

A Priest Tells How Our Bombers Destroyed His Village, P. 3

Except, of Course, in Those Distant Little Countries We Beautify By B-52

"As long as I am President, what has been divinely given by nature will not be recklessly taken away by man."
—President Johnson, as he signed the Highway Beautification Act, Oct. 22.

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. XIII, NO. 36

NOVEMBER 1, 1965

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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The South's Rebel Klansmen and The Student Rebel Left

In the sciences, fresh insights are often obtained by putting familiar facts in a fresh frame of reference. The nature of the Klans in the South, and the repeated acquittal of its killers, may usefully be looked at in terms of experience in the colonial world. In Palestine, in Cyprus, in Algeria and in South Vietnam, we have seen the power of a relatively few terrorists or guerrillas to disrupt law and order. The handful can succeed only if they have the sympathy and the support, passive at least, of the general population. The people of whom the terrorists are an extremist wing may themselves abhor bloodshed, yet they will acquiesce in the means because they agree so strongly on the end. The Klans, in this perspective, are the Eoka, the Irgun, the Viet Cong, of the white South. They terrorize and murder in defense of a system in which the white majority in the South believes.

Colonial Struggle in Reverse

In Cyprus, in Palestine, in Vietnam, sympathizers hid terrorists from the police. In the South white juries refuse to convict Klansmen; white forces of law and order often sympathize with, or secretly join, them. The Klans, now as during Reconstruction, are the white South's way of fighting the white North in defense of its peculiar institutions. This differs from—in fact it is the exact reverse of—the colonial struggle in that it seeks to perpetuate a colonialism of our own. Colonialism degrades one people in order to allow another people to enjoy the benefits of cheap labor in semi-serfdom. This is the colonial relationship the Klans are trying to perpetuate in the South. This is white supremacy as it is known in Rhodesia and South Africa as well as Alabama and Georgia.

Here, as there, the whites are so intent on maintaining their domination of the blacks that they are prepared to give up their own liberties and accept coercive systems to repress not only rebellious blacks but sympathetic whites. So white men in our South who dare disagree with white supremacy find themselves forced out of business by boycott, threat and ostracism. The Klans are the secular arm of the South's drive against racial heresy. This is what makes the investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee, with its emphasis on petty stealing by Klan leaders, so ludicrously wide of the mark. And this is what makes proposals for new criminal legislation seem so futile because they all break down on the same rock of refusal to convict. Though limited and covert, we are confronted here with a kind of rebellion—a rebellion of the white South—and rebellions are not put down by legal means.

Not All The Dying "Patriotic"

"I note with alarm the rise of that journalism which accords the words of wounded or dead American soldiers in Vietnam a sort of mystical and divine status and thus uncontrollable. I have heard men in the process of dying in Vietnam express a different point of view than the 'patriotic' party line the intrepid journalist usually selects for quotation. My own opinion is that these men by law or by choice are killing machines, and thus not particularly invulnerable in discussing the morality of our position in Vietnam.

"The press makes a valiant effort to convince its readers that the Viet Cong are more destructive to the civilian population than our largely indiscriminate saturation bombing of heavily populated areas. A year in Vietnam has heightened my awareness of inconsistencies of our policy in Asia; and I find it strange that much weight is given in current popular publications to words on foreign policy and morality by soldiers whose peace of mind is dependent upon their ignorance of both these matters."

—Richard M. Tellefsen, Capt. MC (resigned) in the Cleveland Press, Oct. 23.

Those who would understand the student revolt against the war in Vietnam must widen their field of vision to see that by and large the same student minority so deeply involved in this Southern struggle is the same student minority which feels so intensely opposed to the war in Vietnam. These students compare the one rebellion with the other and are doubly revolted. In the first place, they cannot help but contrast the overwhelming force mustered to put down the rebellion 9,000 miles from home while they have difficulty even in obtaining a full contingent of Federal registrars for the South, much less the Federal marshals or soldiers necessary to protect the registrars and those who wish to register with them. In one place we have 150,000 soldiers; in the other we do not have 150—or one-tenth of one percent—as many registrars, indeed we do not have 50.

The students have seen their friends and comrades in the integration struggle beaten or killed, and the killers acquitted, while this same government claims to be helpless here but asks them to go fight against a rebellion there. In the second place, these students see the struggle in the South and the struggle in Vietnam as parts of the same world-wide struggle, the struggle of colored races to shake off white domination. The leadership of the struggle in Vietnam may be Communist and dictatorial, but it is the same leadership which has

(Continued on Page Four)

In Reply to A Hostile Press Campaign, We Let the Hounded SDS Speak for Itself

Student Leader's Plea for Chance to Serve Our Country But Not By Killing

By Paul Booth*

National Secretary, Students for A Democratic Society

Students for a Democratic Society wishes to reiterate emphatically its intention to pursue its legal opposition to the war in Vietnam. We feel that the war is immoral at its root, that it is fought alongside a regime with no claim to represent its people, and that *it is foreclosing the hope of making America a decent and truly Democratic Society*. The commitment of SDS, and of the whole generation we represent, is clear. We are anxious to help and to change our country; we refuse to destroy someone else's country. We are anxious to advance the cause of democracy; we do not believe that cause can be advanced by torture and terror.

