

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Pacifica Radio Archives: “Protests, Rallies, Demonstrations”
(Funded by The Ford Foundation)

Transcript of **A Wrap-Up on the Washington, D.C. Moratorium**. A Report on the 1969 Moratorium in Washington, D.C. Features Host Steve Bookshester in Washington, D.C., Mrs. Martin Luther King at the Sylvan Theater behind the Washington Monument and Robert Hinton at the Washington Monument. Other speakers include Senator McGovern, Senator Frank Church, and Benjamin Spock.
Pacifica Radio Archives Number: BB3743
Program length: 60:00



We appreciate your comments, additions and corrections. Please address them to: Brian DeShazor, Director, Pacifica Radio Archives, 3729 Cahuenga Blvd., West, North Hollywood, CA 91604. Phone: (800) 735-0230, e-mail: pacarchive@aol.com. Also contact Pacifica Radio Archives for information regarding audio CDs.

Transcript

A WRAP-UP ON THE WASHINGTON, D.C. VIETNAM MORATORIUM

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: This is Steve Bookshester in Washington where participants in the Vietnam Moratorium today, here in the nation’s Capitol, numbered in the tens of thousands. At this moment, there is the conclusion of a ceremony at the Sylvan Theater behind the Washington Monument. The featured speaker there is Mrs. Martin Luther King. From the Sylvan Theater, people assembled there will go to the White House for a silent vigil, passing the White House, holding candles. Following that, they will disperse. Pacifica’s Robert Hinton is at the Washington Monument now and we hope that, toward the end of this broadcast, we will have a report from Bob on the events at the Washington Monument.

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

SB: There were Vietnam Moratorium Day demonstrations and observances at almost every major campus in Washington today and at most government agencies; two different, rather, three different agencies of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the main HEW Building downtown, the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda where, by an Order of the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, Dr. Benjamin Spock was able to speak, and the U.S. Office of Education. There were speeches by Representative Andrew Jacobs [D. Indiana] and Richard Ottinger [D. New York] at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, speeches by Reverend Walter Fauntroy at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, speeches by Dr. Spock and others at the Office of Economic Opportunity. Dr. Spock addressed a crowd of over five hundred there, speeches at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, including Representative William Clay of Missouri [Democrat], and at a number of other government agencies. This morning, Pacifica brought you Senator McGovern's speech. [George McGovern, D. South Dakota] As we said, Senator Frank Church of Idaho [Democrat], a long-time opponent of the war in Viet Nam, was at the Peace Corps today. Let's listen to some of what Senator Church had to say.

SENATOR FRANK CHURCH (FC): - you all for your invitation to come here. I don't know where I would rather come and appear and speak today, than here at the Peace Corps. The proof of my devotion to the Peace Corps is the fact that I have given two very good arms to it. Ward Howard and Jerry Brady, both of whom used to work for me in my office, now work for the Peace Corps. Let me say that, uh, I understand this has been advertised as a "question and answer" session, and that's the way I would like to

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

handle it, but I would like, first of all, to say just a few words about the Moratorium because of the things that are being said today (very disturbing things), first of all, uh, the Minority Leader of the Senate has suggested that those of us who are participating in the Moratorium are behaving in such a way as to give rise to the question, "Whose side are we on?" and, uh, another Senator even went further this morning. The Vice President [Spiro T. Agnew] has, uh, quoted, uh, declarations, uh, coming out of Hanoi, that have been widely, uh, publicized in the press. The President [Richard M. Nixon] himself has said that he will be unmoved by what occurs today and that may be so, but it is only fair to observe that he is moving everything else. He has moved his Ambassador back from Paris for special consultations on the War. He's moved General Hershey (CROWD REACTION IN THE BACKGROUND) to another position. It's obvious that he is sensitive to the politics of the War, though, perhaps, there isn't sufficient evidence that any of the policy has changed. This, I think, has led to the frustration which gives rise to a search for scapegoats. In much the same way that the German General Staff, which had actually initiated Germany's surrender in World War I, later perpetuated the myth of defeat by betrayal on the home-front, the men who lead us into the Viet Nam quagmire have sought to place the blame for the catastrophe on their domestic critics. On those of us who said that we never should have entered the quagmire in the first place and who now insist that we ought to get out.

FC: The real battlefield, according to this self-serving doctrine of the architects of failure, is not in Viet Nam, but in America where, if only the critics would be silent, the will of the enemy would supposedly be broken. In its crude form as a spurious, jingoist

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

patriotism, the argument runs that the War critics are near-traitors, provisioners of aid and comfort to the enemy. In the scarcely more august language of our last two Presidents, the critics are nervous-Nellies and neo-isolationists, deriders of patriotism, as Mr. Nixon put it, “a backward fetish.” The critics are also credited with the failure to make progress in over a year of negotiations in Paris. With a cold eye fixed on the agitated state of America opinion, so the argument runs, the enemy is emboldened to resist our reasonable proposals. “It’s awfully hard to play chess with twenty kibitzers at your elbow,” Mr. Kissinger complains, “all of them demanding explanations of the purpose of every move while your opponent listens.” Well, the kibitzers, who are such an inconvenience to Mr. Kissinger, are the very dissenters whose protests finally pursued President Johnson to stop the escalation of the war and to go to the conference table. Had these critics remained silent, as the war-makers would have had them do, the limited War in Viet Nam might by now have escalated into a full-scale war with China. Whatever hope of peace there now is, it is the kibitzers’ gift to the architects of failure. Long may they kibitz.

