

# VOICE

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## CANADIANS AND VIETNAM

- by Marjorie Stewart

Well, is it a federal, provincial or municipal responsibility? Surely it can't be mine, I'm only an individual citizen, and my only responsibility is to consume, and leave politics to the politicians. Are they doing a good enough job? Well, Canada is a noted peacemaker isn't she? And, after all, Nixon brought peace to Vietnam so we can all stop feeling a bit anxious about what was going on over there.

Every Canadian is responsible for all actions omitted or committed by our federal government: that's what democracy means. So we're responsible for a government that defies national legislation by expediting forbidden trade between Canada and S. Vietnam. And we're not likely to see this cynical duplicity challenged as the Nixon administration was challenged, since our system ensures that the group that controls Parliament is only answerable to a largely uninformed electorate every four years. Pretty good system, eh? For whom?

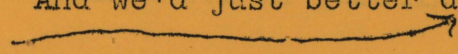
And every Canadian must bear the shame that our government recognises the Saigon administration as the only legitimate government of S. Vietnam, while at the same time being signatory to the Paris agreement which recognises both governments of S. Vietnam. Oh, we're a nation of great principles - a great many principles, any old principles, so many principles it's downright confusing which principles we act on until we start taking a peek at our trade and aid practices.

We really care, we Canadians, about suffering humanity. But we haven't a thing to say about the political prisoners in South Vietnam. Are there any? You'd never guess it from the statements of our government. Mr. Sharp even went there and, strange to relate, found no political prisoners. Pierre Elliott Trudeau is a "lovable guy" all right, but he doesn't waste any love on prisoners of a vicious regime also under the protection of our Big Daddy to the South.

But I guess we're really proud to be such close (if junior) partners with those wonderful peacemakers Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, who have performed the greatest miracle since the Immaculate Conception by creating peace where any poor, ignorant citizen would swear there was a war going on. Anyway, if we keep on calling them peacemakers we'll be really popular, and that's what's important. Isn't it?

So, I don't know how to explain why we simple-minded citizens are having a Week of Concern, September 29 to October 6. A week to spread the news about those prisoners who don't exist in a country which isn't at war, even although the great peacemakers have fixed that one up. We just are. And we'd just better do a good job of it.

WEEK OF CONCERN: See Page 2



# Week of Concern Sept. 29 - Oct. 6

FROM Canada Vietnam Newsletter, organ in Canada of the International Committee to Free South Vietnamese Political Prisoners from Detention, Torture and Death:-

"From Sept. 29 to Oct. 6, Committees all over the world will join with Canadian committees once again in an attempt to focus international attention on the serious violation of the Paris Accords, by the S. Vietnamese government, in the continuing imprisonment of the thousands of S. Vietnamese civilians. The WEEK will concentrate world support for the release of the prisoners and ask signator nations and guarantor nations to press for action. Canada is a guarantor of the Ceasefire Agreement, and we as Canadians share the international responsibility to protest their plight.

"WHY have a Week of Concern for the prisoners?

"People are still unaware of the problem.

"The WEEK is to be a gigantic teach-in to broaden public understanding of the issue, and in particular, of the Canadian Government's responsibility, as a one-time signator of the Peace Agreement (cancelled after withdrawal from ICCS) and a signator to the International Act on Vietnam - the guarantee for the provisions of the Ceasefire.

"...and so we have to follow through on commitments given by candidates in the last election:

- continue education of the MP's
- continue writing letters to and on behalf of prisoners
- raise funds to be sent to prisoners
- show the film "S. Vietnam: A Question of Torture"\*\*, have a speaker\*\* for church, union, service (etc.) groups
- help the above groups gather MP support for Canadian Gov't public action; supply the groups with source materials

(\*\*SEE PAGE 3)

"SUGGESTED PROGRAM for CANADA includes Cross-Canada Tour of Ex-Political Prisoners for S. Vietnam; a Petition to be sent to P.M. Trudeau later in the Fall; and a concentrated effort by each participating country to achieve release of 4 or 5 chosen prisoners."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION → write to the International Committee for S. Vietnamese Political Prisoners, Suite 201, 40 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto, Ont. - AND THEY NEED MONEY!!!

