

**Transcript of KMYR series on The Public Affair:  
“Vietnam Remembered”**

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**Albuquerque Museum, gift of Zane Blaney**

This radio program is a three-part remembrance in sound, plus a two-part interview with a former peace advocate and a former prisoner of war.

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[music]

ZANE BLANEY: The Vietnam War ended April 29, 1975. It was declared an evacuation with the President asking American citizens to look ahead ...

[Phil Ochs sings lyrics of his song, “Small Circle of Friends”: Oh, look outside the window/  
There’s a woman being grabbed / They’ve dragged her to the bushes / And now she’s being  
stabbed / Maybe we should call the cops / And try to stop the pain / But Monopoly is so much  
fun / I’d hate to blow the game. / And I’m sure / It wouldn’t interest anybody / Outside of a  
small circle of friends.]

[music]

MAN’S VOICE: And now today’s news event.

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON: So, on this Monday morning in Vietnam, at my direction, after complete and thorough consultation and agreement with the government of South Vietnam, United States aircraft have resumed action in North Vietnam.

[bomb drop sound]

[The Beatles sing lyrics of their song, “Here Comes the Sun”: Here comes the sun do, do, do/  
Here comes the sun / And I say it’s all right]

MAN’S VOICE: Flash ladies and gentlemen. Before his bodyguards could assist him, five or six peasants of undetermined origin start...

[shouting]

MAN'S VOICE: Flash!

U.S. SENATOR WAYNE MORSE: All I'm asking is if the people decide that this war should be stopped in Southeast Asia, are you going to take the position that's a weakness on the home front in a democracy?

ARMY GENERAL MAXWELL TAYLOR: I would feel that our people were badly misguided and did not understand the consequences of such a disaster.

MORSE: Well, uh, we agree on one thing. That they can be badly misguided and you and the President, in my judgement, have been misguiding them for a long time in this war.

[cuckoo clock sound]

U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK: If there is doubt in the Congress about this major policy. If there is doubt, let us vote. Let us find out. Let's have that decision considered in 1966.

[Bob Dylan singing the lyrics of his song "Blowin' in the Wind": How many roads must a man walk down / Before you call him a man? / How many seas must a white dove sail / Before she sleeps in the sand? / Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly / Before they're forever banned? / The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind / The answer is blowin' in the wind.]

PROTESTORS CHANTING: How many kids have you killed today? Hey, Hey, L.B.J., How many kids have you killed today?

[rock music; singing]

MAN'S VOICE: Rock and roll music continued to catch the ear of the younger generation in 1966.

WOMAN'S VOICE: Actually, though, by the end of the year some of the early advocates of nudity, and **Jacques Teepoo** was one designer for example, were screaming for an end to vulgarity in fashion. Thus, although ladies continued to wear their skirts up to there, they were covered underneath leotard-like from their chins to their shins.

[orchestra music]

MAN'S VOICE: For the older generation, 1966 is a special year to remember. Medicare, the health program for the elderly under Social Security went into effect July first. President Johnson noted the occasion earlier in the year when he went to Independence, Missouri, for ceremonies announcing the establishment of the Truman Center for the Advancement of Peace.

[cartoon

crowd noise; marching band, voice: The President has arrived!

Welcome to our newest steamship.  
What did he call me, First Lady?  
A steam ship, a steam ship!  
That's what I thought he said.  
Look, it's the President!  
Can I have your autograph, sir?]

BLANEY: More to come on the Public Affair. And I'm Zane Blaney on KMYR.

[04:55]

[music]

BLANEY: It was five years ago Sunday, May fourth, that Ohio National Guardsmen fired on a group of students at Kent State who were protesting the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. Four students died and the shots that were fired rumbled through the late sixties and the early seventies.

MAN'S VOICE: We entered the R.O.T.C. building in a form of non-violent protest as to the Cambodian issues and the Kent issues. Uh, this was meant as the first step in a student strike and in an agenda of non-violence.

MAN'S VOICE: Flash: The entire staff of the Pentagon was slipped LSD early this afternoon. They took off all their clothes and marched to Florida to surrender to the Seminoles.

