

EDITORIAL NOTE

Indochina Chronology is a quarterly publication devoted to historical and contemporary events in Việt Nam (including the Việt Nam War), Cambodia, and Laos: it is a bibliographic resource on book, monograph, periodical and journal literature and a source of news of the field. It was launched in 1982 at the University of California (Berkeley) and moved to Texas Tech University (Lubbock) in mid-1997. It is available, gratis, to academics, historians, writers, researchers, journalists, veterans, and government officials. Publication by Vietnam Center, Texas Tech University, James R. Reckner, director. Editor is Douglas Pike. Editorial assistance is supplied by Alison Honig, Ben Dubberly, Khanh Lê, and Myrna Pike. *Indochina Chronology* operates in conjunction with the Vietnam Archive, also at Texas Tech University (Ronald Frankum, chief archivist).

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On the Cover: Three top military figures out of the Vietnam War gathered at Texas Tech University for the Third Triennial Vietnam Symposium in mid-April, attended by hundreds of academics, veterans and officials from Hanoi including Lt. Gen. Nguyen Dinh Uoc. Seventy papers were presented (available from the Vietnam Archive). Photos by Neal Ulevich.

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Abbreviations

AFP—Agence France Presse
AI—Amnesty International
AMAZON.COM—For reviews, cite Amazon.com as source, URL (<http://www.amazon.com>)
ASEAN—Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPP—Cambodian People's Party (ruling party)
CS—Council of State
DK—Democratic Kampuchea
THE ECONOMIST—International Weekly (London)
FEER—*Far Eastern Economic Review*
FBIS—Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FBIS-CHI—Daily Report/China
FBIS-EAS—Daily Report/East Asia
FDI—Foreign Direct Investment
FUNCINPEC—National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (opposition party)
GSSP—Grandfather Son San Party (Cambodia)
INDOCHINA INTERCHANGE—USIRP quarterly, New York
JPRS-SEA—Joint Publications Research Service, SE Asia (Dept. of Commerce)
KPL—Lao News Agency
KR—Khmer Rouge
LPDR—Lao People's Democratic Republic
LPRP—Lao People's Revolutionary Party
NATION—Bangkok Newspaper (English)
NHÂN DÂN—People's Daily (Hà Nội)
NRC—National Radio of Cambodia (Phnom Penh)

PAVN—People's Army Việt Nam
PDK—Party of Democratic Kampuchea (Khmer Rouge)
PPP—*Phnom Penh Post*
PRC—People's Republic of China
RENMIN RIBAO—People's Daily (Beijing)
RGC—Royal Government of Cambodia
RKAF—Royal Khmer Armed Forces
SRV—Socialist Republic of Việt Nam
Review (Hong Kong)
UNDP—U.N. Development Program
UNHCR—U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva
USIRP—U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project, New York
VBJ—*Vietnam Business Journal*
VC—*Vietnam Courier*
VIR—*Vietnam Investment Review*
VNN—*Vietnam News* (Hà Nội daily news sheet)
VNU—Việt Nam National University
VVN—Voice of Việt Nam Network (Hà Nội)
VTN—Việt Nam Television Network
XINHUA—China News Agency

EXCHANGE RATES—U.S.\$

đồng (Việt Nam)	13,944 (buy)
	14,940 (sell)
riel (Cambodia)	4,000
kip (Laos)	8,070
baht (Thailand)	36.70
renminbi (China)	8.27

Address of Global Directions (also publishers on e-mail of *Destination Vietnam*) is 116 Maiden Lane, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94109. Website: www.destinationvietnam.com

Bibliography—Books

Viet Cong: A Photographic Portrait by Edward Emering (National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum, Chicago). A remarkable archival accomplishment, page after page of photographs of “faceless Viet Cong.” With: brief history of the NLF; chapters on the two types of PLAF soldiers (main force [full military] and guerrillas [para military]); scenes of jungle life; weapons; medals and awards. Excellent contribution to the literature of the Vietnam War. Emering contact: PO Box 544125, Chicago, IL 60654. Published by Schiffer Military History, Atglen, PA \$39.95. (1999)

