

Earthen Mound with Bamboo Spears

Bamboo & Barbed Fence

Moat

Bamboo Barrier

House

Watchtower

**GENERALIZED
STRATEGIC
HAMLET**

Scale: 6 Inches = 1 Mile





Strategic Hamlet Program

- Population transfer: **isolate peasants from NLF**
- By 1962, 4.3 million people in 3,225 hamlets
- By 1963, 8.5 million people in 7,205 hamlets
- Failed: No defense; no sympathy





MAC-V

Senate-Reagan Tax Pact Near

THURSDAY

RACING
RESULTS-ENTRIES

Los Angeles Times

FINAL

LARGEST CIRCULATION IN THE NATION, 1,211,983 SUNDAY

VOL. LXXXVI

SEVEN PARTS—PART ONE

THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 22, 1967

122 PAGES

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Los Angeles Times

DAILY 10c

VIETCONG DESTROY 134-MAN U.S. UNIT

Entire Company Wiped Out in Fierce Mekong Delta Battle



A WELCOME TO EGYPT—President Gamal Abdel Nasser, left, joins hands with Soviet President Nikita S. Khrushchev at the Cairo airport.

SAMSON (UPI)—A Communist force virtually wiped out a 134-man U.S. Army company before being destroyed by a 300-man Delta rifle platoon today.

U.S. officials withdrew with no intention of destruction of Alpha Company of the 4th Battalion, 6th Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division to allow time for informing relatives at home. Earlier in the war has an American company suffered so heavily.

Alpha was destroyed in a seven-hour fight starting which 78 had an original 134. Eight were killed and 126 wounded, Maj. Charles W. Rice of Fort Riley, Kan., a 1st Division spokesman, said yesterday.

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Helicopters rushed in to pick up the survivors. But one Communist was killed on the helicopters which struck one each Alpha.

Two more U.S. companies landed from special armored landing boats. The Communists lost about 100 men but the new units suffered far less heavily than the concentrated line of specially built, pre-arranged "cannon battalions" designed as a modern style of the Civil War tactical doctrine.

Alpha paid the price for being

Ap Bac
January 1963





**Ambassador
Henry Cabot Lodge**



**President
Ngo Dinh Diem**



Eighty-eighth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

Began and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday, the seventh day of January,
one thousand nine hundred and sixty-four



Joint Resolution

To promote the maintenance of international peace and security in southeast Asia.

Whereas naval units of the Communist regime in Vietnam, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, have deliberately and repeatedly attacked United States naval vessels lawfully present in international waters, and have thereby created a serious threat to international peace; and

Whereas these attacks are part of a deliberate and systematic campaign of aggression that the Communist regime in North Vietnam has been waging against its neighbors and the nations joined with them in the collective defense of their freedom; and

Whereas the United States is assisting the people of southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambitions in that area, but desires only that these peoples should be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

Sec. 2. The United States regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the maintenance of international peace and security in southeast Asia. Consistent with the Constitution of the United States and the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with its obligations under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall expire when the President shall determine that the peace and security of the area is reasonably assured by international conditions created by action of the United Nations or otherwise, except that it may be terminated earlier by concurrent resolution of the Congress.

John W. McCormack
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

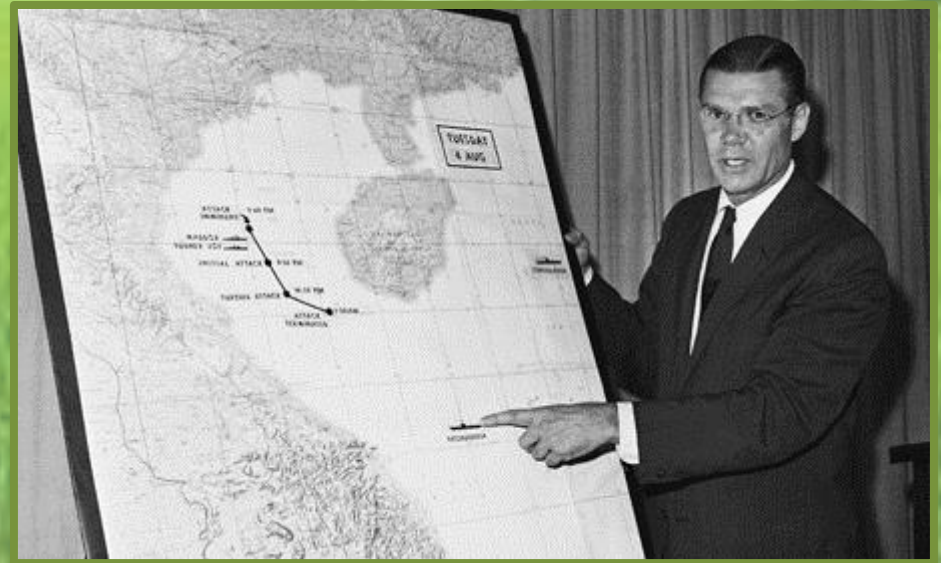
Lee Harvey
President pro tempore of the Senate.

APPROVED

AUG 10 1964

Lyndon B. Johnson

GULF OF TONKIN AND HO CHI MINH TRAIL



THE SUN FINAL

U.S. DESTROYER BEATS OFF ATTACK BY 3 RED VIETNAM TORPEDO BOATS

JOHNSON'S ELECTION IS PREDICTED Democratic Machines Blamed In Race Riots
ROSK SAYS U.S. OPPTS WANTS PEACE TO ATTACK. HIS POLICY WITHOUT WAR. 4 Carrier Jets Aid Ship
REDS SAY U.S. BOMBED POST

Small text and graphics including a map of the Gulf of Tonkin and other news snippets.

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

(August 1964)

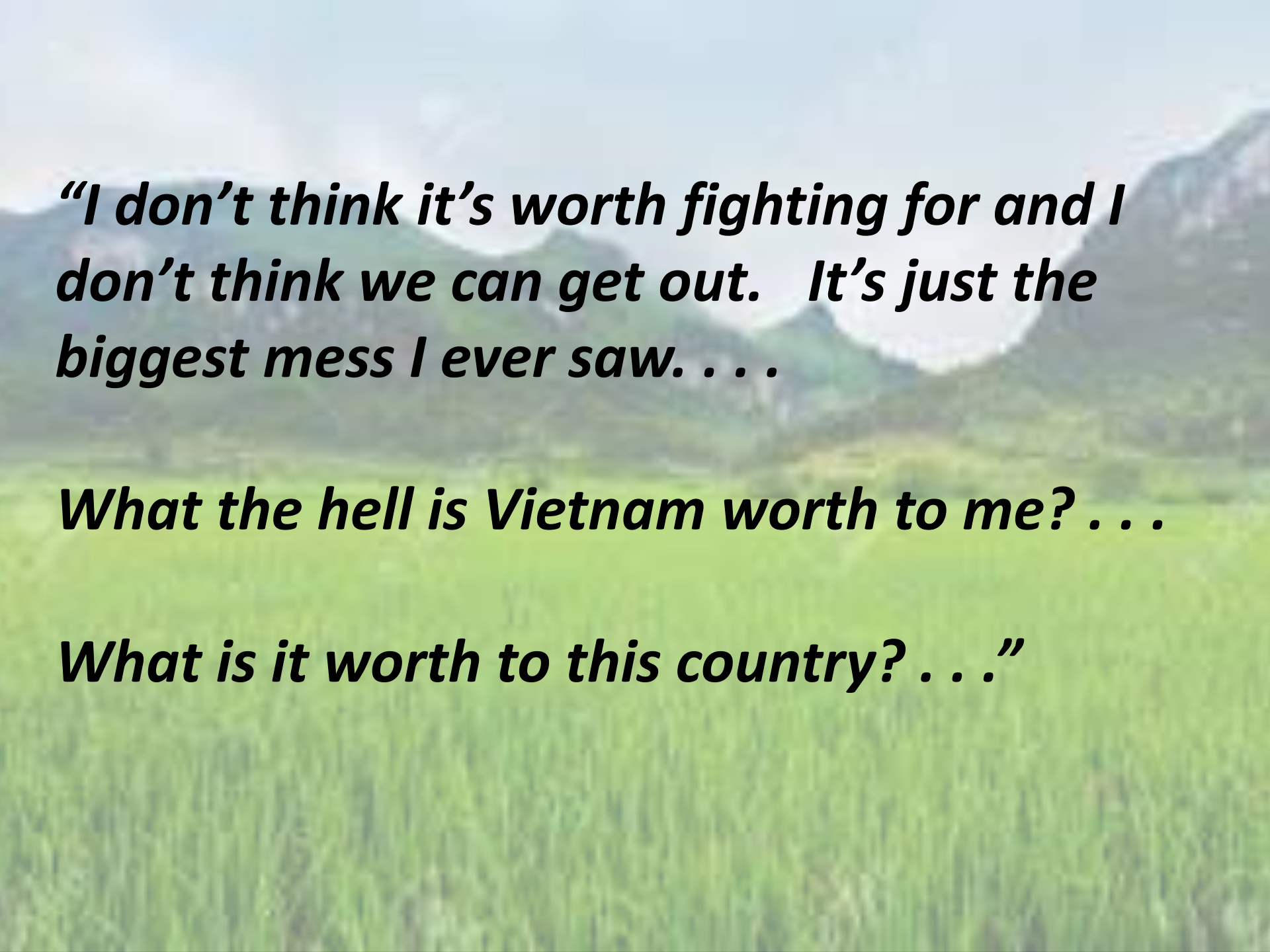
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“I don’t think it’s worth fighting for and I don’t think we can get out. It’s just the biggest mess I ever saw. . . .

