

draw the two great powers into a confrontation both would wish to avoid.

Both in Vietnam and in the Middle East the people who must suffer the damage that war inflicts are those people whose countries are engaged in the war. But one of the facts of international politics is that few conflicts between countries — or even within countries — are viewed as isolated events by the major powers. Each area of conflict threatens to become an arena into which they are drawn to test, once again, their strength, their resolve and their principles but also their shibboleths, their untried theories and their uncertain political wisdom.

There are a number of unpleasant ironies in the present situation. Supporters of Administration policy in Vietnam can point out that those who urge U. S. intervention in the Middle East are re-

lying upon the same principles that the Administration claims as the basis for its Vietnam policy. But those who are critical of our Vietnam policy can point out that it is our intense involvement in Vietnam that inhibits strong U. S. action in an area where our commitments are clear and long-standing.

The Administration has said that the U. S. is neutral in the Middle East crisis. Insofar as that is true it is a most unstable stance. If the Soviet Union continues to exploit the very dangerous conditions of the Middle East, the U. S. will soon seem to be given only a Hobson's choice, i.e., not at all. But when, in political affairs, one is faced with a Hobson's choice it is because a succession of previous decisions has brought one to that pass.

J. F.

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## ***in the magazines***

In a sixteen-page article which appears in the spring issue of *The American Scholar*, Nathan Glazer has surveyed the role of "Student Politics in a Democratic Society." While there will be disagreement with the sociologist's conclusions, his rehearsal of the problems raised for the university, for the student body and for American society in general by the degree and kind of political activity initiated on the campus is a significant contribution to current debate on the subject. Glazer's concluding remarks indicate some of the points raised in his discussion.

"There is unquestionably a tension — there should be a tension — between the university and society. This tension exists in the fact that the university should not take as seriously and immediately as those

actively engaged in society the problems of society. It can look at these problems in historical perspective; it can try to strip these problems of the emotions that invest them; it can try new and strange and even playful alternatives, in thought and in experiment. Thus, I would argue, there is still some virtue in the independence of the university in some measure from the immediate problems of society, although these virtues are not often exploited.

"This independence is threatened from a number of quarters. One threat is from the insistent demand that the university be helpful — the demand from business and government that it offer practical aid. . . . Another threat is from the vocational conception of the university. . . .

"But the independence of the university will also be threatened by turning it into a chief center of political activity. The universities have recently played an important role in this country in making the war in Vietnam a subject of national debate. . . . They have developed a means of bringing this subject to national attention that is ideally suited to the nature of the university — the teach-in, in which the problems are analyzed and a broad array of fact and analysis is brought to bear upon them. But on many campuses, on the politically most active campuses, the teach-in becomes a political weapon; when it does, speakers who support our policy in Vietnam are booed and shouted down; those who oppose our policy bring into play the most powerful emotional appeals, not in order to make the issues clearer, but to arouse the strongest possible response—in other words, they become propagandists and recruiters. . . .

"Thus, this third position on the student's role in a democracy raises troubling questions. I do not think the university in a democratic society ideally should be a chief target of political forces, seeking to find recruits and activists, to seize the political leadership of students, and to use student organizations and the university name as a weapon in political combat. I can envisage situations when such all-out use of all available resources in society for a political struggle to prevent some great evil is necessary, and I appreciate the views of those who believe the American involvement in Vietnam presents such a threat, and thus does require us to ignore the special character of institutions in bringing all of them into battle. I do believe the situation of the Negro in the South in the early sixties did justify the use of every resource the Negro possessed — the church, the college, the tactics of civil disobedience — to overcome the grave injustices in his position.

". . . I do not believe we face such a situation in this country today (with regard to Vietnam). I think our democracy does function, even if with many difficulties; many of our people are alert to our problems; and there are many hands willing to take up the necessary political work of society. Under these circumstances, I believe that the first two positions I have described form a sound basis for answering the question, what is the student's political role in a democracy? He should be prepared for a political role, he should learn from involvement in political activity — but he should not try to transform his university into a bastion and base of political activity."

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Dr. Saul Rose, Fellow and Bursar of New College, Oxford, reports, following a return to the Far East after ten years, that "one of the most striking features of contemporary Asia, to my mind, is the transition that has occurred, in the past decade, from the first to the second stage of nationalism" (*International Af-*

*fairs*, April). The first stage saw "one overriding aim — independence — to which everybody could subscribe. The enemy, too, was obvious and alien. Consequently, everybody knew what they were for and whom they were against." Some leaders, like Sukarno, "attempted to prolong it artificially at a terrible cost." But elsewhere "the great days of the revolution ended and a new era began." This second stage — "characterized by the struggle for survival" — offers greater difficulties. "The new states have to contend with disruptive forces both within and without. To establish themselves as independent states, they had to oust the Europeans. To survive as independent states they have to resolve the problems of their relations with their neighbors."

Dr. Rose identifies China as the biggest external problem these nations face. But "the majority view" seems to be, he says, "that China is not in a territorially expansionist mood, or only in a small way, but could become so." And the question they ask is "What is the most expedient attitude to adopt in that situation?"

