

## WAR AND ATROCITY IN VIETNAM

The war in Vietnam is eighteen years old. It began as a broad movement of resistance to the French under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, a Communist. It was fought with ferocity against an unarmed peasantry, using guerilla tactics. The French were driven out of the North of Vietnam and the conflict was halted during negotiations at Geneva, leading to the establishment of an international Commission, intended to stabilise peace and watch over any attempt at foreign intervention.

Before developing what I wish to say about this subject, I should like to make clear that the facts in this article are taken from the daily papers. Many are taken from bulletins of committees concerned with Vietnam. Some are from reports of the South Vietnam Liberation Red Cross and others from a very interesting book by Wilfred G. Burchett called "The Furtive War." Many of the facts have passed unscathed through the crucible of American denial. Many of them have been accepted even by the American authorities. All of them, I have good reason to believe, are incontrovertible.

It is important to realise that, since the French were defeated finally at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the war had been conducted surreptitiously under American direction. A substantial number of American forces began to be committed there after the French withdrawal and the Geneva talks. One of the most important aspects of this war has been that the United States pretended for many years that no such war was taking place and that the war which was not taking place was not being conducted by Americans. I have experienced some frustration in attempting to bring to light the fact that the war has been taking place and that Americans have been deeply involved in its conduct. At first, Western newspapers and even persons connected with the peace movement in the West held that there was no evidence of American direction of this war. The "New York Times" stated this several times. Finally, in the course of controversy, it was allowed that American participation was solely in an advisory capacity. When it was alleged that chemicals were being employed by the United States forces in Vietnam, it was first denied and then alleged that the chemicals employed were used against American advice and wishes. It was admitted that they were used under the direction of the United States, but it was said that chemicals were harmless to human beings and were intended solely for the purpose of clearing vegetation and foliage. I brought to public attention impressive and particularised evidence concerning the use of additional chemicals and asked for international investigation of these allegations and the evidence adduced to support them. I was informed by various Western newspapers that no observers had found harmful results through the use of these chemicals and that no condemnatory comment had been made by the International Control Commission.

It is odd that this is advanced on behalf of that Commission. The function of the Commission was to regulate and prevent intervention from the outside. The failure of this International Commission to place on record its observation of American participation was in violation of its mandate and does not inspire confidence in its ability to detect chemicals where it failed to detect armed forces, aircraft, military supplies and a full-scale war. I shall

wish to return to these more contemporary aspects of the war in Vietnam. It is sufficient here to note that the extraordinary war which has been raging in Vietnam managed to elude the juridical commitments of the Geneva agreements. It encompassed repression and extermination without any hindrance on the part of the Control Commissions set up at Geneva, escaped for some time the notice of the Western press and enjoyed restrained consideration by those nominally committed to opposition to Cold War, small wars and wars of annihilation.

#### THE U.S. AND DIEM

The history of French and Vietnamese relations, particularly in the North, is much the same as that of the United States and South Vietnam. At the time of the conclusion of the Second World War, a movement of rebellion began, acquired new strength and culminated in the Geneva decisions. Vietnam was to be partitioned for an interim period, with the North under the control of the forces of Ho Chi Minh, and the South under the control of pro-Western groups. It was agreed that there would be a general election throughout Vietnam, out of which unification and neutralisation were expected to come. The Geneva Conferences of 1955 were designed to bring neutralisation to all of Indo-China. The United States, though not a signatory to this Convention, accepted it in name and professed it to be the basis of American policy in Indo-China.

In fact, the United States quickly decided that it was impossible to permit a general election, in view of what it considered to be "the disturbed state of the country." The United States began to intervene actively with arms, money and men and established in power a ruling oligarchy subservient to American interests. This direct foreign intervention destroyed the purpose of the Geneva agreements and was a test for the International Control Commission. Its failure to instance this violation prepared the way for violence, the intrusion of the Cold War and the present threat to the peace of the world in South East Asia.

John Foster Dulles had urged the use of nuclear weapons at Dien Bien Phu. His desire to encompass the area in the Cold War led to the formation of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation. The purpose of this body was to forestall neutrality and to forge a military alliance of anti-communists. The United States favoured Ngo Dinh Diem, a rich refugee from North Vietnam. He and his family, together with the Nhu family, represented a group of landowners and the Catholic hierarchy in Vietnam - a small, closely knit circle. The Diem family installed officers and relatives in various provinces, who administered them virtually as private estates. Various religious sects and cults in Vietnam were subdued because they failed to prove sufficiently loyal to the Diem regime. The Diem and Nhu families were dependent upon American backing for their power. American policy aimed at keeping South Vietnam in the anti-Communist camp and at opposing all groups not subservient to that purpose. The Vietcong were to be eradicated, despite the fact that the Vietcong was neutralist. Diem's regime was one of terror and persecution. Ghastly tortures were inflicted upon the peasants. It is instructive that it has been possible for 350,000 people to be placed in camps as political prisoners and for the greater part of the rural population to be uprooted and put in camps without vigorous protest taking place.

