

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

## Presidents Say?



- Activity: The Presidents Say
- Chart: Contrasting Facts and Points of View
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## The Presidents Say

**Truman sent military aid to the French who in 1946 began attempts to regain control of their colonial possessions in Indochina. In 1950 he directed “acceleration in military assistance.”**



LOC.GOV

“It has always been difficult to draw the line between restrictions which are proper because they are necessary for internal security, and restrictions which are improper because they violate the spirit or the letter of the Constitution. It is clear that on certain occasions, that line has been over-stepped. ...

“This is the way to build real security for our country — and every citizen can help. Everyone in public life has a responsibility to conduct himself so as to and not undermine our internal security and our basic freedoms. Our press and radio have the same responsibility. Private groups of all kinds, and citizens in their daily work and in their homes, are equally concerned with the question of protecting our liberties and our national security. We must all act soberly and carefully, in keeping with our great traditions. This is important not only to our own country, but to the success of the cause of freedom in the world. ...”

—*Harry S Truman, August 8, 1950*

Special Message to the Congress on the Internal Security of the United States

**Eisenhower sent U.S. weapons, military advisers, and dollars instead of troops to Indochina to aid French.**



LOC.GOV

“The way chosen by the United States was plainly marked by a few clear precepts, which govern its conduct in world affairs.

First: No people on earth can be held, as a people, to be an enemy, for all humanity shares the common hunger for peace and fellowship and justice.

Second: No nation’s security and well-being can be lastingly achieved in isolation but only in effective cooperation with fellow nations.

Third: Any nation’s right to a form of government and an economic system of its own choosing is inalienable.

Fourth: Any nation’s attempt to dictate to other nations their form of government is indefensible.

And fifth: A nation’s hope of lasting peace cannot be firmly based upon any race in armaments but rather upon just relations and honest understanding with all other nations. ...”

—*Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 16, 1953*

“Chance for Peace” or “Cross of Iron,” given at ASNE meeting

“Strategically, South Vietnam’s capture by the Communists would bring their power several hundred miles into a hitherto free region. The remaining countries in Southeast Asia would

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be menaced by a great flanking movement. The freedom of 12 million people would be lost immediately, and that of 150 million in adjacent lands would be seriously endangered. The loss of South Vietnam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progressed, have grave consequences for us and for freedom. ...“

*Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1959*

**Kennedy, in 1961, increased military advisers and ordered the Special Forces to train South Vietnamese in counter-insurgency warfare. By his assassination, 16,000 American military advisers were in Vietnam.**



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**The President:** I don't think that unless a greater effort is made by the Government to win popular support that the war can be won out there. In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it, the people of Viet-Nam, against the Communists.

We are prepared to continue to assist them, but I don't think that the war can be won unless the people support the effort and, in my opinion, in the last 2 months, the government has gotten out of touch with the people.

The repressions against the Buddhists, we felt, were very unwise. Now all we can do is to make it very clear that we don't think this is the way to win. It is my hope that this will become increasingly obvious to the government, that they will take steps to try to bring back popular support for this very essential struggle. ...

**Mr. Cronkite:** Hasn't every indication from Saigon been that President Diem has no intention of changing his pattern?

**The President:** If he does not change it, of course, that is his decision. He has been there 10 years and, as I say, he has carried this burden when he has been counted out on a number of occasions. Our best judgment is that he can't be successful on this basis. We hope that he comes to see that, but in the final analysis it is the people and the government itself who have to win or lose this struggle. All we can do is help, and we are making it very clear, but I don't agree with those who say we should withdraw. That would be a great mistake. I know people don't like Americans to be engaged in this kind of an effort. Forty-seven Americans have been killed in combat with the enemy, but this is a very important struggle even though it is far away.”

— *John F. Kennedy, September 2, 1963*  
Interview with Walter Cronkite

“... I was shocked by the death of Diem and Nhu. I'd met Diem with Justice Douglas many years ago. He was an extraordinary character and while he became increasingly difficult in the last months, nevertheless, and over a ten-year period he held his country together to maintain its independence under very adverse conditions. The way he was killed made it particularly abhorrent. The question now, whether the generals can stay together and build a stable government or whether Saigon will begin to turn on public opinion in Saigon. ...”