To Build Instead of Burn

We volunteer to go into Watts to work with the people of Watts. We volunteer to help the Peace Corps learn, as we have been learning in the slums and in Mississippi, how to energize the hungry and desperate and defeated of the world. We volunteer to serve in hospitals and schools in the slums, in the Job Corps and VISTA. *We propose to the President that all those Americans who seek so vigorously to build instead of burn be given their chance to do so.* We propose that he test the young people of America: if they had a free choice, would they want to burn and torture in Vietnam or to build democracy at home and overseas? I predict that almost every member of my generation would choose to build, not to burn; to teach, not to torture; to help, not to kill. And I am sure that the overwhelming majority of our brothers and cousins in the army in Vietnam would make the same choice if they could.

Our generation is not afraid of service for long years and low pay; SDS has been working for years in the slums of America at \$10 a week to build a movement for democracy there. We are not afraid to risk our lives; we have been risking our lives in Mississippi and Alabama, and some of us died there. But we will not bomb the people, the women and children of another country.

I have just sent a telegram to the President and the Attorney

* At a Washington press conference, Oct. 20.

Something Wrong When A Democratic Senator Must Plead Such Elementary Truths

"I do not like taking a public position criticizing a Democratic administration which in most respects I strongly support. Neither do I like being told that my statement was 'irresponsible' or that it has given aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States. . . . If that accusation is to be pressed an interesting discussion could be developed as to whether it is my criticisms of U.S. policy in the Dominican Republic or the policy itself which has given aid and comfort to our enemies. . . ."

"Insofar as it represents a genuine reconciliation of differences, a consensus is a fine thing; insofar as it represents a concealment of differences, it is a miscarriage of democratic procedure. I think we Americans tend to put too high a value on unanimity—on bi-partisanship in foreign policy, on politics stopping at the water's edge, on turning a single

Leading Publisher Defends Demonstrators

"Demonstrations against war are as old as the centuries. And in every war, the super-patriots assail and condemn those who oppose it. Today's unhappiness over Vietnam is largely attributable to the manner and method of our gradual involvement. It began with President Eisenhower, grew under President Kennedy and came to full scale war in the Johnson administration. During this period, only a few newspapers and a handful of Democratic senators spoke out against our policies. As the Detroit Free Press has said, 'Behind the fluttering banners and the chants on the asphalt lies a feeling among other Americans that their nation ought to stop trying to police the whole world. . . .'

"The students, intellectuals, university professors and others who stage 'teach-ins' and demonstrate from New York to San Francisco may be serving no useful purpose. Yet, they have a right to be heard in a land with our traditions. We are engaged in an unpopular and unnecessary war. So there will be more demonstrations and counter demonstrations to come. But let not the voice of dissent be stilled, lest we emulate the suppressive measures practiced so long by leaders of the Asian 'democracy' we are attempting to save."

—John S. Knight, of the Knight Newspapers, 3rd largest U.S. chain, in Detroit Free Press Oct. 24.

General asking to meet with them immediately to discuss our proposal. Let me state it again: that any American who is ready to risk his life, his health, his career, and his material possessions in order to build democracy not be asked to take part in a war that is destroying democracy. If they do this, I say again—they will find the whole of our generation rejoicing in the opportunity to build. I hope the President and the Attorney General will respond to our request and will meet with us at once; for every hour and day that passes, more human beings, American and Vietnamese, die needlessly in that ugly war, and for every hour and day that passes, more members of our generation become desperate.

Until the President agrees to our proposal, we have only one choice: we do in conscience object, utterly and wholeheartedly, to this war; and we will encourage every member of our generation to object, and to file his objection through the Form 150 provided by the law for conscientious objection.

face to the world—as if there were something dangerous and illegitimate about honest differences of opinion. . . . Responsible dissent is one of the great strengths of democracy. France, for example, is unquestionably in a stronger position today in her relations with the emerging nations of Asia and Africa because during the years of colonial wars in Indochina and Algeria a large and articulate minority refused to acquiesce in what was being done and by speaking out, pointed the way to the enlightened policies of the Fifth Republic. The British Labor Party, to take another example, not only protested the Suez invasion in 1956 but did so while the invasion was being carried out; by so doing, the opposition performed the patriotic service of helping Britain to recover its good name in the wake of a disastrous adventure."