Part of the responsibility for this default lies with the suppression of facts which, until the last two years, characterised Western reports about Vietnam. Part of the fault lies with the silence of peace groups, frightened to appear to be supporting "the Communist side" of things.

One case is related in *The Furtive War*. It is that of a young girl:

"One day", she says, "I came home and there were two security agents waiting for me. I was taken to the town of Faifo and for months on end I was tortured very badly.....Once I recovered consciousness and found I was stark naked, blood oozing from wounds all over my body. There were others in the cell. I heard a woman moaning, and in the half dark saw a woman in a pool of blood. She had been beaten into having a miscarriage. Then I made out an old man. An eye had been gouged out and he was dying. Alongside him was a thirteen or fourteen year old boy, also dead; a little further away, another dead youth with his head split open. They had thrown me there, hoping the sight of this would break me down."

Finally, she was covertly conveyed to North Vietnam. This story was subsequently confirmed by neutral enquirers. It is typical of many among the 350,000 political prisoners.

#### "STRATEGIC HAMLETS"

The vast majority of peasants support the Vietcong. It is estimated that 160,000 have died and as many as 700,000 have been maimed. In order to combat the support of the population, Diem and the Americans instituted what were called "strategic hamlets", into which the inhabitants of rural areas and existing villages were, in cruel circumstances, moved at a moment's notice. "Strategic hamlets" were, in reality, prisons. Those who had been forcibly brought into them were unable to get out. These "hamlets" were surrounded by spikes, moats and barbed wire and were patrolled by guards with dogs. They have all the character of concentration camps. The *London Observer* estimated that 65 per cent of the rural population, or over seven million people were inside these "hamlets" by mid-1963. Their establishment was the result of a decision on the part of the United States, publicly set out by W.W. Rostow, an adviser of the State Department. He suggested that Vietnam should be used as an experimental area for the development of anti-guerilla techniques and weapons by American forces.

The rural population was stuffed into the "strategic hamlets" so that they would be shut off from the guerilla forces, who depended for their food and manpower upon them. I wrote letters to the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* in 1963 in which I sought to set out the full nature of this war, which I designated as a war of annihilation and atrocity. The *New York Times* vigorously denounced me for making such a charge.

#### THE "ADVISORY CAPACITY"

The State Department denied that chemicals were used in Vietnam and the *New York Times* admitted editorially that weedkillers were used, but stated

that napalm was not used by Americans but only by Vietnamese governmental forces. Madame Nhu states: "If they don't like our chemicals why don't they get out of our jungles?" The New York Times failed to remember its own reports of June 19, 1962 which refer to the destruction of nearly 1,400 villages by governmental forces. Napalm and chemicals were used in the course of this devastation. My charge of atrocity was based upon the ruthless use of chemicals and jelly-gasoline, the devastation of civilian populations and the use of concentration camps.

In addition to uprooting the population and establishing the hamlets, the United States sent special helicopters which could fire small rockets and ammunition in excess of that used by any aircraft during the Second World War. The Americans, as mentioned earlier, professed that their soldiers and airmen in Vietnam were only there in an advisory capacity and were not responsible for Diem's doings. At the same time, they took great pains to conceal from the world the sort of things that were being done. The New York Times, in its editorial comments, illustrates this attempt.

#### THE EVIDENCE

In the course of controversy in the pages of the Observer, I sought to bring to the attention of people facts which I had before me in the form of photographs and documents which particularised villages, dates, individuals and specific chemicals, and the use of toxic chemicals in Vietnam by American forces. I have evidence that over 1,000 people were caused severe illness, characterised by vomiting, bleeding, paralysis and loss of sight and consciousness. The evidence includes the destruction of fruit trees, vegetables, cattle and domestic animals. Further evidence specified the use of toxic gas on densely populated areas. This evidence was provided in part by the South Vietnam Liberation Red Cross and in part by the Foreign Minister of North Vietnam. It has been offered to any international agency for impartial consideration. The replies to my setting out of this evidence were indicative of Western attitudes towards this war. Dennis Bloodworth, the Far Eastern Correspondent of the Observer, blandly stated that I was "apparently referring to the defoliation campaign known as "Operation Ranchland" and said that the weedkillers were popularly known in America and had been used widely without causing harm to animals or to humans. He contended that a propaganda campaign was being employed in which it was falsely said that these chemicals had ill effects and suggested that I was now assisting in a Communist propaganda campaign.

Let us now consider some of the statements which have appeared in the American and British press over the past two years. These statements will help to indicate the nature of the war and the validity of the editorial protests which have peppered my appeals about the situation in Vietnam. With respect to the contention that Americans served only as advisors, it is worth looking at the New York Times of March 17, 1962. It was stated that, after two Vietnamese pilots pulled out of formation and launched a full attack on Diem's palace, Americans were designated to accompany every Vietnamese pilot on a mission. The Saturday Evening Post of March 23, 1963, published a long report in which it contradicted the New York Times' statement that uniformed Americans were "solely advisors and trainers". The Saturday Evening Post said:

"Virtually all the fighting is done by U.S. troops."

