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War: The Bleeding Of America

Chapter 6

We are not going to bomb civilian targets in the North. We are not using the great power that could finish off North Vietnam in an afternoon, and we will not. But it would be the height of immorality for the United States at this point to leave Vietnam, and in leaving, to turn over to the North Vietnamese the fate of 17 million South Vietnamese who do not want a Communist government, to turn it over to them.

—Richard M. Nixon July 27, 1972

Nothing must be done to endanger communications between this country and the Communists. No reference must be made to Communism as the enemy. Furthermore this country is not striving for victory in the Cold War. The United States should not under any circumstances refer to Communist tactics as 'brutal,' nor should the word 'slavery' be used in referring to Communist takeovers of captive people.

—George W. Ball
Under Secretary of State in the Kennedy Administration

> *The peculiar notion of weakening ourselves while beefing up the enemy got started back in the days of Robert S. McNamara as an offshoot of more general theories about* détente *with the Soviet Union. Under the patronage of the Kennedy-McNamara regime, a group of left-wing intellectuals began cranking out studies which argued that we should build a "structure" of mutual trust with the Communists, reassure the Kremlin by pulling back on our forward defenses, and approach the goal of global disarmament by sustaining a "balance of terror" in which pervasive fear of nuclear holocaust would make the idea of scrapping military hardware seem attractive by comparison.*
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> *As set forth in a volume called* The Liberal Papers *and various documents produced by the tax-supported Institute for Defense Analysis, these theories converged in a bizarre doctrine of "mutual assured destruction " in which it was considered* desirable *that the Soviet Union be able to obliterate our cities, just as we were capable of obliterating theirs.*
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> *As* Liberal Papers *author Walter Millis put it, the end-product of such reasoning was the notion that a "genuinely deterrent policy would require the United States to cooperate with the Soviet Union in insuring that their retaliatory force was as invulnerable as ours and that our population was equally exposed to attack with theirs."*

> *Though the idea was considered far-out at the time by Millis himself, it rapidly became converted into official policy through the efforts of McNamara and Kennedy disarmament guru Jerome B. Wiesner. In relatively short order the Kennedy strategists set about to build "structure" and reassure the Communists by signing the Moscow test ban treaty, cutting back manned bombers ["provocative" to the Soviets] and holding up work on anti-missile defenses. The thrust of our policy became to insure that our defenses were downgraded to signal our pacific intentions to the Kremlin, and led to such chilling furbelows as that reported by defense expert Donald Brennan, in which McNamara ordered that the Sentinel ABM have "some specific weaknesses introduced to make the system more easily penetrable by the Soviets. "*
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> —M. Stanton Evans
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> *Sometimes in the past we have committed the folly of throwing away our arms. Under the mercy of Providence, and at great cost and sacrifice, we have been able to recreate them when the need arose. But if we abandon our nuclear deterrent, there will be no second chance. To abandon it now would be to abandon it forever.*

—Prime Minister Winston Churchill

A cease-fire in the Vietnam War was formally proclaimed at 8 a.m. January 28, 1973. By February 17 the Associated Press reported that South Vietnamese and North Vietnamese had suffered nearly 15,000 casualties since the "cease-fire." Some of this fighting was called the fiercest of the war. Fighting continued also in Laos and Cambodia during that time. The United States withdrew the last of its forces from South Vietnam on March 29, 1973. Within the year following the so-called cease-fire, the two sides in Vietnam had inflicted as many casualties upon each other as the number suffered by Americans in the entire war—more than 350,000.

Continued fighting after a cease-fire is normal procedure for the Communists. Nor would the conclusion of one war mean that they would not ignite another conflict elsewhere soon thereafter. (The Soviet Communists instigated the war in the Middle East in October 1973.) We are concerned here with history and the matter of getting it straight. Specifically, we are concerned with the bleeding of America in two great wars in Korea and Indochina. The two Vietnams, South and North, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand figure in the second war. A cease-fire was declared in Laos on February 22, 1973, but the fighting there continued. It went on also in Cambodia, where no cease-fire had been reached by mid-1974.

