

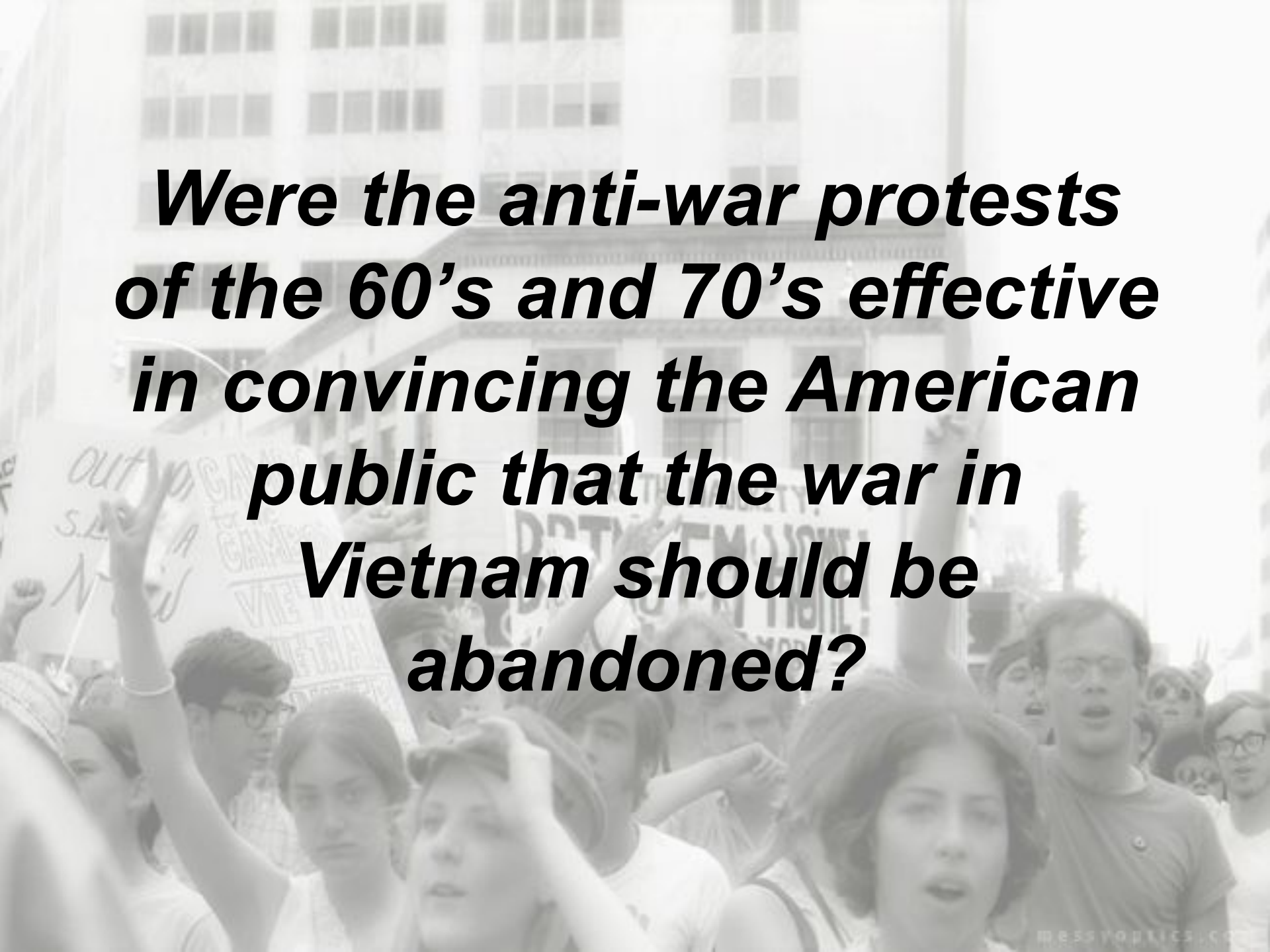
Antiwar Protests of the 1960's and 1970's

Jill R. KLM

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AHAP Final

Ms. Pojer



***Were the anti-war protests
of the 60's and 70's effective
in convincing the American
public that the war in
Vietnam should be
abandoned?***

Background



The Vietnam War

- **1960-1973**
- **War of containment**
- **North Vietnam (Communist) vs. South Vietnam (Pro- West)**
 - **Allies of North: U.S.S.R., People's Republic of China**
 - **Allies of South: U.S., South Korea**
- **North wanted to reunify with the South after the country was split in two at the 1954 Geneva Conference**
- **1960- "Viet Cong" (North) invaded Southern Vietnam and the war began**

The Vietnam War (cont.)

