

## Document Citation

Title	<b>De Antonio: Vietnam polemic</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Christian Science Monitor</i>
Date	1969 Feb 27
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	In the Year of the Pig, De Antonio, Emile, 1968

# De Antonio: Vietnam polemic

One cannot help but be depressed when a United States general characterizes the difference between "us" and "them" as our firmer belief in the sacredness of life—and then ends up saying, "I wouldn't trade one dead American for 50 dead Chinamen."

Nor is there easy comfort in watching a minor officer tell a bunch of grinning soldiers, "What this company needs is a good fight—by the grace of God we're gonna get it." And how does one take this non sequitur from Col. George S. Patton III, describing a bunch of soldiers gathered for a memorial service: "... we sang three hymns and had a nice prayer. I turned around and looked at their faces and I was just proud. My feeling for America just soared because of the way they looked, they looked determined and reverent at the same time, but still they're a bloody good bunch of killers."

The film, which is having its premiere in Boston at the Symphony Cinema, is by Emile de Antonio, a director who has earlier tackled such subjects as the McCarthy hearings and the assassination of President Kennedy. The present production is a stream of newsreel footage spliced with interviews, a tribute to the art of montage as well as a devastating comment on the doublethink and confusion Mr. de Antonio finds contributing to and resulting from United States involvement in Vietnam.

What emerges from the screen is the subjective cry of an outraged filmmaker. Mr. de Antonio has put together a thought-

ful if slanted case for his own particular analysis of what has perhaps become the knottiest problem of the 20th century. The film seems to ask how can a divided nation of peasant, agrarian villagers, with or without the help of Communist China, so thoroughly frustrate the will of a superpower like the United States? Mr. de Antonio sees the whole basis of the international power structure, the faith in advanced weaponry, the oceans of rhetoric and political doubletalk as somehow challenged by the tenacity of Ho Chi Minh—a man described in the film by Sen. Thruston Morton as "the George Washington of his country."

As the flow of images on the screen emphasizes, the tattered Vietnamese in their irksome simplicity and apparent powerlessness are an embarrassing obstacle to the massed political and military machinery of the homeland of the Monroe Doctrine.

Senator Morton of Kentucky says, after observing that the United States has dumped more bombs on North Vietnam than the total tonnage released during World War II in Europe: "To me it's just, How silly can you get?"

That is more or less the question to which this film finds no ready answer.