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Editor/Publisher

EDITORIAL FOCUS

Amnesty only for crime

Even with the growing controversy over amnesty for draft evaders and President Ford's half-hearted attempt at conditional amnesty, the basic question of the Vietnam War has not been addressed by the United States Government: Was the Vietnam War a legal war?

Now that most Americans feel that the war was, at best, a mistake, it is time for this government to determine the legality of the war. It is our opinion that this war, which was never declared by Congress, could not have been legal.

If the war was illegal, the next logical step is to determine who are the criminals. The criminals could not be those American citizens who refused to be involved in the war -- those who resisted the draft or deserted the Army; those who protested in the streets; those who refused to pay their "war tax". It is they who served as the conscience of the nation.

The real criminals are the presidents, the chiefs of staff, and the military leaders who sent innocent boys to slaughter and to be slaughtered. The criminals are the congressmen who voted the funds and the citizens who stood by and let it happen.

There should be no question of amnesty, but amnesty should be given to those who created the war. Public service should be required of those who perpetrated a war that was fought for the economic benefit of this country and not for the democratic rights of the Vietnamese. The Loyalty Oath should be required of those who supported the war actively or through their silence.

Those in exile must be welcomed home as heroes and the jails opened. Those who sacrificed to live the truth must be honored. Serious consideration must be given to compensation for those who were injured for their loyalty to the American principles.

Let experts decide

Former President Richard Nixon is doing everything possible to halt investigations into his role in Watergate and to avoid getting on the witness stand where his hesitancy to tell the truth could put him in contempt of court.

First he resigned from the Presidency rather than go through an impeachment trial; then he announced that he would resign from the California and New York Bar Associations, both of which are investigating his conduct.

The latest development is his sudden severe illness and the possibility of hospitalization at the very time that he is supposed to testify at the trials of Erlichman and Haldeman.

In light of Special Prosecutor Jaworski's revelation that Nixon was under investigation in ten different areas, and the recent rumors that the Jaworski staff has evidence that Nixon helped plan the Watergate burglary, it is natural that he would want to avoid testifying under oath.

If poor health is to be the next excuse for avoiding the truth, the American people have the right to know the true state of Nixon's health. With the conflicting statements about the severity of phlebitis and its sudden appearance in this case, the court should require examination by a panel of court-appointed physicians.

It is not enough to fly Nixon's old friend out to California on an Air Force jet to tell the world he is near death. Let us hear from some neutral experts who can base their diagnosis on scientific evidence and not on emotionalism. Then perhaps Mr. Nixon will have his day in court.

Racism or realism?

Will racism rear its ugly head again as Portland approaches the receipt of its Community Development Act funds? Already there is speculation in the local white press that there will be "a parade from North Portland lobbying long and loud that the area should be allowed to keep what is considered 'their federal bucks'."

Portland is to receive at least \$8.6 million for programs in housing and community development. This can include some rehabilitation, low-cost leasing programs, construction of community facilities, etc.

One would assume that some of the money would go to the areas that have not had the opportunity for rehabilitation that the Model Cities area has -- Southeast, Lents, Northwest, etc. The residents of these areas have waited a long time and need assistance. But there are also areas in Model Cities that have not had their share of rehabilitation programs either, like Boise and Eliot.

We would also hope that the phasing out of the Model Cities Program will not bring an end to housing programs in this area. It would be too bad if the gains that have been made in the last five years were lost due to future neglect.

We hope that when the time comes to divide up the money, racism and petty jealousies will not be the deciding factors.

Concerned citizens absent

Only five citizens attended a public hearing on a proposed city ordinance to insure citizens' participation in the selection of City Commissioners to fill vacancies in mid-term.

Last Spring, when Charles Jordan was appointed to fill Lloyd Anderson's vacated position, a great uproar was raised. Some citizens were genuinely concerned that the selection had been made secretly and others were just upset that a Black had been chosen.

At Commissioner McCready's suggestion, the Council appointed a committee to find a better method of appointment. The public hearing to discuss the committee's recommendation failed to draw any of the concerned citizens.

