

Students Speak Out- Viet Nam, C.V.V. & Dr. Barnard

(Editor's Note: The following letter was received last week by a member of the Vets Club from Cpl. J. P. Anderson, a former student at NMU who is with the Marines in Viet Nam. I feel it says more than anything I could add.)

11 Oct., 1965

Dear Mike,

I am writing this letter from someplace south of DaNang, Viet Nam.

I have been here nearly six weeks now. For the first month we didn't stay in one spot for more than a couple of days but for the last two weeks or so we have been living in E.P. Tents in what might be called a rear area.

To date "Charlie" Co. has lost about 30-35 men of which three were KIA's (killed in action). One being my platoon leader which was a pity. With a little toneing down he could have been a first rate officer.

I am a 3,5 squad leader, having got my rank back after 24 days. Incidentally, I came back in on the 6th of July.

It gets hot as hell over here with the humidity just as high. On one patrol we lost six men to the heat which reached the 130's.

All in all it hasn't been too bad. We catch a lot of sniper fire and an occasional grenade gets through into your fox hole.

We lost two rocket men that way. It's frustrating as hell in the war. You can't tell who the V.C. are and quite often you can't fire even though fired upon because of the innocent bystanders who like as not are being held there for the express purpose of using them as shields or hostages.

The V.C. come out of the surrounding mountains and intimidate the people and take their rice. No

wonder they are scared and won't cooperate with us.

Not only do we have to convince the people that they should help us and point out where the V.C. are hiding, show us where the booby traps and mines are, but we have to be able to back up our promises of protection, etc., which is pretty rough considering the number of villages scattered all over the area.

How are Buck and Denny and the boys in the Vets Club?

No doubt you all celebrated your return to school with a free-flowing social.

Speaking of beer, that's one of the few luxuries we have to look forward to. Half the time there's no ice which means warm beer.

The other day I really hung one on. There's this "house" just outside the perimeter of our base camp. I went down there and bought a case of the local beer "Tiger beer" and man did I get plowed. I guess it must have been the tension and nerves but I sure let off some steam that afternoon. It's a good thing I didn't have to man an outpost that night.

Speaking of casualties one of the "wiremen" attached to the Co. was captured by the V.C. We found him three days later with his arms tied behind his back floating in a river. Arm broken, two bullets in his legs, one in the back of the head, and two in his chest I think. According to some of the local populace he killed one V.C. and wounded two others before being captured.

My address is on the envelope so you had best write and let me know the latest news.

Reckon I'll close here as my candle is running low.

Your friend,
J. P. Anderson

To the Editor;

In all due respect to Dr. Barnard whom I feel to be very sincere in his beliefs I should like to make clear several observations. The first is that of why we are in South Vietnam. Is the prevention of Communist takeover vital to our national interest. I believe it is. The U.S. Government believes it is. We have made the decision and now we are committed. However, this does not mean the U.S. cannot change policy or course of action. The U.S. has never lost a military confrontation to gain what it considered vital to its national security. It has at times lost many men gaining these objectives. Do not forget that there are many North Vietnam army units operating in the south under the direction of the leaders in the North. Normally these circumstances would lead to a major war between many countries as it has in the past. Why is this so different? When are you going to fight? Where are you going to draw the line? In the Philippines, or maybe in Hawaii? Is that close enough to home. South Vietnam is the test because we made it so. If their aggression succeeds there, then no underdeveloped country is safe from Communism. If there is ever going to be peace in this world it will mean little if it is dictated by the Communists. World peace will not come by giving in to the Communists. They must be convinced that their goals of aggression will be met at all consequences. Only then will there be peace in the world.

If Communism would be better for the people than the war now going on then there is little hope for the future. Do you think the people want Communism? They want a better life than they had before the war. They will never get it under Communism but they could have it some day in a type of democracy. Understandably you don't develop democracy at bayonet point. After all, Communism has already done much for South Vietnam. The Viet Cong which would take over the country have killed and kidnapped about 8,000 village leaders and officials. It has killed about 25,000 South Vietnamese soldiers a year. The Viet Cong have terrorized most of the population. It has stopped food from going to market and brought the economy to a halt. What truth is there in a system that takes a country by force at the expense of the people?

