

Vietnam War

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Date: January 19, 2025



The Establishment's War in Vietnam

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The Vietnam War is a dismal remembrance to its veterans, many of whom still ask why we went and why we lost. No single event has brought America more social transformation. We are prone to accept that transformation as the unintended by-product of a war that was a blunder. But as we have seen, historical "blunders," from the Great Crash to Pearl Harbor to Cuba, have a convenient way of serving the interests of the backstage globalists who run our country.

French control of Indochina ended in 1954. CFR chronicler Robert Shulzinger notes that the Council's "study groups on Southeast Asia, meeting in 1953-54, prepared the ground for the United States to take over France's role as the outside power waging war against local leftist insurrection."¹⁹¹ The groups stressed the importance of Southeast Asia to American interests.

After the Geneva Conference artificially divided Vietnam into North and South, the U.S. government helped depose Emperor Bao Dai—symbol of Vietnamese unity—and backed Ngo Dinh Diem as the South's prime minister. Eventually Washington turned on Diem as well; the Kennedy administration's collusion in the coup that overthrew him (and ultimately resulted in his brutal murder) is now widely documented.

In Vietnam, as in Korea, we engaged in war without declaring it. C. L. Sulzberger stated in the *New York Times* in 1966:

Dulles fathered SEATO with the deliberate purpose, as he explained to me, of providing the U.S. President with legal authority to intervene in Indochina. When Congress approved SEATO it signed the first of a series of blank checks yielding authority over Vietnam policy.¹⁹²

Later, President Lyndon Baines Johnson obtained the power to escalate the war from Congress through the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. This transpired after an alleged assault on U.S. destroyers by North Vietnamese torpedo boats—an incident whose authenticity many later questioned. Doubts intensified after it was revealed that the Johnson administration had drafted the resolution before the skirmish took place.

The matter has since been settled rather decisively by Admiral James Stockdale, a former navy fighter pilot, in his 1984 book *In Love & War*. Stockdale, a Congressional Medal of Honor winner who spent more than seven years as a POW in North Vietnam, had been on the scene during the supposed Tonkin Gulf attack. Although both destroyers were firing rounds, Stockdale did not detect any Vietnamese boats in the vicinity during an hour and a half of overflight. It was now the nuclear age. At a televised dinner of the Council on Foreign Relations (January 12, 1954), John Foster Dulles had declared that, thanks to our nuclear arsenal, we could deter Soviet aggression with the threat of "massive retaliation." But this new trend in U.S. policy had a corollary: if we exasperated the Soviets, it was claimed, they too might push the button. Wars against Communism would therefore have to be limited and not aimed at winning. Thus, in Establishment dogma, the idea of victory in war was now not only an anachronism: it was a liability.

As James E. King, Jr. wrote in *Foreign Affairs* in 1957:

Moreover, we must be prepared to fight limited actions ourselves. Otherwise we shall have made no advance beyond "massive retaliation," which tied our hands in conflicts involving less than our

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survival. And *we must be prepared to lose limited actions*. No limitation could survive our disposition to elevate every conflict in which our interests are affected to the level of total conflict with survival at stake. Armed conflict can be limited only if aimed at limited objectives and fought with limited means. If we or our enemy relax the limits on either objectives or means, survival *will* be at stake, whether the issue is worth it or not.¹⁹³ (First emphasis added.)

In Korea, where the Establishment's interest was in accrediting the UN's police powers, stalemate had been considered an acceptable substitute for victory; now that we were outside of a UN context, however, defeat itself was acceptable. This was not explained to the brave Americans who fought and bled in Vietnam. They found out the hard way.

Mismanaging the War

In Vietnam, as in Korea, extraordinary restrictions were placed on the U.S. military. These, known as the "rules of engagement," were not declassified until 1985, when twenty-six pages in the *Congressional Record* were required to summarize them.

The Air Force was repeatedly refused permission to bomb those targets that the Joint Chiefs of Staff deemed most strategic.

U.S. troops were given a general order not to fire at the Vietcong until fired upon.

Vehicles more than two hundred yards off the Ho Chi Minh Trail could not be bombed. (Enemy supply trucks, forewarned of approaching U.S. planes, had only to temporarily divert off the trail to escape destruction.)

A North Vietnamese MIG could not be struck if spotted on a runway; only if airborne and showing hostile intent.

Surface-to-air missile sites could not be bombed while under construction; only after they became operational.

