AGNEW'S TALK WITH 5 STUDENTS

Full Text of a 90-Minute Debate

What is bothering student dissenters? Why do they find fault with the nation's leadership?

How does a top U. S. official feel about student unrest—and campus disorders?

In a remarkable "confrontation," Vice President Spiro T. Agnew and student critics explored these and other questions that reflect the deep divisions in U. S. life today.

—Wide World Photo

Vice President Agnew responds to question by Kent State student.

Following is the text of "The David Frost Show." The program was produced by "Group W Productions," a subsidiary of the Westinghouse Broadcasting Company, Inc., and was first telecast on Sept. 25, 1970:

Mr. Frost: We've got a very special program for you today—the Vice President in debate with college critics of the Administration, starting right now.

Thank you very much indeed and welcome to this special—very special—edition of "The David Frost Show."

The story so far—how it came about, this particular program: It followed on—we very much wanted to do a follow-up after the last program we did with Vice President Agnew, which there was a tremendous response to. The Vice President himself wanted to debate with students and we suggested a format in which he might like to do so. Here to introduce the theater and the audience to those of you at home—here we have an invited little-theater audience right here. We don't claim that it is in any way an amazing Gallup Poll cross section of the country, with exactly 1.7 trade-unionist and so on. It is simply a group of 200 to 250 people here in the little theater. They are friends of the Administration and friends of the students, critics of both and undecideds. We know that up in the balcony there we have our friends, the gentlemen of the press. We know that here in our front row we have five students who, along with the four students who are going to join me in a moment on stage, we have to say, in the cause of full disclosure I think is the word, that they are receiving reasonable expenses and no payment.

As to how the students—incidentally, I'd like to say that we want all of our audience, and particularly the five in the front, to join in later on in the program.

Right now, as to how the four students who are going to join me, and the five in the front row—the nine—were selected: Let me say that, obviously, with 7 million students to choose from in this country, it was a somewhat difficult task. So we agreed with the White House that we would, in fact, choose presidents of student bodies and as wide a geographical cross section across the country as possible.

At that point—I can't say, in fact, firmly enough—that at that point the White House, the Vice President's office, the Vice President, and so on, neither took any part nor tried to take any part in the selection of the students. They knew that they were going to be student critics of the Administration. And we, at the same time, didn't feel qualified to make a sort of random choice ourselves, and so we spoke with various people. We spoke with editors of student newspapers across the country, asking them for names of students who were both critics and articulate spokesmen for the college community. We put the same question to leaders of various campus political organizations and to officers of the National Student Association. And so it is on that basis I would like you to welcome both the five students who are with us in the front row, and would you welcome now the four who are going to join us on stage.

Very good to have you all with us. Let me just introduce each of you by name, starting with you, Greg Craig, who is in his second year at Yale law school and has been student-council president of Harvard. Is that correct, Greg?

Mr. Craig: That's right.

Mr. Frost: Welcome; very good to have you with us.

Next, Rick Silverman, from the University of Washington, who is writing a thesis on urban violence, worked for VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America] and has worked also as a tomato picker—is that right?

Mr. Silverman: That's right.

Mr. Frost: Eva, welcome—Eva Jefferson, from Northwestern, who testified before the Scranton Commission on Campus Unrest, and is majoring in political science—is that right?

Miss Jefferson: That's right.

Mr. Frost: And Steve Bright, from the University of Kentucky, who is a political-science major. Is that right?

Mr. Bright: True.

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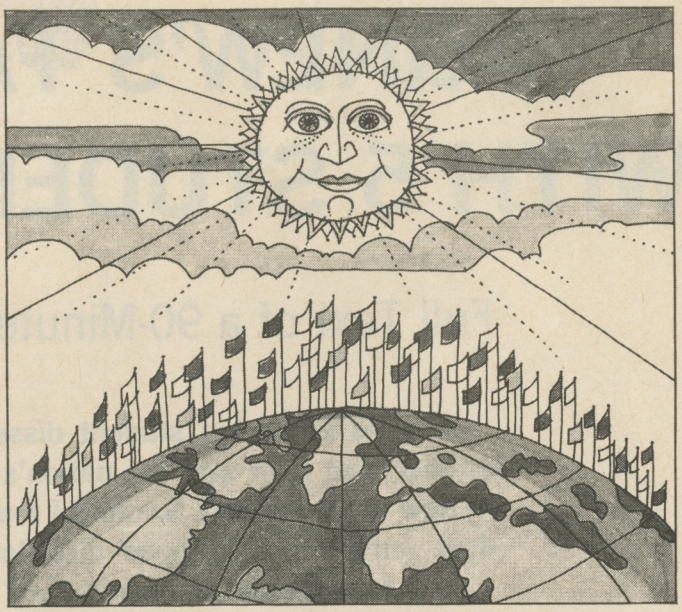

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Five students participated with Mr. Agnew and Mr. Frost in the TV discussion of campus dissent. They are:

Gregory B. Craig, Yale law school; Richard Silverman, University of Washington; Eva Jefferson, Northwestern University; Steve Bright, University of Kentucky; and Craig Morgan, Kent State University, who appears in the photo at left.

Mr. Frost: Terrific, and we welcome all four of you. We are delighted to have you with us.

And right now it is a privilege to welcome the Vice President of the United States, Spiro T. Agnew.

Mr. Vice President, I am sure people would like to know, why did you particularly want to have a debate with student critics, and so on.

Mr. Agnew: Well, David, I don't know whether I'd call it a debate. In effect, it will be a discussion, not a formal debate. I hope we can communicate more readily than that format. But what I wanted to do is have a chance to sit down with some of the students who obviously have not really understood what I am saying, and who I think could benefit by hearing a little more expansion of my views. And I think the converse is true. I think there is much about what they are saying that I read secondhand, and maybe it will help my understanding to talk with them. Perhaps, as happens in any exchange, we will move closer together. That's what my hope is of this meeting.

Mr. Frost: What is your own main memory of your student days, in fact, Mr. Vice President?

Mr. Agnew: I think the thing about college that most people truly enjoy is the stimulus of having one's intellect brought into sharp focus, not so much in the formal classes but in the exchanges that you go through with people who are part of your college community. You seem to have—to discover together that there are things you have been talking about that you have thought about a long time but they sort of come into being as you discuss them. It's the intellectual stimulation of college that I found most engrossing.

Mr. Frost: The first question, Greg?

Mr. Craig: I have a question for the Vice President.

At the beginning of your campaign for this year, Mr. Vice President, you pointed out that the theme of this campaign would be that policies should be made by the elected officials of this country rather than by the people in the streets. But in the last three weeks you have chosen to defame some of the most respected and distinguished public servants in American life today—elected by the people from States such as South Dakota, Tennessee, Arkansas.

I think it's been regrettable that you have chosen to attack personalities rather than problems, that you have not addressed yourself to some of the really central issues that are facing American society today.