The Sacred Willow: Four Generations in the Life of a Vietnamese Family by Duong Van Mai Elliott (Viet kieu living in Southern California). Insight into the Vietnamese psyche comes best not through non-fiction or academic studies but through this peculiar kind of Vietnamese literary genre, intimate memoir mixed with social history. Because of the influences of Confucian reserve and Buddhist self-effacement the Vietnamese have trouble explaining themselves to the outside world. Best approach is method employed here. This ambitious 500-page account traces the author’s antecedents back four generations, from the time of royal tradition, through the French era, the subsequent two wars, to the U.S., married to an American academic. Throughout she weaves in contemporary history. Mai inherited from her forebears, especially her paternal grandfather, the critical temperament common to Vietnamese intellectuals and the inability to decide whether to join the world or retreat to an “island in the lake.” Her father faithfully served the French; her sister went with the Viet Minh in the jungle (both commendable logical choices at the time). Mai sided with, or at least wound up with the Americans. Recommended. (as a sidebar: it is interesting to note the mirror image employed by commentary on the dust jacket and in reviews: each contributor saying in effect Mai proves that “I am right in whatever it is that I have written all along

about the Vietnamese”) Oxford University Press, \$30. (1999)

Years of Renewal by Henry Kissinger (NSA advisor, Secretary of State in Nixon and Ford administrations). The third and final volume in a mammoth memoir, runs to 1,151 pages (the three total a whopping 3,900 pp); add to that Kissinger’s 900-page *Diplomacy* (1994). Long portions of this work devoted to Vietnam, wartime and afterwards, bottom line of which is that we snatched defeat out of the jaws of victory but we had no choice because we are a democracy. Throughout Kissinger strives to make it clear that he always meant to operate within a framework of moral authority, that he could never have done less given his formative years as a Jew in Nazi Germany. But he also learned early that moral authority in diplomacy and warfare is always contingent. Decisions turn on alternatives, usually on least worse choices. In the end he muses that his ultimate fate may be that all of his labors will vanish into thin air and he will be defeated by hostile contemporaries and indifferent historians. Simon and Schuster. \$35 (1999)

Introduction to Vietnamese Culture by Huynh Dinh Te (Folsom Cordova Unified School District, California). This is a little gem of an introduction to things Vietnamese. The reader will find it informative whether he/she be Vietnamese, Viet kieu, midwest school teacher, journalist or specialist. Briefly traces the physical and historical setting of Vietnamese culture; attitudes toward self; family and social relationships; language and body language; politics; economics; education; literature; art; philosophy. Ends with cautionary note: the Viet kieu in the U.S. daily are under continuous acculturation, so don’t over-generalize about them. Recommended. From Southeast Asian Culture and Education Foundation, 17212 Blue Fox Circle, Huntington Beach, CA 92647. \$15. (1996)

The Blood Road: The Ho Chi Minh Trail and the Vietnam War by John Prados (Military

historian and author, Takoma Park, MD). The Ho Chi Minh Trail this year is 50 years old and its anniversary is being celebrated in and out of Vietnam for what it was, an historical metaphor, a myth, and a major engineering accomplishment. In conceptual terms its godfather was Vo Nguyen Giap, a logistics general genius (and mediocre strategist) able to move men and supplies around the battlefield far faster than anyone had a right to expect. This work treats the Trail in strategic, tactical, socio-economic and ideological terms. Prados sets forth several deterministic theses: that the Trail could never have been cut; that China would have entered the war had Hanoi been in danger; that never could the war have been won. But it is probable this book will prove to be a seminal work on subject. (The Ho Chi Minh Trail is not like the Pennsylvania Turnpike, one chopper pilot radioed. It's like a plate of spaghetti.) Recommended. John Wiley and Sons. \$35. (1999)

