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The Underlying Issues

Writing in McCall's about the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962, when the world tottered on the brink of nuclear war, the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy observed:

"We saw as never before the meaning and responsibility involved in the power of the United States, the power of the President, the responsibility we had to people around the globe who had never heard of us, who had never heard of our country or the men sitting in that room determining their fate, making a decision which would influence whether they would live or die."

Recalling such crises that have been weathered and anticipating the even greater challenges that almost certainly lie ahead for the next occupant of the White House, the American electorate has a sobering responsibility in selecting a President this year to look beyond the immediate issues that compel our attention as Americans to deeper, underlying issues involving all mankind.

The problems of "law and order" in American cities and of peace in Vietnam which have pre-empted public attention through much of the campaign are real indeed. But these are only the more overt manifestations of more fundamental problems that present a mounting threat to the security of men everywhere.

Foremost among these basic issues are the unchecked arms race, which diverts massive resources from urgent tasks of development at home and abroad and threatens the world with nuclear destruction in our time; deepening division between the white and colored races in the United States and throughout the world; the widening gap between rich and poor, also a domestic and international phenomenon; and the population explosion, which threatens the quality of life in the United States and the very survival of hundreds of millions of people in less fortunate lands.

Unless the next American Administration tackles these problems with fresh imagination and vigor, no amount of law enforcement at home or peace enforcement in Southeast Asia can save Americans from the catastrophe which threatens to become the common fate of mankind.

Of the candidates, the one who has shown the clearest perception of the fundamental issues and has offered programs to deal with them is Vice President Humphrey. Long a student and advocate of disarmament measures, he has steadily supported ratification of the nonproliferation treaty and has urged further steps to control the arms race and to strengthen the United Nations. He has championed the cause of colored minorities at home and has been sympathetic to the needs of colored majorities abroad. He has sought to close the dangerous gap between rich and poor by advocating extensive—and expensive—Federal programs for the American slums and more effective aid for the developing nations. He has pledged "high priority" support to efforts to increase family planning assistance.

Hubert Humphrey has demonstrated by word and deed that he is best prepared to assume the broad responsibilities involved in the power of the United States Presidency.

For Senate and House

We list below the candidates for Congress whom we have endorsed who come from states outside the metropolitan area. These men seem to us to be particularly outstanding nominees, including some of the finest present members of House and Senate. Asterisks denote incumbents. Our recommendations to voters of New York State, New Jersey and Connecticut will appear tomorrow.

United States Senate

- Arkansas: J. William Fulbright (Dem.)\*
California: Alan Cranston (Dem.)
Colorado: Stephen McNichols (Dem.)
Idaho: Frank Church (Dem.)\*
Illinois: William G. Clark (Dem.)
Iowa: Harold Hughes (Dem.)
Maryland: Charles Mathias (Rep.)
Missouri: Either Thomas F. Eagleton (Dem.) or Thomas B. Curtis (Rep.)
Ohio: John Gilligan (Dem.)
Oklahoma: Mike Monroney (Dem.)\*
Oregon: Wayne Morse (Dem.)\*
Pennsylvania: Joseph S. Clark (Dem.)\*
South Dakota: George McGovern (Dem.)\*
Wisconsin: Gaylord Nelson (Dem.)\*

House of Representatives

- Arizona: (2d Dist.) Morris K. Udall (Dem.)\*
California: (3d Dist.) John Moss (Dem.)\*; (7th Dist.) Jeffrey Cohelan (Dem.)\*; (21st Dist.) Augustus F. Hawkins (Dem.)\*; (22nd Dist.) James C.orman (Dem.)\*
Illinois: (9th Dist.) Sidney R. Yates (Dem.)\*; (13th Dist.) Donald Rumsfeld (Rep.)\*
Indiana: (3d Dist.) John Brademas (Dem.)\*; (11th Dist.) Andrew Jacobs Jr. (Dem.)\*
Iowa: (1st Dist.) Fred Schwengel (Rep.)\*
Massachusetts: (1st Dist.) Silvio O. Conte (Rep.)\*; (5th Dist.) F. Bradford Morse (Rep.)\*
Michigan: (1st Dist.) John Conyers Jr. (Dem.)\*; (12th Dist.) James G. O'Hara (Dem.)\*
Minnesota: (5th Dist.) Donald M. Fraser (Dem.-Farmer-Labor)\*; (8th Dist.) John A. Blatnik (Dem.-Farmer-Labor)\*
Missouri: (3d Dist.) Mrs. Leonor K. Sullivan (Dem.)\*; (5th Dist.) Richard Bolling (Dem.)\*
Ohio: (4th Dist.) William M. McCulloch (Rep.)\*

- Pennsylvania: (22nd Dist.) John P. Saylor (Rep.)\*
Texas: (9th Dist.) Jack Brooks (Dem.)\*
Wisconsin: (2d Dist.) Robert W. Kastenmeier (Dem.)\*; (5th Dist.) Henry S. Reuss (Dem.)\*

False Problems in Vietnam

There are many obstacles to progress at the Vietnam peace talks that warrant serious concern, but several that now dominate headlines are not among them.