Enemy forces could not be pursued if they crossed into Laos or Cambodia. This gave the Communists a safe sanctuary just fifty miles from Saigon. Even the brief incursion into Cambodia that Richard Nixon authorized in 1970 was hamstrung by a variety of rules and regulations authored in Washington.

Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker observed:

Our political leaders elected to fight a land war, where every advantage lay with the enemy, and to employ our vast sea and air superiority in very limited supporting roles only.

Surprise, perhaps the greatest of the principles of war . . . was deliberately sacrificed when our leaders revealed our strategy and tactics to the enemy....

The enemy was told . . . that we would not bomb populated areas, heavy industry, canals, dams, and other critical targets—and thus sanctuaries were established by us along the Chinese border and around Haiphong and Hanoi. This permitted the enemy to concentrate anti-aircraft defenses around the North Vietnamese targets that our Air Force was permitted to attack—greatly increasing our casualties. Missiles, oil and ammunition were permitted to enter Haiphong harbor unmolested and without protest.¹⁹⁴

Such restrictions were equaled in perfidy by the indirect support the United States provided North Vietnam by boosting trade with the Soviet Bloc (which furnished some eighty percent of Hanoi's war supplies).

This commerce was one of the Establishment's pet projects. Zbigniew Brzezinski, writing in *Foreign Affairs*, had called for economic aid to Eastern Europe as early as 1961.¹⁹⁵ The journal even featured an article by Ted Sorenson bluntly titled "Why We Should Trade with the Soviets."¹⁹⁶

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The actualization of such trade seems to have begun with David Rockefeller's trip to Moscow in 1964. The *Chicago Tribune* reported on September 12 of that year:

David Rockefeller, president of Chase Manhattan bank, briefed President Johnson today on his recent meeting with Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev of Russia.

Rockefeller told Johnson that during the two-hour talk, the Red leader said the United States and the Soviet Union "should do more trade." Khrushchev, according to Rockefeller, said he would like to see the United States extend long-term credits to the Russians.

On October 7, 1966—with the war now at full tilt—Johnson stated:

We intend to press for legislative authority to negotiate trade agreements which could extend most-favored-nation tariff treatment to European Communist states... We will reduce export controls on East-West trade with respect to hundreds of non-strategic items.¹⁹⁷

Six days later the *New York Times* told its readers:

The United States put into effect today one of President Johnson's proposals for stimulating East-West trade by removing restrictions on the export of more than four hundred commodities to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Among the "non-strategic items" cleared for export were: petroleum, aluminum, scrap metal, synthetic rubber, tires, air navigation equipment, ground and marine radar, rifle cleaning compounds, diethylene glycol (used in the manufacture of explosives), computers, electric motors, rocket engines, diesel engines, diesel fuel, and various truck and automobile parts.¹⁹⁸ Almost anything short of a weapon itself was classified "non-strategic." In times of war, however, few commodities are truly *not* strategic—even food, seemingly innocuous, is vital for an army to prosecute war.

Did the Johnson administration's easing of restrictions influence the flow of goods from Warsaw Pact nations to Hanoi? Two weeks after the announcement, the *New York Times* reported (October 27, 1966):

The Soviet Union and its allies agreed at the conference of their leaders in Moscow last week to grant North Vietnam assistance in material and money amounting to about one billion dollars.

Bombing the Ho Chi Minh Trail to interdict the enemy's supplies made no sense when we were enriching the source of those supplies. Trade that would have been labeled "treason" in World War II was called "building bridges" during the Vietnam War. This, along with the self-destructive restrictions on the military, were two of the reasons why we could not defeat tiny North Vietnam, whereas it had taken us less than four years to overcome the combined might of the German and Japanese empires.

Why Did We Go to Vietnam?

Analysts such as David Halberstam believe John F. Kennedy increased our commitment in Vietnam as an antidote to humiliation: that after the Bay of Pigs and a bullying Khrushchev gave JFK in Vienna, the President wanted to show the Russians—if not his right-wing critics—that he had backbone.

But if Kennedy really wanted to atone for the Bay of Pigs, he didn't have to go to Vietnam—all he had to do was send our armed forces against Fidel Castro, and it is doubtful that the tin-pot dictator's fledgling regime would have lasted another day.

