

Vietnam Veterans for Factual History



ON EVE OF 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETNAM WAR AUTHORIZATION, VETERANS GROUP CHALLENGES ANTI-VIETNAM LEADERS TO DEBATE

Held at 1 PM on Tuesday, August 5, 2014
Zenger Room, National Press Club, Washington, DC.

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What is the “Vietnam Veterans for Factual History”?

The Vietnam Veterans for Factual History is a project of RADIX Foundation. The purpose for which RADIX Foundation was established is “to preserve military history and lore and to promote the understanding of military history as seen through the eyes of its participants.” To this end, RADIX Foundation sponsored a 2004 Conference, which can be seen at www.viet-myths.net. As a by-product of this event, participants of the conference, calling themselves Vietnam Veterans to Correct the Myths, web-published “The Boston Manifesto” which can be viewed at <http://www.buttondepress.com/BostonManifesto/> and two of the participants, RJ Del Vecchio and Bill Laurie, self-published a book titled “Whitewash/Blackwash – Myths of the Vietnam War” (available at <http://www.amazon.com/Whitewash-Blackwash-Myths-Viet-Nam/dp/0962399256>

In 2013 Texas Tech and NARA teamed up to hold a conference on the 50th Anniversary of events in Vietnam in the year 1963. We were troubled by the views that were proposed and the Vietnam Veterans to Correct the Myths produced a book titled “Our Pre-Sponse – A Supplement to the TTU-NARA Conference on Vietnam in the Year 1963”, available at http://www.amazon.com/Pre-Sponse-Supplement-TTU-NARA-Conference-Vietnam/dp/1929932235/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1405700056&sr=8-1&keywords=Pre-Sponse as a result of this effort, a project called Vietnam Veterans for Factual History was formed under RADIX Foundation. A website, www.vvfh.org has been established and this Debate/Presentation/Press Conference is being held.

Part of the mission statement for VVFH reads: “We know that the only way that the valid lessons of a war are learned is if we can study the accurate history of that war. Our nation has too long been denied access to the factual history of the war, and we are undertaking to defend and publicize that history. This is our duty to the nation, and to our comrades who fell in that war.”

We expect to continue to take actions to further the missions of both RADIX Foundation and Vietnam Veterans for Factual History.

What is the purpose of this Event?

The **Vietnam Veterans for Factual History** (VVFH) is a relatively new non-profit educational organization made up primarily of U.S. military veterans of the Vietnam War. Its membership includes a number of distinguished individuals, including retired four-star generals and admirals, Medal of Honor recipients, prisoners of war, and former members of the special operations community.

The shared belief that unites us is that the American people do not fully understand the realities of the war. We believe the war was necessary, noble, lawful, and winnable. Indeed, those of us who served in country after 1970 share the view expressed by many experts that we were clearly winning the war in South Vietnam, and after the *Linebacker II* campaign over North Vietnam in December 1972 Hanoi was on the ropes as well. American forces did not lose a single major battle to the Communists, and had Congress not snatched defeat from the jaws of victory in 1973 many of the millions of people who died under Communist rule might still be alive.

In the end, we lost the war because in the 1960s and early 1970s a number of so-called “peace activists”¹ put forth a narrative that challenged what might be called the “conventional wisdom” that led an almost unanimous Congress (99.6%) fifty years ago this week to enact legislation authorizing the President to use armed force to protect the Protocol States (Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam) if they

1 We use quotation marks here because we are not aware of anyone who did not favor “peace” and wish to avoid “war.” The issue was rather what course of action was most likely to promote long-term peace, allowing Communist aggression to go unchecked or standing firm and protecting its victims. In a 1793 letter to James Monroe, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson made this point eloquently:

I believe that throughout all America there has been but a single sentiment on the subject of peace and war, which was in favor of the former. The Executive here has cherished it with equal and unanimous desire. *We have differed, perhaps, as to the tone of conduct exactly adapted to the securing it.*

Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, June 28, 1793, 26 Papers of Thomas Jefferson 392 (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. John Catanzariti, ed. 1995) (emphasis added).

requested assistance in defense of their freedom.

Although widely referred to as the “Gulf of Tonkin Resolution,” the joint resolution (see page 8 for the text) declared: “these attacks are part of a deliberate and systematic campaign of aggression that the Communist regime in North Vietnam has been waging against its neighbors and the nations joined with them in the collective defense of their freedom.” When President Johnson responded to reports that American warships had been attacked in international waters off the coast of North Vietnam by ordering limited air attacks against North Vietnamese naval bases, his approval rate in the Gallup Polls shot up 58%--a jump of 30 points. In the decade that followed, nearly three million American servicemen were sent to fight what became a major war.

But then the protests began, with activists charging that the Department of State was “lying” in its 1965 white paper, *Aggression from the North*. America was cast as the true villain, and both Congress and the public had been “lied” to so LBJ could go to war. With angry confidence, the war critics explained that the U.S. had following the end of World War II worked actively to restore Indochina to its proper role as a French colonial territory. They charged America then violated the 1954 Geneva Accords by refusing to permit free elections to reunify the two Vietnams, because even President Eisenhower admitted that Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam’s “George Washington”²) would have won a free election. Independent of Hanoi, southern revolutionaries formed the National Liberation Front (“Viet Cong”) to resist the oppression of Ngo Dinh Diem.

This is not the time to try to refute the entire narrative, as there will be time to address each of these (and other) myths during the August 5 press conference. But none of this holds up under scrutiny. For example, it should be noted that, after the war ended, Hanoi *repeatedly*

2 Official North Vietnamese publications regularly noted during the war that Ho Chi Minh had been a co-founder of the French Communist Party in December 1920, had be trained in Moscow and then served as an operative for the Communist International in various parts of the world—not setting foot in Vietnam for three decades. See, e.g., “President Ho Chi Minh—A Brief Biography,” *Nhan Dan* (Hanoi), May 17-21, 1970

acknowledged that it had made a decision on May 19, 1959, to open the Ho Chi Minh Trail and start sending troops, weapons, and supplies through Laos and Cambodia into South Vietnam for the purpose of overthrowing its government.³ The myth that America tried to reinstall French colonialism in the late 1940s is firmly refuted by the *Pentagon Papers*,⁴ as were allegations that America violated the Geneva Accords and blocked “free elections.”⁵ As for the famous “Eisenhower quote,” all anyone had to do was read the entire sentence to realize that he was not addressing an election between Ho Chi Minh and Ngo Dinh Diem, but rather between Ho and French puppet *Bao Dai* (who lived on the French Riviera with his casino and Ferrari, signing whatever documents the French put in front of him). The choice between this French puppet and the Communist Ho Chi Minh, Eisenhower observed, left the Vietnamese with the feeling they had “nothing to fight for.”⁶

Most Vietnam veterans we know reserve their greatest anger for actress Jane Fonda and now Secretary of State John Kerry. Fonda clearly committed treason when she traveled to North Vietnam and made radio broadcasts urging sailors on aircraft carriers off the Vietnamese coast to refuse to carry out their orders, because the ordinance they were being ordered to load were really filled with poison chemicals that were illegal and could result in Nuremberg-type war crimes trials for all involved.

John Kerry was involved in assembling a group of alleged Vietnam veterans (some of whom were later shown to be total imposters, and

3 See, e.g., *Victory in Vietnam: The Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954-1975* (Merle L. Pribbenow, translator) (2002); “The Legendary Ho Chi Minh Trail, *Vietnam Courier* (Hanoi), vol. XX, no. 5, May 1984

4 In reality, as the *Pentagon Papers* make clear, the United States worked hard to prevent the return of the French, including prohibiting American flag vessels from carrying French troops or weapons to Indochina and consistently pressured France to make meaningful concessions to genuine Vietnamese nationalists. See, e.g., *Pentagon Papers* (Gravel ed.), vol. 1, pp. 10, 16-17, 32-33.

