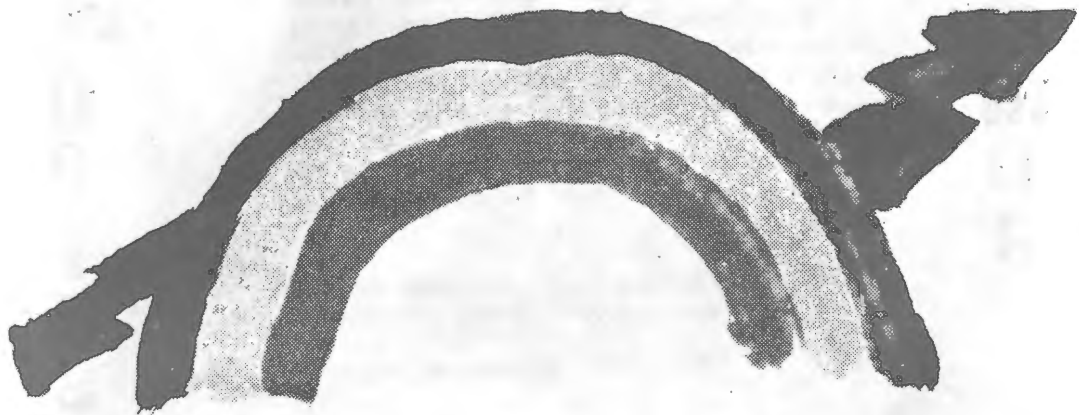


# COMMON VICTORIES



WEATHER UNDERGROUND  
Communication Number 13  
February 23, 1973  
Concerning the Vietnam  
Peace Agreement

Distrust of the Nixon-rulers must not blind us to the light of Vietnam. Without savoring our common victories, we become cynical and paralyzed. Expecting everything, we discard anything less.

202302

Victories

Dear Friends,

The enclosed statement expresses our thoughts on the cease-fire in Vietnam. The signing of the cease-fire agreement marks a great victory, not only for the Vietnamese people, but for everyone who has protested the war and fought for an end to U.S. aggression. It is a time to share in the celebrations of the Vietnamese, to reflect on our movement in history, and renew our resistance.

Nixon and his supporters will spread the lie that U.S. terror-bombing "won the war" and "forced" the Vietnamese to sign the agreement. This lie cannot affect the continuing progress of the Vietnamese revolution. It is aimed at deceiving the American people and silencing millions in this country who have opposed the war. Many clear voices need to be heard right now—to tell the real history of the war, to draw the lessons from U.S. defeat.

We hope that you will read this statement, print it if possible and circulate it among your friends.

Weather Underground

Yesterday, a cease-fire agreement was signed in Laos.  
Great joy, common victories.



The women joined the Circle  
gliding across perfumed parisian carpets  
walked to the calm measure  
of rice-pounding rhythms.

Thi Binh came victorious  
her flesh torn and blistered  
singed hair skin coarsened  
from prison lye, barelegged work in the deltas.  
She covered her mudcaked body  
with crimson ao dai  
dipped in  
the blood of women  
warriors,  
sacred red.

They saw red.  
Her enemies  
described their own fear:  
"a fishwife", ShriII  
cries of her countrywomen  
rise from the ancient soil  
"I shall not resign myself  
to the usual lot of women."

The cochin women  
sat in high circles  
crouched in caves  
hidden in mangrove forests,  
taking careful aim.  
Her graceful hands  
with nails ripped out  
held the pen;  
she made a sign.  
The moon turned scarlet.

Now the children can be born.



Written by a sister  
in the underground

27 january 1973

★On the day of the signing, U.S.  
newspaper accounts referred to  
Mme. Binh as the "fishwife of  
the Paris negotiations."

Five years after the Tet Offensive, a New Year's victory is being celebrated in Vietnam. This is the Year of the Water Buffalo, the animal of power in the rice fields—slow and ponderous, strong. The Vietnamese say it will be a fruitful year, a time of building close to the earth.

The signing of the *Agreement on the Cease Fire and Restoring Peace in Vietnam* marks a time of joy for the Vietnamese people. It ends direct United States military involvement, ends the blockade and mining of the ports of the Demo-

cratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), the threats to the dikes and other life-support systems, the terror bombing by U.S. warplanes.

from their country. For the first time in over one hundred years, Vietnamese soil will be free of foreign soldiers. Article No. 4 of the Agreement says: "The U.S. will not continue its military involvement or intervention in the internal affairs of Vietnam." The full force of U.S. wealth, the cream of computerized technology, the racial arrogance of Empire has been defeated by an ancient Asian nation, a people who began this stage of their revolution thirty years ago armed with a two thousand year tradition of resistance and bamboo poles sharpened at the ends.

