

Concern for Cambodia and Campus

To the Editor:

We believe that President Nixon's recent actions in Indochina constitute a disastrous and indefensible re-escalation of the war. We do not think that any tactical, short-term advantages could possibly justify the catastrophic reversal of American policy since 1968, and we condemn his reckless disregard of the effects of his futile policies abroad on the fabric of our life at home.

After years of bombing North Vietnam and in light of similar experiences elsewhere, the Administration should know at last that neither the National Liberation Front nor the North Vietnamese can be bombed into acquiescence or coerced to negotiate. Further escalation on our side will provoke new initiatives on their side; casualties will continue to mount, while the possibilities of peace recede.

The record of military miscalculation in Vietnam is unprecedented in American experience, and we believe that the President's sudden acceptance of military demands is an ominous harbinger of still greater tragedies to come. Our military experts have consistently erred in Vietnam because they misread the political dimensions of the struggle.

We now fear that the President is indifferent to the political realities at home. He seems embarked on a course of maximizing our internal divisions. He reached his most recent decisions in clear defiance of what a large number of Senators and Representatives counseled; he worsened a constitutional crisis that is already the gravest in decades.

The betrayal of his own campaign promises will further undermine the already shaken faith of many Americans, especially young Americans, in the efficacy of the democratic process. He has given destructive militants the greatest possible boost—precisely at a time when the wave of senseless campus violence seemed on the wane.

It must be obvious to all now that the President and those who proclaim the revolutionary need to overthrow the system are unwittingly giving strength to each other; the middle ground of American life and politics is being eroded.

We appeal to all like-minded citizens everywhere to express their condemnation of President Nixon's policies now. Only a

massive outpouring of responsible opposition can prevent the further escalation of the war and a further polarization at home. The hour is late and the country's danger great.

FELIX GILBERT; RICHARD HOFSTADTER; H. STUART HUGHES; LEONARD KRIEGER; WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG; FRITZ STERN; C. VANN WOODWARD; GORDON WRIGHT

Princeton, N. J., May 6, 1970

The writers of the above letter are professors of history at various universities.

To the Editor:

I note that your columnist C. L. Sulzberger [Foreign Affairs column May 3] has placed his imprimatur on President Nixon's strange theory that the United States would have lost credibility everywhere in the world had it not invaded Cambodia.

The Nixon-Sulzberger argument is, briefly, that, if the United States declines to fight to the end in a part of the planet where its vital interests are not involved, the rest of the world will conclude that we will not fight at all in areas

where our vital interests are involved.

This argument is patently absurd. Yet on this absurdity President Nixon has rested the most dangerous escalation of the whole ghastly war. By the Nixon-Sulzberger argument, once Russia withdrew its missiles from Cuba, where its vital interests were not involved, the United States could have moved against Russia with impunity in Eastern Europe, where its vital interests are involved. Does President Nixon really believe such nonsense? Does Mr. Kissinger? Does even Mr. Sulzberger?

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER Jr.
New York, May 4, 1970

To the Editor:

Last fall, in expressing my personal judgment of policies that have a grave effect on students and the future of higher education, I stated that either a failure to end the Vietnam war quickly or an expansion of that war could alienate almost a whole generation of promising Americans, the young people upon whom our national future depends.

Now the war not only continues, but is expanding. American forces are invading Cam-

5-10-70
NY
bodia. The reason given is that this may save American lives. Already, however, the Cambodian operation is itself costing American lives.

The only way to give millions of young people a renewed faith in the future and in their country is to end this war and bring our men home. The Administration's course will not and should not be changed by lawless window-breaking or other forms of violent protest. It may and should be changed by Congressional influence, including the power of the purse.

All who are convinced of the desperate urgency of ending the war should impart that conviction to the people's representatives, now. THOMAS H. ELIOT
Chancellor
Washington University
St. Louis, May 1, 1970

To the Editor:

The courageous decision of President Nixon to neutralize the Vietcong "sanctuary" along the Cambodian border was a landmark move toward restoring logic and direction to our foreign policy.

In withdrawing American forces at a rate consistent with the ability of the South Vietnamese to take over responsibility for their own defense, the President has been following a consistent and sensible course to get us extricated from the war which he inherited from his predecessors. As part of his withdrawal plan, the President has repeatedly and explicitly warned the enemy that any action on their part that would endanger our troops would result in an appropriate response.