Selected Vietnamese Proverbs (Tuc Ngu Viet Nam Chon Loc) by Huynh Dinh Le (Center for International Communications and Development, Oakland, CA). Proverbs represent the sum of peasant wisdom and are perhaps the most intriguing form of popular Vietnamese culture. They are pithy, cynical, funny. Listed here are 369 proverbs. They appear, in common, to be negative, suspicious, downturning. Some are simplistic: "cats scratch, dogs bite." Some are puzzling: "Where blood runs, there you find flies." A sampling: * "If you win, they call you king; if you lose they call you rebel." * "Avoid crabs with dark pincers; avoid women with dark lips." * "Listen to this my child: robbers are those who steal in the night. Those who steal in the daylight are called officials." * "The best thing to have is a male child. Next best is a doctorate." From the Center for International Communication and Development, P.O. Box 70845, Oakland, CA, 94612-0845. (1990)

Shield and Sword: The U.S. Navy and the Persian Gulf War by Edward Marolda and Robert Schneller (U.S. Naval Historical Center, Washington). An official history of Desert Storm. Scattered throughout are references to the Vietnam

War, including long passages on "lessons learned" and one chapter titled "Legacy of the Vietnam War." Authors seem to suggest that much of the Pentagon thinking about Vietnam was more an impediment than an aid in the Gulf. Well illustrated. From U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328. (1998)

War and Revolution in Vietnam, 1930-75 by Kevin Ruane (Canterbury Christ Church College, UK). A brief (121 page) treatment of a complex, still muzzy history. Characteristic of Brit scholarship it perceives system and order where others see only chaos. Old hands will find something to carp about in each of the seven chapters; for instance writing from Canterbury the author gives the Vietnamese, North and South, something of a short shrift. But, taken as a whole, this is a text that will do nicely for the undergraduate course on the war. One in a series of "introductions to history." From UCL Press Ltd., 1 Gunpowder Rd, London EC4A 3DE, UK or 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007-1598. (1998)

Zen in Medieval Vietnam: A Study and Translation of the Thien Uyen Tap Anh by Cuong Tu Nguyen (George Mason Univ., Fairfax, VA). A reevaluation of Vietnamese Buddhism focused on its so-called Zen tradition. Includes the original calligraphic 14th century text. With extensive bibliography. One in a series of the Kuroda Institute's Classics in East Asian Buddhism. Heavily footnoted with extensive bibliography of Vietnamese Buddhism. University of Hawaii Press. \$55. (1998)

We Remember: The Vietnam Stories of the Men of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, David and Marian Novak (eds.). A collection of articles, interspersed by photos, poems, short memoirs and similar memorabilia about the life, times and deaths of men of a marine unit in Vietnam (July 1965 to May 1971). They were there—at Con Thien, Co Nui and the Khe Sanh. For all the jokes about Marines as jugheads this collection demonstrates that they are, by and large, a highly literate group

and despite their gruff exterior, surprisingly sentimental. Extensively illustrated. Excellent reference source. Contact: Vietnam Veterans of 2/1, PO Box 4009, Westford, MA 01886 (Peter Meadows) 1993.

From Classrooms to Claymores: A Teacher at War in Vietnam by Ches Schneider (teacher, educational consultant, St. Louis area). And he writes like a teacher too, with great enthusiasm and deliberate butchery of English grammar. As the dust jacket says, this First Infantry Division grunt found in Vietnam a fantasy life of gunfire, blood, heat, and superhuman toil. Also "that all the books in the world couldn't teach him the first thing about Vietnam." (Not something a school teacher should admit.) A good read, as they say. Ballantine Books \$6.99. (1999)

Dead Center by Ed Kugler (now a management consultant in Spring, Texas). A Marine sniper's account of two years service in Vietnam. His tour found Kugler leading a five-man sniper team into deadly Co Bi-Thuan Tan Valley. Says what counts for a sniper is patience, marksmanship, bush skills and guts. Ballantine Books, \$6.99. (1999)