(APPLAUSE) Acting, let it be remembered, not on a concept of patriotism that calls them to silent acquiescence in a policy that they detest, but rather to the call of the patriotism of Camus, who would have us love our country for what it ought to be, and of Carl Schurz, that mugwump dissenter from McKinley Imperialism, who proclaimed, “Our country, right or wrong, when right to be kept right, when wrong to be put right.”

(APPLAUSE) It’s in that spirit that I am participating today, that I know you are participating today, in this nationwide call to the government to take note of the feeling of millions of Americans who want this War ended and want American troops withdrawn and they’re acting in the best tradition of a free people, by making their views known to

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

the government and I think, perhaps, in such numbers that even the government may hear. (CHUCKLES FROM CROWD) So, I promised this would be a “question and answer” session. I’d like to open the meeting now to questions.

FC: Yes. (CALLING ON QUESTIONER) The question is what is my proposal for withdrawal? How would I see us proceed at this time? Senator Hatfield and I have introduced a resolution in the Senate which is, uh, winning, uh, an increasing number of co-sponsors. It is a bi-partisan resolution. It calls for a more rapid withdrawal of American troops, pending such reasonable interval as may be necessary for an orderly transition on the battlefield, and for the safety of the withdrawing troops and those who may wish to leave with them. The resolution also calls for a national commitment to full and complete disengagement from Viet Nam. It does not specify a date, but it establishes criteria that make it plain that this withdrawal can be affected within a reasonable time. The, uh, present pace of withdrawal is such that American troops would be engaged in Viet Nam for the next eight to ten years.

QUESTIONER: How do you see this Moratorium and the effort put forth today as abetting or helping this cause?

FC: Well, I have been protesting the War policy in Southeast Asia for five years. When I first spoke up against it, negotiation was a dirty word here in Washington. So, I’ve seen the policy move a long, long way in five years, but believe me, the only time it’s moved is when the pressures have been brought to bear and the pressures have become sufficient

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

here at home. And I think that the Moratorium, whatever is said about it, if it is conducted peacefully as we all have hoped and prayed, can't help but have a great impact upon the government and I think that it will accelerate the pace of withdrawal, that whatever the President may say, he *will* be moved by this kind of massive demonstration of public opinion. After all –

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: That was Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, a longtime opponent of the War in Viet Nam, speaking this morning at the Peace Corps, here in Washington, to Peace Corp Staff and returned volunteers. Another one of the speakers, of the Congressional speakers, today here in Washington, at Viet Nam Moratorium rallies, was Congressman – was, rather, uh, let's do first Dr. Benjamin Spock, who caused the greatest amount of controversy in the attempts that were made for Dr. Spock to be able to speak at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda. The invitation to Dr. Spock to speak was originally blocked by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. That is, they would not give permission to Dr. Spock to speak, based on some regulations. The Federal District Court here in Washington upheld that HEW decision, but it was overruled two days ago by a Court of Appeals here in Washington. Dr. Spock spoke at noon to a group of about a thousand employees of National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Mental Health. Let's listen now to a portion of Dr. Spock's remarks at noon today at the National Institutes of Health here in Washington.

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

DR. BENJAMIN SPOCK (BS): Is dissent justified? It seems to me, all of these, uh, impairments of the well being of our country, in themselves, uh, justify, uh, dissent and, uh, certainly I believe that the illegality and the immorality of the War justifies dissent. It doesn't just justify it. To me, it *demand*s dissent! What *are* we? Are we *mice*? Uh, are we – (APPLAUSE) Let me tick off to you the reasons, uh, why I think the War in Viet Nam is illegal and immoral. The United States was never invited there. The United States went there in response to no Treaty obligation, though our Presidents have lied to us repeatedly on these two scores. We went there in 1954 for a pure power grab and anybody who takes the trouble to read one or two books on the history of Viet Nam, or a half dozen pamphlets, will be convinced that we went there as a pure power grab. Even our President, at the time, uh, admitted that this was true. Uh, we introduced a puppet, puppet – our first puppet, whom we found in the United States. We transported him to Viet Nam and set him up in the puppet business and, in doing so, we broke our promise to abide by the Geneva accords and then, furthermore, we encouraged him to cancel the election that had been promised to the people of South Viet Nam and whom our government *knew* preferred Ho Chi Minh by a percentage of eighty – a fine thing for a country that goes around talking down its nose to other countries that we think are less democratic, less freedom-loving than we. (APPLAUSE) Six years later, the people, *despairing* of ever getting justice because of the increasing tyrannicalness and, uh, cruelty of our first puppet, uh, launched the Viet Cong revolt in 1960 and, uh, our government at that time broke its promise to the U.N. in declining to refer, uh, this threat to the peace to the U.N. Can I say, as an aside, unfortunately, this is one of the ways that we keep the U.N. weak. Instead of using it honorably, the way we promised to use the U.N., we refer