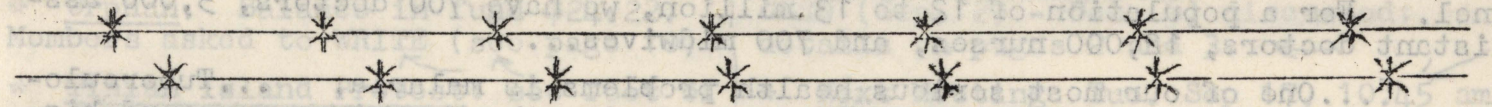
## LOCAL ACTIONS

IN VANCOUVER the International Committee is getting a Tiger Cage built to use for display during the Week of Concern. They plan to take it to as many meetings as possible (church, Trade Union, student) to build up interest for Demonstrations at the Court House in Vancouver on Oct. 25 and 26 (noon to 6 p.m.). And they plan to have young people (or anyone) sit in it, manacled, and to invite anyone else to "sample" it by sitting in it.

IN WASHINGTON, D.C. a similar tiger cage display has been successfully staged, with talks and leaflets, at the main steps of the Capitol - in mid-August it was already in its fourth week.

# WHAT WILL YOU DO?

- Hold a Ritual Meal on a beach or in a park, with a Tiger Cage?
- Ask your minister to preach on the subject?
- Arrange to show the film, with a speaker, to a group (service club, church group, school, trade union meeting or what have you?)? B.C. VOW VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDS speaker FRANK DINGMAN with the film "South Vietnam: A Question of Torture". Frank may be contacted at 1463 - 126A St., Ocean Park, Surrey, B.C. The powerful film, which is still sadly relevant today, recently won a second international award from New York. It is available from Mrs. A.M. Inglis (Kay), 3751 Selkirk, Vancouver 9, B.C.
- Any other ideas?
- Try to get at least one copy of Canada Vietnam Newsletter, No. 8 (July 1974), for your local VOW branch - it is full of information about the Week of Concern and the desperate reasons for holding it. Write to Ste. 201, 40 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto, Ontario.



## Even in Silence

You took away all the oceans and all the room.  
You gave me my shoe-size in earth with bars around it.  
Where did it get you? Nowhere.  
You left me my lips, and they shape words, even in silence.

by Osip Mandelstam, who died in a Stalin prison camp in 1938.

We are 5,000  
Here in this little corner of the city.  
How many are we - in all the cities of the world?  
All, all of us, our eyes fixed on death.  
How terrifying is the face of fascism!  
For them, blood is a medal  
Carnage is a heroic gesture.

Song, I cannot sing you well when I must sing out of fear.  
When I am dying of fright  
When I find myself in these endless moments  
Where silence and cries are the echoes of my song.

Last poem of Victor Jara, written in the National Stadium of Chile. Jara, a Chilean singer and composer, was imprisoned on the day of the coup. Though he was humiliated, tortured and killed, the junta could not silence his mind and spirit.

Reprinted from La Wisp, Jul-Aug 1974. We share La Wisp's view that "these poems speak for all political prisoners throughout the world, whether they be in S. Africa, Portugal, Spain, the Soviet Union, Chile, Brazil, Ireland, the United States..."

# SCARS OF WAR

PRG health minister calls for peace

When the Provisional Revolutionary Government (P.R.G.) of South Vietnam was formed in 1969, Dr. Duong Quynh Hoa was appointed Minister of Health, Social Affairs and Invalids. The following is excerpted from her statement to the European Medical Aid Committee, Paris, June 8, 1974.

"I have to speak about the political prisoners and I speak at first hand. I was arrested in 1960 by the Diem regime. My father was arrested three times, my brother was murdered.

"...We are now informed that instead of torture, the prisoners are being subjected to drugs. This is the greatest horror yet and we have to tell the whole world. They are now giving the prisoners morphine, heroin, and marijuana, orally and by intravenous or intramuscular injections. This is being done in the prisons of Chi Hoa, Thu Duc, Bien Hoa, and Poulo Condor, mostly in the interrogation centers.

"...(In the PRG area) we suffer from a great shortage of medical personnel. For a population of 12 to 13 million, we have 700 doctors, 5,000 assistant doctors, 12,000 nurses, and 700 midwives...

"...One of our most serious health problems is malaria. ...Tuberculosis, a direct result of living conditions during the war, is our second biggest problem. During the six years I spent in the liberated areas, I lived underground... Nothing is more painful than to live underground where you have the impression of being asphyxiated. It is as if you are in a prison. We knew it was the only way to escape from the bombing and of struggling for our world...

