

t
u
e
s
d
a
y

The People's Peace Rhetoric

By Charles Cain

It somehow seems sadly ironic that while American forces are involved in fighting in Cambodia and perhaps in Laos, a conference was held to discuss a proposal for peace.

Such a meeting was held in Ann Arbor last weekend.

The 2,000 or so people who came to the conference were there to discuss a peace treaty proposal that was negotiated between representatives of the National Students Assn. (NSA) who traveled through Vietnam, and representatives of North and South Vietnam.

The proposed treaty calls for the immediate withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam, establishment of free elections in Vietnam and the release of all prisoners of war.

One point in the treaty calls for the neutrality and independence of Cambodia and Laos as established in the Geneva Convention of 1962, to be observed by the United States, a point that seems to have a hollow ring.

The people who came to the meeting were representatives of virtually all sections of the United States.

Hampered by bad weather in parts of the country, the conference had the immediate problem of people arriving late.

When they did arrive, they were donned with sleeping bags and packs strapped to their backs.

The Housing Committee, whose job it was to find quarters for the people, had their hands full arranging enough dorm rooms on the University of Michigan campus to satisfy the number of people who needed quarters.

Some of the people slept in the Michigan Union on chairs and couches; others slept on hard floors if nothing else was available.

Food was provided for those who attended the conference. A typical menu included stewed tomatoes, fried rice with vegetables, salads, brown bread, sassafras tea and coffee.

A lack of organization was characteristic of the conference, but there really was no one to blame. The people who organized the conference spent many weeks in preparation, but with so many different interests from so many different parts of the country, it was hard to have much control.

It reminded one of a pro - bowl football game when the best players from all the teams are matched against each other. Though there is tremendous talent, the play is usually sloppy and unorganized because of the lack of time spent to learn to function as a team.

Such was the fate of the weekend conference. People with talent who were involved in the peace movement from all over the country came together to discuss a treaty but could not operate as a smooth organization.

There was tremendous division at the conference with a hint of juvenile ego, "My group is better than yours."

Speakers who identified themselves with the Student Mobilization Committee and the Students for a Democratic Society, were greeted by boos from a majority of the crowd.

Rick Thornegate, one of the Winter Soldier Investigation participants, summed up the problem.

"You go to a New Left meeting and you see a bunch of egos bouncing around," he said.

Not only Thornegate but Bobby Seale also appealed for unity.

In a statement Seale wrote to be read at the conference, he called for a unified effort for peace without any of the divisiveness that was indicative of past attempts for peace.

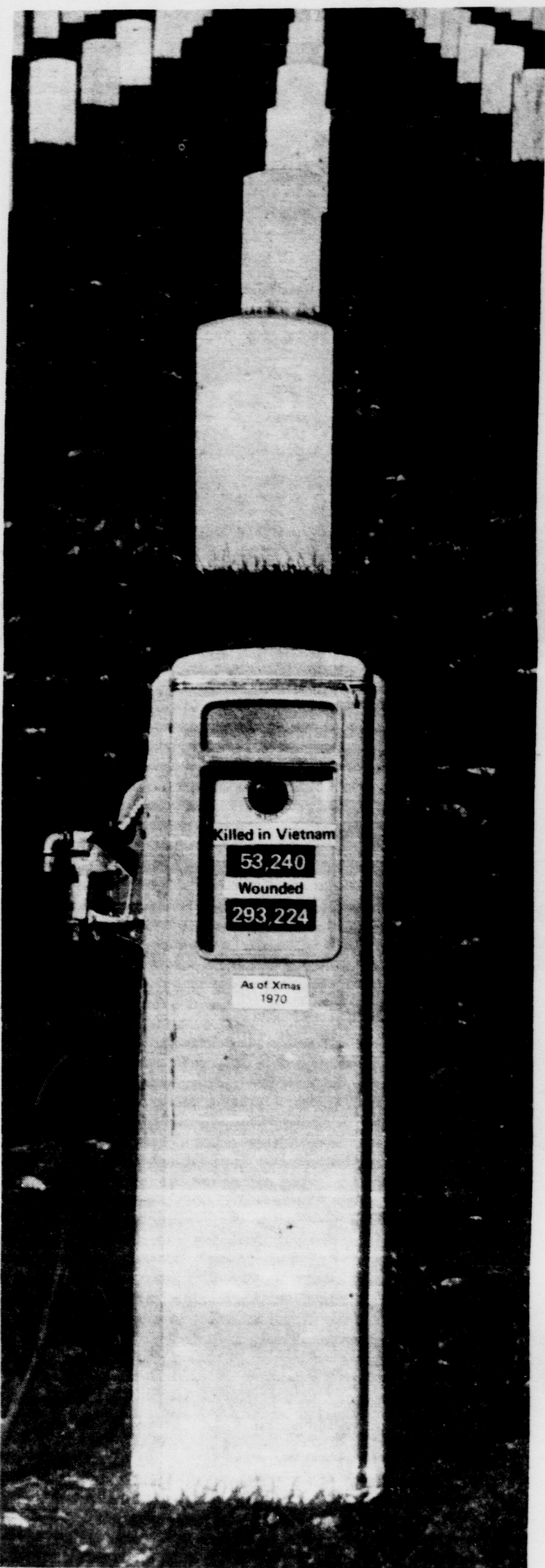
The crowd seemed to be swayed by powerful rhetoric on more than one occasion.

