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A POLITICAL AND CULTURAL JOURNAL EXPLORING ISSUES
—— OF WAR & PEACE AND THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE ——

STAT

May 23, 1985

George V. Lauder, Director
Public Affairs
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Dear Mr. Lauder:

In the spring issue of Foreign Policy you say that "a major CIA initiative in recent years has been the dramatic expansion of its contacts not only with academics but also with think tanks and the private sector."

My personal experience, however, has been otherwise. Recently I contacted your office requesting an opportunity to have a meeting. This was denied, in what I consider an arrogant fashion. I am the editor and chief of INTERVENTION journal, which deals with military and foreign affairs from a noninterventionist perspecitive. Do you only talk with interventionist minded people? Is that the extent of the CIA's "dramatic expansion"?

I travel rather frequently, and have contacts with a variety of people outside the United States. [redacted] however, not STAT only declined my offer to talk--at least I think so, since she has not really given her final decision, but the negative was the last I heard after calling her--but has done so in an unappropriate fashion.

One can make allowances for ignorance, but an arrogant manner should not be tolerated.

Sincerely,

Thomas Nusbaumer

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INTERVENTION

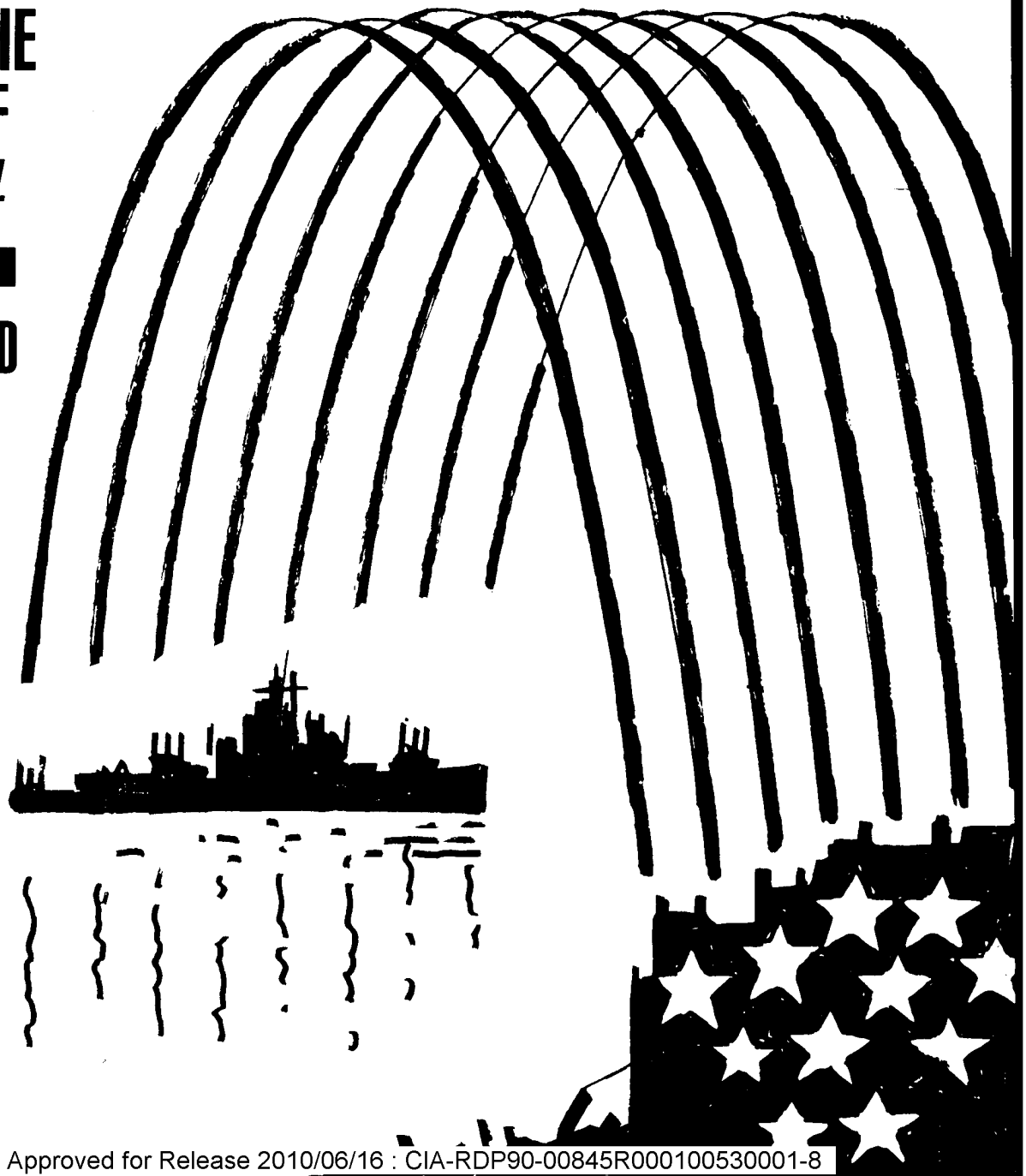
A JOURNAL ON WAR & PEACE & THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE

DEFENDING THE PERSIAN GULF
BY EARL C. RAVENAL

THE OVERLOOKED VICTIMS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

A REPORT FROM AFGHANISTAN

ALSO: FICTION & POETRY



Letters

WHY *INTERVENTION*

Dear Editor:

Thanks for getting out a publication I wish we didn't need, I hope will soon be outdated, and I fear will be essential for some time. I am very glad someone will help remember Vietnam so we can see the tragedies of great power interventions with the help of the past, and not steadily rediscover the wheel.

David McReynolds
New York, NY

Dear Editor:

Your statement of purpose, "Why Intervention?" was a well written, eloquent, and largely clear-sighted document. For the most part it seems to indicate an openness to exploring ideological, economic, racist, sexist, and militaristic roots of interventionism.... You expressed a determination to uproot the "culture of war" in all its forms and "to delegitimize military force as a tool for foreign policy and to substitute a genuine concern for human needs and human rights." Yet your very next sentence was a jarring move backward down the slippery slope towards closed minds—and another Vietnam War. By recognizing "the need for a military force to defend our vital interests and national security..." you have embraced a concept that surely is one of the roots of interventionism.

Sam Diener
Brooklyn, NY

VISIONS

Dear Editor:

Please consider devoting at least one page per issue to alternative visions, positive images of how different folks would will their future and their children's future. Visions of an exciting peace, a stimulating peace full of the fear and joy of life on this lovely planet, not full of rage and numbing dread. Visions of a vast, intricate web of life-affirming technologies that fit into a shining and sustainable vibrant peace of our self-fulfilling prophesy of the future.

Tom Hastings
Webster, WI

Dear Editor:

You traitorous bastards can go straight to hell!

R.E. Phelps
San Angelo, TX

MIAs

Dear Editor:

Those who have objective information on this issue [MIAs in Indochina, Spr., '84] will dismiss this article post haste and appropriately as uninformed.... The article is rife with selective thinking and erroneous facts....

Ann Mills Griffiths
National League of Families of POW/MIA
Wash., DC

Walter F. Wook responds: I do not make it a practice to write unsubstantiated articles. I check my sources and document my facts. Conversely I'd like to take this opportunity to call your attention to a piece of information touted by the League of Families as fact. In your organization's POW/MIA briefing, dated 5/8/84, it is stated that "The U.S. has very credible intelligence data that the remains of over 400 U.S. servicemen have been recovered and are being withheld." The allegation is yet another variation of the Vietnamese mortician story, also touted as fact. According to information obtained from the Defense Intelligency Agency and the Joint Casualty Resolution Center, the gentleman in question alleged having seen the remains of approximately 400 American servicemen in Vietnam. An initial polygraph examination of this person was conducted in Hong Kong by a non-Department of Defense agency. The results of that examination "revealed indications of deception regarding the mortician's responses about having seen American remains." Subsequently he was "brought to Wash., D.C. for several days of intensive interviews conducted by DIA's POW/MIA experts and a senior U.S. Army mortuary specialist." In a subsequent DIA polygraph, the mortician "responded to all questions with no indication of deception." But, according to JCRC representatives, he was not polygraphed for the portion of testimony of having actually seen American remains. To translate this information into "very credible intelligence" is a classic example of "selective thinking" and "erroneous fact."

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COVER: David Suter

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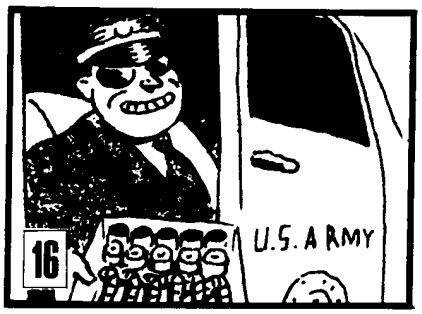
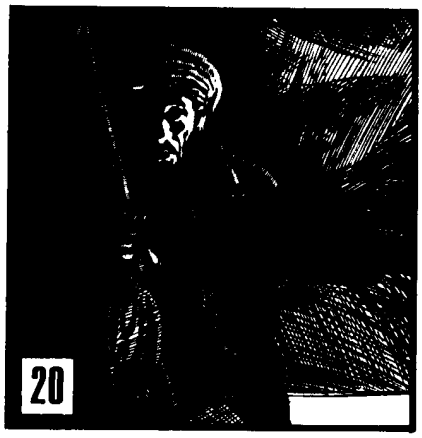




Editor's Comments / Tom Nusbaumer

A NON-INTERVENTION NETWORK

For a century the national debate over United States' foreign policy has been essentially restricted to isolationism and interventionism, portrayed to the American people as a choice between the dangerous policy of complete U.S. withdrawal from the world and the supposedly much safer policy of U.S. leadership and guardianship of the free world. Obiovusly a rigged debate. A third alternative, noninterventionism, wherein this nation would remain active in world affairs but not intervene militarily in other countries, has been ignored, or misidentified as isolationism.

Still, the vast majority of Americans harbor deep-seated anti-interventionary feelings. Most people simply don't want to pay the economic and human costs of military intervention, and often they do not believe that intervening in a foreign country will accomplish anything good. These beliefs, however, are easily suppressed by interventionists who inundate the public with warnings about our "lack of national will," the hazards of a "loss of U.S. credibility," and well formulated appeals for the demonstration of our military might. As one disabled Vietnam veteran recently said, "to have a violent foreign policy has become patriotic."

The major organized opposition to interventionism, solidarity and anti-imperialist groups, too often romanticize foreign revolutions and insist that the United States is the only country pursuing military intervention. These organizations have a serious credibility problem with the general public, Congress and the media, which has greatly assisted the interventionists as they rolled-over the "Vietnam Syndrome" on the way to Grenada, Beirut and Central America.

Anti-interventionary organizations, not only solidarity and anti-imperialist, but also peace and religious groups, focus almost exclusively on halting U.S. military intervention in one particular geographical area. Central America, of course, is the area most groups currently concentrate on, with less emphasis on the Philippines, Korea and the Middle East. Stopping particular interventionary acts is extremely valuable and commendable, but these successes will not add up to a policy of nonintervention. It is necessary to examine the generic problem of intervention and develop new guidelines for the use of military force. In not challenging the roots and overall policy of interventionism we will remain on the defensive, fighting intervention brush-fires throughout the world.

What can we do? We can hold symposiums on military intervention, arrange exhibits on the culture of war and create an alert system to monitor crisis situations; in short, form what could be called a Non-Intervention Network. However, unless the Network can establish solid credibility with policymakers, succeed in getting the media to discuss not only specific interventions but also interventionism, and most importantly, somehow broaden public support for nonintervention way beyond what exists today, we will be ineffective and unable to change our foreign policy. All of this may sound unrealistic in the present political atmosphere, but remember, after Barry Goldwater was trounced by the "peace candidate" Lyndon Johnson in 1964, the extreme Right regrouped and began a successful 15 year campaign to the White House. We may also need 15 years, until 1999, but what a great way to end the century.

"REHABILITATING" VIETNAM

With the return of the American hostages from Iran, the construction of the Vietnam veterans' monument, the burial of that war's unknown soldier, and the continuing revision of its history, the image of those who fought in the Vietnam War is being transformed. It was only a few years ago that Vietnam veterans were considered baby-killers, drug addicts and psychopaths. The vet we used to see so often depicted on TV and in the movies dressed in ragged fatigues, anti-social, psychologically crippled, and of course, violent, is now an historical artifact. Today the Vietnam veteran is portrayed in the media like any other flag-waving veteran, indistinguishable, except in the most superficial ways, from all other veterans from all other wars. At last America can feel comfortable with its veterans of the Vietnam War.

But war veterans, despite being bound by the common experience of combat, are not a single, uniform group. They are differentiated by the uniqueness of their wars. The poetic antiwar vets of World War I, the gung-ho patriots of World War II, the anonymous veterans of Korea, the deranged boys of Vietnam; each of these images is derived from the different combat experiences and social interpretation of each particular war. In turn, veterans become symbols for "their" war, and ultimately, I believe, inseparable from the meaning of that particular war.

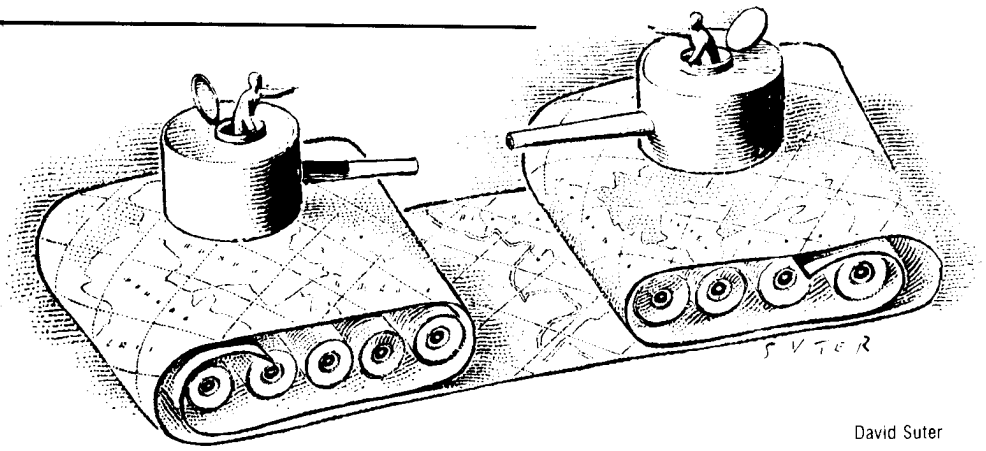
At the height of passion, the anti-Vietnam War movement did not separate the warrior from the war, and supporters of that war, past and present, do not separate the veteran from the war. In the 1970's, the general consensus of the American public was that Vietnam veterans were victims, objects of pity. The country was remorseful over the war. However, with the country's shift toward conservatism and the election of Ronald Reagan and his effort to re-cast the Vietnam War into a "noble cause," the popular image of the veteran changed to an object of pride.

During this 20 year evolution when the Vietnam veteran was transformed from prince to toad and back to prince again, and the war itself from moral to immoral to noble, the right-wing criticism of the anti-Vietnam War activist has remained constant. There has been no restoration of the activists' image, and with good reason. In rehabilitating the image of the Vietnam veteran, the Right is seeking to rehabilitate the image of the Vietnam War. A noble veteran helps to make a

noble cause. Conversely, the Right denigrates those who were against the war and would have us believe that the Americans who marched in the streets instead of the rice paddies were opportunists and cowards, and that the anti-Vietnam War movement is and always has been anti-American.

For two decades the extreme Right has pushed the notion that the antiwar movement undermined the effort of our soldiers in Vietnam. Those who refused the call and resisted the Vietnam War may soon be groomed for the principal role in a "stabbed in the back" theory of that war's outcome. With the passage of time and the distortion of memory it may be possible for this lie to gain broad public support, and even enter into official U.S. history.

If this occurs, then the cause for our defeat in Vietnam will be shifted entirely to the "liberal antiwar movement" and their conspirators in the media, and farther away from those who are really responsible. A new generation of potential antiwar activists could be intimidated into silence and unable to successfully resist new wars with the same kind of people dying for the same old lies. Then the worshippers of military force will have at last won the Vietnam War.



David Suter

NON-ALIGNED EUROPE?

