

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

April 4, 2017

Proclaim April 4, 2017 as Nick Ut Day in Los Angeles County

On June 8, 1972, while on assignment with the Associated Press (AP), twenty-one year old photographer Huỳnh Công Út, known professionally as Nick Ut, captured a photograph he named "The Terror of War" that depicted nine-year old Kim Phuc fleeing a misdirected napalm attack on her village, Trang Bang. After noticing that the napalm had caused Phuc's flesh to melt from her body, Ut covered her with a raincoat and immediately drove her and other burn victims to a hospital in nearby Cu Chi.

When they arrived, doctors refused to admit her, saying she was too badly burned to be saved. They directed him to the local morgue. With the help of his AP colleagues, he got her admitted and eventually transferred to the Center for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in Saigon. 14 months and 17 surgical procedures later, Phuc was allowed to return home. Ut continued to visit Phuc until he was evacuated during the fall of Saigon. They reconnected in 1989 and remain friends to this day. Phuc now lives in Canada and affectionately refers to Ut as "Uncle Nick." Ut moved to Los Angeles in 1977, where he continued to work for the AP, ending a prolific 51-year career in March 2017.

Six months after Ut snapped his fateful photograph, the United States, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam signed the Paris cease-fire agreement. On March 30, 1973, the last American personnel left Saigon. The next month, Ut was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his image that telegraphed the searing pain, tragedy, and horror of the

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MOTION

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KUEHL	_____
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RIDLEY-THOMAS	_____

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Vietnam War to the rest of the world. “The Terror of War” is credited with swaying public opinion against the war and has become an iconic photo of the Vietnam era, as well as one of the most haunting and memorable images of the entire 20th century.

Nick Ut was wounded three times during the war: in his stomach, his left leg and his chest. After all three injuries, as soon as his wounds healed, he went right back to work. His older brother, also an AP photographer, was killed by the Viet Cong while on assignment. Ut lost countless friends, neighbors, and extended family to the war, yet refers to himself as a “lucky guy.”

During Ut’s illustrious career, he worked for the AP in South Korea, Hanoi, and Tokyo. After relocating to Los Angeles, he covered events including the 1992 civil unrest and the O.J. Simpson trial. Many of his photos were published worldwide. In 2012, Ut was inducted into the Leica Hall of Fame for his outstanding achievements in photojournalism.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Proclaim April 4, 2017 as Nick Ut Day throughout Los Angeles County in recognition of Ut’s immense talent, tenacity, and heroism, shared with the world over his career which spanned more than a half-century. Ut’s ability to chronicle history and captivate the world’s attention through the medium of photography transcends time and will leave a lasting impression on generations to come.

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