

We now return you to the control of
Dave Van Arnam, of 1730 Harrison Ave,
Apt 353, Bronx, NY 10453, for several
issues of political discussion.

FIRST DRAFT #164

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I could put a Lunacon Report in here,
telling all about the hit I made as
panelist with Lin Carter & Ted White,
but I'm not going to. I don't have
the time to do it right, and I don't
want to do a scrappy one and be sorry
about it later.

STILES/TAFF::STILES/TAFF:::

Instead, to tide me over a few issues in which I prolly won't be getting
around to that many fangatherings anyway, due to pressure of finishing
LOST IN SPACE (I shdn't even have gone to the Lunacon, and prolly won't
go to the Disclave, which I'll regret very much), I happen to be the
fortunate recipient of perhaps the longest letter of comment FIRST
DRAFT has ever received, from Ted Pauls. It is in response to FD #161,
back on 14 Apr, which was a two-pager in which I basically attempted to
put down the "Peace Marchers" rampant back then. My feeling then as now
is that they have the right to protest the war, but that they shd face
up to the fact that their protests are extending the length of the war,
because "Uncle Ho" believes the antiwar people will eventually take over
-- a dubious likelihood indeed, and one which hardly even bears discuss-
ing, tho I'd be willing to if anyone else is.

Anyway, here and for the next few issues is a letter of comment which
because of the way I'll probably be distributing it will be read by
nearly everyone as a continuous piece, assuming nearly everyone who gets
it reads it (another dubious likelihood, inasmuch as most people wd far
prefer to pretend the Viet Nam war doesn't exist and certainly isn't
worth discussing...). My comments inclosed in $\langle\langle\rangle\rangle$, by the way.

TED PAULS :: 1448 Meridene Dr, Baltimore, Md 21212 :: April 24, 1967

Dear Dave;

My initial reaction to First Draft #161 was a kind of frus-
trated anger at your vilification of men like Dr. Spock $\langle\langle$ a "moral
idiot", one of many, was my description -- dgvt $\rangle\rangle$ and your black-versus-
white, cops and robbers view of the conflict in Vietnam. While other-
wise occupied this afternoon, I composed in my head a long letter on the
legal and moral aspects of the US involvement in this civil war (whether
you choose to consider it primarily an internal problem within the South
or a North-versus-South struggle, like the US War of Rebellion, it's
still a civil war). But really, I suppose, it isn't worthwhile to write
such a letter; if reading Kipple for the past couple of years hasn't
convinced you that there are legal and moral grounds on which perfectly
loyal, non-Communist, even anti-Communist Americans oppose this war, I
don't suppose another few pages of my stilted prose will help. Suffice
it to say that there are plenty of people, including your obedient ser-
vant, who favored the US position in Korea, who applauded the Budapest
Revolt, who would be willing to fight the Chinese in India or Burma or
the Philippines today, who would like to see democratic revolutions in
any and all Communist countries -- but who nevertheless cannot see that
killing women and children to keep Nguyen Cao Ky in power has anything
to do with liberty and democracy. If that makes me a "noral idiot", so
be it. $\langle\langle$ There may be legal and moral grounds; I didn't say other-

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wise; and I didn't say the demonstrators were Communist, or disloyal -- I didn't even say they were anti-anti-Communist, tho that wd certainly have been fair enough. What I tried to say was that there were even stronger "legal and moral" reasons not to demonstrate, on the basis, if nothing else, that it's simply going to prolong this bloody war. I'm occasionally sickened, in fact, at the hysterical reactions to the protests from the more Neanderthal rightists. -- dgv}}

If it is pointless to discuss the moral questions with you, however, it may still be worthwhile to discuss the practical aspects of the US commitment in Vietnam. I'm probably deluding myself in believing that even in this area your opinion is open to change, but then that's always been one of my faults: I cannot believe that reasonable and intelligent men are not capable of being convinced by reasonable arguments. ((Just what I believe. But arguments must not simply be reasonable on their face -- they must also include all relevant points. Let us see how it all works out... -- dgv}} So let us be hard-nosed and practical as all hell; let us ignore the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who have die and will die in this war, for you obviously are not concerned about them -- particularly if they happen to favor the other side. ((Can I mention the million or so who walked out of North Viet Nam between the Geneva conference and Uncle Ho's closing of the border? I mean, let's not forget that there are people in South Viet Nam who rejected Communism in the most dramatic way possible. -- dgv}} Let us consider the question purely from the viewpoint of the United States.

Tell me truthfully, Dave, would you have believed four or five years ago that the US could pour 450,000 troops into Vietnam (over a half million if you count the Koreans whom we pay), and drop more bombs than we dropped in all theatres of World War II, and yet still be at a point where, as General Westmoreland told the press luncheon this afternoon, no end is in sight? If you can answer yes, then you were in the minority. I have encountered a lot of Hawks in the past couple of years, and almost without exception they believed, back in 1964 and 1965, that a few divisions of US troops, a few thousand bombs, would be sufficient to compel those "filthy little Communists" to settle the thing on our terms. Even today, those who urge "victory" continue to believe that if we push a little harder, send a few thousand more men, drop a few more bombs, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese will give up. ((Back when Diem was in, I figured the best thing to do was to use all the clout we had -- which would have been plenty, I'm sure -- to make him join with us in ameliorating the peoples' lot, and if he refused, kick him out and get someone who would. Well, Kennedy had him kicked out and slaughtered in the best Liberal manner, and proceeded to use no measurable clout at all to make his successors straighten out. But the Liberal doesn't believe in trying to force the more conservative governments to Liberalize, since that is misusing our power; much better to simply destroy the conservative government and sweep in a new lot of thieves and murderers and mulcters of the general good. As for the application of force of arms to the terrorist activities of the so-called "National Liberation Front", there are ways to fight an anti-guerrilla war, and bombs won't do it. As for men, you need on the order of a 10-to-1 superiority before you can pacify by sheer military strength. Less than that, and you can pretty well forget about it; thus I'm not surprised the methods used failed.

Well,
this will be Continued Next Week; hoping you are the sane...

-- dgv}}