What the hell is Vietnam worth to me? . . .

What is it worth to this country? . . .”



China

Laos

Thailand

Cambodia

Hoang Sa

Truong Sa

- Ha Giang
- Cao Bang
- Sapa
- Lao Cai
- Lang Son
- Dien Bien Phu
- Ha Noi
- Ha Long Bay
- Hai phong
- Hoa Binh
- Mai Chau
- Ninh Binh
- Hue
- Da Nang
- Hoi An
- Kontum
- Pleiku**
- Qui Nhon
- Buon Me Thuot
- Da Lat
- Nha Trang
- Phan Thiet
- Ho Chi Minh City
- Long Hai
- Ben Tre
- My Tho
- Chau Doc
- Vinh Long
- Ha Tien
- Phu Quoc Island
- Can Tho
- Soc Trang
- Ca Mau
- Bac Lieu
- Con Dao

2 March 1965 Operation Rolling Thunder, Vietnam War

Secretary of Defense
Robert S. McNamara

President
Lyndon B. Johnson

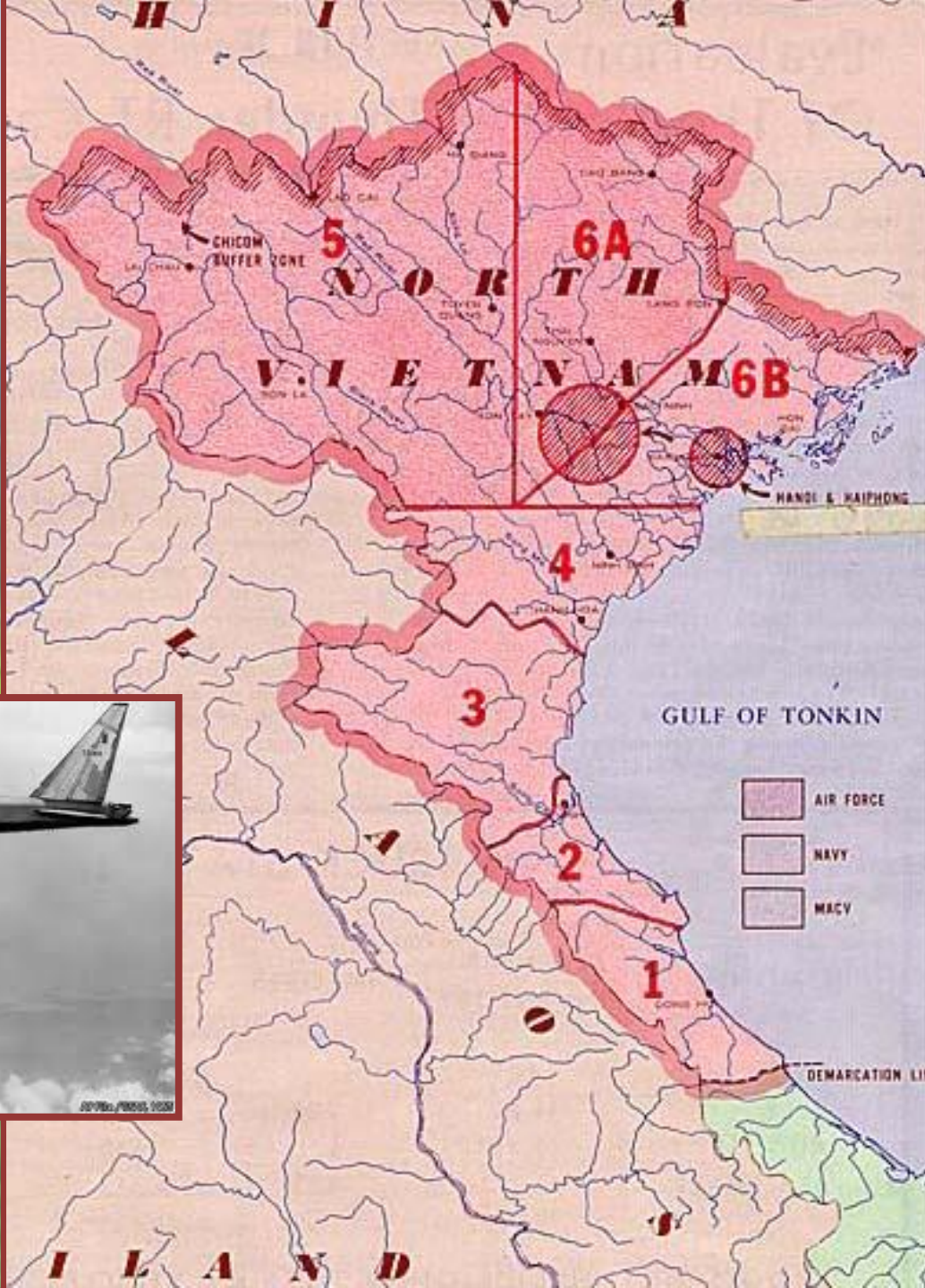
General Curtis Lemay,
Chief of Staff, USAF (CSAF)



President Lyndon B. Johnson meeting with Joint Chiefs of Staff around picnic table on LBJ Ranch front lawn. Operation Rolling Thunder was closely controlled by the White House and at times targets were personally selected by President Johnson. From 1965 to 1968, about 643,000 tons of bombs were dropped on North Vietnam. A total of nearly 900 U.S. aircraft were lost during Operation Rolling Thunder. The operation continued, with occasional suspensions, until President Johnson, under increasing domestic political pressure, halted it on October 31, 1968. (Source: History.com; Photo by Yoichi Okamoto)

C3i

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Analysis – Operation Rolling Thunder – Vietnam War, 1965-68

"**Rolling Thunder** must go down in the history of aerial warfare as the most ambitious, wasteful, and ineffective campaigns ever mounted. While damage was done to many targets in the North, no lasting objective was achieved. Hanoi emerged as the winner..."

– by **Raphael Lungerich, CIA Analyst**

"**Rolling Thunder** was closely controlled by the White House and at times targets were personally selected by President Johnson."

– by **Harry G. Summers Jr., Vietnam War Almanac**

- **U.S. Air Force** fighter bomber strikes were flown primarily from bases at Don Muang, Korat, Nakhon Phanom, Takhli, Udorn and Ubon in **Thailand**, and B-52's flew from Anderson air base on **Guam**, Kadena on **Okinawa** and U-Tapao, **Thailand**.



- **U.S. Navy and Marine Corps** strikes flown by fighter bombers from aircraft carriers at **Yankee Station** staging area in **Gulf of Tonkin**. Joined by shore-based Marine fighter bombers from **Chu Lai** and **Da Nang** air bases in S. Vietnam.



"The **Rolling Thunder** program of bombing the north has not significantly affected infiltration or crushed the morale of Hanoi – at the proper time we should consider terminating bombing in all of North Vietnam."

– **Secretary of State Robert S. McNamara**,
draft memorandum to the President, October 1966

"I saw our bombs as my political resources for negotiating a peace. On the one hand our planes and bombs could be used as carrots for the South – pushing them to clean up their corrupt house – on the other hand, as sticks against the North."



– **President Lyndon B. Johnson**

Johnson Lyndon Baines, 1908-1973; VP under President John Kennedy, assumed US presidency after JFK's assassination on Nov.22,1963. As Commander-in-Chief Johnson was responsible for US step-by-step escalation of the Vietnam War; due to his failed war policies, on March 31,1968, President Johnson announced he would not seek re-election as President.