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If you wanted to fight Communism, Vietnam was a terrible place to pick. Our supply lines had to stretch halfway around the world. There were no fronts; the enemy was nearly invisible, not only due to the jungle terrain, but because the Vietcong, who wore no uniforms, looked like ordinary villagers. A glance at the map shows Vietnam is a narrow country whose extensive border with Laos and Cambodia always ensured the Communists of nearby refuge. The French had not been able to hold out there with 300,000 troops, which hardly imbued the enterprise with optimism. And the government of South Vietnam, thanks in part to U.S. meddling, was unstable, fraught with coups and corruption. No, Vietnam was not a utopian battlefield on which to confront Communism.

In dissecting the Establishment psyche that produced our Vietnam entanglement, it should first be noted that the Establishment was, in the early 1960's, under heavy fire. Traditionally, the American people seem to be more wary of the loyalty of our public servants during Democratic administrations. Under Truman, there was an uproar concerning the State Department. Not long after Alger Hiss's conviction, Joe McCarthy made his famous Wheeling, West Virginia speech. Four months later, however, Truman sent U.S. soldiers to battle the North Koreans. This tended to deflect, temporarily at least, criticism that his administration was soft on Communism.

From 1953 to 1961, the Oval Office housed a Republican—albeit a nominal one—and conservatives' scrutiny of Washington became largely inert. But, after the reinstatement of the Democrats under Kennedy, the American right experienced a renaissance.

In 1961, the largest anti-Communist rally in American history was held at the Hollywood Bowl, and J. Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit* hit the best-seller list.

In 1962, three exposes of the Council on Foreign Relations were published: *The Invisible Government*, by former FBI man Dan Smoot; *The Welfare States*, by Colonel Victor J. Fox; and *America's Unelected Rulers: The Council on Foreign Relations*, by Kent and Phoebe Courtney.

Also in 1962, the American Legion passed a resolution condemning the CFR "as being actively engaged in destroying the Constitution and sovereignty of the United States of America," and the Daughters of the American Revolution adopted a resolution petitioning Congress to investigate the Council.

American Mercury magazine was regularly blasting both the CFR and the international bankers linked to it.

The recently formed John Birch Society was using its educational program to counteract Communism and its Establishment sympathizers.

And the Goldwater movement was picking up, striving to restore the GOP to its tradition.

Newsweek and the *New York Times* may have ignored it, but Americans were at war with the Establishment, especially those figures in the Kennedy administration. The decision to go to Vietnam took much of the steam out of these movements. Those who hated Communism were now given a war against it—but it was an endless, no-win war, one that would be dragged out until the nation at large renounced ever fighting Communism again.

The Manipulators

We have noted a number of times in this book that the Establishment is not "conservative," despite PR to the contrary. In *The Strawberry Statement: Notes of A College Revolutionary*, James Kunen quoted a fellow student radical's report about a 1968 SDS convention:

Also at the Convention, men from Business International Round-tables—the meetings sponsored by Business International—tried to buy up a few radicals. These men are the world's leading industrialists and they convene to decide how our lives are going to go....

They offered to finance our demonstrations in Chicago. We were also offered Esso (Rockefeller) money. They want us to make a lot of radical commotion so they can look

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more in the center as they move to the left.¹⁹⁹

Yet it was members of this same Establishment who were at the helm during the Vietnam War. All of our ambassadors to Saigon from 1963 to 1973—Henry Cabot Lodge, Maxwell Taylor, and Ellsworth Bunker—were members of the Council. LBJ sought John McCloy for that particular job, but he turned it down.

One of the chief engineers of the Vietnam fiasco was Walt Rostow, chairman of the State Department's policy planning council from 1961 until 1966, when he became National Security Adviser. The *Washington Post* of August 10, 1966, called him "the Rock of Johnson's Viet Policy." But was Rostow a hawk? A conservative right-winger? Like his equally prominent brother, Eugene Victor Debs Rostow (named for the Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs), Walt Rostow had been a member of the CFR since 1955. He was rejected for employment in the Eisenhower administration three times because he could not pass security checks. In 1960, in his book *The United States in the World Arena*, Rostow declared that:

it is a legitimate American national objective to see removed from all nations—including the United States—the right to use substantial military force to pursue their own interests. Since this residual right is the root of national sovereignty and the basis for the existence of an international arena of power, it is, therefore, an American interest to see an end to nationhood as it has been historically defined.²⁰⁰

Not exactly the words of a die-hard patriot. Rostow called for unilateral disarmament and an international police force. In 1962, there was a stir in Washington when Congress learned of a secret State Department report Rostow had produced entitled "Basic National Security Policy." It discussed our "overlapping interests" with Communist nations, called for recognition of Red China and East Germany, and said we should bar assistance to freedom fighters behind the Iron Curtain.

