

A content analysis: Attitudes of the New York Times
and the Washington Post toward the Vietnam War,
as expressed in their editorials (1968)

by

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INTRODUCTION

American involvement in the Vietnam War was accelerated in the years 1966 to 1968 and this involvement generated public protests and concern. This thesis reviews the editorial attitudes of the Washington Post and the New York Times toward the war for 1968, which is considered to be a turning point in the war. Reviews and reports by the Times and Post were indicators of American public opinion.

The author chose to analyze the editorials of the Times and Post because of personal and professional biases. The Times has long been the nation's most prestigious newspaper, as well as a major influence on other media. The Post was chosen because of its vanguard role in the nation's capital. Both are to be lauded for their prolific coverage and their positions over varying degrees of the political spectrum. For example, both the Times and the Post were among ten daily newspapers classified as the "most superior newspapers for news coverage, integrity, and service" (Rivers, 1975, p. 37). Also, the Times' and Post's microfilms were readily available in the Iowa State University Library.

In 1968, American public opinion was to undergo sharp and unsettling changes in its attitudes toward national leadership and trust in the American government. This study endeavors to gain some perspective of these diverse reactions, by exploring and analyzing the editorial content of the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Background Information

Vietnam is situated along the southeastern tip of Asia on the South China Sea, and is approximately 127,300 square miles, or the size of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina combined, with a population of 5.3 million people. Ninety percent of the population are ethnic Vietnamese, and the other ten percent are ethnic minorities--Chinese, Muong, Thai, Khmer, Cham, Montagnards, Meo, and Man (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

Vietnam has a history of political turmoil perpetuated by foreign interference and internal power struggles. For more than 1,000 years (111 B.C.-939 A.D.) the Vietnamese contended with Chinese occupancy and oppression. In the 17th century, Vietnam split into two hostile states (establishing the demarcation lines which at the 1954 Geneva Conference came to be known as the Demilitarized Zone). By the 18th century, the two states had reunited. But by no means was this the end to the Vietnamese plight (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

In 1858, France had begun to move into Vietnam; by 1884, she had gained complete control of the country. Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Indo-chinese Communist Party, in 1930, led the first significant armed uprising against the French. However, the French moved quickly to repress the efforts of the Communists and the Nationalists. Many insurgents went underground, fled to China, were imprisoned or executed (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

During this period of uprising, Ho had been captured and imprisoned

in Hong Kong by the British. However, upon his release in 1933, he returned to China to form the Viet Minh--a united Communist front movement whose aim was to unite Vietnamese of all classes, groups and nationalist parties to defeat the Japanese and French. By 1940, Japanese troops had begun movement into northern Vietnam as a part of their plan to conquer Southeast Asia; by 1941, they had successfully infiltrated southern Vietnam, and remained there until 1945 (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

In August, 1945, Ho led a successful uprising against the French. His forces were able to gain control of much of rural Vietnam. On July 20, 1954, France signed the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam, ending the 18-year war and French colonial rule in Indochina (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

Provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreement included: the division of the country at the 17th parallel into two military zones; a cease-fire; a 300-day period for free movement of the population between the two zones; and the establishment of an International Control Commission to supervise its execution (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

Following the partition, the South experienced initial periods of economic and political pains. Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem, however, was soon able to make progress that led to significant developments in South Vietnam, and caused concern in the North, where the Hanoi leaders were waiting for the South's demise.

In the late 1950s, the North reactivated the network of Communists

who had stayed in the South (the Vietcong). Cadres of trained guerrillas infiltrated the South, practicing terrorism. In 1964, Hanoi ordered regular units of the North Vietnamese Army into South Vietnam. In 1961, Diem had sought United States assistance and military advisers were sent to help the government. By November 1963, when President Kennedy was assassinated, there were 16,300 American soldiers in South Vietnam. In 1965, Marine units were dispatched in the Danang area (U.S. Department of State, 1981). A period of peace talks and secret negotiations were to be followed by the withdrawal of U.S. troops, which had begun in 1969; and the implementation of a cease-fire agreement, which was signed on January 23, 1973.

By 1972, only air and sea supports were left in South Vietnam. Hanoi, however, continued its subversive activity in the South--sending in tens of thousands of North Vietnamese troops to join the 160,000 already there. By 1975, the Communist regimes had begun a major offensive in the South, which eventually led to the fall of Saigon and the G.V.N. Thousands of Vietnamese, fearing Communist rule, fled the country. The Vietnamese struggle and this exodus continues today (U.S. Department of State, 1981).

To many, American involvement in the Vietnam War was tragic in its consequences. Gallucci (1975, p. 1) wrote:

"The country's predicament seemed to be the result of ignorance, mispreception, and misunderstanding, all of which in time contributed to an ill-founded and ill-fated optimism on the part of the leaders and their admirers."

In 1964, the year before the U.S. became actively involved in the Vietnam War, the national mood was described as one of "palmy optimism" (Millett, 1978, p. 5). President Johnson's actions and his capabilities as a national leader were highly rated by the American public. Fifty-two percent of the American public responded favorably to the opinion poll's question on how he was handling the American foreign policy towards Vietnam (Gallup, October, 1969).

Integration and civil rights were the burning issues in the media, as well as on the agenda of national social concerns (Gallup, June, 1964, p. 1883). The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 boosted Johnson's popularity at home. His visions of a "Great Society" instilled great pride in Americans, and the hope that their needs would be fulfilled (Millett, 1978, p. 5).

In the year American went to war, the economy of the nation was buoyant. The Gross National Product, as a consequence of Johnson's tax measures, expanded tremendously. Inflation had been curbed to an annual growth of less than two percent (Millett, 1978, p. 5). High cost of living and unemployment were the least of Americans' concerns. According to the Gallup polls (October, 1969, p. 1944), as an item on the list of "Most Important Problem" facing the country, the cost of living received four percent of mentions, and unemployment, only three percent.

The White House had waged a full-scale campaign on reform and revolution. There were programs to reduce the level of poverty; health programs to combat disease; rigid laws against discrimination; and

educational programs to eradicate ignorance. It was a period of concerted participation in presidential activism, and faith in national leadership and the efficacy of government programs. But, the Vietnam War was to cast an impregnable shadow on this period of prosperity (Millett, 1978, p. 5).

In May, 1964, sixty-three percent of the American populace gave little or no attention to the developments in South Vietnam (Gallup, 1969, p. 1882). By mid-1967, the poll indicated that half of American voters still had no clear idea of what the war in Vietnam was all about (Millett, 1978, p. 7).

Then, in January and February of 1968, the Tet offensive occurred. This event was to be covered extensively by the mass media, especially television, and brought the reality of the war to the American people. According to Gallup, the Tet represented the turning point in opinions toward the war in the U.S. A poll taken immediately following the event, found that for the first time since America had become involved, substantially more people said the war was a mistake than said it was not (Millett, 1978, p. 4).

Furthermore, confronted with the disparity between the depth of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the shallowness of their own knowledge of that small, insignificant, isolated area in Southeast Asia, Americans found themselves called upon to support what has come to be known now as America's longest war (Herring, 1979, p. x).

According to Gallucci (1975), there have been conventional explanations about how the war in Vietnam happened, and how America became involved. One such convention is that America "slipped" into the Vietnam War, or perhaps more accurately wrote Gallucci, that it had "sunk" into Vietnam over a period of time. The United States' role was projected as that of a nation trying to protect a small alien country from Communist aggression. And, although aid was given, Americans had the notion that America would extricate itself from involvement as soon as it could be done reasonably and "in a good political practical fashion" (Gallucci, 1975, p. 3).

Americans were led to believe that the U.S. was "seduced" into the war; and many saw America as the "victim." This interpretation, however, was rejected by Leslie H. Gelb and Daniel Ellsberg. They maintain that the U.S. neither slipped nor sunk into Vietnam; it was not seduced; and nor did it find itself deeply involved because it miscalculated or misjudged the chances of success. Rather, these authors argue that the comfortable image of "America-as-victim" in Southeast Asia serves to excuse our activity in Vietnam as a mistake "committed by well-meaning but ignorant policy makers" (Gallucci, 1975, p. 3). Gallucci espouses Gelb's ideas. He refers to Gelb's article, "Where Do We Go From Here":

"If Viet-Nam were a story of how the system failed, that is, if our leaders did not do what they wanted to do or if they did not realize what they were doing or what was happening it would be easy to package a large and assorted box of policy-making panaceas. For example: fix the method of reporting from the field. Fix the way progress is measured in a guerrilla

war. Make sure the President sees all the alternatives. But these are all third-order issues, because the U.S. political-bureaucratic system did not fail, it worked."

On September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh stood in festive celebration in Hanoi and proclaimed this day Independence Day for Vietnam against French rule. American warplanes flew over the city, U.S. Army officers stood on the reviewing stand with Ho and other leaders, and a Vietnamese band played the "Star-Spangled Banner." Ho spoke of Vietnam's "particular intimate relations" with the U.S. (Herring, 1979, p. 1).

This was the beginning of a succession of bitter ironies. Despite the outward appearance of goodwill and friendship, the U.S. had not always supported Ho in his efforts, as has already been indicated. From 1950 to 1954, the U.S. acquiesced to the return of France to Vietnam--actively supporting France's efforts to suppress Ho's revolution.

The inconsistencies in American policy regarding foreign affairs are well-documented. Up until 1945, President Roosevelt supported the Indochinese independence. However, he retreated on his stand, and endorsed, instead, a proposal under which the colonies would be placed in trusteeship only with the approval of the mother country. This was done so as not to antagonize France (Herring, 1979, p. 6).

