

WHY THE VIETNAM WAR IS IMPORTANT 50 YEARS LATER

VIETNAM VETERANS

FOR

FACTUAL HISTORY



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**Vietnam Veterans for Factual History
Why the Vietnam War is Important
50 Years Later**

CONTENTS

Introduction

Stephen Sherman.....2

The Second Indochina War

R. J. Del Vecchio.....4

On Vietnam Conferences

Bill Laurie6

The Cultural Legacy of the Vietnam War

James D. McLeroy7

The Relevance of the Vietnam War to the Post 9/11 Era

Roger Canfield..... 9

Bibliography11

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***Dedicated to all those who served
in the noble and valiant effort to turn back
the forces of aggression and tyranny
in Vietnam and Southeast Asia,
all the men and women of our armed forces –
and the many civilians too
who played important roles,
and of course our South Vietnamese allies
and those of other nations who joined in that effort,
and – perhaps especially – all their families.
Thank you, my brothers and sisters.***

And just one thing more: It didn't have to end that way.

Lewis Sorley, October 28, 2014

Adapted from an address at the Army Navy Club

Introduction

The Vietnam War is, arguably, as divisive today as it was four decades ago. Unfortunately, far too many Americans do not possess the basic factual information about United States involvement in Southeast Asia to formulate informed opinions on the matter. But that fact is not the fault of the average American.

Lifelong [Leftist] academicians, biased journalists, anti-war activists and historically inaccurate motion pictures—often working in tandem—have created the average American's view on the Vietnam War.

The accepted narrative history of the Vietnam War is an invented history replete with egregious falsehoods and distortions.

Vietnam Veterans for Factual History (VVFH) is a [501c(3)] group founded by Vietnam Veterans and their supporters. Its mission is to study and disseminate factual, well researched information about the Vietnam War and correct the myths that have permeated academia and our society since the war's beginning. Our goal is to correct those falsehoods and distortions that have become part of the dramatized and written accounts of the Vietnam War, despite logic and the availability of accurate historical analysis.

VVFH has begun publishing a multi-volume *Indochina* book series that examines key events during the Second Indochina War. Each book in the series covers a single year and the main political, military and cultural aspects of the war that year. The series challenges long held myths about the Vietnam War.

Published volumes in the new series are *Indochina--In the Year of the Dragon 1964*; *Indochina--In the Year of the Snake 1965*; and *Indochina--In the Year of the Cat 1975*. Other VVFH endeavors include attending Vietnam War academic conferences, for which we have published two "Pre-sponses." These are "*Our Pre-sponse*"--*Our Supplement to the TTU-NARA Conference on Vietnam In the Year 1963* and "*Our Pre-sponse*"--*A Supplement to the Kroc Institute Conference: Then and Now--Assessing the Critical Lessons*. VVFH has also started to develop an educational packet for secondary, high school and college instructors who can use the guide to teach the real history of the war.

Please visit <http://vvhf.org> and <http://www.viet-myths.net/OSpecialVVFHBookOffer.htm> for more information about VVFH's mission, members and how to order the book series.

VVFH believes that we owe the American public the truth about the Vietnam War and we would appreciate your support of our efforts.



Series Editor: Stephen Sherman



We style ourselves as “Vietnam Veterans for Factual History.” Not all of our associates are Vietnam Veterans, but the preponderance of them are. We can live with that. But on the issue of “factual history” we adamantly try to live up to our name. If you wish to take issue with matters of fact discussed herein or on our website, we encourage you to do so. The appropriate addresses would be: The Editor, 11715 Bandlon Dr, Houston, TX 77072 or email at sherman1@flash.net.

The Second Indochina War

The “Vietnam” War was not limited to North and South Vietnam. It always included Laos and Cambodia, which together with northern Vietnam (Tonkin), central Vietnam (Annam), and southern Vietnam (Cochin China) comprised the former French Indochina. The First Indochina War against the French was from 1946 to 1954, and the Second Indochina War against the U.S. and South Vietnamese Armed Forces (ARVN) was from 1959 to 1975. The American Phase of the Second Indochina War was from 1965 to 1973. It was a direct response to the challenges of international Communism during the Cold War.