Richard Hughes in the Sunday Times of January 13, 1963, speaks of the "Washington fiction that no United States troops are involved in combat and that United States officers and trainers are on the scene merely to 'advise, support and assist'. The Americans are now operating more than 200 helicopters and scores of reconnaissance and troop transport planes in the combat areas. Probably half of all bombing and strafing missions of the South Vietnam Air Force are undertaken by Americans serving as pilots and co-pilots". It is illustrative, as well, of the nature of this war to quote the New York Times and other American papers for the period 1962 to 1963. On July 7, 1962, the New York Times states:

"Tactical air support is used extensively. It is difficult to ascertain whether the people who are being killed by napalm and fragmentation bombs are guerillas or merely farmers".

On June 16, 1962, the New York Times had stated:

"Though the Government makes some attempt to re-educate the captured guerillas, many are shot".

The New York Times had stated on June 5, 1962:

"Seven leprosy clinics were wiped out by mistake in bombing raids last fall".

The New York Times of July 25, 1962 states:

"Many of the 'enemy' dead reported by the Government to have been shot were ordinary peasants shot down because they fled from villages as troops entered. It is possible that some were Vietcong sympathisers, but others were running away because they did not want to be rounded up for military conscription or forced labour".

#### TARGETS

The Chicago Daily News is more direct in its statement of January 18, 1963:

"The Government regards Vietcong hospitals as fair targets for ground attack. If Vietnamese commanders order an airstrike on a medical centre, the planes bomb and strafe it, even when Americans are along as advisors or instructors. When asked if Americans officially condone these attacks, a U.S. military spokesman said: 'There has not been a definite ruling for Vietnam'. Planes of the Vietnamese Air Force are frequently piloted by Americans".

The New York Times which, editorially, overlooks its new reports (as when it reported the razing of 60 per cent of the villages of the country) might have been advised to listen to the Voice of America on January 6, 1963. It was stated that during the year 1962 the American Air Force carried out 50,000 attacks on villages and upon virtually all the peasant population outside of the strategic hamlets. This report was confirmed by the United States Defence Department. Senator Michael Mansfield of Montana stated that there were American troops in every fighting action in Vietnam. Senator Mansfield referred to the action as "America's secret war". Areas in which heavy guerilla activity was reported were denuded of population and then virtually obliterated.

## "A DIRTY, CRUEL WAR"

The New York Times managed to say on October 21, 1962:

"Americans and Vietnamese march together, fight together and die together, and it is hard to get much more involved than that".

The New York Herald Tribune of November 23, 1962, stated:

"The United States is deeply involved in the biggest secret war in its history. Never have so many U.S. military men been involved in a combat area without any formal programme to inform the public about what is happening. It is a war fought without official public reports or reports on the number of troops involved or the amount of money and equipment being poured in."

This war in which seven million people have been placed in internment camps, 160,000 killed, 700,000 tortured, 350,000 imprisoned - requiring 16,000 camps - was described by The Nation of January 19, 1963:

"It is a dirty, cruel war. As dirty and as cruel as the war waged by the French forces in Algeria, which so shocked the American conscience".

The Nation continued:

"The truth is that the United States Army, some 10,000 miles from home, is fighting to bolster up an open and brutal dictatorship in an undeclared war that has never received the constitutional sanction of the United States Congress."

A supporter of the Vietcong, Ma Thi Chu, stated:

"From January to March, chemicals were used against 46 villages. 20,000 people were affected, many of them women, children and old people. I have been on the spot. I have seen children with swollen faces and bodies covered with burns. I have met women blinded or suffering from sanguinolent diarrhoea. Many of them died afterwards. I have seen the luxuriant vegetation of the Mekong Delta devastated by chemicals. Our enemies have thus attacked all life, human, animal and vegetable."

## "WEEDKILLERS"

The concealment to which I have referred has included the effects of what were euphemistically called "weedkillers". Dennis Bloodworth described how in April, 1963, South Vietnamese officials "rubbed defoliant on their hands and arms in the presence of foreign correspondents who had selected the canisters from which it should be drawn - and in one case drank some of it" (Observer, 9 February, 1964). It is interesting to examine these weedkillers and their effects. The Times of 16 May, 1963, disclosed the death by pesticide of birds of 58 species and described fifty pesticides in widespread use as responsible for "acute poisoning" of animals and human beings. President Kennedy found it necessary to halt their use and to begin a formal investigation. It was stated in the United States that chemicals used there for purposes of defoliation and the killing of weeds resulted in California in 1,100 cases of serious illness and 150 deaths (Reuter, May 16, 1963). Dr. Jerome Weisner, the Chief Science

Advisor to President Kennedy, designated unregulated use of these weedkillers as potentially "more dangerous than radioactive fallout". The actual use of these weedkillers has killed. They caused serious illness in Britain, the United States and Scandinavia.