An example was when the conference participants discussed whether a demonstration should be held in Ann Arbor.

An Ann Arbor student said that it would polarize people who should be involved in the peace treaty movement — namely the working class. He also asked why people from around the country should be allowed to come and raise hell in Ann Arbor, especially since they did not know the

(continued on back)

Copyright 1971, Another Mother for Peace, Beverly Hills, Calif. Reprinted with permission.



Campus suicide

By David Bassett

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following feature is a condensation of a taped discussion on college student suicide between David Bassett and Drs. Arnold Werner and Lionel Rosen of the MSU Psychiatric Services.

Question: Do you agree with the theory that many suicides are accidental, that they were only intended to be cries for help?

Rosen. No. It may seem naive to say this, but most people who kill themselves mean to kill themselves. Probably intervention plays very little role in prevention. The figures are so bad, statistically, in terms of what intent really is in terms of suicide gestures, that it's hard to tell what intent is.

It struck me that the only significant thing that has been shown to lower suicides is newspaper publication, not suicide prevention centers. In the Detroit newspaper strike, there was a significant lowering of suicides in the area, and that is one of the few things that has ever been correlated or coincidental with the lowering of suicides.

Q. What is the most common cause of suicides at MSU?

Werner. The young person who commits suicide usually has had a fairly long history dating back to childhood of difficulty in getting along with other people; they've had interpersonal difficulties. I think that the kid who got along well when he was 15 or 16 years old is not the person who kills himself when he's 20 and under the stress of college, unless, of course, he's acutely psychotic.

Q. Do you think the suicide rate is significantly lower in colleges in which the student does have at least some contact with his parents than at those in which he does not?

Werner. Yes, you see suicides often occur in persons who are very isolated and alone, and the contact with the family brings with it various types of supports and warmth and caring despite any difficulties in getting along.

A person living at home and going to college could be very unhappy with his family situation. It could be very stressful, often because there's not enough money to get out of town and a variety of other reasons, but in spite of all those unhappinesses, there's still the support that exists within the family unit.

In intact families, the suicide rate and suicide attempt rate is much lower than in families in which there has been divorce or death or separation.

Q. Is there any correlation between suicide and drug use / abuse?

Werner. The suicides of those on LSD and other hallucinogenic drugs receive a lot of attention, but the few studies that have been conducted indicate that those who commit suicide while on drugs were disturbed long before they ever began using drugs. There invariably have been suicides committed while on drugs because of extreme panic and fear either during a bad trip, or because of the perceptual distortions that can occur. I think that that is another myth that drugs per se are responsible for suicide. Obviously, though, people who shoot heroin are behaving in a suicidal way, because you never know when you're going to get a bad batch or when you're going to get something that's going to kill you.

Q. Studies by Temby (in 1961) and Parrish (1957) and in various English universities indicate that college students are more suicidal than persons of the same age. Do you agree with this?

Werner. Yes, I think students are more suicidal. Persons who are obsessional, people who tend to mull things over a lot, people who tend to become depressed are often found among good students, people whose whole life styles have become one of careful reasoning, thinking, etc., and who have high rates of suicide. That's

part of the explanation for the high rate among physicians, and also among psychiatrists, where it's quite high.

There is evidence in personality studies that it goes along with the person who is guilt prone, to whom performance and success is very, very important. When you start talking about people to whom these things apply, whose family expectations are also quite high, you're talking about college students. There's also the situation of ambiguity among college students of being an adult yet being dependent financially upon parents.