5 See, e.g., *ibid.* p. 116-21, 245.

6 Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change* p. 372 (1963).

one of whom later stated that Kerry pressured him to make up stories about having witnessed “war crimes” while in Vietnam if he wanted a ride back to Baltimore) who testified at the “Winter Soldier Investigation” in Detroit that they had committed and/or witnessed numerous war crimes in Vietnam.⁷ Kerry later testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that sixty to eighty percent of U.S. troops in Vietnam were “stoned twenty-four hours a day” and that American troops were behaving in a fashion “reminiscent of Genghis Khan.” Three decades later, Kerry sheepishly acknowledged on Meet the Press that his allegations of “genocide” and frequent war crimes were “the words of an angry young man,” and acknowledged that “our soldiers served as nobly, in the whole, as in any war . . .” He probably did more than any other single American to turn vast numbers of Americans against the brave and courageous men who had answered their nation’s call by serving in Vietnam; because unlike the unwashed “hippies,” he was articulate and pretended to be reporting on what he had observed in Vietnam.

After fifty years, we believe the time has come for the American people to understand what really happened in Vietnam. Those who claim the war was “unnecessary” should go back and read the writings of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Vice Chairman Lin Biao—who in 1964 declared that “Vietnam” was a “test case,” and once the Communists had proven America had no effective answer to “people’s warfare” people throughout the Third World would realize “what the Vietnamese people can do, they can do too,”⁸ leading to numerous “wars of national liberation” that America clearly could not have prevented without the use of nuclear weapons. Cuba’s Ché Guevara declared that “the Vietnam battlefield is most important for the future of all America,” as an American defeat in Vietnam would open the way for revolutions throughout Latin America.⁹ By delaying the fall of Indochina another decade, America bought time for Indonesia and Thailand to strengthen themselves and for China to turn inward during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. In 1964,

7 <http://www.buttondepress.com/BostonManifesto/>

8 Lin Piao, *Long Live the Victory of People’s War* (Peking 1965).

9 Ché Guevara, *The Speeches and Writings of Ché Guevara* 289 (1968).

Beijing was arming, training, and funding Communist guerrilla movements throughout Southeast Asia and as far away as Mozambique in Africa. A decade later, Lin Biao and Ché Guevara were dead, and China had abandoned its campaign to export revolution.

When Congress prohibited the expenditure of funds for combat operations anywhere in Indochina, North Vietnam's Premier Pham Van Dong declared "The Americans won't come back now even if we offered them candy." Moscow and Beijing stepped up their military assistance to Hanoi, and in 1975 almost the entire North Vietnamese "People's Army" invaded their neighbors behind columns of Soviet-made tanks. In the three years following "liberation," it has been estimated that more people died from Communist oppression than had died in combat in the previous fourteen years. In tiny Cambodia alone, the Yale University Cambodia Genocide Project estimated that more than twenty percent of the population was killed—nearly two million people. Hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese died of thirst, starvation, of were raped and murdered by pirates as they sought to flee to freedom as "boat people." Others were executed or died in reeducation camps or new economic zones. The respected human rights organization Freedom House consistently rated the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam as among the worst of the worst human rights violators, rating it as less free than China and comparable to North Korea.

Correctly judging that America had lost its will to defend its interests, Moscow transported tens of thousands of Cuban soldiers to Angola (where hundreds of thousands perished as a result), unleashed revolution in Latin America (leading to several wars and more casualties), and invaded Afghanistan (claiming hundreds of thousands of additional lives). But by holding out for a decade, the United States bought time for countries like Thailand and Indonesia to become strong and capable of defending themselves. And of particular importance, during this period China turned inward during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and by 1975 was no longer exporting revolution.

The failure of any of the more than two-dozen anti-Vietnam leaders from the 1950s and 1960s to either accept our invitation to debate or select a champion willing to defend the arguments they made during the war is compelling evidence of the weakness of those allegations. This conclusion was well stated by a Clemson professor who focuses heavily on the Vietnam War. He responded to our invitation by declaring: “You are setting out to refute things that nobody actually believes.” That is exactly the point we had hoped to make. Few people today embrace the mythology that the anti-war movement peddled to undermine America’s resolve in the 1960s and early 1970s. It is now clear that the critics were wrong on almost every issue. Sadly, the mythology they passionately embraced led to the deaths of millions of human beings, and the consignment to Communist tyranny of tens of millions more, that the United States had repeatedly pledged to protect.

The Primary Speakers,

representing the views of Vietnam Veterans for Factual History, are:

Doctor Robert F. Turner



Robert F. Turner holds both professional and academic doctorates from the University of Virginia School of Law. He co-founded the Center for National Security Law with Professor John Norton Moore in April 1981 and has served as its associate director since then except for two periods of government service in the 1980s and during 1994-95, when he occupied the Charles H. Stockton Chair of International Law at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

Before going on active duty for his two Army tours in Vietnam, he wrote a 450-page undergraduate honors thesis on the war. After leaving the army in 1971 he became the resident Vietnam scholar at Stanford’s Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, where he wrote *Vietnamese Communism: Its Origins and Development*. He

spent five years in the mid-1970s as national security adviser to Senator Robert P. Griffin, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He has also served in the executive branch as a member of the Senior Executive Service, first in the Pentagon as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, then in the White House as Counsel to the President's Intelligence Oversight Board, and at the State Department as acting assistant secretary for legislative affairs. In 1986-87, he was the first president of the congressionally established United States Institute of Peace. A former three-term chairman of the ABA Standing Committee on Law and National Security (and for many years editor of the ABA National Security Law Report), the author or editor of more than fifteen books and monographs and numerous articles in law reviews and professional journals, Dr. Turner has also contributed articles to most of the major U.S. newspapers. For additional info see <http://www.virginia.edu/cnsl/pdf/Turner-Myths.pdf>

Professor Nguyen Ngoc Bich



Nguyen Ngoc Bich, educator, lecturer, author, translator, born in Hanoi Vietnam, educated in Saigon, the US, Japan and Europe, received his B.A. in Political Science from Princeton University in 1958. He did graduate work in Asian studies at Columbia University (1959-65), Japanese literature at Kyoto University (1962-63) bilingual education and theoretical linguistics at Georgetown University (1980-85). In 1975, he came to the US, settled in Virginia, where he taught adult education, elementary school and high

school in Arlington, then Vietnamese Literature and Vietnamese Culture and Civilization at Trinity College, George Mason University, and taught at Georgetown University as a teacher trainer in bilingual and Multicultural Education. He is also one of the founders of National News Service, which provides news of interest to readers of Vietnamese language newspapers worldwide. In 1997, he joined RFA (Radio

Free Asia) as the Director of the Vietnamese Service at Free Asia in Washington DC. Professor Bich is the author of several books mainly in English, including 'The Poetry of Vietnam', North Vietnam: Backtracking on Socialism (1971), An Annotated Atlas of the Republic of Vietnam (1972), and A Thousand Years of Vietnamese Poetry (Knopf, 1975). He is the editor of the anthology *War and Exile: A Vietnamese Anthology*, an anthology of stories and poems, published by Vietnamese PEN Abroad East Coast Center in the US (1989) and has co-authored with his wife, Dr. Dao Thi Hoi, several books and translated into English several others.

Colonel Andrew R. Finlayson, USMC (Ret.)



Colonel Finlayson is a 1966 graduate of the U. S Naval Academy who served 25 years in the US Marine Corps as an infantry officer. He spent 32 months in South Vietnam as a Force Reconnaissance Platoon Commander, Infantry Company Commander and Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) Commander and Advisor. From his retirement from the US Marine Corps in 1991 until 2007 he worked for the Vinnell and Northrop Grumman Corporations in management positions

specializing in military training, strategic planning and security biometrics. As a civilian defense contractor he worked for five years in Saudi Arabia training Saudi military units and he took the first New Iraqi Army training team into Iraq in July 2003. He also spent a year in Romania advising the Romanian Ministry of National Defense on US military base development and training procedures. His most recent publication is a book entitled *Killer Kane: A Marine Long-Range Recon Leader in Vietnam, 1967-1968*. He is the author of several articles and studies related to the Vietnam War. He currently resides in Morrisville, North Carolina.

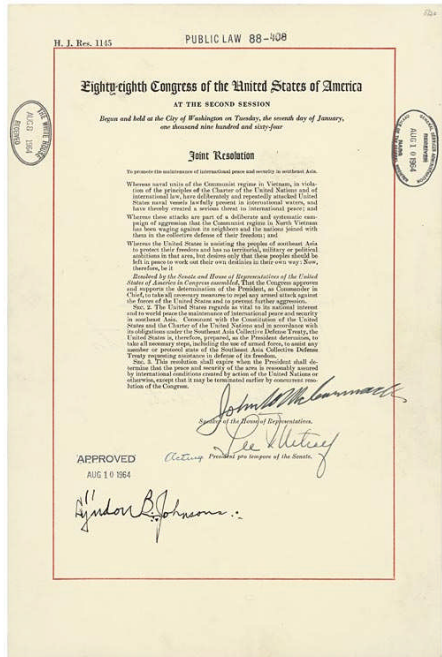
Southeast Asia Resolution¹⁰ [aka Gulf of Tonkin Resolution]

Joint Resolution of Congress H.J. RES 1145 August 7, 1964

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

Section 2. The United States regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the maintenance of international peace and security in southeast Asia. Consonant with the Constitution of the United States and the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with its obligations under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom.

