

"He Was Sitting in the Center of a Column of Flame"

Malcolm Browne. June 11, 1963

The long, brown joss that sticks that burn at Buddhist holy places and homes throughout South Viet Nam generate a pleasing fragrance said to find favor with ghosts. But the smell of joss sticks is one that I shall never be able to dissociate from the ghastly smell of burning human flesh.

The two odors mingled June 11, 1963, at the intersection of two busy Saigon streets, to create a political explosion, the effects of which are still felt in Washington and elsewhere. I was there, and it happened like this:

On Monday, June 10, I got a telephone call at my office from a young Buddhist monk named Thich Duc Nghiep whom I had known some time. Duc Nghiep became well known to Western newsmen later as official press spokesman for the Buddhist rebels, by virtue of his fairly fluent English. At this writing, he is in the United States studying for a master's degree in comparative religion.

"We shall hold a meeting tomorrow morning at eight A.M.," Duc Nghiep said. "I would advise you to come. Something very important may happen."

For nearly a month, top Buddhist monks had been holding marching street demonstrations and hunger strikes in Saigon, all aimed at wringing concessions from the authoritarian Ngo Dinh Diem regime. Demands included one for government permission to fly the five-colored Buddhist flag in public. The Buddhists also wanted an end of alleged government favoritism to Catholics, an end to arbitrary police arrests, and "social justice for the nation."

The whole thing had been touched off on Tuesday, May 8, 1963, when Buddhists observing the birthday of Buddha were forbidden to fly their flag in the streets. A pagoda protest meeting organized by the powerful young monk Thich Tri Quang had been tape recorded, and the Buddhists demanded permission to broadcast their recording on the local government radio station. Permission was denied, and several thousand Buddhist marchers led by monks headed from Hue's Tu Dam Pagoda for the radio station in the center of town.

As the marchers approached the radio station and surged around its entrance, the local military commander, a major named Dang Sy, had a bad case of jitters. He ordered troops and armored cars to move in. Several grenades, apparently thrown by trigger-happy soldiers, exploded in the midst of the crowd. A few of the marchers (including children) were crushed under the tracks of the armored vehicles. Eight persons were killed on the spot, and, of the scores wounded, several died later.

The people who died in the Hue incident became the first of the Buddhist martyrs in what was to come a fierce struggle to destroy Ngo Dinh Diem and his family.

The Diem government, rather than back down, applied increasingly harsh measures against the Hue Buddhists, and the pleasant little city on the banks of the Perfume River became an armed camp. In another incident later in the summer, marchers with arms folded were blocked at a street barricade, and staged a sit-in on the pavement. Troops dispersed them by hurling glass containers of acid, which splashed over demonstrators and sent more than seventy of them to the hospital.

The masses of the nation were stirring, and the showdown was nearing.

In Saigon, demonstrations by monks during the first month after the Hue incident were orderly and staged with military precision. Monks would converge at key parks around the in taxicabs and bicycle taxis with such perfect timing that formations of three or four hundred saffron-robed Buddhists appeared to materialize from thin air, under the noses of security police.

Street marches, especially on Tuesdays, became so frequent they appeared to be losing their impact. Tuesday was the day of choice, because the ascension of the spirits of the dead from the Hue incident was said to be marked by seven-day intervals, and the victims had died on a Tuesday.

Some time in late May, one of the English-speaking monks at the cluster of concrete buildings known as An Quang Pagoda had given a visitor a piece of blood-chilling intelligence. He said that two monks were planning to commit suicide publicly in support of Buddhist demands—one by disembowelment and the other by burning. The Buddhist high command (consisting of about ten top monks, including Tri Quang) had not yet authorized the suicides but was considering them, the informant said. Nothing further was said about this plan, and many people wrote it off as an idle threat, on grounds that the nonviolent Buddhist faith would never condone suicide.

But something special was in the air the morning of June 11.

I arrived about a quarter to eight at the small pagoda off Phan Dinh Phung Street where I had been advised to go. The concrete pagoda building was set in about thirty yards from the street with a muddy alleyway as an entrance. In the rear was a small courtyard, jammed with yellow-robed monks and gray-robed nuns. Loudspeakers nailed to trees and corners of the pagoda building were blaring in rapid Vietnamese.

More monks and nuns, all of them standing, were jammed in the main pagoda room, where another loudspeaker was howling.

I was shown to an alcove in which a large, gilded Buddha statue stood, and asked to sit down at a low table. Six or eight women wearing the white dress of mourning were busy preparing tea. One of them brought me a steaming glass cup of tea, and tried to smile politely, although tears were coursing down her face.

My monk informant, Thich Due Nghiep, spotted me and came over. He whispered in my ear, "I advise you to stay until the very end of this, because I think something very important will happen."

At exactly eight o'clock, the jabber of Vietnamese from the loudspeakers stopped and the chanting of prayer began. One monk led the chanting with a microphone and another one next to him kept time, beating rhythmically on a gourd.

"*Na Mo A Di Da Phat*," the ancient prayer begins, each word equally accented on the same monotonous note.

It is the most hypnotic kind of chant I have ever heard, and on that hot June morning, clouds of incense in the air, I found even myself affected. All the monks and nuns joined the that chant, quietly at first, then with rising, hammering volume, as the verses were repeated over and over, the tempo speeding up slightly.

Eyes all around me were fixed straight ahead, almost glazed in the absorption of fervor. But at exactly 9 A.M. it stopped.

Monks and nuns, who apparently had drilled their procedure many times, lined up in the alleyway, moving out into the street in two ranks. Some unfurled banners in Vietnamese and English calling on the government to answer the Buddhist demands. In a minute or two, the procession of 350 or so monks and nuns was formed and moving. At its head was an innovation in the street marches—a gray sedan with four or five monks riding inside. It seemed strange to me at the time that monks were now riding instead of walking.

Police ahead of the procession cleared the streets as usual, keeping clear of the marchers, and not interfering, except to shunt traffic and crowds away from the line of march. Preceding the Buddhist car by about a half-block, a white police jeep kept pace. At the time, the main crackdown on Buddhists by government officials was in Central Viet Nam, not the Saigon area.

People leaned from shop windows along Phan Dinh Phung, and children stared at the passing procession.

The marchers reached the intersection of Le Van Duyet Street, one of the most important boulevards in Saigon, always jammed with heavy traffic. On one corner of the intersection stood the massive, gray Cambodian consulate building, with its stone lion statue. On two other corners were apartment buildings, and on the fourth corner, an Esso service station. At precisely the center of the intersection, the Buddhist car stopped, apparently stalled. The police jeep was already halfway down the next block.

The marchers began to move past the car, and then abruptly turned left into Le Van Duyet, quickly forming a circle about thirty feet in diameter, of which the car formed a link. It was now nearly 9:20 A.M.

The monks in the car had gotten out, and one of them had opened its hood. From inside, he pulled a five-gallon gasoline can made of translucent plastic, filled to the brim with pink gasoline. Three other monks were walking from the car side by side to the center of the circle. One of them placed a small brown cushion on the pavement, and the monk in the center sat down on it, crossing his legs in the traditional position of Buddhist meditation known as the "lotus posture." This monk was the Venerable Thich Quang Duc, destined to be known throughout the world as the primary saint of modern Vietnamese Buddhism.

The three monks exchanged a few quiet words. The two who had flanked Quang Duc brought the gasoline container quickly to the center of the circle, and poured most of it over the bowed head and shoulders of the seated monk.

The monks stepped back, leaving the gasoline can next to the seated man. From about twenty feet away, I could see Quang Duc move his hands slightly in his lap striking a match. In a flash, he was sitting in the center of a column of flame, which engulfed his entire body. A wail of horror rose from the monks and nuns, many of whom prostrated themselves in the direction of the flames.

From time to time, a light breeze pulled the flames away from Quang Duc's face. His eyes were closed, but these features were twisted in apparent pain. He remained upright, his hands folded in his lap, for nearly ten minutes as the flesh burned from his head and body. The reek of gasoline smoke and burning flesh hung over the intersection like a pall.

Finally, Quang Duc fell backward, his blackened legs kicking convulsively for a minute or so. Then he went still, and the flames gradually subsided.

While the monk burned, other monks stood in positions at all four entrances to the intersection, holding banners reading: A Buddhist Priest Burns for Buddhist Demands.

City police at first watched in stunned horror, and then began running around aimlessly outside the circle of Buddhists. One of them radioed headquarters, and three or four fire trucks arrived with a platoon of helmeted riot police carrying fixed bayonets. The riot police charged down the street in a wave, but stopped short in confusion a few yards from the circle. As the fire trucks moved down the street, several monks leaped in front of their wheels, and other monks chocked themselves behind the rear wheels, making movement impossible without crushing someone.

All the while, leading monks with portable electric loudspeakers harangued onlookers, both in Vietnamese and English, with a highly emotional explanation as to why the suicide had taken place.