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

to the U.N. only those issues where we're pretty sure we can embarrass the other side, and we use our *muscle* to keep from being taken up by the U.N. those issues where we might be embarrassed. (APPLAUSE) The third, and the worst, illegality, from my point of view was February 1965, when Lyndon Johnson, who had been elected with a promise not to escalate and not send Americans to fight there, abruptly started the bombing of North Viet Nam and the building up of fighting troops to the number of, eventually, over half a million. In doing so, President Johnson broke his promise to obey the Constitution of the United States that says, very specifically, that only Congress has the right to declare War. (APPLAUSE)

BS: Johnson said all along that the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was the equivalent of a Declaration of War. He got that Resolution from Congress by telling the Congress that there had been unprovoked attack on the Naval forces of the United States by the Naval Forces of North Viet Nam. Eventually, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee found this to the *exact* opposite of the truth, that the United States' Navy had equipped and trained a Saigon Naval force, which, in that first week of February 1964, was making *attacks* on harbor installations of North Viet Nam, not only with the *knowledge*, the *full* knowledge of the United State Navy, but with the *active* cooperation of the United States Navy. In other words, this Resolution was obtained by *fraud* – F-R-A-U-D – *fraud*. (APPLAUSE)

BS: Then our government, unable to win the war, because, basically, the people who are knowledgeable enough to care and to know where to put their efforts in, the, those people

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

are on the other side, all except the so-called Mandarin class, the absentee land owners, the Army officers, and the civilian officials, the same people who, for eight years, from 1946 to 54, fought on the side of the French when the Vietnamese people were fighting to throw off French rule. These are the only people fighting on our side in Viet Nam. Our government, unable to make any progress because the people were all on the other side, then took to wholesale violations of the laws of warfare. We have been deliberately destroying crops in order to starve the people of South Viet Nam into surrender. We have been deliberately destroying their dwellings, by the torch, by the bulldozer, and in North Viet Nam, by bombing. We have been removing people from their homes and the graves of their ancestors and throwing them into what amount to concentration camps to the numbers of hundreds of thousands, where they live in squalor and degradation. All of these things are very specifically forbidden by the laws of warfare to which the United States has affixed its signature. Our participation in Viet Nam is not *slightly* illegal or *slightly* immoral. It's a total abomination. (APPLAUSE)

BS: You have to read the, the press of foreign nations to realize that America, ever since the escalation, has been compared, in its ruthlessness, with the ruthlessness of Hitler and the ruthlessness of Stalin, at their worst. Now, uh, I think if we aren't going to get a more peaceful America, uh, America that does right by its own people and that, uh, behaves as a decent citizen of the world until we reverse American Imperialism. I think it will be all in vain if we, eventually, some time or other, end the war in Viet Nam and then go on with more Viet Nams in Latin America and other parts of the world. (APPLAUSE)

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

BS: But we were children in school, we are taught that the United States is always the good guy and this is why we won our wars. But it's not until you get somewhat more sophisticated and somewhat older and, especially, when you get your eyes opened by our participation in Viet Nam, that you realize that our country has been one which has thrown its weight around, like other nations. I don't think it's worse than other nations, of all complexions, whether it's Democratic, uh, Capitalist, or whether it's Fascist, or whether it's Socialist, or whether it's Communist. All nations, when they find themselves much stronger than their neighbors, cannot resist the temptation to throw their weight around. Our Monroe Doctrine in the 19th Century was not as I was taught in school, uh, because we were a Big Brother to Latin – to the other nations of Latin – of, uh, the Western Hemisphere. It was our warning that we were going to exploit the Western Hemisphere, which we have done quite consistently and, at times, very ruthlessly since then. Our Mexican War, way back in 1848, was a pow – was a land grab. We wanted 40% of the territory of Mexico and we got it because we had the Army which was able to do it. And, in the 20th Century, we've intervened, uh, several times more in Mexico, in Nicaragua. Quite recently, uh, in 1965, in the Dominican Republic. We've subverted governments, uh, in other parts of Latin America, as we did in Panama, uh, in order to get the right to dig the Canal land, as we've done during the Eisenhower Administration in overthrowing a popularly elected government in Guatemala, at the behest of the United Fruit Company.

BS: Since World War II, the United States has ended up incomparably the strongest nation that the world has ever seen. Uh, we have been very effectively able to dominate

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Europe, industrially, militarily and, to a surprising degree, politically, too. Uh, we have around the world, at the present time, over three thousand military bases on foreign soil in thirty countries. This is Imperialism. Uh, we are able, through foreign aid to influence the foreign policy of, uh, countries who want to do business with them. We force them, uh, to refrain from doing things that they want to do in regard to trade with Cuba and in regard to China, because we have the potentiality, through foreign aid, of pulling the rug out from under them. And, uh, this is why we became involved in Southeast Asia. Uh, Eisenhower, himself, said, when he was talking to the Governors of the, then, forty-eight states in 1953, a year before the French collapse in Viet Nam, he said the reason that the United States is being, is paying 80% of the bill of the French for their war against the Vietnamese people, all along. He said it's not because we love the French so. He said it's because of all that valuable tin and tungsten and valuable materials in that part of the world that we want to control.

