

Spirit of Washington Peace

The first of two strikingly similar reactions to the Washington Peace March follows after an introduction by Peter Moynihan, a second-year arts student at the U of A. The piece itself is by Tony Czarnecki, a member of the students' council at Iona College, New Rochelle, New York. Mr. Moynihan suggested that Mr. Czarnecki write something for "the University of Alberta community" to inform people here of the deep emotions America's youth are feeling.

"All of the people I shot down were women, old men and children. I don't recall seeing any young men in the village." The speaker was a U.S. army sergeant describing the now infamous massacre by U.S. troops in My Lai, Vietnam. The killing of Vietnamese civilians by American troops is not new—one soldier defended it because "they get in the way."

Thousands of civilians have paid in agony and death for "getting in the way" of the reign of the bullets, artillery, bombs, and napalm that have been poured into "unsecured" hamlets as well as parts of Hue and Saigon by U.S. forces.

Mr. Nixon was aware of this particular massacre several months before he called on the "silent majority" to back the cause of "right" in Vietnam. The torture and execution of smaller groups of "suspects" has long been accepted by many Americans in Vietnam.

Canada has already welcomed over 60,000 military refugees from the U.S. and the rate of their entrance continues to increase. Increasing dissent within the U.S. armed forces is shown by mass circulation of underground newspapers and the Pentagon's estimates of over 70,000 U.S. military deserters this year.

The huge attendance at the recent Teach-in on the American Domination of Canada showed that most Cana-

weekend, we were the people's representatives in Washington and were entitled to all the customary fringe benefits.

We took a cab to Arlington National Cemetery, where John and Robert Kennedy are buried, to walk in the "March Against Death," which was continuous for 38 hours. It was the most unique form of protest I have ever witnessed—and so solemn. 40,000 marchers, each with a candle and a placard bearing the name of a dead American soldier, walked single file from Arlington to the Capitol Building. It was a four-mile hike, and as we passed the gates of the White House, each shouted out the name of the "silent American" who died in Vietnam. My placard, which I will never forget, read "Henry Emil Holder of Texas." It really personalized my feelings of disgust for this indefensible war and reminded me of John Donne's words: "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." Unfortunately, President Nixon could not hear the names throughout the long night; his bullet-proof windows are four inches thick. At the end of the line of march, the placards were placed into 12 wooden coffins, which preceded the march down Pennsylvania Avenue Saturday afternoon.

Saturday was M-Day. We rose early to tour the Capitol Building and visit the House and Senate Chambers. To our dismay, we witnessed U.S. military personnel carting machine guns and ammunition through the Rotunda, the very room where Lincoln, Kennedy, and Eisenhower had lain in state. It nauseated me. It showed the arrogance of power and the mistrust of the people who came to Washington. Don't they know that we don't want to destroy America, we want to save it?

By chance, we met Senator Eugene McCarthy outside the Senate Office Building, and he gave us the sign of

course (to the delight of Nixon's Fascistic Attorney-General, John Mitchell) devoted distorted headlines to this single incident, under pressure from Agnew's anti-free speech mouthings.

We left Washington Sunday morning. On Pennsylvania Avenue, we were cut off by a convoy of army trucks and traffic was halted. The troops left the city with hands raised in a sign of peace. We responded to their gesture of good will. Together we shared a dream.