— *John F. Kennedy, November 4, 1963*  
Private dictation in his office

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**Johnson increased commitment to war, eventually with more than 500,000 American troops in Vietnam. On May 10, 1968, peace talks began between U.S. and North Vietnamese in Paris.**



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“...But the key to all that we have done is really our own security. At times of crisis — before asking Americans to fight and die to resist aggression in a foreign land — every American President has finally had to answer this question:

*Is the aggression a threat — not only to the immediate victim — but to the United States of America and to the peace and security of the entire world of which we in America are a very vital part?*

That is the question which Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson had to answer in facing the issue in Vietnam. ...

“There is progress in the war itself, steady progress considering the war that we are fighting; rather dramatic progress considering the situation that actually prevailed when we sent our troops there in 1965; when we intervened to prevent the dismemberment of the country by the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese.

The campaigns of the last year drove the enemy from many of their major interior bases. The military victory almost within Hanoi’s grasp in 1965 has now been denied them. The grip of the Vietcong on the people is being broken.

Since our commitment of major forces in July 1965 the proportion of the population living under Communist control has been reduced to well under 20 percent. Tonight the secure proportion of the population has grown from about 45 percent to 65 percent — and in the contested areas, the tide continues to run with us. ...

The late President Kennedy put it precisely in November 1961, when he said: “We are neither warmongers nor appeasers, neither hard nor soft. We are Americans determined to defend the frontiers of freedom by an honorable peace if peace is possible but by arms if arms are used against us.”

The true peace-keepers in the world tonight are not those who urge us to retire from the field in Vietnam — who tell us to try to find the quickest, cheapest exit from that tormented land, no matter what the consequences to us may be.

The true peace-keepers are those men who stand out there on the DMZ at this very hour, taking the worst that the enemy can give. The true peace-keepers are the soldiers who are breaking the terrorist’s grip around the villages of Vietnam — the civilians who are bringing medical care and food and education to people who have already suffered a generation of war. ...”

— *President Lyndon B. Johnson, September 29, 1967*

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**Nixon in March 1969 authorized secret bombing in Cambodia; increased commitment in April 1969 to 543,000 American military personnel; on Nov. 3 outlines policy to provide South Vietnam with equipment and financial aid as American troops withdraw; more attacks on Cambodia and anti-war demonstrations at home in 1970. In 1972 while President Nixon is meeting with Chinese leaders and signing agreement of détente with Brezhnev, U.S. is bombing military targets in North Vietnam and mining Haiphong Harbor.**



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“...—A nation cannot remain great if it betrays its allies and lets down its friends.  
—Our defeat and humiliation in South Vietnam without question would promote recklessness in the councils of those great powers who have not yet abandoned their goals of world conquest.

—This would spark violence wherever our commitments help maintain the peace — in the Middle East, in Berlin, eventually even in the Western Hemisphere.

Ultimately, this would cost more lives.

It would not bring peace; it would bring more war.

For these reasons, I rejected the recommendation that I should end the war by immediately withdrawing all of our forces. I chose instead to change American policy on both the negotiating front and battlefield.

In order to end a war fought on many fronts, I initiated a pursuit for peace on many fronts. ...

The other two factors on which we will base our withdrawal decisions are the level of enemy activity and the progress of the training programs of the South Vietnamese forces. And I am glad to be able to report tonight progress on both of these fronts has been greater than we anticipated when we started the program in June for withdrawal. As a result, our timetable for withdrawal is more optimistic now than when we made our first estimates in June. Now, this clearly demonstrates why it is not wise to be frozen in on a fixed timetable. ...

I pledged in my campaign for the Presidency to end the war in a way that we could win the peace. I have initiated a plan of action which will enable me to keep that pledge.

The more support I can have from the American people, the sooner that pledge can be redeemed; for the more divided we are at home, the less likely, the enemy is to negotiate at Paris.

Let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat. Because let us understand: North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that. ...”