"A third problem is the health of our children. They have no normal development. They do not start walking until about 25 months, they only begin to speak from the age of two, they suffer from rickets and deformation of their limbs. No child can be considered a normal child in the PRG area.

"...We fear for (these children). We have no scientific documentation: it is quite impossible for us to say what the cause can be of the enormous number of congenital malformations in children and abortions in women...

"Our children have no toys; they have seen adults around them dying almost daily and they are terrified of the color of red. We are afraid of the terrible effect on them of the trauma of living in a war situation. It is a question of future generations.

"I do not even know if we can call them children. They do not know how to play. We had to tell them not to sing too loudly, or laugh loudly or shout, and I think our children will always bear the scars of these years of war.

"Our social problems are also enormous. We have 200,000 orphans and 250,000 war wounded. It is not easy for us. But we cannot just talk about humanitarian aid - our obsession is the problem of the war continuing and our thousands of compatriots suffering in the prisons of Thieu. There is not a single family in South Vietnam which has not lost a dear one. We are obsessed with peace. We ask you to demand that peace come to Vietnam."

(All underlining ours - Ed.)

The above is taken from an article in the Aug. 1-15, 1974 issue of Focal Point, a newspaper for the anti-war community, published bi-weekly by the Indochina Peace Campaign. Subscriptions available from I.P.C., 181 Pier Ave., Santa Monica, Cal. 90405, for \$4.00 yearly (24 issues). Highly recommended by our Literature Chairman!

HIGHLIGHTS from the MINUTES  
(Exec. meeting Aug. 13)

\* Trident Submarine: letters have been mailed to all B.C. MP's & MLA's, also U.S. senators. Coppard to ask Emergency Measures Organization in Victoria whether they're prepared to cope with colossal emergency in our coastal waters.

\* Pamphlet on Nuclear Power to be worked on by Stewart, Cox & d'Easum, for distribution in Sept., to alert people to dangers. To include facts on Pryce-Anderson Act, and on refusal of all private insurance cos. to cover damage from radioactivity.

\* Orphan. Balance in fund \$24.22. Members asked to WRITE (see page 10)

\* Tinian Island Protest: see foot of page 9.

\* Bank Balance Aug. 12: \$312.44

\* Brief on Gas Export to be presented to National Gas Energy Board by Sep. 3: Eve Smith working on it.

\* Winter Olympics in B.C.: Eve has written protesting on our behalf. We should commend Barrett for his gov't's decision, and continue to protest.

\* Nuclear Fusion: B.C. VOW to write official letter against any nuclear fusion development in Canada; individuals asked to write too (see page 9).

\* Political Prisoners. WEEK OF CON-CERN (Sep. 29 - Oct. 6) discussed: details on pages 2 and 3.

\* Next Meeting: Tue. Sep 17, 10.45 am Horseshoe Bay Community Hall.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are coming to the end of the funds which the B.C. Gov't gave to the B.C. Quakers for aid to the children in the PRG areas of Vietnam. As you may know we bought 1,500 midwife kits and 500 sphygmomanometers (blood-pressure cuffs) for the Committee for the Protection of Mothers and Children over there. The kits have already reached Hanoi (one thousand for sure, and the other 500 should be there by now (Aug 19) as they left Hong Kong on July 31st); and the blood-pressure outfits will be ready shortly, we think. I wish you could see the midwife outfit - it is really more than that, being a light surgical outfit, I guess, and should prove immensely useful in the vil-lages and hamlets where medical resources are very limited if existent at all.

--Frank S. Dingman, Surrey, B. C.

Have just been reading the Report of the Annual Provincial VOW meeting, and must congratulate you all on such a fine presentation of all our problems. I hope you have some extra copies... With all good wishes,

- Hilda C. Collins, Vancouver, B.C.

Editor's notes: (1) B.C. VOW is looking into the possibility of producing extra copies of this fine Report, the credit for which lies entirely with Froda Handford. (2) Hilda also sent an interesting book review--see page 8.

I like your newsletter very much, as it covers a lot of territory. I am a subscriber to Women of the Whole World, which comes from Germany. They put out an excellent magazine. No doubt you have read it. It comes out once every three months. Incidentally, my brother always reads the Voice of Women newsletter and enjoys reading it very much.

