

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Perils of Party Discipline

Editor — As a dues paying, card carrying Republican (born that way), I have been asked by the "Friends of Max Rafferty" to give money to help the Superintendent prevent Senator Thomas Kuchel from getting the GOP senatorial nomination. They tell me that the Senator did not support Barry Goldwater, George Murphy, Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan and that he has not voted according to the GOP party line as they interpret it.

Many politicians, especially those of authoritarian dispositions, are strong for party discipline. They want the voters' votes but they don't want voters to interfere in the selection of the candidates they are expected to vote for. The most successful politicians in these efforts are the political bosses of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, who require the party members to support the candidates they have selected and follow the party line even if they disagree with it. They suffer a worse fate than the Friends of Rafferty are preparing for Senator Kuchel.

Although the Communists claim to be infallible, as the "ultras" of both the Left and Right usually do, they have sometimes been mistaken. Russian voters have no chance to show this by their votes.

American voters have this right and Republicans used it in 1964. To his supporters Barry Goldwater's platform was in the mainstream of Republicanism. But when the votes were counted, the only states besides Arizona, which found the Goldwater line enough to their liking to win their electoral votes were the most solid members of the Solid South: Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. The eminent Dixiecrat, Senator Strom Thurmond, was so moved that he deserted to the Republican party. Another GOP platform like that of 1964 might even win over George Wallace. Republicans in the traditional Republican states were less moved than the Southern Democrats.

A good many Republicans seem to believe that no group of party

politicians in this country can exercise the authority of the political leaders of the Communist parties and lay down the party line and purge any who do not conform.

It is one thing to nominate a candidate and something else to make the members of American parties vote for him. Too many people of both parties seem to believe that the privilege of voting for one's convictions is more in the public interest than submitting to party discipline.

HAROLD H. FISHER.
Palo Alto.

Dr. Fisher is author of many works on Soviet-American relations. A former director of the Hoover Institute and Library at Stanford, he has also taught at several Bay Area universities.—Editor.

Spendthrifts Abroad

Editor—Since President Johnson has called for a cutback on American traveling and spending abroad, I know one way he can save dollars. By recalling my brother-in-law who is a Marine stationed in Da Nang, Vietnam. He has been spending U.S. dollars in Da Nang, in Saigon and even in Hong Kong.

DENNIS F. MALICK.
Fresno.

Editor — Considering that LBJ regularly sends 500,000 visitors to Southeast Asia, doesn't it seem just a bit indiscrete that he put the squeeze on American tourism?

ROBERT HERMAN.
San Francisco.

'We'll Bury Ourselves'

Editor—The politicians in Washington and in our State capitals are sure short on memory . . .

Years ago Khrushchev said "We will bury you." Do the politicians realize what he meant? The country is chasing at the moon at a cost of billions. The country is chasing little men through the jungles in far off places at a cost of billions. You cannot keep spending and

spending with no intention of paying back. Something has to happen.

Khrushchev's hole is about two feet deep at the moment, I believe. Another four feet and that's us.

JOHN J. McHUGH.
San Francisco.

'Tell Me Why'

Editor—Would someone tell me why young men in their teens are sent to die in wars not of their own making, and yet are not allowed to vote for their choice of legislators to represent them to get laws changed?

PENNY THEODORE.
Sebastopol.

Advancement

Editor— . . . Can we not learn that war is outmoded as an instrument of enlightened, civilized minds? In an age which is outstripping all others in wonders of science we should be able to leave behind the tactics of our ancestor cavemen, slaving and struggling in the mud.

SHIRLEY ELDERWOOD.
Palo Alto.

Hard Truth

Editor— . . . We have been told for the past year that we were "turning the corner" in Vietnam, yet the Viet Cong only recently turned every corner in the country into a potential battleground, and in doing so clearly revealed substantial support from the civilian population . . .

The hard truth is that the corrupt generals we have installed as the South Vietnam government have never gained any substantial support from the Vietnamese people. From the beginning they have represented only their own greed and U.S. interests in Vietnam. The war which was supposed to win the hearts and minds of the people has been long lost, and the Administration's policy has arrived at a dead end.

The only decent course left is to stop this war of our creation.

