

LEADERSHIP CHANGE IN HANOI: NEW, YES BUT HOW NEW?

In the dying days of December 1997, the other shoe finally dropped in Hà Nội. Throughout the year there had been many changes on the State side: National Assembly elections, major appointments to the SRV Cabinet, provincial committees reshuffled, People's Council elections at the village/local level. But on the Party side nothing but official silence – only rumors, intimations, trial balloons suggesting that momentous change was in the offing. As months passed and embarrassment set in, it became clear that the Hà Nội rulers – that small band of men (no women, which is partly what is wrong with the system) who run the country – were, first, trying to sort things out among themselves, and second, summing up courage to push the envelope of leadership change.

Finally, change came when, on the morning of December 26, the Vietnam Communist Party's Fourth Plenum (Eighth Congress) convened in Ba Đình Hall, Hà Nội and elected Party Central Committee, a Politburo, and a General Secretary.

The dust is still setting on the Hanoi political scene as this is being written. Clearly much remains to be sorted out. However, it seems probable that this moment will go down in history as the true beginning of a generational transfer of political power in Vietnam. All of the originals – that “set of old masters” as one French observer expressed it – are now gone. All of the “jungle fighters” from the Việt Minh and Vietnam wars are now gone.

What is the nature of this new highest level leadership? More correctly, what is it in the process of becoming? Is there to be a single leader, in the mode of Hồ Chí Minh? Highly unlikely. Is there to be a *primus inter pares* – first among equals – and is he to be Lê Khả Phiêu, the new Party General Secretary? Presumably. Which means there will be no firmly established pecking order among the Politburo 19. It may be another *triumvirate* – Lê Khả Phiêu, Phan Văn Khải, and Trần Đức Lương who will share power equally. This is likely, although it probably will not be like the case of the previous occupants (Đỗ Mười, Lê Đức Anh, and Võ Văn Kiệt), known in Hà Nội political circles as “Our Troika” from the Russian three-horse vehicle. The forces that raised those three to a full trimvirate do not appear to be present today.

In any event, personality ranks fairly low in Hanoi's political culture, collective leadership is the rule. It is totally unlikely that any single figure – a Stalin or a Castro – will emerge to seize the reigns of power. Hence, the principles of governance – the so-called Operational Code of the Politburo – will endure despite personnel change.

What has not changed within the political dynamics of the Vietnamese leadership is the overriding anxiety about potential instability (*bất an* and *bất ổn*). It is a specter that increasingly came to haunt the Politburo last year. Public exhibitions of social unrest, virtually unknown in postwar years, during 1997 developed in at least six provinces both in the North (Thái Bình) and the South (Mekong Delta). Officials were beset by bolder opposition from religionists (Catholics, Buddhists); farmers (over losing land to golf courses); restive students; disgruntled veterans; complaints from foreign joint-venture entrepreneurs; etc. Another source of anxiety is the fear of importing economic instability from the tigers of Asia. This is not the in-your-face sort of economic crisis faced by them, but rather instability that basically is a product of the so-called Revolution of 1989 – disestablishment of the USSR and overthrow of the Leninist system in East Europe – and in a somewhat different way, the Beijing Tiananmen Square incident. Leaders in Hà Nội are determined it will not happen here.

Their first response in the early 1990's was a hunkering-down syndrome (let's do nothing right now; let the situation clarify). This did not work, so a policy of *đổi mới* (renovation) was hesitatingly adopted. The operational code rule became: reform the economy and improve material life (basic necessities, some luxuries); and begin true economic development but do nothing that destabilizes. In effect, this was a call for risk-free change – something we know is not possible in this life. Hence policy-making became, and remains today, a question of risk evaluation. Reformers are willing to accept a greater degree of risk. Conservatives, because they are conservatives, are not. Outsiders should be well aware that to persuade Hà Nội leaders to change a policy or embark on a new one they must convince them that no significant risk is involved, or at least that the rewards will be so great as to be worth limited risk.

By all evidence, the essential political structure in Vietnam will remain what it has been in the past: Leninist organization within a Confucian construct with little actual input of Marxist thought; collective leadership by the Party and the same operational code of the Politburo; no policy change made, no action taken that is total anathema to any member. This is not a matter of deference to ego. Each member has his own constituency; he runs it but it also runs him. Some matters are regarded by a constituency as a malediction. Their view is respected by the Politburo and the decision is watered down to the point where the constituency can at least live with it. This rule makes the collective leadership system work. It will not work without it. However, it also is the system's chief weakness for it tends to reduce decisions to their lowest common denominator.

The Board. In Hanoi the buck stops with the Board, a 1996 creation formally termed Political Bureau Standing Board, previously the Presidium. Presumably it was redubbed because presidium smacks too much of Moscow (although it could be argued board smacks too much of Wall Street). In any event the board remains what it has always been, the Party's top level permanent administrative committee running affairs on a day-to-day basis. (Said one Hanoi official: "It is where we go when we want to get something done quickly".) Membership: Lê Khả Phiêu, Trần Đức Lương, Phan Văn Khải, Phạm Thế Duyệt, Phan Diên, and Nông Đức Mạnh. Departing the board was Đỗ Mười, Lê Đức Anh, Võ Văn Kiệt, and Nguyễn Tấn Dũng.

PAVN. One political development that emerged from the December plenum is that Vietnam's professional military have moved into a more prominent public position, certainly into a more visible one. This not does not appear to be a power grab or a challenge to the way Vietnam is governed. It is not clear what fueled it, nor for that matter whether it is a significant development.

The Vietnamese military have always been reluctant in the extreme to involve themselves in politics. In the years after the end of the Vietnam War, when an utterly disastrous civilian leadership was in charge, one must marvel at the restraint of the generals. Party civilians made mistake after mistake: confronting China; invading Cambodia, driving the middle class into the sea, calling for a self-sufficient economic system at a

time when the whole world was moving into economic interdependency, etc. Surely the generals who ran the war must have thought among themselves that anyone – pick 10 names from the Hanoi phone book – could run the country better. Yet never was there a whiff of coup d'état, or even takeover by the military in the name of the Party (as in Poland). Perhaps the military were relieved they were not saddled with the responsibility.

The more prominent posture assumed by PAVN on the political stage, whatever else it may mean, does raise the question of exactly how conservative is the Vietnamese military and in what ways is this conservatism expressed? It is overly simplistic to regard Phiêu and his faction as reactionaries, although to judge him by his public utterances over the years, one can come to no other conclusion. However, as with other leaders, the rhetoric used often is designed as much to obfuscate as to enlighten. Certainly it is not to be regarded as deep political thought. This has been proven over the years by examples in which policy pronouncements are casually reversed within a month or so. The only bedrock political value judgement involved here is that Phiêu can never be counted on to sacrifice the interests of his constituency, PAVN, to the needs of the rest of the society.

In fact, it is quite easy to build the argument that the professional military in Vietnam are quite progressive, if by that term is meant advocating an economic system that operates, as it is delicately expressed, under the principle: "the logic of the situation is in command" (which, if carefully examined, is seen to be more or less standard Adam Smith thinking). What restrains PAVN leaders from becoming knee-jerk reactionaries – unlike some of their Party civilian counterparts – are the armed forces' demands for the benefits of modern technology, which require a strong, open economy.

Bung Di. Once again Hanoi watchers are caught up in reading tea leaves to produce educated guesses about the factional line (it should not be lost on us that the word faction comes from the Latin, meaning organizer of (Roman) chariot races). For the influentials in Hanoi who follow politics, this is charting the factional infighting (known by the slang term, bung di or faction bashing): what is going on within each faction; who is doing what to whom, and what about their wives?

In the rush to analysis, some observers continue

to divide Politburo members into West Leaning (or pro-West, now to include Moscow) and East Leaning (pro-China). This division has been around for 40 years, is now supported by only a minority of analysts. More common is the view that we are witnessing the rise of a Military faction (Lê Khả Phiêu, Lê Minh Hưởng, Phạm Thanh Ngân, Nguyễn Minh Triết) vs. a Civilian faction (Phan Văn Khải, Võ Văn Kiệt). Whatever the reality, the question does arise of whether we are witnessing the “militarization” of the Politburo? Others, charting the birthplace of the four new members, profess to see a regional geographic line-up, i.e., North-South, or possibly North-Center-South. Some observers see a line-up consisting of Lê Khả Phiêu, Võ Văn Kiệt, Đỗ Mười, and Trần Đức Lương as major power holders on one side vs. Đoàn Khuê, Lê Đức Anh, and Nguyễn Văn An on the other (admittedly, the murkiest aspect here is Đoàn Khuê’s position and future role). Still others see the emergence of an entirely new factional line-up. Old (formed from the Politburo retirees or “consultants” from whom Phiêu in his Plenum address said “we expect guiding ideas”) vs. New. The former are the Old Guard (Đỗ Mười, Lê Đức Anh and Võ Văn Kiệt) and the Really Old Guard (Phạm Văn Đồng, Nguyễn Văn Linh, and Võ Chí Công). The point to be made with these “fathers of the kings”, as one observer calls them, is that they have a great deal going for themselves in Vietnam’s political culture – status, prestige, and a Confucian concept transferred to Marxism, “revolutionary depth”. If they act in concert they can exert enormous influence.

Summing Up. The leadership scene in Hanoi, as viewed by journalists, academics, spies, expats, other outsiders, is more or less consensual:

*There is an ongoing, never-ending political struggle between conservative ideologues and reform-minded pragmatists. The political balance between the two is, for the moment, stable but such is its nature that it could be upset at any time. This would lead to serious instability (bất an, bất ổn).

*Instability could be triggered by the outside (for instance, ASEAN-wide economic chaos) or by domestic conditions (public dissension rising to the level of public disorder, such as riots in the streets that could force sol-

diers to shoot civilians – or even worse, soldiers refusing to shoot civilians).

*Economic reform must continue but not at the price of political change, if this can be managed. If political change is required, it must be minimal and in no event should it be systemic change.

*Vietnam’s leaders are under increasing external pressure from trading partners (China, ASEAN) and international funding agencies, which means increased economic competition.

*Most serious, Politburo members are judged to be out of touch with both the world and their own people. They have been bugs in amber, unequal to the demands placed on them, chief of which is an inability to see clearly and act accordingly.

Such, more or less, is the agreed-on estimate by most Hanoi watchers of the leadership, its character and its views. It is a correct assessment save for the fact that it does not go deep enough. Beneath are a host of subliminal cultural and psychological factors. To the extent these deeper dimensions are addressed by observers, it is in terms of anxiety and fatigue marking top leadership behavior intermixed with the Confucian fear that Heaven’s mandate will be withdrawn and governance of Vietnam will lose its legitimacy, which according to Confucius (and Thomas Jefferson) authorizes its replacement.

In terms of future plans and policies to expect from the new leaders, we have before us, for what it is worth, guidance from Fourth Plenum sessions, including Lê Khả Phiêu’s state-of-the-union address December 29. His is a standard address in standard three-part format: what is good about things, what is bad and must be corrected, and a moral exhortation call to duty. If it differs from past similar documents – and this could reflect Phiêu’s personality – it is the tone of deference to other Party figures: repeated tributes by name, accolades to all (Đỗ Mười is lauded eight times in 25 minutes/5,000 words). Phiêu’s rhetoric is impeccable, beyond criticism: we must broaden democracy in Vietnam; we must decentralize decision-making and man-

agement although retain certain prerogatives at the Center; we must stand against corruption; we must increase effective international cooperation, practice open door diplomacy. We must be thrifty, we must develop our culture, we must implement social justice, progress, self-sovereignty, self-reliance. There is something here for everyone. No matter that Plenum documents are full of contradictions, undefined terminology, fuzzy logic, vagueness in key passages. Find what you want and focus on that.

Prime Minister Phan Văn Khải's Plenum address was somewhat more specific – but not by much. He listed 1998 priorities as: development of a more competitive export program, infrastructure development (roads, canals, power, airports), further equitization of state-owned enterprise (but only to the extent of getting rid of deadwood), rationalization of the financial banking system, thinning out the dense bureaucracy, and new and better health, education, and social welfare programs.

Lê Khả Phiêu. The Party's new General Secretary has no clear public image. He is known, but not known about. Details of his career – in the military and security sector – are available but there is little about the essential man. This is to be expected. This is the norm in Vietnam, a standard manifestation of Vietnamese political culture with its politics of clandestinism. Like all Vietnamese, Phiêu prefers the world to have only general knowledge about himself, thus never knowing exactly where he stands on various matters. It is a form of insurance and a survival mechanism.

Phiêu's character probably was shaped by his military assignments – as PAVN's chief political commissar for years and later as a major figure in the security apparatus that sprawls over both military and civilian. Some observers conclude from this that he is highly ideological, which may not be the case. In any event, little is known about his personality, even less about his private life. How well read is he? Does he understand the nuances of the governing process in, say, the economics sector? If not, how willing is he to trust decision making to those who do? Is he essentially a watchdog, an administrator, a mediator, or a bureaucratic infighter? Which interests him most: people, things, or ideas? How will he handle crises and challenges – from

dissidents in the street, from China?

It seems clear that Phiêu is an old school PAVN officer as that term can be applied to PAVN. For years he ran the PAVN General Political Directorate (Tổng Cục Chính Trị), the SRV's oldest high-level military institution predating even the PAVN General Staff (modeled on China's PLA). Assignment to the Directorate carries great prestige and influence. It is the necessary corridor for those who would become generals. The Directorate works intimately with the Party in administering PAVN's political officer system, which is responsible for various motivational, indoctrinational, and surveillance programs among the military. This means the director is probably steeped in the đấu tranh (struggle) military ethos, that the proper way to solve a problem, any problem, is through the sustained maximum application of force. He may be inclined to carry this over to decision making in civilian sectors, such as the economic sector, where it is almost guaranteed not to work.

By all evidence, Phiêu through the years has performed his military duties well. He gets much of the credit for PAVN's discipline, loyalty, the firm establishment of the unique, almost mystical bond between the military and the general public; and for PAVN's stability at a time when armies in other socialist countries were coming apart at the seams.

Many observers interpreted Phiêu's advent as a victory for a slower pace in economic development and a return of control to the Center (away from decentralized decision making). There is little on which to base this judgement. We are best advised not to dissect public statements by Phiêu (or any other leader in Hanoi) with a view to extracting nuanced meaning about plans and policies.

"Capitalism is backward. It does not meet the people's needs for happiness. It will definitely be replaced" (Phiêu, 1966).

"Peaceful evolution is our gravest danger. Resist all efforts by outsiders to introduce it. It will bring only anarchy, chaos from which none will profit" (Phiêu, 1994).

"The economic reform effort must be intensified" (Phiêu, 1997).

While Phiêu may have less of a military and more of a political mind than, say, a line commander,

it is quite possible that he will not carry on as an agit-prop agent, will be less of a political activist than his predecessor, Đỗ Mười. It may be that while Phiêu will continue delivering pro forma political statements and moral exhortations, he will in fact leave day to day political pronouncements to Prime Minister Phan Văn Khải. This would mean something of a new arrangement between Party and State – a new balance among factions – not a decisive shift but a noticeable one. A brokered Phiêu-Khải arrangement would push along a trend underway for a decade. At one time the party did it all. It ran the country by fiat – disastrously – by dispatching directives, written in ideological language, down the line to the province/enterprise level. These were given to honest differing interpretations, and confusion reigned. The National Assembly did not legislate. Rather, it was a mobilizational and motivational instrument – an important one, working through the Fatherland Front – but it did not act as legislatures do elsewhere. Finally the press of events – stagnation and decay of the governing process – forced a reappraisal. This was coupled with insistent private advice from the international lending agencies that if Vietnam wanted money it had to make systemic change. Now change has come, although we are not sure how far the system has moved toward congruence with governing systems elsewhere.

The test for Phiêu and his Politburo is still to come. We have yet to see evidence of true commitment to making sacrifice in certain sectors, such as reducing defense expenditures to serve the general economy. Despite the rhetoric and gestures of good intention, we have not seen the required resources to bring the infrastructure (especially the technical education sector) up to speed. Certainly we have not seen any concerted effort to develop greater social consensus in Vietnam with its pernicious forces of geographical regionalism — a consensus that has its greatest meaning, and need, in the South.

To judge Phiêu solely by his c.v. is to conclude he is not the man for the job. This may not be the truth, he may not now be the man he was. In any event, we should allow change, as new leaders elsewhere have often done. It could be that Phiêu will meet the challenge of metamorphosis from commissar to all-around Party leader.

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The Art of Insurgency: American Military Policy and the Failure of Strategy in Southeast Asia by Donald W. Hamilton (professor of American history at Mesa Community College and officer in U.S. Military Reserve). Praeger. \$50 (est.). (1997).

The Edge of Honor by P.T. Deutermann (novelist). Vietnam War techno-thriller. Hero is a career Navy man whose ship is beset by danger all around, including a drug-besotted crew. Paperback. Also available on audio-cassette. St. Martins. \$5.99. (1995).

Bridging the Gap: Twenty Years After the War in Vietnam by Charles D. Pilon (author). A memoir.

Charles D. Pilon Co. \$10.95. (1996).

The Brocaded Slipper and Other Vietnamese Tales by Lynette Dyer Vũông (Việt kiều). Short stories. Amazon Publishers. \$4.95. (1992).

Stalking the Việt cộng: Inside Operation Phoenix, A Personal Account by Stuart Herrington (Army War College). Herrington worked as an intelligence officer (1971-72) in the Đứck Huệ Phoenix Program rooting out the Việt cộng infrastructure, one way or the other. Appears to be a revised edition of his earlier work. *Silence Was A Weapon*, one of the best memoirs to come out of the war. Presidio Press. \$14.95. (1997).

The French in Indochina. From White Lotus. A reprint of the 1890 history of French derring do in 19th century Indochina: Henri Mouhot's 1860 trip up the Mekong; Lt. Francis Garier's exploration of Laos; Dr. Morice's peregrinations in backwater Cochinchina. White Lotus, Bangkok. \$14.50. (1994).

Vietnam Assessment: Creating A Sound Investment Climate Suiwah Leung (Australian National University), ed. Seven essays on ways Hanoi attracts investors, foreign and domestic. Seems to be something of a consensus among them that the problem is more socio-political than economic. ISEAS, Singapore. \$18.50. (1996).

Marine Helo: Helicopter War in Vietnam with the U.S. Marine Corps by David Petteys (VN vet, now commercial pilot with United Airlines). Diary of a war that began early for the author—on the Berkeley campus in the late 1950s as he witnessed the left organize its political steamroller. Much technical data on choppers; lavishly illustrated in color. Printed in Italy. Ediga, Venice. \$20.00. (1995).

Vietnamese Perspectives on the War in Vietnam: An Annotated Bibliography of Works in English by John Schafer (California State University at Humboldt). Survey of the field, and a valuable one. At least 150 entries which more or less cover the genre to date. We still do not have the literature we need, but this is something that teachers can carry into the classroom if they wish to teach the war as it should be taught: as a struggle of competing perceptions. Yale Council on Southeast Asia Studies, Yale Univ. (1977).