- Sheila Reade, Penticton, B.C.

(Sheila was originally referring to the National VOW newsletter, but since she now tells us she feels the same way about the Voice we include her remarks -Ed)

# THE UNPEACEFUL ATOM - some opinions

GEORGE F. WILL, in Los Angeles Times, Jan 7/74 (quoted in La Wisp, July/74):

"Life was safer when travelling potentates dispensed ivory, apes and peacocks, not nuclear reactors. If delivered, the reactor Mr. Nixon promised to Egypt will be of substantial use to an Egyptian nuclear weapons program. The reactor will generate electricity, which Egypt could generate more easily in other ways, and in the process the reactor will produce plutonium, the best explosive material for nuclear weapons. Egypt has a slight power shortage because the Aswan Dam is producing only 5 billion kilowatts, half of its original projected capacity. If technical improvements increased the dam's output just 12 percent, that would produce more power than the proposed reactor would produce... But Egypt wants the reactor not because she is desperate for electricity, but because she, perhaps more than any other nation, would enhance her strategic position by acquiring nuclear weapons. The Administration says it is confident it can devise safeguards to prevent the reactor from serving Egypt's nuclear aspirations. That is transparent nonsense..."

LOS ANGELES TIMES, June 16/1974 (quoted in La Wisp, Jul-Aug/1974):

"Within a period of less than one month, President Nixon has 'pledged' nuclear reactors and fuel to Egypt, Israel, and Iran - power plants of a size that produce enough plutonium every year to manufacture 20 atomic bombs - and this in the most volatile area of the world and almost immediately following India's atom blast, made possible by the nuclear fuel and technology provided by Canada for nuclear power plants. 'It makes one wonder why,' said Dr. Milton Plesset, Caltech nuclear expert, who points out that Egypt uses only 20 - 30% of the hydro-electric capability of the Aswan dam, and in Iran natural gas is burned in the field as it comes out of the oil wells. Why, then, do they need nuclear power plants? Can the temptation to develop nuclear weapons be resisted if there comes a time when it is considered 'in the national interest'?"

Leading Geneticist DAVID T. SUZUKI, speaking in Vancouver on Hiroshima Day, Aug. 6th, 1974:

"In 1974, the 'Nuclear Club' has expanded from the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union to Britain, France, the People's Republic of China and now, thanks to Canada, India, Israel, Egypt, Germany, Canada, Australia and Japan could easily follow suit.

"...Prof. Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb, estimates that today between 100,000 and 1,000,000 people have sufficient knowledge to construct a nuclear bomb. In spite of Canada's experience with the duplicity of India, the United States has extended nuclear aid to Egypt and Israel.\* It is possible to construct nuclear devices as small as a suitcase and the recent book, 'Nuclear Theft', documents the potential for terrorist blackmail. We should weep for our failure to learn from Hiroshima."

\*And Canada has been negotiating with Korea to introduce 2 Candu reactors there! - Editor.

BARRY COMMONER, concluding an interview with Playboy (July/74 issue):

"It is absolutely imperative that the people of the United States

and the whole world understand that the only rational way to assure future energy supplies and at the same time end our suicidal assault on the environment is to undertake a massive development of solar energy. Any other alternative would enormously worsen our environmental problems, create dangers such as plutonium radiation and potential nuclear power-plant explosion, even risk war over foreign oil supplies. In other words, failure to understand and act upon the ecological, economic and political imperatives that push us toward developing solar energy will end in disaster. It's as simple and as crucial as that."

MARY HAYS WEIK

has been working for the past twelve years against radiation hazards. A warm and essentially human person in her seventies, she has been in the habit of taking transcontinental bus trips (on a shoestring) from her home in New York in order to bring hope, encouragement and practical pointers to groups and individuals who DON'T WANT a proliferation of nuclear power plants on our planet.

During the latest of these monumental trips Mary has been hosted by VOW groups in Victoria, Nanaimo and Vancouver.

IN NANAIMO the following were some of the tips she offered:

↘ "Don't be afraid to look the government right in the face. Start a Pro Se case, and when asking how to do this, don't be put off by answers like 'you'd do much better with a lawyer'."

→ "Find out what rights you have to observe government and corporate actions... Stand on undebatable citizen rights and speak out for them, rather than going into detailed arguments about megawattage, etc."