- **1964- Gulf of Tonkin- North Vietnam accused of attacking U.S. destroyers**
 - **Lead to a large increase in U.S. involvement**
 - **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution- the President has the right to “prevent further aggression” from the North Vietnamese**
 - **The number of troops sent to Vietnam skyrocketed (500,000)**
- **U.S. made very few gains**
 - **American troops fought a conventional war, while the Vietnamese were fighting an ideological war**
 - **U.S. tried to achieve their goals with as few American deaths as possible**
 - **Vietnamese didn't care how many people had to die for their cause**

The Vietnam War (cont.)

- 1968-



- Tet Offensive-
North Vietnam
attacked U.S. and
pushed them back
(U.S. eventually
regained the
territory)

- Portrayed as a huge
loss by American
media

The Vietnam War (cont.)

- 1968
 - **My Lai Massacre-** A Vietnamese town suspected of harboring enemies was brutally murdered by U.S. soldiers



The Vietnam War (cont.)

- 1968
 - Nixon took office- promised to get America out of the war
 - Vietnamization- Bring U.S. troops home and leave the majority of the fighting to the Vietnamese



The Vietnam War (cont.)

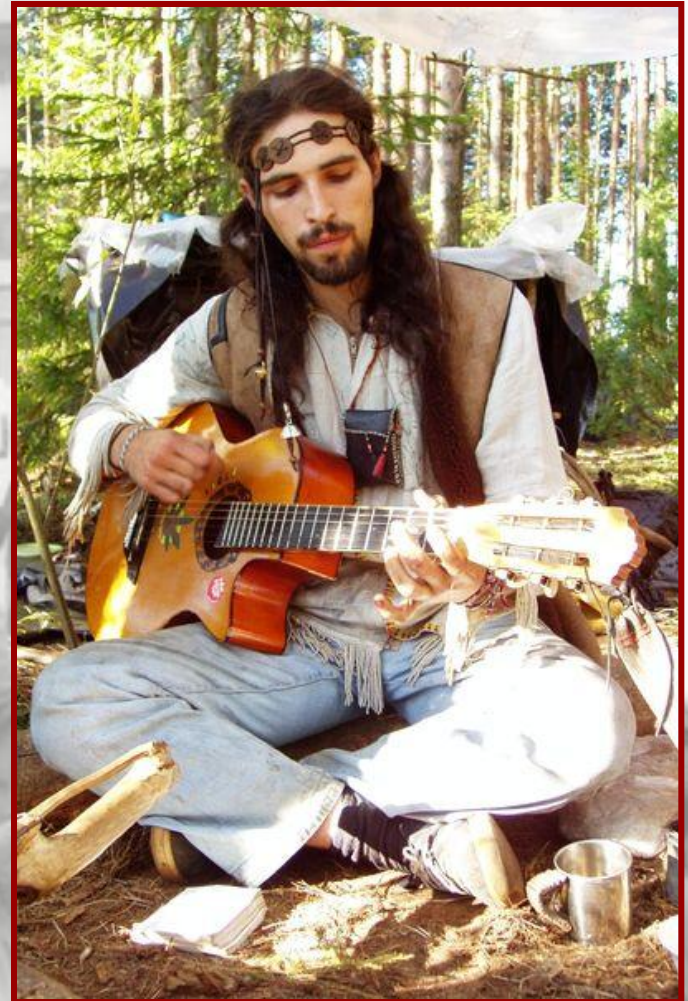
- **1971- Pentagon Papers leaked to the press**
 - **Showed that the U.S. had deliberately expanded its involvement in Vietnam**
 - **This was happening while Pres. Lyndon Johnson was telling the American people that the U.S. would not expand its involvement**
- **1973- Ceasefire signed**
 - **U.S. removed all troops**
 - **No provisions for POW's or MIA's**
 - **War resumed between North and South Vietnam**
- **1975- North Vietnam defeated South Vietnam**

Results

- **3 million Vietnamese died**
- **58,000 Americans died**
- **\$150 million spent on the war**
 - **Under funding for Great Society programs**