Within the past few weeks the enemy has launched an armed invasion of Cambodia and built up its forces at points clearly menacing American and allied positions. In responding, the President has simply done what he said he would do.

The notion that this is somehow a change of policy or an "escalation" of the war is nonsense. We are fighting the same war against the same enemy in the same place. The only difference is that, at long last, we have a President who recognizes the folly of letting the enemy establish one set of rules for our conduct and a different set for his own.

The aggressive and intransi-

gent conduct on the part of the enemy is not really surprising. They had no incentive to negotiate so long as their wishes were being granted by unilateral concessions on our part and more were being promised by self-righteous politicians in the U. S. Senate and elsewhere. They were no doubt also encouraged to ignore Mr. Nixon's warnings by their experience with other U. S. leaders whose words tended to exceed their deeds.

Undoubtedly, as the result of the President's current action the enemy will be less likely to make a similar miscalculation in the future and the prospects for honorable and lasting peace will be furthered.

T. L. MCCLINTOCK
Colts Neck, N. J., May 5, 1970

To the Editor:

The student and college communities in the United States have now arrived at a strategic position to open a New Frontier that could lead to the end of the war in Southeast Asia and to solving many other vexing problems at the same time.

This New Frontier is non-violence.

To launch now a national nonviolence movement of the Gandhi-Martin Luther King type would be the best way of showing regret and honor to those four Kent State University students who have just died. Such a challenging movement would be in keeping with America's finest traditions and spirit. Nonviolence, advocated by Thoreau in the nineteenth century, has been proved effective and revolutionary by Gandhi and Dr. King in the twentieth.

When the leaders and peoples in Southeast Asia see this new demonstration of moral courage and self-sacrifice by dedicated American youth, disciplined by nonviolence and committed to human dignity, the shooting will stop and all American troops will be safely withdrawn.

The world is anxiously watching which way America's students are going. Who would say that the youth of all nations will not follow such a courageous, creative and self-demanding initiative of American students?

The times are critical, a word which in Chinese means "danger and opportunity." This is the hour for America's youth to seize the opportunity and to open up the New Frontiers

of nonviolence. I believe America's students have the daring and the dedication to give this lead to the world's youth.

YU-TANG DANIEL LEW
Professor of Political Science
Mackinac College
Mackinac Island, Mich.
May 5, 1970

To the Editor:

The student deaths at Kent State University are tragic. They could have been avoided. Any rebellion of historical consequence has resulted in deaths, either of the revolutionaries, the government, the people, or all three.

It's a question of how far the dissenters wish to go. In a democracy you may protest to sway elections or opinions, but once armed and organized to seize, destroy and topple the elected authority, you then lose legal sanctuary.

I don't believe parents pass on this information to their children, nor do the faculty. To them, it's a game. The fact that they ally themselves ideologically with Kosygin, Mao and

Castro makes it a romantic game—for awhile.

The civilian commission on violence, states 50 per cent of campus riots are perpetrated by the faculty. They also claim 25 per cent of these rioters to be nonstudents and nonresidents of the area. Is it odd that we are called "A Nation of Sheep"?

RONALD FRITZ
Peekskill, N. Y., May 5, 1970

To the Editor:

How tersely, yet how fractionally did President Nixon hit the nail on the head, when he called our riotous collegians "bums."

He could have hit the nail a more resounding blow if only he would have continued his logical rationale into some yet unspoken truths:

For every campus "bum," there has got to be two "bum" parents continuing to subsidize their revolutionary offspring financially, spiritually and morally. Each "bum," at best, I.Q. notwithstanding, is a genetic drone who should be exorcised from college. This can be accomplished by the simple process of requiring that parents be responsible for the acts of their offspring while in college.

Parents of truant children are now being incarcerated through legal corrective measures by courts. Cannot we extend that practice to higher education?

Learning is discipline—and the reverse is also true. These bums are indulging in neither. Therefore, both society and the colleges would benefit by the bums being rushed from the campus—through legal means.

I. K. DYE
Cumberland, Md., May 2, 1970

To the Editor:

It is said that only the President has access to certain facts pertinent to our military intervention in Cambodia. Because of the Administration's evident aim of bolstering the regime of General Lon Nol, it is imperative that Richard Nixon detail the nature and extent of prior American involvement, if any, in the March overthrow of the Government of Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

JAMES P. SEWELL
North Haven, Conn., May 2, 1970