

nist governments of South Vietnam and whose sermons on the immorality of the American commitment in Vietnam received such widespread publicity are silent about what have helped to bring about. What is happening in Vietnam today is as bad as what happened in many of the death camps of Nazi Germany. But those who could speak for hours on the alleged abuses of previous governments in Vietnam are content to watch torture, both physical and psychological, visited upon innocent human beings. The hypocrisy of these people is astounding—but it is not surprising.

At this point I wish to insert in the RECORD, "Vietnam's Postwar Hell" by Ginetta Sagan, from Newsweek, May 3, 1982.

[From Newsweek, May 3, 1982]

Vietnam's Postwar Hell

(By Ginetta Sagan)

April 30, 1982, marks the seventh anniversary of the end of American involvement in that prolonged, nightmarish event, the war in Vietnam. Few events in the twentieth century have so shaken and divided the American people. As a dark shadow of the past, it lingers in the conscience of the Congress, the media and the public. As a "lesson," it colors our lives, our perception of ourselves, and it is affecting our decision-making process in international affairs.

Americans and Vietnamese are no longer dying amid the temples of Huế or in the jungle of the Mekong Delta. But tens of thousands of Vietnamese from all professions and religious persuasions are languishing in a vast nationwide network of prisons and "re-education" camps.

Human rights in Vietnam is not a new concern to me. During the years before 1975 I met with representatives of the National Liberation Front who told me of their great concern for human rights in South Vietnam. Where are these leaders today, and where are my colleagues in the peace movement who had so strongly protested political repression by the Thieu regime? While some have continued to speak out against violence and repression in Vietnam, many have remained silent. Others have even defended repression in Vietnam as a "humane alternative" to the blood bath that was predicted by the CIA.

TAKEOVER

But few in the peace movement believed that such a blood bath would occur with a communist takeover in South Vietnam, and many believed in the strong verbal commitment made by the NLF leaders to human rights in South Vietnam. From the time it was founded in 1960, the NLF presented itself as if its members were genuine civil libertarians arguing for the right of dissent, along with other democratic freedoms, for the South Vietnamese people.

In 1973 the Paris Peace Agreement was signed, establishing a framework for the eventual reunification of Vietnam, based on national reconciliation. Article 11 of this treaty ensured the South Vietnamese such rights as freedom of speech, press, movement and organization and freedom from reprisal for collaborating with one side or the other during the war. Article 11 was widely praised by leaders of the NLF and North Vietnam—until April 30, 1975.

Immediately upon taking control of the South at that time, the new regime proceed-

ed to tear up Article 11 by banning all non-communist political parties and organizations, placing severe restrictions on religious groups, launching a campaign to destroy the "neocolonialist" culture of the South and throwing hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese into re-education camps. Political prisoners in Vietnam fall into two basic categories: (1) former government officials, leaders of political parties and army officers arrested in June 1975 for having occupied positions of authority under the previous regime, and (2) writers, religious leaders, intellectuals and other dissidents who have been arrested in subsequent years. Both categories of imprisonment directly violate Article 11.

No one knows how many political prisoners there are in Vietnam today, but estimates suggest there are more than 100,000. Most of them are detained in re-education camps, which are so labeled because the inmates are subjected to mandatory "confessions," political indoctrination and forced labor. The length of their detention depends on the degree to which they reform.

During the last three years friends and I have interviewed several hundred former prisoners, read newspaper articles on the camps as well as various reports of Amnesty International, and have studied official statements from the Vietnamese Government and its press on the re-education camps. The picture that emerges is one of severe hardship, where prisoners are kept on a starvation diet, overworked and harshly punished for minor infractions of camp rules. We know of cases where prisoners have been beaten to death, confined to dark cells or in ditches dug around the perimeters of the camps and executed for attempted escape. A common form of punishment is confinement to the CONNEX boxes—air-freight containers that were left behind by the United States in 1975. The boxes vary in size; some are made of wood and others of metal. In a CONNEX box 4 feet high and 4 feet wide, for example, several prisoners would be confined with their feet shackled, and allowed only one bowl of rice and water a day. "It reminded me of the pictures I saw of Nazi camp inmates after World War II," said a physician we interviewed who witnessed the release of four prisoners who had been confined to a CONNEX box for one month. None of them survived. Prisoners condemned to such punishment have often committed suicide.

RIGHTS

Today there is no talk in Vietnam about human rights—only about the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the need to suppress dissidents. Today Vietnamese authorities make a false distinction between political and civil rights on the one hand and economic and social rights on the other—as if a government which denies its people the right of dissent is therefore more likely to give them more food or a better education.

Some well-meaning "friends" have told me that it is moral arrogance to criticize the Hanoi government in view of the suffering caused to the Vietnamese people by American military intervention. I disagree. When we are faced with the knowledge that innocent human beings are being destroyed in order to radically change a society, it would be immoral to remain silent.

For me, personally, to remain silent would mean betraying all of my co-workers in the Resistance movement of World War II who perished in the torture rooms of the SS and the Gestapo or in the death camp of Mauthausen. It was their sacrifice which, together

with deaths of millions of Jews, Christians of all denominations and various minority groups, made possible the unanimous adoption of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Dec. 10, 1948.

People all over the world who campaigned for peace and human rights in Vietnam should look at Vietnam again—and consider that their task is not yet over.

(Sagan is a longtime volunteer worker in the field of human rights.)●

STATEMENT OF HON. BALTASAR CORRADA OF PUERTO RICO

HON. BALTASAR CORRADA

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 1982

● Mr. CORRADA. Mr. Speaker, since last week we were celebrating the National Volunteers Week, I would like to make a brief note to recognize and honor the outstanding work and contribution that millions of largely invisible groups are doing to this Nation.

Volunteers have become a major labor force in the United States, they are men and women who are out there everyday helping their neighbors and ours without salary nor payment and often without recognition of any kind.

Volunteer work is absolutely essential to our society, they save our taxpayers an enormous amount of money by performing services which the Government would otherwise have to provide. They represent the spirit of private initiative and self-reliance on specially important trends in a society which today is recognizing the limits of government.

Very quietly and with little recognition an estimated 40 million unselfish individuals in this country contribute around \$11 billion to this Nation measured in time and services. But its vital influence extends to virtually every aspect of our society—health, education, social services, culture, religion, the arts and other.

But, the volunteers' contribution cannot be measured and should not be measured in time and money alone, we must also measure it in terms of the value system it represents; a sense of caring and a heartfelt motivation to make the world just a little bit better.

I would like also to encourage all my colleagues to support and cosponsor H.R. 4309 and 768, the volunteer mileage bill, introduced by Congresswoman BARBARA A. MIKULSKI. The passage of this bill is a matter of justice to this group of heroes of our society whom as Government and profitmaking organizations has been affected by inflation.

In these days in which the American people are suffering one of the largest cutbacks in Government programs and that thousands of Government pro-