One is the claim of the chief North Vietnamese negotiator, Xuan Thuy, that the agreement on an enlarged conference provides for "four delegations, independent delegations with the right to speak." Another is the fear that Hanoi's claim—which implies the National Liberation Front will sit as an independent delegation—will strengthen Saigon's reluctance to participate in the new Paris meetings.

Hanoi is entitled to claim—and the United States to deny—that the N.L.F. will sit as a separate entity. The agreement mentions four delegations, but it also provides for a two-sided conference—with Washington and Hanoi each entitled to invite its South Vietnamese friends and neither obligated to recognize the other's.

The Hanoi-Washington agreement purposely sidestepped the issue of the relative status of Saigon and the N.L.F. because it is the most critical matter to be negotiated at the conference. A long time could be wasted trying to argue it in advance.

Equally meaningless is the talk of deteriorating relations over this issue between Washington and Saigon. The Saigon government knows that it can neither force the half-million American troops in South Vietnam to fight its war for it against Washington's will—nor can it sabotage a settlement and fight on alone with much hope of success.

President Thieu probably is maneuvering to strengthen his political position, both at home and, ultimately, in the Paris talks. He may also have been playing for time, in the hope that a Nixon victory tomorrow would install an American Administration willing to go on with the war in hopes of a better outcome later. Mr. Nixon's offer, if elected, to cooperate with President Johnson in his efforts to get the Paris talks "off dead center" suggests that Saigon will have to face reality in the coming weeks whatever the election outcome.

Prowess in Science

All the Nobel Prizes in science and medicine went to American citizens this year. During the entire history of the Nobel Prizes in these fields there have been 79 American winners as compared with 47 from Britain and 46 from Germany, the two runner-up nations. Since the great bulk of this country's winners received their awards in the period since World War II, the statistics suggest that American scientists have been dominant in the mid-twentieth century.

None of this means, of course, that Americans are in any way more gifted or more talented, as a nation, than the rest of humanity. A good many United States citizens who have won the Nobel Prize were naturalized immigrants who had been born and educated abroad, as were two of this year's winners, Dr. Lars Onsager and Dr. H. Gobind Khorana. Moreover, this country has several times the population of Britain or Germany, so that a fairer comparison might be Nobel Prize winners per million population.

But there are real and important roots of American scientific prowess which need to be understood and fostered so that future achievement may match or excel that of the past. This country's hospitality to refugees from political tyranny and to those seeking to better themselves economically has brought rich rewards particularly in science and technology. The nation's huge investment in education has permitted able young people to develop their talents. Generous Government support of basic research has given the nation's scientists the tools and the material security needed for the realization of their potential excellence. The abundant returns from these policies provide good reason for maintaining them so that American science can continue to flower.

Adult and Other Movies

It should take about a year for the American moviegoing public to see how the new rating system that began Nov. 1 works out. The chances are that the classifications—adhered to voluntarily with no censorship—will serve as a helpful guide for parents. The main reason for the ratings is to let adults know in advance which pictures are so lurid as to be unsuitable for children.

Only one category—the "X" rating—will mean that youngsters under sixteen will be barred at the box-office. The "R" rating will restrict the under-sixteen group unless accompanied by a parent or adult guardian. It is of course to be expected that many a "guardian" will be born suddenly a few feet from the boxoffice; they have been for decades.

The classification system has worked for many years in Great Britain. The British too have two categories—barred and restricted—for children under sixteen. The American motion-picture industry has added one category that the British do not have: the "M"—for mature audiences, with parental discretion advised. This serves as a sort of early-warning system; parents are given the option of judging their own children's maturity.

Sociologists and self-appointed censors can debate to their heart's content about the behavioral effect of sexual or violent movies on children and adults. The British secretary of the Board of Censors has always been more concerned about sadism than sex. Personal judgments will still have to be made by parents, but at least now they will be armed with some knowledge.

