

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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TIME PROVOKES AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT

In an article April 14, 1961, TIME magazine recommended, among other things, that the U.S. lend Bolivia money for equipment and prospecting for its tin mines on condition that the government fire "5,000 featherbedding miners" and make plans to find other jobs for them.

The article was apparently so offensive to Bolivians that the American Embassy a few days later issued a statement that TIME did not represent the views of the U.S. government and that, under civil liberties in the United States, a private publication could say what it liked about another American state.

In an angry comment on this interchange (reprinted in the pamphlet "La Ayuda americana-Una Esperanza frustrada", La Paz, 1962), a Bolivian miners' leader Mario Torres Calleja attacked TIME on several grounds:

(1) The \$169 million "aid" was largely in surplus articles whose export was necessary for the U.S. economy but did not help build the Bolivian economy. "Instead of coming in machines and tools the American 'aid' came in food shortening, wheat or cotton..."

(2) The "featherbedding" workers "contributed to the production of strategic minerals at a low price and with salaries of hunger in the two world wars..."

(3) The article did not mention the control which the big powers exercise over world mineral markets.

(4) TIME represented the views of wealthy U.S. leaders and it

should be repudiated by the U.S. government in the spirit of the Alliance For Progress. "The case is that this magazine does not have any right to injure another country, to disturb international relations and the harmony of all the countries of the continent."

No Latin American nation has received more U.S. aid than Bolivia, and few have less to show for it. Since 1952, the U.S. has pumped \$169,600,000 into Bolivia, either in technical assistance or outright grants. Yet Bolivia's economy is still near bankruptcy, and its 3,500,000 ill-housed, ill-fed people are never far from revolt. The U.S. is now taking a new look at its aid program in hopes of finding a way to straighten out this discouraging situation.

--TIME 4/14/61

These remarks may seem unreasonable to readers of TIME; yet they reveal the sense of helpless frustration which people in many small countries probably feel in their relations with the United States. A donor country can decide as it

pleases when to give aid and what to give. And by dumping tin from its strategic stockpile on the world market, a large country can lower the world price of tin--an advantage to its own industrial consumers but a disaster for a small producing country where wages are already low. This was pointed out by Drew Pearson in an article in the San Francisco Chronicle last spring:

"...the United States has proposed selling 28,000 tons of surplus tin this year. The calculated world shortage is about 14,000 tons, so that the sale of 28,000 tons--double the shortage--is bound to depress prices. If, on the other hand, the United States sold only 14,000 tons from its stockpile--just enough to meet the world shortage--prices would stabilize at around \$1.80 per pound..."

"Since 1952 the United States has given \$500 million to Bolivia in foreign aid. Part of this would not have been necessary had we stabilized the price of tin at a reasonable level."

INDONESIA: THE GREAT UPHEAVAL

Indonesia has called off its confrontation with Malaysia and is now taking a position more favorable to the West, following the upheaval last year in which hundreds of thousands of "Communists" and "Communist supporters" were killed. The results of the upheaval have been noted with satisfaction in the United States, but there has been little serious attempt to understand its causes.

An analyst wrote in the Christian Science Monitor Aug. 19 simply that Indonesia was now approaching a "rational attitude to the world around it" after having suffered from an "acute form of nationalist madness". Statements such as this tend to obscure the underlying political and social conditions, of which the following were probably of importance:

(1) The upheaval was not so much a revulsion against Communism as a system, as an expression of dislike for governmental programs that were moving too fast in times of hardship. Compared with China or North Vietnam, Indonesia was not at a very advanced stage of development toward socialism.

(2) The upheaval involved a large popular uprising, but it was instigated and probably in large part directed by a huge army purge of Communist governmental officials in Java and Bali. Often the military would execute officials, then leave the victims to be beheaded or disembowelled by the people.

(3) The upheaval unleashed not only hostility toward Communist officials, but also other local animosities: personal vendettas, hatred of successful Chinese merchants, and probably traditional rivalries between villages. Far from being an expression of "rationality", many killings may have been accomplished in the state of "running amok" (violent temporary insanity) which is common in the area. (See Seymour

Topping's article in the N.Y. Times 8/24/66, and an article by Adelbert Weinstein reprinted in Atlas magazine April 1966.)

U.S. ROLE?

The Administration has not commented publicly, but there is reason to suppose it had an important role in the upheaval. According to James Reston (N.Y. Times 6/19/66):

"There was a great deal more contact between the anti-Communist forces in that country and at least one very high official in Washington before and during the Indonesian massacre than is generally realized. General Suharto's forces, at times severely short of food and munitions, have been getting aid from here through various third countries, and it is doubtful if the coup would ever have been attempted without the American show of strength in Vietnam or been sustained without the clandestine aid it has received indirectly from here."

