms per 100,000 people. The deaths attributable to carelessness are unfortunate, but wouldn't more firearms training programs such as the National Rifle Association (NRA) sponsors help reduce this figure?

According to the documentary, the NRA is one of the most nefarious groups in America today. The NRA was pictured by NBC as a malignant giant smashing any attempts to adopt firearms control. Once again, this overt implication is totally false. Any organization with almost 800,000 members is bound to be powerful but this does not automatically mean that the group will also be criminally inspired. The NRA was "credited" with the defeat of 77 firearms control acts since the death of President Kennedy. This is true only so far as the NRA has gone on

record as being opposed to those bills. The House of Representatives and the Senate are the ones who voted against the measures. It is not true that the NRA immediately opposes any control act as the NBC program implied. In 1961, the NRA helped the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency, headed by Senator Thomas Dodd, draft legislation intended to halt abuses in the sale of mail-order guns. In August, 1963, this bill (S.1975) was introduced by Senator Dodd and had the full support of the NRA. After President Kennedy's death, the bill was rewritten with so many objectionable restrictions that the NRA felt obligated to withdraw support and to urge its members to oppose this revision. The NRA is still urging its members to oppose the Dodd bill (S.1), but this does not mean it is totally against all such bills under consideration. Support for the Casey bill, sponsored by Congressman Robert Casey (D., Texas), is freely given. This bill calls for the punishment of crime committed with a firearm but would not punish possession so long as no crime was committed.

But the calumnies both stated and implied on the NRA and the emotional issues like "It was a gun that killed Kennedy" only serve to cloud the real issue. Will a firearms regulation bill have the desired result of reducing crime? It is best to look at the cities with strict

LIBERTY

BY BOB VARDEMAN

gun controls and compare their crime rates with cities having few restrictions on the ownership of firearms.

The Sullivan Law is the oldest statute of its kind in the US and has a rather disheartening record of restricting guns but not crime. In New York City in the fifteen years between 1950 and 1965, the number of gun permits for "protection of home and business" was reduced by 77%. In that same period murders more than doubled (294 in 1950; 702 in 1965). In New York City, the homicide rate was up 6.1 per 100,000 population in 1964 while in Milwaukee, which has moderate gun control ordinances, it was up only 2.6 per 100,000. Philadelphia has possibly the most restrictive gun law of any city in the country and yet has the fifth highest rate of crime increase of any major city. In Chicago (February, 1966) there was a drop in crime of 6.7% from the previous year's figure while the figure was increasing in cities with "tough" gun laws.

A recent survey conducted by the District Attorney of Los Angeles over a 26-day period showed 4065 criminal complaints. Of this total, 263 involved the use or possession of guns. In 187 cases the gun was used in the crime, while in the rest the suspect had a gun in his possession at the time of apprehension but the firearm did not figure in the crime for which he was arrested. Taken were 222 guns, 95 of which the police could not trace, 39 stolen and 37 obtained from local retail dealers. Death or injury was attributed to the use of a firearm in 58 instances, and of these 8 defendants had a previous history of mental illness, 16 were drug addicts and 43 had prior felony convictions. Their guns came from private parties (13), stolen (9), from local dealers (3) and from unknown sources (14). The three purchasing guns from a local dealer had been convicted as juveniles but under California law were not classed as convicted felons.

Guns figured in 7% of the reported crimes, and in most instances could not have been kept from the criminals' hands. Six of the eight with a history of mental illness had stolen the guns they used and the police could not trace the guns used in the other two cases. It might be argued that registration might aid the police in tracing the stolen

and unknown guns, but in the words of Congressman James F. Battin:

"Let's assume that the serial number (of my firearm) was listed at the local police station. Let's also assume that somebody came into my house...the door was unlocked and he walked in. He took my gun and I didn't even know it was gone for a period of months. The person who took the gun uses it in the commission of a crime. At that point there would be some assumptions, I am afraid, that the individual whose gun was listed in the police record would be suspected of committing a crime."

Gun control laws can easily disarm the honest man, but they never would disarm the criminal. The only effective curb on crime short of recognizing criminal tendencies and attempting rehabilitation is to let the criminal know that any potential victim might be armed, that the police will immediately apprehend the criminal, and that successful prosecution will mete out punishment to fit the crime. To walk softly and carry a big stick is the only way at our immediate disposal that crime will be deterred. The more than 20,000 gun control laws already on the books have simply not reduced crime.