BS: Now, let me say right away that I believe in standing up to aggression. I think if Communists attack us or attack any Democratic government with which we have a military alliance, I believe that we should stand up to it, whether that attack comes from Communists or Fascists, or Capitalists, or for anybody else. What I am opposed to, and what I think Americans have got to, uh, become opposed to, if we're going to involve – if we're going to, uh, avoid, uh, future involvements like Viet Nam, is *our* being the aggressor and then trying to *pretend*, uh, that we are trying to save somebody else from Communism. This is *paranoia* and when individuals become paranoid, or when groups become paranoid, and when nations become paranoid, they not only are a menace to each

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

other, even more so, they are menace to themselves, because the only way we can save ourselves, uh, the only way we can get along in the world, in the long-run, is by being able to see the realities. And when we falsify the realities by calling ourselves ‘good guys’ when actually we are the aggressor, we are starting a perilous course which could easily result in annihilation of ourselves and, in fact, of the whole world. My own feeling is that, throughout the escalation of the War in Viet Nam, we have not only been making a *mess* of, uh, of our own country, which helps Communism rather than puts it back, and have been teetering on the edge of nuclear war, we have had people in the Pentagon, we have had Senators and Congressmen *demanding* all along that we take the restraints off ourselves and really unleash ourselves. Uh, let’s bomb Hanoi and let’s bomb the Soviet ships in Hai Phong Harbor. These people keep screaming, oblivious, apparently, of the fact that, uh, China and the Soviet Union have said they will be forced into the war if we commit any such acts as this. This is the kind of *madness* that we’ve worked ourselves into. When we can’t get with our quiet might what we would like to grab, uh, then we go beserk and, uh, say, “Let’s destroy more widely, more wildly, uh, in order to get the control we want.”

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: That was Dr. Benjamin Spock. An excerpt from Dr. Spock’s speech at the National Institutes of Health in suburban Bethesda, Maryland, today. Dr. Spock, by the way, also spoke at the Office of Economic Opportunity to a crowd, as we said earlier, of about five hundred, at George Washington University, and at the main auditorium at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Other interesting, rather noteworthy speakers, in addition to Dr. Spock and Senator Church, who we heard

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

earlier, and Senator McGovern this morning at American University, were Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, who spoke to a convocation of Washington lawyers at St. John's Episcopal Church, former Senator Ernest Gruening of Alaska [Democrat], who, as a matter of note, addressed the first Washington Peace Rally held in 1965, Congressman Henry Reuss of Wisconsin [Democrat], Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin [Democrat], Congressman Richard Ottinger of New York, who spoke at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Congressman Andrew Jacobs of Indiana, who also spoke at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Health, Education and Welfare, and Catholic University and, who we might note, gave an excellent, rather even it might be described as a brilliant speech last night on the floor of the House of Representatives, supporting the Moratorium, Congressman William Clay, of Missouri, who spoke at the Civil Rights Commission, Congressman Richard McCarthy of New York, who spoke at Georgetown University Law School, Congressman William F. Ryan of New York [Democrat], who spoke at Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture, Health, Education, and Welfare, newly elected Congressman Michael Harrington of Massachusetts [Democrat], who spoke at Housing and Urban Development, Congressman Conyers of Michigan [John Conyers, Jr., Democrat], who also spoke there, and Congressman [James] Scheuer of New York [Democrat], who spoke at the Georgetown Day School.

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: We might pause briefly to note here that this is WBAI in New York City at 99.5 FM, bringing you coverage of Viet Nam Moratorium Day activities. My name is Steve Bookshester and I'm in the WBAI, Washington Bureau,

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

where shortly I'll be bringing you the remarks of Congressman Louis Stokes [D., Ohio], who spoke at a noon time rally at Washington's Farragut Square in downtown Washington. Here are some of the remarks of Congressman Stokes at the noon time rally in Farragut Square, off Connecticut Avenue in Washington, a rally which drew three thousand participants.

CONGRESSMAN LOUIS STOKES (LS): Friends of Peace, my salutations and congratulations to those of you who gather here to take part in what I think will be the greatest single expression of conscience in the history of this nation. Whatever be the attitude of the President or the House of Representatives, your participation in this overwhelming demand for cessation of our involvement in the Viet Nam conflict is an exhibition of good citizenship in its highest form, and should serve as an inspiration and an example to those of us charged with the responsibility of determining our country's policies. If we are to extricate ourselves from the costly and undeclared war in which we are involved, we must first *admit* that the policies we have pursued since the Gulf of Tonkin are, as Senator Gruening has pointed out *long ago*, bankrupt, and premised almost totally upon myth – military myths, diplomatic myths, and political myths.