The New Left

- **Radical political movement of the 1960's and 70's**
 - Mostly comprised of college students
- **Social activists**
- **Beliefs**
 - **Anti- Draft**
 - **Pro- Civil Rights**
 - **Anti- Traditional values (family, complacency)**
 - Rebelled with sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll
 - **Opposed authority (Anti- Establishment)**



The Protests



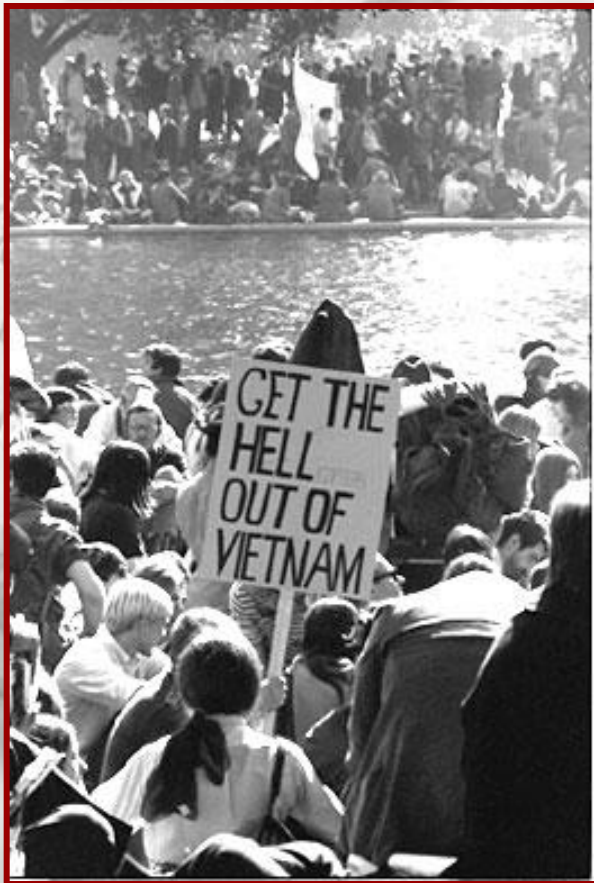
The First D.C. Rally

- **April 17, 1965**
 - **One month after the U.S. sent its first troops to Vietnam**
 - **Staged by the Leftist group, Students for a Democratic Society**
 - **16,000 people picketed outside the White House**
 - **“No More War”**
 - **“We Want Peace Now”**
 - **Only 4 arrests made**

March on the Pentagon

- **October 21, 1967**
 - **Culmination of 5 days of protests organized by the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam**
 - **Famous speakers came to address the crowd (Robert Lowell, Benjamin Spock)**
 - **The protest escalated when the leaders of the Youth International Party announced they were going to “exorcise” the Pentagon**
 - **People surrounded the building and chanted spells to try and drive out the “evil war spirits”**
 - **“LBJ, Pull Out Now, Like Your Father Should Have Done.”**
 - **Tear gas was released into the crowd**
 - **2,500 troops guarded the Pentagon**
 - **681 arrested**

March on the Pentagon (cont.)



The Moratorium Rally (D.C.)

- **November 15, 1969**
 - **America's biggest anti-war demonstration ever**
 - 250,000- 500,000 protestors present
 - **A little less wild**
 - LBJ was out of office and Nixon had initiated his "Vietnamization" plan
 - Police had learned how to handle protests
 - 3,000 Police
 - 9,000 Army troops
 - 200 Lawyers
 - 75 Clergymen
 - **Protest was peaceful for the most part**
 - 135 arrests made

The Moratorium Rally (cont.)



The Moratorium Rally was the largest anti-war protest in U.S. history

Kent State

- **In response to Nixon's invasion of Cambodia**
 - Didn't want to be drafted
- **May 1, 1970- Day One**
 - Huge demonstration on the College's commons
 - Around midnight rowdy bikers began throwing bottles and vandalizing cars in the street
 - Approximately 100 students joined in
 - Police eventually got the situation under control

Kent State (cont.)