C3i

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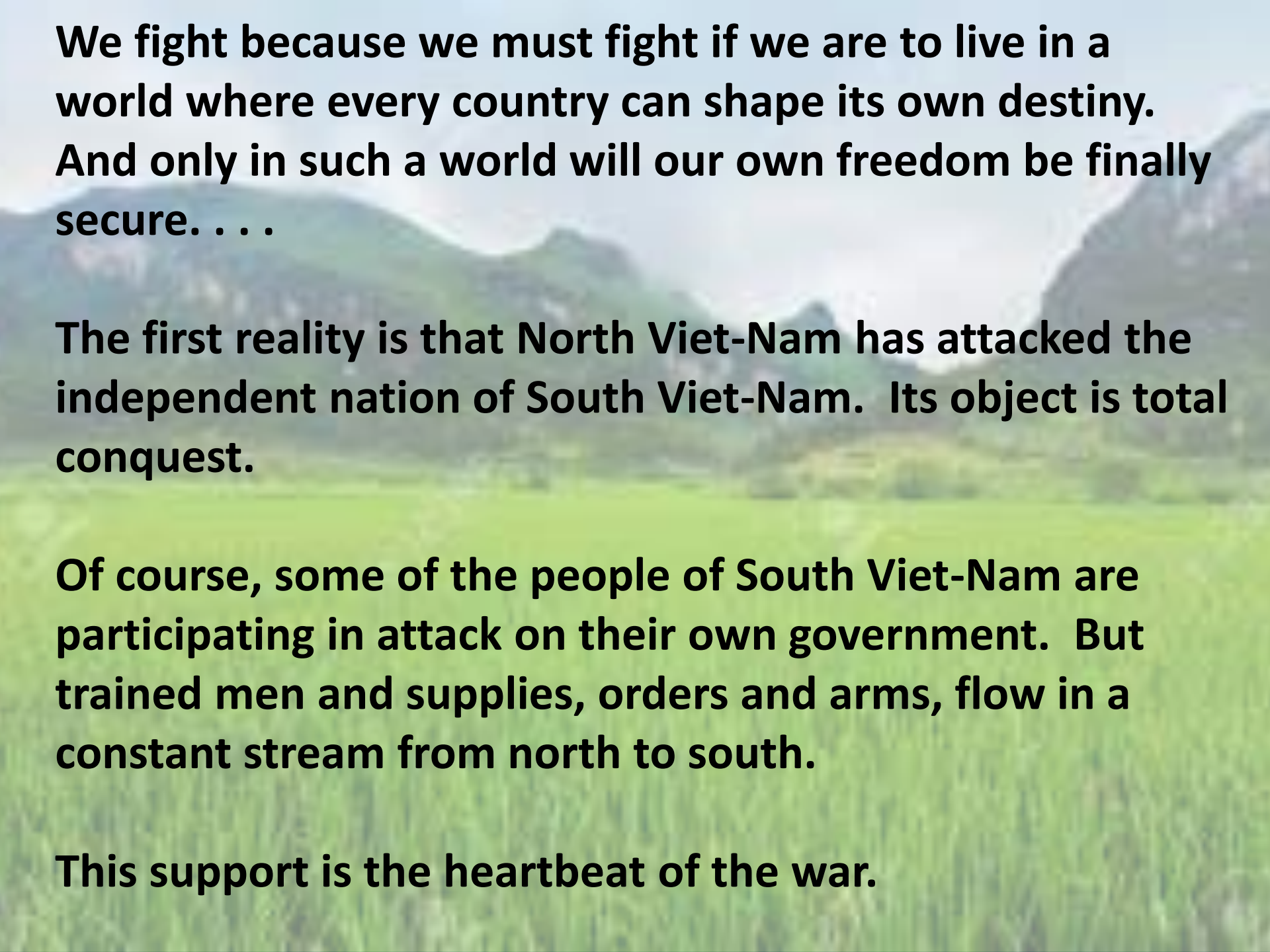
March 8, 1965

Lyndon Johnson's Johns Hopkins University Speech (April 7, 1965)

Viet-Nam is far away from this quiet campus. We have no territory there, nor do we seek any. The war is dirty and brutal and difficult. And some 400 young men, born into an America that is bursting with opportunity and promise, have ended their lives on Viet-Nam's steaming soil.

Why must we take this painful road?

Why must this Nation hazard its ease, and its interest, and its power for the sake of a people so far away?

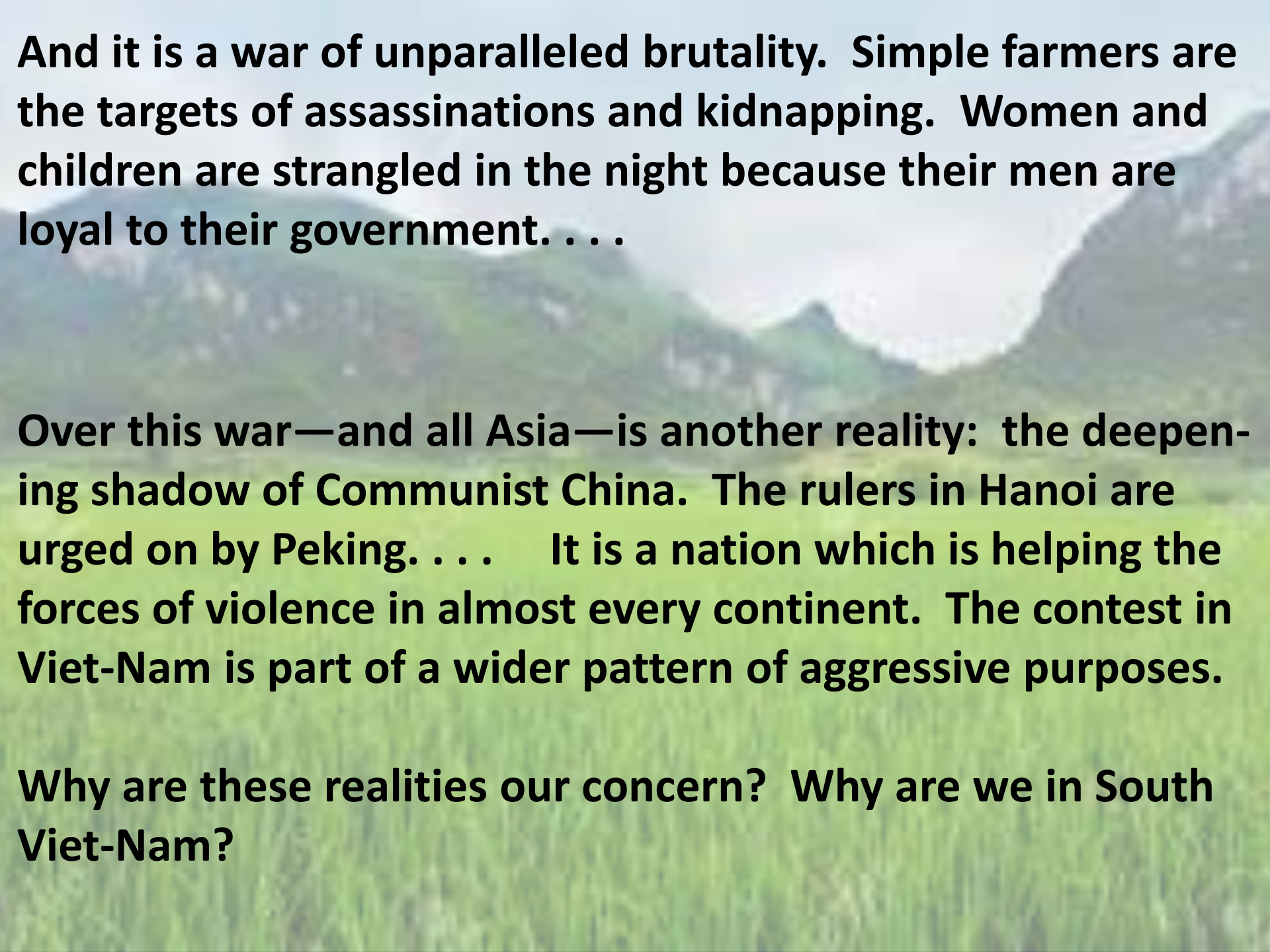


We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. And only in such a world will our own freedom be finally secure. . . .

The first reality is that North Viet-Nam has attacked the independent nation of South Viet-Nam. Its object is total conquest.

Of course, some of the people of South Viet-Nam are participating in attack on their own government. But trained men and supplies, orders and arms, flow in a constant stream from north to south.

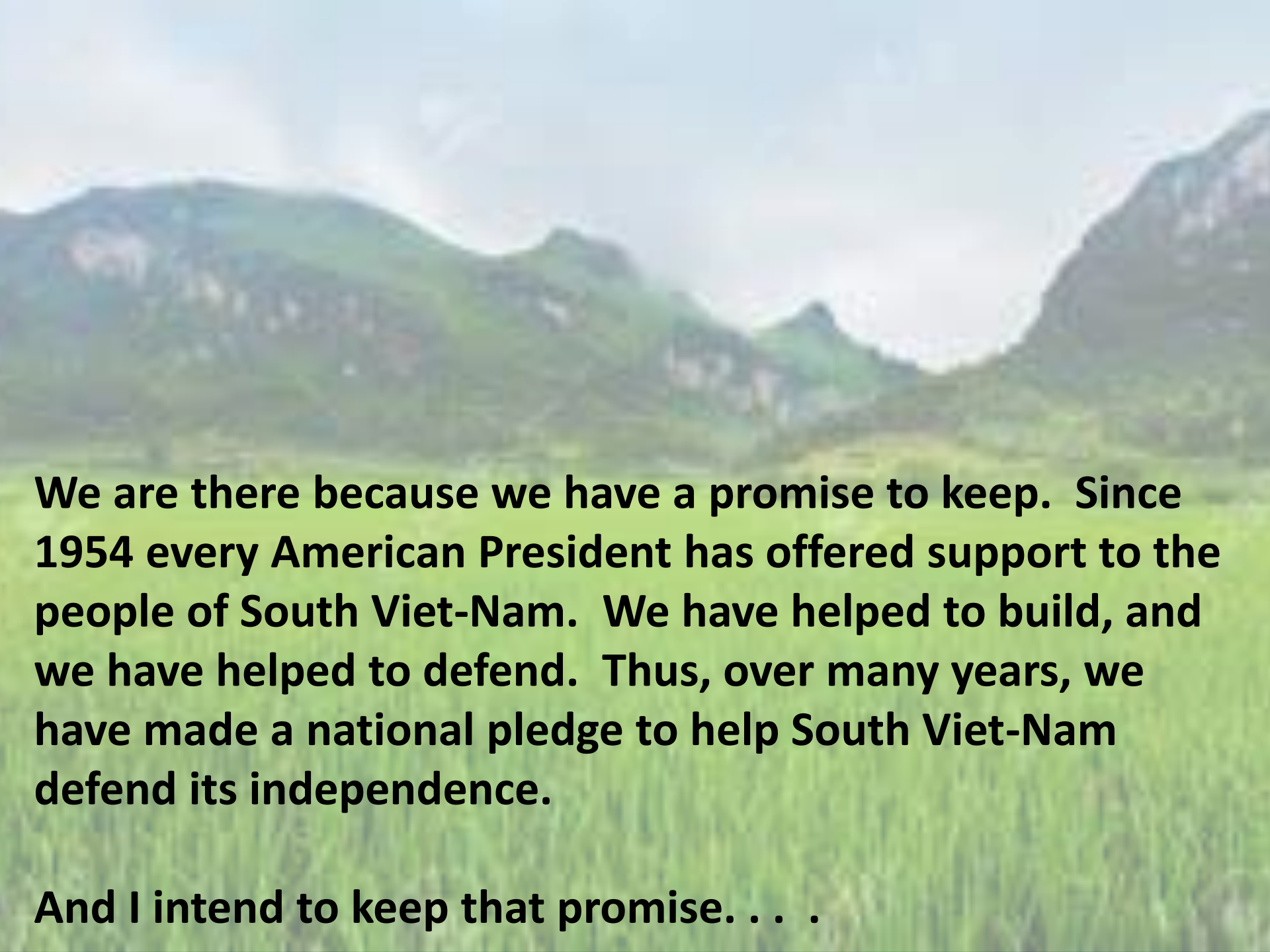
This support is the heartbeat of the war.