—Fulbright in the Senate, Oct. 22.

From An On-The-Spot Report in Paris-Match (Oct. 2) By A French Writer Who Knows Vietnam Well

A Priest Tells How Our Bombers Razed His Church and Killed His People

By Jean Larteguy
Author of "The Centurions"

Near Duc Co, 17,000 refugees, for the most part Catholics from Tonkin, had been settled in some ten villages. Father Currien was their curé. He is a stocky, robust native of the Vosges. He won the Military Medal for going out among the Vietminh in 1944 to find the wounded French. I found him stretched out on a bed in the St. Paul Clinic in Saigon. He had been caught for several hours under the beams of his wrecked church and his spine still felt the effects. In his hand he held a small pyx, a small round metal vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is carried, which had been pierced by two bullets. He showed it to me:

"They Even Shoot at God"

"This was the consecrated host. In this war they even shoot God himself. It all began one Monday at 9 a.m. The Viet Cong were in the vicinity, but not as many as reported—many less. It was not a regiment coming from the North. They held the roads, it is true, but like everywhere else, not the villages. We Catholics have little love for them. We hardly ever saw them and they left us alone. At 9 I saw an armored column arrive. There were lots of them. They were commanded by a sub-brigadier. The Viet Cong, placed along the sides of the roads, let the tanks pass and fell on the troops in the trucks. The government forces were three battalions. The Viet Cong, from what I could judge, were at the most two companies. But they were well prepared. Everybody shot at everybody else, the tanks on their own troops. At last it ended, the Viets took off.

"The sub-brigadier then came to see me. 'Now it is finished,' he told me. 'You and your faithful are no longer in danger.' He left, leaving three armored cars in front of my church. I would have preferred that he had put them elsewhere. It was 5:30 p.m. The soldiers were taking a nap or enjoying a snack. Suddenly I saw some 50 Viet Cong rush at them, weapons in their hands. I did not know where they came from. I let out three yells. This woke my Viet regulars who leaped into their armored cars and trucks and disappeared. The Viet Cong also scammed. We were left alone. No one was in the village except for some women, children and old people whom neither the Viet Cong nor the regular troops thought to pick up to serve as coolies.

"I heard some planes. The first bomb fell at 6:05 on my church. There was nothing left of it. I ran for shelter to the presbytery, a wooden house adjoining the church. A second bomb crushed it and I was pinned under the beams. Children cried, women shrieked and the wounded moaned. They were near me but I could not budge. Finally, some of the faithful who had been looking for me everywhere, dragged me out. I made the women and children lie down under the flooring of the house. There we passed the entire night while those accursed planes hammered with rockets and bombs at my village.

"There were no longer any Viet Cong around. They had fled into the forest long before. Next morning my back hurt badly, but I gathered 42 women and children and took

Afraid of What The Refugees Might Say?

"[Sen. Edward M.] Kennedy, 33, arrived yesterday for a five day tour and a first-hand look at the refugee problem. At a refugee camp in Banmethout north of Saigon, he told 3500 refugees: 'You can be sure that no matter how long this struggle goes on, the United States is going to continue to be your friend in the difficult months and years ahead.' At one point, Kennedy complained that he was not permitted to talk freely enough with the refugees. He said Vietnamese officials at the settlement were answering questions intended for the refugees."

—AP from Danang, Washington Post, Oct. 25.

the Host in its bullet pierced pyx and started off for Pleiku. The bombing could start again at any moment. On the way I buried as best I could the bodies of my faithful. Yes, I remember now I buried seven of them completely torn to bits. I had to abandon some wounded and dying. I gave them absolution. I tried to keep alive those who were still alive. The children were exhausted, the women wept; they dragged themselves along. It was a real way of the cross. . . .

"A Vietnamese Colonel who saw that I had a great deal of trouble walking offered me a ride to Pleiku in his helicopter. I asked him, 'And those who are with me, shall I leave them to shift for themselves?' I stayed with them. The march continued. The children laid down along the road; they no longer wanted to move. Finally we arrived at a French tea plantation where they gave us to eat and drink, and a place to lie down."

