Yale University

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From the Streets to the Polls

David R Mayhew
James David Barber

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White House required political clearance for participants in the conference and insisted that the roles of black and other minority militants be kept to a manageable minimum. The counter-effect, Mayer says, was to arouse distrust among those same militants, thereby impeding efforts to bring a representative cross-section of them into the conference. This kind of fire from theoretically friendly quarters convinced Mayer that too many people in the anti-hunger ranks want to preserve the problem as a partisan issue, and that too many others see in it "a symbolic issue" to be used more to further general social reform than to abolish hunger and malnutrition.

The force of these and kindred plaints at the White House is reduced by the acknowledged truth of a story involving Senator McGovern. Jean Mayer, who still regards the Senator as a friend of the conference, asked him last July if he would be willing to address it if he were formally invited. McGovern said that he would be happy to. McGovern was told in October that he would not be invited to speak. Mayer later explained: "The fact that Senator McGovern is considered to be a leading candidate for the Presidency on the Democratic side seems to us to be a good reason to get a different Senator." Another Democrat, Walter Mondale of Minnesota, was chosen. Professor Mayer may like to know that Senator Mondale asked John Kramer of the National Council to draft his conference speech for him.

John Osborne

From the Streets to the Polls

by James David Barber and David R. Mayhew

Tell a hawk congressman you are planning a peace march through his district, and you're likely to get a cold rebuff. Tell the same man you have organized a thousand volunteers to canvass his district in the next primary in support of a dove opponent. Then his attention picks up. Show him you know the law, the ins and outs of the nominating process. Show him a substantial campaign fund already available for peace candidates. Tell him the name of the popular citizen who has agreed to contest his nomination if necessary. At this point he is listening hard. . . . Perhaps there is something to that Goodell Resolution after all.

The next step for the peace movement is from the streets to the polls. The massive Moratorium of October 15 and the immense (and 99 and 44/100ths percent pure nonviolent) march of November 15 made their point: a majority of Americans recognize that the war in Vietnam is a mistake. The job now is to translate that sentiment into political power. The President can always back up his popularity by appealing for personal support in time of crisis. He may yet discern in the flux of opinion the difference between allegiance to the flag and acceptance of his slow and secret policy. But he has nearly three more years for maneuver before he faces the electorate. Four-hundred thirty-five representatives and a third of the senators face that test in the coming year.

The machinery for '70 is already in motion. Incumbents are watching the election calendar, wondering if challengers will let the key dates pass without action. In Connecticut, for example, registration to vote in party primaries in 1970 closes on January 9. In other states candidates must file as early as the first or second week in February. Normally, all this early maneuvering takes place in obscurity; the public is not much interested, and the politicians are willing to leave it that way. But unless the peace forces want to wake up next November to congressional contests of the Humphrey vs. Nixon type, the time to shape the choices is upon us.

Success in a campaign for a peace Congress depends on mobilizing quickly to implement a plan with at least the following elements:

1. *Money.* It is an old political maxim that a dollar in January is worth $5 in July. The shift in public confidence from newspapers to television has escalated the cost of campaigning far beyond what most candidates can afford. A national effort to elect a peace Congress will cost millions, but in the early days of the campaign it is the thousand-dollar checks which count. Before a candidate takes on an intrenched opponent, he needs – and deserves – to know whether he has a realistic chance. Money helps that confidence.

2. *Candidate Recruitment.* In some states and dis-

The authors teach political science at Yale University.

tricts, registration and petition efforts will have to get started before candidates appear, simply because the deadlines are approaching so rapidly. As soon as possible, however, these actions must be organized around specific candidates who articulate and lead the cause. The overriding criterion must be the man's determination to take an active, aggressive role, in cooperation with other congressmen, to stop the war. That comes first. But reactionaries, ideological wild men, and political inepts – however loudly they proclaim their dedication to peace – have to be screened out. The point is to win and get the US out of Vietnam.

