

Vietnam:

THE POWER OF PROTEST

Telling the truth.
Learning the lessons.

MAY 1-2
WASHINGTON DC

www.lessonsofvietnam.org

April 13, 2015

Dear Walter Teague,

WHO WILL TELL OUR STORY?

By tom hayden

Who will tell our story when we are gone? So much was never remembered, and now the time is rapidly passing.

We need to resist the military occupation of our minds. Long-discredited falsehoods are being resurrected again. As one example, the recent acclaimed film "Last Days of Vietnam" depicts the war as one of aggression from the North with a green dagger of invasion pointed to the South. That was the false claim of the State Department's "white paper" we debunked in 1965.

As other examples, the Pentagon's recent website trivializes the Pentagon Papers, and restores the Phoenix assassination program, shut down in 1971, as a misunderstood program that was succeeding. We were winning the war in the South, many claim today, when Congress and the peace movement pulled the plug.

The Official History becomes a hecatomb covering our truths. So this becomes our last campaign, our legacy to the next generation.

The warmakers could win on the battlefield of memory what they lost on the battlefields of war.

We must not let that happen. We must unite for the future to overcome our divisions of the past.

We need everyone in the peace movement to transcribe their stories so that an oral history of the peace movement can be preserved in a living archive. That's how the stories



of past social movements were recorded.

We need a new generation of historians to document the peace movement as a truly historic resistance which helped end a war, terminated the forced draft, toppled two American presidents, might have elected a president were it not for assassinations, and shook the country to its foundations until the madness finally was ended.

We need to protest the continuing exclusion of our viewpoints from the the think tanks of the powerful.

We need to widen the spectrum of legitimate opinion to include a genuine peace option. Having been wrong about past wars should not be a qualification for high political or editorial office. We need to ostracize all those who have never apologized.

Healing the wounds of war should mean a faithful commitment to removing the unexploded bombs and mines from the soil of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and preventing Agent Orange from dooming future generations to birth defects and disabilities.

The disaster that began in Vietnam still spirals on as a conflict between empire and democracy. The cycle of war continues its familiar path, with memory its casualty. The demonization of enemies. The fabricated pretexts. The secrecy in the name of security. The casualties covered up. The costs hidden off budget. The lights always at the end of tunnels.

We need to end this future and assert ourselves in history.

May 1-2 in Washington is the place to begin to tell our story. Click [here](#) for the agenda and to register for the conference.

A registration donation of at least \$25 assures reserved seating at the Saturday conference. General admission is a nominal \$5.

Saturday registration at the church requires a donation of at least \$30 for reserved seating.

There is no cost for the Friday night program or to participate in the walk to the Martin Luther King memorial.

Saturday's on site lunch and a special dinner of Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodian cuisine must be reserved on line and purchased no later than Wednesday, April 29.

Speakers, Entertainers, Moderators (revised 4/10/15)

- Jan Barry
- Elizabeth Becker
- Phyllis Bennis
- Jeff Blum
- Becky Bond
- Julian Bond
- Heather Booth
- Taylor Branch

Leslie Cagan
Alan Canfora
Rufus Cappadocia
Robert Cohen
Jo Comerford
John Conyers
David Cortright
Ron Dellums
Bernadine Dohrn
Phil Donahue
Rev. Ray East
Bill Ehrhart
Dan Ellsberg
Jodie Evans
Rev. Richard Fernandez
Frances Fitzgerald
Todd Gitlin
Juan Gonzalez
Amy Goodman
Judy Gumbo Albert
Susan Hammond
David Harris
David Hawk
Tom Hayden
Julian Hipkins
Elizabeth Holtzman
Doug Hostetter
Gerald Horne
Jonathan Hutto
Raed Jarrar
Channapha Khamvongsa
Michael Klare
Larry Korb
Carol Kurtz
Judith LeBlanc
Barbara Lee
Judy Lerner
James Loewen
Staughton Lynd
Myra Macpherson
Jorge Mariscal
John McAuliff
David McReynolds
Betty Medsger
Stephen Miles
David Morris
Jack Ballange Morris
Bob Muehlenkamp
Rosalio Munoz
Robert Musil
Holly Near
Martha Noonan
Don North
Nguyen Nguyet
Margaret Prescod
Sophie Quinn-Judge
Bonnie Raines
Marcus Raskin
George Regas
Brewster Rhoads
Luis Rodriguez
Randy Ross
Mark Rudd

Vivian Rothstein
Andre Sauvageot
Susan Schnall
Pat Schroeder
Frank Smith
Wayne Smith
Marge Tabankin
Arthur Waskow
Barbara Webster
Rick Weidman
Cora Weiss
Barbara Williams
Bethany Yarrow
Peter Yarrow
Marilyn Young
Ron Young

Additional reading

The 40th anniversary of the end of the war is prompting many reflective pieces. Among the most interesting:

"The Scene of the Crime: A reporter's journey to My Lai and the secrets of the past."
by Seymour M. Hersh

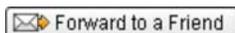
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/03/30/the-scene-of-the-crime>

"After the Fall of Saigon"
by Ngo Vinh Long

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/GAPP/Cairoreview/Pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=794>

"America's Memory of the Vietnam War in the Epoch of the Forever War"
by H. Bruce Franklin

<http://lareviewofbooks.org/essay/americas-memory-vietnam-war-epoch-forever-war>



Vietnam Peace Commemoration Committee

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