[Arlo Guthrie singing "Came to talk about the draft"]

MAN'S VOICE: "I want to express a sense of deep personal concern for the acts of violence at Kent State University and particularly for the tragic loss of life there. I must also express my very strong feeling that your decision to extend the war by sending U.S. ground troops into Cambodia was a mistake and is likely to slow down rather than step up the rate of withdrawal of our armed forces from Vietnam. I share the apprehensions expressed by Senator Clinton B. Anderson as to the consequences of this decision." And it's signed Earl Heady, President, University of New Mexico.

[Arlo Guthrie singing "You can get anything you want at Alice's Restaurant / You can get anything you want at Alice's Restaurant / Walk right in / It's around the back / Just a half a mile from the railroad track / And you can get anything you want at Alice's Restaurant"]

MAN'S VOICE OVER A BELL RINGING: It's developing into a general strike at the University of New Mexico, joining campuses throughout the nation. Many departments on campus have decided not to hold classes today, including the Anthropology and Political Science

departments that have decided to extend the strike through Friday. At this hour, students are standing with picket signs in front of the entrances to classes. The strike is aimed at the Kent State killings and American involvement in Cambodia. The background, the bell is tolling for the dead at Kent State, Cambodia and Vietnam.

[Danny O'Keefe singing his song, "An American Dream": On a pale afternoon painting scenes in the air / Climbing stairs in between the rain / It was then that I thought / Of the ones who had fought / and left us with nothing but sorrow.]

MAN'S VOICE: Governor David Cargo and UNM President Dr. Farrell Heady have just issued an order closing the University of New Mexico for the rest of the week.

MAN'S VOICE: Governor Shaffer announced at the meeting the White House is scheduling a session for all fifty state governors at the White House Monday afternoon. There is speculation the President might ask the governors of all fifty states to close down all institutions of higher learning until the present Cambodian crisis is over and the tempest on the nation's campuses simmered down.

MAN'S VOICE: Mobs of students surrounded State College today. They explained they were anti-Semantic. The tactile unit of the local police mob forced the students to surrender by late this afternoon [explosions].

MAN'S VOICE: Confrontation at the University of New Mexico. State police, city police, and the National Guard are here equipped with gas masks and bayonets on fix. Blood is on the sidewalk in front of the University of New Mexico Student Union Building.

[Danny O'Keefe singing his song "An American Dream": On a mirror of rain the grey army parades / Marching forever in time / And I call to the men again and again / Love melts the chains of your sorrow / After the war is over / After the war is over / After the war is over]

ZANE BLANEY: And I'm Zane Blaney on KMYR.

[09:34]

MAN'S VOICE: A federal judge overturned the court martial conviction of former Army Lieutenant William Calley. He had been found guilty of murder for the killing of Vietnamese civilians at My Lai.

The 1970 shootings at Kent State University in Ohio were back in the news. Eight members and former members of the National Guard were charged with violating the civil rights of the four students killed and nine wounded in the campus demonstration. A federal judge acquitted the defendants saying the government failed to prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. The mother of one of the slain victims, Mrs. Louise Schroeder of Lorraine, Ohio, served notice the case isn't closed yet.

LOUISE SCHROEDER: Although we've never stopped, we are going to renew further our request for a Congressional investigation of the Justice Department's handling of the case as far back as John Mitchell and his original decision to not have a federal grand jury.

[The Beatles singing their song "Come Together": Come together / Right now]

PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON: I want these to be the best days in America's history,

[violin in the background]

because I love America. I deeply believe that America is the hope of the world. And I know that in the quality and wisdom of the leadership America gives lies the only hope for millions of people all over the world that they can live their lives in peace and freedom. We must be worthy of that hope, in every sense of the word. Tonight, I ask for your prayers to help me in everything that I do throughout the days of my Presidency to be worthy of their hopes and of yours.

[snoring and violin music, slowing down of speech]

God bless America and God bless each and every one of you.

[music ends]

MAN'S VOICE: Flash. The Chinese Army just appeared in Santa Monica Beach early this morning, marching six abreast out of the surf. They are wearing scuba gear composed of old American beer cans and discarded balloons. They seem to have marched underwater all the way from the Chinese mainland.

[Students singing at UNM's Student Union Building: "All we are saying / is give peace a chance / All we are saying / is give peace a chance / All we are saying / is give peace a chance" ]

[music]

[Joan Baez singing lyrics from her song "Saigon Bride": Farewell my wistful Saigon bride / I'm going out to stem the tide / A tide which never saw the seas / It flows through jungles, round the trees / Some say it's yellow, some say red / It will not matter when we're dead.]