And it is a war of unparalleled brutality. Simple farmers are the targets of assassinations and kidnapping. Women and children are strangled in the night because their men are loyal to their government. . . .

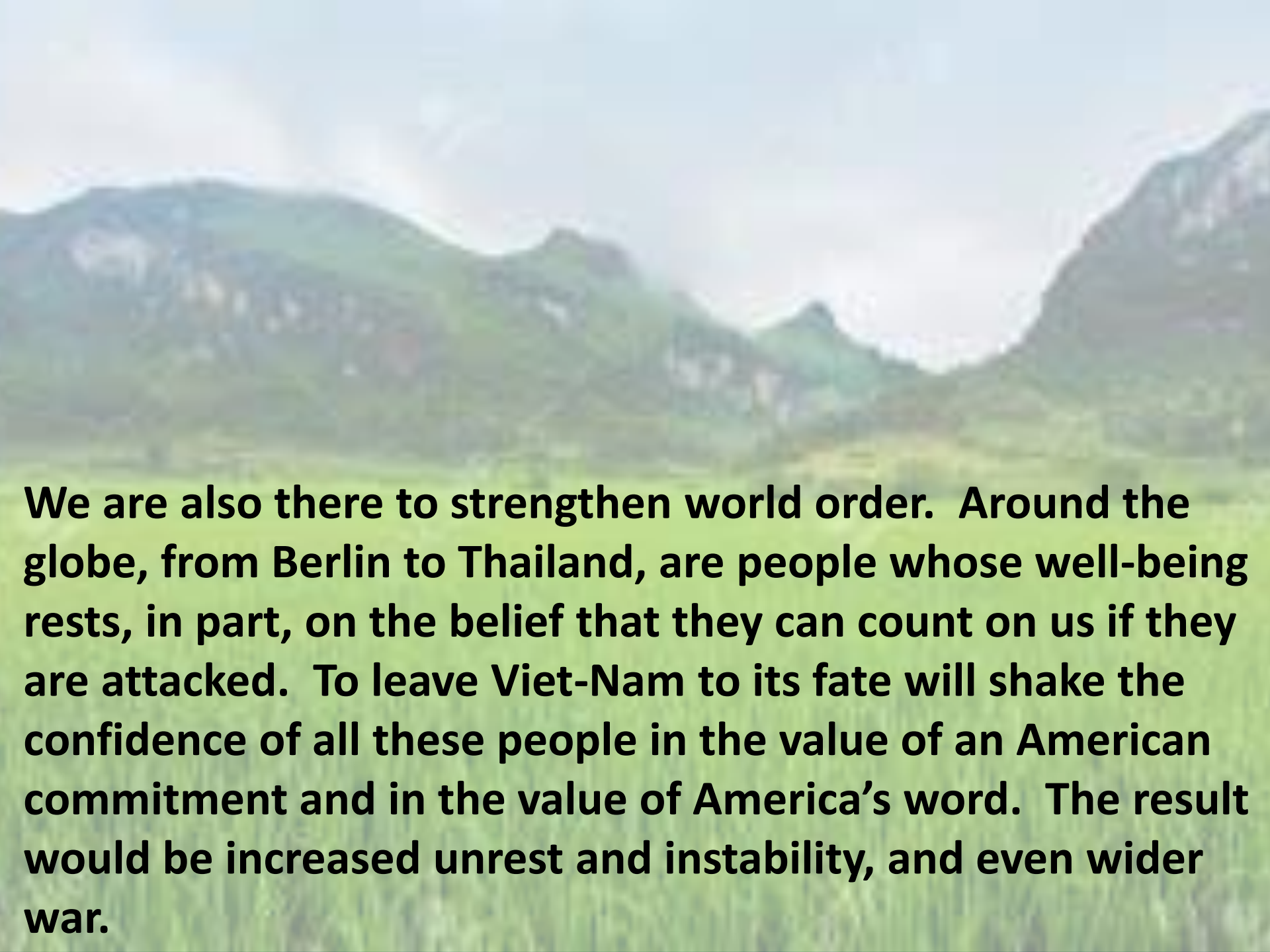
Over this war—and all Asia—is another reality: the deepening shadow of Communist China. The rulers in Hanoi are urged on by Peking. . . . It is a nation which is helping the forces of violence in almost every continent. The contest in Viet-Nam is part of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes.

Why are these realities our concern? Why are we in South Viet-Nam?

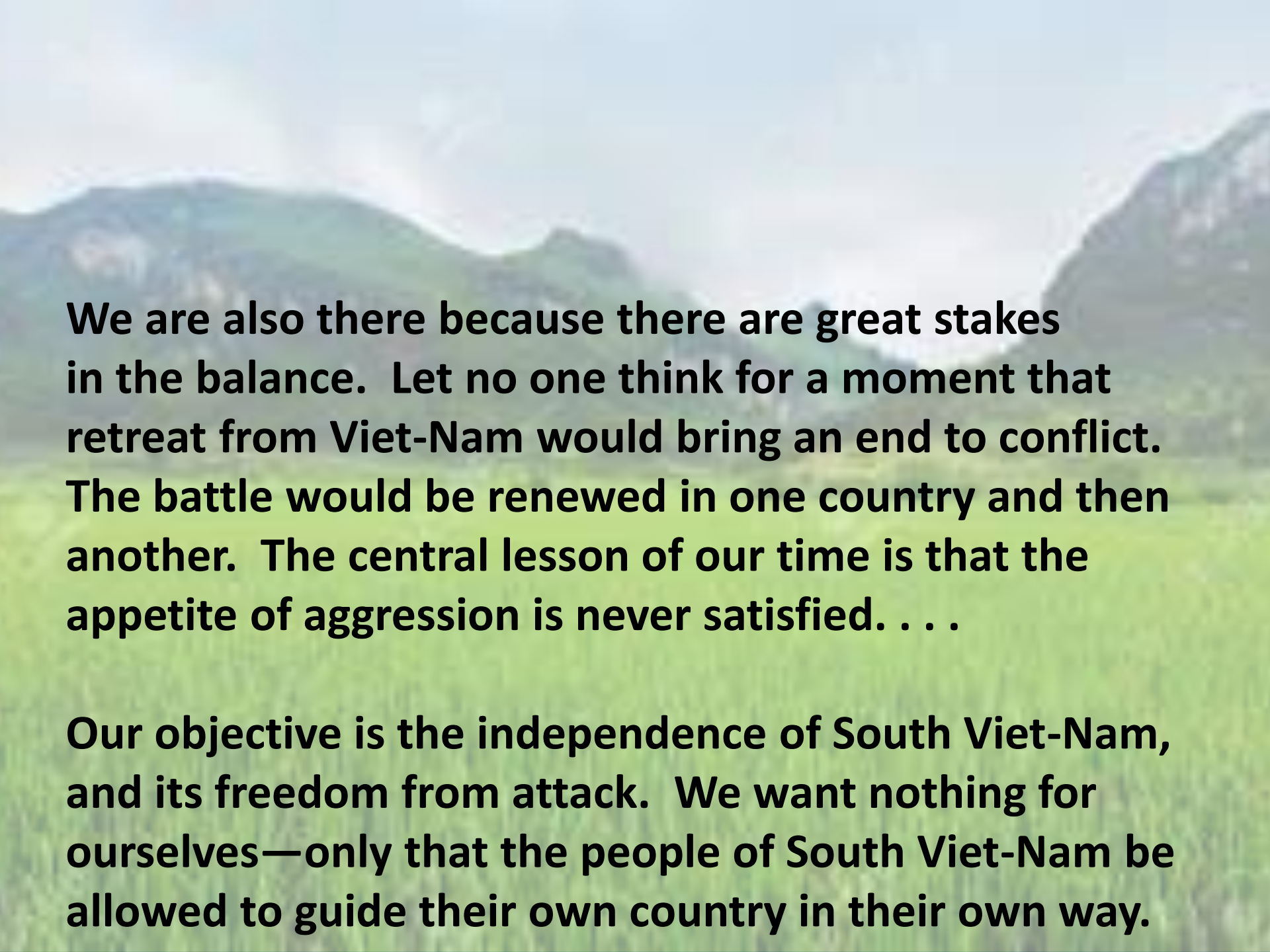
A scenic view of a valley with green hills and mountains under a blue sky. The foreground is a lush green field, and the background features rolling hills and mountains with patches of snow or light-colored rock. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

We are there because we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every American President has offered support to the people of South Viet-Nam. We have helped to build, and we have helped to defend. Thus, over many years, we have made a national pledge to help South Viet-Nam defend its independence.