My hope would be for this program that we can talk about those kinds of problems rather than slandering established and respected public servants, that we can talk about the policies that you think might solve some of the problems that we are facing as a nation today, because we can't afford the kind of emotionalism and clouding of reason through rhetoric today. And my comment would be why—my question would be: Why have you chosen this route at a time more than ever before when we need unity as a nation—not necessarily unity, but we need some kind of civilized discourse of issues?

Mr. Agnew: Well, Greg, I think that I agree with you 100 per cent that what we need is civilized discourse, because that is what I am really trying to reach for. And in discussing these individuals, as I have done during the campaign, you may notice that I have never unilaterally raised their names. It's always been in response to something they have said. It is something I think that demonstrates their unfitness to hold the offices that they hold.

Now, the political climate has to be adversary. That's our system. How else will our people make up their minds about whose judgments they want to follow unless we have an adversary climate?

But what is unusual to me is that it seems as though my rhetoric is always called into question, and yet the rhetoric of others who impugn my motives and my philosophy is never called into question. There are many examples of this.

When I was running for Vice President, a very respected public servant of the persuasion that you mentioned had some very unkind things to say about me. He said I was a two-bit hack politician or a fourth-rate hack politician. I didn't see any of the editors or the columnists flying into orbit over this insult. So, it's a two-way street. We have to have an adversary climate. I'm willing to discuss what I believe in. My speeches, if you read them, do discuss it very candidly.

Mr. Craig: The adversary system, though, is based on an issue—on a problem—and in the course of the last three weeks, in all of the reports that I have seen of your speeches, I have not seen you address yourself seriously to any of the serious problems that are confronting the society. For example, the health care that the society has got. We have

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[*continued from preceding page*]

the worst health care among all industrial nations in the world. Now, this seems to me a very important issue. The strength of our nation depends upon the health of our people. Why are we not talking about that?

Mr. Agnew: Well, I'm not sure I agree with that conclusion that we have the worst health care of any industrialized society. This may be some pundit's opinion. But even if it is bad in comparison to our affluence, I think you would have to agree that President Nixon's programs are trying to do something about that. Take, for example, the money that's being spent in upgrading the present health-delivery systems—the administrative reforms that are trying to eliminate the waste in those systems. Take, for example, the program that is being worked on right now that will probably result in a national health-insurance system.

The point is that our improvements in these ways have come about over the last 50 years, and the thing I think that most adults resent most about the judgments of some of you young people who criticize us so violently is that you really don't understand what we have done in 50 years about health. You haven't had to grow up with polio or diphtheria, mainly because the people in my generation and the generation before have eliminated that. You haven't had to be hungry, you haven't had to be cold.

You have come into a period of affluence that has allowed you to have the time to think, principally because today a person works about one third as many hours as he used to have to work to make a living. This gives you more time to think, which we think is great. We want you to think. We want you to challenge, but don't deprecate and downgrade a society that has given you the tools to work with that you have.

Mr. Frost: Eva.

Miss Jefferson: Sir, I'd like to challenge that comment, if I may, and make an analogy to the business world, if I might.

If you had an employe who in the past years had done a good job, a very good job, but for the past, let's say, few years, had just completely broken down—not completely, you know, still kept up with some of his good works, but in the over-all perspective, was not doing an effective job—you wouldn't keep this person on. And you wouldn't say that in the past the things he had done were bad. You would give him credit for those, but you'd either try to improve him and, you know, get him to do better things than what he's been doing in the past, or get someone else. And I think this is the type of attitude that young people have.

We realize, as you pointed out, that your generation—my parents—have given us economic security so we can address social problems. Yet it is offensive to me when it is inferred that we are not grateful or we don't appreciate the greatness that America has. I don't think anyone is saying that. We just want it to live up to its potential. And this is what bothers me about your statements. We realize that there are great things going on, but that's what you and President Nixon do —you verbalize these things. But we feel the responsibility to vocalize some of the problems of the country because this is what we feel. As you said, it's an adversary system, and we feel it is our duty to bring up some of the problems, and I don't think it's correct when you say we don't appreciate America.

Mr. Agnew: Let me take brief exception to one thing you said. Much of what you said I find very encouraging, particularly in contrast with what you said to the Scranton Commission when you said the only way to get the attention of the society is to bomb buildings. But let me say this: I don't believe that it is possible to say that this society is broken down and is not continuing to respond to the problems.

Let me give you an example: In higher education this year we're spending about 8.6 billion dollars. That's—two years ago we were spending about 3.4 billions on higher education. Now, does that show a lack of interest or lack of effort on behalf of the Government?

Miss Jefferson: Could we examine what that money is going into? You talk of education—

Mr. Agnew: It's going into federal assistance.

Miss Jefferson: What about the desegregation programs? I believe there is a widely acknowledged slowdown on the part of your Administration. I believe if anyone goes into any ghetto school you would not see a top-quality educational system.

Mr. Agnew: Let me respond to that one thing. May I interrupt as you make the point to respond.

Mr. Frost: And then you must mention about the Scranton Commission.

Mr. Agnew: Let me say this:

You say there is a slowdown on desegregation. Do you know that the number of black children attending integrated schools in the South this year will be 10 times more than it was two years ago? That's the figure.

Mr. Silverman: May I respond, as you make your points?

Mr. Agnew: Yes, indeed.

"Glossing Over the Public-Relations Shimmer"

Mr. Silverman: There is an interesting article in "Playboy" this month, which seems to have come of age. And Tom Wicker, who is one of your ongoing critics and, I might suggest, one of the more sophisticated pundits in America, observes that the Administration statistics on desegregation are really the high point of your glossing over the public-relations shimmer of the Nixon regime. The point that Wicker makes, I think with some authority—and I think that people like Leon Panetta and dozens of other people within the Justice Department and HEW [Department of Health, Education and Welfare] who have left the Administration in protest have been making—is that you are really falsifying those statistics badly. And I suppose we can elaborate. I am somewhat concerned about doing this—

Mr. Frost: I think you should give us an example of what you mean.

Mr. Silverman: The basic tool here is that the Administration has adopted some statistics which were based on integrating that is beyond a 50 per cent scale, and now, on the basis of statistics—I'm sorry, I don't have those at hand, what number of students would be involved—we find that the Administration is now listing for us as integrated students any student who is in a district which is nominally integrated. So that we have countless examples, dozens and dozens of examples of students attending all-black schools in what are being listed in the new federal guidelines—the new federal propaganda—as integrated schools. It is a farce.

Mr. Frost: Is that true, Mr. Vice President?

Mr. Agnew: No. I take exception to it and I ask for the contravening figures. I don't see how you can make a statement off the top of your head, and as far as "glossing over a shimmer," that's a pretty hard thing to do in itself. That's not my Bible.

Mr. Frost: It's clear, either a change in the country or in "Playboy"— While you're searching for that, and we must obviously come back to that point, don't get waylaid on the way to finding that—

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Mr. Silverman: They are twins for the price of one issue—it's incredible.

