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**From:** Jim Henthorn < >  
**To:**  
**Cc:** VHFCN1 Pilots and Crew < >  
**Sent:** Monday, September 24, 2012 1:32 PM  
**Subject:** [Vhfcn-l] This Day in Vietnam 09/24

## **September 24**

### **1963: McNamara and Taylor assess situation in Vietnam**

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Gen. Maxwell Taylor, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrive in Vietnam. At President John F. Kennedy's request, they were to determine whether South Vietnam's military situation had deteriorated as a result of the continuing clash between the Ngo Dinh Diem government and the Buddhists over Diem's refusal to institute internal political reform.

Earlier in the month, Kennedy had sent Marine Corps Gen. Victor Krulak and State Department official Joseph Mendenhall to Saigon on a fact-finding mission. They returned with a conflicting report that left Kennedy unsure of the actual situation in Saigon. Consequently, Kennedy dispatched McNamara and Taylor in an attempt to clarify the situation. They were accompanied on the eight-day trip by William Bundy of the Defense Department, William Colby of the Central Intelligence Agency, White House advisor Michael Forrestal, and diplomat William Sullivan.

Again, the individual perceptions of the group differed. Gen. Paul Harkins, commander of the U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) convinced General Taylor that the war against the Viet Cong was progressing on schedule, even to the point that Harkins thought that 1,000 advisors might be sent home by the end of the year. The civilians in the party were not so optimistic, agreeing with Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge's assessment that the Diem government was very fragile. They were even more convinced when they

met with Diem and he rejected any discussion of meaningful political reforms that might have quieted the growing unrest among the Buddhists.

When the group returned to Washington in October, their report was an amalgamation of their differing views of the situation. While agreeing that some progress was being made in the field against the Viet Cong, they all agreed that the political situation threatened further progress. On the subject of a potential coup, the report said that there was only a slight chance and that the United States should not support any coup attempts "at this time." They recommended selective economic and psychological measures to convince Diem to institute reforms to redress the political unrest. Unfortunately, when the recommended measures were taken, they had no effect on Diem and his policies.

The United States made clear its dissatisfaction with Diem's refusal to change his domestic policies, giving, in effect the green light to a coup by opposition military officers. A coup was staged on November 1, 1963, in which Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, were murdered by South Vietnamese officers.

### **1967: Political instability continues in South Vietnam**

In Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang, demonstrations are staged against the recent election of President Nguyen Van Thieu and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, led by the militant Buddhist faction, who charge that the elections were rigged and demand that the Constituent Assembly cancel the results. In the United States, the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) adopted a resolution against the Johnson administration's policy and strategy in Vietnam, charging that in Vietnam the United States was "in league with a corrupt and illiberal government supported by a minority of the people."

### **1969: The "Chicago Seven" go on trial**

The trial of the "Chicago Seven" begins before Judge Julius Hoffman. The defendants, including David Dellinger of the National Mobilization Committee to

End the War in Vietnam (MOBE); Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden of MOBE and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); and Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman of the Youth International Party (Yippies), were accused of conspiring to incite a riot at the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

At the height of the antiwar and civil rights movements, these young leftists had organized protest marches and rock concerts at the Democratic National Convention. During the event, clashes broke out between the protesters and the police and eventually turned into full-scale rioting, complete with tear gas and police beatings. The press, already there to cover the Democratic convention, denounced the overreaction by police and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's handling of the situation.

The Chicago Seven were indicted for violating the Rap Brown law, which had been tagged onto the Civil Rights Bill earlier that year by conservative senators. The law made it illegal to cross state lines in order to riot or to conspire to use interstate commerce to incite rioting. President Johnson's attorney general, Ramsey Clark, refused to prosecute the case.

Although Bobby Seale of the Black Panthers was originally a defendant in the trial as well, he angrily denounced Judge Hoffman as a racist for denying his request for a separate trial. He wanted to be represented by his own lawyer, who was recovering from surgery at the time, so he loudly protested by attempting to examine his own witnesses. Judge Hoffman took the unusual measure of having Seale bound and gagged at the defendant's table before eventually separating his trial and sentencing him to 48 months in prison.

With encouragement from defense attorney William Kunstler, the seven other defendants did whatever they could to disrupt the trial through such acts as reading poetry and chanting Hare Krishna. While the jury was deliberating their verdict, Judge Hoffman held the defendants in contempt of court for their behavior and sentenced them to up to 29 months in jail. Kunstler received a four-year sentence, partly for calling Hoffman's court a "medieval torture

chamber." Five of the Chicago Seven were convicted of lesser charges.

In 1970, the convictions and contempt charges against the Chicago Seven were overturned on appeal. Abbie Hoffman remained a well-known counterculture activist until his death in 1989. Tom Hayden went on to marry actress Jane Fonda.

#### **POW/MIA's Reported this day during the Vietnam War**

1	09/24/65	FLYNN NEW ORLEANS LA	GEORGE EDWARD III	USAF	SVN
2	09/24/65	OSBORN WINTER PARK FL	GEOFFREY H.	USN	SVN/OW
3	09/24/66	WHITTLE INDIANAPOLIS IN	JUNIOR L.	ARMY	SVN/OW
4	09/24/68	BREINER DECATUR IN	STEPHEN E.	USMC	SVN
5	09/24/68	DRABIC UNION BRIDGE MD	PETER E.	ARMY	SVN
6	09/24/68	MC CONNELL JAMICA NY	JERRY	ARMY	SVN
7	09/24/72	BORAH OLNEY IL	DANIEL V. JR.	USN	SVN

#### **Fixed Wing Aircraft Losses reported this day during the Vietnam War**

1	9/24/1965	A-1H	135274	VA-196		USN	USS Bon
		Homme Richard					
2	9/24/1965	F-8E	150668	VF-194		USN	USS Bon
		Homme Richard					
3	9/24/1965	F-4C	64-0700	47 TFS	15 TFW	USAF	Ubon
4	9/24/1965	F-100D	56-2923		6241 TFW	USAF	Bien Hoa
5	9/24/1968	O-1G	51-4570	19 TASS	504 TASG	USAF	Bien Hoa

6	9/24/1968	F-100D	55-3602	308 TFS	31 TFW	USAF	Tuy Hoa
7	9/24/1969	F-100D	55-3737	614 TFS	35 TFW	USAF	Phan Rang
8	9/24/1972	A-7B	154436	VA-155		USN	USS

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**USAF Helicopter Losses reported this day during the Vietnam War**

1 NONE This Day

Dusty, Jim Henthorn

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Vhfcn-l mailing list

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