↘ "Go and see a nuclear power plant, on a Sunday drive. See for yourself the stagnant pools, the dead trees, the lack of birds... Search out the statistical records of the area around a plant after 6 or 7 years of operation, and bring them to light."

→ "People should begin to get the habit of taking part in the government that is theirs."

IN VICTORIA Mrs. Weik spoke at a Hiroshima Day (Aug. 6) meeting sponsored by Victoria VOW. The meeting, held at noon in Centennial Square, also included music and poetry readings, a literature table, pictures of Hiroshima, and street distribution of B.C. VOW's Fact Sheet on the U.S. Trident submarine. It was reported to be successful, with a large crowd attending.

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↘ Please Note ↙  
Non-member SUBSCRIPTIONS to B.C. Voice are now \$2.00 per year (six issues).  
Members receive it free, of course.  
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↘ THOSE LETTERS ↙  
MP's pay great attention to letters from constituents, say John Fraser, P.C., and Stuart Leggatt, N.D.P.

It is a good idea to make a point of asking the politician a question which forces an answer, if you want more than a routine acknowledgement.

↗ DON'T FORGET! ↖

CHINA VISIT  
V.O.W.'s Molly Phillips, librarian at Claremont High School, Victoria, recently conducted a tour to China. Hilary Brown was along and has come back fervently enthusiastic. Molly's excellent account may be had for 50¢, either from her or from Mary Cox at Bowser.

# READING that MATTERs

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL - Economics As If People Mattered, by E.F. Schumacher, Harper & Row paperback \$3.75

A very thoughtful book by a rare being - a truly wise and humane economist. Mary Cox reviews it in five words: "'Small Is Beautiful' is beautiful!" It is indeed. If you see it you will want to own it - at any price.

SURVIVAL - from 1300 Raimbault, Montreal, P.Q. Subscr. \$2.00 for 6 issues.

An excellent and most relevant publication which we are glad to see has revived. WELL WORTH THE SUBSCRIPTION!

From an editorial in the July 20, 1974 issue:

"We are no longer interested in 'proving' to people that a crisis exists by vividly portraying all the negativity we see all around us. We are interested in exploring possible answers to the question: 'Where do we go from here?' We want to communicate to you some of the positive things that are happening, or that could be happening. Our theme is the future. Our concern is with alternatives."

CAPITALISM & THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN CANADA, edited by Gary Teople, University of Toronto \$3.95

ONE COSMIC INSTANT, A Natural History of Human Arrogance, by John A. Livingston. McClelland & Stewart \$7.95

THE SECRET LIFE OF PLANTS, by Peter Tompkins & Christopher Bird. Harper & Row

An excellent book which mentions soil damage due to inorganic manure and over-supply of nitrogen and pesticides; water and air pollution; and the enormous power of money-making companies to carry on to make profits for themselves without a care for the health of humans, animals and plant life. Every library should have several copies. (review by Hilda Collins)

THE NEW YORKER, May 13 and May 20, 1974 issues carried a two-part article, "Support tankers", by Noel Mostert.

If you haven't read it, please do. It is not just about oil tankers, it is about the shape of things to come - and tomorrow is already here. It is about computers computerizing people. It is about men being aboard great tankers for a year and never landing - worse than the old sailing-ship days in that regard. It is about the dangers of sea bottoms when U.L.C.C.'s are speeding up to save an hour's time and \$5 million of Oil Companies' money.

And what are U.L.C.C.'s? Ultra Large Crude Carriers. Crude is the key word: crude ways to treat humans, crude making of profits and crude ways to get money out of our pockets.

One of the terrifying things about oil tankers (and they are only an example, typical of our technological world) is the money madness they engender. One small example: "The Dutch have spent hundreds of millions of dollars deepening the North Sea and providing facilities at Rotterdam" just for oil - paving the way to pollution.

Alternate methods? Let's hurry them up. Solar heat, methane gas, windmills, geothermal... And let's cut down on our own uses of energy and demand that governments and industry do the same.

(review by Eve Smith)

GOOD NEWS FROM PARKSVILLE Knitting co-ordinator Janet Cousins reports 108 knitted garments sent over to C.A.V.C. Vancouver in June.

ARROWS → → → care for → → → ACTION