Mr. Frost: Yes, amazing. Eva, the words that the Vice President quoted—were they the words that you said to the Scranton Commission? Did you endorse that point of view or were you describing a situation you saw?

Miss Jefferson: See, your attack on me in saying what was alleged that I said before the Scranton committee is an example of what Greg was talking about. Instead of looking beyond the personalities and into the issues, you just pick up on something that was alleged that I said. What I said, in fact, in front of the Scranton Commission was this—and I will give you my rationale for saying it:

I represent a student body at Northwestern University that has a cross section of people just as you represent a country that has a cross section of people. Among those students at the university are people who would be termed radicals or revolutionaries. I myself am not one of those students. If you would examine what I have done in the past you'd know that.

However, I feel honor bound to represent those people because they are part of my constituency. What I attempted to do before the Scranton committee was to explain what could motivate someone to blow up a building, and if you also examine what I have done—and I don't mean to be patting myself on the back—you will see that during our strike during May there was no violence on our campus. And I was part of the leadership of the strike "Students Help Prevent Violence."

What I did say, however, was examine the civil-rights movement in our country. Now, there was civil-rights legislation before the Congress. It was held up, slowed down. Some of it was coming out, but not fast enough. All of a sudden Watts blew up, Detroit blew up, and we saw the legislation coming out of Congress with much greater speed than it was before.

You notice that every time a black ghetto blows up, the mayor of a city all of a sudden decides it is now time for him to go down and investigate this ghetto and see what would motivate people to act out like this. And what I am saying is, if someone studies a history of this country, which you would have to admit does have a lot of violence—the violence in Vietnam, the violence that has gone behind a lot of our social movements, and you would have to admit that. A person looking at that might be inclined to think the only way to move society is to blow up a building.

I did not say I endorsed this, and if you read my testimony quite carefully you'll know that I didn't. And it is this type of just picking up on what allegedly I said, instead of really studying what I said, that really disturbs me about your whole process of going about and talking around the country.

You're doing us a great disservice because you're making people afraid of their own children. The way you talk about students is as though they are people from another planet who were dropped down on college campuses with no more intention than to just blow up buildings and to destroy our society.

Yet they are your children, they are my parents' children and the children of this country. Yet you're making people afraid of them, and I think this is the greatest disservice. There is an honest difference of agreement on issues. But when you make people afraid of each other, you isolate people. Maybe this is your goal. But I think this could only have a disastrous effect on the country.

Mr. Agnew: Let me say, first, that isolating people is not my goal. If that were true, I wouldn't be here tonight.

Miss Jefferson: Good.

Mr. Agnew: Let me take exception to that oft-repeated rationale that violence is the only way to get results. You know and I know that the greatest result—the greatest progress that was made—was when the Supreme Court began to recognize this very difficult problem as far as public acceptability, but nonetheless did not shy away from the propriety of integration. And the Civil Rights Act of 1964 took place long before much of this violence occurred. In 1954 there was no violence when the Supreme Court made the historic Brown decision.

Miss Jefferson: Sir, if I may interrupt just for a second. Yet we are still in the process of desegregating schools. That's all I have to say.

Mr. Agnew: Well, it is true, but we are in the process of accomplishing it, and we have recognized the impropriety of some of the discrimination that obviously took place and continues.

—UPI Photo

Vice President to students: "You say my rhetoric has caused violence. Long before I became a household word, violence was rampant in U. S."

And let me make one thing completely clear to you: At a time when I was county executive of Baltimore County—this is a county with about a 3 per cent Negro population—I was one of those who successfully intervened in the Gwynn Oak Park dispute to see that the injustice done to black citizens of Baltimore who wanted to use that facility, even though it wasn't in Baltimore city proper—it was in Baltimore County—would have a right to do that.

I spoke out for open housing. I am not in any sense at all unsympathetic to the discrimination that has taken place. I want to help cure it. But to say that the way to bring about social change is even a tacit acceptance of violence is wrong.

And I read your testimony. I didn't go by the news reports. I read your testimony, and you did call for the impeachment of the President and you did—I don't know how you missed me—but you did also indicate that the only way to get results sometimes is violent conduct, and you just repeated that now as you pointed out these situations where things happen after there is violence. I say this is a poor rationale to get results.

Mr. Frost: But surely what you were saying, Eva, what you were saying was, in fact, that it seems to a tiny minority

that that is the only way to make people listen, not "It is the only way I think results can be got," isn't it?

Miss Jefferson: I wish you would listen to what I am saying, because I have said two or three times that I am not in favor of violence. I have never participated in a violent act except at the Chicago "police convention," called the Democratic Convention, in which I was tear-gassed. I was trying to explain to you the rationale of some students who are openly revolutionary. Yet my trying to explain them you take for a position of advocacy. This is one of the problems. You're not listening to what I am saying. I am really distressed.

Mr. Agnew: What are you advocating?

Miss Jefferson: Sir, because I'm a student-body president, which in the context of the students is a very Establishment point of view, it is obvious that I am for working through the system. I have registered to vote. I don't intend to vote for candidates who are of your persuasion. This is my personal way of working through the system.

Now, I would have to go back to something you said, and I'm very disturbed that you said you read the testimony because maybe you got a different transcript than the one that I have presented. My comments on the impeachment of President Nixon were this: I gave an analysis of what I thought college students thought was wrong with the country. At the end I said, "What kind of recommendations do you think I should come up with? Do you think I should say you should impeach the President?" The room—oddly enough, filled with young people, all Government employes—broke into applause. Then I said, after that was over:

"But you see the problem goes much beyond one man. The problem is not just one man, because many people voted for this person. Now, that's why this recommendation would not be particularly good." I unfortunately left my transcript in my hotel room, but I could certainly have someone go get it if you would like to see the transcript, because that is exactly what I said.

Mr. Agnew: Well, I wrote down one thing I extrapolated from the transcript, and I would just like to ask you whether this is wrong, whether this represents your thoughts or not: "The only thing that is going to move college administrators"—you didn't use the words "college administrators"—"is blow up a building; either you blow it up, or you say you don't want to change that much anyway."

Miss Jefferson: Sir, the disservice you do me is that you leave out the entire context in which that was placed.

Mr. Agnew: I would like to hear how—

Mr. Craig: She has said that she is not in favor of violence as a tactic. She is opposed to it, and publicly denies it.

Mr. Frost: This quote—I think you were saying—is that where you were quoting a minority point of view with which you did not agree, and you were paraphrasing what they thought. Is that what you are saying?

Miss Jefferson: This is probably the last time I will say this. I don't want to get into an argument because there are much greater issues. But I was trying to explain the rationale behind a minority—but an active minority—of college students. I can't prove to you that I am not for violence. I can just say it. And I guess we should move on to something else.

Mr. Silverman: I am not sure why it should be necessary—

Mr. Frost: Steve, let's turn to you. You haven't had a chance to speak.