And I intend to keep that promise. . . .

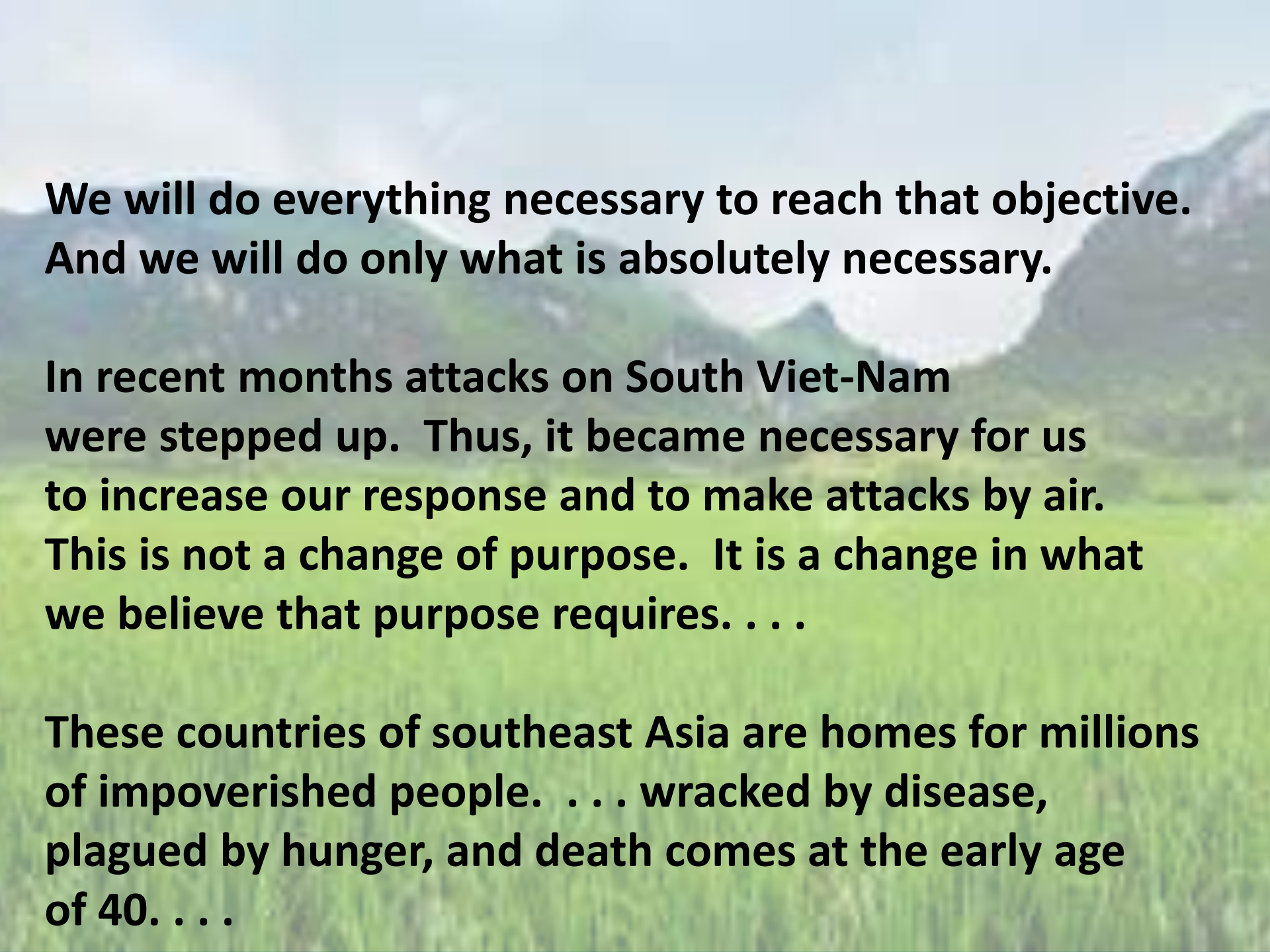
A scenic view of a mountain valley with green hills and a clear sky. The foreground is a lush green field, and the background features rolling hills and mountains under a bright, slightly hazy sky.

We are also there to strengthen world order. Around the globe, from Berlin to Thailand, are people whose well-being rests, in part, on the belief that they can count on us if they are attacked. To leave Viet-Nam to its fate will shake the confidence of all these people in the value of an American commitment and in the value of America's word. The result would be increased unrest and instability, and even wider war.



We are also there because there are great stakes in the balance. Let no one think for a moment that retreat from Viet-Nam would bring an end to conflict. The battle would be renewed in one country and then another. The central lesson of our time is that the appetite of aggression is never satisfied. . . .

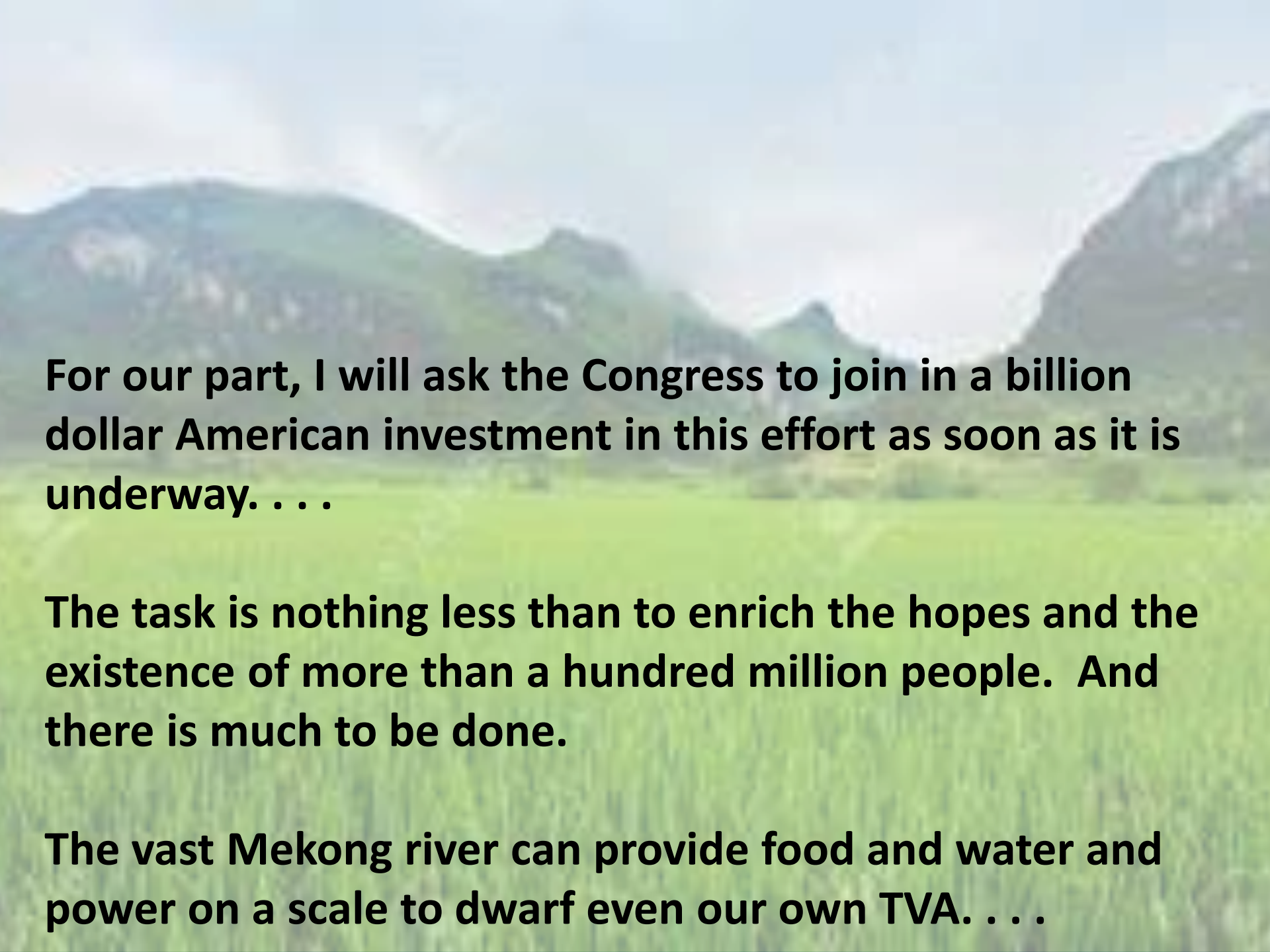
Our objective is the independence of South Viet-Nam, and its freedom from attack. We want nothing for ourselves—only that the people of South Viet-Nam be allowed to guide their own country in their own way.

A scenic view of a mountain valley with green fields and a white waterfall. The text is overlaid on this background.

**We will do everything necessary to reach that objective.
And we will do only what is absolutely necessary.**

In recent months attacks on South Viet-Nam were stepped up. Thus, it became necessary for us to increase our response and to make attacks by air. This is not a change of purpose. It is a change in what we believe that purpose requires. . . .