3. *Leg Power.* Personal contact with voters – canvassing – is probably the most effective way to bring out the votes. In the hoopla of Presidential campaigns other factors may be more important, but congressional primaries are prime targets for personal politics. Primaries can be won by small margins: in many of them, only 20 to 25 percent of eligible voters make it to the polls. There is much room for education at the doorstep: Gallup found in 1965 that 57 percent of American adults did not even know their congressman's name; 70 percent did not know when he would next stand for election – much less how he stood on the war. If the peace forces in both parties can mobilize the kind of volunteer effort we saw in New Hampshire, Oregon, Wisconsin and California in 1968, Congress can be turned around on its grassroots.

It won't be easy. Target states and districts will have to be carefully picked – although there is hardly a district in the country in which a serious challenge cannot be mounted if the war drags on. The national mood seems volatile; Representative Sam Steiger of Arizona and 14 of his colleagues read it one way when they call on the President to order a "sudden and major escalation" of the war. Furthermore, incumbents have been hard to beat; they hang onto their seats as if they owned them. In the current House, only 9.2 percent of the members are freshmen, the lowest percentage of new blood in the history of the US. Many are too busy climbing up the little ladders in their committees and subcommittees to grasp the urgencies felt among the people back home. That can change. A locally based movement for a peace Congress will know best the races on which to concentrate.

Take Rep. John Rarick, Democrat from Louisiana. Rarick has termed peace demonstrations "a public manifestation of disloyalty." Only three of Louisiana's eight Representatives were opposed in the last election; Rarick was one. In the midst of his district, the Sixth, stands Louisiana State University, with more than 16,000 students and their teachers. What are the chances for defeating Rarick in a primary next year?

Consider Mr. William E. Minshall, Republican, of Ohio's Twenty-Third District. Minshall is the second-ranking Republican on the Department of Defense subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations. He has not been what you might call an energetic advocate of prompt withdrawal from Vietnam. In November, 1968, Minshall squeaked through with 52 percent of the vote, defeating a liberal Democrat by a margin of 8000 in 200,000 votes. Suppose that among the 40,000 students at Ohio State University, and those from other colleges, a thousand canvassers could be discovered, trained and transported to Minshall's district for a primary in May. Somewhere along the road Rep. Minshall might change his mind.

Why have we not heard of leadership for peace from the House Committee on Armed Services? Ranking right next to Mendel Rivers on that committee, and chairman of its subcommittee number one is Rep. Phil Philbin, Democrat, of Massachusetts' Third District. Mr. Philbin was not among the more than 80 members who spoke up for the Moratorium; so far he cannot be called a leader for peace. Philbin's district nests among one of the most thickly settled hotbeds of student power in the United States – the Harvard-MIT-University of Massachusetts-Brandeis complex. In the last election he faced two challengers and won with a bare 47.8 percent of the vote. Should there be an alternative to Philbin in 1970?

The House has a Committee on Foreign Affairs, a fact that may be news to those who have noticed the leading role of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The ranking Republican there is E. Ross Adair, who won in Indiana's Fourth District with a shaky 51.4 percent of the vote. What could be accomplished by a team from Notre Dame, backed up with volunteers from Indiana University's nearly 50,000 students?

In districts like these, a double-barreled strategy may make sense: primaries in *both* parties, to raise the odds that a peace candidate will get on the ballot in 1970.

There are targets elsewhere. Hebert of Louisiana, Meskill of Connecticut – even the Rivers and Mahons may be challengeable. In the Senate, four seats are being vacated, their incumbents retiring, so the field is open: Holland of Florida, McCarthy of Minnesota, Young of Ohio, and Williams of Delaware. Dodd of Connecticut deserves to go, as does Murphy of California. Prouty of Vermont is being challenged by an attractive, outspoken Robert Kennedy-Eugene McCarthy supporter, ex-Governor Phil Hoff, in a state increasingly attuned to change. Alaska could replace Republican-appointed Theodore Stevens and return to its Gruening tradition. Hawaii – strongly Democratic in Presidential voting – might replace Republican hawk Hiram Fong. Meanwhile, senators who *have* taken courageous leadership for peace need strong support: Gore of Tennessee, Hart of Michigan, Yarborough of Texas, Goodell of New York and others.

