



The
human
cost
of the
Indochina
War
under
President
Nixon.

SIX MILLION VICTIMS

Documented Source Material on the Human Cost of the Indochina War under the Nixon Administration, January 1, 1969 to June 30, 1972. (Primary Sources: *The Pentagon Information Office* and *U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Refugees*.)

SUMMARY: THE NIXON YEARS

4.5 MILLION INDOCHINESE CIVILIANS
KILLED, WOUNDED OR MADE
HOMELESS

1.5 MILLION SOLDIERS ON ALL SIDES
KILLED OR WOUNDED

40,000 SOUTH VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS
EXECUTED WITHOUT TRIAL UNDER
THE PHOENIX PROGRAM

3.7 MILLION TONS OF BOMBS
DROPPED, 2 TONS EVERY 60 SECONDS

13 MILLION BOMB CRATERS, 1.7 BIL-
LION CUBIC YARDS OF EARTH
DISPLACED

750,000 ACRES OF CROP AND FOREST
LAND BULLDOZED

20,000 AMERICANS KILLED, 110,000
WOUNDED, OVER 500 CAPTURED OR
MISSING IN ACTION

\$59 BILLION EXPENDED

When Richard Nixon took office on January 20, 1969, he had two clear alternatives on the Indochina war:

(1) He could get out, allowing the matter to be settled by the Vietnamese themselves, whether North Vietnamese or South Vietnamese, communists or anti-communists.

(2) He could continue fighting to keep a pro-American regime in power in Saigon.

He chose the latter course, substituting the use of American air power for American ground troops. This insistence on imposing the Thieu regime on the people of South Vietnam ensured that no negotiations could take place. Richard Nixon began by ignoring the clear signal, reported in National Security Memorandum No. 1, that the other side would scale down the fighting if only he would withdraw. He consistently refused to consider various peace plans, including the most recent and most generous 7 point plan, which allows for the return of American POWs, safe return of American troops, and a non-communist coalition government in Saigon, if only he will set a date for total withdrawal. The American Embassy engineered the re-election of Thieu in the one-man October 1971 election, despite the fact that a compromise candidate would have cleared the way for an end to the war. And Nixon substituted attempts to pressure and bribe the Soviet Union and China for any attempt to find a solution in Indochina.



Back in Indochina, Mr. Nixon's years have brought unprecedented misery. Between January 20, 1969 and March 30, 1972, he doubled the bombing of Laos, sent 20,000 South Vietnamese troops into southern Laos and 10,000 Thai troops into northern Laos; he initiated a full-scale air war in Cambodia; he resumed the bombing of North Vietnam, striking it on over 360 occasions; he greatly increased the Phoenix program in South Vietnam which killed tens of thousands of civilians without trial, and increased the secret police, ARVN, and the jailing of political prisoners as well.

By March 30, 1972, the other side Provisional Revolutionary Government [PRG] and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam [DRV] realized that it had little hope of forcing the Americans to leave Indochina without launching a major offensive. It did so, and Nixon responded by tripling U.S. air and naval forces in the area, re-instituting the full-scale bombing of North Vietnam, removing previous limitations on strikes against civilian targets, mining and blockading North Vietnam's harbors, and laying waste vast portions of South Vietnam.

By now over six million human beings have been killed, wounded, captured or made homeless since Richard Nixon made the fateful decision to continue fighting in Indochina.

And far more death and destruction is yet to come as long as Richard Nixon maintains these current policies.

We are no closer to peace now than we were 25 years ago. On the contrary, it has now become American policy to destroy any city, town, locality or person judged to be associated with the "enemy" from the air. The agony of Indochina has only begun.

The documentation presented here on the human cost of the war during Richard Nixon's first 3½ years in office is thus only part of the story. In many ways it is the less important part.

For nothing will bring back those who have already been lost.

Far more important are the millions more who will fall in the months and years to come until the Nixon Administration is forced to change its current policy.

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(i) The Basic Statistics, January 1969 - June 30, 1972

I. Over 4.5 million Indochinese civilians have been killed, wounded, or made refugees under Nixon. (Source: U.S. Senate Refugee Subcommittee)

II. Nearly 1.5 million combatants have been killed or wounded under Nixon. (Source: Pentagon Information Office)

III. Nixon has already dropped over 3.7 million tons of bombs, more than any leader in history. (Source: Pentagon Information Office)

IV. Over 40,000 civilians have been executed without trial through the Phoenix Program under Nixon. (Source: Saigon Ministry of Information)

V. Ecological damage under Nixon includes the creation of over 13 million bomb craters, the displacement of over 1.7 billion cubic yards of earth, and the bulldozing of over 750,000 acres of crop and forest land. (Source: Scientists Westing and Pfeiffer, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science)