To your second point, the right to protest I would agree with you in part. You are entitled to your own opinion as long as it is within the law. If you are being silenced then there is something wrong with our society. But the majority rules and you must accept this even if we are wrong. The Communist leaders are now believing the minority of desertors to our policy. This is wrong because it is costing American lives and they do not believe our real intentions. A few people are convincing our enemies that we do not believe in what we are doing and we do or we would not be there. Are you going to let those men die for nothing? You owe something to those men. They are willing to die for what they believe. They have faith in their country. Do you share that faith?

Peter Clark
November 1, 1965

Dear Editor,

When this letter reaches the Northern News, the excitement generated by Tuesday's demonstration will, no doubt, have subsided. From prior indications, the C.V.V. has done a fine job organizing its march. It would have been fitting had these college students spent an equal amount of time to the organization of their ideas.

The fliers distributed in the dorms promised not only a demonstration, but also the opportunity to gain additional information. Accordingly, I called one of the extension numbers listed to ask a few questions.

First, I wanted to determine if the C.V.V. was a campus organization. My inquiry elicited the response that they represented the "American Students". However, it developed that the "American Students" is not an organization but rather a term that is meant to cover all of us. It is a known fact, how-

Dear Students,

I personally think that it is about time to put an end to the idea that your government is trying to suppress your thoughts and the expressions of them. I see people marching in the streets and cities protesting everything from equal rights to the protection of cats and dogs.

The thing that I, many of my fellow citizens, your government, and our soldiers in Viet Nam, feel is that through the expression of the ideas that many hold so dear, we are being misinterpreted, and these ideas are being thought of as

ever, that there are students legitimately concerned with our policy in Viet Nam who are in disagreement with the position of this group. The fact that such disagreement is necessary and helpful to the proper functioning of our system of government is made clear by John K. Jessup in an editorial in the October 29 issue of "Life" magazine.

But the C.V.V. met my inquiries abruptly by banging down the telephone. Thirty minutes later, I called again and accepted their apologies. The explanation given for their behavior was that I was wasting their time and tying-up the phone.

I submit that this attitude is highly unfavorable to the best interests of higher education and the proper functioning of a democratic society. The college campus has long been noted as a forum for the free exchange of ideas.

Mary Cauhorn
318 Spooner
ext. 2563

the ideas of all the Americans as a whole.

Mr. Barnard stated in his letter to the Northern News (11-29-65) that the freedom of expression is so dear that he should be entitled to say whatever he believes. Let me ask him if it is right for a group of people to burn their draft cards because it is wrong in their minds to have a draft? Or is it right for a group of students to raise money to send to North Viet Nam to buy war goods for them?

(Cont. on page 3)

LETTERS

(Cont. from page. 2)

And to whomever may read this letter, let me ask if it is right that through these demonstrations the war is prolonged, more of our brave young men die, and more of our valuable resources are used for War? If we allow these types of demonstrations to continue, we are playing into the hands of the communists, and dividing American against American.

Let me say here that I am not trying to advocate the suppression of ideas and thoughts as being right. Quite the contrary. If a person feels so inspired and so dedicated to his beliefs, let him demonstrate, but not at the expense of his country or fellow men. Also let it be noted that your government is not stopping you from demonstrating but is trying to explain that through these demonstrations, the enemy is being helped by indirect means, by inspiration, while our boys are dying. Isn't this some sort of treason??????

Michael Carpenter

126 Payne

To The Editor . . . The C.V.V. Replies

To the Editor:

An editorial is supposed to contain the opinions of the editor. That is exactly what your editorial entitled "C.V.V." (Nov. 5, 1965) did contain. However, our committee feels very strongly that the majority of your editorialized facts are unfair, biased, and totally unjustified.

Taking the editorial where it differs with the truth, beginning with the third paragraph we read:

"I wonder how many of the participants know what they were marching for?"

With 2,000 leaflets distributed throughout the campus, to each students room, as well as banners and speeches before the demonstration which all carried the basic reasons for our demonstration, to a radio commentator's estimate of over 1200 students, the question would better be stated, "What student present didn't know what he was marching for?" For those not already knowledgeable to the purpose of the demonstration here are the basic things we wanted to emphasize from the very beginning.

