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THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION'S HIDDEN BLOODBATH

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During the past 3 1/2 years, the Nixon Administration has regularly used fears of a "communist bloodbath" to justify continued Administration killing in Indochina.

WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT TOLD THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, HOWEVER, IS THAT IT HAS ITSELF CARRIED OUT ONE OF THE MOST MASSIVE BLOODBATHS IN RECENT HISTORY SINCE TAKING OFFICE, A BLOODBATH TOTALLY AT VARIANCE WITH AMERICAN IDEALS.

During the past 3 1/2 years, the Nixon Administration has funded and advised the systematic execution of tens of thousands of South Vietnamese civilians suspected to be working for the other side. These executions have been carried out without trial, in cold blood. Going under the innocuous name of the "Phoenix Program", the Nixon Administration has already carried out precisely the kind of bloodbath it claims that it is trying to prevent.

Although the Phoenix program has been written about occasionally in the nation's press, most Americans are still unaware of its scope. The Administration has attempted to obscure its true workings and downplay the number of civilians executed under its auspices.

I HAVE HERE AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, SAIGON, ENTITLED "VIETNAM:1967-71, TOWARD PEACE AND PROSPERITY". THIS DOCUMENT REVEALS ON PAGE 52 THAT BETWEEN AUGUST 1968 WHEN THE PHOENIX OPERATION WAS INITIATED AND MID-1971, WHEN THE BOOKLET WAS PRINTED, 40,994 PEOPLE HAD BEEN "KILLED" UNDER IT. LET ME STRESS THAT FIGURE: 40,994.

The National Study Security Memorandum No. 1 reveals that 2,255 people were killed under Phoenix in 1968. (See the Congressional Record, May 11, 1972, p. E5019). THUS, BY MID-1971, 38,739 PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED THROUGH PHOENIX UNDER MR. NIXON.

It is now mid-1972. Official figures are not available for the executions under Phoenix during the past year. It is reported, however, that the rate of killings under Phoenix has been stepped up since the recent offensive. It thus seems safe to assume that at least 10,000 more people have been killed through Phoenix in the past year.

IT THUS SEEMS LIKELY THAT UNDER MR. NIXON THE PHOENIX PROGRAM HAS EXECUTED OVER 50,000 SOUTH VIETNAMESE CITIZENS WITHOUT TRIAL.

The implications of this information are many. Let me stress a few.

(1) Phoenix killings have outnumbered the number of civilians the Administration claims the other side has ~~killed~~ by a margin of 2 1/2 to one.
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(2) The Administration bases its claimed fears of a potential Communist bloodbath in South Vietnam in large part on the killings it says took place in North Vietnam after 1954. Yet the highest figures put forward by most scholars in post-1954 North Vietnam are around 50,000. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS KILLED THAT MANY PEOPLE ALREADY, IN AN AMERICAN BLOODBATH.
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(3) The fact that the Nixon Administration has already carried out this kind of a bloodbath is absolutely outrageous, a stain on this nation's honor, and a shame we will all carry with us. I can think of no single aspect of our Vietnam policy more at variance with everything we hold dear as Americans.

(4) Even more importantly, however, is the possibility that through Phoenix the Administration is in fact inviting retaliation from the other side. None of us can but deplore the use of such cold-blooded terror by both sides. I do not wish to suggest here that I do not deplore any such murder carried out by the other side. But surely it is obvious that to carry out Phoenix can only spur continued bloodletting through assassination and terror.

(5) President Nixon is apparently playing upon fears of a "communist bloodbath" to win public support for his imposition of the Thieu Regime on the people of South Vietnam. The facts of the Administration-inspired execution of 50,000 make it clear that it has little real concern for preventing a bloodbath.

Given these facts, I hereby make the following demands of the President:

(1) I demand that Mr. Nixon reveal the total number of people that have been killed under operation Phoenix during his term of office.

(2) I demand that he explain to the American people how he justifies this shameless bloodbath which his Administration has carried out in their name.

(3) I demand that he immediately halt all operations carried out by the Phoenix program: that he dismantle the entire apparatus of spies, informers and executioners; that he remove its funding; that he recall any American personnel engaged in it, both those employed by the Central Intelligence Agency and all other agencies.

(4) I demand that he make a public pledge to halt all other such systematic executions and imprisonment of South Vietnamese civilians; and that he further detail to the American people the steps he will take to ensure that such a blot on this nation's honor will not occur again as long as he remains in office.

(5) And, finally, I demand forego cynical attempts to play upon fears of a "communist bloodbath" to justify further bombing and killing by his Administration in Indochina; that he realize that the bloodbath his Administration has already ordered may well invite retaliation from the other side; and that he therefore stop the bombing, set a date for the final withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Indochina, announce a cutoff date for aid to the Thieu regime, and thus test the other side's promise to release our POWs proportional to final withdrawal of our forces in segments. To forego any further bloodbaths, I ask that he arrange safe passage for those about whom there is a reasonable fear of retaliation for their role in Administration-sponsored programs of torture, murder, and degradation.