

OBSERVATION POINT

DISSENT



Vietnam: A Lesson If We Will Learn

By Philip H. Power

Wars tend to enshroud themselves in a remoteness of their own until the new men among us who played in our midst as boys are reported missing or killed. Then the war socks us hard where we live.

Livonia, Farmington, Redford, Garden City, Westland, Plymouth—all have lost men to the war in Vietnam, a war few people understand or care to fight.

Now President Nixon has started the initial withdrawal of 23,000 men. There is national debate about further reducing the American forces by 100,000, and there are hints that the Paris talks are being nudged off dead center.

Maybe it all means that the young man who lives down the

block in Farmington or Plymouth will come back with his GI benefits to build a better place.

THE LESSONS OF WAR are sometimes obtuse and are soon forgotten, siting, draft card burnings and any number of other demonstrations that the young reject the old way of doing things. It used to be that the military called and young men responded, but now they are questioning.

One of the reasons, of course, is that to them Vietnam was not a patriotic war. It was a war started almost by osmosis, a gentle hand helping a people stay free, then frightening escalation.

First it was the deployment of

professional soldiers to advise. Now it is the departure of the young man next door for whatever a mercurial destiny holds and one he cannot stabilize or direct.

Somehow the national purpose involved in the war—if, indeed, there was one—never came through except in bits and snatches. No one has yet been able to articulate our full purposes in language meaningful to the young men who may have to do the fighting.

This has to do with the declaration of war and the rising mood of the people. These factors, of course, were present for World War I and II and those national and international causes before

those times. They were lessened for Korea and now more so in Vietnam.

IF ANYTHING of value can be salvaged from Vietnam, it is possible that the one major effect has been a greater awareness and a more intelligent and profound examination of our role in the world.

Examine this, from Richard N. Goodman, advisor and speechwriter for two presidents and one of the more articulate and thoughtful men of our time:

"I think the war has generally been a radicalizing influence. But not the only one, by far, because I think the forces are much deeper than the war. 'I think the war has catalyzed

and illuminated very fundamental problems, and in itself it is, of course, a great issue. But even without it, the fundamental problems would remain, as I think we can see in Europe and Japan and elsewhere where they don't have the war."

It is important that the dissent about the war is far more significant than the beads and funny glasses of those who use a sincere questioning of our society for their own license. In every philosophical enclave, there are hangers-on.

This much—this new growth—is worth saving if the idea survives the violent on its fringes. Then the war in Vietnam will have meant something.

Tim Richard writes

Suburbs Getting Bigger ... But Thinking Small

Two things got me to thinking about this business of being a "suburb."

One was the prediction of TALUS, the six-county Transportation and Land Use Study, that all of Wayne County will be urbanized by 1990, and so will Farmington in Oakland County.

The other was an article in our Farmington paper by Councilman John Allen, who opposes consolidation of the city, township and villages there into one compact new city.

NOW, THIS NEWSMAN has always had a great respect for John Allen, but we have to take exception to these notions of his:

"With the proximity of a major metropolitan area, the proper and most successful role of the suburban community is ... and so on.

Allen continues: "The role of the satellite city is not one of competition or duplication."

Now, John Allen doesn't share the biases of many people out this way toward Detroit, to his credit, but he's off base with his "us" and "them" approach.

Farmington, Livonia, Plymouth—all of our towns—aren't

"proximate" to the metropolitan area. They are part of the metropolitan area, or will be very soon.

It wasn't so many years ago that when you drove from Detroit out to the lakes area, you drove through the countryside to get to Farmington and Plymouth.

Now there's little countryside left between the big city and our towns, and TALUS tells us that that little bit will be gone in less than 20 years.

IT MAKES ME wonder whether we're not even being "suburbanized" or whether we're still "suburbs" now. The word implies a place that's not urbanized, or less than fully settled.

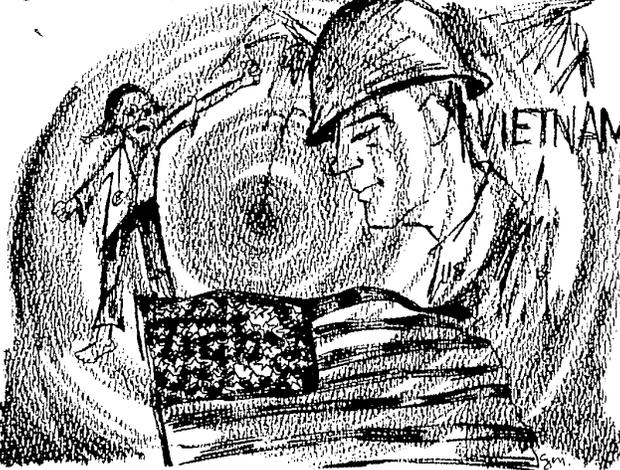
Take a look at our so-called "suburbs." They have apartments, they have colleges. They have industry; and those industries draw as many workers from the big city as the big city draws from the suburbs. Our suburbs buy water and sewer services from Detroit and have representatives on the water board.