The significance of the ceasefire agreement is that the strength of people—in Vietnam, around the world and inside the U.S. itself—was pitted against a handful of men who control technolo-



cratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), the threats to the dikes and other life-support systems, the terror bombing by U.S. warplanes.

The intention of the U.S. government has been total war and genocide against Vietnam. This intention has been countered and defeated. The Vietnamese people have driven an invading army

gical power and the means of violence. A small poor country can defeat the largest richest power in the world, provided its people are united and its cause is just.

What an ominous message for the American empire. What inspiration and comfort for all people.



The Vietnamese have experience with the forked-tongue of the American government; we are reminded of the trail of broken treaties and the greed which has accompanied peace-and-honor words before.

U.S. imperial presence continues in force in South Vietnam. Already ten thousand "civilian advisors" are in place, propping-up the Thieu regime for a decent interval, looking for ways to subvert the cease-fire agreement. U.S. built prison camps remain in the South as centers of repression and torture for over two hundred thousand opponents of the regime. U.S. war-planes based in Thailand continue to bomb the peoples of Laos and Cambodia; the U.S. fleet strikes a threatening pose in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The Pentagon Papers are an invaluable guide to the history of U.S. designs. They remind us to hear through Nixon-words. We must guard the hard fought peace that we helped to win. We must remain vigilant and demand that:

*—the Nixon government strictly abide by the terms of the Agreement;*

*—the U.S. end all its economic and military aid to the puppet Thieu;*

*—the Thieu regime must free all political prisoners held in the prisons and tiger cages, and stop the campaign of repression and terror against the Vietnamese people;*

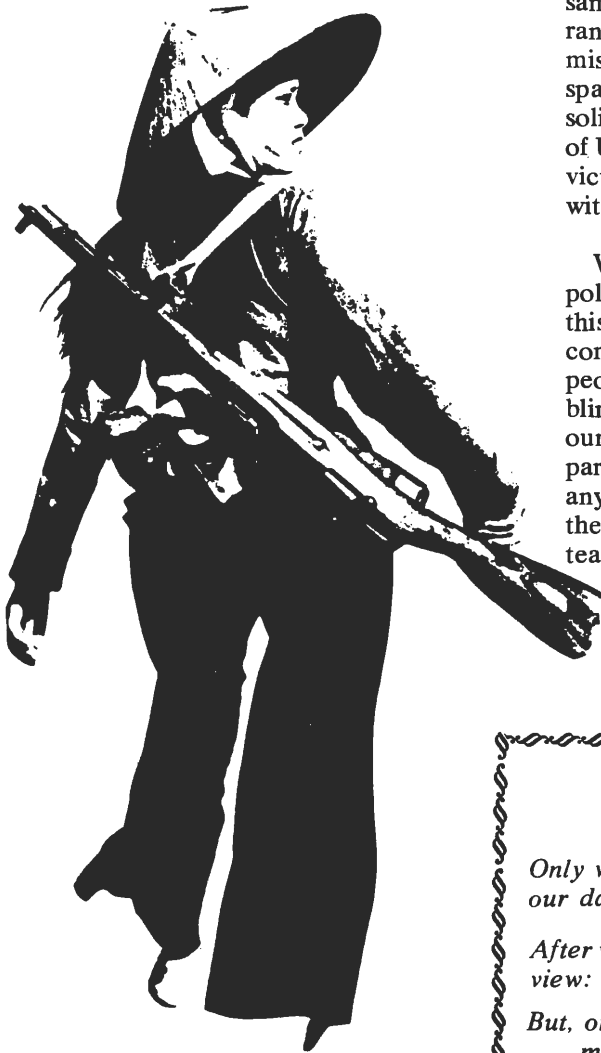
*—the U.S. government must give reparations for the destruction caused by its aggression;*

*—all American forces withdraw from Indochina.*



However, the central significance of the victory should not be lost. The Agreement is a proud moment in a long history of Vietnamese resistance to foreign aggression. In world revolution, where the enemy is as strong as U.S. imperialism, victories do not happen every day. When they do, they are hard won and nothing remains quite the same. Now American military strength cannot range unchecked over the planet. The uncompromising struggle of the Vietnamese has created space for revolutions around the world to consolidate their gains without the immediate threat of U.S. military intervention. We cannot allow the victory to be hidden from us or claimed by those with bloody hands.