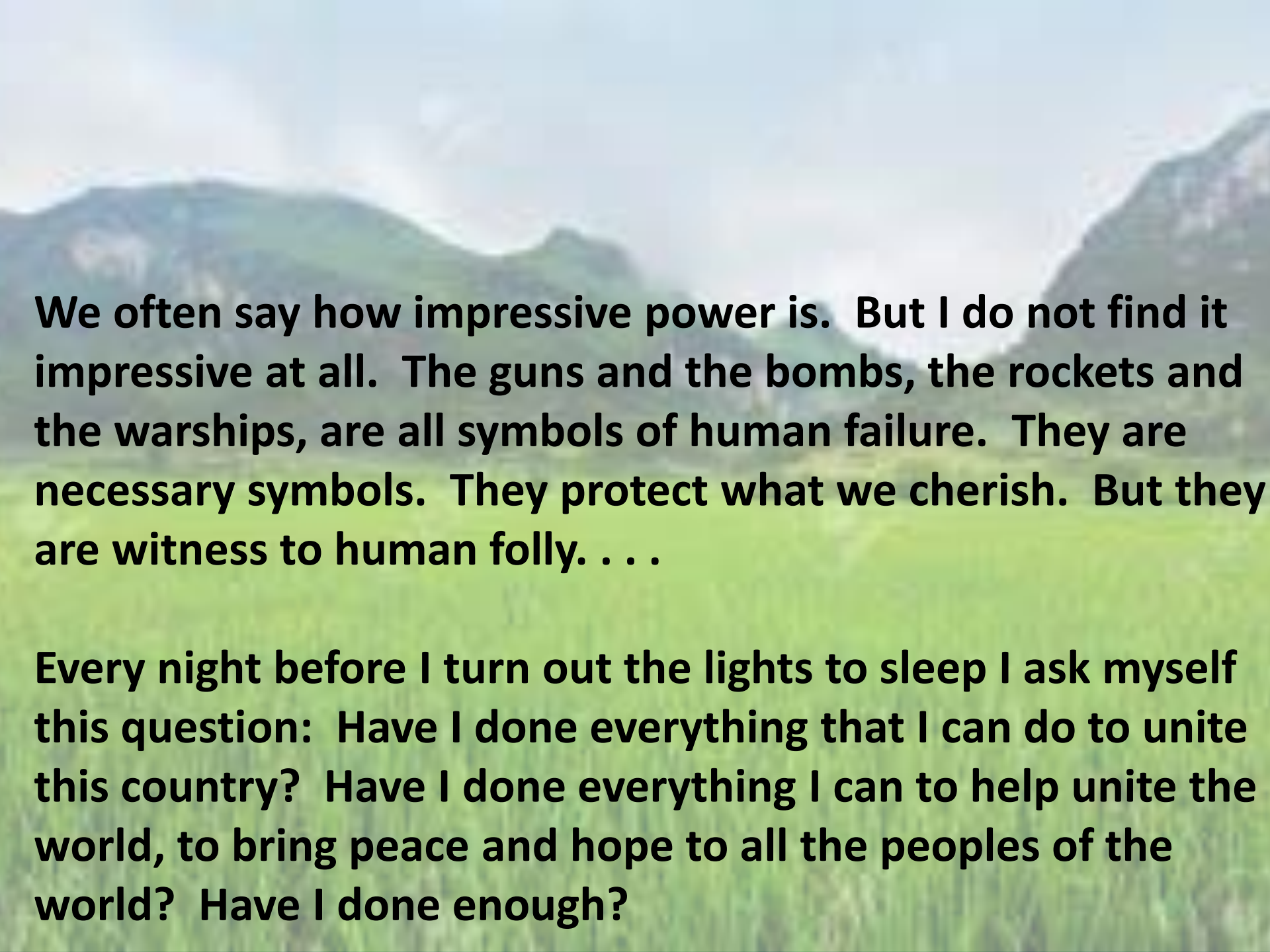
These countries of southeast Asia are homes for millions of impoverished people. . . . wracked by disease, plagued by hunger, and death comes at the early age of 40. . . .



For our part, I will ask the Congress to join in a billion dollar American investment in this effort as soon as it is underway. . . .

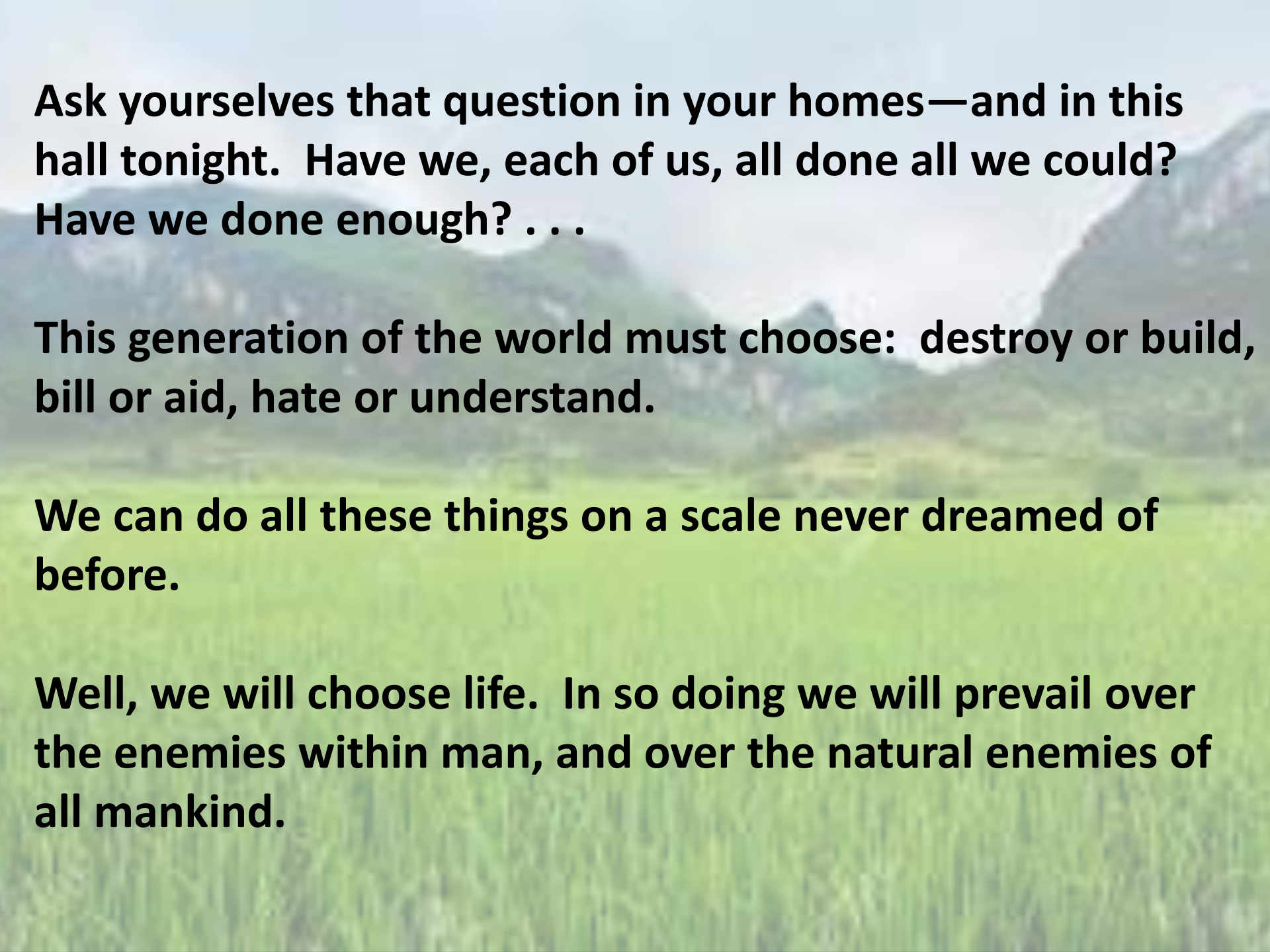
The task is nothing less than to enrich the hopes and the existence of more than a hundred million people. And there is much to be done.

The vast Mekong river can provide food and water and power on a scale to dwarf even our own TVA. . . .



We often say how impressive power is. But I do not find it impressive at all. The guns and the bombs, the rockets and the warships, are all symbols of human failure. They are necessary symbols. They protect what we cherish. But they are witness to human folly. . . .

Every night before I turn out the lights to sleep I ask myself this question: Have I done everything that I can do to unite this country? Have I done everything I can to help unite the world, to bring peace and hope to all the peoples of the world? Have I done enough?

A scenic view of a valley with green fields and mountains in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

Ask yourselves that question in your homes—and in this hall tonight. Have we, each of us, all done all we could? Have we done enough? . . .

This generation of the world must choose: destroy or build, bill or aid, hate or understand.

We can do all these things on a scale never dreamed of before.

Well, we will choose life. In so doing we will prevail over the enemies within man, and over the natural enemies of all mankind.

Pacification versus 'Search and Destroy'

The pacification-first approach. More focus on uprooting the local communist infrastructure and dealing with internal problems to deny the enemy access to the population base.

Reduced destructiveness of US operations and strengthened Southern regime. Since 90% of the population resided on the coastal plain and in the Delta, search and destroy into thinly populated areas or remote border jungle were counterproductive.

Needed to focus on securing rice-producing villages or training ARVN forces to be more effective. Success achieved by the US Marines and the US Special Forces in organizing large areas of tribal peoples before 1965.

The search and destroy approach

The Communist shift to Phase 3 warfare required "big battalion" activity to remove the most pressing conventional threats to the Saigon regime.

