

We cannot support a war against children!



"Torn flesh, splintered bones, screaming agony are bad enough. But perhaps most heart-rending of all are the tiny faces and bodies scorched and seared by fire."

This destruction of children is not one of those sad but inescapable accidents of war. It is a direct and necessary result of the Johnson Administration's policy of unrestricted bombing of the Vietnamese countryside.

There are certain issues beyond political considerations. The killing of children is one of them

“What we are doing to Vietnam may become clearer if the same percentages are applied to the American population.

They mean that one out of every two American families with four children would be struck with the tragedy of having at least one child killed or maimed.

There is a good chance, too, that the father would be dead as well. At the very least, he is probably far from home.”

Apply these comments and statistics to Australia, for we are equally guilty. Australian men, planes, ships and bombs are in Vietnam backing the U.S. aggression responsible for this outrageous sacrifice of young lives.



"... I never left the tiny victims without losing composure. The initial urge to reach out and soothe the hurt was restrained by the fear that the ash-like skin would crumble in my fingers."



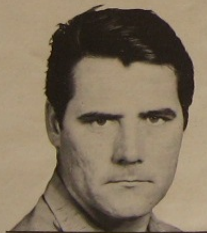
William Flint,
Able Seaman, ex Jeparit

"One trip to Vietnam was enough for me. In Vung Tau I saw American MPs handcuff and manhandle a six-year-old kiddie into a jeep; he was obviously terrified. The barbed wire we took up there is used to make villages into concentration camps. The suggestion that Australian soldiers were hostile to us is ridiculous . . . the crew had many friends among the soldiers. Last trip we took fresh meat and beer and had a barbecue with them on the beach. No Australian should support the war against women and children that's going on up there."

Opposite we publish some of the reasons why Australian seamen, members of the Seamen's Union of Australia, refused to volunteer to carry bombs and munitions to the war in Vietnam.

Denied space in the news columns of the daily press, seamen made their views public by inserting paid advertisements in daily newspapers. The "Sydney Morning Herald" and the "Daily Telegraph" refused to accept the advertisement, reproduced on these pages.

Freedom of the press?



Raymond Greenhough,
Able Seaman

"I was in Vietnam in 1950 when the Vietnamese were being robbed and butchered by ex Nazis in the French Foreign Legion. They've now been replaced by the American Army. I don't want my country, my union or my mates involved in maintaining the vicious domination of the Vietnamese people by Hitler-admiring warlords like Ky. What's the point in blaming the German people for the rise of Nazism if we Australians co-operate in the oppression of Vietnam?"

BOONAROO and JEPARIT

Seamen say why they refuse war cargo



Basil Box,
Able Seaman, ex Boonaroo

"I have been at sea for fifty years since I started in England during the 14-18 War—I went right through the 39-45 War in Australian troop ships. I've been through bombings and my ship's been sunk. I did this in a war against Fascism but I won't be conscripted into this filthy business to blow up women and kiddies. If the Government wants the likes of me to co-operate in taking ships to Vietnam they would need to make the cargoes materials to build up the country, not destroy it. They'd have no trouble getting us to man ships then."



John Graham,
Able Seaman, ex Boonaroo

"I'm twenty-five years old, have a wife, two kiddies and I'm a Catholic. One trip on the Boonaroo was enough for me . . . what I saw up there disgusted me. I'm proud of the decision of our stopwork meetings. Now I can sleep at night with a clear conscience, knowing that neither myself, my shipmates, nor my fellow Unionists have taken any part in increasing the sickening number of children already maimed and killed by bombing in Vietnam. The London blitz didn't make the British surrender and I don't believe that bombing will shake the Vietnamese."

Are these men wrong?

SEAMEN HAVE VOTED AGAINST PARTICIPATION IN THE VIETNAM WAR IN THE INTERESTS OF AUSTRALIA

EXTRACT OF RESOLUTION OF A SEAMEN'S MEETING, MARCH 8, 1967

" . . . we civilian seamen are being called upon to participate in a war that has horrified the world, has no support from the United Nations, and is bringing death and destruction to thousands of innocent people by the use of such bombs as are to be carried on the Boonaroo.

We cannot support such a war."

Stop the bombing! Negotiate!



Raymond King, Greaser

"I attended our last stopwork meeting and I'm glad of the decision. I'll have no part in taking a cargo of bombs to blow up the Vietnamese people, especially when I know that only one side has bombers and they are killing too many women and children. I was in Vietnam when they were getting rid of the French . . . it's ironical that the Government is now trying to railroad us into helping the Yanks take over the country. I'll willingly sail on any ship to bring our boys home . . ."



Warrick Maude,
Able Seaman, ex Jeparit

"I did my National Service training in 1956 and I'm dead against conscription. "What affected me most in Vietnam was the way the war is making our soldiers brutal . . . they told us stories of prisoners being kicked to death . . . a chap I went to school with told me that he thought all Vietnamese over six years old should be shot between the eyes. It's terrible to hear some of our soldiers talking of 'cutting loose and shooting up' the Vietnamese. Our soldiers up there would like to see the bombing stopped and peace negotiated."

"A lovely 28-year-old peasant woman was lying on her back nursing a young child. The evening before she had been sitting in her thatched hut when a piece of shrapnel tore through her back transecting the spinal cord. She was completely paralysed below the nipple line. We could do nothing more for her than give antibiotics and find a place to lie. A few mornings later she was dead."



Photographs and comment on Vietnam reproduced from and by courtesy Ramparts Extra "The Children of Vietnam," based on reports by William F. Pepper, Executive Director of the Commission on Human Rights in New Rochelle, New York, a member of the faculty at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, New York, and Director of that College's Children's Institute for Advanced Study and Research. On leave during 1966, he spent six weeks in South Vietnam as an accredited journalist.