

THE IMPACT OF VIETNAM

TRANSCRIPT TAPE W-50  
Tracks I and II  
April 6, 1979 2:00 pm

PARTICIPANTS: See page 1,  
first meeting

CAPPS: We ought to get started with our afternoon session in order to keep on schedule. This afternoon we have a session with the title of "Statistical Analyses: Beliefs and Attitudes About the War," and the title is calculated to give James Rosenau and Ole Holsti an opportunity to talk about a project at which they have been at work for some time on beliefs and attitudes about Vietnam. This session will run into the three o'clock hour, and then we'll have a break and have one other session this afternoon. There has been some confusion about the program. There is no, nothing scheduled this evening. We finish up here after the second session this afternoon, and there's nothing tonight, and then we start in again tomorrow morning with a session on morals and beliefs, I believe the religious element, and with an attempt to do some kind of summarizing, gathering together some of the themes that have come up during our discussion, and perhaps looking ahead a bit. That will be tomorrow. So we are ready now for this afternoon. You can handle this however you decided.

ROSENAU: Well, Ole and I have committed ourselves to being brief,

on the grounds that we would like, welcome, feedback and reactions to what we have to offer. And so we intend to keep by that. And I am going to be very brief, describing our project, suggesting some of its dimensions, and then Ole will address himself to what our central findings are. I may reserve a second to come back and add to, or emphasize something that he says. We hope that the bulk of this period will be devoted to discussion and reaction.

And I think this conference takes a slight turn now, because what we have to offer, and I don't say it's better than anything that's been done, I wouldn't say that for a moment, what we have to offer is not our own, so much our own reflections as the findings of a rather substantial, we like to think rather systematic survey of American leaders. Some hard to believe, but some four years ago the two of us, having long been friends and colleagues across the country, converged around a common interest, as political scientists, as students of foreign policy, as teachers of international relations, a common interest in the impact of Vietnam, the same kind of concerns that gave rise to this conference, only ours is a little more narrow. Our focus and what we have to present today

concerns the impact, what we call the lessons of Vietnam, insofar as they relate (a) to the thinking and belief systems of American leaders; and (b) insofar as they relate to the role of the United States present and in the future in world affairs. And that's what brought us together in this project. I am proud to say, although it's quite irrelevant, I suppose, on a shoestring, we put together a survey instrument that proved by our standards not perfect but quite successful. In February/March of 1976, we sent out something like 4,500 American leaders, the identity of whom I will mention in a moment, this questionnaire, a twelve-page questionnaire. If you want, I'll pass it around. You will find it is loaded down with what we call in our rhetoric variables, items, questions, I think we have some two hundred-plus items. We got a response of fifty-three per cent from some very busy and distinguished people, in a variety of walks of American life. We got to the point where we were on the verge of being inundated by our data. I can say to our credit that we constantly said to each other, prior to mailing the questionnaire, we've got to be on top of this before we start getting our results, or we will be

And we brought to bear on these findings, developed in advance of the mailing of the questionnaire, in February of 1976, we brought to bear a series of hypotheses, having to do with what the American leadership community in general, and particular groups of it in particular, thought about three major dimensions of Vietnam, what we call the sources of the failure, failure from the point of view of American policy; secondly, the consequences of Vietnam; and thirdly, the lessons of Vietnam. And a large bulk, by no means all, but a large bulk of the questions in this instrument are assignable to any of those three categories. What American leaders thought about, scaled responses, check marks in white boxes on a blue background, what they thought about the sources of failure, the consequences, and the lessons of Vietnam. And this questionnaire, as I say, produced a fifty-three-per-cent return rate. We have at last count, this final count, we have 2,282 people in American society who in some detail, with some care, if you can go impressionistically by thumbing through them when they came back, filled out this instrument.

ROTHMAN: Can I ask a question? How did you find the leadership

sample?

ROSENAU: I am about to get to that. Thank you, Stan, for getting me there. We, somebody used the phrase this morning about people at the top of the institutions, it may have been you, in the society. We did not start, I think it's fair to say, with a theory of American leadership. All we started, if anything, I suppose, we may have had a pluralistic conception of the American leadership. We started out with American, with Who's Who in America, discovered that there were many too many proportionately in terms of our impressionistic notions of the leadership structure, many too many businessmen and academics, and so we, half of our samples were drawn from Who's Who in America. As I recall, just to illustrate the diversity, we had three baseball managers, a number of entertainers, as well as a number of corporate executives, and so on and so forth. All of these questionnaires were sent to home addresses, on the grounds that we would get a better response rate if people opened them at home. All of them, we have a friend named Sidney Verba, who is at Harvard, who early participated in this, and lent us, through the auspices of the Center for Inter-

national Affairs at Harvard, Harvard stationery, and Harvard envelopes, and we proceeded, though we don't accept this, the pecking order says that Harvard comes ahead of Duke and the University of Southern California. We mailed it out on Harvard stationery, and the other half of the sample, which is the most, is the more interesting part. Having felt that there were too many educators and too many business executives in Who's Who, we supplemented it then, Ole did the main work here, using phone books and whatever, because we had an operating rule that it had to be somebody's home address. We have biographical directories from labor, industry, Who's Who in American Women, we had a large list that we managed to obtain of Defense Department, and military officers, we used the, for our media category we supplemented it with, was it the Congressional, Congressional Media, people who cover the Congress. We had some ten or twelve major occupational categories where we did devote about half of our sample to filling it out. So I would say of the twenty, if you want we can pass around the distribution in terms of the result of the 2,281 across some eleven occupational categories. The point is, we went

about this in such a way that we got enough people in each category so that anybody around this room with a different conception of American leadership could use our data to pursue their questions. And we in turn could use our data to pursue questions about any one of the occupations. I would, my general summation, I know Cindy is a little concerned about this, so I am going to elaborate a little bit. My general summation would be that we, that our sample is not a representative sample, either because we didn't have a theory of what a representative sample of American leaders would be. But what it does do, in my judgment, it does cover the major categories of American institutions of American life.

We operated with a research strategy which I am really very proud. And that is, we committed ourselves to the proposition that having become virtually inundated by our data, that it would take us a while to really master and understand what we had here. So we committed ourselves to a proposition that we would pick at pieces of it before we even began to think about publishing a book. And as of this day, we've now authored ten papers, still

we now beginning to talk about putting all of this together in a book, but we haven't reached even that point, because there are still dimensions of this that we haven't puzzled our way through. I would say, I don't know if Ole would agree with this, that I was up here, I think, Walter, it was just a year ago, or thereabouts, I talked about the data at an early stage, and I remember coming up here with some kind of lack of confidence that we still had a long way to go with this. It's a year later now, and I must say that in the intervening year, there has been a kind of a surge of confidence, not arrogance, but confidence, that we really have inadvertently, or somehow, come upon some very important findings. And that this turns out to be, this is a participant's self-judgment, I suppose, it serves one's ego, but it was not intended, it turned out we have turned up something that could be very valuable. And so we published ten papers and we now have a proposal in to the National Science Foundation, which may or may not succeed, and if I have a moment at the very end of this session I'd like to make a plea for anybody who wants to help us out, if the N.S.F. lets us down. We've got a proposal in to do a



second phase of this in February of 1980, on the grounds that if we can send out to roughly the same kind of sample a modified and extended version of the questionnaire to see whether or not there is a stability in our findings, a stability in the belief systems of American leaders, that we will have enriched by more than double our findings, whether we find stability or instability. And the thought is that if we can send it out in February of 1980, we sent it out in February of 1976, an election year, we will have controlled a number of variables.

I would just say a couple more things and I will turn it over to Ole. There, well, let me say that, a couple more. Happily this didn't happen today, but a year and a half ago we were asked to give a paper at a conference in Nebraska, and they neglected to give us the length of the paper, so we seized the opportunity to get all the data out, and the basic dimensions of this data that we are now going to present in very summary form, were published in 188-page xeroxed thing, which, a summary version of which will be published in October in a journal called World Politics. So if you want to look up how we pursued this, either let me know and I'll get you a copy of this, or you can see us,

and I'll give you a bibliography of the stuff we've done, I think four of the ten papers will have been published by the end of the year.

I would say that to buy what Ole is about to present, or at least to ponder it, one has to have some openness to the notion that central tendencies in quantitative data are meaningful. I would hope that the next hour we can talk about our findings. I am not trying to avoid anything. I think if you were to get into our papers, you would find that thanks to Ole, who is a kind of a specialist on this, which I'm not, that everything we've done is methodologically sound, that we make no claims beyond which we are entitled to make them, and that, the main thing I want to say is that I guess what strikes me as of this point in our project, we didn't have to scrounge and massage and play around with our data to come up with findings. I don't know if Ole would agree with this, maybe I am overstating it. But I think there are, we have come upon some central findings that just keep coming up at us in a variety of ways. And that, while it's perfectly appropriate and I wouldn't want to cut it off, to, for us to focus

this afternoon on whether or not these findings are spurious and artifactual, and a result of bad methodology, I think it would be a more profitable afternoon if we proceeded in playing the game as if Holsti and Rosenau came upon findings that are essentially accurate. In any event, you can check up on what we've done, and eventually I think we'll make the data available to whoever wants to use it. So that is the background. Ole is going to present our findings of all this.

HOLSTI: O.K. Let me pass out some stuff which is a sort of a compilation of a variety of tables. I think that some of this will be much easier if you have something in front of you to look at. I am not going to go in great detail through all the tables, but maybe, anyway, these may be of some help to you.

Let me begin a little bit at the beginning, just say a couple of things that--the original impetus comes in part from some of the kinds of things that historians, and not only historians, but historians among them had been becoming interested in a few years ago, and that is the whole question of how lessons of history get used and misused. Now, it hardly need be said that one of the

reasons historians began to be interested in that whole question was precisely the war in Vietnam, the feeling on the part of a number of historians that the lessons of Munich, or the lessons of whatever have you, had been used in somewhat simplistic ways. And in thinking about that problem, it began to be rather clear that one of the areas in which that whole issue might be examined is on the question of the war in Vietnam and precisely how Vietnam might continue to have an impact long after the last American left. That is, it would have an impact in the sense of learned lessons that would be carried in the minds of Americans in our particular interest, as Jim has indicated, is in people that we think are more likely than the general population to be interested in foreign policy, to try to have an impact on foreign policy, whether it be by writing congressmen, sending letters to the editor, or what have you, taking part in pressure group activities or in direct participation in foreign policy activities. The general assumption here was that Americans would not doubt, as a result of this traumatic experience, if given a plebiscite, agree with the proposition, no more Vietnams! But that doesn't get

us very far. That probably just as every historical event one can read into it or draw out, adduce from it, the lessons one might want, that Vietnam too would become that kind of a receptacle out of which one can draw a variety of lessons that could be applied for the future conduct of American foreign policy.

Let me emphasize again that what we are not doing here is a public opinion survey. There have been public opinion surveys that constantly are done on foreign policy. But our view was that we would attempt to get people in a whole variety of walks of life, who, whatever their roles might be, somebody had come along and decided that they were more likely than not to be leaders. Now, as Jim said, one of the sources of both constraint and in a sense, I think, a source of satisfaction to both of us is that we did this on a shoestring. We had basically a little bit of money from each of our institutions, but no outside support. And so we didn't have the luxury to go out and make some independent decision about who the four thousand or so most influential Americans are. We decided that by whatever criteria Who's Who

uses, that we'll go along and play the game with them, but we are recognizing that it's a skewed sample. And so we needed to go out and to be very specific, we used such sources as directories of labor leaders, and so we have one-half of the presidents of all American labor unions, and one, and for the other half of the unions, we have the research directors. Directories of American clergy, military officers, both junior and senior, foreign service officers, the media people. There's been some discussion of media here, so I might just indicate a little bit how this was done. We went and took the 110 highest circulation American newspapers, and located who the chief editorial writer for each of the newspapers was. That gives us 110. We then went out and looked at a sample of the Washington-based correspondents for the printed and electronic media, to fill out a quota of 250 for those. Who's Who in American Politics, Who's Who Among American Women, we have the category, foreign policy experts outside government. We used a variety of criteria here. If they had published in, or been on the editorial board of one of two journals, one a kind of an Establishment journal,

another a somewhat less establishment journal the two, Foreign Affairs and Foreign Policy. As a result of that, we picked up in our sample two people who were not then in office, Cyrus Vance and Zbigniew Brzezinski. And, O.K., I might add that some of our respondents, in fact a surprisingly large number of respondents, signed their names to the questionnaire, and one of those who did so in big block letters so we would have no question as to who she was, was a lady at that time primarily known for peddling orange juice, but subsequently has become known for other types of political activity, Anita Bryant.

ROSENAU: Ole, let me interrupt and say that this thing was conducted with a covering letter that promised the respondents anonymity. And the signing of names was quite voluntary.

HOLSTI: In fact, we took some quite extraordinary steps, well, I don't know if they are extraordinary, but we took real efforts to do this. We could not afford to send out a second questionnaire to all non-respondents, and so in order to be able to strike people off the list, we had a post, separate postcard, which went to the other, the questionnaires went to Los Angeles, the postcards went to

Durham, and we were, we asked them to acknowledge that they had turned in the questionnaire. And we had as a bait there a, if they would check off a little box, that we would send them a summary of the results, and for that we needed their addresses. So that was done as a way of trying to assure their anonymity. And that may have helped to provide a good return rate.

Let me just say a little bit about the sources of the questions, items in the questionnaire. These were not figments of our imaginations. Along with a graduate student at Duke, all of the editorials that we could find that related from the period of about 1971 through 1975, that related to what were the lessons of Vietnam, all of the journal articles, magazine articles, television shows for which we get transcripts, and so on, were scanned for what in fact was part of the debate in America about the lessons of Vietnam, or about the sources of failure, or about the consequences. These were abstracted out of them, they were collapsed into a series of categories, and so we have, for example on lessons of Vietnam, thirty-four, which are an attempt



to representatively sample the kinds of things that were being talked about in the United States. One or two of them actually appear verbatim, in a rather pithy form, but most of them are sort of a collapsed summary of what these were. So that these, the questionnaire was in fairly substantial part drawn inductively from the debate going on in the wider society rather than trying to sit down and ourselves try to impose the boundaries of what are the appropriate lessons of Vietnam. And so we have a very wide range of items on there. And similarly with the sources of failure and likely consequences of it.

Well, I think what's probably of most direct relevance and perhaps of most interest to you here is how do you relate this specifically to the question of the impact of Vietnam. And what I'd like to do is just rather quickly walk through some of these tables with you. The first table that you have when you peel back the cover is simply a summary of what our respondents looked like. Now, I think one could legitimately criticize this in asking, well, do you have enough people who are born since 1951? Well, the fact is that, whether it's

appropriate or not, most leaders in most occupations tend to be older rather than younger. Whether we like it or not, there tend to be many more who happen to be men than women. And so on and so forth. There tend to be more that have had military service, just partly as a consequence that we had more men than women and so on. But this gives you a kind of a summary of some of the background attributes of our respondents. As you can see, they are a very highly educated group, they are a, they are pretty much spread across the political spectrum in terms of party, like the population as a whole, that is, more Democrats than independents, than Republicans, and so on. Let me turn now though, however, to the next one, which is labeled Table 3. The numbering here is, seems ideosyncratic because these are drawn from a variety of these papers.

What we tried to do, and this is the starting point of our analysis, is to ask a very simple question. How could we assess most directly, and without doing a lot of very complicated manipulations of the data, how could we assess most directly what the real impact of Vietnam was? We have two items which ask them, as the wording indicates here in the table, how they felt at the beginning of, when

the war first became an issue, and toward the end of the war, how did they feel between the series of options, tending to favor victory, in between, withdrawal, and not sure. So what we have is self-appraisals at two particular times during the conflict. What we found was that there had been a profound change, that whereas in the early part of the war, more than fifty per cent of our respondents favored a policy of seeking military victory, by the end of the war a very, very substantial number, well over fifty per cent, had now come to favor a policy of withdrawal. The figures actually are fifty-one per cent early favored victory; as against twenty-two per cent withdrawal; late, it was fifty-seven per cent favored withdrawal, twenty-two per cent victory. So we have in effect created, as you can see in this table 3, we have created seven categories of people. We have tried to use non-pejorative labels, supporters at one end of the spectrum who favored victory, both early and late. At the other end of the spectrum, the critics who were for withdrawal early and late, and then various combinations in between. So that out of the sixteen possible combinations we collapsed it down into seven categories, as some of these seem to--

BERNSTEIN: Just one question. In the question you asked to them,

was it specified when the war first became an issue, or did you define when the war first became an issue?

HOLSTI: Question is repeated, it's exact--

BERNSTEIN: So in other words it would not be inconceivable that people thinking it became an issue in sixty-four, and others thinking it became an issue in seventy-two.

HOLSTI: It's possible, although I would guess that it was, I mean, some might have seen it as in say, sixty-one, sixty-two, sixty-three, maybe others in sixty-six, sixty-seven--

BERNSTEIN: --that would be probably sixty-four to sixty-eight--

ROSENAU: That was quite purposeful. We didn't want to lose people by being too--

HOLSTI: I might just add that I have a kind of a favorite story, I'd like to use to suggest what is possible weakness in a questionnaire like this. Those of you that are baseball fans, know that back in 1917 there was a very unique event took place, both the Cincinnati Reds and the Chicago Cubs pitchers threw no-hitters at each other. And the attendance figures for that day were something like 2,500 people saw the game. Some years later an enterprising sports

reporter did a random sampling to ask people whether they attended that game. He came to the conclusion that something like a million people had been there that day. So, selective, memory can play tricks on us. We do have one check, however, and it's not a perfect check but, well, I think we have two checks. One, the results seem plausible in light of what we know went on in American society at the time. We also, while these are not public opinion data, we can compare these results against public opinion polls for these periods, and they look very, they look plausible. That's not a definitive answer to the question, have we actually nailed it down to the last per cent. I think they, there is some reason to feel moderately confident about those results.