At various times and places the war in South Vietnam displayed some of the characteristics of a revolution, an insurgency, a guerrilla war, and a civil war. Primarily, however, it was always an incremental invasion of South Vietnam controlled by the North Vietnamese Politburo. The Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) were both sovereign nations diplomatically recognized as such by other nations for the same reason that East Germany and West Germany were. A war between two sovereign nations is not primarily a civil war, and the invasion of one sovereign nation by another sovereign nation is not primarily an insurgency.

The North Vietnamese conquest of South Vietnam was initially based on Mao Tse-tung’s three-stage, protracted attrition model of revolutionary warfare. The Viet Cong (VC) “insurgency” in South Vietnam was only the first stage of the Politburo’s three-stage strategy to conquer South Vietnam and establish military hegemony in Laos and Cambodia.

The first stage was terrorism and guerrilla warfare by irregular VC squads and platoons. The second stage was semi-conventional, mobile warfare by VC/NVA companies and battalions. The third stage was conventional, positional warfare by regular NVA regiments and divisions. The three stages did not progress sequentially everywhere, but fluctuated between stages at different times and places in South Vietnam.

The NVA attempted to invade South Vietnam conventionally in 1964, 1968, and 1972, but were prevented from doing so by U.S. and ARVN forces. U.S. forces were never militarily defeated in Vietnam by either the Viet Cong or the North Vietnamese Army forces, nor were they ever fought to a military stalemate by those forces. The VC forces were totally defeated in 1968 by U.S. and ARVN conventional forces using conventional tactics, not counterinsurgency tactics. The NVA

forces were totally defeated in 1972 by U.S. and ARVN conventional forces using conventional tactics, not counterinsurgency tactics.

In 1973, the U.S. Congress cut off virtually all military aid to South Vietnam, and in 1974, Congress prohibited all U.S. air support of ARVN forces from U.S. bases in other countries. If the ARVN forces had been given enough ammunition and other essential combat supplies, and if the U.S. aircraft at bases in Thailand had been allowed to provide combat air support to the ARVN forces, as they did in 1972, the modern, Soviet-equipped North Vietnamese Army would not have invaded the Republic of Vietnam in 1975, much less have been able to conquer it.

Instead, all the tactical victories of the U.S., allied, and ARVN forces over the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces from 1965 to 1973 were deliberately forfeited by the Democrat majority in both Houses of Congress. The victorious American Phase of the Second Indochina War ended not with the “bang” of a military defeat in Vietnam, but with the “whimper” of a political forfeit in America.

In 1975, two years after all U.S. combat forces and U.S. military support had been withdrawn from South Vietnam, the ARVN were defeated by conventional NVA forces using conventional tactics, not by VC guerrillas using unconventional tactics. The victorious Communist regime in Vietnam is still one of the most corrupt, cruel, and repressive in the world.

The few historians who stress these facts are academically ostracized as "revisionists" by "orthodox" historians, whose knowledge of the war is primarily based on the superficial reporting of a few politically adversarial and militarily ignorant journalists in Saigon during the war.



R.J. Del Vecchio



On Vietnam Conferences

“Nor is the people's judgement always true; the most may err as grossly as the few.”
John Dryden

The traditional phases of a war's written record start with contemporaneous reporting, followed by the personal accounts of individual soldiers (often fictionalized). Then come the memoirs of their commanders and a culminating flow of volumes of historical analyses of events shaping the era. Vietnam follows this pattern and adds another feature, the numerous conferences and symposia on the meaning of the War.

What then can be said about these gatherings, and, more importantly, the inferences drawn from them, particularly on the part of younger people with no military experience and no basis of comprehending Vietnam's war? Students could read other factual narratives, leaving a completely different impression from that which these authors depict.

Many in this country not only do not comprehend the Vietnam War, but do not want to comprehend it objectively. The attendees, the speakers, and the organizers will all "feel good", but they will go out the same epistemological door they came in, because they prefer various types of historical fiction to objective, factual history. Many others share that preference, we don't.

Any young attendees with first-time exposure to things Viet Nam will emerge more ignorant than before. In these pages we share with you our “revisionist view” of the Vietnam War, with our apologies for not having done so earlier and louder. If you happen to be attending one of those rare conferences, featuring speakers who *do* know what they are talking about, we applaud your good fortune. We trust the eager minds in the audience will not take offense and those who can, in response to the proffered understanding of the War that Never Ended, will find some enlightenment in these pages.