In a paragraph of a letter I wrote to the New York Times, which the Times did not see fit to publish, I said:

"In your fifth paragraph (of an editorial attack upon a former letter from me on the subject of South Vietnam) you also endeavour to minimise the effect of 'defoliation chemicals' by calling them 'common weedkillers'. If spread, as they must be to achieve the end for which you say they are intended, certain common weedkillers would destroy many crops and animals, but, in fact, chemicals other than 'common weedkillers' have been used.

"Among these other chemicals are included some which were previously used as 'weedkillers' in other countries before being found too dangerous.

"The United States Government has been charged by the South Vietnam Liberation Red Cross, after a year's study by them of the chemicals spread in South Vietnam, with using chemicals which, in the large doses used, are harmful: with using white arsenic, various kinds of arsenite sodium and arsenite calcium, lead manganese arsenates, D.N.P. and D.N.C. (which inflame and eat into human flesh) and calcic cyanamide (which has caused leaves, flowers and fruit to fall, killed big cattle like buffaloes and cows, and seriously affected thousands of the inhabitants of South Vietnam); with having spread these poisonous chemicals on large and densely populated areas of South Vietnam. Admittedly, the South Vietnam Liberation Red Cross is, as its name suggests, allied with those opposing the U.S.-supported Diem regime, but its published findings cannot be ignored, since it has urged international investigation of the situation. The use of these weapons, napalm bombs and chemicals, constitutes and results in atrocities and points to the fact that this is a 'war of annihilation'."

Napalm is a chemical which burns unremittingly and cannot be extinguished. The victims suppurate before terrified observers. The object of this weapon is to create hysteria and panic, as well as to annihilate. This weapon has been used on over 1,400 villages. The United States has spent one million dollars daily on the war. The Observer of 8 September, 1963, estimates that there has been an average number of 4,000 casualties monthly. The Central Intelligence Agency has spent an estimated sum monthly of 250,000 dollars on private armies, espionage and intrigue, according to The Times of September 10, 1963.

#### UNIFYING THE REVOLT

This war was largely conducted under the nominal rule of Diem. Diem grew more and more reckless and was at last murdered in a coup which most agreed was engineered by the United States, after a number of eminent Buddhist priests had burned themselves to death. It is noteworthy that Diem was said by the head of military operations for the United States in the Mekong Delta to have been unwilling to win the war. Diem feared that if he won the War, American forces would be reduced and he would fall. His aim was simply indefinite war. The

second junta to succeed him complained that its predecessor was secretly negotiating with the North along Gaullist lines, but not, noticeably, that tyranny was unpalatable to the population. The death of Diem brought no amelioration. He had been, in fact, only the tool of the Americans and the sole change brought by his death was that the Americans had open responsibility for whatever they had formerly blamed on Diem and for what was done under his regime.

The Viecong was formed on December 20, 1960, unifying the various elements of revolt against American domination. By 1961, 10,000 Diem troops had deserted and joined the Vietcong with their arms. Let us consider again the treatment accorded this popular revolt. Homer Bigart described in the New York Times of January 30, March 27, March 29, April 1, April 4, April 20, May 10, June 24 and July 25, all in 1962, the following programme:

#### WISH FOR NEUTRALITY

"The rounding up of the entire rural population in strategic hamlets, the burning of all abandoned villages with the grain and possessions of the inhabitants and the 'locking' of strategic villages behind barbed wire"

It is clear that the majority of the inhabitants wish their country to be neutral. This the American Government cannot tolerate. The euphemisms used for the military operations which have belatedly been acknowledged to be the full responsibility of the United States are instructive. "Operation Sunrise", "Pacification of the West" and "Morning Star" resulted, in the area attacked, in the destruction of all villages, fields and crops. In 1962 alone, according to General Paul D. Harkins, 30,000 peasants were killed. The Christian Science Monitor described this process on March 8, 1963:

"Since the army finds sullen villagers and does not know which are pro-Communist and which are merely dissatisfied with Saigon, and since the army must do its job, it shoots anyone seen running or looking dangerous. It often shoots the wrong peasants. They are in the records of battle listed as Communists. Anyone killed is automatically a Vietcong".

On January 25, 1963, Life had photos of napalm bombings with the following caption:

"Swooping low across enemy infested land, U.S. pilot instructors watch Vietnamese napalm strike. The object of the fire bombing is to sear all foliage and to flush the enemy into the open".

"The New York Times also reported that U.S. advisors made a tally of guerilla corpses after each battle to make sure that Diem's troops were using American equipment to maximum advantage, so that they could display a good 'bag'." (Militant, April 15, 1963).

In the light of all this evidence, it is strange to find the New York Times saying on April 8, 1963:

"Napalm has been used by the South Vietnam Air Force and has certainly killed innocent people, as other weapons have done in all wars. American (my emphasis) advisors have opposed its employment on both moral and practical grounds against all except clearly defined military targets".

This definition appears to include 60 per cent of the villages, hospitals and clinics and all peasants who run or look dangerous. This editorial reply contradicts the New York Times' own news reports about American use and insistence upon the use of napalm and other weapons on non-military areas.

