

IUP STUDENT ATTITUDES ON THE VIETNAM WAR
AS REFLECTED BY THE PENN. 1965-1973

1986

DAVID F. STEMMLER

Title: IUP Student Attitudes on the Vietnam War as Reflected by the Penn, 1965-1973.

side of the Vietnam debate.

Author: David F. Stemmler

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Thesis Chairman: Neil B. Lehman

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Thesis Committee Members: Steven B. Cord, Ernest B. Fricke, Irwin M. Marcus
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with a simultaneous increase in student opposition. This

period. The purpose of this thesis was to examine the attitudes

of Indiana University of Pennsylvania students towards the

Vietnam War from 1965 to 1973. These attitudes were classified

as support, opposition or neutral to American involvement in

the war. Evidence of such attitudes was provided by letters

to the editor, columns, editorials, and reports of war related

activities printed in the student newspaper, the Penn, during

this period. Because the Penn was the major source for this

study it was necessary to note the extent, if any, of its own

influence on these attitudes. While both sides agreed that

the years 1965 to 1973 were chosen as the limits of this

thesis since they correspond to the major period of American

involvement in the war. This time period was divided into

three sections covering the years 1965 to 1967, 1968 to 1970,

and 1971 to 1973. This study concluded that the Penn did not

directly influence student attitudes. The results of this study showed that IUP student

attitudes concerning the Vietnam War first appeared in the

years 1965 to 1967. While support for American involvement

in the war was strongest in this period, the Penn evidenced

the beginnings of student opposition. Also, many students

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in this period appeared to be neutral or uncommitted to either side of the Vietnam debate.

The second period of this study, covering the years from 1968 to 1970, revealed a distinct shift in student attitudes towards the war. Diminishing support for the war was coupled with a simultaneous increase in student opposition. This period also witnessed the end of student neutrality towards the Vietnam War. Evidence of this category of student attitudes vanished from the Penn after 1968.

Although student opposition to the Vietnam War continued through the final years of this study, 1971 to 1973, this opposition was countered by evidence of student support for the Nixon administration's Vietnam policy. This policy, involving a slow, calculated withdrawal of American forces was directly contrary to the immediate, unilateral withdrawal demanded by the peace movement. While both sides agreed that the war should be ended, bitter disagreement existed over this issue of withdrawal. This factor may have contributed to the relatively small number of IUP students actively participating in the antiwar movement.

Finally, this study concluded that the Penn did not directly influence the development of student attitudes towards the Vietnam War. However, the Penn did play an important role in exposing IUP students to the war and by providing an available outlet for the expression of opinion.

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
The Graduate School
History Department

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July 17, 1985
July 17, 1985
July 17, 1985
July 17, 1985

M. B. [Signature]
 Professor of History, Adviser

M. B. [Signature]
 Professor of History

[Signature]
 Graduate School

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
The Graduate School
History Department

We hereby approve the thesis of

David F. Stemmler

Candidate for the Master of Arts

July 17, 1985

Neil Steinhilber

Professor of History, Adviser

July 17, 1985

Lawrence M. Mason

Professor of History

July 17, 1985

John M. Rife

Professor of History

July 17, 1985

Alfred J. Savel

Graduate School

American involvement in the Vietnam War had a profound effect on many different areas and aspects of American life. American colleges and universities were one area of society that underwent drastic changes as a result of the war. Because few colleges managed to isolate themselves from the repercussions of these changes, it is necessary to study the relationship of the Vietnam War with American universities at the local level.

Specifically, the lack of information concerning Indiana University of Pennsylvania during the war pointed to this as a possible area for study. Since the university newspaper, the Penn, provided the best written account of IUP during this period, it became Chapter One this study. Consequently, the purpose of this thesIntroductionmaine student attitudes on the Vietnam War, as reflected by the Penn, from 1965 to 1973.

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1965 to 1967, 1968 to 1970, and 1971 to 1973. Within the constraint of each period, student attitudes supporting, opposing, or neutral to an American presence in Vietnam will be examined. These classifications of student attitudes will be based on information drawn from the letters to the editor, editorials, columns, and reports of war related activities involving IUP students that appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1973.

While the intensity of the attitudes of individual students concerning the war was readily illustrated by their letters, editorials, or columns, the extent to which these attitudes existed among the student body as a whole was more difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain. However, the nature of this study indicated the need to formulate various generalizations concerning this problem. These generalizations are based primarily on information provided by the Penn, supplemented by a number of opinion polls pertaining to various aspects of the Vietnam War.

Finally, this study is not intended to be the definitive history of Indiana University of Pennsylvania during the Vietnam War. It is hoped, however, that this paper will contribute some insight into the attitudes and actions of IUP students during this important period in American history.

Evidence of the attitudes of Indiana University of Pennsylvania students toward American involvement in the Vietnam War, first appeared in the university newspaper, the Penn, during the years 1965 to 1967. In examining the issues of the Penn printed in this period, several interesting, though sometimes contradictory trends involving these attitudes, emerge. For example, while a majority of the letters to the editor voiced support for American participation in the war, most of the student activities reported in the Penn were in opposition to such an involvement.

Another trend becomes apparent while examining those letters to the editor supporting an American presence in Vietnam. This trend confirms the assumption, found in a majority of such letters, 1965-1967 American presence in Southeast Asia was necessary to contain either communism in general or specifically, Communist China. An example of this assumption may be found in a letter written by Paul Wilson, defending the Johnson administration's Vietnam policy.¹ After pointing out the shortcomings of communism in the Soviet Union and Cuba, Wilson argued that "Communism is bad and unworkable and ... its progression throughout the world must be halted by some means."² After examining various means by which communism could be stopped, Wilson concluded:

Until the time comes when the U.S. is able to get support from its allies, or when the Viet Cong accepts the negotiation table in favor of the jungle battlefields, I believe that our government's Viet Nam policy is the best that can be hoped for under the present circumstances.³

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withdraw⁷ Until the time comes when the U.S. is able to get support from its allies, or when the Viet Cong accepts the negotiation table in favor of the jungle battlefields, I believe that our government's Viet Nam policy is the best that can be hoped for under the present circumstances.³

The containment of Communist China was also the reason why Art O'Neill and Tom Mason supported American involvement in the Vietnam War. In their letter, they argued that China, in order to dominate the world, must obtain the resources of Indo-China.⁴ According to the authors, the first step in the procurement of these resources was the domination of South Vietnam through North Vietnam. Finally, Mason and O'Neill concluded with the question, "Can the United States and other non-Communist nations idly sit by and allow world-domination, oriented Communism to spread?"⁵

The need to contain communism was also the reason that Kenneth Chilson, in a series of three letters to the Penn, offered his support for the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War. For example, in his first letter Chilson claimed that it was better to stop Communist aggression in Vietnam now, instead of "in California ten years from now."⁶ He continued by stating his belief in the need for a boundary between East and West that all would respect. Such a line of demarcation, Chilson argued, already existed in Southeast Asia. Finally, his belief regarding a continued American involvement in the war became most obvious when he concluded his letter by stating that "it is not a waste of lives to continue this job, it is a waste of those [lives] given if we withdraw."⁷ In two other letters to the editor, Chilson argued that an American presence in Vietnam was not only necessary to

halt communist expansion," but that such an involvement was both honorable and morally justified. For example, in his second letter he argued that "any country [in this case the United States] which tries to be a policeman without expecting material reward is certainly behaving honorably."⁸ Chilson continued such reasoning in a third letter by stating that since the government of South Vietnam asked us "to fight the terrorist threat posed by the National Liberation Front," we have a commitment in Vietnam that we must honor.⁹ Finally, he pointed out that "Vietnam is a war for world stability, beyond geographical boundaries," and concluded by affirming that "I, with few reservations, support our present Vietnam policy."¹⁰

In another letter with an anti-communist theme, Thomas Sipe expressed his support for American policy in Vietnam. According to Sipe, "If we do not fight to suppress communism in Viet Nam, in Europe, in South America the chances of your children not living under a dictated morality grow very slim."¹¹ Finally, Sipe addressed questions concerning the morality of American participation in the war by commenting that "it seems to me that a greater morality advises that we fight, now, and preserve our nation, and our ideology."¹²

Similar ideas concerning the containment of communism and the morality of America's position in Vietnam, appeared, in a letter to the editor written by Paul S. Wilson. He argued that since America was defending South Vietnam from

aggression by the North," the United States basic policy in Vietnam is morally justifiable."¹³ Furthermore, he argued that the United States must remain in Vietnam in order to convince our allies that we will honor our commitments and to contain the expansion of Red China. Finally, Wilson reiterated his belief that "the U.S. presence in Vietnam is totally justified, both morally and politically," and concluded that "history in the end will prove us right."¹⁴

Two other letters to the editor written in this period expressed support for American involvement in Vietnam indirectly, primarily through criticism of antiwar activists in the United States. For example, John Carlin argued that "the carrying of the enemy's flag in the streets was treason a few centuries ago and is nothing less than treason today. Such action is giving aid and comfort to the enemy."¹⁵ Similarly, Thomas J. Thompson, Arthur V. O'Neill, Paul Rots, and John Remensky claimed that antiwar protestors were "attacking over four hundred thousand troops and civil workers who are representing our national policy with more than mere talk."¹⁶ They concluded their letter with a defense of American policy in Vietnam by stating that war "is the means chosen by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese to carry out their plans and we must answer in a similar manner."¹⁷

The Penn also contained several editorials and columns, written between 1965 and 1967, that voiced support for American involvement in Vietnam. For example, in a column discussing the role of the American involvement in Vietnam. For example, an editorial by Chuck McCulloch concluded, "These men on the sea,

appearing in the November 5, 1965 issue of the Penn urged students to support a "Bleed-In" that was being organized on campus.¹⁸ While the "Bleed-In" was primarily a Red Cross blood drive, it had the underlying purpose of showing support for the Johnson administration's Vietnam policy, in an effort to offset antiwar protests that were occurring across the United States. A second editorial, entitled "Must Viet Nam Be Pearl Harbor," contrasted America's national unity in the weeks following Pearl Harbor with the lack of unity concerning the war in Vietnam.¹⁹ The Penn commented that the reason for unity in 1941 might possibly stem from the fact that the United States was directly attacked by Japan. The editorial continued, an involvement in Vietnam was a continuation of

