

"Years have passed since the last helicopter took off from the roof of the American embassy in Saigon, signaling the end of the Vietnam War. It was the most photographed war in history, the first 'TV war', often broadcast as families sat at home, balancing trays on knees, eating dinner while watching Vietnamese families flee their villages ahead of a napalm attack. Then the commercial break, often a government announcement listing the chosen birth dates for the next call up of 18-year old conscripts.

For anyone who watched these reports on TV, or leafed through page after bloody page of Life magazine or Time, Vietnam still seems more graphic and immediate than any conflict since. Nowadays, governments and the military know that the greatest threat to an offensive strategy in war is the photographer who frames the horror of its execution.

In Vietnam, no photographer did this more effectively than Philip Jones Griffiths."

— *Black & White Photography Magazine*

"In war, words buckle, shrivel or pale as the journalist struggles to describe an attack, and what it does, until the language seems dry and flat. This is not the case with the gifted photographer, who must creep closer to see and forever ratify a scene of suffering by showing the damage done, the unspeakable harm, the shock of being hurt.

I remember Philip Jones Griffiths from Saigon, from helicopters, from this grim place or that. He calls the war in Vietnam "it" and believes we need reminding of it.

"The fact is that America is busy repeating 'it'. American foreign policy has always neglected the feelings and rights of the local population," he said. "Vietnam forecast the major attempt of America to subvert one culture and supplant it with their own."

(Philip Jones Griffiths' photographs) "...shows the lunatic disorder imposed on a people who so valued harmony."

— Gloria Emerson in the *Los Angeles Times*, September 1, 2002

"Philip Jones Griffiths never ceased to be outraged by the cruelties of war. Unlike some war photographers, he never acquired a protective shell of callousness. Some of the finest and saddest photographs in this book are of children killed in south-west Saigon in May 1968. Since I was with him for part of this time, I know that every picture was taken in rage and distress.

There are 10 million bomb craters in South Vietnam. Giant B-52 aircraft fly in from Thailand or Okinawa to flatten a suspect copse. After listening to Americans who oppose 'fighting the war with one arm tied behind our back', I have often wished I could take them round the napalm ward of a hospital, where civilians, mostly women and children, survive in screaming agony for up to three weeks. The next best thing would be to show them Philip Jones Griffiths' pictures of victims of technological war. He is, I believe, the first photographer to show Vietnamese who have been driven out of their senses and now lie, chained to their wooden beds, in lunatic asylums. One little boy, according to the caption, went mad when his mother was gunned down by a helicopter. Now, when helicopters pass overhead, he goes frantic trying to shut out the sound."

— Richard West in *The New Statesman*, March 1972