Mr. Bright: O.K. Thank you. I notice among the things you talk about a great deal are violence and crime. And I think probably most people would agree that they are opposed to violence and opposed to crime. I think most college students would be. But one thing I am interested in is: Don't you see that if the political system is not responsive enough, and if people with whom you disagree—especially if you use the power and prestige of your office to intimidate them or to call them "effete snobs," rather than to deal with the ideas which they are advancing—that we could someday in the future reach a stage where violence, as you talked about it a moment ago, might be the only solution or might be the only alternative for some people who are up against the wall?

Mr. Frost: What do you mean, if the system is unresponsive? You're saying—

Mr. Bright: I mean, can you foresee that happening, eventually?

Mr. Agnew: Well, Steve, I've got to say this much: First of all, I'm disturbed with the way people jump from a very carefully limited expression I might use to include a lot of people that aren't intended to be included. And I noticed when Miss Jefferson was talking she assumed that I was hostile to all students. That's not true. I have never criticized all students. I think that the hope of the country lies with the students.

But as far as crime and repression, those things, are concerned, we've got to understand that we do have a responsive system of Government. We do have a Government where the people elect their representatives every two years, every four years or every six years, depending on the level of Government. And if a President is elected, after a hard, adversary, issue-oriented campaign, such as we had in 1968, and he is given a mandate of the people—a majority of the people or even a plurality of the people—to lead the country for four years, he has a right to do that without having people calling for a referendum in the streets.

Now, you may disagree with what he's doing and, if you do, you have a right to work within the system to have him turned out of office when his term is over.

But what is it that gives certain students the feeling that they are able to exhibit or reveal truth of which direction this Government ought to go. After all, students in this country are only about 4 per cent of the population. People between the ages of 16 and 24 are only about 10 per cent of the population. Do you think students should have some special privilege to be heard and heeded?

Mr. Bright: No, but by what you have just said, haven't you pointed out that the only time we have really any fear of violence or any fear of a revolution in this country is when enough people—is when the Government has failed to respond to so many people that there is tremendous support from it—certainly not the support of only a very teeny minority?

"I Have No Fear of Revolution"

Mr. Agnew: I don't see the tremendous support, and I have no fear of revolution in this country whatsoever. I think that there is a great drama attached to it. The rapidity of communications makes it possible to show numbers of people in disagreement with the Government but, as far as the violence is concerned, you and I know there are very few people involved in violence at the present time.

Mr. Bright: One thing: Many students who are on a part of the spectrum where their means of behavior is often very unpopular—and certainly most unpopular to you, a dissenting point of view—but nevertheless is very legal. Haven't you often put the students in two camps—the students who are there to, quote, "get an education," and the students who are the militants and who are bent on destruction and violence?

Mr. Agnew: I have indicated in an in-depth article that was written in "Life" magazine not too long ago how I feel about dissent and what kinds of dissent I think are proper.

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Lawful dissent is proper. I have no quarrel with certain types of civil disobedience where the law being violated is directly related to the grievance. But I think when a person lies down in the streets of the city of Washington and disrupts traffic because he doesn't like something the Department of Agriculture is doing—that's a little bit much.

Miss Jefferson: Sir, could I backtrack to one of your comments, and that was: What right do a small percentage of people have to—and I think this is quoting from one of your speeches—harass the President. If I could be historical for a moment, using my student perspective: Slavery in this country went on for a number of years, supported by the majority of the people. It was a small minority of people who were termed radical, maybe radical-liberals in their times, who kept agitating—who kept agitating continually. And they were looked down on. You know, the Abolitionists were looked on as the crazies of their day. Yet, looking back in perspective on that, we see that they were right.

And I think that the college students—and it's not just college students, it's people whom you might term the radical-liberals, and I think I'd like to deal with that later, too, but will wait. It's people, you know—adults, Democrats, independents, old people, people who aren't students—a lot of people are protesting the policies of your particular Administration. I think it is our moral obligation to protest those things lest we be caught in the same bag that Germany was under Hitler, where too many people sat back and kind of let things happen. I'm not saying that the country is in that shape right now. I really don't think that that's true. As I said, there are a lot of things right with America. It's just that I think it's our moral obligation to "harass" the President. It is not harassing; it is our constitutional right.

Mr. Agnew: I agree with you 100 per cent. It is a moral obligation, not to harass the President but certainly to take him on where you think he's wrong. But I fail to see where the tactics that have been employed so extensively by not all students—again I hate to be characterized as criticizing all students, because I know there are a large number of students who want to involve themselves in a productive dialogue rather than the screaming of obscenities in the streets. But, unfortunately, the students who do chant and scream the obscenities, who substitute cadence count of four-letter words for rational dialogue are the ones that are getting the attention.

Now, of course, I agree with you that there are people in the forefront of every social change, but I don't think that violence or dropping out of society is the way to dramatize the propriety of your position. I think you should participate within the system as you are doing, as you say you're doing, and I respect you for it. And Heaven knows, I don't quarrel with your right to have an opinion different than mine or to articulate it, but I don't see why taking some violent stance, disrupting the rights of other people to move freely and to assemble freely—as happened to me in Saginaw, Mich., when I tried to make a speech and was shouted down by a bunch of people who had no idea of what they wanted to say to me, except they didn't want me to be heard. Now, that's repression of my right to express myself.

Mr. Frost: Mr. Vice President, I guess, first of all, the violence that you would feel is out of order is something that I am sure—or I assume—all of our panel would agree is going too far, namely, bombings and burnings and killing, and so on, and that form of violence. I'm assuming probably that we would all rule that out. When we have ruled all that out, and that obviously is the work, as you say, of a tiny, tiny minority, what other forms of conduct or agitation —you mentioned laying down in front of traffic for an issue not connected with traffic—what else would you rule out of court?

Mr. Agnew: Sure. One of the things I'd rule out in the way of nonviolent conduct is that kind of conduct that deprives other people of their rights.

Now, let me give you a perfect example: We are having what we hope will be an interesting television program for the people in the country. It's being put on at considerable expense to your sponsors. Suppose a group of people marched into this room and suddenly stationed themselves in front of each of those cameras, nonviolently, and said: "Because we don't think this format is proper, you're not going to be able to show this program." That's the kind of nonviolent conduct that imposes on the rights of others—the same kind of demonstration that is totally unrelated to the people who are inconvenienced. Tying up traffic, the types of disruption that are involved in activities that affect people who are not the object of the protest, even though they are nonviolent, are not permissible.

We live in a lawful society and I think these young people would agree that, for example, the students who are not interested in the protest of the moment that is going on in the campus and want to use the library wouldn't like to be turned away from the library because that's been set up as guerrilla headquarters for the protestors.

Mr. Frost: What forms of civil disobedience—you mentioned that some are perfectly permissible or have been—what forms of civil disobedience do you regard as O.K.?

