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# The fall of 1967: a turbulent time in the area

## Part one of three

For the next three weeks, let's look back to the fall of 1967. It was a turbulent period in local politics, on the University of Connecticut campus, Willimantic grocery workers and for the American Thread Co.

Willimantic's Democratic incumbent mayor, Leo Carey, announced that he would not be a candidate for election to a third term. This late withdrawal caused much gnashing of teeth in local party circles, as the election was only a month away. The Democrats quickly nominated former state Rep. Albert J. Harvey in his place. Harvey, who lived at 255 Summit St., was first elected to the state House of Representatives in 1955, where he fought for an extension to Route 6 and acquired funding for Eastern Connecticut State College.

Harvey was to face Republican Stanley R. Kokoska in the Dec. 4, election. He unveiled a three-point platform at the Windham Democratic Town Committee meeting in the Nathan Hale. It called for consolidation of the city and town government, support for redevelopment and urban renewal, and new facilities to house city government offices.

Controversy reined on the Storrs campus after 100 members of the Students for a Democratic Society organization, turned away two interviewers from Dow Chemical Co., manufacturers of napalm, currently being used in



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the war in Vietnam. UConn President Homer Babbidge Jr. deplored the actions of the minority, and stressed that the University was a forum for all ideas. Babbidge was also critical of immature students who had vandalized and damaged half of the

bicycles supplied free by the University to solve transportation problems. The president was still confident that the "Blue Bike" experiment would be a success.

The University of Connecticut

(A turbulent, Page 10)

## (Continued from Page 5)

Board of Trustees approved increases in both the university fees and dormitory rates. Full-time students on the Storrs campus currently paid \$190 a year. This would rise to \$250. Dormitory rates went up by \$50 to \$350 a year. Babbidge announced that UConn was the only state university to keep the same rates the last two years. He explained to the trustees that \$240 a year was below the national average for state universities.

UConn students had listened to Barry Goldwater speech, where he threatened to bomb China and escalate the war in Vietnam. Historian and Pulitzer Prize winner Arthur M. Schlesinger spoke to 1,500 students in the auditorium earlier. Schlesinger, the Albert Schweitzer Professor of the Humanities at the City University of New York, attacked U.S. policy in Vietnam.

He asserted that bombing was never a decisive weapon against

an agrarian economy or guerrilla warfare. He believed the government was still deluded in thinking it was a super power, and that the CIA's wish to be omnipotent was an out-of-date attitude in a changing world, dominated more by nationalism than ideology. Schlesinger wanted a return to the concept of the Kennedy years, that the world is composed of divergent societies and each should be permitted to progress by themselves.

Twenty five employees of Main Street's First National Store picketed after the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen's Union ordered them to quit work. Some 383 stores were affected. The call was successful in 277 stores, but in Danbury, Brooklyn, Putnam, Pawcatuck, New Haven, Branford and Hamden ignored it. Negotiations continued, but management locked the union out. Picketts persuaded Willimantic shoppers to stay away, until negotiations in Boston were completed.