Perhaps a man closely linked with a national tragedy has expressed the above sentiments on firearms restriction more succinctly. Governor John Connally has said:

"I recognize that there is a great hue and cry in some areas of our country for a gun registration law. I am not convinced that this is the answer to our problems for two reasons: (1) the criminal element could still obtain firearms illegally, and (2) many of our most dastardly and shocking crimes have been committed by individuals who would have encountered no difficulty in obtaining and registering firearms under even the most strict gun registration law recommended.

"I believe that we should hit hard at the unlawful use of firearms and concealed weapons rather than at the right of ownership."

--Bob Vardeman

MATTER IN MOTION.....CONCLUDED

Repeated requests by the Yugoslav government that Artuković be extradited to stand trial for war crimes have been rejected, to the accompaniment of a good deal of red-baiting.

Recently the American Ustashi emulated on a larger scale the terrorist tactics of their German comrades. On the same night, the Yugoslav embassies in Washington and Ottawa, and the Yugoslav consulates in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Toronto were bombed. This concerted action argues the presence of a large and well-coordinated Ustashi underground in North America, which has been permitted to operate without FBI scrutiny because it is professedly "anti-Communist".

--John Boardman

"Whenever there is a conflict between human rights and property rights, human rights must prevail." --Abraham Lincoln.

Dissenting

Opinions

GEORGE W. PRICE :: 1439 W. NORTH SHORE AVE. :: CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, 60626

The Warren Report: While I have not studied the full report, it does seem obvious that it is highly tendentious. As you say, evidence in favor of the Authorized Version was emphasized, and contrary evidence was rejected or ignored. "The Commission began with its hypothesis, and selected or interpreted evidence to fit it." Since you find it credible that Chief Justice Warren and his heretofore highly respected fellow commissioners would do such a thing, how is it that you cannot believe that the Warren Court would do precisely the same? In #113, when I said that the Court could deliberately misinterpret legislation intended to veto its previous decisions, you replied: "The Court cannot and does not interpret white as black and vice versa; it exercises its interpreting authority only where there exists a reasonable doubt concerning the exact meaning of phrases." Just play that over again, applying it, mutatis mutandi, to the Commission.

To be sure, the Warren Court and the Warren Commission have only the one member in common, yet the commissioners were in no way inferior to the Justices in their reputation for intelligence and probity. If the accusation of tendentiousness is credible for one, it is no less credible for the other. In my opinion, the behavior of the Warren Commission parallels that of the Court majority quite closely. Both have found the results that they wanted to find, and then chopped the evidence or the law to fit. Both have studiously ignored any inconvenient evidence or precedents. In fact, I should not be at all surprised if Warren was selected to head the Commission precisely because his record on the Court showed that he could be depended upon to reach the politically desirable conclusion regardless of evidence. I submit that the Warren Report is full and sufficient proof that Mr. Justice Warren can and will "interpret white as black and vice versa".

I doubt that the primary aim of Communist terrorism, as in Venezuela, is to provoke the government into alienating the populace by abandoning democratic procedures. This is certainly a consideration, but I suggest that the primary aim is to demonstrate the ineffectualness of the government by showing that it cannot protect the people against the terrorists. This is particularly noticeable in Vietnam. When a terrorist flings a bomb into a barroom--containing no Americans or government troops, but only civilians--this is a message: "We can kill you anytime we please, and the government can't save you. Give us what we want, and live longer!" I suspect that your theory is what the Communists would like us to believe, so that the governments will refrain from the harsh measures that would root out the terrorists. (I suppose I really shouldn't be surprised at your inability to grasp what is to me an elementary principle; it is precisely because the conservatives who are likely to be dominant in the governments of underdeveloped nations cannot understand or accept these principles that Communist theoreticians are able to discuss them so candidly in their writings. You raise an interesting point with regard to the function of terrorism in Vietnam, but it is utterly irrelevant to the situation in Venezuela, where the insurgency is currently in a much more primitive stage and where, besides, it is being conducted against a popular, elected government. Please note, as

I did in #119, the response of the Venezuelan terrorists to the government's return to constitutional rule. They didn't blow up a school bus or a saloon to show people that the Leoni regime couldn't protect them; they kidnapped and killed a former cabinet minister to panic the government into suspending the constitution again. What do you want to bet that within five days of the government reinstating constitutional government again the terrorists will bomb a government office or shoot an army officer?))