Section 3. This resolution shall expire when the President shall determine that the peace and security of the area is reasonably assured by international conditions created by action of the United Nations or otherwise, except that it may be terminated earlier by concurrent resolution of the Congress.



SEATO Treaty (1955) (Excerpts¹¹)

Done at Manila, September 8, 1954. Ratification advised by the Senate Feb. 1, 1955; ratified by the President Feb. 4, 1955; entered into force Feb. 19, 1955

ARTICLE IV

1. Each Party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties **or against any State or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate**, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

Protocol to the SEATO Treaty

Designation of States and Territory as to Which Provisions of Article IV . . . are to be Applicable.

The Parties to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty unanimously designate for the purposes of Article IV of the Treaty the States of **Cambodia** and **Laos** and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of **Vietnam**.

. . . .

This Protocol shall enter into force simultaneously with the coming into force of the Treaty.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Protocol to the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty.

Done at Manila, this eighth day of September, 1954.

11 **SOURCES:** TIAS 3170; 6 UST 81-86. Full text available at: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/usmu003.asp; U.S. Department of State, *American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955*, pp. 912-913.

Inputs from Our Invitees

We had hoped to recreate the debates of the 1960s, since Hanoi has, after the war, shot down most of the myths that were prevalent then. We wrote a number of anti-war leaders, including Bill Ayers, Daniel Ellsberg and Tom Hayden, and included both activists from the 60's and 70's and academics who followed in their footsteps. [See list at on page 19] But only one wanted any part of a national debate, and he had to back out due to family issues. Perhaps their ardor has cooled; perhaps age, infirmity, schedules and geography, have prevented their participation. Perhaps they are not willing to hold a discussion with someone who has earned a right to his own alternative point of view. A few responded suggesting alternate names, who, in turn, were unavailable or chose not to respond. Many of us hold the protesters responsible for extending the duration of the war and for its outcome. Considering that perhaps more people died in the three years after we left then in the eighteen years during which we were there, their lack of response appears to demonstrate a rather cavalier attitude toward the impact of their efforts.

One aspect in the change of attitudes was captured well by the response we got from Prof. Edward Moise who wrote: "What most attracted my attention was the VVFH[.org] page "Myths and Lies". Many of those myths seem to me quite mythical; you are setting out to refute things that nobody actually believes." In other words, serious scholars and many political activists from the anti-Vietnam movement now realize that their main arguments were wrong.

We now know, for example, that the "Viet Cong" were a wholly owned subsidiary of the Politboro in Hanoi. That the Tet offensive virtually wiped out local communist forces. That media coverage was highly biased. That, despite the promises, freedom and human rights did not accompany the "Liberation." That atrocities by American forces were rare and not akin to the policies of terror that were carried out by the Communists. These and many other falsehoods accompany the teaching and discussions and the reflections on the Vietnam War.

The arguments still persist that the Vietnam War was "illegal, "immoral" and "unwinnable". Those that responded did so in a civil, but unapologetic tone. Since from our point of view, they "won" the

battle of history and now have a government that is ideologically in tune with their views, they are decidedly un-victorious. In fact one correspondent, Irv Bergman, bemoans the loss of American industrial prowess on expenditures for a constant state of war rather than what we would see as an excessively meaningless educational system that stems from the successful emasculation of that system by the “anti-war” protesters.

Tom Hayden, in a response to our invitation to debate, says “Ho Chi Minh's 1945 reference to the Declaration of Independence was based on his hope for the US to replace colonial France as a strategic ally of Vietnam in order to counter-balance China.” And “it was assumed that Ho Chi Minh's citation of the American Declaration of Independence when he called for recognition in 1945 was a mere ruse covering his intentions to impose Communist totalitarianism. In other words, [our] mistake was made long before the first US adviser and ground troops arrived in the 1960s.”

Did the Vietnam War cause America's loss of innocence. Whose loss of innocence? The anti-war movement succeeded on the naïveté of its' followers. America has not yet learned to be wary of such naïveté or others who may take advantage of our predilection to do good.

It seems that our country's actions must be perfect while our enemies' faults are tolerated. Our Government tried to keep secrets and is called “a liar;” the enemy does nothing but lie and that is OK with the American critics out U.S. policy.

There was always an undercurrent that Communism wasn't as bad as our Government made it out to be. In fact, the Left is now revealed to have been led by Communist propaganda, and its leaders thoroughly infatuated with achieving a similar victory at home. We hold, as we did then, that the notion of communism was antithetical to innovation and striving for personal achievement and required the tools of totalitarianism to maintain itself against human nature. Peter Davis, the director of Hearts and Minds, admitted “I should have known earlier, of course, but it was only after our loss in Vietnam—in other words, after the triumph of its revolution—and subsequent political developments there, that I **understood the right was right about one big thing: the institutionalized absence of personal freedom in a**

Communist state. Calling freedom bourgeois is like calling ice cream fattening; you're going to want it anyway. Regardless of Marxist economic aims, Communism has never been about individual freedom." Others never achieved that knowledge and we find ourselves in a state where avowed Communists are placed in high government office and student movements like Occupy Wall Street say that the problem with Soviet Communism is that it was not imbued with American know-how. ("The wrong people were in charge, we can do it better.")

We still remember Jane Fonda, who, with her then husband Tom Hayden, co-founded the Indochina Peace Campaign, which worked tirelessly and successfully to cut American aid to the governments in Saigon and Phnom Penh and help the North Vietnamese Communists and the Cambodian Khmer Rouge overthrow them, famously saying "If you understood what communism was, you would hope, you would pray on your knees that we would some day become communist. . . . I, a socialist, think that we should strive toward a socialist society, all the way to communism." There is no indication that her statement has ever been retracted.

The War was Illegal

The proposition made by the other side is that the U.S. had committed itself to a war in Vietnam from 1945. If not then, then the government consistently lied about its wish to avoid participating in an Asian Land War, especially in the early months of 1964, and then dragged out an AUMF resolution based on a non-event – the second Tonkin Gulf attack. The question arises as to our motivations. As veterans, we accept the premise that our government's primary responsibility is to defend our nation and we perceived Communism to be the threat to our way of life that the Communists portrayed themselves as being ("We will bury you..."), but the co-called anti-war movement believed military preparedness and military action to be the product of the evil designs of the military-industrial complex, using the straw man of Communism to necessitate ever more funding.

The dual villains of Southeast Asian conflicts were, in Jane Fonda's view, "U.S. imperialism" and "a white man's racist aggression." Our imperialism is hard to perceive when we didn't take land or seize raw

materials (oil) or totally control every aspect of another nation's government (as did the USSR in Eastern Europe and Vietnamese in Laos). Certainly there could be an element of cultural imperialism, but we are not forcing Big Macs and Coca-Cola down the throats of the Red Chinese.

The War was Immoral

The protesters argument is that, after we were unable to enable the French to retake their colonies, we installed our puppet Ngo Dinh Diem and encouraged him to establish a tyrannical regime, which opposed the freedoms of speech, assembly, press and religion, that America has enshrined as our constitutional values. This charge emanated from the DRV which suppressed all such freedoms and immediately eliminated those freedoms enjoyed by the Southerners when the North conquered them.

H. Bruce Franklin says¹² “The truth was that for three decades our nation had sponsored and then waged a genocidal war against a people and a nation that had never done anything to us except ask for our friendship and support” (invoking the false image of avowed Leninist Ho Chi Minh as a rejected suitor for America's blessing)

It was alleged that American soldiers routinely behaved (in the 1971 words of John Kerry) “in [a] fashion reminiscent of Genghis Khan” Rape, murder, and other war crimes were commonplace, not to mention the intentional carpet-bombing of civilians in Cambodia and North Vietnamese cities. Rather than being welcomed home as warriors who had served America honorably, returning Vietnam veterans were sometimes urged not to wear their uniforms off base and were blamed for the unpopular war by many.

