

Horst Faas in Vietnam, 1962-1970

An Exhibit of His Stories and Photographs from
The AP Corporate Archives and AP Photo Library

Exhibit Checklist

Horst Faas in South Vietnam, 1965. AP Photo.
AP Photo Library.

Horst Faas in South Vietnam, ca. 1965 (color).
AP Photo. AP Photo Library.

News Report, Kontum, South Vietnam, 24 July 1962.
Page 1 of 3, written by Horst Faas, edited by Peter
Arnett. Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

South Vietnamese Government Troops Return to Ca Mau,
1962 August. Photograph by Horst Faas.
AP Photo Library.

News Report, Ca Mau, South Vietnam, 18 August 1962.
Page 1 of 3, written by Horst Faas.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

Message Wire, AP Saigon to AP Tokyo, 1963 August.
Sent by Saigon Bureau Chief Malcolm Browne.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

A Buddhist Monk Talks to Followers at Xa Loi Pagoda,
Saigon, 22 August 1963. AP Photo. AP Photo Library.

Photo Log Note, 29 December 1964. Page 1 of 2,
written by Peter Arnett. Saigon Bureau Records.
AP Corporate Archives.

The Christmas Eve Bombing of the Brink's Hotel, Saigon,
24 December 1964. AP Photo. AP Photo Library.

*A Member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, 2nd Battalion,
in the DMZ*, 1966 March. Photograph by Horst Faas.
AP Photo Library.

News Report, d-zone, 13 March 1966. Page 1 of 6,
written by Horst Faas with Jim Nance.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

News Report, Ben Suc, 10 January 1967. Page 1 of 8,
written by Horst Faas.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

Evacuation of South Vietnamese Refugees at Ben Suc,
1967 January 11. Photograph by Horst Faas.
AP Photo Library.

*Spec. 4 James R. Pointer (L), and Pfc. Herald Spracklen
(R), Peer into the Undergrowth of a Rubber Plantation
near Bu Dop*, 5 December 1967. Photograph by
Horst Faas. AP Photo Library.

News Report, Saigon, 6 December 1967. Page 1 of 2,
written by George Esper.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

News Report, Song Chang Valley, 24 August 1969. Page
1 and 2 of 8, written by Horst Faas and Peter Arnett.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

*Silhouette of a Soldier Crouching Atop Bunkered Position
West of Chulai*, 25 August 1969.
Photograph by Oliver Noonan. AP Photo Library.

*AP Saigon Toasts the Departing Horst Faas and Peter
Arnett at the Hotel Royale in Saigon*, fall, 1969.
Richard Pyle Photograph Collection.

*Champagne sendoff at Tan Son Nhut airport (Saigon) for
Peter Arnett and Horst Faas*, summer 1970.
Richard Pyle Photograph Collection.

Message Wire, 1970 July. Sent by Horst Faas from
Singapore to AP Saigon.
Saigon Bureau Records. AP Corporate Archives.

Nick Ut, April 3, 1973. Richard Pyle Photograph
Collection.

Phuoc Van Dang, 1972. Richard Pyle Photograph
Collection.

Henri Huet, ca. 1970. Richard Pyle Photograph
Collection.



sai-

operation eyewitness

(editors note: u.s. troops are engaged in ^Wone of the biggest
~~WEST~~civilian relocation programs of the war, north of saigon. associated
press photographer horst faas accompanied troops at the start
of the mission. here is his report.)

by horst faas

ben suc, vietnam, jan. 10 (AP) - the fifty village elders sat
tensely in the old, burned out schoolhouse as the vietnamese
province official told them: "you and your people must leave this
town, abandon it.

"you cannot take your houses, but we will arrange transport for
your cattle, your chickens and your children. you will be safely
taken to a refugee center," the official said.

*"When you look through that view finder...don't push the trigger if you don't see that picture
published. And if you see it published, think on which page." -Horst Faas*

Horst Faas in Vietnam, 1962-1970

An Exhibit of His Stories and Photographs from
The AP Corporate Archives and AP Photo Library



Horst Faas arrived in Saigon on June 26, 1962, the same day as Peter Arnett. He shared a house with *New York Times* reporter David Halberstam, whom he had met on his previous assignment covering civil war in The Congo. As AP's chief photographer in Vietnam, Faas organized the AP Saigon bureau photo operation and ran it with administrative and editorial genius. It was he who transmitted Nick Ut's Pulitzer Prize-winning "Napalm Girl" photograph of severely burned Kim Phuc in 1972, moving it on the AP photo network despite some debate with colleagues over its graphic content. As Faas later remarked, photos of the wounded had been taken for 10 years, but this photo showed something new. Moreover, it was one of the three most dramatic story-telling pictures of the war, along with Malcolm Browne's "Burning Monk" (1963) and Eddie Adams' "Street Execution" (1968), both of which were handled by Faas.

Faas won the first of his two Pulitzer Prizes in 1965 for his own "daring and courageous combat photography" in Vietnam. What is overlooked in this record of excellence is that his stories, preserved in the Saigon Bureau Records and now on exhibit, are as finely observant as his pictures. After he suffered a near fatal wound on Dec. 6, 1967, he wrote from his hospital bed a story about his roommate there, a guitar player who had lost his arms and was trying to imagine a future. The piece typifies Faas' ear for the telling anecdote, and it won him a writing award from AP. His dispatches often lead with a human voice, as at Ben Suc, where he covered the relocation of South Vietnamese refugees: "You cannot take your houses, but we will arrange transport for your cattle."

Almost from the beginning in Saigon, Faas teamed up with Peter Arnett. AP General Manager Wes Gallagher recognized the value of this double byline; he called the pair his "Green Bay Packers" (a reference, Faas admits, that was lost on him). One of their biggest stories, "Breaking Point," tells of the "combat refusal" of Army troops to move forward against a concealed enemy after five days of deadly fighting. "I am sorry sir, but my men refuse to go – we cannot move out," the commander of Company A told his superior officer by radio as Faas listened nearby and Arnett monitored the transmission at battalion headquarters. The unit was trying to reach the site of a helicopter shoot-down crash that had killed seven soldiers and AP photographer Oliver Noonan six days earlier.

New York Times Washington bureau chief James Reston took up the story in an editorial on Sept. 2, writing: "This incident is a flash in the dark, and must give President Nixon something to think about as he plans his Vietnam policy....For the more the President says he's for peace, the more troops he withdraws from Vietnam and Thailand, the more he concedes that Southeast Asia is not really vital to the security of the United States, the harder it is to ask for the lives of the men of Company A."

Faas left Vietnam in July 1970 to begin a new assignment as chief photographer for Asia based in Singapore. But a week later, Faas was back in Saigon, and he would return there periodically to what remained the biggest story of the time. As European photo editor based in London, his reach became global. Since retiring in 2004, Faas has been a passionate teacher and advocate for photojournalism. His labor of love remains *Requiem: By the Photographers Who Died in Vietnam and Indochina* (1997). It contains the astonishing battle photographs by those who died covering those wars – in many instances, just minutes after the shutter snapped.