Rivkin Leads American Action at Vienna Youth Festival

by Dave Villiamson, "52

Planning Officer Malcolm D. Rivkin was almost temporary chairman of the American delegation to the third annual "World Youth Festival for Peace and Friendship," held in Vienna at summer.

"Admit" because he never took office because the Festival officials pointedly the election was illegal. Their attitude is exactly understandable—Mr. Rivkin was one of the small number of Orientals who doggedly attempted to carry the delegate of propaganda for which the Festival was institutional

Youth Mansa Forty

The World Youth Festival Youth Mansa Forty (a fort, spoken means forty) he then held every other summer since World War II. They have been explicitly oriented towards the Asians and Africans, though delegates from many countries attended. The six previous Festivals were held in Iron Curtains capitals, and the thousand of delegations, the next generation's leaders were smoothly and methodically inculcated with the worker, power, and glory of Communism, while the bands played and everyone was peaceful and comradely.

Americans Attend Festival

Everything went so smoothly that the World Youth Festival of 1959 was scheduled for Vienna, outside the Iron Curtains, under the curious eyes of the West.

Among the delegations streaming in for the all-expense-paid pilgrimage was a small group of Americans and other Westerners who were neither Communist nor naive.

Mr. Rivkin was one of them. Other members of this minority from MIT were Donald Blackheme, Assistant to the Director of MIT's Center for International Studies, Judy Thornwood, a secretary at the same Center, Inga Schneider of the Research Center, and Alve Erickson, an Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

The barrage of propaganda was continuous. One example was the seminar. Mr. Rivkin explained, "Seminars were their most important straight lectures.

"No questions were allowed. After several prepared speeches, all members of the Soviet bloc, Africans, and Asians, the chairman recognized individual participants. There was no debate. When delegations tried to make questions from the floor they were shouted down.

"The speeches, too, followed basic lines. Few concentrated on the subject. The Soviets and East Europeans recited statistics on their achievements. People from developing countries pried for freedom. The East Germans attacked the West Germans, the North Koreans the South Koreans, and many the Americans.

"We took offense"

But despite the planning, things did not go smoothly for the Communists. Mr. Rivkin tells, "At most of the major seminars at least one American managed to speak. Our attack shook the careful conservatism of the chairmen. We took off the offers of the Commissars that America believed in freedom but that the slavery of Communism was the way to achieve it.

After the communists did a lot, numerical inferiority and the exclusion resulting from American Communists contradicting the other Americans hampered them. They were only able to make the Festival propaganda machine to itch rather than to stop it cold.

A further blow to the success of the Communist view was the antipathy of the Vienna people. Austrian students organized the delegate's mind. The serious contradiction of the West until Good is equated with Communism in the minds of the potential leaders of nations is obvious.

But American Youth Festivals are not the only ones Mr. Rivkin dislikes. They are appeals in their massiveness and gigantic organization from the living and strong character that we value. Instead, he let the student exchange program, where the students can absorb and understand the American democracies, be increased a hundred-fold.

We should also supply technical aid to underdeveloped countries to lead the idea of Americans bringing good. Russia and China are flooding these countries with technicians. More important would be a plan to

spot technicians in underdeveloped to the best graduates in American know-how. A strong economic system in this field is the best deterrent to Communist government.

Mr. Rivkin concludes that it is of the utmost importance that we recognize the Vienna Youth Festivals for what they are, a danger and not a danger to us. It should check us out of our complacency and force us to work to prove that some form of individualism and freedom will come to the emerging nations of the world.

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M.E.T.A.L.L.U.R.G.Y NOTICE

The MIT Student Metalurgical Society will hold its first meeting of the term, a steak and beer party, on Thursday, October 14th, at the foundry. Tickets can be purchased at the door. Both members and non members are welcome.

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