Bill Laurie



The Cultural Legacy of the Vietnam War

"The country that sent us off to war was not there to welcome us home."

Harold Moore and Joseph Galloway

Prologue to We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young

The American Phase of the Second Indochina War, aside from its military facts, is a symbol of a fundamental cultural divide in the minds of most contemporary American adults. Most of them have no more factual knowledge of what they call the Vietnam War than they have of the Crimean War, yet it continues to have a powerful symbolic value for them.

The "Vietnam" War was the historic catalyst for the national emergence and cultural dominance of the militant Leftist value system in America. That mentality has no interest in the objective military facts of the war, or indeed in the objective facts of anything, because of its belief that mere facts are irrelevant to the greater Truth of its coercive collectivist world view.

The supreme Truth of the militant Leftist mentality is that the source of most social evils in the world is the political and economic system of the United States, which should be destroyed and replaced with a utopian, neo-Marxist system. That great, unexamined Truth leads them to blindly support any Communist or "Socialist" enemy of America, including the Stalinist Communists in Vietnam.

The militant Leftist mentality views U.S. participation in the Vietnam War as illegal, immoral, unnecessary, and fully deserving of its resulting defeat by the righteous Communist forces. After vociferously denying that any North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops were in South Vietnam until the mass NVA invasion of 1972, they changed their line to, "What's wrong with replacing the corrupt, oppressive capitalism of South Vietnam with Communist social justice?"

On the other side of the cultural divide is the Conservative mentality. It considers the American political and economic system, despite its inherent imperfections and occasional malfunctions, the best that has ever been devised compared to all the others. It thinks the U.S. participation in the Vietnam War was legal, moral, and a necessary part of the Cold War at that time. It also thinks that U.S. military success in the Vietnam War was deliberately forfeited by the left-Liberal majority in the U.S. Congress.

Oscillating between the two radically opposing sides in the history of the Vietnam War is the naïve, "soft-left" Liberal mentality. It thinks that

Americans who are proud of their political and economic system and their military history should be embarrassed by that system and history. It feels a moral obligation to apologize for its nation's political and economic exceptionalism and military successes. It considers America's initially well intentioned role in the Vietnamese "civil war" to have been illegal, immoral, unnecessary, and militarily unwinnable.

Since both the North Vietnamese forces and the Viet Cong forces clearly identified themselves as Communists, the historical evaluation of the Vietnam War has been the product of one of three political value systems: a hard-left, anti-American Cold War mentality; a hard-right, anti-Communist Cold War mentality; or a left-Liberal, anti-Cold War mentality. The latter denies that the Cold War was a proxy competition between Communist and non-Communist nations and a fundamental aspect of U.S. participation in the Vietnam War.

The third version is now the prevailing one and is accepted in most schools and universities as common knowledge. In the universities it is taught by left-Liberal professors, who think they have an academic license to claim omnipotence on all aspects of the subject, although much of their alleged knowledge is unchallenged misinformation that omits or misrepresents essential facts. In the schools it is taught by left-Liberal teachers, who are ignorant of the most basic military facts of the war.

Fortunately, there is a growing "revisionist" movement that explicitly or implicitly challenges that misinformation and those omissions and misrepresentations. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that those and similar books in the future will have any noticeable effect on the teaching of the Vietnam War in the lifetime of any participant in it.

Like the misreporting of the battles of Tet in 1968, once the misinformation, omissions, and distortions are accepted as common knowledge, they become part of the popular history of the subject. Each revisionist history [see asterisked items in Bibliography] lights another small candle in the darkness of the orthodox history of the American Phase of the Second Indochina War. One can only hope that those accumulated candles will eventually enlighten the academic darkness for future students of one of the most influential yet misunderstood events in Twentieth Century American history.



James McLeroy



The Relevance of the Vietnam War to the Post 9/11 Era

History is but myth agreed upon.

Napoleon

Since the worldwide Cultural Revolution of the Sixties, we have accepted, and allowed our children to be taught, misinformation – outright lies – about ourselves, our country and the world, in a manner that has undermined our national character and culture perhaps irretrievably. The Vietnam War was the root of this propagandization and is therefore the necessary starting point for any corrective action.