We urge all opponents of the government's war policies to allow themselves to seize and celebrate this triumph. We welcome the renewal which comes from sharing the aspirations of a heroic people. Distrust of the Nixon-rulers must not blind us to the light of Vietnam. Without savoring our common victories, we become cynical and paralyzed. Expecting everything, we discard anything less. Now the Vietnamese can order their reunification, plant and harvest, heal and teach, in their own time.



*On the Road*

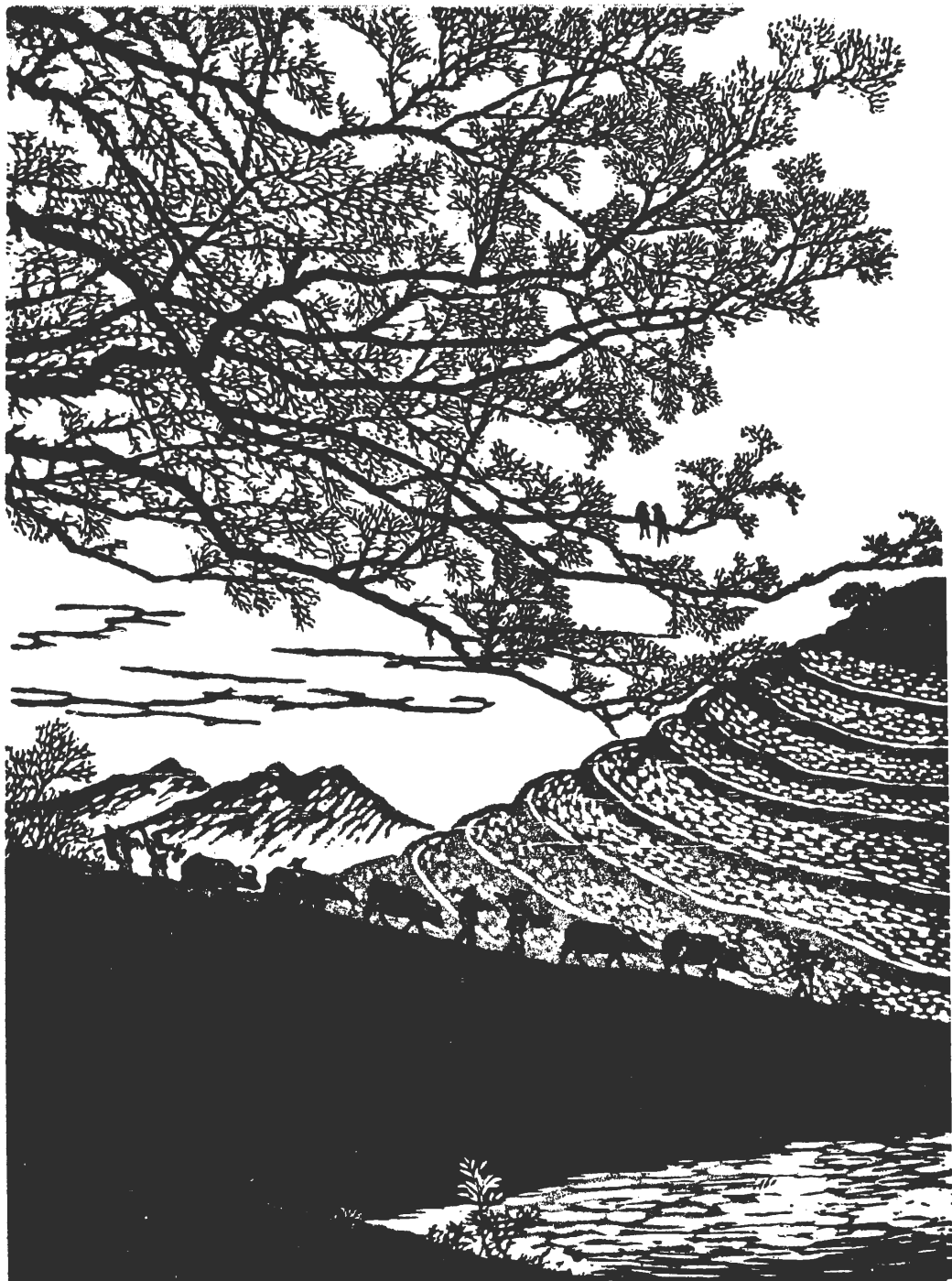
*Only when out on the road can we take stock of our dangers.*

*After we climb one mountain, another looms into view:*

*But, once we have struggled up to the top of the mountain range,*

*More than ten thousand li can be surveyed at a glance.*

*—Ho Chi Minh*



Remember the slogans:

**Hell No, We Won't Go!  
Stop the Draft!  
Dump Johnson!  
Bring the Troops Home!  
Stop the Bombing!  
The NLF Will Win!**

Each defines a campaign successfully waged—from the first acts of conscience to the flowering of mass action. The millions of Americans who opposed the war have contributed to this moment. Never before has U.S. imperial policy been so challenged by its own people. It is a culmination of a ten-year history and an occasion for us to look back at the course of the war, study its lessons for the growth of movements here.

