

Post 3/24/67

Psychiatrist Charges Administration With Confusing Public About Vietnam

The Administration is using a "simple but effective" formula to minimize public concern about escalation of the Vietnam war, a California psychiatrist said here yesterday.

Dr. Isidore Ziferstein of Los Angeles described the process this way:

"First step: Highly alarming rumors about escalation are 'leaked.'

"Second step: The President officially and dramatically sets the anxieties to rest by announcing a much more moderate rate of escalation, and accompanies this announcement with assurances of the Government's peaceful intentions.

"Third step: After the general sigh of relief, the originally rumored escalation is gradually put into effect."

Ziferstein participated in a discussion of war and peace at a meeting here of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

He charged that "The succession of 'leaks,' denials of leaks, and denials of denials thoroughly confuses the individual. He is left bewildered, helpless, apathetic."

Ziferstein said the Nation is being "habituated" to the expanding war through the inch-by-inch manner of its escalation. "The end result is that the people find themselves

deeply committed to large-scale war, without being able to tell how it came about, when and how it all began."

It is "quite likely that . . . the leaders themselves became conditioned and habituated—they became the victims of their own techniques," he added.