When our enemy destroys our neighbors, do we stand by idly and wait for him to knock on our front door? Former policies of isolation have not brought us or the free world 'peace in our time.' Perhaps our current policy is not the answer either but it is a new experiment in international relations.²⁰

and 1967, provide further evidence of student support for While acknowledging "the agonies of the situation," the American policy regarding Vietnam. The first event of this editorial's support for American involvement in the war was nature was a Red Cross blood drive sponsored by the Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity.²⁶ The purpose of the blood Viet Nam affair."²¹

drive or "Bleed-In," scheduled for November 12, 1965, was for In a series of several columns written by Chuck McCullogh, the donation of blood by students "who wish to demonstrate the author appealed to the reader to support American involvement in the war by supporting the armed forces fighting in their support of the government in its action in Vietnam."²⁷ While the "Bleed-In" netted a total of 204 pints of blood, Vietnam. For example, in a column discussing the role of the this figure fell short of the proposed goal of 400 pints.²⁸ Navy in the war, McCullogh concluded, "These men on the sea,

as well as the courageous men on land, are fighting for us. I wonder if we realize it."²² Similarly, in a column on the Green Berets, McCulloch commented, "The next time you hear 'the Ballad of the Green Beret,' take your hat off to them and the crest of our men in Vietnam, they deserve it."²³

A final column written in this period by Fred Gelston listed several justifications for the participation of the United States in the Vietnam War.²⁴ According to Gelston, by acting as a counterbalance to Red China, an American presence in Vietnam contributed to stability throughout Southeast Asia. If the United States withdrew from Vietnam, China would immediately move in and subsequently, America would lose the trust of its allies. Finally, Gelston argued that American involvement in Vietnam was a continuation of the policy of containment, and as such, sent a strong signal to potential communist aggression elsewhere in the world.²⁵

Several events occurring on the IUP campus between 1965 and 1967, provide further evidence of student support for American policy regarding Vietnam. The first event of this nature was a Red Cross blood drive sponsored by the Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity.²⁶ The purpose of the blood drive or "Bleed-In," scheduled for November 12, 1965, was for the donation of blood by students "who wish to demonstrate their support of the government in its action in Vietnam."²⁷ While the "Bleed-In" netted a total of 1204 pints of blood, this figure fell short of the proposed goal of 400 pints.²⁸

That A further example of student support for American policy in Vietnam appeared in the November 16, 1965 edition of the Penn, in the form of a joint resolution adopted by the UUP Republican Club and the Democrat Club. The resolution, War, highly critical of antiwar protests, argued that such protests "undermine the authority of the President...; demoralize in America's friends, allies and men at the front... [and] discourage the Viet-Cong from making a peaceful settlement in Vietnam."²⁹ In an effort to counteract such demonstrations, the above organizations, in conjunction with the International Relations Club and the Social Science Society, decided to sponsor a "Lecture-In," scheduled for November 22, 1965.³⁰ The purpose of the "Lecture-In," occurring at colleges throughout the United States, was "to inform President Johnson, and national leaders all over the world that a great majority of American college students feel it is their responsibility to support the national government at times of international crisis."³¹ Finally, a Penn survey illustrated the existence of further student support for American participation in the Vietnam War. The survey asked five students, regarding Vietnam, "Is the United States justified in its intervention, or should we let them settle their own problems?"³² In response, all five students voiced the opinion that the intervention of the United States in Vietnam was indeed justified. Furthermore, three of the "students polled" stated³⁶

that the reason for this justification was America's attempt to halt the spread of communism.³³ Ho Chi Minh, as the "rightful ruler" of North Vietnam, was the "rightful ruler" of North Vietnam. A second category of student opinion concerned those IUP students opposed to American involvements in the Vietnam War. Such opposition was evidenced by letters, to the editor, that appeared in the columns, and reports of students activities that appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1967.³⁷ While only two letters opposing the war were written in this period,³⁸ they provide important insights into the underlying beliefs, influencing those students opposed to a continued American presence in Vietnam. As may be expected, these beliefs were in direct contrast, to those held by students supporting American policy. A North AV letter to the editor by James A. Wilison, in response to a letter by Kenneth Chilson supporting the war, illustrated these fundamental differences. Wilison argued, for example, that North Vietnamese aggression was not so much a cause as a consequence of the war,³⁹ and that furthermore, it was impossible to draw and defend a geographical line against communism.³⁴ Wilison concluded that the United States had no right in Vietnam and that the lives of Americans who died there were, a waste, "a tragic waste because we should not be there."³⁵ The second letter, written by John Repko, expressed other sentiments influencing the attitudes of those students opposed to American involvement in Southeast Asia. For example, Repko argued that such an involvement was wrong since it was based on "political blundering" by the United States.³⁶

Such blundering, Repko continued, resulted from the failure of the United States to recognize Ho Chi Minh as the "rightful ruler of North and South Vietnam," coupled with the inability to "realize that nationalism is more powerful than communism in Southeast Asia."³⁷ For these reasons, he concluded that "the Vietnamese should be left alone to solve their own first problems without interference from the U.S."³⁸ Although there were no editorials, three columns appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1967 expressing opposition to the Vietnam War. The first of these columns, written by Rick Benton, was critical of President Johnson's Vietnam policy, especially regarding his decision to resume the bombing of North Vietnam. Benton's attitude toward continued American involvement in the war was obvious when he concluded, "It is a time for a complete rethinking of our role in Southeast Asia. Should the United States enforce a 'Pax Americana' on the world? I think not."³⁹

In another column, James A. Wilson voiced the opinion that even the United States government realized that it was embroiled in "an untenable position" in Vietnam.⁴⁰ Continuing, he expressed his support for an American withdrawal from the war and concluded with the statement,

Surely we can no longer be asked to believe that because we possess so great a military might we can educate 15 million people, invent for them democratic institutions, write laws and find leaders for them and create from them a nation where no nation has ever existed before.⁴¹

occurred in conjunction with "International Day of Protest

In a final column, Ron Slabe discussed certain misconceptions Americans maintained concerning communism and the Vietnam War. For example, Slabe argued that many Americans falsely believed in the concept of monolithic communism, failing to realize that "no two communist parties in the world are the same, for in any nation, nationalism comes first and communism second."⁴² Applying this argument to Vietnam, Slabe claimed that "the Vietnamese people couldn't care less about what Vietnamese faction he is governed by as long as that faction is not in collaboration with a foreign power."⁴³ Noting that the United States was the only major country actively involved in the war, Slabe expressed his hope that perhaps someday, Americans may realize that the majority of Vietnamese do not want them there. He concluded, "When we awaken to this fact, a new politics will have emerged in this nation. For the sake of this great nation and that of the world may that day of dawning be not far off."⁴⁴

The Penn reported on a number of antiwar activities from 1965 to 1967 in which, Indiana University of Pennsylvania students participated. Besides those activities occurring on campus, IUP students participated in various antiwar activities in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. One of the earliest antiwar activities occurring at IUP involved the wearing of black armbands by those students opposed to the war, on March 25 and 26, 1966.⁴⁵ This activity occurred in conjunction with "International Day of Protest

Against the War in Vietnam" and served as "a reaction to the demoralizing militant spirit rising in our country believing that our nation is always right and that we must force our social system on those in the farthest corners of the earth."⁴⁶ D.C.⁵² In November of 1966, several students attended an antiwar program at Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh. The program, entitled "Peace in Vietnam," consisted of an open forum where various people stated their reasons for opposing the Vietnam War.⁴⁷ The belief that through "education, rational discussion, and Another antiwar activity occurred on May 3, 1967, when the Student Union Board presented "'The Last Judgement,' a presentation of anti-Vietnam, pro-peace poetry and songs in featuring Gerald Stern and William Stubbs of the IUP English department, and D.C. Fitzgerald, member of the Folkmen."⁴⁸ Although primarily an antiwar activity, the stated goal of the program was to "provide for a discussion on...Vietnam... with all sides invited to attend and express opinions."⁴⁹ not for In the fall semester of 1967, Reverend Harold Liphart,⁵⁵ Reverend Ronald Shonk, Reverend Bill Richard, and several students decided to participate in a national drive to obtain signatures on a petition, asking President Johnson to stop the bombing of North Vietnam and to begin negotiations to end the war.⁵⁰ Located at the Student Union building,⁵⁶ the group managed to collect between 110-115 signatures from of October 4-6, 1967. While the number of signatures collected was relatively small, Reverend Richard felt the activity was

important because "it stimulated discussion and thinking,"⁵⁰ about the Vietnam War.⁵¹

Later in the same month, Reverend Ronald Shonk and ten students attended the October 28, 1967 peace march in Washington, D.C.⁵² Finally, an organizational meeting for a group called Humans for Education toward Liberty and Peace in Vietnam, or HELP, was announced in the December 12, 1967 issue of the Penn.⁵³ According to the announcement, the group was founded on the belief that through "education, rational discussion, and peaceful protest...peace can be achieved, primarily in Vietnam, and eventually in the world in general."⁵⁴ There were also two speakers that appeared on campus in this period who were critical of American involvement in Vietnam. The first, Mrs. Betty Boardman, was a Quaker peace activist who stated that "until Americans take a firm political stand against the immorality which leads to wars like Vietnam, they will continue to sacrifice their sons, not for democracy and freedom, but for a war machine."⁵⁵ The second speaker, Senator Joseph Clark, was also critical of American involvement in Vietnam. After stating that the war was a civil war and that he was unable to explain the presence of the United States in Vietnam, Clark offered three steps he believed could lead to peace.⁵⁶ According to Clark, if the United States would unconditionally stop the bombing of North Vietnam, put an end to "search and destroy" missions by its troops and follow a "fire when fired upon" policy, "then a

North Vietnamese would be at the conference table within two months."⁵⁷

The Penn also provides evidence of a third category of student opinion and activity concerning the Vietnam War that emerged between 1965 and 1967. The apparent purpose of this category, involving a neutral discussion of the issues surrounding the war, was to enable students to arrive at an informed, unemotional decision concerning American involvement in Vietnam. Various programs of this nature also stressed the importance of student participation in such a serious national issue. For example, two items appeared in the Penn during this period, emphasizing the necessity of student interest and action concerning the war. The first, a column by Chuck McCulloch, appealed for student involvement in world issues, especially Vietnam. McCulloch based his appeal on the assumption that "by simply becoming aware of the issues and taking a stand rather than skirting the problem, we should take a formidable step in the right direction."⁵⁸ Similar sentiments are voiced in a Penn editorial that urged student attendance at an anti-Vietnam program, since "enlightenment on the subject is necessary in intelligently determining (or at least influencing) the government's policies towards the Vietnamese war."⁵⁹

There were also several speakers, lectures, and forums during the years 1965 to 1967, which sought to provide students with information about the Vietnam War. For example, students

were invited to attend a panel discussion entitled "Is War Necessary," at the Wesley Foundation on November 14, 1965.⁶⁰ This program was followed in March of 1966 by a foreign policy forum featuring Senator Kenneth Keating and Senator Albert Gore, at which various aspects of the Vietnam War were discussed.⁶¹ Also, Captain George Mergner and Captain Bruce Heim of the IUP ROTC department spoke on the history, culture, and people of Vietnam at a Student Union Board lecture entitled "Conversations On Vietnam."⁶² The lecture, beginning with a summary of the Vietnam War from the French departure to the current American involvement, concluded with a question and answer period.⁶³ Another forum examining the issues surrounding the Vietnam War was a discussion series sponsored by Campus Ministries and interested faculty. The purpose of the series, entitled "Peace or War in Vietnam," was "to stir up interest concerning United States' political affairs in Vietnam."⁶⁴ The scene of yet another Vietnam presentation and discussion was the February 1967 meeting of Kappa Delta Pi, the honorary education society.⁶⁵ Finally, a Student Union Board sponsored lecture concluded the informational discussion of the complex issues arising from American involvement in the Vietnam War during this period. This lecture, entitled "Vietnam: How We Won the War and Why We Won't," was presented by Dr. Robert Morris of the Center for International Studies at IUP.⁶⁶

From 1965 to 1967, the Penn contained other articles that

do not necessarily reflect student attitudes towards the Vietnam War. However, these articles are important because they indicate the extent to which IUP students were exposed to Vietnam by reading the Penn. A third category of student opinion: The majority of the articles concerning Vietnam that appeared in the Penn during this period were articles dealing with the draft. These articles dealt with a variety of draft related subjects including deferments, conscientious objector status, and the Selective Service Qualification Test.⁶⁷ Altogether, the Penn contained sixteen articles dealing with the draft. There were also five articles dealing with antiwar demonstrations in other parts of the country, four columns reprinted from other newspapers and six letters to the editor written by non-students in this period. Of the six letters, three supported American involvement in Vietnam while three opposed this policy.