ROSENAU: Could I just interject one thought? I'd like to interject one thought, that if you had any experience in working with data like this, you get to the point where you think a ten-per-cent change is really kind of meaningful. As Ole went over it, we are talking here about self-perceived change on the part of over thirty per cent of our sample. And I think as a relative datum for this whole project--

HOLSTI: It's really more than that, Jim, because if you look at the figures, in fact the only people who remained the same are on a right-to-left diagonal downward, 363 supporters, 127 ambivalents, and 378 critics. Everybody else changed their position in the war. So that in fact we have somewhere in the order of about nine hundred out of 2,200, almost 2,300, who remained constant, and the rest changed. And that's a pretty profound figure, it seems to me, that did in fact change their positions.

O.K. Now, while it is true that we didn't have a kind of a clear-cut theory that we wanted to operate, about what American leadership was like, in other words, we were prepared, in effect, because of a variety of constraints, to allow a variety of sources to define leadership for us, and to use those. I should emphasize a point that Jim made earlier, and that is that it's not therefore true we have been operating sort of by the seat of the pants without any notions about such things as attitude change and belief systems and things like that. And one of the underlying assumptions all the way along here, and some of this was written up while the questionnaire was in the process of being sent out, was that in fact people,

particularly people in leadership positions, people who think more than the average public about such issues, are likely to have moderately to quite highly structured sets of beliefs, that things will go together. And there's a lot of evidence from external, from other studies to show that this is in fact true. So one sort of underlying proposition here was that we would in fact find that when we asked people about the most important sources of failure in Vietnam, that they would have a set of answers to that that were consistent with what they saw as the consequences and what the lessons are. If you look at the next table, which is labeled Table 29, the most important sources of failure, you will find in it in fact that whereas the people on the supporter end of the spectrum are all talking about self-inflicted failure, ineffective use of the military capability, restrictions put upon our own effort, the media, dissidents, congressional interference, and so on, no clear goals about what we are doing. At the other end of the spectrum, you will see that in fact the answers are essentially that the whole proposition was unwinnable to begin with, that the U.S. didn't have realistic goals, that Saigon had no popular support, that we

misunderstood Third World nationalism, ignorant about Vietnam.

In might way, these are just brief capsule statements. The actual statements, if you look at the questionnaire, are much more fully developed. O.K. So we have, what we find in the first place is dramatically different explanations, relatively little convergence, on any kinds of explanations. Turn to the next table, what do people see as the consequences of Vietnam? Again, consistent with what you would expect to find, given the kind of, what they see as the sources of the failure. On the supporter end of the spectrum, you see a series of predicted consequences which are essentially systemic in nature. That the Communists will be encouraged to seek other triumphs, that American international credibility has been damaged, that our conception of national interests will have been changed. Whereas people on the critical end of the spectrum are really talking about domestic and internal consequences, that we have neglected the real threats, that we have lost faith in our government, that the American economy has been damaged, and so on. And so that, and these both logically and empirically, go together.

And then we turn to the next table, Table 80, what do



people see out of these thirty-four lessons, plus any that they were able to write in, as the lessons of Vietnam we see again that there is a consistent pattern that emerges. That we have on the one hand, people on the supporter end of the spectrum are in effect arguing that the lessons of Vietnam are such things as, we should avoid gradual escalation, that the Soviet Union is expansionist, that it is important to honor alliance commitments, that the domino theory is a valid law of international life. And at the other end of the spectrum we find that the people on the critic end of the spectrum are saying such things as, avoid involvement in Angola, which was a rather hot issue when the questionnaire went out, that the press is more likely to tell the truth than the government about foreign policy, that we have excessively relied upon military advice, and so on. So in effect what we have here, as our theory would have predicted, namely, that we have people with internally consistent sets of beliefs about a whole variety of things relating to Vietnam but they have very little in common. If you look for example at the, we use a relatively modest criterion for listing these items, these are in rank order of importance, out of thirty-four items that they

were able to identify, this is still on Table 80, there are twelve items in the supporter side of the column, six on the critic side of the column, using a relatively modest criterion, and not a single item converges. There is not a single item that appears on both lists. So that what we see here is a set of internally consistent, but rather mutually exclusive sets of beliefs about Vietnam.

Turn to Table 83, another way of putting it is that out of, in this particular paper that Jim had identified, I might say this, he slipped up a little bit, he said this is all of our results, all of the results relating to these three clusters of items. But we have many others, but if you look at the numbers in brackets you will see that out of a possible sixty-eight items, there is a tremendous amount of difference between almost all of these groups. It is not that we have two extremist groups, the critics and supporters, and then a great big undifferentiated lump in the middle. In fact, in the middle there is just as much, almost as much differentiation between the groups as we would have predicted. And the groups ranked order precisely as we had expected prior to sending out the questionnaires.

Well, now, a very legitimate question might arise, and I think this is, when we get to the consequences of Vietnam, this becomes very important. O.K. So you guys have looked at a bunch of Vietnam-related questions, and so you find people have internally consistent beliefs, and that they are mutually exclusive. What about non-Vietnam items? If you look at the next table, this is a question borrowed from a study done by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations for the, by the Harris organization, a set of eighteen proposed foreign policy goals for the United States, which range from such things as containing Communism and maintaining a balance of power, to the other end of the spectrum, combatting world hunger, worldwide arms control, strengthening the United Nations, fostering international cooperation to solve common problems, and so on. This particular table too gives you aggregate results. If we look at, as in the next table, which is labeled as Table 12, if we look at how these groups respond to these, again rank order in them, we see that even here, and bear in mind that this list which we took verbatim from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, include some of what might be called motherhood kind of

questions, promoting and defending our own security, even with the inclusion of such items, what we find is that there is no item, for example, that all seven groups listed among the top three or four. So that the differences we find when we move quite far away from Vietnam-related items, those differences continue to hold across here. I might add that there is a whole series of other tables that I did not include here that reinforce the same point. In other words, the cleavages persist even when we remove them from the Vietnam context.

Now, at this point I think what we have tried to show, and I think at least moderately to our satisfaction we have demonstrated that in fact Vietnam, when you simply take a very simple, very simple way of classifying people, how did they feel early and late in Vietnam, that we get tremendous differences. And these, I don't want to get into the statistics of all this, but the differences are of a magnitude that is really striking.

Now, the next step has been, O.K., we found that. Now let's take a series of competing explanations and see if we can chop out, chop this down, get rid of it. One competing kind of

explanation, which is widely to be found in public discussions, in fact, somebody mentioned it last night, the Vietnam generation versus the Munich generation, is that basically the cleavages are generational. What we have is a younger generation and an older generation, the older generation, those that carrying the kind of ideological, cognitive, and other baggage from the Munich, World-War-II and post-World-War-II period, then if you have another generation which, for whom World War II is like the Punic Wars, something you read about in the books, that their daddy talked about, or granddaddy, but not much else. In fact, what we find, and the next few tables give you some indication of how striking the result is, that the differences are within generations and not between generations. In other words, take a look at the next table, the next table which runs across two pages. The sources of failure in Vietnam. And here we indicate all of them, and you look at the rank orderings, and you find that indeed they are strikingly similar, across age groups. In other words, generation does not, by itself, tell us very much. That the, that by and large the cleavages are within, rather than between. So that if we look for example at the single most popular

explanation of why we failed, was Americans underestimated the dedication of the North Vietnamese, this turns out for every generation to be one of the two most important explanations.

And if you look across, I won't bother going through all of this but if you could look across here, you will see that by and large, the differences are much less striking than the similarities.

Similarly, if we go to the next table, which is on the lessons of Vietnam, and I, here only include the top ten, you will see that the lessons of Vietnam, again we find striking convergence across generations, again confirming the viewpoint, and we've done very, rather complex, multivariant statistical analyses, which underline this. These are only rank orderings, but let me just say that the more complicated analyses reinforce what we're saying, in these findings. And if you look at the next table, the, labeled 35, on foreign policy goals, again you will find that there is a much greater degree of similarity. Every generation believes that promoting and defending our own security is the most important of those goals. Every generation believes that promoting the development of capitalism abroad is the least important, that helping to bring

democratic forms of government is the next least important, and so on.

In the next table, which is labeled Table 9, if you look across all different items, this is a kind of a summary, of various types of items, you will see that the instances in which differences occur across generations are much less striking than if we classify a response according to occupation or these Vietnam groups that I talked about earlier.

O.K. There are other ways of doing analysis, and I am not going to go through these in a great deal of detail. We have done the same thing with occupation, with ideology, with political party, with sex, with military service, and a whole lot of other backgrounds, and what happens is that still standing out as the most striking and the most powerful explanation is that very simplistic way of classifying people, how did they feel early and how did they feel late, and what are the sort of combinations of the two. That still emerges as the most striking finding, overriding all of these others that have been widely, the generational, ideological, occupational, and all the others that

might be put forward as competing explanations.

The next stage in the analysis was to undertake the analysis somewhat differently--

ROSENAU: Could I just say that, wouldn't it be fair to say that the finding you just pointed out, namely, that position on the war resisted breaking down as against other variables, that our interpretation of that is that indeed Vietnam, I have been pressing, Ole, what does this mean, what does this mean, early position, late position--

BERNSTEIN: Could you restate the proposition that Ole did before you offered the explanation, state it again?

HOLSTI: Well, the proposition is that the Vietnam experience had a profound impact on our respondents, so that even if we get at that with a relatively, pair of relatively simple measures, how they stood early and late, and what are the combinations, what are their, both the consistencies and the changes that took place, we can locate people in effect on some kind of a matrix of those positions, we have a better way of identifying other things about their foreign policy views than we do if we ask questions about ideology, generation,



sex, military service, occupation, all the other things that we have brought them through, all this kind of standard measures. This is not to say that these other things--

BERNSTEIN: Could, I am confused for this reason. That it seems to me you are uttering the following proposition, which--

ROSENAU: We haven't interpreted that yet--

BERNSTEIN: -- it strikes me as a tautology, that is, what you're saying is that if we know the position of respondents on Vietnam, which means their early position, and their final position, we have a better way of, it's a better way of what, that I'm still confused on. Because you told me, indicate better, will indicate better their positions on foreign policy than their positions on foreign policy will indicate? That strikes me as clearly untrue. So I am not sure, I am seeing what's being contrasted--

HOLSTI: I am stahing, let me put it in a somewhat different way.

If, given a very wide spectrum of foreign policy issues, both Vietnam-related and quite divorced from Vietnam, if you had to make a bet, and you were able to buy only one piece of information about the respondent, your, the way to make most money is to get at this

one variable, the Vietnam variable, rather than going at ideology, sex, occupation, military service, the whole bit. Because that's the one that emerges--

BERNSTEIN: --ideology is what, asking them are you radical or conservative?

HOLSTI: We asked them on ideology, we asked them to identify themselves on a seven-point scale.

BERNSTEIN: I see--

HOLSTI: From far, it's reproduced on page 1. And we did have some other items, too, to try to get at this indirectly. We asked them some questions about integration, inflation versus unemployment, and things like that, which don't emerge, really, as very, as very striking.

BERNSTEIN: O.K. I understand.

ROSENAU: Now, what I tried to interject was that we took that finding, namely, that you can get further by this variable than the other variables, and our interpretation was, cautiously put, but nonetheless it's there, that in whatever position on the war, represents in some true sense, it has something to do with Vietnam, and that therefore

it is in the context of this whole occasion, it's a reasonable conclusion from our data that indeed Vietnam has had an impact not only with respect to attitudes toward Vietnam, but more importantly, with respect to attitudes toward American foreign policy in general and toward future situations.

FREY: How do you know it isn't the other way around? I mean, how do you know that you haven't got a kind of aggregated variable there that already reflects positions on other problems, that is, how do you know this isn't a resulting figure rather than a causitive figure?

HOLSTI: Well, we have, since he have only the survey done at one time, I think we can't say that the one came prior to the other. I think what we can say is that since the, since in time the one presumably comes before the other, it seems more plausible that without really being, we can't, since you have responses that are given at a single time, in 1976, we can't really absolutely nail that down, but it seems more plausible to suggest that the Vietnam experience having come prior in time to some of the questions asking about the future conduct of American foreign policy, that the

direction of influence is that way rather than the other way, that they have looked at what they think the future conduct of American foreign policy ought to be, and they have then selectively remembered what they would have liked to be consistent with that, to have been their positions earlier in the war.

FREY: you find to say--

LICHTY: --logical explanation, though, in fact that there are a cluster, as you explained, a cluster of opinions about certain foreign policy, domestic issues, which are in fact the dependent variables, and Vietnam is the independent variable. How can you accept or reject either direction?

HOLSTI: Well, I think it's, I think that we can't, we cannot do it in terms of some of the standard time-series analysis ways of doing it, because we have a, maybe later, when we do, if we are lucky enough to get supported to do our implication of this, we may be able to get at some of that. But I think that, it seems to me much the more plausible explanation that the Vietnam question relating to a past event has the impact on a whole series of future-related questions, which include future-related questions.

LICHTY: I am really inclined to agree, but can I go just one step further? And that is that what strikes me is that you tend to have, if you'll let me reanalyze your data in my way for just a second, you tend to have sort of three clusters. One is those people who were hawks and stayed hawks, which represents about sixteen per cent of your people. Those people who were doves and stayed doves, which is about seventeen per cent.

ROSENAU: Supporters--

HOLSTI: Supporters--we deliberately decided not to use hawks and doves.

LICHTY: Well, I deliberately decided to use hawks and doves, so--

HOLSTI: O.K. Fine.

LICHTY: What you do have, is, you have what were either hawkish or neutralish, and became dovish, and that represents thirty-eight per cent of your sample, which is, if we were to look at any other policy question over a series of ten years or whatever, is an astounding change. My question is, what variables identify the hawk to dove people versus the hawk to hawk or dove to dove, using your own terms?

HOLSTI: O.K. If I could just hold off, because that's sort of one of the last things I want to get to. But I, yes, we can, they are not, they are not simply random. In other words--

LICHTY: Gosh, I hope not. The whole world would have to be random, then.

HOLSTI: No, they are not random. In other words, to jump a little bit ahead --

GRAHAM: Go ahead and tell us.

HOLSTI: O.K. For example, it will be to nobody's surprise, especially in light of some of the comments that were made earlier today, that we find a very substantial number of business executives and military officers among the supporters, whereas most strikingly, among the critics and the converted critics, are the media people. And educators, secondarily.

ROTHMAN: Two things. First of all, a question and a suggestion.

What proportion of the variance on these other issues is explained by Vietnam position? That is, you say that this is the best piece of information. But how much of it, variance is explained?

HOLSTI: The--

ROTHMAN: --the best position is still a low amount, that is--

HOLSTI: No, it is--

ROTHMAN: --still might not be very good.

HOLSTI: No, it's very, very high.

ROTHMAN: It is high.

HOLSTI: Yeah. If, to give you one example, we've used, all the way

across the board we've used a criterion that we will report no

finding as a significant finding unless in statistical terms it

is of such strength that it occurs only once in a thousand times by--

ROTHMAN: That's a good, but what about variance--

HOLSTI: Yeah, I can't answer that question for you, but it's very

high. It's very high--

ROTHMAN: The second thing is, you were interested in the direction of

causality, that is, between whether it's policy preferences which

really determine perceptions of Vietnam or perceptions of Vietnam

that determine policy preferences. It seems to me one way to check

that out, at least to gain some plausibility, is policy preferences

should be related, it seems to me, in some ways, to self-conceptions

of ideology. Then--

HOLSTI: They are.

ROTHMAN: All right. And then you can see how much, you can see whether ideology is a better predictor--

HOLSTI: We've done that, we've done the multivariant analyses in which ideology in fact almost across the board comes in a rather weak second best.

ROTHMAN: So that lends plausibility to your idea that position on Vietnam is the best, that the causality is from position on Vietnam.

HOLSTI: What we've tried to do, all the way across here, once having done this particular analysis, which took the seven Vietnam policy groups, we then decided, we adopted the principle, let's attack it with every possible alternative explanation, and in doing multivariant analyses, we still consistently, this thing still comes out at the top. It remains unchallenged as the best explanation. So in answer to Bart Bernstein's question, he is still going to make more money, if that's the only piece of information he can get, he will make more money, simply knowing that about his respondents rather than knowing some other piece of information.

LEWY: What is the best explanation as to whether people are supporters or critics, or whatever other position is in between?



HOLSTI: There it, they are, there are multiplicities of them.

In other words, they are not, as I tried to indicate a minute ago, they are not randomly distributed across occupational groups, they are not randomly distributed, they are randomly distributed across such things as sex, military service, and a variety of other things, but by and large, region of the country, they are not randomly distributed. They are weakly related to such things as political preference, only moderately related to such things as ideology.

There tend to be a rather broad mix. Another way of putting it is that this Vietnam policy position variable to seven groups is not a very good surrogate for any other obvious explanation we would build in questions for, such as ideology, sex, age, the whole bit of standard <sup>?</sup>SCS type of things. Yeah?

KRIEGER: I'd like to ask you a slightly different thing, on Table 29, where it says, lessons of Vietnam, the answers that they ranked the highest are surprising to me. And I am wondering what you asked them to elicit these responses. Were these just, were these questions that explicitly, that you said to them, rank order, what you think are the major lessons--

HOLSTI: No, let me just read you the instructions. This question asks you to indicate your position on certain foreign policy issues and to state the extent to which your position was shaped by the experience in Vietnam. First indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement by checking one box in each row, on the right. And the options were agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, disagree strongly, and no opinion. Then follow the instructions at the bottom of the page. Go back through the statements by indicating on the line to the left the extent to which the lessons of Vietnam may underlie your present position. And they were then asked to indicate whether they, it greatly influenced their judgment, that is, Vietnam experience, or it mildly influenced it, or it had no influence, or if they were not sure. Now, strikingly--

ROSENAU: He wants to know how we--

HOLSTI: O.K. How did the items originally get into the questionnaire? This was out of this process of going through that whole mass of debate in the media, and so on, about what the lessons ought to be.