1. We wanted to bolster morale of our soldiers fighting in Viet Nam who already have been subjected to many grossly exaggerated accounts of the college draft card burners.
2. We support a policy of victory in Viet Nam, not a stalemate which would follow withdrawal. Communist aggression from the North must cease in order for the war to come to the conference table. This statement is official policy of the U. S. State Dept.
3. We favor a free South Viet Nam with people not oppressed by the Viet Cong and Invading North Vietnamese.
4. If world communism is not contained in Viet Nam, Southeast Asia will surely be lost to the tentacles of totalitarian dictatorship. Where shall it be extended then? Australia? Hawaii? San Francisco?

Next in the editorial statements, Mr. Almy questions "that the entire show was valuable enough to bother the President of the United States at 2 in the morning with?" We are sure that even you, Mr. Editor, will understand that the President of the United States wouldn't be in a position vulnerable for phone calls from everyone in the entire country. An aide is who we reached and he said he would put a memorandum on his desk for the President to read in the morning.

The next and most misrepresented statement, (some would call it libel) read thus:

"I wonder about the leadership that told Mr. Robert Manning, he was unapologetic because he wouldn't give them sound equipment without going through the proper channels? Mr. Manning was a member of Uncle Sam's Army for four years?"

This statement came as a great surprise to the C.V.V. Committee of Six who most assuredly did not say anything of the kind to Mr. Manning. All equipment used for the speeches was obtained through proper channels and we challenge you, Mr. Editor, to the source of your information. Furthermore if you should quote Mr. Manning as your source, we sincerely wonder why Mr. Manning did not inform you that he was in the Coast Guard?

Your next editorial "fact" was:

"I wonder about the misrepresentation of a group that told Steve Mitchell that they had already talked to him and he had agreed to speak for them?"

When two C. V. V. Committee members met Mr. Mitchell for the first time, his identity was not known to them. When his identity was revealed to them, Mr. Mitchell was asked if our representative (Mr. Terry Hartfield) had contacted him? Upon Mr. Mitchell's reply that he had not heard from Mr. Hartfield we asked if he would check with Terry at his 4 o'clock class. At this point, no further contact between Mr. Mitchell and our Committee occurred. As for the

"Gross misrepresentation that told you that Mr. Mitchell had agreed to write a letter for us", we have only this to say: Apparently for lack of facts, Mr. Editor, you have let your imagination run wild. No member of C.V.V. has ever made a statement such as that you attribute to us.

The last editorial statement you made was: "I wonder too, how many of them would care to enlist and do something constructive to advance Uncle Sam's war?"

When our men are over in Viet Nam fighting, our committee, and apparently the people who marched with us, were proud to say, "WE SUPPORT YOU!" Perhaps in your eyes Mr. Editor, this is not constructive to demonstrate support for our G. I's rather than follow the lead of some "humanitarian" college students who's definition of constructive is to send blood, medical supplies, and even themselves

to the Viet Cong, America's enemy.

We hope these facts which are backed up by the people whom we have quoted, will clear up doubts as to the validity of our demonstration which you Mr. Editor, have irresponsibly conveyed to the N.M.U. student body.

Sincerely,
C.V.V., Committee for Victory in Viet Nam.
Jerry DeRossa, Sandy Ulmer,
Louis Tokle, Allen Salmi,
Larry Novess, Paul Walker

EDITOR'S COMMENT


At 12:30 Monday morning I was awakened by a knock at my door. Rubbing my heavy eyes I found the light switch, turned it on and opened the door. More rubbing brought the scene before me into focus. Standing there were the six members of the Committee for Victory in Viet Nam reacting somewhat awkwardly at the realization that they had gotten me out of bed. A quick glance assured me that no malice was intended and so, acting as calmly as I could, I inquired about the purpose of their early morning visit. I was handed the letter which is printed above. At this point it was obvious that my reaction to the letter was the foremost thought in their inquiring minds, and so I read.