The Padre tried to turn himself on his bed but made a grimace. He showed his fist: "Today nothing remains of all that region. All is razed. As for the poor mountain people whose villages and rice granaries have been destroyed, they can live only as wild boars in the forest. Before the bombardment, the loud speakers, in the planes above them, told them not to go into the fields and to stay in their huts. They stayed in their huts and the huts were bombarded anyway. Or again the Viet Cong obliged them to come out and machine-gunned them in the fields. Some villages were warned, others not. I have seen my faithful burned up in napalm. I have seen the bodies of women and children blown to bits. I have seen all my villages razed. By God, it's not possible! (*C'est pas Dieu possible*)."
Suddenly the priest burst into tears. His nerves had given way. He cursed the war and its attendant horrors and absurdities. He railed at the Americans in English, as if they were there to hear him. He finally calmed down:

"They must settle their accounts with God. When I arrived in Saigon, I could barely drag myself along. Two Americans wanted to give me a lift to the hospital in their automobile. I couldn't stand it. Always before my eyes were those burned up women and children. I told them to get the H— out ("f..le camp") because I didn't like murderers. They were probably nice guys who wanted to help me. In Saigon they probably pound away at typewriters in an air-conditioned office and know nothing of this war. They couldn't understand what was the matter with me."

For The Option of National Service on More Difficult Battlefields

(Continued from Page One)

been struggling since the last World War against foreign armies and their puppets. The students who have shown their willingness to face death in the South are not willing to face it in Vietnam. The latter, emotionally and philosophically, is not their war. That is how they feel.

Less Fearsomely Armed

What is the wise national policy for dealing with this student revolt, even from the standpoint of those who see the Vietnamese war as a test of national prestige in a larger world contest with two Communist rivals, Russia and China? The wise national policy, it seems to me, is to let those who prefer to fight in the South do so. Unthinking enthusiasm, blind devotion, anti-Communist fervor and herdlike conformity may be counted on to produce enough troops for Vietnam. It takes far more guts to fight the civil rights struggle in the South. It is lonelier, it is more exposed, and its chosen weapons are not napalm and bombers but non-violence and love.

Those few youngsters who are willing to engage in this task are a rare national asset, the real heroes of our time. It is because of them that our country looks very different in the eyes of the world from Rhodesia or South Africa. They are the ones who have stirred the Southern Negro from a century of submissive slumber. They have helped force the pace of civil rights legislation and enforcement. They have given the world a spectacle whose value is beyond price in a world festering with racial hatred—the spectacle of young white people from privileged homes going out to risk their lives on behalf of underprivileged blacks. They have made it possible for us to boast that our country is doing more to eradicate racism than any other country on earth, white or black. The kids of SNCC and CORE have served their country well on its most difficult and honorable battlefield. It is understandable that the Stennises and Eastlands would like to root them out and send them off to Vietnam instead. But let not the rest of us be deceived. This is not a test of their patriotism but of our good sense.

A substantial portion of our press is off like a lynch mob in full hue and cry against the student rebels. Their numbers,

Bombers In, Foxholes Out?

"We're doing a lot more than killing monkeys and making kindling wood out of the jungle," said a young [B-52] pilot just back from the 5,400 mile round trip to a bombing objective in South Vietnam. "The bomber is here to stay." From Maj. Gen. W. J. Crumm, commander of the Third Air Division on Guam, down to the lowest ranking airman, there is a conviction that the [B-52] operation is performing a useful and important combat function in Vietnam and is proving the flexibility of the manned bomber."

—Hanson Baldwin from Guam in N.Y. Times Oct 25

"For the first time since B-52 bombings against the Vietcong began, results of such a raid were made public. A U.S. military spokesman in Saigon said a raid Tuesday near Bencat, 30 miles north of Saigon, killed two Vietcong, destroyed three structures, several tunnels and 40 foxholes."

—Washington Post from Saigon Oct. 23.

their views, their actions are being exaggerated and distorted; we invite you to read for yourself the actual statement of their aims issued by the leadership of the Students for a Democratic Society on page 2. It is an eloquent one. This majority of the rebel minority is seeking the right to opt for national service, in the slums, in the South, in the Peace Corps. They ask that those who object to the war in Vietnam be allowed to serve on these other fronts. We believe nothing could be more creditable to our country and more useful to its future than to accept their offer and their challenge. This idealistic youth is the same youth already serving in Peace Corps abroad and poverty program at home. They are the seed corn of a better future. They embody that strain of idealism which in every generation has written the brightest chapters in our American history. They are the spiritual sons of the Jeffersonians and the abolitionists. They have already proven their mettle, besieged as they are by the ignorant rich of Birchism on one side and the ignorant poor of the KKK on the other. There could be no greater folly than for the government to be drawn into a frontal conflict with the best youngsters of our time. Instead of alienating them further, we ought to take up their offer to enlist in their own way.

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NEWSPAPER

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Second Class Postage Paid at Washington, D. C. Published every Monday except in August, the last week in December and the first week in January and Bi-Weekly during July at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: \$5 in the U.S.; \$6 in Canada; \$10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: \$15 to Europe; \$20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.