Resolving Regional Conflicts, Roger Kanet (University of Miami), ed. Twelve scholars analyze conflict in the post Cold War world. What we can expect in the future, they say, is the regionalization of international security, meaning communal strife, tribalism, anarchy. Three of the ten chapters are comparative studies: Cambodia and Somalia; Cambodia and Yugoslavia; and Cambodia and El Salvador. Comparativists tend to hammer square pegs into round holes. Univ. of Illinois Press, \$39.95 (hardcover), \$21.95 (paperback). (1998)

Man of the River by Jimmy Bryant (chief petty officer on a PBR [patrol boat, river] in Vietnam, 1968-69). A memoir intended to honor the men who did river patrol duty in the Mekong Delta where the waterways are the main arteries of traffic. The Mobil Riverine Force's mission was to interdict the flow of enemy men and materials. Daytime duty consisted largely of boarding and

searching the river's sampan traffic. At night the PBRs drifted down stream, beached silently at suspected guerrilla crossing points, and set up ambushes. The story of one man's experiences. Sergeant Kirkland's Press, Fredericksburg, VA, \$6.95. (1998)

Shadows and Wind by Robert Templer (AFP correspondent, Hanoi; now visiting scholar at Univ. of California, Berkeley). Superb reportage on the politics and culture in today's Vietnam. Chronicles the lives of dissidents Hoang Minh Chinh and Bui Tinh; a Buddhist bonze in self-immolation; Roman Catholic church's maneuvers with the regime; also the spreading AIDS epidemic. Contains a romantic chapter on Hanoi and its hidden history. Sophisticated writing, insightful, cynical. Templar is pure French. Recommended. Little Brown, London, £18.99; to be published in U.S. by Viking-Penguin. (1999)

A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam by Lewis Sorley (West Point trained military historian living in Washington, DC). A history of the final wind-down (if that be the term) of the Vietnam War. Sorley argues it was actually three wars (all of them going well): against the VC, against Hanoi, against the anarchy in the South (through the accelerated pacification program). There was, after Tet '68, a new allied strategy and a new command--in short, a wholly better war (at which point the cause could no longer be sustained). Blame for this rests entirely on the Congress and the U.S. anti-war establishment (in the mass media, academy, liberal intellectual community). Sorley establishes his attack thesis firmly, defends it well. Those who say nay are obliged to refute him point by point. Recommended. Harcourt Brace & Co., \$28. (1999)

Lyndon Johnson's War: America's Cold War Crusade in Vietnam, 1945-68 by Michael Hunt (Univ. of North Carolina). Something of a slash and burn historical revision of Washington's lead up to, and the intervention in Vietnam. Major conclusion seems to be that the U.S. was too ethnocentric (or at least LBJ, McNamera, and

company were). Hill and Wang, New York, \$11. (1999)

Through the Valley: Vietnam 1967-68 by James Humphries (USA, ret., in Vietnam with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade). An account of warfare up the mountain chain in Vietnam—at Hiep Duc, Hill 406 and Nhi Ha—medium sized battles that challenged Gen. Giap's "coordinated fighting" methods in his 1967-68 three stage winter-spring campaign. By the Americal Division and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. Humphries draws on interviews with some 50 troopers who were there and on his own combat experiences. Highly readable work. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder Colorado, \$49.95. (1999)

The Vietnam War: Its History, Literature and Music, Kenton Clymer (ed.). Cultural history of the era: historical trends, literary interpretations, roles of Vietnamese and American women. Texas Western Press, \$15. (1999)

Cambodia Silenced: The Press Under Six Regimes by Harish Mehta. History of the mass media in Cambodia from the 1930s to date. Newsmen got rough treatment from the ruling authoritarian regimes, hence Cambodian journalism always has been a dangerous profession. The author opines that those rulers in Cambodia who deny press freedom do not govern well, nor for long. White Lotus Press, Bangkok, \$27.50. (1997)

Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and the Causes of War by Stephen Morris. Analysis of Hanoi's war against the Pol Pot regime which began Christmas Day 1978—the first extended war anywhere between two communist regimes. Cultural and historical factors account for the struggle, as much as does ideology, Morris finds. Stanford Univ. Press, \$45 (hardcover), \$16.95 (paperback). (1999)