Even the unsureness of the road and the differences among us cannot blur the main thread: that the social movements of the sixties and beginning seventies have transformed American consciousness and forced the war-makers into secrecy. Confidence in them has been replaced by skepticism and doubt. The foundations of racism and the rule of wealth, the culture of male supremacy, have been challenged. Many people have come to identify with the enemies of the U.S. government.

### **Hell No, We Won't Go!**

Resistance to the war has taken many forms, but it began modestly, using what was at hand. It has grown from the deeds of a courageous few who broke the silence of the McCarthy ice age. The early vigils, night after cold night on hostile streets, the lonely decisions of the first men who deserted from the army, the first draft card burners, embattled. Then a few people began to learn about Vietnam, to distrust accounts of American victories which appeared in the uncritical mass media, to search out accurate sources and spread the news of Vietnamese revolution. Teach-ins were organized at campuses and the stranglehold of the Cold War ideology on the minds of young people was broken.



**Rap Brown**  
Former SNCC leader, now jailed  
and on trial in New York City

The Civil Rights movement was the teacher: of the necessity to overcome apathy and fear of jail, to break the law, to take personal risk, to build mass action. The unresponsiveness of the government and the growing human cost of the war moved many to more and more direct action. Opponents of the war marched, fought, chained themselves to public buildings.

The Black movement laid bare the racist foundations of society at home. An outcry was raised against the draft of Black and Third World GI's as "cannon-fodder". Greatly disproportionate numbers were wounded or killed at the front, but the logical outgrowth of three hundred years of American history which began with slavery and the near-extermination of Native Americans for the purposes of exploiting their lands. In January 1966 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee issues a formal position opposing the war and urging Black people to resist:

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*.. We believe the United States government has been deceptive in its claim of concern for freedom of the Vietnamese people, just as the government has been deceptive in claiming concern for the freedom of colored people in such other countries as the Dominican Republic, the Congo, South Africa, Rhodesia and in the United States itself...*

*.. We are in sympathy with, and support, the men in this country who are unwilling to respond to a military draft which would compel them to contribute their lives to United States aggression in Vietnam in the name of the "freedom" we find so false in this country...*

*.. We ask, where is the draft for the freedom fight in the United States?*

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The draft brought the war home to many families. To support the massive ground invasion, draft calls swelled and draft resistance grew into a popular movement. Recruiters for war faced angry opposition. People learned about the cruelty of the weapons: napalm, a jelly that sticks to human skin while burning at high intensity, was designed to terrorize civilians, not tanks and armies. Cluster bombs were constructed to tear the flesh but leave the buildings standing. The destruction of crops and forests, biological and chemical warfare against future generations, created thousands of militants and taught that the war was being waged against an entire population.

During these years people pressed the offensive against the "Great Society". Black rebellions of Watts, Newark, Detroit and thousands of spirited anti-war demonstrations wrested power and morality away from the masters of war. By the end of 1967, Stop the Draft Week culminated in the storming of the Pentagon. Three months later the Tet offensive raised before the eyes of the world the inevitability of American defeat.



Watts burning during 1965 rebellion



"...who broke the silence of the McCarthy ice age."