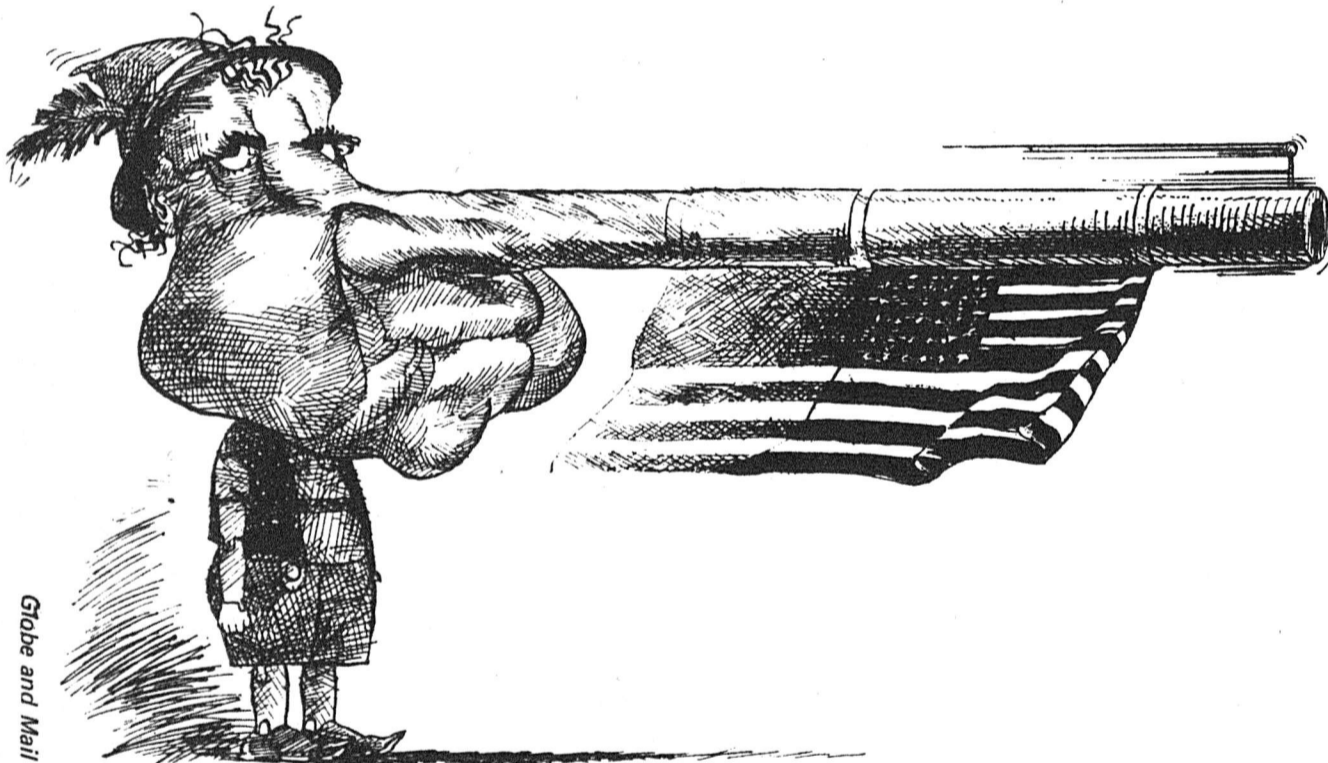
The Nixon administration is playing the politics of polarization. During the Moratorium days, local peace groups in the U.S. distributed black armbands in support of the march, and an immediate end to the war. Counter-groups distributed red, white, and blue armbands in support of the President's tired policies.

After seeing and feeling that unity of purpose and commitment in Washington, I am convinced that the momentum of anti-war feeling is multiplying itself tenfold, but I also look forward to the day when Americans will abandon their black armbands and tri-color armbands and walk arm in arm together to promote a return to the unfinished agenda of peaceful priorities at home. Is that ever possible?

Yours for peace
Tony Czarnecki
Students' Council, Iona College
New Rochelle, New York

That is the dream of our America and it is surely Canada's dream also. I also speak as an American who loves his country while feeling great bitterness at the ever-growing militarism, arrogance, and domination of much of the world by my government. I also seek to know Canada, while hoping, that if I decide to live here it will not be as the only alternative to a U.S. prison for opposing the draft by the unfeeling U.S. military machine. I would not want to be forced to accept the generous welcome Canadians have given to thousands of fellow dissenters who can never again set foot in their home country without risking imprisonment.

Peter Moynihan
arts 2



Now a Canadian joins:

Nancy Perry, a second-year sociology student at the University of Toronto, was a marshal during the massive marches in Washington. This is an edited version of her account, to her parents living in Calgary, of the demonstration.

Dear Family:

I just got back from the Moratorium, and thought I'd write you immediately so that you wouldn't worry.

We were all pretty paranoid about going down. Although everyone's hopes were pinned on a show of non-violent strength, it looked pretty difficult to handle a march of hundreds of thousands of people on something like Vietnam and not have a serious incident of violence.

Also, I had gone down expecting to see a "Great American City" festering with slums and tensions and ill-will towards the "dirty subversive commy hippy" protestors.

So what I got out of it was fantastic in that it was so unexpected. I went down ready to see hopeless frustration and perhaps violence; I found an atmosphere of solemn mourning, goodwill, and perhaps even hope.

This march was really well organized. Part of our fears were the traditional shortages of food, water, cigarettes, sanitary facilities, and shelter. The New Mobilization Committee (or MOBE as it was called) drew on a lot of experience and handed free food (donations) and drink and even handed out cigarettes and Kleenex along the route. Perhaps most impressive was the warm welcome given us by the people of Washington. We could never have done without them. They opened gymnasiums, schools and churches for people to crash. Once a car pulled up beside a group of us and a man leaned out. "You kids got a place to stay?" He had already invited about 15 other kids to come and sleep on his floor. "The door's open, you needn't knock. There's coffee in the kitchen." This was a common experience.