VI. The human cost to the U.S. under Nixon—in terms of American casualties and billions of dollars denied American citizens—includes over 20,000 Americans killed, 110,000 Americans wounded, 500 Americans captured or missing in action, and \$59 billion expended. The war continues to cost over \$20 million and 10 American casualties each day. (Source: Pentagon Information Office)

VII. The human cost to the Indochinese also continues to mount daily. Although continuing to withdraw U.S. ground troops from Vietnam, Nixon has assembled the greatest armada in the history of the war outside of Indochina, which drops over 110,000 tons of bombs monthly, 2 tons every sixty seconds on Indochina. (Source: Pentagon Information Office)

(ii) Documentation of Statistics Listed Above, Jan. 1969—June 1972

(N.B. The figures for the Nixon years appear first. Wherever possible, we also list the figures for the Johnson years, 1965—1968, following. The Johnson years are listed as (J: 123456, etc.)

I. Over 4.5 civilian victims

A. The official record shows 4,624,000 civilians have been killed, wounded or made refugees under Nixon in Indochina. (J: 4,147,000)

(1) 165,000 South Vietnamese civilians have been killed. (Source: "War Victims in Vietnam," by Senator Kennedy, Congressional Record, Aug. 3, 1972, S12592) (J: 235,000)

(2) 410,000 South Vietnamese civilians have been wounded. (Source: "War Victims in Vietnam" by Senator Kennedy, Congressional Record, Aug. 3, 1972, S12592) (J: 490,000)

(3) 1,855,000 South Vietnamese civilians have been made refugees. (Source: (a) For 1969-71 figures, see "Problems of War Victims in Indochina, Part I: Vietnam," May 8, 1972, U.S. Senate Refugee Subcommittee, p. 38. (b) For 1972 figures as of August 1972, see "War Victims in Vietnam," by Senator Kennedy, Congressional Record, Aug. 3, 1972, S12592) (J: 2,916,000)

(4) 2,000,000 Cambodian civilians have been made refugees. (Source: "War Victims in Indochina," reports by the Government Accounting Office prepared for the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, May 3, 1972, p. 9) (J: no figures available for Cambodians refugeeed)

(5) 194,000 Laotian civilians have been made homeless. (Source: For January 1969 - September 1970, see "Refugee and Civilian War Casualty Problems in Indochina," a staff report of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, September 28, 1970, p. 20; for September 1970 - May 1971, see "Problems of War Victims in Indochina, Part II: Cambodia and Laos," U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Refugees, May 9, 1972, pp. 37-38) (J: 506,000)

B. The official record does not include the following civilian victims:

(1) More than two million South Vietnamese civilians not recorded in refugee camps are estimated by the U.S. Senate Subcommittee to have been made homeless under Johnson and Nixon. The Subcommittee believes that most of these have gone to live in the cities with relatives. Given the fact that they are not recorded, the Subcommittee has made no estimate on a year by year breakdown. So they are not included in the official record.

(2) The tens of thousands of Laotian civilians who have been killed and wounded by U.S. bombing in Laos. The Air War in Indochina, a Cornell University Study, estimates that Nixon dropped 1,230,000 tons of bombs on Laos between 1969 and the end of 1971. (See p. 281.) Also not included are Laotian refugees counted between May 1971 and the present, and Laotian civilians killed or wounded by ground fighting.

(3) The tens of thousands of Cambodian civilians killed and wounded by U.S. bombing in that country. The same Cornell study estimates 176,000 tons of bombs dropped in Cambodia during 1970 and 1971, which may be compared with the 154,000 tons of bombs dropped on Japan in World War II. Also not included are Cambodian civilians killed and wounded by ground fighting.

(4) The tens of thousands of North Vietnamese civilians killed and wounded by U.S. bombing in North Vietnam between January 1969 and the present. Tonnage figures for the Nixon years are not available. However, the Pentagon Information Office reveals that there were 369 "protective reaction" strikes between January 1969 and April 8, 1972, including nearly a dozen sustained periods of several days, during which hundreds of aircraft attacked North Vietnam. Since April 8, of course, full-scale bombing of North Vietnam has been resumed—more massive and indiscriminate than under Johnson. Therefore it can safely

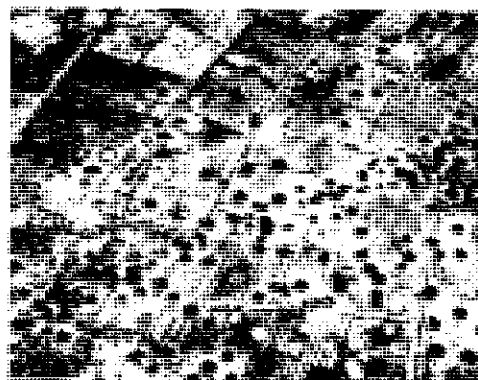
be assumed that civilian casualties since April 8 have been over the one thousand a week that former Defense Secretary McNamara estimated they were back in 1967. (See the N.Y. Times version of the Pentagon Papers, the McNamara estimate reprinted on p. 580). It may be fair to estimate, for example, that more than 16,000 North Vietnamese civilians have been killed or wounded by our bombing between April 8 and August 12.