Vietnam Joins the World, James Morley and Masashi Nishihara (eds.). Ten essays by American Japanologists and Japan researchers and scholars who whip up a meal offering rich substance and thin gruel. The Japanese to a person

seem to view Vietnam (and Vietnam-US relations) through a monocle prism. Some good entries (Donald Zagoria, Frederick Brown) some puzzling (Tatsumi Okaabe on motivations that drive Vietnamese relations with Russia and China). The Japanese entries in general tell us more about Japanese foreign policy than they do about the subject at hand. M.E. Sharpe, \$58.95. (1997)

Why the Senate Slept: The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and the Beginning of America's Vietnam War by Ezra Siff (attorney). The U.S. Senate allowed the Executive Branch (Bundy and McNamara, chiefly it would seem) to launch a major war on its own initiative. Implies the Senate slept because it did not want to be awakened. Does suggest it is no easy task to fix responsibility in Washington when things go wrong. Blame the system or blame the senators. Praeger Publishers, \$49.95. (1999)

Clashes: Air Combat Over North Vietnam 1965-1972 by Marshal Michael. Details what the author strongly believes: that shortcomings in training U.S. pilots for the Vietnam War, produced deficiencies which led to poor performance. Applies to both USAF and US Navy fliers. Hard hitting. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, \$26.36. (1999)

Health and Wealth in Vietnam: An Analysis of Household Living Standards. Dominique Haughton, et al. (eds.). Fourteen chapters on family life based on the rural Vietnam Living Standards Survey. Researchers asked who are the poor and why are they poor? Which children get the best health care? Who uses contraceptives? Which families migrate, etc? Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. \$32 plus \$9 postage. (1999)

Lost Crusade: America's Secret Cambodian Mercenaries by Peter Scott (Ohio prep school teacher). They were not exactly secret, just largely unknown outside the war zone, those Cambodian (or Kampuchean) Khmer Kron (or KKK). Six thousand guerrillas who fought the Viet Cong in the marshlands along the lower

Vietnam/Cambodia border. Scott acted as advisor in 1968. Went back later to do research. Valuable work on a chapter of the Vietnam War that suffers from sparse literature. The history is well told. Brandywine Press, Waterbury, CT, \$27.95. (1998)

The Siege at Hue by George Smith (AP writer, Hartford Conn.). It was not just the U.S. Marines at Hue in Tet 1968. The ARVN First Division was there defending the Citadel with Smith as military advisor. Describes the First Division in action, also on what he learned later, the execution of 3,000 Hue civilians by the Viet Cong. Lynne Rienner Publisher, (Boulder, CO), \$49.95. (1999)

Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam by Frank Logevall (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara). A critical essay. The U.S. and its leaders, from Kennedy onwards, should have known better than to intervene in Vietnam—our “lost chance” was to not get involved in the first place. Having gotten in we should have known better than to escalate. Thanks a lot. Univ. of California Press, \$35. (1999)

A Road Map to War: Territorial Dimensions of International Conflict by Paul Diehl (geographer). On the role that territory plays in the origin, evolution, escalation, and resolution of wars. For use with the Spratlys and the forthcoming war between Vietnam and China. Vanderbilt Univ. Press, \$49.95 (hardback), \$21.95 (paperback). (1999)

The Turning: History of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War by Andrew Hunt (Univ. of Waterloo, Canada). Story of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), which Hunt sees as misunderstood by all political factions. He credits them with making a major contribution in mobilizing U.S. public opinion. Based on extensive interviews. NYU Press, \$35. (1999)

Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle Over Military Strategy, 1700 to the Present by Michael Pearlman (USA Command and