Q. Do you think a statement could be made that students with higher grades and/or intelligence are more likely to commit suicide than those with lower grades and/or intelligence?

Werner. The issue of intelligence is the hooker in there. There are a lot more things involved in higher grades than just intelligence. People with lower grades don't have that much lower intelligence, so if we just left it at the issue of grades, then I would say yes, because the person with higher grades tends to be the striving type, the one who is disappointed with poor performance. I don't think it's inherent in intelligence; I think it's inherent in the things that go along with high performance. People who perform well, though, are drawn from the population with higher intelligence.

Q. Studies at Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania indicate that early loss or absence of father was found to be the dominant distinguishing characteristic in cases of male suicide. Do you think that this is generally true?

Rosen. I've never seen it pinned down to the point where you could say "father" specifically.

.....
I think that the kid who got along well when he was 15 or 16 years old is not the person who kills himself when he's 20 and under the stress of college.
— Dr. Arnold Werner
.....

Werner. Loss of parent of the same sex or inadequate parent of the same sex correlates with difficulties. If you take a series of people who have had difficulties, who committed suicide, you probably will find a much higher incidence of loss of parent of the same sex. One of the worst correlates is to have a close relative who committed suicide.

Q. There has been much conflicting opinion regarding the relationship of academic failure and suicide attempts. Do you think there is any significant relationship?

Rosen. At MSU I've seen one picture, and at Temple I've seen another. At Temple, I saw suicide attempts were higher among upper middle class students who were doing well in school, while students at MSU had not been doing well.

Werner. The few successful suicide attempts I've seen, none of them here, involved students who had been the bright performers. I think the English studies which indicate that the student who kills himself is apt to be a better student are probably valid.

Q. Do you agree with the statement made by Rook in 1959 that higher standards of entry into college are likely to lead to selection of the mentally unstable?

Werner. I don't know about "mentally unstable;" that's a vague term. However, people from prestigious institutions tend to commit suicide at higher rates.

Q. The highest rate increase in suicides in recent times has been among black males. Does this hold true in college?

Rosen. You get into the problem here of

statistics. In the past, no one ever went into the ghetto and the suicides which occurred there were seldom registered. Now, all of a sudden they are reporting suicides, so naturally there is going to be an increase.

Q. Is that the only reason, or has there been an actual increase?

Rosen. There's no way of knowing, but it is probably abnormally high. There's no question about that.

Q. What has MSU done to decrease the likelihood of suicide?

Werner. Since it's so low here, there's not much that can be done. I'd leave well enough alone, since there's such a ridiculously low number.

Q. Is there anything that can be done to make it zero?

Werner. In terms of the on-campus situation, it's the availability of dorm advisers and other students who are sensitive to the person who is in distress and who are capable of having them express themselves in other ways instead of hurting themselves.

Q. What's the best way to prevent student suicides: religion, friends, reading, professional help, suicide prevention centers?

Rosen. There's no evidence that anything helps.

Werner. There's no evidence that suicide prevention centers work. People who contact suicide prevention centers are likely to contact somebody else anyway.

Q. Is suicide among college students inevitable then?

Werner. Actually, the suicide rate among college students isn't that high. The rate increases with age. For college students it runs about four



or five per 100,000, and for nonstudents of the same age it is about two or three. Nationwide, it runs about 10½ or 11 per 100,000 regardless of age. So actually it is quite low, but relative to other causes of death, it is quite high because people of college student age are not dying of cancer, of heart diseases or other debilitating or chronic illnesses. They die of accidents, and they die of suicide.

Some things can be done to decrease the rate in terms of ranking of cause of death. For example, persons who respond badly towards stress should not be placed in stressful situations such as college.

In regards to attempts, however, you have a different story. My experience has shown that the rate of attempts is roughly five or six times that of successes, while my experience here is that it runs about 25 times more often, based on the number of attempts I hear about and see.

You see, we only come in contact with those students who have tried to kill themselves and who require medical attention. In talking with dorm people, I've found a much larger number who never get as far as the health center. There are probably at least one or two unreported attempts for every one that is reported, but there is no way of knowing. There probably were 100 or so students who came to the health center requiring attention for suicide attempts last year and not all of these were hospitalized.

Q. How many of these were injured severely enough as to require hospitalization?

Werner. Well, suicides are a cry for help, and sometimes the physical injury is not that severe, but the distress, the cry for help, is. We feel that anyone who is self-destructive enough to try to kill himself needs professional help, at least evaluation.

