

TRUDY



Spotlight On Agriculture

By Herb Plambeck

THE WAR IN VIETNAM continues to dominate the thoughts of most farm families. A statewide survey of farm opinions reveals many misgivings and much confusion about the U.S. role in S.E. Asia. Dismay and disillusionment was the reaction of the majority of the farm people questioned by Spotlight on Agriculture regarding the American dilemma in Vietnam. Fears centered around Lunar New Year attack by the enemy are very real.

BITTER PARIS DISPUTES have added greatly to the frustrations of those who had hoped for an early settlement in S.E. Asia. The long heart-breaking delays in reaching agreement on so inconsequential a matter as the size and shape of the peace table have dashed all hopes for an early peace. Major points of issue now under discussion or consideration could drag the conference on and on for months.

RENEWED ENEMY ACTIVITY along the DMZ and in other areas of blood-soaked Vietnam in recent weeks has raised more questions. Despite repeated assurances from U.S. and South Vietnamese military leaders that the Viet Cong is no longer a serious threat and that the North Vietnamese Communists have "had it," the fighting and dying continues.

US COSTS IN VIETNAM are nothing short of staggering. American dead now are approaching 32,000—and going up at the rate of nearly 200 a week. The number of missing exceeds a thousand. More than 200,000 have been wounded, with some maimed for life. The dollars and cents toll now is estimated at \$100,000,000 or more a day. A monthly tab of \$3 billion is now attached to our involvement in Vietnam.

MORE THAN 500 IOWANS have been placed on the gold star roll in Vietnam. This past year brought the heart-breaking news to several hundred families in the state. So far in 1969 many more messages with the dreaded words "Killed in action" have been delivered to Iowa parents, wives and children.

AMONG THOSE who have paid the supreme sacrifice in answer to their country's call last year were young men from the Oelwein Register area. Included were Nabor Tafolla, Marine, Oelwein; Donald Thompson, Army West Union; Ronald Stroschein, Marine, Elkader; Dennis Friedhoff, Army, Elma; Donald Kremer, Marine, Aurora; Merlin Miller, Army, Guttenberg; Martin Reedy, Marine, Independence; Richard Meighan, and Myron Pock, both Army men and both of Sumner; and Gerland Rosenbaum, Army, Waucoma.

THE VIEWS OF IOWANS relative to our Nation's part in the S.E. Asian conflict vary all the way from those who believe we must "see it thru" to those who feel American troops should be pulled out at once. Following are some of the opinions voiced or sent to Spotlight on Agriculture editors.

DUANE-SWANSON, manager of the Eldridge Co-op, probably put it about as well as anyone can. He said, "On the Vietnam question, my thoughts are that we have serious, tragic problems if it continues and serious, difficult, short-term problems if the war ends suddenly. Of the two choices, I'm sure we much prefer the latter."

SENATOR ROBERT DODDS, of Danville, says, "I'm for a strong, firm settlement. Let's not lose everything after all the investment in life and money we have made."

A MASTER FARMER, Keith McAllister, of Mt. Union, says, "I am anxiously waiting to see what President Nixon can do on his campaign promise of an honorable peace in Vietnam. I am 100% for him, but doubt that this hope

will materialize. I am afraid the Communists will continue at war with us for some time at one place or another. They gain every day that we become more divided and more bankrupt."

A CHEROKEE COUNTY MAN, John C. Reimers, of Marcus, says, "On the Vietnam question, my thoughts are, get the boys home and get it over with. We had no business there in the first place."

FROM MARSHALL COUNTY John Leise, of Liscomb, says, "If it is proper to be there, we should fight to win. If it is not proper to be there, we should be out. I don't know whether we should be there or not. I have my personal doubts, but I do not like to see this country draft boys to fight and then not back them to the utmost."

AN EASTERN IOWAN, Fred Bachman, of Clarence, who has been farming 52 years, spoke for a lot of us when he said, "I'm confused! We can't win a military victory. We can't negotiate a peace pact. Meanwhile, Communism continues to spread and to work against us at every turn, while at the same time pretending to be friendly. Is Vietnam a delaying action designed to enable us to buy time and find a better way? If so, it justifies our being there."

A CRESTON W.W. II VETERAN, Brad Jackson, who served in the U.S. Air Forces as a captain for four years, is very outspoken in his feelings about Vietnam. Jackson, who was on Pacific duty in such hot spots as Tinian, Okinawa, etc. is emphatic in the conviction that the U.S. cannot and should not attempt to police the world.

"LET'S GET THE HELL OUT" is the way the Creston farmer puts it. He goes on to say we had no business getting into Vietnam in the first place. In his opinion the Vietnamese will be fighting each other and others as long as they exist. Brad Jackson goes on to say, "France saw the light and got out—and told us we couldn't win." He believes the US can afford to pull out and yet "save face" and says he believes President Nixon will get us out of our S.E. Asian dilemma.

SUPPORTING JACKSON'S VIEW, Joe O'Hara, Shenandoah Master Farmer and well-known S.W. Iowa conservationist, says, "Let's end this dirty, expensive conflict and get on with the job of making our own country and the world a better place in which to live."

A CENTRAL IOWAN, Bill Stine, of near Adel, puts it very succinctly. He says "I hope it can be ended." A northern Iowa farmer, Lloyd Kronemann, of Plymouth, says, "I hope and pray the Vietnam war can be stopped, so no more American boys will have to die."

A LONG GROVE MAN, Ray Baetke, from eastern Iowa, says, "Let's strive for an honorable peace, get the boys home, and then perhaps give South Vietnam a little financial aid to again help them get on with their own development."

A POCAHONTAS MAN, Eldon Anderson, makes this hopeful observation: "Although I am confused on this question, I hope we can phase out of this war, bring our fighting men home, yet handle the political situation so diplomatically that a sound democratic government can be established in Saigon."

RANDALIA BRIEFS Mr. and Mrs. Keith Borland and family, Davenport; Gregory Borland, UIU and Barbara Boeck, Janesville; Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wilbur and family, Hardy, Iowa; Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Wilbur, Des Moines; Mardelle Parkinson, Hampton; Mr. and Mrs. Art Parkinson and Delinda were Sunday dinner and supper guests at the E.R. Wilbur home.



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