Realistically, present US policy, dependent as it is on the Saigon junta, the NLF and Hanoi, may drift into

re-escalation or widely spaced mini-withdrawals. The war may be worse by November, or drag on as now. Or it could be over by November. The campaign for a peace Congress must be ready, before it is too late to effect real changes in Washington. Act One is a visit to each incumbent senator or representative by a top delegation of citizens, urging him to join with his colleagues in a common move for a quick end to the war, and describing to him the organized peace forces developing in his constituency. Act Two is the nominating process – the registration drive, petitions, conventions, and primaries. Act Three is November. To play out this drama with hope in the results requires a special dedication which may be too much for the older generation. It means hour after hour of work few will notice. It moves beyond the excitement of provocation to the exhaustion of of persuasion. There will have to be speeches by those who have never made speeches, lonely encounters with hostile voters, cold feet and missed recreations, chances taken in a cloud of uncertainty. No one can say how it will turn out. But if the alternative to politics is acquiescence to killing and dying, we have a responsibility to try politics.

The Fate of "Our" Vietnamese after Withdrawal

Fear of a Bloodbath

by Tran Van Dinh

The possibility of a "bloodbath" in South Vietnam if US troops were to swiftly withdraw has been worrying both "hawks" and "doves." But the Vietnamese likely to be the most affected by a change of regime in Saigon, or by a Communist take-over – the wealthy and powerful – do not talk much about it: they have been getting ready ever since the Tet offensive of 1968, which brought the war into their cities and their air-conditioned living rooms. A quiet exodus began, mostly to France. The price of exodus is not cheap. An exit visa costs as much as $5000; a "certificate of French citizenship" costs about $2000; illegal border crossings into Cambodia cost anywhere from $800 to $4000.

Money has been deposited in European banks. According to Allessandro Cassella of *Die Weltwoche* of Zurich a total of between $1.5 and $2 billion has left Vietnam in this way. According to the same journalist, President Nguyen Van Thieu has found a home for his children in Rome (where his brother is ambassador), and his wife has just purchased a house in Europe. He estimates that of 1600 Vietnamese who are legally leaving this country each month, half do not return, which means that approximately 10,000 have emigrated since the negotiations started in Paris. My own estimates are a bit higher. Those who cannot afford or who do not wish to leave, have gone through a well-planned process of accommodation with the "other side," an accommodation that reaches the highest echelons of the government. Huynh Van Trong, special assistant to President Thieu, was arrested in July this year with 42 others on charges of having contacts with the Vietcong. They were scheduled for trial November 28. On the provincial level, as Henry A. Kissinger has noted, "tacit accommodations are not unusual in many areas such as the Mekong Delta" (*Foreign Affairs*, January 1969). One wonders who will be left among the prospective victims.

The here-and-now bloodbath *is* real, however. For the majority of Vietnamese, poor peasants in the defoliated countryside and destitute workers in the city slums, it is what they have been witnessing a long time: the search and destroy missions; the "free zone" strikes; the B52 saturation bombings; the *Phoenix* operation (which from December 1967 to December 1968 killed 18,393 civilian Vietcong cadres); the Song My ("Pinkville") type of breakfast massacre in which an American infantry unit allegedly shot down some hundreds of men, women and children in a captured village in the early morning of March 16, 1968; the atrocities regularly described in national magazines (*Esquire, Look, The New Yorker*). To talk about a

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MR. TRAN VAN DINH'S *last post in the South Vietnamese diplomatic service was that of Chargé d'affaires in Washington in 1963. In 1960 he was a member of the South Vietnamese Cabinet, holding the portfolio of Director General of Information, and was also a member of the National Security Council.*

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