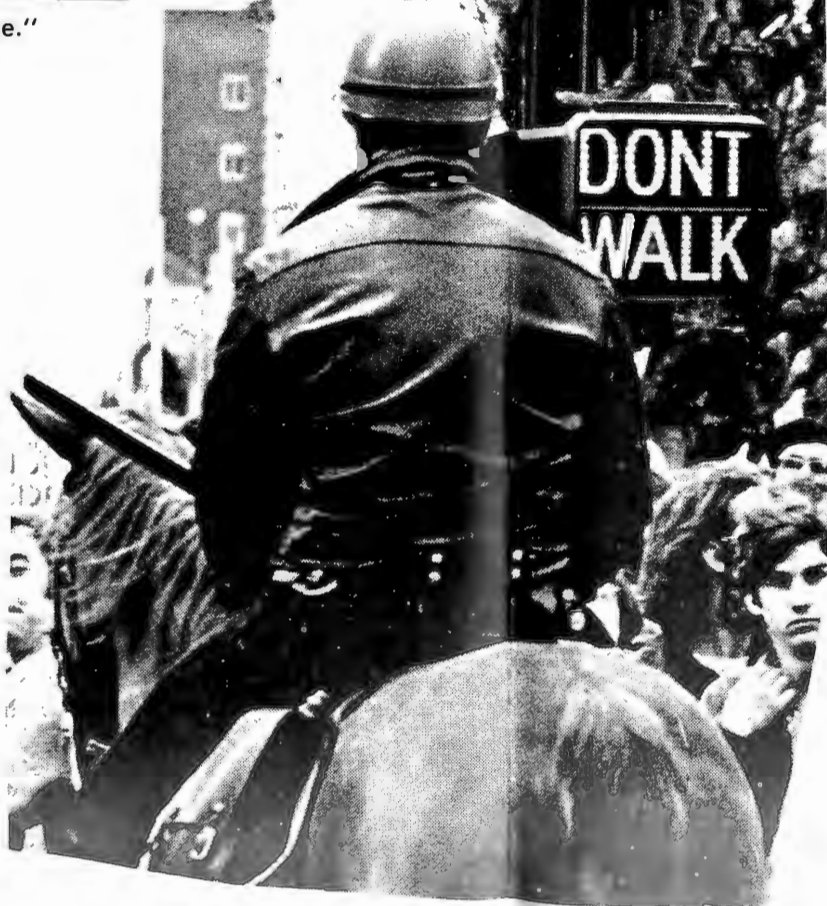




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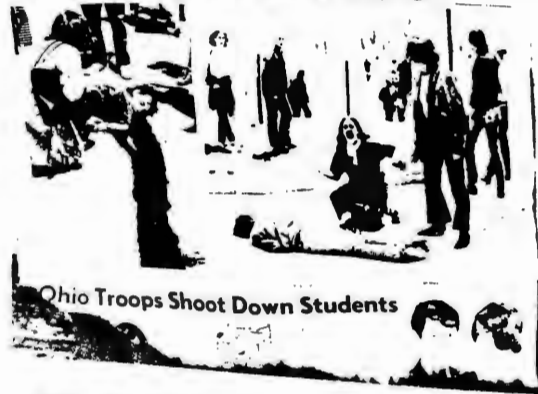


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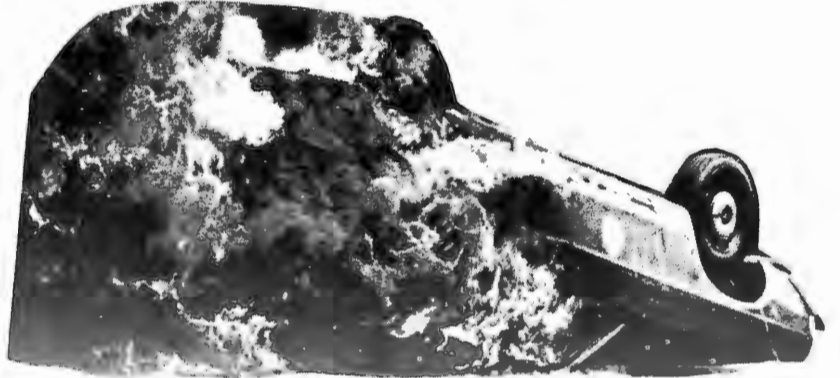


"In Chicago, the movement exploded onto the world..."

**The Killings at Kent State**



"We have lost comrades, and this victory belongs also to them."



"Armed attacks against the war apparatus"