Robert Strange McNamara, who was Secretary of Defense during the first half of the war, was hardly a militarist. Schlafly and Ward, in their book *The Betrayers*, summarized McNamara's impact on U.S. defense capabilities. By the time he left office in 1968 he had:

- . . . reduced our nuclear striking force by 50% while the Soviets had increased theirs by 300%.
- . . . caused the U.S. to lose its lead in nuclear delivery vehicles.
- . . . scrapped 3/4 of our multi-megaton missiles.
- . . . cut back the originally planned 2,000 Minutemen to 1,000.
- . . . destroyed all our intermediate and medium-range missiles.
- . . . cancelled our 24-megaton bomb.
- ... scrapped 1,455 of 2,710 bombers left over from the Eisenhower Administration.
- . . . disarmed 600 of the remaining bombers of their strategic nuclear weapons.
- . . . frozen the number of Polaris subs at 41, refusing to build any more missile-firing submarines.
- . . . refused to allow development of any new weapons systems except the TFX (F-111).
- . . cancelled Skybolt, Pluto, Dynasoar and Orion [missile systems].

It was aptly noted that McNamara, who even called for the abolition of our armed forces reserves, had inflicted more damage on America's defenses than the Soviets could have achieved in a nuclear first strike! He continually exasperated the Joint Chiefs on Vietnam policy, forbidding sorties against strategic targets and keeping our troops in short supply. After resigning, he stated, "I am a world citizen now," and was appointed president of the World Bank. During his tenure there, the Bank's annual lending grew from \$1 billion to \$11.5

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billion; in 1978 he oversaw a \$60 million loan to Communist Vietnam. More recently, CFR member McNamara has been appearing on television as a peacenik, and has coauthored articles for *Foreign Affairs* opposing the construction of SDI (the Strategic Defense Initiative).

Averell Harriman served as Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, and was later chief negotiator at the Paris peace talks. Harriman, as we have noted, was a trailblazer of trade with the Bolsheviks. He was instrumental in bringing the Communists to power in Romania.²⁰¹ Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin customarily attended Harriman's birthday parties, and even vacationed with him in Florida.²⁰²

Another critical Establishment figure was William Bundy, appointed-Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs in 1964, the same year he became a director of the CFR. The Pentagon Papers later exposed him as a major architect of our Vietnam policy. It was he who "prematurely" drafted the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. And it was his brother, McGeorge Bundy (CFR) who, as National Security Adviser, oversaw the mission that resulted in the Tonkin incident. McGeorge went on to become president of the Ford Foundation.

William Bundy was certainly no Bag-waving anti-Communist. He had once donated \$400 to the Alger Hiss defense fund.²⁰³ In 1972, David Rockefeller chose him as the new editor of *Foreign Affairs*, replacing Hamilton Fish Armstrong, who was retiring after fifty years of service. Under Bundy's guidance, *Foreign Affairs* began to repudiate Cold War attitudes. J. Robert Moskin, writing in *Town & Country*, notes that "Bundy surprised his critics by publishing articles in *Foreign Affairs* that questioned the wisdom of American intervention in Southeast Asia."²⁰⁴

Thus a grand paradox crystallized. Bundy had helped get us into the no-win war; now he edited a journal suggesting that Vietnam proved the futility of challenging Communism. His apologists believe that he was being penitent after realizing his errors in Vietnam. But there remains another possibility: that it was planned this way. Further insight can be derived by tracing the career of Bundy's father-in-law — Dean Acheson.

Acheson and the "Wise Men"

Acheson, like Bundy, attended Groton, Yale, and Harvard Law School. At the latter he became a protégé of the leftist professor Felix Frankfurter, who got him a job in Washington. Even before the Soviet Union was recognized by the U.S., Joseph Stalin hired Acheson to represent Bolshevik interests in America. During the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, he alternated between private law practice and public service. In 1945, he told a Madison Square Garden rally of the Soviet-American Friendship Society: "We understand and agree with the Soviet leaders that to have friendly governments along her borders is essential both for the security of the Soviet Union and for the peace of the world."²⁰⁵ This attitude was reflected in Acheson's diplomacy. While Under Secretary of State, he approved a \$90 million loan for Poland, even though our ambassador to that country, Arthur Bliss Lane, protested because of the Communist government's severe human rights abuses. To secure the loan, the Poles had retained Acheson's law firm, which made over \$50,000 on the deal.²⁰⁶