However, after Roosevelt's death, Harry Truman cared even less about Indochinese interests and colonization. His top priority was in promoting stable and friendly governments in Western Europe that could stand as bulwarks against Russian expansion. The Truman Administration

concluded that the U.S. "had no interest" in "championing schemes of international trusteeship" that would weaken and alienate the "European states whose help we need to balance Soviet power in Europe" (Herring, 1979, pp. 5-6).

By 1947, the U.S. had formally committed itself to the containment of Soviet expansion in Europe. The Truman Administration had become increasingly obsessed with Communist expansion in Europe. The next two years American attention was riveted on France, where economic stagnation and political instability aroused grave fears of a possible Communist takeover. Thus, for the time being, the destiny of Indochina was left solely in the hands of France. The State Department concluded:

"An immediate and vital interest in keeping in power a friendly government to assist in the furtherance of our aims in Europe, must take precedence over active steps looking toward the realization of our objectives in Indochina" (Herring, 1979, p. 7).

During the first three years of the Indochina War, the U.S. maintained a firm pro-French "neutrality" policy. Reluctant to place itself in the awkward position of directly supporting colonialism, the Truman Administration rejected all of France's appeals for military aid to be used against the Viet Minh. But, at the same time American funds were being provided under the Marshall Act, which allowed France to use its own resources to prosecute the war in Indochina. The U.S. was also cautious in assisting the Viet Minh even indirectly. The White House refused to acknowledge receipt of Ho's requests for support, and declined to use its leverage to end the fighting or bring about a negotiated settlement (Herring, 1979, p. 8).

There have been various reasons given as to why the U.S. deemed it necessary to forget its commitment of "neutrality" and become involved in Vietnam in the early 1950s. Following are the arguments that Herring puts forward.

First, support for France in Indochina was considered essential for the security of Western Europe. France's economic recovery and political stability had been retarded by massive expenditures in its war against the Viet Minh. U.S. policy makers, more certain than ever of a Soviet threat, began to formulate plans in early 1950 to raise the forces necessary to defend Europe against the Red Army. The initial proposal required France to contribute sizeable numbers of troops and provided for the rearmament of West Germany. France was already resistant to this measure, and the U.S. feared that if it did not respond positively to its ally's appeal for aid in Indochina, then France might refuse to cooperate with its strategic design for Western Europe (Herring, 1979, p. 10).

Secondly, the fall of China prompted American strategists to conclude that Southeast Asia was vital to the security of the U.S. The Communist triumphs had already aroused nervousness in Europe, and the U.S. feared that another major victory might tempt Europe to reach an accommodation with the Soviets.

Economically, the consequences would be equally profound. The U.S. and its European allies would be denied access to important markets. Southeast Asia was the world's largest producer of natural rubber. It was also an important source of oil, tungsten, tin, and other strategic commodities.

Policy makers also feared that the loss of Southeast Asia would permanently damage the nation's strategic position in the Far East. America's first line of defense in the Pacific--the off-shore island chain extending from Japan to the Philippines--would be endangered. Air and sea routes between Australia and the Middle East and the U.S. and India could be cut off, severely hampering military operations in the event of a war. Such a step would leave Japan, India and Australia vulnerable, and would cut them off from each other. Even more disastrous, denied access to the raw materials, rice and markets upon which their economy depended, the U.S. believed that the Japanese might see no choice but to come to terms with the enemy (Herring, 1979, p. 11).

Finally, American policy makers had firmly embraced the concept of the "domino theory", the belief that the fall of Indochina would bring about the rapid collapse of other nations in Southeast Asia. Thus, these factors ended American neutrality and produced a commitment to furnish France military and economic assistance for the war against the Viet Minh (Herring, 1979, p. 12).

The Tet Offensive

According to Newsweek, the roots of the Tet Offensive started in the spring of 1967. The leaders of North Vietnam, alarmed at the devastating losses of Communist ranks in the south, re-examined their long-standing strategy of waging a protracted war of attrition from rural base areas, and decided that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces couldn't hold out against the U.S. and its allies much longer. Newsweek

claimed this information was obtained from confiscated enemy documents and transcripts (Newsweek, March, 1968, p. 64).

Subsequently, a group of Politburo members in North Vietnam led by Marxist theoretician Truong Chinh, drafted new plans. In March or April 1967, the Central Committee of the Lao Dong (Communist) Party passed "Resolution 13" which called for a new strategy to achieve victory "in the shortest possible time."

It is thought that Defense Minister General Vo Nguyen Giap played a major role in the offensive. His tactics entailed a three-phased campaign beginning in the fall of 1967 with attacks along South Vietnam's border. The intent was to tie down large numbers of U.S. troops. By the spring of 1968, political cadres were to set off a general uprising among the populace. His major goal was to wage decisive battles against the U.S. in the western highlands and at the U.S. Marine outpost installation at Khe Sanh (Newsweek, p. 64).

Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh, on New Year's Eve of 1968, remarked that peace talks would definitely start once the U.S. stopped bombing North Vietnam. It is believed that Trinh was also aware of Giap's plans, and some U.S. officials believed that his "peace offer" was simply devised to elicit a bombing halt during the critically important days prior to the Tet attack.

Situated along the southern panhandle of North Vietnam, not far from the Khe Sanh base, 240,000 Communist troops awaited for orders from Giap. The command for attack was read over Radio Hanoi by President

Ho Chi Minh, who recited this poem: "This spring shines far brighter than before. Happy news of victories blooms across the land. South and North challenge each other to fight the U.S. aggressors. Forward! Total victory will be ours."

The Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) selected Major General Tran Do to coordinate the offensive against Saigon. Tran Do divided the Saigon area into five subsectors. The center was the Presidential Palace. Also divided were the suburbs where secret guerrilla cells were ready to provide guides, shelter and food to the troops. Communist troops were placed 30 miles away from Saigon in an effort to lure allied troops away from the capital (Newsweek, 1968, p. 65).

However, South Vietnamese Army headquarters didn't take the threat seriously or refused to believe Saigon was the target. Thus, when the attack began, the nearest U.S. unit was 38 miles away from Saigon near the Hoc Mon bridge. Viet Cong troops penetrated the U.S. Embassy compound in Saigon, seized control of much of the imperial citadel of Hue, and terrorized 26 provincial capitals from the Demilitarized Zone in the north to the Mekong Delta.

The Tet Offensive was far from a failure. By catching the U.S. and South Vietnamese forces by surprise, it made a mockery of numerous allied claims that the enemy was too weak to fight. It forced thousands of allied troops to withdraw to the defense of the cities, and left the South Vietnamese countryside vulnerable to Communist encroachment. Furthermore, by launching their Tet Offensive, the Communists seized the

battlefield initiative from half a million U.S. troops and raised doubt in the minds of millions of Americans about the future of the Vietnam War.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With new developments in the technique and the application of the content analysis as a research tool, a diversity of definitions have been used in describing this method. In early analysis, Berelson (1952, p. 16) defines content analysis as a method for objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of a text. Later, Holsti (1969, p. 143) modified this definition, stipulating that the content analysis must not only be objective and systematic in its approach, but that it must include a general description of the manifest content of a text as well.

Nevertheless, despite the diversity in definitions, the general consensus is that content analysis allows a researcher to view messages in a systematic, objective, general and quantitative manner. Objectivity requires that each step in the research process be based on explicitly formulated rules and procedures. The content analysis must be systematic in its inclusion and exclusion of categories in following consistently applied rules. Holsti regards the principle of generality important, in that it provides theoretical relevance to the analysis. Quantitativeness is usually strictly defined, but is often used in a vague manner (George, 1959; Rosengren, 1981, p. 11).

There has been much disagreement between early researchers and their contemporaries about the applicability of content analyses. For instance, Berelson (p. 16), among others, supports the view that the content analysis deals with "what-is-said" and not "why-the-content-is-

like-that." More recent researchers, like Budd, et al. (1967, p. 54), disagree with Berelson's method because his approach leaves unanswered the question of the implications of what was said compared to what was not said (Gitau, 1979, p. 42). This researcher prefers the earlier approach, but does not overlook the contributions made by Budd and others. Bryder cited Kaplan's view, which is also worth considering (1981, p. 73):

"It is less important to draw a fine line between what is 'scientific' and what is not than cherish every opportunity for scientific growth...."

However, it is not the intent of this research to argue the merits of the content analysis (or its authors), but only to say that it does have a legitimate place in research.

One final definition of content analysis is that it involves a careful scrutiny of the written materials in a communication, so that the investigator may be able to make judgement based on the original information conveyed in the communication process (Gitau, p. 42).

The need for information, in today's society, can never be over-emphasized. The increasing complexity of world affairs, government and public affairs, etc., demands that the public be informed, and have access to free and diverse expressions. Such is the interest of much of the public in the editorial page. Editorials are considered as vital sources of information by the consumers of this medium. Inasmuch as the editorial is an expression of public opinion on various issues of public concern, it is safe to say that editorials may either modify or

directly influence the opinions in a free society.

According to Lasswell (1966, p. 189), there is a manifest interplay between the media and the community they serve. He stated that the media which serve a community will: 1) transmit the viewpoints of its members on important issues to the entire community; 2) disclose any threat against the community; and 3) attempt to respond to the threat in its editorial content.