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1980, 114 nations in the United Nations General Assembly voted "for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan"; only 21 countries did not support this resolution, among them the countries of Eastern Europe, the Soviets' closest allies. Four years later when the United States invaded Grenada and the U.N. vote was 108 to 9 against that invasion, Western Europe voted *for* the nonintervention resolution and condemnation of the U.S. action.

Similarly, when the Soviet Union boycotted the summer Olympics in Los Angeles, every Eastern European country except Rumania supported the boycott. When the United States boycotted the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, Western European nations, with the exception of West Germany, refused to support the boycott.

Today, Western European governments, encouraged by their citizens, no longer unequivocally support U.S. foreign policy. In fact, in nearly all quarters of Western European society both superpowers are being severely challenged. At a major disarmament conference this summer in Perugia, Italy, which included representatives of virtually every major disarmament group in Western Europe, the Soviet Union was the target of harsh criticism, and was even jeered when its delegation attempted to defend itself. An observer to the conference stated that "the time is past when much of the European Left harbored more tender feelings for the Soviet Union than for the United States."

In the tense Cold War atmosphere of the 1950's and 1960's, when "our superpower right or wrong" could have been the guiding principle of most countries' foreign affairs, it was impossible for Europeans to even contemplate nonalignment as a policy. But in Western Europe today, the successor generation's leaders have no qualms about portraying the "balance of power" as the balance of terror, and divided Europe as the pawns of the superpowers, foretelling a possible future of non-alignment.

The division of Europe was created out of the fear of military invasion from the opposite ideological camp. For four decades, however, since the separation of Europe, the only invader has been the Soviet Union and the only countries invaded have been members of its own bloc: East Berlin in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968, with the almost annual threat of other military interventions, e.g., Poland. In Europe it is clearly the Soviet Union which has shown a willingness and ability to resort to military force to control its allies.

Soviet military intervention has certainly made it more difficult for Eastern European nations to resist the pressures of the Soviet Union. Most Eastern European governments, however, continue to press for more independence, and there have been some real successes: Rumania in foreign policy and Hungary with its economy. But the 1984 Olympic boycott and the Soviet's recent success in halting Erich Honecker's trip to West Germany (which would have been the first for an East German leader), exemplifies the Soviet Union's continuing control over its allies in Eastern Europe, while the example of Afghanistan shows the Soviets are still willing and able to invade a neighboring country.

With the increased economic interdependence of all of Europe, the redevelopment of a European self-identity, and the continuing example of Western Europe's independence from the United States, the alliance's "glue of fear" will continue to dissipate. The Soviet Union will be confronted with a major decision: the continuation of military invasions or the acceptance of a redefined relationship with Eastern Europe. Neither choice leads to a non-aligned Europe, which is way off, but a Soviet pledge not to militarily intervene would be an important historical step encouraging the trend of a Europe free from both superpowers. □

THE LEAST WE CAN DO

The Vietnam Babylift and the Aftermath

BY DANNY SCHECHTER

I. A Blow to the Heart

Wars are cruelest to children. Vietnam was no exception. What memory of the war is complete without the images of a napalmed girl screaming on Highway 1, the homeless shoeshine boys scrambling for food in the garbage cans of Saigon, and the nearly one million orphans. No one who was there will ever forget the children. In the closing hours of the war, during the month that the war ended, an effort was made to bring Vietnamese orphans—or those thought to be orphans—to the United States. The Air Force sent its largest plane to launch "Operation Babylift." That first plane crashed. Ninety-eight of the nearly two hundred-fifty children perished in a tragedy that devastated the beginnings of the evacuation effort.

That horror was instantly relayed to a stunned world. "A blow to the heart," was what ex-CIA agent Frank Snepp called it in his Vietnam memoir. "Too unbearable to believe," wrote Arnold Isaacs of the *Baltimore Sun*. The survivors were quickly airlifted to waiting families in the United States and overseas, but they did not escape unscathed. Doctors say that most or all of these children are now suffering from chronic brain damage caused in all likelihood nine years previously by the air disaster in Saigon.

Danny Schechter is a television producer and radio broadcaster.

II. Saigon, April 1975

The "decent interval" was over. South Vietnam had a month to live as a separate entity. In Washington, the Ford Administration scrambled feverishly to head off the inevitable. The President and his advisors argued that an infusion of arms could stabilize the situation. A war-weary Congress was not being receptive.

In Saigon a number of childcare agencies were scrambling to find places to fly the orphans in their care out of the country. Friends For All Children, a Denver-based group, ran four Saigon nurseries filled with children they wanted to evacuate to the U.S. and Europe. Their supporters in Connecticut were trying to raise money for a plane. They wanted a 747 but the commercial airlines were not being responsive. Pan Am and Air France would give nothing but vague replies to requests for charter aircraft. The U.S. Embassy was of no help initially because Ambassador Graham Martin reportedly feared that any official evacuation would stir panic.

Matt Mahurin

Enter Ed Daley, the pistol-packing President of World Airways who offered free tickets out on one of his planes. The Embassy declared Daley's plans unsafe, perhaps because they were alarmed by his flamboyant publicity-seeking antics like his "last flight to Danang" where refugees literally hung off of his plane while it took off, Daley beating their hands off the open hatchway as the plane lifted. According to the childcare workers, Daley insisted that the evacuation be "performed in an action-packed" manner for effective television coverage. An airlift under his sponsorship might make World Airways look good but could embarrass the government.

Then someone got a bright idea. A highly publicized, officially backed airlift might stimulate a wave of renewed sympathy for the plight of South Vietnam. If Daley had his uses for the flight, so might the U.S. government. The Ford Administration seized on the idea, proclaiming "Operation Babylift," a program to bring Vietnamese orphans to America and in the process dramatize and humanize the attempt to save Saigon. "It's the least we can do. We will do much, much more," declared President Gerald R. Ford on April 2, 1975 in a nationally televised press conference. "Marvelous propaganda" is how Ambassador Martin reportedly described it to an aide. Publicly the Embassy explained that the Ambassador's concern "was simply the welfare of the children."

At Martin's urging the South Vietnamese government agreed to cut through the red tape governing foreign adoptions. Dr. Phan Quang Dan, the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Welfare, sent a letter to his colleagues predicting that "when these children land in the United States, they will be tremendous." In North Vietnam, Prime Minister Phan Van Dong denounced the babylift as "criminal," likening it to a mass kidnapping.

President Ford was upbeat about the announcement. He explained we would be airlifting two thousand orphans "all in the process of being adopted by American families." This statement was inaccurate. Many of the children were bound for families in Europe and Canada as well as in the U.S. More importantly, there was no way of being absolutely certain that all of the babylift children were even orphans. In fact, more than 100 babylift "orphans" would ultimately be returned to their natural parents after ugly legal battles. Oddly, at the press conference, Ford specified the precise type of aircraft to be sent: "I have directed that C5A aircraft and other aircraft especially equipped to care for these orphans during the flight be sent to Saigon." At the time this contradiction went unnoticed. The C5A is a cargo plane, not at all "especially equipped" to care for people, much less tiny babies. The C5A was a plane which for years had been caught up in controversy over massive cost overruns, design and safety problems.

Furthermore, the C5A was not the only plane that might have been used. Commercial planes were later chartered for the babylift. The Air Force also had more appropriate planes nearby. Four fully-equipped medical planes were based in the Philippines. There was even a C141, a smaller version of the C5A, in Saigon which took off empty while the passengers crowded on board flight 80-218, the inaugural plane sent to pick up the children. Why this plane? Those who say the choice was not unusual cite the plane's size and flying range, the fact that it was built for airlifts and flown by the Military Airlift Command which was assigned to organize the babylift. But lawyers representing the surviving children put forth another hypothesis: that the C5A was sent to rehabilitate the aircraft's image at a time when Lockheed was on the ropes financially and politically, a time when the Congress was being asked to spend millions more on repairing the plane.

III. The Military-Lockheed Complex

April, 1975 was not a good time for the Lockheed Corporation. The company, which faced bankruptcy in the late sixties only to be bailed out with government help, was surviving on 90-day notes its bankers were rolling over. Senator Frank Church was about to launch his probe into an overseas corporate bribery scandal that would implicate Lockheed, topple the corporation's top management and send shock waves through several governments. The C5A itself was embroiled in a heated controversy. Cracks had surfaced on the airplane's wings indicating that they were too light for the plane's load. They had to be replaced at an enormous cost. It is this context that leads the children's lawyers to argue that the C5A was not dispatched to Saigon for humanitarian reasons. A successful mission of mercy, they argue, would show the world how vital the Lockheed jet could be. They believe there was collusion between Lockheed and its Air Force friends to use the babylift to give the C5A a chance to share in the good publicity that would flow from the operation and its media campaign, well orchestrated by the Ford Administration.

The plane arrived at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport during the lunch hour. The C5A is a huge plane: six stories high from wheel to tail, with a 223-foot wingspan. "I never saw such a big plane," one of the children, Ly Vo, would say later. "We didn't think it would get off the ground."

The plane was the 21st of the 84 Galaxies that Lockheed built for the Air Force on its vast production lines in Marietta, Georgia. The C5A is almost as long as a football field and is capable of carrying 250,000 pounds. Orville and Wilbur Wright's first flight could have taken place entirely within the bowels of this giant transport.

C5 number 80-218 had been flown in from Clark Air Base in the Philippines, its last stop on a flight that originated in California, hopped east to Georgia to pick up a load of howitzers and then flew west to Saigon to drop them off. The plane had flown halfway around the world to pick up its new cargo: babies. Newsmen at the airport filmed the unloading, watched as the vast rear doors swung open with a giant ramp clanking down into place. Trucks drove right into the plane's belly to drag artillery

pieces onto the runway. To open the doors, a loadmaster had to unlock a complex system of 14 interconnecting latches which had a tendency to slip out of rig.

After the accident, the lawyers for the survivors would discover just how dangerous the system was. It was so complex that many mechanics couldn't understand it or fix it. In 1971, an Air Force study called the doors a "monster system" which, if unrepaired, could lead to a "catastrophe." These are strong words for a military study. But not much was done. There were many incidents officially acknowledged involving locking system malfunctions, including one when a door fell off in flight less than two months before the C5A was sent to Saigon. Court documents reveal that both Lockheed and the Air Force knew about the problems, but there was no "fix" prior to the accident because of a quarrel about who would pay for it. According to trial depositions, even Lockheed's own engineers had recommended improvements, but the company's management vetoed the work until the Air Force agreed to pay for it. The Air Force rejected one Lockheed proposal for a cost-plus contract for just such a fix because the military procurement officials felt Lockheed had a responsibility to build a safe plane. Neither Lockheed nor the Air Force made the issue a priority or a matter of safety.

IV. Flight 80-218

Captain Dennis Traynor was plane 80-218's veteran commander. He had received the order to pick up the orphans only a day earlier during a stopover at the Clark Air Base in the Philippines. When asked, he told his superiors that he could "combat load" as many as 1,000 children. He asked them if he could offload his military cargo first to another C5A also on the ground at Clark but was summarily denied. He did his best to ready the plane for its new mission: he had containers of milk, box lunches, and baby bottles loaded aboard. Flight nurses and medical corpsmen were assigned to the flight which had been designated a top priority mission. In fact, the plane was dubbed "The President's Plane" in honor of who would be meeting it when it landed in California.

The boarding was a noisy affair. The C5A has two decks. The troop compartment upstairs with 75 seats was filled first. The infants were strapped in, two to a seat. Nurse Christy Lieverman and the others tending the children had to stand. Downstairs, in the giant doubledecker, the scene was even more chaotic. Over one hundred older children, several medical corpsmen, and Embassy personnel being evacuated under babylift cover were stretched out on the steel floor. Cargo straps substituted for seat belts. There were no toilets, not even enough air sickness bags. Most importantly, there was not enough oxygen on board for emergencies.

"Try and picture a hundred children, screaming, hollering, carrying on. Lots of confusion," Lieverman recalls bitterly. "Children aren't cargo. Children are people. They belong in seats. They don't belong on the floor of an airplane, particularly with luggage strapped into one side of them." Remember, this was to be a twenty-hour flight.

With the passengers on board, the crew prepared for takeoff. In the cockpit they discussed a high altitude flight plan, climbing up to 37,000 feet to get over some turbulent weather. Incredibly, as the children were loaded aboard, crew members had second thoughts about the safety of the mission. A cockpit recorder taped a prophetic discussion about exactly what would soon happen. "If we are up at 37 [*i.e., 37,000 feet*] and we have rapid decompression, we're gonna lose someone." And again, they noted the lack of oxygen, both upstairs and below. "Those babies, they ain't gonna get 'em all out in time." But the airport loadmaster ordered them to proceed and they taxied for takeoff. At 4:03, the 75-ton machine lumbered down the runway and rose toward the clouds. In 12 minutes, 80-218 would reach an altitude of 23,752 feet, four miles high.

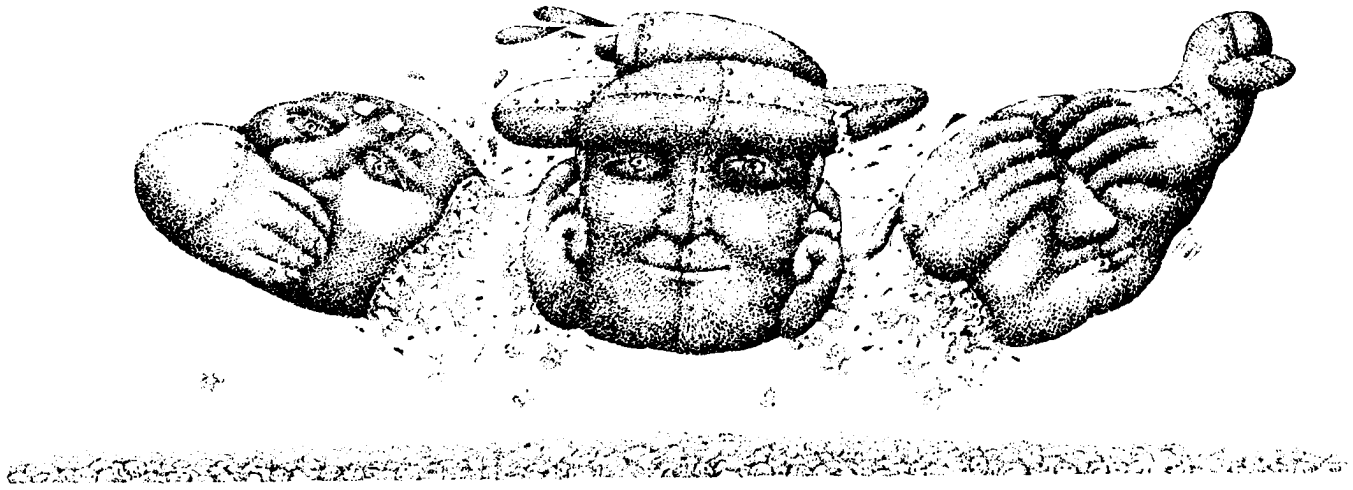
Christy Lieverman was in the rear galley upstairs filling baby bottles when she heard the explosion. Susan Derge, then twenty, who had volunteered to help out on the flight, was standing towards the front of the troop compartment and heard a more muffled sound. Medical technician Phil Wise was downstairs in the cargo area. He just happened to be looking towards the back of the plane.

"We had no warning," he recalls. "It was just a loud explosion all at once, and I looked back and saw the doors falling off like they never were attached. And blankets and debris flying throughout the aircraft, bodies flying, and a lot of screaming."

In 3/10ths of a second all the oxygen left the pressurized aircraft. And not just air. Wise saw crew members sucked out of the plane. "Our crew members that were back there at the time—they all went out the aircraft....It was horrifying...it was a powerful suction...just took everybody off their feet....I felt like I was gasping for air, and you could not get air. And I didn't have time to get scared. My reaction was, 'This shouldn't be happening.'" Wise estimated that he passed out within 20 seconds. Ly Vo, one of the children on the floor of the cargo compartment, reported the same sensation: "It hurt really a lot...I couldn't stand the pain any more. Both ears!"

Upstairs, a floor above the exploding clamshell-like doors, Christy Lieverman remembers the plane getting cold, the children first becoming quiet, and then passing out. "I just assumed we were all going to die." She looked down and could see the South China Sea through a gaping hole. That frightened her even more because she couldn't swim.