You place great emphasis on the "dominantly 'political' nature of insurgency", but I do not see where this is borne out in practice. The Communists talk a great deal about getting the support of the masses, but in fact they win without it. At the best, the Communists can stimulate enough disaffection that the people remain neutral and do not defend the government against the revolutionaries. I cannot offhand think of any Communist conquest that was achieved by mass support. Always, the Communists are a comparatively small band of well armed and highly disciplined fighters who bring the government down by force of arms. The guerillas conceal themselves among the masses, not by winning the approval of the masses, but by so terrorizing them that they dare not betray the guerillas. To be sure, the process is made easier when the central government is unpopular. But then, one of the things which makes the government unpopular is its inability to protect the masses from the terrorists. It might make an interesting research to try to find out just how many people actively supported the Communists at the time they became the de facto government of the three countries which they won by revolution: Russia, China and Cuba. (I don't count North Vietnam, because Ho won in the guise of a nationalist rather than as a Communist against a native regime.) (I have never claimed that Communist (or other) insurgents required overwhelming mass support in order to overthrow a government. What is true is that where the government itself possesses such support it cannot be overthrown by an insurgency, no matter how well supplied from outside. An insurgency may be overwhelmingly popular, or it may be supported by only about a third of the people (as was apparently the case in the American Revolution), or it may have the active support of only a small percentage (as for example in a situation where 10% support the insurgents, 5% the government and 85% aren't committed either way). But in all cases the problem remains dominantly political: it is the government's lack of support which prevents it from winning. It is not merely that "the process is made easier when the central government is unpopular"; it is made possible only when the central government is unpopular. Certainly the central government was widely unpopular at the time of the Communist victories in Russia, China and Cuba. "The guerillas conceal themselves among the masses, not by winning the approval of the masses, but by so terrorizing them that they dare not betray the guerillas." If terror bred loyalty, then Diem should have been overwhelmingly popular. For that matter, the Nazis should have been popular in the occupied countries of Europe. I commend to your attention the Feb. 4, 1967, New Republic, page 21, paragraphs 1-4, Dr. Bernard Fall commenting on the inhabitants of Ben Suc in the "Iron Triangle". That kind of loyalty cannot be inspired merely by violence.))

"Status is a frame of mind, encompassing a state of existence, hung on a wall of quicksand." --Johnny Hart, in "BC".

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Chay Borsella's characterization of liberalism as "placing decision-making in the hands of a remote central power" is a venerable cli-

che. It is part of the conservative belief that the federal government of the United States of America is a tyrannical alien entity, bent on clamping a totalitarian rule on a free people. Nowhere in this characterization is there any intimation that this power is amenable to the opinions and votes of the citizenry. The conclusion that the transfer of certain powers from localities to Washington is supported by the majority of the people would be unthinkable to conservatives.

(That is, it would be unthinkable except to those conservatives who distrust democracy precisely because it does imply majority rule, and whose concept of the role of government is to find out what the people want and prevent them from doing it.)

Since the beginning of the New Deal, conservatives have been engaged in spreading fear and hatred of the federal government. This has come to its most ridiculous extreme in the current pronouncements of the John Birch Society on the war in Vietnam. The Birchers oppose the war, because they feel that Communism is now in operative control of the federal government, and therefore anything that the federal government does must in some obscure way rebound to the benefit of Communism.

This conservative attitude has driven some liberals into the equally absurd position of defending every action of the federal government. Some old-line New Deal liberals, who defended President Roosevelt against the attacks of anti-federal conservatives 30 years ago, are now supporting the American invasion of Vietnam as part of the same set of pro-federal reflexes.

By and large, the federal government has not "usurped" powers of state and local governments and private agencies; it has acted because these other agencies have refused to meet certain needs, or even to admit that they existed. This has been the case in rural electrification, public power development, welfare assistance, civil rights, and a whole range of other programs beyond either the will or the means of private or local agencies.

It is all very well to oppose "majority rule", but such opposition clearly implies that the critic would prefer "minority rule". What minority? If society is to be ordered to suit a minority, an elite, then who gets to play daddy?

John Berry: Sweden's history bears more resemblance to that of the United States than you appear to think. Sweden, like the US, had its imperialist delusions. In the middle of the 17th Century, Sweden was a major European power, the only real winner in the Thirty Years' War. The Baltic was virtually a Swedish lake; Sweden ruled Bremen, Pomerania, Finland, the Baltic shore south of Bothnia, and even a small segment on the eastern coast of North America. Having overextended themselves to preserve this empire, they ended by losing all of it, and by 1812 were cut back to their present boundaries. Sweden has been at peace ever since. The lesson should not be lost on the United States, even though President Johnson is trying to imitate Karl XII. (Let us hope that this imitation does not extend to the close of his life. After 20 years of continuous war, Karl XII lost most of his country's trans-Baltic territories and tried to compensate by invading Norway. One of his own soldiers shot him in a desperate and successful attempt to bring peace to Sweden at last.)