(APPLAUSE) Fortunately, - fortunately these premises are *finally* being understood for what they are by a *great* majority of American people. The American people now realize that we can never win this war. They now realize that the Viet Nam conflict is not a matter of aggression from the North, but an internal one, which the people of South Viet Nam must settle for themselves. (APPLAUSE)

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

LS: Finally, and most importantly, they realize that to pay for this war, they must watch their homes and schools deteriorate, their transportation systems break down, their environment become even more polluted, and their children go hungry. The important task now, however, is to *build* on the past, to confess the error of our policy, and to begin working toward re-structuring our national priorities. Our national spirit has been badly demoralized by this war. It has alienated parents from children, students from universities, neighbors from neighbors. It has exacerbated the growing racial crisis and has impeded social progress on all fronts. But Americans are a resilient lot. Just as we can be demoralized, we can be revitalized. Our moral energies can once again be harnessed and guided to the betterment of this nation. To provide this leadership will be our responsibility - the public and civic leaders of our communities – it will be our job to see that henceforth our government will buy bread before we buy bombers, homes before howitzers, (APPLAUSE) schools before submarines. And, if we are successful in this effort, America will have turned the corner to world leadership in the coming decades and we will have taken a giant step toward the creation of a peaceful and just society here at home. If we are not, we must prepare ourselves for internal strife of untold dimension, which could easily tear our society apart. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: Congressman Louis Stokes speaking at a noontime rally at Farragut Square here in Washington, a rally of business and professional people. There was some controversy here in Washington today over the statement made by the Premier of North Viet Nam who, in an open letter to the American people, according, at least, to the Republican leaders in the Senate and the House, describe the Moratorium as a fall

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

offensive aimed at forcing the United States to withdraw completely and unconditionally from Viet Nam. The Senate and House Republican leaders introduced resolutions calling for repudiation of Premier Pham Van Dong's letter. Said the Resolution, "Whereas the said Premier greatly misjudges Americans and deceives himself if he believes that those who demonstrate are doing so with a desire to assist Hanoi and, whereas the said Premier's letter to the American people is a blatant and insolent intrusion into the affairs of the American people, resolved by the Senate that we support the inherent right of all Americans to responsible and peaceful dissent, that we abhor the attempt of Premier Pham Van Dong to associate those Americans who demonstrate for peace, with the cause of our enemy, and resolve further that we repudiate the Premier's letter and call upon all Americans to disassociate themselves from North Viet Nam's crude and intolerable Declaration." Last night, Vice President Agnew called the Premier's statement an inexcusable intrusion into American domestic affairs. Earlier in this broadcast from Washington, you heard Senator Frank Church reply to the statements such as those issued by the Vice President and the Senate and House Republican leaders. Senator Eugene McCarthy [D., Minnesota] also issued a statement on this matter. The Senator's statement said, in part, "It is distressing that the Nixon Administration would revert to using techniques which Mr. Nixon, himself, used when first elected to the Congress and the Senate. I do not mean to charge that the Nixon Administration is the only administration to use this technique. It is the same technique used by the Johnson Administration during the New Hampshire primary campaign in 1968 in an attempt to discredit me. It is the same technique used by Dean Rusk, who charged that my campaign was "causing joy in Hanoi." The Moratorium is, in fact, an expression of the

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

best conscience of the American people.” That, a statement by Senator Eugene McCarthy. In mid-afternoon, the Viet Nam Moratorium Committee itself has a press conference. The speakers were Sam Brown and David Mixner, co-founders of the Moratorium. Let’s hear Mr. Brown’s statement and then Mr. Mixner.

SAM BROWN (SB): We cannot believe, gentlemen, that the President intends to continue the War in the face of the kind of massive, public out-pouring which we are witnessing across the country. All over the country, in cities large and small, it’s becoming clear that a substantial, if not a majority of the American people oppose the continuation of this War. The things that lead me to say that are, frankly, very exciting things, I think, that are happening around. The ones that, I’m sure that you are aware of some of them, some of them you may not be aware of. I don’t know if you’re aware that today, in New Haven, Connecticut, fifty thousand people showed up for a rally – police estimate of 50,000 people. That this morning, for a starter-rally in Cambridge, Massachusetts, just at a gathering place, something between fifteen and twenty thousand people showed up, and today, in New York City on Wall Street, there’s – the crowd estimate is – is in, is in the fives of thousands, like fifteen or twenty thousand, and we haven’t gotten a newspaper estimate on it yet, for a Wall Street rally this noon. Those are only – with the exception of New Haven – were only sort of initial rallies to start the day off. David would like to talk to you about what’s going on in some of the smaller towns and cities, that you may *not* be aware of around the country. But, in addition to the size of the response, we have been very gratified by the kind of response that has been coming from prominent public officials. You’ve probably seen Arthur Goldberg’s statement. If

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

you haven't, there's only one sentence I'd like to read because I think it's – it is from him a substantial statement – I think a change from the past, "... Second, I suggest a straightforward statement by the President that we accept the principle that there should be a prompt withdrawal of *all* American forces and that we are prepared to discuss in Paris, a timetable for their prompt and systematic withdrawal." It's *that* kind of movement on the part of public figures, as well as the kind of response that we've received from people all over the country that indicate to us that the President will, whatever he says, be in a position where he *must* listen to that *vast* outpouring of the American conscience.

VOICE IN THE CROWD: (OVERLAPPING) Mr. Brown, would you –

SB: David would like to talk to you about – David would like to talk to you about what's going on in a variety of smaller cities and towns around the country. David...