Mr. Agnew: I'll give you an example of that: Now, when the bus boycotts took place in Alabama, here was a direct action that was related to what was claimed to be an unjust law. In other words, the people refused to use the bus because it was the discrimination on the bus that they were protesting about. If the protest is directly related to —the action is directly related to—the subject of the protest and later this is found to be an unconstitutional law, there is some reason to say, "Well, this is certainly understandable; this is an understandable dissent." But a dissent that is unrelated to the subject matter is not understandable.

"Four-Letter Arguments Don't Impress"

Mr. Craig: Sir, could I ask a question about responsible and irresponsible rhetoric? We have been talking to a certain extent about political inactions. I think it is fair to say that there are responsible things that people can say and irresponsible things that people can say. As you pointed out, the four-letter arguments don't impress you. But the content of rhetoric strikes me as being very important because it provides an atmosphere and a milieu for the way people think politically.

In the last week you attacked the United States Senate in an unprecedented way. You preside over the United States Senate. I don't think in the history of the United States has any Vice President ever attacked members of his own body to the extent that you have. Let me quote one of these things:

You said "a little band of men" you defined as radical-liberals—a group of Senators who are "a little band of men" guided by a policy of calculated weakness—who vote to weaken our defenses; they vote to weaken our moral fiber; they vote to weaken the forces of law. Now, sir, that is quite a serious charge to be making against a popularly elected official of the United States who simply disagrees with you on certain issues. They may think that what is strong for the

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United States is different from what you think is strong. Do you call their patriotism into question? Do you impugn their loyalty to the United States? I think this is the kind of thing that undermines authority, undermines the institutions that we really believe in.

The way in which the Attorney General attacked educational administrators—does that improve the credibility of the educational institutions in this country? I don't think so. I think, in fact, there may be some kind of unconscious but mysterious and rather dark conspiracy between the members of the Administration and the "far left" who undermine our institutions and take them away from the people.

Mr. Agnew: First of all, it is not unprecedented for a member of the Senate or a Vice President to attack his political adversaries, and sometimes in the past it's been done a lot more violently. Actually, there have been occasions of physical violence in the Senate of the United States where one Senator beat another one with his cane. I would remind you of that. I haven't done that, and have no intention of doing it, and I certainly hope that none of these large Senators take after me, but this is an adversary climate.

My rhetoric is no different than the rhetoric that has been turned upon me—sometimes a lot less inflammatory. And there is no way to say that this kind of hard, political—adversary language hasn't been used, Greg.

I remind you President Franklin Roosevelt, with his ridicule of Martin, Barton and Fish over and over again, and some of the things he said about them. Harry Truman called his opponents "snollygosters," whatever that was; Teddy Roosevelt called them "pusillanimous pussyfooters." The rhetoric hasn't changed. I stole it from Teddy Roosevelt.

Mr. Craig: Mr. Vice President, I wonder, sir, if it is appropriate to challenge their patriotism.

Mr. Agnew: Let me just answer that, because I want to get to that part. In the same speeches that you quote, there are passages that very carefully say that I do not impugn or question their patriotism. I do not question their motives. This is part of the speech.

I have always qualified my criticisms of these people. I think they are terribly wrong. I think the radical-liberals, as I characterize them, are wrong because their policy amounts to an isolationist posture internationally, a permissiveness socially, and a big-spenders program in the domestic sense—a big-spenders program without looking to see where the money went or whether it's doing the good. And I reserve the right to take them on, and let me tell you one thing: I am not going to stop saying what I have to say about them in a way that I want to say it, because this is my right of free speech. I don't have any idea of allowing anybody to repress me, any more than you do.

Mr. Silverman: I'm very much disturbed by the tenor which the conversation has now taken. It strikes me as macabre that we are sitting here pondering the wisdom of one's rhetoric or the nature of the alliteration that has been adopted by the Vice President, when we really have some very real questions before us. He spoke before of obscenity, and I would like to pursue that—put that in terms of a speech that the President recently made about violence—because we are talking about some fairly obscene situations in which the United States is involved, which goes well beyond the nature of intellectual discourse.

What is happening in Vietnam right now is an obscenity. Further killings—the thousands and millions—hundreds of thousands of mutilated bodies in Vietnam is simply not something we can dismiss as passé, that we've gone beyond, that we are now concerned with more sophisticated subjects.

I wonder how the President or the Vice President can reconcile this strangely self-righteous position that they take on violence while the United States is at this time the most singularly violent country in the world. I would like to put that in the domestic frame of reference, too, if I may.

Mr. Frost: That's a perfectly coherent question, and let's have an answer.

Mr. Agnew: Do you want me to go ahead with what you have said so far?

Mr. Silverman: Well, I would like to make an addition, if I may. I think it is also very dangerous for Americans to delude themselves that our hands are being dirtied only across the waters. What's going on in the United States right now is not merely the sloganism or the rhetoric of the left when they talk about violence and repression. We have real examples with us all the time. Kent State is not just a dirty chapter in the past, the killings at Jackson State [in Mississippi], the shootings at Orangeburg [South Carolina State College], the murder of [Black Panther] Fred Hampton in his bed. These are real; these are going on. And I've yet to hear the Vice President or the President speak in the same harsh terms to these kinds of acts of violence. I'd be eager to hear that today.

—Wide World Photo

A student's rejoinder to Mr. Agnew: "I think there may be some kind of conspiracy between members of the Administration and the 'far left.' "

Mr. Agnew: All right. Let's go back to the first part. I assume what you are really saying to me is that Vietnam is an immoral war? Is that succinctly put—what your thought about it is?

Mr. Silverman: I will accept that for the moment.

Mr. Agnew: Do you think any war is moral?

Mr. Silverman: I think there are degrees of morality. And I am willing to play that philosophical game with you.

Mr. Agnew: Explain what you mean by "degrees of morality."

Mr. Silverman: Well, much as one negotiates any kind of philosophic discussion.

Mr. Agnew: Let me ask, for example, if tiny Israel were overrun today, would it be moral for the United States to engage in a war in the Middle East?

Mr. Silverman: Well, Mr. Vice President, I just rejected your contention that there are no moral wars. What I am concerned with at the moment is how the United States can

sanctimoniously abhor what is going on in Vietnam, suggest that it's winding down, whereas in today's newspaper we read that Vice President Ky, your counterpart in South Vietnam, is about to visit us and to march in a "victory now" parade that is sponsored by the Rev. Carl McIntire. The American people are led to believe—and I, too, would like to share this fond hope—that the war in Vietnam is indeed winding down. But I am very fearful that what we have in its place is a war in Cambodia, a war in Thailand, as well as a war in South Vietnam. And we are supporting a regime in Saigon that is being all too clear, all too succinct about what their ambitions are. Vice President Ky is not at all inclined to negotiate. Why are we supporting him?