While there were no wire service articles dealing with actual combat in Vietnam, the Penn covered this area when a graduate or someone associated with IUP was directly involved. For example, an article concerning the wounding of a former ROTC cadet from IUP, appeared in the September 27, 1966 edition of the Penn.⁶⁸ Five articles of this nature were printed from 1965 to 1967. Although the Penn did not overwhelm IUP students with articles concerning Vietnam, they were exposed to some aspects of the war and war related issues. In conclusion, the attitudes of IUP students toward

American involvement in the Vietnam War first appeared in the Penn during the years 1965 to 1967. The most noticeable attitudes belonged to those students who supported or opposed an American presence in Vietnam. A third category of student opinion regarding the war was not as clearly defined. This category involved those students not yet committed to either side of the Vietnam debate. Evidence of the existence of this attitude was provided by the various forums, lectures, and debates concerning the war that sought to stimulate thought and discussion among IUP students in this period.

Those students possessing firm convictions of support or opposition to the government's Vietnam policy, expressed these opinions through letters to the editor, columns, editorials, and other activities reported by the Penn. The majority of letters to the editor regarding Vietnam that appeared in this period strongly supported American policy on this issue. Furthermore, most of these letters expressed the shared assumption that an American presence in Vietnam was necessary in order to contain the constant spread of communism, particularly with regard to the People's Republic of China. In contrast, the letters to the editor voicing opposition to the war argued that the United States had no business in Vietnam and that the Vietnamese people should be left alone to solve their own problems. Another area of agreement among those students firmly entrenched in support of the war, was the question of the

morality of American involvement in Vietnam. As evidenced by their letters and columns, these students deemed it necessary to emphasize the moral justification of their position. Also, students supporting American policy in Vietnam were highly critical of those students opposing the war. Such criticism was especially harsh when directed at those students actively participating in antiwar demonstrations. Finally, the appearance of repeat letters by students positioned on both sides of the Vietnam debate indicates the intensity of feeling about the war that some students possessed.

Although letters supporting the war outnumbered those in opposition, the columns and editorials printed in this period were more evenly balanced. As may be expected, these articles contained many of the assumptions and arguments concerning the war that were outlined in student letters.

As mentioned earlier, while the letters to the editor supporting American involvement in the Vietnam War outnumber those letters protesting this policy, the opposite relationship exists concerning student activity. As reported by the Penn, there were twice as many antiwar activities between 1965 and 1967, as there were activities designed to demonstrate student support for American military involvement in Vietnam. A closer examination of these activities offers a possible explanation for this discrepancy. The key to this explanation appears to involve the matter of organization. For example, when reviewing the Penn's accounts of these

activities it becomes apparent that the majority of such sight actions, both supporting and opposing the war, were associated with similar activities occurring at colleges and universities nationwide. Since few of these activities originated locally, the existence of national antiwar groups provided IUP students opposing the war with an available outlet for the expression of their opinions. As a result, these students possessed a great advantage over fellow students who supported the war but lacked the ideas and leadership that national organizations could have provided. This advantage would become more pronounced as the war continued and national antiwar groups became firmly established. There existed however, a distinct exception to this trend, involving those activities designed to provoke thought and discussion about the war among IUP students. These activities were almost always organized locally by several groups, including the Student Union Board, members of the Campus Ministries, and IUP faculty. As mentioned earlier, such activities originated out of the perceived need to provide IUP students with information about the complex issues emanating from the Vietnam War.

Finally, while the Penn provides evidence of the attitudes of IUP students concerning the Vietnam War, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which such attitudes existed among the student population in general. However, the information provided by the Penn, combined with the results of several

Gallup Polls released in this period, may provide some insight into the extent of student opinion regarding the Vietnam War at IUP.

For example, a Gallup Poll released on May 28, 1967 asked college students if they considered themselves a "hawk" or a "dove," in respect to the Vietnam situation. In response, 49 percent classified themselves as "hawks," 35 percent as "doves," with 16 percent of the students surveyed having no opinion.⁶⁹ Another Gallup Poll released on June 24, 1966, asked college students whether they approved or disapproved of President Johnson's handling of the situation in Vietnam. The results of this survey showed 47 percent approving, 47 percent disapproving, and 6 percent expressing no opinion.⁷⁰ However, some historians, including Stanley Karnow, point out that this last poll may be somewhat misleading. According to Karnow, such polls fail to mention that a portion of those disapproving Johnson's handling of the war may have felt that he was not prosecuting the war vigorously enough.⁷¹ Considering the validity of this argument, the above poll would reflect even stronger support for an active American involvement in Vietnam.

Based on the responses to these polls, coupled with the information provided by the Penn, I believe that a majority of IUP students supported American participation in the Vietnam War during the years 1965 to 1967.

In the years 1968 to 1970, the Penn provides evidence of a visible shift in the attitudes of IUP students concerning American involvement in Vietnam. In this period, student support for the war diminished drastically, almost to the point of vanishing completely. For example, there were only two letters to the editor written in this period that supported an American involvement in Vietnam. The first was a letter written by Jonathan Langham in response to another letter critical of an American presence in Vietnam. As in previous letters supporting the war, Langham argued that a withdrawal from Vietnam would be an unthinkable surrender to communism. According to Langham, "The fact is that we are in Vietnam. If we leave without defeating the communists, Vietnam will be overrun by the Reds, militarily and ideologically."¹ Also, Langham argued that a continued American presence was necessary, because in reality, the freedom of the United States was preserved by preserving the freedom of South Vietnam.² The second letter, written by John Tomasic, indirectly supported America's role in Vietnam by criticizing those students involved in the antiwar movement. Tomasic implied that many people in the peace movement were more concerned with self-preservation instead of a sincere desire to achieve peace. He asked, for example, "How many are really convicted (sic) to peace and how many are just plain cowards who hide behind their hair and grubby clothes under a peace sign?"³ Tomasic concluded by stating that young men are obligated to go to

Chapter Three

1968-1970

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war in order to defend the rights and freedoms "abused by other people who are not even willing to fight to preserve them."⁴ Another example of support for American involvement in the Vietnam War appeared in a column written by George Gorman. For example, Gorman stated his belief that "President Nixon should have the support of the American people in his efforts to terminate the conflict in Vietnam."⁵ Furthermore, he argued that the Vietnam Moratorium, an antiwar activity scheduled for October 15, 1969, would be detrimental to Nixon's efforts to end the war.

Finally, the only other activity even slightly supportive of American policy in Vietnam was the circulation of a petition in the fall semester of 1970, by the Indiana chapter of the Young Americans for Freedom, asking the government of North Vietnam to release the names of all American prisoners of war.⁶ The YAF, a conservative youth group, was able to obtain over 4,000 signatures on the petition.⁷

While there was a noticeable decrease in letters to the Penn that support American involvement in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970, there was a subsequent increase in the intensity of student opposition to the war, as illustrated by an increase in letters to the editor regarding this subject. Three of the letters written in this period that expressed opposition to the war, were influenced by the Vietnam Moratorium of October 15, 1969. The first, a letter by the Vietnam Moratorium Committee, urged those students in opposition to

the war to increase their efforts in that direction.⁸ Another letter, containing "some thoughts brought to mind by the Vietnam Moratorium," called upon the government to "wind up our involvement in Vietnam as quickly as completely, and as honorably as possible."⁹ Finally, a letter to the editor by Barry Popchack commented favorably on the Moratorium, while criticizing President Nixon's refusal to listen to dissent. Popchack claimed that such criticism was justified since "our President closes his mind to every option save his own predetermined policy."¹⁰

Two other letters to the editor in this period were written in response to "Living and Dying," a poem printed in the February 23, 1968 issue of the Penn, highly critical of those involved in the antiwar movement. The first, a letter by Richard O. Salsgiver, argued that instead of criticizing the peace movement, criticism should be directed at the military and the government since they were responsible for America's involvement in Vietnam.¹¹ Also, a letter to the editor written by Edwin Ridout, in response to the same poem, claimed that the author "doesn't understand that it is the doves and not the hawks who are really 'in support of our boys in Vietnam.'"¹²

It is also interesting to note that the Penn provided evidence of disagreement among students who opposed the war in Vietnam, concerning the subject of an American withdrawal. For example, a letter by Floyd R. Garret called for a

unilateral withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, while a letter in response to Garret by Paul Gray disagreed.¹³ Gray argued that such a plan, if implemented, would lead to "a wholesale bloodbath."¹⁴ As a result, Gray favored a withdrawal of American troops coupled with a strengthening of the South Vietnamese Army.

Other letters in opposition to an American presence in Vietnam were written by Donald J. Mitaratanda and Richard Murry. Mitaratanda's opposition to the war was evidenced by his criticism of Dr. Ralph Smiley, of the IUP History department, who had supported the United States government's Vietnam policy at a campus debate on Vietnam in March of 1968.¹⁵ The letter by Richard Murry was critical of the failed raid on the POW camp at Sontag and of President Nixon's Vietnam policy as a whole. For example, Murry referred to Vietnam as "a wasted war unwanted by the American people" and concluded that "those of us who have pleaded with the President to withdraw immediately, unilaterally now question his sincere desire to end the war."¹⁶

Finally, while a letter by John O'Brien was primarily critical of the draft, he clearly implied his attitude to America's involvement in Vietnam when he stated that "the draft boards of Amerika are just as responsible, just as guilty for the crimes and mass murders happening in Vietnam as the soldier...that pulls the trigger."¹⁷

There was also a slight increase in the number of editorials

and columns opposed to American involvement in the war that appeared in the Penn from 1968 to 1970. While the editorials and columns were addressed to various subjects they contained a common element, opposition to a continued American presence in Vietnam. For example, an editorial entitled "Is War In Vietnam Being Blocked Out," was concerned with the impression that America had shelved Vietnam "into a remote corner of its collective mind."¹⁸ The Penn proceeded to decry the absence²⁴ of coverage concerning Vietnam in the American press and media.

