

POWs once bombed with impunity

By GUIDO PALANDRI

Editor's note: Palandri is assistant head of the catalog department in the University library.

Although Operation Homecoming is winding down, the Pentagon's repatriation spectacular will not end until the media have exhibited the last POW celebrating his first Mothers Day (Fourth of July, Christmas, National Spanish Green Olive Week, etc.) in the bosom of his family back in the Land of the Free.

The Pentagon staged its first showing of the operation with the assistance of eighty Public Information Officers (PR men); similar crews of opinion manipulators were doubtlessly on hand during subsequent performances.

Following identical scripts

The many pro-Administration commercials turned out by the Pentagon ad men have followed nearly identical scripts. Viewers of the six o'clock news saw exuberant crowds greet arriving POWs who saluted smartly, embraced radiant wives, tearfully grateful mothers and freshly scrubbed children, and then delivered similar (coached) statements of gratitude to their Commander-In-Chief, to country, and to God.

Perhaps better than expected, the spectacle has lived up to the government's expectations: the stirring up of patriotic fervor and flag-waving emotionalism. These are the only heroes we've got, and the Nixon Administration intends to exploit them to the fullest. (Nixon gave the cold shoulder to those few POWs who

spoke out for peace while imprisoned; the crowds received them with a stony silence.)

Bombing with impunity

And what had these repatriates done to merit a hero's welcome? What were they engaged in — with impunity they felt — when they were inconsiderately shot from the sky by those they were attempting to liquidate? They were, many of them, carrying out "surgical" air strikes from 50,000 feet, dropping bombs on schools, hospitals, hamlets and similar military targets. Others took part in the bombing of Laos. The intensive bombing of that country was so brutal and murderous that by September of 1969 American fly-guy hero types had destroyed the society and culture of the Plain of Jars. Most Laotians of that area who were not killed by the United States Air Force, or who did not join the Pathet Lao were herded into "refugee" camps by American-supported Meo tribesmen.

Contrary to the beliefs of most Americans, premeditated terror bombing of the rural areas of Vietnam and Laos was standard operating procedure from the very beginning of American escalation in 1965. Early in that year, social scientists at the Rand Corporation — a Pentagon para-university staffed in large part by co-optable professors from less rewarding academic posts — became collaborationists in American war crimes against the Vietnamese.

At the request of the Pentagon they produced a study that drew a most ingenious conclusion: since current levels of U.S. bombing of villages was already

being effectively exploited by Viet Cong propagandists, the escalation of this bombing would not be likely to increase significantly Vietnamese hostility towards the Americans and the South Vietnamese government. This scholarly document gave a virtual go-ahead to American scorched earth policy in South Vietnam.

Lengthy secret study

In the summer of 1966 a lengthy secret study of this massive bombing was done for the U.S. Embassy and military headquarters in Saigon. Why this study was requested is not clear, but it confirmed that not only was indiscriminate bombing killing innocent civilians; it also found that it was creating hundreds of thousands of refugees and driving them into urban slums and squalid refugee centers.

The study recommended among other things that the practice of indiscriminate bombing be carefully re-examined, perhaps in the unrealistic hope that the American military would order it stopped. The proposal was vetoed at the highest levels of American authority in Saigon. And why not? The study had provided justification for continuing the massive bombing; it was working better than expected.

The United States Air Force was reversing Mao's axiom: it was drying up (killing) the sea (peasantry) from which the guerrillas drew sustenance. Questionable ends justified immoral means. American air power had become a weapon of terror.

Much of this information was made public early in the war by concerned

scholars and the press of the Left. But Americans were not outraged. Most chose to believe that the death of innocent men, women and children was a tragic but inevitable side effect of any war. Others, like good Germans, were afraid to ask themselves the overwhelming question; they could not bear the reality of the made-in-USA Auschwitz and Mauthausens that had been fashioned in their name.

Part of American tradition

But Vietnam has been part of American tradition from the beginning. Like the murder of twenty-two South Vietnamese at My Lai by another American hero, Lt. William Laws Calley, Jr., the mass murder of countless thousands of civilians in North and South Vietnam and in Laos by American pilots, navigators and bombardiers was no hideous exception. (Of his own war crimes Lt. Calley said, "It was no big deal.")

These are discovered instances of a continuing pattern that has been part of the "American way" since the first settlers massacred the first Native Americans. From Wounded Knee to Dresden, Hiroshima, My Lai and the Plain of Jars it has been the same story of deliberate violence.

None of the defendants at the Nuremberg trials were convicted of crimes connected with the bombing of civilians; victors and vanquished were equally guilty. If Nuremberg was silent on the problem of terror bombing, the unspoken question was certainly raised there. In legal terms it is still unanswered. Set in a moral framework, the same question can be answered by each of us as we watch the reruns of the heroes' return.