KRIEGER: It's a very depressing finding, if we're to take this for

some semblance of the truth, that all of these people seem to agree that out of all of Vietnam, their most striking lesson was that the Soviet Union is generally expansionist, rather than defensive, in its foreign policy goals. I really wonder if you, if it had been an open-ended question, and you said, what were the lessons of Vietnam, if that would have, if it could have possibly occurred that way. I mean, I would be very shocked if we went around this room and anyone gave that as the lesson of Vietnam, at the table.

LEWY: That's because we aren't leaders, you see.

KRIEGER: We're not leaders. And never will be, I--

HOLSTI: O.K. I think there's a possible explanation, and that is that recall that this questionnaire went out at the time when the Angola intervention was very much in the news. And so that in part this may be an explanation of what you're saying, in other words, that airlift of Cubans was sort of front-page stuff, that the Congress' decision to cut off all assistance, despite the Ford-Kissinger request for it, and so on, was a salient issue at that point. And so this may be partly, this may be partly an artifact of that.

KRIEGER: It that's, then what your results seem to indicate is that the leaders were telling you that they put a very low priority on avoiding involvement in other Vietnam-type disputes.

HOLSTI: No, because one of the--

KRIEGER: Well, Angola--there is an item on involvement in the Angolan civil war, and that ranked eight, six, six, and nine, among the various items.

HOLSTI: Yeah, but not that the item says, should avoid involvement, not should get involved. And if you look at the item that received the least support of any item in the whole questionnaire, it was one, another one that was rather salient to the time, that the U.S. should intervene to maintain the flow of oil from the Middle East.

And that item received something like six per cent favorable. In other words, that had the least support of any item of all of these.

KRIEGER: Exactly. In other words, the leaders were saying that we didn't learn any lesson about involvement.

HOLSTI: No, they were saying don't intervene in the Middle East, despite the fact that Henry Kissinger, within a bout a month before that, had suggested in a news conference that that could not be

ruled out, that the Tucker articles, the two Tucker articles in Commentary had come out, I believe, in January and March of seventy-five, seventy-six, so that that again was an issue of some salience, and that stay out of, the Middle East oil, was the item that received the least popular, the least support of, among any of our leaders.

There was, so the answer was clearly not that the U.S. should intervene.

KRIEGER: But doesn't this say the U.S. should avoid any involvement in the Angolan civil war, they agree with that, the U.S. should avoid any involvement.

HOLSTI: That's right.

KRIEGER: But that, what I am saying is, they may agree that we shouldn't get involved, but that ranked as a lesson, somewhere around seven.

HOLSTI: Out of thirty-four. There's thirty-four total.

KRIEGER: O.K.

HOLSTI: See, this was a truncated list. There was a limit to how much xeroxing I could do. So there was not, the whole list of thirty-four lessons is--

KRIEGER: At any rate, as a lesson, that turns out far less important than that the Soviet Union is generally expansionist.

HOLSTI: That did not rank as high. What I am saying is also that remember that some other items relating to intervention, specifically the one which is, which is worded, the United States should undertake military intervention in the Middle East in the case of another oil embargo. That item received the least support of any item in our questionnaire.

FREY: I think the test of that is what the second testing turns up, whether that was just a time-related--

1107 BERNSTEIN: --oil embargo <sup>unintelligible</sup> time of the second testing, and I mean that curiously, because I think the Angola phenomenon raises something which you may want to catch/<sup>in</sup>the area of methodology, may have some other group <sup>unintelligible</sup> which to cast it, and that is, when a new event intervenes, and is perceived as troubling, how much that skews, or affects, what you are seeing as a pattern of responses. My guess, in terms of some of the other responses here, is that had this questionnaire been sent out five months before, and answered before Angola, you would have gotten a different response on the Soviet Union. I think

Angola, the news of Angola, changed that response.

HOLSTI: Well, yeah, I think it's possible, but I think, keep one thing in mind. Remember that we were not so specifically interested in whether we get eighty-three per cent, as I think the figure was, who agreed with the proposition, the Soviet Union is expansionist, or whether we got seventy-seven per cent. Our question, our concern was more that are there, are there consistencies within people's belief systems, rather than the specific numbers attached to any specific item. And this is something I--

FREY:-- a difference between asking that, and there's plenty of literature on that to give you an answer, and asking whether the Vietnam war itself promoted certain points of view that may or may not be consistent.

HOLSTI: But we did, we specifically then asked them, these are not reported in these data, but we did ask them to then indicate for each of these items how much their views were in fact specifically influenced by the Vietnam experience. So for each of these items they were asked to give two ratings, one, a level of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale, and secondly, the extent to

which their specific response to that item was influenced by Vietnam, on a four-point scale. So we have them asked in two ways. And so I don't have the figure at my fingertip, but it's very easy to check as to how much on the specific item with the Soviet Union, how much that was viewed as specifically Vietnam-related, or how much that was viewed as a general phenomenon about the Soviet Union.

BERNSTEIN: Was there a question also about China?

HOLSTI: Yes.

BERNSTEIN: And was the salience on that so low that you didn't even put it--

HOLSTI: Either the salience on that, let me just say that the interesting thing, I have the figure, if you look at the next table, which I have not yet talked about, labeled Table 2, the specific responses are on that, Item F is on the Soviet Union, and if you aggregate the first two columns to the right--

ROSENAU: It says at the top, Cold War Axioms.

HOLSTI: Table 2, about six or seven from the back. If it's got a little number 15 written in at the bottom of the page. O.K. If



you look at Item F, the Soviet Union generally expansionist rather than defensive, the aggregate, eighty-three per cent. The next item, exactly the same wording, except China instead of the Soviet Union. Only seven per cent strongly agreed, twenty-three per cent agree some what, and sixty-two per cent disagree. Interestingly, of the occupational groups there is only one occupational group which agreed with that proposition on China. It was not the military officers or the business executives, it was clergy. Only the clergy, and by a very moderate, by a very, it was something like well, very, very minor degree, to the agree side of that proposition of China.

ROSENAU: You see that, Bart?

BERNSTEIN: You mean, do I visualize it?

ROSENAU: I mean, did you find the table?

BERNSTEIN: Yes, I observe it.

ROSENAU: I didn't know if you saw it.

LICHTY: Rather than going on individual items, because I think it is not important what the specific response to the individual items is, but rather the cluster of items, as you have already explained.

I am not sure I got an answer to my question. My question is that it seems to me that we have a significant change, from either hawk to neutral, or neutral to dove, or hawk to dove. That could, encompasses an enormous percentage of your population. What item, in terms of all these, cluster with that change. Not the specific items, but can you, by either some canonical analysis, fact analysis, or something, can you explain what's going on in terms of a category, rather than just individual items. I just--

HOLSTI: O.K. Could we, if you would jump to the table with the little 19 on the bottom of it, because this is really where I propose to stop. It's labeled Table 5-Cold War Axioms, correlation among items, et cetera. And what the factor analyses, the correlation analyses and factor analyses have revealed is that if we really want to draw out of this a set of different kinds of belief systems, there really are three that emerge. Now, Bart was, I think, being quite critical of the idea that there is a neo-isolationism. And yet there is, if you turn to--

BERNSTEIN: The criticism was not against the proposition that there is, but that it is widespread and substantial.

HOLSTI: Well, let me just get to that point. Because I think it may be, maybe I'll split the differences with you, but I think I disagree with you a little bit. This Table 5, there are a series of items here labeled A through T, which, if you look at the correlation, the correlation matrix there, correlations can run from plus 1 to minus 1, maximum positive and maximum negative correlation. These are a set of items that hang together empirically just as well as they hang together logically. And they constitute what we've labeled here as cold war axioms. They include the domino theory is valid, these are capsule summaries of them on the, that are labels here, but any Communist victory is a U.S. defeat, the assumptions of détente are false, Soviet Union expansionist, and so on. These are a set of items that hang together quite well, not uniformly, but the correlation coefficients across 2, 280 items are by social science standards, it seems to me, quite high. They run up into the sixties, which I think it quite high. If you turn the page to the next one, we have a cluster of items which we call here post-cold war internationalist axioms, and these are such items as the Communist bloc is actually

fragmented, that the Third World revolutionaries are nationalists, rather than dominated by Moscow or Peking, that the U.N. is an important institution, importance of arms control, international cooperation, and so on. These are a set of items in effect that are prescribing in various ways an internationalist role for the U.S., but a redefinition of that role in terms of socioeconomic non-cold war, nonmilitary, nonstrategic kinds of issues. And then the next table, labeled Table 7, with a little 21 on the bottom is what we call the isolationist axioms. Such items as U.S. should scale down its role, that the domestic problems have primacy, and we should solve our own problems, that military aid leads to war, that American troops abroad lead to war, we should stay out of Angola, we shouldn't send technicians to the Sinai, too much military advice, too much Presidential role, we damaged the economy by Vietnam and so on. And these are a set of things that, not quite as strikingly as the cold war axioms, hang together. Now, in response to the point, are these in fact a rather minor group, I think there's some other data we can point to that suggests that these are not. I made earlier reference to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations survey done

by the Harris organization. Those data have been very carefully examined by Michael Mandelbaum and William Schneider at Harvard, and I deliberately did not look at that paper before some of these analyses were done, but they come up with three groups that they call the liberal internationalists, which look exactly like our post-cold war internationalists, conservative internationalists, that look exactly like our cold war internationalists, and what they call the non-internationalists, which look exactly like our isolationists. And strikingly, the non-internationalists are the biggest group. They constitute forty-three per cent, if I recall the figure correctly from the Mandelbaum-Schneider study. So rather strikingly high figure. If you want to look at the other data, look at George Kennan's most recent book. Look at the interview he did recently in The New York Times Magazine, where he said, yes, I think I am a neo-isolationist, semi-isolationist, or something like that. So I don't think that necessarily nails down the point. But I think using independent sources of data, I think we get some suggestion here to George Meany's argument that free trade is a sham. The appeal for many former staunch internationalists for Project

Independence and so on. I think there are bits and pieces of evidence to suggest that it's not, it's not a lunatic fringe group.

ROSENAU: Let me say, can I just interject here, that Adlai Stevenson the Second or the Third, the Third, has announced a possible candidacy for the Presidency on the ground that there's a third position that somewhere is different from the other two, and I would just want to emphasize that it only implied more, I would say one of the major findings of this study to date is that not only are there internally consistent and mutually exclusive belief systems that prevail among American leadership stratum, but the major finding, which it wasn't true a year ago when I was here, because we didn't get to it, is that there are three such groups. We have our labels and the Chicago people have theirs.

BERNSTEIN: But, you see, I am not, I did not mean to deny that there is a cluster of attitudes, which if you wanted arbitrarily to denote as neo-isolationist, you could do so. Rather, I wanted to raise the question as to whether it's a meaningful descriptive category, and let's go through A to K and talk about it. Say that people want to scale down the U.S. role is to say nothing which is necessarily very

interesting. Because a real question becomes not, you want to scale it down, but by how much, one per cent, forty per cent, I mean at some point it becomes something that you might want to call isolationism.

Primacy of domestic problems. I would go so far as to argue, we disagree upon this, but at least one can read many of the speeches, diary entries, and private memoranda by that generation of cold war whom one might want to label non-pejoratively the architects of the American policy, in which they asserted over and over again that the way to preserve the American economy was through certain kinds of foreign policy activity. Or to put it otherwise, the primacy of the domestic, the domestic economy had primacy, but the issue was how to preserve it. So I could imagine people reading their speeches, if I gave their speeches to students and I said, pick what they should believe, they could also say, primacy of domestic problems. Let's go a few steps further.

Excessive military advice. Well, I am not sure why that is neo-isolationist rather than something else. It doesn't strike me that it's, it falls necessarily in that category rather than in other categories. Harry S. Truman, in 1951, when firing Douglas

MacArthur, would have also kept it, as would have that whole generation of Truman supporters, who thought the military was out to escalate the war, that the civilians were out to escalate. I mean, you may say, well, I am chipping away at little things by offering occasional factual counter-examples. Rather I am offering the factual counter-examples to show the salience of my criticism. It's not simply an arbitrary criticism, which is theoretically, that is, where I say that in theory I am troubled. I am trying to give you an example, and pick a salient example from the past to suggest why I am so deeply troubled. The economy was damaged by Vietnam. Well, one could in fact believe in the war, I mean, there are all kinds of possibilities and so come to the conclusion that the economy was damaged by Vietnam. But I am not sure why these are necessarily isolationist axioms. In fact, I would be hardpressed to find many people in America who would believe that the economy was not ultimately damaged by Vietnam.

HOLSTI: O.K. Let me just suggest that, in the first place the labels you see here are for, take that last item, the actual wording is, not, is that the foundations of the American economy were seriously



damaged by our involvement in Vietnam. These are, some of these little labels for space purposes, don't adequately provide the wording.

Others, the one on--

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BERNSTEIN: I'll bet even Wol<sup>?</sup> and Rostow would subscribe to that--

HOLSTI: O.K. But the second point I would make is that what is striking is not any single item, but that there are, that no matter what kind of statistical analyses you do on these, these are the things that cluster together. And they do, taken as a whole, they do make a picture that it seems to me is consistent with a set of ideas that have not only, I think at present, but traditionally have been seen in part as a rationale for a limited American world role, namely, that I think a very important element of the, of the whole American isolationist tradition has been that excessive involvement abroad will lead to, is incompatible with democratic institutions. Why? Because it means a large standing army, means the military will be important, means executive domination of the government, and so on. But these are a whole set of items that go way back in American political thought, are part and parcel, I think, of, or are consistent with an isolationist view. Now, they may be

consistent with other views as well, but the fact that all of them cluster together rather closely, I think suggests that maybe the whole is a little bit more substantial than you might indicate there.

ROSENAU: Do you understand what he means by cluster? That is to say if you correlated these with some of the items on the other pages, it doesn't wash.

HOLSTI: Another way of putting it is, which, what is not here, is if you could correlate these items with all the others, all the correlation coefficients are negative. And so that it's not just that people believe in this cluster, but they also disbelieve in the other one.

BERNSTEIN: You see, I am not disputing whether the cluster exists. What I am disputing, disputing even whether there's a, many people hold that set of beliefs. Rather, I am disputing something which is more fundamental, whether the term isolationist, or neo-isolationist, is a meaningful description of those characteristics here denoted which are salient.

HOLSTI: O.K.

BERNSTEIN: I am challenging your conclusion and proceeding to challenge

it on those fundamental grounds. Not whether you have a cluster, but what does that--

ROSENAU: All you are doing is challenging our labels.

BERNSTIN: No, I think more than the label, because you seem to denote, to want to express by the label, more than simply the existence of a cluster. That is, if you called it x group, and I called it x group, I don't think you would be unhappy, I would not be unhappy, but I think you would be unhappy because you want to get some kind of a characterization, and I am struck by the fact that you chose, when offered the possibilities, as a label which would not have any significance other than distinctiveness, you could have called the group x that you chose to call the group isolationist. That is, you thought that certain parts of this were salient and defining, and I am challenging that. It's like a kind of dialogue that people have where one person says, God exists, and the other person says, God doesn't, and the first person says, I mean, given reality as being equivalent to God. And the first person says, O.K. The rest of your lexicon forever, use given reality when you want to say God. I don't think the person who, if he wants to use given reality as a substitute

for God. And I do think you really do want to use isolationist, or neoisolationist. I am not suggesting the choice is--

HOLSTI: Could I just, could I just, O.K. I think arguing over labels, I certainly don't want to make a, you know, bloody last stand over a label. But let me just put it this way. It does seem to me that if you take, if you would take those items and a very large set of other items, and you would ask yourself, are these, taken at face value, the kind of things that a Charles Beard or a Robert Taft, in the nineteen-thirties, or whatever, are these the kind of things that, or a William Borah, could subscribe to? I would say that compared to the other things we have, I would say more so, rather than less so. Now, whether that makes them isolationists or non-internationalists, the term that Schneider and Mandelbaum use, or some other term, that, I think, is not very helpful to most readers, because they don't know what x means. But maybe, and I don't want to argue the labels.

ROTHMAN: No, I tend to agree. I am impressed by this. And again, Bart, you have, you always, you can always question, words are always imperfect guides, especially in short statements. The question is what is plausible. And I beg to suggest to you if you take a

look at the previous page, remember that these attitudes correlate not negatively with the desire to combat world hunger, the desire to raise UDC standards of living, the desire to foster international cooperation, the desire to strengthen the U.N. These statements correlate negatively, if that's true, with those. It really lends tremendous plausibility to an argument that this represents a syndrome which could be called non-internationalist. It isn't always, remember, the positive correlations. Now, again, you can always say, well, it may mean something else. But I think, I am a little surprised, and it seems to me a very impressive finding.

HOLSTI: I think, let me just say one thing before I forget it, because it came up in other contexts, and the question, I think, could legitimately be raised. Is there no bridge of anything that cuts across these groups. And there are two items that I think, they are more than two items, but there are two that are striking. That do cut across these groups. And one of them has been referred to a number of times. One of them is the question, the efficacy of military power is declining. That received a very high degree of support. And that's not one that falls consistently in any of those

three groups. The second one is, we have a moral commitment, let me read it exactly, so I get it straight. The United States has a moral obligation to prevent the destruction of the State of Israel. And that, too, cuts across those items. In other words, that item does not fall into the isolationist syndrome, if that's the proper term, nor does it fall into the post cold war and so on. In other words, people respond to that in ways that are not predictable by these three clusters.

ROTHMAN: May I ask you now a question on this? Do you have any data as to, because I am persuaded, I don't care if you, I say non-internationalist, rather than isolationist, because I, isolationist, I think, does raise some kind of hackles. But I certainly, an in-drawing of some sort. What, do you have any, is there any particular variables that seem to correlate with this particular pattern?