H. Bruce Franklin calls this “the myth of the spat-upon vet, which had been mushrooming throughout the 1980s despite the fact that there has never been a shred of contemporaneous evidence of any antiwar protestor spitting on even one Vietnam veteran.”

12 <http://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/americas-memory-vietnam-war-epoch-forever-war/#>

Jane Fonda, while visiting Hanoi during the Vietnam War, accused American soldiers of acting as “war criminals.”

Nick Turse in his book “Kill Anything That Moves” concludes that the My Lai massacre was not an aberration but the standard and that the United States engaged in a coordinated effort to commit and cover up these war crimes. He argues that My Lai’s uniqueness was not that it happened, but that it became so public. Additionally, Turse argues that by seeing My Lai as the exception rather than the rule, historians have dismissed other atrocities as mistakes when they were really part of a larger system of American war crimes. According to Turse, the war in Vietnam was a criminal act (from how America fought the war to why it fought it) and the media at the time and historians after the fact have left this crime unreported.

If there was any immorality in America’s actions, it was abandoning its allies, its promises and the blood of its soldiers.

The War was Unwinnable

The Left believes that Vietnamese nationalism was unconquerable. We argue that the Left successfully kept us from pursuing a strategy for actually winning wars.

Tom Hayden is concerned that the Vietnam 50th Commission will ignore the “accomplishments” of the anti-war movement. He wrote about Mark Rudd¹³ “What explains the enduring interest in such radicals? I believe it has something to do with exploring the extremes of personal commitment. To fail heroically, though miserably, is seen by many as attaining a greater glory than the rewards to be had from the mundane life of patient political work. As Karl Marx wrote of the Paris Commune, the French Communards at least had stormed the heavens. And as Rudd quotes Erich Fromm quoting Nietzsche, ‘There are times when anyone who does not lose his mind has no mind to lose.’” This illustrates the egotism of the Left.

Second Thoughts

There were some people who renounced their Radical views. The most famous of which is David Horowitz, who, with his colleague Peter Collier, ran the radical *Ramparts* magazine, but has since become highly active with the Right. Film star Jon Voight summed up his own experiences in a July 28, 2008 op-ed in *The Washington Times*. He wrote that he regretted his youthful anti-war activism, calling it the result of "Marxist propaganda."¹⁴

Michael Medved acknowledged "Those of us who devoted years to misguided activism convinced ourselves that our reluctance to serve in the military stemmed from selfless, ideological opposition to the war. But the equation also worked in the opposite direction: our opposition

14 <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/jul/28/voight/> I know this process well. I was caught up in the hysteria during the Vietnam era, which was brought about through Marxist propaganda underlying the so-called peace movement. The radicals of that era were successful in giving the communists power to bring forth the killing fields and slaughter 2.5 million people in Cambodia and South Vietnam. Did they stop the war, or did they bring the war to those innocent people? In the end, they turned their backs on all the horror and suffering they helped create and walked away.

Those same leaders who were in the streets in the '60s are very powerful today in their work to bring down the Iraq war and to attack our president, and they have found their way into our schools. William Ayers is a good example of that.

<http://www.boxofficemojo.com/features/?id=2381&pagenum=all&p=.htm>

"We were traumatized in the Sixties and all of that behavior — the dancing in circles, the smoking pot and saying "all we need is love" — it was because we couldn't identify evil; we couldn't believe in evil — we didn't want to believe in evil so we just hid from it. It was a very disturbing time... overwhelmingly, it was a very bizarre, selfish and hedonistic philosophy that wasn't very helpful. It attacked the family — the attack on the family was very severe because not only was there this idea of [indiscriminate love] and that would solve the world's problems, which gave rise to teen pregnancy, but also this idea not to trust anyone over 30. This was from people who were over 30 and bombed out of their minds with every kind of drug they could put into their system. Then there was the romanticization of the drugs — there were people coming out with [pseudo] scientific evidence that [drugs] increase your enlightenment — it was devastating. Today, I find that people look back at that time in a romantic way and that's as dangerous as anything is. It wasn't a romantic time. It was a time of great distortion."

to the war stemmed at least in part from our very selfish reluctance to serve. With the draft no longer a direct, personal threat the imperative of protest seemed far less compelling."¹⁵

H Bruce Franklin talks about President Obama, in 2012, issuing "his 'Presidential Proclamation — Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War' calling for a 13-year campaign of thousands of events throughout the nation to honor the three million 'proud Americans' who 'upheld the highest traditions of our Armed Forces [...] fighting heroically to protect the ideals we hold dear as Americans.'"... "Because of the hard lessons of Vietnam,' Obama declared, 'America is even stronger than before.' What were these lessons? [According to Franklin] The two main lessons cited by the President were actually the two main myths I have described. They were to not dishonor our soldiers and to not forsake our POW/MIAs."

We think. . .

[The Protest Movement's] ~~Such~~ statements could have had only one purpose: to provide aid and comfort to America's Communist enemy. Fonda's propaganda efforts played **a major role in prolonging the war and increasing the death toll.** As North Vietnamese Colonel Bui Tin explained in a postwar interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, the American antiwar movement "was essential to our strategy. Support for the war from our rear [China] was completely secure while the American rear was vulnerable. Every day our leadership would listen to world news over the radio at 9 a.m. to follow the growth of the American antiwar movement. Visits to Hanoi by people like Jane Fonda...gave us confidence that we should hold on in the face of battlefield reverses."¹⁶

Learning the wrong lessons of the Vietnam War, from left-leaning historians, academics, journalists and entertainers, has led us to repeat the errors they caused us to incur.

15 <http://www.truthrevolt.org/commentary/medved-confessions-one-time-peace-protester> see also <http://www.viet-myths.net/Medved.htm>
MICHAEL MEDVED hosts a daily radio talk show. His book RIGHT TURNS (2004) tells the story of his evolution from self-described "punk liberal activist" to today's "lovable conservative curmudgeon."

16 <http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indid=1326>

Invitees and Selected Quotes

We invited a large number of protesters from the 60's and 70's as well as academics and journalists who supported their views, either then or now. These included Sam Anson, Bill Ayers, **Peter Arnett**, **Andrew Bacevich**, Fred Branfman, Carol Brightman, Robert Buzzanco, **Peter Davis**, Rep. Ron Dellums, Arlene Eisen-Bergman, Daniel Ellsberg, Richard A. Falk, Frances Fitzgerald, Brian Flanagan, Jane Fonda, **H. Bruce Franklin**, Todd Gitlen, Senator Tom Harkins, **Tom Hayden**, Jeff Jones, Secretary of State John Kerry, **Clark Kissinger**, Larry Levin, Don Luce, D. Gareth Porter, Terry Provance, Barry Romo, Mark Rudd, William Shawcross, Oliver Stone, Donald Sutherland, Nick Turse, Cathy Wilkerson, Cora Weiss, Marilyn Young. We have incorporated some of the views of those who responded in the discussion above (responders are noted in **Bold type**), as well as a link to any references they chose to supply. But we also provide here some of their statements from that era.

Antiwar Activists and Historians: Selected Quotes

Adopted from Roger Canfield's *Comrades in Arms: How the Americans Won the War in Vietnam Against the Common Enemy—America*.

SAM ANSON: 24-year-old Robert **Sam Anson**, a *Time Magazine* reporter who arrived in Vietnam in early 1970 was an experienced war protester who already believed the war was colonial, immoral, illegal and unwinnable.¹⁷

Upon release by North Vietnamese Anson said, "They weren't...my enemy. I never considered the people of Vietnam or Cambodia or Laos to be my enemy. I believed in peace...and so they treated me like a friend.¹⁸ ...We really got to be brothers." Press conference after a recording over Radio Hanoi.¹⁹

17 Robert Sam Anson, *War News*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 26, 40, 69

18 Robert Sam Anson, *War News*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989, 280-1, 283-5.

19 "Antiwar Delegation Visits Northern Region of DRV," *Hanoi Domestic Service*, 0430 GMT, November 4, 1972, 10, TTU Archive cited in Rothrock 172n32, 472.

