

Girl Accepting an Award Asks Nixon to End the War



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The President leaving the Blue Room after his brief exchange with Debra Jean Sweet, at left. Just behind Mr. Nixon is Maxine Susan Lazovick, another who received medal.

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 3—A 19-year-old Wisconsin girl seemed to startle President Nixon today when she told him to "get us out of the war" as he was giving her an award for public service. As the President was handing her one of four Young Ameri-

can Medals distributed at a ceremony in the White House Blue Room this morning, Debra Jean Sweet delivered her plea in a voice barely audible to nearby newsmen. The reporters heard only the phrases "Mr. President, I find it very hard to believe" and "until you get us out of

the war." Later, Miss Sweet reported that she had said to the President: "I find it hard to believe in your sincerity in giving the awards until you get us out of Vietnam." Mr. Nixon, who seemed a bit taken aback, replied in a

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A GIRL BIDS NIXON END VIETNAM WAR

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voice that could easily be heard: "We're doing the best we can."

The President posed for a picture with Miss Sweet and her parents and then abruptly left the room.

Miss Sweet, a church worker from Madison, was one of four youths honored with the Young American Medal for bravery or public service. She was cited for organizing a 30-mile march by 3,000 Wisconsin high school students to raise funds to feed impoverished children and for her work in race relations.

The other three recipients were:

John N. Caruso Jr., 12, of John's Island, S. C., who drowned after saving the life of a 10-year-old neighbor who had fallen into a creek. His parents accepted the award.

Thomas Dvorscek, 17, of Oak Lawn, Ill., who rescued a 10-year-old girl who had fallen through ice into a pond.

Maxine Susan Lazovick, 20, of Bridgeport, Conn., who was honored for local fund-raising and volunteer efforts.

4 Fine Young Americans

Shortly before making the awards, Mr. Nixon described the four youths as "four fine young Americans who represent the very best in American youth."

"We hear too much these days about the very small minority of young Americans who have lost faith in their country," Mr. Nixon said.

"We hear too little about the great majority of young Americans, young Americans who display courage in their daily lives, who are willing to sacrifice to save the lives of others and young Americans who are motivated by idealism."

Miss Sweet attended Valparaiso University for a year before going into church work.

See also incident involving Carol Peraci, this file 25 Jan 72