Many people in the Pentagon are urging that the war should be extended to an invasion of North Vietnam. President Johnson has announced that those countries which are directing and supplying the (so-called) Communist guerillas in South Vietnam are playing a deeply dangerous game. A map in the New York Times of April 1, 1962, shows the forces of the Liberation Front in the far south around Saigon, and nowhere near the borders of Laos or North Vietnam. Both British and American reporters have stated that primitive guerilla weapons have been used by the Vietcong, in addition to those plentiful supplies captured from the forces of South Vietnam. The London Times of February 24 has stated that it is now considered doubtful whether the Government of South Vietnam has any will to win the war. The Observer of March 1, 1964, quoted an American official as stating that the trouble lay in the fact that, while the United States wished to extend the war, the Vietnamese only wanted to end the war.

#### TO RETIRE OR CONQUER?

The situation which faces those who have conducted this war is grave. Should the United States retire and allow victory to the Vietcong? Should America engage in a naked war of conquest, which will be clearly seen as such, and attempt to establish again a Government dependent entirely upon alien armed force? This "enemy" controls nearly 70 per cent of South Vietnam. The majority of the Vietcong was described as non-Communist by former Premier Tran Van Huu in Paris, as reported in the Observer. The Vietcong official policy asks for a neutral and disengaged South Vietnam. Despite all the attempts on the part of the Western press to describe this war as one in which a helpless democratic people is under ruthless attack from an aggressive Communist neighbour, it is evident that the Vietcong is a popular front which has fought an appalling tyranny in South Vietnam and has been opposed by the United States at an incalculable cost to the population. Why is this non-Communist, neutralist, popular front so ruthlessly opposed? Even the Communist North has declared, through Ho Chi Minh, that it wishes to be unified with the South on terms of neutrality in the Cold War and independence of Russia, China and the West (Times, 5 November, 1963).

The policy of the United States which has led to the prospect of an American invasion of North Vietnam will likely bring on Chinese involvement, with war with China as the result. The Soviet Union would then be drawn in. There are few parallels with the war in Vietnam. It has lasted nearly two decades; two Western industrial powers of overwhelming might have fought peasant guerillas in a manner reminiscent of the Japanese during the Second World War. Everything short of nuclear weapons has been employed. Atrocity has characterised the conduct of the war throughout its history. The Western press has hesitatingly discovered some of the facts about this war during the last two years. The Western peace

movement has been conspicuously silent or restrained in its setting out of the truth about the war. The war has had no purpose. Its extension will bring direct conflict between the Cold War powers, with the possible destruction of mankind as the culmination of this folly. The tragedy in Vietnam indicates the extent to which it is possible to hide or disguise terrible crimes and it is time that people in the West raised their voices for an end to the bloodshed.

Bertrand Russell

April 1964

EXTRACT OF DATA COMPILED ON  
WAR IN VIETNAM

The following figures are conservative as they were compiled before mid-1963:

Number dead in 1962 alone: 40,000. Source: General Paul D. Harkins, Chief of U.S. military operations in Vietnam. Quoted in publication Sword of Free Vietnam.

Note: The Sword of Free Vietnam is the official organ of the Democratic Party of Vietnam. The Democratic Party of Vietnam is a virulent anti-Communist Party composed of former officials and sympathisers of Governments prior to that of Diem. The motto of this party is: "For the Defeat of Communism in the interests of Free Men EVERYWHERE" (capitals in original)

Numbers killed by late 1962: 100,000. Source: 1963 White Paper of Democratic Party of Vietnam. From here on this party will be abbreviated DPV.

Numbers held in camps designated "concentration camps". Over 5,000,000 by mid-1962. Source: White Paper of DPV. Quoted in Los Angeles Times for 19 October 1962.

Number of "anti-Communist nationalists" held in camps designated "concentration camps" estimated at 100,000. Source: White Paper of DPV.

Number of students only held in "concentration camps" by late 1962: 45,000. Source: Student Peace Union of the United States Bulletin, April 1963.

Number of Secret Police: 300,000 by mid-1963. Source: DPV White Paper.

Number estimated held in Strategic Hamlets: Over half rural population by mid-1962. Source: DPV White Paper.

Use of U.S. aid: U.K. Ambassador from Vietnam spent 40,000,000 francs on house furnishings. Source: DPV White Paper.

Number of people in Strategic Hamlets by mid-1963: Over Six million. Described as concentration camps with spikes, moats, machine-gun turrets, forced labour and patrols. Source: DPV report for June 1963.

Forty per cent of "enemy" casualties claimed estimated to be guerillas; sixty per cent of "enemy" casualties claimed estimated to be uninvolved peasants. Source: DPV report for September 1963.

General Wheeler quoted in N.Y. Times of 26 January 1963: "Dirty, nasty little war".

Number of people interned by 1963 on Paulo Condore Island alone: 300,000. Source: DPV report for September 1963.