Code-Name Bright Light: The Untold Story of the U.S. POW Rescue Efforts During the Vietnam War

by George J. Veith (former U.S. Army captain living outside Philadelphia). Veith is fast becoming the leading American authority on the dark side of the whole resolution of casualties issue of the Vietnam War, taking it out of the Oliver Stone syndrome. This is a remarkable work of tireless research. The author appears to have turned over virtually every archival source: military, State Department, NSA, academic. Bright Light was a POW rescue program. While it essentially failed, Veith puts a lie to the contention that the U.S. military, and its civilian leaders, did not care what happened to these men. Recommended. Free Press/Simon and Schuster. \$25.00. (1997).

Westmoreland: A Biography of William G. Westmoreland by Samuel Zaffiri (author of *Hamburger Hill*). Full scale work. Traces Westmoreland's life from his South Carolina youth to his education at the Citadel (forgoing West Point) to his steady rise as commander of U.S. Forces, Vietnam. Also covers his legal battle with CBS afterwards. Extensive bibliography. Useful as adjunct history of the war. Should be in the library of anyone writing on the Vietnam War. William Morrow Publisher. \$25.00. (1994).

Vietnam Atlas Quốc Gia (National Atlas), Dũng Hùng Võ (SRV Land Administration Dept.), ed. Mammoth publishing effort. Oversized: 14 chapters, 114 maps, text, name index. It took 25 years by 200 researchers and 50 state enterprises. Available in Vietnam book stores. \$1,000. (1996).

True Democracies For A Better World. Author not given. Work of the Việt kiều organization, True Democracies Forum, Phạm Kim Vinh (founder). Advisory board of 10 and council of five made up of persons from 15 countries, most of them from the U.S. and Australia. Available from the True Democracies Forum, Fountain Valley, California. (1997).

Development Trends in Vietnam's Northern Mountain Region: An Overview and Analysis, Vol. 1 *Lessons For Asia*, Deanna Donovan, Terry Rambo, Jefferson Fox, Lê Trọng Cúc, and Trần Đức, eds. A serious and extensive analysis of the northern Vietnamese highlands scene. Specific studies in Vinh Phủ, Yên Bái, Lào Cai, Tuyên Quang, and Hà Giang provinces. A wealth of detailed information. Volume 2 is subtitled *Case Studies and Lessons For Asia*. Valuable

addition to the literature of the field. From National Publishing House, Hà Nội. Available from East-West Center, Honolulu. \$30, plus shipping. (1997).

A Step From Heaven by K.L. Bye (poet). In this collection of what she terms "flash back" poems about the Vietnam War, Bye employs what might be called the *haiku* tradition—sparse and restrained—which will mean the most to those who were there but from which others can learn. Also from the same author, her first work, *Deadly Presents* (1994). From Turtle Run Publishers, Circle Pine, Minnesota. \$13. (1996).

Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, and Consequences, by Richard Betts (Columbia University). Former Washington strategic thinker worries that now that the Cold War is over the U.S. will lapse into a post-World War I mentality and come to regard military defense as hardly necessary. This is a concept book that sets forth clearly the issues of how much readiness and what kind. Brookings Institution. \$16.95. (1995).

Covert Warrior: Fighting the CIA's Secret War in Southeast Asia and China, 1965-67 by Warner Smith (U.S. Naval Intelligence, CIA, ret.). Termed a Vietnam War memoir, Smith recounts specific activities and enterprises of FRAM 16, a super-secret dirty tricks unit with which he served in the mid-1960s in and around Vietnam. Some of the unit's feats were unbelievably daring. Remarkable memoir. Presidio Press. \$24.95. (1996).

Laos' Dilemmas and Options: The Challenge of Economic Transition of the 1990s, Mya Than and Joseph L.H. Than (both Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore), eds. An excellent serious work. Twelve contributors do chapters dealing with all major sectors of the Laos economy, which of course is chiefly agrarian but is caught up in a drive towards a market economy within some kind of a socialist framework. Particularly valuable is the chapter on Lao education by Mya Than and Richard Vokes (both Asian Development Bank, Manila). A work of considerable investment in effort, with some 75 tables, charts, and schematics. Recommended. St. Martin's Press, New York, and ISEAS, Singapore. (1997).

Six Silent Men: Book Three by Gary Linderen (ex-101st Airborne Division, Vietnam; publisher of magazine *Behind the Lines*). Final of the trilogy on

Lurps in the Vietnam War, which collectively offers authoritative and gripping accounts of long range patrol work by Rangers—men who came silently and left silently (when they could). *Book One* is by Reynel Martinez and *Book Two* by Kenn Miller. Available from Ballantine and Ivy Books. \$5.99. (1997).

Writing Between the Lines, Kevin Bowen (Joiner Center, Univ. of Massachusetts) and Bruce Weigl (Penn State Univ.), eds. An anthology subtitled *On War and Its Social Consequences* by two major figures in the Vietnam War literature field. Contributions by 49 poets, fiction writers, non-fiction writers, and journalists, divided into: in-country; aftermath; across borders; going back; mountains and rivers; works from Vietnam. Should be on college classroom reading lists. University of Massachusetts Press. \$55 hardback, \$17.95 paper. (1997).

Vietnam: Anatomy of Peace by Gabriel Kolko (York University Emeritus). A follow-on of sorts to the author's early *Vietnam: Anatomy of War*. Addresses the question of whether Hanoi, having won its war, lost its peace. Kolko argues that the Vietnamese, prisoners of a millenium of history, were singularly unable to adapt to an economically interdependent world. Like the Americans, who lost their war because they did not understand it, Hanoi leaders are losing the peace because they do not understand its imperatives. Thoughtful work. Routledge Publishers. \$15.95. (1997).

Phoenix and the Birds of Prey by Mark Moyar (historian). The moral question raised by the Phoenix Program (separate from its strategic utility) is this: are the leaders who send men out to fight and die (in this case, down the HỒ Chí Minh Trail) to be regarded as sacrosanct by the other side? It seems hardly just, that the order givers themselves should be off-limits. The Phoenix Program was in fact part of a broader strategy called the Census Grievance Program (which was vilified as a covert term when it was actually a direct and expressive one). This is because critics never bothered to inform themselves. This is a fine effort. Moyar does not seek to moralize or even rationalize, only to explain. No one should speak or write about the Phoenix Program without first consulting this work. With extensive bibliography. Naval Institute Press. (1997).

Rakkasans: The Combat History of the 187th

Airborne Infantry by E.M. Flanagan, (Lt. Gen. Ret. and Army magazine columnist). They got their nickname—rakkasans—from the Japanese soldiers of World War Two, meaning “umbrella men,” i.e., people who jump out of airplanes hoping the umbrella opens. This history traces the notable 187th through all of its wars. Chapters nine through eleven are devoted to Vietnam. A product of meticulous research. Presidio Press. \$27.95. (1997).

Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War by Edwin Moise (Clemson University). An effort to set that moment of early August 1964 in what the author considers to be the correct historical interpretation. Extensively researched. University of North Carolina Press. \$39.95. (1996).

World Refugee Survey: 1997. From the U.S. Committee for Refugees. Six articles on the refugee scene worldwide. Six regional reports including “East Asia and the Pacific” by Hiran Ruiz and Christina Rodousakis, which includes Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos country studies. From UNHCR, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue., Washington D.C. \$19. (1997).

Destroyer: A Memoir of Command at Sea by Don Sheppard (U.S. Navy, ret.). Third in Sheppard's trilogy (earlier ones *Blue Water Sailor* and *Riverine*). Vietnam's War and his destroyer command are very much a part of all three, also a part of Sheppard's life. Full flavor of U.S. Navy in the Pacific. Presidio Press. \$24.95. (1996).

Vietnam in Verse: Reflections of a Soldier by Roger Barton (veteran / poet). Slim volume of blank verse. Sample: “Of those who say we never lost the war . . . Just who the hell are you trying to kid? We didn't lose in Vietnam—you did!” Printed privately by the author, P.O. Box 585, Walkersville, Maryland 21798. (1986).

Commanders-in-Chief, Joseph Dawson, ed. Six American presidents are studied in the role of highest level strategic decision-maker. Two of them are of interest to Vietnam War historians: “Lyndon Johnson: A Reluctant Hawk” by Frank Vandiver (Texas A&M Univ.), and “Richard Nixon: A Belligerent Dove” by Stephen Ambrose (Univ. of New Orleans). Both presidents treated firmly, objectively. Norman Graebner (Univ. of Virginia, Emeritus) supplies an excellent scene-

setting first chapter: "The President as Commander-in-Chief; A Study in Power." University of Kansas Press. \$12.95. (1993).

Sex, Disease, and Society: A Comprehensive History of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV / AIDS in Asia and the Pacific by Milton Lewis (Univ. of Sydney), Scott Bamber (AIDS researcher in northern Thailand), and Michael Waugh, (M.D. Leeds General Infirmary), eds. Sixteen editors and writers deal with the troublesome side of sex in the Pacific Basin. Chapter seven is "Sexually Transmitted Disease in Vietnam and Cambodia Since the French Colonial Period" by Annick Guenel (National Institute for Blood Research, Paris), who finds that opening Vietnam to tourism and business also opened it to an influx of AIDS carriers. Official reaction came only slowly. It is still the case that not enough is being done. Greenwood Press as a Contribution in Medical Studies, No. 43. (1997).

American Military History and the Evolution of Western Warfare, Robert Doughty (USMA) and Ira Gruber (Rice Univ.), eds., with six other contributors. Starts with 17th century Anglo-American warfare (emergence of people in arms), ends with projecting power and maintaining peace in the age of intervention. George Herring (Univ. of Kentucky) does chapter 21, the Vietnam War. A fine brief piece of history writing. D.C. Heath and Company. (1996).

Counting Survivors by Walter McDonald (Texas Tech Univ.). A collection of poems in the spirit of Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. Mix of subjects, some Vietnam, some Texas, but all direct and precisely shaped. Each can find his favorite here—the editor's "most charming" nomination is "Dogs in the World They Own." Recommended. University of Pittsburgh Press. \$25.95 hardback, \$10.95 paper. (1995).

Beijing and the Vietnam Peace Talks, 1965-68: New Evidence From Chinese Sources by Quang Zhai (Auburn University). A working paper (no. 18) from the Cold War International History Project. Available from the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, Washington D.C.

A History of Laos by Martin Stuart-Fox (University of Queensland). Good general history of Laos in the 20th century by a major figure in the field. Cambridge University Press. \$59.95 hardback, \$14.95 pa-

per. (1997).

An English-Spoken Khmer Dictionary by Allen P.K. Keese (Khmer Specialist). The 292-page work includes articles on romanized writing system, usage, and idioms; also notes on Khmer speech and grammar. Columbia University Press. \$110. (1995).

Comfort Zone by Christopher Moore. An "entertainment" novel set in today's Bangkok and Saigon. A young American lawyer with the help of Thai police seeks a killer, finds corruption and fraud amidst Vietnam's economic miracle. From White Lotus, Bangkok. \$14.50. (1995).

Vietnam's Rural Transformation, Benedict Tria Kerkvliet and Doug Porter (Australian National Univ.), eds. Ten essays on what is going on out there in the rice paddies. Useful contribution to understanding the dynamic scene among 80% of the population. Westview Press. \$29 hardcover, \$20 paperback. (1997).

Requiem: By the Photographers Who Died in Indochina by Horst Faas (AP photographer now in London) and Tim Page (photojournalist). In the 30 years of warfare in Indochina that ended in 1975, 207 photographers (including 72 from North Vietnam) were killed. This extremely high casualty rate was due chiefly to the nature of their high-risk work. War photographers are a breed apart—to get the shot they must take risks that can prove fatal. This work is a collection of photographs of those who died, camera in hand. What comes through clearly is that the motivations varied greatly. The Hanoi photographers saw themselves as serving a cause which required socialist realism photos. Others sought images of truth. Random House. \$65. (1997).

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures by Anne Fadiman (editor of American Scholar). The story of Lia Lin, born in 1982 in California of Hmong immigrant parents. At three months old she began having a series of epileptic seizures, 20 over the next three months. It became clear that her parents were not following the treatment plan ordered by the American doctors. A court took her out of her parents' care; she returned home a year later. At home parental treatment consisted of animal sacrifices and chants by Hmong healers. Today Lia Lin is alive but in a vegetative state. An East meets West tragedy.

Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux. \$24. (1997).

Women in the U.S. Military, 1901-1995: A Research Guide and Annotated Bibliography by Vicki Friedl (historian). List of writings beginning with the formation of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901 and running through the Persian Gulf War. Women in the five services, the military academies, in combat, as veterans. Greenwood Press. \$69.95. (1996).

The Tết Offensive, Marc Jason Gilbert (North Georgia College) and William Head (Warner Robbins ALC), eds. A fresh look back at the most famous battle of the Vietnam War (1968) by 16 essayists, most of them academics. As is common with this genre, we have the gold and the dross. Larry Berman's lead-off piece is first rate as are the contributions by the two editors. Some are informative (Larry Cable), and a few seek to be distinctly revisionist. Such varied perceptions are valuable, however, as a case study in writing history. Greenwood Press. \$69.95. (1996).

Guide to International Affairs Internships In Washington by Matthew Higham and Hilary Berkey, eds. How to do it in Washington. From Access, 1701 K Street NW. Washington D.C.

Trends in Peace and Security Grants: A Study of Funders' Response to the Post-Cold War Era, Mary Lord and Mary Soley, eds. Where to get study money now that the 1,200 U.S. foundations are convinced the old geopolitical construct is dead and a new one is waiting to be born—which they will fund once the definitions become sharp. Wealth of detail here on fund hunting. From Access (see above). \$24.95. (1996).

Richard Nixon: A Psychobiography by Vamuk Vokan et al. Shrink view of the man many love to hate. Nixon's psyche, these authors say, was a mix of pomposity and self-degradation. He sought in desperation to be a peacemaker, but in the cauldron of his character this led only to self-destruction. Columbia University Press. \$27.50. (1997).

The More You Watch The Less You Know: News Wars, (Sub)merged Hopes, Media Adventures by Danny Schechter (film maker, ex-ABC 20/20 director). In the commercial handling of the news, Schechter says, the essential problems are the contradictions between a free press and corporate ownership of the mass media. Gatekeepers are chiefly about audience size; are more

interested in conflict than ideas; happily settle for heat rather than light. The most deadly assault here is against the one-time consulting expert, consistently picked for name value and audience familiarity rather than for what they know. For those who rail against television news wastelands this is a book to read, if for no other reason than therapy to vent one's spleen. Seven Stories Publishers. \$26.95. (1997).

The Costs of War: America's Pyrrhic Victories, John Denson (lawyer, Auburn Univ.), ed. Collection of "war is hell" philosophical musings. Some of it is rather self-evident: war infringes on personal freedom; war is costly to both winner and loser, hence the enemy, of prosperity. Only tangentially related to the Vietnam War. Transaction Press. (1997).

Tân Phú: Special Forces Team A-23 In Combat by Leigh Wade (Green Beret sergeant, ret.). Tân Phú in 1963 was a famous and deadly place. And the war was almost entirely Vietnamese v. Vietnamese. Wade was a radioman in a 12-man unit. At the end of his first year, all but two of the team had been wounded or captured. A first-rate account of how it was in the early years of the war, in the worst part of Vietnam (the part that was underwater much of the year) and Americans were a tiny minority. Ivy Books. \$6.95. (1997).

The Stars, The Earth, The River by Lê Minh Khuê. Fourteen short stories—the Vietnamese seem to do better with short fiction than lengthy novels—which demonstrates Khuê's skill and well-deserved reputation. Her chief forte is character delineation, second is atmospheric, third, plotting. Good to see that sensual writing (even sex) increasingly is getting by the Hà Nội censors. Curbstone Press. \$12.95. (1997).

Company Commander, Vietnam by James Estep (USA ret., four tours in Vietnam). As they say, people and the Vietnam War are divisible into two distinct groups. Those who were there, and those who were not. Estep definitely was there—in the First Cavalry Division. He has produced an excellent memoir, one which in places is deeply introspective—why a few men become war lovers; why some army companies can become "hard luck" units; why Vietnam and its war were so hard to understand. Estep was there long enough to realize that understanding was indeed our central problem. Presidio Press. \$14.95. (1996).

Semper Fi Vietnam: From Đà Nẵng to the DMZ, Marine Corps Campaigns, 1965-1975 by Edward F. Murphy (historian). A detailed history (356 pages) of the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam told in no-nonsense chronological order. From the halls of old Huế City to the jungles of Khe Sanh. And all those battles up the mountain chain. Proper note taken of the Phú Bài strategic experiment. Also useful as a name reference of Marines in Vietnam. Presidio. \$24.95. (1997).

Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas A. Dooley, 1927-1961 by James T. Fisher (St. Louis Univ.). Tom Dooley for years had the one-dimensional image of radiant American selflessness, saintly healer, first on U.S. Navy ships during Operation Exodus and later in Laos as a Catholic missionary. He strove to move the country's medical system from the 13th to the 19th century. Gradually, and especially after his death, it became clear that Dooley was no cardboard saint—that he lived a complex life both publicly and personally, largely the antithesis of the public image. Ironically, it would seem that the more his critics smashed the myth, the more they made Dooley a metaphor for the Vietnam War. University of Massachusetts Press. \$29.95. (1997).

A Time For the Past: A Novel of Vietnam by Lê Lưu (Hà Nội war correspondent, editor). Translated by Ngô Vĩnh Hải, Nguyễn Bá Chung, Kevin Bowen, and David Hunt. Novel follows the protagonist, Giang Minh Sai, from birth into a rural northern Confucian family, through two wars, and into peacetime Hà Nội. Two marriages fail. Socialism disillusioned. Life becomes ever more complex. Sai is beset by tradition, Party demands, familial obligations, and above all, social change. Fine picture of northern Vietnam yesterday and today. Novel in 1986 was a runaway bestseller in Vietnam when first published (120,000 copies). Larry Heinemann calls Lê the Hemingway of Vietnam. University of Massachusetts Press. \$24.95. (1997).

Asian Higher Education: An International Handbook and Reference Guide, Gerard A. Postiglione (Univ. of Hong Kong) and Grace C.L. Mak (Chinese Univ., Hong Kong), eds. Twenty country studies. Đặng Bá Lâm (National Institute of Higher Education and Vocational Education, Hà Nội) does Vietnam; Thomas Layton (Univ. of Pittsburgh) and Yuok Ngoy (Faculty of Law, Phnom Penh) Cambodia; John Weidman (Univ.

of Pittsburgh) Laos. Introduction by Postiglione. Selected bibliography. Greenwood Publishers. \$95.00. (1997).