— *Richard M. Nixon, November 3, 1969*  
“The Silent Majority” speech

**On January 28, 1973, the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam (Paris Peace Accords) were signed in Paris by representatives of the governments of the United States, the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Contrasting Facts and Points of View

After you select your topic, compare and contrast the people, the competing points of view, events, actions and issues.

**Topic:**

People Issues Actions		
①		
②		
③		
④		
⑤		



# Vietnam, Presidents and the Pentagon Papers

1. France held colonial sovereignty over its Southeast Asia colonies from the late 1800s. French Indochina was composed of three formerly independent countries \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The United States became involved in Vietnam in \_\_\_\_\_ (year) when it sent \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The “Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Task Force” was commissioned by Secretary of Defense \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ (year).
4. When the Report was completed, it was presented by Leslie Gelb, who led the team at RAND, on January \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, (date) to Secretary of Defense \_\_\_\_\_.
5. This report, that became known as the Pentagon Papers, was leaked to the press in June \_\_\_\_\_ (year) by \_\_\_\_\_ (name, job).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The report that the Secretary of Defense commissioned provided
  - a. defense of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia in the Truman and Eisenhower administrations.
  - b. justification and inspiration to remain involved in Vietnam.
  - c. historic records and preserved documents that chronicled key decisions that resulted in U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Ellsberg leaked these documents, that consisted of 7,000 photocopied pages, to \_\_\_\_\_ (name, job) because
  - a. he believed an educated public would send more troops.
  - b. he hoped to change U.S. policy and end U.S. involvement in Vietnam.
  - c. he had recurring nightmares from his years in Vietnam.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. It took *The New York Times* from March 1971, to June 13, 1971, publish the Pentagon Papers because
  - a. a team of reporters and editors read all the report and documents, confirming information against hundreds of previously published stories
  - b. they were waiting for the approval of the federal government.
  - c. they had to verify that all the Vietnamese people and places existed on obscure maps.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The Nixon administration issued an injunction against The New York Times Company in order to stop further publication of the Pentagon Papers. They argued that
- a. national security was endangered.
  - b. the reports would reveal that intensive bombing of North Vietnam had not deterred the enemy's will to fight.
  - c. the public had no right to know of the Kennedy administration involvement in overthrowing South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Justice Hugo Black wrote about the *New York Times Company v. United States* decision, "Only a free and unrestrained press can effectively expose deception in government ...". This idea refers to:
- a. The freedom to write about local people and events
  - b. The freedom to write columns and editorials
  - c. The watchdog role of the press

### **Vocabulary**

Define each of the following terms keeping in mind the historic context. Write a short statement using three or more of them to discuss an aspect of the Pentagon Papers' commission, compilation, leak or Supreme Court case.

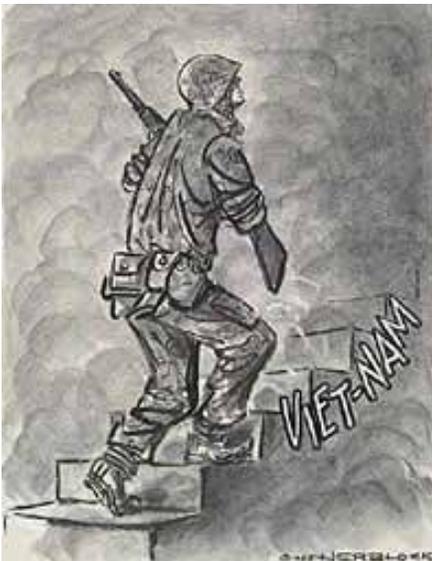
Deception  
Domino theory  
Imperialism  
Injunction  
Leak  
Prior review  
Sovereignty  
Unrestrained  
Verification  
Watchdog

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# Herblock and the Vietnam Era

For more than 70 years, Herbert Block caricatured 13 U.S. presidents, their actions and policies. From April 24, 1929, in the *Chicago Daily News*, to his final *Washington Post* cartoon, published on August 26, 2001, Herblock took on Republicans and Democrats, commented on ethics, education and the environment; took stands on domestic and foreign affairs; and provided insight during peace and war.