REPORTER: Are you open for questions (INAUDIBLE) –

DAVID MIXNER (DM): Yes. Pardon? Gentlemen, I'm going to ask your tolerance because in the Midwest section, you'll all have to understand the time difference that we have in reporting, uh, on our phones. I'm going to try also to give you some of the descriptions of some of the things that happened in order to set the tone of the day that we are feeling and that some of the people have been feeling throughout the day. In Baltimore, Maryland, which has never been known for its anti-War activities, The

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Evening Sun estimate is that fifteen thousand people jammed Federal Plaza today to hear Mrs. Martin Luther King address them over a telephone. At the end of the rally, many of them joined hands and sang "Day Is Done," with the V-sign prevailing.

REPORTER: Sing what?

DM: "Day Is Done," the Peter, Paul, and Mary record. In Washington, D.C., I know for a lot of us here on the staff, it was one of the most gratifying things to see last night, and probably [unclear] to us, know that we have done something, because we went up there at eleven o'clock last night and found the Congress of the United States debating the War in Viet Nam, with over a thousand students in blue jeans outside waiting to listen to the debate, in lines that policemen told them would take three to four hours before they could get in.

DM: In Melville, New Jersey, an industrial, one-factory town in Southern New Jersey, over one hundred high school students stayed out of school today to prepare for signs for a candlelight caravan tonight through the city of eight thousand. In Fort Collins, Colorado, one thousand five hundred students marched a mile through a twelve-inch snow that is on the ground, in a Peace Walk this morning, in the first event of that day's activity. In Milwaukee, one thousand people jammed cars and went in a funeral procession down Wisconsin Avenue with untold thousands, according to the Milwaukee newspapers, lining in sympathy around the streets. In Chicago, ten thousand at a Civic Center rally. North Hampton, Massachusetts, over five thousand students showed up for

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

a staging rally to canvas today. Over a thousand went out and canvassed and found that 50% of the response so far is unconditional, immediate withdrawal. In Bay City, Michigan, one thousand five hundred people within an all-night vigil against the war. In Sioux Falls, South Dakota, at an early morning rally, eight hundred people showed up, at a rally against the War. Four hundred people at an early morning march to the post office marched in Salina, Kansas. In Tucson, Arizona on Monday two thousand five hundred students showed up for the planting of crosses on the Mall at the University in a silent vigil.

REPORTER: How many was that?

DM: Two thousand five hundred. It's absolutely massive. The scope is unbelievable. We're delighted. We hope that the President will heed the call of what, obviously, is American – many American people. In Washington today, at the Gold – Arthur Goldberg rally at St. John's Episcopal Church, they had over a thousand of them, uh, people who were unable to get in and Mis – former Justice Goldberg went outside and addressed the crowd outside. In Farragut Square, over a thousand businessmen and professionals, uh, jammed the rally to hear former Senator Ernest Gruening and Congressman Louis Stokes give a speech against the War. The South – I guess it's the East front of the Capitol – the back, anyway – I'm not quite sure of my directions – uh, was *filled* with Capitol staffers today, and there were two to three hundred on the sidelines who could not get on the steps to take part in an afternoon vigil against the War. That's from the Staffs of the Hill, and I guess Mr. Brown will answer any further

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

questions you have. That is, I apologize, just a quick rundown of some of the things we're getting in and I apologize for it.

REPORTER: Mr. Brown, uh, in your (UNCLEAR) after, uh, Mr. Agnew made his statement yesterday – (OVERLAPPING VOICE OF REPORTER) – impugning your patriotism...will you comment...

SB: We clearly have no way to control what North Viet Nam is going to say. We view the Moratorium, as Mr. Justice Goldberg characterized it, as *profoundly* American in spirit. We're *shocked* that the Administration would attempt to use this event to impugn the integrity, the motivation, the purposes, the goals of Americans who profoundly desire peace. And frankly, to comment on that statement is to give it more credit than it is due. It is not, frankly, a statement deserving of any kind of comment and I hope we can talk about the substance of the day, rather than getting sidetracked on what is an irrelevant side question raised, I think spuriously, by the Administration in an attempt to discredit the day. (APPLAUSE)

REPORTER: Mr. Brown, in line with that - (APPLAUSE) – Mr. Brown, in line with that, Congressman Ashbrook of Ohio [Republican] charged today that your movement was symptomatic of what was happening with the American Left. He said that, whereas in the past, the American Left had been scrupulous (the ADA and the ACLU) about eliminating elements that were extremists, say those who were members of the

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Communist party. You have not done so, for example, Mr. [UNCLEAR] who's a member of the, uh, the Board of the New Mobilization and, uh, -

SB: Tony, my God, to attempt to impugn Averell Harriman and Arthur Goldberg and Senator McCarthy and Senator McGovern and Senator Hatfield, and to tar them with that brush, is, frankly, a new -

REPORTER (TONY): [OVERLAPPING] I am not tarring with any brush. I'm saying -

SB: And I just don't think that's a statement worthy of comment. Are there further questions on the substance of -

REPORTER: I'd like to know - It seems to me that this country is - there's some kind of a crisis upon us right now. In other words, you got, you've got tens of millions of people demonstrating against the war and yet the President *does* come out with statements like this. Where do you think the country is headed now? What do you see is a way out of this impasse?