Donald Hiss, brother of Soviet spy Alger Hiss, was Acheson's law partner. In the State Department, Acheson helped Alger himself, as well as several other men later identified as spies or security risks (John Stewart Service, John Carter Vincent, Lauchlin Currie) to high positions. He promoted Service even after the FBI had caught him passing secrets to Communist agents. It was this Acheson clique that helped push China into Mao Tse-tung's hands, causing a furor in the U.S. When Ambassador Lane heard that Acheson had been appointed Secretary of State, he said: "God help the United States!"²⁰⁷ Acheson became a byword to many Americans. On December 15, 1950, the Republicans in the House of Representatives resolved *unanimously* that he be removed from office.

He was—by the voters' repudiation of the Truman administration in 1952. And many breathed a sigh of relief.

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But although his public career was over, his influence was not. Acheson's law offices were strategically located across Lafayette Park from the White House. He became an unofficial advisor to the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. Nixon even had a phone installed in Acheson's winter home in Antigua.²⁰⁸

Acheson had a crucial role in bringing about the Vietnam escalation. The meaning of this must be weighed in light of his past, even though some claimed his views on Communism hardened in old age.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, it should be noted, had inherited the Presidency after John F. Kennedy's death in 1963. He also inherited Kennedy's Establishment advisors, with whom he did not harmonize well. Unlike JFK, he had little in common with these men. He was not a Harvard-CFR intellectual. A graduate of Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, he had risen to prominence in Congress. Kennedy chose him as his running mate in 1960 for his capacity to win Southern votes and his influence within the Senate. When Johnson sought to retain the Presidency in the 1964 election, the Establishment backed him to the hilt: Barry Goldwater was the Republican nominee and, as such, was the first GOP Presidential candidate in decades it had not controlled. Indeed, Goldwater represented nearly everything the Establishment was against. For that reason, the mass media was arrayed against him, and he was falsely characterized as a fanatic who would start a nuclear war and snatch social security checks from the elderly. These scare tactics sufficed to give Johnson a landslide victory. Nevertheless, relations remained shaky between LBJ and the Establishment administrators surrounding him. He resented their arrogance, but also admired their intellects. In any case, he probably trusted that they would not do anything deliberately contrary to America's interests.

During the Vietnam War, Johnson met periodically with an advisory group he himself called "the Wise Men"—fourteen VIP's, twelve of whom were CFR members. Acheson was chief among these. McCloy, Lovett, and Harriman were included in the gatherings.

In 1965, Johnson was reluctant to heighten our role in Vietnam any further, and explained his reasons before the assembled patriarchs. The Isaacson and Thomas book, *The Wise Men*, which is intended as a tribute to some of these men, relates:

Acheson fidgeted impatiently as he listened to Johnson wallow in self-pity. Finally, he could stand it no longer. "I blew my top and told him he was wholly right on Vietnam," Acheson wrote [to Truman], "that he had no choice except to press on, that explanations were not as important as successful action."

Acheson's scolding emboldened the others. "With this lead my colleagues came thundering in like the charge of the Scots Greys at Waterloo," Acheson exulted to the former President. "they were fine; old Bob Lovett, usually cautious, was all out."²⁰⁹

In effect, the Wise Men seized Johnson by the collar, kicked his butt, and told him to escalate. They were almost unanimous in this exhortation. William Bundy said that this was the occasion when "America committed to land war on the mainland of Asia. No more critical decision was made."²¹⁰

Each year, as the war intensified, Johnson consulted the Wise Men, who told him to push on.

But in private they felt differently. Halberstam notes: "As early as May 1964 Dean Acheson stopped a White House friend at a cocktail party and said he thought Vietnam was going to turn out much worse than they expected, that it was all much weaker than the reports coming in . . ."²¹¹ And Acheson's correspondence from that period demonstrates pessimism about the war he did not share with the President.

Averell Harriman played the hawk for Johnson, so much that he received a scolding from former Kennedy aide

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Arthur Schlesinger. Harriman brought Schlesinger to his hotel room, took a stiff drink, and told him confidentially that he was *against* the war.²¹²

William Bundy wrote in a memoir that he had misgivings about the pro-escalation advice the elder statesmen had given the President, but he did not so advise Johnson.

Referring to Acheson, Lovett, and McCloy, *The Wise Men* asks:

Even in 1965, they harbored serious doubts about committing U.S. troops to the defense of the government of South Vietnam. Why did they fail to convey those doubts to the President?²¹³

That, of course, is the \$64,000 question! But Isaacson and Thomas supply no satisfying answer.