The Vietnam War. High school text for course on the Vietnam War. Chief weakness, endemic to this genre, is that it largely ignores South Vietnam—and the North Vietnamese almost entirely. Valiant attempt, but not very successful, to steer students into critical thinking and always to remember that the war is still a struggle of competing perceptions. Chapter on Mỹ Lai attempts to be objective, but turns out fuzzy-minded if not flatly wrong. Mỹ Lai was a criminal act, pure and simple. It did not involve, and had nothing to do with, intellectual courage. Globe Fearon Educational Publisher (Simon and Schuster). (1997).

Grown Gray in War: The Len Maffioli Story by Len Maffioli (USMC ret.) and Bruce H. Norton (USMC ret., and military historian). Biography of one tough Marine who can truly say, "Been there, done that." Stormed the beach at Saipan in 1944 at age 18; landed at Inchon in the Korean War and was captured by the Chinese (later escaped); Vietnam for the 1968 Tết Offensive. Ivy Books. \$5.99. (1997).

A Prisoners' Duty; Great Escapes in U.S. Military History by Robert C. Doyle (Penn State Univ., Vietnam veteran). In earlier warfare there always was something of a stigma against a soldier taken prisoner in combat. This stain faded with the advent of downed aviators. Then and now, however, the mark of the brave was to attempt to escape and the mark of the lucky was those who succeeded. Chapter 10 of this work is titled "Free From the Jungle Camps", and traces escapes in Vietnam and Laos beginning with World War Two. Also treats civilian hostages and escapees in what Doyle terms "pseudo wars." Extensive bibliography. Naval Institute Press. \$34.95. (1997).

Vietnam Stories: A Judge's Memoir by Jack Crouchet (Metropolitan State College, Denver, U.S. Army Colonel, ret., ex-J.A.G.). The theme of this judicial mind's memory of the Vietnam experience is it was a strange culture composed of bravery, compassion, brutality, futility. Judge Crouchet notes 12% of Americans in Vietnam saw combat. The rest, ranking military and civilians chiefly, lived high in Sài Gòn. Thoughtful work. University Press of Colorado. \$27.50. (1997).

Truth in History by Oscar Handlin (Harvard Univ.). An academic with impeccable credentials in his field tees off on what he finds wrong. Historians are preoccupied with self-justification. Their criteria add up to political correctness, not search for truth. Discipline has surrendered to ideology. Seventeen chapters of blistering attack. See especially the one on "abuse of history." Transaction Publishers. \$24.95. (1997).

Exiles: Three Short Novels by Philip Caputo (prize winning author of *A Rumor of War*). One of the three novels is set in Indochina: "In the Forest of the Laughing Elephant." Caputo's theme here and elsewhere is that soldiers go abroad and become alienated. A dubious contention, but Caputo pulls it off because he writes so well. Alfred Knopf. \$25. (1997).

Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War by Barbara Ehrenreich. Highly intellectualized explanation of why we go to war. Because, she says, we forget about our reptilian brain. One example: *predation* (a mode of survival in which food is obtained by capturing and feeding on animals—Webster) mightily shapes our thinking. Henry Holt & Co. \$25. (1997).

Headline Diplomacy: How News Coverage Affects Foreign Policy by Philip Seib (Southern Methodist Univ.). Indeed the news media do profoundly influence government by defining what is a success and a failure. Many case histories including coverage of the 1968 Tết Offensive in the Vietnam War. Greenwood Press. \$59.95. (1996).

Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook by James Joes (St. Joseph's Univ.). General survey of 40 guerrilla wars across five continents during the past century. Leaders profiled. Extensive bibliography. Joes carefully notes the distinction between guerrilla warfare, which is strategic, and terrorism, which may or may not be. Greenwood Press. \$89.50. (1996).

Lettres du Tonkin du Laos (1900-1903) by Joseph Chevallier (French turn of the century *colon* official). While serving as an aide to Indochina Governor Paul Doumer, Chevallier wrote long letters to his father, with wit and an acerbic pen. Available from the Cellar Bookstore, Detroit. \$47.50. (1995).

Halfway Heaven: Diary of a Harvard Murder by Melanie Thernstrom (Harvard Univ.). On May 28,

1995, Trần Phương Hồ, 19, a Việt kiều, was stabbed 45 times by her roommate, Sinedu Tadesse (an Ethiopian). Both girls were cream of the crop college coeds. The crime shocked Harvard—"such things just don't happen here"—and reverberations continue. Thernstrom concludes the primary cause was Tadesse's cultural isolation, with possible borderline personality disorder. Thernstrom, for her part, has been roundly criticized by Harvard officials for writing the book. Doubleday. \$23.95. (1997).

The History Highway: A Guide to Internet Resources by Dennis Trinkle et al., (Univ. of Cincinnati). A list of some 1,000 high quality history sites now available out there in cyberland. Excellent source for historians doing research. M.E. Sharpe. \$56.95 hardcover, \$16.95 paper. (1997).

From Vietnam to El Salvador: The Saga of the FMLN Sappers and Other Guerrilla Special Forces in Latin America by David Spencer (George Washington Univ.). Spencer examines the guerrillas of El Salvador, 1981-92, and finds they borrowed heavily from Việt Cộng tactics and techniques. Praeger. \$59.95. (1996).

The Coming Conflict with China by Richard Bernstein (Time Magazine) and Ross Munro (Toronto Globe and Mail). Gloomy prognostication. China is next century's front rank threat, say these authors. It will be (can't help being) more hegemonistic than it has been in the past, which was considerable. Book is meant for Washington strategic planners, but in reading it one must sympathize with the Vietnamese who have been fending off Chinese hegemonism for a millenium. Alfred Knopf. \$23. (1997).

Dragon Strike: The Millenium War by Humphrey Hawksley (BBC, Beijing) and Simon Holberton (ex-Financial Times correspondent, Hong Kong). Billed as "future history," posits what will happen (compare Bernstein and Munro, above). The offshore islands trigger the war, but actual blame rests with the U.S. for general ineptitude and for its inability to recognize and serve its own national interests. Provocative. Sedgwick and Jackson, Hong Kong. HK\$135. (1997).

The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security by Andrew Nathan (Columbia Univ.) and Robert Ross (Boston Univ.). Here we have the case made by the negative team (see above for the affirma-

tive team case) in the great debate. Resolved: that China looms as the future threat to peace and stability in the Pacific. Negative case turns on one major assertion: China's limited military air and naval prowess. The Chinese Navy would lose a battle against Singapore. The plain fact is, say the authors, that the military gap between China and the U.S. grows exponentially wider, as in the imperatives of command and control technology and communications and intelligence capabilities. Detailed discussion over what the Spratly Island dust-up is actually all about. Read this, is you must read the two above. Norton & Co. \$27.50 (1997).

Land of the Ascending Dragon by Paul Martin (text) and Steve Raymer (photos). Absolutely stunning collection of Vietnam photos by a pair who saw duty in wartime Vietnam. From Gates and Bridges, 50 Washington Street, Norwalk, CT. 06854. (1996).

Major Crises in Contemporary American Foreign Policy: A Documentary History, Russell Buhite (Univ. of Tennessee), ed. Teaching tool to provide students with documentation about eight major U.S. crises. Includes, as one might imagine, the Vietnam War. Greenwood Publishing. \$65. (1997).

Events That Changed America in the Twentieth Century, Frank Thackeray and John Findling (Indiana Univ.), eds. For classroom use. A dozen such events which include, as one might imagine, the Vietnam War and the rise of television that accompanied it. Greenwood Publishing. \$39.95. (1996).

Getting to War: Predicting International Conflict with Mass Media Indicators by Ben Hunt. Methodology for prognosticating war, based on governmental campaigns mobilizing public opinion. Useful as a research tool even if it does, in places, tend to confuse correlation with causality. University of Michigan Press. \$49.95. (1997).

Behind Bamboo Hedges by Mai Phuong (pen name of Lan Cao, Việt kiều). Memoir of an intensely sensitive young Vietnamese woman. She suffered a good deal in war in Vietnam and in peace (and details it incident by incident). Her introspection may get on the reader's nerves, but Lan Cao is an authentic voice of more Vietnamese, in and out of Vietnam, than we may care to admit. Privately printed. From Người Dân, P.O. Bo 2674, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

New East-bloc Evidence on the Cold War in the Third World and the Collapse of Détente in the 1970s, Bulletin 8-9 from the Cold War International History Project at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington. Further documentation from diggers through Moscow archives. The 30-page section on the Sino-Soviet dispute; Mao Tse-Tung in Moscow; Krushchev and Mao; will be of interest to Indochina historians. Introduced by James Hershberg (project editor). See also from the same project: *Central and East European Documents on the Vietnam War: Sample Materials from Poland, Hungarian, and East German Sources*. Compiled by Hershberg.

American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives by Zbigniew Brzezinski (National Security Advisor, Carter administration). The specter that is haunting the world, says the author, is global anarchy. And the U.S. had better get cracking if it is to prevent this. Our chief problem is that, as a democracy, we do not do as well as hegemonists. Brzezinski here echoes Samuel Huntington (*Remaking the World Order* and *Clash of Civilization*) and Richard Haas (*The Reluctant Sheriff*). Basic Books. \$27. (1997).

A Minority Enters the Nation State by Jan Ovesen Uppsala. Case study of a Hmong community in Vientiane Province in the early 1990s. Available from White Lotus, Bangkok. \$22. (1995).

Historical Dictionary of War Journalism by Michael Roth (Sam Houston State Univ.). War correspondents date only to the mid-19th century. In the good old days before that, military commanders did their own reporting. This is a fine history of how it has all changed. Essentially, this is a reference book. Greenwood Press. \$85. (1997).

Revolution and War by Stephen Walt. In Cornell Series in Security Affairs. Says the author, we must abandon the idea that when political and military upheavals of a revolutionary nature occur in any given country, intervention is called for. Also, we must avoid appeasement. Neither works. In most cases, Walt maintains, the challenge will not be something simple, like liberal capitalism, but rather religious fundamentalism, ethno-linguistic diversity, irrational protest movements, etc. Cornell University Press. \$35 hardcover, \$19.95 paper. (1997).

Politics of Readjustment: Vietnam Veterans Since the War by Wilber Scott (sociologist, Univ. of Arizona). Oral history study that tends to mix the war and the 1960s cultural revolution in the U.S. What seems clear is that knowing about the in-country war does not contribute much to understanding what was going on back home. University of North Carolina Press. (1997).

The Pacific Islands: Paths to the Present by Evelyn Colbert (U.S. State Department, ret.). Deals with that vast watery area made up of Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. Exploration; contact and control; practice of politics; cooperating with the outside world. Good general reference work. Westview Press. \$27. (1997).

Strategic Assessment in War by Scott Sigmund Gartner. How military leaders devise their war strategies, adjusting them when evaluation and field reports come in. Includes the Vietnam War. Yale University Press. \$39. (1997).

Medicinal Plants in Vietnam, no author given. Identifies 200 plants which Vietnamese for centuries have ingested as medical treatment or to protect health. From White Lotus, Bangkok. 50 baht. (1990).

Shook Over Hell: Post Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War by Eric Dean Bold. Perhaps over-adventurous comparison of the battlefield and postwar experiences of Civil War and Vietnam veterans. Harvard University Press. \$35. (1997).

Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life by Jon Lee Anderson. Grove Press. \$35 (1997); *Companero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara* by Jorge G. Casteneda. Alfred A. Knopf. \$30. (1997); *Guevara, Also Known as Che* by Paco Ignacio Taibo. St. Martin's Press. \$35. (1997). There is a revival of interest in the revolutionary poster boy, Che Guevara, with the arrival of three new biographies. Che had charisma and a terrible cruel streak. He died a brutal death, largely brought on by his ignorance: he rode into the Bolivian back country, exhorting in Spanish peasants who spoke only Quechua. They betrayed him, which is what peasants usually do during guerrilla wars. Che would never have made it as a Việt Cộng.

Darkness at Mid-Day by Vũ Thủ Hiền (Hànhội dissident, son of famed anti-French revolutionary Vũ Đình Huỳnh. Memoir in the spirit of Koestler's *Dark-*

ness at Noon. Focus on the tribulations of *pere* (who died in 1900) and the Party faction that opposed the armed struggle (i.e., warfare) in South Vietnam and paid dearly for it. Hiền defected to Paris (via Moscow) in 1993. For interview and information on the book, contact Free Vietnam Alliance (Liên Minh Việt Nam Tự Do) on Email: vndemo@fva.org—Web: <http://www.fva.org>.

The Day the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers by David Rudenstine (Yeshiva Univ., Cardozo Law School). On the failed effort by U.S. Government lawyers to stop the New York Times from publishing the documents stolen by Daniel Ellsberg. (legal side question: why wasn't Ellsberg indicted for grand larceny?) Rudenstine's concern here is that the precedent established will be influential in future legal decisions. The Court refused to accept as valid the argument that America's allies would never trust it if they knew secrets they shared would not be protected by U.S. law. And, that the government did not offer a sufficiently persuasive argument that national security interests should protect the documents. University of California Press. \$34.95. (1997).

Vietamerica: The War Comes Home by Thomas Bass. The French called them *metis*. Americans, originally, then mixed blood, then Amerasians, are not sure what to label them. In any case they were largely unwanted and scorned, both here and there. This is an oral history—interviews with those who made it to the U.S. and what they encountered. Bass lacks certain skills in this genre, but his seriousness is commendable. Soho Press. \$25. (1997).

Viết Cho Mẹ Và Quốc Hội (For Mother and the National Assembly) by Nguyễn Văn Trấn (long time Party intellectual). Written as a "secret" letter to top Party brass, in which Trấn indicts the postwar policy of "breaking the machine" in the South, that is, weakening it socially and economically. Includes a good deal of detail on intra-party factionalism and power struggle in general. Patriarch Trấn (83) ostensibly was the mastermind behind the "seizure" of Sài Gòn during the August Revolution (1945). His current proposal for Vietnam is partition back into three separate political entities. Published first in Vietnam and now banned. Available (in Vietnamese) from Literature and Art Publish-

ing House, Box 2301, Westminster CA, 92683. \$20. (1996).

Crisis in U.S. Foreign Policy: An International History Reader by Michael Hunt (Yale Univ.). Case histories of American foreign policy (WWI; 1930s isolationism; start of the Cold War; the Sino-American face-off in Korea; the Iran revolution; and "Going to War in Vietnam, 1950-1965". Each case is fixed where it belongs—in how it originated—that is, the diplomatic policies that precede it. Full of wisdom and acumen, especially the final chapter, "Afterthoughts". Useful for the classroom, to stimulate students and help hone their skills of critical inquiry. Yale University Press. \$18.50. (1996).

Acceptable Loss: Point Man in Vietnam by Gregg Jorgenson (ex U.S. Army LRRP/Ranger, Vietnam). He was 20 and writes of his 54 missions on point—out there in front of everyone as walking trip wire, the loneliest job in warfare. Military Book Club. \$19.95. (1997).

The United States and East Asia: Conflict and Cooperation by Tommy T.B. Koh (Singapore ambassador-at-large). One of the best minds in one of the best foreign ministries in Asia puts his thoughts on paper about the future pulls and hauls in the ASEAN region. Koh is guardedly optimistic. Times Academic Press, Singapore. \$8. (1996).

Peasants on the Move: Rural-Urban Migration in the Hanoi Region by Li Tana (ISEAS, Singapore). Results of a 1993 study of Vietnam's urban drift. Who came, why exactly, life style changes in the city. Greenwood Press. \$13. (1996).

Asian Mind Game by Chu Chu-ning (businessman). Advice on how to do business in the Asian arena of conflicting patterns of thought, scratches on the mind, or whatever. For the foreigner, the trick, of course, is to learn how to beat the locals at their own game. White Lotus, Bangkok. \$38.50. (1993).

Dictionary of Modern Politics of South East Asia by Michael Liefer (Univ. of London). Concise and urbane, by an Asian old-hand. White Lotus, Bangkok. \$34. (1995).

The Khmers, Ian Mabbett, ed. History of the long span of the Khmer empire. Well done. White Lotus, Bangkok. \$39.50. (1995).

Women Refugees in International Perspectives 1980-1990, Rita Reddy (UNHCR Coordinator). An-

notated bibliography of the literature of the field. Books, articles, field reports; by country of origin, asylum, and/or resettlement. From Carleton University, Ottawa. \$30. (1997).

Phantasmic Indochina: French Colonial Ideology in Architecture, Film, and Literature by Panivong Norindr (Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee). Indochina, says the author, is a fictive, mythic construct, a legacy of French imperialism. In other words, French colonialism is alive, well, and still dominating the peninsula, but now only in the imagination. Duke University Press. \$44.95 hardcover, \$13.60 paper. (1997).

No Clear and Present Danger (25th anniversary edition) by Bruce Russett (Yale Univ.). We got into Vietnam, says Russett, because of our hubris, which was an outgrowth of our entry into World War II. Presumably no clear and present danger to the U.S. existed in either case. Book is an example of the strange capitulationism that afflicts certain savants on campus. Published initially by Harper 1972. Westview. \$12. (1997).

The Vietnam Lobby: American Friends of Vietnam, 1955-1975 by Joseph Morgan. Origin and efforts of the first and actually only important group of activists who sought to add importance of Vietnam to the U.S. scene in the 1950s. And a prestigious group it was: Cardinal Francis Spellman, John F. Kennedy, Joseph Buttinger, Robert Shaplen, General John "Iron Mike" O'Daniel. Useful addition to the literature of the field. Note: the entire files of the American Friends of Vietnam: papers, internal documents, etc., are now at the Vietnam Archive, Texas Tech University. University of North Carolina Press. \$39.95. (1997).

Guide to Peace and Security Studies in Washington, John James (Univ. of Maryland, compiler). Surveys 400 organizations, agencies, and archives in the Washington area concerning international security / peace resources, broadly defined to include such topics as the environment and international law. An update. From the U.S. Institute of Peace. Johns Hopkins Press. \$65 hardcover, \$24.95 paper. (1996).

Shooting at the Moon: The Story of America's Clandestine War in Laos by Roger Warner (war historian). New version of Warner's 1995 work *Back Fire*. Deals chiefly with the treatment of Vang Pao and his Hmong allies who were largely abandoned when the

war ended. Steerforth Press. \$18. (1997).

Selected Bibliography of Vietnamese Perspectives on the Vietnam War in English by David Marr (ANU). Listing of some 50 works, most of them by Vietnamese, largely by wartime North Vietnamese. Posted on the Internet May 15, 1997.

Conflict Neutralization in the Cambodia War: From Battlefield to Ballot Box by Sorpong Prou. On recent efforts, chiefly by the UN, to end anarchy in Cambodia by dividing up political power through Western-style elections. Oxford University Press. \$24.95. (1997).

OSS in China: Prelude to Cold War by Maochun Yu. Study based on newly declassified World War Two OSS documents. Tangentially touches on Vietnam. Yale University Press. \$35. (1997).

George Ball: Behind the Scenes in U.S. Foreign Policy by James Bill. Biography of Ball, chiefly while at State during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. We are still not too sure what to make of him. Yale University Press. \$30. (1997).

