Another Vietnam view

The war being fought by the Viet Cong is being waged by the Vietnamese people only in the sense that a rifle kicks rather than the man who fires it. Viet Cong prisoners of war are not fighting for the American soldiers who believe they are fighting for the American people. The Viet Cong are fighting for their own people, against the interests of both the government soldiers and the people of the United States, detrimental to our "world image." whatever that is, and a neo-colonialist propagation of the Vietnamese people. This same line has been repeated, reaffirmed, and warmed over. The arguments of the left are by now quite familiar to everyone.

The frequency of the attacks on American policy, indeed on any policy, in Vietnam has increased with the number of US troops in combat and with the intensity of the war. With the increase in quantity of leftist propaganda has come a decrease in quality of the same, until we are now faced by Mr. Caplan, writing in The Tech, the probably least read student paper in the United States. The Tech is published every Tuesday and Friday. The editor is Charles Kolb.

The American "involvement" in Southeast Asia is immoral, unjustifiable, impractical, against the interests of both the people of Vietnam and the people of the United States. This is a nonsequitur, not really representative of the opinion of the staff or Board of Directors of this newspaper.

Since the United States began to strongly resist Communist aggression in the South Vietnam in 1962, a number of people whose political colors range from old-style isolationist to "new" leftist have opposed the war. Like many people in America, Mr. Caplan is content to read the Saigon-datelined dispatches about coups and demonstrations and fail to notice articles by reporters who have gone to the Vietnamese side where the war is really being fought. One journalist who spent more time in the villages than in the Saigon hotels was the late Marguerite Higgins of the New York Herald-Tribune. She reported the peasants's situation to be: (1) they want to stay in their home villages and grow rice; (2) the Communists won't leave them alone, and insist on murdering their village chiefs and taking their rice and their sons; (3) when the government controls a village by Viet Cong control it by night, the safest thing to do is to tell the government nothing so the VC won't shoot them for talking to government soldiers. For the United States is not trying so much to control the populace as to protect them from the enemy so that they can be allowed to grow rice and stay at home. The government is the one who can inform the troops regarding guerrilla activities.

The most often quoted reason for staying in Vietnam is that we must contain Communist expansion. Mr. Caplan chooses to attack this reason on three points: by questioning US "pretensions" of morality, by accusing our policy makers of trying to protect American investments, and by asserting that a secure peace is impossible to maintain on the Vietnamese border. To an extent, Mr. Caplan is correct on all these points. A secure peace is quite difficult to maintain in a part of the world that Ho Chi Minh and others like him have been working on since 1956, when they realized that South Vietnam would not fall of its own accord, but would prosper instead. If the United States is not willing to meet our interests, is it not a matter of "good moral relations?" the Vietnamese with medical and educational as well as military aid? Of those who saw the television program "Twentieth Century" Sunday evening some have idea of what Americans are trying to do to help the Montagnard tribesmen, for example. Medical help is something the Viet Cong are no less interested in for themselves and medicine for the Vietnamese people is one aspect of the war in which America and South Vietnam have the field to themselves. Nor is medical aid the only form of non-military assistance we might give the Vietnamese. They are being taught new farming methods, use of fertilizer, and animal husbandry.

Mr. Caplan urges MIT undergraduates to learn to live in the Vietnamese way. From my discussions with many students here, I think they have done just that. I would urge Mr. Caplan to inform himself about this war.

Lawrence R. Dally '66
Chairman of Young Americans for Freedom, MIT Chapter.

Dean Wadleigh was a guest at the InsComm meeting and spoke on problems which are of study interest.

Inside Inscomm

Letters to The Tech

To the Editor:

I would like to take issue with the author of the Beaconburger: Mr. Caplan. His article appeared in your March 15 edition. I find no logical precedent for his declaration, "These men who wear the T deserve your moral support on the field, and only on the field."

Firstly, I find as deserving of my admiration and support (within the limited framework of MIT) on those people who are giving their personal, if unselfish service for my school or its student body. I do not see how to compare an athletic team representing the school performs such a function.

High school, I was plagued by demands for team support. I swallowed it then, grudgingly. I refuse to digest it now.

Secondly, my personal interest in athletic competition for "unselfish" motives such as service to the school, etc. makes me so vain and unappreciative that I would certainly not deserve my appreciation, much less praise.

Strange as it seems at first thought, I feel after a long discussion, and education should be based only on selfish motives. Springing purely from personal interest and enjoyment of physical activity, the followers of this type of activity are those for whom athletics is fun and victory. This is true because the true purpose of athletics is to develop, not only physical but also emotional and mental well being.

Finally, I would like to express my regret for implying that I was one of the individuals who received the T awards without "just cause." I - I - I could care less.

I am sure that in this school of outstanding men and women there are many times with individuals who possessed mental and physical abilities equal to mine. Mr. Caplan apparently believes his athletics, which After all, praise does not improve a person but only harm him.

William P. Benge '69

Suicide prevention

To the Editor:

In last Friday's issue of The Tech, a letter appeared which I considered one of the most successful articles that I have ever read. It was one of those 6 line announcements of yet another suicide at MIT. The因为他们 see this as a typical example of the suffering of student suicides. Typically we meet a student who is depressed, dropping to 5 or 4 or suicide this year out of a student body of less than 800. When a person's decision to commit suicide is not atypical. Each time we read of one of these deaths, we are left to wonder if it is the pass for a few seconds, not the number and cause of deaths that is so important.

I wonder why he did it, so much more on it.

As far as the Institute is concerned, for obvious reasons it tries to be as discreet as possible. This is the Institute's general approach to have a well staffed and equipped mental health service available to the student body. But this service is not enough to prevent suicide. One real source of help to the men involved: suicide ideas, and others like him have set their sights on the field. Mr. Caplan is correct on all these points. A secure peace is quite difficult to maintain in a part of the world that Ho Chi Minh and others like him have been working on since 1956, when they realized that South Vietnam would not fall of its own accord, but would prosper instead. If the United States is not willing to meet our interests, is it not a matter of "good moral relations?" the Vietnamese with medical and educational as well as military aid? Of those who saw the television program "Twentieth Century" Sunday evening some have idea of what Americans are trying to do to help the Montagnard tribesmen, for example. Medical help is something the Viet Cong are no less interested in for themselves and medicine for the Vietnamese people is one aspect of the war in which America and South Vietnam have the field to themselves. Nor is medical aid the only form of non-military assistance we might give the Vietnamese. They are being taught new farming methods, uses of fertilizer, and animal husbandry.

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Inscomm elections continue;

Secretariat applications due

By Frank March, UAF

At the Institute Committee meeting last night, elections were held for SCRNP, PRC, Jead-Comm, and Foreign Policy Committee Chairman and for two Inter-Club Secretary positions. These persons assume their duties immediately.

The Executive Committee, set- ing for the Institute Committee, has recommended four students for the student-activity Committee on Community Service. The four are Bob Ferris , W. Lin, Robert Millar, and Stwayne Duhm.

Finance report Committee

Discussion was held at the Institute Committee meeting con- cerning the structure and purpose of the committee. The changes would clearly be worth it.

Today is the deadline for fresh- man Secretariat applications to be turned in. The interviews are the week after vacation.

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