The Times Replies to Mr. Agnew's Advertisement

In an advertisement attacking The Times today, the forces behind Gov. Spiro T. Agnew carry to its climax in this campaign one of the oldest of political strategies: When criticized, deny everything, cry "Foul," capitalize on a posture of injured innocence and denounce your critic in the wilder terms.

This is the course set by Mr. Nixon a week ago last Sunday when confronted with The Times editorial commenting on Mr. Agnew's involvement in conflict-of-interest situations in Maryland.

It is the course that has been followed since then by Mr. Agnew, who has sought to give the impression by means of a propaganda blitz that he is the innocent victim of a vicious and irresponsible newspaper attack.

After the editorial of Oct. 26, The Times had no intention of reverting to the question of Mr. Agnew's conflicts of interest, but Mr. Nixon's and Mr. Agnew's subsequent statements required replies, which were given editorially on Oct. 29 and 30. The renewed misrepresentations in today's advertisement now oblige us to discuss this distasteful subject once again.

Misrepresentation No. 1: The implication that Mr. Agnew, as Governor, had no beneficial interest in a tract of land whose value would be enhanced by a proposed Chesapeake Bay bridge route.

Fact: Although Mr. Agnew had, as he says, placed his interest in the land in trust before his election, it was actually sold, for the price he had paid for it, after he had become Governor and after he had helped push approval of the bridge route through the 1967 Legislature.

Misrepresentation No. 2: As Governor of Maryland, he has no authority over selection of the route for state roads.

Fact: The present chairman-director of the State Roads Commission was appointed by Mr. Agnew and holds office at

the rest of his personal record, and by his party's record in living up to its promises.

On the two or three most important problems, the Democratic party's record is unfortunately very bad. I shall therefore vote for Mr. Nixon on Nov. 5, 1968, and expect to have no more regrets this time than after making the same choice in 1960.

HERBERT J. SPIRO
Philadelphia, Oct. 26, 1968

Muskie and Agnew

Senator Muskie represents a state which has approximately one million citizens, of whom only 6,000 are nonwhite. Governor Agnew has an excellent record as chief executive of a state with more than three million population, of whom more than half a million are non-white.

Those who genuinely wish to strengthen the Democratic party should support Hubert Humphrey on the record, with enthusiasm. He led in the transformation of the Minnesota Democratic party from a weak, demoralized organization to one of the most effective and responsible state parties in the nation.

His running mate, Edmund Muskie, rejuvenated the Democratic party in Maine. Mr. Humphrey has consistently supported reform and innovation in the Democratic party, including the National Advisory Council and the reforms of 1964 and 1968.

A defeated party does not reform itself. It dissolves into warring factions as rival leaders seek power not to strengthen the party but to control it in order to win nominations.

Party reform is a continuing project and must go on as best it can, whether the party is in power or not. But it would be absurd to wait until 1972 or 1976 to strengthen the party when Democrats have the leadership and the will to carry on the task now.

JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS
Williams College
Williamstown, Mass.
Oct. 27, 1968

Choosing a President

Professors Bailey, Beer, Rossiter and Schlesinger [letter Oct. 25] are right to emphasize the importance of the Vice-Presidency but wrong, I think, in letting it determine their choice of President.

In 1952 and 1956 they surely voted for either General Eisenhower or Governor Stevenson (as I did), because they preferred him to the opposing Presidential candidate, and not because they preferred one Vice-Presidential candidate to the other.

In 1960, if I had let my choice be determined by my Vice-Presidential preference, I would have voted for Senator John F. Kennedy, since I preferred Senator Lyndon B. Johnson to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. In fact, I voted for Mr. Nixon.

In 1964 I preferred the two Democratic running-mates to their Republican opponents and voted Democratic, and I assume that the four professors did the same. We need not be political scientists to recognize an easy choice, but a hard choice can be confused by faulty logic.

All of our recent Vice Presidents, including the three elevated to the highest office by the death of the men originally elected, did some pretty silly things as Vice President. Yet each of the three after elevation to the Presidency—certainly Messrs. Truman and Johnson—performed outstandingly.

This suggests that neither Mr. Humphrey nor Mr. Nixon can best be judged by his Vice-Presidential performance. Each must therefore be judged by

which have been fully published in The Times. For further detailed discussion, we refer our readers to the news story of Oct. 22 on which the original editorial was based, and to a follow-up news story of Nov. 2.

The Fundamental Issue

In his comments on a variety of subjects during this campaign, Spiro T. Agnew has amply proved his inadequacy for the high office to which he aspires. But he has proved it in his attitude toward the conflict-of-interest situations in which he had involved himself in Maryland. The fundamental issue is not over the details of shades of meaning, or the omission of relevant facts; the fundamental issue is Mr. Agnew's apparent failure to comprehend the importance of the special standards of propriety that are rightly demanded of any holder of public office.