A black delivery truck with large Buddhist flags painted on its sides arrived, and monks unloaded a wooden coffin. The flames by now were completely out, and monks tried to transfer the charred body to the coffin. But its splayed arms and legs were rigid, and could not be forced into the box.

Seven monks shed their saffron robes (wearing brown robes underneath) and made a kind of sling to carry the body. The circle broke and formed into a procession once again, the body at its head. Marching a few blocks more, the group arrived at Xa Loi Pagoda, the main Buddhist pagoda in South Viet Nam, where a bell was tolling mournfully from the concrete tower. It was 10 A.M. sharp, and the demonstration was finished.

Quang Duc was the first of the Buddhist monks to die by fiery suicide the summer of 1963. He also was the only one to die with such elaborate public trappings. The other suicides all were sprung by surprise without processions. In Saigon, one young monk arrived in a taxi at Saigon's central market place, walked to the center of the traffic circle, and set himself afire. Three American newsmen attempting to photograph the incident were badly beaten by police. Another young monk, his clothing apparently impregnated with gasoline in advance, lay on a street corner facing Saigon Cathedral one bright Sunday morning, as Catholic worshippers were coming for mass. A policeman tried to beat out the flames, but without success.

Two monks in Hue burned themselves to death inside their barricaded pagoda, with no outsiders as witnesses. Another monk burned to death in front of a soldier's memorial, completely alone, in the coastal town of Phan Thiet. And a thirty three-year-old nun died in flames near her pagoda outside another coastal town, the seaside resort of Nha Trang. In all, seven died, all with the blessings of the Buddhist high command.

Thich Quang Duc's body was taken for cremation at the Buddhist cemetery just outside Saigon, and monks in charge of burning the body claimed that Quang Duc's heart would not burn. A singed piece of meat purported to be the heart was preserved in a glass chalice and became an object of worship.

Quang Duc's ashes were distributed to pagodas throughout the country. The yellow robes in which his body had been carried were cut into tiny swatches and distributed to Buddhist followers everywhere. Pinned to shirts and dresses, these bits of cloth were thought to have miraculous healing properties, and also were symbols of the Buddhist uprising against the government. At one point, police tried to crack down on the wearers of the yellow cloth, but there were too many of them.

Tidings of miracles spread throughout the land. In the evening sky over Saigon, thousands said they could see the weeping face of the Buddha in the clouds. Traffic was jammed everywhere as crowds of people stood gazing into the sky.

Tens of thousands of followers poured through Xa Loi Pagoda each day to worship before the heart in the glass chalice.

THE MARSHALL PLAN SPEECH – GEORGE C MARSHALL

When Secretary of State Marshall accepted an invitation from Harvard University to receive an honorary degree during the first week in June 1947, the State Department informed the president of the Alumni Association that Marshall would make a speech for the afternoon meeting of the Harvard Alumni Association but that Marshall did not want it to be a major speech of the occasion. There were no discussions with representatives of other governments; there were no notifications of the American press that an important speech was to be delivered, and even Harvard President James B. Conant did not expect a major address from General Marshall. The speech was drafted by Chip Bohlen, a Russia specialist and interpreter who used memoranda from the Director of the Policy Planning Staff George F. Kennan and from Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs William Clayton. Bohlen especially benefited from Clayton's graphic oral descriptions of Europe's situation. In the memorandum he wrote, "Millions of people in the cities are slowly starving," if the standard of living continued to deteriorate, "there will be revolution."

On the day of the speech the capacity crowd of 15,000 in Harvard Yard did not expect to see history made but simply to see one of the most admired public servants in America. However when Secretary Marshall began to read his speech there was a recognition that the carefully worded remarks on the political and economic crisis in Europe marked an important event. In that speech, Marshall outlined the need for an economic aid plan to help the devastated nations of Europe and their citizens to recover from the ravages of World War II. When Marshall said, "It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace," the Secretary of State committed the United States to consider a European recovery plan that would be developed by the Europeans and presented to the United States. Thus was launched The Marshall Plan for which George C. Marshall would be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Speech

I need not tell you gentlemen that the world situation is very serious. That must be apparent to all intelligent people. I think one difficulty is that the problem is one of such enormous complexity that the very mass of facts presented to the public by press and radio make it exceedingly difficult for the man in the street to reach a clear appraisal of the situation. Furthermore, the people of this country are distant from the troubled areas of the earth and it is hard for them to comprehend the plight and consequent reactions of the long-suffering peoples, and the effect of those reactions on their governments in connection with our efforts to promote peace in the world.

In considering the requirements for the rehabilitation of Europe the physical loss of life, the visible destruction of cities, factories, mines and railroads was correctly estimated, but it has become obvious during recent months that this visible destruction was probably less serious than the dislocation of the entire fabric of European economy. For the past ten years conditions have been highly abnormal. The feverish preparation for war and the more feverish maintenance of the war effort engulfed all aspects of national economies. Machinery has fallen into disrepair or is entirely obsolete. Under the arbitrary and destructive Nazi rule, virtually every possible enterprise was geared into the German war machine. Long-standing commercial ties, private institutions, banks, insurance companies and shipping companies disappeared, through loss of capital, absorption through nationalization or by simple destruction. In many countries, confidence in the local currency has been severely shaken. The breakdown of the business structure of Europe during the war was complete. Recovery has been seriously retarded by the fact that two years after the close of hostilities a peace settlement with Germany and Austria has not been agreed upon. But even given a more prompt solution of these difficult problems, the rehabilitation of the economic structure of Europe quite evidently will require a much longer time and greater effort than had been foreseen.

There is a phase of this matter which is both interesting and serious. The farmer has always produced the foodstuffs to exchange with the city dweller for the other necessities of life. This division of labor is the basis of modern civilization. At the present time it is threatened with breakdown. The town and city industries are not producing adequate goods to exchange with the food-producing farmer. Raw materials and fuel are in short supply. Machinery is lacking or worn out. The farmer of the peasant cannot find the goods for sale which he desires to purchase. So the sale of his farm produce for money which he cannot use seems to him an unprofitable transaction. He, therefore, has withdrawn many fields from crop cultivation and is using them for grazing. He feeds more grain to stock and finds for himself and his family an ample supply of food, however short he may be on clothing and the other ordinary gadgets of civilization. Meanwhile people in the cities are short of food and fuel. So the governments are forced to use their foreign money and credits to procure these necessities abroad. This process exhausts funds which are urgently needed for reconstruction. This a very serious situation is rapidly developing which bodes no good for the world. The modern system of the division of labor upon which the exchange of products is based is in danger of breaking down.

The truth of the matter is that Europe's requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products—principally from America—are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help, or face economic, social and political deterioration of a very grave character.

The remedy lies in breaking the vicious circle and restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole. The manufacturer and the farmer throughout wide areas must be able and willing to exchange their products for currencies the continuing value of which is not open to question.

Aside from the demoralizing effect on the world at large and the possibilities of disturbances arising as a result of the desperation of the people concerned, the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all. It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. Such assistance, I am convinced, must not be on a peace-meal basis as various crises develop. Any assistance that this Government may render in the future should provide a cure rather than a mere palliative. Any government that is willing to assist in the task of recovery will find full cooperation, I am sure, on the part of the United States Government. Any government which maneuvers to block the recovery of other countries cannot expect help from us. Furthermore, governments, political parties or groups which seek to perpetuate human misery in order to profit therefrom politically or otherwise will encounter the opposition of the United States.

It is already evident that, before the United States Government can proceed much further in its efforts to alleviate the situation and help start the European world on its way to recovery, there must be some agreement among the countries of Europe as to the requirements of the situation and the part those countries themselves will take in order to give proper effect to whatever action might be undertaken by this Government. It would be neither fitting nor efficacious for this Government to undertake to draw up unilaterally a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically. This is the business of the Europeans. The initiative, I think, must come from Europe. The role of this country should consist of friendly aid in the drafting of a European program and of later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so. The program should be a joint one, agreed to by a number, if not all European nations.

An essential part of any successful action on the part of the United States is an understanding on the part of the people of America of the character of the problem and the remedies to be applied. Political passion and prejudice should have no part. With foresight, and a willingness on the part of our people to face up to the vast responsibility which history has clearly placed upon our country, the difficulties I have outlined can and will be overcome.

John Foster Dulles -- The Strategy of Massive Retaliation

*Speech of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles before the Council on Foreign Relations
January 12, 1954*

It is now nearly a year since the Eisenhower administration took office. During that year I have often spoken of various parts of our foreign policies. Tonight I should like to present an overall view of those policies which relate to our security.

