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The major theme that occurs to me a great deal while reading the contributions from the anti-war activists is that the authors seem to lack a basic understanding of politics and the nature of the cold war. Now, most Americans don't like dealing with the harsh realities of life in general and, in particular, with the especially bare-knuckled arena of international relations and war. What really disturbed me most of all when reading the anti-war activists that, while being more than willing to condemn the United States for its involvement in fighting the totalitarian communist regime of North Vietnam and its puppet guerrilla/terrorist movement in the South, the anti-war types seem to gloss over the fact that the worst mass killings in the whole of the South was the 3,000+ citizens of Hue that were drug out from their homes, shot in the back of the head, and dumped in mass graves when the NVA and VC took the city during Tet of '68; but I digress. My main point of this piece will be to show that anti-war authors had a profound inability to look at or comprehend the hard realities of Communism and the Cold War.

Starting with the submission "The Ultimate Protest" by Norman Morrison's widow we see a total lack of understanding of the basic nature of the war on Mr. Morrison's part. The man burns himself alive to protest a war that then continues to rage on for another ten years, not the most effective means of stopping a war. Going on we can see the total narcissism and irresponsibility of his actions by the fact that he left a his young wife widowed and his three children orphaned. To what effect? Answer: none. My opinion on the subject of Mr. Morrison's death is that if he truly cared about ending the war he could have done a number of things such as write a letters to the editor, get involved politically and elect better leaders, or go to Vietnam with an aid agency to help alleviate some the war's human suffering.

Ms Rothstein's piece about her meeting with Communist officials in Czechoslovakia and her subsequent trip to North Vietnam also bears need for some criticism. Rothstein, without any sort of critical inquiry, accepts from female Vietnamese communist cadres that American GI's are shoving broken Coca Cola bottles up the vagina's of innocent villagers, then makes a recording and plays back hundreds of times to people back state side. Rothstein accepts the cadres' invitation to tour North Vietnam and, upon her arrival, is greeted by Communist Party officials and told how important important their presence is to ending the war. Had she thought about that statement she might have replied that the quickest way to peace would be for Hanoi to order the NVA to return to North Vietnam. It is also interesting to note that Ms Rothstein fails to mention the brutal crushing of the Prague Spring by an invasion of over 200,000 Warsaw Pact troops less than a year after her visit to Czechoslovakia.

While Truong My Hoa was not, technically, an anti-war activist she was deeply opposed to American involvement in the Vietnam War. Her response to Appy's question about the North's imprisonment of former officials of the former South Vietnamese government is indicative of the true nature of Communist regimes that the War protesters in American seem to gloss over. *"Those who worked for the puppet government had to be imprisoned in reeducation camps because they were obviously guilty."* That line alone tells us a great deal about the ideology that the United States was pitted against in South-East Asia.

All told the anti-war types' lack of understanding about the nature of the Vietnam War and the realities of Communist inspired totalitarianism make their protests ring hollow

in my ears. If these people had bothered to present political reasons for opposing the war instead of spouting anti-American propaganda they might have had more success in their endeavor. As it was Nixon and Kissinger ended the war when they felt the political situation suited the United States' best interests, and not a second before.

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