Review of Strategic Hamlet programme by Democratic Party of Vietnam through on the spot investigation:

DPV report Sept. 1963. "Strategic hamlets mean forced labour under 300,000 secret police. The programme is planned for 15 million people. It is the only conflict on record in which every means used to destroy own people... More severe and brutal than entire French colonial period.... Series of barbaric attacks on unarmed peasant villages with American arms and assistance.... 300,000 secret police committed numerous atrocities. Farm land and food sources destroyed...."

Note: Vietcong is a slang term which means Vietnamese Communist. It is comparable to "Commie". No organisation calls itself by this name.

The National Liberation Front was formed on February 16, 1962. It has a 31 member Central Committee. Three anti-Governmental Parties existing in Vietnam are represented on it. It is headed by a non-Communist lawyer. Leading Buddhist priests, Catholic priests, Protestant clergy are represented on it. (Source: The Tragedy of Vietnam: Helen B. Lamb) Source: Report of NLF.

Leader of Buddhists in NLF: Venerable Thich Thien Hao. Thich Thien Hao estimates:

160,000 dead by mid 1963; 700,000 tortured and maimed; 460,000 imprisoned; 31,000 raped; 3,000 disembowelled with livers cut out while alive; 4,000 burned alive, 1,000 temples destroyed; 46 villages attacked with poison chemicals between January and March 1964 affecting 20,000 people, 16,000 camps employed or under construction in accordance with Staley-Taylor Plan.

The above figures conform to the report of the South Vietnamese Liberation Red Cross, South Vietnamese Women's Union and the reports of the Democratic Party of Vietnam.

The Observer of 8 September 1963 estimated the monthly average of casualties in the war to be 4,000.

The NLF figures are attested to by Catholic Priest, Reverend Father Petrus Vu Xuan Ky.

The Federation of American Scientists quotes Defence Department sources on the subject of chemical warfare and concludes: Chemical poisons are used by the United States in South Vietnam. The U.S. is using Vietnam as a battlefield and proving ground for chemical and biological warfare. Source: I.F. Stone's Weekly,

#### ON NORTH VIETNAMESE CONTROL OF THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM:

- (1) "No capture of North Vietnamese in the South has come to light."

Source: New York Times, 6 March 1964, report from Vietnam by David Halberstam.

- (2) "The guerrillas obviously are not being reinforced or supplied systematically from North Vietnam, China or any place else.

They depend for weapons primarily on whatever they can capture." - General Paul D. Harkins, Head of U.S. operations.

Source: Free World Colossus by David Horowitz (Knopf) Washington Post, 6 March 1963.

- (3) "All the Communists (in South Vietnam) have is their dedication. If I was in their shoes, I'd be pretty sore at Hanoi for letting me down." American Captain in charge of operations in a sector in Vietnam as quoted in Newsweek, 10 December 1962.

#### On Strategic Hamlets:

"Already 8,000,000 villagers---- 59 percent of South Vietnam's population --- are living in the 6,000 hamlets so far completed. The basic element of the governments battle plan is to resettle almost the entire rural population in 12,000 "strategic hamlets" with bamboo fences, barbed wire and armed militiamen." Source: Time Magazine, 17 May 1963 as quoted in Sword of Vietnam for July 1963.

"65 per cent of the rural population are in strategic hamlets" Observer 3-11-63. On Air Attacks:

U.S. Air Force carried out 50,000 attacks on villages in 1962 and on virtually all of the rural population outside of strategic hamlets.

Source: Voice of America, 6 January 1963. U.S. Defence Department report quoted on Voice of America broadcast.

#### On Popular Character of Guerrilla war:

"75 per cent of the people, in varying degrees, support the rebels, who dominate 90 per cent of the land."

Source: DPV report July 1963.

#### On Nature of Strategic Hamlets:

"It is certainly an ironic way to protect the peasant masses from Communism--- to herd them behind barbed wire walls under police control, to subject them to intensive indoctrination, to burn their villages. Poor as the Vietnamese are, they are not domestic animals."

Source: Interview on C.B.S. with Tran-Van-Tung, leader of DPV as reported in DPV report for September 1963.

#### On true nature of the war in Vietnam:

"The people cannot follow the strange logic which decrees that they should be shot or imprisoned in the name of freedom. Offered the very finest facilities for forced labour, they rebel; installed in the newest of concentration camps, they protest. Showered with napalm bombs, they are so ungrateful as to think in terms of a new government.

The charred bodies of innocent women, children and peasants, lying in their fields, the bullet-riddled corpses of Buddhist demonstrators...this is the South Vietnam of today."

Sources: Nguyen-Thai-Binh of DPV, an anti-communist opposed to the NLF.

On press reportage from Vietnam:

Washington, May 5, (Associated Press)

A potentially explosive document in the hands of a House subcommittee is reported to lay down Administration guidance for restricting movement of correspondents covering the warfare in South Vietnam:

- (1) Keep reporters away from areas where fighting is being done entirely or almost entirely by U.S. troops.
- (2) Keep reporters away from any area which will show the failure to attract full allegiance of South Vietnamese people.

Source: As quoted in DPV report for June 1963.