First of all, let us recognize that many of the preceding foreign policies were good. Aid to Greece and Turkey had checked the Communist drive to the Mediterranean. The European Recovery Program [Marshall Plan] had helped the peoples of Western Europe to pull out of the postwar morass. The Western powers were steadfast in Berlin and overcame the blockade with their airlift. As a loyal member of the United Nations, we had reacted with force to repel the Communist attack in Korea. When that effort exposed our military weakness, we rebuilt rapidly our military establishment. We also sought a quick build up of armed strength in Western Europe.

These were the acts of a nation which saw the danger of Soviet communism; which realized that its own safety was tied up with that of others; which was capable of responding boldly and promptly to emergencies. These are precious values to be acclaimed. Also, we can pay tribute to congressional bipartisanship which puts the nation above politics.

But we need to recall that what we did was in the main emergency action, imposed on us by our enemies.... We live in a world where emergencies are always possible, and our survival may depend upon our capacity to meet emergencies. Let us pray that we shall always have that capacity. But, having said that, it is necessary also to say that emergency measures - however good for the emergency - do not necessarily make good permanent policies. Emergency measures are costly; they are superficial; and they imply that the enemy has the initiative. They cannot be depended on to serve our long-time interests.

This "long time" factor is of critical importance. The Soviet Communists are planning for what they call "an entire historical era," and we should do the same. They seek, through many types of maneuvers, gradually to divide and weaken the free nations by overextending them in efforts which, as Lenin put it, are "beyond their strength, so that they come to practical bankruptcy." Then, said Lenin, "our victory is assured." Then, said Stalin, will be "the moment for the decisive blow." In the face of this strategy, measures cannot be judged adequate merely because they ward off an immediate danger. It is essential to do this, but it is also essential to do so without exhausting ourselves.

When the Eisenhower administration applied this test, we felt that some transformations were needed. It is not sound military strategy permanently to commit U.S. land forces to Asia to a degree that leaves us no strategic reserves. It is not sound economics, or good foreign policy to support permanently other countries, for in the long run, that creates as much ill will as good will. Also, it is not sound to become permanently committed to military expenditures so vast that they lead to "practical bankruptcy."

Change was imperative to assure the stamina needed for permanent security. But it was equally imperative that change should be accompanied by understanding of our true purposes. Sudden and spectacular change had to be avoided. Otherwise, there might have been a panic among our friends and miscalculated aggression by our enemies. We can, I believe, make a good report in these respects. We need allies and collective security. Our purpose is to make these relations more effective, less costly. This can be done by placing more reliance on deterrent power and less dependence on local defensive power.

This is accepted practice so far as local communities are concerned. We keep locks on our doors, but we do not have an armed guard in every home. We rely principally on a community security system so well equipped to punish any who break in and steal that, in fact, would-be aggressors are generally deterred. That is the modern way of getting maximum protection at a bearable cost. What the Eisenhower administration seeks is a similar international security system. We want, for ourselves and the other free nations, a maximum deterrent at a bearable cost.

Local defense will always be important. But there is no local defense which alone will contain the mighty landpower of the Communist world. Local defenses must be reinforced by the further deterrent of massive retaliatory power. A potential aggressor must know that he cannot always prescribe battle conditions that suit him. Otherwise, for example, a potential aggressor, who is glutted with manpower, might be tempted to attack in confidence that resistance would be confined to manpower. He might be tempted to attack in places where his superiority was decisive.

The way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and with means of its own choosing. So long as our basic policy concepts were unclear, our military leaders could not be selective in building our military power. If an enemy could pick his time and place and method of warfare - and if our policy was to remain the traditional one of meeting aggression by direct and local opposition - then we needed to be ready to fight in the Arctic and in the Tropics; in Asia, the Near East, and in Europe; by sea, by land, and by air; with old weapons and with new weapons....

But before military planning could be changed, the President and his advisers, as represented by the National Security Council, had to take some basic policy decisions. This has been done. The basic decision was to depend primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our choosing. Now the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff can shape our military establishment to fit what is our policy, instead of having to try to be ready to meet

the enemy's many choices. That permits of a selection of military means instead of a multiplication of means. As a result, it is now possible to get, and share, more basic security at less cost....

(Department of State Bulletin)

War Powers Act of 1973

Updated: June 29, 2011

Ever since the United States was formed, there has been a tension over who controls the use of force. While the Constitution formally lodges the power to declare war in the hands of Congress, it just as firmly declares the president to be the commander in chief of the nation's armed forces.

In practice, more power has lodged in the White House than on Capitol Hill. Scholars have estimated that presidents have dispatched forces abroad between 120 and 200 times, but Congress has only formally declared war on five occasions: the War of 1812, the Spanish-American War, the Mexican-American War and the two World Wars.

The debate became particularly pointed during the Vietnam War, another undeclared conflict. The belief that Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon had exceeded their authority to commit troops without Congressional action led to the adoption of the War Powers Act in 1973.

The law requires the president to notify Congress in a timely fashion when American troops are being sent abroad with a strong probability that they will engage in combat. It calls for the troops to be removed from foreign territory within 60 days unless Congress explicitly gives approval for them to remain.

In practice, the law has done little to rein in the power of presidents, who have usually gone to Congress for authorization prior to the use of force when they felt they had the votes, and have often just gone ahead without authorization when they thought they didn't. And even the resolutions have generally been vague enough for critics to complain that they left the president a free hand.

But in June 2011, an unusually bitter conflict arose over the American role in the Nato-led air campaign in Libya, as the House passed a resolution declaring that the mission, then past the 60 day mark, had not been authorized.

On June 24, the House resoundingly defeated a bipartisan resolution that would have authorized the mission for a year, in a sharp rebuke to Mr. Obama, as 70 Democrats deserted him on the vote. But a Republican measure that would have severely limited the American role by limiting funds also failed, with 89 Republicans voting against it.

The message – a bipartisan muddle – reflected both a nation weary of wars, divisions across party and geographic lines, and a Congress that dislikes having its powers usurped by the executive branch.

The White House had argued that the activities of United States military forces in Libya do not amount to full-blown “hostilities” at the level necessary to involve the section of the War Powers Resolution that imposes the deadline. President Obama, a constitutional scholar, had overruled the opinions of top lawyers at the Pentagon and the Justice Department, who said that the mission fell under the act.

House Resolutions

Liberal Democrats and the Republican leadership responded by preparing measures that would limit financing for the American military efforts in Libya, using the chamber's appropriations power to push back against the White House. At the same, supporters moved forward with a bill giving the president permission to continue.

That resolution, which was based on a Senate measure introduced Tuesday by Senators John Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts, and John McCain, Republican of Arizona, failed 295 to 123

A measure, sponsored by Representative Thomas Rooney, Republican of Florida, would prohibit the use of money for military operations in Libya and would allow financing only for support operations like search and rescue, aerial refueling, operational planning, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance – essentially requiring an end to direct American combat activity like missile strikes. The measure, which had the support of Republican leadership, was intended to severely limit America's role while not completely leaving NATO allies in the lurch.

It failed 180 to 238, with 89 Republicans deserting their party on the measure, and only 36 Democrats voting in favor of it.

The Senate, controlled by Democrats, is not expected to pass such a measure and therefore it is unlikely to have any practical effect on the Libyan operations. Still, the measure would send a strong signal to Mr. Obama that he lacks full Congressional support.

On June 28, a resolution authorizing American intervention in Libya was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, hours after members skeptically grilled the administration's legal adviser over his assertion that airstrikes and other military measures did not amount to hostilities.

Background

The conflict reflects a nation growing weary of wars, a Tea Party focused on cutting spending and protecting what it sees as Congress's constitutional prerogatives and the general hostility between Republicans and Mr. Obama. And the president's interpretation of the war powers law has found little support in either party.

White House lawyers contend that American forces have not been in "hostilities" at least since April 7, when NATO took over leadership in maintaining a no-flight zone in Libya, and the United States took up what is mainly a supporting role — providing surveillance and refueling for allied warplanes — although unmanned drones operated by the United States periodically fire missiles as well.

They argued that United States forces are at little risk in the operation because there are no American troops on the ground and Libyan forces are unable to exchange meaningful fire with American forces. They said that there was little risk of the military mission escalating, because it is constrained by the United Nations Security Council resolution that authorized use of air power to defend civilians.

Jeh C. Johnson, the Pentagon general counsel, and Caroline D. Krass, the acting head of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, had told the White House that they believed that the United States military's activities in the NATO-led air war amounted to "hostilities." Under the War Powers Resolution, that would have required Mr. Obama to terminate or scale back the mission after May 20.

But Mr. Obama decided instead to adopt the legal analysis of several other senior members of his legal team — including the White House counsel, Robert Bauer, and the State Department legal adviser, Harold H. Koh — who argued that the United States military's activities fell short of "hostilities." Under that view, Mr. Obama needed no permission from Congress to continue the mission unchanged.

