

## **[Remembering] Hugh Thompson Hero of My Lai Massacre died age 62**

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international / peace/war / commentary

Hugh Thompson an American soldier who refused to surrender his humanity and conscience to the criminality of war died 6 January 2006, aged 62.



***Hugh Thompson, 1969***

A brave humanitarian and hero in life and an enduring example of how humanity, integrity and bravery are able to triumph over the evil and criminality that is war.

War is the lowest expression of human activity and, as is evident today, kills more innocent civilians than combatants. Warfare today verifies, by its very nature -- oil and resource theft/plunder -- that it is a criminal enterprise instigated and sustained by the most evil and corrupt men the world has ever known. Every war today is fought for the advantage of the very few but at huge cost to millions of innocent civilians. Hugh Thompson's legacy to humanity is that justice can prevail over injustice and that humanity can prevail over bestial brutality and greed.

We are reminded by the memory of Hugh Thompson that in the face of immeasurable odds and pressure to conform to the status quo, we can draw on our humanity and conscience to overcome ALL injustices and tribulation.

Let warfare be a thing of our brutal past, permanently relegated to history; let the warmongers and culpable be brought to trial and held to account as an example to the ENTIRE WORLD that the human race is able to resolve ANY problem by civilised means, full disclosure and Institutional Law.

Not a single war waged today could be successfully defended in an (uncorrupted) Court of Law anywhere in the world, a fact that is widely known. Surely it is now time to break free of the lies and imposed slavery that a tiny minority inflicts on humanity? We know we are able by the strength of human character, exemplified by Hugh Thompson, and by popular consent, to (re)solve every conflict that confronts us today. War is the problem not the solution, as today's civilian death toll clearly highlights.

Wars where the civilian death toll exceeds that of combatants are criminal enterprises, pure and simple -- every Convention and Law verifies that fact! It is time to remove all corrupt puppets from the Hague (political) Courts and hold the REAL instigators of today's wars to account; I of course

refer to the Corporatists, Bankers, Robber Barons and Big Finance for whose benefit these wars are waged - the civilian death toll condemns them all!

Hugh Thompson goes down in history as a good soldier and REAL American hero who stood against the odds and revealed the insane criminality of American warfare to the world. His action accelerated the end of the criminal Indo-Chinese war - a useless ideological war that killed millions of civilians and destabilised an entire region.

Are the many today not capable of doing what so few achieved in the past, I hope not!

War is a crime and the criminals that deceive in order to promote it must be brought to trial if the world is to know peace.

Travel well Hugh Thompson, a hero in life and a shining light in death, we remember and salute you.

And let us not forget a brave, young, American soldier who requires our support TODAY; Bradley Manning [*updated*] *has been charged* with leaking Pentagon documents to WikiLeaks, which clearly reveal the criminal nature of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Support Bradley Manning's heroic gesture and DEMAND that the REAL criminals be placed on trial!

The evidence is now in the public domain, proceedings must be instituted against the culpable and demands made by the people for justice and the cessation of all the needless wars waged today.

Peace.

From AP report January 7 2006:

### **My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62**

NEW ORLEANS -- Hugh Thompson Jr., a former U.S. Army helicopter pilot who rescued unarmed Vietnamese civilians from his fellow GIs during what became known as the My Lai massacre, died early Friday, his biographer and a hospital spokesman confirmed. He was 62.

Thompson, who was from Lafayette, Louisiana, died at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the central Louisiana city of Alexandria, hospital spokesman Jay DeWorth said.

Trent Angers, Thompson's biographer and family friend, said Thompson was being treated for cancer and had been removed from life support earlier this week. Angers said Thompson's former gunner, Lawrence Colburn, had driven in from Atlanta to be at his bedside.

"America has lost a valuable hero of the Vietnam conflict," DeWorth said.

It was March 16, 1968, when Thompson and his crew watched in horror as an American Army officer walked up to an injured Vietnamese girl, flipped her over with his foot and shot her dead. It was his first glimpse of the massacre that led to the court martial of Lt. William Calley, one of the pivotal events as opposition to the war was growing in the United States.

Calley was eventually sentenced to life in prison but his sentence was reduced by President Richard Nixon. He served three years under house arrest.

Journalist Seymour Hersh won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the massacre in 1970.

Thompson would recall in a 1998 Associated Press interview seeing bodies piled in a ditch and watching American soldiers approaching Vietnamese women, children and old men.

"These people were looking at me for help and there was no way I could turn my back on them," Thompson said.

He placed his chopper down in front of the advancing Americans and gave Colburn a direct order: Train your M-60 on the GIs and if they try to harm the villagers, "You open up on them."

Thompson radioed to two gun ships behind him, and together they airlifted at least nine villagers to safety.

By the end of his tour of duty, Thompson had been hit eight times by enemy fire and lost five helicopters in combat. He left Vietnam after a combat crash broke his back, and was awarded both a Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

But Thompson's role in ending My Lai didn't come to light until the late 1980s, when David Egan, a professor emeritus at Clemson University, saw an interview with Thompson in a documentary on the massacre.

Egan wrote more than 100 letters to Congress and high-ranking government officials. He pressed others to write. Among those who did: Dean Rusk, secretary of state during the Vietnam years.

Still, no recognition came until Aug. 22, 1996, when the Army told Thompson he'd been approved for the Soldier's Medal, given to those who risk their lives in situations where an opposing army is not involved. He was faxed a copy of the citation.

Though his acts are now considered heroic, for years Thompson suffered snubs and worse from those who considered him unpatriotic.

Fellow servicemen refused to speak with him. He received death threats, and walked out his door to find animal carcasses on his porch. He recalled a congressman angrily saying that Thompson himself was the only serviceman who should be punished because of My Lai.

"He was treated like a traitor for 30 years," Angers said. "So he was conditioned to just shut up and be quiet."

"Every bit of information I got from him, I had to drag it out of him."

Born in Atlanta, Thompson joined the Navy in 1961 and left three years later. In 1966, he joined the Army to become a pilot and completed his training in 1967 before being shipped off to Vietnam. He retired as a first lieutenant in 1983.

He met his wife, Mona, while stationed at Louisiana's Fort Polk, and later moved to Broussard, La. The couple, married more than 20 years, had three sons; Bucky, Brian and Stephen.

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***Bradley Manning***

<http://www.mishalov.com/hugh-thompson.html>

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Cleaves Alternative News. <http://cleaves.lingama.net/news/story-2200.html>