

"The Vietcong is also engaged on a general offensive that the drama of Plei Mei affair largely obscured. They are attacking a variety of places and the 'attack graph' is steadily rising week by week. Vietnam casualties, particularly among the regional militia, have been heavy, indicating that the B-52 raids against Vietcong strongholds, such as around Bien Hoa, have not been particularly effective." (November 28.)

As against the triumphant U.S. announcements of the exploits of the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in the Iadrang Valley, the *Observer's* reporter offered quite a different picture:

"The battle, which started with a Vietcong attack on the Plei Mei camp on October 20, has . . . petered out. There were high casualties on both sides—probably nearly 1,000 Americans killed or wounded—but the battle was inconclusive.

"It heralded a bigger and bloodier phase of the war." (*Ibid.*)

However Secretary McNamara tries to conceal from the American people what kind of a struggle they are being committed to, even he is now forced to admit not only surprise at the guerrillas' "determination to carry on," but also that "it will be a long war." (*The New York Times*, November 30.) One of the things, however, that he does conceal from his fellow Americans is that his personnel planning now no longer deals in the figure of 200,000, which is used for public consumption, but in one well beyond 300,000.

Moreover, the war is being slowly spread to engulf also Laos and Cambodia. Not that these two countries have until now been immune from U.S. attack; but Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson hinted, on the television program "Meet the Press" (November 28), that a systematic air war might be waged against them. Also, the press is lately being encouraged by the State and Defense Departments to stress China's aid to North Vietnam's war effort, which may well be taken as a psychological ground preparation for "punitive" action against China as well.

One of the features of this war escalation is that alarming but false American allegations tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies. On the false theory that the insurgency in South Vietnam was not indigenous, we have intervened so heavily as actually to precipitate North Vietnamese involvement. On the false theory that Cambodia and Laotian regions under the Pathet Lao are of essential assistance to the South Vietnamese insurgency, we will so treat these countries as to cause them to behave as we at first falsely claimed them to behave. Before long much of Asia may be ablaze, merely because our Government is set on a course of proving the Chinese to be aggressors.

What virtually escapes public attention is that, already engaged in a war which in many respects exceeds the Korean War, the United States is trapping itself in Asian land combat beyond anything military experts ever deemed sound. Moreover, if the U.S. is determined to match the potentially available personnel of its Asian adversaries, then before long we might need in Asia U.S. troops by the million.



"Our position is most encouraging (Ouch!) at the front."

But there is no number of U.S. troops that could produce a victory in Asia. For this is not an even war. It is a war of attrition in which the Vietnamese guerrillas have merely to survive in order for their American attackers to suffer defeat. They need not actively produce a victory. All of Johnson's and McNamara's protestations of American "determination" are not going to produce such public spirit which a nation reserves for the defense of its vital interests. Vietnam may be vital to strategists planning a showdown with China, but this does not make it vital to the American people. Time is bound to teach us, at a heavy and bloody cost, what is obvious in advance to minds sounder than those of our leaders: that the Vietnamese people will have more endurance in defending themselves against foreign invaders than the American people will have in pursuing this bloody invasion. Enthusiasm cannot be faked, and the American people have no reason whatever to be enthusiastic about this war; the Vietnamese do have every such reason.

That is why they will win.

No Jail for Ideas; Only Fines

The Supreme Court's ruling that individuals may invoke their right not to incriminate themselves in refusing to register with the Justice Department as members of the Communist Party, was sadly "balanced" by a Federal court that heavily fined the Party itself for failing so to register. While ultimately also the lower court's sentence is bound to come before the Supreme Court, and consistency of legal interpretation would

require it again to rule against the enforceability of the registration provision of the Internal Security Act of 1950, such consistency cannot be taken for granted. For contrary to widespread impressions, the Supreme Court is not immune to the changing political moods of the country, as its tendency during the McCarthy era amply proved.

By the time the Supreme Court is again called upon to rule on the constitutionality of enforcing specific provisions of the Internal Security Act, this country may well be in the grip of such war hysteria—what with the escalation in Vietnam and preparations to challenge China herself!—that once more at least some of the supreme judges of this country may lack the courage to protect the rights of all.