Name: _____

Period: _____

Civil Rights Movement: MLK Jr. vs. Malcolm X

Passage #1: Letter From the Birmingham Jail by MLK Jr. – Note: This letter, addressed in an open manner to America, was written from jail by MLK Jr. during a campaign to desegregate Birmingham, Alabama.

In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: 1) collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive; 2) negotiation; 3) self-purification; and 4) direct action. We have gone through all of these steps in Birmingham...Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of police brutality is known in every section of the country. Its unjust treatment of Negroes in the courts is a notorious reality. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any city in this nation. These are the hard, brutal, and unbelievable facts. On the basis of these conditions Negro leaders sought to negotiate with the city fathers. But the political leaders consistently refused to engage in good faith negotiation.

You may well ask, "Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc.? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.

My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. Individuals may see the moral light and give up their unjust posture; but as Reinhold Niebuhr has reminded us, groups are more immoral than individuals.

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly I have never yet engaged in a direct action movement that was "well timed," according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This "wait" has almost always meant "never." It has been a tranquilizing Thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration. We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that "justice too long delayed is justice denied." We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward the goal of political independence, and we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward the gaining of a cup of coffee at a lunch counter.

Passage #2: "God's Judgement of White America by Malcolm X" – This is an excerpt from a speech given by Malcolm X in 1963 to a crowd of Black Muslims.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that as it was the evil sin of slavery that caused the downfall and destruction of ancient Egypt and Babylon, and of ancient Greece, as well as ancient Rome, so it was the evil sin of colonialism (slavery, nineteenth-century European style) that caused the collapse of the white nations in present-day Europe as world powers. Unbiased scholars and unbiased observers agree that the wealth and power of white Europe has rapidly declined during the nineteen-year period between World War II and today.

So we of this present generation are also witnessing how the enslavement of millions of black people in this country is now bringing White America to her hour of judgment, to her downfall as a respected nation. And even those Americans who are blinded by childlike patriotism can see that it is only a matter of time before White America too will be utterly destroyed by her own sins, and all traces of her former glory will be removed from this planet forever.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that as it was divine will in the case of the destruction of the slave empires of the ancient and modern past, America's judgement and destruction will also be brought about by divine will and divine power. Just as ancient nations paid for their sins against humanity, White America must now pay for her sins against twenty-two million "Negroes." White America's worst crimes her hypocrisy and her deceit. White America pretends to ask herself: "What do these Negroes want?" White America knows that four hundred years of cruel bondage has made these twenty-two million ex-slaves too (mentally) blind to see what they really want.....

You and I were born at this turning point on history; we are witnessing the fulfillment of prophecy. Our present generation is witnessing the end of colonialism, Europeanism, Westernism, or "White-ism"...the end of white supremacy, the end of the evil white man's unjust rule. I must repeat: The end of the world only means the end of a certain "power." The end of colonialism ends the world (or power) of the colonizer. The end of Europeanism ends the world (or power) of the European... and the end of "White-ism" ends the world (or power) of THE WHITE MAN.....

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad warns us daily: The only permanent solution to America's race problem is the complete separation of these twenty-two million ex-slaves from our white slave master, and the return of these ex-slaves to our own land, where we can then live in peace and security among our people. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad warns us daily: The American government is trying to trick her twenty-two million ex-slaves with promises that she never intends to keep. The Crooked politicians in the government are working with the Negro civil rights leaders, but not to solve the race problem. The greedy politicians who run this government give lip-service to the civil rights struggle only to further their own selfish interests. And their main interest as politicians is to stay in power.

Politically the American Negro is nothing but a football and the white liberals control this mentally dead ball through tricks of tokenism: false promises of integration and civil rights. In this profitable game of deceiving and exploiting the political politician of the American Negro, those white liberals have the willing cooperation of the Negro civil rights leaders. These "leaders" sell out our people for just a few crumbs of token recognition and token gains. These "leaders" are satisfied with token victories and token progress because they themselves are nothing but token leaders.

Malcolm X goes on later to give his opinion of Blacks in the Movement "integrating" with whites (i.e. marching with them and including them in the movement) during the March on Washington in 1963.

Example: If I have a cup of coffee that is too strong for me because it is too black, I weaken it by pouring cream into it, I integrate it with cream. If I keep pouring enough cream in the coffee, pretty soon the entire flavor of the coffee is changed; the very nature of the coffee is changed. If enough cream is poured in, eventually you don't even know that I had coffee in this cup. This is what Happened with the March on Washington. The whites didn't integrate it; they infiltrated it. Whites joined it; they engulfed it; they became so much a part of it, it lost its original flavor. It ceased to be a black march; it ceased to be militant; it ceased to be angry; it ceased to be impatient. In fact, it ceased to be a march. It became a picnic, an outing with a festive, circus-like atmosphere...CLOWNS AND ALL.

Michael Harrington: *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (1962)

There is a familiar America. It is celebrated in speeches and advertised on television and in the magazines. It has the highest mass standard of living the world has ever known.

In the 1950's this America worried about itself, yet even its anxieties were products of abundance. The title of a brilliant book was widely misinterpreted, and the familiar America began to call itself "the affluent society". There was introspection about Madison Avenue and tail fins; there was discussion of the emotional suffering taking place in the suburbs. In all this, there was an implicit assumption that the basic grinding economic problems had been solved in the United States. In this theory the nation's problems were no longer a matter of basic human needs, of food, shelter, and clothing. Now they were seen as qualitative, a question of learning to live decently amid luxury.

While this discussion was carried on, there existed another America. In it dwelt somewhere between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000 citizens of this land. They were poor. They still are....

This book is a description of the world in which these people live; it is about the other America. Here are the unskilled workers, the migrant farm workers, the aged, the minorities, and all the others who live in the economic underworld of American life...The millions who are poor in the United States tend to become increasingly invisible. Here is a great mass of people, yet it takes an effort of the intellect and will even to see them....

If the middle class never did like ugliness and poverty, it was at least aware of them. "Across the tracks" was not a very long way to go. There were forays into the slums at Christmas time; there were charitable organizations that brought contact with the poor. Occasionally, almost everyone passed through the Negro ghetto or the blocks of tenements, if only to get downtown to work or to entertainment.

Now the American city has been transformed. The poor still inhabit the miserable housing in the central areas, but they are increasingly isolated from contact with, or sight of, anybody else. Middle-class women coming in from Suburbia on a rare trip may catch the merest glimpse of the other America on the way to an evening at the theater, but their children are segregated in suburban schools. The business or professional man may drive along the fringes of slums in a car or bus, but it is not an important experience to him. The failures, the unskilled, the disabled, the aged, and the minorities are right there, across the tracks, where they have always been. But hardly anyone else is.

In short, the very development of the American city has removed poverty from the living, emotional experience of millions upon millions of middle-class Americans. Living out in the suburbs, it is easy to assume that ours is, indeed, an affluent society....

A good many concerned and sympathetic Americans are aware that there is much discussion of ban renewal. Suddenly, driving through the city, they notice that a familiar slum has been torn down and that there are towering, modern buildings where once there had been tenements or hovels. There is a warm feeling of satisfaction, of pride in the way things are working out: the poor, it is obvious, are being taken care of.

The irony in this...is that the truth is nearly the exact opposite to the impression. The total impact of the various housing programs in postwar America has been to squeeze more and more people into existing slums.

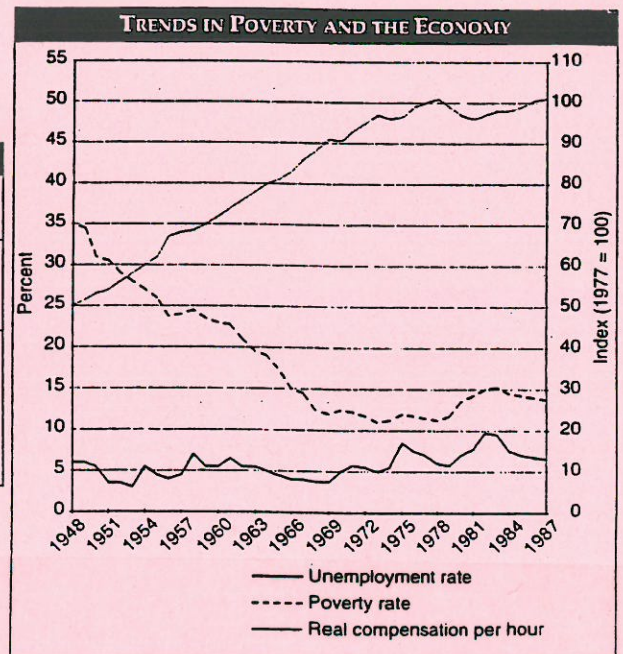
Clothes make the poor invisible too: America has the best-dressed poverty the world has ever known. For a variety of reasons, the benefits of mass production have been spread much more evenly in this area than in many other. It is much easier in the United States to be decently dressed than it is to be decently housed, fed, or doctored. Even people with terribly depressed incomes can look prosperous....