Merrill (1968, pp. 30-31) further commented on the functions of the "free elite" newspapers. He attributes their importance to their 1) independence, financial stability, integrity, social concern, good writing and editing; 2) strong opinion and interpretative emphasis, world consciousness, nonsensationalism in articles and make up; 3) emphasis on politics, international relations, economics, social welfare, cultural endeavors, education and science; 4) determination to serve and help to expand a well-educated, intellectual readership at home and abroad; and 5) desire to appeal to and influence opinion leaders everywhere.

The communication and informational functions of the media, no doubt, influenced the feelings and opinions of the mass audience regarding the Vietnam War. Various public opinion studies have supported the claim that editorials do tend to influence public opinion.

Bird and Merwin (1951, p. 330) suggested that the editorial "is a most important part of the relationship between the press and the public." Other scholars, as well, have stated that editorials shape, guide, and influence public opinion (Lewis, 1949; Waldrop, 1955; McCombs, 1967).

Furthermore, it has been established that editorials can even bring about opinion change (Brinkman, 1968), as well as stimulate public debate and discussion on important issues (Davis and Rarick, 1964).

Vietnam is such a recent happening, that to date, not much communication research has been done on newspaper coverage of the war. Murphy (1979), however, analyzed the editorial opinion of the Atlanta Daily World, Atlanta Constitution, Chicago Defender, and Chicago Tribune for periods covering July 27 to August 9, 1964; January 1 to January 15, 1966; January 24 to February 8, 1968; and December 17 to December 31, 1970.

In her study, Murphy concluded that 1) the editorial opinion in the sample of Black and white daily newspapers did not reflect Black public opinion toward the war; 2) the social, economic and political factors did not affect the nature or pattern of the editorial on the war; and 3) that the sample of Black and white daily newspapers had the same, rather than different editorial opinion toward the war during the same time frame.

In another study, Stephen Elias (1978) conducted a computer-aided analysis (SPSS) of the editorial content of five American newspapers. Using the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, and the Washington Post, this author studied the period of this country's most active involvement in Vietnam, 1964-1975.

Using quantitative analysis, the study traced and examined editorial trends as they developed from generally pro-war opinion at the time of the Tonkin Gulf incident (1964) to almost universally anti-war opinion

when Saigon fell in 1975. The events examined were the 1) Tonkin Gulf incident, 2) 1968 Tet Offensive, 3) Nixon's 1969 Vietnamization and, 4) the Fall of Saigon.

Elias found that the New York Times showed the least amount of change, falling consistently in the anti-war category throughout the 1964-1975 period. The Post, with the exception of a skewed effect regarding the Tet Offensive, steadily increased its anti-war position. Just as steadily, it decreased its pro-war items throughout the time period studied. The Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times and the Post trended from pro-war to anti-war positions during the same time frame. The Wall Street Journal trended from anti-war to pro-war.

The overall tone of the editorials was anti-war. Elias concluded that each paper was willing to make a definite stand during the period under study. The paper which most clearly appeared to have changed its editorial opinion was the Los Angeles Times.

Also, Elias found that both the Post and the New York Times presented fewer items on the Tet Offensive than the other papers. In their editorials on February 1, 1968, both newspapers seem to suggest that the offensive was a final Communist attempt prior to beginning peace negotiations.

The New York Times, in its anti-war tone, referred to the offensive as "further proof of the limitations of American power in Asia" ("Bloody Path To Peace", p. 36). It further stated that the offensive could not be the work of an enemy force whose morale is "sinking fast;" that the

U.S. could hardly be said to be "winning," and that substantially "more troops" than the Administration had yet admitted "would be required" in order to attain a "clear cut military victory."

The Post's first editorial was equally as critical. It warned that the Administration's talk of an invasion in the context of the Viet Cong attack was dangerous. It stated that American military officials "had best be thinking of a different emphasis" in their actions than simply "attrition of enemy forces in the hinterlands;" and offered that possibly "a modified, more selective search-and-destroy policy" was needed ("Rationalizing the Vietnam Rampage", p. A20). The Post concluded that its suggested alternatives had "been advanced publicly... by responsible men" but were unlikely to get a full hearing while we "are determined to find enemy failures in actions where the enemy, by its own known definition of its objectives, finds success."

METHODOLOGY

The basic objective of this study centered around the examination of attitudes as expressed in editorials toward the Vietnam War before the 1968 Tet Offensive, and immediately after it. The two major newspapers selected were the Washington Post and the New York Times. The original intention was to examine a much longer time period. However, time being a factor, the scope of the study was narrowed to include the entire year of 1968 only, thus placing greater emphasis on the coverage of this particular event.

Several researchers have provided definitions of content analysis. However, this researcher considered Berelson's definition to be adequate. He stated that "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (1952, p. 16).

The 1968 Tet Offensive is considered the turning point of the Vietnam War. As casualties and the sense of futility went up, support at home went down. This year is also significant in history, because on March 31, President Johnson ordered all bombing stopped on North Vietnam. He also announced that he would not seek re-election.

The criteria for selection of these newspapers were personal as well as professional. Both of these newspapers have long been recognized for their thorough coverage of international affairs and their willingness to take editorial positions. Both the Post and the Times were listed

among the 10 daily newspapers classified as having the "most superior news coverage, integrity, and service." In addition, the Times and Post's microfilms were readily available in the ISU Library.

The New York Times' Index was utilized to extract all editorials covering the Vietnam War for 1968. Because the Washington Post did not establish an index until 1970, the researcher had to scan each editorial in each edition of the Post for this period.

In order to establish a workable base of data from which to analyze reactions of the newspapers' editorials, this study is based on 201 editorials. A total of nine variables were utilized in a coding sheet to evaluate each editorial involved in the study (see Appendix B). The variables concerned such items as: 1) newspaper's name, 2) page number, 3) date of editorial, 4) title of editorial, 5) content categories, 6) placement of editorial, 7) direction of editorial, 8) theme or overall tone of editorial, and 9) number of column inches. The use of themes to determine the overall tone was considered necessary in order to more objectively evaluate each editorial's content. The most significant criterion in the determination of the parameters of a theme was the ability to infer a definitive tonal meaning from it. This criterion was also used in evaluating the content.

Establishing a rigid system of categories seems to be the problem most associated with content analysis. The researcher was guided by the fact that the categories should: 1) reflect the purpose of this research, 2) be equally relevant during the entire period, 3) be comprehensive, and

4) be mutually exclusive. Following these percepts of category construction, the researcher modified several of Bush's content categories and incorporated them into the following category system. With the aid of the content categories and indicants, the researcher first scanned the editorials and coded them. The following are the categories and indicants that were constructed. The * denotes those categories and indicants formulated by Bush. When more than one issue (category) within an editorial was discussed, a coding decision was made by selecting the one which was more dominant.

The Significant Categories

Draft - includes anti-draft and pro-war aspects about the war.

*Diplomacy/Foreign Relations - includes news of diplomatic relations between nations (i.e., U.N. official activities of ambassadors, military officials, etc.).

Vietnam Policy and Johnson's Administration - includes support or criticism of the Vietnam policy and the Johnson staff.

Cease-fire - concerned with sentiments toward a conditional or unconditional bombing halt.

Negotiation - concerned with the peace talks and a site.

South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility - includes sentiments expressing the withdrawal of American troops, so that South Vietnam could assume a major fighting role.

Escalation - concerned with sentiments toward speeding up the war.

*Allies - foreign reaction toward the U.S.'s involvement in the war.

Casualties and War Activities - concerned with events and the fatal incidences related to battlefield activity.

Social Reform - concerned with social reform for the Vietnamese people.

U.S. - U.S.S.R. relations - includes sentiments regarding the relationship between the U.S. and Russia.

*Politics - includes aspects about issues, candidates and leaders on the national level; also includes the 1968 election as an issue related to the war.

Economics - any editorial discussing the economy and the effects of the war.

The unit of analysis was the entire editorial. Each category within the unit of analysis was evaluated for its directional dimensions, as well as its overall tone. The dimensions included: 1) unfavorable/pro-war (those editorials that reflected support of the Vietnam War, and voiced sentiments of pro-war supporters), 2) favorable/anti-war (those editorials which opposed the Vietnam War and America's involvement in it, and expressed the support for anti-war advocates), and 3) neutral (those editorials which had no perceived direction).

Questions for this Study

The latent aspects of communication about the Vietnam War and America's involvement in that war will be explored by way of asking questions regarding the content of the messages carried by the selected newspapers. In analyzing editorial attitudes, a researcher needs questions which are pertinent to what is being sought. Some of those questions will be:

1. What facts or opinions was the public told about American political interests in Indochina or Asia, and the consequent involvement in the Vietnam War?
2. What was the nature of the news editorials?

3. Did coverage of the war vary in the two newspapers either in depth or in content?
4. What stories about the war resulted in the greatest number of editorial comments?
5. What would a reader without prior knowledge of Vietnam decide from the two newspapers' editorials concerning the strategic importance of Vietnam to America?

Finding answers to the above questions may not tell us all there is about the coverage of the Vietnam War, but the analysis of the editorials will help balance the sensational reporting of the war and the news-worthy aspects of the political controversy in Vietnam. Also, in undertaking such a study, we hope we will have come a step further in understanding this tragic event in our country's history.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study have been reported here under the following rubrics: 1) the nature and pattern of the editorial opinions in the Washington Post and the New York Times on the Vietnam War for 1968; 2) the direction of the opinions; 3) the overall theme of the editorials; and 4) an overview of the preceding three rubrics.