SB: Well, the clear way out, it seems to me is for the President to respond to the expressed desires of the American people. That *he*, at this point, is really at a crossroads about what he will do, and that it's his decision to make in response to the wishes, the clearly expressed wishes, of the American people. If you've been out on the streets, after the President asked those who support the policy to turn on their lights, I think you'll

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

discover that, before 6:30 this evening, there are very few people with their lights on. After that, I suppose we'll all turn them on, (LAUGHTER) but there simply is *not* support in this country for the continuation of the war. I think that's clear today and I think that the President has the responsibility – once again, as Mr. Justice Goldberg pointed out in his speech earlier today – to accept that. It's a very, that's a very interesting speech if you haven't had a chance to see it because to come from a former United Nations Ambassador to then suggest that, in fact, the President's position and the possibility of *him* making peace, are easier because of today, rather than more difficult, as he has suggested, is, it seems to me, is a point well worth thinking about and considering. It is *conceivable* that we have built today a constituency, which will allow the President to withdraw from Viet Nam without having it be politically suicidal for him, and I hope that he would see fit to do that.

REPORTER: Are you gratified by these accolades from Hanoi? How do you people –

REPORTER: Why don't you renounce these people's support? (UNCLEAR)

SB: We are not gratified. That, I think, is not a question even worthy of a kind of response. To put that, an open letter to the American people, which we *clearly* did not solicit, and to take an open letter to the American people and portray it as something to us, is to impugn every individual American who enjoins in that action. And I think there are a number of people in prominent public positions who have very clearly stated, people who support the Moratorium, who worked for the Moratorium, who *are* the

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Moratorium, who have clearly stated their position and I think to speak about it further merely gives more credit to the Vice President than he's due.

REPORTER: Do you renounce the comments of -

REPORTER: Do I take it that your comment about building a constituency means that in no way, that demonstrations such as today's undercut the policy, the negotiating policy and might simply delay a negotiated settlement -

SB: Well, he asked if I was concerned about the possibility that demonstrations such as today's would undercut the President's negotiating position. As I've said, I think Mr. Justice Goldberg's statement answered that. I thought I spoke to that adequately in my first comment and that is, simply, that, in fact, it may make it *possible* now for the President to say, "We are withdrawing systematically from Viet Nam," and we hope that that will be true and he will take this opportunity." Gentlemen, thank you very much.

DM: I just have two more things that I want to announce that came out. Five hundred Americans were joined by Paul Newman, Joanne Woodward, and five members of the British Parliament in a peaceful picket outside the American Embassy.

REPORTER: Can we ask one more question?

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

DM: One other thing. Five or six thousand people gathered in front of the Federal Building in Norfolk, Virginia in its first massive Peace Vigil.

REPORTER: What about the November plans now?

SB: The November plans – we will have an announcement in the next several days about the follow-up. Frankly, we need to evaluate, and that’s why I hasten to get back. We hope to be able to give another briefing with full detail this evening, with fuller detail, which we are now in the process of collecting. November plans won’t be available until, frankly, until we’ve had a chance to see where we are. If you’d asked me a week ago that same question, I’d have given you quite a different answer. We were in quite a different position.

REPORTER: What would you – What answer – a week ago –

SB: And two days – two days from now, two days from now, we may have a different – We didn’t give one a week ago, because the situation is changing so quickly and I think two days from now, we’ll have a full answer.

VOICE: Thank you, Mr. Brown. (APPLAUSE)

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: Sam Brown and Dave Mixner of the Viet Nam Moratorium Committee, two of the four people who started the Committee, at a late afternoon press

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

briefing. Once again, becoming entangled in the question of the letter of the Premier of North Viet Nam to the American people. While most of today's activities in Washington's, in Washington, rather, were rallies and speeches, university events at all four large Washington universities – Georgetown, American Catholic, and George Washington, and also events at the University of Maryland in nearby College Park, there was, also, one more traditional type of demonstration at Washington's Offices of the National Selective Service Headquarters, which was held in mid-afternoon. Here is a bit of that demonstration.

SPEAKER: All right, ladies and gentlemen, we are going to begin our services. Let me introduce UCF Chairman, Mr.[Mel?] Davis. (APPLAUSE)

MEL [?] DAVIS: I'm not sure how to work this thing. Can you hear me? Is it working? (CROWD RESPONSES) All right. This whole day has been set aside as a day for indications for protest. For mourning for the slaughter that is going on in Viet Nam. The march here this morning, the Guerilla Theater has been a part of this; a show of our indication of our protest, and of our mourning. We now ask you to join us in a period of silence and mourning for those who have lost their lives, their families, their homes in Viet Nam, and for this country, of which we are cause. I now introduce Professor David Green of the Law School, the advisor to the Quaker group here at G.W. who will begin our service of mourning. We ask that you join with us in silence and in mourning. (SOME CROWD BACKGROUND, APPLAUSE)

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

DAVID GREEN: I should like to read a passage from Isaiah in which the prophet tried to answer the people of his own nation and times who were asking why things weren't going pleasantly for them, even though they observed the niceties of religion and civilization. "Cry aloud, spare not. Lift up your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their transgression, to the House of Jacob, their sins. Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of me righteous judgments. They delight to draw near to God. While we fasted, thou seest not. While we humbled ourselves, thou takest no -

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: That was part of a demonstration held today at the National Selective Service Headquarters. Robert Hinton has just come back from the Sylvan Theater, near the Washington Monument, where the rally preceding the candlelight march around the White House – rather, to the White House – passed it and back to the Washington Monument, has just begun. The featured speaker at that rally was Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr. An estimated 35,000 people attended the rally. Now, let's listen to Mrs. King.