The Korean War was the second great post-World War II disaster in Asia, the first having been the handing over of China to the Communists. General Curtis E. LeMay, former Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, reported in 1966 that there were 3.5 million military casualties on both sides in three years in Korea, "where we also pulled our Sunday punch. Over a million civilians were killed and other millions left homeless in this protracted land struggle," he added. "I can't believe that this is the most humane way to fight a war." Indeed it was not. But as it turned out, that was not the object. The object was to avoid embarrassing the Soviets and Chinese

Communists by mentioning their involvement in the war; and to make sure that the U.S. did not emerge victorious. Undoubtedly, Joseph Stalin planned the Korean War, probably in collaboration with Mao Tse Tung, who was in Moscow from December 1949 to February 14, 1950. The war started on June 25, 1950. The Truman Administration vociferously maintained the dual fiction that the war was initiated and prosecuted by the North Koreans without assistance or direction from their Soviet masters, and that the Chinese Communists engaged in the fighting as "volunteers." This fiction was maintained even though the Chinese were led by General Lin Piso, a top Red officer. (He became later the Defense Minister of Red China, and in 1970 was killed during an alleged attempt to flee from China to the Soviet Union.) On February 1, 1951, the United Nations General Assembly identified Communist China as the aggressor in Korea, not mentioning either the Soviets or the North Koreans.

This was typical of the way the war was managed by the United Nations—with a minimum regard for the obvious realities of the conflict. The Soviet Government, author of this war tragedy, was allowed to retain its membership in the United Nations. It even utilized the U.N.'s New York headquarters as a base for relaying the messages and plans of the U.N. Commander, General Douglas MacArthur, to Moscow. From there, they were sent directly to the North Korean high command. Finally, General MacArthur, one of America's greatest military leaders, was dismissed by President Truman because the General sought victory in Korea. MacArthur bitterly charged that "Washington planning was not directed toward methods of counterattack, but rather toward the best way to run." It was only the beginning of the post-World War II physical bleeding of America, a curtain-raiser for the Vietnam War, which maimed and killed more than twice as many Americans.

A total of 5,764,143 Americans served in the United States Armed Forces in the Korean War—almost three million of them in the Army; nearly one half million in the Marine Corps; 1,285,000 in the Air Force; 1,177,000 in the Navy; and 44,143 in the Coast Guard. Battle deaths totaled 33,629. There were 20,617 deaths from other causes, and 103,284 were wounded. United States combat casualties in Vietnam totaled 46,520 killed, 10,389 dead from non-hostile causes (accidents and illness), 303,704 wounded, and 1,900 missing or prisoners, 560 of whom were released early in 1973. More than 3.3 million Americans served in Southeast Asia. The South Vietnamese battle deaths through January 13, 1973 were estimated at 183,528 and the Communist dead were estimated at 924,048. If there were four wounded for each Vietnamese death (a much lower hypothetical ratio than actually occurred among Americans) the total of North and South Vietnamese casualties (dead and wounded) would be more than 5 million.

The Korean "peace talks" lasted for two years (July 1951-July 1953), during which time the Americans suffered more than 70,000 casualties. The equally fraudulent "peace talks" on the Vietnam War began at Paris on May 10, 1968. From then till February 1972, the Americans suffered more than 181,000 casualties (22,000 dead)* during offensive after offensive launched by the North Vietnamese, and there were vast numbers of civilian as well as battlefield casualties among the South Vietnamese. Peace talks are strictly a bleeding operation with the Communists, who have no intention of reaching any kind of compromise. In spite of their protestations that their

aims are benevolent, they show not the slightest regard for human life. If there is any of the milk of human kindness in them, it was not revealed by any action recorded in either of these wars.

Conversely, the great sacrifices made by the nations of the West ultimately helped to build up the Communists in both the Soviet Union and Red China. Our national news media as a whole showed no great concern over the carnage. Although newspapers throughout the country printed pictures of Americans who gave their lives, the news media in New York—with the notable exception of the *Daily News*—treated the conflict as if they were being told to propagandize for the enemy. Indeed, it was the view of many U.S. military officers who served in Vietnam that this segment of the media was providing comfort and assistance to the Communists. There was never any doubt in the highest military quarters that the Americans alone could have won the war in a few weeks if permitted to do so. President Nixon himself said on July 27, 1972: "We are not using the great power that could finish off North Vietnam in an afternoon, and we will not." He claimed, however, that the United States was acting as humanely as possible.

The American communications media themselves were guilty of deliberately creating every excuse to throw obstacles that helped to prevent the winning of the war. Broadly speaking, they were guilty of the following acts:

1. A vicious and continued undermining of every government of South Vietnam, from the Diem Administration in the early 1960's to the Thieu Government in 1972. Problems in South Vietnam were usually attributed to the Saigon Government, not to the North Vietnamese invaders.