The invalidation of the Feinberg Act, over which Chay Borsella castigates "that supreme conspiracy known as the Supreme Court", was received with unalloyed relief by every New York state employee known to me. But have no fear, Chay. Senator Marchi of Staten Island (a Republican, of course) has proposed a substitute which he thinks will be constitutional, since the language is based on a 1923 criminal anarchy statute which has been upheld by the Supreme Court. Under this bill, no one could be employed by the state of New York if he "by word of mouth

or writing promotes, fosters, or urges the duty, necessity or propriety of overthrowing or overturning organized government by force or violence...or openly, willfully and deliberately justified by word of mouth or writing the assassination or unlawful killing of any executive or other officer of the United States or any state or of any civilized nation having an organized government...or organizes or helps to organize or becomes a member of or voluntarily assembles with any society, group or assembly of persons formed to promote, foster, or urge such doctrine."

This is a wide net indeed, and I would like Chay's public opinion on it. It would sweep in Cuban and Hungarian exiles, contributors to Radio Free Europe, any Legionnaire who after the sixth beer asserts that "they oughta kill that damn Castro (Mao, Brezhnev, Nasser, Ho)"--or me, for my assertion above that the murder of Karl XII of Sweden was a salutary outcome to the incessant wars with which he had plagued his nation.

Charles Crispin's comment on the obvious cover-up of the truth of the Kennedy assassination makes good sense. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Fidel Castro did set the assassination plot in motion as revenge for a CIA plot to do the same to him. If incontrovertible evidence to this effect is made public, there will be a massive public reaction against anyone who ever had a kind word to say for Castro, from outright support to the mere assertion that the Bay of Pigs invasion was a mistake. It would shatter American political dialog and react against anyone even mildly to the left of center. Au contraire, had the assassination been a Bircher plot, everyone to the right of George Romney would have caught hell. This was illustrated in 1963; the day of the Kennedy assassination, readers of National Review happened to receive in the mail one of that magazine's regular appeals for funds. The first reaction was that a President so viciously hated by the Right must have been murdered from that direction, and National Review took in far less money than they had counted on in the appeal.

An interesting example of Chay Borsella's remarks about changes which the populace may not be ready to accept is now taking place in Baltimore. According to a report in today's New York Times, the New Era Book Store in Baltimore has been harrassed by acts of vandalism. This vandalism, unquestionably directed at the socialist and civil rights literature sold at the shop, has led to its fire insurance and lease being cancelled. The attacks are openly acknowledged for their own by the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The most flagrant attack was the ignition of a can of gasoline in the shop's doorway.

Now unquestionably the New Era Book Store meets Chay Borsella's criterion as a source of ideas which "the general populace is not emotionally ready to accept". Most of the people of Baltimore, reading something on sale there, would be "unnecessarily vexed by this conflict with their own ethical code". Certainly many of them would find that civil rights, peace, and socialist literature is "a direct attack on the ethical code held by most people which, though imperfect, happens to be needed at the moment".

In fact, the New Era Book Store probably upsets more people than do the topless waitresses against whom Chay would invoke sanctions on these quoted grounds. In an exchange of letters between us, Chay has elaborated upon the strains which too-fast change imposes upon the public mind. The closing of the New Era Book Store would certainly remove such a strain, so I can only conclude from her remarks in Kipple #119 that, while she may not approve of the Klan's forthright methods (as she said in her letter to the paper), she would certainly agree with them that the shop should go out of business.

Your article on annelids, planaria and other crawlies brings to mind the fact that, in principle, every cell contains a complete blue-

print for the animal or plant to which it belongs. This means that the theoretical possibility is open to regenerate any lost organ or part. Some way has to be found for the blueprint to operate upon suitable raw material, and attach the regenerated structure as a functioning part of the original. (Details!)

Could Bob Vardeman provide us with more details about the University of Minnesota who was arrested for espionage for his "Frodo lives" declaration?

"No one understands us crabby people!" --Lucy, in "Peanuts"

DICK ENEY :: US AID, VIETNAM :: C/O AMERICAN EMBASSY, SAIGON :: APO SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 96243

On the off chance that you might like to know what actually happened in that crash at Da Nang Christmas eve, let me give you some information to balance your Kipple note about Xmas presents from Wicked Imperialists &c.

