

Schlesinger Sees No Easy Answer

Arthur Schlesinger, Pulitzer Prize winning historian and former special assistant to President John F. Kennedy, appeared at Monmouth College Thursday evening to speak on "The Vietnam Dilemma."

Mr. Schlesinger started the talk on the complexity of the problems in Vietnam. He said that there are no easy answers that will solve all our problems. Free discussions should continue and the right to dissent is one of our countries most prized principles. He then quoted Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara as saying, "Freedom of dissent is fundamental." Mr. Schlesinger demonstrated this by showing that a certain Senator Lyndon B. Johnson in 1954 was against American troops becoming involved in Vietnam. "Problems cannot be solved by emotions, but by hard, sober thought."

Can we completely withdraw? This was a question posed by Mr. Schlesinger. To do so would be to let the people of South Vietnam down. "Departure under duress would have repercussions on Laos, Thailand, and Malasia."

Another alternative is one of complete victory through mass bombing. Mr. Schlesinger pointed out that, "bombings have never been successful against a rural community or guerrilla warfare." The American bombing of North Vietnam has had no effect on them. On the contrary, as Mr. Schlesinger pointed out, the bombing stimulates the morale of the North Vietnamese, as it did the British during World War II. Infiltration of South Vietnam has more than quadrupled, and the Soviet Union has increased its aid to North Vietnam by 40 per cent. Mr. Schlesinger then went on to say that further escalation

of the war will bring about an invasion of North Vietnam by American troops and finally as a last resort nuclear weapons. And for those who are sure that the Chinese would not take the chance of sending her troops against the Americans Mr. Schlesinger pointed out that in 1950 the Chinese were not afraid to fight in Korea. Why should they be afraid in 1966.

There are 480,000 Viet-Cong fighting in South Vietnam, and only 40,000 North Vietnamese soldiers. The war is in South Vietnam, not North Vietnam, Mr. Schlesinger pointed out. The United States must have ten soldiers to each one Viet-Cong to have an equal ratio. Mr. Schlesinger commented that, "one must reject total military victory."

The main objective is a negotiated settlement, and there are two different views on how to get it. The administration, under President Johnson, see Vietnam as the target of Hanoi and China. Schlesinger quoted President Johnson as saying, "if wars of national liberation are permitted to succeed in Vietnam it will be tried elsewhere." The administration will not offer concessions to the communists for fear that this will be interpreted as a sign of weakness. Therefore, they stick by a "hard line" policy.

On the other hand the moderate opposition led by Senators Kennedy and Fulbright are not so sure that China is organizing the war. As Mr. Schlesinger pointed out, the North Vietnamese troops did not enter South Vietnam until 1965 when American troops were already there! Mr. Schlesinger said that "the split between the Soviet Union and Red China set all communist coun-

tries on their own national policies. Communist states can no longer be assumed to be an extension of the Soviet Union or China." "Do we have to obliterate a country to stop guerilla warfare."

Mr. Schlesinger ended his talk by telling his own views. He said that "whatever happens in South America and Western Europe is more important than what happens in Southeast Asia."