For many antiwar opponents of the US in Vietnam, it was insufficient for us to merely withdraw. We had to hand over the people of Indochina to the communists, although the North Vietnamese communists demonstrating that they were far more totalitarian, corrupt, imperialist, and vindictive than the Diem or Thieu administrations they opposed. Yes, we made mistakes in Vietnam, especially the coup against Diem, but our underlying principles contained the dominoes to Indochina, gave ASEAN breathing space and led to the end of the Soviet Union. Our failure to stop the North Vietnamese is a cause for regret by Vietnamese of both the South and the North. This was caused by the self-described American peace movement whose many innocents or avoiders of the draft were tools of communist propaganda.

By our failure to maintain our deserved “invincible” status, we have allowed tyranny and terror to thrive without fear of the paper tiger we have been forced to become. Indeed we have encouraged anti-Western forces around the globe from 1975 to the present.

The full impact of the peace movement has spread far beyond now fading events in Indochina in 1975. The peace movement’s false history dominates today’s academia, the media, the entertainment industry and the Democrat Party. It is deconstructing the decent, free, and humane political culture of America. Recently, bypassing Congress and the American people, progressives have used the regulatory and executive power of government to impose their views on immigration, the environment, finance, labor, health care, tax collection. They are succeeding in transforming America in progressive, socialist directions contrary to its honored traditions.

Progressive success has long been built on a foundation of lies it makes about the America it hates: “Romney paid no taxes.” “Alger Hiss was not a Soviet spy.” “The Rosenbergs were innocent of stealing atom bomb secrets,” and “Vietnam proves America is a uniquely evil, imperi-

alist, colonial, racist power defeated by the progressive forces of the “peace” movement.” Yet the lie that best tells the evil of America is the left’s view of the Vietnam War. It is a lie needed most by those who hate America.

The far greatest number of victims of the war in Indochina came after the fall of Phnom Penh and Saigon. We must give credit to the American peace movement for making this possible. We must now add to the list of victims, the casualties of the multiple wars in the Middle East, where the United States’ ability to exert a constructive influence without war was circumscribed by its failures to stay the course in Vietnam.

It is likely that when, not if, Iran joins the nuclear club, threats will be enough to dominate the MidEast and neuter Western countries’ interests, despite the best wishes of Secretary of State John Kerry [who served in Vietnam, you know]. The intent and propaganda of the descendants of the American Peace Movement will have borne full fruit at home as well as abroad.

American exceptionalism is not a myth. It is a product of what we teach ourselves and a guide to what we aspire to be. When we believe that we do not have the requisite values to do what we believe is morally correct, we become willing to shrug our shoulders and accept an outcome that becomes a self fulfilling prophecy of expanding human suffering.



Roger Canfield



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[These websites, rich in content, are highly recommended.]

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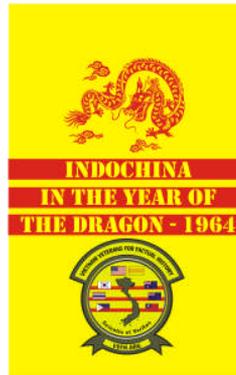
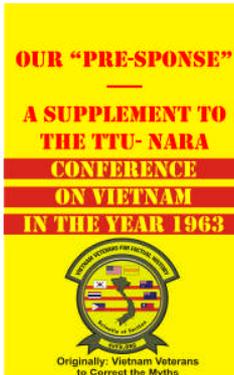
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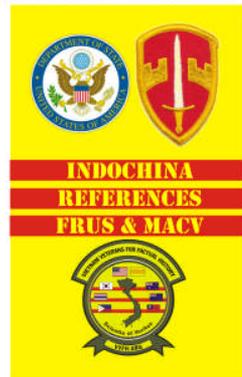
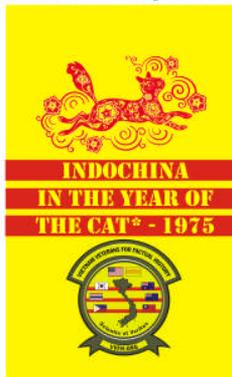
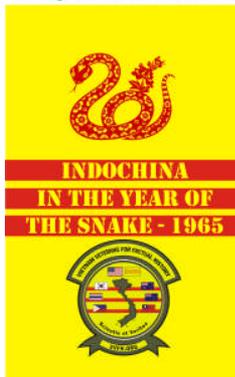
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