FRED BRANFMAN: Fred Branfman head of Project Air War, along with Howard Zinn and Tom Hayden, visited Hanoi. On November 12, 1972 he “We hope the war will end soon...if the war continues we hope you will grow up and become valiant combatants and will be able to down U.S. planes.” He authored “Air War the New Totalitarians.”²⁰

Branfman later said, “I was naïve and wrong in my belief that [the Communists] would usher in a better world. Communism is obviously no better than capitalism. But I certainly have no regrets that I tried to stop the bombing.”²¹

RON DELLUMS: Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Berkeley) authored a joint resolution on the “terrible realities of war atrocities as an integral component of our illegal, insane and immoral adventurism in Southeast Asia.”²² On October 18, 1971, Radio Hanoi lauded Dellums and others for protests “condemning the Vietnam war as immoral.”²³

BERNARDINE DOHRN: “We understood the reason the Vietnamese called the meeting was to get us moving against the war again. The Viet Cong was giving us a kick in the ass....” Bernardine Dohrn appreciated Ba’s advice, “look for the one who fights hardest against the cops.” Now the “only way we’re going to build a fighting force is if we become one ourselves.”²⁴ Havana 1969 At Kent State on April 28, 1969, Dohrn told Kent students to arm for

20 FBI, Denver, Memo, “VVAW National Steering Committee Meeting, Denver, Colorado, February 18-21, Internal Security-new Left,” March 17, 1972, 58-59.

21 Fred Branfman, “What would it be like to hide in a cave day after day for five years?” Christian G. Appy, *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered From All Sides*, New York: Penguin Books, 2003, 219.

22 National Veterans Inquiry on U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam, Washington D.C., Congressional Record, March 1, 1971, 4238.

23 “Commentary Applauds U.S. Antiwar Fall Offensive: The American People Warn the Nixon Administration,” Hanoi Domestic service in Vietnamese 1430 18 Oct 71, cited in Rothrock, *Divided... 292-3n75*

24 Bernardine Dohrn, notes, captured at a Chicago bomb factory cited in FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 106; See also: AP, “Chicago Officials Drop Charge in ‘Bomb Factory,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1970.

revolution.²⁵

The August 23, 1969 issue of *New Left Notes*, Dohrn, Ayers and others wrote, their National Action is “a movement that allies with and proposed material aid to the people of Vietnam. ...Its primary task the establishment of another front in the international class war –not only to defeat the imperialists in Vietnam but to BRING THE WAR HOME!”²⁶

Travels with Bernardine. In 1967 Bernardine Dohrn²⁷ attended a celebration in Moscow of the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.²⁸ In August 1968 Bernardine Dohrn attended a conference on “Anti-Imperialists and Anti-Capitalist Struggle” in communist Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, well attended by proclaimed communist members of SDS including. In 1969 in Cuba Vietnamese given her a ring of comradeship made from the debris of an American aircraft.²⁹ In March 1969 in Austin, Texas Dohrn and Bergman “star-chambered” Carl Oglesby for rejecting Marxist-Leninism and cavorting with the neo-imperialist camp.³⁰ In Budapest she talks with five NLF members. Two NLF told her they worked with American GIs in Saigon— “attempting to obtain information.” Military intelligence. Vernon Grizzard said, “North Vietnamese give no directions... but were pleased and interested in ‘our’ plans.”³¹ A German SDS conference

25 Alan Stang, “Kent State,” *American Opinion*, June 1974, 2,4,10.

26 Kathy Boudin, Bernardine Dohrn, Terry Robbins, “Bringing the War Back Home,” cited in FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 111-113.

27 Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS, 35

28 *New Left Notes*, July 10, 1967: 8; Sale, SDS, 348-9.

29 Sale, SDS, 316; Swinney talk at University of Wisconsin, Madison, October 29, 1968; cited in FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 93.

30 Carl Oglesby, *Ravens in the Storm: A Personal History of the 1970s Antiwar Movement*, New York: Scribner, 2008, 215.

31 “US War Foes Meet with Hanoi Group,” Washington Post, September 21, 1968 cited in FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 269; “Declassified U.S. Government intelligence information regarding the communist and foreign connections of the

Dohrn and comrades were demonstrating international solidarity not only on Vietnam, but also anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism.³² Bernardine Dohrn Notes of July 13-15, 1969 outline Viet Cong concerns about GI's, their motivation, morale and involvement in antiwar movement and the objective of "work w/GIs" to "weaken the enemy." (U.S. forces).³³ U.S. troops were not very good: they were "not trained for close-in fighting," and "140,000 U.S. troops (were) wiped out."

At a Flint Michigan "War Conference" about the Charles "Manson family" who butchered the pregnant actress Sharon Tate, her unborn child and her houseguests, Dohrn said, "Dig it. First they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach. Wild."³⁴ Mark Rudd who was there says a four-finger fork salute became a Weather trademark.³⁵ At a secret leadership meeting in Flint, "Part of armed struggle, as Dohrn and others laid it down, is terrorism. Political assassination... and... violence...were put forward as legitimate forms of armed struggle."³⁶ Larry Grathwohl testified before the Senate that Bill Ayers said Dohrn had to "plan, develop and carryout the bombing of the police station in San Francisco (all by herself) and he [Ayers] specifically named her as the person committing the act." Matthew Landy Steen and Karen Latimer attended two meetings in which the bombing of the Park Station was planned. Dohrn was the ringleader. Howard Machtinger

Weather Underground. Presented as evidence, on the agreement of the prosecution and defense counsel, in the trial of W. Mark Felt and Edward S, Miller," 2 at www.usasurvival.org

32 Martin Klimke, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany & the United States in the Global Sixties*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, 3-5, 8.

33 Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, *The Weather Underground*, Committee Print, January 1975, 145-146.

34 "Weatherman Goes for Weapons," *Combat: a National Review inc.* publication, Vol. 2, No. 3, February 1, 1970 Lawrence V. Cott, editor.

35 Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life With the SDS and the Weathermen*, New York: Harper Collins, 2009, 189.

36 Liberation News Service cited in "The Weather Underground Organization," *Information Digest*, Vol. XIV, #22, November 13, 1981, 340.

was the bomb builder. Latimer had herself cased the police station and handled the bomb,³⁷

DANIEL ELLSBERG: “We weren't on the wrong side. We *are* the wrong side.”³⁸

RICHARD FALK: Adopting the Hanoi view Richard Falk said, “We urge...the end of combat operations by a date certain prior to June 1, 1972... [There is] no other way to secure prisoner release.”³⁹ Ending US air and naval power and stopping all aid to Saigon.⁴⁰ Later he would say the victims of 9 11 got what they deserved.

Falk defended Karleton Armstrong, who bombed the Army Mathematics Research Center, University of Wisconsin, killing a researcher and injuring four. The New York Times reported that Falk “appealed for full amnesty for all resisters, including those who use violent tactics to oppose the war in Vietnam.” Falk “cited the Nuremberg Trials as precedent ...to actively oppose the war by any means.

Falk said “free fire” zones, authorized pilots and soldiers to kill whatever moved, even farm animals and most of the victims of illegal methods being on the Vietnamese side. “I remember listening in my living room... to tear-filled stories told by returning GIs about their role ... involve[ing] the deliberate killing of Vietnamese peasant women and children. ... [R]ecognition of the criminality of the war policies in Vietnam cannot bring the victims back to life.” Falk cited “journalistic accounts of crimes associated with US military...”⁴¹

JANE FONDA—two quotes out of hundreds: “We have a common enemy---U.S. imperialism.” JANE FONDA, July 1972 “POWs who

37 Peter Jamison, “Time Bomb: Weather Underground leaders claimed their bombings were devised to avoid bloodshed. But FBI agents suspect the radical ‘70s group killed a S.F. cop in the name of revolution,” *SF Weekly*, September 16, 2009

38 Daniel Ellsberg, *Hearts and Minds* (1974), a documentary of the Vietnam War.

39 Richard Falk to Dear friends, COLIFAM, January 17, 1972.

40 Richard Falk, “Mr. Nixon and the Prisoner Smoke screen, *New York Times*, June 29, 1971.

41 Richard Falk, “The Vietnam Syndrome,” *The Nation*, July 9, 2001.

reported that they were tortured are hypocrites and liars.” Associated Press, 31 March 1973

TODD GITLIN: Todd Gitlin revised a “Freedom Song,” “And before I’ll be fenced in, I’ll vote for Ho Chi Minh, or go back to the North and be free.”⁴²

