

NICHOLAS PIEDISCALZI:

I almost feel we should stop and discuss your comments, Walter, this, make it awfully disconnected.

Like you, I have felt it necessary to combine reactions to what has been transpiring here and also some thought I had on the religious situation. One thing that has become very evident to me from participating in this conference, in which Vietnam is still so divisive, and how we have been able to often dialogue because of that divisiveness. And at the risk of being terribly oversimple, I'd like to say, I'd say that I've seen two factions here. One centering

W. RICHARD COMSTOCK:

I want to react further, and I think in the same vein as Nicholas, to the theme, impact of Vietnam. So my main point is not anything unusual, because I don't think there is anything really new to say about this. But I would suggest that through the Vietnam experience, we are witnessing and indeed participating in, a serious dissolution of the synthesis of religious and political values that has characterized America. I think all great civilizations have such a synthesis, having by religion, I mean pointing at something transcendent, something more than our ordinary experience. But usually this is combined and connected with the political order, and the religious gives force to the political order, but also hopes to transform it and keep it in a moral direction. Well, I am suggesting that that synthesis is disintegrating, and that Vietnam was the kind of event to which it became evident. I don't believe that

PHILLIP HAMMOND:

In one sense I guess I am last on the program, and I could claim that everything had been said that I had intended to say. Comstock's comments, in fact, do permit me the luxury of skipping through my notes and not duplicate some of the points that he made. To a lesser extent that's true also of Nick's comments. But let me start with an analogue, if I may. There is a remarkable finding in the survey data about religious attitudes, which makes it very clear that World War II was a kind of watershed, so that if you asked churchgoers--this has been done most often with Christians, if you ask churchgoers questions like do they believe in the divinity of Christ, do they believe in the Trinity, do they believe that God exists, and any orthodox standard items that are associated with Christian theology, you will find that people who became adults

BARTON J. BERNSTEIN:

Ideally, talk about the impact of the war, such an analysis to be full should specify at minimum both the arenas or the audiences among which one is discerning impact, and particularly changes either in institutions or, more significantly, I think, in consciousness and understanding. Changes in consciousness and understanding in which seldom in isolation, and usually with other events and changes, altered the paradigms of modes of perception within the society. Let me begin this with a generalization, which I think most of us will share, and that



FREDERICK DOWNS:

O.K. Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here. I am sorry to see that some of the people I listened to earlier are not here. Perhaps it's indicative of the way Vietnam veterans have had to face society in the last eleven years. And the reason I am going to

I think there is broad agreement that, and by that I mean that both people on the left of intellectual and political spectrum, on the more conservative side, that what we do in the U.S. are experimenting in something that many people call a "policy of legislation". And that this has a lot to do with the Vietnam experience. Although I think right away in terms of data that the American involvement in Vietnam is only part of a more general process of de-legitimation and de-legitimation, that not only the Vietnam war, but other advanced industrial countries are going through.

And I think one of the things I discuss in the book is...

RICHARD FLACKS:

Well, I'll try to talk more briefly, in part because a lot of what I want to say sort of represent, maybe, marginal notes or footnotes to what Bernstein just said. But maybe also take some perspectives from a somewhat different angle on some of the same topics.

I think there is broad agreement that, and by that I mean that both people on the left of intellectual analysis and the, on the more conservative side, that what we in the U.S. are experiencing is something that many people call a crisis of legitimation. And that this has a lot to do with the Vietnam experience. Although I think right away we need to establish that Vietnam and American involvement in Vietnam is only part of a more general process of de-legitimation, or contributing to de-legitimation, that not only the United States, but other advanced industrial societies are going through.

But I think one of the things I learned from Bart Bernstein's

CYNTHIA W. FREY:

You will be glad to hear that I won't speak very long, because my thunder has been stolen. And one of the things you do when you are not in the academy is think whenever you have a thought that nobody has ever thought of it before.

And I am both pleased and chagrined to find that that wasn't true.

It seemed to me, when I started thinking about what I was going to say today, that the terms of the conference have been cast in language which is somewhat at odds with the findings of recent research in various fields. And in particular I was uncomfortable with the notion, and I continue to be uncomfortable

SHAD MESHAD:

I don't have a paper. I have a, just looking at the program outline, and listening to the opening session, I am really full of so many things. I have been a counselor, therapist, vocational rehabilitation specialist, for the last eight years, dealing only with Vietnam veterans. I dealt with over eight thousand Vietnam veterans in deep trouble. And as I listen to all the dialogue today, and the interaction amongst panelists from all over the country, I realize that Vietnam is still a thorn in everybody's side, regardless of what approach, or what viewpoint you want to take about it.

I wish I had one hour with everybody in this room, individually, to really talk about Vietnam, and post-Vietnam, with every one of you. I don't think that maybe sharing a few points or touching on