

Current Events: A Plague Rather Than a Blessing

By RUSS USNICK

"May you live in interesting times . . ." an oriental blessing that could not be more fitting than it is today. Yet, I fear that the events of the past weeks will serve to solidify a growing feeling that this saying is a plague rather than a blessing. Many feel a real dissatisfaction with life in an "interesting time." Such a life situation is viewed as an unstable, uncomfortable state in which to reside. I challenge that view.

The events of October, 1973 clearly push into the "interesting times" category. In the past two weeks, a major war has broken out, the Vice President has resigned, the President has fired three of his most competent aids to protect the magic tapes and several Middle East countries have cut oil supplies to this country. This list omits many things, including an unexplained rash of UFO sightings. The point is, things are happening, and they are happening at a breakneck pace.

The speed and fury of these events induces us to sit by with crossed fingers and hope for the best. This is the wrong response. If ever events required our participation in their resolution, they require it now. These

require action on our part, whatever your viewpoint. If you don't care, you are the real problem.

ISSUE ONE: "War 2-C." Somebody forgot to tell us that World War II ended. Nearly thirty years later, we are sitting on the verge of large scale involvement in the Middle East, only months since we terminated our massive involvement in the war in Vietnam. While a tentative ceasefire exists, the war is still ready to return to life and the U.S. has clearly indicated its willingness to involve combat troops if things aren't settled. At the same time, there is legislation pending in Congress to limit the ability of the President to involve ground forces in this manner. The U.S. clearly needs to return to the original wording of the Constitution which grants war-making powers to congress alone.

ISSUE TWO: "The Tapes." First, the President swore that there was nothing on the tapes of importance, but then went to court to prevent anyone from hearing them. When he lost, he appealed and again lost. He said he would appeal to the Supreme Court and let it decide, but then decided not to, because, as one aide said, he was afraid

he might lose before that court, too. He promised the Senate and the Special Prosecutor that he would not interfere in the investigation of the Watergate affair. But last week he ordered the Special Prosecutor, Archibald Cox, to quit trying to get the tapes. When Cox said the President had gone back on their agreement and that he intended to continue to try to secure the tapes, Nixon determined to fire him. Robert Bork agreed to fire Cox and became acting Attorney General for his promise.

It is interesting to note that Bork rose to his position because he was the only eastern law school professor that actively supported Nixon in his campaign. If the tapes are so blaah, why the vast effort to prevent them from being public. Principle is a good stand, but the President now faces possible impeachment over those tapes. I wonder what they say?

ISSUE THREE: "No Fuel." This weekend, Saudi Arabia and Libya cut off oil supplies to the U.S. The energy situation for this winter already looked bleak and this can only heighten the problem.

The state of Oregon has already shut off lighting for decorative purposes and is now

considering turning off street lights and closing schools from Dec. 15 to Jan. 15. Gasoline is nearly impossible to buy in some parts of the country and farmers are having trouble buying fuel for machinery, leaving crops sitting in the fields.

The most conservative estimates predict a shortage of eight per cent of fuel needs this winter. More realistic predictions run from 12 to 20 per cent. Interesting times, indeed!

A positive attitude toward interesting times and a belief that bureaucratic government can still be influenced by those for whom that bureaucracy governs are critical

First, write someone, anyone in the bureaucracy and tell him not to allow U.S. troops to get involved in the Middle East, or anywhere else without the express vote of the U.S. Congress, as the Constitution dictates. The situation in the Middle East can be resolved without U.S. combat troops and we certainly don't need another Vietnam especially with the Soviet Union playing the other hand.

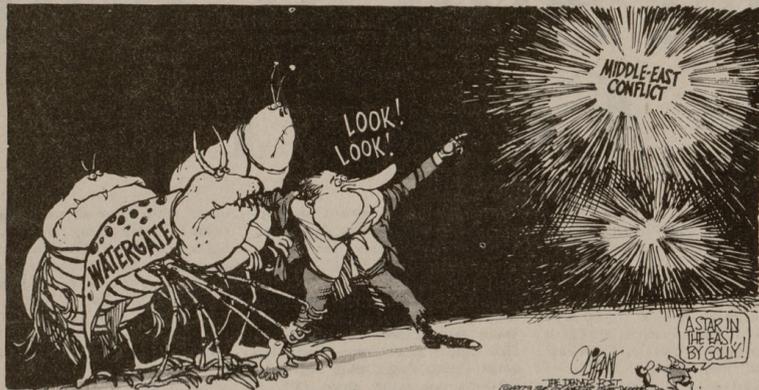
Second, voice and defend your honest moral feeling about those tapes. As it stands, the President is clearly violating the direct order of a U.S. Federal Court. The Cox,

Richardson and Ricklashaus affair smashes the worst sort of armed state tactics that deplore elsewhere in the world. Only a sane and duly outraged populus can correct this situation.

Finally, view the energy situation as a positive thing. Be creative, figure out ways to put fun into your life without plugging something into a socket. Encourage others to do the same. Begin enjoying those things you have rather than being hooked on consuming. Find satisfaction through your creativity and interaction with other people rather than through gross consumption.

I am often accused of being a pessimist, but I deny that charge vigorously. A pessimist is only a pessimist when he feels totally powerless. I believe the only thing lacking in the U.S., October, 1973, is a firm and real belief that each of us can still guide the future of our society. Where is your head?