Selecting the Emerald editor

By DAVID SONNENFELD

Editor's note: Sonnenfeld is a member of the Oregon Daily Emerald Board of Directors.

Students and other people interested in how the editor of the Emerald comes to be in her or his position should note that the selection process has now begun.

The editor of the Emerald is selected in April to serve from May until the next May. Those making the selection are the members of the Board of Directors of the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Company, Inc., the "parent" company of the Emerald.

Three Board members are students appointed annually by the ASUO president; three board members are faculty persons, serving staggered three-year terms, and appointed by the University President; and three board members are Emerald staff people, one being the editor (ex officio), and the other two being elected from the news and production-advertising-business staffs, respectively.

Any student registered for at least six credit hours at the University may apply for the position.

I believe (as one member of the Board, only) that the Board does, however, have certain biases in terms of the kind of people that they will appoint as editor.

(Before going any further, I must note that a majority of Board members will not admit that they have biases — they are afraid that people will hear of these biases and attempt to conform to them.)

Certainly there is not unanimity of biases on the Board. I think, though, that it is fair to say that two biases held by many (if not most) Board members are (a) that an editor should have worked for a considerable (at least two or three months) amount of time on the Emerald, and (b) that an editor should be a person who could "stand to learn a lot" in the position — ie. highly qualified, near-professional applicants may not cut the salt.

I would posit, also, that a majority of

Board members are not believers in affirmative action — most Board members will do absolutely nothing to give, have made no attempt to seek out, to actively encourage, or to work with women and minority people who might possibly be interested in applying for editor. Indeed, some Board members may be biased against aggressive and competent women and minority people.

As for my own biases, I must say that I

am steadfastly biased for (a) minority people, and (b) women (in that order) and against Anglo males. I also hold strong ideological convictions and am biased toward people of like convictions. Realizing that there probably is no one meeting this description, the "ideal" editor, as far as I am concerned, would be a minority person and-or woman, of strong ideological convictions (ready to be a leader and an advocate), with adequate

journalistic skills (not necessarily "the best," but at least "fair"), and with organizational (administrative) capabilities.

So here it is: part of the story about how the editor of the Emerald is selected. If there are parts that you would like me to further demystify, please drop me a note (in care of the Consumer Research Center, College of Business), and I'll be most happy to get in touch with you and try.

Letters

'Abolish him'

I would like to supplement Lee Siegel's recent article in the Emerald (if that's possible) with one of my favorite quotes from Michael Bakunin. "If God existed, it would be necessary to abolish him."

Dean Nolan

Parrish finances

As the treasurer of the Committee to Elect the Parrish-Vernon ticket, I would like to take this opportunity to reveal the funds that we have received from contributors. So far we have received in contributions \$80.55. The list of contributors and amount follows.

Howard M. Svigals	\$9.00
Ken Gritzmacher	5.00
Linda S. Cannon	5.00
John E. Harnagel	5.00
Rosemary Zuelke	5.00
Mark Faber	5.00
Marietta Morris	5.00
Cathy Ralston	3.00
Charles B. Fisk	3.00
Ross Lienhart	3.00
Joan Baker	3.00
William Bryan	2.50
Jim Burge	2.50

Christy Hammond	2.50
Dan Feltz	2.50
total contributions	60.00
Committee Fund Raising	20.55
grand total	80.55

The committee has spent of total of 17.00 so far.

600 flyers	6.30
flyer materials	7.70
sign materials	3.00
total	17.00

At this time our balance from the committee stands at \$63.55. We will issue a complete financial account of our expenses at the end of the primary campaign. We would like to issue a challenge to our opponents to do the same.

Howard M. Svigals
Treasurer

Not Jackson

As everyone knows, the ASUO has had problems this year. The ASUO is destined to fall apart unless a strong executive with a clear sense of direction is elected. Paige Jackson is not that executive.

I have known Paige for quite some time now. I worked with her on the Mock Democratic Convention last year and in the ASUO this year. When Paige speaks of her work on grievance procedures she neglects to add that she was the one who first brought forth a grievance against a faculty member — and then dropped it for fear of reprisals.

This is the kind of executive we do not need next year.

Although the ASUO made strides toward co-governance this year, this was not the part of the ASUO Paige was involved in. It is part of Paige's duties (this year) to make appointments for the ASUO. But she needed help to make the appointments to the co-governance committee. For her to now make co-governance a key issue in her campaign is absurd and misleading.

Paige switched running mates from Tim Travis to Rich Sanchez (both are extremely capable people) two days before filing; as she thought she would have a better chance of winning with Rich. Granted, this may be a good "political move" — but next year we cannot afford politicians.

Cliff Zukin
Senior Pol. Sci.
Friday, April 6, 1973