And finally, the poor are politically invisible. It is one of the cruelest ironies of social life in advance countries that the dispossessed at the bottom of society are unable to speak for themselves. The people of the other America do not, by far and large, belong to unions, to fraternal organizations, or to political parties. They are without lobbies of their own; they put forward no legislative program. As a group, they are atomized. They have no face; they have no voice....

That the poor are invisible is one of the most important things about them. They are not simply neglected and forgotten as in the old rhetoric of reform; what is much worse, they are not seen....

SOCIAL WELFARE EXPENDITURES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1950-1975

Year	Expenditures per capita (in constant 1984 dollars)			Expenditures as percentage of GNP		
	All social welfare programs	Social insurance	Public welfare	All social welfare programs	Social insurance	Public welfare
1950	630	133	75	8.2	1.7	1.0
1960	984	346	94	10.3	3.8	1.0
1965	1189	432	119	11.2	4.1	1.1
1970	1773	660	229	14.7	5.5	1.9
1975	2424	1026	389	19.0	8.1	2.9



10 Amazing Years, 1947-1957: A Decade of Miracles (December 27, 1957)

U.S. News & World Report, Volume 43

The last year of an amazing decade is about to end [1947-1957]. These 10 years have been a time of change and accomplishment unmatched in the history of America, or of any other nation.

In one brief, 10-year period, America's face was remade. Vast suburban areas sprang up to receive millions of Americans pressing out from cities. Ribbons of superhighways were laid across the country. A huge expansion of air facilities helped tie the nation into a compact unity....

Look back 10 years, and you see how far America has come, how fast changes can occur at this period in history.

As 1947 was ending, the nation contained 144 million people, not the 172 million of today. Television was in its infancy. The four-engine plane was only beginning to appear on civilian airlines. Toll highways were a rarity. The superhighway was little more than a gleam in planners' eyes. Supermarkets had just begun to dot the landscape. The ranch-type house had hardly made a dent in the building market, and split-levels were all but unknown. The modern "kitchen" lacked many of the appliances that are standard today.

Food packing was primitive by modern standards. Nobody had heard of the heat-and-serve dinner. Passenger cars, with few exceptions, lacked automatic transmissions, power steering, power brakes and tubeless tires. Most had only six-cylinder engines. Air conditioning was the exception in average stores and homes. Polio had not been licked. Today's wide ranges of antibiotics and hormones were not available. The company pension was more the exception than the rule. So was hospital insurance. So was the long vacation.

In the 10 years that followed, amazing changes came over America.... The things that people enjoy increased immensely in number and volume....

People quickly accepted new products and new inventions. TV sets, only a curiosity 10 years ago, were inquired by most American families during the decade. High-fidelity phonographs were developed and sold in huge numbers. So were filtered cigarettes of many kinds. Housewives took to detergents. FM radios caught on. Lawn work was made easier with a wide variety of power mowers. People began to buy tape recorders, boats of glass fiber, instant foods, long-playing records....

People, more prosperous than ever before, spend record amounts on travel and recreation. More than 8 million civilians traveled abroad. In addition, Americans flocked in record numbers to resorts in the U.S., bought bombs, built summer cottages, went to dude ranches, built their own swimming pools, took up fishing and other forms of recreation – spending about 113 billion dollars on these activities in the process.

Recreation became big business. People bought 4 million power boats, 500,000 sailboats. More than 15 million hunters bought guns and licenses, while 4 million took to golf and 18 million bought tackle and went fishing....

At the same time, the big cities began gigantic rebuilding plans during the decade. Billions were poured into these projects. They involved the expressways to clear new routes for commuters, shoppers and freight. They have included huge new civic centers, modern office buildings, new apartment developments, parks and public auditoriums. Belt roads also were begun by many cities to speed service, help heavy industries escape from downtown....

Jobs became more technical, less routine. Demand increased rapidly for engineers, technicians, skilled workers in many fields. The number of jobs created by the technological revolution rose, with 8.3 million more Americans working at paid jobs at the decade's end than at its beginning.

Education took on more importance, as a result. Never had such a high percentage of U.S. youths gone on to higher schooling. In this 10-year period, 12.3 million youths acquired high-school diplomas, while 3.2 million went on to get college degrees....

All told, the decade just ending has been a real age of miracles, and unprecedented era of change and expansion, of jet planes, and color TV, of great alterations in the face of America, coupled with a technological revolution that promises even greater miracles in the decade that now lies ahead.

The Organization Man Circa 1956

In 1956, *The Organization Man* was published and it quickly became a bestseller. William H. Whyte offered a searing evaluation of the values and ethos of 1950's society. Marked by their relative apathy to politics, philosophy, and rebellion, the so-called "Silent Generation," was coming of age and heading out into the workforce. The goal of many a middle-class man during this time was to land a job at a plumb corporation, give his full loyalty to the organization, move up the ladder, and enjoy a secure retirement.

Whyte was alarmed at the enthusiastic willingness of these new hires to subvert their desires and their individuality to the corporation. Even at the time he was writing Whyte noted the disparity between the ideal of the individual in 20th Century American life and the reality of the collective situation in which most Americans found themselves, where individuality was actually a handicap and conformity the way to get promoted in one's career.

Whyte observed that young organisation men identified their own well-being with that of the company and in those years of rapid expansion after the war, "many a young man of average ability has been propelled upward so early and so pleasantly that he can hardly be blamed if he thinks the momentum is constant". Such men assumed that they would be with the organisation for their whole careers. At the executive level, Whyte described men who worked long hours but didn't feel that it was a burden. They worked fifty or sixty hours a week, as well as after hours in work-related entertaining, conferences, and reading. They promoted those who followed their example. "We have, in sum, a man who is so completely involved in his work that he cannot distinguish between work and the rest of his life; and is happy that he cannot."

Whyte was most discouraged, though, at the amount of pressure, in the form of new sociological mantras, that was leading them to do so. Social scientists during this period proposed that man was most happy when he belonged, and that "belongingness" was one of the most important characteristics of a potential employee. This "Social Ethic" lauded the cooperative group over the individual. The virtue of the 1950's was one's ability to get along with others. The role of manager, the facilitator of cooperation, was greatly elevated and prized, while the role of leader was demoted. For if a group had a leader, then all members' viewpoints were not equally valued. Whyte believed these ideas were fatal to individual identity and innovation. He argued that the elevation of "belongingness" over genius and leadership would impede both individual growth and satisfaction and the progress of society and business.

Of course the Silent Generation's devotion to becoming an "organization man" did not last, followed as they were by the Baby Boomers, who grew up in the time of Watergate, Vietnam, and the turmoil of the civil rights movement. Disillusioned with the organizations they had been reared to respect, young people actively and openly questioned all the old pillars of society: government, religion, business, and education. The standard of belongingness was turned on its head; a person's worth was now based on how individualistic and independent they were from the traditional standards of conformity. It was all about doing your own thing. The value of the individual reigned supreme over that of the organization.

Organization Man defined a generation; the idea of the "Organization Man," like that of his contemporary, "The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit," took on a life that transcended the book itself. It left us the incredible image of the soulless corporate drone, the man in the gray flannel suit, willing to subvert his individuality to pay a mortgage. **But this picture and the haze of time have obscured what Whyte's real message was.** Whyte was not entirely opposed to organizations or even conformity per se. He argued for "individualism *within* organization life." "The fault is not in

organization," he said, but "in our worship of it." At the heart of his message was the warning that when it came to the balance between individuality and "belongingness," the pendulum had swung far too much in the direction of the latter.

Several generations later, it now seems the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction. Of course times have changed. Men today understand that giving their loyalty to a corporation won't be rewarded; they'll probably be downsized during a merger and or when their job is outsourced. But men are loathe to join *any* kind of organization at all. They live increasingly private, isolated lives. They won't join as much as a bowling league. The ideal is to be as unfettered and free as possible, without having commitments to anyone or anything. Yet they are missing out on the benefits that belonging to an organization offer a man.

New American Landscape: Suburbia

By 1945 a severe housing shortage had developed in the United States. During the war new housing starts had slowed to a standstill. Then hundreds of thousands of GIs came home, got married, and began looking for homes. The nation needed 5 million new housing units—the sooner, the better.

The Suburbs

The construction industry in the United States had to meet quite a challenge. Cities were too crowded for new construction to occur, and relocating millions of people to remote, sparsely populated areas of the country would be expensive and impractical. The builders' solution was to create a new addition to the country's landscape—planned communities on the outskirts of cities. This decision would transform not only the landscape of the country but also the lifestyles of the mostly white, middle-class Americans who began migrating from crowded cities to the open, quieter environment of the suburbs. Following World War II, several planned communities were constructed just outside many of the nation's big cities.

Levittown, U.S.A.

