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p.19/20

The kingly view reappears today in subtle form: obey your expert. The notion that experts alone should decide on war pervades American life. On August 19, 1965, former President Eisenhower said: "When our country is in a position of crisis, there is only one thing a good American can do, and that is support the President." This is simply the doctrine of presidential infallibility in times of crisis. The Progressive of June 1965 quotes a similar position of Joseph Alsop's: "When the Government has committed itself to a delicate and dangerous course of action ... the official view of the truth needs to be given the benefit of the doubt." No doctrine could be more subversive to American life than this. The "official view" distorts the American Constitution in the name of patriotism.

p.21

The war in Vietnam is not a mere mistake; it is part of a mistaken policy. For over 10 years men like Joseph Alsop have told Americans that "the official view of the truth needs to be given the benefit of the doubt." Yet it was the official Richard Nixon who said in 1955 that "the militant march of Communism in Vietnam has been halted," who said in 1960 that "the civil war there was ended...today we have a bastion of freedom"; it was the official John Foster Dulles who said in 1955 that "Diem is a true patriot"; it was the official General Lionel McCarr who said in 1958, after the rigged elections and concentration camps, "Diem is a genius, a genius"; it was the official Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara who said in 1962, "Our military assistance to Vietnam is paying off," who said in 1963 that American troops could be withdrawn by the end of 1965; it was the official Henry Cabot Lodge who said in 1964, "I would not be surprised to see the Mekong Delta totally cleared of Communist guerrillas by the end of 1964" (These officials and many more are quoted by Samuel Shapiro, "Vietnam: The History of A Tragedy," Continuum, Spring 1965); and it was the official President Johnson who said in 1964, "We are not going North and we are not going South."

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