

The following, purportedly written by Bernardine Dohrn of the Weather Underground Organization, was received through the mail by the Op-Ed Page of The New York Times. Miss Dohrn is on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's ten-most-wanted list.

By Bernardine Dohrn

Ten years ago, on April 17, 1965, 25,000 people marched in Washington against the war in Vietnam. It was then two months after Lyndon Johnson had sealed his own fate as well as the fates of several nations by launching a massive invasion of Vietnam; it was only days after the marines had landed in Santo Domingo, toppling the democratic Government and adding that intervention to the long list of crimes against Latin America. The next decade would see hundreds of demonstrations involving millions of people, but April, 1965 was the first national demonstration against the war.

Students for a Democratic Society organized and led the march, and S.D.S. president Paul Potter reflected the mood of the militants and electrified the huge crowd:

"If the people of this country are to end the war in Vietnam, and to change the institutions which create it, then the people of this country must create a massive social movement—and if that can be built around the issue of Vietnam then that is what we must do... But that means that we build a movement that works not simply in Washington but in communities and with problems that face people throughout the society... that we build a movement that will find ways to support the increasing numbers of young men who are unwilling to and will not fight in Vietnam; a movement that will... if necessary, respond to this Administration's war effort with massive civil disobedience all over the country, that will wrench the country into a confrontation with the issues of the war, a movement that must of necessity reach out to all these people in Vietnam or elsewhere who are struggling to find decency and control for their lives."

I wasn't at that demonstration. It took me another year to realize that my liberal nonposition ignored the real crimes the United States was committing in Vietnam. That so many people gathered in Washington as early as 1965 opened the way for all of us.

Potter's words were prophetic. A huge movement would be built, uniting millions of people. Its heart and soul would be the militants—those who took uncompromising action in opposition to the war-makers.

Ten years of struggle against the war in Vietnam has been the crucible

Of Defeat and Victory



M.S.A./Hy Peskin

SOUTH VIETNAM IN QUIETER TIMES: Women carrying rice to market for barter.

for a generation of Americans. We can never forget what we have seen and understood: the brutality and violence of the United States military Establishment, the lies and hypocrisy of the Government, the moral corruption of an official system of murder, rape, torture, and now the kidnapping of a nation's children.

For those of us who look to the Vietnamese revolution as the hope for the future of Vietnam as well as a leading force in the future of the whole world, the recent victories for the liberation forces mark this as a time for celebration.

As the United States-sponsored military dictatorship retreats, millions of people and nineteen provinces are liberated and thousands of political prisoners are freed. In the areas liberated by the Provisional Revolutionary Government, society begins to be organized around human need and the normal daily routines have resumed. Unfortunately, as it has been throughout this war, these victories have come at a terrible cost.

No Administration, from Eisenhower through Ford, has been able to recognize that the Vietnamese people, with a 2,000-year history of resistance to foreign oppression, would fight and fight and never stop fighting until the goal of total national independence has been achieved.

Eisenhower, to block the election of Ho Chi Minh and the reunification of Vietnam, sabotaged the 1956 elections mandated by the Geneva Agreements. Kennedy sent in the Green Berets. Johnson fabricated the Gulf of Tonkin incident and launched Operation Roll-

ing Thunder. Nixon expanded the war into Cambodia and Laos, carried the terror bombings to heights never before seen in world history, and then used the P.O.W.'s to stir up the most vile forms of patriotism. Now Ford/Rockefeller have committed themselves to further extending America's longest foreign war.

The United States Government has tried to divert the American people from the truth of its failure in Vietnam. Now, in the midst of defeats abroad and a rotting economy and inhumane social life at home, it is critical for the men in power that the American people draw the wrong conclusions from United States/Saigon defeats.

The need to pacify and control people at home has produced an orgy of "Communist bloodbath" rumors. These completely fabricated and unsubstantiated horror stories are designed to manipulate the 78 per cent of the American people who now oppose their Government's Indochina policies, to stampede the public into one more desperate try to salvage United States aggressive strategy toward Indochina by giving Thieu another billion dollars. It is also a deliberate attempt to produce another generation of Communist-killers, to convince people that Socialism could not possibly be in the interests of ordinary people like ourselves.

Everywhere we look we see pictures of hundreds of thousands of fleeing refugees. Most people I have spoken with in the past few weeks are deeply moved and concerned about the suffer-

ing. If news reports are to be believed, people are fleeing from the P.R.G. into the arms of their American saviors. But the truth is very different. The day after the liberation of Ban Me Thuot, the Saigon air force bombed the central market and killed over 200 civilians. This followed a pattern established by the United States and Saigon long ago: It is better that a town be destroyed and its people killed or forced to evacuate than that it be governed by the P.R.G.

The majority of the refugees from the Central Highlands and the coastal areas are fleeing not the P.R.G., but the war. Some of those fleeing are people who have profited from the war and the United States presence. More are forcibly evacuated; As they pulled out of the Central Highlands, ARVN [South Vietnamese] soldiers drove portions of the population before them as a buffer. In their hurried retreat, that part of the army still loyal to Thieu, injured, crushed to death, and murdered hundreds.

What we don't see are pictures of the people who now live in zones governed by the P.R.G. People are returning to the newly liberated areas daily—not just those who left in the past few weeks, but also many of those forcibly removed from their homes by the United States and Thieu during the past years. P.R.G. policy is to welcome anyone who is no longer part of the Saigon army or the Thieu administration—anyone who does not actively oppose the Revolutionary Government will be protected by its laws.

In the liberated areas, the revolutionary program will begin to improve the lives of the Vietnamese people.

In the future, the truth about Vietnam will be told by the people of the South themselves.

And now arrives Ford's own brain-child, Operation Babylift. This time it is the children of Vietnam who are paying the price. Operation Babylift is a fraud, engineered by the same Government that destroyed Bach Mai Hospital and used antipersonnel weapons and the same profiteers who have supported this war all along. United States Ambassador Graham Martin said that the purpose of the airlift of orphans is to "create a shift in American public opinion in favor" of the Thieu regime. The United States Government created a panic for the purpose of propaganda.

Now this same Government is "deeply concerned" about the plight of Vietnamese orphans. This is hypocrisy and deceit. In December, 1974, columnist Jack Anderson reported that "many orphans have died in South Vietnam since the United States Government stopped shipping vital food, clothing and medical supplies" because they would not make room for them in the giant planeloads of arms and weapons they were sending to the Thieu regime.

Many American families are swept up in the plight of the children. But the notion that the babies are in any danger from a Revolutionary Government is wrong. Adopting these children, many of whom still have parents and family in Vietnam, is one more aggression. Vietnam needs her children. And the children of Vietnam have a right to a full life—a life without war—in their homeland.

Instead of kidnapping children, the United States Government must be forced to honor the Paris peace agreement which binds the Government to healing the wounds of war as well as discontinuing all forms of intervention, especially military aid. This would be the way to stop the suffering and to demonstrate sincere concern for the children as well as the other refugees and people who desire an end to the war.

The defeat for United States policy in Indochina is a victory in which millions of American people have played a part. The antiwar movement has been an important force in limiting the options of three Presidential Administrations. Reborn and schooled by Vietnam, there is today emerging in our country a more mature and experienced movement. What 25,000 people demonstrated for a decade ago is now the hope of millions and millions of Americans. How many new forms of barbaric intervention by the United States Government will we have to endure? The answer to this question lies in a law of revolution: The future will be what we the people struggle to make it.