DOUGLAS MATTERN.
Palo Alto.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reinforcement

Editor—It intrigues me to read about the dignitaries visiting Vietnam, some even taking their wives along. The reason, apparently, is to reinforce their prejudices and marvel at the morale of the troops whose principle inspiration is kill or be killed—a situation easily misinterpreted by junketing statesmen.

STUART OLIVER.

Oakland.

'Seven Singled Out'

Editor — The public expression of dissent in Oakland seems to have become a felony punishable by a three-year prison term. Last October thousands of concerned people expressed their opposition to the Vietnam war at the Oakland Army Induction Center. Among them were university professors, ministers, scientists, writers, artists, and students.

Now seven of the demonstrators, all in their early twenties, have been singled out for prosecution on conspiracy charges. The "conspiracy" — a felony — consists of the defendants allegedly banding together to commit misdemeanors. Justice Robert Jackson once called use of the conspiracy charge "the prosecutor's darling."

District Attorney J. Frank Coakley explained to the press: "Technically a hundred or even a thousand of the demonstrators could have been indicted for their actions . . . We have to take the most militant leaders." He added: "The indictment procedure is a new one, a new policy we have adopted, and should serve as a warning and notice to people who would violate the law in so expressing themselves."

The prosecutor's "new policy" is designed to make an example of these seven — to silence dissent against the war. These are not nationally famous leaders like Dr. Spock; they are young people plucked out of the group to be isolated and punished.

We are horrified at this frank frontal assault on constitutional

liberties. The law is being used to suppress the right of dissent.

We protest the indictments and urge support for the defendants. The cost of defending these cases may run as high as \$50,000. Contributions can be sent to: Stop the Draft Week Defense Fund, 6468 Benvenue Avenue, Oakland, California 94618.

KAY BOYLE,
HERBERT GOLD,
JESSICA MITFORD,
MARK SCHORER.

San Francisco.

Fear

Editor — With fears rising following every speech by Stokely Carmichael or Rap Brown, it might be worth while for postmasters to post rewards for any information leading to the whereabouts of guns or anything hoarded for future "riots."

Children often know what is in neighbors' garages.

After reading some of the wild talks from San Jose I suggest we all stay alert.

NAME WITHHELD.

The Last Redwood

Editor — The last bells are tolling for the California coastal redwoods. Last November the Senate passed a bill for a small National Redwoods Park — composed mostly of two already existing state parks. This bill is now bottled up in the Committee on Interior Affairs, awaiting April hearings.

The only provision making this mean little park tolerable was the fact that Secretary Udall had options to add the choicest lands around it to fill it out . . .

Then, on February 12 it was announced that two lumber companies were to cut around the borders of the proposed park . . . What all this means is that soon there will be no hope of a larger more beautiful park, and the proposed park is far too small for survival.

The lumbermen contend that the already existing 130,000 acres

in state parks is enough. Let us compare national parks: Yosemite has 759,000 acres; Olympics 889,000; Yellowstone 2,213,000; Kings Canyon 439,000; and even little Isle Royale in Michigan can claim 539,000. A national park has to be big to sustain all the hordes of trampling feet that the Department of Interior's fascinating ads will bring in.

What are we waiting for? . . . The Congress must be told sternly that we want a park worthy of the redwoods — not some miserly substitute nibbled all around the edges . . .

ROBERT RIENOW.

Selkirk, New York.

Plea to Johnson

Editor—A few months ago we six Members of Parliament were invited to America, where we expressed the wish of millions of British people that your Government should end the bombing of North Vietnam.

Leading members of the U.S. Administration told us that they, too, wanted peace, but could find no willingness on the other side for negotiations. However accurate that may or may not have been previously it is certainly not true now, since North Vietnam has officially stated not merely that it might, but that it will, negotiate if the bombing and other acts of war against their country cease.

May we, through this column, plead with the President that he grasp this opportunity and that he does not stipulate conditions which will prevent peace talks taking place. We add our profound hope that he will act immediately.

We would like your readers to know how deeply we admire the courage and determination of so many Americans in their efforts to end this terrible war before it becomes World War III.

FRANK ALLAUN,
NORMAN ATKINSON,
RUSSELL KERR,
JOHN MENDELSON,
IAN MIKARDO,
STANLEY ORME.

London.

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