The first and most famous post-war planned community was begun in 1946 on Long Island, New York, about 30 miles (48.2 km) from midtown Manhattan. The community, called Levittown, was named for the company that built it, Levitt & Sons, and was constructed on 1,200 acres (486 ha) of potato farmland.

Levittown's design included single-family homes, parks, playgrounds, shopping centers, swimming pools, baseball diamonds, handball courts, and clubhouses for fraternal and veterans organizations. Each home was exactly the same and sold for the same price: \$7,990.

The homes at Levittown were mass-produced. Specialized construction crews hurried from one

home site to the next, digging foundations, pouring concrete, erecting walls and roofs, and installing plumbing and electrical fixtures. During the height of the construction at Levittown, workers finished a new home every 15 minutes.

Levittown was an immediate success. Just 3 years after construction began, 10,600 houses had been built, and Levittown's population



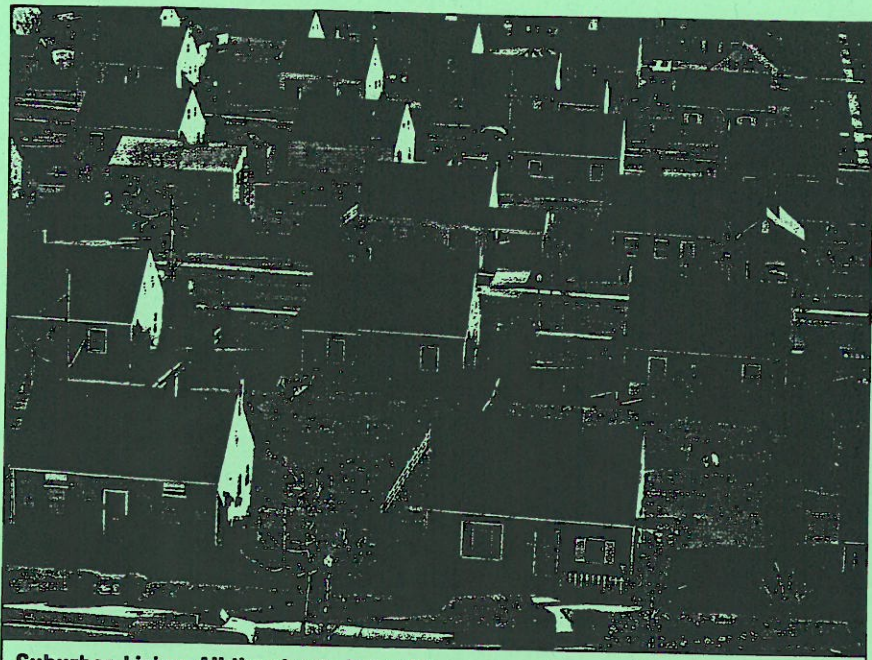
had swelled to more than 40,000. The residents loved their new community. One former GI who had moved to Levittown with his wife and another relative from a 1-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn said, "That was so awful I'd rather not talk about it. Getting into this house was like being emancipated."

A New Landscape

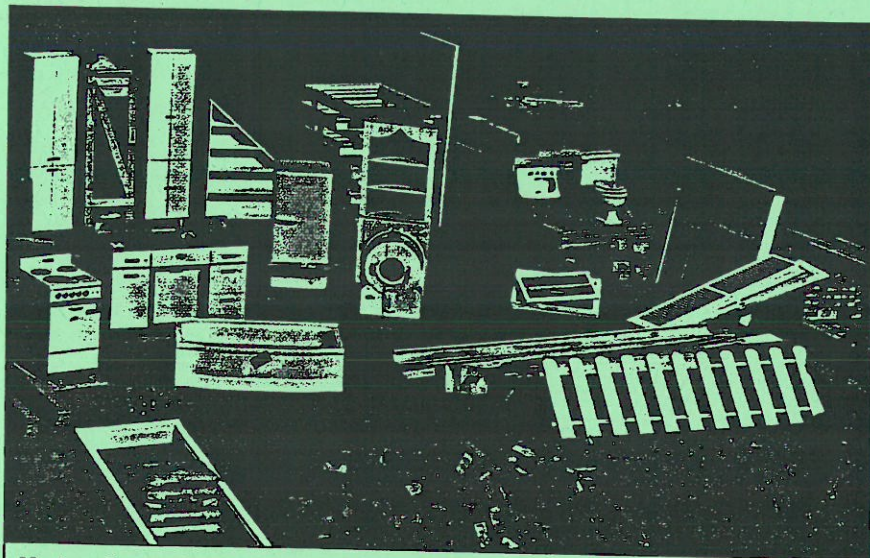
The construction of planned communities such as the three Levittowns accounted for several important changes in the landscape. First, these types of planned communities, or subdivisions, had never existed before. They combined elements of city life with features of rural living, blurring the distinctions that had once existed between these two ways of life.

Second, the new communities were an attractive alternative to the increasingly crowded, dirty cities in which most Americans lived. People who could afford to move did so, resulting in a migration of white middle-class Americans from the cities to surrounding suburbs.

Finally, the suburbs created a new way of life for many Americans. Long daily commutes to and from jobs in the cities became more and more common. New local governments were created to administer the affairs of these fledgling communities and new school systems were needed to educate the children of the suburbs. In short, the postwar housing shortage led to a transformation in the way the nation looked and in the way many Americans lived.



Suburban Living All the streets in Levittown curved at exactly the same angle, and trees were planted along them, 1 every 28 feet (8.5 m). Despite such rigid conformity, residents from the city loved the openness and country feel of this new suburb. *How many homes were constructed in the first Levittown?*



Modern Conveniences Homes in Levittown had a living room with a fireplace, two bedrooms, and a large attic that could be converted into two additional bedrooms. They also had the latest conveniences: radiant heat, an electric kitchen, an automatic washing machine, and a built-in television. *How much did these homes cost when they were first built?*

Craig Thompson: Growing Pains of a Brand-New City (August 7, 1954)

Saturday Evening Post, Volume 227

It takes people as well as buildings to make a city, and this is a story about the people of Levittown, Pennsylvania. In a sense, it is another interim report on that generation of Americans who came of age while fighting history's biggest war, then returned to its classrooms to give dubious educators an eye-popping lesson in earnest scholarship while, simultaneously, it began raising bumper baby crops....

It was in July of 1951 that William J. Levitt – president and principal executive of Levitt and Sons – publicly affirmed his intention to construct 16,000 dwellings in lower Bucks County adjacent to U.S. Steel's new Fairless works near Morrisville, Pennsylvania. Presently, several sample houses went up and Levitt advertised that, beginning December eighth, he would take orders for thousands like them as yet unbuilt....

By mid-1954 at prices ranging from \$8990 to \$16,500, some 9000 houses had been built, sold and occupied. Barring unpredictable delays, the 16,000th will be finished by the end of 1955, and what, four years before, had been 5500 acres of farmland, scrub woods and swamp will be a city of 70,000 people....

Within Levittown, many residents say, the atmosphere is more tolerant and neighborly than any other place they ever lived. However, Levittowners collectively have not yet come to grips with one problem that could give rise to a really tense situation. This is the problem of Negro exclusion.

The Levitts do not sell their houses to Negroes. This, as William Levitt explains it, is not a matter of prejudice, but one of business.

"The Negroes in America," he says, "are trying to do in four hundred years what the Jews in the world have not wholly accomplished in six thousand. As a Jew, I have no room in my mind or heart for racial prejudice. But, by various means, I have come to know that if we sell one house to a Negro family, then ninety to ninety-five percent of our white customers will not buy into the community. That is their attitude, not ours. We did not create it, and cannot cure it. As a company, our position is simply this: we can solve a housing problem, or we can try to solve a racial problem. But we cannot combine the two."

Over the years, Levitt has been the butt of much sharp criticism on this subject, which he has learned to take philosophically, although it rankles him at times to know that this most vigorous critics are those who refuse or accept what he regards as the realities of his position. But there is another reality involved that many people have not understood. Once the title to a Levitt house passes from the builder to the buyer, that buyer is free to sell it to anyone. Because of this fact, Friends [Service] Association Chairman [Paul] Blanshard confidently predicts that a day will come when a Negro family will move into Levittown. And Levitt replies, "If that should happen, there is nothing I can, or would, do about it."...

...125 Levittown houses have been resold by the original purchasers, but no Negro family has yet bought one.

As of this writing, the Negro question seems to have caused more conversation and concern outside of Levittown than in it...



Turning Point

The United Farm Workers and the Grape Boycott

JANUARY, 1968

MEMORANDUM

Mr. President, in September the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO—UFWOC—began the third year of their strike and boycott against California growers of fresh table grapes. They are solemnly dedicated to non-violent, direct action as a tactic to obtain human dignity, and to guarantee by contract improved living and working conditions through collective bargaining with their employers.