PRESIDENT NIXON: Therefore, I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow. Vice President Ford [Gerald R. Ford] will be sworn in as President at that hour in this office.

[John Lennon singing lyrics from his song "Imagine": Imagine all the people / Livin' for today / Ah / Imagine there's no countries / It isn't hard to do / Nothing to kill or die for / And no religion, too / Imagine all the people / Livin' life in peace / You / You may say I'm a dreamer / But I'm not the only one / I hope someday you'll join us / And the world will live as one.]

ZANE BLANEY: And I'm Zane Blaney on KMYR.

[15:02]

ZANE BLANEY: In August of 1965, Nancy Hollander was part of a group of American women who met with Vietnamese women to exchange information on ending the war in Vietnam. Nancy now lives in Albuquerque and continues to work for civil liberties.

Did you expect the war to come to an end last Wednesday?

NANCY HOLLANDER: No. I was completely taken aback by it. I kind of thought it would come to an end briefly during the cease-fire and then when I realized it really hadn't, I kind of almost forgot about it ever coming to an end. I was completely taken aback and all of a sudden it was really going to end. And it was – it was an incredible feeling that finally I could, you know, I could maybe someday go visit Vietnam is I guess the first thing I thought about.

BLANEY: Gary Daves was in law school in 1967 and it was in 1967 that Gary decided to go to Vietnam as a civilian with International Voluntary Services in the capacity of a teacher. He was captured in February of 1968 during the Tet Offensive and spent the next five years in various North Vietnamese prisons.

Did you expect it to end, I mean, last week Wednesday when the war was over? Did you expect that to happen?

GARY DAVES: When I got out two years ago, I expected that the North Vietnamese would do what they did and I had no idea of when. I – I – In my own mind, I was convinced shortly after I was captured or about the time I was captured, just seeing the circumstances that the North Vietnamese had something that the south didn't have in terms of sticking power, staying power. So I'm not surprised except for the time. I just had no idea as to time.

HOLLANDER: I went to college in 1961 and SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] was formed in 1960. And by the time I really got involved in the movement the issue became the Vietnam War. I think, really, only a couple of years after that – And I feel now like it shaped my whole political life. It was this incredible feeling of – that, uh, that I couldn't really do anything else except concentrate on somehow bringing that war to an end.

DAVES: The Peace Movement was more or less what sustained me while I was a prisoner. I really -- for one thing, we got a certain amount of news – limited, but quite a bit about the peace movement. And I knew what people were doing. And very much of it I approved of and then a lot of it I thought went a little far at times, you know. The uh, a lot of it I think was maybe irrational and went too far, though I think the radicalization of it, a lot of that was good too. It really brought – and you know, I learned in the whole experience, and I think many Americans did, as far as America's role and what it has been and what it hopefully should be after this. And it is changing and I think that was really good.

BLANEY: What is that role that America should play, if any, in Southeast Asia?

DAVES: Well, I think it shouldn't play a direct role, for example, in Southeast Asia. So, our role now, I think, is just whatever the Southeast Asians wish it to be. And wish it to be from a sense of their equality, not from us telling us – telling them what they want.

HOLLANDER: A lot of myths were created about the war and they're still going on now. It was never a civil war. It was the United States' role as an imperialist country trying to stop a war of liberation.

BLANEY: What's next? Have you thought about that at all?

HOLLANDER: I have thought about it and I really don't know the answer to that question. And with, kind of the death of SDS, um, it all seems to have – have petered out and there's very little, um, student activity going on now that I would call radical or revolutionary or very meaningful to this society. And what it will take to start that again as a mass movement, I just don't know.

DAVES: It takes a crisis to create a cause and I think probably crises are inevitable and, uh, I think, uh, I came back home in 1973 and the energy of this country was just drained. The peace movement included. And there was a peak, maybe '68 '69, somewhere in there. A real, in a sense, revolutionary or, you know, the sense of an energy to change your mind, change your ideas, and change other people and to just put yourself on the line. And that energy drained out and I think it will take several years for it to build up again where people will get bored again and want to do something.

[Danny O'Keefe singing the lyrics from his song "An American Dream: After the war is over / After the war is over / After the war is over"]

BLANEY: I'm Zane Blaney on KMYR.