The editorial continued, asking students to support an antiwar

Describing the war, should of course, be secondary to directing all the nation's intellectual resources to ending it. Perhaps this effort at playing down the war details, does in fact, reflect a more basic desire in the American people to get the war over with and then forget it.¹⁹

The Penn concluded by lamenting the fact that "the concert of the 'give-me-some-time-and-sen' policy--will march."²⁰ protest the five year 'give-me-some-time' policy--a modification of the 'give-me-some-time-and-sen' policy--will march."²⁰ passion that formerly accompanied the war issue is dead."²⁰

Finally, one of the most emotional denunciations of the Vietnam War appeared in an editorial rallying students to deal with a vow by "Student Government Presidents and Student support a strike at IUP, following the incident at Kent State Newspaper Editors from across the nation....that they would go in May of 1970. The opening paragraph of this editorial is to jail rather than serve in the military 'as long as the war testimony to the moral outrage arising from this incident, in Vietnam continues.'"²¹ The editorial continued with a

It begins, criticism of the Nixon administration's failure to bring a quicker conclusion to the war in Vietnam, a war the Penn was obviously opposed to as evidenced by the concluding sentences of the editorial. The Penn asked, "How long are we to watch young men perish in a futile, ill-begotten war? How long are

we to watch Mother Courage lose her children?"²² the strike.

Another editorial in opposition to a continuance of the Vietnam War appeared in the October 1, 1969 issue of the Penn. This editorial called on "EVERY student, EVERY faculty, EVERY administration and EVERY trustee," to support the October 15 Vietnam Moratorium.²³ Although support for the Moratorium implied opposition to the war, this opposition became explicit when the Penn referred to "the morally offensive Vietnam War."²⁴

Further opposition to the Vietnam War appeared in a column written by Gregg Kreitz, asking students to support an antiwar march scheduled for November 14, 1969.²⁵ Kreitz's opposition to President Nixon's Vietnam policy was clear when he wrote, "On November 14, those who have the time and conviction to stand up and be identified? If you want to discuss protest the five year 'give-me-some-time' policy--a modification organized, orderly manner; you are invited of the 'give-me-some-time-and-men' policy--will march."²⁶

Finally, one of the most emotional denunciations of the Vietnam War appeared in an editorial rallying students to support a strike at IUP, following the incident at Kent State in May of 1970. The opening paragraph of this editorial is testimony to the moral outrage arising from this incident. It begins,

We've sat back on our apathetic asses long enough. We've watched our brothers, our husbands, and our friends die in Viet Nam while we have wallowed contentedly in their blood. We've seen four fellow students shot down on their campus. We've seen Nixon send Americans into Cambodia by a system which is based solely on coercion.²⁷

Following this litany of grievances, the editorial concluded in Vietnam.

with an appeal to students to peacefully support the strike. The Penn also reported on a variety of speakers, films, meetings, and protests against the Vietnam War that involved IUP students during the years 1968 to 1970. While the majority of these activities occurred at the IUP campus, students were also involved in antiwar activities in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. The Penn recorded a substantial increase in antiwar activities throughout these years. The first antiwar activity to occur in this period was evidenced by an announcement appearing in the February 13, 1968 issue of the Penn. The brief announcement, entitled VIETNAM WAR OPPOSITION, stated,

Do you oppose the Vietnam War? Are you ready to stand up and be identified? If you would like to discuss reasonable options for voicing your opposition in an organized, orderly manner; you are invited to come to Room B of the Student Union at 8:00 p.m. tonight.

The above meeting was followed by three antiwar activities in April of 1968. Two of these activities occurred on the same day, April 3, 1968. The first activity was the appearance of a speaker at IUP, Murat W. Williams, a former State Department Coordinator of Intelligence.²⁹ Mr. Williams claimed that "in Vietnam, the United States is in the wrong war at the wrong time in the wrong place. Our intervention there is a colossal mistake."³⁰ Mr. Williams, a supporter of Senator Eugene McCarthy, was sponsored by United Students' for McCarthy, Indiana University Faculty for McCarthy and HELP in Vietnam.

The second antiwar activity of April 3 occurred in Pittsburgh where Charles Demagone, a twenty-four year old graduate student at IUP, took part in a Resistance ceremony by returning his draft card.³¹ As part of the ceremony, Demagone read a statement explaining his reasons for returning his Selective Service registration card. In his explanation Demagone stated, "I cannot...hide the guilt which I share by being part of the American people; I have caused the atrocities in Vietnam, I have dropped napalm on innocent children, I have killed my brothers on both sides."³² Demagone was accompanied by seven other IUP students who went to the meeting to show their support.

The third antiwar activity occurring in April of 1968 was a film shown in Cogswell Auditorium entitled "I Witness North Vietnam."³³ The film, which dealt with the people and land of North Vietnam and the effects of the war upon them, focused "upon the enemy as part of the human family."³⁴

After a period of relative inactivity during the fall semester of 1968 and the spring semester of 1969, antiwar activities at IUP began with a renewed vigor after the resumption of classes in the fall of 1969. Early in the semester, students found in the September 29, 1969 issue of the Penn a letter by the National Moratorium Committee which began as follows:

Recently, a group of Indiana students have joined in affiliation with the National Moratorium Committee to provide townspeople and university administrators, faculty,

and students an opportunity to reinform and reaffirm themselves on crucial points of the Vietnam War.³⁵ The letter continued by announcing plans for a Moratorium, scheduled for October 15, that would involve activities on the IUP campus and in the town of Indiana. The campus activities included films, the planting of a "tree of life," and the reading of a list of the Vietnam War dead. Activities scheduled for the town included an assembly at the Senior High School, a church memorial service for the dead of the Vietnam War and an informational bookstall located on Philadelphia Street.³⁶

In the days prior to the October 15 Moratorium, several articles appeared in the Penn urging students to support the various activities. One article called on those opposed to the war to appeal to the American people, "sitting behind those closed doors, seething over Vietnam and what it has brought them: death, taxes, inflation, decay, and disenchantment."³⁷

The October 15 Moratorium, when it finally occurred, included the distribution of information on the Vietnam War to townspeople by students, speakers, and participation by about 200 students in "two all-night vigils in 20 degree temperatures."³⁸ The speakers included Dr. Steven Cord of the IUP History department and Dr. David Montgomery of the University of Pittsburgh History department. Dr. Cord stated that "although our intentions in Vietnam are legitimate, our

intervention is impractical due to the high costs in lives and money."³⁹ He concluded by stating that "Americans should force government officials to act now on Vietnam."⁴⁰ Dr. Montgomery, who favored the prompt withdrawal of American troops, agreed with Dr. Cord that "the war is not worth the sacrifice of American lives."⁴¹ Finally, an article describing the Moratorium vigil where a list of the Vietnam war dead was read concluded:

It would take over four days to read the complete list of Americans who have died in Vietnam. One feels the reading should continue at least that long. Those names should be read until everybody gets the same indescribable and intensely personal feeling that something must be done.⁴²

Soon after the conclusion of the October 15 Moratorium, the Vietnam Moratorium Committee of HELP began to formulate and revision of U.S. policy in Southeast Asia, and called plans for a similar activity scheduled for mid-November.⁴³ This demonstration was to be held in conjunction with the "March Against Death," occurring in Washington, D.C., from November 13 to 15, 1969. Activities scheduled for the November 15 Moratorium at IUP included an Ecumenical Service for Peace at Zion Lutheran Church, a candlelight peace march, and the distribution to townspeople of "8,000 leaflets centering on the human and economic cost of the war."⁴⁴ Finally, three busloads of people left IUP to attend a mass march and rally in Washington, D.C. on November 15, concluding the November Moratorium.⁴⁵

Antiwar activities resumed in early March of 1970, when several of the students, Kidout concluded his report by

IUP students and faculty were invited to attend an organizational meeting for Clergy And Laymen Concerned About Vietnam or CALCAV, scheduled to convene in Pittsburgh on March 10.⁴⁶ While no figures were available, the announcement noted that a van would leave IUP to transport any interested people to the meeting. Later in the same semester, a rally and teach-in took place in response to President Nixon's televised speech announcing his decision to send American troops into Cambodia.⁴⁷ The outdoor rally, which took place on Friday afternoon, May 1, 1970 at Flagstone Theater, featured a number of speakers. The first speaker, Dr. Irwin Marcus of the IUP History department, stated that the "time has come for a re-examination and revision of U.S. policy in Southeast Asia," and called Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia "a simplistic attempt to deal with a complex problem."⁴⁸ The second speaker, Robin Maisel, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for a U.S. Senate seat from Pennsylvania, proclaimed to those in attendance that "the anti-war movement has just begun and you are the pioneers."⁴⁹ Other speakers included Dr. Daniel Fine, Martin McGurkin, Mrs. Myron Levenson, Mr. Robert Bernat, Reverend Bill Richard and several student speakers representing the Volunteers, Women's Liberation, and the Black Progressives. Edwin Ridout, a Penn reporter who attended the rally, was highly critical of the student speakers. After listening to several of the students, Ridout concluded his report by

The changing attitudes of IUP students concerning a continued American presence in Southeast Asia, first noticed in 1968, continued with the beginning of classes in the spring of 1971. As in the previous time period, the letters to the editor, columns, editorials, and reports of activities appearing in the Penn, indicate that support for American involvement in Vietnam diminished while opposition to the war increased. However, in 1971 a new factor in the arguments for and against the Vietnam War made its appearance, centering around President Richard Nixon. After his election in 1968, criticism of Nixon's handling of the war began to appear in the Penn, especially after the invasion of Cambodia in May of 1970. Beginning in 1971, such criticism appeared with increasing frequency. Antiwar became synonymous with anti-Nixon and those students who supported the President's Vietnam policy found themselves constantly on the defensive.

