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Text for (FAR FROM VIETNAM)

FAR FROM VIETNAM (1967) is a documentary conceived by its six noted directors as a deliberate piece of propaganda. Its target is American foreign policy in Vietnam. Made with the help of numerous members of the French film industry, in North and South Vietnam, France, ^{the United States,} ~~America,~~ and Cuba, it includes interviews with Ho Chi Minh and Castro; shots of the Loyalty Day Parade and the April 15, 1967, Peace March in New York; striking scenes of peasants camouflaged in a field in North Vietnam; a visit to the family of Norman Morrison, the Quaker who immolated himself as a protest against the war; and a chilling opening sequence (photographed by Claude Lelouch in South Vietnam) of bombs being loaded onto planes in Tonkin Bay in the early morning.

Summary
Alain Resnais contributes a brilliant monologue--an exhaustive examination of conscience--of a man deciding whether to translate Herman Kahn's On Thermonuclear War into French. Jean-Luc Godard, in a rare self-portrait, confesses he was denied a visa to North Vietnam, and talks about the political role of the film-maker. Although FAR FROM VIETNAM sees U.S. involvement in Vietnam as the war of a rich and powerful nation against a poor and weak one, and overtly expresses solidarity with the people and government of North Vietnam, it is also, as Alain Resnais has said, "a film of question marks, of questions we ask ourselves as often perhaps as you. It's for that reason that we put them on the screen: after all, it is as natural for film-makers to speak on a white canvas as in a café."

What emerges in FAR FROM VIETNAM is the passion, awareness, and commitment of the makers of the film--and their avowed impotence in trying to face a war they find repugnant, far from Vietnam.