Todd Gitlin, whose wife Nanci Gitlin was with the North Vietnamese and the WSP in Indonesia in July 1965, proposed an SDS sponsored trip to North Vietnam: ““The proposal is to send a mission ... to North Vietnam to help rebuild a hospital or school destroyed by American bombing...and to serve as American hostages against further bombing in their vicinity.”⁴³

TOM HARKIN: After a 30 minute visit Tom Harkin described S. Vietnam’s “tiger cages,” “They were never let out, the food was minimal...little water....forced to drink their own urine. Most...could not stand up, their legs having been paralyzed by beatings and by being shackled to a bar....There were buckets of lime dust...above the cages...[to] throw down on the prisoners when they beg for food and water.”⁴⁴

Tom Harkin, claiming falsely, to having been a combat fighter pilot in Vietnam, was elected to Congress (1974) and the US Senate (1984).⁴⁵ Senator Tom Harkin, visiting Vietnam in July 1995, claimed the communist regime was “not allowing freedoms it should, But it [is] better than the ousted South Vietnamese regime.”⁴⁶

JEFF JONES: After the 1969 SDS convention Weathermen—Mark Rudd, Jeff Jones, and Bill Ayers—sent a letter to Mao’s sycophant

42 *Studies on the Left*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Spring 1965

43 Todd Gitlin, “SDS Aid to North Vietnam? A Proposal for a Mission to North Vietnam.” *SDS Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2-4. (August 1965).

44 Patsy Truxaw, “House Committee Staffer Sees ‘Tiger Cages’ at Con Son, Quits When Committee Produces Whitewash Report,” *Liberation News Service*, July 22, 1970, 5

45 Tom Harkin, *Congressional Record*, May 23, 2007, S6560; “Senator returns to South Vietnam’s ‘tiger cages,” Knight-Ridder, July 5, 1995.

46 “Senator returns to South Vietnam’s ‘tiger cages,” Knight-Ridder, July 5, 1995.

Anna Louise Strong.⁴⁷ “Our...convention... was highly honored to hear greetings from our best-loved revolutionary writer and champion of People’s China and the thought of Mao Tse Tung. ...Long life to comrade
Mao Tse Tung...”⁴⁸
“In August 1969 (Cuban UN) mission intelligence personnel...counseled Mark Rudd and Jeff Jones of SDS concerning slogans to be used in demonstrations planned that fall.”⁴⁹

CLARK KISSINGER” Clark Kissinger, SDS leader, now active in the Revolutionary Communist Party USA: “I think that the largest single failing that we made during that whole period of time was not sending a contingent to North Vietnam to fight on the North Vietnamese side. For example, to man anti-aircraft gun emplacements around Hanoi...I felt it was significantly important for the movement to take on a more treasonous edge.”⁵⁰

LARRY LEVIN: On June 5, 1971, Larry Levin, Tom Hayden and others attended the Soviet funded, CP-USSR and KGB, Stockholm Conference on Vietnam.⁵¹

In Washington, Larry Levin, was Hayden-Fonda’s Indochina Peace Campaign full time lobbyist, using an office of Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA) where they lectured 60 House staff on “American Imperialism” Visiting Hanoi Larry Levin, staff director of the U.S. Coalition to Stop Funding the War, interviewed Paris negotiator Xuan Thuy 14 days

47 FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 65.

48 FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 144-45.

49 Georgie Anne Geyer and Keyes Beech, “Cuba: School for US Radicals,” *Chicago Sun Times*, October 1970 cited in FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 42.

50 Tom Wells, *The War Within*

51 Photo on Levin Website; On the conference see Papers of Jack Askins, Anti-Vietnam War Movement, Ref. Code MSS.189/V/1/12/6 cited at <http://dscalm.warwick.ac.uk/Dserve/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqAp p=Archive&dsqCmd=NaviTree.tcl&dsqDb=Catalog&dsqItem=ASV/1/12&dsqField=RefNo, archives@warwick.ac.uk<archives@warwick.ac.uk>

before the fall of Saigon, broadcast on April 16, 1975. Observing thousands of South Vietnamese choosing to flee their homeland, Thuy condemns “the forcible evacuation... (the U.S. Government) ...refers to as rescue of ‘evacuees.’ This is a mere U.S. hoax aimed at upsetting world public opinion and providing itself with a pretext to intervene in Vietnam.”⁵²

DON LUCE: The Viet Cong’s official *South Vietnam in Struggle*, published letters of Don Luce and women prisoners⁵³, claiming “The women were stripped naked, transported naked, and loaded on the planes naked.” It hadn’t happened, but Don Luce believed what the Viet Cong women told him and no one else.⁵⁴

Led efforts to propagandize “torturous [and brutal] conditions in the Tiger cages” at Con Son, South Vietnam. He interviewed and translated the stories of Viet Cong prisoners making claims of being doused with lime and urine, beaten and shackled, denied food and water; fed rice with sand, live lizards and beetles, and suffered paralysis from cramped quarters.⁵⁵ During 1972-4 Luce’s Mobile Education Project⁵⁶ toured the U.S. with mock prisoners shackled in cramped mock, bamboo, tiger cages, which in fact only existed in Vietnam as VC cells for American POWs, not at Con Son.

D. GARETH PORTER: Gareth Porter used word for word English translations⁵⁷ of North Vietnamese propaganda tracts.⁵⁸ He dismissed

52 Xuan Thuy Interview With (Larry) Levin (IPC), Hanoi VNA in English 1544 GMT 16 Apr 75 BK.

53 “A letter from Don Luce,” *South Vietnam in Struggle*, No 77, October 20, 1970.

54 Luce to Shirley Bordenkircher; McPhee to Berkeley, “Transfer of Female Prisoners to Con Son, December 28, 1969; Berkeley to Colby, “Transfer of Female Prisoners to Con Son,” November 28, 1969 cited in D.E. Bordenkircher, S.A. Bordenkircher, *Tiger Cage: Untold Story*, Abby Publishing, 1998, 107-113.

55 “The Cages of Con Son island,” *Time*, Jul. 20, 1970;

56 Indochina Mobile Education Project, 1973, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, University of Notre Dame Archives, CCPF 3/24 Folder.

57 Hoang Van Chi answers to questions of Daniel Theodora, National Student Coordinating Committee, December 20, 1972, printed as Appendix III, a supplement to Testimony of Daniel E. Teodoro, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Judiciary, *The Human Cost of Communism in Vietnam-II*, Washington; U.S. Government Printing Office, January 5, 1973, 41-42.

Hanoi's slaughter of no less than 50,000 or more during their 1954 "land reforms" as a myth.⁵⁹ The slaughter at Hue of perhaps 5,800 during Tet 1968 was a fabrication.⁶⁰ Gareth Porter and Edward Herman wrote, "And there is no evidence in documents, graves, or from individual witnesses which suggests any large and indiscriminate slaughter of civilians by the NLF at Hue."⁶¹ Also a myth was Pol Pot's "killing fields" genocide in Cambodia.⁶² In several articles and his 1976 book *Cambodia. Starvation and Revolution*, Porter denied the Khmer Rouge holocaust.⁶³

In 1975 Ambassador Dinh Ba Thi, Cora Weiss, Gareth Porter opposing the evacuation of people and evacuating orphans from South Vietnam."⁶⁴

Gareth Porter denounced peace activist Joan Baez's Appeal to expose oppression after the fall. Baez aimed to "impugn the good faith" of the Vietnamese. Hard core Hanoi defenders signed a "A Time For Healing and Compassion," in the *New York Times* praising "the present government of Vietnam...for its moderation and its extraordinary efforts to achieve reconciliation among its many signators were

58 Testimony of Daniel E. Teodoro, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Judiciary, *The Human Cost of Communism in Vietnam*, Washington; U.S. Government Printing Office, January 5, 1973, 6-7.

59 D. Gareth Porter, "The Myth of the Bloodbath: North Vietnam's Land Reform Reconsidered," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 5, 1973; Testimony of Daniel E. Teodoro, U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Judiciary, *The Human Cost of Communism in Vietnam-II*, Washington; U.S. Government Printing Office, January 5, 1973.