But even without worrying about this possibility, there is a tragic element in the Communists' legal victory in the other case. The persecution and prosecution of dissenters has become so integral a part of the American scene that wherever any limit is demarcated for it, the few remaining faithful to the Constitution erect a mental arch of triumph. The truth is that for many years a group of American dissenters has been subjected to most undemocratic, unjudicious and brutal pressure; that its meager human and material resources are being deliberately diverted and exhausted; that all this is a political circus rather than normal democratic process; and that even as far as its recent favorable ruling is concerned, the Supreme Court is to be congratulated merely for belatedly resisting a specific application of lynch mentality.

Minority of One, Jan. 1966

"Books for Idiots"

The political leaders of a country provide more than the sum total of its policies. Setting standards of behavior, they are to a nation much of what parents are to children. The profusion of distortions issuing from President Johnson and his aides needs to be viewed in this context. Lying is being legitimized as a method of conducting public as well as private business. Typically, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., historian and one-time Presidential assistant, did not blink an eye while voluntarily confessing that he had lied when, during the Bay of Pigs invasion, he told a newspaperman the landing force numbered a mere 200-300 men. (*The New York Times*, November 25.)

With this cancer eating away at the souls of Americans, it is disheartening but not surprising that "The Penkovskiy Papers" scandal provoked little public outrage. The purported "notes, sketches and comments" of the Western spy, who was executed in Moscow in 1963, were published by Doubleday & Co. and serialized in numerous American and other newspapers.

As a most damaging "document" on the Soviet Union, it was only natural for it to be received with jubilation and delight by professional anti-Communists and cold warriors. From its pages, which allegedly had been smuggled out of the Soviet Union, the Soviets emerge as totally rotten and cynical war instigators, whose virtually every representative is a cloak-and-dagger operative.

Edward Crankshaw, the uncrowned dean of "Kremlinologists," confessed an awareness that Penkovsky's "opinions, and particularly his opinions about Khrushchev's warlike intentions" were "sometimes completely wrong-headed" and "threw more light" on the alleged author's "mentality than on the strategy of the Kremlin." (*The Observer*, London, November 21.) But this did not dissuade him from writing an introduction to the book confirming "Penkovsky's story" as "all too true" and the volume's authenticity as "beyond question."

Had this book appeared two or three years ago, there would have been no one in the mainstream of the Western press to care about its authenticity. With the Chinese having in the meantime replaced the Russians as the principal devils, there is somewhat less reluctance to scrutinize anti-Soviet propaganda. Thus another eminent "Kremlinologist," Victor Zorza, published in the *Manchester Guardian* a devastating expose. His article begins:

"Their authenticity,' says the introduction to the 'Penkovsky Papers,' the memoirs of the Anglo-American spy in Russia, 'is beyond question.' It is not." (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, November 18.)

And then Mr. Zorza recounts incontestable evidence that caused him to conclude that the original "Russian manuscript of Penkovsky's memoirs just does not exist." He also points out voluminous internal evidence that the book is a fabrication and "could have been compiled only by the Central Intelligence Agency" as the "CIA's answer" to Soviet attempts to discredit it.

In commenting on the "Penkovsky Papers," C. L. Sulzberger lists many of "the cold war's fake literary productions" and then quotes a certain Grigori Bessedovsky, author of "excellent works in this category," who wrote to a friend:

"I write books for idiots. Do you imagine that anyone in the West would read what you call my apocryphal works, if, in quoting Kaganovich, Zhukov, Mikoyan or Bulganin, I tried to be faithful to the manner, sense and form of their speeches? . . ."

"But when I portray Stalin or Molotov in pyjamas, when I tell the dirtiest possible stories about them—never mind whether they are true or invented—rest assured that not only all intellectuals will read me, but also the most important capitalist statesman, on his way to a peace conference . . ." (*The New York Times*, November 21.)