MRS. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.: (APPLAUSE) Thank you so very much. Thank you my dear friend, Reverend Walter Fauntroy, and to the distinguished platform guests, and to you, my dear freedom- and peace-loving friends. Your presence here tonight is deeply inspiring. I must say that I am honored to pay witness this evening to a marvelous re-awakening in the hearts and minds of thousands of American people, as they are

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

moved to speak out against our extremely destructive involvement in the devastation of Viet Nam. As I stand here tonight, I am reminded of the somewhat startling opening scene of Shakespeare's Hamlet, where Bernardo and Marcellus, two Danish officers are taking their guard for the night with Horatio, a close friend of Hamlet's. Several nights before, they had seen a terrifying ghost, and Horatio and others *doubt* what they had seen. Marcellus speaks: "Horatio says, "'Tis but our fantasy, and will not let belief take hold of him, touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us. Therefore, I have entreated him, along with us, to watch the minutes of this night, that if again, this apparition comes, he may approve our eyes and speak of it." I do not imply that you here tonight, like Horatio, have not seen the physical presence of the horrifying ghost. But a few years ago, there were not many of us who approved our eyes, and were moved to speak of it. The ghost of the War in Viet Nam *is* upon us, yet there are some who would advise us to silence our lips. "Give the President time," they say. "Don't give moral encouragement to Hanoi and the National Liberation Front. We are making some progress." In essence, they don't recognize the existence of Marcellus' ghost. But tonight, we are saying that *we*, as the American people, have taken up the night watch, and we have moved to break the betrayal of our own silences. We have seen the plunder of thousands of villages. We *know* of the destruction of life, and spirit, and hope, and we recognize that the *only* solution that is fitting to the problem is to bring the boys home, and to bring them home now. (APPLAUSE)

STEVE BOOKSHESTER: Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., who spoke just a few minutes ago at the Sylvan Theater behind the Washington Monument. Tens of thousands of

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

people participated in the Viet Nam Moratorium today here in Washington, at government agencies, campuses, places where they worked. The Moratorium began last night at the United States Capitol, with what has been described by many long-time Capitol Hill observers as the finest debate in the history of the House of Representatives – the debate on the War. There was a peaceful march through Georgetown last night, the Georgetown area of Washington, by a thousand young people carrying lit candles; an evening Mass, a midnight Mass celebrated last night, a Mass for Peace at Georgetown University, celebrated by the Reverend Richard McSorley. This morning the events began at 7:00 a.m. here in Washington, with a “Pain-In for Peace” at the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies. So, as we said, it’s been a day with activities throughout Washington, perhaps most fitting that the Viet Nam Moratorium happens in so many places in such diverse ways, here in the Nation’s capital. With Robert Hinton, this is Steve Bookshester in WBAI’s Washington Bureau, returning you to Paul Fisher at WBAI in New York City.

End of Transcript of Wrap Up of Viet Nam Moratorium Rally in Washington, D.C.

NOTES:

1. National Anti-Viet Nam War Moratorium (“M-Day”), October 15, 1969.
2. Mrs. Martin Luther King (Coretta Scott King, 1927-2006)
3. Dr. Benjamin Spock (1903-1998). American pediatrician, author of Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care (1946) – one of the bestselling books of all time.

PROTESTS, RALLIES, DEMONSTRATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. MORATORIUM

Political activist. A founder of the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE). Vocal critic of U.S. involvement in Viet Nam, and of the military draft.

4. Reverend Walter Fauntroy (1933-). Civil Rights activist. Elected (non-voting) delegate to the U.S. Congress in 1971 (Democrat, Washington D.C.), served until 1990.

5. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew (1918-1996). Governor, Maryland. Vice President, United States (elected 1968, 1972; resigned 1973).

6. President Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994). Elected 1968, 1972; resigned 1974).

7. Pham Van Dong (1906-2000). Vietnamese Communist leader, founder with Ho Chi Minh, of Viet Minh. Premier of the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam, 1954-1976. Prime Minister of Vietnam, 1976-1987.

8. Dean Rusk (1909-1994). United States Secretary of State under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

9. Arthur J. Goldberg (1908-1990). Associate Justice, United States Supreme Court, 1962-1965; U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, 1965-1968.

10. William Averell Harriman (1891-1986). American financier and diplomat. Helped President John F. Kennedy negotiate the U.S./U.S.S.R. Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Served as chief U.S. negotiator at 1968-1969 peace talks with North Vietnam.

[Sources: Encyclopedia Britannica Concise (online), and infoplease.com

Copyright © 2007, Pacifica Radio. All rights reserved.