

## The End of a Decade

# Changes Mark Seventies

By GARY P. WEBB

An era of "looking out for number one," the 1970's have been known as the "Me Decade." Now that we are leaving the seventies for the eighties, it is time for some reflections on the "Me Decade."

When the decade opened, America was torn by war abroad and protests at home. President Richard M. Nixon had promised to "bring us together again," but the American people seemed to have split into many polarized factions. Students, blacks, and women all sought changes in the existing social order. Peaceful protests, the watchword of the early-1960's, had given way in many instances to more violent expression, and groups like the Students For A Democratic Society, the Black Panthers, and the Weathermen occasionally committed acts of violence. Many Americans were concerned about the U.S.'s continuing involvement in Vietnam; an involvement that would eventually cost 50,000 American lives. The response of some American conservatives to the "New Left" was that of violence as well. "Hardhats" marched against anti-war protesters in New York, and National Guardsmen shot and killed four students during an anti-war protest at Ohio's Kent State University. Several students at Mississippi's black Jackson State University were killed by state police during another protest, threatening to drag that state's tragic history of racial violence into the 1970's. Americans were divided.

A tremendous wave of apathy swept America at mid-decade, however. The Watergate scandal, in which high officials in the Nixon Administration were accused of illegal surveillance activities, taking bribes, and participating in a massive cover-up, shook the nation's faith in its government. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigned in the fall of 1973, and on August 9, 1974, Richard Milhous Nixon became the first man to resign the American Presidency. America seemed to fall behind in foreign affairs as well. The long involvement in the Vietnam War ended in January, 1973, and the U.S.-supported Saigon government fell to the Communists barely two years later. The Arab nations of the Middle East threatened to cut off the United States' major oil supplies, and the decade neared its end with 50 Americans being held hostage by militant students in Iran. To

many, America seemed to have fallen from its position as world leader.

America in 1979 is a very different nation from the America of 1970. The seventies have been a decade of reaction to the leftward movement of the 1960's. Severe economic problems have led many Americans to question the value of traditional New Deal economics, with its emphasis on government control of the economy, and to turn to tax-slashing, budget-balancing, "New Conservatives" for leadership. Most of all, however, Americans began to search for themselves, and "look out for number one," even at the cost of commitment to others.

To some, the gains of the sixties seem to have been wiped out by the reaction and apathy of the seventies. Following the election of Richard Nixon in 1968, the social programs of the Johnson Administration, "the Great Society," were slowed down or disbanded altogether. Education, food and housing assistance, and public transportation seem to have lacked emphasis in the seventies.

The Civil Rights gains of the recent past seem to be threatened by reaction as well. Resistance to affirmative action programs and "reverse discrimination" cases indicate that the battle for equality is not over. The recent flurry of Ku Klux Klan activity is also cause for concern. The traditional pattern of racial strife seems to be continuing; when economic problems are at their worst, frustrated lower and lower middle class whites take out their frustrations on the most convenient minority group, (blacks in the South and in northern cities, Mexican-Americans in the Southwest) blaming them for the economic failure. Recently, Vietnamese fishermen on the Texas coast were victims of Klan violence; the recent immigrants were taking jobs from "Americans," the Klan asserted.

The energy crisis, brought on by increased world demand for energy, as well as the greed of "Big Oil," may well change our lives forever. If so, that change began in the seventies. The gas lines of 1974 were brought back this past summer. Part of the new individualism may be the search for fuel; everyone cries "Me first" when energy is being distributed.

A positive aspect of the seventies has been a genuine soul-searching by many Americans. Values have changed. Some traditional values have been wiped out by change, but others seem to have survived, stronger than ever. Changing stand-

ards regarding sex, drugs, and religion have caused a great deal of tension in America, but the history of this country is one of constant change, and more importantly, successful adaptation to a changing world.

By CHE

The past States of A wide spectr From the ur ble Waterga

## Mary Wash Sees Chan

By JACKIE CONCIATORE

With the beginning of the '80's comes the end of yet another decade at Mary Washington. Much has transpired during the "tumultuous 70's" and MWC did not escape the clutches of reform.

During the end of the sixties, Mary Washington's administration took a liberal plunge and changed MWC'S dress code—girls could wear slacks now! This was followed by a freshman revolt against the tradition of beanie-wearing. (in the "old days," freshman had to wear little striped beanies on campus). It was, obviously, a successful revolt. In 1969 MWC abolished the buddy system, which held each girl responsible for letting her "buddy" in the dorm after closing hours.

In 1970 MWC saw a huge change. News headlines flashed—"MWC male enrollment hits 12." By the end of the year, twenty men were student-body members.

Student sympathy and concern about Viet Nam was strong on campus. Students angrily rallied and marched in protest of the war and the subsequent Kent State killings. The student body "staged an exodus" to Washington, D.C. where they joined forces with others in protest. A letter of apology to Mrs. Nixon displayed the student's regret that her planned visit to the college had to be cancelled "because of the uproar."

In the '71- men were ac and Mary W rated from ginia.

In 1974 P Grellet C. Si the office of

1975 saw t cational do Hall)—despi and alumnae

1976 prov things never was on its w cobeck cuis cern—so mu committee liar?) The ca was formed

In 1978 W awaited su were proud.

The "big" year—five and four sus marijuana MWC put its in office las male enroll 200.

The whee renovations the pool room rally about large increa students—al for surpris way, but wh ther we'll go

She has the nerve  
Because of her I lost you  
I have lost you!  
With her ways you were driven raw  
You had to rid yourself of life, even though you ca  
2:00 A.M. and all alone with a gun  
Because of her I knelt in a church on the cold, har  
candles I had lit  
I wept, I screamed, I asked you why  
And I sat