The oxygen masks upstairs popped free of their compartments but many didn't work. They were designed for adults and were too big for the infants' tiny faces. Most couldn't reach them anyway, so the children had to be picked up and held close to the masks. Some were turning blue. Air Force personnel worked with the other attendants sharing whiffs of oxygen with some of the babies.



Peter Sis

"Most of the children were unconscious at the time of descent," Susan Derge remembers.

Their oxygen masks on, the Captain and his crew were facing a formidable task. Not only were the doors gone, but a flying piece of metal had severed the control cables. They had little navigational capability. With only the power of his engines, Traynor turned the C5A around, heading back towards Saigon. By banking and rolling, increasing and decreasing power, he managed to get on an approach to the runway. But the 300,000 pound plane was losing altitude fast. Traynor had to keep the nose up as it fell towards the ground. He applied power as it was going down, a risky but only half-successful maneuver.

"I had to add max power in the dive," he reported afterwards. "The nose pitched down rapidly and the addition of maximum throttle would not bring the nose back up." The vertical velocity was 500-600 feet per minute when they touched down in an open rice paddy just two miles short of the runway. The plane was going too fast and couldn't stop. It bounced back into the air and crossed the Saigon river, hitting an irrigation dike. The wings kept flying, the cockpit went one way, the troop compartment another.

"The lights went out," Traynor noted in an Air Force report. "I felt the nose seem to furrow down and soon it was dark. We slowly rolled, inverted, and suddenly it was stone quiet. I was alive."

The plane had literally come apart into four sections. Most of the crew walked away from the cockpit. The tail was torn off and the wings flew on by themselves until they burst into flame. The troop compartment with its babies two to a seat slid at least one thousand feet, many of its occupants shaken but alive. The downstairs—the huge cavernous cargo hold—was pulverized. Only six children and a few adults miraculously survived. "They found me hanging upside down with my leg twisted around a wire," says Phil Wise. "My eyeball hanging out and my head laid open." Wise says he was saved only because rescue workers recognized his uniform and didn't want his body to burn up.

Ly Vo was also downstairs, one of the few older children who lived. She was thrown out of the plane, into the rice paddy. "My body was in pain. I gave a scream and an American guy in a helicopter saw me move and came to get me." She would live in a full body cast for years. Most of the other human cargo—153 people—perished.

V. Aftermath

Anh Traer, born Bui Thi Kim Hoa, is eleven years old now. She was babylifted to America on that first flight. She's a pretty girl who wears large glasses. Only when she takes them off is it clear that she's Asian as well as Black. "My brain cells were crushed, that's all," is how Anh understands her problem. Anh and most of the babylift survivors suffer from Minimal Brain Dysfunction or MBD, an often incapacitating illness characterized by hyperactivity, learning disabilities and frequent emotional outbursts.

Doctors retained as part of the children's lawsuits link these MBD problems to the air crash. Dr. Steven Feldman, a Rhode Island pediatrician and psychiatrist, examined some of the survivng children and studied all of their records. He believes: "The plane crash caused the Minimal Brain Dysfunction by exposing these infants to a variety of conditions: a degree of lack of oxygen; a degree of what's called deceleration or slowing down; a degree of explosive decompression; an impact, fumes, a number of factors which we'll probably never fully understand in the crash caused damage and insult to their brains."

Through a process of intense neurological and psychological exams, doctors retained in the lawsuit found that virtually all of the C5A crash survivors showed some MBD symptoms. One is now institutionalized; at least two are suicidal.

VI. All My Trials

It's been nine years since lawyers, acting on behalf of the 150 survivors, filed suit in federal court against

Lockheed, the company that made the C5A that crashed. Lockheed in turn brought the Air Force into the case as a third party. Together they spent an estimated ten million dollars mounting an aggressive defense that turned the case, in the words of Trial Judge Lewis Obdorfer, into "one of the most protracted, costly, and bitterest litigations in the history" of his federal district court. Like the war it grew out of, the case has become a political and ethical quagmire—in the words of *The Washington Post*, a "judicial horror story."

By 1984, more than half of these "babylift children," 92 out of 150, are still waiting resolution of their lawsuits. All 92 now live with adoptive families *outside* the United States. They were left out of a settlement reached in 1982 in which Lockheed and the government agreed to pay $300,000 per child who lived with U.S. families. The children's lawyers contend that the exclusion was part of a deliberate campaign to prolong the litigation. In March of 1984 a jury awarded $660,653 to a Vietnamese child, now living in France, who survived the crash. However, despite the settlements and that latest jury verdict, the remaining cases could drag on for another decade, lawyers say. Lockheed's lawyers—who are paid by the insurance company—no longer contest the role of C5A defects in the accident. Instead, these trials are fought over two questions: were the surviving children really hurt in the crash, and if so, what are their injuries worth? As one Lockheed lawyer puts it, "How much should you pay for a damaged brain?"

Lockheed's doctors scoff at the plaintiffs' claims, suggesting non-crash related causes to explain away whatever problems exist. They deny that the children are brain damaged. Lawyers for the children honestly believe that there has been a virtual conspiracy between Lockheed and the government to suppress evidence, conceal the cause of the crash, and cover up the illegalities. They have, they say, evidence which they believe could cost their opponents millions in punitive damages.

It emerged later that the Air Force had destroyed "hundreds, perhaps thousands of photographs, negatives, and slides of the crash scene and wreckage." One Air Force official who admitted burning the documents said he didn't know why they should have been saved as evidence. He said the destruction was "routine." The Trial Judge would later call this destruction "intentional" and "questionable." This act would trigger charges of cover-up that would still be unresolved and the subject of continuing litigation nearly a decade later. Judge Oboderfer, citing Court of Appeals delays, said, "Once in a great while, a case comes before this court which makes one wonder whether the judicial system is still equipped to deal with a litigant determined to frustrate the workings of justice. Unfortunately, this is such a case."

In addition to subverting the judicial system, the delays have had even more devastating effects upon the children. Charles Work, the court-appointed legal guardian for the children, has said that "these children, because of the delay, have deteriorated. These people have in effect perpetuated a terrible outrage on these children because these children could be better off for the rest of their lives if they had gotten treatment earlier." Work believes that Lockheed has pursued a "scorched earth defense," dragging out the procedures every way that they could in hopes of wearing down the plaintiffs.

The thrust of the defendants' legal case has been to show that the accident was not all that severe, that the oxygen loss was not serious, the descent no worse than an "amusement park ride," and the crash landing "gentle" for the children in the top of the plane. The defendants' legal briefs take all of the horror out of the crash, referring antiseptically to the plane's destruction as "the erosion of its structural integrity." Lockheed's ability to win new contracts from Congress was not impeded. As David Keating of the Conservative National Taxpayers Union puts it: "Not only has Lockheed not suffered from this crash, but from what I can tell, Lockheed has done very well with future contracts from the Air Force not only to fix problems with the plane, but in fact, to get a new order from a whole set of new planes."

In fact, after the crash, Lockheed stuck with its position that the C5's locking system was adequate. The Air Force demanded modifications—which the company ultimately made on the usual cost-plus basis.

At this point, on the eve of a new trial, faced with information that vital evidence had been suppressed or withheld, Lockheed and the government decided to settle the cases of the American families for a little more than $300,000 per child. They would not concede on the liability question directly but in an acceptable legal flim-flam agreed not to contest causation if the plaintiffs promised not to press for sanctions for misconduct and punitive damages. Significantly, they also agreed to compensate each child irrespective of the "individual differences" they had been stressing for years. In some cases, children who were never examined received cash awards.

In 1982 the attorneys who had been working without fees on a contingency basis accepted the out-of-court settlement with the parents' approval. With the government picking up a good part of the tab, it was a $13.5 million deal. Guardian Work insisted on using a chunk of the money for a special trust to set aside funds for any children who were eventually hospitalized or severely troubled. The children's lawyers split a $3.3 million fee for their three years of work. Each family was left with little more than $125,000 for a lifetime of costly care for medical and educational problems. Many comparable accident claims involving brain damage often produce multi-million dollar individual settlements in other courts. "We did not believe the $300,000 per child was enough, far from it," explains Work, "but we had little money left to keep fighting the lawsuit. Their strategy of delay wore us down."

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DEFENDING PERSIAN GULF OIL

BY EARL C. RAVENAL

High on the list of objects of American foreign policy that are often declared essential is the Persian Gulf. This region stands as a surrogate for the whole question of our assured access to resources—in this case, oil—that are held to be virtually irreplaceable in acceptable terms and are subject to interdictions by powers and interests inimical to the United States and its allies.

No doubt this is a serious matter. But expressions of the importance of an interest do not entail our extending military protection to it. This is not to deny the interest involved; and it is not to deny the potential challenges to this interest. Neither the interests nor the threats are fictitious. But they are not absolute or infinite, either. Interests must be weighed; responses must be compared. Proposed actions must be arrayed against each other, and against inaction.

Even advocates of curtailing our containment of the Soviet Union to a "selective" effort would continue our defense of the Persian Gulf against indigenous or external threats—a spectrum that ranges from resource blackmail to actual invasion. A weighty case is made to the effect that this region is the linchpin of the Western alliance. Our allies' dependence on oil from this region is, indeed, much more abject than ours. It follows that, if the Soviets were to control this region, they could subordinate Europe. If local countries, dominated by either Marxist or Islamic revolutionaries, could threaten to deprive the West, they could exact all sorts of concessions or bring about financial and industrial collapse.

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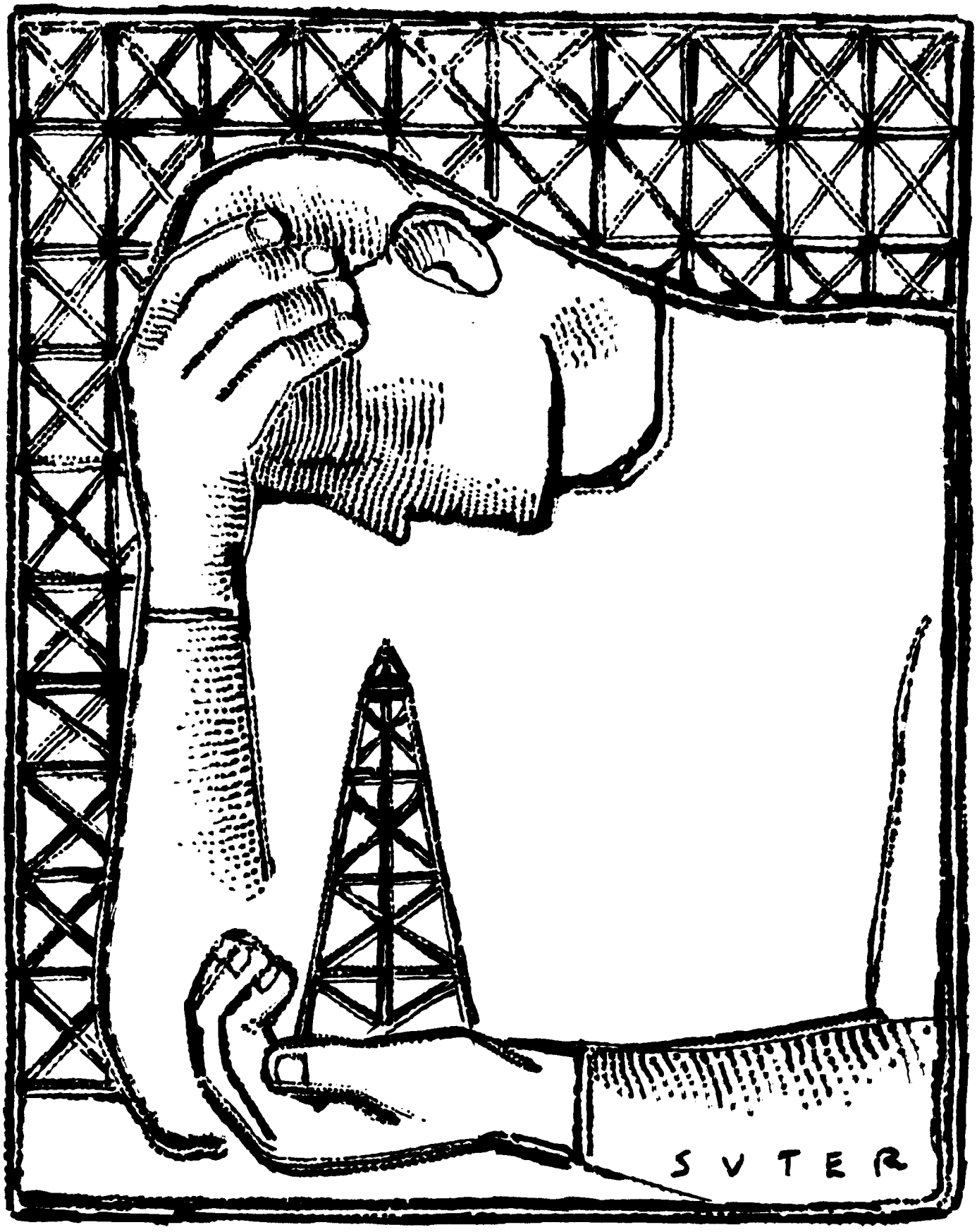


David Suter

But, ironically, the unintended effect of such apocalyptic scenarios is to provoke us to reevaluate our alliances. Under the circumstances evoked by the proponents of enhanced defense of the Gulf, Western Europe and Japan would become liabilities to the United States, rather than assets. And, the more urgent and exacting the measures necessary to defend the Gulf, the more the argument from necessity raises the ulterior question of whether the United States could "do without" Western Europe and Japan, in the sense of relinquishing our protection and letting them make their own accommodations.

Whatever its propriety, undertaking the defense of a "new" area is not cost-free. The Carter Doctrine of January 1980, for example, specified and militarized a commitment which, to the extent that it had existed before, was only implied and mostly political. For some time after the enunciation of the Carter Doctrine, which promised an American military response to aggression in the Gulf, its consequences in terms of force allocations and defense budgets were masked—to the point where critics assailed the Doctrine precisely for being an empty declaration, unsupported by bases, deployments, and lift.

In response, the Carter administration moved to create the Rapid Deployment Force—initially a 100,000 plus group of Marine, Army, Air Force, and Navy units, only contingently available from other commands. Then it acquired or refurbished a series of stepping-stone bases in the western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea areas: Berbera in Somalia; Mobasa in Kenya; Masirah, off Oman; Bahrain, near the head of the Gulf; Ras Banas, along Egypt's Red Sea coast; in addition to Diego Garcia, in the mid-Indian Ocean, which has been held since 1966 jointly with the British, with facilities begun in the early 1970s and greatly expanded since then. It also put as many as sixty U.S. ships into the Indian Ocean at a given time, including two carrier task forces. The Reagan administration inherited these programs, and enhanced them, creating a new "Central Command," and increasingly orienting major forces—Army and Marine divisions, Navy carrier battle groups, and Air Force tactical air wings—to the missions of this command.

The point is that to take on the defense of additional regions eventually required tangible dedicated units, with airlift, sealift, and logistical sustenance. And a string of bases requires not just complaisant clients, but outlays, disguised as they might be, for military assistance, construction, economic aid, and other functions, sometimes even the internal rescue of friendly governments. So the cost of a doctrine that commits the United States to defend a "new" region is inevitably incremental. Commitments may be articulated in fine phrases, but they must be implemented by forces. In the case of the Gulf, since the overall U.S. force structure since 1976 has been increased only by one aircraft carrier and by the one "light" Army division to be created in fiscal year (FY) 1985, the "additional" forces for the Gulf must, in some way, come from forces previously allocated to Europe and, to a lesser extent, to Asia.

So the issue of costs cannot be escaped. The question is not whether it would be nice to have continued access to Persian Gulf oil on tolerable terms. It is, rather, whether it is feasible to fight for it, if access to it for ourselves or for our Western European and Japanese allies is threatened by the Soviet Union, a local proxy, or a revolutionary government, and therefore, derivatively, whether it makes sense to prepare, perpetually and at great expense, to do this.

