



The Phoenix Program

By Douglas Valentine

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A CIA operation, the Phoenix Program aimed at destroying the Vietcong infrastructure. Former Phoenix and CIA director William Colby contended in his book *Lost Victory* that the program's reputation for brutality is undeserved. Valentine (*The Hotel Tacloban*) counters that claim in this shocking expose of the origins, rationale, methods and results of a program that was responsible for the execution of some 40,000

Vietnamese and the death, torture and imprisonment of countless civilians. The author describes how entire families and whole villages were wiped out in the cause of "Vietnamization." He explores the question of how Americans, from a nation ruled by laws and the ethic of fair play, could have created a campaign of such systematic savagery. No book published to date conveys the hideousness of the Vietnam War as thoroughly as this one. Photos.

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From Library Journal

Designed to destroy the Vietcong infrastructure and ostensibly run by the South Vietnamese government, the Phoenix Program--in fact directed by the United States--developed a variety of counterinsurgency activities including, at its worst, torture and assassination. For Valentine (*The Hotel Tacloban* , LJ 9/15/84), the program epitomizes all that was wrong with the Vietnam War; its evils are still present wherever there are "ideologues obsessed with security, who seek to impose their way of thinking on everyone else." Exhaustive detail and extensive use of interviews with and writings by Phoenix participants make up the book's principal strengths; the author's own analysis is weaker. This is a good complement to Dale Andrade's less emotional *Ashes to Ashes* (Lexington, 1990) and such participant accounts as Orrin M. DeForest and David Chanoff's *Slow Burn* (S. & S., 1990).

- *Kenneth W. Berger, Duke Univ. Lib., Durham, N.C.*

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Review

"A bright light into the darkest corner of the Vietnam War, and one of the darkest in American history." -- *Nicholas Proffitt, author of Gardens of Stone, from the back cover of The Phoenix Program, William Morrow edition, October 1990.*

"A controversial yet thorough work, deserving of a place in larger Vietnam collections." -- *Roland Green, November 1, 1990, Booklist.*

"The Phoenix Program is must reading for all." -- *Ralph McGehee, author of Deadly Deceits, from the back cover of The Phoenix Program, William Morrow edition, October 1990.*

"This is very volatile material...in some ways it's remarkable the book ever saw print." -- *Laurence Chollet, The Bergen Record, November 6, 1990.*

"Valentine catalogues the horrors without ever losing sight of the need to explain how such a tragedy could happen." -- *Tim Wells, The Veteran, July 1991.*

"Within these pages is stuff of great importance: examples of human folly, courage, stupidity, and greed." -- *Morley Safer, The New York Times Book Review, September 1990.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Karen Wells:

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Antonio Nelson:

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