

WHAT FIVE MILITARY LEADERS SAY ABOUT VIETNAM:

GENERAL MATTHEW B. RIDGEWAY *Commander of U.S. forces during the Korean War, writing in Look Magazine, 5 April, 1967.*

"It is my firm belief that there is nothing in the present situation or in our code that requires us to bomb a small Asian nation back into the stone age."

GENERAL DAVID M. SHOUP *Former Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, speaking at the 10th Annual Junior College World Affairs Day, Pierce College, Los Angeles, 14 May 1966.*

"You read, you're televised to, you're radioed to, you're preached to, that it is necessary that we have our armed forces fight, get killed and maimed, and kill and maim other human beings including women and children because now is the time we must stop some kind of unwanted ideology from creeping up on this nation. The place we chose to do this is 8,000 miles away with water in between . . .

"The reasons fed to us are too shallow and narrow for students, as well as other citizens. Especially so, when you realize that what is happening, no matter how carefully and slowly the military escalation has progressed, may be projecting us toward world catastrophe. Surely, it is confusing . . .

"I want to tell you, I don't think the whole of South East Asia, as related to the present and future safety and freedom of the people of this country, is worth the life or limb of a single American . . .

"I believe that if we had and would keep our dirty, bloody, dollar-crooked fingers out of the business of these nations so full of depressed, exploited people, they will arrive at a solution of their own. That they design and want. That they fight and work for. And if unfortunately their revolution must be of the violent type because the "haves" refuse to share with the "have-nots" by any peaceful method, at least what they get will be their own, and not the American style, which they don't want and above all don't want crammed down their throats by Americans."

LT. GENERAL JAMES GAVIN *Testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 21 February 1967.*

". . . bombing attacks intended to achieve psychological impact through the killing of noncombatants is unquestionably wrong. Likewise the attack of targets near areas highly populated by civilians, where civilians are likely to be casualties, is also militarily as well as morally wrong . . .

"I believe that we can negotiate with Hanoi and with the National Liberation Front confident that a free, neutral and independent Vietnam can be established, with guarantees of stability from an international body."

REAR ADMIRAL ARNOLD E. TRUE *Writing to the Editor of the Palo Alto (Calif.) Times, 3 March, 1966.*

"We can end the Vietnam fiasco without dishonor by (1) dealing with the Vietcong as a major party to the war, (2) implement the Geneva Accords, (3) withdrawing our troops and (4) letting the Vietnamese settle their own problems . . .

"General Ky is naturally willing to fight to the last American soldier and the last American dollar. It is about time that Americans should make their own decisions and stop blabbing about 'commitments' and saying 'it is up to Hanoi!'"

BRIG. GENERAL HUGH B. HESTER *Writing to Veterans for Peace in Vietnam, 8 May, 1967.*

"I opposed U.S. involvement in Indo-China in 1954, as did General Ridgeway, then Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army (see his book Soldier: Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgeway). Both of us feared this would involve U.S. ground forces in the jungles and swamps of Asia against the almost limitless Asian masses.

"I have opposed every increase in that involvement since. I oppose the Vietnamese War now, not only because it is being waged in violation of the U.S. Constitution and U.S. treaty obligations under the U.N. Charter, but also because it is in violation of the basic interests of the American people. The Vietnam War is not a war of self-defense or even of general self-interest. It is a war in the profit interests of only a very few.

"I therefore support those veterans of previous wars who are planning protests and demonstrations in Washington, D.C., on Memorial Day, against the Johnson Administration war of aggression against the Vietnamese people. This is an illegal, immoral and wholly unnecessary war.

"And I hope that these veterans now working for a sane American future will take this opportunity to set up an effective organization, perhaps along a loose confederation line, to work for a prompt end to a war which is betraying our great traditions as a free, just and peace-loving people.

"I know of no more fitting or proper task for men who have demonstrated their devotion and loyalty to the American people by risking their lives in combat, than by protesting against the terribly dangerous and unnecessary war the Johnson Administration is imposing upon the people of Vietnam. Their action, I believe, in doing these things, constitutes the exercise of patriotism in its very highest form."

Viet War Lashed By General

Hughes Calls It Immoral

Stuns Crowd At Capitol Services

By RICHARD BRAUTIGAM
(Of The Capital Times Staff)

A Memorial Day audience on the State Capitol grounds was stunned into thoughtful silence today as a distinguished Army general made a fervent plea for an end to the war in Vietnam and a commitment to the cause of justice and good will.

Brig. Gen. Robert L. Hughes, U. S. Army Reserve, was the principal speaker at the traditional services arranged by Madison veterans' groups.

He wore the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, Presidential Unit Citation, and the Army Commendation Ribbon as he stood before an audience of some 500 veterans and their families as well as citizens generally.

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Gen. Hughes won these honors through long service in the Pacific Theaters during World War II.

Wounded severely at Buna, in New Guinea, he recuperated in the United States and then returned to the Pacific as a member of Gen. MacArthur's staff at Leyte, in the Philippines.

Hughes spoke quietly, but with the conviction of his long years of service.

"All over the United States today there are observances that are stereotypes of this one," he began.

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"They are expressions of gratitude for those Americans who have fallen in battle in our wars to assure that the political integrity of our nation remains inviolate.

"The true significance of the day is most poignant to those who have suffered the loss of a loved one in the present conflict in Vietnam," Hughes pointed out.

"They died," he continued, "in support of an unstable foreign government that is maintained only by the strength of the United States."

There is a paradox in the role of the United States in Vietnam, he said.

In contrast to the image of a country that offers hope of peace and justice to the world, he said, "we are prosecuting an immoral war in support of a government that is a dictatorship by design."

"It represents nothing but a ruling clique and is composed of morally corrupt leaders who adhere to a warlord philosophy," he added.

This is illustrated currently by the need for the United States to lead in pacifying villages whose citizens do not trust their own government, he said.

Following World War II, the United States accepted its role of world leadership with humility and aided stricken nations to rebuild with American dollars, he said.

"In this new era of political unrest, we cannot police the world, we cannot impose our social system on other nations," he advised.

"We stand alone in Vietnam with token forces from some other countries and mercenaries from Korea paid by the United States," Hughes went on.

"We are losing the flower of American youth in a war that could stretch into perpetuity," he added. "After four years of fighting, we cannot be sure of the security of villages three miles from Saigon, because we can't tell the good guys from the bad guys.

"We are in that position because we selected sides in a civil war," he said.

"This is one hell of a war to be fighting. We must disengage from this tragic war. It is the only one in which we have committed troops without first being aggressed against," he said.



Hughes called for a reassessment of American foreign policy in terms of our own American interests.

"We should recognize our errors in judgment and not compound them by trying to police the world," he said. "We shall cease as a political force if we don't follow a policy of co-existence with other nations.

"We cannot afford a major confrontation with the people of Asia if we want to dedicate this country to our sons and future generations," he concluded.

Gen. Hughes is executive secretary of the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture. He has served in many civic capacities, including a term as president of the Middleton School Board, the Masons, Boy Scouts, Middleton Sportsmen's

Club, United Givers and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

A reporter circulating through the audience found general approval of his address, with some reservations.

A. M. Ryser, a World War I veteran and chairman for the day, told The Capital Times he did not agree with all of Hughes' remarks but would defend the right to say them.

Another veteran said, "It was shocking, but he gave me something to think about." Where there was dissent, there was that acknowledgment of doubt, also.

Others, however, wholly approved of his address.

"Somebody has to say these things," one said.

"This was a surprise package but I agree with him entirely," said another.