A Calculus of Defensive Costs

How do we decide this question? The feasibility of this proposition can be assessed only by presenting a calculus, in terms of "expected losses," of contrasting courses of action, or inaction: to protect access to oil by American armed intervention, or to "let" the region slip into the hands of the Soviets, their proxies, or independent local revolutionaries.

It is not easy to calculate with exactitude the peacetime and wartime costs of defending—let alone not defending—an area such as the Persian Gulf. But that does not matter, since some of the terms we are discussing—the possible loss of economic strength and the possible devastation of war—are of gross magnitude, in *trillions* of dollars over the time the effects would be felt.

On one hand, peacetime military preparations, taken as the present portion of the defense budget attributable to the defense of this region for, say, ten years, compounded each year by a percentage comprising the projected real increases in defense spending and the expected rate of inflation; plus the expected loss in a regional conventional war; plus the expected loss in a nuclear war. On the other hand is the expected loss to our economy caused by the deprivation of oil for, say, ten years.

Before we assign values to the first element in this equation (or inequality), the cost of preparing for war, we must determine the present portion of the defense budget attributable to the defense of the Persian Gulf. To do that, we must analyze and allocate the entire defense budget, by types of forces and by geographical region. Consequently, I offer an anatomy and a methodology that enables a fairly confident and revealing attribution of defense expenditures to the regions we are committed to defend. The following figures are slices of the Reagan administration's originally requested 1985 defense budget authorization for $305 billion. This request includes strategic nuclear forces which come to about $70 billion, or 23 percent of the 1985 requested authorization. All the rest, $235 billion or 77 percent, is dedicated to general purpose forces—land divisions, tactical air wings, and surface naval units.

By my own estimates (derived from an analysis of Secretary Weinberger's 1985 "Posture Statement," presented to Congress on February 1, 1984), Europe will

continue to be the main beneficiary of American defense resources in 1985, accounting for $129 billion. Asia will absorb $47 billion. And an expanding requirement for Rapid Deployment Forces will take $59 billion, of which about $47 billion (or 75 percent—a rough and plausible apportionment) is for the Persian Gulf. In 1985, the Pentagon will continue to increase its primary allocation of forces to the Persian Gulf. It will begin to implement a plan to create as many as five additional "light" Army divisions, justified mostly by the Persian Gulf or Southwest Asia requirement, but without adding any significant manpower to the Army.

In these calculations, we attribute all forces either to the "strategic" or to the "general purpose" side of the ledger, and, in turn, attribute general purpose forces to some region of the world. Combat forces are costed on a full-slice basis. For failing to state the full costs of forces prevents us from linking defense dollars and manpower with the defense of regions of the world. It makes the linkage unintelligible. Both full-slice costing and the allocation of forces to regions of the world are necessary to making defense costs *intelligible*—that is, relating the primary inputs to the ultimate outputs. Perhaps that is why defense officials are so apparently intent on diffusing or obscuring these connections.

I judge that, for FY 1985, the Reagan administration intends the following regional attribution of a total of 20 active ground divisions: NATO/Europe, 11 divisions; East Asia, 4 divisions; Other Regions and the Strategic Reserve, 5 divisions (4 ⅓ Army and ⅔ Marine, with its double-strength air wing), 7 Air Force tactical air wings, and 2 Navy carrier battle groups, each with a tactical air wing—about 75 percent of which could be attributed to the defense of Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf. These allocations are likely to continue to change as proportionately more forces are "pointed" primarily at Southwest Asia and the Gulf, at the expense of Europe and East Asia. Applying these fractions to the total cost of our general purpose forces, $235 billion, we calculate the rough cost of our three regional commitments: NATO/Europe, $129 billion; East Asia, $47 billion; Other Regions and the Strategic Reserve, $59 billion. Multiplying the "Other Regions and the Strategic Reserve" requirement by 75 percent yields the present cost of defending the Persian Gulf region: $47 billion.

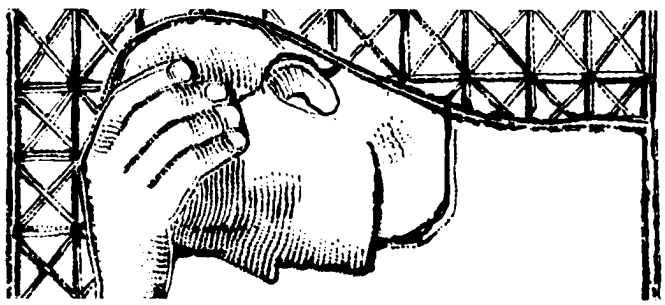
The Payoffs

Thus, to prepare, over ten years, to fight a war to defend Persian Gulf oil would cost, cumulatively, $727 billion. This figure also includes the projected real increases in defense spending and the expected rate of inflation. In addition, we might increase the chance of a regional war—say, a Vietnam-size war—by 5 percent (and the 1985 cost of such a war would be some 3¼ times more expensive than the $350 billion it had come to by 1975); and that yields an expected loss of some $57 billion. Further, we would court the risk, say even one percent, of a general nuclear war, in which the United States might lose one-third of its annual gross national product (at its current value of $3,692 billion), or $1,231 billion, for ten years—an expected loss of $123 billion (not to speak of the casualties and the loss of other precious values, both in war and in an extended period of increased governmental regimentation). The total of these three cost factors is $907 billion.

All this must be thrown into the balance against the consequences if the United States failed to defend and if some sequence of events resulted in the deprivation of oil. (In this calculation, I give every benefit of the doubt to the militant hawks.) America might lose 10 percent of its gross national product (even though Persian Gulf oil comprises less than 3 percent of our energy requirement), for as much as ten years, or a total of $3,690 billion, and this eventuality might become as much as 20 percent more probable—yielding an expected loss of some $738 billion.

So the total expected losses of war are greater than those of peace; the costs of defense exceed the consequences of disengagement. Very simply, the net value to us of protecting the Persian Gulf is less than zero and should cause us to take more seriously non-belligerent options for otherwise providing the energy that is at risk in this region.

Faced with the large ongoing and contingent costs of defense or occupation of the oilfields, we should, as an alternative, hedge against resource deprivation, creating alternative sources of supply through exploration, more intensive recovery, and research into substitute materials and processes. The costs of these moves should be born by private organizations and passed along to consumers in the form of prices that recover and reflect the true long-term costs of providing the commodities and services. It should be intuitively obvious that even expensive hedging moves are cheaper than the costs of a war to maintain access to these strategic commodities. Some national interests cost more to defend than they are worth.



David Suter is a frequent contributor to Intervention. *His illustrations also appear in* Time Magazine, The New York Times *and* Harper's Magazine.

THE FOURTH "R"

MILITARY RECRUITMENT IN OUR HIGH SCHOOLS

BY ERNEST DRUCKER

An Army recruiting ad appeared recently in *On Your Own*, "The magazine for high school seniors." Emblazoned across the glossy ad were the words "Father, Coach, Teacher, Leader, Friend....Sergeant." The ad depicts an Army Sergeant whose strong, confident face signals approval as he stands between the new recruits and us. The Sergeant—clean cut, in his late twenties, white—directs his gaze at the hidden face of a black recruit wearing identical and very clean camouflage fatigues. The scene radiates camaraderie, cohesion, and most crucially, acceptance. The magazine in which this ad appeared asserts on its masthead page that it is published "by the 13-30 corporation of Knoxville, Tennessee, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of Army," a strange disclaimer for a magazine containing the usual collection of articles geared to American high school seniors—articles titled "Changing Relationships," "What If I Hate College?" and "Summit to Sea," the tale of a heroic young woman adventurer. But as you leaf through *On Your Own*, you realize that this Army ad and the several others in the same issue are the *only* ads in the entire magazine. Ads which occupy exactly 25% of the magazine's 48 pages, and back cover! Suddenly the absence of a sale price on this glossy high school give-away and the publisher's disclaimer about its relation to the Army makes sense. *On Your Own* is recommended reading for the latest addition to the American high school curriculum—the fourth "R"—*Recruiting*.

"Be all you can be
Growing strong now, strong together
Be all you can be
You can do it in the Army."
(Army Recruiting Song)

It's 1984 and a couple of million kids are graduating from America's high schools. Now "on their own" indeed. But who cares? American business wants solid skills and

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good work habits—things not easily acquired in many of today's high schools. And once again, neatness counts—corporate America doesn't just want good behavior, it wants good attitudes and, if at all possible, good looks. A tough bill to fill for many 18-year-olds—especially for those who have attended grossly inadequate schools in communities which offer little support.

There's always Burger King! Minimum wage (less if Reagan has his way) and nowhere to go but the same job at McDonald's or Pizza Hut. Not very inspiring. College? College now costs $40,000-$50,000—counting tuition, living expenses and lost earning capacity. "So here's the plan....I'll go to college *later.*"

Enter the U.S. Army, the Marines, Air Force, and Navy. "We're looking for a few good men," and women, too. In 1983 alone, 91% of the 150,000 Army enlistees held high school diplomas.

The recruiters, often local types from the same ethnic background as the students they're addressing, come to the school auditorium and classrooms looking like a million bucks. Spit and polish. Serious members of the adult world who tell their personal stories, frequently of how military service saved them from the ghetto streets or an otherwise wasted youth. Simultaneously, color posters appear in the school entrance lobby or corridors, library, cafeteria, gym lockers or counseling area. The images of these posters which trade on the Madison Avenue, slick, TV sensibility, hold out the promise of excitement, education, competence, dignity, belonging, and self-respect. And, most importantly of all, images and words which communicate concern and optimism about the future. Who else in America is even coming close to such genuine interest in these kids?

Driven by an underperforming economy which always hits youth especially hard, today's high school graduates are the target of a thoughtfully engineered, well financed and professionally managed recruitment campaign without parallel in peacetime America. While debate continues about the political and social significance of our current all-volunteer armed services (now in its tenth year), each of its four branches have met their recruiting goals for the last three years. "We see no need to worry for at least the rest of the decade," says Dr. Lawrence Korb, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, quoted in a recent CCCO Newsletter. Dr. Korb's confidence must stem in part from the goldmine that military recruiters have struck in America's otherwise neglected high schools.

As far back as 1916, the U.S. Senate was presented with an "outline for military training in public schools," first applied in Wyoming and thereafter referred to as the "Wyoming Plan." Although principally designed to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of our armed forces, its proponents argued that this program would do more. It would also "inculcate high ideals and correct views on the duties of the citizen...by showing the value of obedience to superior authority...." Congress approved the Wyoming Plan and, by 1920, 45,000 students were enrolled in JROTC. Today over 1300 high schools have Junior ROTC programs which directly train students in military history, skills, tactics, organization and comportment. Nationwide enrollment now tops 100,000 and 29% of all high schools host such programs. But direct military training is only the tip of the iceberg. In fact, these JROTC programs enroll fewer than 10% of the student body in each school and are not the major source of new graduate enlistees. The really big numbers come through the far more extensive, aggressive and effective general recruiting activities now taking place in most high schools. These activities may include on-site administration of the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery)--an extensive screening test of skills and knowledge geared to the military's needs and interests, and on-site interviewing and counseling about opportunities in the armed services. The occurrence of these activities within the school setting lends legitimacy and enhances trust. There is also direct mail solicitation of students by the Army utilizing the schools' rosters of graduating seniors, an incredibly valuable asset for "marketing" military service. In some cases, the schools actually do the mailing for the military so that via his or her school, each graduating senior gets a personalized letter from an Assistant Secretary of Defense in Washington, D.C. "At last, somebody cares." And recently, some high schools have become partners in draft registration drives with, once again, clever posters and often one-sided counselling on students' responsibilities under current registration requirements.

In addition to direct military training and widespread recruiting activities in our high schools, the armed services provide a presence in other ways—exhibits of military history, technology and hardware or performances by military bands. These serve to orient and shape the perceptions of the entire student body. School staff may even be brought along on all-expense-paid junkets to visit distant, and for that reason if no other, interesting military facilities such as SAC bases or the NORAD command center on Cheyenne Mountain.

While each high school has the authority to restrict these activities, only a few choose to do so. There may be strong pressure from top school administration to "cooperate with the Armed Services," as one big-city Board of Education official put it in his directive to all high school principals and administrators, "in publicizing military service opportunities." But more likely, the military will be welcomed by school systems truly concerned about their graduates' future prospects—especially in areas of high unemployment. Indeed, military service is, with some justification, seen as a positive option by many high school administrators and counselors—an "Armed Job Corps" which can help students break out of the cycle of poverty and unemployment.

The students themselves do not miss the point. A 1983 study commissioned by the Army Recruiting Command found that economics was a powerful factor for students

opting for the military. The study, entitled "Measurement of High School Students' Attitudes Toward Recruiting Incentives," surveyed 5600 high school students and found that the three most important enlistment incentives were a guaranteed monthly salary, work experience in a skill that would lead to a civilian job, and retirement benefits. Black students gave even higher scores to a monthly pay check and added health and dental benefits as powerful incentives for enlistment. This pattern led John Kester, once an Army manpower specialist, to tell the *Christian Science Monitor* in 1983 that we have developed "an Army of the poor [who endure the] danger and inconvenience of military service... to protect society for the comfortable."

The 5th "R"—Resistance

Congressman Charles H. Randell, addressing the U.S. House of Representatives on a proposal to establish military training in high schools in 1916, said, "The training of children in military ideals, however well intended, is a retrograding step. It tends to lure them from gainful pursuits toward illusive militarism. And militarism strikes at civil freedom and in practice leads to tyranny."

As the presence of the military in schools has grown, so has organized resistance to it. Individual faculties, parent and student groups and some school boards have rejected ROTC programs, or attempted to curtail recruiter access and school collaboration. This resistance can run into problems, often related to the issues which loom largest for high school students and their advocates: jobs and future educational prospects. Thus anti-military groups (often white and middle class) can find themselves pitted against the perceived interests and values of local Black and Hispanic communities. A no-win situation for both sides.

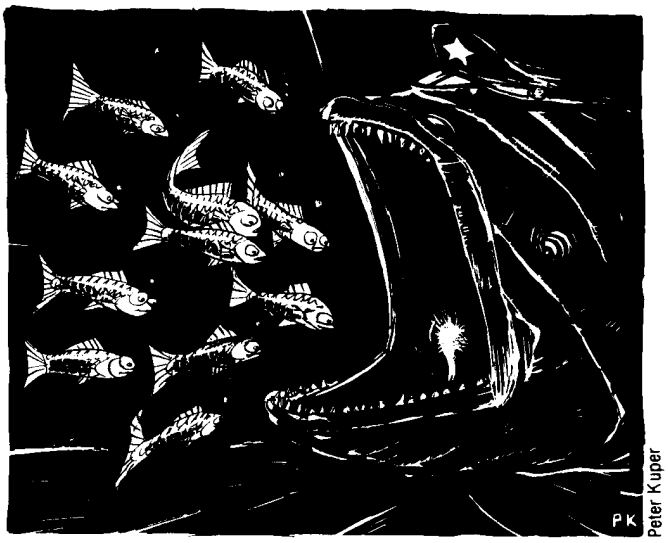
But now another, more far-reaching strategy of opposition to untrammeled military presence in schools has arisen. This is a legal approach based on a powerful argument already well-rooted in American public educational ideology—the doctrine of balance.

In January of 1984 a Chicago Federal District Court judge ruled that anti-military groups must be given *equal access* to students in those schools which admit recruiters or offer JROTC. Operating under this doctrine, Federal District Judge George N. Leighton ruled that "once a school opens its doors to outside groups," it may not "pick and choose" between them. A similar ruling was made in Florida in 1982 and related cases are now pending in Atlanta, Baltimore, San Diego, and Louisville. Plaintiffs in these cases include local chapters of Clergy and Laity Concerned, Quakers, anti-war groups, and local parents and community coalitions. They maintain (successfully now in two federal rulings) that if the military is presenting its point of view in public schools, then others should also be admitted in order to assure that students receive a "complete and balanced presentation of information pertinent to military service," and by implication, to the nature, role, and accountability of the military itself.

Local school board politics are already among the most emotional in the electoral arena, and are often bitterly fought. Recent school textbook controversies, and before that, bussing, gave a glimpse of the powerful feelings involved and of the far-reaching potential of Federal Court decisions. The relatively uncontested "occupation" of the high schools by the military may now precipitate a legal confrontation of great importance.