Nature and Pattern of Editorials

A total of 201 editorials from the sample of the two newspapers were examined for editorial opinions on the Vietnam War. The figures seem to imply that the New York Times (n=100) and the Washington Post (n=101) editorial attitudes toward the Vietnam War were distinct, and for the most part, clear-cut. The Times, for 1968, was consistently anti-war in its attitudes. Interestingly enough, the Post seemed to have varied in its arguments both for and against the war. The Post had almost half as many pro-war editorials (n=14) as it did anti-war (n=29) editorials. Whereas, the Times had only anti-war editorials (n=60).

The quantitative analysis of the editorial subject matter on the Vietnam War under the thirteen (13) categories is indicated in Table 1. From the analysis, it appears that the majority of the sample daily newspapers' editorials dealt with 1) "Politics" (32.0%), 2) the "Johnson Administration and the Vietnam Policy" (20.0%), 3) "Negotiation" (10.0%), 4) "Cease-fire" (10.0%), 5) "Casualties and War Activity" (8.0%), 6) "Diplomacy" (6.0%), 7) "South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility" (4.5%), 8) Others (10.0%), including "Allies," "Social Reform," "Draft,"

Table 1. Breakdown of editorials by newspapers and categories

Subject categories	Washington Post (n=)	Washington Post (%)	New York Times (n=)	New York Times (%)	Total (n=)	Total (%)
Draft	3	2.97	0	0	3	2
Diplomacy	5	4.95	7	7	12	6
Vietnam policy and Johnson's administration	15	14.90	25	25	40	20
Cease-fire	5	4.95	15	15	20	10
Negotiation	16	15.80	5	5	21	10
South Vietnam should take full responsibility	7	6.93	2	2	9	4.5
Escalation	1	0.99	0	0	1	0.5
Allies	3	2.97	4	4	7	3.5
Casualties and war activities	10	9.90	6	6	16	8
Social reform	2	2.00	2	2	4	2
U.S.-U.S.S.R.	0	0.00	2	2	2	1
Politics	33	32.70	32	32	65	32
Economics	1	0.99	0	0	1	0.5
TOTAL	100	100.00	100	100	201	100.0

"U.S.-U.S.S.R.," "Escalation," and "Economics." The categorical issues are discussed in order of the number of editorials which appeared in the two newspapers.

The "Politics" category

The majority of the editorials (n=65; 32.0%) in the two sample newspapers dealt with the "Politics" category. The Washington Post carried 33 editorials, and the New York Times carried 32 editorials.

A qualitative analysis of the editorials dealing with "Politics" indicates that the Post and Times expressed editorial opinion on the Presidential election of 1968, and the candidates' views on the Vietnam War. In its editorial on February 29 (p. A14), "Debasing the Debate," the Post was extremely critical of Senator Fulbright and the war critics on the Foreign Relations Committee, calling them "blackmailers." The editorial commented, "It is nothing less than blackmail to make the prospect of negotiation with an apparently intransigent enemy the price for passage of appropriations for the Asian Development Bank." It further stated that it would be better "if senatorial critics would shun political reprisals" and "if the President would be more generous in his estimate of the motives of those who differ with him."

The Post was also critical of a proposal done by a group called the 'Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam'. Their proposal, "A Balance Sheet on Bombing," (January 16, p. A14), was termed an "unappealing" position for a politician.

While the Post did not openly endorse a candidate in any of its editorials, it did praise Senator Edward Kennedy's views on how the Vietnam situation should be handled (August 22, "Edward Kennedy on Vietnam", p. A20). Kennedy favored the United States unconditionally halting all bombing of North Vietnam. He believed the United States should commence negotiations with Hanoi on a mutual withdrawal of all American and North Vietnamese forces from the South. The editorial also shared Kennedy's view that the Paris talks should deal strictly with this mutual withdrawal concept, and not with the creation of a government for South Vietnam.

The Times questioned whether the Vietnam War had caused Johnson's popularity to go from a record-setting 15 million vote plurality to a perilous point in its January 14 editorial ("L.B.J. and 1968"). The editorial claimed that even though Johnson's domestic spending and reform policies offended the voters, such forces would pose no threat to his political strength were it not for Vietnam.

The difference in editorial coverage between the two sample newspapers under the "Politics" category concerning the Presidential candidates was noteworthy. As stated before, the Post did not directly endorse a Presidential candidate. However, the Times was more verbose in its criticism of the candidates, as well as in its praise. About Richard Nixon, an editorial stated (February 4, "The Persistent Suitor," p. 12) that his candidacy offered the nation "no genuine alternative in Vietnam except that of a man who is not a Democrat and is not named Johnson." The editorial referred to Nixon's speech in 1954 when he told

the American Society of Newspaper Editors that if Communist expansion would be averted by "putting American boys in...I personally would support such a decision." Thus, the editor believed that though Nixon now promised fresh ideas, his was still in "insistent courtship."

The August 28 editorial, "Mr. Humphrey's Incubus...", criticized Humphrey for aligning himself with Johnson's Vietnam policy, which the editorial called a "mistaken" policy. It accused Humphrey of avoiding unpleasant confrontations with Johnson and of lacking independence.

On October 2, October 6, October 11, October 12, October 13, and October 30, the Times ran editorials which endorsed Hubert Humphrey for President and Edward Muskie for Vice President. The editorial on October 12, page 36, claimed that the war would be more readily ended by Humphrey; and on October 30 (page 32), an editorial said Humphrey would be more likely "to lead the country" out of the "morass of Vietnam."

The "Vietnam Policy and Johnson Administration" category

Forty (39.9%) editorials were assigned to the "Vietnam Policy and Johnson Administration" category. Of that total, fifteen (14.9%) were found in the Post and twenty-five (25%) were in the Times.

These categories were further broken down into subcategories of support and criticism of the policy and the administration, which varied as the months passed. For instance, in March, 1968, President Johnson announced that he would not seek re-election. At this same time, he ordered a bombing halt of North Vietnam, not to include the immediate vicinity of the DMZ. For these moves, he was praised by both the Post

and the Times. These editorials were coded under the category of support for the policy and administration. However, the majority of the Post's earlier editorials offered praise and support to the administration and its policy of maintaining the American position in South Vietnam, asking for a U.S. military victory, and questioning the wisdom of bombing pauses.

Likewise, the Times' editorials tended to support the Johnson Administration whenever the administration re-evaluated its policy on the Vietnam War. On April 2, the Times editorial, "Gesture for Peace," (p. 46), reflecting its anti-war sentiments, praised Johnson for turning away from "the futile doctrine of military escalation" for victory in Vietnam, and for moving towards a search for a political situation in which "All South Vietnamese will play a part." The editorial agreed that the move not to stop bombing along the DMZ was best, so as not to place the American and allied troops in jeopardy. It also stated that Hanoi and Moscow "must realize that Johnson has gone as far as expected in this initial move toward peace." When Johnson ordered another bombing halt on October 31, a Times editorial lauded him for "allowing the world a future prospect for peace" ("A Step Toward Peace," November 1, p. 46).

The "Negotiation" category

Of the editorials found in the two sample daily newspapers, twenty-one (10.0%) dealt with the "Negotiation" category. Surprisingly, sixteen of these were found in the Post (twelve of which favored negotiation, two

were neutral, two were unfavorable). The remaining five were found in the Times, all of which favored negotiation, and expressed anti-war feelings.

The first editorial on the subject of negotiation in the Times (January 14, "The Risk of Peace--and War," p. 16) urged that the wise choice for the United States and North Vietnam is a "negotiated settlement which offers victory to no one, but which would give ravaged Vietnam the place it needs to rebuild. That is the best hope for the Vietnamese people and for the world."

The Post's editorial (March 19, "A Vietnam Commission," p. A8) supported Robert F. Kennedy's challenge to the President to establish a commission which would review the Vietnam policy. The editorial agreed that there was a necessity for such a commission in that it might lead to de-escalation, negotiation and conciliation.

The "Cease-fire" category

Under the "Cease-fire" category, twenty (10.0%) editorials were carried in the two newspapers. The Washington Post carried five editorials, and the New York Times carried fifteen editorials.

All of the editorials dealt with the bombing halt issue, what measures should be taken to resolve the fighting, and under what circumstances. Of the five Post editorials, three projected anti-war feelings, one was neutral, and one had pro-war interests. The Times' editorials had eleven anti-war themes, and four strongly anti-war themes.

The "Casualties and War Activities" category

There were sixteen (8.0%) editorials coded under the "Casualties and War Activities" category. Ten of these editorials were written in the Post. The remaining six were in the Times.

A Post editorial discussing the Tonkin Gulf Incident of 1964 was placed under this category. In this editorial, the editorial commented that the country was left "facing dangers far more serious than those that confronted it in 1964, with purpose confused, confidence shaken and counsels divided."

A Times editorial regarding the Pueblo Incident was also coded under this category, as was an editorial in the Post on the death of Major General Keith Ware, who died in "hostile enemy activity."

The "Diplomacy and Foreign Relations" category

Under this category, twelve (6.0%) editorials were covered in the two daily newspapers. The Washington Post carried five editorials, and the New York Times carried seven editorials.

Editorials pertaining to United Nation activities, such as appointments and resignations of officials were placed in this category. The majority of the editorials in the two newspapers, however, discussed the Paris Peace Talks and the selection of a site for the talks.

Direction of Editorial Coverage
and Thematic Scope

The analysis of treatment accorded to the editorials along the three directional dimensions, favorable, neutral, and unfavorable is contained in Tables 2 and 3.