Detroit, Farmington, Livonia, Redford, Garden City, Westland, Plymouth—we're all part of a metropolitan area. This isn't to say that we should all be under one municipal government, but it does mean that we're not as isolated and independent and clearly identifiable as we were just 10 years ago.

My argument cuts both ways. Detroit shouldn't consider us as "satellites," to use John Allen's old-fashioned term. Our research has shown an amazing number of persons living in Observerland who came not from Detroit but from other cities or states. They didn't spill out of Detroit.

We're a metropolitan region. Detroit is the biggest partner but not really the boss of the firm. Our towns are smaller partners but not servants. We're all thinking small.

IT'S TOUGH TO FOCUS A WAR



This Is The Week That ...

The Grapes Of Roger Craig

By Don Hoenshell

Roger the Grape and his sideburns came to Plymouth last week to harangue the Kiwanis Club about the plight of the migrant workers who toil in squalor for \$1.25 an hour. It was a good speech and he is to be complimented on his delivery.

His square name is State Senator Roger Craig (D-Deerborn), where he is also known as a civil rights stalwart. In Dearborn, that's like being a Marine at a Viet Cong picnic.

ROGER HAS SIX bright young men on the payroll at \$200 a week doing their thing in his non-candidacy for governor. His charm for voters is his leadership of the California grape boycott in Michigan.

So Roger is making a call from the pay telephone in the lobby of the Mayflower, attended by Bob Dwyer, branch office maharaja for the Secretary of State, district chairman and leprechaun-in-

residence for the Democrats. "Do your thing and peel Roger a grape," a man said.

There ensued two conversations, Roger into the telephone.

"Look, I don't have \$75,000," he is saying. "Will they settle for a dollar and a half?"

"Oh, yeah? Then I've got a counter-suit."

Dwyer is still talking politics on every level in the entire world and is warming up to interplanetary matters when Roger finishes the call.

IT DEVELOPS, he said, that Roger is being sued for \$75,000 for a slight error. He lived in a migrant worker's shack and picked pickles for a time, then said the farm belonged to the wrong guy. It also appears that the wrongly-identified gent is also a Democratic appointee. Whee-e-e-e.

It would tend to make a Democrat dour.

Roger said the Detroit Free Press is also being sued for \$75,000. And now it's Roger the Pickle.

"I want to introduce Roger to both inn-keepers in town." So it's off to the Box Bar to see Herman Halperin, who has redecorated the place but can't settle on a shade for the carpeting. Herman gives Roger no solace.

"**I CONTRIBUTE** to both parties," Herman said. "We need both of them."

"That's logic," mused Roger. "I've never heard that and it's good."

If he can beat the odds, Roger maybe won't be the most austere governor Michigan ever had, or the first one with sideburns.

But controversial and bright and funny and interesting and quick.

All these and more he will be.

Sense And Nonsense

Striking Plymouth teachers held a large meeting in a local theater to make plans for the duration of the strike which closed every school in the 54-mile district. Outside, the theater marquee proclaimed the current film, "True Grit."

The Soviet doctor who sailed 2,700 miles in the Ra, the boat built from papyrus, is going to do a book on his experiences. Presumably it will be called: "The Last Ra Ra."

Editorial & Opinion

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Don Hoenshell, Editor

We're Right, But Broke Again ...

The U.S. Department of Labor reports that the purchasing power of the dollar has decreased by 3.2 cents since Jan. 1. It confirms the findings of shoppers for the family at every checkout counter.

THAT MEANS, if our Old Math is correct, that the family with a \$10,000 a year income has lost \$321 in buying power this year.

President Nixon and his economic advisors call it inflation. To curb it, Mr. Nixon proposed and the Congress approved extension of the 10 per cent income tax surcharge.

The theory is the less money citizens have to spend, the less is spent and prices are forced downward.

Now comes a subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations with another kind of shrinkage, a report that will do nothing to improve the morale of housewives and the others who do the family shopping.

MANUFACTURERS, it said, are reducing the contents of the boxes (baking powder, frosting mix, dog food, some instant coffee and others) while keeping the same price. It's the same with some lumber standards.

These are all things the people have known—or suspected—for some time and the only comfort seems to be that we're right, again.

—Don Hoenshell