Westmoreland was forbidden from striking with ground forces at communist concentrations and supply routes in Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam, so his attrition strategy within South Vietnam was the only realistic option.


Other analysts maintain that there were equal or better alternatives available at the time besides large-scale attrition operations.

TABLE 1-U.S. ARMY AND TOTAL U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Date	U.S. Army Personnel	Total U.S. Military Personnel
31 Dec 1960	800	900
31 Dec 1961	2,100	3,200
31 Dec 1962	7,900	11,300
31 Dec 1963	10,100	16,300
31 Dec 1964	14,700	23,300
31 Mar 1965	15,600	29,100
30 Jun	27,300	59,900
30 Sep	76,200	132,300
31 Dec	116,800	184,300
31 Mar 1966	137,400	231,200
30 Jun	160,000	267,500
30 Sep	189,200	313,100
31 Dec	239,400	485,300
31 Mar 1967	264,600	420,900
30 Jun	285,700	448,800
30 Sep	296,100	459,700
31 Dec	319,500	485,600
31 Mar 1968	337,300	515,200
30 Jun	354,300	534,700
30 Sep	354,200	537,800
31 Dec	359,800	536,100
*31 Jan 1969	365,600	542,400
31 Mar	361,500	538,200
30 Jun	360,500	538,700
30 Sep	345,400	510,500
31 Dec	330,300	474,400
31 Mar 1970	321,400	448,500
30 Jun	297,800	413,900
30 Sep	295,400	394,100
31 Dec	250,700	335,800
31 Mar 1971	227,600	301,900
3 Jun	197,500	250,900

North Vietnam's Position (April 1965)

• Recognition of the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people—peace, independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. According to the Geneva Agreements, the United States . . . must withdraw from South Viet-Nam United States troops, military personnel, and weapons . . . , dismantle all United States military bases there, cancel its “military alliance” with South Viet-Nam. It must end . . . intervention and aggression in South Viet-Nam. According to the Geneva Agreements, the United States government must stop its acts of war against North Viet-Nam, completely cease all encroachments on . . . the D.R.V.



•Pending the peaceful unification of Viet-Nam, while Viet-Nam is still temporarily divided into two zones, the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet-Nam must be strictly respected.

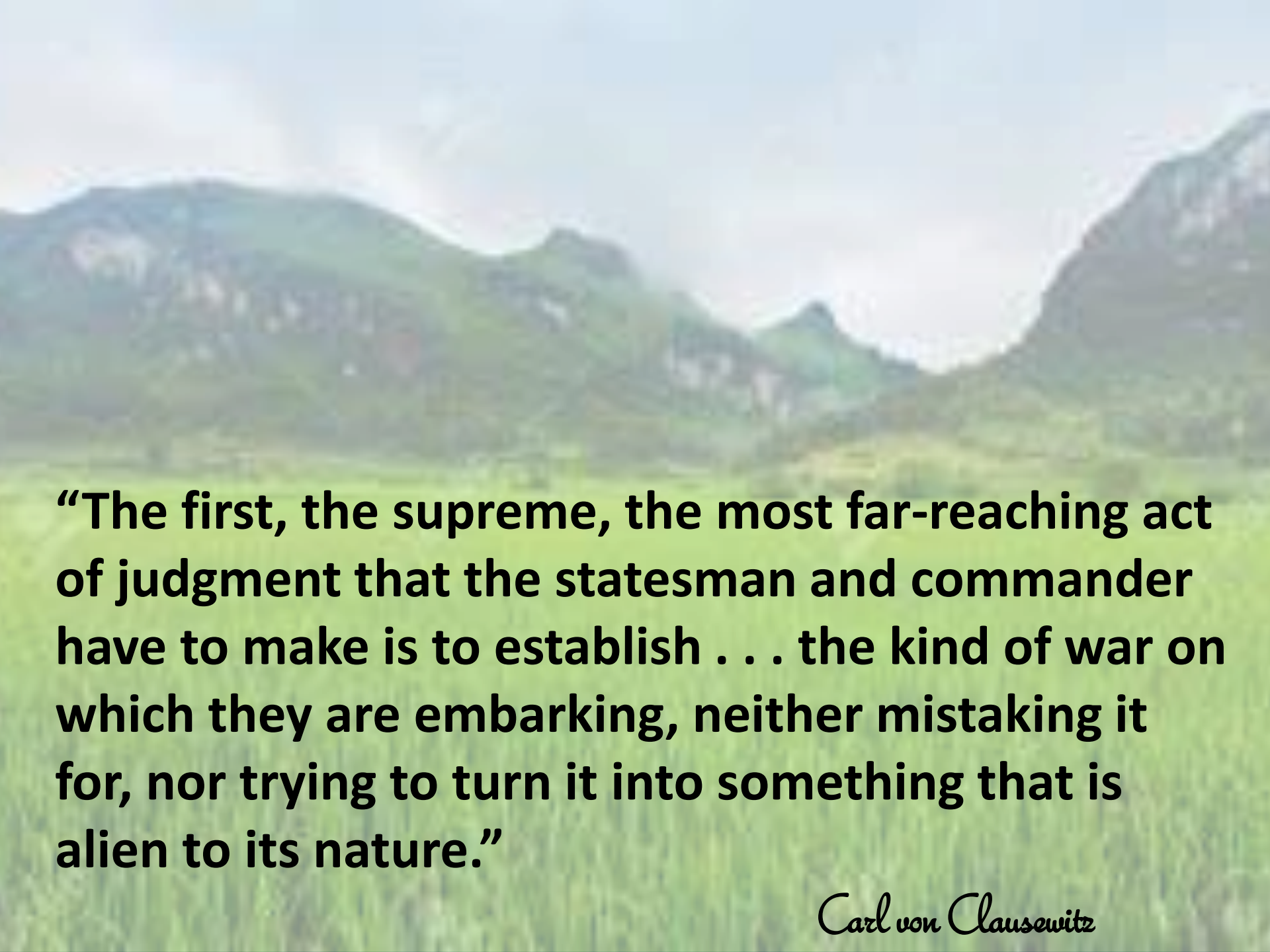
The two zones must refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries.

There must be no foreign military bases, troops, or military personnel in their respective territory.

A scenic view of a lush green valley with mountains in the background. The foreground is a vibrant green field, possibly a rice paddy, leading up to a valley floor. In the distance, there are several mountain peaks, some with patches of white, possibly snow or mist. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

•The internal affairs of South Viet-Nam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves, in accordance with the program of the NLFSV without any foreign interference.

•The peaceful reunification of Viet-Nam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones, without any foreign interference. . . .

A scenic view of a mountain valley with green hills and a blue sky. The mountains are in the background, and the foreground is a lush green field.

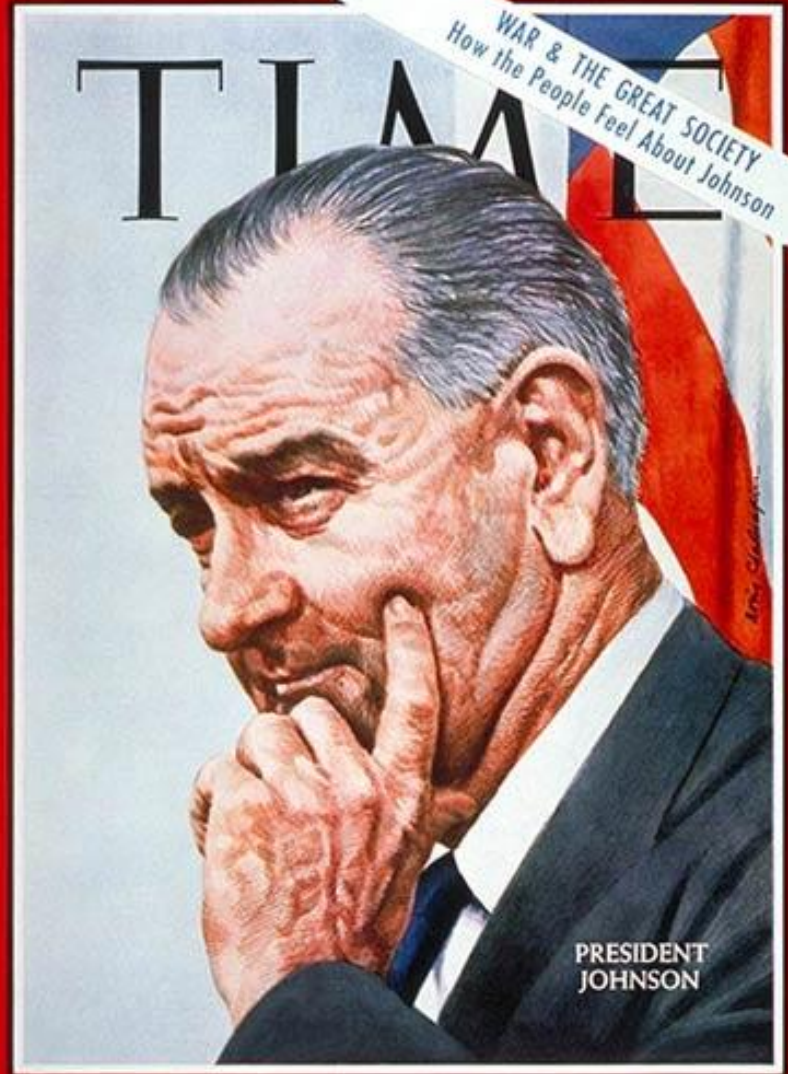
“The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish . . . the kind of war on which they are embarking, neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into something that is alien to its nature.”