Chapter Four

1971-1973

The most vocal supporter of President Nixon, and therefore the most beleaguered, was J.T. Griffith. Griffith was a member of the Penn staff whose column, 'Wright On,' served as the voice of the Young Americans for Freedom, the conservative youth group mentioned earlier in this paper. Griffith

Griffith first came under attack after stating in one of his columns that "the Administration has successfully defused the Vietnam issue."¹ Five days later, Griffith wrote a letter to the editor intending to defuse the criticism generated by adverse reactions to this statement. According to Griffith,

commenting that: itself began on Wednesday morning, May 6,

The rally had moved from an intelligent and worthwhile series of talks on the escalation of the war to an unintelligent and pointless name-calling session, but it probably made the last few speakers feel they were an important part of the struggle for peace.⁵⁰

The next event in opposition to the Vietnam War was a three days strike by IUP students, occurring on May 6, 7, and 8, 1970. The strike, similar to demonstrations occurring on college campuses across America, was sparked by the incident at Kent State where members of the Ohio National Guard fired on a demonstration protesting the extension of the war into Cambodia, resulting in the death of four students and the wounding of several others. The strike at IUP was approved by "a jam-packed Lecture Lounge of students" who attended a special student government meeting held Tuesday evening, May 5, the day following the incident at Kent State.⁵¹ While the students voted to set up picket lines in front of campus buildings, a motion was passed stating that those students who wished to attend classes should not be prevented from doing so. Three points listed as official strike demands were adopted at another student government meeting Wednesday night. The three demands included a protest of the decision of Governor Rhodes to send National Guard troops onto the Kent State campus, "as a political act" with "complete disregard for the possible consequences," a protest of President Nixon's decision to send American troops into Cambodia and a demand for a 10 percent enrollment of blacks at IUP by 1970.⁵²

The strike itself began on Wednesday morning, May 6, with most of the activity located in front of Leonard Hall, where a sign suspended from the roof of the building read, "END the War in Indochina."⁵³ While confrontations occurred between strikers and non-strikers, they consisted primarily of various forms of verbal abuse delivered by the non-strikers in response to the strikers' shouts of "Strike."⁵⁴ At one p.m., the strikers assembled at Pierce Hall for a sit-in where "confrontations (similar to those described above) between about 250 students sitting and possibly 300 non-strikers continued."⁵⁵ Also in attendance, primarily as observers, were "approximately 500 students, faculty members and administrators."⁵⁶ Following a brief talk by Bill Davis, an IUP student, the assembly dispersed with the announcement that a rally would be held at Flagstone Theater at 4:00 that afternoon. At the conclusion of the afternoon rally, which was attended by about 2,000 students and faculty, "a vote was...taken that determined the strike should continue for the next two days."⁵⁷ Support for the first day of the strike, based on estimates of class attendance, varied. One student's estimates reported in the Penn, had attendance in large classes as poor with smaller classes being better attended. While some professors canceled class for the strike, others held class but discussed the war in Southeast Asia and the incident at Kent State with their students.⁵⁸ According to the pickets and organizers of the strike, the number of students entering classroom support

buildings decreased throughout the day.

While Wednesday's strike appeared to have been moderately successful, the Penn stated:

By Thursday morning, the strike had lost most of its impact. Most of the students who had struck on Wednesday had returned to their classes on Thursday. There were few pickets at the classroom buildings in the early morning and those who were there had left by late morning.⁵⁹

Those students who had stayed away from classes on Wednesday, evidently felt that a continuation of the strike would add little to its effectiveness. According to an anonymous student interviewed by the Penn, "The strike on Wednesday has shown our sympathy for the five at Kent. We have shown how we feel. Those 'hard cores' who continue to strike have forgotten the reasons for the strike."⁶⁰ Other students "expressed the fear that the continuation of the strike would polarize the factions in the student body."⁶¹

While most students quietly returned to their classes, the 'vocal minority,' consisting of about 450 students, met again on Thursday evening, May 7.⁶² At this meeting, the strikers voted to extend the strike into Friday and to present the three strike demands mentioned earlier to the merchants of Indiana. According to the strikers, if the merchants failed to support their demands they would be threatened with a student boycott.⁶³ The next day, Friday, May 8, an estimated 200-400 students claiming "that they represented the general student body at IUP", presented their demands to downtown merchants.⁶⁴ According to the Penn, the majority of students did not support

the strikers in this action. For example, a Penn editorial in the May 11 issue stated, "The Penn condemns the tiny minority of students who tried to coerce Indiana merchants in the name of the Indiana student body."⁶⁵ Thus, while the strike had been moderately successful in the beginning, it appeared, by the time of its conclusion, to have lost the support of the majority of students and earned their condemnations. The spring semester of 1970, full of activity for those students opposing the war in Vietnam, concluded with "several carloads and one busload of IUP students" traveling to Washington, D.C. to participate in a rally protesting the extension of the war into Cambodia.⁶⁶

The years from 1968 to 1970, marked by a peak of activity in the spring of 1970, ended on a rather downward note for those IUP students against a continued American presence in Southeast Asia. The only clue to student antiwar activity in the fall of 1970 was a small article asking for student participation in the fall peace activities.⁶⁷ According to the article, these activities would consist primarily of collecting money and signatures in order to support antiwar candidates in the upcoming congressional elections.

Besides opposition or support, the Penn provides evidence of a third category of student activity concerning the Vietnam War during the years 1968 to 1970. These activities consisted of a neutral, more balanced discussion of both sides of the Vietnam debate. Letters, films, speakers, and debates of this

nature were directed towards informing and exposing students to all sides of the Vietnam issue. The only letter to the editor in this category, written by Jackie Fife, contained a letter she had received from a Vietnam veteran expressing his fear that if the United States pulled out of Vietnam, those Americans who had died would have done so in vain. She concluded by expressing her "hope that this letter will give you still another viewpoint on the Vietnam situation."⁶⁸

By far the most ambitious undertaking in this area was 'Vietnam Week,' the administration's firmest supporter of that... aimed at providing opportunities for both 'doves' and 'hawks' to express their points of view and to give those as yet uncommitted on this controversial issue an opportunity to make judgements based on the facts and opinions expressed by both sides.⁶⁹

Vietnam Week, scheduled for the week of March 22, 1968, utilized a variety of activities to achieve these goals. The various programs included films, a folk-rock concert, a debate, and several speakers. Altogether, four films were shown during the week. They included, Time of the Locust, Why Vietnam? a Defense Department film, Ho Chi Minh a CBS documentary, and Good Times, Wonderful Times.⁷⁰

The participants in the Vietnam debate consisted of Dr. James Oliver, Dr. Irwin Marcus, and Dr. Ralph Smiley of the IUP History department and Mr. Richard Davis of the Philosophy department. The debate was well attended with a Penn reporter describing the Lecture Lounge as "crammed with students,

faculty and visitors."⁷¹ Vietnam Week concluded with the War appearance of two speakers, Monsignor Charles Owen Rice, the Pittsburgh priest and a leader of the fall 1967 march on the Pentagon, and James T. Holland, a University of Pittsburgh professor.⁷²

Two other activities, aimed at making students aware of the various arguments surrounding American involvement in Vietnam, occurred in 1968. The first was a debate between Senator Wayne Morse "one of the most knowledgeable critics of the administration's Vietnam policy," and Senator Gale McGee "one of the administration's firmest supporters on the Vietnamese issue."⁷³ The debate, shortly following Vietnam Week, comprised the program for the tenth annual Public Affairs Forum, held each year on the IUP campus. Finally, in the fall of 1968, a discussion centering on a tape of a Rod McLeish talk, "Vietnam--What Price Peace?" was held, with everyone invited to attend and present their opinions.⁷⁴

As in the previous time period, the issues of the Penn printed from 1968 to 1970 contain a variety of articles illustrating the extent to which students were exposed to various aspects of the Vietnam War. Once again, the majority of these items were articles related to the draft. During this period, fourteen draft related articles appeared in the Penn. Also, there were five letters to the editor from student non-students and three columns reprinted from other sources, that dealt with the war.

Two new aspects of the Penn's coverage of the Vietnam War emerged during this period. First, on the local level, the Penn chronicled student opposition to the mandatory ROTC program for freshmen men at IUP. Altogether, six articles of this nature appeared during the 1969 school year. Of greater importance, beginning in the February 9, 1968 issue, with an article concerning the siege of the American Marine base at Khe Sanh during the Tet Offensive, the Penn began regular coverage of the Vietnam War.⁷⁵ The great majority of these articles, which appeared in almost every edition of the Penn, consisted of short UPI or CPS releases covering many different aspects of the war. For example, of three UPI releases in the October 1, 1969 issue, two dealt with the Paris peace talks while the third covered the accidental killing of fourteen South Vietnamese civilians by a United States helicopter gunship. The significance of these articles lies in the fact that after February of 1969, students were exposed to the Vietnam War practically every time they picked up a copy of the Penn. The perception that the Vietnam War was a mistake grew greatly following the dramatic communist Tet offensive at the end of March 1968, and the beginning of negotiations a distinct shift in the attitudes of IUP students concerning the Vietnam War. Support for a continued American presence in Vietnam dwindled while simultaneously, opposition to the war increased drastically. Evidence of this shift in student attitudes was provided by the letters to the editor, editorials, columns, and student activities reported by the Penn in this

period, of which the overwhelming majority expressed opposition to the continuation of the war. There are several possible explanations for this dramatic shift in student attitudes.

For example, by the end of this period the active involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War was beginning its sixth year. Despite an enormous commitment of troops, supplies, and money, a conclusion to the war remained in the unforeseeable future. As a result, an increasing number of people began to feel that a continued presence in Vietnam had become too costly to be justified, especially in terms of American casualties. Although they may have disagreed on the exact logistics, by the end of 1970 most Americans felt that something must be done to end their country's involvement in Vietnam.

A more explicit reason for this growing dissatisfaction with American involvement in the war was addressed by Seymour M. Lipset in the April 1971 issue of Foreign Affairs.

According to Lipset: "The perception that the Vietnam War was a mistake grew greatly following the dramatic communist Tet offensive in February, the cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam at the end of March 1968, and the beginning of negotiations in Paris in May 1968. In effect once the U.S. government had given up the goal of defeating the communists on the battlefield, it became impossible to prevent a steady erosion of support for the war."⁷⁶

In response, 59 percent of those surveyed answered "yes," 36 percent answered "no," and the remaining 5 percent offered no opinion.⁷⁸ In another poll asking college students largely attributed to the above factors.

to describe themselves as "hawks" or "doves," on the issue of

Another possible reason for the increase of antiwar activity at IUP was the continued emergence of several organized, national peace groups. Although some of these groups existed prior to 1968, they became firmly established during this period. For example, the moratoriums of October 15 and November 15, 1969 were organized by the National Vietnam Moratorium Committee, which had chapters at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Similar groups included the Student Mobilization Committee and the National Peace Action Coalition.⁷⁷ The existence of these national groups, by providing ideas, leadership, and a sense of unity, enabled students at IUP and other universities to actively participate in the peace movement.