America's "Finest Hours"

Mr. Agnew: Let me go back to the first question about Vietnam. Now, we got involved in Vietnam not out of any sense of expanding a colonial empire or imperialistic aggression. We got involved in Vietnam because the Communist Party of North Vietnam violated the 1954 Geneva Accords —documented violations—massacred some 50,000 South Vietnamese of professional and impeccable credentials, [able] to assist society in a social sense, and imposed, through one of the most brutal agrarian reforms ever characterized as such in the history of man, its will upon the people of South Vietnam.

Now, the Viet Cong, the so-called indigenous South Vietnamese, have never been able to muster the kind of support in South Vietnam to oppose the Government. Seventy per cent of the people fighting in South Vietnam are North Vietnamese regulars. The North Vietnamese have violated the Accords of 1954. The International Control conference that met in 1962 castigated and criticized them for violations that took place in South Vietnam.

Yes, there have been brutal massacres, and the people of South Vietnam at that time turned for assistance to the free world, and the United States in what I consider to be one of its finest hours under one President, followed by another President, followed by another President irrespective of political party, saw fit to engage in what I consider highly moral conduct in assisting those people who were the subject of Communist aggression.

Now let me say this about war: Nobody wants war, but the thought that war is a unilateral exercise that the party waging it can call off immediately without involving the other party is fictitious. The North Vietnamese want us to simply give up and allow them to have their will on the South Vietnamese.

We feel that the "domino theory" is totally valid. I have been to Asia twice in the past eight months, and I know the "dominoes" think it's valid. Now, we cannot stop war simply by proclaiming that we won't pay any attention to it. And war is the last resort that we must resort to when our freedoms are attempted to be overridden by people who are assailing us.

Mr. Silverman: Your logic does not convince me anymore than it convinces your daughter.

Mr. Agnew: It convinces her a lot better than it used to.

Mr. Frost: It does, does it? Because you talked about that last time we were talking—is she more convinced of your point of view?

Mr. Agnew: Yes, and I haven't had to be aggressive or violent in any way to get her to think that way.

Mr. Craig: Am I wrong in interpreting your comments to be that we are, in fact, seeking a military victory in South Vietnam still?

Mr. Agnew: You are quite wrong, quite wrong.

Mr. Craig: Then, why, sir, have we completely disregarded the new negotiation proposals that have been suggested at Paris?

Mr. Agnew: We haven't disregarded them, Greg. We are looking at them. But you can't say disregard. We've only had them a few days.

Mr. Craig: Ambassador Bruce said it was old wine in new bottles. There was one provision there that had never appeared from the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong before about negotiating for prisoners of war. Now that kind of posturing by our Ambassador endangers the lives of our prisoners of war in North Vietnam and South Vietnam.

Mr. Agnew: What is it that makes you extrapolate, lift out of context, that one sop to the antiwar movement and fail to see that the conditions that they are asking are simply that we get out—unilaterally withdraw—without their having to take any other action.

Mr. Craig: So you are saying it is not a serious negotiating proposal—

Mr. Agnew: I say that, superficially, it looks like it ought to be regarded very suspiciously. I'm not saying that we shouldn't look at it.

Mr. Craig: It is my understanding that there is not anything we can negotiate, then, in Paris.

"Points on the Table" at Peace Talks

Mr. Agnew: We have got a lot of points on the table.

Mr. Craig: The progress of the war in Vietnam depends on the negotiating situation in Paris, and with that attitude we will never get anything accomplished.

Mr. Agnew: May I ask a question? Suppose we would make some offers of this type? Suppose we would say that we are willing to withdraw if they would withdraw, that we are willing, for example, to have the world at large, an international body, come in and supervise elections that would be overseen not just by countries friendly to us but by Communist countries, too, that we would allow the South Vietnamese the right of self-determination, that we would seek no bases or any other permanent installations there. Isn't this a basis of a settlement if we'd make these suggestions to them?

Mr. Craig: Why don't we respond to their suggestions?

Mr. Agnew: Let me ask you, how about those suggestions?

Mr. Silverman: I'd like to respond to that, because it occurs to me that what you have outlined there is essentially the Geneva Accords of 1954. And at that time the United States blatantly and flagrantly disregarded those very precepts. And now you would have the North Vietnamese believe that we are about to abide by them because we no longer find it advantageous to pursue another policy. At the same time you are suggesting, with the incredible amount of gall that Americans have used in this issue, that Vietnamese ought to, in effect, leave Vietnam—or South Vietnam, as we make the artificial distinction—for the settlement of their own problems.

Mr. Agnew: Could I come back and ask the question: If we offered those things, would that be a basis of a negotiation?

Mr. Craig: The three things are the withdrawal—

Mr. Agnew: Three or four things: Withdrawal—we'll withdraw when they do. We will agree to supervision of the withdrawals. We will agree to internationally supervised free elections, with Communist countries in the supervisory bodies, and we will abide by whatever the people of South Vietnam decide they want in the way of a Government.

Miss Jefferson: Sir, could I answer that?

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[continued from preceding page]

Mr. Agnew: Let's just finish this, if we may.

Mr. Craig: Would the South Vietnam Government accept those?

Mr. Agnew: Yes, and assuming the South Vietnamese Government would accept those conditions—

Mr. Craig: Have they stated that they will accept those positions? I think Vice President Ky has said that they will not ever accept Communists in a Government.

Mr. Agnew: Let me ask you—I am asking you a hypothetical question now.

Mr. Craig: We cannot negotiate unless we have the cooperation of the South Vietnamese.

"A Reasonable Basis for a Settlement"

Mr. Agnew: Let me say then: Suppose I would put in my hypothetical question that the South Vietnamese said yes, they would accept them. Is that a reasonable basis for a settlement?

Mr. Craig: That sounds like a reasonable—

Mr. Agnew: All right, just let me make this one point: Everything that I have just said to you is lying on the table in Paris today, including the South Vietnamese acceptance of those conditions. And every one of those points has been rejected by the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong.

Mr. Silverman: You have done an incredible job of simplifying what is going on.

Miss Jefferson: If I could go back into history again. I'm sorry to keep doing this, but I find it necessary. In 1954—you gave a correct analysis of what happened. However, you left out some important facts, and those facts were the conditions under which the Communists laid down their arms. They said they would agree to freely held elections in all of Vietnam at the time—and this is documented in the Geneva Accord. It was not separated into two countries—it was two zones. I am sure you know this.

Now, at this time President Eisenhower when he was still alive said that if elections had been held he felt Ho Chi Minh would have won by 80 per cent of the votes. At the same time Mr. Diem [former President of South Vietnam] came in, and I believe what he said when he came in was that he would not be a part of a Government that had Communists involved in it. At this point the Communists picked up their arms and started fighting again because they saw that the leaders of the Southern part of Vietnam were not going to live up to the Geneva Accord. I guess they are just looking back at history, too, and wondering if we are going to keep our word.

But the question I would have with you is one that Greg pointed out: Are you saying that we want to withdraw from Vietnam and let the Vietnamese fight their own war, or are you saying that we are going to help them fight their own war? See, I think a lot of people whom I talk to say we support Nixon because he is trying to get us out of Vietnam, but it seems to me what I just heard you say is that you are not, and that you're still for Americans fighting that war.