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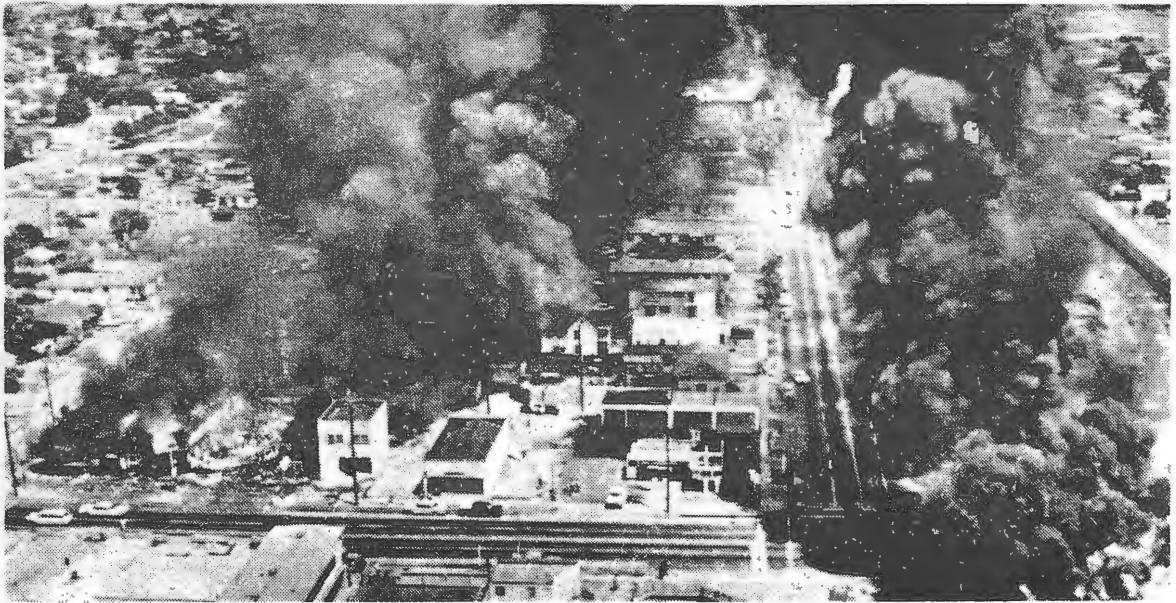
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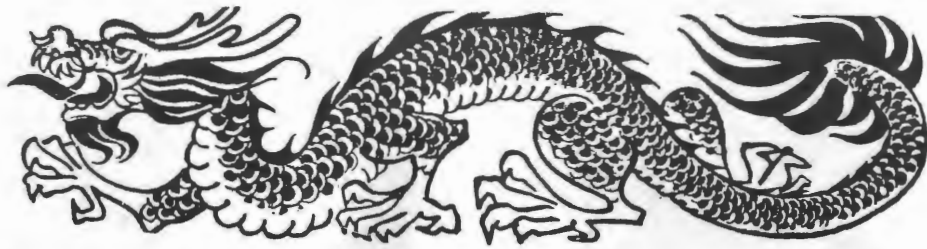
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Watts burning during 1965 rebellion



President Kennedy had estimated that in order to win, it would take ten American soldiers for every one "guerilla". Ground troops began arriving in 1965 and attempted to "search and destroy" the NLF bases in the countryside, forcing many people into reservations (strategic hamlets), calling it pacification. Thousands of U.S. casualties later, a new strategy was announced: "clear and hold". It meant the defensive occupation of base areas, safe for troops.

The Americans, coming from a competitive materialistic culture, came up against an ancient communal nation, with a great majority of the people rooted in rural village life. A beautiful dragon-shaped land of plains and rivers cut through with mountains where families tilled the ricelands of their ancestors. The fabric of life in the countryside built the resistance. Village women organized themselves into a long-haired army. The whole people was mobilized in a great effort. And the Americans were driven out of the

countryside into concentrations in the cities and the large U.S. bases.

Tet—thunder to the heart of Saigon. The Tet Offensive of January 1968 penetrated the urban fortresses. The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF) stunned the world with their deep and broad support among urban workers, students, nationalist groups, government employees. The attacks in the cities were supported by simultaneous uprisings throughout the country, overextending Saigon and U.S. forces, pinning them down and exhausting them in long sieges at Hue and Khe Sanh.

Johnson, stepping down, stopped the bombing of the North, then removed General William Westmoreland from his command and later opened negotiations with the DRV and the NLF in Paris.





"Street Without Joy": Republican Convention, '72

### **Stop the Bombing!**

Nixon was elected President with a "secret plan" to end the war. He announced the Nixon Doctrine, his form of neo-colonialism. He applied it to Indochina and called it "Vietnamization". His secret was a wider war.

A major factor which changed U.S. military policy was the inability of the administration to rely on its own armed forces. At the core of Vietnamization was racism, placing the human cost of

the U.S. war entirely on the Vietnamese, changing the color of the corpses. Nixon hoped to diminish dissent domestically and throughout the world by giving the appearance of a U.S. withdrawal. He replaced the ground troops by escalating the air war into the most ferocious bombing campaign in history. So under Nixon, combat troops were replaced with pilots and computer-guided bombs.

One of the aims of Vietnamization was the destruction of the rural base of Vietnamese life. Villages were destroyed, families murdered as at My Lai. Hundreds of thousands were driven into the cities under a policy called "forced urbanization". Saigon was corrupted into a marketplace for Western consumer goods and cowboy culture. The refugees in the city suffered. Many died of malnutrition and disease. Vietnam had been 90 percent rural before the Americans came. By 1971, 60 percent of her people lived in cities.