One element in their calculation is "the degree of protection" offered by the "American commitment" in the area. "United States backing may not always generate a tough attitude towards China (as the Americans no doubt regret), but it is an increasingly indispensable condition," Rose asserts. And yet, "although the American component is an integral and essential part of every strategic assessment of security in Asia, the Asian view of the American presence does not necessarily tally with the American view." Yes, "it is an assurance against Chinese expansion, but brings another hazard in its train. National independence, safeguarded from the Chinese without, may be sapped by the Americans within. Neo-colonialism never had any clear definition, and has been debased as a catchword of post-independence propaganda. But it is evident even to a casual observer that American influence on the independent state of the Philippines today is greater than ever the British exercised over India since the days of the *Raj*. Singapore is perhaps a more comparable situation: but there is the important difference that it is the fag-end of a vanishing empire and the British are contemplating departure, whereas the Americans are arriving in Asia in ever-increasing numbers and they are contemplating staying." Thus, "one of the problems for the countries of Asia is whether and how they can make reliance on American support compatible with the maintenance of their national independence."

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". . . what the old lawyers called *jus in bello* (justice in war) is at least as important as *jus ad bellum* (the justice of war)," Michael Walzer writes in the May-June issue of *Dissent*. "There are limits to what can be done in wartime, even by men convinced that they are pursuing justice. These limits are never easy to specify, and it may be that they need to be newly

specified for every war. It may be that morality in war is a discretionary morality. But that does not absolve us from making judgments."

What of non-combatants, for example; those hurt in what have been called "necessary efforts" to cut off production, transportation and supplies? Some argue, he says, that "military necessity cannot justify wanton destruction; at the same time, moral principles cannot invalidate necessary destruction. In effect, necessity is the only standard, and trained officers and strategists of the armed forces are the only competent judges. They solemnly conclude that civilian deaths are part of the inevitable ugliness of war."

"They are sometimes right; but the argument does not hold in every case," Walzer contends. "It does not hold, for example, against all efforts to limit the geographic areas within which military judgments can apply. Rearward areas are not always subject to the same political jurisdiction as are the armies at the front. In the past, serious attempts have been made to recognize different degrees of neutrality for such areas and to admit the possibility of benevolent neutrality short of war – the kind of position the U.S. adopted vis-à-vis Great Britain in 1940 and 1941. We would have said at that time that despite the supplies we were providing for the British, German bombing of American factories would not have been morally justified. The same principle applies with even greater force, I should think, to 'little wars' where limitation of the struggle is much more likely than in big ones. Thus the U.S. participated informally in efforts to prevent the French from bombing Morocco and Tunisia during the Algerian war (February, 1958), despite the constructions which French strategists, perhaps quite reasonably, put upon the notion of military necessity. Limits of this sort are very precarious and need to be re-examined in every case. Exceptions are always possible. Allowance might be made for the interdiction of supplies, for example, if it could be carried out with sufficient precision or at the very borders of the battle area. And, of course, a point may be reached when assistance from some ostensibly neutral country passes over into active participation: then the limits have been broken by the other side, and the soldiers must do what they can. Until then, however, decisions are moral and political as well as military, and all of us are involved."

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From an editorial in the *Reconstructionist: A Jewish Bi-Weekly*, May 26: "Traditionally, Jews have always rejected the idea of *inevitability*. It smacked too much of the Greek notion of Fate, and it nullified the deeply entrenched Jewish sense of moral responsibility. As soon as an event, or a development, was seen as inevitable, human initiative became irrelevant; one had no choice but to sit back and 'let it happen.'

"If we are not mistaken, a feeling of inevitability

has invaded contemporary man. It is as though nothing can be done about most of the impending tragedies which loom before this generation. . . .

"Anyone who has read *The Guns of August* recalls a similar sense of the inevitability of a European war. No one could predict just when it would break out, or how widespread it would become; but in 1910, 1912, 1914 everyone 'knew' that, sooner or later, the war would come. It could not be avoided. And come it did.

"Is there not today something of the same sense of inevitability about the war in Vietnam, that it must, inevitably, lead to a war with China, or even with the entire Communist world? Men and nations stand by helplessly as, step by step, this Armageddon approaches. The United Nations is impotent to prevent the tragic dénouement. And, as with most self-fulfilling prophecies, the deeper the conviction that nothing can be done to stop the war, the more likely the tragic end.

"This sense of inevitability is, of course, offensive to men of action, who, as a rule, believe that they can influence the course of events. When they find themselves helpless, they desperately seek a reason for their failure to fashion the course of history. They seek scapegoats. This, we believe, is at the bottom of the ridiculous notion that the war in Vietnam is being prolonged because of the dissenters in the United States.

"General Westmoreland has been, in recent weeks, the major spokesman for this thesis, though others – like Richard Nixon – have voiced the view before him. The General, in command of American forces in Vietnam, is obviously not in 'command' of the situation. In possession of unprecedented striking power, he cannot end the war. Who is to blame? The comparative handful of Americans who dissent? The insignificant percentage of college students? The few hundred thousand who march?

"Yet the dissenters know – and other should recognize – that long before dissent was rife, escalation occurred regularly, with a kind of inevitable (?) rhythm. The mood has begun to resemble that of 1912. And here lies the real danger: an end to dissent (as the President and the General would prefer) would spell the end to the hope of breaking through the vicious cycle of inevitability. Dissent is synonymous with the belief that a different course of action is possible, that alternatives exist to the prevailing method of ending the war. Dissent means that more and more young lives *need not* be lost. . . .

"But we submit that a further, more subtle value lies in the broadening and intensifying of dissent. It can disperse the mood of pessimism which has clearly taken hold of this nation. It can neutralize the paralyzing effects of fatalism. Faith in the possibility of alternatives can also be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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