On Use of South Vietnam as "Experimental Battlefield":

"The army tested small-caliber ammunition as long ago as the 1920s but it was not until the recent combat experience in Vietnam that it really sat up and took notice. About 1,000 AR-15s were sent out by the hush-hush Advanced Research Projects Agency in the Defense Department. A report has been issued marked Secret because of the gory pictures in it. The story of what happens to Vietcong guerillas who get hit with the AR-15 is being kept under heavy wraps. But, aware that the enemy already knows what the AR-15 does, you can find an occasional returnee who will tell you what he saw.

'When I left out there it was the rifle. The effect is fantastic. I saw one guy hit in the arm. It spun him around and blew the arm right off. One got hit in the back and it blew his heart literally out of his body.'

'A man hit in the buttocks lived for five minutes. All the others died instantly. His wound would have been superficial with other bullets.'

'The fellow had his head blown clean off - only the stump of the neck left.' (Photo of five year old child with arm shattered and in tatters).

Source: True Magazine, December, 1963.  
Look Magazine 23 December, 1963.

On ulterior purposes for continuing war:

"A tremendous dope smuggling racket has seen the light of day. One of the key figures is Mme. Tran Can, wife of a prominent general". (DPV report 9-63).

"General Khanh boasted he had ten million dollars and could flee to lead a life of ease if he wanted to". (N.Y. Herald-Tribune, 3 February 1964).

"Aviation Week" let the cat out of the bag (April 6, 1964). An air cargo company, Air America, incorporated in Delaware, is currently the principle instrument for the extension of the war in Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam. This company has some 200 aircraft..used under charter...It is airlifting South Vietnamese special troops to various places. ...the return trip (carries) a load of opium for further transport to markets in the U.S. in big Boeing aircraft. These aircraft are under the command of the U.S. Army General Paul D. Harkins and the pilots are former U.S. military pilots."

Source: Edgar P. Young, Commander R.N. retired in Eastern World, June 1964.

Plans by U.S. to Extend War to North Vietnam.

- (1) W.W. Rostow, head of State Department planning staff, has advanced the "Rostow plan No. 6" providing for a naval blockade and air raids against North Vietnam. Senator Melvin Laird stated in the Defence Appropriations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives: 'The U.S. administration is preparing plans for a strike into North Vietnam.' Associated Press reported a combat force of 50 jet bombers training in the Philippines in preparation for U.S. decision to bomb targets in North Vietnam. The bombers were said to be furnished with intelligence data on North Vietnam

obtained by U2 reconnaissance planes. I understand that the Honolulu Conference of June 1964 under Rusk and McNamara, planned air raids and sabotage against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam."

(Extract from letter to Lord Russell from Foreign Minister of North Vietnam)

- (2) "War against the Communists has already erupted over the borders of South Vietnam with raids and infiltration moves as far north as China...With U.S. backing in aircraft, weapons and money, an estimated 50,000 elite South Vietnamese troops are being trained to take the offensive in over-the-border strikes at Communist supply centres and communications routes.

Despite Defense Secretary McNamara's implication in Washington (March 26) that the decision has not yet been made to extend the war, it is known here that guerrilla strikes against the Communists have been increasing since last summer...

Key factor in the current raids is airlift provided by Air America, a U.S. Cargo company (which) camouflages its U.S. Governmental sponsorship. U.S. military advisors here are optimistic that extending the war beyond the borders, plus a stable Government in Saigon will force the Communist insurgency to collapse in a year..

Special forces - now one tenth of the half-million South Vietnamese under arms---are not connected with formal military organisation. They rely on Air America using numerous secret airstrips in South Vietnam and Thailand.

Last Fall, when U.S. officials decided it was impossible to win the war by confining it inside South Vietnamese borders, they began an expanded program of training special forces at secret bases emphasising techniques of operating beyond national borders."

(Taken from Aviation Week, 6 April 1964: PLEASE NOTE DATE).

- (3) We have already aided and abetted the extension of the war beyond the borders of South Vietnam. I am fearful that as the proof of that becomes clearly established - as I believe it can be - we may wake up some morning to find charges being levelled against us in the United Nations because I do not believe we have any international law basis for being in South Vietnam as a combatant.

(Senator Wayne Morse in U.S. Senate on 14 April 1964: PLEASE NOTE DATE).

- (4) W.W. Rostow's Plan Six provides initially for a naval blockade of Haiphong, the port of Hanoi. If Hanoi still refuses to call off support, the northern ports should be bombarded from the sea, and finally U.S. strategic bombers should attack Hanoi itself, if necessary flying the South Vietnam flag.

Source: James Cameron in Daily Herald for 4 March 1964: PLEASE NOTE DATE.