[20:15]

ZANE BLANEY: Dr. John Herrenberg is a professor of Political Science at UNM specializing in modern political theory. He is a graduate of Dartmouth and received his doctorate from Stanford. He was interviewed for KMYR by freelance writer David Lucero.

DR. HERRENBERG: Well, basically I think the events of the last few years in Vietnam are just terribly important in the sense of, uh, kind of giving a general shape to the way the world's moving. And there are tremendous – very important lessons to be learned from what's been happening in Southeast Asia.

Some people see it as, um, that the wave of the future in Southeast Asia is for Nationalists. Wars of national liberation. Um, often these wars are likely to be led by Communists like it was in Vietnam and Cambodia and Communists would like to see the Americans pull out entirely. Others, I think, would like to see the United States pull out to a defense ring – this is what

Ford's talking about and I think there are people in political science who agree – a ring from Korea, through Japan, through most of the Philippines and Australia, just retreating a few hundred miles West – or East, rather. So I think it varies. It depends upon your, kind of, general approach about the role of this country in world affairs.

DAVID LUCERO: So there is no overwhelming consensus among the academics as to what – how things are?

HERRENBURG: There is overwhelming consensus that it's a massive defeat for American foreign policy. That is plain for all. And –

LUCERO: In other words, Kissinger [Henry Kissinger] is right that we've suffered a terrible loss of face and our word is no longer good and anything like that? Or do you mean?

HERRENBURG: Not in that sense. In the previous sense that the United States tried to do something in Southeast Asia that couldn't be done. What Kissinger is saying is that we should have done it better and had we done it better – had we, you know, gone in there heavier, had more troops and what not, we wouldn't have suffered this humiliation and this loss of face. I think most people who – most other people who look at it are saying something was being attempted which, as long ago as 1954, President Eisenhower knew couldn't be done. Douglas MacArthur was no Marxist and he said – he didn't say simply –

LUCERO: Don't get involved in a land war in Asia, he's out of his mind.

HERRENBURG: He should have his head examined.

And he didn't simply mean land wars in Asia. The context of that phrase is unpopular land wars in Asia. You know, this was no – this was just a hard-headed military realist and he knew very well that, uh, an attempt to maintain this kind of – this kind of structure in any part of Asia was doomed to defeat.

The assumption that American policy makers made was that these were ignorant illiterate peasants who could be bowled over by a few – at first, by a few American advisors and some fancy guns. I think what's happening and what was happening in Vietnam and now in Laos and Cambodia is the education and the politicization and the arming – I mean, arming with guns and arming with knowledge – of the people in that part of the world. And that's a force which is very hard – we've found through ten long years, it's extremely difficult to defeat it. I think if the war proves anything, it proves that the NLF [National Liberation Front] was the social political military force which spoke for and represented the vast majority of the people of Vietnam. Since that's true, my guess is also that their excesses and their, um, cruelties were much less extreme than were the excesses on the other side.

I don't think we're going to see a lot of religious persecution. I don't think we will see a lot of persecution of the Buddhists or the Catholics. I think we are very likely to see, um, a society



moving forward to Socialism and to the extent that there will exist elements in that society who will attempt to divert that – I think those elements are very likely to be repressed.

LUCERO: Well, in terms of the American public, what should we expect in the days to come in terms of foreign policy? What should American foreign policy change to be?

HERRENBURG: Well, Ford laid it out last night, very clearly about what it will be. He's making it very clear that, uh, he wants to move past Vietnam. Now Vietnam is behind us, right? What does that mean? I think what we're seeing is, um, they're taking a step back a few hundred miles to the East and where Schlesinger [James R. Schlesinger], the Secretary of Defense, used to talk about how Vietnam was our, what he called our Forward Defense Positions – this was his, this was his phraseology for it. Vietnam used to be our Forward Defense Position, now they're going to talk about how our Forward Defense Position is an arc from Indonesia up to South Korea. I think – and Ford stated it explicitly, we're going to – there's going to be some -- my guess is there will be a renegotiation of the treaty with the South Koreans. There will be a negotiation of a stronger mutual defense with Japan if it's possible. There'll be more military aid to the Taiwanese and, if possible, to the Indonesians. So my guess is that in that part of the world, at least, there's going to be an attempt to shore up the ring of U.S. vassal states in that part of the world.

BLANEY: And I'm Zane Blaney on KMYR.

[00:25:30]

[end]