Finally, while there was a definite increase in antiwar activity at IUP from 1968 to 1970, it is relatively difficult to ascertain the exact number of students involved. However, several opinion polls released in this period provide some indication of the extent to which opposition to the war had spread. For example, a Gallup Poll released in June of 1970 asked the following question: "In view of the developments since we entered the fighting in Vietnam, do you think the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam?" In response, 56 percent of those surveyed answered yes, 36 percent answered no, and the remaining 8 percent offered no opinion.⁷⁸ In another poll asking college students to describe themselves as "hawks" or "doves," on the issue of

Vietnam 69 percent classified themselves as "doves," 20 percent as "hawks," with 11 percent expressing no opinion.⁷⁹

Based on these statistics, the reports of the Penn, and the assumptions in the previous paragraphs, it is apparent that by 1970, many IUP students opposed a continuation of the Vietnam War. However, it is equally apparent that the majority of these students lacked the intensity, dedication, or desire to openly, actively oppose the war. As a result, the responsibility for organizing and attending antiwar activities at IUP was carried out by a small group of dedicated students, primarily consisting of the 200 to 400 students who attempted to continue the student strike of May 1970 into a third day.

Chapter Four

1971-1973

The changing attitudes of IUP students concerning a continued American presence in Southeast Asia, first noticed in 1968, continued with the beginning of classes in the spring of 1971. As in the previous time period, the letters to the editor, columns, editorials, and reports of activities appearing in the Penn, indicate that support for American involvement in Vietnam diminished while opposition to the war increased. However, in 1971 a new factor in the arguments for and against the Vietnam War made its appearance, centering around President Richard Nixon. After his election in 1968, criticism of Nixon's handling of the war began to appear in the Penn, especially after the invasion of Cambodia in May of 1970. Beginning in 1971, such criticism appeared with increasing frequency. Antiwar became synonymous with anti-Nixon and those students who supported the President's Vietnam policy found themselves constantly on the defensive.

The most vocal supporter of President Nixon, and therefore the most beleaguered, was J.T. Griffith. Griffith was a member of the Penn staff whose column, 'Wright On,' served as the voice of the Young Americans for Freedom, the conservative youth group mentioned earlier in this paper.

Griffith first came under attack after stating in one of his columns that "the Administration has successfully defused the Vietnam issue."¹ Five days later, Griffith wrote a letter to the editor intending to defuse the criticism generated by adverse reactions to this statement. According to Griffith,

his statement was justified for a variety of reasons. For example, he pointed out that in the last Congressional elections, the Democrats concentrated on the issue of the economy, not the war, and that "U.S. casualties are relatively nil."² He further argued that the net U.S. strength in Vietnam was nearly half of what it was at the beginning of Nixon's administration and that the invasion of Laos was justifiable because it would hasten the end of the war.

In another column, Griffith discussed the occasional necessity of war, while simultaneously describing the horrors it entails. In an apparent effort to undermine any criticism generated by the article, Griffith concluded with the disclaimer that "this installment is not an attempt to defend or justify this country's activities in Indo-China."³

Finally, in a column appearing in the May 17, 1971 issue of the Penn, Griffith addressed the issue of American POWs imprisoned by North Vietnam. In the column, Griffith asked that letters be written to North Vietnam, petitioning the Hanoi government to treat American POWs according to the terms of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. After listing numerous violations of the conventions by North Vietnam, Griffith attacked the People's Peace Treaty. The treaty, drafted by peace groups in the United States and South Vietnam, called for an immediate end to the Vietnam War.⁴ Opposed to the treaty, Griffith dismissed it as a "blatant copy of communist propaganda."⁵

This column marked the end of any vocal support for a continued American involvement in the Vietnam War. For some reason, by the fall of 1971, visible support for the war among IUP students had vanished from the Penn. Perhaps those students adhering to such beliefs chose to remain silent, thus avoiding the criticism of the more vocal antiwar movement at IUP. country's mess may soon prove to be our personal mess. As mentioned earlier, much of this condemnation was directed towards President Richard Nixon. Such criticism of President Nixon and his supporters by students opposed to the war is evidenced by the content of several letters appearing in the Penn from 1971 to 1973. For example, criticism sparked by the columns of J.T. Griffith appeared in two letters to the editor written in early 1971. The first, was a letter by Peter C. Scott in response to Griffith's statement that the Nixon administration had successfully defused the Vietnam issue.⁶ According to Scott, current events, such as the spread of war to Laos and Cambodia, the use of American aircraft and pilots in those countries, and the massing of 20,000 South Vietnamese troops on the Laotian border, point out the fallacy of Griffith's statement. The second letter, written by Ken Ball, was in response to Griffith's column concerning the necessity of war and its accompanying horrors. In a slight variation of the theme, a letter by Tim Shafer attacked Mr. Griffith's statement that the "would Ball, choosing to focus on Vietnam, argued that children, die to defend the people of the United States from aggression."¹² "ten children to one soldier," suffer the brunt of casualties. In his letter, Shafer argues that the United States was also in a war fought to support a corrupt, unjust regime.⁷

Other letters in this period focused their criticism solely on President Nixon. For example, a letter by William Hale was critical of Nixon and the recent invasion of Laos. Hale argued that students could no longer passively watch events unfold, "since the President is considering the abolition of student deferments," and concluded with the warning that "the country's mess may soon prove to be our own personal mess."⁸

Another letter, written by Heather Lyle, was especially bitter in its criticism of Nixon's Vietnam policy. She began, "In the past four years we have witnessed the genocide of a people in Southeast Asia perpetuated by the Nixon Administration."⁹ After mentioning bomb tonnage, defoliation, and the bombing of dikes and dams, she charged Nixon with escalating the war despite his promises to end it. She concluded:

Nixon and his Administration must not be allowed to continue this vile, racist war. We, the American people, must let Nixon know that we are sick of his phoney peace promises by voting for his defeat in November.¹⁰

She was not alone in her sentiments concerning the upcoming election, for a letter by Jamie Bentley, critical of Nixon for not ending the war, also concluded that it was time for a change of administrations in Washington.¹¹

In a slight variation of the anti-Nixon theme, a letter by Tim Shafer attacked Mrs. Nixon's statement that she "would die to defend the people of South Vietnam from aggression."¹² In his letter, Shafer argued that the United States was also

involved in aggression, since "our planes and ships destroy villages, dikes, and crops as well as the selected 'military targets.'"¹³ Finally, he concluded by stating that "children in schools and hospitals," are "those being bombed by our mercenaries of death."¹⁴

Other letters written by students opposed to a continuation of the war were directed at different issues. For example, two letters written near the end of the spring semester of 1971, asked students to support an antiwar moratorium at IUP, scheduled for May 5. The first letter, by Judy Clark, began, "Once again the cry against the injustice and plea for peace will resound across the nation's campuses on Wednesday, May 5."¹⁵ After urging students to awake "from their deep-sleep of non-committal and apathy," she concluded with the challenge, "Peace does begin with you. Attend the rally and memorial service."¹⁶

The second letter, written by Vinny Dugan, appealed for support of the moratorium in order that students might, "show the people that you want peace, show them that you wo'nt go to Vietnam and lose your legs 'cause Nixon says so."¹⁷ He concluded, "I sincerely believe that you as people will not be able to live with yourselves if you fail to participate in the Moratorium."¹⁸

Finally, a letter to the editor by Lee Schweitzer was inspired by the recently completed trial of Lieutenant William Calley.¹⁹ According to the author, in a short time the Calley

affair will have been forgotten. What will remain important is not what Calley did or even why he did it, but the fact that "the Viet Nam war will continue, people will be killed."²⁰

After appealing for an end to the war, Schweitzer concluded:

began, "We must begin to rebuild the disasters we helped to create. We cannot resurrect the dead we allowed to be killed, but we can save the remaining lives and help them to live.

Thus, I urge you to protest war and killing, through constructive means. Write letters to government officials, and begin your small talk and party discussions around the issues of life and the freedom to live."²¹

In the spring semester of 1971, editorials and columns by the communists, the claim that Calley was a scapegoat, and voicing opposition to a continuation of the Vietnam War the belief that Calley's superiors, including the President, appeared in the Penn with increasing frequency. These articles should have been held accountable for his actions. The Penn echoed many of the concerns and criticisms expressed by students concluded:

in letters to the Penn. For instance, a column written by Rob Innes entitled "laissez faire," joined in the criticism of J.T. Griffith. Innes disputed Griffith's claim "that the administration has defused the Vietnam issue," dismissing it as "simplistic analysis."²² In another column, Innes printed the text of the Peoples Peace Treaty, prompting Griffith's communist propaganda remark.²³

The Calley incident provoked comment from a column and a Penn editorial.²⁴ The column, written by Gregory Kreitz, utilized the Calley case to condemn the military and the continuation of the Vietnam War. Kreitz claimed, for example, that "the purpose" of the military was "to produce killers to kill the enemy."²⁴ He continued by speculating that perhaps

"Calley was convicted to show that America still has a conscience," and concluded that, as a result, "America can go back to business as usual, and kill...kill...kill..."²⁵

The Penn editorial, appearing in the April 2, 1971 issue, began, "Atrocities are taking place continually in the Indo-China War."²⁶ After describing several atrocities, supposedly committed by American military personnel in Vietnam, the Penn discussed several arguments spawned by the Calley trial. These arguments included charges that atrocities are committed by the communists, the claim that Calley was a scapegoat, and the belief that Calley's superiors, including the President, should have been held accountable for his actions. The Penn concluded:

All of these things may be true. We hope it may be significant that a court, and a military court at that, has recognized that horrible war crimes are being committed by U.S. forces. We hope it may have some effect on the ending of the over-riding crime of all: the continuing American effort in S.E. Asia.²⁷

Several weeks after the appearance of the above article, two more Penn editorials were written asking IUP students to support upcoming antiwar demonstrations. The first editorial asked students to attend an antiwar march in Washington, D.C. on April 24, 1971, sponsored by the National Peace Action Coalition.²⁸ After a brief discussion of the antiwar movement in the United States, the Penn argued that "the past two weeks have provided two more incidents to provoke discontent with the war in the 'secret' failure of the Laotian invasion and

The second editorial, appearing in the May 3, 1971 edition

the conviction of Lt. Calley."²⁹ The editorial continued by endorsing, "the peaceful efforts of those people working to push the government into ending the agony of the mistaken we have made for so many years."³⁰ Of greater significance, this editorial touched on a major weakness of the antiwar movement, its failure to generate mass support. For example, many Americans opposed to a continuation of the Vietnam War were dismayed by the statements, actions, and even the physical appearance of some of the people actively involved in the antiwar movement. This was especially true concerning the more radical elements of the peace movement. Thus, the antiwar movement inadvertently alienated a number of people who would have seemingly supported them. An editorial entitled "War and Peace" appeared in This problem, perceived by the Penn, was addressed twice in the editorial. Concerning the war, the Penn noted that "an even larger segment of the American public has expressed discontent, even though some were put off by the actions of the more vocal protestors."³¹ Finally, an appeal for unified action by those opposed to the war, appeared in the final paragraph. The editorial concluded:

Let us decide now that we have had enough, and do something. Even if we do not agree with the tactics or other political views of anti-war agitators, let our mutual disagreement with the war unite us all. Any little thing each of us can do will show one more citizen against foreign injustice. We have carried our cross too long. Let us seek together an end.³²

the four antagonists who signed it."³⁷ Therefore, the Penn
The second editorial, appearing in the May 5, 1971 edition

of the Penn, began by informing students that "today has been set aside, both nationally and locally, to protest the American involvement in Southeast Asia."³³ This brief article concluded with the simple appeal, "please join with us and many others in asking that this war be stopped."³⁴

Following an almost two year period of silence by the Penn, a column and editorial appeared in January of 1973. The column, written by Dan Truxell, criticized recent bombings of North Vietnam and President Nixon's contention that the United States must achieve an honorable peace in Vietnam. He concluded, "If we Americans want peace with honor, then we must realize that each hour this absurd bloodbath and destruction continues our honor decreases without any end in sight."³⁵

Finally, an editorial entitled "War and Peace" appeared in the January 31, 1973 issue of the Penn. While one might expect some degree of elation in an editorial commenting on the end of American involvement in Vietnam, the tone of the article was rather reserved. The Penn began:

200,000 Now that an agreement has been reached to nominally end the Vietnam War, and at least officially bring to a close the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam, many people, including President Nixon, are hailing this as the start of a new and permanent peace, and therefore, cause for relief on that basis.³⁶

While "the Penn agrees that the peace agreement is cause for relief," it cautioned that the agreement was "not...much else besides a governmental public relations effort on behalf of the election, the referendum was approved with 80% of the four antagonists who signed it."³⁷ Therefore, the Penn voting yes and 221 voting no.

argued, the war would continue, along with American support for South Vietnam. After examining the beliefs that drive men to war, the Penn regrettably concluded that "until this philosophy is abandoned, there will always be suspicion and war."³⁸

After Continued opposition to the Vietnam War by IUP students, was also evidenced by a variety of antiwar activities, reported in the Penn from 1971 to 1973. Several of these activities, following each other by a few days, occurred in late April of 1971.

The first of these activities was the appearance of a speaker at IUP, former Roman Catholic priest Tony Scablick, who had been arrested with Philip and Daniel Berrigan for destroying draft board records.³⁹ Several days following Scablick's appearance, two buses left IUP, transporting students to Washington, D.C. in order to participate in an antiwar march on April 24.⁴⁰ The demonstration, sponsored by the National Peace Action Coalition, attracted an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 protesters.⁴¹

Finally, at a student government meeting in late April, a resolution was unanimously passed that "the following referendum be included on the ballot of the Spring, 1971 elections: Would you endorse the People's Peace Treaty as policy for the United States government to follow?"⁴² In the election, the referendum was approved with 806 students voting yes and 221 voting no.⁴³

The spring of 1971 ended with IUP students "in conjunction with nationwide...action," participating in an antiwar / moratorium at Indiana on Wednesday, May 5.⁴⁴ The moratorium began with an afternoon rally at Flagstone Theater, followed by a film, "All Quiet on the Western Front," from 7 to 9 p.m. After the film, the day concluded with a candlelight procession and memorial service for "those human beings killed and maimed--overseas and at home--as a result of the Indo-china war."⁴⁵ The final antiwar activity of the Vietnam era was reported in Students opposed to a continuation of the Vietnam War, were bolstered by the appearance at IUP in October 1971, of several speakers possessing similar sentiments. These speakers included John Froines, a defendant in the Chicago conspiracy trial, and Senators Mike Mansfield and Daniel Inouye. Mansfield and Inouye, addressing the Fourteenth Annual Public Affairs Forum, voiced their support for an American withdrawal from Vietnam.⁴⁶ for the ROTC band. According to the Press, "the Antiwar activities at IUP concluded with two demonstrations in May of 1972. At the beginning of the month, the last in a series of Vietnam Moratoriums took place on the IUP campus. The moratorium began at 8 p.m., May 3, at Flagstone Theater. At that time, Ted Glick, a co-defendant in the Harrisburg conspiracy trial was scheduled to speak, followed by a candlelight procession through campus.⁴⁷ Activities resumed the next day, once again at Flagstone, with a silent prayer vigil from noon to one p.m. by The day ended with live music

and the appearance of several speakers from 1 to 4 p.m. The speakers and their respective topics included SGA President Dave Kolega on "Richard Nixon's Vietnam War Policy," a voiced representative from Pittsburgh Environmental Action ZPG on "Defoliation Techniques in Vietnam," and on the subject of peace education programs, representatives from Vietnam Veterans Against the War and Dr. Gerald Thorpe of the IUP Political Science department.⁴⁸

The final antiwar activity of the Vietnam era was reported in the May 12, 1972 edition of the Penn. The demonstration, by "about 125 IUP students," was held to protest President Nixon's decision to blockade Vietnam.⁴⁹ Similar to past protests, the demonstration originated at Flagstone Theater but soon moved to Miller Stadium, where the annual ROTC awards ceremony was in progress. Upon arriving at the stadium, the protestors occupied a portion of the football field, refusing to move for the ROTC band. According to the Penn., "the ceremony proceeded with little heckling but rather the silent disapproval of the students."⁵⁰ At the end of the ceremony "the protestors paraded off the field behind the ROTC band chanting 'All we are saying is give peace a chance.'"⁵¹ Also, the Penn. noted that the antiwar protestors were themselves protested by "a few students" claiming to represent "the silent majority of students who are waiting to see what happens before condemning Nixon's attempts."⁵² However, the Penn. countered their claim by pointing out that "most of the

students around the stadium...supported the protest but felt that it would have little effect on the war."⁵³ Finally, the article concluded by quoting an anonymous student, who voiced the growing frustration of those students involved in the antiwar movement when she said: "I have little faith in demonstrations anymore. This will probably do nothing but it is important to be here. Maybe the protest is to assure ourselves of our own beliefs."⁵⁴

This demonstration, signifying the end of active opposition to the Vietnam War by IUP students, might well represent a microcosm of the antiwar movement at IUP, especially after 1968. Elements of this demonstration were present in practically every antiwar protest originating on the IUP campus. For example, the above protest was of a peaceful nature. The Penn never reported the presence of violence in antiwar activities at IUP throughout this period. Secondly, the protest began at Flagstone Theater, an outdoor theater on the IUP campus. For some reason, possibly because of its central location, Flagstone appears to have been the focal point of the antiwar movement at IUP, with the majority of demonstrations originating or occurring at that location. Also, the number of students actively involved in the demonstration, about 125, roughly corresponds to the number of participants involved in other protests. Finally, perhaps an important reason for the involvement of IUP students in the antiwar movement, was expressed by the student who said, "Maybe the protest is to

assure ourselves of our own beliefs."⁵⁵

By 1971, it appeared that IUP students were no longer in need of forums, debates, or speakers to inform them of the various issues surrounding the Vietnam War. That would explain the almost total absence of such programs at IUP from 1971 to the end of the war. The only informational programs related to the war were the appearance of two speakers to discuss Selective Service laws in the fall of 1971, and Lieutenant Colonel Bill Carson's address to forty people on "The Why of My Lai and Beyond," in April of 1971.⁵⁶

Finally, on January 30, 1973, an ecumenical "Thanksgiving For Peace" service was held in Fisher Auditorium. The service, held to "celebrate or solemnize" the ending of American involvement in the Vietnam War, was attended by a small group of people.⁵⁷

The Penn's coverage of the Vietnam War and subsequently, the extent to which students were exposed to the war, changed very little in the years from 1971 to 1973. As in previous years, the concern of students regarding the draft was evidenced by the appearance of eleven draft related articles in the Penn. There were also eight columns concerning Vietnam reprinted from other sources and three letters to the editor by non-students appearing in this period. The inclusion of short UPI or CPS releases concerning the war, first noticed in 1968, continued to frequently appear in the pages of the Penn during this period.

In conclusion, evidence provided by the Penn indicated little or no change in the attitudes of IUP students concerning the Vietnam War during this period. The increasing opposition and the diminishing support for a continued American presence in Vietnam, first noticed in 1968, continued until the end of American involvement in the war in January of 1973. However, the years from 1971 to 1973 witnessed important shifts and revelations concerning the Vietnam War and subsequently, the attitudes of IUP students. For example, it is in this period that a transformation concerning support for the war became evident.

At the beginning of the Vietnam War, those who supported American involvement felt that such involvement was not only justified but that it would result in a victory for the United States against the expansion of communism. However, as noted in the previous chapter, somewhere between 1968 and 1970 a profound change occurred. At this time many Americans became convinced that an American military victory had, for various reasons, become unattainable. The validity of this belief appeared to be substantiated by President Richard Nixon's twofold approach to Vietnam. Nixon, seeking a negotiated settlement to the war, simultaneously began the policy of Vietnamization. This policy entailed a slow, calculated withdrawal of American troops, coupled with a strengthening of South Vietnam's military forces. Nixon argued that as a result of this policy, America would achieve a "peace with honor." Thus, support for

an American victory in Vietnam eventually shifted to support for a calculated, gradual withdrawal of American forces. This policy was in direct contrast to the antiwar movement's call for an immediate withdrawal of American troops. Consequently, while the majority of Americans agreed that the Vietnam War should be ended, there existed deep disagreement regarding the logistics of withdrawal. A comparison of two Gallup Polls released in this period substantiates the existence of this disagreement. For example, when asked if the time had arrived "to begin to reduce month by month the number of United States soldiers in Vietnam," 59 percent of the people surveyed answered yes, 25 percent answered no, and the remaining 16 percent had no opinion.⁵⁸ However, when another poll inquired about a plan proposed by several United States Senators for the immediate withdrawal of American troops, only 35 percent of those surveyed responded that they favored such a plan, while 55 percent expressed opposition, and 10 percent had no opinion.⁵⁹ This disagreement concerning Nixon's Vietnam policy may partially explain the bitter denunciations of the President by IUP students, evident in the letters to the editor in this period. The antiwar movement, favoring the immediate withdrawal of American personnel from Vietnam, held Nixon personally responsible for each day the war continued. Thus, the Vietnam War was transformed into Nixon's War, with the President emerging as a target of criticism and contempt for

those opposed to his policies. Also, such criticism may have been exacerbated by Nixon's contemptuous attitude toward the peace movement. Perhaps another reason for the frequent attacks on Nixon that appeared in the Penn was a growing sense of frustration among those IUP students opposed to the war. Years of apparently futile demonstrations and protest, coupled with the intransigence of the Nixon administration's Vietnam policy, contributed to this feeling of helplessness among students involved in the antiwar movement. For example, a U.S. News & World Report article examining the decline of antiwar protests in this period, commented that "even among extremists, there is a growing doubt about the value of antiwar demonstrations-- a feeling of futility."⁶⁰ As an outlet, this frustration was readily channeled into emotional denunciations of the President and his policies. Another trend emerging in this period concerned student reaction to the court-martial and conviction of Lieutenant William Calley. While several letters, editorials, and columns addressing this issue appeared in the Penn, most of them shared a common theme. Basically, these articles had a tendency to view the Calley trial as a secondary issue and therefore, one that distracted the American public's attention from the most important factor, the continuation of the Vietnam War. Also, the Calley issue may be responsible for the accusations in several letters to the editor, charging the United States

with such atrocities as genocide and the murder of children in Vietnam. Evidently, the accusations of these IUP students were shared by a number of Americans. For example, a survey asking, if "the incident for which Lt. Calley was tried was an isolated incident or a common one," found that 50 percent of the respondents felt that such an incident was common in Vietnam.⁶¹

A final revelation, brought to light in this period by a Penn editorial, was the failure of the antiwar movement to generate mass popular support among IUP students. While a majority of students may have opposed a continuation of the war, the number of students actively involved in protests at IUP was rather small. Two important factors may explain the reason for this obvious discrepancy. For example, the increasing frustration regarding the usefulness of antiwar protests discussed earlier, may have led a number of students to conclude that such activities were a waste of time and effort. A second factor that alienated many IUP students from the peace movement was the issue of withdrawal. As previously mentioned, those students actively involved in the antiwar movement demanded an immediate, unilateral withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. On the other side of this issue were those students who favored the gradual withdrawal of American forces outlined in President Nixon's policy of Vietnamization.