Mr. Agnew: Let me clarify the Eisenhower quotation. When Eisenhower said that Ho Chi Minh would without any question win that election, it would be Ho Chi Minh running against Bao Dai, who was the then leader, who was the next year defeated by Diem by an 80 per cent margin. So everyone knows that, yes, Ho Chi Minh would have won against that particular person, but not against Diem.

Now, as far as the situation goes about the election that was offered, the Communists refused international supervision of that election, and it was impossible to have a free election leaving it to the countryside, which was completely terrorized by the Communists at that time. There was no way to have an election that would have been at all free without some international supervision of the quality and magnitude that would have protected the South Vietnamese.

Point No. 3, and the last point: There isn't just one Vietnam—there are two Vietnams at the present time by wish of the people. Thirty-some nations have recognized the sovereignty of South Vietnam. Some 19 nations have recognized North Vietnam. The people in Vietnam have been having free elections. They just had an election of province and district leaders this year. This was a free election with a 65 per cent turnout of the electorate. It's a fiction to say that the Vietnamese people at the present time—who are under the domination of the Communists, who have ruthlessly and brutally repressed freedoms—

You don't see any dissent over in Hanoi at the present time, principally because people would be executed if they dissented.

Miss Jefferson: In Saigon—

Mr. Agnew: Yes, you do see dissent in Saigon.

Mr. Silverman: As opposed to being held in "tiger cages" off an island—

Mr. Agnew: Let me say about the tiger cages that they are maximum-security cages—not the best, certainly. You could go into some States of this country and find conditions in the prisons that are pretty bad, too—

Mr. Silverman: I quite agree, and I would like to see the Administration move on prison reform as well. But let's talk about the kind of cages that we have now at My Lai—the 500 cages there. And let's talk about the 40,000 cages for Americans. It seems incredible to me—and I realize that you're a man who has a great ability to throw these things out and I shouldn't be surprised any longer that you can still represent to the American people, and particularly to what you know to be the critical student left—that Diem was the folk hero of South Vietnam. If that's the case why are the United States' hands so damned bloodied at his execution?

Mr. Agnew: I don't think the United States' hands are bloodied at anybody's execution in Vietnam.

Mr. Silverman: Are you saying there was no CIA involvement in the toppling of the Diem regime?

Mr. Agnew: Exactly! Exactly! What gives you the thought that there was?

Mr. Silverman: Would you admit, just to set some perspective here, that there has been CIA involvement in other regimes—for example with our bands in Guatemala?

Mr. Agnew: Well, let me just respond by asking you one question.

Mr. Silverman: I would appreciate a response to this question, Mr. Vice President. It has tormented me for some time.

Mr. Agnew: Give me the question again.

Mr. Silverman: The question is: Would you concede that the CIA has toppled other sovereign governments?

"Soviets Are Encouraging Antiwar Movements"

Mr. Agnew: No, but I think they have tried to persuade people in another country, where they feel that the administration is terribly unfair and hostile, to certain courses of action, just as other nations. I'm being completely frank now. The Soviets are encouraging a lot of people that are involved in antiwar movements here at the present time, as are the Communist Chinese, as are the North Vietnamese.

Mr. Silverman: But you decry that—you protested, and legitimately so, I suppose, from your point of view. Why

then do you not raise the same grievances about the CIA involvement?

Mr. Agnew: All I can say is that the United States is lily-white compared to most countries in this respect.

Mr. Frost: We had a lengthy discussion there on Vietnam, and there was part two of your question, Rick, which was about violence at home, where you said—and you cited three things: Have they been condemned as roundly? Now what were the three things you questioned?

Mr. Silverman: I think I cited more than three, and you could probably choose almost any three at hand.

I talked about the Fred Hampton murder in Chicago. Let's explore that, if we can.

Mr. Frost: You also quoted the "hard hats" and you quoted something else.

Mr. Silverman: I didn't quote the hard hats, but I would certainly like to.

And I am curious as to why the President—

Mr. Frost: Well, look, don't launch into a whole lengthy question. I just asked you the list. We will never get to the answers of anything.

Mr. Silverman: I talked about Kent State and I talked about Jackson State. I talked about Orangeburg—

Mr. Frost: You also mentioned hard hats at some point. And your question at the end there was: Has that sort of violence been equally, roundly condemned? Wasn't that basically your question?

Mr. Silverman: Yes, essentially.

"Precursors of Violence" at Kent State

Mr. Agnew: I get the question. I will respond to it in segments. First of all, I have no personal expertise in the matter you mentioned involving Hampton. Is that still in the courts? I can't speak to that because I don't know enough about it. I just don't know the circumstances surrounding it.

With regard to Kent State, I think it is amazing how obliterated from the public memory is the fact that the night before the Kent State incident, which I deplore and which I think was a most unfortunate reaction on the part of other young people—people in National Guard uniforms—who made a terrible error of judgment at that time, feeling that their lives were threatened. Now the evidence seems to indicate that they overreacted.

But looking at the Kent State thing, the night before—two nights before—when the students went through the streets of the city, destroying property, breaking windows, doing what they call "thrashing" the Establishment, and the night after that when they burned the ROTC building to the ground, and at that time, when the firemen came to put out the blaze, those same students of Kent State cut the fire hoses.

People have forgotten the precursors of this climate of violence that existed. People have forgotten the precursors that created this inflammatory atmosphere that took place. Then came the Guard—came the Guard—into a situation where the president of Kent State himself has said he has never seen people quite so disturbed and so ugly as were segments of his college community, whom he describes as being human debris dumped on his campus by the Ohio open-admissions system.

Here comes into that climate the National Guard, young people just like yourselves, not professional soldiers, and they were afraid because, as the situation developed, there were rocks and confrontations happening around them.

Now I don't excuse what they did. But are you willing to say that placed in that same situation, being part of that group of people, if someone lost his cool and fired, that you as a member of that group would not have fired with him?

Mr. Silverman: Yes, I am absolutely willing to say that, and I am willing to pursue it a step further. I want to ask you—speaking of precursors—which one of those was justification for murder? Was it the burning of the building? Was it the marching? Was it the shouting of obscenities?

Mr. Agnew: I don't say that any of those things were justified.

Mr. Silverman: Or was there another precursor that ought to be considered? And I would like to make this point, which is perhaps my last one—

Mr. Frost: Your last point—

"This Incendiary Surrounding"

Mr. Agnew: Can I answer the questions as they come? You are answering your own questions.

Which one justifies murder? I never suggested that any of them did. I merely have used these incidents to show that the inflammatory climate that developed there didn't come about because of the National Guard, which would not have been on the campus had not these things happened. So I'm saying that part of the blame rests with the people who created this incendiary surrounding that caused the explosion. I don't excuse what happened on the campus.