- **May 2, 1970- Day Two**
 - **State of Emergency declared in Kent**
 - Ohio Governor, James A. Rhodes, called in the National Guard
 - **Demonstrations continued on campus**
 - Reserve Officer Training Corps building was set on fire
 - Fire men and police were pelted with rocks by the surrounding crowd
 - **10:00 p.m.- National Guard set up camp on Kent State's campus**
 - Used tear gas and arrested the protestors
 - At least one person was bayoneted
- **May 3, 1970- Day Three**
 - **More protests**
 - **Curfew imposed on students**

Kent State (cont.)



The National Guard was sent in to maintain order on Kent State's campus

Kent State (cont.)

- **May 4, 1970- Day Four**
 - **Pre-planned rally commenced**
 - Approx. 2,000 people present
 - **National Guard told them to disperse**
 - People refused
 - Troops sprayed the crowd with tear gas
 - **Crowd began throwing rocks and chased the National Guard off campus**
 - “Pigs off Campus!”
 - **After being chased up a hill by the angry protestors, the National Guard opened fire on the crowd**
 - Firing lasted 13 seconds
 - 4 dead
 - 9 wounded

Kent State (cont.)



The National Guard was chased up a hill by angry students



A shocked student grieves over a dead body, shot down by the National Guard

Fourth D.C. Rally

- **In response to Nixon's invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State shootings**
- **Goal: Close down Washington D.C. on May 3, 1971**
 - **Shut off all access routes to the city**
 - **The protestors would come in waves so if one wave got arrested the next would be there to take its place**
 - **March on the Pentagon, the Capitol, and the Justice Department**
- **Two weeks before May Day, 1971**
 - **Over 200,000 people attended peaceful rallies in D.C.**
 - **As May 3 approached many left, leaving only the die-hard radicals (organized by the People's Coalition for Peace and Justice)**

The Fourth D.C. Rally (cont.)



The Fourth D.C. Rally (cont.)

- **As May 3 approached, the Police prepared to arrest huge numbers of people**
 - **Fill- in- the- blank arrest forms (to arrest people faster)**
 - **Polaroid cameras would be used to take pictures of perpetrators so the Policeman could remember him later in court**
 - **New “flexi- cuffs” with officer’s badge number already on them**
 - **“Arrest teams” created to streamline the arresting process**
 - **Arresting officer**
 - **Handcuffing officer**
 - **Transporting officer**

The Fourth D.C. Rally (cont.)

- **May 2, 1971**
 - Police announced over a loudspeaker that the 30,000 protestors camping out in West Potomac Park must vacate
 - Reason: “violation of their permit” (use of drugs)
 - Only 12,000 people remained after the announcement
- **May 3, 1971**
 - Police used tear gas to keep streets open
 - 7,000 people arrested- the record to date
 - 155 injuries
 - Protestors plan was thwarted and D.C. stayed open



**Were these protests
effective in swaying
public opinion?**

Opinion #1: Protests Were Effective

- People sympathized with the protestors
- Constant, large protests kept the public's attention on the issue



Protests Were Effective (cont.)

In view of developments since we entered the fighting in Vietnam do you think the U.S. made a mistake sending troops to fight in Vietnam?" (Gallup) DATEPERCENT

Percent that said NO

August 1965: 61

March 1966: 59

May 1966: 49

September 1966: 48

November 1966: 51

February 1967: 52

May 1967: 50

July 1967: 48

October 1967: 44

December 1967: 46

February 1968: 42

March 1968: 41

April 1968: 40

August 1968: 35

October 1968: 37

February 1969: 39

October 1969: 32

January 1970: 33

April 1970: 34

May 1970: 36

January 1971: 31

May 1971: 28

Protests Were Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 03/1964**
Sample: VOTERS AND FLIERS
Question Number: 15.
How would you rate the job President Johnson has done on (READ STATEMENT BELOW) excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?
Item: Handling the situation in Vietnam

- **Responses: Excellent/Pretty Good/Only Fair/Poor/Not Sure**
Unweighted* Percent Responding
 - 5.50% Excellent
 - 28.20% Pretty Good
 - 23.20% Only Fair
 - 16.90% Poor
 - 26.20% Not Sure
 - **Number of Valid Cases: 1406 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q15_18 ***
Weights not available for this survey

Protests Were Effective (cont.)