Two opinion polls released in this period provide evidence

of support for this policy. For example, a Gallup Poll concerning Nixon's handling of the war showed that 41 percent of the people surveyed approved of the President's Vietnam policy, 46 percent of the survey disapproved, and the remaining 13 percent had no opinion.⁶² A poll of IUP students concerning the invasion of Laos by South Vietnamese and American forces, also illustrated the existence of support for Nixon's policy of Vietnamization. Although 41 percent of the students surveyed felt that the invasion would delay the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, 31 percent of those surveyed felt that this action would hasten such a withdrawal.⁶³ This latter view corresponds closely with President Nixon's justification for the invasion.

This disagreement over the policy of troop withdrawals, combined with the apparent futility of demonstrations, served to isolate the peace movement from a substantial amount of potential student support. This may explain the small number of students that actively participated in antiwar activities at IUP.

In each of the three time periods examined in this study, the Penn provides evidence of various shifts and developments in the attitudes of IUP students towards the Vietnam War. Evidence of these attitudes was provided by the letters to the editor, columns, editorials, and reports of activities associated with the war that appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1973.

Beginning in 1965, the attitudes of IUP students can be categorized as supporting, opposing, or neutral to American involvement in Vietnam. While support and opposition are self-explanatory, the third category of attitudes involved those students not yet committed to either side of the Vietnam debate.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

In the first period of this study, covering the years from 1965 to 1967, the majority of student letters appearing in the Penn strongly supported American participation in the Vietnam War. These letters also provided insights into the beliefs that influenced this support. For example, many of the students who supported the war argued in their letters that the United States was justified in its involvement, since it was attempting to contain the spread of communism. This containment was necessary to prevent a communist domination of South Vietnam, which would result in the spread of communism throughout Southeast Asia. If unchecked in Vietnam, the expansion of communism could eventually threaten the immediate security of the United States.

In each of the three time periods examined in this study, the Penn provides evidence of various shifts and developments in the attitudes of IUP students towards the Vietnam War. Evidence of these attitudes was provided by the letters to the editor, columns, editorials, and reports of activities associated with the war that appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1973. Beginning in 1965, the attitudes of IUP students can be categorized as supporting, opposing, or neutral to American involvement in Vietnam. While support and opposition are self-explanatory, the third category of attitudes involved those students not yet committed to either side of the Vietnam debate. In the first period of this study, covering the years from 1965 to 1967, the majority of student letters appearing in the Penn strongly supported American participation in the Vietnam War. These letters also provided insights into the beliefs that influenced this support. For example, many of the students who supported the war argued in their letters that the United States was justified in its involvement, since it was attempting to contain the spread of communism. This containment was necessary to prevent a communist domination of South Vietnam, which would result in the spread of communism throughout Southeast Asia. If unchecked in Vietnam, the expansion of communism would eventually threaten the immediate security of the United States. This evidence

Disagreeing with this view of events, the few letters written in this period by those students opposed to American involvement in Vietnam, argued that the policy of containment was both flawed and impractical. Because of this, they maintained, the Vietnamese should be allowed to determine their own fate, free from outside interference. The editorials and columns which appeared in the Penn from 1965 to 1967 echoed many of the sentiments and justifications outlined in student letters. In examining the Penn's reports of student activities, concerning the war in this period, one might expect to find, judging from student letters, that they overwhelmingly support American involvement in Vietnam. However, the opposite is true. Antiwar activities involving IUP students substantially outnumber those activities designed to show support for American policy. The most probable explanation of this discrepancy appears to have been the influence of several national peace groups that were developing in this period. These groups provided those IUP students against the war with ideas and opportunities for expressing their opposition. Such national organizations also planned and coordinated antiwar protests in Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., which were often attended by small groups of IUP students.

Also in this period, the Penn provided evidence of a third category of opinion involving those students not yet committed to either side of the Vietnam debate. This evidence

included several editorials and campus activities which sought to expose students to the divergent viewpoints arising from this complicated and sometimes emotional issue. These activities were usually organized by local groups, including members of the IUP faculty, which emphasized the need for information and discussion on American involvement in Vietnam. In the next period of this study, 1968 to 1970, the Penn provided evidence of a distinct shift in the attitudes of IUP students toward the Vietnam War. In these years, support for American involvement in the war diminished drastically, while simultaneously, there is a dramatic increase in the number of student letters and activities opposing the continuation of this involvement.

There are several possible factors which may have contributed to this increase of antiwar sentiment among IUP students. For example, by the end of 1970 the active involvement of the United States in the war was beginning its sixth year. Despite an enormous commitment of men, material, and money, a successful conclusion to the war remained somewhere in the unforeseeable future. As the cost of the war increased, especially in terms of American casualties, many Americans concluded that these expenses far outweighed any justification for a continued American presence in Vietnam. A second factor in this growing disenchantment with the war was the Tet offensive in January of 1968. In the months preceding this major communist offensive, the Johnson

administration had continually released optimistic reports concerning the progress of the war. However, this optimism appeared extremely wishful when compared to the vivid reality of the Tet offensive. While the communists suffered devastating casualties in the offensive, it forced many Americans to confront the unpleasant fact that the United States had made little progress towards a military victory in Vietnam.

Another factor contributing to an increased disillusionment with the war was the beginning of the Paris peace talks in 1968. Once it appeared that a military victory in Vietnam had been abandoned in favor of a negotiated settlement, many Americans felt that the United States should withdraw from the war as soon as possible.

A final factor responsible for increased antiwar sentiment by IUP students was the continued influence of national peace organizations, offering ideas and coordination. For example, the moratoriums of October and November 1969, originated with the National Vietnam Moratorium Committee, which was associated with local chapters at colleges and universities throughout the United States. Such organizations provided an available outlet for those IUP students against a continuation of the war to express their opinions.

The Penn registered little change in the attitudes of IUP students towards the Vietnam War in the last period of this study, covering the years from 1970 to 1973. The increased opposition to the war, first noticed in 1970,

continued until the end of American involvement in January of 1973. However, the Penn provided evidence of several developments during this period, primarily involving those IUP students active in the antiwar movement. These developments included a growing sense of frustration over the effectiveness of protests, the failure of the antiwar movement at IUP to generate support among students, and increasingly bitter denunciations of the person and policies of President Richard Nixon. A common element in all of these developments appears to center on the last factor, Richard Nixon.

Nixon's approach to the Vietnam War was to end American involvement without damaging American prestige. To accomplish this goal it was necessary to achieve a settlement that would provide the United States with "peace with honor." Accordingly, Nixon's Vietnam policy combined continued negotiations with North Vietnam, a gradual withdrawal of American forces, and a subsequent strengthening of South Vietnam's military forces. This policy, labeled Vietnamization, was directly contrary to the immediate and unilateral withdrawal of American troops demanded by the peace movement. The inability to pressure Nixon from his chosen course may be responsible for much of the frustration concerning the usefulness of further protest among IUP students opposed to the war. The apparent futility of protests, combined with disagreement over the issue of American troop withdrawals,

contributed to the inability of those IUP students active in the antiwar movement to generate mass support among their fellow students. As the Penn pointed out in an editorial, a third factor in this failure to generate support may have been the appearance and actions of those IUP students most active in the antiwar movement. The intransigence of the Nixon administration's Vietnam policy, coupled with the growing sense of frustration on the part of those IUP students opposed to a continuation of the war, may explain the increasingly bitter denunciations of Nixon expressed in letters to the editor in this period. Finally, the Nixon administration's visible contempt for the peace movement did nothing to lessen the severity of such criticisms. The Penn's coverage of the Vietnam War and subsequently, the extent to which students were exposed to this issue, many underwent several changes from 1965 to 1973. Perhaps the most significant of these changes occurred in early 1968 when the Penn began covering the war on a regular basis. While the majority of this coverage consisted of brief releases from various wire services, these releases covered a wide range of war related issues and served to expose IUP students to the Vietnam War practically everytime they read the Penn. The extent to which the Penn influenced the attitudes of IUP students concerning the Vietnam War is another area that requires further comment. This involves an examination

of the controversy focusing on whether the media foments or reflects public opinion. In this instance, I believe that the Penn accurately reflected the attitudes of the student body regarding the Vietnam War. For example, in the early period of this study, covering the years from 1965 to 1967, editorials appearing in the Penn either supported American involvement in Vietnam or adhered to a cautious wait and see approach. Not until the fall of 1968, did a Penn editorial express the belief that American involvement in the war should be ended. This shift in the editorial opinion of the Penn corresponds to similar shifts in student attitudes occurring at that time. Another piece of evidence supporting this proposition is the Penn's condemnation of the small group of students who attempted to continue the student strike of May 1970 into a third day. This condemnation, expressed in an editorial, appeared to correspond with the attitudes of many IUP students regarding this event.

From the beginning, the most difficult part of this study has been the attempt to provide some estimates into the number of IUP students supporting, opposing, or neutral to American involvement in the Vietnam War. While it may have been easier to omit such generalizations, I felt that this paper would have suffered from their exclusion. These estimates were primarily based on impressions gathered from the Penn, occasionally supplemented by a relevant public opinion poll. It is my belief that a thorough examination of the sources

¹ Paul Wilson, Letter to the Editor, The Indiana Penn, December 10, 1965, p. 2.

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