Schools are still one of the few areas of public life where local communities can and do make important decisions. Broad, well-informed citizen participation is possible and citizen empowerment, the essential ingredient for any democratic process, is assured. In this instance, local school boards and the constituencies they represent really do have the legal authority to make deliberate choices. Through these choices they can express their viewpoint on the military's role in our society and its presentation to successive generations of children. Here is a place where local citizens groups concerned with war and peace can at last negotiate from a position of some strength. We may even discover that this struggle contains within it the seed for a serious effort to present not only alternative *viewpoints* about the military, but to actually begin to establish the grounds for forms of alternative *service*, not restricted to the armed forces. Indeed, the presence of the military in our schools and the court battles already under way may open the school house door to many new possibilities for open dialogue at the local level with regard to military conduct and philosophy. If that door opens wide enough, the grass roots American peace movement can and should walk in and take a seat at the head of the class.

Steven Guarnaccia is working on a children's book to be published by Harper & Row. He teaches a seminar on satiric illustration at Pearsons School of Art.



Andrzej Dudzinski

DISPATCH FROM AFGHANISTAN

A British Physician Reports from a Medical Tour in the Mountains of Afghanistan

One of the few things on which the U.S. and U.S.S.R. are in agreement is the use of military intervention to get their way. While the United States mines Nicaraguan harbors, equips and helps train the Contra *army and sends "advisors" and extensive military aid to El Salvador, the Soviet Union is conducting full-scale war in Afghanistan. The Soviets' tactics are reminiscent of American military conduct in Vietnam, where ground operations were combined with heavy bombing of villages and civilian population. During the summer the Soviets mounted a new major offensive against Afghanistan's rural population. The Russians are attempting to clear rebels from those areas which could be used as bases for attack against the Soviets. It is estimated that one-third of Afghanistan's pre-war population of 15 million has been displaced.*

Yet, in over four years of military action and occupation, the Soviet Union has not succeeded in stopping armed resistance or in gaining popular support for its regime. The following article provides some insight into why

Chris Blatchley is the director of Health Unlimited, 20 Linden Gardens, London W2 4ES, England. After his return from Afghanistan, Dr. Blatchley formed Health Unlimited to give "primary health care to countries in conflict which receive very little in the way of aid."

BY DR. CHRIS BLATCHLEY

Afghanistan refuses to be pacified, and should be regarded as background briefing on the culture and politics of Afghanistan.

Chris Blatchley, a British physician, travelled in Afghanistan before the Soviet invasion and returned again last year to offer medical services in rural areas. His work was sponsored by Medecins sans Frontieres, a French medical aid group which provides care to "victims of natural catastrophes and war, without discrimination, operating with the strictest neutrality and complete independence. . . ."

The group specializes in rapidly sending trained medical staff to parts of the developing world where conventional relief organizations will not go. These are often war zones where doctors work alongside rebel or guerilla forces. Medecins san Frontieres has placed doctors in Beirut, Honduras, Ghana, Kurdistan, Eritrea, and most recently, El Salvador.

The Editors

In Pakistan it was 1982; in Afghanistan 1361 according to the Islamic calendar. Every kilometer I travelled I felt the sensation of going backwards in time, into a fiercely proud, feudal world where the "Wali," or local leader, controls his area—often with a hand of steel.

We crossed into Afghanistan without permission or visas, travelling over 500 kilometers of rugged, mountainous terrain to get to the Hazarat, a region with a racially distinct minority, about 100 kilometers or so from Kabul.

Our route, through nomad territory, has become a main supply line for goods and staple foods from Pakistan. Thirty or 40 vehicles use it at any one time. There is a frequent, albeit primitive, "bus" service.

Sangi Mosha, the main bazaar in Hazarat, has benefited from the Soviet presence. Kabul had been the major bazaar but those under 40—conscription age—can no longer travel there, so Sangri Mosha has expanded to become an important trading center for the whole of the Hazarat.

Local dignitaries are chauffeured at high speed in partly dismembered jeeps. Each has an entourage of heavily armed mujahadeen. The whole scene has an air of the Wild West. Many trucks came and went each day, including a couple of very modern Mercedes 20-tonners—but for most, life is frugal. There are no roads, electricity, or running water.

The Wali, like a feudal lord, demands at least 50 percent of his tenant farmers' crops as rent. In return he offers protection. Land is never bought or sold and remains entirely the property of male descendants.

The economy is almost entirely agricultural with cottage industries providing additional income—usually less than $5 a month—to buy extra food and clothes for poorer families. By this standard, basic commodities are expensive. Wheat has doubled in price in the last year and costs 10 cents a pound. Meat is 50 cents a pound, and eggs 50 cents a dozen, while chickens cost more than they do in Britain.

For most it is a subsistence existence. Wealth is measured very much by the number of animals owned. Those who have no animals do not eat meat or drink milk. Far too many who came to us for treatment existed on a diet of bread and black tea with occasional vegetables. They had milk rarely and never ate eggs or meat. Many suffered from diseases of malnutrition. With low resistance to infection, TB was rife and the infant mortality rate horrendous.

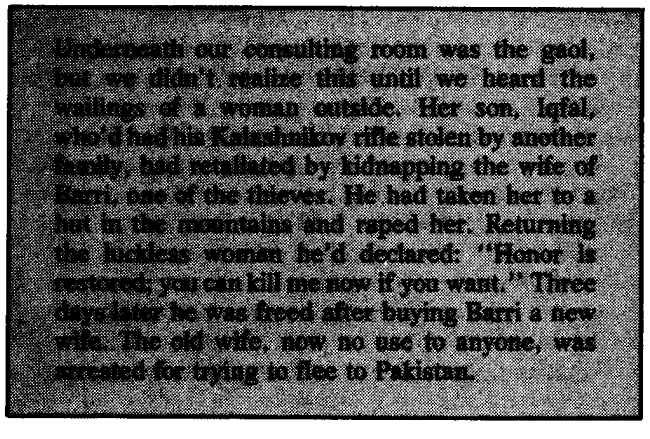
Rising costs have not been matched by a rise in rural incomes and many families who previously relied on their sons working abroad are much worse off. For many it has been "flee or starve."

Over the last 20 years the rudiments of secular education and health care have come to the mountains. Before 1979, influential locals went to Kabul to be educated, and the better leaders exude a depth of perception instilled into them since birth. They may accept feudal rule but their views of the country's future are not static. They see the need for education and health care.

Central government control was always uncertain. Taxes were collected with difficulty and civil order was maintained more by feudal structure than the army. Thus, since the Russians came, life for many has continued along much the same lines, and far from being anarchic, there is, in some spheres, more control. For instance, emigration from the Hazarat is not allowed and anyone travelling towards Pakistan without the necessary passes is turned back.

There is apparently no central government funding for the hospitals and schools. They have closed, and often the buildings have been stripped of useful items. Medical care is non-existent for most, for even if the consultation fee of about 40 cents could be paid, many could not afford the medicines for treatment of the most simple illnesses. Only the richest can afford a course of TB treatment costing $20 to $30.

We set up a clinic in the hills at 10,000 feet and saw up to 150 people a day. Since everything was free, news of our



existence travelled fast. People were walking eight or nine days to see us; some with trivial illnesses; others in such a serious condition that they died.

Afghanis have no concept of the seriousness of symptoms for they have never been educated in this. Backache, caused by the hard way of life, and TB are considered with equal gravity, for both stop them working.

Difficulties of communication and lack of education make many Afghanis myopic about the problems of their country as a whole. There is little transference of manpower or resources from area to area and no one expects it.

It is because of this lack of cohesion that Kabul will never govern the mountains without consent; so, for the time being, it leaves the mountain people alone to argue among themselves.

The educated Afghanis I spoke to saw the Russians as imperialists and the Karmal Government as their puppets. However, there are signs of new politics in the mountains which the Russians may find more difficult to combat.

There are now supplies of money and arms coming from Iran to support Islamic fundamentalists. Nehzat is perhaps the most influential group. Its roots appear to go back many years when, though its numbers were small, it had sympathizers in many government offices.

Nehzat is composed of young intellectuals, now driven to the mountains to avoid conscription. They are highly literate and articulate, frustrated by unemployment and hereditary and feudal leadership.

Politically, they are neither left nor right. They are aware of the importance of schooling and health care and, to a certain extent, the redistribution of wealth. But their overriding motive is their belief in the importance of Islam. Such strong fundamentalist views place them squarely behind Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Like him they distrust the West and dislike Westerners in their midst. They use the Holy War as a political and military rallying call and are quickly gaining power in several parts of the mountains.

The traditional leaders see them as a threat, feared sometimes more than the Russians. Their rise has produced much tension in the mountains, which, in at least two areas, has erupted into bitter fighting between rebel factions.

For many in the mountains, the future looks bleak. Insufficient food, falling incomes and no education or health care make it difficult to survive, and the uprooting is taking its toll on this traditional society. □

Note: Future issues of Intervention *will publish reports by Soviet soldiers who have fought in Afghanistan.*

Andrzej Dudzinski came to New York from Poland. His work appears regularly in The New York Times, The Boston Globe *and numerous other publications.*

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VII. A Personal Footnote

The babylift tragedy is now only a footnote to the Vietnam War—one of those events that was bathed in publicity when it happened and then promptly forgotten. Yet one can easily become obsessed with this "footnote" because it raises so many questions about humanitarianism in the service of our foreign policy, the interworkings of our military-industrial complex, and the ways our courts system can frustrate justice as often as serve it. Would these children and their claims be treated the same if they had been American and not Vietnamese?

But this is not a story that is widely known and therefore it is not yet in the curriculum of Vietnam War courses that *The New York Times* reports a new generation of students have demanded. In part that's true because the most widely received media, like *The New York Times*, have barely covered the story. When I produced a television account of this event for the ABC news magazine *20/20*, I tried to interest other news media in investigating and reporting the story further. I felt the case would become a public issue only when more than one news outlet covered it. First I thought some talk shows might want to explore the issue through interviews with the lawyers and parents, but *Donahue, Good Morning America, Nightline, Freeman Reports* (CNN) and others passed. They felt that because the Vietnamese children who were still embroiled in litigation live overseas, Americans wouldn't be interested.

I wrote a long article about the tragedy to expand many of the issues which couldn't be compressed into the television report. Perhaps the article was too long, or too detailed, or not well-written enough. In any event, it was offered to and rejected by *The New York Times Magazine, The Washington Post, People, Harpers, New York, The Village Voice, Rolling Stone, The Washington Monthly, Mother Jones* and *The Progressive*. None of these publications chose to do their own reporting on the issue even though I suggested it to some. No national columnists picked up the story either, even though many were told about it in detail. I am pleased that *The Los Angeles Weekly* and now *Intervention* have published part of it.

These children, victimized once by the war, again by the crash, and a third time by the courts, deserve better at the hands of the media and all who questioned the war and express concern about its aftermath.

One promising development: members of Congress and the Senate are writing to President Reagan asking him to intervene. Reagan has so far declined—but at least the issue is no longer buried in the courts. Perhaps, if pressure builds, he will follow the advice of the *Chicago Tribune*: "Forget the legalities and do what is right." □

Matt Mahurin's work has appeared in Time Magazine, Rolling Stone, Mother Jones *and* The New York Times.

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DEATH IN VIETNAM

ANGUISH AND SURVIVAL IN AMERICA

BY HEATHER BRANDON

Between 1961 and 1975 nearly 57,000 Americans died in Vietnam and are survived by hundreds of thousands of widows, orphans and parents. In the tradition of the best oral history, Heather Brandon's book Casualties *(St. Martins Press, November, 1984) evokes the feelings of these survivors. Their stories are unpretentious, painfully honest, and are distinguished by a rare emotional power. In terms of our understanding of what Vietnam and its terrible aftermath means to our country, Brandon's book adds a new and valuable dimension.*

The people who speak in the excerpt presented here are not literary characters; they are real people who carry inside them real pain and unequivocal loss. Salvator (Sam) Cammarata was killed in DaNang, Republic of South Vietnam on February 4th, 1967. We hear from his wife, Katherine Cammarata DeTample, who gave birth to Salvator's baby only days after she learned of her husband's death; from Gary DeTample, a medic in Vietnam who was at Sam's side when he died and who came home to marry Sam's widow and become the father of his child; and from Carmen Cammarata Sr., Sam's father, who tells his story with such grace and courage that no matter how painful the legacy of his son's death is, we cannot turn away.

The Editors

Katherine Cammarata DeTample
Born: September 4, 1946
Lackawanna, New York
Wife of Salvatore Cammarata and of Gary DeTample

Gary DeTample
Born: February 24, 1941
Lackawanna, New York
Friend of Salvatore Cammarata and Husband of Katherine Cammarata DeTample

Carmen Cammarata, Sr.
Born: March 7, 1922
Serrodefaleo, Italy
Province, Sicily
Father of Salvatore Cammarata

KATHY: I was carrying Sam's daughter at the time, and I had dreamt that he was killed. When I woke up and told my mother, she said, "Oh, it's your imagination. It's because you're pregnant. You're going to have a baby, and you're dreaming all sorts of things." I said, "Nine o'clock, Mom. The doorbell's going to ring, and it's going to be two officers." Well, at nine o'clock, the doorbell rang, and it was two officers. Three days later I had his daughter. She was late. She was supposed to be born on his birthday, but she was late.

They sent his body home, and they wanted to take him and bury him before I got out of the hospital. I said, "No, there's no way. I better attend; otherwise, I will never believe it." I was fortunate in that I did have an open coffin, and that I did something I shouldn't have done. I broke the glass and put him in another coffin. Maybe I shouldn't have done it, but I did it. I just made up my mind: "I'm going to verify that it's him." We broke it open, and we had him placed in another coffin. What could they do? After we did it, it was done.

I proceeded to find out where he was shot, because his face was completely untouched. It looked like he was perfect, and I said, "How could this have happened?" Then I saw his whole stomach was blown right out, and his legs were off, and there was all paper inside. I saw him, and I was able to touch him, to know that it was him, and to verify that it was him. Otherwise, I probably to this day

Heather Brandon has been the northeast regional coordinator for the Veterans Administration's Vets Center program. Casualties *is her first book.*

would never have believed it. That was awful hard for someone who had never seen the contents of a casket.

According to stories told to me by an Army buddy, Phillip, you would not know if it was your family's remains or not, because they had to go through the field and pick up arms and legs and put them into bags not knowing. There was no way to identify them sometimes, so maybe you had half of someone else's. This was the only way they could do it in the field, so I was really one of the fortunate ones. I have to honestly say I was fortunate. I can be at peace, knowing it was him.

GARY: I went over with him. A bunch of us from this area were drafted, and we all went together. That's pretty unusual for Vietnam, but we were all drafted together. We went to Fort Dix and Fort Devens, and we trained as the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. It was the first time they had formed it since World War II. We trained together, we shipped together, and a lot of us didn't come home together. It was a little harder when someone got killed, because you knew him. It was a lot harder.

He wasn't at base camp when he got killed. He was supposed to be at base camp. He wanted to go out and see what it was like, because everybody else was going out, but he wasn't ordered to go, not as far as I know, That's what happened. Mortars. I was there. I was a medic.

KATHY: When I was in the hospital, Gary tried to get a ship-to-shore phone call through to me to notify me of Sam's death before the army did, but Gary never told me that. Phillip told me the entire story while Gary was at work one day, about three years after Gary and I were married. I thought, "Well, if I fill Phillip up with a little booze, I can get anything I want out of him," so I did. We sat up all night, and he told me the entire story.

When Sam was dying, Gary was at his side, and Sam asked Gary to come and take care of me and the baby. Gary came home at the end of July. The first thing he did, the first day he was home, was to come over to my mother's house. We had corresponded back and forth after Sam was killed, but I'd never met him. I couldn't have asked for a better person. He has become a saint in his own way. Sam didn't send some run-of-the-mill person, but somebody he knew would take care of me and his child, and Gary has. I've talked to my daughter Sally about it, but I've never talked to Gary about it before this.

GARY: When I see Phillip, I'm going to smack him. Fortunately, he's stopped drinking. He won't tell any more stories.

Sam's dad just started talking the last couple of years. His mother took it pretty hard. He did, too, to the point of going over to the cemetery and trying to dig up the grave.

