

## Vietnamization or automated genocide

Forty-five thousand six hundred fifty-nine dead. Three hundred-two thousand seven hundred eighty-seven wounded.

Those figures, representing the number of American casualties as of March 25 in Vietnam, have been used time and time again by anti-war groups. Apparently they bear the most weight in convincing the people of the United States that this ugly tragedy marring our nation's history should not continue.

Now those figures have almost stabilized. The American dead and wounded count is down drastically from several years ago. Many people are pleased.

But something is missing from those statistics. They represent nothing of the people to whom the battlegrounds belong. What about the South Vietnamese? What about the Southeast Asians who call themselves the Viet Cong? How about the North Vietnamese? Don't they have fatalities or statistics that graphically tell the story of life and death in countries at war?

Over two million Vietnamese have been killed in this political fortress of automated genocide. Another 10 million have been rendered homeless.

Countless times the Nixon administration has defended its stance in dealing with the war. The President has stated that it was not he that started the conflict; it was not a Republican that involved our nation in this conflict on the other side of the Pacific. Upon his election in 1968, Richard M. Nixon said, "I pledge to you the new leadership will end the war and win the peace in the Pacific."

A problem exists in Southeast Asia, yes. Even as the United States was withdrawing combat troops the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong began a new ground military offensive. Yet, while it has remained clear that military efforts in that part of the world have been ineffective, Nixon again responded with more American military movement.

There is a new twist to this display of force by the U.S. Instead of men on the ground we introduced an all-out pounding by men in machines. The Americans in Southeast Asia are now battering the earth with more firepower than has been rained on that part of the globe since 1966. All of this happens in the name of a "just peace" and real live "Vietnamization".

A second twist occurred as the American delegation, while professing the need for a negotiated settlement to end the Asian conflict, chose to walk out of the Paris peace talks. President Nixon still speaks of an honorable end to the war.

Evidence of planning for future use of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia was released at the first of this month. A confidential memo issued by the President also has been recently made public. That memo encourages high level government officials to rally public opinion in support of the escalated air war because of "Soviet support for Hanoi."

Allegedly in response to Nixon's confidential memo, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, before the Cincinnati Council on World Affairs on March 10, said, "We cannot discount the fact that the Soviet Union has been and remains the major supplier of military arms and munitions to the North Vietnamese and is thereby a major contributor to continued conflict in Southeast Asia."

The Nixon administration and all that it stands for is again hoping to tell the American people that more bombs, airplanes, napalm, and aerial violence will help solve our Southeast Asian dilemma. In the past, the same type of military display has only produced death and destruction with no positive economic, humanistic or ethical return.

The President of the United States, in order to justify an unjustifiable conflict is again trying to play upon the mistaken fears of a good number of American citizens.

Let us not be fooled again.

Barry Pilger



High vs. low profile



A question of altitude