2. A blatant smearing of the South Vietnamese armies and people.

3. Defense of the restraining of Americans and Allies so as to enable entire battalions of North Vietnamese to escape and fight again, leading to thousands of unnecessary casualties. They opposed the use of any kind of gas to flush the enemy out of tunnels. They condemned search-and-destroy operations. They denounced defoliation as a means of exposing the enemy. They denied the enemy's flagrant use of Cambodia as a sanctuary for years. And they hysterically attacked President Nixon's drive into Cambodia, one of the most sensible military moves undertaken by the Allies in Southeast Asia, which eventually saved the lives of many Americans and others. The media attacked rain-making as an alteration of the environment (never mind that it undoubtedly saved lives on both sides). They vigorously opposed the bombing of North Vietnam, even though the military was seldom, if ever, allowed to bomb effectively. Targets chosen by the military were in most cases put off limits by the Defense Department, under Robert Strange McNamara. When the North was being effectively bombed in 1972, a propaganda campaign in the United States was undertaken to stop it by calling it "dike bombing," though no dikes were targeted, and it is entirely possible that the damage done to the dikes was the result of North Vietnamese antiaircraft shells falling back upon the dikes and exploding there. Also, some dikes were damaged by floods. Later, in December 1972, very heavy strategic bombing by the United States

was denounced as being directed against civilians and hospitals, though, strangely, dikes were not again mentioned. All these media attacks also provided the enemy with a propaganda lever.

4. Vast publicity for the My Lai cases, which involved Americans accused of killing more than 100 South Vietnamese civilians; meanwhile hundreds of similar actions, cold-bloodedly ordered by the North Vietnamese Government, were either ignored completely or played down. *The New York Times* at first gave little space to the gruesome murders of between 4,000 and 5,800 South Vietnamese at Hue in 1968, although it devoted entire pages to the My Lai cases, in which American soldiers were likened by *Times* writers to Nazis who had killed millions.

5. Reporting and playing up of mutinies of Americans on the battlefield as victories while desertions of South Vietnamese soldiers were cited as proofs of weakness.

The aim was apparently to blame the United States, to shame it, to prevent any victory, and to reduce its power, while the real culprits— the North Vietnamese Communist invaders and their Russian and Chinese Communist suppliers—were ignored. President Lyndon B. Johnson paid with his political life for refusing to win the war. And President Kennedy might still be alive if he had wiped out the Communists in Cuba. The American people always wanted to win the war as quickly as possible, thus saving lives on both sides. They wanted to follow the most humane, honorable, and sensible method for ending the conflict, since any other would damage our own country, and our ties and influence around the world. Even Americans with little knowledge of foreign affairs understood that. **

In the spring of 1972 President Nixon ordered mining of the rivers, harbors, and canals of North Vietnam, and the bombing of industrial and military targets there, in retaliation for the massive invasion of South Vietnam that began March 31, 1972. About 11,000 mines were dropped into North Vietnamese waters, coastal and inland, and strategic targets were bombed totally in 1972 and early 1973. This presidential action was in defiance of the idea often expressed in the American news media that such a move might bring on a general war with Russia and Communist China. (Earlier in the year the President had visited Mao Tse tung and Chou En lai in Peking. And a few months later he went to Moscow to sign a number of military and civil agreements, while the bombing of North Vietnam continued, and the rivers and harbors were still mined.) Thus in spite of the fact that throughout the entire Vietnam War the media had labored to create the fear that the mining of Haiphong harbor and the bombing of Hanoi's industrial and military installations would cause general war, it did not occur. §

Before that fallacy was clearly exposed as fraudulent, however, more than 360,000 Americans had been killed or wounded or had died from disease or accidents. And more than five million South and North Vietnamese battle casualties had occurred, in addition to countless civilian dead and injured.

What the news media in the United States had been saying, in effect, was that the Russian and

Chinese Communists would not make it a general war, so long as we simply continued piling up casualties on both sides but made no attempt to win. But the moment we began to seek victory, the Soviets and Chinese would enter the conflict and make it a wide-open war. Actually, the United States as well as South and North Vietnam were being bled. The lesson was clear: Wars must be fought to quick victory or not at all. The East Europeans, who know the Soviet Reds best, feel that there was never any likelihood that they would take on the United States in a war over Indochina. It is far more likely that the Soviet manipulators viewed the Vietnam War strictly as an enervating operation. They knew that the United States would never seek a clear-cut victory. They sought, therefore, to prolong the conflict for its great nuisance effect in America and around the world. In this Moscow had success aplenty.

On April 30, 1975, the Vietnam War came to a formal end with the surrender of the Government of South Vietnam in Saigon to the Communist invaders. The last Americans were taken out of Saigon by helicopter. “This action closes a chapter in the American experience,” said President Gerald Ford. After the American Civil War, it was the sorriest chapter. It was another in the series of defeats inflicted upon the free world by the Communists since the end of World War II.

