

# Fonda Brings Anti-War Campaign to Island

## Bomb Threat Fails to Keep Activist From Telling of Trip to Viet Nam

by Glenn Tepper

At 5:30 on Thursday, September 21, one thousand people, mostly students, turned out to hear Jane Fonda, noted anti-war activist and actress tell of her recent experiences in Viet Nam at Staten Island Community College.

Greeted by a standing ovation in the school's auditorium, Ms. Fonda began by remarking that she came by ferry on this, her first visit to Staten Island. She said the boat ride was very nice but passing the Statue of Liberty was very sad.

Ms. Fonda gave a brief background of the origins of her anti-war activism. She recalled a time when, like many other women, her thought processes were defined by men, and she found it difficult to think of worldly matters. While living in France she became aware of the international opposition to America's involvement in Viet Nam and she started thinking. She is now on a speaking tour as part of the Indo-China Peace Campaign which has taken her to places like the Ohio State Fair and Staten Island Community College.

Then she began telling of the Viet Nam War. She said that the United States was bombing the north with the equivalent destructiveness of one Hiroshima every five days. She said that the M-16 is being replaced as the weapon of America's war by the B-52. The B-52 Superfortress, noted Ms. Fonda, was designed to bomb highly technologically developed areas such as Russia, yet it is used against an agrarian society in Viet Nam, carrying out the prophecy of General Curtis LeMay that the United States "bomb Viet Nam back to the Stone Age."

Quite literally, Viet Nam is being bombed back in time because the bombings are uncovering remnants of the four thousand year old Vietnamese culture of which the Vietnamese are very proud.

Ms. Fonda wished to make it clear that she did not go to Hanoi as a politician but as an individual, as a guest of a North Vietnamese film society.

At this point in her presentation, her microphone went dead and she was summoned backstage. She returned a few seconds later and announced that a bomb threat had been received. The audience quickly left the building and regrouped in a mall area outside as attempts were made to set up a P.A. system so Ms. Fonda could continue. When technical problems developed with the makeshift P.A., the crowd became quiet so that the speaker could be heard unamplified.

Continuing her presentation, Ms. Fonda recalled that the air in Hanoi is filled with the sound of the Theatre of Laughter, the music of peasants ridiculing the fat cats.

The Vietnamese people, Ms. Fonda discovered, are very aware of American culture. The peasants all read Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck and Twain in Vietnamese. The Vietnamese Theatre Troupe tours the countryside with a production, also in Vietnamese, of Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*.

The Vietnamese know who Abraham Lincoln was and what the American

Revolution was about. Ho Chi Minh incorporated passages of the American Declaration of Independence into the Vietnamese Declaration.

As rain began to fall, Ms. Fonda refused an umbrella, remarking that if the Vietnamese can endure under the rain of bombs, she can take a little water. Then she began talking about those bombs.

Refuting claims that civilians are not the targets of bombing raids, she said she saw some of the victims of a kind of bomb that can't blow a hole in a tire, yet can blow off arms and legs.

She spoke of a kind of bomb that does not explode when it hits the ground, but bounces to eye level, then explodes, sending thousands of pellets into the heads of its victims. It is impossible for doctors to remove these pellets because there are so many and they are imbedded quite deeply. One new development under Nixon is the use of non-metallic bombs. The bombs are all-



Jane Fonda At SICC

R. T. Photo by Bob Lampel

plastic, so that the fragments imbedded in the flesh of the Vietnamese can't be detected by X-ray and hence removed, leaving their victims to carry pieces of bomb inside them for the rest of their lives.

Another Nixon "improvement" is "better" napalm. If immediately after getting hit with Johnson-vintage napalm, the victim

were to jump into water, most of the napalm would come off. The Nixon model does not wash off.

Ms. Fonda stressed that if we can't feel for the Vietnamese, we will never be able to feel again.

She called Vietnamization an artificial (Continued on Page 2)

## Jane Fonda

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creation of the United States. Addressing herself to Nixon's promises of peace in the near future, Ms. Fonda cited National Security Council Memorandum No. 1, dated early 1969 which projected that Vietnamization will take between eight and thirteen years.

Ms. Fonda continued, saying that South Vietnam is essentially the creation of the United States. The Vietnamese, she said, are not foreigners in their own country: they have one language and one culture. She recognized the war as a war for independence.

She stated that Nixon won't end the war unless and until we force him to. Then, turning to the topic of the election, she said that it will be easier to force McGovern to end the war than Nixon.

Her manner of speaking then became more emotional as she spoke of the attitudes of those on the left towards McGovern. She asked, "How can the Eagleton Affair be equated to Vietnam? Can his weaknesses be equated to what Nixon is doing?"

And speaking of the candidate she said, "To not vote for McGovern because you don't think he's the answer is like voting for Nixon. McGovern is what he is; a member of the ruling class of America. McGovern is where he is because of the anti-war movement." Continuing, she said that no one "likes being lied to, we must prevent Nixon from taking the war off the front page."

Concluding her remarks, Ms. Fonda advised that the time between now and election day must be used to make the American public aware of the realities of the war because, in her assessment, such an opportunity may not arise again for decades.

She then left, because before her day was to be through, she would address a meeting of District 65 in Manhattan; speak before two gatherings in the Bronx, one in Co-op City and one at Manhattan College; and appear on the Barry Farber radio show.