

file: Galston

# Accuracy In Media, Inc.

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Reed J. Irvine  
Chairman of the Board

August 16, 1974

Professor Arthur W. Galston  
Eaton Professor of Botany  
Yale University  
New Haven, CT 06520

Dear Professor Galston:

Thank you for your letter of August 5.

It may have been clear to you that your remarks about the impact of the destruction of the mangroves on the ecosystem and nutrition of the human population were your conclusions and not those of the report of the National Academy of Sciences. It was certainly not clear to me, nor would I think it would be clear to any other reader. This sentence was sandwiched between two sentences that did report findings of the National Academy of Science team. I see not the slightest indication that it was a view of yours that differed from the actual findings of the report. Since your article was about the report, it would be only reasonable to conclude that you were telling what the report said, not substituting your subjective views for the objective findings of the study.

You may stand by your conclusion, but the point is that the readers of Natural History are entitled to know what the scientific evidence actually uncovered by the study showed. You did not provide that information with respect to the impact on the mangrove swamp fauna.

Your defense of the omission of the findings with respect to the damage done to the hardwood forests is similarly weak. You may prefer to side with the two scientists who disagreed with the majority of ten, but it is hardly in line with the scientific method to conceal what the majority reported. As I pointed out in my letter, one could agree with Paul Richards that the estimates considerably understated the actual damage and still come up with figures for damage that were but a fraction of the wild guesses that had been so widely disseminated by those who had never made the kind of painstaking study carried out by the National Academy of Sciences team. You failed to point that out.

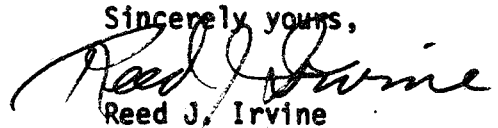
I do not agree that contesting your statement that herbicide operations forced "the displacement of Montagnards to urban relocation centers" was merely a matter of differing interpretation or taste. If you can find such a statement in the report, please give me the reference. Similarly, I can find no justification for the statement that the Montagnard villages may never be reoccupied. Where is the scientific evidence for this?

Accuracy in Media was founded five years ago. It is modestly financed by contributions from the public, which are tax-deductible, since we are recognized

by IRS as an educational organization. Your contribution would be welcomed.  
I shall enclose a brochure for your information.

Since you have asked about us, I wonder if I might put a question of a personal nature to you. Are you the Arthur W. Galston who visited Hanoi in April 1971 and attended a meeting of the Committee for Solidarity with the American People? If so, is it possible that the way in which you wrote up the report of the National Academy of Sciences on the impact of herbicides might have been somewhat influenced by the political attitudes that are implied by your participation in that meeting in that place?

Sincerely yours,



Reed J. Irvine

cc: Prof. Anton Lang  
Dr. Philip Handler  
Mr. Alan Ternes  
Mr. Arthur Ochs Sulzberger  
Prof. Kenneth V. Thimann