There are other statements in today's advertisement which we question, but the above examples are sufficient to demonstrate the misleading character of Mr. Agnew's denials,

among them voting and majority rule are in themselves distasteful. For most of them, however, a victory by Nixon (and perhaps even by Wallace) would provide proof and justification for their total rejection of American society; it would help them to preserve intact a perversely satisfying alienation and disenchantment with democratic institutions.

They claim that this society is beyond redemption—at least redemption by peaceful means—and they want to do their best to make this assessment come true. A victory by Nixon and the further strengthening of Wallace would go a long way to prove the point; it would also contribute to another cherished goal of the radical-left: the growth of polarization in American politics.

Some of the left radicals say: "At least Wallace is sincere." So was Hitler; so are they. The road to totalitarianism is paved by this type of sincerity.

Let us hope that extremists on both sides have underestimated the political maturity of the American electorate and that it will repudiate their appeals on Election Day.

PAUL HOLLANDER
Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Mass., Oct. 27, 1968

Community Control vs. Decentralization

Much of the confusion surrounding the current school crisis is due to a lack of understanding of the terms decentralization and community control. These two expressions have been so glibly interchanged by the press, radio and television that the public has come to regard them as synonymous.

According to the authorities and experts on the subject as well as according to established practices throughout the country, decentralization essentially means community participation in school policy and planning. A community which pays taxes to support its local schools naturally has to have a voice in determining how its money should be spent. It is quite obvious that this concept is completely unsuitable and inapplicable to New York City, where school taxes are a part of the total taxes paid and, therefore, support all the city's schools, not merely those of an individual community.

Decentralization, as it exists in most school systems of the country, does not aim at usurping the judgment of responsible and experienced educators. Nowhere has decentralization been equated with power—that is, with total community control of the schools.

It has been stated that Ocean Hill-Brownsville has been set up as an experiment in community control. If so it is wrong and misleading to have it sail under the banner of decentralization. If, on the other hand, it is an experiment in decentralization, it must first learn the rules of the game. Ocean Hill-Brownsville has violated the accepted rules of decentralization from the very beginning and has substituted its own procedures. Community control, as practiced there, is not the same as decentralization; on the contrary, it is directly opposed to this concept.

GERTRUDE BERNIS
Brooklyn, Oct. 21, 1968

Letters to the Editor of The Times

A vote for George Wallace is in my opinion a desecration of the exalted office of the Presidency.

MARIE S. JEMISON
Birmingham, Ala., Oct. 9, 1968

For Paul Davidoff

We believe The Times made a serious error in failing to endorse Paul Davidoff for Congress in the 26th District in Westchester. This failure is particularly unfortunate because Davidoff has, in the course of his campaign, made a number of significant contributions to the urgent debate about the future of our cities.

Paul Davidoff, Professor of Urban Planning at Hunter College, has brought to the attention of suburban voters the relationship between urban and suburban development, and the special responsibility of the suburbs in helping to move toward a more equal America.

For example he advocated an end to restrictive zoning laws that prohibit builders from constructing homes that middle-income families can afford.

We desperately need men in Congress who do more than cast a vote for whatever the Administration proposes. We need Congressmen who are alert to new ideas, who themselves create new ideas and inject them into public debate, who have the respect of the younger generation on whom so much now depends. Paul Davidoff is such a man, and deserves endorsement.

LEWIS MUMFORD
Amenia, N. Y., Oct. 23, 1968

The above letter was also signed by Colleen Dewhurst, Ossie Davis, Julian Bond and Michael Harrington.

Left-Radical Motives

The approach of Election Day predisposes to reflection about the arguments of those who urge us not to vote in the name of high moral principles or an allegedly constructive spirit of vindictiveness toward the Democratic party.

I would like to suggest some further motives which prompt left-radicals to favor abstention in this election. For a minority

HERE IN THIS HOUSE

(For Elisabeth)
Under the dark drip of the rain
A ruined world goes on without.

Blow wind at the blind
windowpane
Presses, releases, blows about.

Here in this house where once
we sought
Refuge from sorrow, desperate
love

Destroys itself with every
thought;
Impelled, the old impulse will
not move.

The passion, with pretending,
goes.
All that once mattered,
meant the most,
Is hidden now where neither
knows.

A fugitive in exile lost.
Our eyes, turned inward on
this room
To fix its features, can but
mark

Old moments drowning in
this gloom,
And cold rain dripping down
the dark.

CARLETON DREWRY

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