HOLSTI: Yeah. If you look at, there, I should add I think Jim made the point, and let me reiterate, we have not by any means completed the analyses, but I was going to indicate that if you want to get some kind of rough ideas of who or what, the cold war internationalists,

as you might predict, are, by and large tend to be military officers, business executives. Not exclusively. The post-cold war internationalists are most strongly the media people and secondarily, the educators. The isolationists are probably the one group that stands out most powerfully. They are the labor leaders. And they come out so unambiguously, and, the labor leaders. And then, and finally, because of the interest of many people here, the clergy are an interesting mixture. And they don't fall very easily into the pattern. As I indicated earlier, they were the only occupational group that was persuaded that China is expansionist rather than defensive. They were the group that was most strongly convinced that Third World revolutionaries are not just nationalists. And yet, on items relating to hunger, international cooperation, Third World LDC standard of living, and so on, the clergy also the top. The clergy are a mixed bag in that respect, and they are the one occupational group that has this sort of characteristic of on the one hand, some elements of what we calling the cold war internationalists, on the other hand, some elements of what we called the post-cold war internationalists. But they are distinctly not isolationists.

ROTHMAN: Post facto, post facto, one could predict it. But of course one could predict almost anything post facto. It makes sense, it makes a certain amount of sense.

CAPPS: We are getting so close to the time that we have allotted for this. Could you tell us something about, you said that the project is not finished yet. Can you tell us what you are going to have to do?

ROSENAU: Y<sup>es</sup>, I would like that extra minute or two. We are stopping now, huh?

CAPPS: Well, we ought to, at three-thirty, we've got a few minutes.

ROSENAU: I have said I would like a second just to, we, our shoestring, we did this on about ten thousand dollars the first time around.

We feel entitled to ask for more than that.

HOLSTI: We are passing the plate around.

ROSENAU: We have submitted a proposal to the NSF, but we are prepared, if that fails, to go it alone again. And if any of you find this interesting enough to have ideas as to where we might generate that small amount of money to do the second stage. And the purpose of the second stage, basically, is to see whether this finding of three mutually exclusive, internally consistent, belief systems, still holds. To me it's a vital question. I mean, this is a major



finding that we have to know whether it holds as a major finding.

Or whether some how more remoteness from the early seventies and the late sixties has made for change in these belief systems, whether the, China's problems in Vietnam have changed perceptions, what the lessons of Vietnam, there is all kind of things that could intervene.

And I have become personally just fascinated to see whether these basic findings we have uncovered will hold as you go back at the same stratum of American society a second time, ten months before the next Presidential election. Our own hunch is that they will hold. But it's, that's pre facto. So that's--

HOLSTI: Just a final word. I think that, to reinforce what Jim has said, one of the interesting things is the efforts of the recent Administrations to try to very consciously rebuild a consensus. And it's striking, if you look it's clear that détente did not do it, détente became a non-word by the time seventy-six rolled around. But if you look at the human rights policy, it's rather striking, if you look at it to see how the different groups respond to human rights. The cold war internationalists get very concerned about human rights in the Soviet Union and some other places. And less so

when it comes to Iran and South Korea and so on. The cold war, the post-cold war internationalists are much less concerned about the dissidents in the Soviet Union, feeling that other things take precedence, SALT and so on. But become very concerned about South Africa and places like that, South Korea, Nicaragua. And finally the isolationists, the non-internationalists, or the x group, or whatever we want to call them, like George Kennan, they really argue it's none of our business, that we've got enough problems of our own at home on human rights, that we ought to stick to our own knitting, and so what you find is that these, even these conscious efforts to rebuild a consensus, which every administration ultimately has got to have, because it has only limited amount of political capital, what you see in these efforts is that we are getting kind of a continuing breakdown along roughly those same lines. And so I think it's fair to say that up to this point the efforts to rebuild a consensus have maybe even exacerbated it rather than--

ROSENAU: Let me put it in the other side of the coin. If our findings are reasonably accurate, one can look forward for better or worse to a long period in American foreign policy of divisiveness,

and the absence of cohesiveness, and for me this has always suggested the absence of effectiveness, which may or may not be desirable.

Depending upon where you come from.

CAPPS: I think that's where we will--

ROTHMAN: May I say I think what you've got so far is beautiful. If

I knew someone at the NSF, I'd put in a good word--

ROSENAU: Why don't you volunteer to be an evaluator?

CAPPS: --take a bout a ten-minute recess, before we get back at

three forty-five. Thank you.

BREAK

TAPE W-50 Track II

CAPPS: --this afternoon, he will be with us tomorrow. He is a professor of sociology of religion at UCSB. And Donna Gregory has joined us, and Mr. -- Do you -- sure--

MC DONALD: Before turning this session over to Murray Fromson and Mr. Lichty, I thought I'd simply recall one incident, and maybe Mr. Fromson remembers that, and maybe he doesn't. He was sitting here about ten years ago, at the height, or depth, of the Vietnam war, came back from Vietnam, on a kind of an R and R leave, I guess it was, to go to New York, and then go back to Vietnam, and he stopped off en route here at the Center, to give us some of his experiences as a correspondent fresh from Vietnam, the dust of Vietnam still on his boots, and he sat here and talked for about a half-hour, and telling us -- the reason I am relating this is I think it reveals two limitations of the media, of the broad, the electronic media, at least, in reporting such a thing as the Vietnam war. And maybe those things will be covered in your session this afternoon, among other things. But Mr. Fromson mentioned the fact, he talked to us for about a half-hour, about the kinds of things you couldn't put on

camera from Vietnam, about the war. He says, how do you, for example, how do you photograph such realities of the Vietnam war as demoralization of troops, or desertion of the South Vietnamese soldiers, or prostitution, or corruption, or bribery? Those things aren't just, you can't, there is no picture of those things, as I recall your saying it, such as would be, fellows jumping out of helicopters into elephant grass, and moving up with their bazookas, and their guns and anti-tanks, and so on. And then some of us in the question and answer period following that, said, well, why couldn't you, this would be fascinating if you could say the same things to a national audience on your network that you've just said here around the table. It wouldn't have to have a lot of graphics and, behind you, and a lot of film, and all that. Just talk, and say the same things, and have a panel, maybe, of critics, for and against the war, quiz you after your, and all on camera, of course, and with an open microphone. And Mr. Fromson said, well, it, they wouldn't let us do it, and I don't know whether you would care to amplify that or not, but they was a kind of a combination of the corporate officers and owners of the network plus the flak you would get from the

White House and the State Department, wondering again whose side are you on, which was Lyndon Johnson's eternal question of the media people during the Vietnam war, whose side are you on, when you undertake to present that kind of journalism or that kind of factual reporting. It seems to me those reveal two limitations, are two very deep problems of the mass media, commercial mass media. One is the nature of photographing itself, how do you photograph certain kinds of abstractions which are real, but don't photograph very well, like corruption, and so on. And also how do you counteract the pressures that certainly exist, both inside the media and on the media, to monitor what you have released to the public about such things as the Vietnam war? And with that, I don't know whether Mr. Fromson cares to add a sequel to that, or he has some other things, but I am, turn the meeting over now to Mr. Lichty and Mr. Fromson, and they have some ideas of what they want to do, and then they are going to leave plenty of time, I gather, for questions and answers, is that right? From the audience, and discussion.

FROMSON: I don't know where I stand in the aviary of Indochina, any more, you know, hawk, dove, whatever. But Larry and I have

had many conversations about this problem. He has done a lot of research in the field. I think with regard to what you said, I had forgotten a lot of that. I remember coming and talking--

MC DONALD: I never forgot it--

FROMSON: I think there are some things that probably were less abstract, and I know that bothers some of the people here, why we didn't show atrocities on both sides, you know. The problem is how do you do that kind of thing. And I suppose, just, a thought just puts, there were just certain atrocities you couldn't show on camera, wouldn't be shown, because of the distasteful nature of what was involved. Anyway, but, why don't you start off--

LICHTY: If I may I'd like to take just a few seconds to explain a little bit about where I am in the aviary. And I think I can explain where you are in the aviary, but in an entirely different way. To understand what, where I am coming from, what I say, I think maybe it is important to say that I have, for the past ten years or so, been trying to understand the television coverage of the war. I wish I did understand it. I don't understand nearly enough yet. To that end, I have tried to look at, have looked at,

all of the network evening news coverage that came from Vietnam, and will try to stick to that in terms of what we talk about, as well as looking at the documentaries and other programs. I would also like to say, because I have never been able to do this publicly, although I've known Mr. Fromson for some time, that we are particularly fortunate to call on his expertise. Of all the reporters who, in Vietnam, the one person who was there the most times, not the longest, in any one continuous tour, but the only correspondent of all the television correspondents who was there before 1965, during the Tet offensive, in the sixty-six to sixty-nine period, and at the end, was Murray Fromson. And that's a true fact. There is no other, there are a lot of reporters who were on the air more times, there are a lot of reporters who stayed there for a longer tour at specific times, but the only one who was stupid enough to consistently go back again and again was Murray Fromson.

FROMSON: Unfortunate, please. Not stupid.

LICHTY: That's true, and I'd be happy to show you my tables if anybody would like to know that. So I think it's particularly important.



With that important, with that introduction, I would like us to start out talking about the beginning of the war, in terms of the television coverage of it. And I'd like to kind of go through a case study. For those of you who saw me do my act here, my traveling war, death, and destruction, in October, this is a rerun. But I'd like to make some additional points and ask Murray to comment, an entirely different perspective. And then I think it's reasonable to talk about the change that came with Tet, it's reasonable to talk about what came at the end, in terms of the way the television coverage changed with respect to what was reflected about the war. To a great degree, every time people sit around and talk about the television war, or the war itself, or just the way television news works, they tend to reflect on a particular story. I could show you the video-tape of that, but I won't. I'll play an audiotape, because we don't have a video-tape machine. I think that actually is lucky, because it forces us to concentrate on the subject and the words of it rather than the pictures, although what was important to a degree was the pictures. When Morley Safer's film of Ca May was first shown in August, 1965, it was

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by no means the first television coverage of Vietnam. It may strike you as somewhat ironic that the first American television correspondent to be shot at by the other side was Charles Corault.<sup>?</sup> Somehow that doesn't make sense, does it, but Charles Corault was in Vietnam in 1961, and was shot--he was not on the road, actually, he was in a ditch, but the point is the same. Well, enough of that.

From time to time, following the Kam Nay story,<sup>?</sup> which we'll talk about, it was cited as a classic example of either network bias or misinterpretation by so-called hawks, who would charge that television by its very nature, or by malice, had somehow demoralized the home front, had prevented the military from doing its job, and so forth. The doves were to cite Kan May repeatedly as evidence for their case, that the war would not work, that it was immoral, that it was misdirected, or something like that. What I would like to argue here, was that Kan May raised the very issues that never faded during the entire ten years, or however you measure it, of the war. Interesting from a television point of view, the Safer story was controversial before it was ever on the air. Reasoner,

and Murray will talk about this in a second, Harry Reasoner started it all on the third of August, and he was substituting for Conkrite who was, as he always is in August, on vacation. Reasoner opened the program in a very a-typical fashion. Let me just quote.

"Good evening. We received today a cable from Morley Safer, our correspondent in South Vietnam. It seems to us worth quoting directly. 'I was the only correspondent,' Safer says, 'at today's burning of a hamlet by U.S. Marines, surrounding the village of Kam Nay. According to a Marine officer on the operation, they had orders to burn the hamlet to the ground if they received so much as a round.'"

In the whole history of the war, in the whole history of the television and media presentation of the war, I know of no other instance when an anchor man set up a film report in such a way. Mind you, at this time the film was on its way from Saigon, from Da Nang, actually, to the United States. It had not been developed. No one had any idea what was on that film. It was nothing but some black and white stuff on silver iodide. What was being read over the air, on, by then and continuing for the next ten years, the

most popular television evening news program, was in fact an internal memo, cable advising what was coming. Let me just, two days later that story played on the air. Let me just play you how that went, how that went.

FROM TAPE

"We are on the outskirts of Kam Nay <sup>??</sup> as elements of the First Battalion, Ninth Marines. We were walking into this village when you can hear what happened. (GUNFIRE)

"Let's move in with those other guys.

"This is what the war in Vietnam is all about. The old and the very young, the Marines have burned this old couple's cottage because fire was coming from here. Now when you walk into the village, you see no young people at all. Fire was coming from automatic, automatic weapons fire was coming from all of these villages. It's not really one village, it's a string of--and the people are all left, come this way, Kan, people that are left are like this woman here, the very old.

"Did you set fire to these houses here?

"Now we were just off to the left unintelligible

"Were you getting fire from them?"

"From what, not too much, \_\_\_\_\_"

"It first appeared that the Marines had been sniped at, and that a few houses were made to pay. Shortly after, an officer told me he had orders to go in and level the string of hamlets that surround Kam Nay village. And all around the common paddy field that feeds these hamlets, a ring was fired, 150 homes were leveled in retaliation for a burst of gunfire. In Vietnam, like everywhere else in Asia, property, a home, is everything. A man lives with his family on ancestral land. His parents are buried nearby. Their spirit is part of his holdings. If there were Viet Cong in the hamlet, they were long gone, alerted by the roar of the amphibious tractors, the heavy barrage of rocket fire laid down before the troops moved in. The women and the old men who remained will never forget that August afternoon. The day's operation burned down 150 houses, wounded three women, killed one baby, wounded one Marine, and netted these four prisoners. Four old men who could not answer questions put to them in English. Four old men who had no idea what an ID card was. Today's operation is the frustration of Vietnam

in miniature. There is little doubt that American fire power can win a military victory here. But to a Vietnamese peasant whose home is a, means a lifetime of backbreaking labor, it will take more than Presidential promises to convince him that we are on his side.

Morley Safer, CBS News, near the village of Kam Nay."

END OF TAPE

LICHTY: August 5, 1965. Our purpose here, really, is to talk about what did TV report, and how did it go about reporting it. And it is in that light that I did this. Let me note that the pictures that went with this, in black and white, even in monochrome were very vivid and very different for television at that time. Safer did this in very much a cinema verité, or direct cinema style. You see him standing in front of the huts, his tape recorder, a big reel to reel tape recorder slung over his shoulder, a cigarette dangling sort of casually between his fingers, you heard him speak to his cameraman, Hatu Kan, say, come this way, Kan, go over here, Kan. That was, and it's hard for people watching television news now to understand, but that was very different. Television to this point was tripod television, it was newsreel television, it was a

stationary camera, it was performance in front of a camera, not a camera involved in something going on. In this case, Safer is wandering around casually, he is giving directions to the camera, this was something that was very, very different. It's important to understand that. Your turn.

FROMSON: In the isolation of that one area, where he was filming, there was, as I recall, no Vietnamese interpreter.

LICHTY: That's right.

FROMSON: Kan, the cameraman, was the interpreter, who was telling the villagers to get out of the hut. As soon as that spot appeared on the air, Arthur Sylvester, then the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, called Fred Friendly and said, to the best of my recollection, "Now that you've spit on the American flag, how do you feel?" I think at that moment, at that juncture of the Vietnam war, when there was still a feeling that, (a) American power would win, would survive, would prevail, and there had never been any really sharp questioning of American policy, either in Vietnam, or in Asia, for that matter, in that period of time, I think there was probably some

sense of intimidation felt by the network. I happened to be in Hawaii the day the piece was on the air, and I was on my way back to New York, and they asked me to stop in Washington, because they knew I had become acquainted with Bill Moyers during the 1960 Presidential campaign, when I was covering Lyndon Johnson. Since Moyers was then the press secretary of the White House, they said, "why don't you go talk to him, they are upset, they are, and try to explain what's going on in Vietnam." And we had a discussion. It didn't really prove very much, except that the line I remember Moyers giving me was, "Why do you have to use foreigners to cover the war in Vietnam?" Safer is a Canadian. And, "Why do you have to use Vietnamese cameraman?" And I was kind of irritated by that. And I simply said, "Well, your boss, the President, keeps on saying it's their war to win. Why can't you have Vietnamese cameramen covering it?"

I think that was a beginning. That was a kind of a Rubicon in terms of coverage, because it was an uncomfortable chapter for Americans to face on television, that I will leave it to others to judge whether it was a distortion. But I do think in an era of



symbolism, it was not in isolation, just a case of one village being burned. It talked about American understanding of the Vietnamese, Vietnamese understanding, or misunderstanding of Americans, the frustration we felt in a guerrilla-type war, I think it covered an awful lot.

LICHTY: It, let me amplify that. It's important to understand that the television, in my judgment, is not the monolith that we have, often seen to be. That very same day that this was broadcast, the Huntley-Brinkley report had similar film. It was filmed near Kam Nay in the village of Chow San. Chow San, the two villages, well actually Chow San is four miles south of the village of Kam Nay <sup>4</sup>, as it was designated. N.B.C. had a cameraman but no reporter on the spot, so the film was actually done voice-over by Huntley in New York, who reported that fifty of ninety houses were burned, and the civilians were caught in the cross-fire. And he noted in his narration, though it's not in Safer's story, and was insisted on by the Marines, that there were in fact Viet Cong fortified bunkers underneath some of the houses.

FROMSON: Can I just say one thing? I do think, though, that despite

whatever Safer said, and whatever report said, I think it's the image that is left in the minds of most people watching, and that is that Zippo lighter going up against the roof.

LICHTY: Excuse me, I should have said that. And as he says, "That is what the war is all about," there is a shot of the Marine holding his, a cigarette lighter, we don't know if it was a Zippo or not, holding a cigarette lighter to a hooch and lighting it, and following that immediately, though, that was the most controversial picture, following that immediately is a picture of a Marine using a flame-thrower to set the roof of several hooches on fire. Huntley's narration was very different from what Safer had said, as the pictures were different as well. Huntley said, "It was a tragic misfortune of the people of Chow San to have been used as a shield by the Viet Cong." And the marines have been criticized for excessive brutality. But this battle was no more barbaric than any other battle in recorded history. What made it seem more brutal was that it was photographed. Indeed, all three networks had similar versions of that and other operations, at nearly the same time.