Thoughts bespoke to stolid shadows
 Tumbling, tumbling, out of half-conscious
 Of little but desire
 Seething with ripeness
 Yet, not far to wake an inner fire
 How long, how long,
 A silence sings
 On hollow notes can fullness ring.

D. LOWE

II
 Black alley pedlars
 sell american dreams,
 tarnished ballons,
 spent
 heliummed
 condoms
 While Ginsberg writes
 another Howl.
 at the wake of america

reads it.

DAVID P. HOHENDORF



foradarkhairedgirl

TO THIS END

*Late afternoon
 And a Fall breeze is satisfied
 The day stoops, not yet gone
 An aspen leaf, undone
 I wish I'd never tried.*

*Between the barren trees
 A solar smile is warming
 To chill through empty leaves
 Nook and cranny whistles these
 Whys, do I keep forming.*

*Small faces
 Far, and scented with a lost decay
 Fell fallow into place,
 Thoughtfully's most fate:
 An unmarked grave along that way.*

D. LOWE

Air, hot and
 thick with moisture from
 the sweating blades of summergreen grass,
 eases gently through a
 slitted window. . .

blinds down. . . metal slats revealing
 thin lines of sunlight separating.
 Each white sunlight line
 sharply cutting
 hot and wrinkled sheets. . .
 cutting golden lines
 on smooth brown legs and waist and slender neck. . .
 Soft illumination separate silkenstrands of
 deep brown hair.

And cutting paler not - so - golden
 strips on paler not - so - suntanned legs. . .
 stronger legs. . . not boy's. . . not yet man's . . .
 and cutting still and quiet lines on a sleepstilled face.

soft, easy jazz a quiet woman singing
 sad bud fated things
 in the room's cool silence.
 next door telephone someone answers;
 a speeding car is halted by flashing lights across the street.

In the silent room, time halts, these two
 left for now by the
 bearded father trudging toward tomorrow.
 For this same silence that does
 ease their softly sleeping minds
 shall come no more.

DAVID ZAFFER

Peace rhetoric

(continued from front)

problems of the police in Ann Arbor. His arguments were met with wild applause.

A speaker from Boston argued that a demonstration should be held and geographic locations should not be even considered. He argued to the crowd that those at the conference were "international people" and not people from various parts of the United States. After much debate a hand vote finally decided that a demonstration would not be appropriate yet.

CBS was on hand for the convention with a four-man film crew. Their conspicuous presence bothered some people, and a vote was taken to see if they should be allowed to stay.

After some debate the people at the conference voted in favor of allowing the newsman to stay.

While the conference was deciding the fate of the newsreels, one middle-aged CBS film crew member said to

a fellow crew member that the younger generation had certainly changed.

"All kids want to do today is bitch and raise hell. Don't they ever go to bed with each other anymore?" he said.

"I remember when I was a kid I used to drink a couple of beers and play grab ass," he said.

People such as Abbie Hoffman, Rennie Davis, John Froines — all defendants in the Chicago 7 conspiracy trial — and Jane Fonda, actress turned activist, were inconspicuous in the crowd.

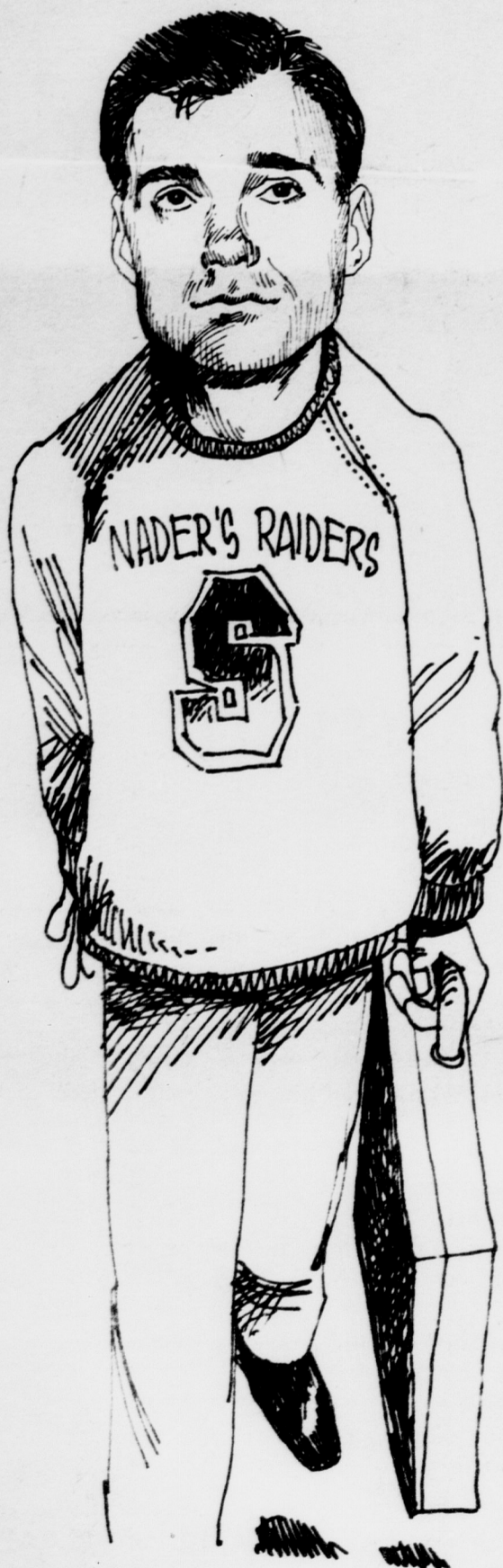
The hours of preparation for the conference, the money spent for the conference and the strategy plans for gaining support for the treaty are now history.