General Staff College). Purports to be the first comprehensive history of the making of war by Americans in the political (or socio-political) context. Every war, from colonial times through Vietnam to Desert Storm, has been subject to bargaining and compromising between competing governmental and military factions. Always the problem has been to devise winning strategies in the face of internal divisiveness—among political parties, between the President and the Congress, between elected representatives and hired bureaucrats, and between civilians and military. If nothing else this work forcefully demonstrates the grim complexity of making national security policy in a democracy. Univ. of Kansas Press, \$45. (1999)

Vietnam's Social and Political Development as Seen Through the Modern Novel by Hoang Ngoc Thanh (formerly Saigon Univ., now living in San Jose). Novel in Vietnam came of age in the 1920s. It reflected influences of the French class system and Vietnamese intellectual resistance. Treats long fiction in the DRV as well as in the South. Peter Lang Publishing, 275 7th Ave., N.Y., NY, \$54.95. (1991)

Military Geography for Professionals and the Public by John Collins. National Defense Univ. Press, Washington. (1998)

Radio Hole-in-the-Head—Radio Liberty: An Insider's Story of Cold War Broadcasting by James Critchlow. The CIA at the microphone. American Univ. Press, \$47.50. (1995)

War and the World: Military Power and the Fate of Continents, 1450-2000 by Jeremy Black. Yale University Press, \$35. (1998)

Cool Words, Cold War: A New Look at USIA's Premises of Propaganda, (2nd ed.) by Agnes and Leo Bogart. American Univ. Press, \$28. (1995)

Nhung Cau Chuyen Viet Su (Vietnam History Stories) by Tran Gia Phung (former Da Nang school teacher now living in Canada).

Fourteen brief accounts from 19th and 20th century Vietnamese history. Tran Gia Phung Publishers, Toronto, \$12. (1997)

Nhung Ngay Cuoi Cung cua Tong Thong Ngo Dinh Diem (Last Days of President Ngo Dinh Diem) by Hoang Ngoc Thanh (ex-GVN University professor) and Than Thi Minh Duc (former high school teacher in South Vietnam; now living in U.S.). Sympathetic treatment of Diem government. Puts the chief blame on the U.S. for the *coup d'etat* which deposed him. San Jose, California, \$25. (1996)

Trung Ty Dan Bien-1908 (Revolt in Central Vietnam 1908) by Tran Gia Thung (former school teacher in Danang; now living in Canada). History of the Vietnamese revolt against the French colonial tax system, which began in Quang Nam province and spread throughout the Center during the spring of 1908. Non Nuoc Publishing, \$12. (1997)

Nhung Bi An Lich Su Duoi Che Do Ngo Dinh Diem (Secrets of Ngo Dinh Diem Regime) by Le Trong Van (one-time associate of Ngo Dinh Nhu). Lurid account of GVN security police activities against political opposition: Pham Cong Tac, leader of Cao Dai sect; Ho Han Son, Cao Dai sect political strategist; Nguyen Bao Toan; and Vu Tam Anh, commander-in-chief of the 4th Division of the Revolutionary People's Army against the French Colonists. Me Viet Nam, San Diego, CA, \$16. (1989)

Nhung Cuoc Dao Chanh Cung Dinh Viet Nam (Coups d'Etat in Vietnam's Royal Palaces) by Tran Gia Phung (former history teacher in Danang; now living in Toronto). Accounts of palace coups d'etat in Vietnam from Chu Toan Trung against his elder brother, Chu Toan Duc, in 892 AD to the last one by Ton That Thuyet and Nguyen Van Tuong to overthrow King Ham Nghi of the Nguyen dynasty in 1885. Nha Xuat Ban Non Nuoc Publisher, Toronto, Canada, \$15. (1998)

Merchants & Migrants: Ethnicity and Trade Among Yunnanese Chinese in Southeast Asia by Ann Maxwell Hill (Univ. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign). Traces pre-modern Yunnanese

Chinese trade and analyzes its effect on the cultures it touched. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, \$32 (cloth), \$20 (paper). (1998)