*The Washington Post's* editorial cartoonist for 55 years, Herblock used current and historic references, visual metaphors, allusion and details to convey his point of view. "Read" each political cartoon that focuses on American involvement in Vietnam before answering the questions. >>>



June 10, 1965  
*The Other Ascent  
Into the Unknown*



June 17, 1965  
*Our Position  
Hasn't Changed  
at All*



June 20, 1971  
*New Figure on the  
American Scene*



June 16, 1972  
*"Dr. Kissinger,  
I Presume?"*

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## Herblock: Read the Editorial Cartoons



### June 10, 1965 *The Other Ascent Into the Unknown*

Although President Lyndon Johnson campaigned in 1964, that he could keep the U.S. out of war in Vietnam, after his election he increased American involvement and ultimately the U.S. took over the war.

1. Who is the main figure in the cartoon? What details support this?
2. What is the effect of the background treatment?
3. The steps are labeled “VIETNAM.” What is Herblock communicating to readers?



### June 17, 1965 *Our Position Hasn't Changed at All*

On June 16, the Department of Defense announced that 21,000 additional soldiers, including 8,000 combat troops would be sent to Vietnam. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution gave Johnson the authority he felt he needed to proceed.

1. How do the steps differ from those that appear in the June 10 cartoon?
2. Who are the two figures in the cartoon?
3. What do the label and title combine to communicate about Herblock's point of view?



### June 20, 1971 *New Figure on the American Scene*

On June 13, 1971, *The New York Times* published parts of a top-secret document that was a report commissioned by the Secretary of Defense. After an injunction against *The Times*, *The Washington Post* published its first article based on the Pentagon Papers on June 18.

1. Who are the two figures in the handle of the scissors? What are their jobs?
2. What is the visual metaphor? To what does Herblock's metaphor refer?
3. What is Herblock's perspective on the “attempted censorship”?



### June 16, 1972 *“Dr. Kissinger, I Presume?”*

Dr. Henry Kissinger was President Nixon's national security advisor in 1972. He believed in détente and held secret negotiations.

1. This cartoon alludes to a British explorer. Who was he? What connection is Herblock making through this reference?
2. Where has Henry Kissinger traveled? Why do you think he is lurking in a jungle scene?
3. What was the purpose and outcome of his visits to these three destinations?

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## HEALTH & SCIENCE

# Reverberations From War Complicate Vietnam Veterans' End-of Life Care

BY APRIL DEMBOSKY, KQED

• *Originally Published January 4, 2018*

Many of Ron Fleming's fellow soldiers have spent the past five decades trying to forget what they saw — and did — in Vietnam.

But Fleming, now 74, has spent most of that time trying to hold on

to it. He's never been as proud as he was when he was 21.

Fleming was a door gunner in the war, hanging out of a helicopter on a strap with a machine gun in his hands. He fought in the Tet Offensive of 1968, sometimes for 40 hours straight, firing 6,000 rounds a minute. But he never gave much thought to catching a bullet himself.

"At 21, you're bulletproof," he said,

as he sat on the edge of his hospital bed at the San Francisco VA Medical Center. "Dying wasn't on the agenda."

Now it is. Fleming has congestive heart failure and arthritis, and his asthma attacks often land him in the hospital. Ten years ago, he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which makes him quick to anger and hypervigilant, as if he's still in that helicopter. Fleming's physical and



Ron Fleming

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mental health symptoms, combined with his military history, are a challenge to the VA's palliative care team, which is coordinating his care as his health deteriorates. It is a challenge they are facing more often as Vietnam veterans age and develop life-threatening illnesses.

For some veterans, the stoicism they honed on the battlefield often returns full-force as they confront a new battlefield in the hospital, making them less willing to admit they are afraid or in pain, and less willing to accept treatment. Other vets, with PTSD, are even more reluctant to take pain-relieving opioids because the drugs can actually make their symptoms worse, triggering frightening flashbacks.

About 30 percent of Vietnam vets have had PTSD in their lifetime, the highest rate among veteran groups, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Center for PTSD. Their rate is higher because of the unique combat conditions they faced and the negative reception many of them received when they returned home, according to numerous studies.