(For one thing, the Imperialists had no demonstrable connection with it; that is, there is neither internal evidence nor a propagandistic claim that the Viet Cong arranged the crash.)

What happened, briefly, was that an air freighter racked up in Quang Nam North--about a mile short of the Da Nang runway near the district seat of Hoa Vang, if you've any maps of the area--in a heavily populated residential zone. I'm sure you'll regret to hear that it wasn't one of our Evil American warplanes. In fact, it wasn't anybody's warplane--it was a purely civilian operation, Flying Tiger Airlines. First time the military got into the act was when the Marines went in to fight fires and rescue survivors or, alternately, remove bodies.

Estimate is that 117 were killed: an estimate is all that's possible, since the area hadn't had an accurate census and the crash and fire levelled the impact area so there's no way to guess from the number of structures what the number of occupants might have been.

By Christmas morning a crash committee had been formed to work through the problem of immediate assistance, civic action relief, and cause-of-crash investigation. (Who? Well, the Vietnamese members were the District Chief of Hoa Vang, the Social Welfare chief of Quang Nam province, and a representative of the CG I Corps. The US members were the subsector advisor for Hoa Vang, a representative from the US unit with tactical responsibility in the area--an Amphibious Tractor battalion, for some reason--and the G-5 of the 1st Marine Division.)

Immediate commodity assistance was provided by the Marines--remember what I had to say in CYRB! about C rations being always available as Instant Food. That kept up until December 28th when civilian assistance took over--first USAID, but distributed through the Vietnamese Social Welfare Chief, then, on January 2nd, regular supplies from the Government of Viet Nam. At the end of a week--I mean Monday, January 9th--generalized commodity support was ended because the SW Chief and the District Chief had checked out entitlement for regular relief (which was determined on the basis of relationship to the deceased and degree of dependency) and completed the arrangements for relief payment instead of direct gifts of supplies.

The response to this emergency did finger a deficiency in Vietnamese government arrangements: there proved to be no established procedures or institutions to deal with this particular type of emergency. There are arrangements for dealing with local disasters of military origin, like the incident in Quang Ngai a short while back when the Viet Cong burned down a refugee camp; and there are systems for establishing

arrangements that can deal with large civil disasters, like the typhoon in I Corps or the Mekong Delta flood this year; but there are no arrangements for meeting local disasters of purely civilian origin. The Social Welfare Chief had no funds or commodities to draw on, and--so far as his regulations went--no authority to deal with victims of a civilian air accident. The relief work went on because, to begin with, the Marines and USAID did have commodities, and, to continue, the District Chief of Hoa Vang moved with a good deal of ingenuity and briskness in making the necessary connections between supply sources and crash victims.

This shortcoming was experimentally met by assigning emergency-relief powers to the Da Nang City Council--I say experimentally because nobody was sure how the Council would work on its regular job (advising the Mayor), let alone whether it could or would meet urgent unforeseen needs. On the first test, it worked well: when the Viet Cong tried to bombard Da Nang air base with 140 mm rockets and successfully creamed the Vietnamese residential area outside the base, the two nearest members of the City Council hustled over and got busy organizing the Vietnamese share of the rescue activity right away. This, however, was only a test of the responsiveness of the Council, not its effectiveness in relief administration; the regular arrangements of the Vietnamese government, as I said, include coverage for disasters caused by military action. After all, Viet Cong attacks for ten-twenty years stop being emergencies and get treated as a routine health hazard...

I'll be watching with morbid (and cynical) interest, by the way, to see how much space you give to denouncing the carelessness of the Viet Cong in smashing up innocent civilians on this occasion. After all, if a civilian air freighter rates a slaking, common fairness dictates that the next time the same town gets hit, with much the same sized casualty list... (I don't think my comments on this incident qualify as a "slaking"; the crash was mentioned in #117 only incidentally, my chief criticism being that NBC News had given disproportionate coverage to the US relief measures as compared to other less wholesome US activities occurring simultaneously. I even called the rebuilding of the houses a constructive act. Still, it is true that I devote a good deal more space to decrying US misdeeds than comparable Viet Cong actions, and I will again reiterate my reason for this: the US is acting in my name, the VC isn't. If the NFL were, like the US government, an institution which existed solely to spend my money in preserving my liberty and promoting my interests, I'd raise a lot more hell about its misdeeds.)

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