Abia South and Southeast Asian Art and Archaeology Index, Vol. I by Karel R. van Kooij (ed.). Contains over 1,300 annotated bibliography entries (monographs, periodicals, and articles). Useful indexes included. Columbia University Press, New York, \$161.50. (1999)

Knowing Your Friends: Intelligence Alliances and Coalitions from 1914 to the Cold War by Martin Alexander, (ed.). Frank Cass Publishers, \$22.50. (1998)

The Nanhai Trade: The Early History of Chinese Trade in the South China Sea by Wang Gungwu (ISEAS, Singapore). A history of early Chinese trade with Southeast Asia (known to the Chinese as the Nanhai trade), 111 B.C. to 960 A.D. Times Academic Press, Singapore, \$29. (1998)

The ARVN Ranger by Nieu D. Vu (ed.) (former ARVN Ranger now living in Dallas). A tribute to what probably was the top gun elite of the South Vietnamese military. By one of their own. Scrapbook format: unit histories, essays, accounts of battles fought, tribute to the legendary Brig. Gen. Tran Van Hai. Also photos, maps, medals, patches. A work of love and respect. Recommended. Tu Quynh Books (published privately), Dallas, TX, \$15. (1998)

Technology and the 21st Century Battlefield: Recomplicating Moral Life for the Statesman and the Soldier by Charles Dunlap (9th AFJAC). A monograph on the complexities of future warfare and how moral complexities will complicate lives of soldier and statesman. U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. (1999)

Little Daisy by Mai Nguyen (Viet kieu author). Novel whose protagonist represents the soul of the Amerasian. Addresses many of the events in Mai's life. One of those writings that conveys more than a good story—it offers insight into the Vietnamese psyche. Published privately.

Available from author at 565 Canyon Vista Dr., Newbury Park, CA 91320, \$16. (1993)

The Stuff of Heroes by William Cohen (MG, USAFR, ret.). Lists eight "universal laws of leadership." Says the effective leader on the battlefield can become an effective leader in the civilian world. These laws are: 1) Maintain absolute integrity, 2) Know your stuff, 3) Declare your expectations, 4) Show uncommon commitment, 5) Expect positive results, 6) Take care of your people, 7) Put duty before self, and 8) Get out in front. Longstreet Press, Marietta, GA, \$24. (1998)

Authority Relations and Economic Decision-Making in Vietnam: Historical Perspective by Dang Phong (Hanoi University of Business and Management) and Melanie Beresford (Macquarie Univ., Sydney). Being a Confucian society, Vietnam's governance remains remarkably Confucian despite the Marxist, Leninist and Maoist influences. Schematically, rule in Vietnam is a based pyramid: (the State) inside which is a narrow based pyramid (the Party), the whole sliced horizontally by committees (the Politburo at the top, the People's committees at the rice roots level). At each committee level there are a mix of Party and non-Party people and the job of the Party members is to influence the committee to support policies handed down from the top. This brief work traces the early history of these two institutions; efforts to reform them; hopes for some sort of transformation, possibly built around the National Assembly. Interesting sections on factionalism in politics, operational code of the Politburo, the utter significance importance in the midst of all the importance of legitimacy (although there is a tendency to equate legitimacy with prestige and authority). Authors seem to see the present system as being more pluralistic than others would credit. (1998)

Beyond Nam Dong by Roger Donlon (U.S. Army Colonel, ret.). Autobiography by the first American soldier of the Vietnam War to be awarded the Medal of Honor. As CO of the Special Forces Detachment A-726, Donlon led his 12-man team in

defense of the highland outpost at Camp Nam Dong, July 6, 1964. What did it, he says, was teamwork. Later Donlon married a young widow, still later returned to Vietnam on humanitarian missions. He now is with the Westmoreland Scholarship Foundation. Forward by General William Westmoreland. Roon Publishers, Fort Leavenworth, KS, \$24.95. (1998)

