



EGL interview, 17 May 84

ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE DURING SECOND VN TOUR:

We lost the war at the Tet Offensive In most wars--politically--they'd have made that 'remember the Alamo,' 'remember the Maine,' and 'remember Hue.' Not there. Incidentally, I . . . tried to get Pres. Thieu to put on his postal cancellations on all mail in and out of VN 'remember Hue,' and he couldn't see the value of doing it. Simple, psychological things like that weren't done because the leaders--both Ams and VNese, weren't trained to think that way.

The other side did. Look at Hanoi cancellations. They'd send a sapper team in to blow up something and then change all the stamp cancellations [to honor it]: 'the terrible explosions done at such and such by the rightist capitalist dogs,' and so on. Sometimes the sappers were caught, the explosions never took place, and [yet here] was a commemorative stamp centering on it.

American journalists used to look with a very jaundiced eye at the leaders in Saigon. Never looked at a govt where people were trying to do the right thing. They'd pick a handful of ldrs and denigrate them--sometimes just in the adjectives used They used to really go in to get Ky I remember . . . a press conference on pacification and [I was] asked to talk [to] the vnese press. The vnese press [later] told me they were shocked at everything [i said]. I told them what the vnese forces and the vnese govt were doing, and I said, "It's **your** war, you guys, your govt, your army. your forces, your pacification. We're trying to save your people and bring you all together." They said, "We can get that from our own army." "Please do and backstop them. Tell them you're proud of what they're doing. Please [also] jump [on] me as an American having to talk to you vnese about your own country and your countrymen." . . . This was about '66 or '67.

. . . General Nguyen Duc Thang [now lives in Connecticut] was a very close friend of mine. Americans told Tang he shouldn't have anything more to do with me. They had a new program going and he was to work with others. He was a husky vnese and he made a fist and started corking the guy on the muscle. **"I want you to know that Ed Lansdale is my friend. I'm going to see him any goddam time I want and tell him any goddam thing I want, and if he gives me any advice, I'm going to welcome it."** This guy went Ow. You're hurting me. He was from Washington. God that was funny. I was sitting there. I said, I'm going to go on seeing him. I don't care what you say. Or else give me a ticket and get me out of vn. Then I can't see him. As long as I'm here and he needs help, I'm going to help him. He's a friend of mine. Doesn't matter what he's up against, i'm going to try to help him succeed." Which I did.