KATHY: Sam was gone for about four or five years then. His other son started growing up, and that son got mixed up with the wrong kind of people, and Dad felt, "I've lost one, now I'm losing another." Sam was his sidekick. Dad went hunting; Sam went hunting. Dad went fishing; Sam went fishing. He'll say, "Sam should not have gone to war. Sam wasn't old enough to go to war. Why did they take my Sammy?" He just doesn't understand why his son got drafted. "He wasn't born in this country, why did they take him?" He'd just turned eighteen when he was drafted. He quit high school and started working at the plant. He got his draft notice that fall and reported in October.

GARY: Most of our brigade was made up of people who were drafted. I was drafted two or three times. I was underweight all the time. It finally got to the point where if a guy could bend over, he went. I could bend over, so I went. It was not our decision to go. Three of us were known as the "pops" of the brigade, because we were old. We were twenty-three, twenty-four. The average age in Vietnam was something like eighteen, so we were old for Vietnam. One of the three of us died, another killed himself. He killed himself in this country, after he got back.

KATHY: When Sam died, his dad just wanted to go and bring his son back. When he was at the cemetery a few years later, he just started digging. His hands were all raw, sore, and he said he would rather be there than his son. He said, "I'm going to take him out of here." Now that family has a beautiful memorial. It's in Italy, in Montedoro, where Sammy was born. It's in the center of town. It's all brick and marble. It is the memorial that was built before anything was built for a Vietnam veteran in this country, and Sam's parents did it. It's the most gorgeous thing, and they built it.

Sam's mother wears black to this day. She's constantly lighting candles, constantly sending masses to anything and everything. I don't think she will ever be able to come out of black, but she's learned to accept the fact that he's gone, and he's not going to come back.

For years they thought I killed him. For years we did not talk, because they thought I killed him. I don't know how, how I would have gone to Vietnam and killed him, but to them, I killed him. I didn't understand Italian then, but during the entire wake, his mother told his father, "She killed my son. She killed my son." I kept saying to myself, "Don't cry, Kathy, don't cry. You've got to be strong for these people. You cannot cry."

From February until July, when Gary came home, it was three days here, three days there, three days at their place, four days at my mother's. I was back and forth, living with them both. Finally I was going to take an apartment on my own. I was going to live downstairs from Sam's parents. When Gary came home, he said, "You're not living in this neighborhood with this baby. No way." They live on the west side. It's the lower section of Buffalo. It was rough then, but it's even rougher now. It was a downstairs apartment, and Gary was afraid for the baby and me, so I told them, "No. I'm not going to live there." In August, Gary and I got engaged. They said, "Oh, my God. Our son isn't even in his grave a year yet. You must have had this planned. We know you killed our son."

After Sam was killed I used to get calls from his mother.

She would tell me I was going to be thrown into the Niagara River. I laughed. She would come to the place where I worked and stand in front of the doorway and call me a "black whore" in Italian. My boss would say, "Who's that?" I'd say, "I don't know. I've never seen the lady in my life." I would talk to them some during that time, but, at the same time, I figured, "Hey, this is your hardship, your problem." The final blow was when Sally made her communion. They said, "Our son isn't here to see this thing."

This went on until about two years ago. That's when I saw Dad at a funeral. I don't hold grudges, so I went up to him and said, "Hello, how are you? This is your granddaughter." He said, "My granddaughter?" and the tears started coming down. I asked him if he needed a ride to the cemetery. He said no, but he made me promise to come over to the house and see him sometime. He and I were still arguing back and forth until about a month ago. I guess Sally got fed up with it. He'd had a little bit too much of his wine, and he started on me again. He said, "Well, if it wasn't for you, Sammy wouldn't be dead." Sally said, "Now wait a minute, Pop. How do you figure my mother killed your son? My mother didn't kill my father. In the first place, she couldn't get over there, but how do you figure this? You're wrong." He thought about it for a minute, then he said, "You know, I think you're right." It's been within the last month that it's been totally different. You can see that it doesn't come to his mind any more that I killed his son. It's totally different. Now he introduces me as his daughter. Before that day with Sally, I was nothing. I was the whore who killed his son.

GARY: I know when it started changing. It was at the St. Anthony Festival. He called me up and said, "Do you want to go to the Italian festival?" I said, "Sure." He was laughing and joking, buying this and that for the kids, saying, "Anything you want, you can have," then he got to the statue of St. Anthony, and I saw him turn away from me. Tears were rolling down his face. He didn't want anyone to see him crying. I didn't know it was his son's saint.

KATHY: St. Anthony's is near here. Sammy was an altar boy. He followed through until he was seventeen years old at St. Anthony's, and St. Anthony was Sammy's patron saint. When Dad saw St. Anthony, he saw his son, but he's been better the past two years, and in the last month he's been totally different. He just couldn't face the fact that his son was gone. Even now, when I go someplace with him and I happen to have to sign my name, he'll say, "You know your name is Katherine *Cammarata* De-Temple." I say, "Okay, Dad." I'll sign it like that to make him happy. I'll do anything to please him. To keep peace among the family, I'll do anything.

GARY: I've made up my mind as to that. I want peace and quiet in my life. No aggravation. No fights. I've seen enough. What I've got left of my life, I'm going to live in peace and quiet. It's as simple as that.

KATHY: He wants peace and quiet to the point that he

won't fight with me. He won't argue. He's beyond arguing.

GARY: A lot of things might be important to someone else, but they're not important to me.

KATHY: There were many times when I got punched in the mouth. Not intentionally. He would be dreaming, and I got punched, and I would wake up and say, "Who the hell are you to hit me? Don't hit me, or I'll hit you back." He would be asleep, tossing and turning. I don't how many clock radios he's put his fist through. I no longer put clock radios in our bedroom. He still dreams at night.

GARY: They're not as bad as they were.

KATHY: They're bad. You just don't realize it. Many nights I get up, and I'll sit an hour. I'll crochet, or I'll do some kind of needlepoint. If he hasn't settled down in an hour, I'll sleep on the couch.

GARY: The next morning, I'll just be tired. I won't remember it. She took me out to the fair one time...

KATHY: Oh Lord. He came home in July, and the fair was in August. This was the first August after he came back, in 1967. At the end of the Hamburg Fair, at eleven o'clock at night, they light up the fireworks. Well, it was all unknown to me at that time. I didn't realize what they had gone through in Vietnam. I was knocked down in the parking lot, thrown between two cars, and another woman got totally knocked to the ground. Gary tried to barricade her. I thought, "Oh, my God, I'm going out with a crazy man," not realizing at the time that Vietnam was flashing back at him. He thought we were getting hit with mortars, and he was trying to protect us.

GARY: It's an automatic reaction. I stay away from fireworks now. If I'm prepared for it, I can handle it, but I can't if I don't know they're going to go off.

KATHY: A complete stranger was walking by, and he was trying to protect her. This woman got up off the ground, and she said, "Oh, my God, this guy is going nuts." In my own mind, I was thinking, "I agree with you." It was about five minutes later that he realized where he was, then he said, "I've got to get out of here. I've got to get out of here."

What was the name of that movie? The one with Henry Winkler and Sally Field? Well, anyway, we went to the drive-in to see that. The whole family went, all of us. We were hoping to learn more about Vietnam. About twenty minutes into the show, the car all of a sudden took off, and the speaker went with it. I thought, "Oh, my God, we're going to get killed." He just took off. He couldn't take it.

Right now, Gary will go downstairs and sit at the typewriter. He'll take out his frustration by writing letters to President Reagan, to Moynihan, to anybody under the sun. If he's down in the cellar, and he's down there for more than an hour, we know it's one of those days, and we don't bother him. Call him for dinner, but don't bother him.

GARY: I just put myself in the cellar, and I stay away from everybody. Well, I survived Vietnam. I'm all in one piece. My head's on, and I consider I'm pretty normal. I might

have bad days once in a while, but I'm not carrying an M-16, trying to wipe out the world or anything like that.

It's hard, but I don't think this country should forget Vietnam. If it was a mistake, learn from it, so we don't do the same thing over again. Let's not let any American go through it again unless it is an absolute and correct necessity, based on a true threat to our own freedoms. I don't think we should forget it. I don't think we should bury it. The school books aren't even telling the kids the true facts. If someone wants Vietnam vets to come into a school and talk about Vietnam, we should be willing to go. Let them know what it's about.

I can tell about people I remember, lying there, knowing they were going to die. They would say, "I don't want anybody to know I died this way. Don't let anybody know this is the way I died." Three minutes later, or in less time, they'd be gone. The last statement they would make would be something like that. It would be somebody who'd lost both his legs and both his arms, and there was just nothing left of him. You didn't know how they could talk any more. They didn't want anybody to know they died that way. The medics couldn't walk away from it. Somebody else, they could call a medic. They could get away. A medic couldn't get away from that. You had to deal with it. There was just no way you could get away from that.

You were hoping nobody would die, but they did. They died on you. The first one I saw, a mortar went right through him. There was nothing left of him, just the pieces. I can still see him. Those are the nights when I have a tough time. I'll be sleeping, and I'll wake up because it's night, and I can see it.

CARMEN CAMMARATA, SR.
Father of Salvatore Cammarata

What did I get from the war? A gold medal, right on the nose. That's what I got. They took the diamond out of my house, the racketeers in Washington. They packed their own pockets off the war. When they get elected, that's when they grab the money. They talk about organized crime. What do they mean, "organized crime?" What do they think they are, legitimate? They put all these kids up at the slaughter house. That is what it is, a slaughter house. "Go. Go and get killed." What did I get? After he got killed, I never even got a letter from the army, from nobody. No. Nothing.

I didn't know he was going to Vietnam before he went. If I would have known, I would have stopped him. I would have held him back. "Hold it, baby. I take you, baby. I take you away." I know where to take him. To the mountains. Dig a tunnel in the mountains somewhere. He would have survived. Sure. On wild game, fish. He would have been in Canada, in Allegheny County, in Pennsylvania, anyplace. There are a lot of mountains in Pennsylvania. They would have never got him. No way.

I may be wrong, but I think this country is in a danger situation. They keep on pushing so many countries. They're shooting all over, and one of these days one of these countries is going to be strong enough to turn it around and dump it on this country. This country is going to go down. BANG! This country is talking too much, because they never saw a bomb. They never saw an atomic bomb. They've never been attacked. That's why they talk too much. We never had a war here, not in internal U.S.A. I know, because I was there, in World War II, in Italy. Some people want war. It helps them. That domino theory, they're playing it out in Central America right now, like in Vietnam. That's quite a bag. That Reagan, I tell you, he's got funny ideas. Congress has got to dump him.

When we lost our boy, it was quite a bit. We lost our minds. We lost all track of everything, went out of balance and everything, out of control, physically and mentally, all of it. His mother is still in it. This is a house that will never see light again. Since he's been dead, there's no parties, there's no weddings, there is no nothing. We are jailed in this house, jailed in without doing anything. We can't go out. Know what I see on TV? News. Western pictures, something like that. If there's dancing or singing, I shut it off. There is no music in this house. Everything is dead. I feel rotten, pretty rotten inside. I don't know. I feel no more pain. I don't know. I used to feel pain. No more.

It's not easy. It's a tough thing to go through all that. It is a scar. How can you forget? Every time I turn around, even if I go into another room, I see something. The picture. The gun. We used to hunt together. Fishing, he was with me like a little puppy, like a puppy dog. He wouldn't get away from me at all. Anything I needed, I had from him: "Hey, Sam." "Yes, Dad." Boom. It's mine. I need that thing, and right away, it's mine. Now, what happens? So many things I remember. If he would be sick, that would be another story. Not this way. This was a slaughter house way.

P.S. Recently, Carmen Cammarata returned to Montedoro, Italy to see his son's memorial, which he had never visited. And his wife has stopped wearing black. □

Vivienne Flesher is a recipient of a gold medal from the Society of Illustrators. Her work has appeared in New York Magazine, Texas Monthly *and* Vogue.

Poetry

The Ghost Inside

Like Ezekial,
Unless the ghost is inside me,
My tongue is tied
And my hands with which I otherwise gesture,
Twisting in the air before me to make a point
Will not move, nor my arms, nor my legs.

It has been so long now
The bodies have grown back into the earth,
Into the green places, the shadowy
Plantations abandoned by the snowy white
Egrets who will not return to the war-fouled
Groves of bamboo.
But the cocaine is even whiter,
Spread out on the mirror
Into which we stare our grotesque faces,
Even whiter than this sky full of holes
Opening like flowers into the humorless oblivion beyond.
Unless the ghost is upon me,
I can't say a word.
Tonight a razor of ice slides through my brain.
I lie back on the stoop and hear
The evening of birdsong rise and fall
And only a few black wings roll past,
The sleeplessness hunting me down
Until the ghost is inside me
And I sing.

Bruce Weigl

Dick and Jane and Spot the Dog Get Their First Zen Lesson

Drinking yourself to death in a bar somewhere in the world
Is Sepuku—
A word for Ritualistic Suicide
Excusing yourself from polite company to shoot up in the bathroom
Is Satori—
A word for sudden illumination
Either way it is Bushido—
The code of a warrior
O but murder is murder
And when you learn to kill people
They become just a bit like lovers—
Once you get good at it—you stop counting
My last unsolved koan from my Roshi
A word for master—who lived on West 81st Street
And where I went on Saturday afternoons to drink beer
And get beaten with sticks
Was that "if this is a religion for warriors—what are you doing here?"
I solved this puzzle by never going back there
I'm still in New York
He's in Japan
I drive by the neighborhood occasionally in cabs
And it's always the rainy season.

Bill Cooner

White Farms, Salvador

What I saw before I slept,
your face.
Its lines grown deep into the skin.
I watched your hands move
toward the boy in the street.
He'd been there for days, unclaimed.

You feel the bones of your children,
watch as the jeeps go by. They trade
your country for someone else's fears.
You don't understand the romance
these people have with death. Why they count bodies
in the dark, drive to the capital to see fires.
You hold your children close,
feed them bread left
by the armies that patrol all day, all night.

Later, I see you carry
the boy to a field. In the night
that belongs to the armies
you quietly cover him
with grasses and twigs that lie nearby. You carve
a small cross with your penknife,
plant it in the dirt.

When I wake,
you're counting your children.

Mari LoNano

Somoza Unveils the Statue of Somoza in Somoza Stadium

It's not that I think the people erected this statue
because I know better than you that I ordered it myself.
Nor do I pretend to pass into posterity with it
because I know the people will topple it over someday.
Not that I wanted to erect to myself in life
the monument you never would erect to me in death;
I erected this statue because I knew you would hate it.

Ernesto Cardinal
translated by Steven F. White

Just Waking Up

The perfume of coffee stands in the clearing
waiting for us to get up and drink.
Coffee is like good soil . . . so fertile
it can be brewed and drunk.
That's what land should be.

On the map, you lose the vague shape of
country. It breaks down into pieces. Green
and brown, rough and smooth. Pieces
small enough to fit in the pocket.

Far away I am watching fishermen on the river.
Occasionally there is a small silver flash as
the nets turn, and then nothing. Little explosions
of labor. And a boat filled, even as we are rising,
goes back to empty itself.

Today is almost like yesterday. We'll do
the same things. Our hearts adjust to thursday
or tuesday. On sunday, for instance, we are
unconsciously lazier.

If I don't get to drink my coffee tomorrow
it will be sad. I will have to return to the earth
and become the humus for the plants to grow in.
All that takes a long time, you know . . . and
it really is too abstract for me.
I will tell you this: I am afraid I will
never get to change something before
I am changed myself. I am always on the outskirts
of my most important cities.

Today is a good day. It must have been a day
like this that everything started up. It must
have been a monday. Today is monday, and I feel
like friday night.