Since the war, many vets have developed coping strategies to keep disturbing memories and other PTSD symptoms at bay. But facing a terminal illness — the severe pain of cancer, the nausea of chemotherapy or the breathlessness of heart failure — can drain their energy so much that they're unable to maintain their mental defenses. Vets previously diagnosed with PTSD can slip out of

remission, and some may experience it for the first time.

"They're so distracted trying to cope with their physical symptoms that they might have flashbacks," said VJ Periyakoil, a palliative care physician at the VA Palo Alto Health Care Center and director of palliative care education at Stanford University. "War memories start coming back; they start having nightmares."

Gasping for breath can induce panic for anyone, but it can make vets feel as threatened as they did in a combat zone, said Eric Widera, director of hospice and palliative care at the San Francisco VA and professor of geriatrics at the University of California-San Francisco.

That's what happens to navy vet Earl Borges, who logged 240 24-hour river patrols in Vietnam with three other men on a plastic boat, constantly looking for enemy soldiers in the brush.

Since then, he's been startled by loud noises and fast-moving shadows. Now, at age 70, Borges has amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, which can intensify the anxiety from his PTSD.

If he lies down without his breathing machine, he panics, then hyperventilates.

"I have to talk him through it, tell him he's OK, 'just breathe,'" said his wife, Shirley Borges, 67.

They both say Earl's PTSD is under control — as long as he doesn't talk about the war — and

his ALS is progressing very slowly, without pain.

But for patients who are in severe pain, the go-to treatment is opioids, which can also make PTSD symptoms worse. This forces vets to choose between physical pain and mental anguish.

"Oftentimes, pain medications like morphine or oxycodone make some people feel a little bit fuzzy," Widera said. "That may contribute to that feeling of loss of control."

That's why Periyakoil isn't surprised when vets refuse pain medications.

"Don't you try and give me none of those narc pills, doc," she recalled one of her patients saying while he grimaced in pain.

Some vets also refuse medication because they feel as if they deserve the pain.

"We see a lot of feelings of guilt over what they've seen and done during their experience in Vietnam," Widera said, "and they don't want to blunt that."

At the end of life, this sense of guilt is amplified as vets look back and review their lives and, perhaps, contemplate the consequences of their actions in the line of duty. This is even true for vets like Fleming, whose overriding feeling about his service is pride.

"Sometimes I think that now I'm being paid back for all the men I killed. And I killed a lot of them," said Fleming, who has not required opioids for his condition, but has declined other medications.

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“If there is a judge, I figure I’m going to hell in a handbasket,” he said.

Watching vets choose to endure their pain can be hard for families, as well as for palliative care doctors and nurses. Just like soldiers, doctors hate doing nothing.

“Staff suffer terribly because they feel like, ‘What good are the hospice experts if we can’t take care of patients’ pain?’” Periyakoil said.

Often, the only thing they can do is stand back and respect the vets’ choice to bear their pain, she said.

Once, when Periyakoil was dressing the ulcer wounds of the patient who refused “narc pills,” he began talking about the war. She didn’t press, just kept working quietly on the wounds.

As he stared at the ceiling, wincing, he confided in her about a time he was forced to kill a pregnant teenager.

But this kind of revelation is unusual. With weeks or months left to live, after a lifetime of silence about their most horrifying memories, there often isn’t enough time for vets to talk about them at all.

That’s one reason the VA has been trying to start end-of-life care earlier — to address vets’ moral distress or PTSD years before they land in hospice, Widera said.

Fleming’s doctors, for instance, have urged him to consider mental health counseling or antidepressants. He refuses.

“I don’t want to take psychiatric

drugs,” he said. “The vets call them the happy pills. I don’t want any of those, because they change you. I don’t want to change.”

He was awarded 18 Air Medals for meritorious acts and heroism in flight. The loss and grief he experienced in Vietnam are woven into those memories of victory and glory.

“You see all the combat. There’s a charge to it,” he said. “And after a while, it bites you right in the ass. And once you’ve been bit, you’re bit for life. Nothing else works.”

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