Carl von Clausewitz

VC/NVA ambush	=	23.3 %
Enemy attack on static U.S.	=	30.4%
Enemy attack on U.S. LZ	=	12.5%
U.S. surprise of enemy (& selves)	=	12.5%
U.S. surprise of enemy	=	5.4%
American ambush	=	8.9%
Chance meeting surprises both	=	7.1%

THIRTY CENTS

AUGUST 5, 1963



WAR & THE GREAT SOCIETY
How the People Feel About Johnson

PRESIDENT
JOHNSON

VOL. 66 NO. 3

ARMS & DIPLOMACY
Re-Examining U.S. Military Might



ARMS & DIPLOMACY
Re-Examining U.S. Military Might

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

DEFENSE
SECRETARY
MCNAMARA



American Goals

(as explained by Ass't Secretary of Defense John McNaughton)

U.S. aims:

- To protect U.S. reputation as a counter-subversion guarantor.
- To avoid domino effect especially in Southeast Asia.
- To keep South Vietnamese territory from Red hands.
- To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods.

70% of U.S. goal: To avoid a humiliating U.S. defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).

20%: To keep South Vietnam out of Chinese control.

10%: To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.

Also – To emerge from crisis without unacceptable taint from methods

NOT – To 'help a friend,' although it would be hard to stay in if asked out.

“The relevant audiences of U.S. actions are the **COMMUNISTS** (who must feel strong pressures), the **SOUTH VIETNAMESE** (whose morale must be bouyed), **OUR ALLIES** (who must support our risk-taking with U.S. lives and prestige) [W]e must act with special care -- signaling to the **D.R.V.** that initiatives are being taken, to the **G.V.N.** . . . that we are behaving energetically despite the restraints of our political season, and to the **U.S. PUBLIC** that we are behaving with good purpose and restraint.”

LBJ influenced by:

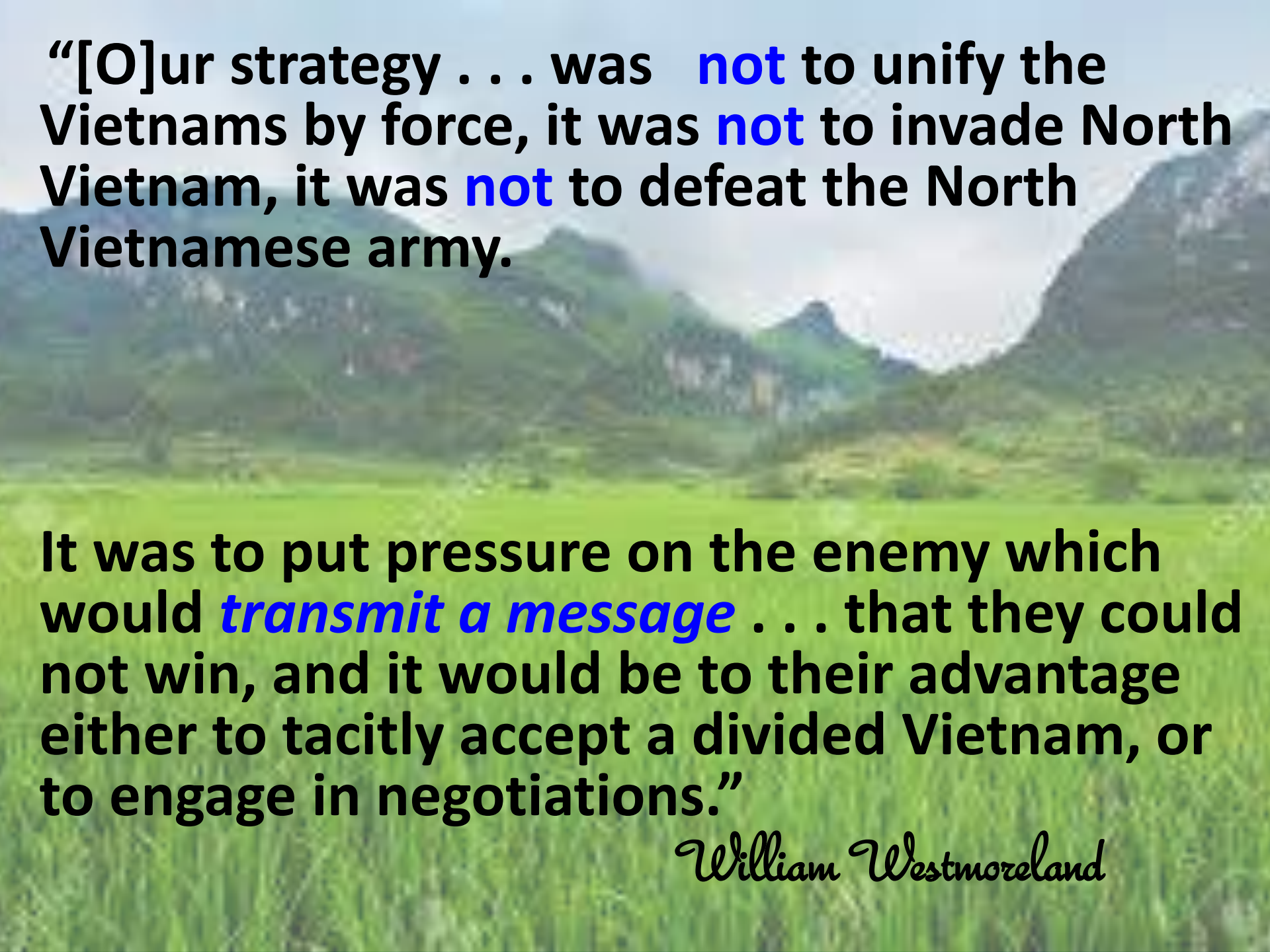
- ◆ **commitment inherited from JFK & others (back to turn of century?)**
- ◆ **policy of containment inherited from predecessors & belief in domino theory**
- ◆ **appeasement of Germany in 1930s**
- ◆ **view of the frontier and the need to civilize**
- ◆ **continuation of JFK's programs**
- ◆ **the split between China and Soviet Union**
 - **need to deter China**
 - **need to give Asia time and help to live stably**
 - **need to project right image of U.S.**
 - **need for firm stand to discourage other threats**

“I cannot overstate the impact our generation’s experiences had on [us] [W]e had lived through appeasement at Munich; years of military service during World War II fighting aggression in Europe and Asia; the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe; repeated threats to Berlin . . . ; the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962; and, most recently, communist Chinese statements that the South Vietnam conflict typified ‘wars of liberation,’ which they saw spreading across the globe.”

Robert McNamara

McNamara's "basic questions"

- Was it true that the fall of South Vietnam would trigger the fall of all of Southeast Asia?
- Would that constitute a grave threat to the West's security?
- What kind of war—conventional or guerrilla—might develop?
- Could we win it with U.S. troops fighting alongside the Vietnamese?



“[O]ur strategy . . . was **not** to unify the Vietnams by force, it was **not** to invade North Vietnam, it was **not** to defeat the North Vietnamese army.

It was to put pressure on the enemy which would *transmit a message* . . . that they could not win, and it would be to their advantage either to tacitly accept a divided Vietnam, or to engage in negotiations.”

William Westmoreland


Westmoreland

- **Classic military conflict**
- **Destroy enemy army**
- **War of attrition**
- **Push enemy to breaking point (“crossover point”), determined by body count**
- **Search and destroy through large unit action**
 - **“find, fix, fight, and finish”**

Some problems with attrition strategy

- Enemy kept tactical initiative
- Did not “mesh” with enemy’s strategy
- Did not distinguish enemy v. neutral/friend
- Viet Cong exploited restrictions on U.S. (including weather)
- Open-ended – so could require more troops (that were politically expensive)
- Casualties hurt war’s popularity at home
- Raised international concerns/disapproval
- Couldn’t spare troops for security/occupation; couldn’t fight main forces and secure rural areas
- Left NLF to “swim” in the people
- Alienated/hurt the civilian population → refugees
- Reflected lack of confidence in ARVN → hurt morale
- Did not reduce American casualties OR wear out the enemy
- GVN/ARVN restrictions and realities

- Meant to be a LOW-RISK strategy (*send a bullet not a man; quantity shall overcome*) but wound up having HIGH risks

A scenic landscape featuring a wide, green valley in the foreground, leading up to a range of green mountains with some rocky peaks. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall scene is bright and clear.

Objective? Unclear

Nature of war? Unclear

I.D. of enemy? Unclear

Domestic support? Shaky if war long and costly

International support? Shaky/limited

Military answers? Limited since guided by conventional thinking

U.S. and DRVN

- **Wanted to avoid war with each other**
- **Concerned about drawing in China and dealing with China-v.-U.S.S.R**
- **Saw the other as trying to destroy it**
- **Sought to destroy the other's "aggressive will"**
- **Had an attrition/diplomacy strategy ("fighting while talking")**
- **Were uncertain and fought internally on HOW to fight**

“We made an honest mistake. . . . We felt that we were doing what was necessary. It proved to be unsound.”

Former Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford (McNamara’s immediate successor)

“[D]ecisions . . . were made in good faith and for good purpose.”

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger

“The fact that some of their judgments, in retrospect, can be shown to be have been flawed and that the outcome has been a fiasco does not make [national leaders] villains or fools.”

Historian Guenther Lewy