Quinton Duval

Ernesto Cardinal is a poet, priest, and spokesman for the Frente Sandinista. *This poem initially appeared in* Poets of Nicaragua: A Bilingual Anthology, 1918-1979, *published by the Unicorn Press.*

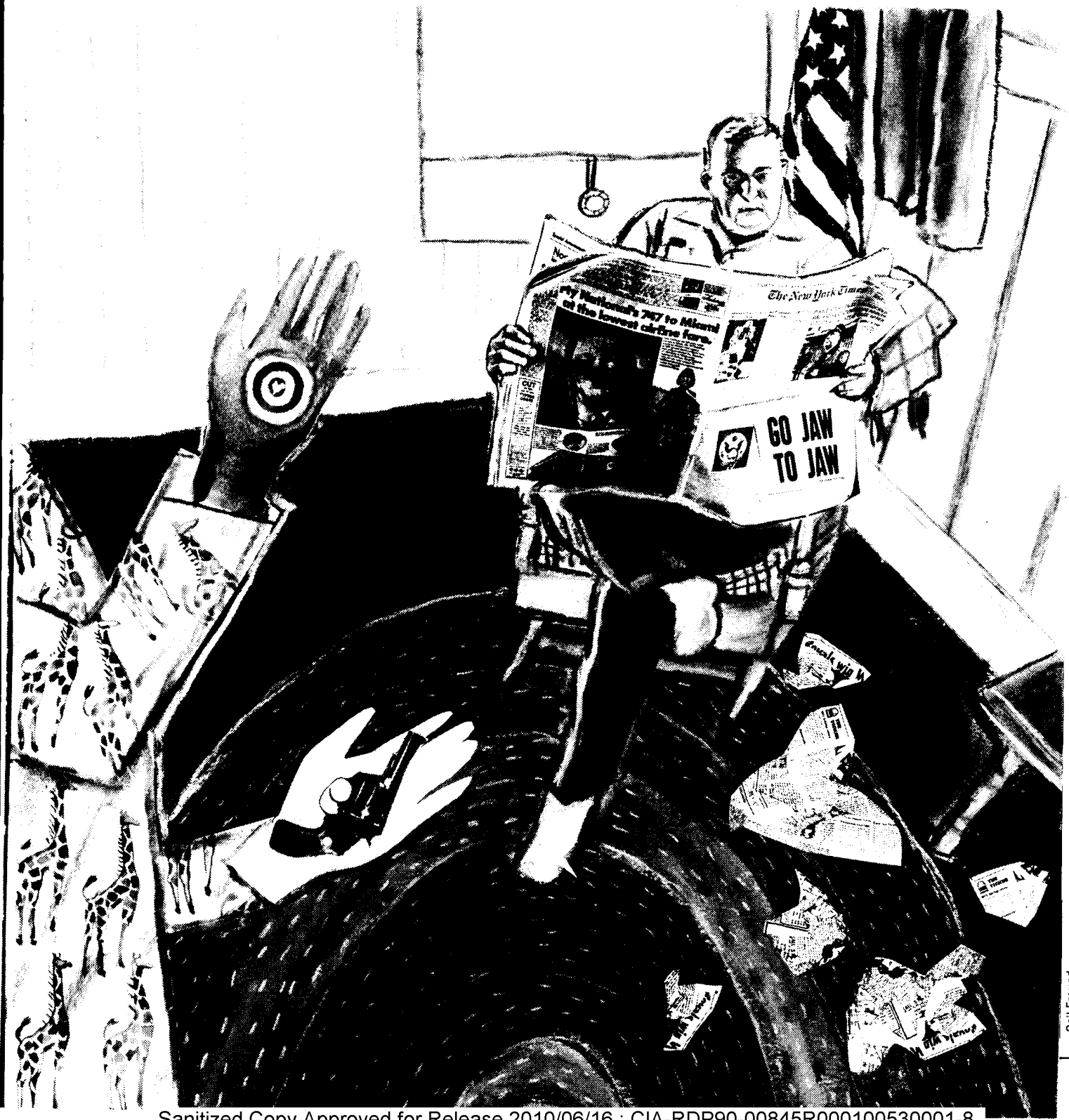
Bill Cooner is a free-lance film maker and writer residing in New York.

Quinton Duval's book of poems, Dinner Music, *is forthcoming from Lost Roads Publishing.*

Mari LoNano lives in Norfolk, VA where she works for the Associated Writing Programs.

Bruce Weigl is an Associate Editor of Intervention. *His most recent book of poems,* The Monkey Wars, *is forthcoming from the University of Georgia Press.*

Routine Q



Gail Freund

estioning

Fiction

BY ENID HARLOW

"Would you say your husband was a violent man?"

Violence. That's the first thing men think of. She didn't like this man standing in front of her with that bulge at his waist. It was a gun, she wasn't stupid.

"No, I wouldn't say that. George was a calm person. A little moody, maybe. Sombre, almost, in his later years. Like a color. But not violent."

Interested in violence as all men are. But not himself violent.

REBELS GAIN IN SOUTH SPAIN
CIVIL WAR RAGES IN CITIES
TWO MADRID CABINETS FALL

Aw, Georgie, she had begged. *Put it down. Come back to bed with your little Emma.*

But he went on reading: *General Francisco Franco landed at Cadiz today...*

Please, Georgie. Emma's cold. She remembered it as if it were yesterday. *Some honeymoon this is.*

"Like a color?"

"Did I say that? What I meant, Sergeant, is I could see him getting darker and darker."

"It's Lieutenant, M'am."

"Lieutenant, I see. Those are ranks out of the army, aren't they?"

"Is there someone you'd like me to call? A daughter? A friend?"

"I don't have a daughter."

That was true. She didn't. She would have liked to have a daughter. But after the war George seemed to lose interest. She was sure she hadn't told the lieutenant that.

"I'm not here to hurt you, M'am."

"Is that why you wear a gun? And those two in the other room, those lieutenants..."

"Sergeants."

"Oh excuse me. Sergeants. I understand it's important in the army to get the rank right."

"M'am, if you wouldn't mind. I find the situation here a little mysterious."

"Mysterious?"

"Do you know anyone who might have had a reason to...?"

"Reason? What has reason to do with it?"

BRITAIN AND FRANCE IN WAR AT 6 A.M.
HITLER WON'T HALT ATTACK ON POLES
CHAMBERLAIN CALLS EMPIRE TO FIGHT

It wasn't any different the next time around. All he did was read the paper.

Can't you see what it means? We'll be in it next.

You always see the worst in things, George.

"What do you mean, mysterious?"

"Did you and your husband quarrel much?"

That was one of their trick questions. Answer yes and they've got you. Answer no and they say, No? How much would you say was much?

"It's true I have a son." She hadn't meant to say that. It just slipped out.

SUDDEN ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR PLUNGES
UNITED STATES AND JAPAN INTO ACTIVE WAR

Did you see him, George? His tiny fingernails. His cute little nose. Isn't he a beauty?

He's a real fighter, that kid. Just from the way he was sleeping I could tell our Danny's gonna make his old man proud.

She knew it was only a matter of time before the lieutenant found out about Danny. They kept records of births and deaths. Anyone could look them up. Especially a lieutenant.

ROOSEVELT SEES LONG WORLD-WIDE WAR

He brought the newspapers right into the hospital. Every day he brought them in.

Stop reading that, she shouted. *I don't care about it, do you hear?*

How can you say a thing like that?

How? I just said it, that's how.

It's your freedom they're fighting for.

Join them then, if you're so concerned.

They can't force me now, Emma. I'm the sole support of a family.

How convenient.

What're you getting at?

I'd say you were the one who was getting at something, George. You're very perceptive about how wars go. Reading all those papers over the years. And last April, coming at me every night. No precautions. No questions about the time of the month. You think I didn't suspect something? Now lo and behold we're in a war and here you are, the sole support of a family. It

must've given you quite a jolt to find you'd figured it that close.

"I'd be glad to call your son for you, M'am."

"Would you, Lieutenant? Maybe that's what's needed. A strong male voice. Danny doesn't seem to hear when I call."

"When you call?"

That's another of their tricks. Saying back to you what you just said to them. Only with a little question at the end so you know they think it's off somewhere.

"I've told you everything I know, Lieutenant. I was out all day. I came in and found him like that. The blood all over."

U.S. DEAD IN VIETNAM RISES TO 7,684

Seven thousand, six hundred and eighty-four men, Emma. Don't you think I'd give my eyes?
Give them, why don't you? It won't bring Danny home.

"Would you mind telling me where you went?"

"It's a big city, Lieutenant. A woman could walk around it all day and not be absolutely sure where she went."

"Is that what you did, walk?"

"I believe that is what I said."

"Would you mind telling me what you were wearing when you took this walk?"

"This is what you call an interrogation, isn't it? That's something else out of the army. The Viet Cong and those awful quilted coats. The evil was stitched right in. I could hardly look at the photographs. But not George. He couldn't get enough."

"The evil was stitched in?"

"Day after day. Reading the articles. Poring over the photographs. Talking to Danny about duty."

"Do you own a pale green button-down blouse..."

"Duty, duty, that's all I heard."

"Decorated with orange giraffes?"

"Giraffes?"

"Sergeant, you can bring that in now."

SIX MONTH U.S. TOLL AT 9,557
MORE AMERICANS WERE KILLED IN COMBAT IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR THAN IN ALL THE PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS

Stop it! she shouted. But even then he went on. *Can't you ever stop? Not even now?*
You don't have to worry about him, Emma. Our Danny knows how to take care of himself.
Don't say his name. It makes me sick to hear his name coming out of your mouth.
I only wanted him to do what was right. He understood that. He told me he did.

"Is this your blouse, M'am?"

TOTAL UNITED STATES CASUALTIES
KILLED AND WOUNDED: 360,573

"M'am? Is this your blouse?"

"There's no mystery here, Lieutenant."

"We found it in the trash out back."

Pale green cotton. Spotted with blood. Spotted orange giraffes blinded by blood.

"Let me speak to a woman, please. She would not find this mysterious. Surely there are women in your army."

"Sorry, M'am. No lady officers assigned to our precinct."

"Lady officers? Are you mocking me, Lieutenant? Do you find me ridiculous?"

"No, M'am."

SOUTH VIETNAMESE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES
KILLED: 451,000 WOUNDED: 935,000

"All right, Sergeant. You can take it away."

"Yes, take the giraffes away. Let their blind eyes close."

"You have the right to remain silent..."

"The last time I saw Danny he was silent. Innocent but silent. All talked out. I couldn't help thinking he looked sort of silly."

"If you give up this right..."

"Like he was still a little boy dressing up in his father's suits. The uniform hung on him. Of course that was a suit his father never wore. From deep inside it, he looked out at me, smiling and innocent."

"Anything you say may be taken down and used against you..."

"His father made him take it all down. Word for word. He pounded it into his head. Duty to country, to family. Duty to himself as a man."

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY REGRETS TO INFORM YOU

"His father insisted it was his duty to go. But Danny saw the despair in that argument. He went to war to make peace with his father."

"Will you come with me now, M'am?"

"Of course, Lieutenant. There's no mystery here."

Enid Harlow is a fiction writer who lives in New York. Her stories have appeared in Southwest Review, Bennington Review, *and* Ontario Review. *In 1980 St. Martin's Press published her novel* Crashing.

Gail Freund is an illustrator living in New York whose work has appeared in The New York Times, New York Magazine *and* Vogue. *She also designs jewelry.*

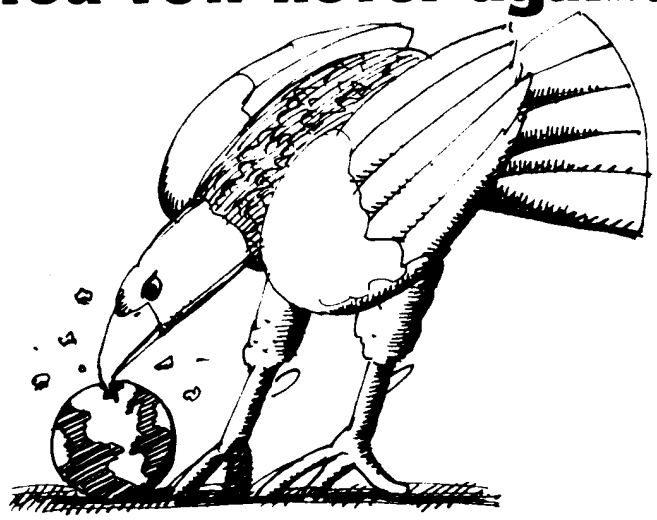
You love America.

But not what is being done to others—in El Salvador and Nicaragua, in the Middle East—in the name of our "national defense";

You remember Vietnam.

Not as a war cry, or a political slogan; not as a fight to "win hearts and minds"; but as a tragic failure of American military intervention;

You vow never again.



Marc Rosenthal

And you're not alone.

There is a generation of Americans who carry the lessons of Vietnam in their bones. Whether we are combat veterans or veterans of the peace movement, the Marine Corps or the Peace Corps, we share a common heritage and common concerns. We know the real costs of military intervention at home and abroad, physically and psychically. We know cluster bombs cannot solve complex human problems, nor can military strategy free the world from hunger and oppression. We reject—***reject***—any more bloody battle streamers on our flag.

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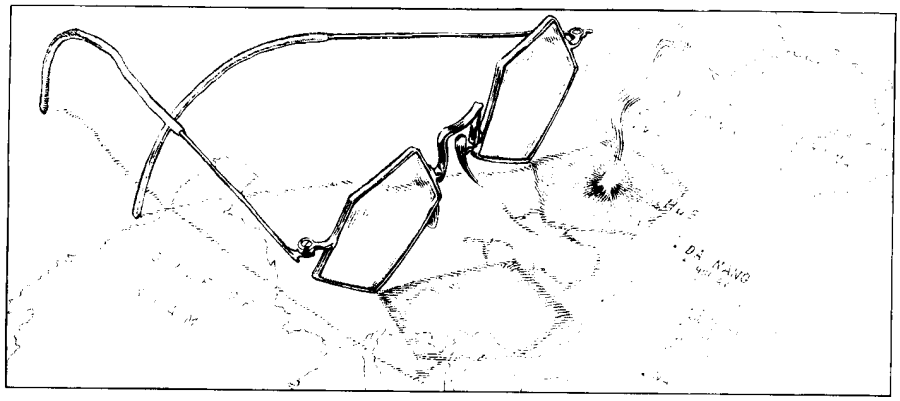

David Suter

BEYOND THE GREEN WAR

BY BRUCE WEIGL

MEDITATIONS IN GREEN
by Stephen Wright
Charles Scribner's Sons, 342 pp., $14.95

Publishers, editors, writers and film makers have turned America's involvement in the Vietnam war and the terrible aftermath of that involvement into a mega-corporate industry. Even before the last body count was taken on the battlefield, Americans could see John Wayne, our cowboy of mythic proportions, cavort on the big screen in an obscene romanticization of the war called *The Green Berets*, a movie aptly described by Michael Herr as being more about Santa Monica than about Vietnam. In addition, as early as 1956 the American publishing industry began to recognize the commercial potential of Vietnam novels, especially given the success of Graham Greene's important and beautiful book *The Quiet American*. Since that time over one hundred novels, over fifty personal narratives, twenty-five critical studies, thirty narrative films, fifty documentary films, twenty full-length collections of poetry, and hundreds of other assorted literary works either directly or indirectly concerned with the Vietnam war have been produced. Critical reception of this work, especially the fiction, has been largely favorable. So favorable in fact that it seems critics have been unusually soft on the Vietnam novel, as if this particular category of prose fiction inherently deserved more than the usual generous consideration because of its painful subject matter, or because of the fact that one group of the war's victims—the Vietnam veterans—most often author these works. Regardless of this overwhelmingly favorable critical response to Vietnam prose fiction and its relatively high level of commercial success, there have been very few good novels to come out of the war. Most of the work simply trades on the war, subverting and sensationalizing the horror of the war in the form of graphic descriptions of combat and civilian casualties, and most do not ultimately attempt to come to grips morally with the consequences of the war. At work under the surface of these slickly written and produced books is a motto which seems to say: I was there. I saw the horror; therefore, my fiction is valid. And the failures of many of these books are not only moral failures; in many instances they are failures of craft. Many of these novels seem ill-conceived, poorly written and obviously rushed through the editorial process as if the publishers were so anxious to take advantage of the readers' faddish interest in war literature that they ignored larger and more significant concerns of craft.