Under cover of preventing another Vietnamese offensive, Nixon expanded the war across Indochina with his disastrous invasions of Cambodia in 1970 and Laos in 1971. They were the last American ground adventures. The decisive Spring offensive began on March 31, 1972. Several divisions of Saigon troops were wiped out and many more were pinned down at the sites of the big battles—Quang Tri, Kontum, An Loc. Over a period of months, the pacification program was disassembled by the NLF. Regional forces set up people's governments throughout the countryside, liberating millions of people, enabling them to return to village life.

On April 6, Nixon resumed the bombing of North Vietnam in an attempt to stop the offensive. In nine months, American warplanes dropped one ton of bombs a minute, that is, the equivalent of 20 Hiroshima-sized atomic bombs. When Nixon threatened to destroy the thousand year old dike system and flood the rice country during the rainy season, the Vietnamese launched an international diplomatic offensive calling on nations and people of good conscience to protest.

### **The NLF Will Win!**

In October, word of a cease-fire agreement was released. Postponing his acceptance of the agreement after his reelection, Nixon launched a twelve-day assault on the cities of the DRV—the heaviest bombings in human history. His generals used this delay to rush last minute supplies to Saigon.

This bombing assault was an attack on the centers of an independent socialist country, a last



attempt to punish the North for the defeat the U.S. would soon accept. It was also an attempt to make it appear to the American people that the U.S. had forced the DRV to make concessions in Paris. However, mounting world pressure and the unexpected loss of one tenth of the B-52 force ended the bombings. Nixon was trying to create a reality out of a myth in the minds of the American people. But the Vietnamese have a saying: "You cannot cover a buffalo with a basket."



Nixon expected that the anti-war movement would lose its immediacy with the dirty aspect of the war one step removed by Vietnamization. But hatred for the war became an accepted fact of American life. By the Spring of 1970, with the U.S. invasion into Cambodia, hundreds of thousands of people took part in actions and strikes. People fought, attacking the centers where the armed forces were trained, the laboratories where chemical warfare was taught. Armed attacks against the war apparatus began to occur within the U.S. Women were joining together, using their political force, creating and demanding institutions in which women had power. The women's movement had taken firm root, growing in every part of the country. Sisterhood grew to embrace the women of Vietnam.

From within the armed forces came opposition to Nixon. Groups of Vietnam veterans told the world of the inhumanity of the U.S. conduct of the war. By throwing their medals over the White House walls the vets undercut Nixon's cynical attempt to be the friend of the troops, and to create American war heroes. Black rebellion grew inside the armed forces, G.I. morale plummeted. The war machines were sabotaged from inside.

For ten years, we have all shared a common aim through Vietnam. What began as opposition to a single military policy grew to confront an executive which more and more took power into its own hands. Coming to see this unconscionable state power as antagonistic to the survival of other peoples and to the best aspirations of the American people, the anti-war movement has grown into a force for revolutionary change.





Amilcar Cabral

Not easily brought about. Hard courageous work and sacrifice helped to create this movement, this peace. Love and gratitude are due those who accepted prison or exile rather than become war criminals or be complicit in silence. People gave their lives in the battles here. We have lost comrades, and this victory belongs also to them.



The Vietnam victory is one milestone in the long struggle against imperialism. The U.S. government is still reaching into 3 continents: it arms and supports Portugal's desperate war against the people of Guine and the Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique and Angola, where the liberation forces govern vast portions of each country. On January 20, one of their leaders, Amilcar Cabral, was assassinated by Portuguese mercenaries. Cabral said: "In the modern world, it is not necessary to be courageous to support people fighting for independence and freedom; it is enough to be honest." The U.S. is still trying to undermine and topple the socialist government of Chile, and to protect its extensive interest in Puerto Rico, threatened always by the Puerto Rican people's movements. The U.S. still maintains its arsenal in Asia, propping up the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines and ringing the Pacific rim with military bases and a force of 226,000 men.

Vietnam has been the battlefield. What are the well-springs of their power to endure, their purposeful unity and courage? The life force of the people is characterized by mutual politeness,

appreciation of old people and treasuring of children. Songs and laughter defied the defoliation. When mechanical fury pounded the homes, the trees and the fields, life went underground. Schools and factories moved into tunnels. A culture of tradition, bending, transforming into people's war.

Even during the highest pitch of the fighting, a new society was being built in the liberated zones. People were not fighting for abstractions, but for what they painstakingly constructed: food for everyone, medical care, schools for the children and teaching for the adults, their poetry and art.

Times of popular insurrection are built on the years of teaching and organization. The liberation forces organized and reorganized the same

villages many times, knowing that their words and actions won more listeners, more fighters, each time. Every form of resistance, every front, must be used and will be decisive at a certain time. The acts of the An Quang Buddhists overthrew Diem; the courage of Nguyen Van Troi, executed in Saigon in 1965 for an attempt on the life of Robert McNamara inspired a new generation of liberation fighters; Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh led a world campaign that forced the Americans to stop the bombings of the dikes.