However philosophical both Bessedovsky and Sulzberger are about such literature, the psychological and political damage it inflicts is too great to relegate the whole matter to the domain of jokes. This is a serious matter that should alert the American public to the utter unscrupulousness of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Unfortunately, the whole American Establishment, from the White House down to the last commercial enterprise and advertising agency, is so committed to lying as a *modus operandi* that it would be futile to hope for someone in Congress to question effectively the propriety of official forgeries.

The Counter-demonstrators

The proponents of the U.S. course in Southeast Asia make it sound as if crimes stop being what they are if only a majority of some sorts can be whipped up in support of them. According to this logic, there is nothing wrong with murder if only the crime gang's majority favors it.

But even within this frame of reference, the Administration often misrepresents facts when stressing majority support on its side. When public opinion polls, for instance, indicate that a majority of Americans favor a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam war, it is only by using fraudulent semantics that the Administration can claim this majority to identify with its own position. When Saigon students, "imported" to spread the State Department's gospel in American colleges, complain that no one would even talk to them, they contradict claims that the student protest movement involves but a tiny campus minority.

Yet another type of dishonesty is displayed by the Administration when it juggles statistics. While on these occasions implying that it would not pursue foreign policies unsupported by a majority of Americans, on other occasions it defends the "integrity" of its position by representing it as immune from popular pressures.

"Nothing irritates President Johnson and his principal advisers more than the suggestion that they allow popular feelings at home to influence their foreign policy decisions abroad." (James Reston, *The New York Times*, November 21.)

With all the Government's formidable means to stage appearances of popular support (it can, for example, at any moment mobilize thousands of people in the streets of Washington to welcome "enthusiastically" a foreign dignitary none of them ever heard

of before), the counter-demonstrations are fatally anemic. Neither the hired (by Republicans for Conservative Action) half-crazy Hell's Angels hoodlums of San Francisco nor their stylish counterparts of the Junior Chamber of Commerce are manifesting much conviction and enthusiasm. And even the American Nazis have volunteered for no more heroic exploits than marching in counter-pickets. Or have the legions of the Government's supporters volunteered for the battlefields of Vietnam, as consistency would seem to require?

These war enthusiasts, however, prefer to insist, loudly if illogically, that not they but the war opponents should volunteer for combat, and General Lewis B. Hershey, America's chief producer of cannon fodder, challenges pacifists and all other critics to prove their "sincerity" by reporting for "humanitarian" duty in Vietnam. This presumably means that they would be releasing over villages the toys and candy that attract human targets for a rain of napalm.

Not only are the counter-demonstrations anemic, especially when occurring on college campuses, but more often than not they are externally instigated. Fairleigh Dickinson University with its four campuses in New Jersey provides a case in point. November 12 was set aside not by students but by the university president, Dr. Peter Sammartino, for "a day-long demonstration of support for U.S. policy in Viet Nam." Ray Josephs Public Relations, Ltd. of New York was paid by the university treasury to provide advance publicity for the "spontaneous" event. It was announced that "the University . . . will aid the drive by giving students time off to go to Rutherford to make [blood] donations" with the University president having "volunteered to be first on the line at 10:00 a.m. when blood is given at the university gymnasium at the Rutherford, N.J. campus."

This episode reveals something of the mechanism of the counter-resolutions, counter-petitions and counter-demonstrations. These are affairs in which the recipients of support are its behind-the-scenes producers.

But the human psyche being what it is, no amount of professional manipulation can blow much life into synthetic emotions and activities. One thing we can be certain of: none of those who pray for the continuation of the Vietnam bloodbath is going to underscore his conviction by setting himself ablaze. The press accounts of the counter-demonstrations mislead the public in that they conceal their synthetic nature and exaggerate student participation.

Such is the power of the American press that with a line from a linotype it can cut any protest demonstration in half while producing something of a population explosion in the ranks of counter-demonstrators.

In exaggerating popular support for their genocidal war President Johnson and his Administration malign the American people. Our progeny will be as eager to point to the Americans who opposed U.S. crimes in Vietnam as the Germans are now eager to point to those who opposed their nation's crimes in Europe.

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