Stephen Wright's first novel, *Meditations in Green*, is a notable exception. Not simply a good war story, it is a good novel which happens to be about the war. But it doesn't stop there. Like some of the more important and eloquent novels about the Vietnam war (and I'd include in that list Greene's *The Quiet American*, James Crumbley's *One To Count Cadence*, Winston Groom's *Better Times Than These*, Tim O'Brien's National Book Award-winning *Going After Cacciato*, and Robert Stone's *Dog Soldiers*), Wright's novel, winner of Scribner's Maxwell Perkins Prize, does not limit its focus to atrocity and does not trade sensationally on a graphic retelling of horror, artificially jarring the reader out of complacency. Instead, Wright is smart enough a writer to consider the larger implications of the war and its aftermath. He writes not only about the obvious destruction of body and limb in Vietnam, but also about the destruction of the psyche and about his characters' and his country's loss of American, apple pie, idealistic innocence.

The novel begins *after the fact*. The narrator, Spec. 4 James Griffin, who comes to resemble Melville's Ishmael, has just completed one of fifteen meditation exercises in the book after which he shares a heroin-laced Kool cigarette with a friend and begins his tale, gracefully moving back to his year in Vietnam. Structurally this is a risky move. Since we know at the outset that our major protagonist has made it home in more or less one piece, the subsequent flashback scenes in which he is placed in mortal danger are somewhat tempered. But finally the close reader will come to see that that is exactly the point of this book: although Griffin *literally* survives the war, he has been figuratively destroyed by it. This destruction takes place gradually throughout Griffin's journey of transformation from an innocent, straight-arrow soldier to a cynical, burned-out drug addict who has witnessed too much and who, in moments of pathological clarity and insight, tells a story of our mutual descent into the darkness of the human spirit equal in intensity and insight to Mr. Kurtz's brilliant, mad revelations in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Structurally the novel functions on two levels: vivid, carefully wrought war scenes interrupted by the first person narrative of Griffin as he tries to put his mind and spirit back together in a country he finds at times more foreign than the Vietnam he left behind. Through his eloquent narrative, Wright shows us that the fall of Griffin is actually a metaphor for the fall of America, and though the narrator/soldier initially tries to bury his head and hide from his country and its sins, he ul-

timately comes to realize that not only can he not hide, he is compelled to speak out. He is, like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, forced to tell his story to whomever will listen, not so much to exorcise his sins but to take full responsibility for them.

This is finally a flawless book. Wright should be praised not simply because he has cast a new light on our experience in Vietnam, but because he has written a remarkable book in which he clearly demonstrates that he understands the intricacies of plot, the subtleties of character development and the complications of human emotion. He is always in complete control, never sacrificing the craft of his book in order to indulge in cheap, flashy, sensational battle stories. He is after much bigger game than that. He wants us to recognize that our involvement in Vietnam changed us forever. And although he finally comes to see that there is no going back, no possibility of forgiveness, there is at least the possibility that we have learned a hard lesson: the painful recognition of our humanness and the moral limitations present therein.

Bruce Weigl is an associate editor of Intervention.

THE ANATOMY OF REVOLUTION

BY ERNEST DRUCKER

WITNESS TO WAR: AN AMERICAN DOCTOR IN EL SALVADOR
by Charles Clements, M.D.
Bantam Books, 268 pp., 1984

This is really two books in one. The first is the personal saga of Charlie Clements—son and younger brother of U.S. military officers, 1968 Air Force Academy (second in his class), Vietnam veteran pilot turned Conscientious Objector, and by 1983, Quaker physician in El Salvador treating civilian casualties in the rebel controlled Guazapa Front. The second book is a detailed and very human account of the daily experience of guerilla life and of the revolution in El Salvador, especially valuable for its absence of cant and political rhetoric.

Clements' evolution from high tech warrior to pacifist healer working under the most primitive conditions offers a rare combination of perspectives. And his experiences are made more vivid by the personal struggle to understand revolutionary violence and his own relationship to it. The book focuses on the life histories and observations of guerilla fighters, their families, and their Christian base communities. It chronicles the terrible ordeals of those who fight this kind of war and the perhaps more terrible ordeal of those who simply get in its way. "Caught in the vortex of revolutionary violence," Clements struggles to maintain his own "letter-perfect pacifism" even as he cowers with a peasant family beneath the strafing attacks of the same A-37 jets and Huey helicopters he knew from such a different vantage point in Vietnam. It is not easy.

The campaneros do not readily trust the gringo. Why should they and what can they think of his individual struggle to come to terms with his own government's brand of violence now visited on them? Once when he comments critically on the dirge-like quality of the Salvadoran national anthem sung by the intensely patriotic rebels at the close of a war council, Clements is told, "We do not sing this song for you, gringo." So it is all the more important for Charlie Clements to sing it for us. Like Che Guevara—another doctor in a foreign revolution—Clements must choose between the bag of medicine and the bag of ammunition. This physician chooses the medicine, and, significantly, the role of witness. His choice allows us all to be there and to hear El Salvador's fierce song for ourselves.

Ernest Drucker is an associate editor of Intervention.

THE MYSTIC VIETNAM

BY JOHN BALABAN

BLUE DRAGON, WHITE TIGER: A TET STORY
by Tran Van Dinh
TriAm Press, 5015 McKean Ave., Phila., PA 19144. 334 pp., $14.95 hardcover, 1984

This book provides our first opportunity to look at the war from Vietnamese eyes. The novel is set in Vietnam; the characters are almost all Vietnamese; the thinking is Vietnamese. We see ourselves from their side as we follow the hero, Tran Van Minh, back from the United States where he has quit the South Vietnamese diplomatic corps. We share his confusion as he accepts the protection of his half-brother in the Saigon secret police and as he is scolded by his aging mandarin father for not struggling against the Americans. Gradually, he is so revolted by the corruption of the Saigon officials who consider him one of their own that he joins the communist side. Ironically, he is driven to the communists out of Buddhist compassion for the millions who suffer from the war, and it is a Confucian adage which propels him: "Knowledge is the beginning of action. Action is the completion of knowledge."

Some of the most interesting passages of *Blue Dragon, White Tiger* are those where we see a communist cell set up in Hue under the noses of the police or, later, after Minh has been found out, when he is working in an underground bunker headquarters in the jungle near Hue. It is there that his fervor dims as he begins to notice something scary in the dedication of his communist colleagues. In criticism sessions, he is told that he is not "grasping the full revolutionary importance" of his clerical duties. His aristocratic background and his discriminating mind make him suspect. With the American defeat, he decides to leave

as a boat person. Loc, his party superior and friend, scornfully permits him to flee. Now it would be "the spirit of the historic Vietnam that he held in his heart, not the political one—the mystic Vietnam, not the vulgar and brutal one."

Tran Van Dinh writes with authority. Like his character, Minh, he is an historian from a literary family in the old imperial city of Hue where his father was a high-ranking mandarin. At eighteen, Dinh was an officer with the Viet Minh; years later, he served as *charge des affairs* for the South Vietnamese embassy in Washington. *Blue Dragon, White Tiger*, a first venture for the TriAm Press, is a valuable book for America which cannot risk forgetting Vietnam, which, if it should, will wander into the twenty-first century with the vulnerabilities of an amnesiac.

John Balaban, a contributing editor of Intervention, *is Associate Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University.*

VIETNAM RECONSIDERED
ed. by Harrison Salisbury
Harper & Row, 335 pp., $8.50

Based upon a series of papers presented at the Univ. of Southern California, this collection discusses a wide range of topics related to the war and its aftermath including the traumas of Vietnam veterans and the Vietnamese, the conduct of the American press corps, and the policies of the military; in fact, the book problematically tries to cover too much ground in too little space so that nothing is discussed in depth and we're left with only snapshots of thoughts and splinters of ideas.

ONE DAY OF LIFE
by Manlio Argueta
Vintage Books, 215 pp., $6.95

Written by a Salvadoran who was exiled as a result of this book, *One Day of Life* is told from the point of view of the women of the fictive Guardado family. This moving and lyrical novel tells the story of the daily life of the peasant in El Salvador after fifty years of military rule. Never trading on geopolitical rant or rhetoric and written with remarkable restraint, this book is especially important for the way it presents the base facts of corruption, social injustice and political violence in a country whose future is so intimately tied to our own.

TOUCHED WITH FIRE: THE FUTURE OF THE VIETNAM GENERATION
by John Wheeler
Franklin Watts, Inc., 259 pp., $16.95

This book's title promises much and although the reader will find throughout rich and genuinely realized descriptions of the author's experience at West Point and in Vietnam, overall the book is seriously flawed. Flawed structurally because Wheeler has not yet found a form for his story and flawed morally because of his failure to identify the colonialist roots of our illegal intervention in the affairs of Vietnam. In addition the book is weakened by the author's generalizations about the generation of Americans who came of age during the Vietnam era.

THE 'RULES OF THE GAME' OF SUPERPOWER MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE THIRD WORLD 1975-1980
by Neil Matheson
University Press of America, 159 pp., $10.25

An excellent examination of the explicit and tacit rules which the United States and the Soviet Union follow in Third World military interventions, this book analyzes the guidelines which allow the superpowers to deploy their military forces throughout the world and at the same time to avoid direct and dangerous confrontations between themselves. Four cases of military intervention are considered: Angola (1975), Ethiopia (1977), Zaire (1977-78), and Afghanistan (1979). This is an extremely worthy subject seldom acknowledged and practically never discussed.

AMERICAN PEACE DIRECTORY, 1984
ed. by Melinda Fine and Peter M. Steven
Ballinger/Harper & Row, 225 pp., $12.95

For anyone who wants to know what they can do for peace and what groups they can find for support and grassroots organization, this book is indispensable. Included is an alphabetical list of names, addresses and brief descriptions of more than 1300 peace-oriented groups in the United States. Also included is a comprehensive index, facilitating use of this important reference work.

SENSING THE ENEMY
by Lady Borton
Dial Press/Doubleday, 250 pp., $14.95

Flawed only slightly by its misleading and ambiguous title, this is a moving and beautifully written account of the author's six month stint as health director of a refugee camp on a small, previously uninhabited island in Malaysia that had become the home for more than 12,000 Vietnamese boat people. Borton is not only a woman of remarkable moral responsibility; she is also a truly gifted writer. This is a book we cannot turn away from.

THE NEO-LIBERALS
by Randall Rothenberg
Simon & Schuster, 287 pp., $16.95

An incomplete and often ambiguous analysis of neo-liberalism—a political school which arose out of the collapse of the Carter Administration—this book reads more like an extended piece of journalism than a well-developed study. Interesting for its description of neo-liberal strategies including more market reliance, entrepreneurship and investment for economic growth, the book finally does not provide enough background information, nor does it develop its arguments as fully as one would expect.

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN WORLD AFFAIRS: VIETNAM AND THE BREAKDOWN OF CONSENSUS
by Ole R. Holsit and James N. Rosenau
Allen & Unwin, 301 pp., $28.50/$9.95

Based on the polling of almost 5,000 American leaders, the authors conclude that foreign policy elites hold two separate, often conflictual sets of lessons on the Vietnam War, and this division undermines the development of a new foreign policy consensus. Neither the hostage crisis in Iran nor the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan eroded this cleavage, indicating that the divisiveness from the Vietnam era will remain with us.

Commentary

BEYOND HEROICS

SOME THOUGHTS ON "ROSY-GLOWISM"

BY ADAM HOCHSCHILD

Lately I've found that I've grown allergic to the word "heroic." As in: "The heroic guerrilla fighters of El Salvador." Or: "We must support the heroic people of Nicaragua in their struggle against U.S. imperialism."

Don't get me wrong. I think the rebels in El Salvador *are* heroic. And I think the covert U.S. war against Nicaragua is criminal. But the rhetoric bothers me, because it indicates that portions of the Left in this country are currently making the same mistake many people did during the war in Vietnam. If what we're doing is 100% evil, the unspoken logic runs, then the other side must be 100% good.

Yes, the U.S. interventions in Central America are 100% wrong; there is not justification whatever for our attempts to crush the Sandinistas on the one hand and to prop up a corrupt and brutal government in El Salvador on the other. Every North American of conscience ought to be working to stop that intervention. But the corollary of that statement is not that the Sandinistas or the Salvadoran rebels are without problems. Few regimes or movements anywhere are. And there is no useful purpose served—particularly the urgent one of stopping U.S. intervention—by pretending that they are.

I hope the rebels in El Salvador win. They potentially offer more hope to a long-suffering people than the death squad thugs running the country now. But the rebels are in an unsteady coalition of five heavily-armed groups ranging across the political spectrum. Some of these revolutionaries have on occasion used arms against each other as well as against government troops. There's no certain guarantee of sweetness and light after they take power.

In the countries in this hemisphere where revolutions have triumphed—Nicaragua and Cuba—most people are vastly better off now than before. Despite vicious U.S. harassment, these nations have made huge advances in attacking malnutrition, unemployment, disease, illiteracy and the official corruption endemic to most of Latin America. Nicaragua's is probably the first revolutionary government in history to abolish capital punishment. Both regimes clearly have deep popular support. But at the same time, they're both countries, Cuba particularly, where authority flows from the top down, not from the bottom up. The Sandinistas have treated Nicaragua's Indian population badly. Cuba has few civil liberties in our sense of the term, has political prisoners in jail, and won't even let Amnesty International send in a survey team. Both governments have serious flaws. Why pretend that they don't?

I don't mean to sound sanctimonious. There's no country anywhere that fully combines great social justice and maximum civil liberties. And you can't expect that combination to arise quickly in nations whose history is centuries of Spanish colonialism, U.S. economic imperialism, slavery, and the Catholic Church. Given that heritage, Cuba and Nicaragua have done extraordinarily well. If Ronald Reagan were to stay off their backs, they might do still better.

Why, though, do some North Americans talk about Nicaragua as if it were a political paradise, and ignore a degree of authoritarianism in Cuba that would appall them if they found it in this country? This tendency is a familiar one, I'm afraid; there is something seductive and guilt-relieving about having some distant country to romanticize, particularly if it has a history of being oppressed by the West. There is always part of the American Left which wants to see some Third World country bathed in this rosy glow. For a time it was China. During the Vietnam war it was North Vietnam. At other times it has been Tanzania or Mozambique. Somewhere, *somewhere*, there must be a perfect socialist society where justice reigns, everybody is happy, and everything works. Alas, seldom is it so. In all these countries there is much to admire, but in the end China and Vietnam went to war against each other; Mozambique is seeking Western investment, and Tanzania is sunk in economic doldrums which cannot be entirely blamed on the rest of the world. Happily, none of these places have ended up as badly as the Soviet Union, which was the target of so much of that rosy glow vision in the 1930s.

The problem with rosy-glowism is threefold. First: no country anywhere, ever, for any reason, should be exempt from being judged according to the basic international standards of human rights. Second: North American leftists who appear to have blind spots in this regard weaken their own credibility. And right now the anti-intervention movement in the United States needs all the strength and credibility it can muster. And third: any time people project their own vision of Utopia onto a particular country, in the long run it usually ends up not being true, and this leads to mass disillusionment. In this way, illusions about Stalinism led to a great weakening of the American and European Left as the truth about the *gulags* unmistakably emerged. The best way not to have disillusioned leftists is not to have illusioned ones to begin with. Any progressive politics worth its salt must rest on an absolute passion for justice, and not on the fantasy that there is anywhere on earth where this has already been achieved. □

Adam Hochschild is a contributing editor of Mother Jones *magazine. This commentary first appeared in* Peace & Democracy News.

Dear Friend,

U.S. military intervention, discredited a decade ago by the wrenching experience of Vietnam, has returned. El Salvador, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Grenada...where will it end? In another Vietnam? With the ultimate disaster, nuclear holocaust?

There's a generation of Americans who carry the lessons of Vietnam in their bones. Whether we're combat veterans or veterans of the peace movement, the Marine Corps or the Peace Corps, we share a common heritage and common concerns. We know the *real* costs of military intervention at home and abroad, physically and psychically. We know cluster bombs can't solve complex human problems, nor can military strategy free the world from hunger and domination. We reject more bloody battle streamers on our country's flag.

A decade ago, we opposed America being the world's policeman and we helped contain and ultimately end the Vietnam War. Today there is again the call for arms instead of reason, hate instead of compassion, war instead of peace. Once more we must be willing to resist.

INTERVENTION will play a central role in that resistance. It will offer an informed and instant critique of the culture of war, a strong voice against the institutions of war, and a living memorial to the Vietnam War.

Please join us.

Sincerely,

Tom Nusbaumer

Tom Nusbaumer
Editor

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