The two sample newspapers tended to be neutral in their editorial opinions (89.5%). The Post had an overall total of forty-six editorials with neutral leanings; whereas, the Times had forty-four editorials coded as neutral. The Post had forty-four editorials leaning toward the favorable/positive dimension. The Times trailed with thirty-four favorable/positive editorials. For the unfavorable/negative dimension, the Times led with twenty-two editorials, and the Post had only eleven editorials.

An explanation of the directional dimensions will be further explained by category.

The "Politics" category

On August 5, the Post's editorial, "Good Sense in Miami," praised the GOP's Vietnam plank. Nixon (p. A18) was characterized as "thinking cool...on crucial points," and was lauded for his "notable...restraint." In another favorable editorial (August 22, "Edward Kennedy on Vietnam," p. A20), the Post praised Senator Kennedy, who supported an unconditional bombing halt of North Vietnam, and the mutual withdrawal of all American and North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam.

Table 2. Distribution by direction and theme of editorials by category in Washington Post

Category	Distribution by direction of editorial			Distribution by theme of editorial					
	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	SA	Anti	Neutral	Pro	SP	
Draft	1	2	0	3	0	0	2	1	0
Diplomacy	4	1	0	5	0	0	5	0	0
Vietnam policy and Johnson's adminis- tration	11	1	3	15	0	3	2	8	2
Cease-fire	4	1	0	5	0	4	1	0	0
Negotiation	12	2	2	16	0	12	2	2	0
South Vietnam should take full responsi- bility	7	0	0	7	0	7	0	0	0
Escalation	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Allies	1	2	0	3	0	0	3	0	0
Casualties and war activities	0	9	1	10	0	0	10	0	0
Social reform	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
U.S.-U.S.S.R.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Politics	3	26	4	33	0	1	30	2	0
Economics	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	44 (43.5%)	46 (45.5%)	11 (10.9%)	101	0 (0%)	29 (28.7%)	57 (56.4%)	13 (12.8%)	2 (1.98%)

Table 3. Distribution by direction and theme of editorials by category in New York Times

Category	Distribution by direction of editorial			Distribution by theme of editorial				
	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	SA	Anti	Neutral	Pro	SP
Draft	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diplomacy	1	6	0	7	0	5	0	0
Vietnam policy and Johnson's adminis- tration	5	0	20	25	6	19	0	0
Cease-fire	14	1	0	15	4	11	0	0
Negotiation	5	0	0	5	1	4	0	0
South Vietnam should take full responsi- bility	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0
Escalation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allies	0	4	0	4	0	0	4	0
Casualties and war activities	0	2	4	6	0	3	3	0
Social reform	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0
U.S.-U.S.S.R.	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	0
Politics	8	23	1	32	0	9	23	0
Economics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	34 (34%)	44 (44%)	22 (22%)	100 (11%)	49 (49%)	40 (40%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table 4. Trend of overall tone by newspaper

Theme	Washington Post		New York Times	
	(n=)	(%)	(n=)	(%)
Strongly anti-war	0	0.0	11	11
Anti-war	29	28.7	49	49
Neutral	57	56.4	40	40
Pro-war	13	12.8	0	0
Strongly pro-war	2	1.98	0	0
TOTAL	101	100.00	100	100

Twenty-six of the Post's editorials indicated neutral directional dimensions as well. Many of them discussed the Presidential candidates and their views on the war, which the Post seemed unwilling to commit itself to. And indeed, it criticized Maryland's General Assembly for "getting bogged down" in the debate on Johnson's Vietnam policy (February 14, "Vietnam At Annapolis," p. A22).

Of the four Post editorials coded as being unfavorable, only one expressed direct anti-war feelings. The others were defending those who supported the Vietnam War. Such was the case with the Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam, a group mentioned earlier. However, in an editorial on December 18 ("Clifford Embattled," p. A20), Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford was praised for his new-found evaluation and stand on the Vietnam War. Clifford maintained that Saigon did not want the war to end, and that Americans in Saigon were still hoping for a military victory. The editorial praised him for his "more than usual clarity and candor" and "for giving warts and all."

The New York Times had eight editorials under the "Politics" category. All but one had anti-war themes. "A Straw For Doves," on October 2, endorsed Hubert Humphrey as the (p. 38) Democratic Presidential candidate, because he "offered something hopeful" for the perplexing Vietnam situation. And, on October 15 ("Agonizing Reappraisal," p. 46), the editorial complimented George Bundy, past Special Assistant for National Security to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, who in 1965 had supported the war. In 1968, though, he urged the U.S. to "decide that

it will steadily, systematically and substantially reduce the number of casualties, the number of Americans in Vietnam, and the dollar cost of the war."

"Mr. Humphrey's Incubus..." (August 28, p. 46) was the only Times editorial which maintained an anti-war theme. It described Humphrey as trying to avoid "an unpleasant" confrontation with Johnson, and lacking independence.

The "Vietnam Policy and Johnson's Administration" category

In this category, the Post seemed to give more favorable than unfavorable and neutral treatments to the Vietnam policy and Johnson's Administration.

There were fifteen (14.9%) editorials coded under this category for the Post. Eleven editorials were supportive, thus favorable, of the policy and the administration. Three were unfavorable, and one was coded as neutral. Of this breakdown, eight editorials reflected pro-war sentiments; two were strongly pro-war; three were anti-war; and two were coded as neutral.

The positive (strongly pro-war) treatment was indicated in an editorial appearing January 1. It stated:

"There are ways out of our troubles. They will be found by people who do not give way to hysteria, submit to sorrow or swoon into surrender because life refuses to conform to dreams of bliss. The world ahead looks like a hard world; but it always has been a hard world for a Nation unwilling to submit tamely to domination and dictation, either foreign or domestic."

The editorial went further to advise the public to "ring in the New Year" and not succumb to the "dreary duty of ringing down the curtain on the American drama."

In another pro-war/positive editorial, the editorial spoke of the likelihood of the U.S. forces pursuing Vietcong forces into Cambodia. The administration was praised for handling the "delicate crisis" with great "restraint, infinite caution and tact" (January 12, "Cambodian Neutrality, p. A16). Still another favorable editorial reflected the Post's pro-war commitment. On January 20 ("Clifford to Defense," p. A10), an editorial discussed its satisfaction with the appointment of Clark Clifford as Secretary of Defense. It stated that Clifford was convinced of the necessity of maintaining the American position in South Vietnam, and criticized the "unwisdom of bombing pauses of the past."

In regard to the U.S.S. Pueblo affair, the Post printed its second strongly pro-war editorial. It occurred on January 26 ("Korea and Vietnam," p. A20). It supported the administration's move to call up the reservists, although it was an "unpopular" move. It admitted that the capture of the Pueblo may have been coincidence, or the result of informal working arrangements between North Korea and North Vietnam, with Peking or Moscow coaching. Nevertheless, it expressed its support of the war in the following words:

"Our best hope of countering this pressure while avoiding a wider war almost certainly lies in a demonstration of our willingness to wage a wider war if we must."

Finally, on February 3 ("Terms for A Bombing Halt," p. A12), the Post gave its reaction to Johnson's speech on a bombing halt. Johnson said, "Unless we have some sign [the enemy] will not accelerate his aggression if we halt the bombing, then we shall continue to give our American men the protection America ought to give them." The editorial commented that:

"To stop the bombing without some prior evidence that the North Vietnamese won't take advantage of a situation in which we are unilaterally foregoing an important part of our military pressure---this would be not only inequitable but extremely hazardous."

The editorial further stated, "An opportunity for peace talks is a precious commodity in a situation like this."

An anti-war attitude of the Post was indicated in an editorial on January 6 ("Less Than Halfway," p. A10). It referred to the raid against the port of Haiphong as "poor timing" for the U.S. And, it said that such actions had not done much "to enhance" the administration's claim that it was ready "to go more than halfway in pursuit for peaceful settlement." In its critical tone, the editorial added that "there is still less justification for doing anything that suggests an American disinclination to listen, for as long as we are actively exploring fresh evidence that Hanoi just may be signalling a willingness to talk."

In commenting on the policy following the Tet Offensive, the February 1 editorial was extremely critical ("Rationalizing the Vietnam Rampage," p. A20). The editorial claimed that General Westmoreland's conclusion

that "the enemy's well laid plan went afoul" was irrelevant to the real issue in Vietnam, and was not conducive to constructive debate over current strategy. It urged that a more selective search-and-destroy policy be applied; and that a greater number of troops be concentrated in populated areas where the enemy had demonstrated more strength. Though such a comment still typified the pro-war attitude of the Post, the underlying tone suggested great displeasure with the policy, nonetheless. The editorial opinion was that though these alternatives had been advanced "publicly and privately by responsible men, they are unlikely to get a full hearing while we are determined to find enemy failures in actions where the enemy, by its own known definition of its objectives, finds success."

The Post presented its most critical editorial against the Vietnam policy and the administration on August 4 ("Vietnam---An Unlearned Lesson," p. B6). North Vietnam had slowed down its activity, and military strategists believed the enemy was preparing for another offensive. Johnson responded by toughening his terms for a bombing halt. This editorial, though not very critical of Johnson for failing to halt the bombing completely, accused the administration of being "insensitive" and "inconsistent." It stated, "...the Johnson Administration has yet to learn a central lesson of the conflict in Vietnam: discrepancy, inconsistency, obscurity and scorn for public sensitivities are the enemies of public understanding and support for our effort in Vietnam." It argued that the conduct of the war was "everything" and said:

"...how it is explained and presented is very largely the determinant of public support, without which this war, more than most, cannot be conducted effectively. Some case can be made for standing firm on the bombing issue at this time; but no case can be made for doing so in terms so inconsistent with past public statements that they can only invite suspicion and shake public confidence. This is a lesson which the Administration, for no apparent reason, seems almost determined not to learn."