N.Y. TIMES COMMENT 11/29/66 ON PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S SUDDEN DECISION TO SUSPEND GRAIN SHIPMENTS TO INDIA IN THE FACE OF AN IMPENDING DROUGHT:

"...The White House statement that the new drought required a new survey is unconvincing. It does not explain why shipments are being held up while the study is made....This situation leads Indians to suspect that the hold-up may be partially due to President Johnson's displeasure with Prime Minister Gandhi's recent call for a halt in the bombing of North Vietnam..

"President Johnson undoubtedly is hampered by the fact that most American food surpluses are exhausted and normal reserves of wheat and other foods are being run down. But the Administration's failure to increase crop acreage soon enough is not sufficient excuse for the tough tactics now being followed in the Indian crisis."

VIETNAM: "FREEDOM" vs. "LIBERATION"?

In an article by a correspondent of the Collegiate Press Service which appeared in the Stanford Daily Nov. 22, a Vietnamese intellectual is quoted to the effect that the North Vietnamese government offers the Vietnamese people "liberation" while the South Vietnamese government offers "freedom". As a broad attempt to characterize the present war, this statement conflicts with many other reports from Vietnam.

The idea that the South Vietnamese government is "offering" freedom, or personal liberties, does not correspond very closely to the way the government is actually being run. The South Vietnamese press was heavily censored before the September election (N.Y. Times 9/10/66). When a recent issue of Newsweek carried an article on a "warlord" South Vietnamese general, the government itself bought all 4,000 copies that were intended for distribution in South Vietnam (S.F. Examiner 11/27/66). When dissident Buddhists rose in revolt last May, the Ky government put them down by force. Last summer the Unified Buddhist Church appealed for foreign intervention to save the people of Vietnam from "religious persecution" by the Ky government (N.Y. Times 8/7/66).

Judging from an article by Neil Sheehan in the N.Y. Times Sunday Magazine 10/9/66, if members of the South Vietnamese government want "freedom", what this means in practice is the freedom to continue to enjoy their dominant position in society. Traditionally members of the government come from the class of mandarins--merchants and land owners--who administered the country before French rule, who allied themselves with the French and with the Japanese during Japanese occupation, and who now stand to gain the most by allying themselves with the Americans.

To sum up the war in Vietnam as a struggle between "liberation" and "freedom" is to ignore many other important issues. Several of these were

discussed by the French journalist Max Clos in an attempt to explain the broad appeal of Buddhism in South Vietnam (N.Y. Times Sunday Magazine 8/21/66):

SOCIAL JUSTICE. "Buddhism attracts millions of Vietnamese who are suffering from the war. It beguiles the village artisans who subsist with difficulty while the important businesses in the American orbit become enriched by the flood of dollars. It comforts the common peasants who have been ruined by aerial bombardments..."

PEACE. "The Vietnamese, exhausted by a war that has lasted 20 years, want only one thing: peace--and, for many, peace at any price. Vietnam holds the world record for desertions during wartime..."

RESPECT FOR TRADITIONAL VIETNAMESE VALUES. "The Vietnamese watch with horror as all the principles on which their society is constructed crumble away. Previously, the social scale ranked the well-educated at the top, then the artisans, and finally the laborers. Today, the prostitutes are at the top, then the black marketeers, then those in transportation (because of the scarcity of taxis and trucks), and finally the generals..."

If "freedom" represents neither the example set by the Ky government nor the dominant aspirations of people now under the control of Saigon, "liberation" does not represent the full program of North Vietnam or of the National Liberation Front. The N.L.F. stands for unification with the North: many families were separated by the partition of 1954, which was supposed to have been removed after the elections of 1956 which were never held. The N.L.F. has redistributed land and instituted popular education in areas under its control: both these measures have been well received by peasants, to judge from interviews with defectors (N.Y. Times Sunday Magazine 7/31/66).

EDITORS IN NEED!

Meeting to plan for next
quarter: WEDNESDAY, DEC. 7
at 5:00 p.m., International
Center, Stanford.

At our editorial meeting last Monday we discovered that it takes a great deal of work to put out a journal. It takes time to keep up with the newspapers, to write articles, type copy, get it to the printer, and hand out the final product on campus.

This is our second issue and the last for this quarter. Next quarter we would like to put out INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS on a regular weekly basis--but we need people who will write articles, people who can type, people who will help us raise funds.

If you would like to help put out INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, please come to our organizational meeting Wednesday, Dec. 7 at 5:00 p.m. in the International Center (small lounge).

For further information please contact:

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Our last issue cost \$45.40 to print; thus far we have raised only \$22.00. Contributions will be gratefully received; checks may be made payable to Eric Prokosch and sent to Eric Prokosch, Box 5081, Stanford, Calif. 94305.