MOBE also ensured that the marches themselves were well organized. For the "March Against Death" on Friday they passed us through three tents to brief us and finally give each of us a placard with the name of a dead soldier or a bombed Vietnamese village to carry. We marched single file, about five feet apart, all through downtown Washington. I stopped briefly in front of the White House, and, as instructed, shouted the name of my soldier. His name was Jose E. Menzales, Colorado, and I was shocked to see behind me about ten people the name Charles E. Menzales, Colorado. It makes you wonder at the tragedy. When we got to the capitol we placed our placards in a coffin. There were 40,000 names—then they ran out of placards. There was a steady flow of marchers for 40 hours solid—a thousand an hour. And all the time they rang a bell every four seconds symbolizing the dead. At night they walked with candles.

Friday night I went to a church service in the huge Washington National Cathedral. The cathedral sits 2,200—simple and restrained—still in the atmosphere of mourning. When they had sung the recessional, no one wanted to leave. Then, spontaneously, we began to chant the theme of the march.

"All we are saying, is give Peace a chance."
It swelled and grew—and in that whole huge cathedral everyone stood and gave the peace sign—a forest of hands,

dians are not apathetic about the survival of Canada. They are very concerned that Canada's power to act independently of the U.S. is threatened by the present economic, political, and cultural domination by the U.S. Canada does share complicity in the Vietnam tragedy by its strange silence, the selling of \$300,000,000 in weapons to the U.S. and its close, outdated military ties with the U.S.

The following is an intense personal account of the November 13 to 15 Washington Peace Offensive written by a U.S. student who was actively involved in it. The events of these three days—including the largest demonstration in U.S. history—were the most significant to date in the rising tide of dissension in the U.S.

Nixon's speech got far better coverage than this happening and I hope this will give the true perspective to the scattered actions against the war in Canada:

The University of Alberta Community: November 22, 1969

"All we are saying is give peace a chance." It seemed like we chanted that refrain for an entire weekend in Washington. It was the greatest demonstration of public disapproval of a continued American presence in Vietnam. People by the thousands converged on the capital by car, bus, train or plane; I suppose almost every college and university east of the Mississippi River was represented there too.

It's difficult to record all the details of such an eventful weekend, but I'll attempt a sketch, since I know you share my sentiments on this bloody war.

Our first problem upon arrival by car Friday night was parking. After circling around for a while, we decided to park near the Capitol Building in an area reserved for Congressmen. The police never gave us a ticket for this illegal move. I suppose they more or less felt that for this

peace as we proceeded to the march grounds. There were signs reading "Effete Snobs For Peace" and "Two Four Six Eight; Stop the Pigs and Smash the State," and "Agnew Eats Grapes," etc. Banners representing every imaginable group from "Veterans for Peace" to the "Zionist Socialist Alliance" assembled for the great parade. It was out of sight and mind. It felt like the Age of Aquarius was dawning.

An ocean of people converged on the grounds of the Washington Monument, our destination point. The rally at the monument lasted five hours, with speakers from "Who's who for peace"—Dr. Benjamin Spock; Mrs. Coretta King; Senators Goodell, McCarthy and McGovern; Arlo Guthrie; Peter, Paul and Mary; Dick Gregory; Leonard Bernstein; Mitch Miller; Dave Dillinger; Pete Seeger; etc. It was incredible!

Later that night we heard that the radical fringe—SDS, Yippies, etc.—attacked the Justice Department to stop the trial of the "Chicago Eight" conspiracy and free Black Panther leader Bobby Seale. They smashed the windows of the building, threw red paint bombs, and ran up a Viet-Cong banner on the flagpole. The Washington police responded with canisters of tear gas to disperse the mob.

Washington on Saturday night was an armed camp. Military police patrolled every block. Federal office buildings were heavily guarded. It was eerie. A group of demonstrators confronted police near Dupon Circle in the business district and went on a rampage. Flocks of young people were running from that direction. The tear gas was swept through the streets by the wind and burned our eyes like acid. Many people needed first-aid treatment. Mass confusion in the business district: streets barricaded, buses re-routed, pedestrians waving down taxicabs. It was an unfortunate ending to a peaceful day, marred only by a tiny handful of would-be revolutionaries. The media, of