The New York Times had no neutral editorials in the "Vietnam Policy and Johnson Administration" category, neither in theme nor direction. However, of the twenty-five editorials coded under this category, twenty were coded unfavorable/negative, and five were favorable/positive. All were anti-war in theme, with six being strongly anti-war, and nineteen anti-war.

The five editorials which extended support to the administration and to its Vietnam policy, only did so when the administration started singing tunes other than those of escalation and an American military victory.

Two of the most favorable editorials praising the administration, but opposing the war came in April. The first, which appeared April 1 ("I Will Not Accept," p. 44) commended Johnson on his decision not to accept renomination for the Presidency, and described his decision as "one of the most dramatic developments of modern American political history." Also, it claimed that his decision to halt the bombing of North Vietnam must now make a move "to put the wheels in motion," which would "end the dreadful, cruel and ugly war---the war that nobody wants."

The following day, the editorial, "Gesture for Peace" (p. 46), maintained that Johnson had gone as far as could be expected in his initial move towards peace, and that he had turned away from the "futile doctrine" of military escalation for victory in Vietnam."

Another anti-war editorial appeared in the Times after the deaths of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. These events, the editorial hoped, would prompt the administration and the nation to become responsible. It offered the opinion that a responsible nation "can bring the war in Vietnam to an end, and firmly resolve that it will not again resort to the use of force except after mature reflection and debate by Congress and the public." In addition, a final editorial praising the administration occurred on November 1 ("A Step Toward Peace," p. 46). It followed Johnson's demand for a complete bombing halt. Once again, the editorial lauded the administration for "allowing the world a future prospect for peace."

The editorials with the strongly anti-war feelings commented on the necessity for the establishment of an independent commission to re-examine the war, and the need to initiate peace talks. On February 8 (p. 42), a Times editorial written after the Tet Offensive expressed these concerns. The editorial argued that the administration's optimism was "unfortunately ill-founded." It urged that negotiated settlement, seeking a political accommodation under international supervision, remain the alternative "to a prolonged war of attrition, a war that neither side can win."

Such urgency for a move towards peace was once again expressed in the editorial on February 14, "Another Emergency Escalation," p. 46. "The best way to insure the safety of American troops, and the security of national interests," it said, "is to concentrate on the initiation of peace talks, rather than on the endless escalation of a war neither side can win." Furthermore, it described the administration's policies as having, "brought the nation and its armed forces to the current perilous position." And, it feared that for "insurance purposes" the American troop level would be raised beyond the 525,000-men limit.

"Escalation, U Thant Style" (February 28, p. 46), another Times editorial, said that the policy of military escalation "has reduced to a shambles Americans' hopes for ensuring a free and secure Vietnam." The editorial stated that Thant's reassurance that a bombing halt would lead to "productive talks," and that American forces below the Demilitarized Zone would be dealt with in "good faith" should be put to the test. It indicated that the risks involved "are far less" than the dangers of plunging deeper into "an unlimited and unproductive war."

The Times' attitude about a commission to re-examine the Vietnam War was expressed on March 19 ("Commission on Vietnam," p. 46), as was its disillusionment with the administration's policy.

"It is evident that something is fundamentally wrong with both the Administration's assessment of the Vietnam problem and the strategy adopted to deal with it. More of the "same" in terms of method is unlikely to bring anything other in results than more of the same.... The man-made disaster in Vietnam cries out for new and independent evaluation."

Anti-war feelings were reflected in other Times' editorials as well. One editorial commented on Johnson's State of the Union Message (January 19, p. 46), in which the President stated that the U.S. "will persevere" in its determination "to block aggression," while expressing the desire to open negotiations with Hanoi. The editorial maintained that "as long as the Administration persists in this over-simplified view of a complex war, there can be little hope for a settlement short of surrender by the other side." The editor believed that Johnson's message clearly reflected that "the huge American involvement in one tiny corner of Southeast Asia has taken precedence over every aspect of American policy...and the very thought processes of Administration and Government."

An editorial on January 25 (p. 36) revealed the Times' suspicion and distrust of the administration. The editorial accused the Johnson Administration of actually planning the August, 1964, air attacks against North Vietnam in early July. It maintained that until this time, outside aid to both sides had been restricted mainly to arms and training for a civil war. However, after the attacks, regular North Vietnamese regiments were sent south to join the guerrilla war. The editorial argued that the country is entitled to have maximum information, both on current policy and past events. It added, "The United States will never extricate itself with honor from its Vietnam involvement unless it achieves a better comprehension of how it became entrapped."

Such criticism of the administration and the Vietnam policy became even more harsh following the Tet Offensive. Some American officials'

assessments of the enemy's Tet Offensive were that it was a "one-shot" effort, a "psychological gambit," a "diversionary tactic," and anticipated "fireworks." However, the Times assessed that it was far more serious (February 2, "More Than A Diversion," p. 34). Unlike the Post, it assessed the Tet as a "Communist victory," and as "indicative of the weakness of the political structure on which the American military effort in Vietnam is based, and threatens to compound that weakness." It warned that to underestimate this threat would be "utter folly."

Another editorial, which expressed the Times' anti-war feelings, appeared on February 25 ("Escalation--To What End?", p. 12). It said the administration's policy "has mired this country even deeper in a land war in Asia." The excerpt below addresses this sentiment further:

"The time has come for Americans and their leaders to recognize that the policy itself is illogical; that it entraps the U.S. in a war without visible limits, despite all official optimism; that it will continue to make insatiable demands on American manpower, resources and energy far beyond the worth of any conceivable gains. The only sound policy is to move from the battlefield to the negotiating table with fullest speed."

Months later, this anti-war feeling had not lessened. On the day the Democratic Convention was held in Chicago, an editorial commented on the "futility" of the United States' adventure in Southeast Asia. The editorial said:

"After years of relative indifference to the Vietnam War, suddenly in the last few months, vast numbers of American people have begun to understand the utter futility and misdirection of this adventure in Southeast Asia and are turning their wrath on the political leadership that has dug the United States constantly deeper into the morass at fearful cost in lives, resources and reputation."

The "Negotiation" category

Sixteen Post editorials were categorized under the "Negotiation" category. Twelve of them expressed favorable directions. Two Post editorials were neutral in their directional dimension, and two were unfavorable. In expressions of theme, the percentages were the same. There were no editorials which had strongly anti-war or strongly pro-war feelings. Twelve, however, expressed anti-war views, two were neutral, and two were pro-war. The Times had fewer editorials on the negotiations, but all were favorable towards the subject, with one being strongly anti-war, and the remaining four being anti-war.

A Times editorial focused on the urgency for Hanoi and the United States to come to some sort of settlement. This particular editorial, "Bloody Path To Peace" (February 1, p. 36), commented that the Tet Offensive offered "further painful proof of the limitations of American power in Asia." Captured documents led American military officials to believe that the Communists were attempting one last massive attempt to improve their bargaining position by heavily concentrating men and arms along the Demilitarized Zone. However, the editorial claimed their aim "is a bloody path to peace," and hoped that with American superior power,

and if Washington's trend in its flexible diplomacy persisted, then steps toward negotiation could follow.

The strongly anti-war editorial, referred to earlier in this chapter (January 14, "The Risk of Peace--and War, p. 16), commented on the reports of heavy fighting and of increased North Vietnamese troop movement to the South. The editor wrote that this alone made it clear that the enemy "is not on the ropes," as administrative officials suggested. The editorial expressed apprehension that should such trends continue, the war would spill over South Vietnam borders--in spite of U.S. Ambassador Chester Bowles' talks with Cambodian Prince Sihanouk. Another fear was that air incidents increased the danger of confrontation with Russia and China. Negotiated settlement was quickly recommended as the "best hope for the Vietnamese people and for the world."

When Hanoi agreed to peace talks, this was viewed as both a tremendous and tiny step by the Post (April 4, "A Tremendous Tiny Step," p. A20). The step was considered small because it forced policy makers to review their confidence that the country would gain a decisive advantage by intensified fighting. The Post considered Hanoi's move "big" because it believed that the Tet Offensive, in spite of the damage it did, demonstrated the limitations of the enemy.

The Post expressed its pro-war sentiments, and negative feelings about negotiation talks in an editorial headed "From 'Would' To 'Will'" (January 3, p. A16). The Post stated that it saw no "serious purpose" in sitting down to negotiate until both sides were ready to trust each

other. However, it was not pleased with the terms proposed by North Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh, and said they remained "unacceptable." Furthermore, the editorial disagreed that "we should drop the whole enterprise and go home."

The "South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility" category

The Washington Post had seven editorials coded under this category; all seven were favorable toward the issue, and all seven were anti-war.

"Vietnam Mission---A Return to First Mission" (March 6, p. A22) argued against the need for additional American troops in Vietnam. It said that "there is the need for a more passive role for American forces and a more active one for the South Vietnamese." The editorial expressed its fear that a prolonged war might constitute a greater enemy deterrent and a larger inducement to accept a negotiation or de facto settlement. It said:

"There is no doubt a strong impulse to seek a quick decision by expanding firepower and increasing manpower; but it may be more effective to demonstrate our staying power and our sticking power."