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Batt Commentary

An Educational Blow

A plan by a business group — the Committee for Economic Development — to double and triple the current tuition costs at public colleges is a severe blow to the aspirations of millions of middle income and low income families which have traditionally looked to low-cost public higher education for access to the system in the United States. Texas A&M has traditionally been in this bracket.

Students and their parents should unite across the "generation gap" to throw state legislators and federal congress-persons out of office who vote for tuition-doubling plans. A plan such as this could serve to bring back the campus disruptions of the Sixties not only among students, but also among their outraged parents.

The CED plan calls for raising tuition at the average four-year public college by \$540 per year and at the average two-year college by \$213. Earlier this fall, disruptions occurred at the University of Michigan, which is attempting to raise in-state tuition from \$696 to \$800 and out-of-state tuition from \$2,260 to \$2,600 per year.

Even without the CED proposal, most students and their parents are being priced out of the higher education market, as tuition and other education costs have risen at roughly twice the rate of inflation. Inflation in education costs over the last five years has meant that a private college education is no longer a reality for most students from middle income families. On top of this, the CED plan would make education at public colleges, even two-year community colleges, extremely difficult financially, most likely involving heavy use of loans.

The Battalion is totally opposed to the tuition-doubling plan, but supports the CED recommendation for large increases in funding at the federal and state level of grants administered directly through students, rather than through institutions.

The number one priority for educational funding should be to substantially increase monies for the federal Basic Opportunity Grant program (BOG).

The National Student Lobby, of which A&M is a member, endorses these ideas and supports adding \$50 million to set up a federal State Student Incentive Grant Program to match increases in 24 state scholarship programs, and to provide incentive for the other 26 states to set up state scholarship programs.

The NSL strongly supports programs which save money based on opening up post-secondary education to options of three-year bachelor's degree (equivalent to 25 per cent cut in cost of college education), granting credit based on knowledge acquired outside the classroom and the cooperation in the use and planning of facilities among neighboring colleges. Obviously, these ideas deserve serious consideration.

Any raise in tuition to students would be immediately eaten up by cutbacks in financial support by state legislatures and Congress and by increases in faculty salaries to meet inflation. The CED proposal serves no purpose other than to limit the number of students gaining degrees and therefore should be opposed by Texas legislators.

The Battalion

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Listen Up--

Aggie Band Performance Revolting

Editor:

At the Texas Tech-A&M football game, I witnessed one of the most revolting performances by a band I have ever witnessed. It did not occur during the game, or at halftime, but afterward.

As the Tech band was giving its post game show, the Aggie band proceeded to blast its way into attention with the Aggie fight song.

Louder and louder the two bands played until the Tech band finished. After finishing its number the members of the Tech band waited at attention until the Aggie band had finished.

Upon a halt by the Aggie band, the Tech band proceeded to continue its post game show. Not more than ten or fifteen measures deep into the number, the Aggies once more opened up with their blasting, forcing the Tech band to stop and wait for these characters to stop.

Being former bandmen, my wife and I were appalled. It has been drilled into all bands, and directors, that when a unit is on the field, it has the spotlight.

Whether it is a tradition of the group to interrupt other bands while they are on the field, or a gross mistake by some unthink-

ing blunderer, it was repulsive.

The Aggie band did a fine half-time show and the football team performed admirably, but the final impressions of the A&M students and band were shattered for many people. This is the most uncorsetous exhibition I have ever witnessed. I am sure that displays such as this may be responsible for the poor reputation attributed to your university's sportsmanship.

Never again will I respect the A&M Band as in the past. It is truly worthy of jokes.

Dwight Fortson
Lewisville Texas
★ ★ ★

Editor:

It was within my power to emend Trop Nevad's letter to Redaed T-tab (17 Oct.), but I thought it best (as your true friend), to let it stand, and then offer some friendly bits of advice:

(1) The flippant tone in the education-factory analogy is distasteful, to say the least. It borders on an irreverent treatment of our own sacred, efficient, and soundly economic edu-system.

(2) As he well knows, the concept of individual treatment for individual proto-citizens was discredited and non-facted long ago

in both H-Tuos and H-Tron. He should leave that bit of foolishness in archeologic America—buried in the uncivilized past, where it belongs.

(3) The referees of the Ancient Worlds Archeological Society have assured me that his interpretations of the American runes and manuscripts are sophistic misguesses at best; they would be better categorized as sophomoric, ridiculous, and ignorant fictions. He admits that he knows nothing of the differences between the Dallasite Nashvillean, Californian, and Newyorkese dialects of the era. Nor is he capable of appreciating the value of the Lindsey, Von Danniken, or Nixon-Dixon fragments.

(4) His proper occupation is the preparation of America's natural resources for consumption by Society. He should be experimenting and reporting on better methods for processing those resources. He should not be pursuing the non-societal hobby of writing for popular and lurid publications.

If Trop Nevad continues to voice quasi-heretical and anti-traditional fomentations in rag-sheets (however unread, ineffective, and unimportant they may be), he will be in danger of losing Exploring License L088 and your Resource Processor permit Ac219A.

Fraternally yours,
Forp Lufesu, Rewonk

At least the writer of the viewpoint column had common enough to pen his name in thoughts. Where's yours?—

★ ★ ★

Editor:
Re: Mike Alford's letter to 4) on the Supreme Court's decision.

He forgot to include Justice Pyron R. White's dissenting opinion: "The Court appreciates the convenience of a pregnant mother more than continued existence and development of the life or potential which she carries."

How anyone, who has looked carefully at photographs of an embryo, can call anything but murder is beyond me.

John Reylan

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