Mr. Frost: Rick, rather than letting you ask the next question, as you know, among our student presidents in the front row is Craig Morgan of Kent State. I think you should make a comment.

Mr. Morgan: I have a number of questions I would like to direct to Mr. Agnew. I would like to preface them by stating the fact that I was there in all the disturbances all week long, and I hope it doesn't incriminate me in Portage County [where Kent State is located].

But first of all, I recall that on one occasion—I believe it was on this show, as a matter of fact—you stated that, if there were no sniper fire, then that would have been murder on behalf of the National Guard. It is an inadequate statement.

Mr. Agnew: Mr. Frost and I were talking legalistically, I think he will agree, and he said, if there were no sniper fire and the Guards simply opened fire without any explanatory reason, would that legally be murder, and I said yes, as a lawyer, I'd have to say it would have been second-degree murder.

Mr. Frost: But not in the first degree, you said.

Mr. Agnew: It would have been certainly a crime to do that, yes. I'd say that is true.

Mr. Morgan: I would like to elaborate on that a little later. But, first of all, I would like to speak against the philosophy which seems to be predominant in this country. I have heard that same position cited by Mr. Nixon a few days after the Kent State shooting. I've heard it cited by Portage County officials, by Governor Rhodes [of Ohio], by the Portage County prosecutor.

Mr. Agnew: Could I interrupt to ask what philosophy are you referring to?

"Countering the Allegation"

Mr. Morgan: Yes, the philosophy of immediately countering the allegation that four Kent State students were murdered—immediately countering that by saying, "Well, it was an aura of violence, and three nights previously windows had been broken in downtown Kent, and our ROTC building had been destroyed, and there were rocks being thrown." There was never any elaboration upon that.

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Mr. Agnew: I'm not trying to counter it, honestly. I'm not trying to excuse it. I said I found it deplorable. But I'm also saying—

Mr. Morgan: I don't wish to play with semantics. You may not be excusing it. You may not be countering it. But nonetheless you're trying to reduce the severity of the sanction I'm trying to put on the National Guard. The point is that since when in this nation is throwing rocks, is breaking windows or is burning an ROTC building a capital offense? And more so than that, I'd like you to answer me: Why is it that, if one of those is a capital offense, that one of the people who was shot was just walking to class?

"An Extra Measure of Responsibility"

Mr. Agnew: Let me put it this way: Under the law a person who breaks into a building, a burglar who commits even a second-degree murder in the course of that other felony is guilty of first-degree murder. So when you create these volatile and inflammatory circumstances you have to take an extra measure of responsibility. Now, all I'm saying is this: Without the conduct, whether it is capital or not doesn't make any difference—you admit it is unlawful. I hope you admit it is unlawful. Do you?

Mr. Morgan: Yes.

Mr. Agnew: It is unlawful. There had to be some response to the burning of the ROTC building. The Governor of the State had to take what steps he considered necessary to protect the property of the taxpayers. That's what was on that campus. And protect the rights of those other students. So he sent the Guard in there. The Guard were there.

The Guard are young people like yourselves. They are not people that represent Mr. Nixon or represent me; they are there to do a job of preserving peace and order. And as a result of the conditions that came about because of the violence that began with the actions of some of the students on the Kent State campus—and certainly not all; I don't mean to suppose that they were all involved—this is the result, the deplorable result. I don't excuse what happened, what the Guard did, but I say it wouldn't have happened at all.

Mr. Morgan: If it is murder, sir, isn't it indictable?

Mr. Frost: Mr. Vice President, you have obviously thought through this whole question of violence at home a great deal.

Do you think there is any justification to the suggestion that a number of people have made in the last week that the hard hats, who, for instance, beat up students here in New York a bit, and so on—that they have received, in any sense, more lenient treatment from speakers like yourself than the student protestors?

Mr. Agnew: I think there is a fundamental difference in what happened with the hard hats and what happened with the disruptions on the campus. Let me explain what I mean by that.

First, I think that the campus disruptions were not spontaneous, they were not the result of a rage that swept a person who worked with his hands to build America, to see people advocating that it be torn down. This was a wave in defense of a country, not a wave to destroy a country. It was not a premeditated attack on the institutions of the country.

Now, I don't condone the violence when the certain members of the hard hats lost their temper and resorted to fisticuffs. I don't condone that at all. I think it was wrong. I deplore violence in any form. But it was understandable. Here you have a group of people who have worked with their hands and worked hard to get where they are in this country.

And I hope I get some questions before we quit about the so-called materialistic society, because one thing I want to point out is that there can be no improvement in the quality of life unless we have certain material comforts—the right to be secure, the right to be warm, the right to be fed, the right to have the time to engage in these social expressions.

But I can't equate that wave of revulsion that shook these construction workers when they saw the flag of the United States defiled, when they saw people ridiculing the institutions of the country that had given them a chance. That's a different perspective. It's not in equal balance.

Mr. Silverman: Mr. Agnew, you say that you are troubled by that as well and that you do not accept it, and yet there is a quite remarkable picture in a short article in a recent "Scanlan's" magazine which shows the President of the United States having lunch with Mr. Brennan [president of the New York Building and Trades Council] and his coterie of hard hats shortly after that demonstration. Now part of the difference involved here is, one deserves legitimate chastisement and the other gets a lunch as opposed to a state dinner.

And I also want to say something else, as a parting comment—I guess I've been rather obstreperous through all of this.

You have a very strange sense of history, sir. You have a great facility for recalling what's happened in 1954 when it's to your convenience and not recalling what happened in Guatemala when it's inconvenient for you. You have a strange sense about what happened at Cambodia and Kent State as well. You suggest that the causative factors there were student protests, students' throwing of rocks.

You don't suggest, sir, what happened the day before that. You don't suggest how disgusting, how abhorrent it is for those of us who feel this way to watch the United States invade Cambodia. You don't seem to think that that's a causative linkup. And you talk about an aura of violence. You talk about precursors of violence.

And there's one small failing left out here, and this is the distinction between your being a political joke and your being a very serious man. And that is that you yourself, singularly, are perhaps the greatest precursor of violence in this country. You have done more to build an aura of violence, to build a milieu in which violence is accepted than anyone else I know.

Mr. Frost: Can you give an example of that? That's a very big charge.

Mr. Silverman: I think the Vice President gives examples of it in virtually all the speeches he gives.

"One of the Most Ridiculous Charges"

Mr. Agnew: May I answer that?

Let me just point out one thing: Long before I became a household word, violence was rampant in this country. The Berkeley campuses exploded when I was still back in county government. Columbia University was turned topsy-turvy long before President Nixon was even inaugurated. And yet you say my rhetoric has caused the violence.

Let me point out something else: Student violence is a way of life in Germany, in Japan, in England, in many other countries where the effect of my rhetoric is virtually nonexistent. Now, to use me as some convenient bête noire for the violence that's existed in this country because of the disgusting permissive attitudes of the people in command of the college campuses is one of the most ridiculous charges I've ever heard. **[END]**