It further stated that greater emphasis should be put on pacification among the people, and less on search and destroy and on body counts.

Another editorial (March 23, "South Vietnam's War, p. A12) encouraged the U.S. to support President Thieu in his efforts to make the war a South Vietnamese war. It said, "We must struggle to return the burdens and prerogatives of the war to South Vietnam's government

and people." Also, by turning things over to Saigon, and disengaging itself in the war, the editorial believed this would be an "honorable discharge of our responsibilities." Another anti-war editorial spoke of Johnson's decision in 1965 to deploy American troops to dissuade Hanoi from its campaign to take over South Vietnam by force, and his decision in 1968 to shift back to the original track--"to move in a much more positive and forceful way toward the day when the South Vietnamese are carrying proportionately more of the load."

The last Post editorial regarding the subject of turning the bulk of the responsibilities over to the South Vietnamese was written on November 1 ("The Breakthrough," p. A22). Written after another announcement by Johnson to half all American attacks on North Vietnam, it said:

"For it is a fact now, as it was a fact five years ago when John F. Kennedy first said it, that the war is first and last a Vietnamese war, theirs to solve---theirs--in the last analysis---to end."

Furthermore, the editorial emphasized that Americans could not expect an "early or easy disengagement."

The two Times editorials which discussed giving South Vietnam full responsibility for the war were neutral in direction and in theme. Both discussed coalition government, whereby the Saigon government and the Vietcong (NLF) could work out their problems. Though the Times favored this alternative, it expressed that to hope for such a government in Saigon was "merely wishful thinking" (August 22, "Kennedy on Vietnam," p. 36; April 5, "Saigon's First Talk," p. 46).

The "Cease-fire" category

The Post editorial opinions in the "Cease-fire" category were treated more in the favorable (n=4) direction than in the unfavorable (n=0) or neutral (n=1) directions. The four favorable opinions tended to support the view that the war could not be won by military escalation, but suggested that efforts be made to come to a final agreement on a bombing halt. Within this same category, an editorial commented as well on McGeorge Bundy's charge that we should start "packing up our American troops," and consider our "mission accomplished" without any concern for the consequences. Predictably, the Post disagreed with this aspect of Bundy's proposal (October 14, "...And Mr. Bundy's Blueprint for 1969," p. A20).

The Times was more favorable toward the proposed cease-fire in its editorials (n=15; 14.9%) than was the Post. What is more, the directional dimension was more pronounced. Fourteen of the fifteen editorials were favorable in direction. Only one was neutral. Likewise, eleven suggested anti-war feelings, while four appeared to be strongly anti-war.

The strongly pro-war feelings of the Times was demonstrated in such editorials as the one written on January 2 ("End Of A Truce," p. 36). While Johnson maintained that peace in Vietnam was "up to the enemy," asserting that "we are pursuing every possible objective" toward peace, the editorial responded by commenting that one sure and "simple" way to convince the country and the world of this would be an "unconditional" bombing halt in North Vietnam.

On January 5 ("Hanoi's Bid For Talks," p. 34), the Times editorialized:

"The Administration is in fact divided. Some believe the political and military situations in South Vietnam can be strengthened by waiting and negotiating at a later date or even seeking a military victory. Others argue that no appreciable improvement that would significantly strengthen the American bargaining position can be expected in the next six or twelve months, and that there never has been a better time to negotiate than now. In our view, the time clearly has come for President Johnson to make a move to open talks. A halt in bombing is the way to begin."

The Times was still of this opinion seven months later. It argued that a "bad" war could not produce a "victorious" peace. "To conclude this drama," the editorial read, "a decision to stop all bombing of the North, and thus test to the utmost the change of settlement now, would redeem much in what has proved a tragic national adventure" (August 11, "For Vietnam Peace," p. 10).

The other eleven anti-war editorials were no less emphatic in their appeals for a bombing halt. On August 21 ("Johnson's War Plank," p. 44), an editorial stated that risks must be taken in granting a bombing halt. It believed that the halt will have to precede negotiation, and stressed the urgency for negotiation. The Times pleaded that peace could come quicker and lives saved if both sides would speed the process of mutual de-escalation (May 8, "Bloody Prelude...", p. 46).

The "Casualties and War Activities" category

The Post had ten editorials in this category. Nine were neutral in direction, and one expressed an unfavorable direction. In regards to theme, all were neutral. The editorial which was unfavorable in direction, and neutral in theme, indicated that the military "should not put much stock in the number game" when the war is going well, so that when the numbers suggest an adverse turn, the American people won't be 'depressed' (January 15, "The Vietnam Numbers Game," p. A16).

The editorials expressing neutral directions and themes discussed incidents such as when an airliner carrying American soldiers to South Vietnam was seized by the Russians (July 2, "Test of Good Feelings," p. A12). Another editorial, "Communications Failure," (April 3, p. A16), discussed the bombing which took place one mile away from a North Vietnamese province capital, and 205 miles north of the DMZ. "Fort Head" (July 7, p. A20) dealt with reports of marijuana in the military.

Of the Times' six editorials in the "Casualties/War Activities" category, four were unfavorable and two were coded neutral. The distribution by theme was fifty/fifty--three were anti-war in theme and three were neutral.

News of alleged American air attacks on a Russian ship in the Haiphong harbor, and U.S. air attacks on roads and bridges only nine miles from the Chinese border caused the editor concern in its anti-war editorial, "Escalation vs. Negotiation" (January 6, p. 28).

Another editorial gave the opinions of Generals Westmoreland and Wheeler, who disagreed on the most effective military strategy to be

applied in Vietnam. Westmoreland saw the Tet Offensive as the Communists' last major effort to control the war before giving in. Wheeler believed the situation to be more serious. He said, "The enemy retains substantial uncommitted resources. We must expect hard fighting to continue" (March 1, "New Look at Vietnam Needed," p. 36).

The editorials coded neutral in theme discussed such issues as the transferral of Westmoreland to the post of Army Chief of Staff (March 23, "Westmoreland's Transfer," p. 30).

The "Diplomacy and Foreign Relations" category

The majority of the Post's editorials (n=4) were favorable toward the war in direction. One Post editorial was neutral. The distribution by theme was even more clear-cut. All of the editorials were neutral. The one editorial neutral in direction and theme discussed the replacement of Henry Cabot Lodge for W. Averell Harriman as chief negotiator at the Paris talks (December 6, p. A24).

The editorials on April 9, April 15, and May 4, which were favorable in direction, all discussed selecting a site for the peace talks. The editorial in May revealed that Paris had been selected as the site ("The President On Peace," p. A16).

The Times had a total of seven editorials assigned to the "Diplomacy and Foreign Relations" category. Six were neutral in direction and one was favorable. By theme, the distribution was fairly similar. Five of the editorials expressed neutral feelings and two, anti-war.

The editorials neutral in theme commented on the United Nations' 23rd annual session (September 24, p. 46); the pressing business of finding a site for the peace talks (April 28, p. 18); and Arthur J. Goldberg's retirement as the U.N. representative (April 27, p. 38).

One Times editorial, anti-war in theme, focused on the necessity for the establishment of the International Control Commission. This commission would presumably deter the abuse of Cambodian sanctuaries by Vietcong and North Vietnamese troops. And, so the editorial stated, would temporarily ease the pressure on Johnson to authorize "hot pursuit" (January 11, "Shadow Over Phompenh," p. 36). The other anti-war editorial expressed pessimism that the Paris talks would be successful in view of the intensified fighting in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh's appeal to the Vietcong to step up their struggle against American "aggression," and the movement of Soviet troops into Eastern Europe (May 10, "To Paris With Hope," p. 46).

The "Other" category

Ten percent of the Washington Post and New York Times' editorials were placed into the "Other" category. These included "Allies," "Social Reform," "Draft," "U.S.-U.S.S.R.," "Escalation," and "Economics."

In the Times, all of these categories had directions and themes which were neutral. There were no favorable or unfavorable directions, and no strongly anti-war, anti-war, strongly pro-war or pro-war themes.

The Post, however, though mostly neutral in its directions and

themes, did have two favorable editorials toward the war--"Draft," and "Social Reform." The editorial, "The Pitfalls of Prophecy" (March 27, p. A22), expressing anti-war feelings under the "Social Reform" category, stressed the need for a search for new strategies and tactics. These strategies and tactics, stated the Post, should "rest less on escalation of force levels or graduated air power against the North...and more on the need for security, stability and social and political reform in those parts of South Vietnam where the people are."

An Overview

From the preceding discussion of the nature and pattern of the editorial opinions in the two daily newspapers' coverage of the Vietnam War in 1968, the direction of the opinions and their various themes, it appears that the majority of the editorials dealt with "Politics" (n=65; 32.0%), "Johnson Administration and the Vietnam Policy" (n=40; 20.0%), "Negotiation" (n=21; 10.0%), "Cease-fire" (n=20; 10.0%), "Casualties and War Activities" (n=16; 8.0%), "Diplomacy" (n=12; 6.0%), and "South Vietnam Takes Full Responsibility" (n=9; 4.5%) categories, while the remaining categories had ten percent of the editorial assignments.

For the most part, the majority of the editorial opinions in the sample newspapers were treated in the favorable and neutral directions rather than the unfavorable direction.