What remains to be recorded is if enough support can be found for the treaty.

One can't help but wonder whether, even if large scale support for the treaty is found, it will make any difference, whether the people who are backing the treaty can find a strong enough argument to persuade the administration of its value.

Cornering consumer complaints

By Susan Krot



Troubled by nasty letters from credit collection agencies? Have you been bilked by a magazine salesman or cheated by your landlord? Now you have recourse — the Michigan Consumers Council (MCC).

MSU students along with many consumers have long been fair game in crooked dealings that barely skirted the law. Now students and all Michigan residents have an avenue of complaint and action through the Michigan Consumers Council.

The council is an agency created by the state legislature to promote improvement in the consumer protections programs of the state by eliminating harmful products and merchandise, false advertising and deceptive sales practices.

Because it is impossible for a few state officials to protect all Michigan consumers from unfair treatment, adequate enforcement of the consumer laws of Michigan are, to a great extent, dependent on an informed public who, in turn, report violations to the council.

The MSU Volunteer Bureau, in an effort to promote and expand the work of the MCC, is currently recruiting MSU students to work as case workers, researchers and educators for the council.

The MCC's complaint handling division receives between 75 and 100 complaints monthly including those from MSU students. Beginning operation in April, 1970, the complaint division processed 405 cases in four months and recovered more than \$11,000.

MSU student volunteers working as MCC case workers will be expected to take complete responsibility in obtaining basic information relative to individual complaints, contacting the complainant and all other parties involved, preparing reports of necessary information, explaining alternatives available to consumers and participating in all complaint discussions within the council.

Sallie Hicks, director of consumer complaints at the MCC said student volunteers are needed more than ever now that consumer complaint bureaus are becoming more useful. She cited the work of Ralph Nader and his raiders for

generating this public interest in consumer affairs.

The consumer complaints most frequently received by the MCC involves problems with defective merchandise. Warranties give the council the second largest number of headaches. Warranties are a special problem in Michigan because they are not covered by law in any way.

MSU students most frequently complain about leasing agreements and forfeiture of security or damage deposits by students, but also are bilked in bogus buying clubs and encyclopedia and magazine orders.

Mrs. Hicks said most complaints are due to a lack of communication, human and clerical errors or personality conflict.

The MCC is not a regulatory authority. As part of the legislature since its inception in 1966, it draws its resources from its nine council members in state government. The nine member council consists of three gubernatorial appointees, three legislative appointees, the state attorney general, the secretary of state and the director of commerce.

The MCC, a paper lion until funded in July, 1969, now employs a full-time staff of seven people who not only investigate complaints but also serve as legislative advisers, educators and information specialists and as clearing house executives of Michigan and nationwide consumer affairs.

Chuck Boyd, asst. director of information and education at MCC, said that although the council action is not regulatory, it has no power to issue a cease and desist order, the council has been quite successful in spurring corrections in the past.

"Most people are impressed by the state seal on our stationery," Boyd said, "but if a letter doesn't work we contact the county prosecutor or attorney general. In some cases the threat of publicity has the most immediate effect on offenders."

Commenting on MSU Student Volunteers, Boyd said, "College students want action. This is it, and we need them. It's not glamorous. It's experience. Our successes are small, but they are celebrated."