60 D. Gareth Porter, "The 1968 'Hue Massacre,'" *Indochina Chronicle*, No. 33, June 24, 1974, 2-13.

61 Edward Herman and D. Gareth Porter, "The Myth of the Hue Massacre," *Ramparts*, 13:8 (May-June 1975), 10.

62 D. Gareth Porter, "The Myth of the Bloodbath: North Vietnam's Land Reform Reconsidered," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 5, 1973; Gareth Porter, "The 1968 'Hue Massacre' *Indochina Chronicle*, Issue 33, June 24, 1974.

63 Stephen Morris, *National Review*, Oct 31, 2004

64 "Dinh Ba Thi Receives Antiwar Activists Delegation 7 Apr," *Liberation Radio* (Clandestine) in Vietnamese 1000 GMT 9 Apr 75, SG, IV. 10Apr 75 L 13, South Vietnam

Richard A. Falk, Don Luce, Cora Weiss, Friendshipment.⁶⁵ Porter "spent days campaigning against the [Baez] letter. He spent literally hours on the phone haranguing Daniel Ellsberg..."⁶⁶

BARRY ROMO: Barry Romo, long-time leader of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, VVAW said that in Vietnam prisoners were tossed out of helicopters, pregnant women kicked in the gut. "The military is constructed to...instruct individual soldiers to conduct...(abuse and torture of ...prisoners)."⁶⁷ Barry Romo, claimed at a "Winter Soldier" conference that the racist military dehumanized the enemy and made it easy and normal to kill civilians.⁶⁸

While in Hanoi VVAW's Barry Romo claimed the "Christmas" bombing in 1972 was never to destroy military targets, but to terrorize and demoralize the Vietnamese people. Bombs falling on nonmilitary targets were not errors. The same homes and shops were hit several times.⁶⁹

MARK RUDD: Mark Rudd remembers a February 6, 1968, Cuba paid⁷⁰ and Soviet KGB subsidized⁷¹ visit of some 22 SDS members to

65 "To the American People, the Carter Administration and the Congress, "Vietnam: A Time for Healing and Compassion," *The New York Times*, January 30, 1977; James Finn, "Fighting Among the Doves," *Worldview*, April 1977.

66 James L. Tyson, *Target America: The Influence of Communist Propaganda on U.S. Media*, 115

67 Dave Curry and Barry Romo, "VIETNAM VETERANS SAY TORTURE POLICY NOT AN ABERATION-DATES BACK TO VIETNAM WAR," News Release of VVAW, May 26, 2004; Robert Dunn, "Veteran at Urbana High School: Soldier No More," *The Veteran* (VVAW), Spring/Summer 1999, Volume 29, Number 1.

68 Vietnam Vets, "John Kerry and VVAW (Vietnam Veterans Against the War)", *Bella Ciao*, Sunday August 29, 2004 - 22:36, <http://bellaciao.org/en/spip.php?article3093>

69 FBI, Legat Rome to Acting Director, VVAW, IS-RA, Hilev, TELETYPE 4:30 PM January 30, 1973

70 "Declassified U.S. Government intelligence information regarding the communist and foreign connections of the Weather Underground. Presented as evidence, on the agreement of the prosecution and defense counsel, in the trial of W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller," 12 at www.usasurvival.org.; Mark Rudd remembers paying his way by selling "opiated hashish" brought back from Vietnam. Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life With the SDS and the Weathermen*, New York: Harper Collins, 2009, 38-9.

Havana, “to talk with ...the National Liberation Front...” The group received “souvenir rings made of extremely lightweight titanium. The number 2017 was stamped inside to indicate that each ring had been made from debris from the 2017th American plane shot down in Vietnam. I wore mine proudly for years afterwards.”⁷² Rudd says, “I passionately wanted to be a revolutionary like Che, no matter what the costs...Our goal was...ending the capitalist system that caused the war.” Mark Rudd bragged to his Havana comrade Huynh Van Ba that *New Left Notes* of August 29, 1969 declared “Vietnam has Won.”

During the Columbia University protest led by Mark Rudd, The Viet Cong flew over the Math building at Broadway and 117th Street from on April 23-30, 1968.⁷³

In 1969 Weathermen—Mark Rudd, Jeff Jones, and Bill Ayers-- sent a letter to Mao’s sycophant Anna Louise Strong.⁷⁴ “Our...convention... was highly honored to hear greetings from our best-loved revolutionary writer and champion of People’s China and the thought of Mao Tse Tung. ...Long life to comrade Mao Tse Tung...”⁷⁵

71 Frank J. Rafalko, *MH/CHAOS: The CIA’s Campaign Against the Radical Left and the Black Panthers*, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011, 134

72 Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life With the SDS and the Weathermen*, New York: Harper Collins, 2009, 40.

73 Mark Rudd, *Underground: My Life With the SDS and the Weathermen*, New York: Harper Collins, 2009, 55-77; “Declassified U.S. Government intelligence information regarding the communist and foreign connections of the Weather Underground. Presented as evidence, on the agreement of the prosecution and defense counsel, in the trial of W. Mark Felt and Edward S, Miller,” 2 at www.usasurvival.org; Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, *The Weather Underground*, Committee Print, January 1975.

74 FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 65.

75 FBI, FOIA, Weather Underground. The primary source is Acting SAC Chicago to Director, memo, “Foreign Influence-Weather Underground Organization,” August 20, 1976, 144-45.

MORLEY SAFER: About the burning of Cam Ne, a fortified and bunkered Vietcong⁷⁶ village, Morley Safer wrote, “conjured up not America, but some brutal power — Germany....To see young G.I.s, big guys in flak jackets, lighting up thatched roofs, and women holding babies running away, wailing....Soldiers aren’t innocent....It was so shocking...it’s not how we do things...seen to be doing it....There was a realization...that the rules had changed,” Morley Safer.⁷⁷

ROBERT SCHEER: In 1965 Robert Scheer claimed the Viet Cong were patriotic nationalists free of Hanoi and that Catholics, spies and hawks had dragged the U.S. into a civil war⁷⁸ and that Diem was a puppet of Americans rather than a genuine Vietnamese nationalist and patriot.

In a 1966 Radio Hanoi broadcast Robert Scheer said the Vietnam War was untenable, violates “all the norms and decent values of this society.”⁷⁹

An August 8, 1970 article of *The Black Panther* has a Scheer statement, Since the peoples of the world have a common enemy, we must begin to think of revolution as an international struggle against U.S. imperialism....Understanding the [North] Korean people's struggle and communicating this to the American movement is a crucial step in developing this internationalist perspective.”⁸⁰ Robert Scheer made a broadcast on Radio Hanoi on September 5,

76 Peter Brush, “What Really Happened at Cam Ne, *Vietnam* magazine, June 12, 2006; Andrew Finlayson to Roger Canfield June 26, 2014.

77 *From Reporting America at War: An Oral History, compiled by Michelle Ferrari, with commentary by James Tobin, published by Hyperion, 2003. Copyright ©, 2003 Goodhue Pictures.*

78 Peter Collier, “Life Along the ‘Ramparts,’” *New Criterion*, January 2010 comments on Scheer’s *How the U.S. Got Involved in Vietnam*, Santa Barbara: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 196x.

79 “Antiwar Rally Speeches by [Donald] Duncan, [Robert] Scheer,” Hanoi in English to American Servicemen in South Vietnam 1300 GMT 26 February 1966—S.

80 August 8, 1970, *The Black Panther* cited in David Horowitz, FrontpageMagazine.com on May 6, 2003.

1970.⁸¹ Robert Scheer said, “The US government is a criminal government that got those pilots [to] perform the highest war crimes...”

Pham Van Dong, General Giap⁸² received Robert Scheer quite well: “Our delegation moved ...met openly with the peoples governments and were received as *comrades-in-arms*. We are fellow combatant against US imperialism.”

September 16, 1970 FBI agents watched Customs inspect literature and films mostly from North Korea written by Kim IL Sung and V.I. Lenin. Robert Scheer later sang the praises of the thoughts of North Korea’s Kim IL Sung in Tom Hayden’s Red Family commune at Berkeley and at *Ramparts* magazine.⁸³

NEIL SHEEHAN: Sheehan’s *Bright Shining Lie* accepted Ho Chi Minh’s murders of Vietnamese nationalists as a necessity, called Hanoi’s butchery of 50,000 in 1956 “an unfortunate mistake” performed by Ho’s renegade underlings, dismissed the communist massacre at as a “stupid mistake” and a public relations problem. As late as July 2002 Sheehan told CSPAN that Hanoi’s “reeducation camps” were not so bad (no less than 10% died there) and, falsely, that Hanoi “didn’t shoot anyone.”⁸⁴

“In some countries a Communist government may be the best government....“Anticommunism [is] as destructive as Stalinism.”⁸⁵

March 1969, **NEIL SHEEHAN** at First National Convocation on the Challenge of Building Peace. Neil Sheehan said that North Vietnam was a “modern dynamic society” and South Vietnam was a “dying

81 Hanoi in English to American Servicemen in S. Vietnam 0830 GMT 5 Sep 70. Robert Scheer talks about his visit to both zones of Vietnam.