II. Nearly 1.5 million military victims

A. The official record shows that 1,489,240 combatants on all sides have been killed or wounded under Nixon. (J: 1,333,215). The source for these figures is the Pentagon Information Office. Official Pentagon figures for 1966-1971 can be found in *The Air War in Indochina*, Beacon Press, Littauer and Uphoff, Ed., pp. 267-272. Figures for 1965 and January 1 - June 30, 1972 can be obtained by telephone from the Pentagon Information Office, (202) OX 7-2873:

(1) 20,327 Americans killed by hostile and non-hostile causes. (J: 35,350)

(2) 110,968 Americans wounded, including hospitalized and non-hospitalized. (J: 191,052)



(3) 81,623 ARVN killed. (J: 63,287)

(4) 237,130 ARVN wounded, ARVN counting only those seriously wounded. (J: 134,237)

(5) 412,996 "Enemy" killed. (J: 360,213)

(6) 619,494 "Enemy" wounded. Pentagon figuring 1.5 wounded for every 1.0 killed. (J: 540,320)

(7) 2,426 Third Nation killed, not including 1972. (J: 2,650, not including 1964)

(8) 5,196 Third Nation wounded, not including 1972. (J: 6,006, not including 1964)

B. The official record does not include the following combatant casualties:

(1) The tens of thousands of Laotian, Meo, Thai and U.S. soldiers and special forces killed and wounded in Laos.

(2) The tens of thousands of Laotian, Meo, Thai and U.S. soldiers and special forces killed and wounded in Cambodia.

III. Over 3.7 million tons of bombs, more than any leader in history has dropped

A. The official record shows that Nixon has dropped 3,633,022 tons of bombs between January 1969 and June 30, 1972. (J: 3,191,417)

(1) The 1969-1971 bomb tonnage figures can be found in the Pentagon print-outs in *The Air War in Indochina*, pp. 270-272. The bomb tonnage figures for Jan.-June 1972 can be obtained by telephone from the Pentagon Information Office.

(2) Nixon's overall bomb tonnage can be compared to the 2,000,000 tons dropped by the U.S. on two continents in World War II, the 1,000,000 tons dropped on Korea, the 33,000 tons used by the British in Malaya. Nixon's tonnage is the equivalent of 185 Hiroshimas, roughly one a week.

B. The record does not yet include the tonnage figures after July 1, 1972.

IV. Over 40,000 civilians executed without trial.

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"Those who have had a chance for four years and could not produce peace should not be given another chance."

Richard M. Nixon, Oct. 9, 1968

A. The official record shows that 38,739 civilians were killed between January 1969 and July 31, 1971. (J: 2,255)

(1) 40,994 civilians are reported as killed by the Phoenix program, a CIA-directed project to eliminate suspected "enemy civilians," from its inception in August 1968 until the middle of 1971. This figure is found in an official booklet put out by the Thieu regime's Ministry of Information, entitled "Vietnam 1967-1971, Toward Peace and Prosperity", p. 52. The latest figure in the book is July 31, 1971.

(2) The Kissinger papers reveal that 2,255 civilians were killed by the Phoenix program between its inception in August 1968 and January 1969. See the *Congressional Record*, May 11, 1972, p. E5019. By subtracting the 2,255 killed in 1968 from the overall total by the middle of 1971, we find that 38,739 civilians had been murdered by Phoenix under Nixon by July 31, 1971.

B. The official record does not include the number of civilians murdered by Phoenix under Nixon between July 31, 1971 and the present.

V. Over 13 million bomb craters, 1.7 billion cubic yards of earth displaced, 750,000 acres bulldozed.

A. Between 1965 and 1971, professors Arthur H. Westing and E.W. Pfeiffer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science estimated that 26.1 million bomb craters were produced, 3.4 billion cubic yards of earth were displaced (423,000 acres) and 750,000 acres of crop and forest land were destroyed. (See *Scientific American*, May 1972, p. 24)

(1) About 50% of the overall tonnage dropped between 1965 and 1971 were dropped during Nixon's first three years in office (1969-71). This means that about 50% of the bomb craters and 50% of the earth displacement, 13 million bomb craters and 1.7 billion cubic yards of earth displaced (211,000 acres) occurred under Nixon. (J: 13 million, 1.7 billion)

(2) Although the first Rome Plows, giant bulldozers were introduced in South Vietnam in August 1966, they were originally used only for roadside clearing. It was not until the end of 1969 that they began to be employed for widespread ecological destruction. By August 1971, Westing and Pfeiffer estimate, over 750,000 acres of crop and forest land had been made bare. (See *Scientific American*, May 1972, p. 28). Thus almost all the bulldozing has occurred under Nixon.