Accuracy in Media, Inc., in its AIM/REPORT of April 1975 published an excellent analysis of “How the Media Helped Defeat Us” and the method used in “Covering Up The Consequences.” But the media did not do it alone. The many and nefarious ways in which the United States Department of Defense under Secretary McNamara positively prevented America from winning the war are hardly touched upon here. And these actions caused many thousands of Americans and their allies to die or be wounded on the battlefields of Indo-China.

We know now that the no-victory principles stated by Walt Whitman Rostow during the Kennedy Administration were in fact set forth even more specifically in National Security Council document number 68 (NSC-68). That instrument, signed by President Truman on April 12, 1950, was classified and kept secret for twenty-five years. In 1975 it was declassified so quietly that the public, even the cognoscenti, were unaware of it.

Alice Widener devoted the September 3, 1976 issue of her magazine, *U.S.A.*, to NSC-68. From that publication, we learned the truth about the imposition of the no-victory principle upon the United States. NSC-68 almost certainly brought on the Korean War, for it assured the Soviet Government that it need not fear defeat. It was in that document that Secretary of State Dean Acheson put Korea outside the line that the United States was prepared to defend in the Pacific. It strains credulity to suppose that the Russians were not immediately informed of the contents of NSC-68. Mrs. Widener describes its purposes as follows:

> Despite complete recognition of the stark reality of the Soviet threat to our country, both military and ideological, the principal aims of NSC-68 are:
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> > 1.—to avoid nuclear war but to accept a Soviet nuclear first strike against us if necessary, hoping to ward it off by building up our own and our allies’ military, economic and social strength as a “deterrent”;

> 2.—to confine U.S. military actions to strictly limited counteractions;
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> 3.—to seek “coexistence” with the Soviet Union in the hope that democracy would win out eventually against dictatorship, that time would be on our side, and that the USSR would undergo changes eventually leading to abandonment of its goal of world domination;
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> 4.—to try to “contain” the expansion of the Soviet Union beyond its own territory, but not to do anything “directly challenging Soviet prestige.”

Almost all of NSC-68 is based on the analysis and policies advocated in George F. Kennan’s 8,000-word paper, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” first drafted by Kennan in 1945 while he was charge d’affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow with Ambassador Averell Harriman.

The National Security Council document itself, on page 6, described the aims of the Soviet leaders and world Communism:

> The fundamental design of those who control the Soviet Union and the international communist movement is to retain and solidify their absolute power, first in the Soviet Union and second in the areas now under their control. In the minds of the Soviet leaders, however, achievement of this design requires the dynamic extension of their authority and the ultimate elimination of any effective opposition to their authority.
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> The design, therefore, calls for the complete subversion or forcible destruction of the machinery of government and structure of society in the countries of the non-Soviet world and their replacement by an apparatus and structure subservient to and controlled from the Kremlin. To that end Soviet efforts are now directed toward domination of the Eurasian land mass. The United States, as the principal center of power in the non-Soviet world and the bulwark of opposition to Soviet expansion, is the principal enemy whose integrity and vitality must be subverted or destroyed by one means or another if the Kremlin is to achieve its fundamental design.

Mrs. Widener comments with unconcealed bitterness:

> NSC-68 determined and evidently still determines American foreign policy and military strategy. The philosophy of NSC-68 became so pervasive that it constituted the way of thinking of the U.S. Government no matter who was President, Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense. The philosophy of NSC-68 still is all-pervasive in U.S. foreign policy.
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> Every American has a right to know what is in NSC-68. It is the key to the lock of the secret box containing all the answers to all the agonized questions asked about our no-win military strategy and overall foreign policy by so many Americans, both prominent and plain citizens.

Not only are the policies ofNSC-68 in effect today; they were also in effect between 1945 and April 12, 1950, when they became the official principles of the United States Government in diplomatic and military affairs. It is these principles and policies that have caused the great loss of American, allied, and enemy lives in two great wars, and has stultified American behavior in many other ways.

* U.S. News & World Report, February 7, 1972.

** *A Soldier Reports,* by General William C. Westmoreland is indispensable to a full understanding of the Vietnam War.

§ While President Nixon was in Moscow on this visit Mr. Brezhnev angrily denounced him, in a face-to-face meeting, for the bombing. The Soviet leader was said to have been in a towering, livid rage. It was not reported at the time. Yet the Soviet Government made no threats of war.