

*** The Robert Maynard Hutchins
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

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Mr. William H. Hunter
74922 Chateau Circle
Indian Wells, CA 92210

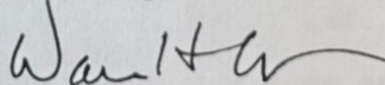
Dear Mr. Hunter:

Thank you very much for your thoughtful response to the CBS "60 Minutes" segment on the class on the Vietnam War that I teach.

Yours is a fascinating story, and though we are already filled to the very top with resource persons -- and were even before "60 Minutes" aired -- I'm going to keep you letter in the active file.

Many thanks for writing.

Sincerely,



Walter H. Capps
Acting Director

Mr. and Mrs. William H. Hunter
74922 Chateau Circle
Indian Wells, CA 92210

Professor Walter Capps,
University of California,
Santa Barbara, Ca.

10-10-87

Dear Professor Capps,

It was a source of great personal pleasure to learn, on "60 Minutes", Sunday evening, that the Vietnam War is being so intelligently studied at the College level, under your leadership .

My own involvement began in 1946, when I was sent out to be our one-and-only Military Liason Officer with the French Forces in Indochina. For 3½ crucial years, with the cover-title of Assistant Naval Attache, Bangkok, I travelled, ate, drank and talked with all branches of the French Military, at all levels, all over the country. Because the only other U. S. Officials were Consular people, disliked and distrusted by the French, both sides came to use me as a pipeline to Washington. Before the fighting began, I had long talks with Ho Chi Minh, Giap and other Vietnamese politicians. Throughout the years , while developping a warm personal friendship with High Commissioner Pignon and other French Government Officials, I was in close touch with the Vietnamese Delegation in Bangkok.

By the end of 1948, through all these various sources, I was able to predict that "the French Army would win every battle except the last one". Their troops were well led, far better equipped and courageous, but no match for night, the jungle, and a brilliantly led, implacable, guerilla army, with a hundred years of scores to settle, and a language that no one else on Earth could understand.

When we started sending troops to Vietnam, I had a piece published in The New Republic "No Win in Vietnam" , which gave the same reasons for our ultimate defeat that applied to the French. Alas, the die had been cast. No politician dared to appear "soft" on any form of Communism, or defeatist on the prospects of military success.

Do you think your classes would be interested in hearing how the whole thing started from someone who was there ? If so please write or phone, I'm available .

Yours faithfully,

W H Hunter (619) 3469792