Like the ebony trees in the Highlands, their revolution has grown with patience over years, into an indestructible human fibre. They have shown the world the gentle strength that flowers in a people fighting for their liberation.





The wheel of the law turns  
without pause

After the rain good weather.  
in the wink of an eye

The universe throws off  
its muddy clothes.

For ten thousand miles  
the landscape

Spreads out like a beautiful brocade  
Light breezes. Smiling flowers.

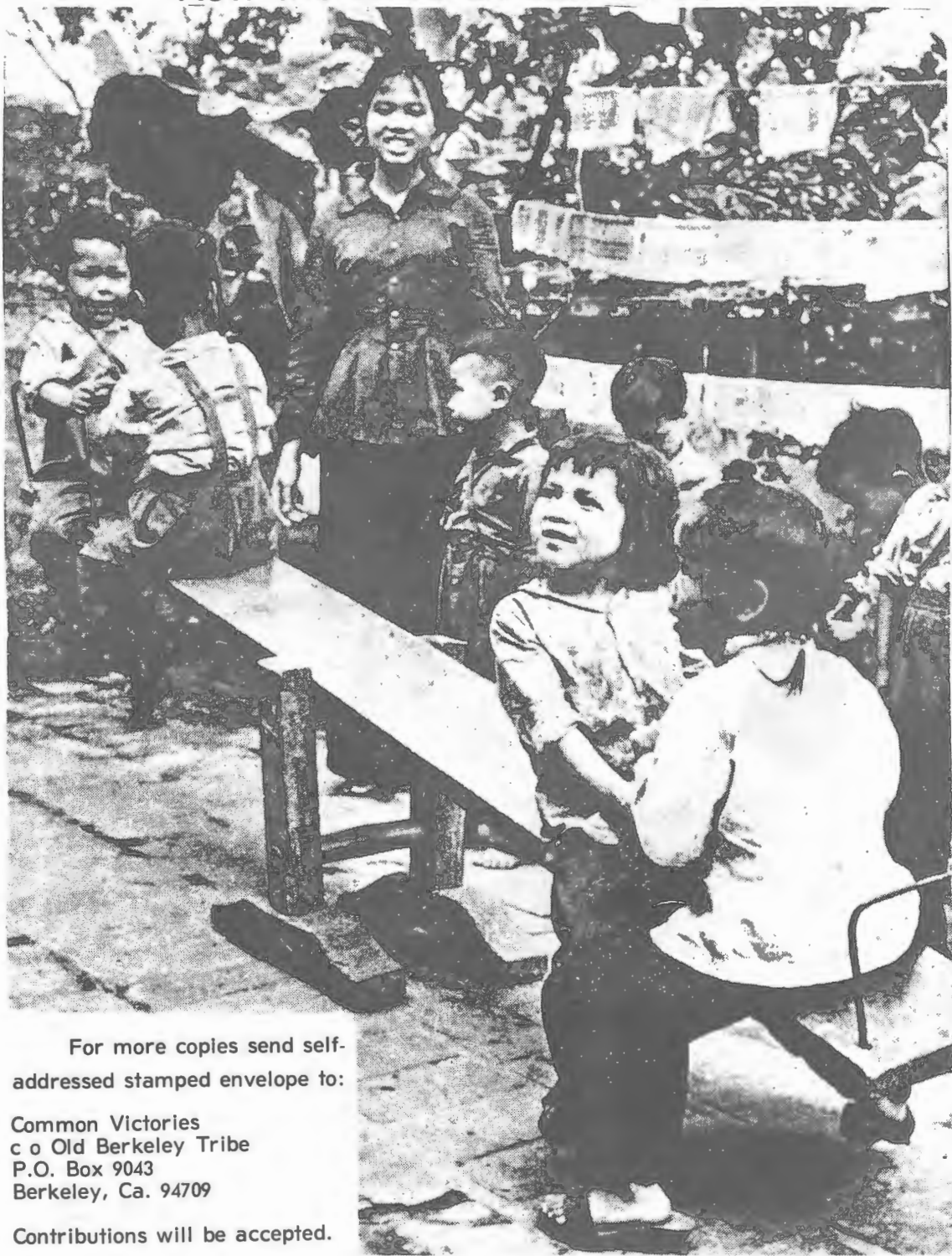
High in the trees, amongst  
the sparkling leaves

All the birds sing at once.  
Men and animals rise-up reborn.

What could be more natural?  
After sorrow, comes joy.

Ho Chi Minh

"Now the children can be born."



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