

THE MAN WHO PLAYED GOD

In 1964, Lyndon Baines Johnson became President of the United States of America for another term in the biggest landslide victory of American political history. But the flush of glory faded when he began the process of escalation in Viet Nam following that pathetic pretext in the Gulf of Tonkin, which it is not certain even happened.

From his position three years ago as the most popular president of a united nation, he is today a distrusted man, swamped in a mass of broken promises to the extent that he has been accredited with a "credibility gap" as a euphemistic alternative to branding him a liar; his initial plans for the Great S riety have shattered before the staggering military expenditure; and Americ: today is on the brink of another civil war as the Negro is forced to the unpleasant realization that the white American simply will not allow him to live in dignity. All of these issues are intimately tied in with Viet Nam.

It may be that Johnson has had a moment of truth. It may be that the huge array of informed opinion throughout the world ranged against him has eventually seeped through, but a word of warning is in order.

Johnson is nothing if not a shrewd political speculator. In ordering the cessation of the bombing, he has done nothing except stop the criminal activity that he began three years ago. There is no mention of negotiating with the NLF. He has made no mention of the unification of Viet Nam on the basis laid down by the Geneva agreements of 1954.But most people will consider the bombing pause as a grand concession on Johnson's part: the Commies will now have no chance not to come a-runnin' with an olive branch.

But suppose they don't?

Just imagine the reaction of the huge numbers of apathetic and ignorant people in the world who have been supporting Johnson's policies in Viet Nam without having made any effort to study the war, if it is eventually trumpeted that Hanoi has made no move after the bombing pause. Every misinformed or non-informed present supporter of Johnson will say: I told you so. Will this be used as a pretext for escalating the war still further? Will it result in a clamour for the recall of Johnson?

To put it bluntly, Johnson's recent announcements could conceivably be a political trick.

"The elections here have been a loss of time and money. They are a joke. They have served to install a regime that has nothing in common with the people - a useless, corrupt regime." - <u>Air Vice Marshall Nguyen Cao Ky</u>, Quoted in Brisbane TELEGRAPH, Monday 1st. April, 1968.



FOCO, and

Important new book out:

Q'1d. 4067.

"CONTAINMENT AND REVOLUTION"

edited by DAVID HOROWITZ. Western policy towards Social Revolution, 1917 to Vietnam. (paperback edition out soon)

> The movement needs more than militancy - it needs PRINTING! Contribute to the TYPEWRITER FUND so that we can print. Send \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ to: or see: Society for Democratic Action, Matthew Lambourne. P.O. Box 90, Brisbane University,

> > WHAT'S ON

1 - TODAY, Tues. 2nd., Rm. L.G.16, Soc. Sci. Bldg. - Film - THE SILENCERS.

2 - Wednesday Forum, 1.10 pm. Special topic - JOHNSON and VIETNAM.

- 3 Friday 5th.
 - (a) 1.10 pm. SENATOR J. WHEELDON on VIETNAM, in the Forum.
 - (b) Film Sophia Loren in JUDITH, Abel Smith Theatre, 3.00 pm. & 6.00 pm.
 - (c) PARTY 77 Benson St., Toowong. (opposite the Amoco garage) 8.00 pm.