The Analects of Confucius, Simon Leys (Australian Sinologist, aka Pierre Ryckmans), translator, notes. Superb scholarly work, perhaps the best in a long string of translations that helps to establish clearly what Confucius said, and what he meant by it. While China is China and Confucius was Chinese, there is much here that enlightens us about Vietnam, past and present. Recommended. Norton. \$23, (1997).

Southeast Asia Infrastructure Directory: 1995-1996. Summaries of some 350 projects (power, water, supply/treatment, telecommunications, and transportation) by country including Indochina. From the California Southeast Asia Business Council, Oakland, CA. 94406. \$140 plus postage. (1996).

Shame and Humiliation: Presidential Decision Making on Vietnam by Blema Steinberg (McGill University). A Canadian psychoanalyst puts American presidents on the couch, employing what is termed a monothetic methodology (look it up). Eisenhower, Johnson, and Nixon had narcissistic personalities and this explains their various policy making decisions on war and peace. (JFK is spared the treatment, presumably because it would be impolite in Canada to examine his narcissism). What we have here is a fine example of academic pseudo-intellectualism. It also smells

of crypto anti-Americanism. Steinberg obviously was never at the elbow of those about whom she writes. Nor does it seem she consulted those who were. Hence, as the young would say, she does not have a clue. University of Pittsburgh Press. \$40. (1997). For a second opinion, see the review by Jay Stanley (Towson State Univ.) in *Armed Forces and Society*, v.23 no. 3, Spring 1997.

Father, Soldier, Son: Memoir of a Platoon Leader in Vietnam by Nathaniel Tripp. Reminiscence of a man who had trouble finding himself but finally was able to do so on the battlefields of Vietnam. He fought as a soldier of honor, but without illusion or patriotism. Tripp also had problems with his father, says his veins are still full of poison. Searing work as they say, surreal in places because Tripp writes well. Steerforth Press. \$26. (1997).

Modernity and Beyond: Themes in Southeast Asian Art, T.K. Sabapathy. Vietnamese artists include Truông Tấn (known for his phallic explicitness). From Singapore Art Museum, S\$82.40 (1997). See also *Southeast Asian Art Today*, Joyce van Fenema, ed. An art show catalog. Roeder Publications, Singapore. S\$75. (1997).

CAP Một: The Story of A Marine Special Forces Unit in Vietnam, 1968-1969 by Barry Goodson (Texas police official, ex-Marine). First-rate description of the Marine Corps strategic experiment at Phú Bài. The combined action platoon (CAP) lived, worked, and fought alongside the villagers. It was successful as far as such slim available evidence can tell, however, ran aground due to interservice rivalry. Recommended. Texas A&M Press, College Station, TX. 77843. \$32.50 (1997). See also *Strategy in Vietnam: The Marines and Revolutionary Warfare in I Corps, 1965-71* by Michael Hennessy (Royal Military College of Canada). A Canadian strategist compares counterrevolutionary war strategy advocated by the U.S. Army and that of the Marines. Hennessy comes down on the side of the Marines. Basic point: U.S. did not have enough men and other assets to fight the army's kind of war, but it did have the resources to do it the Marine way, which probably would have worked. Greenwood Press. \$59.95 (1997).

An Artist At Angkor: Paintings and Sketches by Somboon Phuandorkmai. Collection of 79 watercol-

ors and 31 black and white pen sketches begun in 1994. From Mark Standen Publishing. Phnom Penh. \$28. (1997).

John F. Kennedy: Commander-in-Chief, A Profile in Leadership by Pierre Salinger. The former Kennedy press secretary examines one aspect of the saga: JFK and the military, including the U.S. military in Vietnam. Viking. \$24.95. (1997).

Royal Succession in Ancient Cambodia by Adhir Chakravati. Monograph Vol. XXVI from the Asiatic Society, 1 Park Street Calcutta. (1996).

Aftermath: The Remnants of War by Donovan Webster (ex-editor of *Outside*). Descriptive of war horror. From the forests of Verdun and the Marne, to Stalingrad, to the barren battlefield of Khe Sanh, it is all the same. Bad as was the old face of war, it is less terrifying than the future face of war. Pantheon. \$28. (1997).

The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War by Samuel Hynes (Princeton Univ.). Snippets from the battlefield—memoirs, diaries, journals, letters, from 1914 onwards. Author was a Marine fighter pilot in World War II and Korea. This is a sort of meditation on warfare by a thoughtful person. Well done. Allen Lane / Penguin. \$24.95. (1997).

My Homeland Vietnam by Nguyễn Mạnh Đan (prominent HCMC photographer). Collection of 170 photographs, some dating back 50 years. This is Đan's third book; earlier came *Vietnam in Smoke and Fire* (1969) and *Vietnam's Economic Picture* (1974). From Sài Gòn tourist, HCMC. D500,000 (1997).

Patches of Fire: A Story of War and Redemption by Albert French (black novelist). He was a U.S. Marine in Vietnam during the war, and a journalist in Pittsburgh later. This account of his service is searingly honest. It appears the effect of the war on the French resembled that on World War One writers. It opened up a well-spring of creativity. Recommended. Anchor Books. \$22.95. (1997).

Disarmed and Dangerous: The Radical Lives and Times of Daniel and Philip Berrigan by Murray Polner and Jim O'Grady (journalists). A somewhat unkindly biographic study. Daniel was self-righteous; Philip was intolerant. They came from a self-devouring German-Irish family in frozen northern Minnesota. Ruled by Dado, their mad-poet father, both were in per-

petual anger. That aside, it remains astounding what you can get away with in this life, providing you can convince the world you are totally sincere about your behavior, entirely without hypocrisy in what you think. Basic Books. \$30 (1997). See also *Fighting the Lamb's War: Skirmishes With the American Empire; The Autobiography of Philip Berrigan* by Philip Berrigan, with Fred Wilcox. From Common Courage Press (Monroe, Maine). \$15. (1997).

Voices and Visions: A Journey Through Vietnam Today by Carolijn Visser (travel writer). Based on her four month trip through Vietnam, reporting on the remarkable cast of characters she encountered. Well done. From Global Destinations. San Francisco. \$19.95. (1997).

Hunters and Shooters: An Oral History of the U.S. Navy SEALs in Vietnam, Bill Fawcett, ed. Autobiographical sketches of the U.S. Navy's legendary warriors. Military Book Club. \$17.95. (1997).

Everything You Need to Know About Asian-American History by Lan Cao and Himilce Novas. On the impact Vietnamese and other Asian immigrants have had on American culture. Duke University Press. \$12.95. (1997).

We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History by John Lewis Gaddis (prominent American historian). Slightly revisionist view of the Cold War in international relations terms, beginning with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Thoughtful. Oxford University Press. \$30. (1997).

Power Competition in East Asia by Suisheng Zhao (Colby College). Portents of theoretical trends in East Asian international relations. Based on events seen moving from the "old Chinese world order" into the post-Cold War regional multipolarity. St. Martin's Press. \$45. (1997).

The Other Americans: How Immigrants Renew Our Country, Our Economy, Our Values by Joel Milman (journalist living in Mexico City). Further on the theme that if America is to be saved, it will be the recent arrivals who will save it. Viking Press. \$24.95. (1997).

American Pastoral by Philip Roth (prominent American novelist). Autobiographical fiction set in the 1960s when life was "surreal, stupefying, maddening, unmanageable." Protagonist breaks when his daughter, Merry, plants a bomb that kills in protest of the Việt-

nam War. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$26. (1997).

Lao Grammar for Language Learners by Sue Wright. Reprint issued by Thammasat University, Bangkok. \$6. (1997).

Tangled Memories: Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering by Marita Sturken (Univ. of Southern California). On America's cultural memory of the Vietnam War, including things like the AIDS Memorial Quilt. University of California Press. \$45 hardcover, \$16.95 paper. (1997).

American Communism by James Ryan. The Party in the U.S. under Earl Browder trying throughout to keep from being smothered by Moscow. University of Alabama Press. \$34.95. (1997).

Ethnic Chinese as Southeast Asians, Leo Suryadinata (ISEAS, Singapore), ed. Identity problems of those overseas Chinese (80% of total) living in Southeast Asia. By scholars from the region. From ISEAS. \$47 hardcover, \$37 paper, plus postage. (1997).

Sơn Thẳng: An American War Crime by Gary Solis (USMA, ex-U.S. Marine, lawyer). On the U.S. Marine Corps' worst war crime in Vietnam; the murder of 16 women and children by five Marines in reaction to snipers in their village. Focus is where it should be: exactly what are the rules of engagement against an invisible enemy whose own code rationalizes a strategy in which civilians—especially children—are to be utilized as weapons of war. Objective work. U.S. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD. 21402. \$29.95. (1997).



Rare Books Wanted: These books the Indochina Archive would like to acquire and would appreciate reader assistance: William Standard, *Aggression: Our Asian Disaster*, Random House, 1971; Andrew Roth, *Foreign Books on Japan and Indochina in World War II* (publisher and date unknown); J. Rowlands, *Libraries in Indochina: Brief Survey of Libraries in Laos, North Vietnam, South Vietnam*, Brighthon Smoothie Publishers, 1973; Julian Manyon, *Fall of Saigon*, L. Collins, 1975; Jacques Doyon, *Les Việt Cộng*, Denoel, Paris, 1968; Trần Huy Liệu, *Le Soviets du Nghê-Tĩnh de 1930-31 au Vietnam*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960; Francios Houtart, *Sociologie d'une Commune, Òni Partipon Sociale, Odeles, Cultural, Families, Religion de Hai Vân Commune*, Le Mercineir, Geneva, 1981; P. Boudet and R. Bourgeois, *Bibliographie de l'Indochinese Francaise*, four vols., 1912-33; Pierre Bernard Lafont (any books by this French anthropologist).



PERIODICALS

"Peace? Or Defeat? What Did the American War Protesters Want?" by James Webb (U.S. Marines in Vietnam, ex-Secretary of the Navy, author), *American Enterprise*, May-June 1994. A deadly, telling, verbal assault on the American Left during the Watergate years. The war protesters introduced a "political virus" into American politics. Its contagion spread to Congress, the mass media, academia, and the public. The purpose was to "destroy the foundations of American society so it might be rebuilt according to their own narcissistic notions." Webb carries one along because he writes so well and because he has such a keen eye for the telling detail. On American leadership: The 1974 Congressional elections brought 76 new Democrats to the House, some glaringly unqualified. Examples: Tom Downey, 26, who had never really held a job in his life and was living at home with his mother; Harold Ickes and young Bill Clinton working Project Pursestring to cut off all funds to help the South Vietnamese defend themselves. This was not, says Webb, the cry of a few years earlier—stop young Americans from dying in Vietnam—it was two years since the last American soldiers left Vietnam and four years after the last serious American casualties there. In citation after citation, Webb switches on the light of history—Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden in Hanoi; the editors of *Ramparts*; Hollywood filmmakers behind their bamboo curtain; academics lacking the intellectual integrity to confront the steamroller on campus—one wonders what they think, reading about themselves today.

"Innocents Abroad: Recent U.S.-Vietnam Talks on the Causes of the Vietnam War", column by William Buckley (editor) in August 13, 1997, *National Review*. As only he can, Bill Buckley takes a rapier to the Hanoi conference of Robert McNamara "Commander-in-Chief of the Flagellant Order of Vietnam and Stonewall Giáp's minions". Dialog of the deaf—Vietnamese participants hardly acknowledged there had been a war. Buckley quotes Randall Richard, one of the two American reporters permitted in the sessions: "McNamara moved about the room like a man who still needed to be in control, answering important phone calls, shuffling papers and agendas and consulting with ambassadors, generals, and spies." But, Buckley concludes, "Việt-

nam endures as a totalitarian nation with the spirit to show contempt for such as McNamara, so anxious to strut his abjection on the world stage.”

“Reviving Vietnam’s Reforms” by Michael Scown (partner, Russin & Vechi Law Firm, San Francisco, HCMC), *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 3, 1997. Foreign investors in Vietnam are increasingly discouraged about the short-run future. Ten years ago, when the SRV Foreign Investment Law went into effect, they expected a multitude of malfunctions assumed eventually things would straighten out. When they did not, investments dwindled and some investors departed. It will take a powerful catalyst, says Scown, to reignite investment. In the long run, however, investors are optimistic—some are “absolutely certain” about this.

“A TV Camera in Vietnam: Dave Hamer’s Early Coverage of the War” by Michael Sherer (University of Nebraska), *Communication Quarterly*, v. 52 no. 7, July 1997. Lengthy biographical account of the life and times of an early TV photo-journalist in the Vietnam War. Hamer arrived in May 1962 (the first televised report by Jim Robinson of NBC was aired Jan. 5, 1962). The war was a simpler, easier affair back then, and this report captures the nature of it in remarkably accurate fashion. Heavily documented. Recommended.

“Ideas for Effective Instruction at the High School Level” by Diana Marston Wood (Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.) Suggestions on what to teach students about Confucianism if students are going to understand any of the Sinic societies, including Vietnam. In the same issue, “Teaching Hindu Traditions,” by Paula Richamn (Oberlin College) which can be an aid in teaching about Cambodia. In both cases the teacher must be careful, since both comparisons—Vietnam-China and Cambodia—India are slippery slopes. In *Education About Asia*, v. 2 no. 1, Spring 1997. Issue devoted to teaching about all the religions of Asia (four others in addition to the two above). Available from Association for Asian Studies, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

There is a lingering bouquet about Tết Mậu Thân Vietnamese celebrating the Lunar New year—that lasts in the memories of foreigners long after most other recollections have faded. The time of Tet is captured by Huu Ngoc (drawn from “Sketches for a Portrait of Vietnamese Culture”) in the Jan-Feb issue of *Vietnam Des-*

tinations. In the same issue is a report on the legendary Ann Caddell Crawford who came to Vietnam in the mid-1960s and stayed to write what became an enduring classic, *Customs and Cultures in Vietnam*. Ann is alive and well and living in Virginia.

“Bon Appetit, Vietnam” by Marjorie Coeyman, *Restaurant Business*, July 1, 1997. Kentucky Fried Chicken food chain spent three years checking out the Vietnam market, has now decided to move and open its first franchise in HCMC. Hopes to be in five other cities in three years. A spokesman for Domino’s Pizza is bearish, “I don’t see us going in for two to three years.” Others in the food business in Vietnam offer as advice to restaurateurs: be patient and cautious.

“Petro Vietnam”, *Oil and Gas Journal* August 4, 1997. Vietnam plans to go ahead with construction of the Dung Quat Oil Refinery, a 13,000 b/d, \$1.75 billion facility, as a go-it-alone project. The decision came in July when France’s Total pulled out of negotiations that had been underway during the past three years.

“Troublesome Christians: Vietnam”, *The Economist*, Nov. 15, 1997. Some 2,000 Roman Catholics protest against political corruption and land confiscation in Dong Province. Most are farmers, and they say they are long-suffering but this does not mean their patience is limitless. In Hanoi, Party Sec-Gen Đỗ Mười seeks to soothe the southerners, saying: “Abuse of power undermines the rights of the people; local officials should listen to people’s complaints more carefully.”

“Re-mob Happy: VN PM Võ Văn Kiệt Plans to Build a North-South Road by Using the Labor of Ordinary Citizens”, *The Economist*, April 26, 1997. Corvee labor is alive and well in Vietnam, says this report. Hanoi plans a road to run the length of the country, done in the traditional way—an idea first developed by the Romans in conquered territories. Every Vietnamese between the ages of 18 and 45 must put in ten days of labor or buy themselves out with cash payment. A triumph for socialism, Kiệt says. Project will be finished, it is hoped, by the year 2020. Foreigners invited to participate.

“Self-Hypnosis Training and Captivity Survival” by D.P. Wood and J.L. Sexton, *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, v. 3, 1997. A study of the 566 U.S. POWs released by Hanoi in 1973—who had been held for periods of two months to nine years—and had suf-

ferred starvation, disease, inadequate shelter, lack of medical care, interrogations, and torture. Some of the worst stress they reported was the trauma of solitary confinement. Study lists the inventive ways POWs "killed time." Coping with isolation—devices such as self-hypnosis and various forms of "do-it-yourself brain washing." Such prophylactic measures, they say, should be taught to all military personnel who may someday find themselves POWs.

"Regionalism or Globalism: The Carter Administration and Vietnam" by Stephen Hurst *Journal of Contemporary History*, v. 23 no. 1, Jan. 1997. The Carter Administration in the summer of 1978 was moving spiritedly toward diplomatic recognition of Vietnam, then suddenly backed away. Author says the generally accepted explanation for that is wrong. It was not that national Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski prevailed in convincing Carter he must choose between Vietnam and China and serve global imperatives. Rather, the reversal came out of deference to regional opinion and politics in Southeast Asia.

"Tobacco Use in Vietnam" by C.N. Jenkins, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, June 4, 1997. Male Vietnamese have the world's highest prevalence rate of tobacco use. Unless "forceful measures" are taken to eradicate this tobacco epidemic, Vietnam will face enormous economic and health burdens.

"Vietnam and War Reporter" by Peter Arnett (war correspondent), *Media Studies Journal*, v. 11, Spring 1997. Mainstream American journalists in Vietnam during the war reported positive stories instead of telling the truth, says Arnett, who was there.

"Emergency Medicine in Vietnam" by J.R. Richards, *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, v. 29 no. 4, 1997. Economic renovation in Vietnam has had a significant and positive effect on the country's health care system's ability to handle medical emergencies, but has far to go. Some detail on how it works.

"New Zealand's Vietnam Vets Receive Tribute," a photo essay by Michael Keating. Coverage of ceremonies last May 13 at the Wall in Washington. *VVA Veteran* for June/July 1997.

"Healing the Wounds of the Past" by John Shaw (staff) in *Embassy Flash* for September 1997. Interview with SRV Ambassador to the U.S., Lê Văn Bàng,

who says he sees as his primary mission at the moment to help bind up the wounds of war and by this improve U.S. Vietnam relations. (*Embassy Flash*, Wheaton, Maryland, is a new weekly that covers Washington's embassy row.)

"Scaling the Dragon's Spires of Vietnam's Ha Long Bay," story by Lynn Hill and photographs by Beth Ward, *National Geographic*, December 1997. Brief account of the climb by these two freelance adventurers up the 160 foot limestone spire known locally as "Respected Lady" to view and describe the incredible beauty that is Ha Long Bay. Superb photos.

"Even if it Were But 'Betwixt Memory and Reputation', In Retrospect Serves Neither" by James Nathan (Auburn University). An essay review of Robert McNamara's 1995 memoir-*mea culpa*. Singles out for special examination the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Incident and finds that McNamara's behavior then and since was disingenuous if not downright fraudulent. In *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, v. 7 no. 2, Autumn 1996.

"From Vietnam to the Newsroom" by Al Hemingway (military Historian). Four successful journalists recall their service in the Vietnam War, how it served them later in their careers, and gave them an opportunity to give something of themselves back to society. *VFW Magazine*, November 1997.