The Washington Post (n=101) had percentage distributions as follows: favorable (n=44; 43.5%); neutral (n=46; 45.5%); and unfavorable (n=11;

10.9%). In the same light, the Times (n=100) had thirty-four (34%) editorials favorable in direction; forty-four (44%) neutral; and twenty-two (22%) unfavorable.

Only twenty-nine percent of the Post's editorials were anti-war in theme and none were strongly anti-war. In contrast, the Times expressed its anti-war feelings in sixty percent (60%) of its editorials. It carried no pro-war or strongly pro-war editorials. The remaining forty percent (40%) were neutral in theme. The Post carried more neutral (n=57) editorials than it did anti-war or pro-war. However, its fifteen pro-war editorials were substantial in assessing its pro-war sentiments. Likewise, the Times was found to be consistently anti-war in its attitudes for 1968 (see Table 4).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Vietnam War, though eight years in the past, was a pivotal event in our American history, and has not been yet forgotten. The soldiers and civilians mangled and lost, the minds twisted and damaged, the hopes denied and unfulfilled made a tremendous impact on the confidence of the people of a great nation. The realization of defeat caused feelings of shame and remorse. The war, the longest in which the United States had ever been involved, has left irreparable scars in many of our lives.

During the war, editorial opinion became a significant point of the media coverage. Throughout the war, and the United States' involvement in Southeast Asia, the mass media communicated and interpreted public opinion and information on the events occurring there. Because of the media's editorial functions, public opinion was very likely influenced. With this in mind, it is assumed that general public opinion would have been influenced by editorials in the chosen sample daily newspapers, the Washington Post and the New York Times. Hence, it was important to assess how these influential newspapers evaluated and interpreted the war in Vietnam. Earlier research has shown that the mass media, in general, supported the war in its early stages, and opposed it as the war progressed.

This analytical examination of the aforementioned newspapers' coverage of the war is a result of this author's desire to understand the nature of the editorial attitudes reflecting the sentiments of the mass public. This study was an attempt to make an objective diagnosis

of the editorial coverage, in hope that the diversity of the Post and the Times' opinions would be better understood.

The year 1968 marked a turning point in the course of the war. People and nations crossed over to new opinions and new directions. The high point in the military action occurred during the Lunar New Year, or Tet. Communist forces simultaneously and unexpectedly attacked nearly every city, town and major military base throughout South Vietnam. The American people were shocked by this attack. Led to believe that victory was just around the corner, the citizenry grew distressed, uncertain and unhappy. Such emotions erupted in mass protest, at home and abroad. The consequences were even graver for the Johnson Administration. The Tet presented a final blow to his already waning credibility; consequently, on March 31, 1968, President Johnson disclosed his decision not to seek re-election. The Tet was also instrumental in providing the U.S. leaders a rationale for turning around, or at least assessing further the consequences of getting deeper into a war that would be more costly--both in lives and in money.

When the U.S. became involved in the Vietnam War in 1964, the majority of the country's population supported the U.S.'s war efforts. But, as the war gained momentum, public opinion turned against the Vietnam War. This

The study delineates the direction and pattern of editorial opinions on the Vietnam War in the two sample daily newspapers. It also explains the differences and similarities of the aforesaid editorial opinions. In

addition, certain conclusions regarding the nature and pattern of the editorial opinions toward the Vietnam War were discussed.

In regards to the problem questions outlined in the Methodology section, the findings indicated that the American peoples' perception of the Vietnam War and their knowledge of it could have been influenced by the editorial opinions expressed by the two newspapers. However, the editorials reviewed for this study expressed no real indications of the public's concerns (i.e., there were no editorials which directly undertook the issue of public sentiment through polls in any of the 201 editorials analyzed). The New York Times carried more editorials on the Tet than did the Washington Post. The Post expressed its support of America's involvement in the war with only twenty-nine percent of its editorials being anti-war. The Times, however, had an even greater anti-war commitment in sixty percent of its editorials.

The method utilized in the study consisted of qualitative and quantitative content analysis. Thirteen subject categories were formulated to evaluate the editorials. The editorial opinions were analyzed under the thirteen categories of "Draft," "Diplomacy," "Vietnam Policy and Johnson's Administration," "Cease-fire," "Negotiation," "South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility," "Escalation," "Allies," "Casualties and War Activities," "Social Reform," "U.S.-U.S.S.R.," "Politics," and "Economics." Each category within the editorials was evaluated for favorable, neutral and unfavorable directional dimensions. When more than one category was found in any editorial, only the most dominant category was

cited. Themes were also used to determine the overall tone of the editorials.

The findings discussed in the Findings of the Study section suggest that the majority of the sample daily newspapers' editorials dealt with the "Politics," "Vietnam Policy and Johnson's Administration," "Negotiation," "Cease-fire," "Casualties and War Activities," "South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility," and "Diplomacy" categories. The remaining categories constituted ten percent of the editorial assignments. Furthermore, the figures seem to infer that the New York Times and the Washington Post were distinct and clear-cut in the editorial expressions toward the war. The Times was more consistently anti-war in nature, whereas the Post wavered between anti- and pro-war feelings. The Post had almost half as many pro-war editorials as it did anti-war editorials. The Times had no pro-war editorials.

Because the sample number for this study was small, more ambitious studies are needed to document the effects of editorial opinions using a larger sample and expanded time frames. An analysis which would determine when and if the Washington Post became strongly opposed to the war is another possibility. A study analyzing the editorial attitudes in geographical, cross-sectional newspapers, covering important events, such as the Gulf of Tonkin Incident, the Tet Offensive, Nixon's Vietnamization Program, comes to mind as another path to explore. Through such studies, more contributions can be made concerning the relationship between the editorial and the public regarding such a major event as the Vietnam War. This research may have contributed in a small way to this endeavor.

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APPENDIX A: CHRONOLOGY

- 1964 Johnson directed a foreign policy toward Southeast Asia where the U.S. had, for several years, been helping South Vietnam defend itself against the Vietcong, who were aided by North Vietnam.
- U.S. aid such as military supplies and advisers were increased.
- U.S. warships patrolling the Gulf of Tonkin were allegedly attacked by North Vietnamese torpedo boats. Johnson ordered retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnamese torpedo-boat bases.
- Congress approved a resolution authorizing "all necessary measures to repel any armed attacks" against U.S. forces, and "to prevent further aggression."
- 1965 Vietcongs killed 31 Americans at Pleiku and Qui Nhon.
- Johnson sanctioned retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam.
- Johnson was advised by General William Westmoreland that only a major commitment of American troops could save South Vietnam. The U.S. military strength was raised to 180,000. By 1969 it was 543,400.
- In the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley, the first U.S. airmobile unit, the First Cavalry Division, used helicopters to drive North Vietnamese divisions into Cambodia.
- 1967 North Vietnamese buildup within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) prompted the reinforcement of U.S. Marines in the north.
- Opposition to the Vietnam War rose as casualties mounted.
- 1968 Johnson restricted U.S. bombing of North Vietnam and called upon Hanoi to negotiate.
- May Discussion between the U.S. and North Vietnam begun at Paris.
- November All bombing on North Vietnam was stopped.

- 1969 Nixon became President. He began to upgrade the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) as part of his plan to withdraw American units.
- Nixon begun "Vietnamization" plan to make South Vietnam independent.
- Ho Chi Minh died, requiring adjustments in North Vietnam leadership.
- Nixon sanctioned American and South Vietnam operations to eliminate enemy sanctuaries in Cambodia.
- 1970 Fighting spread to Cambodia.
- 1971 An air raid by the ARVN on the Ho Chi Minh Trail.
- 1972 North Vietnam attacked American ground force using twelve divisions, spearheaded by Russian tanks.
- Nixon reacted by sealing the port of Haiphong and by bombing North Vietnam with B-52 bombers.
- 1973
January Long-stalled peace negotiations in Paris concluded a cease-fire agreement, providing for the exchange of POWs and the U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam.
- August U.S. Congress, reflecting the tenor of the American public opinions, passed an amendment to an appropriation bill prohibiting funds for all American combat action in Southeast Asia.
- North Vietnamese troops remained in South Vietnam.
- 1973-
1974 North Vietnam, in violation of the cease-fire agreement, massed more men and supplies inside South Vietnam.
- 1975
January North Vietnam launched a major attack that ended in the capture of Phuoc Long province.
- April U.S. completed emergency airlift of embassy personnel and the thousands of South Vietnamese who fear Communist rule.

The Communists gained control of South Vietnam and also neighboring Cambodia, where the government surrendered to insurgent forces on April 16, and Laos, where the Communists gradually assumed control.

Note: Taken from the Directory of American History, EL74 D53x.

APPENDIX B: CODING SHEET

(Name of newspaper)

Date of Editorial: _____ Page _____
month day year

Title of Editorial/Subject Matter: _____

Categories: _____ Draft
 _____ Economics
 _____ Diplomacy and Foreign Relations
 _____ Politics
 _____ Vietnam Policy and Johnson's Administration
 _____ Negotiation
 _____ Cease-fire
 _____ Escalation
 _____ Allies
 _____ Casualties/War Activities
 _____ Social Reform
 _____ U.S.-U.S.S.R. Relations
 _____ South Vietnam Should Take Full Responsibility

Placement of Editorial: _____ Entire editorial
 _____ Lead editorial
 _____ Other placement in editorial column

Direction of Editorial: _____ Favor/Positive
_____ Neutral
_____ Unfavor/Negative

Theme (overall tone of editorial): _____ Strongly anti-war
_____ Anti-war
_____ Neutral
_____ Strongly pro-war
_____ Pro-war