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B. These figures do not include the number of bomb craters and earth displaced in 1972, nor the number of acres bulldozed since August 1971.

(1) In a telephone interview, Professor Westing estimated that 100,000 tons of aerial-dropped munitions produced some 200,000 craters and displaced some 20 million cubic yards of earth. By this reckoning the 500,000 tons dropped by Nixon during the first 6 months of 1972 has produced one million new bomb craters and 100 million new cubic yards of earth displaced by Nixon during the first six months of 1972.

(2) In addition, Professor Westing reported that he and Professor Pfeiffer were told upon leaving Vietnam in August 1971 that the bulldozing program was continuing at a rate of 1,000 new acres bulldozed per day. Although the program was officially announced as curtailed some months back, Professor Westing believes it may have continued under the Thieu Regime's direction. There is every reason to believe, therefore, that the total number of acres bulldozed under Nixon may well exceed one million.

VI. The war has already cost over \$59 billion, 20,000 Americans killed, 110,000 Americans wounded, 500 captured or missing Americans under Nixon. It continues to cost \$20 million and ten American casualties a day, as well as prolonged confinement for over 350 Americans still held by the DRV.

A. The official record shows that between January 1, 1969 and June 30, 1972, \$59.6 billion was spent, 20,327 Americans were killed, 110,968 Americans were wounded, 337 Americans captured or missing in action.

(1) Figures for killed and wounded Americans were obtained from the Pentagon Information Office, as described above. (See "II—Nearly 1½ million combatants have been killed or wounded under Nixon" above.)

(2) Congressman Donald W. Riegle, (Republican-Michigan) released figures obtained for him by the Library of Congress from the Department of Defense, Defense News Branch, Public Affairs Office. They include 467 Americans missing in action under Nixon and 70 listed as POWs between 1969 and July 1972.

(3) Congressman Riegle's figures also show cost figures were \$12 billion for February 1, 1969 through June 30, 1969; \$23.1 billion for fiscal year (FY) 1970; \$15.3 billion for FY 1971; and \$9.2 billion for FY 1972, for a grand total of \$59.6 billion under Nixon.

B. Present figures indicate that the war continues to cost some \$20 million and 10 American casualties daily.

(1) The \$20 million a day figure is based on budget authorization demanded by Secretary of Defense Laird for FY 1973 of about \$7 billion. Many experts estimate that the war may well cost far more.

(2) Between April 1 and August 5, 1972, the Pentagon Information Office reports that 287 Americans were killed for hostile and non-hostile causes, 656 Americans were wounded, both hospitalized and non-hospitalized, and 126 were listed as either missing in action or captured. Thus an average 13 Americans have been killed, wounded or captured every day between the beginning of the Vietnamese offensive on April 1, 1972 and August 5, 1972. Since the fighting continues at a high level, it seems fair to assume that at least 10 Americans continue to fall victim to the war every day.

VII. Nixon's huge armada of air and naval power continues to drop 2 tons of bombs every 60 seconds on Indochina.

A. Newspaper and official sources reveal that there are over 1,400 fixed-wing aircraft, 700 heli-

copters, 50 U.S. warships, 35,000 U.S. combat advisers in South Vietnam, and 200,000 U.S. air and navy men outside Indochina, waging war against it. This is the greatest air and naval armada in the history of war.

(1) There are 800 U.S. fighter bombers piloted by Americans, 400 U.S. bombers being flown by Vietnamese, Thai, Laotian and Cambodian pilots, 200 B 52s being flown by the U.S. Air Force Strategic Command, 700 helicopters and well over 50 U.S. Navy warships in the Gulf of Tonkin from which the naval shelling, aerial bombardment, mining and blockading of North Vietnam is being carried out.

(2) By September 1, 1972, there were under 39,000 U.S. ground advisers on land in South Vietnam. By contrast, as of August 15, 1972, U.S. forces outside Indochina included some 95,000 directly waging war against Indochina from Thailand and the Gulf of Tonkin, and another 100,000 directly involved in the war stretching back to Hawaii. This breaks down as follows: (a) 45,000 men in Thailand; (b) 50,000 men in the Gulf of Tonkin; (c) 45,000 men in Okinawa; (d) 18,000 men in the Philippines; (e) 6,000 men in Taiwan; (f) 10,000 men in Guam; (g) 25,000 men in Hawaii. All these men are involved in one way or another in waging the war against Indochina.

B. This armada dropped 112,460 tons of bombs on Indochina during June 1972, the latest month for which figures are available. This works out to well over 2 tons every 60 seconds. Figures for succeeding months are expected to continue at this level or higher.