"Nike Does It To Vietnam" by Jeff Ballinger (director of advocacy group Press For Change), *Multi-national Monitor*, v. 18 no. 3, March 1997. Report on alleged labor abuses of Nike's contractors. Some 25,000 Vietnamese are on the payroll, turning out a million pairs of shoes a month. Labor relations are not good, in part because of a clash of cultures.

"Nothing is Really Private in Vietnam," *Economist*, May 17, 1997. The state sector dominates manufacturing, mining, and finance and is partner in more than 90% of the joint ventures set up by foreigners. State share in the economy has increased in this decade from 33% to 40%, with projections eventually to 60%. However, many state enterprises lose money. The state simply cannot afford the investment—\$42 billion—to meet its growth rate target of 9% each year through to 2020.

"Warfare in An Information Age". A five-part article on how communication of ideas—broadly defined—has been changed forever by technology. The

parts are: "Strategic Information Warfare: A New Face of War" by Roger C. Molander, Andrew S. Riddle, and Peter A. Wilson; "Information Warfare and Deterrence" by Richard J. Harknett; "Advanced Battlespace and Cybermaneuver Concepts: Implications for Force XXI"; "Command and Control at the Crossroads" by Thomas J. Czerwinski; and "The Digital General: Reflections on Leadership in the Post-Information Age" by Paul T. Harig. *Parameters* v. 26 no. 3, Autumn 1996.

"MIA: African-American Autobiography of the Vietnam War" by Jeff Loeb, *African American Review*, v. 31 no. 1, Spring 1997. Of 600 novels on the Vietnam War, six are by black authors. Of the 400 memoirs produced, seven are by blacks. Author recommends: James Daly's *A Hero's Welcome: The Conscience of Sergeant James Daly versus the United States Army*, and Terry Whitmore's *Memphis-Nam-Sweden: The Autobiography of a Black American Exile*.

"Into the Teeth of the Tiger" by Al Hemingway (military writer), VFW for December 1997. A look back at Operation Linebacker II, the so-called "Christmas Bombings" of North Vietnam, December 1972. It ignored airmen's sacrifices and sparked controversy in the U.S., says the author. It also ended Hanoi's stall at the Paris Peace Talks.

"Reality Bites: North Vietnam and Foreign Banks" by Andy Soloman, *FEER*, September 25, 1997. Foreign bankers in Vietnam grow increasingly cautious. Some banking is profitable and big deals have been struck, including two major loans in August 1997. However, the 24 foreign banks compete fiercely for a decreasing number of potential foreign clients and for business with those local companies considered safe. Bankers operate under restricted and unstable banking laws, limited-skills workforce, and increasing enactment of the death penalty for corruption.

"Man-Made Monsoons: The Weather War" by Craig Stevaux (U.S. Department of the Army Civilian Researcher) in *Vietnam*, December 1997. The idea for Project Popeye was to extend the Lao rainy season, trigger flooding, and deny the North Vietnamese use of infiltration routes into the South. It did work, but how much it disrupted PAVN is, the author concludes, problematic. In the same issue: "Zulu Platoon's Final Fight" by Russell Stolfi (Naval Postgraduate School Emeri-

tus) on a U.S. Navy SEAL platoon's fight for survival; "Marines Under Fire at Côn Thiện" by Eric Hammel (military author) on the midsummer 1967 opening gun, up near the DMZ, of Gen. Giáp's 1967-68 Winter-Spring Campaign, high point of which was the 1968 Tết Offensive; and "Testing the Rules of Engagement" by Joe Patrick (USAF veteran) on the General Lavelle Story who, with Chief of Staff John Ryan, challenged the absurd White House-imposed on-again-off-again bombing restrictions and paid dearly for it in terms of career. With commentary, "A Matter of Integrity" by Vietnam editor Harry Summers.

"All Politics Are Local" by Scott Sigmund Garter et al., *Journal of Conflict Resolution* v. 41 no. 5, October 1997. A rather intellectualized testing of the thesis that public attitudes towards continuance of a war (in this case, Vietnam) turn on the casualty rate, but only in a complex and sometimes contradictory manner.

"New Crop: Military May Be Left Out of Top Leadership" by Faith Keenan, *FEER*, Oct. 2, 1997. Speculates that reform in Vietnam means the military will lose its top leadership position, to be replaced by reform-minded politicians, such as Nguyễn Văn An replacing 80-year old General Secretary Đỗ Mười. Broader conclusion, that military policy-making influence in Vietnam is in decline, is doubtful to say the least.

"Half-Empty: Vietnam's Economic Situation" by Faith Keenan in *FEER*, October 16, 1997. Economy growth is 8%, inflation is 4%, trade deficits are decreasing. However, the GDP is unlikely to exceed 8% growth for 1997, compared to 9.3% for 1996. The economy is showing signs of slowing because of import controls on steel, glass and cement. This has slowed industrial growth to 12.8% against 14.4% in 1996. Foreign investors account for 20.4% of new industrial projects. Vietnam must plan on this foreign direct investment to fund future growth.

"Vietnam: Big Plans But Major Obstacles" by Trần Doan An *Pulp and Paper International*, v.19 no.7, July 1997. Profile of Vietnam's paper industry, statistics on production, imports-exports. Three major paper mills now operating, plan to double their output by 2020.

"What Grace is Found in So Much Loss?" by W.D. Ehrhart (poet), *Virginia Quarterly Review*, v.73 no.1, Winter 1997. Prominent poet judges Vietnam War

veterans-as-poets: Doug Anderson, Kevin Bowen, David Connolly, Dale Ritterbusch write about the bitterness and the disillusionment of the war. Some tender poems in their collections seem alien in context of harsher emotions. The poets seem to have purged themselves of the war memories by writing. However, the assumption that war poetry can cleanse the soul of the nation is far-fetched.

“Welcome to Cambodia: Where Nothing is Ever As it Seems” by John McAuliff (USIRP, New York), *Indochina Interchange*, September 1997. A lengthy report on where Cambodia is now and how it got there. Based on a trip in mid-August. As good a wrap-up as is currently available. USIRP Also offers additional materials on Cambodia: transcripts of interviews, white papers, similar reports. Available from FAS, 307 Mass. Ave, Washington DC, 20002. In the same issue is a report on the eighth annual conference (attended by 260) on the Forum on Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos (Bryn Mawr College, June 12-14), titled “From Isolation to Globalization: The Potentials and Problems of Entering the World Economy.”

“Vietnam’s Strong Economic Performance: Difficult Choice and Challenge”, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, v.63 no.21, August 15, 1997. Text of address by Lê Anh Tú Packard (University of Amsterdam, Indochina Studies Foundation). Delivered June 16 to the Asia Society, New York. Excellent technical description of the factors that drive the remarkable recent GPD growth in Vietnam. Runs to about 4,000 words, contains a wealth of statistical data. Conclusion as to Vietnam’s economic future is more or less the same as others in the field at the moment: it will turn on enlightened Hanoi leadership making the right moves. Recommended.

“Vietnam Introduces Value-added Tax Effective in 1999” by Fred Burke and Frank Meier *East Asia Executive Reports*, v.19 no.1, April 1997.

“AFTA and Its Environmental Implications for Vietnam” by Trần Thị Thanh Phong (Embassy of Sweden, Hanoi), *Journal of Environment and Development*, v.6 no.3, September 1997. On the meaning for Vietnam of the contradictions between AFTA liberalization demands and Hanoi environmental policy-making process. Made doubly difficult because these are integral parts of the transformation from central planning to

market economy. Conclusion is that it will work providing Vietnam integrates itself well and completely into ASEAN. Well done article.

“Lessons From Vietnam” by Mark Mitchell (Asian business specialists headquartered in Bangkok), *World Trade*, v.10 no.11, Nov. 1997. Many foreign firms doing business in Vietnam fail simply because they do not do their homework. Second greatest cause of failure is Vietnam’s dense bureaucracy. Several case histories offered, notably bath taken by Chrysler Corporation. Written by one who learned the hard way earlier, when he did business in Hồ Chí Minh City.

“An Ambassador Returns At Last” by Brian Palmer (staff), *U.S. News and World Report*, May 12, 1997. News report on Douglas “Pete” Peterson’s formal takeover (May 9) of the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi. Ceremonies were quick and low key.

“Vietnam Opens Trading Range for Đồng to Plus/Minus 5%” *FX Manager*, March 7, 1997. A semi-technical report on the foreign exchange scene in Vietnam in March when Vietnam opened its “trading band” on the đồng in response to persistent selling pressure. New official rate set at Đ11,096 to US\$1. Black market rate at once went to Đ11,550 (although in February it had been as low as Đ11,850).

“McNamara’s Conscience Meets Hanoi” by Stein Tonnesson (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen), *Indochina Interchange*, September 1997. Best account yet on this most singular academic exchange by McNamara leading a dozen Americans and General Võ Nguyên Giáp leading a dozen Vietnamese. Tonnesson’s perception of the gathering is what might be called that of the typical European intellectual. He sees coherence and organized abstraction where the Americans tend to see mostly hodge podge. Still by all accounts he has it straight. There was no frank exchange because the Vietnamese professed to see no need. There was no Giáp-McNamara dialogue, only Giáp monologue. The reason the meeting never got off the pedestal, the author suggests, is that there was no agreed on definition of its purpose. The result was the two sides steadily talked past each other. Interesting. Available from US-Indochina Reconciliation Project, 25 West 45th Street, Suite 1201, New York, NY 10036. Or from Tonnesson, NIAS Njalsgadd 84, Copenhagen, Denmark,

DK 2300. E-mail: stein anias.ku.dk.

“Achieving Direct Democracy at the Village Level,” by Bùi Ngọc Trinh (Hanoi intellectual) in *Tạp Chí Công Sản*, October 1997. This could become a highly important document, influential in redefining the Party role at the rice-roots level. Villagers, says Trinh, differ from city people because of their culture established long ago—customs, beliefs, spoken language, attitudes toward nature, family and villager relations—“unlike urban areas where the population comes from everywhere, moves easily.” Special attachment to the village means the people there require different socio-political arrangements than are found in the city. Primarily they must distinguish between local politics and informal politics (while of course there need be no change politically at the Center). Article appears to address, in part at least, recent rural unrest, suggesting the way to pacify the countryside is by extending decision-making authority to villagers. At the village level, Trinh says, there must be more “direct democracy” (as opposed to “representative democracy”, i.e., Party, National Assembly, provincial committees), presumably meaning the locals do more to look out for their own local interests. But Trinh writes timidly, chiefly raising questions and making suggestions; does not give answers or make policy pronouncements. But he does seem to argue quite clearly that villagers – not urbanites however—should have greater latitude in making decisions on local matters, and this must be done if social stability is to be maintained in the countryside.

“Culture, Virtue and Political Transformation in Contemporary Northern Vietnam” by Shaun Kingsley Malarney (International Christian Univ., Tokyo) *Journal of Asian Studies*, v. 56 no. 4, Nov. 1997. A tantalizing scholarly effort—virtually first of its kind—to examine popular conception of rural Vietnam’s local politics. Based on interviews, framework is set up to try to determine opinions about two local politicians, compare in room with Vietnam’s model politician, Hồ Chí Minh. What is turned up is neither Marxist, Leninist, Stalinist, Western, Nor Confucian but something of an amalgam of all, hence full of inconsistency. The data Malarney has assembled raises more questions than answers. Presumably this means (and one would hope) it is the first tranche of its full-scale pioneer study of

local and informal politics in rural Vietnam, North, South, and Center.

“Its Been a Long Road Back: Doing Business in Vietnam” by Barbara Farrell, James Downing and Patrial Healy (in certified public accounting field), *CPA Journal* v. 67 no. 4, April 1997. Yes, it has been a long road back and we are still not there, says this CPA view of Vietnamese foreign trade and investment sectors. A fine, lengthy article that traces early history of aid and trade; advent of American business; investment opportunities today; continuing problems; and final section on how to apply for a business permit. Recommended.

“Lost and Found: Washington Whispers” by Douglas Stranglin, *U.S. News and World Report*, April 14, 1997. A military database on the Vietnam War dealing with bombing operations has been decoded (from computer tapes) by Roy Stanley U.S. Air Force Reserve officer doing a research project. Reportedly it includes every military flight and bombing run in Southeast Asia from January 1970 to June 1975. (E-mail address: whispers.usnews.com).

“New Faces, Old Problems: Vietnam” in *The Economist*, Oct. 11, 1997. A somber report. Economic reform in Vietnam has come to a halt. State owned enterprises drain government coffers already starved for tax revenues. Banks are in a mess. Devaluation of the đồng looms. Projected Nine percent GNP growth rate seems hopelessly unrealistic. Foreign investors are increasingly infuriated by the red tape, corruption, bureaucratic inertia, The World Bank and IMF are dismayed. The best the leadership can come up with is the hope for better times ahead. One of the most dismal reports of the year by a respected source.

“To the Colonizer Goes the Spoils” by V.H. Houston, *Amerasia Journal*, v. 23 no. 1, 1997. How Hollywood and television stereotype the Amerasian progeny.

“Sugar in Vietnam: Present and Future” in *International Sugar Journal*, v. 99 no. 1182, June 1997. Prospects are good.

“Group Therapy, Spiritual Issues and Vietnam Veterans” by L.L. LaPierre, *Journal of Religion and Health*, v. 36 no. 2.

“Golf Courses Irk Vietnamese” by Barry Kramer, *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 2, 1997. Protest over

land seizures.

"Peter Braestrup Obituary" by Martin Weil, *Washington Post*, August 11, 1997. Tribute to a highly respected war correspondent.

"Pilgrimage to Hà Nội" by Chester Cooper (ex high-level U.S official), *Washington Post*, June 29, 1997. Cooper was with McNamara at the June conference. He says: "We tried to talk frankly but they still can't" (surprise?). In the *Post* for June 24 Mai Hoàng article, "Ex-Foes Meet to Come to Grips, Not Blows". Americans, Vietnamese cite misjudgments that spurred the war on, she says.

"Foreign Investment in Vietnam" from *Executive Reports* (Hong Kong) v. 19 no. 1, Jan. 15, 1997, comes the text of the new Foreign Investment Law adopted by the SRV National Assembly, effective November 23, 1996, the date of proclamation. Translation by the Hồ Chí Minh City and Hong Kong offices of Baker & McKenzie. Purpose is: "To expand economic cooperation with foreign countries, serve the task of industrialization and modernization [and] develop the national economy on the basis of efficient exploitation and use of national resources." Based on the 1992 Constitution, law sets forth provisions on direct foreign investment in the SRV.

"Trade and Environmental Diplomacy: Strategic Options for ASEAN" by Manuel Montes and Francisco Magno (Univ. of Hawaii), *Pacific Affairs*, Fall 1997. Curbs on sovereignty and environmental concerns are global trends that increasingly complicate ASEAN intra- and inter-relationships.

"Vietnam Changes to Banking Law" in *International Financial Law Review*, v. 16 no. 5, May 1997. Two recent changes in Vietnam's banking laws explained and criticized. Among other things, checks will be valid for only 15 days rather than six months, which is the ASEAN norm.

"A Rig Too Near" in *The Economist*, v. 342 no. 8010, March 29, 1997. Good background discussion of the long-standing oil dispute between China and Vietnam. Pegged to Hà Nội opposition to the presence of the Chinese oil-drilling rig, Kan Tan III.

"Vietnam / Singapore Industrial Park" in *East Asian Executive Reports*, v. 19 no. 2, Feb. 15, 1997. On the newly opened industrial park in Bình Dương Prov-

ince (HCMC exurbs). A \$250 million project with its own power supply.

"Self-hypnosis Training and Captivity Survival" by D.P. Wood and J.L. Sexton, in *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, v. 39 no. 3, 1997. Study of the way American POWs in Hà Nội Hilton coped with the trauma of solitary confinement and torture using various time-killing devices that amounted to self-hypnosis. Calls for systematic research for use in future training programs.

"An Extraordinary Capacity to Forgive" by Patricia Chisholm, in *McCleans*, v. 11 no. 6, February 10, 1997. The famous "napalm girl" Phan Thị Kim Thục is interviewed about her defection to Canada; says she forgives those responsible for her injuries. This year she became a UN poster girl.

"Dentistry in Vietnam" by A.E. Qualtrough, *British Dental Journal* (London) v. 182, March 1997. Recent study by British dentist.

"The Hồ Chí Minh Tower in HCM City" by T.R. Hamzah-Yang, *Architectural Design*, no. 125, Jan-Feb 1997. New construction.

"Psychological Warfare in Vietnam" by J.O. Whittaker, *Political Psychology*, v. 18 no. 1, March 1997. A look back on the battle for people's minds.

"Emergency Medicine in Vietnam" by J.R. Richards, *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, v. 29 no. 4, April 1997. Shortage of ambulances among the major problems.

"Rural Health Services in Vietnam" by G. Tipping and V.D. Truong, *Institute of Development Studies Bulletin*, v. 28 no. 1, January 1997. Comparing health services to other transitional economies of Asia. See also in same issue S. Witter, "Rural Health Services in China: Their Relevance for Vietnam".

"Regionalism or Globalism: The Carter Administration and Vietnam" by S. Hurst, *Journal of Contemporary History*, v. 32 no. 1, January 1997. Historical survey. In same issue "Lyndon Johnson and the China Enigma-Vietnam War" by R. Garson.

"Exploring Vietnam and its Nuclear Medicine" by L.M. Freeman, *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, v. 38 no. 1, January 1997.

"Hội An Interlude" by Kim Fay (freelance writer, Los Angeles) in the Sept-Oct 1997 issue of *Vietnam*

Destinations. Up the coast from Đà Nẵng lies this famed 17th century port town that once outrivalled all others, then went into decline, eclipsed by the superior harbor at Đà Nẵng. Its architectural artifacts remain—Dutch, Chinese, French—which makes it a fine tourist spot. A handy guide to what you can find there.

“Portraits of Indochina” by Jean Despujols (French artist), *Việt Nam Destinations*, July-August 1997. A collection of absolutely stunning Việt Nam images, superbly reproduced here. From the Indochina collection at the Meadows Museum of Art, Centenary College (Louisiana). In the same issue is “The Story of Nom” by Sarah Tilton; illustrated by Marion Cook Tilton. A charming folk tale about a dragon who ate Vietnamese children because he could not read ideographic Vietnamese, then learned vernacular Vietnamese from, a scholar sent by the emperor whereupon he desisted dining on children. In its way, *Việt Nam Destinations* is the premier publication about Việt Nam available today.

“The Ballad of Freddy Gonzalez” by John Flores, *Hispanic*, v. 9 no. 11, Nov. 1996. The U.S. Navy names a battleship for an Hispanic U.S. Marine killed in Việt Nam. A biographical sketch. In the same issue: “In-Country, A Soldier Returns to Việt Nam” by George Ortiz.

“What Every Investor Needs to Know About Doing Business in Việt Nam” by Mathilde Genovese (Hong Kong based business advisor), *East Asian Executive Reports*, v. 18 no. 8, August 16, 1996. A set of extremely practical and highly useful guidelines for use by newcomer foreign entrepreneurs entering Việt Nam. From one who has long been in the trenches. Sample: don’t assume you are always (or even some of the time) on the same wavelength. Recommended.