82 Photo with General Giap is at “U.S. Anti-imperialism Delegation,” *Journeys Toward Peace: Internationalism and Radical Orientalism During the U.S. War in Vietnam*,

<http://digitalunion.osu.edu/r2/summer09/caldwell/Pages/eldridgecleaver.html>

83 Collier and Horowitz, *Destructive Generation*, 226; Armstrong, Trumpet, 165, 188

84 Bill Laurie, review of Neil Sheehan’s *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam*

lcounterparts.net/message3_NEW.cfm?threaded=120&messages=6

85 Alice Widener, “The Coo of the Doves: From Waldorf to Hilton, 1949-1969,” U.S.A. Vol. XV, No. 26, March 14, 1969.

post-feudal order.”⁸⁶

After the exposure of Pham Xuan An, Hanoi’s master spy, Neil Sheehan remained a gushing fan: “My friend, who served the cause of journalism and the cause of his country with honor and distinction— fondest regards.”⁸⁷ In late 1974 Neil Sheehan would tell his audience at the Army War College “The idea of fairness and objectivity is specious.”⁸⁸

OLIVER STONE: Oliver Stone's error laden film "*Born on the 4th of July*" in 1988 portrayed Ron Kovic attacked and thrown from his wheel chair by Republicans, which he was not. Films such as Oliver Stone’s *Platoon*, showing barbarous soldiers, largely formed early public opinion about the Vietnam War and all its participants. “I will come out with my interpretation. If I'm wrong, fine. It will become part of the debris of history, part of the give and take.”⁸⁹

CATHY WILKERSON: In Hanoi Cathy Wilkerson, SDS Weather, remembers,” I absorbed the optimistic Vietnamese belief that most people deep down did not want to live by aggression and manipulation... They could ...reject leadership based on brutality.” She believed Ho Chi Minh taught his people to resist “the corrosive powers of hatred and revenge.”⁹⁰

86 Thomas B. Morgan, “Reporters of the Lost War,” *Esquire*, July 1984, 52 cited in Berman, *The Perfect Spy: The Incredible Double Life of Pham Xuan An, Time Magazine Reporter & Vietnamese Communist Agent*, New York: Harper Collins, 2007, 146.

87 Larry Berman, *A Perfect Spy: The Incredible Double Life of Pham Xuan An, Time Magazine Reporter & Vietnamese Communist Agent*, New York: Harper Collins, 2007, 10.

88 Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam*, New York: Harcourt, 1999, 427-8n8.

89 http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/o/oliver_stone.html#2f51ruCxtQ4PJrqY.99

90 Cathy Wilkerson, *Flying Close to the Sun*, New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007, 162, 295.

MARILYN YOUNG: “[T]he Vietminh acted to alleviate the famine then raging in the North by opening local granaries and distributing rice.” Marilyn Young⁹¹

The Sixties...centrally about the recognition, on the part of an ever growing number of Americans, that the country in which they thought they lived – peaceful, generous, honourable, just – did not exist and never had. The emergence of a more nuanced history of the US as opposed to the patriotic meta-narrative taught in grade school...⁹²

Marilyn B. Young, member of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars and a well-read orthodox historian of the war developed a more nuanced rationalization of the Hue massacre. “[A]ll the accounts agree that NLF rather than North Vietnamese units were responsible for the executions (in Hue),”⁹³

“The central mechanism of US policy in the 1940s, as today, the pivot around which all the rest rotates, is the conviction that the particular national interests of the United States are identical with the transcendent, universal interests of humanity. The increasingly evident falsehood of this claim produces what Che Guevara once hoped for, ‘two, three, many Vietnams.’” [Thank you. Marilyn Young.]

“There was no conceivable justification for the horrors daily inflicted on and suffered in Vietnam.”

Unfortunately as of the time of this printing, we did not get anyone to take up our challenge, except one who, unfortunately, was unable to follow through because of his wife’s illness. However, we expect, in our audience, several other respondents who have provided the background information noted below:

Charles Mathes “Chuck” Searcy is International Advisor for Project RENEW, a partnership to lessen the risks from the threat of explosive

91 Marilyn B. Young, “Reflections on the Anti-war Movement, Then and Now,” 31 March 2003.

92 Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1991, 217-19.

93 (Preface, xi) Marilyn Young. *Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2004. Pp. 329

remnants of war (ERW) in Quang Tri Province Project RENEW's mission is to make Quang Tri safe. He has represented three American veterans organizations in Viet Nam since 1995, including Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA), Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), and Veterans For Peace (VFP). Searcy is a graduate of the University of Georgia with a B.A. in political science. A veteran of the Vietnam War, he served in the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion in Saigon from June, 1967 to June, 1968. In Hanoi Searcy was elected to eight terms as a member of the Board of Governors of the American Chamber of Commerce until stepping aside. In 2004, he was awarded the National Friendship Medal of the State of Vietnam, Vietnam's highest honor for foreigners who have served the country.

Jean Andre Sauvageot, 1956-1984: Active duty, U.S. Army. Wartime Vietnam service (1964-73) began as a District Advisor. Various assignments included the Prime Minister's Office, and interpreter for the U.S. delegation to the Four Party Joint Military Commission meetings in Saigon to implement the Paris Agreement and end the war. Promoted to Colonel in 1980, and assigned as the Political-Military Advisor, Bureau of East Asian Pacific Affairs, Department of State until retirement from the U.S. Army. He also received an award/plaque presented by the SRV Ambassador for his service representing General Electric (GE) in Hanoi after establishing their Representative Office in 1993.

Myra Macpherson is the author of *Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation*. She has recently been to Vietnam and has kept in touch with many of the men she interviewed for the book which remains in print. She has strong views on the issue.

Mike Marceau, Vice President of the DC Chapter of Veterans for Peace, is a disabled Vietnam veteran who returned in 2012 on a tour organized by his organization.

We have also invited the **Vietnam Old Hacks**, a google group of media people who worked in Vietnam during the war.

So, despite the lack of direct participation of our invitees, we expect to have a spirited discussion.

We also expect in our audience:

R. J. Del Vecchio, Marine Combat Photographer who spent 1968 with the 1stMarDiv in Vietnam, co-author of *Whitewash/Blackwash* and Project Manager for VVFH.

Mike Benge served as a Marine in the late 50's, and as a civilian with USAID in Vietnam from 1963-1968. He was captured during the Tet Offensive and spent 5 years as a POW in Hanoi. After his release in 1973, he returned to Vietnam and served as a special representative to the Minister for Ethnic Minorities until the communist takeover in April 1975.

COL Abraham Lincoln "Linc" German (US Army, Ret) served two and a half years in Vietnam with Special Forces, between 1965 and 1970. He is President Emeritus of the U.S. Army Ranger Association.

Sol Sanders, author of *A Sense of Asia*, first went there as an ambulance driver in WWII with the British army. He has spent 70 years reporting for UP, Business Week, US News & World Report and other American, European and Asian periodicals. He covered the French War in Indochina as well as the U.S. conflict. He publishes a weekly commentary on current affairs at yeoldecrabb.com.

MAJ Stephen Spoerry (U.S. Army, Ret), West Point graduate, Special Forces officer who served with 5th Special Forces Group, 173rd Airborne Bde and MACV-SOG from January 1968-May 1971.

LTC Jim Bruton (U.S. Army, Ret), a Special Forces officer who served in Thailand and Laos and is now independent researcher in Washington D.C.

Van T. HuLamm served in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam ARVN, South Vietnam. He was drafted in 1969 when he was 21 and served in Saigon, as a Second Lieutenant, teaching English for the military personnel. He left Vietnam a day before the fall of Saigon in the black April 30th, 1975. He is retired from civil service with the US Department of Defense since 2008 and now lives in Southern MD.