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CLEVELAND, OHIO
PLAIN DEALER

M - 352,007
S - 506,787

CPYRGHT

JAN 18 1967

READERS' FORUM

Rusk a 'Fake' on Vietnam War

It is a privilege for the reader to have the benefit of such outstanding reporters and reasoners as Walter Lippmann and Harrison Salisbury. But in the editorial, "Informed Views Clash on Viet," The Plain Dealer missed an extremely important point.

The Vietnamese do not "feel they were defrauded . . . in the (1954) conference at Geneva" nearly as much as they KNOW that they were defrauded by the U.S. government in the two years following the treaty.

As every American should know, Walter Bedell Smith, then assistant secretary of state, initialed a memorandum of agreement with the Geneva convention. After that, John Foster Dulles, who had an enormous capacity for fighting dictatorships of the left but virtually no recognition of the equal dangers in dictatorships of the right, convinced the Eisenhower administration it should violate the treaty provisions calling for free elections in Vietnam.

Instead, he and the CIA were instrumental in preventing the elections and installing the tyrant Ngo Dinh Diem in power. The people of Vietnam never asked us to intervene militarily in their civil war. They never had a chance to express their feelings on anything. But our country quickly re-

sponded to the call of Diem—the dictator we created.

That's why it's such an unmitigated fake when Secretary Rusk keeps insisting that we "are only carrying out our obligation to a country that called for our help."

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