“The Origins of Dissent: Senate Liberals and Việt Nam, 1959-1964” by R.D. Johnson, *Pacific Historical Review*, v. 65 no. 2, May 1996. History of the decade of changed attitudes on the hill re. Việt Nam.

“African Americans in the Armed Forces: A Bibliography” by Dennis Showalter (Society for Military History), *Multicultural Review*, v. 5 no. 3, Sept. 1996. Research resource on African-Americans from the American Revolution onwards, including Việt Nam.

“Laos: Power Development” from Canadian Foreign Affairs Department, on-line. Two-page brief on Laos’ energy scene. Laotian officials want to do in

years what would normally take decades. This worries others—chiefly outsiders—that it will be done wrong and will result in a great deal of waste and environmental degradation. (Dec. 1996).

“Robert Olen Butler’s Việt Nam Veterans: Strangers in an Alien Home” by Maureen Ryan, *Midwest Quarterly*, v. 38 no. 3, Spring 1997. One of the finest of the Việt Nam War fiction writers is examined for his literary treatment of efforts by Việt Nam War veterans to go home again. Novels include: *The Alleys of Eden*, *Sun Dogs*, and *On Distant Ground*.

“A Leap of Faith”, *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 7, 1997. On Ford Motor Company opening an automobile assembly plant in Việt Nam.

“A Reconnaissance Geochemical Study of Thermal Waters of South and Central Việt Nam” by G. Gianelli and H.S. Quy, *Geothermics*, v. 36 no. 4, August 1997.

“Economic Transition in China and Việt Nam: Crossing the Poverty Line” by G. Summerfield, *Review of Social Economy*, v. 55 no. 2, Summer 1997. Việt Nam’s women are behind the curve in crossing the line.

“Việt Nam Tops World Smoking League For Men” by J. Wise, *British Medical Journal*, v. 314 no. 7095, June 1997.

“The Go-Go Dancers Haven’t Gone” by Keith Richburg, *The Washington Post*, September 15, 1997. On Hà Nội city officials’ failed effort to eradicate social evils, including ladies of the night.

“Việt Nam Plans Cooperatives With New Style” by Anya Schiffrin, *Wall Street Journal*, August 22, 1997. New co-ops are to be true co-ops and not communes, i.e., will be modeled on American cooperatives.

“House Pastors Jailed in New Crackdown: Việt Nam” by Alex Buchan, *Christianity Today*, January 6, 1997. Report on arrest (August 1996) of three evangelists whom the regime accused of being “fake Christians.” Their Assembly of God church was not the Assembly of God church authorized by Hà Nội. Article details general religious crackdown.

“Automobile Industry Sees Potential in Việt Nam” by Raymond Champagne, *Automotive Engineering*, v. 105 no. 3, March 1997. Present transport demand in Việt Nam: 3,000 passenger cars and 12,000 commercial vehicles. Japan is the dominant supplier (80%). Local makers are Mekong Corp. and Fiat

Iveco. Currently 14 licensed auto-manufacturing projects are underway, Some 15,000 used vehicles are imported annually, chiefly from Singapore, South Korea, and Japan.

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Death Toll. Foreign wire services in Vietnam in December 1997, reported what appears to be a turn-around by official Hanoi in its reluctance to offer any statistics on its war dead, long sought by historians.

During the war, and afterwards, the subject officially was taboo – almost as if officials were willing to discuss the character of the dying but not the numbers of the dead. General Giáp was quoted by a well-known Italian journalist as fixing Hanoi's war dead at one million; on publication she was denounced and Giáp denied the statement. Even in propaganda terms, however, the fact remained that the degree of sacrifice could be established only through use of hard statistics. This sort of silence did not go down well with PAVN veterans, since it left the impression that there was minimal suffering on their part. First break came in the mid-1990s when for the first time realistic war novels and short stories were authorized (or at least tolerated by the leadership) probably because of pressure from the generals in the Politburo. No numbers of battle deaths appeared in this literature, but it did open the door to the start of a realistic accounting on the North Vietnamese side.

The second breakthrough now is the official sanctioning of a census-type survey of wartime human loss in five Central Vietnam provinces, — Quảng Bình, Quảng Trị, Quảng Ngãi, Quảng Nam and Bến Tre – the region that probably suffered the heaviest casualties in the entire country. However, these are “southern” casualties, which are being counted. What remains to be seen is whether this research effort will be extended throughout the official's promise. Until then we will have to go with our unofficial, but widely accepted, total Vietnam War dead of three million (see “Vietnam Finally Counts War Deaths”, AP/New York, Dec. 14, 1997).

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

This section lists new publications, or publications that are new to us.

Hail. The long-respected *Indochina Digest* has changed its name to *Mekong Digest* but remains editorially the same. This weekly publication covers economic, political, social, and cultural events in Southeast Asia. Published by the US-Vietnam Forum and International Center, Washington DC. Subscription: \$395 corporations, \$195 non-profits; \$95 individuals. Available on the web. Tel: (202) 547-3800. Fax: (202) 546-4784.

And Farewell. Sandra Wittman in August folded her *Vietnews*, published out of Oakton Community College in Skokie, Illinois. In many ways this was a remarkable yeoman (or yeowoman) endeavor, obviously the product of a great deal of labor and commitment. Sandra goes on sabbatical to train herself in web technology. She says *Vietnews* will quite possibly reappear on a future web site. Can be reached at (847) 635-1474.

The Khe Sanh Veteran. Rev. Ray Stubbe, ed. New name for the *Red Clay* (as of Spring 1997). Publication of the tri-annual Khe Sanh Veterans' Association. John Kaheny, president. Address: *Khe Sanh Veteran*, 8766 Park View Court, Wauwatosa, WI, 53226-2729. Tel: (414) 771-9987.

Cambodia Development Review. New Phnom Penh-based monthly, available gratis, and devoted to economic and development issues. English, Khmer editions. From Cambodia Development Resources Institute, Toul Kork, 315/56, PO Box 62, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Tel/fax: (855) 23-366094/426103; e-mail: cdri.pp.cam@uni.fi (Indochina Interchange, December 1997.)

U.S. Foreign Policy in Focus. Four-page briefs on issues currently being debated in the foreign affairs field. Includes issues related to Indochina, Southeast Asia. Jointly sponsored by Interhemispheric Resource Center and Institute of Policy Studies. For list of briefs, contact: Interhemispheric Resource Center, Box 4506, Albuquerque, NM 87196; Tel: (505) 842-8288; Fax: (505) 246-1601; Also on the Web at: <http://www.zianet.com/infocus> (Indochina Interchange, December 1997).

Vietnam Law and Legal Forum (Công Báo).

SRV product, now also published in the U.S. Quarterly. \$9. From RDI Publishing, 827 State St., Santa Barbara, CA. 93101.

Pacific Rim Journals. International Business Press is now publishing some 40 journals devoted to various aspects of marketing and business in the Asia-Pacific. Most are by sector, such as food products, hospitality and leisure, pharmaceuticals, hospital management, etc. Widest ranging is "Journal of Asia-Pacific Business." Catalog from IBP/Haworth Press, 10 Alice St., Binghamton, NY, 13904-1580.

SFO Bay Area Media. New twice-weekly newspaper in San Jose, California, is *Saigon USA*, edited by Tam Nguyễn (San Jose attorney) and friends. Expects to go daily in 1998. Two other ethnic language dailies now serve the estimated 130,000 Việt kiều in the region, *Việt Nam Daily News* and *Thời Báo (Times News)*, with a combined circulation of about 20,000. In addition there are about a dozen weekly or monthly Việt kiều news publications in northern California.

Mopix. The journal *Film and History* is an interdisciplinary quarterly of film and television studies. Published by a committee affiliated with the American Historical Association. Editor and further information from Peter Rollins, Route 3, Box 80, Cleveland, OK, 74020.

Third World Quarterly. Title of highly respected serious academic journal of emerging areas, out of the UK. Editor is Sahid Qadit (Univ. of London). Carries occasional articles on Indochina; see Donald Emmerson (Univ. of Wisconsin), "Orientalism Reversed? Some Thoughts on "East" Asian Identity" in v. 18 no. 4, 1997. Available in electronic form over the Internet using RealPage software. Address: Carfax Publishing, P.O. Box 25, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, O14 3UE, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom, or Carfax Publishing, 875-81 Mass. Ave. Cambridge, MA. 02129.

B-52 Stratofortress Association News. Quarterly newsletter featuring news, photographs, and anecdotes about this famous bomber's past and present. The Association itself exists to preserve and document the history of the B-52. Contact the organization at: 498 Carthage Drive, Beavercreek, Ohio, 45434-5865. Fax: (937) 426-1289.

Living Abroad. Published 10 times annually, this journal aids expatriates in finding resources for work,

study, networking, and living in other countries. Edited by Ruth Halcomb, it includes general information on the country being profiled, helpful tips on traveling (when to go, getting around, accommodations, dealing with customs, etc.) and living in that country (housing, what to bring, etc.). Resources for basic research are listed, and business opportunities described. The October 1997 issue focuses on Vietnam. Interesting. Address: 133351-D Riverside Dr. Suite 101, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423-2542. Tel: (818) 789-2542.

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Top Ten. The ten major Vietnam news stories of 1997, in the judgment of VNA editors, are:

1. VCP Fourth Plenum (8th Congress) and the Politburo membership change; also discussions of *đổi mới* (renovation) (Dec.).
2. National Assembly election (July 20).
3. Francophone Summit Conference, Hanoi (November).
4. Vietnam farmers exceed quota; produce 3.6 million MT foods.
5. Fiftieth million ton of crude oil pumped by Vietsov Petro (October) and 10 millionth ton of coal mined (December).
6. National Assembly okays three key projects: (Quảng Ngãi oil refinery; five million-hectare Highland reforestation project; plan to produce electric power and fertilizer from natural gas.
7. Vietnam Donor Conference in Tokyo (\$2.4 billion) and London Club's restructure of Vietnam's debt (both December).
8. Typhoon Linda, worst storm of the century (November).
9. Vietnamese athletes win 35 gold medals at Asian games, Jakarta (October).
10. Eight persons executed following conviction on drug trafficking charges (December).

Ten top world news stories, by same editors: 1) ASEAN's 30th anniversary; 2) El Nino, including Typhoon Linda; 3) Hong Kong reversion; 4) Russia-NATO security agreement and NATO membership for Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary; 5) Mideast peace deadlock; 6) face-off between the U.N. and Iraq; 7) British Labor Party victory; 8) Congo political crisis; 9) Terrorist attacks in Algeria and Egypt; 10) World Youth Festival in Cuba. Added for good measure: the sheep called Dolly and the Mars space flight landing.

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ELECTRONIC, AUDIO-VISUAL, & MICROFORM

Hanoi v. Internet. The revolution in communication of ideas, that truly overwhelming revolution of our lifetime, pits establishments against themselves everywhere, and nowhere more than Vietnam: needs/opportunities vs. fear/loathing. The Year 1997 was marked by a Politburo wrestling match with itself on internet policy. To open or not to open, that is the question? And, if to open, which seems inevitable, how open? In November 1997, licensing began for Vietnam Internet providers; The Finance Promotion and Technology Company (FTP); Vietnam Data Transmission Company (VDC); Saigon Postal Corporation; and the Information Technology Institute. Executives cautioned that two existing low-speed lines connecting Hanoi and Hồ Chí Minh City are insufficient. True Internet access will depend on a high-speed transmission line linking Hanoi to Hong Kong. Cost: a one-time subscription fee, \$36; \$4 monthly access fee; connection charges of about \$0.03 per minute. Once logged on, individuals cannot engage in online discussions or economic, political, social, and cultural issues involving Vietnam. Technical firewalls can be installed to monitor information and subscribers. Sending coded information is banned. (Source: Adrian Edwards, Reuters, November 18, 1997). The dilemma of harnessing this miracle beast is caught nicely by *Vietnam Business Journal*, April 1997, "Internet in Vietnam: Imminent or Impossible" by Christopher Moore. Major points: Hanoi officials seem poised to open the entrance to the information superhighway because they must; however, first they must ensure that a vigilant gatekeeper is in place, which is easier said than done. Further evidence of the impending world-wide triumph of technology over ideology.

Picture This. A company called Corbis wants to capture images of the entire history of human existence—and sell it. Now in its seventh year, it acquires electronic rights to photos and art from sources around the world. Bill Gates is involved. Corbis, however, is but one of the companies in the digital market. For background see "Photography" by Katie Hafner in *Newsweek*, June 24, 1996. Their electronic addresses:

Muse: West Stock (wide selection): <http://www.weststock.com>

PhotoDisc (15,000 pictures): <http://www.photodisc.com>

Liaison International: (2,400 of 4 million photos can be accessed at this site: <http://www.liaisonintl.com>

Picture Network International: Photos, illustrations, clip art, royalty-free photos, sound-effects; a natural language search engine at <http://www.publishersdepot.com>

Corbis: Sampling of the archive is available; it also ships images on CD-ROM.

<http://www.corbis.com>

JUSPAO. Now available on microfilm (6 reels) is the set of captured documents published in the 1960s by the U.S. Embassy's Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office, Saigon. (Successive editors: Douglas Pike, William Gausman, and William Ayers). Title *Vietnam Documents and Research Notes Series: Translation and Analysis of Significant Việt Cộng/North Vietnam Documents*. Includes also VNA press releases and guide. From University Publications of America (CIS), 4520 East-West Highway, Bethesda, MD. 30814-3389.

U.S. Marines. Now on the market are 78 reels of the 35mm microfilm (with guide) of Records of the U.S. Marine Corps in the Vietnam War. In three parts: *Fleet Marine Force, Pacific Command Histories, 1964-1973* (8 reels)

III Marine Amphibious Force Command Histories, 1964-1971 (30 reels)

Part 3: Divisional Command Histories, 1965-1971 (40 reels)

From University Publications of America (see above).

USA Logistics. Now on microfilm are 29 reels of declassified reports to the Secretary of the Army on the first three years of the massive American logistic build up in the Vietnam War. First part, *The Army Build-Up Progress Report (August 1965-March 1969)* is on expansion and its impact on the army worldwide. Second part, in March 1969, this series was replaced by *the U.S. Army Activities Report: Southeast Asia*. Intended to portray the U.S. Army's progress in fulfilling its responsibilities. From UPA (see above).

War at Home. Hollywood feature film starring Martin Sheen, Emilio Estevez, Kathy Bates, and Kimberly Williams, theme of which is that the long reach of

war can tear up a Texas family. An adaptation of James Duff's "Home Front", which ran briefly on Broadway in 1985. Plot: troubled veteran, seething with rage against fate and his family's lack of understanding, explodes at a Thanksgiving Day dinner. With flashbacks and 1960s music. (Reviewed in *New York Times*, Jan. 23, 1996).

Indochina Photo Requiem. Project honoring Vietnam War photographers who died in the line of duty. Launched by the late Tim Page (British photo-journalist) and Horst Faas (AP's premier photographer). Project to date has published a book of photos (see Bibliography); staged a traveling exhibition; and is working on plans for a battlefield memorial in Vietnam, if Hanoi officials can be persuaded to give approval. Contact: Indochina Photo Requiem Project LTD., Horst Faas c/o Associated Press, 12 Norwich Street, London EC4A 1BP, England. Tel. (44-171) 583 1691; Fax (44-171) 583 0218.

French-era Vietnam. Now on CD-ROM is a highly useful bibliographic resource for those working on colonial Vietnam: *Bulletin des Amis du Vieux Huê* (13,000 pages in 120 volumes with 4,000 illustrations. Published from 1914-1944. Work of Philippe Papin (e-mail address: ppfeo@refer.edu.vn) and team of editors at Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, Paris. To order CD-ROM (\$1,000), contact: Pacific R.I.M., 61 Lý Thường Kiệt, Hanoi, S.R. Vietnam. Tel: +844 8221101 Fax: +844 8221108 e-mail: pacrim@netam.org.vn

Vietnam Videos. The Cinema Guild in New York sells / rents a large variety of videos on Vietnam. Includes:

Vietnam Mission: 50 Years Among the Montagnards. Produced by Douglas Smith, narrated by Charles Kuralt. Documentary about Gordon and Laura Smith, missionaries in the Vietnam Highlands for 50 years. Footage and interviews, with commentary by Gerald Hickey, foremost American anthropologist working on Vietnam.

Young Vietnam. Edward Milner, director. On the lives and loves of Vietnamese youth today, (1989). 28 min. / color. \$250 purchase, \$50 rental.

After the Fire. Edward Milner, director. On Vietnam wartime environmental damage. 53 min. / color. \$395 purchase, \$100 rental.

Surname, Việt, Given Name, Nam and As the Mirror Burns. All shot in the 1990s. The Cinema Guild's address: 1697 Broadway, Suite 506, New York, NY 10019. Tel. (800) 723-5522.

Hồ Chí Minh: The Man Behind the Myth. Documentary produced by Reuters Television (1997). Newsreel footage, interviews with contemporaries. 52 min. \$350 purchase, \$75 rental. From Filmmakers Library, 124 E. 40th St. New York, NY 10016.

Great Wars of American History. Narrated by George C. Scott. The 200-year odyssey, from Lexington to Saigòn, in 24 audiocassettes (1996). \$249. From Herring Co., Londonderry, NH. 03043.

Too Much Air to Breathe: A Lao Monk-healer and His Community. A 28-minute documentary video from Achan Bounmi and members of the Wat Lo Buddhavong in rural Virginia. On Lao Buddhist culture. With 60-page guide. Contact Samsara Communications, 1335 Massachusetts Ave. SE, Washington DC, 20003.

Nixon Tapes. Now coming on the market, so to speak, are 154 hours of White House Oval Office tape recordings of the early 1970s, released by the National Archives Oct. 16, 1997. Includes Nixon and advisors on Daniel Ellsberg, the Pentagon Papers, Vietnam POWs' Dinner at the White House. For details see "In New Release of Tapes, Nixon Backs Measures to Prevent Leaks" by George Lardner, *Washington Post*, Oct. 17, 1997. For brochure on A-V holdings in the National Archives, contact: National Archives and Records Administration, Motion Picture Sound and Video Branch (NNSM), 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD, 20740-6001. Tel: (301) 713-7060.

Research Materials. An organization called Archival Research International offers a catalog of Vietnam War-related subjects: unit histories, maps, aerial photos, etc. \$3. Address: 1539 Foxhall Road, Washington DC, 20007. Tel: (202) 338-4249.

Microform Mỹ Lai. The Peers Inquiry of the Massacre at Mỹ Lai is now available on Microfilm. Equivalent of 42 books. From the document collection at the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's School Library, Charlottesville, VA. With guide. \$1,575. From University Publications of America, 4250 East-West Highway, Bethesda MD, 20814-3389.

