

FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

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Mr. Harvey Wellman
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Dear Mr. Wellman:

Thank you for your letter of January 8. The Quaker pamphlet is certainly a powerful "indictment," and one which it is difficult to reply to despite its many inaccuracies or omissions. The essential theme--that war is hell--has been recognized since W. T. Sherman, and this basic emotional theme runs through the Quaker pamphlet and is, of course, irrefutable. The way they present their case is such that anyone wishing to take issue with it is placed in a position of seeming to be in favor of killing, or war, etc.

It so happens that Jim May, our Deputy Coordinator at VTC, was the Province Senior Advisor in Quang Ngai during the period described in the pamphlet. I gave him the pamphlet, and he soon returned to me a single-spaced, legal-sized document refuting, or placing in perspective, one charge after another in this pamphlet. He was of course very familiar with the Quaker team in Quang Ngai.

If I went through the pamphlet statement by statement and commented on each one, this letter would be rather long. For example, the "Magic Dragon" exercise described so vividly by the Quaker worker refers to the Tet attack in which part of Quang Ngai city was overrun by attacking Viet Cong, and the aircraft concerned was there to oppose these attacking forces. The Quaker commentators deplore the loss of life caused by this weapon but do not point out why it was being used or what would have happened to Quang Ngai city and thousands of innocent people if the enemy forces, in fact, had been successful in their attack. What would have happened can be readily ascertained by what happened in Hue, where thousands of people--men, women, and children--were executed by various means, including being buried alive. This is only one typical example of how the Quaker document is one-sided, and does not place events in their total context.

I gather you will be coming into Washington shortly for a reunion of all the Diplomats-in-Residence. At that time I hope to meet with any of you who are interested, and in your specific case I suggest you have a chance to discuss the pamphlet in detail with Jim May. I think this would be a more thoroughgoing response to your letter than my attempting to consider each paragraph and footnote in this letter. If such is acceptable to you, please advise me as soon as you reach Washington and we will devote as much time as you will permit to helping you place the Quaker commentary in a fairer and more accurate perspective.

Sincerely,

/s/

Ogden Williams
Coordinator
Viet-Nam Training Center

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