In March 1968, in *Science & Mechanics*, a dozen top U.S. military officers made individual statements concerning Vietnam. They summarized how the restrictions on the armed forces had prolonged the war, and asserted that the U.S. could win in a few months if only it would adopt realistic strategy, which they outlined. Such views were considered extremely dangerous in Establishment circles.

That same month, Johnson was scheduled to see the Wise Men again. He expected that, as usual, he would be patted on the back and told to continue the war. But before the conference, the Wise Men received negative briefings about the war from three individuals whom the wily Acheson had been consulting over the previous month.

The next morning, Johnson sat down with the Wise Men, and received the shock of his life. Based on that single set of briefings, they had been wondrously transformed from hawks to doves: the war, they said, was a rotten idea after all. Acheson, seated next to the President, bluntly informed him that thoughts of victory were illusory, and that the time had come for the disengagement process.²¹⁴ *The Wise Men* tells us:

General Maxwell Taylor was appalled and amazed” at the defection. “The same mouths that said a few months before to the President, “You’re on the right course, but do more,’ were now saying that the policy was a failure,” recalled Taylor. He could think of no explanation, except that Army Council on Foreign Relations friends were living in the cloud of The New York Times.”²¹⁵

Johnson hit the roof.

When the meeting broke up, he grabbed a few of the stragglers and began to rant. Who the hell brainwashed those friends of yours?” he demanded of George Ball. He stopped General Taylor. “What did those damn briefers say to you?”

This, then, is the picture that now appears to be emerging. For years, the Wise Men had prodded LBJ deeper into Vietnam, until he had committed over a half million combat troops. Now, in effect, they said: “It’s all a mistake—sorry about that,” and left him holding the bag. It was he, not they, who bore the fury of a rebelling America.

Johnson briefly entertained thoughts of defiantly pushing for victory, but realized he would receive no support from the political infrastructure surrounding him. LBJ’s March 1968 meeting with the Wise Men was his last. According to Townsend Hoopes, then Under Secretary of the Air Force, “The President was visibly shocked by the magnitude of the defection.”²¹⁶ One aide reported that it left him “deeply shaken.”²¹⁷ Five days later, a broken man, he announced on television: “. . . I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.” A surprised nation was left to conclude that this had been prompted by the

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good LBJ, showing Bobby Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy were making in the Democratic primaries.

Ultimately, culpability for the war would be focused on the military. In 1971, Louisiana Congressman John Rarick declared:

The My Lai massacre, the sentencing of Lt. Calley to life imprisonment, “The Selling of the Pentagon,” and the so-called Pentagon papers are leading examples of attempts to shift all the blame to the military in the eyes of the people.

But no one identifies the Council on Foreign Relations—the CFR—a group of some 1400 Americans which includes as members almost every top level decision and policy maker in the Vietnam War.

CBS tells the people it wants them to know what is going on and who is to blame. Why doesn't CBS tell the American people about the CFR and let the people decide whom to blame for the Vietnam fiasco—the planners and top decision makers of a closely knit financial industrial-intellectual aristocracy or military leaders under civilian control who have had little or no voice in the overall policies and operations and who are forbidden by law to tell the American people their side.

The My Lai incident, “The Selling of the Pentagon,” and the Pentagon papers have not scratched the surface in identifying the responsible kingmakers of the new ruling royalty, let alone in exposing the CFR role in Vietnam. Who will tell the people the truth if those who control “the right to know machinery” also control the government?²¹⁸

The war in Vietnam was not created by conservative “hawks.” It was created by luminaries of the CFR—whose globalism and tolerance of Communism is a matter of record. As in the world wars, it was these two systems that emerged as the victors. At home, nationalism—the anathema of the CFR—hit an all-time low, as embittered young Americans lost faith in their country. And on the other side of the world, little North Vietnam, like North Korea and Cuba before it, was allowed prestigious triumph against the mighty USA. Furthermore, thanks in part to the war's sapping of the Defense budget, the Soviets, militarily inferior at the war's outset, had reached parity with us by its end.

The Vietnam War is a mystery only if seen through the accumulated myths surrounding it—such as that it resulted from blunder, or from overconfident jingoism. Viewed, however, as an exercise in deliberate mismanagement, it ceases to mystify, for its outcome fulfilled precisely the goals traditional to the CFR.