Việt Nam: The Last Battle. Producer, David Munro, writer/director, John Pilger. Left-wing journalist for whom the “last battle” is the class war between capitalism and socialism. Interviews and images seem to add up the conclusion that on balance, Việt Nam was better off under the Stalinist economic development model. A fairly big-budget film, worth viewing. 52 min. 1995. From First Run / Icarus Films, New York. \$390 purchase, \$75 rental.

Sài Gòn Artifacts. E-mail traffic this past year has taken note of a must-visit place in Hồ Chí Minh City for art lovers. It is a Gallery of Antiques run, out of his home, by Hoàng Văn Cường, one-time UPI photographer. On the ground floor are lacquers and antiques; upstairs scores of photographs from the Vietnam War. VOA interviewed Cường Oct. 20, 1997. Home address not given, but he should not be hard to find in Hoville, as the French expats call it.

Việt Nam Info. A new service on Việt Nam's economy. Brochure says Việt Nam Info can supply six data bases: legal documents; Vietnamese business companies; imports-exports; direct foreign investment; statistics; Việt Nam's administrative structure. Service can be updated quarterly. Price for the set of six: \$480; quarterly updates, \$120, plus \$65 s/h. From Chamber of Commerce and Industry / North Star, 706 North Star Building, 4 Dã Tượng St. Hà Nội. Fax: (84-4) 822-0520. Branch office at 171 Võ Thị Sáu St. HCMC. Fax: (84-8) 829-4472.

Indochina Photos. An exhibit of some 100 photographs taken in Indochina in the 1930s by French artist Jean Despujols were on display (Fall 1997) at the Centenary College Meadows Museum. A world premier exhibition. The museum has what is described as the largest body of French colonial paintings in the world. Curator of the exhibit was D.A. Kress, Centenary College, Shreveport, LA. Tel: (318) 869-5169.

Three Seasons. Feature film now being shot in Việt Nam, Jason Kliot, producer. American GI returns to Việt Nam to search for his daughter. Harvey Keitel has a part. Writer / Director is Tony Bùi, 25. Joint venture by Giải Phóng Studios and Open City Films. To be released in 1998. (*New York Times*, Dec. 2, 1997).

Seawolves of Việt Nam. A 35-min. documentary on a U.S. Navy combat chopper unit called Heli-

copter Attack (Light) Squadron Three (HAL-3), nicknamed Seawolves. Worked the Mekong Delta 1967-1972. \$22.95 from Tully Entertainment, 12115 Magnolia Boulevard, North Hollywood CA. 69107.

Images of Việt Nam. By Ted Engelmann (Univ. of Denver). Exhibited at the Denver Performing Arts Complex theater café. Twenty color photos shot in Việt Nam in 1989. Available for exhibition. Address: P.O. Box 2331, Boulder, CO. 80306-2331.

A World Beneath the War: The Secret Tunnels of Việt Nam. Janet Gardner, producer, director. Dramatization of a central Việt Nam underground city built during the war by the villagers of Vĩnh Mộc—2,000 people in “miles of catacombs.” 53 min. \$295 purchase, \$75 rental. From Filmmakers Library, 124 E. 40th St., New York, NY, 10016.

Cambodia: The Betrayal. Video produced by David Munro. Seeks to expose the hypocrisy of the West in its relationship with Pol Pot. Filmmakers Library (see above).

Moving Wall. The Việt Nam War Memorial in Washington—known universally as The Wall—continues to travel around the U.S. in the form of a half-scale replica, attracting a large number of visitors. In November it was in Redondo Beach, California, then moved on to San Francisco. It is to be at Texas Tech University in April, 1999, during a conference by the Việt Nam Center.

Worlds Apart. Title of a 20 min. video on the generational conflict between young Việt kiều and their parents in an Australian housing estate. Deals with drug-use, cross-cultural friendships, education, etc. In Vietnamese with English sub-titles. Available (\$60) from: Richmond Community Care, 3 Belgium Avenue, Victoria, Australia.

Peace-trees Việt Nam. Video documentary subtitled “Reversing the Legacy of Việt Nam” produced by Chris Stegman. Biographical sketches of individuals: Vietnamese, American veterans, Việt kiều, others. Uses home video footage, photos, etc. Sponsored by Earthstewards Network, PO Box 10697, Bainbridge Island, WA, 98110. (\$12).

Dust of Life. A feature film directed by Rachid Bouchareb, starring Daniel Guyant. Hero is a 13-year old Amerasian boy socked into a reeducation camp at

war's end, where he's blitzed by agit-prop cadres and forced into hard labor in the jungle. Plot involves efforts to escape by Daniel and his two friends, Bob and Shrimp—all three true angels with dirty faces. Villain is the camp guard who resents the three because they are literate and intelligent. Now showing in art theaters in the U.S.

The Vietnam War From Start to Finish. Documentary (1997). The long sweep—Việt Minh War, Việt Nam War, and on into the postwar era in which Hânội cadres seek to break the social machine in the South. 28 min. From Films For the Humanities and Sciences, P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543.

Asia-Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam. A 28 min./color documentary (1997) on economic aid projects in the three countries: better farming practices, preservation of Cambodian historic monuments, infrastructure, development in Vietnam. From Films For the Humanities (see above). \$89.95 purchase.

Borne in War: A Real Personal Story. Semi-autobiographical video that traces Va Megn Thoj from the hills of Laos through his college days in the West, and into the Persian Gulf antiwar movement. (1996). From the Third World Newsreel, 335 West 38th St., New York, NY 10018. \$135 purchase, \$50 rental.

On the Web. From Indochina Interchange, v. 7, no. 3, Dec. 1997, comes a valuable listing of web sites:
 * Vietnam Embassy, Washington: Vietnam: <http://www.vietnamembassy-usa.org>
 * Cambodia Embassy, Washington: Cambodia: <http://www.embassy.org/cambodia>
 * Laos Embassy, Washington: Laos: <http://www.laoembassy.com>

Wars for Vietnam:

The Wars for Vietnam: 1945-1975: <http://www.vassar.edu/vietnam/index.html>

Prof. Robert Brigham offers overview of the war, original documents, and links to 50 sites on the wars and Vietnam today; archives, image galleries, U.S. veterans' experiences, Vietnamese culture, and travel.

E-Mail Café, Hồ Chí Minh City:

pqhoi@bdvn.vnmail.vnd.net

On Lê Duẩn Street, customers can send and receive electronic mail for about 30 cents.

Asian Studies WWW Virtual Library:

<http://www.coombs.anu.edu.au/wwwvl-asianstudies.html>

Asian Studies WWW Monitor:

<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/asia-www-monitor.html>

New developments in Asian studies in cyberspace for academics, students, librarians, journalists, business people, government administrators; evaluations of networked sites relevant to social science research of the Asia-Pacific region.

Internet Guide for Students of the Vietnam War:

<http://www3.mistral.co.uk/spartacus/vietintro.htm>

From John Simkin, a British history teacher (students 11-18)

e-mail: spartacus@mistral.co.uk

The Internet Travel Guide: <http://www-students.unisg.ch/~pgeiser/itg.htm>

Travel information, general overview, transportation, places to visit, guidebooks, etc. Information on Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam is available.

e-mail: Peter.Geiser@student.unisg.ch

Asian Development Bank (ADB news releases at):

<http://www.asiandevbank.org>

World Resources Institute: <http://www.wri.org/wri/enved/vietnam.html>

Information on environmental education in Vietnam, Dr. Lê Dien Duc (CRES, Hanoi University).

Indochina Interchange / USIRP: <http://usirp.org>

Further Internet Sources:

Vietnam Pictures Archive at SunSite: <http://sunsite.unc.edu/vietnam/vnpsc.html>

Photographs about Indochina by Paul Levrier. Information on the "Voyage Through the Motherland" CD-ROM, issued by Coloa Publishing House.

The WWW Virtual Library for Laos or Alternate:

<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/wwwvlpages/vietpages/wwwvl-vietnam>

Maintained by Pan Thongvilu (Pan Vietnam Veterans (VietVet) or Vietnam Veterans (SwRI), Homepage maintained by Bill McBride

e-mail: billm@swri

A Virtual Visit to Vietnam: <http://grunt.space.swri.edu/visit.htm>

Galleries of recent photographs taken by veterans and friends of veterans. Also, check out the U.S. Army Vietnam Combat Art Gallery via this link.

Vietnam Information (Geography): <http://sunsite.nus.sg/sealinks/vietnam-info.html>

Việt Nam Insight Online: <http://www.vinsight.org/insight.html>

Provides information on the Vietnamese struggle for freedom and democracy and a forum for the expression of Vietnamese aspirations.

Veterans Organizations and Support Groups: <http://grunt.space.swri.edu/vetorgs.htm>

Việt Nam Veterans of Pittsburgh, Inc.; Việt Nam Veterans Oral History and Folklore Project; Việt Nam Veterans of Ventura County (VVVC); Việt Nam Veterans of Maui County (VVMC); Veterans For Peace; Veterans of the Việt Nam War, Inc.; Việt Nam Veterans Arts Group (VVAG); Việt Nam Veterans of America (VVA); Việt Nam Veterans Against the War (VVAW); Việt Nam Veterans of Diablo Valley; Việt Nam Veterans of.

Free Việt Nam Alliance: <http://www.fva.org/>

Current developments. French journalist launches appeal to free Vietnamese dissident (11/05/97); Northern California: Letter to leaders attending the Francophone Conference(10/27/97).



Việt Nam Total Acreage (including islands): 33 million hectares.

Total Acreage in Use: 18 million hectares

Acreage Devoted to Agriculture: in Mekong Delta: 80%; Red River Delta: 27%; Northern Highlands: 34%; Central Highlands: 70%; Central Coast: 62%.

Việt Nam Population (Dec. 1997 est): 74,000,000 (with annual growth rate of 2.4%).

Total Villages: 9,032

GDP Target: Growth rate for 1998 set at .9% Agriculture 4.6-4.8%. Industrial production: 13.5%. Increase in export earnings: 25-26%. Trade deficit: under 20%.

Inflation rate: under 7%

Rice Production: In the Mekong Delta (7 provinces): seven million MT (500,000 MT over 1996). Exports 3.3 million MT (600,000 over 1996).

Agriculture Production: 30.6 million MT of food.

Foreign Investment: Total new investment 1997: \$4.5 billion (vs. 8.6 billion, 1996). Target for 1998: \$5.5 billion. Largest foreign investment project start-up in 1997: Ford Motor Company's \$72 million plant (14,000 units p/a).

Total State Income (1997): \$5.5 billion.

VIỆTNAM: YEAR 1997

It was another year of flux and change (some of it real, some of it only apparent). The usual main actor was confusion, brought on chiefly by uncertainty as to what exactly was going down. This seemed most apparent at the leadership level (see above), where a degree of confusion is the norm but lack of self-confidence is not. Public attitudes towards the society and the leadership, as far as can be determined, appear to have been marked by an erosion in confidence. This stems basically from the perception that the previously monolithic, entirely self-assured Politburo was now divided on the question of pace and direction of the economic reform effort, and whether reform should be extended into the political sector. The official noisy agit-prop campaign against corruption—while worthy for its own sake, certainly necessary—served also to undermine public confidence in the leadership's ability to put things right.

Major economic concern during the year turned on indications of a serious down-turn due to various internal forces, including the worst floods in a century, and the difficulties imported from troubled Southeast Asia (see above). Statistical details on the economic scene on page

Foreign aid officials say they are worried that the ASEAN and South Korean current economic problems will have serious negative impact in Việt Nam. For instance, with 185 investment projects capitalized at \$3.2 billion, South Korea ranks fifth (of 57 countries) among Việt Nam's investors. Seoul has also been generous recently in grants (\$350,000) to the National Center for Sciences and Humanities, Hà Nội, to develop a computer network.

As statistical accounting suggests, the year was not a bad one for Việt Nam in economic terms. For instance, tourism, one of the important dollar earners, continued to develop. The total international standard hotel rooms in the country, for example, stood at 50,000 at year's end, an increase of 1,500 during 1997. Adding to the inventory has resulted in a drop in hotel room prices. During the year, 16 foreign projects (\$369 million) focused on tourism and hotels; four involved hotel construction, and the remainder golf courses, office towers, resorts, and travel facilities. The five stars in HCMC are: The Nikko Sài Gòn (\$63.5 million joint venture of

Saigontourist, Saigòn Bus Company, and Japan's Florette Investment, and the \$58 million Park Hyatt (next to the Continental). The city's tourism authority states that none of the joint venture hotels average an occupancy rate of more than 50%.

Religious dissent and activism increased during the year, or at least became more evident. This applies to Buddhists, Catholics, and the few Protestants in the country. Some observers see a new phenomenon—the state v. religion. However, in earlier years—even before the French arrival—there was a low grade but persistent struggle that went on between the Hue court and the village, the former oriented toward Confucianism and the latter towards Buddhism. Buddhism suffered recurrently at the hands of both the Chinese and the Huế, through official encouragement of Confucianism and through outright repression. This tended to make religion semi-covert, although in the village it was not so much underground as unobtrusive. The French subjected Buddhism to various official restrictions and controls, which tended to move it in the direction of nationalistic clandestinism. Buddhism, as practiced in Vietnam today, still carries many of the characteristics of this clandestinism, unlike the practice of the religion elsewhere in Asia. The Vietnamese, unlike the more passionate Hindus, are not very specific about God. There are not great apostles in Vietnamese history, no martyrs, and no saviors, few who could even be called religious leaders. The most venerated personage in the traditional Vietnamese community was not the priest but the scholar or man of learning. Even today religion of the common people is a mix of superstition, animism, and worship of local spirits passed down from the dawn of history.

What we have also seen during the year is a rise in local or informal political activity in Vietnam that is non-governmental or semi-governmental politics at the rice-roots level, and distinct from local (i.e., state-organized) politics.

Political activity at this informal level is shaped from one generation to the next by some specific major social trauma. Each generation in every society undergoes some formative experience that fixes its existential outlook. In Vietnam these social traumas have been: 1. Việt Minh era (over age 60): liberation (anti-colo-

nialism); 2. Vietnam War era (30-60): unification (North); survival (South); and 3. Post-Vietnam War era (under 30): dashed expectations; continued spirit of revolutionary change (North); “breaking the (social) machine” and “never again” attitude (South). Post-war failure (both North and South).

The important change that has come in Vietnam since 1989, with the introduction of *đổi mới* (renovation) is largely due to developments in the informal political arena. The common perception of outsiders is that in about 1990 the stagnant economic system suddenly took off in development in seemingly effortless manner. How could this be explained? Nothing had eventuated at the Politburo level to account for it. Later it became evident that *đổi mới* actually developed from the bottom up, was not mandated from above as would be expected in a command economy. Since the end of the war, forces of change had been fermenting at the rice-roots level establishing the preconditions for economic take-off. It is a case in which the thinking of the general population (in and out of the Party) was ahead of the leadership.

Formal-informal politics in Vietnam can be characterized as being institutional vs. individual. While governance over the centuries has been by formal directive there has always been a weak tradition of rule of law. The fact is that today the law in Vietnam is what the party says it is at the moment; just as it was when the French *colon* said it; and before that, when the Emperor said it.

Vietnam today has weak social consensus, defined as agreement on three things: 1. What does society stand for (How are distinguishable from other societies?); 2. Where do we want the society to go or become (What is our social vision?); and 3. By what manner should we achieve this (what political decision making mechanism do we want? True political stability can come to Vietnam only with consensus on these three questions. No one is sure how to achieve social consensus. We do know it begins with the leaders, and can never develop without good leadership.



CAMBODIA: YEAR 1997

It was a year that could have been worse for the people of Cambodia—and certainly it was a year that could have been better. It was an edgy year in general as the society continued to teeter at the brink. One's final judgment for 1997 turns on how much one accepts the Temporal Theory of political analysis. This theory holds that what is involved in running a society is time. Those who make things happen—the 10 per cent or so in the case of Cambodia—should think in terms of time. Policies are to be devised to buy time. You do things today to buy time for tomorrow. Tomorrow you buy time for the next day. And so on. There is nothing else but to buy time. There is nothing else but time. If you accept this thesis—and many do—it was not a bad year in Cambodia.

Disputation between the two prime ministers—Prince Norodom Ranaridh (also president of the royalist party known as Funcinpec) and Hun Sen (vice-president of the Cambodian People's Party, or CPP)—came to blows in mid-year with clashes in every province, which firmly indicated the two prime ministers were no longer prepared to share power. In the next elections, due in 1998, only one prime minister is to be elected, and feeling threatened by the politically and militarily mightier CPP, Prince Ranaridh moved to build a new political front, the National United Front (NUF).

Then came the coup d'état July 5-6 when Hun Sen ousted Prince Ranaridh. Hun Sen denied it was a "coup" since he said it did not alter the coalition structure, but simply eliminated one member or at most one faction. Officials in Phnom Penh issued a 27-page White Paper (July 9) which put the blame on Ranaridh for his "provocative strategy" of establishing the NUF (made up of opposition parties and even the Khmer Rouge). The document reiterated Ranaridh's March 1996 public criticism of the coalition government and the CPP.

The Cambodian economy during the year was essentially stagnant. The good news here is that it could have been worse. The initial CNP growth rate estimate was 7.5%. Before the coup the official forecast was down to 6.5%, and by October, the Finance Ministry admitted that growth would be negative in the second half of 1997 and flat for the whole year. Hence, the economy was done in by the coup. The agricultural

sector fell victim to heavy flooding, the most severe in several years, in which more than 20 people died, some 1.3 million were displaced, and hundreds of thousands of hectares of paddy and other crops were flooded.

LAOS: YEAR 1997

The quiet revolution in Laos—the gentle revolution, the velvet revolution, some would say—rolled on during the year. The change, revolutionary and otherwise, continued to build and it was these forces for change—and the implications of change—which seemed most relevant in evaluating the year.

Laos joined ASEAN (July 23), probably its most significant event, at least in terms of external relations. Membership itself perhaps was less important than the fact that it solidified a trend of moving out into the world, away from the pernicious advice of some that the society should remain self-contained as the best means of fending off external threats.

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ADB, the Asian Development Bank, headquartered in Manila, currently offers:

Sustaining Momentum: Economic Cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion.
\$10.

Social Sector Issues in Asian Transition Economies. Results of a study on social sectors in eight Asian transitional economies. Includes: Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam. Topics include: role of government, financing of social sector activities, and the role of external assistance.

Asian Development Outlook, 1997-1998. Comprehensive annual analysis of economic trends in, and prospects for, Asia's developing economies. Statistical tables on key economic indicators. Chapter on world trading environment. Copublished with Oxford University Press. \$34.

Emerging Asia: Changes and Challenges. Looks at Asia's economic and social transformations and analyzes the prospects for its continuation. Identifies major trends likely to influence the quality of life of Asia's people into the next century.

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NAMES IN THE NEWS

Ambassador Douglas Peterson and Ms. Vi Lê.