Senator Harrison Williams, D-N.J.
Chair, Subcommittee on Migratory Labor
Congressional Record, October 11, 1968

The Case

In January 1968, labor organizer Dolores Huerta and 60 other members of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) set off from California on a cross-country bus trip. They were headed for New York City, the biggest market for West Coast grapes, to kick off UFWOC's latest campaign in its struggle for farmworkers' rights—a boycott of California table grapes. As they crossed the United States, the farmworkers set up boycott committees in dozens of communities. At each stop, they spoke in churches, schools, and homes, urging people to support their efforts to unionize farmworkers by not buying grapes.

The grape boycott grew out of earlier efforts to force grape growers to let their workers join the union. When those pickets, strikes, and negotiations failed, UFWOC turned to the boycott.

The growers insisted that the boycott was illegal and that most farmworkers did not want a union. In the months and years that followed, the growers and the farmworkers would each try to win consumers to their side. The boycott would be won or lost in supermarket aisles across the country.

The Background

California's farmworkers—mainly Mexican Americans, but also whites, African Americans, Filipino Americans, and others—were among the poorest of the poor. Many were migrants, following the harvest up and down California's Central Val-

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ley, picking grapes, lettuce, and other crops. Even though the entire family, including the children, worked long hours in the fields, the average yearly income for a migrant farmworker's family was well below the poverty level of \$3,000. Exposed to pesticides in the fields and with little access to health care, the average migrant worker could expect to live only 49 years compared with 70 years for the average United States citizen.

Farmworkers had never been able to organize an effective union. They had been excluded from the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), passed in 1935, which guaranteed other workers the right to join unions and to bargain collectively with their employers.

Organizing Workers In the 1960s, however, farmworkers in California were beginning to build a union. One of the leaders of this new movement was César Chávez. Chávez, a Mexican American, grew up in a migrant farmworker family in California. Like many other farmworker children, Chávez left school at 14 to work full-time in the fields. In the 1950s Chávez began working with a group that was helping Mexican American communities in California organize to fight discrimination.

In 1962 Chávez set off on his own to organize agricultural workers in Delano, California, the heart of California's grape-growing empire. He called his organization the Farm Workers Association (FWA). Within 3 years the FWA had more than 1,000 members and had begun to use traditional labor tactics, including strikes, to win wage increases. In 1966 the FWA joined with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), another farmworker organization, to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC). The new organization was headed by Chávez and other FWA leaders along with Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz, Filipino American labor organizers from AWOC.

Building Support UFWOC members went from vineyard to vineyard talking to workers about the union and pressing growers to allow elections so that workers could choose a union to represent them. Once workers had a union, UFWOC argued, they could use collective bargaining to win contracts that would guarantee higher wages, better working conditions, and benefits.

"Gandhi taught that the boycott is the most nearly perfect instrument of non-violent change, allowing masses of people to participate actively in a cause. . . . Even if people cannot picket with us or contribute money or food, they can take part in our struggle by not buying certain products."

César Chávez

"Employer importation and use of strikebreakers, presence of Mexican alien greencarders, and court injunctions severely limiting the union's right to picket, left no recourse for the workers but to seek public support through a consumer boycott of grapes."

Senator Harrison Williams

"If we, as farmers and employers, accept the union as bargaining agent, we are taking away the individual laborer's right of choice—his right to freedom of work. This is a struggle for the right of a farmer to deal directly with his employees—a stand for free enterprise."

Louis Rozzoni, president, California Farm Bureau

"When we tried to fight back in the past, we found the grower was too strong, too rich, and we had to give up. César Chávez has shown us we can fight back."

Farmworker



Farmworker



César Chávez



Boycotters



Turning Point

In 1967 UFWOC targeted the Giumarra Vineyard Corporation, the largest table-grape grower in California. Giumarra, however, refused to allow union elections, and the vineyard's workers voted to strike. Giumarra then brought in other workers in an attempt to break the strike. To force Giumarra to negotiate, UFWOC called on consumers to boycott Giumarra grapes. To evade the boycott, Giumarra began shipping its grapes under other companies' labels. UFWOC decided that the only way to make the boycott work was to expand it to all table grapes. Chávez later explained, "It was the only way we could do it. We had to take on the whole industry. The grape itself had to become a label."

The Opinions

The growers insisted that most farmworkers did not want a union. They claimed that California farmworkers were the highest paid of any American farmworkers and that they were already adequately protected by labor laws. The growers argued that they could not afford to pay higher wages and warned that increased farmworker wages would mean higher prices for consumers. The growers also maintained that the boycott was illegal—prohibited by the NLRA.

Many conservative politicians, including California Governor Ronald Reagan and President Richard Nixon, supported the growers. Nixon said the boycott should be condemned "with the same firmness we condemn . . . any other form of law-breaking."

Many supermarkets also supported the growers, claiming to do so under the banner of consumer rights. They argued that they should continue to stock grapes so that consumers could choose for themselves whether or not to support the boycott.



César Chávez leads marches for farmworkers' rights.

Chávez and UFWOC argued that the growers should at least allow the workers themselves to decide whether or not they wanted a union by letting them hold elections. UFWOC pointed out that they had always offered growers the option of holding elections before calling for strikes or boycotts. At the few vineyards where elections were held, workers overwhelmingly voted to join UFWOC.

UFWOC maintained that farmworkers' wages were unfairly low. Raising these wages would mean only a slight increase in the price of grapes at the supermarket, they said, since United States Department of Labor records showed that only 2 cents to 5 cents of every dollar invested in grape production went to the workers. Furthermore, UFWOC claimed the consumer boycott was legal because the provisions of the NLRA that restricted the use of boycotts did not cover farmworkers.

People across the United States and Canada supported the boycott. They set up more than 400 boycott committees and raised more than \$20,000 a month for UFWOC. Boycott supporters picketed supermarkets, calling on store managers to stop selling grapes and shoppers to stop buying them. Students demanded that school cafeterias stop serving grapes. In Boston, one group dumped grapes into the harbor in a protest reminiscent of the Boston Tea Party. Religious leaders, including California's Catholic bishops, defended the farmworkers' right to unionize. Politicians, too, began to stand up for

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the farmworkers. All the major Democratic presidential candidates and the mayors of three dozen cities, including New York, declared their support for the boycott.

The Players

César Chávez Director of UFWOC. Chávez was a firm believer in nonviolence as a means of bringing about social change. To make this point and to draw public attention to the boycott, Chávez fasted for 25 days. He said, "Social justice for the dignity of man cannot be won at the price of human life."

Growers Just 30 growers grew 85 percent of California table grapes. Giumarra alone had 10 percent of the market. Many growers were suspicious of Chávez's motives. Some even called him a Communist.

Consumers The farmworkers called on shoppers to stop buying grapes, and many did. *New York* magazine reported that many Americans "would rather eat a cyanide pellet than a California grape these days."

The Outcome

The grape boycott turned out to be one of the most successful consumer boycotts in United States history. In New York City, sales of grapes declined by 90 percent during the summer of 1968. National grape sales fell by 12 percent. Prices for grapes dropped too. One grower admitted, "It is costing us more to produce and sell our grapes than we are getting paid for them. . . ."

Finally, in the summer of 1970, most growers gave in and signed agreements with UFWOC. The new contracts called for pay increases, employer contributions to worker health and welfare funds, union control over hiring, and joint worker-grower committees to regulate pesticide use.

The Significance

Most historians consider the grape boycott to be a landmark in twentieth-century American labor history. For the first time, United States farmwork-

ers gained the right to unionize. The contracts negotiated by the union led to increased pay and better working conditions for many farmworkers.

The grape boycott also demonstrated the power of grassroots organizing and of the boycott as a tool for social change. Other groups would later adopt these same tactics to bring about change in other areas, such as the environment.

Perhaps most importantly, the grape boycott heralded the emerging political power of Hispanic Americans and others who took part in the struggle. In the years that followed, Hispanic Americans would join together in the National Council of La Raza to lobby Washington on behalf of Hispanic Americans. They would use their newfound political muscle to oppose discrimination, to fight for bilingual education and changes in immigration law, and to elect Hispanics to government posts.



Boycott Button

RESPONDING TO THE CASE

1. Make a chart in which you list the growers arguments against the boycott and UFWOC's responses. Which arguments do you find most convincing?
2. In your opinion, why was the boycott successful?
3. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of a boycott as a strategy for bringing about change? Should groups involve consumers in disputes through boycotts?



Imagine you are in charge of a public relations campaign for the grape growers. Write a newspaper ad in which you try to persuade shoppers not to boycott grapes. Then take the position of a supporter of the grape boycott, picketing a grocery store. How would you convince a shopper not to buy grapes? Write a script of a conversation you might have with a shopper. Also, design a poster to carry while picketing. Place the ad, the script, and the poster design in your portfolio.

