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Drew Pearson speaks at University of Montana

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NEWS

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IMMEDIATELY

DREW PEARSON SPEAKS AT UM

cook/jm
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AP & UPI

MISSOULA--

"The world is changing, for the most part for the better," said Drew Pearson to a capacity crowd at the University of Montana in Missoula where he spoke tonight.

Pearson, who calls himself "a watchdog of government" discussed such topics as ethics in Congress, truth in the news media, the coming election and peace or war, at home and abroad. The columnist, the most widely syndicated in America, predicted that Hubert Humphrey and Richard Nixon would battle for president in November, and that the United States and North Vietnam "would probably get a compromised peace sometime this fall."

Pearson, who has covered the administrations of seven Presidents in his column, said that the House of Representatives has a standard of ethics which should be improved. The U. S. Senate's code of conduct is generally higher, he said. "Montana's Senators, Mansfield and Metcalf, have standards which are very high indeed," Pearson said.

Pearson remarked that he thinks the U. S. government the most cooperative of any in the world with its news media. The truth is available to Americans, he said. He added that a Democratic president is likely to have a more difficult time with the press since 80% of American newspapers favor the Republican Party.

Pearson said he believed that Johnson will go down in history as a "pioneering President" for his record of domestic legislation.

Pearson named the Negro problem as the most serious domestic problem facing America today. "We do face a Negro revolution," he said, predicting possible racial tension after the November election.

Pearson does not consider the current student unrest either a serious problem or an indication of spreading communism in America. He said, young Americans should "keep on challenging what's going on in the world."

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Pearson cited the Vietnam crisis as the most serious problem facing the nation. He summarized what he thought to be the three major mistakes in U. S. policy in Vietnam. They were Eisenhower sending 1000 troops into Vietnam, in 1954; Kennedy's escalation of troops in 1961; and LBJ's failure to seize a chance for peace talks in the fall of 1964 and his subsequent escalation of the war.

Pearson predicted the nominations of Humphrey and Nixon to President and a close battle possibly ending in the House. He added that if Rockefeller received the Republican nomination, which he believed unlikely, his chances to win the Presidency would be great.

Pearson said the U. S. and the USSR could avoid World War III "if we're careful." "The world is not static," he said, but expressed optimism for the future of the nation and of the world.

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