I don't claim a degree of perfection which makes me automatically and consistently right. God knows, I'm the last person on campus who should be thought of as unquestionable. But I don't write an editorial without first checking the facts or quotes with those involved. In this case I did talk to Mr. Manning and Mr. Mitchell and my ensuing editorial was not a collection of "misrepresented statements". Both Bob and Steve will attest to that (as Steve Mitchell has done in a letter to the editor printed on this page).

Perhaps, before the C.V.V. starts screaming slander and libel they had better step out of the heady atmosphere of public recognition and come back down to earth. Borrowing an applicable statement made by a close friend of mine I can only add that there is 60¢ (cab fare) in the Northern News office for any patriotic individual who wishes to ride down to the post office and enlist.

The Editor

OFF-CAMPUS APPLICATIONS FOR SPRING SEMESTER, 1966, are available in the Student Personnel Office, K105. All applications should be returned no later than Mon., Nov. 22, 1965.



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Published weekly throughout the school year at Marquette, Michigan by the students of Northern Michigan University.
Entered as second class matter at Marquette, Michigan 49855, October 14, 1958, under the act of March 3, 1873.
Subscription by mail \$2.00 per year.
Editorial printed in The Northern News voice opinions of student writers; they do not necessarily reflect the views of the University.
Printed by Globe Printing - Ishpeming, Michigan

To the Editor:

I am sorry to ask for space again, but I think I ought to make two comments--on unrelated topics.

First, please stop referring to the "SDC"--"Student Disciplinary Committee." I was one of the group that recommended setting up the committee, and the proper name is "Committee on Student Conduct." Its aim is not to "discipline" or punish students but to provide a uniform, orderly, and fair procedure for dealing with offenses against the university community. It is my personal judgment that this aim has been achieved.

Second, those who publicly oppose our government's policy in Viet Nam are condemned on the ground that we may delude the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese into thinking that America is seriously divided and thus that we may strengthen their will to resist, encourage them to delay negotiation, and so increase the loss of American lives. The unstated assumption is that the Communists are now about ready to quit. There is, however, not the slightest evidence to support such wishful thinking. They are steadily increasing their commitment as we are increasing ours. Our government itself is trying to prepare us psychologically for a long war. I invite the critics of my position to supply a genuine argument.

Ellsworth Barnard

Dear Jim,

This is a letter in regards to your editorial in the last issue of Northern News. In your comments on the Committee for Victory in Viet Nam, you stated that the members of that group told me that I would speak for them in their demonstration and march of Tuesday November 2nd. I would like to clear up the details of exactly what happened.

On Monday, Nov. 1, I walked into the Student Government Office and heard a heated discussion going on between several members of the C.V.V., and several members of the Student Senate. They were talking about a possible speaker for their demonstration. They said they were contacting a political science major who is a part time announcer at radio station WDMJ to make the speech. I asked the member of the C.V.V. who made that comment what the person's name was who they were going to contact. They said they didn't know. I told them that I was the only person who fit that description.

Then one of the two gentlemen said that I was the person who would be making the speech? I asked them who was supposed to be contacting me and they said Terry Hartfield. I was certainly amazed to know that a group of individuals who I didn't know, representing a cause I knew nothing about, were going to have me speak for them.

To find out more about the group I asked them a few questions. One question concerned who gave them support for the march. They mentioned Dr. Harden, Dean Niemi, and Mrs. West. I went next door and asked Mrs. West if they had her support, and she said they did.

Then I asked if they had the support of the Vets Club. They said they did. One of the gentlemen said they had contacted several members of that club and they were holding a special meeting that night to support them. Since Mike McCarthy, the president of the Vets Club, was in the office at that time, I asked him if the statement was true. Mike said that it was not, and that he knew nothing about it.

I asked them several more questions because I wanted to know as much as possible about a group that was going to ask me to speak for them. In each case they gave rather confused answers. I didn't, at any time say I would, or would not, speak for them.

Let me stress that although I was never technically asked to speak, the two gentlemen in the office made it clear to me, and everyone else there, that I was the one who would be speaking. They even said that they would have two members of the faculty write my speech for me. After I heard this, I just shook my head, and left the office.

I hope that this clears up the matter of exactly what happened that day. Before I conclude, I would like to say that I agree whole heartedly in their cause, but I can not accept the method of organization that they used to have it.

Steve Mitchell
477 E. Arch. St.