- (5) Secretary of State Dean Rusk told SEATO Nations, U.S. absolutely committed to remain in South Vietnam and reiterated that the war may be brought to North Vietnam soon. (N.Y. Times, 10 April 1964).
- (6) U.S. planned South Vietnamese bombing attacks on the North may commence as soon as late May or early June. (Wall Street Journal 13 April 1964).
- (7) An expanded war in Asia could only be won if we used nuclear arms: Wayne Morse after secret briefing by Dean Rusk (I.F. Stone's Weekly, 16 March 1964).
- (8) The grim thing about Plan Six is that it has no end. If Hanoi must be bombed, ...Shanghai must be bombed to stop Chinese help to North Vietnam... (James Cameron in Daily Herald - 4 March 1964).
- (9) On 30 July, U.S. warships intruded into the Northern territorial waters of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and shelled Hon Me and Hon Ngu islands. On 1 and 2 August, U.S. planes bombed a border post and village of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The bombing of coastal towns of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on 5 August was a pre-meditated move by U.S. imperialism to extend the war step by step. (Office of the Charge d'Affaires of China in London - 6 August 1964).

Further data on Experimental Warfare conducted by U.S.

- (1) "We supply a phosphorous explosive fired from artillery and from fighter bombers which erupts in a white cloud, burning everything it touches." (Associated Press from Saigon, 21 March 1964 in Baltimore Sun).
- (2) "The spectacle of children half alive with napalm bombs across their bodies was revolting to both Vietnamese and Americans...". (Associated Press in Washington Star, 22 March 1964).

Report by Democratic Party on Atrocities:

- (1) "Supposedly the purpose of the fortified villages is to keep the Viet-Cong out. But barbed wire denies entrance and exit. Vietnamese farmers are forced at gunpoint into these virtual concentration camps. Their homes, possessions and crops are burned..In the province of Kien-Tuong, seven villagers were led to the town square. Their stomachs were slashed, their livers extracted and put on display. These victims were women and children. In another village, a dozen mothers were decapitated before the eyes of compatriots. In still another village, expectant mothers were invited to the square by government forces to be honoured. Their stomachs were ripped and their unborn babies removed...." (Published in Dallas Morning News, 1 January 1963).
- (2) "Decapitations, eviscerations and the public display of murdered women and children are common...685,000 have been maimed by firearms or torture..." From report by Democratic Party of Vietnam to International Commission on 18 October 1962).
- (3) "In the cells of more than one thousand prisons in South Vietnam, some 100,000 women and 6,000 children are at present condemned to a slow death. Many children have been there six years now. Others were born in prison and died there." Ma Thi Chu of National Liberation Front.

(Note coincidence of reports from National Liberation Front and Democratic Party of Vietnam although the two organisations are politically opposed and the latter has offices in the U.S. and publishes there).

Programme of Liberation National Front:

"...To carry out without delay, real and broad democracy in which freedom of thought, expression, the press, organisation, assembly, demonstrations, trade unions and freedom to set up parties, political, social and professional organisations, freedom of movement, trade religion, worship, corporal liberties to be guaranteed by law for the entire people without any discrimination.

To stop persecution, arrest, detention of patriots and opposition, individuals and parties, to cancel the barbarous prison regime, especially torture, penitence, brain washing and ill-treatment of prisoners. To refrain from setting up in South Vietnam any form of dictatorial regime, either nepotie and militarist or set up by a group or party, and from carrying out a mono-party or mono-religious policy, a policy of dictatorship in ideology, politics, religions and economy.

Free general elections to elect organs and to form a national coalition Government composed of representatives of all forces, parties, tendencies and strata of the South Vietnamese people. .... a policy of neutrality, will not adhere to any military bloc, not let any foreign country station troops or establish bases in South Vietnam. Will accept aid from all countries, regardless of political regimes and establish friendly relations on an equal footing with all countries. Respect the sovereignty of all countries and form together with Cambodia and Laos a neutral zone on the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Reunification to be realised step by step on a voluntary basis with due consideration for the characteristics of each zone, with equality and without annexion of one zone by the other..."

Statement of Ho Chi Minh on neutrality

"...Neutrality for both North and South Vietnam and independence of Russia, China and America..(5 November 1963, Times).

Statement of W. Bedell Smith at Conclusion of Geneva Conference 21 July 1954:  
We take note of the agreements and of paragraphs 1 to 12 inclusive of the Final Declaration...The U.S. will refrain from threat or use of force to disturb them...and would view any renewal of aggression with grave concern (in violation of agreements) and threatening international peace and security."

Thus U.S. went on record in support of the Geneva Conference Report of 1954. U.S. troops are the only foreign troops in Vietnam.

The Guardian editorial of 11 August 1964 confirms rumours that the movement of the Seventh Fleet into the Gulf of Tonkin was calculated and directly related to naval attacks by the "South Vietnamese" navy:

"A new account is now emerging in Washington...The North Vietnamese islands of Hon Me and Hon Ngu had indeed been attacked from the sea, as Hanoi had alleged, before the crisis blew up; this is now admitted in Washington. The attackers were South Vietnamese ships, not the Seventh Fleet; but that distinction may not seem so significant in Hanoi as in Saigon and when at that point the US destroyer Maddox sailed into the Gulf of Tonkin....."

Plan Six should be kept in mind.

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