Wedding bells are to ring in May for this pair, the ambassador recently told a gathering of American expatriates in Hanoi. She is a Saigon-born, Australian-raised banker, and for the last two years Chief Trade Representative at the Australian Embassy in Hanoi. "He is a wonderful man," said Lê, flashing a diamond engagement ring. "We're grown up and we knew what we wanted almost as soon as we met," said the ambassador. Peterson's first wife died of cancer three years ago. (See "Peterson To Marry Diplomat: the U.S. Ambassador and Former POW is Engaged to a Woman Who was Born in that Country," *San Jose Mercury News*, Jan. 13, 1998).

Nguyễn Công Thuật. Vietnamese entomologist has been made a member of the New York Academy of Science. For the past 30 years he has done research on the behavior of crop-destroying insects. Thuật also helped develop new strains of high yield rice. He is an official of the SRV Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development's Institute of Botanical Protection. (VNA, Dec. 26, 1997).

Nguyễn Duy Gia. Director of the Vietnam National Institute of Administration has been suspended from his post for reasons of "personal insolidarity and financial mismanagement," *Sài Gòn Giải Phóng* (Dec. 18, 1997) reports. Party officials have ordered him to engage in self-criticism. The Government of South Vietnam formed the NIA in the mid-1950s in Saigon, advised by Michigan State academics, and was a respected training ground for many GVN officials (AFP Dec. 18, 1997).

Rodolfo Severino. Named new secretary-general of ASEAN (Jan. 5, 1998). He is regarded as a top Philippines diplomat, takes over from Ajit Singh of Malaysia. (Reuters, Jan. 5, 1998).

PAVN Year-end Promotions (VNA Jan. 4, 1998):

Phạm Văn Trà, Minister of Defense—to senior lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Đào Trọng Lịch—to dep. min. and chief of general staff

Lt. Gen. Phạm Thanh Ngân—director, Political General Directorate

Maj. Gen. Nguyễn Hoa Tinh—director, Technical General Department.

Col. Nguyễn Văn Đa—director, Logistics General Department

Pol Pot. Cambodia's personification of evil. He may be barely able to move, but continues to prove he is a master guerrilla chief, confusing the world—tossing sand in its eyes—as to his location, his health, and his plans. During 1997 he has been reported dead, dying, hiding out in Thailand, gone to China, and finally and lately, seen back in the border region where he was interviewed by a Bangkok journalist.

OBITUARIES

Peter Braestrup. One of America's top journalists, died Aug. 10, 1997, of a heart attack in Maine where he was vacationing. He was 68 and lived in Washington. Braestrup served as a U.S. Marine officer in Korea during that war, and as a war correspondent in Vietnam for the *Washington Post*. Authored the seminal work *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tết 1968 in Vietnam and Washington* (the press badly; the administration poorly, was his judgment) and founded a premier American intellectual journal, the *Washington Quarterly*. While in retirement he acted as a consultant to the Library of Congress. Braestrup was boldly outspoken when he needed to be; incorruptible in his reporting; a man of great wit; and a model for future journalists. See obituaries in *Washington Post* by Martin Weil, Aug. 11, 1997, and *New York Times*, by David Herszenhorn, Aug. 18, 1997.

Emperor Bảo Đại (Nguyễn Vĩnh Thụy). Vietnam's last emperor died in southern France August 1, 1997, at age 83. He was a tragic figure. Also, he was more intelligent and human than credited by his critics. Bảo Đại was born in 1913 in Huế, crowned in 1925 at age 12, and assumed royal duties in 1932. He cooperated with the Japanese during World War II. In 1945 he abdicated in favor of the nationalist Việt Minh, who named him "Citizen Prince Nguyễn Vĩnh Thụy." He went into exile in Hong Kong, then returned in 1949 to rule as chief of state under the French. In 1955 Ngô Đình Diệm ousted him in a referendum. So

ended the Nguyễn Dynasty—and the monarchy—in Vietnam. Often described as the “Playboy Emperor”, Bao Đại is believed to have tried in his early years to introduce reforms but gave up on efforts to persuade his colonial masters.

Elbridge Durbrow. American Ambassador to South Vietnam, 1957-1961, died in Virginia on May 22, 1997. He was 93. Durbrow was an old school diplomat, careful in all that he did as a symbol of the United States and as the representative of the President. He believed an ambassador’s job was primarily to keep the State Department fully informed, carry out Washington’s instructions on a minimal basis, and not engage in local politics unless a U.S. national interest—as defined by Washington—was involved. This tended to get him ignored at State. It also gave him an essentially pessimistic outlook. He once observed at a staff meeting: “I don’t expect much, and come to think of it, I am seldom disappointed.” Privately he had little faith in the prospects of the new Ngô Đình Diệm regime. Obituary in the *Washington Post*, May 29, 1997.

Leonard Sagan. Human rights activist, died Dec. 8, 1997, at his home in Atherton, California, following a year’s battle with brain cancer. He was 69. For years Sagan worked side by side with his wife, Ginetta, in their Ginetta Sagan Fund of Amnesty International USA (for which Ginetta received the U.S. Medal of Freedom). The fund was active in human rights projects in Vietnam and elsewhere. Obituary by Malcolm Glover in *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 1, 1997.

Walter Holden Capps. The revered professor of religion at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and U.S. Congressman, died of a heart attack Oct. 28 at Dulles Airport, Washington, while en route back to California. He was 63 and had been in office only ten months. Capps was best known in the Vietnam field for his mesmerizing lectures on the Vietnam War, which routinely drew 800 students (the limit of enrollment because of the size of the lecture hall). See “California Congressman Dies After Being Stricken at Airport” by Martin Weil and John Yang, *Washington Post*, Oct. 29, 1997. Also an op-ed tribute to Capps by Lou Cannon, *Washington Post*, Oct. 30, 1997.

Nguyễn Xiển. Viet Minh era intellectual and secretary general of the defunct Vietnam Socialist Party died

in a Hanoi hospital, after a long illness, announced Nov. 17, 1997. He was 91. Vietnam’s original Radical Socialist Party (Đảng Xã Hội Cấp Tiến) traced its lineage back to the French socialist movement. It was one of two non-Communist organizations in the Việt Minh (the other being the Democratic Party of South Vietnam, or Đảng Xã Hội Dân Chủ Miền Nam Việt Nam, which catered to bourgeois elements, especially in the South). Both were dissolved after the Vietnam War. (AP Nov. 17, 1997).

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Vietnam Nuclear, Jeffrey Smith in the *Washington Post*, Jan. 16, 1997, reports on what he terms as “gaffe” by the American embassy in Saigon in 1975 in its failure to retrieve nuclear material from Vietnam at the war’s end. Plutonium, he says, was left at the Đà Lạt Nuclear Research Institute (however the core of the reactor was removed). Two other articles on the same subject in the *New York Times*: “Now It Can Be Told: Plutonium and a Do-or-die Vietnam Foray” by David Stout Jan. 16, 1997, and “Vietnam Says Plutonium Left by U.S. is Safe”, Jan. 19, 1997.

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Tiếng Việt Không Sơn Phấn. The world’s premier Vietnamese-language lexicographer, Đinh-Hòa Nguyễn of San Francisco, has published what is termed an essential new work. Titled *Vietnamese* (1997), it is a book meant primarily for those learning the language. It deals with history, semantics, writing systems, loan words, syntactic structures, phonology. Hòa informally terms it “Vietnamese without veneer”. From John Benjamins Publishing Co., P.O. Box 27519, Philadelphia PA 19118-0519; Tel 800-562-5666) \$84.

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Vietnam-China and 5,000 Years. Xinhua reports (Dec. 5, 1996) the publication of *History of China’s Border Defense* by Zhen Shan (Kunming Military Academy) issued by the Social Science Documents Publishing House, Beijing. It is described as a review of China’s 5,000 year border defense efforts – (500,000 characters, most of it documents) with materials on politics, military affairs, economics, culture, diplomacy, nationalities, and geography. Presumably this means ample detail on the long Vietnam-China border.

HISTORY REDUX

(For historians: brief notes taken verbatim from published reports this year)

Hồ Chí Minh. “A cave in Southwest China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has been identified as a hideout of Hồ Chí Minh. The cave was called ‘yanlin’ in the Zhuang language, meaning a cave with ventilation. It is 60 meters long and has a small entrance sheltered by thick vegetation. It was being used as a place to make spirits by a local man, Huang Caihan, in 1942 when a friend introduced Hồ Chí Minh who needed a place to live. Huang, who is now 84, says that Ho often helped him make fire and taste the alcohol and that they called each other brother. According to Huang, Vietnamese Communist Party members came to the cave frequently and left many poems there. One poem written by Hồ can still be seen on the ceiling of the cave.” (*Xinhua*, Aug. 27, 1997).

JFK. “Pentagon documents now declassified may rekindle the still smoldering argument over whether President Kennedy would have pulled American forces out of Vietnam. “All planning will be directed towards preparing Republic of Vietnam forces for the withdrawal of all United States special assistance units and personnel by the end of calendar year 1965,” reads an Oct. 4, 1963, memorandum drafted by Gen. Maxwell Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and discussed that day by the chiefs. “Execute the plan to withdraw 1,000 United States military personnel by the end of 1963,” the memorandum continues. No one will ever know whether these plans would have been carried out had Kennedy lived.” (Tim Weiner, *Washington Post*, Dec. 28, 1997).

JFK (2). “Seven weeks before President Kennedy was assassinated American military leaders were anticipating the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam by the end of 1965, newly declassified documents suggest. Signed by Army General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the memo was directed to the uniformed leaders of the four military services. The memo also ordered the service chiefs to “execute the plan to withdraw 1,000 U.S. military personnel by the end of 1963.” In all, 800 pages of Joint Chiefs papers were made public today by the

government’s Assassination Records Review Board. The board was created by Congress to amass for public inspection any records that might shed light on Kennedy’s murder.” (AP, Dec. 22, 1997).

LBJ. “President Johnson had grave doubts about U.S. involvement in Vietnam as early as May 1964, according to tapes of his personal White House conversations published in a new book. Transcripts of the tapes are to be published this week by Simon and Schuster in the book *Taking Charge: The Johnson White House Tapes, 1963-1964*, by Michael Beschloss. Parts of the transcripts were published in the Oct. 13 edition of *Newsweek*. The tapes show Johnson expressing serious—and strikingly early—doubts about Vietnam. His conversation with Bundy, in which the president said: “I don’t think it’s worth fighting for. And I don’t think we can get out. It’s just the biggest damned mess I ever saw” was in May 1964, about three years before American troop strength in Vietnam reached its peak. Recorded secretly, the tapes were recently made available by Johnson’s widow, Lady Bird Johnson, *Newsweek* said. (Reuters / Washington, Oct. 5, 1997).

Nixon. As the Vietnam conflict raged on and election neared, President Nixon met with 10 Republican senators who implored him to get out of the war, newly released White House tapes show. “This was has to be ended quick,” one senator said, “otherwise we’re all going to perish.” Despite the intensity of the senator’s pleas, Nixon ordered the heavy bombing of North Vietnam while secretly dispatching National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger to Paris to negotiate with the North Vietnamese.” (Karen Gullo, AP, Oct. 16, 1997).

Nixon (2). “Richard Nixon listened in apparent fascination while a low-level Pentagon officer told the president in 1973 about greeting American servicemen who had been North Vietnam’s prisoners and accompanying them home, free at last, a newly released Nixon White House tape shows. “You’re lucky you’re young, you’ve got one of the great experiences in public,” Nixon told Roger Shields, a deputy assistant secretary of defense as he recounted his mission to Hanoi. Bowing to requests from a now-defunct special Senate committee investigating the POW-MIA situation and from organizations of family members, the National Archives today made public tapes from three Nixon conversations

in March and April of 1973. The archives previously released hundreds of hours of Nixon's secret tapes, but these were the first to be made public that concerned anything except Watergate and the other abuses of power that forced Nixon to resign as president in 1974." (Mike Feinsilber, AP, Aug. 29, 1997).

Christmas Bombing. "A solemn meeting was held in Hanoi yesterday commemorating "Điện Biên Phủ in the air"—the most resounding victory over the US air war 25 years ago. Vietnamese armed forces fought with extreme courage against a daunting force of almost 200 B-52 strategic bombers and 1,000 tactical aircraft that were targeting Hanoi, Hải Phòng, and other areas in northern Vietnam. Over Hanoi alone, the defenders brought down 30 raiders, including 23 B-52s and swing-wing F-111s. (VNA Hanoi, Dec. 24, 1997).

CIA. "The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in mid-September (1997) marked the 50th anniversary of its establishment with an exhibit entitled "Cold War: Fifty Years of Silent Conflict." Various kinds of secret service equipment and facilities widened visitors' field of vision. U.S. President Clinton visited the exhibit accompanied by CIA Director Tenet. The exhibits on display included a series of espionage equipment based on the collections of Gene Melton of the CIA. Melton, a symbol of the notorious U.S. espionage experts called agents, and an expert in jackets, daggers, and other tools that secret agents carry with them, has written a book entitled, *A Book Special Agents Must Read*, which describes detailed functions of various kinds of espionage equipment. Various kinds of espionage equipment and concealed weapons used by spies and special agents of the United States, its allies, and enemy countries were all displayed at the exhibition. They included wristwatch cameras, lipstick pistols, James Bond type equipment, nooses, and three-fingered daggers, the "most powerful short-distance antipersonnel weapons." Multifarious exhibits on display dazzled visitors. According to an investigation made by an ad hoc intelligence group of the U.S. Senate, the CIA was involved in a series of conspiratorial activities such as attempting to assassinate Congolese President Lumumba, Dominican President Trujillo, South Vietnamese "president" Ngô Đình Diệm, and Chilean President Allende. Although they did not die in the assassinations engineered by U.S. in-

telligence personnel, they died in military coups." (Xinhua, Nov. 12, 1997: Report by Zhang Weiwei, "CIA: 'Fifty Years of Silent Conflict'—Espionage Equipment and Concealed Weapons on Display in Exhibit").



Re-Education Camps. From Hong Kong comes a depressing but important document. *Registry of Deaths in (Vietnam) Re-education Camps* (Oct. 1997). It is a list of 367 names — "a tiny fraction of tens of thousands" who died in "Vietnam Holocaust." Document comes from Việt kiều in the Washington D.C. area with contributions from the Association of Vietnamese Former Political Prisoners, Honolulu Chapter; Vietnam Helsinki Committee; and former political prisoners who have resettled in the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe. Each entry includes: name, rank, former South Vietnam military/civilian organization, last re-education camp, and circumstance of death.

The list was posted on Dec. 10, 1997, by Southeast Asia Discussion List SEASIA-L@MSU.EDU Kim Nguyễn knguyen@NRN1.NRCAN.GC.CA.

Interviews. It has become a cottage industry, this producing a book by editing tape interviews. To do it well requires knowledge of the process (especially about how to keep the subject on the subject). Sage Publications has produced a series of books on interviewing skills which can help increase efficiency:

Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing by Steinar Kvale (Arhus University, Denmark); *The First Helping Interview: Engaging the Client and Building Trust* by Sara Fine, (Univ. of Pittsburgh) & Paul W. Glasser, (Rutgers University), *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* by Herbert Irene S. Rubin, (Northern Illinois Univ.), *Interviewing in Depth* by John Chirban, The Interactive-Relational Approach (Harvard Medical School), *The Active Interview* by James Holstein (Marquette Univ.) & Jaber Gubrium, Univ. of Florida, Gainesville), *Goal Focused Interviewing* by Frank Maple, (Univ. of Michigan), *Decisional Dialogues in a Cultural Context* by Paul Pedersen, Structured Exercises (Univ. of Alabama, MI) Daniel Hernandez (Syracuse Univ.), *Sage Publications* 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-2218

The Washington national security planners (Pentagon, State Department, Congress, White House) consider Vietnam to be important. Its population is the world's 16th largest; it has one of the largest armies; it is strategically situated. It offers no credible threat to U.S. forces in the Pacific because its military consists primarily of infantry without long range power projection capability. However, it retains the capacity to threaten U.S. regional interests in Southeast Asia.

Vietnam is a praetorian society, made so by its culture ("We have always lived in an armed camp," said one of its more perceptive novelists) and by 20th century history, that unbroken series of struggles over who will control the Indochina peninsula, successive outcomes of which being determined by war (Japan: 1945); France (1954); non-communist Vietnam (1975). The struggle continues.

The socio-political system is Leninist, more or less dedicated to orthodox Marxism with a generous infusion of Confucian thought. Political power is monopolized by the Vietnam Communist Party with day to day rule firmly in the hands of a 19-man Politburo. Operational code of the Politburo is collective leadership which allows for highest level disputation, an agreement to disagree. Style of politics is a mix of Sinic factionalism similar to that found in China, the two Koreas, and Japan, and the politics of entourage common in Southeast Asia. There is no discernible challenge to the system, but then neither is there any guarantee it will prove sustainable in the next decade.

The spectre haunting communism in Vietnam is the Revolution of 1989 in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Clearly, intense and at times bitter, Politburo level debate continues on over communism's prospects both worldwide and locally, the question being: is history irrevocably driving Vietnam to some form of political pluralism or can its Leninist system be made to prevail by overhauling its internal mobilization and motivational devices, which once were so highly effective? Reformers in the Politburo, the majority, contend that political changes must be introduced to match economic changes already in place. The conservatives acknowledge change is required and inevitable, but advocate only tinkering with the Leninist machine to make it work better. This debate turns on degree of risk involved in making political change. Reformers argue the risks are small compared to the gains to be achieved.

Conservatives warn major political change would trigger an avalanche of instability. The collective leadership's compromise to date is to slow the pace of change, evidence for which is found daily in virtually all policy pronouncements. Part of this resistance to political change is found in the rationale of the true Hanoi ideologues, who are legion, that victory in war was purchased at a high price in lives, treasure, and above all, time. To abandon the system now is to admit that it was all for naught, an entire generation wasted. This is an understandable sentiment--to insist we must preserve what we have because we paid so high a price for it--even while it is not logical.

Economic development problems abound. Vietnam is poor but it is not backward. It can make significant progress quickly only if it attracts vast sums of foreign investment capital. To do this it must quiet foreign investor concern that there will not be sufficient change to support economic development, and to ease more general fears about future political stability. The regime is experimenting with a new governance system--from government by party fiat with rules set down by an ideological language, to government by law, through the mechanism of the National Assembly as the country's CEO.

Since introducing the market oriented policy (the 7th Congress, 1990), Vietnam's economic sector has made remarkable progress. In part this impressiveness is due to the fact it began at a low take-off point--total stagnation of about a decade and a half.

In external affairs, Vietnam's relations with China counts for more than all other relationships combined. Hanoi officials, without exception, believe correctly or not, that China's hegemonistic ambitions in the region continue unabated as they have for a thousand years. And that the current face off over the Spratly archipelago and other islands of the South China Sea is in pursuit of these ambitions. While official Sino-Vietnamese relations have improved markedly in the past year, it seems clear that the destiny of the two is forever to remain locked in competition for influence in Southeast Asia.

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