ASHMORE: Did the N.B.C. version run simultaneously with C.B.S.?

LICHTY: It ran the same night, but how do you mean simultaneously?

That--

ASHMORE: Was Huntley really replying to Safer?

LICHTY: No, he was not. He, it's unlikely that Huntley knew what Safer had done, although the Safer piece had run on the, the narration had run on radio, and it had in fact run in the ten o'clock news with Mike Wallace.

FROMSON: And N.B.C.knew what he had done--

LICHTY: In fact, yes. But in fact the Huntley narration follows almost exactly the A.P. report of that, and it's most likely that it was rewritten from that.

BERNSTEIN: It was a different village--

LICHTY: Yes, they did, it was the same operation, but village is our definition, O.K.? Actually, there were more than that. There were two basic hamlet areas, Chow San and Kam Nay, but Kam Nay is not a village, Kam Nay is a cluster of at least four kind of collections of houses. It was exactly the same operation. There were two units involved. And one unit, the unit Safer was with, was in fact to a degree lost. They were in the wrong area. The larger

unit that the N.B.C. was showing film of was in the right area, and in the correct area. I wouldn't say that they were absolutely lost, but they were not, it was later determined they were not going precisely where they should have been going and precisely where they should have been.

I can talk, if you like, a teeny bit here, and later on the after-ops reports on that, and what in fact was determined later, because as I will say in a second, the Marines in fact did a detailed investigation of the incident. Most of the reactions were, as you would expect them. In the first place, if any television story ever from Vietnam created a sensation, it was this one. But it is still not possible after years and millions of words to describe precisely what the reaction means. The Saturday Review, for example, started a fundraising campaign to help rebuild the village. I have this image of getting thousands of carpenters from Peoria, Illinois, and sending them to--Drew Pearson, in a commentary broadcast from WTOP in Washington, said that the Americans used too much fire power, often indiscriminately, and he argued that the American occupation of Vietnam would end just as had the French. William F. Buckley

devoted an entire column to Cam Nay, entitled, "Join the Marines and get on the hate list." He quoted Safer at length, and then said, "This episode is symbolic of the larger problem. America's mode is an all-out effort, done with singleness of purpose and dispatch. We are unpracticed at sustained exercises in Florentine cunning." Doesn't that sound like William F. Buckley? "We are a nation of problem-solvers by the direct approach. If a hamlet is in guerrilla hands, you level the hamlet. It will get worse, and the bitterness of our soldiers will be real and searing as they face gunfire ahead of them, and behind them the well-formulated contempt of those in whose cause they serve and die."

FROMSON: Before and after that situation, too, have to remember that Kam Nay occurred about four weeks after the first draftees landed in Vietnam. Because I remember I was at Cam Ranh Bay when the first elements arrived to join up with the big red 1, the first division.

LICHTY: And it occurred just two weeks after, on July 14, when  
?  
McVey had issued the guidelines by which correspondents were to operate. Simultaneous with this, I won't get into it, simultaneous

with this was an A.P. photograph that was accused of showing Marine brutality, and another discussion in another part of Vietnam by another reporter, of very, very similar sorts of things. My argument there, if it had not been Cam Nay and Safer, it would have been somebody else, some other time, very, very close to that. And it happened that this was the first time we took notice of this.

FROMSON: Kam Nay was the most dramatic example at that point of the frustration that existed in the military and amongst Americans who were involved in Vietnam. I was trying desperately yesterday to locate, I do have it in my files someplace, a clipping from a McVey newspaper in 1964, it has a coupon in it addressed to all GIs. Twenty-five dollars, write in your suggestion how to win the Vietnam war. And this was given to all, it was really distributed throughout Vietnam, to all the McVey groups, all the advisory groups. The aftermath--yeah--

LICHTY: O.K. When the main argument came to be C.B.S.-Safer versus the D.O.D. and Sylvester, as Murray pointed out, when, for example, Sylvester wrote to Fred Friendly and said essentially what Moyers

said to you, Sylvester called on the phone first and then wrote a letter and said that, quote, "I think that an American reporter and an American photographer would be more sensitive to the considerations that this was a new kind of war." And by new kind of war, he meant that it was political, economic, and military. He wrote, complaining that Safer not only was Canadian, but that it had been demonstrated that Safer in Canada had been disloyal and was being investigated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. That was not true. He also well, there were a number of other accusations. The most interesting anecdote I spoke, coming out of that, was it went so far as, not just Moyers, but Johnson himself, called the president of C.B.S., Frank Stanton, and said, well, first he said, "Boy, your man just shat on the flag." And he said, "Did you know that Mr. Safer is a Communist?" And Frank Stanton said, "No, sir, he's not a Communist, he's a Canadian." And the President said, "Well, I knew he wasn't an American."

ROSENAU: Could I just ask--

LICHTY: You bet.

ROSENAU: I hate to interrupt, but I'd like a little clarity as

to where you're coming from. Are you trying to illustrate that the media had a big impact, and that media people were mistreated--

LICHTY: I am trying to make the point that it is very easy to simplify what was on the media. That what was on the media is not easy to summarize. The point that Guenther made in his book was that it is very complicated, there are a lot of complicated arguments. I am trying to illustrate that a lot of the complicated arguments were in fact summed up in the beginning, and maybe we didn't recognize them. Let me play for you if I may, just one other-- go ahead.

FROMSON: Also a lot of the pressures were never apparent on the screen or in print. I mean, the kinds of things that happened to either reporters in their exposure to people in Vietnam, or executives in New York or Washington.

LICHTY: Virtually none of what we talked about here, at the time, was a part of the public record, until about a year later, when in fact, partly because of this instance, there were Senate hearings on the press coverage of the war, at which point most of what we're talking about came out in response to the argument between Safer and --



ASHMORE: Where did the Johnson quote come from, Stanton? Is it a real quote, I mean--

LICHTY: It's, to the best of my knowledge, it's a real quote, yeah.

ASHMORE: Well, it had to come from Stanton, it couldn't have come from Lyndon.

LICHTY: I'll have to look that up, Harry, I don't honestly remember.

ASHMORE: There wasn't any tape on it, or anything like that?

LICHTY: No, I don't believe Lyndon Johnson did that.

ASHMORE: Sounds like Lyndon.

LICHTY: You didn't tell me that, no, O.K. I'll look that up. I, let me, let me jump forward a couple of weeks, two weeks.

TAPE

"Biggest American victory"

LICHTY: This is Cronkite on the twentieth of August--

TAPE

"Rugged terrain"

LICHTY: I'll go back one second--this is my--

TAPE

"Biggest American victory yet out there. The Marines are

mopping up the rugged terrain south of the Da Nang and Chu Lai bases, and they are rooting the isolated Viet Cong out of bunkers and pill boxes. ?? They disclosed today that about five thousand Leathernecks took part in that big battle that ended yesterday.

"This is the command post for the biggest and most successful American operation to date. The flow of Marine battalions came ashore, came in by helicopter, pounded \_\_\_\_\_, and in the end killed more than seven hundred Viet Cong. This is probably the most important operation to date, too, because it is the first time that American troops were able to act successfully instead of react to the Viet Cong. The Marines used every device, every lesson, this was an operation that they had been rehearsing for months in Vietnam and for years on Okinawa. Then Wednesday morning some of the world's finest assault troops hit the beaches off the \_\_\_\_\_ Peninsula just south of their base at Chu Lai. A simultaneous landing by helicopters put down more Marines behind the suspected Viet Cong concentration. And then another amphibious force cut both sides of the peninsula, and the enemy was trapped. A suspected Viet Cong regiment, two thousand men, a full Marine regiment made the assault, supported by fighter bombers and naval gunfire. The area around

Chu Lai is some of the roughest fighting country in Vietnam. A long stretch of sand dunes down the coast and inland, impassible <sup>A</sup> jungles. The temperature here is sometimes, rises to 140. The Viet Cong had installed heavy concrete bunkers and seemed to be preparing for an assault on Chu Lai air base itself. The peninsula has a complex of villages, one of which the Viet Cong has used as a command post. And the inevitable civilian suffering. Marine casualties were the casualties of all-out war, not of booby traps and sniping. This was the first set battle for American troops in Vietnam, and in the peninsula south of Chu Lai, a lot of nineteen-year-old Marines became veterans on that steaming August afternoon."

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"The battle at Van Twong is a rather historic event. It marks the first time that American troops took on an aggressive role. This wasn't the static perimeter defense or even a probing action. It was a major assault by American Marines. Morley Safer, C.B.S. News, Van Twong."

"There was just a hint today that North Vietnam may not insist on the complete withdrawal of American troops from the South before they are ready to talk peace. The story comes from a

roundabout way, British diplomats who talked with Vietnamese Communist officials in Moscow. Frequently that is the way a break first comes. The softening of Red policy, if any, is attributed to President Johnson's tough stand in Vietnam, and there is more to that story. C.B.S. News diplomatic correspondent Marvin <sup>Kalb?</sup> Capp."

"The Administration believes that the Viet Cong has now reached a point of critical decision. Either to initiate major military action in South Vietnam, or to sue for peace. One American official said tonight, 'Something very important is now happening in Vietnam.' Officials of course are not sure which way the Viet Cong will turn, but in hopes the Communists may find negotiations attractive at this stage of the war, President Johnson today issued another passionate appeal for peace talks."

"We do have a serious situation in Vietnam. We need to get to the negotiating table. We need to, in the words of Isaiah, reason together. And I pray every night that the day will come when others will be willing to accept our proposals and join us in our hopes of satisfying these problems and dealing with these difficulties by talking instead of fighting."

"Many U.S. officials are buoyed by the news of that Marine victory near Chu Lai, and tend to feel that the Communists may now be drifting toward negotiations. Their casualties in the past few weeks have been extremely high, and their morale has been sagging under the impact of continuous American air strikes. It is now felt here that this military pressure may be forcing the Viet Cong and Hanoi to drop their earlier precondition that the U.S. withdraw from South Vietnam before any negotiations can start. However, the Chinese Communists still insist upon this, which indicates a major breach may now be developing in the ranks of Asia's Communists. Marvin Kalb, C.B.S. News, in Washington."

(END OF TPE)

LICHTY: That was the twentieth of August, both of those, sixty-five. I trust that, I know that all of you are familiar with your Bible, so you know that what Isaiah said, following "let us reason together," was if you don't reason with me, I will smite you.

Just if I can conclude very briefly. We know what happened to Morley Safer. Chet Huntley argued that he was bucking for stardom, that he was not interested in freedom of the press, and for whatever your opinion, he got stardom. He has the second-best

job in the world, if you can't be Walter Cronkite, you might as well be Morley Safer.

A second effect, of course, was the fact that the C.B.S. network generally, the reaction of the Defense Department and so forth and the fact that C.B.S. has consistently been accused of being the most liberal, the most critical of the war effort. Archie Bunker, throughout most of the seventies, would slouch in his favorite chair, switch to C.B.S. to monitor, quote, that pinko Cronkite, unquote. And in saying that, I think represents a fair body of American public opinion. C.B.S.'s reputation about Vietnam was a trail that led back, of course, to Cam Nay, but obviously back a lot further than that, back to 1953, with the "See It Now" program, Milo Redulovich, to 1954, for the Joseph McCarthy program, to many C.B.S. reports through the sixties that were dealing with issues that the other networks didn't touch. There was a critical policy, such as programs on the Ku Klux Klan, auto crashes, migrant farm workers, birth control, abortion, pesticides, funerals, smoking, all of those things not dealt with on other networks. Nonetheless, the myth came, and the reason for talking about this, I think, that is

what we tend to remember and write about, not only in terms of the television coverage of Vietnam, but the media coverage in general, and all of Vietnam, are the myths rather than the reality. The myth came to be that Safer was hostile to the Americans and tried to sabotage the war effort, and that television in general did that. I think that a careful reviewing of the reports over a long period of time will indicate that the second series we heard is very typical, very typical of all the reporting through the end of 1967, that the Cam Nay thing was indeed unusual.

MC DONALD: Can I ask a question of that--

LICHTY: Sure.

MC DONALD: Do you think that the results, what you just said, from that Zippo episode on television, to the, all through 1967, where there was a pullback and kind of a defensive, everybody on the networks more or less giving a positive view of the war, was because they were fearful of what had happened? I mean, that the networks got cold feet?

LICHTY: No, I don't think, I don't mean to imply that at all--

MC DONALD: That they wanted to reassure the White House that they

FROMSON: You have to understand, if I may say, that until he went to Vietnam, if Cronkite had been there in sixty-five, when that incident I told you about this morning, about the general saying, why don't, they are chickens, they are cowards, they won't come out and fight. That was his story. He was filming then at the time. Cronkite was pretty much a hawk right up to the time he went to Vietnam during the Tet offensive. A lot of people around New York were convinced that the U.S. effort in Vietnam was a valid one, and would eventually come out favorably to the United States. As a matter of fact, well--

MC DONALD: Well, what accounts for that episode, then, why was that put on, that one dissident, that one lonely, isolated episode of the Zippo lighter, you know--

FROMSON: The first one?

MC DONALD: Was that a mistake, or--

FROMSON: No, I mean, he was there, he is identified as being on film, and he--

MC DONALD: What decision was made to put that--

FROMSON: I don't think it was a decision, it was--

LICHTY: It was not, it was put on because it happened--



FROMSON: That's right.

LICHTY: The way Safer started on the story, everything that happened was not the least bit atypical. It was very typical. What no one calculated was the reaction.

FROMSON: Yeah, that's right--

LICHTY: And the assumption is, we often sit around making the assumption that in deciding what gets on, and doing the list, that somehow we know how it's going to come out, how people are going to perceive it. And it's simply one thing we don't know very much about in terms of mass communication.

FROMSON: In December of sixty-five, I was then living in Bangkok and going back and forth to Vietnam, and my wife had encountered a couple of F-105 pilots from Tok Lee air base in Thailand. We were not admitting at that time we were bombing from Thailand, not publicly, anyway. And they were reservists who had been called back to active duty. And it was in that week that Johnson declared the Christmas bombing pause, to give the North Vietnamese a chance to talk peace. And we had said that our planes were not bombing North Vietnam, which was technically true, but we were really bombing the

hell out of Laos at the time. And these pilots were very upset about it. They were talking about the fact that they were not getting combat pay. They were risking their necks hitting the Ho Chi Minh trail, being shot at, losing a lot of their colleagues, and they were complaining about the fact that there was a shortage of bombs, they were being forced to fly over against Communist targets without enough bombs in their planes. And we were repurchasing bombs from the Germans we had given them after World War II. Well, I didn't want to do the story from Bangkok, but I had gotten it from these guys, and they said, yeah, you could use it. And I happened to have a friend who was an intelligence officer. And I checked with him, and in fact he bore out what they were telling me, and he was at another, he was at the command headquarters. So I went back to Saigon, and I did the story. And the Defense Department called up C.B.S. after the piece was on the air, and said this was a lie. McNamara said it was a lie. And they insisted on carrying a rebuttal from them the next night. And I got a long cable from New York, explaining that they felt compelled to use the Defense Department reaction to this piece, and am I sure of my evidence, and

so forth, and I said, well, I can always tell you what I have checked, and the kinds of people I have checked with. I wasn't going to give them names on the Telex, because it was being seen by everybody. Some people from New York came out, and they said, "boy, they sure cut you off on the air. It made it look like they put you on a tree and just whacked the limb off." And I said, "Well, I don't know, I didn't, I did my story." And I just let it sit that way. I wrote a note to New York, to Gordon Manning, who was then the senior vice-president of C.B.S. News. And I said, "I just want you to know that I checked the story out and as thoroughly as anybody could, and it seemed to me, based on the evidence I had, to be borne out." And he said, "Well, this is what the Defense Department said." Two months later, The New York Times carried a story and said they had learned that there was a bomb shortage in Vietnam. And then I got a kudo from New York, saying "congratulations on your exclusive." It was only when The New York Times confirmed the piece that they were even willing to believe what I had reported two months earlier. I think there was always that kind of questioning in the early days of the war.

BERNSTEIN: Did the Department, the Pentagon, or the Defense Department deny, that there was a bomb shortage, or we were bombing Thailand during the alleged Christmas pause?

FROMSON: They denied the bomb shortage, and they protested the fact that I had somehow broken the, broken some kind of a, not secrecy, but the fact that I had really violated some kind of code by even reporting that.

BERNSTEIN: Oh, I see. So they acknowledged that we were bombing Thailand--

MESHAD: Not Thailand--

FROMSON: Not Thailand, Laos from Thailand.

ASHMORE: Well, what this sounds like to me in your exchange with the network is not so much a policy question as just the usual idiocy that--

FROMSON: Well, yeah. I don't think it was any policy, again, with Safer's piece I don't think it was policy either. They got the piece--

ASHMORE: Somebody pressures, so they yield--

FROMSON: But to try and answer your question, I think there are a

cluster of things through 1965 and 1966 and 1967 that help explain this. They don't, you know, they don't exhaust the variables, but first, there was the fact that most of the decision-makers in the media, as well as the military, were in fact fighting the end of World War II. This war particularly true in Cronkite's case.

Whenever Cronkite began to worry about the war, he went to Washington and talked with the people with whom he had been associated as a U.P.I. reporter in World War II. There was this tremendous pressure to get on the team. Sylvester to you, and Safer, and throughout Washington, especially Washington to the reporters there. And the Washington columnists, coming out to Vietnam, or not even coming out to Vietnam and accusing these young kids of distorting the war effort.