"Tired Rock Fans Begin Exodus" (NY Times Article on Woodstock) Aug. 18th, 1969

Background: The Woodstock Music and Art Fair is commonly referred to as the Woodstock Festival, Woodstock '69, or simply "Woodstock". It was a turning point in the history of popular music, and also a turning point in terms of the popularity of the counterculture scene, including drug use, promiscuity, and a rebellion against traditional American society and expectations.

Bethel, N.Y., Monday, Aug. 18 - Waves of weary youngsters streamed away from the Woodstock Music and Art Fair last night and early today as security officials reported at least two deaths and 4,000 people treated for injuries, illness and adverse drug reactions over the festival's three-day period. However festival officials said the folk & rock music could go on until dawn, and most of the crowd was determined to stay on.

Campfires Burn - As the music wailed on into the early morning hours, more than 100 campfires - fed by fence-posts and any other wood the young people could lay their hands on- flickered around the hillside that formed a natural amphitheater for the festival. By midnight nearly half of the 300,000 fans who had camped here for the weekend had left. A thunderstorm late yesterday afternoon provided the first big impetus to depart, and a steady stream continued to leave through the night. Drugs and auto traffic continued to be the main headaches. But the crowd itself was extremely well-behaved. As Dr. William Abruzzi, the festival's chief medical officer, put it: "There has been no violence whatsoever, which is remarkable for a crowd of this size. These people are really beautiful."

Months of Planning - Local merchants and residents eased the food shortage. Youths who endured drenching rain to hear such pop performers as Sly and the Family Stone and Creedence Clearwater Revival overcame the water shortage by gulping down soft drinks & beer. As the close of the festival approached, the spirits of the audience- mostly youths of 17 to 20- were high. For many, the weekend had been the fulfillment of months of planning and hoping, not only to see and hear the biggest group of pop performers ever assembled, but also to capture the excitement of camping out with strangers, experimenting with drugs and sharing- as one youth put it- "an incredible unification." The state police said last night that traffic was moving out of the area at a gradual and slow but steady pace. Throughout the weekend, parked and stalled cars had been stretched out on the roads in all directions. The state police said they had about 150 men on duty to help deal with the traffic in a 20- mile radius. They were permitting no cars to enter the area.

Drugs Kill a Youth - Helicopters ferried out some youths who had fallen ill. About 100 people were treated yesterday for bad reactions to drugs, bringing to 400 the number of persons so treated during the three-day affair. The pervasive use of drugs at the festival resulted in one death yesterday. The unidentified youth was taken to Horton Memorial Hospital in Middletown, N.Y., where officials said he failed to respond to treatment for what was believed to be an overdose of heroin. Three young men were taken to the Middletown hospital yesterday in critical condition as a result of drug overdoses. One of them identified as George Xikis, 18 years old, of Astoria, Queens, also suffered a fractured skull when he fell from a car roof while under the influence of drugs, hospital officials said. The two others in critical condition were identified as Anthony Gencarelli, 18, of Port Chester, N. Y., and Arkie Melunow, 22, of Franklin Township, N. J. Despite the "bad trips" of many drug users at the festival, sales were made openly. Festival officials made periodic announcements from the stage that impure and harmful drugs were circulating in the crowd. The use of heroin and LSD, popularly known as "acid" because of its chemical name, lysergic acid diethylamide, drew the public warnings. But marijuana was the most widely used drug, with many youths maintaining that practically everyone in the audience was smoking. Only about 80 arrests were made on drug charges, a dozen inside the fair grounds. In addition to the death attributed to the overdose, one other youth was reported killed. The police identified him as Raymond R. Mizesak, 17, of Trenton, and said he had been run over by a tractor yesterday morning.

2 Babies Born - Dr. Abruzzi said yesterday that first-aid facilities were returning to normal after the arrival of medical supplies and a dozen doctors summoned as volunteers. He said two babies were born during the course of the festival... and four miscarriages were reported... Anticipating massive traffic tie-ups in the area, many in the crowd said they would remain encamped for a day or two on the 600-acre farm of Max Yasgur that was rented for the event. "Some of them might decide to live here permanently," one state trooper said. Many of the fans, weary after listening to entertainment that started Saturday night and continued until 8 A.M. yesterday, slept late yesterday morning and into the afternoon. Most slept in the open and others in the thousands of tents surrounding the entertainment area. Later, [the sun] brightened their outlook and began to dry the mud left by Friday night's heavy rains. "The whole thing is a gas," said one young man, who identified himself as "Speed." "I dig it all," he said, "the mud, the rain, the music, the hassles."

The Storm - The storm, which struck at 4:30 P.M., after a sunny and breezy day, would have washed out any less-determined crowds. But at least 80,000 young people sat or stood in front of the stage and shouted obscenities at the darkened skies as trash rolled down the muddy hillside with the runoff of the rain. Others took shelter in dripping tents, lean-tos, cars & trucks. The festival promoters decided to continue the show but also to try to persuade as much of the audience as possible to leave the area for their cars or some sort of shelter... Most of those who remained unsheltered had parked their cars many miles from festival grounds. "It is really a problem because the kids are as wet as they can get already and they have miles to go before they can even hope to get dry," said Michael Lang, producer at the festival. The threat of bronchial disease and influenza was increased by the downpour, according to staff doctors. Many wandered the storm nude, red mud clinging to their bodies. When the storm struck, the performer on the stage, Joe Cocker, stopped playing and the hundreds of people on the plywood and steel structure scurried off for fear of its being toppled by winds, which were blowing in gusts up to 40 miles an hour. Amplifiers and devices were covered to avoid damage.

Naked Man Cheered - As performers wandered onto the stage to look at the crowd and to decide whether to play, they were greeted by loud cheering. One naked man also came up on stage and danced. At 6:15 P.M. the sun broke through and spirits rose again. Artie Cornfield, a partner in the festival production company, said, "I guess this was meant to happen, and everybody is still with us. We're going to go on all night with the music."

Some Fans Reach Here - Young people straggling into the Port of New York Authority bus terminal at 41st Street and Eighth Avenue last night were damp, disheveled and given to such wild eccentricities of dress as the wearing of a battered top hat with grimy jersey, blue jeans and sandals. They were, according to a driver, Richard Biccum, "good kids in disguise." Mr. Biccum, who is 26 years old, said: "I'll haul kids any day rather than commuters," because they were exceptionally polite and orderly. Reginald Dorsey, a Short Line Bus System dispatcher, agreed that the youths were "beautiful people" who had caused no trouble.



Carter's "Malaise" Speech (July 15 1979)

Good evening.

This is a special night for me. Exactly 3 years ago, on July 15, 1976, I accepted the nomination of my party to run for President of the United States. I promised you a President who is not isolated from the people, who feels your pain, and who shares your dreams and who draws his strength and his wisdom from you. . .

Why have we not been able to get together as a nation to resolve our serious energy problem? It's clear that the true problems of our Nation are much deeper -- deeper than gasoline lines of energy shortages, deeper even than inflation or recession. And I realize more than ever that as President I need your help. So, I decided to reach out and listen to the voices of America.

I invited to Camp David people from almost every segment of our society business and labor, teachers and preachers, Governors, mayors, and private citizens. Let me quote a few of the typical comments that I wrote down. . .

"Mr. President, you are not leading this Nation -- you're just managing the Government."

This kind of summarized a lot of other statements: "Mr. President, we are confronted with a moral and a spiritual crisis."

And this is one of the most vivid statements: "Our neck is stretched over the fence and OPEC has a knife."

So, I want to speak to you first tonight about a subject even more serious than energy or inflation. I want to talk to you right now about a fundamental threat to American democracy. The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. It is a crisis that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will. We can see this crisis in the growing doubt about the meaning of our own lives and in the loss of a unity of purpose for our Nation.

The erosion of our confidence in the future is threatening to destroy the social and the political fabric of America.

Our people are losing that faith, not only in government itself but in the ability as citizens to serve as the ultimate rulers and shapers of our democracy. . . . In a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities, and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. Human identity is no longer defined by what one does, but by what one owns. But we've discovered that owning things and consuming things does not satisfy our longing for meaning. We've learned that piling up material goods cannot fill the emptiness of lives which have no confidence or purpose. . . .

The symptoms of this crisis of the American spirit are all around us. For the first time in the history of our country a majority of our people believe that the next 5 years will be worse than the past 5 years. Two-thirds of our people do not even vote. The productivity of American workers is actually dropping, and the willingness of Americans to save for the future has fallen below that of all other people in the Western world. . . .

We were sure that ours was a nation of the ballot, not the bullet, until the murders of John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. We were taught that our armies were always invincible and our causes were always just, only to suffer the agony of Vietnam. We respected the Presidency as a place of honor until the shock of Watergate.

Often you see paralysis and stagnation and drift. You don't like, and neither do I. What can we do?