Protests Were Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 10/1966**
Sample: VOTERS
Question Number: 6.
How would you rate the job President Johnson has done on (READ STATEMENT BELOW) -- excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?
Item: Handling the war in Vietnam
- **Responses: Excellent/Pretty Good/Only Fair/Poor/Not Sure**
Unweighted* Percent Responding
 - 7.00% Excellent
 - 28.40% Pretty Good
 - 22.50% Only Fair
 - 31.80% Poor
 - 10.30% Not Sure
 - **Number of Valid Cases: 1121 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q6_8 * Weights not available for this survey**

Protests Were Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 10/1969**

Sample: National Sample of Persons 16 or older

Question Number: P3f.

Now let me read you some statements that have been made about the Vietnam war and the anti-Vietnam demonstrations. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree. (READ EACH ITEM AND RECORD BELOW)

Item: President Nixon was wrong to say he would not pay any attention to anti-Vietnam protests

Responses: Agree/Disagree/Not Sure Unweighted* Percent Responding

- **53.40% Agree**
- **33.50% Disagree**
- **13.10% Not Sure**
- **Number of Valid Cases: 1942 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: P3F_6 ***
Weights not available for this survey

Protests Were Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 12/1974**
Sample: National Sample of Persons 18 or older
Question Number: 2.
As a result of what we learned from the Vietnam War, do you tend to agree or disagree that (READ LIST AND RECORD BELOW FOR EACH ITEM)?
Item: We should never again commit American soldiers to a war like Vietnam
- **Responses: Agree/Disagree/Not Sure Weighted Percent Responding**
 - 75.40% Agree
 - 18.10% Disagree
 - 6.50% Not Sure
 - Number of Valid Cases: 2864 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q2_4

Opinion #2: Protests Were Not Effective

- **Protesters of the time were so radical they repelled others**
 - **“Negative Follower Group”- One group of people (protesters) bothers the other (normal Americans) to the point where others join the enemy (Pro-war Americans)**
- **It was not the protests that changed public opinion, but the constantly increasing amount of money being spent on the war**

Protests Were Not Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 06/1965**
Sample: VOTERS
Question Number: 11e.
Do you think the disagreement of college professors and students with U.S. policies in Vietnam is mainly the result of honest disagreement, or do you think it is mainly the result of organized radical activity in colleges today?
- **Responses: Honest disagreement/Radical activity/Not sure**
Unweighted* Percent Responding
 - 25.90% Honest disagreement
 - 56.30% Radical activity
 - 17.70% Not sure
 - **Number of Valid Cases: 158 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q11E * Weights not available for this survey**

Protests Were Not Effective (cont.)



The Protestors were viewed by many as too radical

Protests Were Not Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 10/1969**
Sample: National Sample of Persons 16 or older
Question Number: P3f.
Now let me read you some statements that have been made about the Vietnam war and the anti-Vietnam demonstrations. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree. (READ EACH ITEM AND RECORD BELOW)
Item: President Nixon is right to ask that people not support protests against the war because it hurts his chances of getting peace

- **Responses: Agree/Disagree/Not Sure Unweighted* Percent Responding**
 - 57.50% Agree
 - 29.00% Disagree
 - 13.50% Not Sure
 - Number of Valid Cases: 1940 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: P3F_5 * Weights not available for this survey

Protests Were Not Effective (cont.)

- **Date: 10/1969**

Sample: National Sample of Persons 16 or older

Question Number: 5c.

Do you favor or oppose an immediate withdrawal of all American troops from Vietnam?

- **Responses: Favor/Oppose/Not sure Unweighted* Percent Responding**

- **35.90% Favor**
 - **56.50% Oppose**
 - **7.60% Not sure**
 - **Number of Valid Cases: 1636 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q5C ***
- Weights not available for this survey**

Protests Were Not Effective (cont.)

- **Date:** 01/1971
Sample: National Sample of Persons 16 or older
Question Number: 44.
Would you like to see the federal government increase the amount of money spent on (READ LIST), cut back, or not change the amount of money spent? (CONTINUE WITH LIST AND RECORD FOR EACH ITEM)
Item: The war in Vietnam
- **Responses: Increase/Cut Back/Not Change/Not Sure**
Unweighted* Percent Responding
 - 5.70% Increase
 - 63.50% Cut Back
 - 23.50% Not Change
 - 7.30% Not Sure
 - **Number of Valid Cases: 3090 SAS/SPSS Variable Name: Q44_A**

* Weights not available for this survey

Were the anti-war protests of the 60's and 70's effective in changing public opinion about the war in Vietnam?

You Decide!

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