LICHTY: There was an enormous pressure on the part of the State Department, particularly the Defense Department, and in Vietnam, to give us time. We are getting the kinks out, come on, you know, lay off, give us a bit more time. There was, what I call the instrument of war stories, that tended, the reports of progress. It was a series of every time television didn't know quite what to do or

the military didn't know quite what to do, we had a new weapon, a jeep with a thirty-five-foot steering wheel that could be driven from thirty-five feet behind it, so that it went over mines, nothing happened. My favorite is a helicopter, the guns of which were aimed by your eyeball, called viper fire, you know, zap, zap, zap. A whole bunch of them. There was this appearance of progress reflected primarily in the official documentation. The numbers that came out of Comer's computer. The figures on pacification. The villages. The number of operations. The body count. All of this appearance of progress. There was what you were just reflecting on, the last year, the New York-Washington, D.C. view versus Vietnam. You have been out there too long. You don't understand the big picture. The fact that from Washington you talk on television to New York especially before the Telex was completed, and you were in fact two days away by phone, was extremely important that there wasn't communications so that if x reporter from Vietnam filed a story two days later, the State Department would say, "No, No, No. That's not true. He doesn't understand this, he didn't get this part of it."

FROMSON: Some of this may seem extraneous here, but it really does

explain to a significant degree the kinds of pressures that the media, especially television, is under, in trying to cover the war.

MC DONALD: But are you two suggesting that the networks didn't find it all that uncomfortable to go along with the pressure, in other words, until the Tet offensive. Is that what you're suggesting?

LICHTY: Yes, absolutely. Fred Friendly and defensive, say, for 1965, when interviewed about that specific story said, quote, "I believe in the war." And what is important is not that Fred Friendly believed in the war, changed his mind later, quite, in part, and only in part, because of that. What is important is that Friendly was expressing the general opinion that you stated today, and we talked about yesterday, that virtually every American leader, every person in the media, virtually the entire American society, in one way or another, reflected at least lukewarm support for the war effort, the idea of it, at least, the ideology of it, so that there was not the criticism, the criticism was explained as extremely radical, so that, for example, several days after this, when there was a protest at Berkeley, Chet Huntley could say about someone who complained that we were using gas in the tunnels in Vietnam, Chet

Huntley could say, "and in making that charge, he joins a legion of those in Soviet Russia who said the same thing."

That was a perfectly rational explanation at that particular time.

FROMSON: Shortly after Friendly resigned, he wrote a book called Due to Circumstances Beyond Our Control. He sent me a copy, and he said "This book wouldn't have been possible without you." And there was one page in there, I never had heard about this before, nobody at C.B.S. had ever told me. But immediately after I did the story about the bombing of Laos, Stanton called up and wanted to get me fired. Stanton was just upset, because he said Johnson had called, and Johnson and Stanton were good friends. And Lyndon accused me of undermining the war effort.

LICHTY: Let me go on just one further step on that, this specific Safer story and then quit. What is important, it seems to me, was not what Safer said, though that is important, not the reaction, but the fact that it became the symbol. TV Guide, in October of 1965, just two months after this, referred to Safer's quote, "reportorial



daring," unquote. He said, the article said, quote, "The staggering film report showing U.S. Marines burning down 150 homes in the village of Cam Nay," unquote, scored a beat on the newspapers. And they went on to say that television story had been picked up by the newspapers, which, quote, "scored a beat on the newspapers, and the country found itself talking about the new spirit of TV news," unquote. It's important, I think, to understand the coverage of Vietnam to understand how new and learning its trade television was doing. The military at this time was learning what was learning what was going on in Vietnam, trying new things, but television was too. It was very, very experimental to a degree. Cam Nay somehow became this kind of moment, if you will, in the abstract. There were, by our count, some four thousand film reports from Indochina following that, but none of them could compare with this one. A recent textbook about the history of television said, quote, showing the still picture of the cigarette lighter, "an American soldier sets fire to a house in Vietnam. TV viewers numbly watched the horrors of war nightly in the nineteen-sixties." Guenther Lewy said last night that every single night there were bloody stories

on television. And it's absolutely incorrect. There were not bloody stories on television every single night. They represented a very small percentage of the television coverage. Whether or not they represented in terms of public opinion a significant segment of all of that is, of course, arguable. I don't know the answer to that.

ASHMORE: Well, in those early days, how did the print coverage compare with the TV coverage in terms of bias or color or impact--

LICHTY: In terms of the Cam Nay story, the newspapers tended to run, in the first day, the A.P. dispatch, which was essentially what Chet Huntley said virtually word for word, except by, manipulated by Gil Milstein and his typewriter at N.B.C. But essentially the same story. The picture was then run, and there was great controversy about the still picture, which came out of that. I think that's significant. If most of us, I think, who think about Vietnam, think back on the symbols on the pictures of Vietnam, to me at least, and to the people I know, four pictures flash into our head. One is the Buddhist in 1963, lighting himself, a picture by Mel Brown. ??  
The other is the picture of General Luan, a well-known Virginia ??

restaurateur, raising his pistol to a Viet Cong suspect and shooting him through the head at Tet. Another, of course, is the 1973, the little girl when the South Vietnamese napalmed a group and the little girl comes running out of the black smoke burned. And of course a fourth is this particular one. The interesting thing to me is, those three other images besides this one are all still photographs. There was television film in all instances to be sure, but the pictures that are repeated and printed again and again and again are still photographs. The only singular, unique picture to come out of Vietnam that is a television picture, is this one. So that David Halberstam would write, if I may quote him, David Halberstam wrote in the, at the end of April, 1975, at the end of the war, "the Zippo day," making the same mistake you made, "the Zippo day, it was a total reversal of the American myth; the American legend of the West had the Americans in white hats, protecting women and children, the Indians are the savages who brutalized the innocents. It was a moment that touched the soul and would often be repeated."

I find that intriguing, because Halberstam implies, and so many others, that that somehow was the end, that was the end of the war,

that was the symbol that summarizes the whole thing. And indeed it wasn't. It was the very beginning. It was not indeed, a moment that would often be repeated. In fact, in the history of television, it was virtually never repeated in precisely that same form. It was a unique instance.

FROMSON: I want to say a couple of things if I may. And I don't want to sound defensive of coverage in Vietnam, because I think it was flawed. There were a lot of things wrong with it. For one thing, we were one-dimensional. We got out there, we covered the war, we were faced with a deadline, we knew we were up against print competition, we had to get the stories back from the field, to Saigon, to immediately put on an airplane, in the days when there were no good-quality telephone lines to correct a narration, there was no Telex to tell them to change the information, we had found some new information that will put a better balance to the story. We were in a competitive business. And a lot of, I think some, a considerable number of the stories might have sounded a little bit different or the shading would have been a little bit different, had we had the technical capacity in 1965, 1967, to do what we did

in, later in the war. But I wouldn't want to underestimate the kinds of pressure we were under. And I think you are familiar with some of the stories that, I don't know if you want to talk about that. But, and, in 1967, there was a battle for Hill 881 up near Da Nang, and this was the time when the M-16 was first introduced in the Vietnam. The Marines really were unfamiliar with the weapon, didn't know how to use the dust cover to keep the weapon clean, and as a result, the M-16 had a strange characteristic. It would jam up a lot. And the battle for Hill 881, they were just having a terrible time. The Marines, one battalion really took a terrible beating. We had a stringer, a part-time fellow, covering the I corps area. C.B.S. was very content to have him there all the time so we wouldn't have to spare our staff guy tied down there in Da Nang all the time, unless there was really a reason for being there. He was getting ready to leave on a fellowship to Harvard, and wasn't particularly interested in going out on a combat operation when this story developed. And there was a young Frenchwoman, photographer, named Katherine Leroi, who was taking pictures from a hill nearby, and she got a rather graphic photograph

of a Marine with his hands up in the air, going like this. And she captioned it and said, "Marine prays for help." The Marine was bringing a helicopter down, is what he was doing, putting his hands up, and he was right in an LZ, landing zone, and there was a helicopter coming down. Anyway, the pictures, she had a series of four or five pictures, and three of them were front -page on The New York Times. And John Hart, who was then with C.B.S., and I got a cable from our assignment man, and it said, "At this moment in a critical juncture of the war, why don't we have one of you high-priced correspondents up there in the middle of the fighting. Stop. FYI New York Times today frontpaged a graphic photographs of action by girl photographer Kathy Leroi. Stop. If it takes girls to cover the war, let's get more of them." And, you know, at that time it struck, you know, it was a kind of harassment that we really feeling. I think a lot of us felt, not only at C.B.S. but at the other networks as well. And it had an effect, I think, of really having you get out more, get in the action, whether or not some of this action represented a true picture of what was going on or not, almost seemed to be irrelevant. Just getting a story that

day. And that kept the flow up. But I agree with you, if what you said, I was not here last night, I think to suggest that there was blood and gore on television every night simply isn't true. We have --

LEWY: It may have been a rhetorical excess, I am not even sure that I said every night, but there was a lot of blood and gore, and especially, I think, in the reporting on Tet. And I think it is--

FROMSON: It was mostly there. Most of the blood and gore you couldn't show, it was that bad. I mean, you know, it was bad enough to show a body bag, but I mean, for instance on atrocities, some of the atrocities we found, I mean committed by the Viet Cong, simply would not be shown on television. There is just no way they could be shown on television.

LICHTY: I think the important thing here in what you said, to me was, and let me go back and be more specific on just one point. You were describing the incident of the ear-cutting, in which Don Webster filmed the ear-cutting incidents, and you said that the knife was that of the cameraman, and that the cameraman had asked that that be done. It is true that it was John Smith's knife. That is unquestioned. I have no evidence whatsoever, nor have I seen any,

that John Smith asked that that be done. The evidence is clear that in fact a number of ears had been cut off prior to that, that that was a regular activity, there was a court-martial of the GI involved, and the court-martial officers knew that John Smith was going out of the country on R and R, and chose to hold the court-martial at a time at which John Smith could not testify. So I think that to use that as an example, that is not good evidence. And I think it is important to understand that prior and after that, there were a number of instances of atrocities that were on film, which were not put on the air. Maybe you want to speak to that, I don't know.

FROMSON: Well, there were two. One in 1967 in Rach Yin in the delta, where there was an action going on. I happened to leave, be in the process of leaving, we filmed that day and we were taking our story out, and we were changing film before we got on the helicopter. And the cameraman had his film magazine disconnected from the camera. And about that time six Vietnamese, South Vietnamese, RVN or whatever, wearing black pajamas and skull and crossbones, they were PRU, counter-terror groups, walked by us carrying six heads. Well, we couldn't film that. But the point is that there were



stories that we never filmed, that we could have and we didn't.

That struck me as one example.

MC DONALD: I think you --

LICHTY: I don't offer that as proof that there were atrocities.

What I am arguing is that whether or not atrocities were, were not covered by the media, is neither proof nor refutation of the atrocities. The evidence to that has to be gathered separately, and I am quarreling with your use of examples from the media as to examples as to whether or not there were atrocities.

LEWY: No, I didn't invoke it in that context at all. I gave these illustrations, the story about the helicopter dropping the dead--

LICHTY: You said a number of instances where, that the media had covered atrocities were in fact fake, and you used those two as examples.

LEWY: That's right. That doesn't prove that they weren't atrocities. I know full well that there were numerous atrocities. Of course, we all know that. That was not the issue. I think the issue was, how the media reacted in particular situations.

LICHTY: I agree, and what I am saying is that my evidence indicates

that prior to 1966, the media reacted almost universally to not report those atrocities, when in fact they knew of them, did not report acts of atrocity.

LEWY: That may well be so--

LICHTY: And I think that was very much in line with the media and the American public judgment about the war.

LEWY: I don't disagree.

LICHTY: In the first year and a half, I remember reporting repeated stories about Viet Cong atrocities, showing what they had done.

LEWY: But as you said before, the Viet Cong didn't allow American correspondents to be present when they disemboweled the village chief, things of that sort. Whereas it was possible to be present when American or South Vietnamese atrocities took place, even if you weren't able to show all of them, you were able to show some of them.

LICHTY: What we were trying to do here is to talk about what TV reported, and how it reported it. But before we got into the general thing just sort of be specific. Now--

MC DONALD: Do you have any more you want to say, if you want five

FROMSON: No, I have, it's just that I think some of the major things of the war were, almost impossible for television to cover. The whole business of the sanctuaries in Cambodia, American atti, attitudes of GIs. We spent an awful lot of time in the field talking to GIs, and capturing their frustrations, and their feelings about the war. They were intimidated for one reason or another, they didn't want to talk on camera, they didn't really have much use for television. I mean, they didn't really know, except they knew that we were there and what the hell were we doing there without guns, that's what they wanted to know. We'd walk, and, you know, you mean you guys aren't armed? It was a burden for them. They had to worry about camera crews. But I think a lot of the political stuff was simply impossible to put on television.

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ASHMORE: How do you react to Peter Braystrip's critique of the Tet coverage? Were you there during that time?

FROMSON: Yes. He used an incident involving me, as a matter of fact.

ASHMORE: How do you respond?

FROMSON: Peter was a roommate of mine. And we had some very sharp

disagreements, about the role of the press in Vietnam. I think his analysis of what happened at Khesanh was flawed. I think--

ASHMORE: Everyone know what this was about? Are you all aware of the Braestrip critique?

FROMSON: Two volume--

LICHTY: It's now in paperback. It's called Big Story, it's in paperback, it's an Anchor paperback, which has just the first part without the documents--

ASHMORE: A New York Times correspondent who essentially was critical of the media coverage of Tet.

LICHTY: Later became, Washington Post--

ASHMORE: Washington Post, not--

FROMSON: Yeah, I think the problem is that again, going back, not using it as an alibi, just trying so that you can understand it, the pressures to get the story were enormous. And what happened to us in the process of getting those stories sometimes were hair-raising. Now, in February, 1968, when Khesanh was going hot and heavy, the first time I ever heard the term, Dien Bien Phu, used in connection with Khesanh, was from a general, at Westmoreland's

headquarters. It was not by the press. They were the first ones talking about the possibility of another Dien Bien Phu. Then it was repeated again and again. They had a, it had a kind of a life of its own. I went up to Da Nang in an attempt to get into Khesanh. And I sat around for two days, got on a C-130, at that time the airfield was under heavy rocket and antiaircraft fire, and as we got about five hundred feet from the deck, coming in, the plane right ahead of us was blown up. So we took off again, went back to Da <sup>N</sup>ang. And the next day I went in again, and we had to run out of the combat door to get to safe cover, and we were taking 130 millimeter rocket fire from the North Vietnamese. And I got, I fell and banged my knees open and had a hard time, but the tension of living in Khesanh for three days, I want to tell you, was something I'll never forget.

MC DONALD: Well, your criticism of Braestrip that he didn't take that enough into account?

FROMSON: That's right. You see, because there's a, the print guys, a lot of them, I'm not knocking the print guys, they got the story, got out, and that was the end of it. A lot of us in

television, of course, the difficulty of getting three people in there at one time, we got there and we stayed for four or five days.

And the tension of living there with the Marines, who were damned scared of the situation too, were hunkered down in their bunkers, and didn't want to come outside.

ASHMORE: If I understood Braestrip's summary argument about the whole of the Tet offensive coverage, he contended that although frequently the media had been accused of being pro-U.S. in its coverage, in this case, they were pro, if not intentionally, the effect was to say that Tet was a victory for the North Vietnamese and the Cong, when in fact it was a defeat for them. That I think is a summary of his argument.

FROMSON: I think, I understand what he is saying, and I see where he's coming from. I just suggest that his analysis of Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, the headquarters of the American military establishment, and the government of South Vietnam, when a group of people can come charging into the capital and hit the American Embassy without being challenged, and do what they did in the center of the city, was a defeat, a shattering propaganda and

psychological defeat for the United States. I don't think there is any way you can argue with that. What the ultimate effects were is another thing. But in terms of how we reported it at the time it happened, I think like all daily journalism we really, I don't think we can really be faulted for that. And also you have to remember that a lot of the military people were saying the same thing.

ASHMORE: Yeah.

MC DONALD: I think Mr. Lewy is first, and then Rosenau, and then Bernstein. Are you on this thing, or are you --

LEWY: Well, I'd like to come back to Cam Nay, if I may. Is that in order?

MC DONALD: Did somebody want to wind up on this, and then we'll come back, change the subject.

ROSENAU: Well, I just, I get sleepy late in the afternoon, which is no comment on this presentation, and I, it so happens I don't watch television. And I just don't know what point you guys are making, or what several points, about the role of television in the war.

MC DONALD: Do you want to--

ROSENAU: I'm terribly challenging, and I don't mean it that way.

What do I do with this pattern that you've put together? Do I --

LICHTY: Well, let me try and explain one place I am coming from in this, and that's this. I don't know if you asked the question in your survey, the extent to which they, the leaders you interviewed, thought that television had been responsible for the defeat in Vietnam. The fact is that an enormous percentage of the military believe that. That has become part of the common, the commonplaces about Vietnam.

ROSENAU: Are you saying that's true?

LICHTY: No. Let me finish. I want to finish the point. I am saying from a social science point of view, we have too small a, we don't have enough samples. What we are trying to do with it is deal with a bunch of different variables here. It is argued that in Korea there was censorship. In Vietnam there wasn't censorship. In Korea there was only limited television. In Vietnam there was television. We see a series of opinion and attitude changes. Now, I would argue that the important, the significant variable was the amount of time. If you look at public opinion about Korea, and public opinion



about Vietnam, they are virtually the same. I think what we are in danger of is focusing on such a limited number of variables, using Vietnam as a case study, and jumping to all kinds of conclusions. It is very easy to generalize, and I am only arguing that we make a mistake in generalizing too quickly and too simply.

ROSENAU: Well, but I would have thought, maybe it's methodological technical point, that that Cam Nay incident, instead of finding out what Lyndon Johnson thought of it, or what the problems were from the point of view of the cameraman on the spot, that some kind, the relative data would be how widely was it seen, are there letters that it produced, what do we know about its impact?

