

Goodell Tells Finch Graduates U.S. Should Halt a 'Mistake'

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By EDITH EVANS ASBURY

Senator Charles E. Goodell told the graduating class of Finch College yesterday that American participation in the war in Indochina was "an awful mistake" from which we should withdraw.

"President Nixon is a decent man but is making a mistake" to continue the war, Senator Goodell told the class, the members of which were sophomores when Tricia Nixon, the president's daughter, was a senior there. When she graduated, two years ago, her father was the commencement speaker.

Nearly half of yesterday's graduating class of 96 wore peace symbols of some kind on their robes. These included large white squares with a red circular peace symbol or a red clenched fist pinned to their backs, white armbands or white ribbons tied around the arm. Several of the girls wore both the back decoration and the armband.

Mr. Goodell asserted that the United States was supporting "a corrupt military leadership" by remaining in Vietnam.

"Right on!" cried an unidentified senior, using words the Black Panthers have adopted as their shout of approval.

The Senator, an early critic of the war in Vietnam, ticked off arguments advanced by supporters of the war one by one, and challenged them, probably giving a foretaste of the major theme of his forthcoming campaign for election to a full term. He has both the Republican and Liberal nominations.

In reply to those who say

we must stay and fight communism, the Senator asserted that there is no "monolithic communism, we are in an era of new nationalism."

We would gain, rather than lose credibility in the world, he declared, "If as a free and moral nation we had the courage and enlightenment to recognize we made an awful mistake and withdrew from that mistake."

Denouncing the "fallacious theory" that other nations would fall if we withdrew from Indochina, Senator Goodell declared: "We can go on helping nations willing to help themselves. We don't have to go in and fight their wars for them and their civil wars or them."

Young people provided leadership against the war three or four years ago, Mr. Goodell said, and "you have a right to scorn many of us in public life because decent, enlightened people have not involved themselves effectively in the political process."

The commencement was held in the Unitarian Church of All Souls, 80th Street and Lexington Avenue, followed by a reception for the 96 graduates in the college's North Hall, 45 East 78th Street.

As relatives and friends congratulated the girls outside the church, a white-haired dowager was asked to comment about the large white and red peace banner on her granddaughter's back.

"If that's the way she feels about it, it's all right with me," was the reply. "It's going to be her world."