

# The Story of Vietnam: An Instant Editorial

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"I fully expect [only] six more months of hard fighting." *General Navarre, French Commander-in-Chief, Jan. 9, 1954.*

"With a little more training the Vietnamese Army will be the equal of any other army . . ." *Secretary of the Army Wilbur Brucker, Dec. 18, 1955.*

"The American aid program in Vietnam has proved an enormous success—one of the major victories of American policy." *Gen. J. W. O'Daniel, Official Military Aide to Vietnam, Jan. 8, 1961.*

"Every quantitative measurement shows we're winning the war . . . U.S. aid to Vietnam has reached a peak and will start to level off." *Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, 1962.*

"The South Vietnamese should achieve victory in three years . . . I am confident the Vietnamese are going to win the war. [The Vietcong] face inevitable defeat." *Adm. Harry D. Felt, U.S. Commander-in-Chief of Pacific Forces, Jan. 12, 1963.*

"The corner has definitely been turned toward victory in South Vietnam." *Arthur Sylvester, Assistant Secretary of Defense, March 8, 1963.*

"The South Vietnamese themselves are fighting their own battle, fighting well." *Secretary of State Dean Rusk, April, 1963.*

"South Vietnam is on its way to victory." *Frederick E. Nolting, U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, June 12, 1963.*

"I feel we shall achieve victory in 1964." *Tram Van Dong, South Vietnamese general, Oct. 1, 1963.*

"Secretary McNamara and General [Maxwell] Taylor reported their judgment that the major part of the U.S. military task can be completed by the end of 1965." *White House statement, Oct. 2, 1963.*

"Victory . . . is just months away, and the reduction of American advisers can begin any time now. I can safely say the end of the war is in sight." *Gen. Paul Harkins, Commander of the Military Assistance Command in Saigon, Oct. 31, 1963.*

"I personally believe this is a war the Vietnamese must fight. I don't believe we can take on that combat task for them." *Secretary McNamara, Feb. 3, 1964.*

"The United States still hopes to withdraw its troops from South Vietnam by the end of 1965." *Secretary McNamara, Feb. 19, 1964.*

"The Vietnamese . . . themselves can handle this problem primarily with their own effort." *Secretary Rusk, Feb. 24, 1964.*

"We are not about to send American boys 9,000 or 10,000 miles from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." *President Lyndon Johnson, Feb. 21, 1964.*

"We have stopped losing the war." *Secretary McNamara, Oct. 1, 1964.*

October 1965.

"I expect . . . the war to achieve very sensational results in 1967." *Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, Jan. 9, 1967.*

"We have succeeded in attaining our objectives." *Gen. William Westmoreland, U.S. field commander in Vietnam, July 13, 1967.*

"We have reached an important point when the end . . .

begins to come into view . . . the enemy's hopes are bankrupt." *Gen. Westmoreland, Nov. 21, 1967.*

"We have never been in a better relative position." *Gen. Westmoreland, April 10, 1968.*

"[the enemy's] situation is deteriorating rather rapidly." *Gen. Andrew Goodpaster, White House aide, January 1969.*

"We have certainly turned the corner in the war." *Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, July 23, 1969.*

"I will say confidently that looking ahead just three years, this war will be over. It will be over on a basis which will promote lasting peace in the Pacific." *President Richard Nixon, Oct. 12, 1969.*

"This action [the invasion of Cambodia] is a decisive move." *President Richard Nixon, May 9, 1970.*

"General Abrams tells me that in both Laos and Cambodia his evaluation after three weeks of fighting is that—to use his terms—the South Vietnamese can hack it, and they can give an even better account of themselves than the North Vietnamese units. This means that our withdrawal program, our Vietnamization program, is a success . . ." *President Richard Nixon, March 4, 1971.*

"Peace is at hand." *Dr. Henry Kissinger, Oct. 26, 1972.*

"We have agreed on the major principles that I laid down in my speech to the nation of May 8. We have agreed that there will be a ceasefire, we have agreed that our prisoners of war will be returned and that the missing in action will be accounted for, and we have agreed that the people of South Vietnam shall have the

right to determine their own future without having a Communist government or a coalition government imposed upon them against their will.

"There are still some details that I am insisting be worked out and nailed down because I want this not to be a temporary peace. I want, and I know you want it—to be a lasting peace. But I can say to you with complete confidence tonight that we will soon reach agreement on all the issues and bring this long and difficult war to an end." *President Nixon, Nov. 6, 1972.*

"The United States and North Vietnam are locked in a 'fundamental' impasse over whether they are negotiating an 'armistice' or 'peace,' Henry A. Kissinger acknowledged yesterday." *From The Washington Post, Dec. 17, 1972.*

"Waves of American warplanes, including a record number of almost 100 B-52 heavy bombers, pounded North Vietnam's heartland around Hanoi and Haiphong yesterday and today in the heaviest air raids of the Vietnam War." *From The Washington Post, Dec. 20, 1972.*

"Hundreds of U.S. fighter-bombers launched intensified attacks yesterday on North Vietnamese air defense sites in an all-out attempt to cut down the number of B-52 heavy bombers and their 6-man crews being shot down by surface-to-air missiles." *From The Washington Post, Dec. 30, 1972.*

"The President has asked me to announce that negotiations between Dr. Kissinger and special adviser Le Duc Tho and Minister Xuan Thuy will be resumed in Paris on Jan. 8. Technical talks between the experts will be resumed Jan. 2. . . . The President has ordered all bombing will be discontinued above the 20th parallel as long as serious negotiations are under way." *Gerald L. Warren, White House spokesman, Dec. 30, 1972.*