LICHTY: I don't think we can answer that question. I can answer it in this sense. I don't think it had any particular impact until later. It was redefined and refocused as a symbol. At the time there was an enormous amount of other communications. If one reads the newspapers for that week, or looks at all of television for that week, it is not very significant at all. It became significant for the television industry. It became significant for the military. It was of no significance in the general scheme of public opinion

and attitudes about the war, in my judgment.

ROSENAU: And then you go back and you look at a lot of tape and you pick that out to play here, as illustrative of the problems it caused for the military, is that it?

LICHTY: No, I would use it as illustrative now that in reassessing, redefining the role of the media in the war, that is frequently cited as an evidence of how television presented the antiwar picture.

MC DONALD: Mr. Bernstein.

BERNSTEIN: Yeah. I have been listening, too, and I have been trying to figure out what the conclusions are. And let me offer what I think are four conclusions, and you tell me whether I have understood correctly or not. The first is that the policy generally was one of restraint and caution, and even not showing on TV atrocities, generally of either side, perhaps more often of the Viet Cong side, for two reasons, one being that fewer were available and the others being that they may have even been more atrocious. Secondly, there were in fact few pictures that had any political message, few pictures of the war that had any political message.

The things, this pattern changes, however, about the time of Tet, or is changed by Tet, and by the perception of Tet at the time.

And you haven't talked about what happened afterward, but we are assumed to know it. The fourth con, there are five propositions.

The fourth conclusion I would draw is that what is remarkable about this, if you are correct in your assessment of the first three, is a policy of restraint, and the reasons for it. And you suggested through anecdotal evidence, some of the reasons for it, that is, namely two. One, that those in the field as well as those elsewhere, and especially in corporate room in New York and Washington believed in the war. And secondly, even when reporters began having first doubts about efficacy, this, it seems to me, is like the early Halberstam, that it was a quagmire and there were better ways of winning, that when there are doubts about efficacy, those doubts cannot be communicated because of other commitments in New York and Washington, the kind of restraints that often leads subordinates not to push too fiercely upon the levers of power.

Fifthly, and this, it seems to me, is a proposition which is lurking in the first four, is that had Americans not been so

innocent, so addicted to belief systems, but had rather viewed this as simply a war for security, resources, more territory, et cetera, and not for freedom, that even the trickle of evidence that you have referred to might not have had any impact. That is, it's because the population came to this with a belief in its rectitude, uniqueness, and its innocence, that these even occasional spasms of evidence may, and all you have been willing to acknowledge so far is it may, so I am casting it in the subjunctive, may have had a significant impact.

LICHTY: I would, I think I would go along with the presentation. What I would regard more or less as the evidence. My conclusion on that would be that I would accept a no hypothesis, that television didn't do anything, rather than argue that I could prove that it didn't. But I would suggest that all that adds up to a series of propositions which reject the idea that television had enormous impact on attitude and public opinion. Up to Tet. And it's important, if you like, I'll give you my two-minute summary on that. But up to the point of Tet, I think that is especially true, and to a degree after Tet, with respect to specific situations. I would

make, I would do two, I would break the evidence you offered in two categories. One was innocence. I think it is extremely important to understand that the media, like the public, generally was innocent. There was no real discussion. I agree very strongly with the preface of your book, where you argue that there was in fact no real discussion about what had, what was the price that had to be paid, what were the implications of this policy, what, there was no real prediction of where this in fact might lead. Secondly, there was not only innocence, but there was conscious selectivity leaning over to present the general American view that this was a good idea, that it would work, that we could win, and all of those things. I think especially if we go back prior to 1964, the innocence is extremely interesting. For example, a C.B.S. series of programs, "Twentieth Century," which I would lump together, for many years presented a very, very appealing picture of the defense establishment, history of the, of air power, a history of World War II, a program about Pop Buell, an Indiana man from Laos, who is helping out the people there, without ever pointing out that in fact Pop Buell was a C.I.A. operative the entire time.

FROMSON: We didn't know. We suspected, but we didn't know. We couldn't prove it.

LICHTY: So there's a series of innocences, if you will.

MC DONALD: I think Mr. Downs has an irrepressible intervention, and then Mr. Lewy comes in.

DOWNS: I was listening to this. One of the things I want to say is that the media, like the military and the political establishment, was strongly in favor about Vietnam, but where it's different for the media is this, as I see it, is that up to Vietnam, we were not prepared for the investigative type things that TV can do. And so when you played this tape awhile ago, what had happened was, the American public, and myself included, we weren't prepared for this, so when you started showing us facts and figures and talking, we, and I should say we, your executives, they were also distrustful of it, and they also were not able to cope with the political pressure brought against them to stifle all of this. So as I see something positive coming out of this, it is that because of Vietnam and what has occurred since then through "Sixty Minutes," "Twenty-Twenty," is that actually America is now, you have prepared us for

this investigative thing. Now we trust you, so to speak, and now when you show us a scene in Angola, or South America, or on the Panama Canal, the American public is more ready to believe it, and the politicians can't just squelch you. So in a positive way, I think that's very good, because now the media is prepared, and your reporting has more validity.

Now, what I would like to say as a future trend toward this, is just something that I have been thinking about on the subject, is that we are looking at, future military actions. will now have to take into account the media. The media will never stand for censorship, and I don't think the American public will, either.

So any military planning in the future will have to take into account media coverage, and what I feel this leads to, then, and I hope that this doesn't sound too far-fetched, is the idea of newsmen forming actually a world network, and that newsmen from each country will have an international passport, so to speak, so that in the future everything will be covered by all the media from all different types of countries. And therefore the people within those countries then may have to be more objective in their decision-

making. I don't know if that's too far-fetched or not, but that's as I see the trend of communications in this world.

FROMSON: What frightens me about that, frankly, is I think that there, I think that journalists generally should not develop too, their head shouldn't get too big over Vietnam. I think there were a lot of shortcomings in the coverage there. And one shouldn't assume we are going to be journalistic policemen in the world in the sense of making, we do make, tend to make too many judgments, I think, about political situations we don't really know enough about.

DOWNS: Right. You know, I could really get into about the things I saw wrong with the political early reporting in Nam, from a personal standpoint. I don't want to get into that because it doesn't solve anything. When I say what I just said I am also thinking of course of all the variables, and which we don't have time to go into. But there would be a watchdog committee, there would be a worldwide associations with the sanctions that these people would be judged against, and they would be more than newsmen. But, because they had to operate under really strict code of moral



rules. But that is just of course, interpretation.

MC DONALD: Mr. Lewy?

LEWY: In a problem area where generalization admittedly is hazardous, I would venture the following generalization, and I think I can back it up. And that is that the TV medium for various structural and other reasons cannot really convey the big picture of something like Vietnam. And I think Cam Nay is a very good case in point, and so is operation starlight, which is the second operation that, two weeks later, that you referred to. It so happens that I consider these two instances also of great importance, and indeed I think they were milestones in more ways than one, not only with regard to media coverage, but with regard to the development of the ground war. So I have made, I invested considerable time and effort in trying to reconstruct what happened in these two instances, the Cam Nay episode and operation starlight. I interviewed some of the participants, I was able to get access to the correspondence between D.O.D. and C.B.S. I corresponded with Safer, with other correspondents, and I had access to the classified after-action reports of these operations, which it should be stressed were not

meant for public consumption, and in fact some of them were drawn up before the whole thing blew up. Now, in what way does Cam Nay 4 back up what I said? It's important with regard to Cam Nay, not only to pay attention to what Morley Safer said, and what he showed, and therefore what the audience heard and saw, but also what he did not say and what he did not show. And I am not suggesting that he didn't say these things or didn't show them, because he is a Commie. I think neither Mr. Sylvester nor President Johnson accumulate glory in this particular episode, that's rather clear. But for various reasons, which are very difficult to analyze, he did not or was not able to say and show all that was involved, specifically three things. And these three items taken together drastically, it seems to me, change the matter, and therefore in this sense it is correct to say that the coverage of Morley Safer distorted badly what was going on here. What he did not say, or what he did not show, on July 12, roughly two and a half weeks before the operation in Cam Nay 4, on August 3, another Marine company had made a sweep through that same complex of hamlets, three Marines had been killed and four wounded in an action in which heavy fire had been encountered

from both men and women. It was as a result of this operation in this same locale that the second operation was launched, with instructions to destroy the enemy and his fortifications in that particular complex. That is item number one.

Number two, Morley Safer neither mentioned nor showed the existence of trenches, fighting positions, tunnels, hedgerows, booby traps, and so forth, which were plentiful in Cam Nay 4.

And lastly, while we hear shots on the tape, and on the soundtrack, Morley Safer never indicated that there was extensive sniper and automatic weapon fire coming from the other side. Now it seems to me if you put all this together, then what the Marines did looks just a little bit different, because the only way to destroy the fighting positions and the trenches, which were around the houses, was in effect to destroy the houses as well, and that's exactly what the Marines did. So what looked to the public as senseless and wanton destruction of ancestral homes, in effect was a military operation which achieved its purpose.

Now, Morley Safer, in my view, distorted and did not adequately portray what happened at Cam Nay 4, and I think he was

equally off with regard to operation starlight, which you praised.

LICHTY: I beg your pardon, I praised?

LEWY: Well, you thought this was much more balanced reporting, did you not say?

LICHTY: I don't think that at all.

LEWY: Didn't you say that starlight indicated that he had no ideological bias, he was a fair reporter, and so forth?

LICHTY: I said that I think if one looks at everything Safer did in Vietnam for two years, they would come to that conclusion. I agree with you that just as much distortion in the second as the first.

LEWY: O.K. Well, let me just amplify just a little. I devote two and a half pages to this operation, and I come out being extremely critical of the Marines. To me this does not look like a successful operation. I am convinced that more civilians were killed than Viet Cong, I quote the after-action report of one of the commanding officers of one of the Marine battalions, who said, and this is clearly an understatement, he wrote "More concern must

be given to the safety of villages. Instances were noted where villages were severely damaged or destroyed by napalm or naval gunfire, wherein the military necessity of doing so was dubious."

Now, Morley Safer could not capture that, and it seems to me this is another example where the TV medium, by virtue of the way it has to operate in a situation of this sort, really cannot get the big picture. And there's no need to involve or to allege ideological bias, although in many instances I think ideological bias may also have been involved, not necessarily here with Morley Safer.

LICHTY: Let me just deal with the nature of your evidence.

LEWY: O.K.

LICHTY: Because I too have read the record. First, it is true that on the twelfth of July they had been in that general area, and that there was fighting. It is, I think also should be pointed out that this was in three miles of the end of the Da Nang air base. And militarily and strategically it is impossible to have such a situation. I don't find in all of the record, and if you have found it, I'd like to see it, I find no record that in fact under the houses that were burned down there were concrete bunkers, as is alleged.

LEWY: I didn't speak of concrete bunkers, I said bunkers--

LICHTY: Well, that's what the record speaks of, that's the, that's

what specifically what Lewis Walt and that's specifically what--  
??

LEWY: He may have said it, but the record doesn't say it.

LICKTY: The communications, the day summary communications to the commandant of the Marine Corps, says there were, quote, "concrete pillboxes," unquote, there. I have seen no evidence whatsoever to support that.

LEWI: That is correct. This must have been rhetorical excess on the part of General --

LICHTY: I am--

LEWY: --because the record itself doesn't speak of concrete bunkers--

LICHTY: I am inclined to agree--

LEWY: It speaks of bunkers.

LICHTY: Now, the only point that you didn't make, that was argued by the Marines at the time, was that the villagers had been forewarned. The after-report by the Marine Corps argued in the letters, the entire series of letters from Sylvester to Friendly, argued that there had been warnings by bullhorn or loudspeaker from the helicopters

for as long as two hours before that. But in fact the after-operations report by the lieutenant who was on the specific operations with Safer, said that he recommended in the future that there be previous warnings. So I conclude that there was no warning of the civilians.

LEWY: I agree, and I think you are in error in thinking that this was part of the actual record. This again may have been put forth in --

LICHTY: It depends what you mean by the record. The day summary of important items going to the commandant of the Marine Corps makes that. The other thing that is not mentioned in the Marine defense, but is in fact in that day summary, is the conclusion on the part of the officers who led the entire operations, that that was the way the South Vietnamese wanted it, that the fact was that the burning of the villages, and taking, cleaning out that particular territory, was in fact doing what the South Vietnamese leaders wanted, rather than what we thought was--

LEWY: I think again, I am not sure recollection is accurate, because Morley Safer brought that up in an article many years later.

LICHTY: My recollection is not particularly important in this. The fact is that that is, I'll be happy to xerox it and send it to you.

That is specifically in the after-operations report.

LEWY: I have it, I am sorry, but we won't be able to resolve that here. But I have copies of these reports as well, and my recollection says--

LICHTY: If I could say one--

BERNSTEIN: If you could indicate for our benefit, or for my benefit, why one resolution of this factual matter --

LICHTY: The bottom line is was or was not this typical? That is the question. The question, was or was not what television was showing typical? It seems to me that that's the question that has to be answered. The question really, as you say, television was incapable of covering the big picture.

FROMSON: I don't think anybody is arguing with that. Television is an episodic medium.

LICHTY: And everybody has said, we are capturing a slice of what happens. If Cam Nay is an episode, it is up to you to read a newspaper or whatever else you have to get a complete picture of what's going on. I think for television to assume it was giving you a whole story, I don't think anybody's ever made that--



LEWY: Well, I didn't mean that as a reproach. I simply stated it as a generalization which I think it is safe to make and which can be supported.

MC DONALD: Two people, Cynthia and Rothman--

FREY: Yes, I just think it's important to continue with that, because the assumption has been made that television has had an impact, particularly had an impact on forming public opinion, and charges have been leveled that television has been biased in one way or another, and that had x or y been done, the television coverage would have been more thorough, and we would have gotten the truth. There is a statement in Caputo's book that the facts are somewhat different from the truth, and I think that's well taken in the case of television reporting, and I think your point is also accurate, if in fact public opinion has been formed by television, and if people feel that they have not been getting the full picture, and that the problem is with the medium, rather than people's unwillingness to look at a variety of sources. Then we are devoting more time than is necessary to criticizing the medium.

LEWY: Well, I am not prepared to go along with that conclusion, if it is indeed your position that the medium had no important impact on public opinion. I think it did. I think it is very difficult to measure, very difficult. I am reasonably convinced, for example, that the coverage of Tet, which has been examined in some detail, did indeed have a rather clear impact on public opinion. The public opinion figures--

FROMSON: I would say--

LEWY: --over a spread of several weeks bear this out.

LICHTY: I am sorry, they don't. They just don't. I think what is important is, there is two, important distinction here. One is what is public opinion and attitudes as measured. O.K. Second, what are the perceptions of that public opinion? What is important in the case of the television reporting of Tet, it seems to me, is what was Washington's perception of what was happening to public opinion, and what specifically was Lyndon Johnson's perception? And you have to combine that with the fact of the New Hampshire campaign and election at that particular time, which is far too complicated to do here, but it was Lyndon, I agree with you that quote, "public

opinion," unquote, had tremendous impact at the time of Tet. But in fact if you look at that, the specific questions that were asked over a series of time, that are usually used to measure that, they don't change particularly. What changes is, Johnson's, and the Senate's, particularly. In order to understand public opinion in Tet, you've got to go back to the fall of 1967, an article that Don Oberdorfer wrote in The New York Times, called "The Wobble on the War," or "The Wobble on the Hill on the War." And I think I would have a different interpretation of the television coverage on Tet, and that was essentially Tet, and was a facilitating item. What happened was, there were an awful lot of people, particularly in the Senate, were who/prepared to change their opinion about the war, who were prepared to get out, who wanted rationalization. And they found it in the Tet offensive.

FROMSON: Two things happened after Tet, I think. If you assume, or you accept the notion that Walter Cronkite is one of the most respected men in America, it was immediately after the Tet offensive that he went on camera and said, this, we've got to have a settlement of the war.

LICHTY: We are mired and stalemated.

FROMSON: We are mired and stalemated. I think that turned a hell of a lot of people around. But that, the second thing that happened was Johnson calling the council of elders together in Washington and saying, "what are we going to do?"

LICHTY: But you also need to go back to McNamara's memo, in October of 1967, when he in fact had come to that conclusion. It seems to me that that is important. Remember McNamara had come to that conclusion and was on his way out at that time. Now, just one other point --oh, I'm sorry--

MC DONALD : Mr. Rothman, and Mr.--

ROTHMAN: I am not prepared to argue this point. Just a personal observation, very brief, about what the effect was on the polls. It is my memory from the polls that I read that in fact there was an impact after Tet. But it's not really important, because the question is how they perceived it in Washington. And people in Washington get a lot of their perceptions of the public from The New York Times and television--

LICHTY: That is correct, The New York Times, the Washington Post,

the three television networks, are the world's largest house organs. They tell Washington about Washington. And that's the important concept, I think.

ROTHMAN: But the thing that interests me, and it's not a question of bias, really, the thing which interests me, and maybe I am, this is for a historical purpose, really, I have read a lot of World War II. I haven't read on the Korean war, but I have read a lot on World War II. There are a lot of, we have talked about this, there are a lot of incidents in World War II, it was not as clean a war as I was brought up to believe, and I follow the newspapers pretty closely. And I was brought up to believe this, because a lot of things weren't reported, like, for example, Eric Severeid in Not So Wild a Dream reports a shelling Italian villages with the civilians right there, you know, and not really being concerned about it. I am not saying we were worse than others, because we weren't, but we did it to save American lives. Daniel Lerone, in the liberation of France, talks about how he came in during the daylight and bombed a French city when people were returning from work, and killed large numbers of people. It was never reported. Neither were, let me finish, I

haven't gotten to the question yet. Neither were our losses as, I am trying to indicate to you is this. I think, I think that if this incident, for example, the one that you are talking about, I won't dispute the fact that most of the war reporting that was described in the early years of the war was in fact, did not include these things, the kind Safer commented. I am not even concerned with whether he was right or wrong. Let's say the situation was a little ambiguous, it seems to me to be. I think if this had been during World War II, even with television there, Safer would have done what Severeid did. He would have said, and Severeid says in his book, I saw these things, I wasn't going to report them. I just decided I wasn't going to report them. And Safer's words there, you know, are, I am wondering what happened, you see, because there is a difference. And I am just, have a feeling that if this was in World War II, it wouldn't, even this, I mean, it's not question of bias, it's a question of a shift in attitude, it seems to me. Maybe, maybe not. You see the point I am getting at? I just can't believe another war, a lot of things happened during World War II in the Pacific and elsewhere which journalists simply did not report.