Do the voters just not care how their Commissioners are selected? Do they only care after the fact, or do they only care when the appointee is Black?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Open primary best

To the Editor,

I do not agree with your editorial "Open Primary No Answer", appearing in the September 12th issue of the Observer.

I say "bravo" to Clay Myers proposal for an open primary system. The two-party system is not mentioned in the Constitution of the United States of America.

An open primary in my opinion would tend to strengthen rather than weaken existing political parties. Such parties could still nominate their candidates and promote their election. In doing so, however, they would be more aware of

the whole electorate rather than the party regular. They also could still adopt a party platform.

An open primary in my opinion would enfranchise all voters in all elections. At the present time some who register to vote must choose to be disenfranchised in the primary if they feel they are neither Democrat or Republican.

I wonder if voters in Washington State feel that the Democratic and Republican parties are weaker because Washington State has an open primary?

Elizabeth L. Sale

Commitment can change

(Continued from pg. 1, col. 9) to the principle of hiring and promoting minorities.

"The problem with affirmative action until now is that it operates only at the entry level," he said. In his own office, minorities make up 40 percent of the staff, but they are mainly clerks and aides. There is one Black Welfare Assistance Supervisor, who was promoted recently, and several minority Welfare Assistance

Workers (who compute grants). There are no Adult Service Workers.

Learning that there were two aides who had been employed for four years and had not been promoted, he immediately told John Burch, Multnomah District Administrator for the Welfare Department, that this was a case of affirmative action not operating properly. Burch agreed and the two went to Salem and presented their case to the Personnel Director. The two aides were placed on the civil service list for Welfare Assistance Workers, and at the same time the college degree requirement for the WAW position was dropped.

Gomez has informed the District Office that the Albina Office cannot bear the affirmative action responsibility for the entire district, that all branch offices must

participate. "John Burch has reacted favorably to the idea," he said. "I believe he is really committed to a policy of affirmative action."

"The fact that I am the highest ranking minority in Welfare means they haven't been doing much. One of the main problems is the lack of minorities in policy making positions and positions where they can make affirmative action work," he explained.

Gomez believes the system can be changed and is working to prove that he is right. He knows that there are minorities who are qualified for administrative positions and uses himself as an example. He hopes that his success in hiring qualified minorities, especially in professional and supervisory positions, will demonstrate to other department heads and managers across the state that affirmative action can become a reality.

Woodlawn

(Continued from pg. 1, col. 9) as a priority to the official dedication took six years and involved many of the residents of the Woodlawn community. Joseia Mann is chairman of the Woodlawn Park Design Committee, and Glen Childs is chairman of the Physical Planning Committee. Mrs. Inez Battles is current chairman of the Woodlawn Executive Board. Former chairmen include Frank Jacobs, Josiah Nunn, Bobbie Nunn and Clarence Jensen.

Betty White, director of the Portland Development Commission's Woodlawn office, said "The history of Woodlawn Park has been a history of the involvement of people in an exciting and challenging effort, and it has demonstrated for all to see that citizens' participation works. For the people of Woodlawn, it has indeed been a very personal experience."

Socialists

(Continued from pg. 1, col. 3) to the outrage of the entire country, by pardoning Tricky Dick. And even though Ford has needed no big money to get to the top, a short look at his close chums makes it clear whose interests he will rule in. As listed by Michael G. Jensen in the August 19th New York Times, they include: Rodney W. Markley, Jr., the Ford Motor Company's chief Washington lobbyist; William Whyte of United States Steel; Leon Parma, an executive of Tele-dyne, Inc.; and Stark Ritchie, chief general counsel of the American Petroleum Institute, to name a few."

Studer states that it is no problem for Democrats and Republicans to file the names of their contributors. If they get caught with their finger in the pie, they get unconditional pardons. "But for Vietnam war resisters, Black activists like George Jackson, antiwar activists like Frank Giese, and supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign, there is only systematic government harassment and victimization."

Studer states that these laws, rather than ending corruption, are perpetrating the most corrupt aspect of American politics: the monopoly maintained by the two parties of capital on political action in this country.

"In these circumstances we're not going to comply with the demand for lists of our members and supporters," he said.

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