

## Wichita Vortex Sutra

### II

Face the Nation

Thru Hickman's rolling earth hills

icy winter

gray sky

bare trees lining the road

South to Wichita

you're in the Pepsi Generation      Signum enroute

Aiken Republican on the radio

60,000

Northvietnamese troops now infiltrated but over 250,000

South Vietnamese      armed men

our Enemy—

Not Hanoi our enemy

Not China our enemy

The Viet Cong!

McNamara made a "bad guess"

"Bad Guess?" chorused the Reporters.

Yes, no more than a Bad Guess, in 1962

"8000 American Troops handle the  
Situation"

Bad Guess

in 1954, 80% of the

Vietnamese people would've voted for Ho Chi Minh

wrote Ike    years later      *Mandate for Change*

A bad guess in the Pentagon

And the Hawks were guessing all along

Bomb China's 200,000,000

cried Stennis from Mississippi

I guess it was 3 weeks ago

Holmes Alexander in Albuquerque Journal

Provincial newsman

said I guess we better begin to do that Now,

his typewriter clacking in his aged office

on a side street under Sandia Mountain?

Half the world away from China

Johnson got some bad advice      Republican Aiken sang

to the Newsmen over the radio

The General guessed they'd stop infiltrating the South

if they bombed the North—

So I guess they bombed!

Pale Indochinese boys came thronging thru the jungle

in increased numbers

to the scene of TERROR!

While the triangle-roofed Farmer's Grain Elevator

sat quietly by the side of the road

along the railroad track

American Eagle beating its wings over Asia

million dollar helicopters

a billion dollars worth of Marines

who loved *Aunt Betty*

Drawn from the shores and farms shaking  
from the high schools to the landing barge  
blowing the air thru their cheeks with fear  
in *Life* on Television

Put it this way on the radio  
Put it this way in television language

Use the words  
language, language:  
“A bad guess

Put it this way in headlines  
Omaha World Herald— *Rusk Says Toughness*  
*Essential For Peace*

Put it this way  
Lincoln Nebraska morning Star—  
*Vietnam War Brings Prosperity*

Put it *this* way  
Declared McNamara speaking language  
Asserted Maxwell Taylor  
General, Consultant to White House  
Viet Cong losses leveling up three five zero zero per month  
Front page testimony February '66  
Here in Nebraska same as Kansas same known in Saigon  
in Peking, in Moscow, same known  
by the youths of Liverpool three five zero zero  
the latest quotation in the human meat market—  
Father I cannot tell a lie!

A black horse bends its head to the stubble  
beside the silver stream winding thru the woods  
by an antique red barn on the outskirts of Beatrice—  
Quietness, quietness  
over this countryside  
except for unmistakable signals on radio  
followed by the honkytonk tinkle  
of a city piano

to calm the nerves of taxpaying housewives of a Sunday morn.  
Has anyone looked in the eyes of the dead?

U.S. Army recruiting service sign *Careers With A Future*  
Is anyone living to look for future forgiveness?

Water hoses frozen on the street, the  
Crowd gathered to see a strange happening garage—  
Red flames on Sunday morning  
in a quiet town!

Has anyone looked in the eyes of the wounded?  
Have we seen but paper faces, Life Magazine?  
Are screaming faces made of dots,  
electric dots on Television—  
fuzzy decibels registering  
the mammal voiced howl

from the outskirts of Saigon to console model picture tubes  
in Beatrice, in Hutchinson, in El Dorado  
in historic Abilene  
O inconsolable!

Stop, and eat more flesh.

“We will negotiate anywhere anytime”

said the giant President

Kansas City Times 2/14/66: “Word reached U.S. authorities that Thailand’s leaders feared that in Honolulu Johnson might have tried to persuade South Vietnam’s rulers to ease their stand against negotiating with the Viet Cong.

American officials said these fears were groundless and Humphrey was telling the Thais so.”

AP dispatch

The last week’s paper is Amnesia.