An incident like this would not, I don't think, have been reported.

So something had changed, it seems to me, even if--

FROMSON: --war for survival--

ROTHMAN: I don't know, I agree that--

ROSENAU: --sure that the media people really the furthest out--

MC DONALD: What's that?

ROSENAU: --would suggest the change. I just said that when we examined our data by occupation, the, what we called the media category, those people were the largest proportion, among those was the largest proportion of critics. The critics among those were the largest proportion of any other occupation--

ROTHMAN: --from the beginning--

ROSENAU: Yeah.

LICHTY: But the question of course is, what is the cause and what is the effect? I mean, one can examine the backgrounds of the reporters, and the typical, the ascribed cause has always been, geography, type of education, and things like that. The ascription to, for example, experience, which I was arguing with Ole a moment ago is one that has never been examined in detail.

ROSENAU: That's a very good point, and I have to, a confession to make. Ole and I spent I don't know how many phone calls saying to each other before we mailed the questionnaire, is there any question that six months from now we are going to wish we had asked that we didn't ask? Let's get it in before we send it out. And we went back at each other, and back and forth, and it was all over, opened up the results, and we never asked, have you ever been in Vietnam?

MC DONALD: Mr. Downs?

LICHTY: Could I just try and answer that very quickly? I understand the question. I agree. I think we could cite many, many other examples from World War II of material that was repressed. I think that the evidence is that more material was repressed early in Vietnam and less later, and the turning point was Safer. I have no quarrel with that. But to go beyond that, to say that this might have happened or that might have happened if there had been censorship, if it hadn't been television, if it hadn't been in color, is speculation. And I'd like to respond to one thing that Guenther said yesterday, which is an extremely interesting point, and I wish I had a very good answer, but the matter that, he brought up the



matter not only of nightly coverage, but of color. A whole series of researches have shown that people do in fact get different depths and types of information from color as opposed to black and white photography, whether it's done with motion pictures, or television, and the evidence is that people have a more emotional reaction to color. People have a more rational, now it doesn't matter how you measure it, whether you measure it by amount of information retained, there has been a series of studies that demonstrate that. The effect of that are fascinating, but unfortunately unmeasurable now.

LEWY: --one point because the question of Gallup polls has come up--

LICHTY: If one, incidentally, has watched the percentage of color television sets in the United States, there is a precise inverse relationship, it is beautiful, to attitudes to the war during the same time period. It is one of those lovely things like correlating Presbyterian churches with drunkenness in the same cities. It worked beautifully.

LEWY: Larry, according to my data, the Gallup poll indicates that in

early February and the middle of March, 1968, nearly one person in five had switched from the hawk to the dove position. That's what I was referring to earlier.

MC DONALD: Mr. Downs and then Mr.--

DOWNS: According to my data, which was on the ground in Nam, whenever we, we had been on an operation for a long period of time, and then our big complaint, the soldiers, what we'd complain about was that we never saw any news photographers when we were in a lot of heavy action and all the events that led up to it. The only time we saw a news photographer is when they would show up when they got an inkling from somebody in the officer corps, the staff, that there was going to be something going on, and they would come out and they would film a scene and go back with it, and we always felt that that scene was taken out of context, because they would show us, we always, we were combat troops, and so maybe we were a little violent in some of our reactions. But they didn't film what had taken place, or they didn't, they did not explain what happened. I laid in a hospital bed for five months and watched the Tet offensive. I got hit right before the Tet offensive. So I spent a lot of time lying in a hospital bed watching the news. And every night, every night

I watched the body counts. And those were nothing but little figures of men behind Walter Cronkite and numbers next to them. So many South Vietnamese were killed, and so many Americans were killed, wounded. And I saw that every night. And then in February I got a letter from the parents of a good friend of mine who lived in Hacienda Heights down in L.A. He had been killed north of Saigon and I always saw one of those little figures behind Walter after that with Bob's name up there. And I always thought to myself, they are showing the war, and they are showing the soldiers there, and they would show Americans firing the M-16 and then all of a sudden they would flash to a scene of a bunch of refugees. And I knew better, but still in my mind I got the impression that for some reason, the Americans were doing, soldiers, were doing something wrong, because they would show a scene of American soldiers doing something, come in usually in a chopper, everybody bailing out, the cameraman was already on the ground for that kind of a shot. You saw them going to a tree line, firing, and then there would be a blip on the film or something and it would change to a scene of civilians, or hooches burned, or bodies laying on the ground, and it

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was implied that somehow or another those American soldiers had killed civilians, had killed these people right here, or they burnt that hooch for no particular reason. And I got that impression from watching TV. Now, whether they were trying to put it across or not, that's the impression I got. And if I got that impression, then it explained why a lot of the vehemence that was directed toward the war, or against the soldiers, was that they would, people would see this on TV, and they would associate the soldier with violence, which they were not able to separate from them when the soldier was back here in the States, as I was talking about last night. So I felt that TV was very unfair in that respect. It didn't, they never spent a little bit of time explaining about this American soldier. He'd been in the jungle for three weeks, back where people were killing each other. You didn't take prisoners back there. I mean, that's a pure, simple fact. You want facts. In all those years of fighting, how many GI prisoners were finally turned back? Thirty?

FROMSON: I think a lot of what you said is understandable, and I think we, it was a subject of constant discussion in Vietnam among the correspondents.

DOWNS: Yeah, but I want to lead up to something here, O.K.? O.K. So a while ago I mentioned about the military hadn't been planned for media coverage. If the newspeople today aren't planning for the future, and how you are going to cover future wars, then how are you going to be able to, what are you going to do when a war starts to break out someplace? How are you going to be allowed to cover it? Are you going to have censorship close down on you? Do you even discuss it, or do you just react from crisis to crisis in the world? This is my question to you. How are you going to handle that?

FROMSON: I don't know, because there was a counter-censorship as a matter of fact. We were at the mercy of the military to get where we had to get to in the war. You could only go in an Army helicopter. You could only go in Army transportation. You only knew where the battle was based on Army communiques, military communiques. Therefore when we came in, as you complain, and justifiably, I understand that, if we came in and got one scene of a thing that was really an aftermath of what had taken place, it was merely because we didn't know about it before that.

DOWNS: Did you ever ask the military guys if you could stay and--

FROMSON: Oh, we did--

LICHTY: I would like to say this, Fred, I think your criticism is a very good one. I think it's one that television has to answer to. And that is that if you look at the specific subject matter you mentioned, about a profile of the grunts out in the field, what they did, how it worked, the fact is, that has come out in the literature afterward, it was not done by television. Interestingly, it was done by Canadian and French television, Anderson Platoon, Hill 943, The Mills of the Gods, were all foreign documentaries, carried eventually on American television, and then there was a fourth, Face of War, done by Gene Jones, but that never got on the networks. It was syndicated, and it was not particularly bought. It was not until 1970, when C.B.S. finally allowed Laurence and Keith, on their own, to do Charlie Company, that that thing was ever done. And I think that is a very perceptive and absolutely correct criticism of American television.

DOWNS: Let me just go one step further. One more thing I've got to say--

LICHTY: Let me go one step further--

DOWNS: I've got to say--

LICHTY: And that--

MC DONALD: --by five-thirty--

LICHTY: -go ahead--

MC DONALD: --g- ahead--

DOWNS: O.K. And that is, I watched something called The Mutiny of Charlie Company, I think that's what it's called--

LICHTY: It's just called Charlie Company, you put in the mutiny.

DOWNS: O.K. The commentator called it a mutiny, on the--

LICHTY: Was it a scene, in fact, when they refused to go down the road. But you need to understand, I think, that John Laurence asked the military, the military picked the unit, the specific area, and the company. They didn't do that.

DOWNS: But who made the comment about the mutiny? The guy who was doing the commentary, right?

LICHTY: No, in the film it's the, the men refused to go down the road.

DOWNS: You see, this is my whole contention. This I think focuses in on the problem. I watched that program. I watched the whole thing.

I never figured out where the mutiny was. And this explains the difference between the Vietnam vet, the veterans who were fighting that I was familiar with. That was a combat unit. And what had happened was, a new commander came in, he wanted to go, as exec, he wanted to go down the road, and all the guys said, no way. I saw that, wait a minute, let me finish. The thing was, that's the way operated, that's the way all of us operated. If we didn't like something, we argued with each other about it, because we were right there. And the company commander was new, and he had a camera and all that, so I suppose he showed a lot, he didn't know what to do. But you'll find out that ultimately the guys did go down the road. But the problem was that the guys--

BERNSTEIN: --most units mutinied much of the time--

DOWNS: The guys didn't want to go down the road, and I saw the road on the screen, and I say to myself, you know, I wouldn't go down the road, either. But the problem was that maybe people didn't understand that particular show, they got a bad image of the soldier. And they were completely wrong, because there wasn't any mutiny. They were just arguing back and forth about they didn't want to go down that road, because it was a good ambush spot and they'd get killed. Now,



these guys were eighteen, nineteen-year-old kids, but they were experienced combat troops, and the company commander/<sup>who</sup> had ordered them down, was still green. They were just educating him to combat.

LICHTY: Exactly.

DOWNS: That wasn't mutiny.

LICHTY: And it was fascinating that we got to see it, because that in fact is what happened a lot.

DOWNS: But it spread across the nation that the American soldiers were mutinying, and they weren't.

ROTHMAN: You guys are not facing up to what he's saying. I'm sorry. There are two things you haven't faced up to.

LICHTY: I don't agree with that at all. I think we are facing up to it absolutely. I said something to you earlier, we were talking about, John Van <sup>??</sup> said, just before he was killed, the United States was not in Vietnam for ten years, we were in Vietnam for one year ten different times. And that's an extremely important point to understand, that for any G.I., we are trying to talk of the big picture, and I think you were sort of saying this earlier, I don't think there is a big picture. I think that we have a lot of little

pictures in Vietnam, and they don't add up, because it was very typical for a grunt to go to Vietnam and be in one area, and never see another part of Vietnam. It was very typical for them to have a very limited picture, regardless. O.K. The perceptions of the war on the part of a Marine who spent six months at Con Tien were very different than the perception of the war held by General Westmoreland.

MC DONALD: I think we have time for just two more people, Meshad and Mr. Piediscalzi, and then we really have to break it off.

PIEDISCALZI: --of the impact of Vietnam on American life. And in this discussion we haven't talked about that at all. Did Vietnam have any impact on the TV industry, and from where you sit, has it had any impact on American life?

MC DONALD: That's sort of a question that Mr. Downs had earlier, and I was wondering what your response would be, Mr. Fromson, when you expressed the hope that TV would cover a war, if there's going to be another war, or skirmish, do the networks really learn anything?

FROMSON: I think just when there were technological improvements in how we cover an event. I am not sure that if another Vietnam came

along tomorrow--

MC DONALD: And if the White House put pressure on you, or the Defense Department--

FROMSON: Yeah, and I don't want to overemphasize that pressure.

I think it was kind of a subliminal thing, you know. I am not sure that the coverage would be that different, frankly.

MC DONALD: Mr. Meshad, and then Murray Fromson had a footnote he wanted to--

PIEDISCALZI: What about TV in general? Did it have any impact upon your industry, the way you report other things?

FROMSON: I don't know. I really don't know. I don't know that it had an impact. I am now out of it. I left it a year ago. And I watch television, now I watch the coverage from Iran, and to me, I look at it, and I think it's a distortion of what's going on.

And I say, my God, that's not the way it is, you know, and we don't understand the religious, cultural in Iran--

MC DONALD: --Meshad--

MESHAD: To get back to the impact, I am looking at it from a different viewpoint. When Fred was laying in bed, in 1968, and

watching the Tet offensive, I was a graduate student, right in the middle of graduate school, watching the Tet offensive. And Fred had something to relate to, most definitely. You know, he was alive but you know trying to become a whole person again. I was a whole person becoming fragmented, mentally, because I was a reserve officer waiting to go in. I didn't know if I was going to go in as an infantry officer, or whether I was going to get changed over to a medical officer. And that impact, getting back to the impact, because I appreciate, you know, bringing it back, and I watched the news very closely, because I was a reserve officer for four and a half years, you know, going through graduate school and trying to get through, waiting for Johnson to end the war, whatever. And I can never forget the impact on myself, and I can imagine for the high-school kids and for the people trying to stay in college, of watching what was shot every night, regardless of whether it was fragmented or segmented, or whatever. But I remember the horror and the confusion, and that's what I want to leave the whole conference with, is you know, that was the only thing we could go by. And visual is the best thing you can go by, no matter how piecemeal it

was. But it was still that fright and that fear and watching the whole country change. Because what we're talking about, from the early sixties, to Tet, and down, we were studying. We were watching the hawks and the doves, we were watching our own peers go back and forth. Yet for those that Nam was coming up for, and not Fred's group, but my group, it was very painful because it created a lot of psychological question, a lot of psychological stress, internal stress, making that decision, now do I go? Because all of a sudden, it's not popular. It's sixty-eight, sixty-nine, and seventy, and I've got orders for you to go to Nam, go to jail, or go to Canada. And all three of them at one time looked equal. And that impact and, I was talking about it with Krieger and Lewis and a few other people at lunch, affected everybody. It affected me more directly, because I had to eventually face it. But for all the Americans, in, soldiers, Vietnam-era veterans that didn't <sup>???</sup>go, that I deal with on a day to day basis for the last eight years, have still a lot of residual effects from that sort of situation that they were placed in. And I'm not directing this against anybody, I am just trying to once again tie up this awareness of that, you know,

being able to watch, sort of like your holocaust, or a possible holocaust for yourself, possible Catch 22. Because for me that's what it was. It was a Catch 22 to the day I landed in Cam Ranh Bay. And the, you know, sixty-four and sixty-five, it was no such thing.

FROMSON: Well, you asked about the impact. I can only say to you that when I left Vietnam at the end of sixty-eight to come home, I asked to get out for a while, ended up in the middle of all the antiwar stuff in the Midwest and then went to Moscow and the next thing I know, in seventy-four I'm back in Asia. And I was there for the collapse of Cambodia and Vietnam. Was there an impact on the industry? I was shocked to find that although Americans had really in effect been out of the war since seventy-two, withdrawal, seventy-two? Seventy-two?

LICHTY: Seventy-three--

FROMSON: Seventy-three, we had been out for a couple of years, that when I went to Cambodia, I was getting the same kind of telegrams from New York that I was getting in the sixties. Why aren't you out there on the road with, getting into the action? The episodic action of

Cambodia, and fighting Cambodians, you know. So did we learn anything in terms of sophistication about covering a war, presenting a war to people on television? I don't really think so. In terms of personal impact, I think that an awful lot of, many of us who were there, and I think it's left a permanent effect on us, as individuals. Because there was a great frustration in not being able to really capture the real essence of the war. I don't think there was ever really an, in human, personal terms, ever, really translated to film in a consistent way.

ROSENAU: --that's a comment I would assume would apply to the nightly, daily coverage.

FROMSON: Right.

ROSENAU: What about the earlier comment about investigative reporting? Would one find today on television an hour-long inquiry that reflects some growth and education?

FROMSON: People wouldn't watch it.

LICHTY: I think that, I couldn't really, you know, this is a stupid cop-out. I really couldn't answer that quickly, but I'll try. I think there are two bits and pieces of evidence. One was on the

night that it all ended, the twenty-ninth of April, 1975. In his summary, Cronkite, and to the degree he really does reflect American public opinion, and I think he does reflect rather than create American public opinion, said that many of us will not be so easy to accept what we are told in the future. And I think that's true. I would jump forward to one other thing, and that was when the Angola thing--

BERNSTEIN: Excuse me, something had intervened, called Watergate.

LICHTY: Let me finish, let me finish. If you jump forward to the Angola thing, when Angola came up, C.B.S. did a series of weekly, a whole week of reports, and said, we got suckered on Vietnam, and we were bozos, and we are not going to do that with Angola. So we're going to look at it carefully, And what they did was a virtual carbon copy of what they had done in Vietnam in sixty-four. They had five nights of here's the background, here's the history, here's what you need to know. But it was the same kind of treatment. I think that it, television is not capable of doing what you are asking it to do. It is important as a footnote, I think to understand that Safer thing came in the context of Santo Domingo. The word



credibility gap was first used to apply, not to Vietnam, but to Johnson's justification for sending the Marines simultaneously, incidentally, into Santo Domingo. That's to me an interesting and ironic footnote. Plus examine very carefully the Los Angeles Times for that period in Santo Domingo, particularly a series of articles by Reuben Salazar, who ironically was killed in war protests in Los Angeles a few years later. For the very first time, Salazar was interviewing Marines out there, who were saying, hey, why are we here? What's going on?

O.K., I am trying to speak specifically to your point about the change from World War II. I think the change occurred, but I think it probably occurred very rapidly in 1965, as the result of a whole bunch of things. And then, of course, the nail in the coffin, whatever silly cliché you want to make up was, was Watergate, the wheat deal, and a whole series of government lies.

MC DONALD: O.K. That sounds like a good, and lies, we'll end on lies. Walter Capps has passed me a note here asking these people if they would be willing to serve, maybe you have talked to them previously, on the panel, which meets at eleven, is the second