Regional Outlook: Southeast Asia 1999-2000, Daljit Singh and Tin Maung That (eds.). Annual roundup of regional events in Southeast Asia. In a somewhat new format: two general parts, political and economic, each divided into two sections: ASEAN and Indochina and Myanmar. Indochina sections by Milton Osborne, Nick Freeman, David Steinberg, Carlyle Thayer, Mya Than, Myat Thein and Carolyn Gates. Judgement on political change and economic improvement in Vietnam seems to be one of cautious optimism. With extensive statistical data in Appendix. As usual, well done and invaluable source of research data. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, \$19 (U.S.), \$29.92 (Singapore). (1999)

From Post-Maoism to Post Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology in Deng's China by Kalpana Misra (University of Tulsa). This book addresses one of the most significant paradoxes of Deng Xiaoping's China: the decline of the regime's legitimacy during a period of high levels of economic growth, relaxation of state controls, intellectual pluralism, and a flowering of artistic and literary creativity. Misra analyzes the intra-Party debate that failed to produce an ideological justification for the dramatic changes. With a ten page chronology of key events from Mao's death in 1976 to Deng's death in 1997. Routledge, New York, \$21.99 (paperback). (1998)

Nota Bene:

Arnold Issac's fine intellectualized assessment of the Indochina War, *Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia*, is now available in paperback. Johns Hopkins University Press, \$17.95.

Bibliography: Periodicals

“War, Culture, and the Interpretation of History: The Vietnam War Reconsidered” by Wray Johnson in *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 9:2, Autumn 1998. Author has turned over a library of Vietnam War histories and produced an intellectual history of his own. Everyone who was anybody (and others who were not) are quoted. He begins with a long section on definitions and terminologies; moves on to competing military ethos (ways of war); then to the cultural differences and thought processes, Vietnamese and American; and finally to retrospective views of the war and some conclusions (chief of which appears to be that the Americans were excessively pig-headed in thinking about the war). Throughout he deals with competing perceptions, seems to favor the critics slightly, but clearly has a deep grasp of the nature and dimension of the war. Despite its somewhat smug tone of superiority, this is solid scholarship deserving to be read by all Vietnam War historians.

“Pailin Cambodia: A Place Time Forgot” by David Lamb (foreign correspondent) *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1999. A political report from the boondocks. Khmer Rouge leaders, their dreams and reputations spent, have turned this malaria-wracked, mile-high frontier town into a retirement community. No power lines running in, no phones. They reminisce with each other, offer no apologies for their “dark years” behavior to those few visitors who make the 13-hour bone-jarring drive in from civilization, appear only to want (or hope) to be left alone. All in Pailin suffer from selective amnesia, reports Lamb.

“Courage and Blood: South Vietnam’s Repulse of the 1972 Easter Offensive Invasion” by Lewis Sorley (military historian and biographer) in *Parameters*, Summer 1999. Slowly but steadily the effort goes on to rectify the record and rescue the reputation of the South Vietnamese soldier, those so casually trashed by the ignorant commercial television reporter and the academic left-winger bent on some ideological mission. Sorley’s writings

amount to historical revisionsim and he is a sturdy yoeman plowing this particular patch.

“The South China Sea: Crossroads of Asia” by Tracy Dahlby (text) and Michael Yamashita (photos) (both staffers) in *National Geographic*, Dec. 1998. Superb report on the politics and economics of the arc of countries that runs from China to Singapore, back up to Taiwan. Captures the incredible beauty of the place; describes the depletion of what only recently was one of the world’s most abundant fisheries; details anxieties of all over whether China will be enlightened or become a political heavy?

“The ‘New’ Law and Development Movement in the Post-Cold War Era: A Vietnam Case Study” by Carl Rose (Harvard Univ.). What does introduction of rule of law do to economic reform and political change in Vietnam? What it does is to exacerbate social and economic disparities. Focus in this case history is on the first decade of change in Vietnam’s legal culture brought on by *doi-moi* (renovation), such as reinforcing authoritarianism; inducing ethnocentrism (and backlash to same); inoculating a neo-liberal market hegemony (seen as imperialism); and establishing “essentialization” (imposing a “reified identity”). Conclusion reads like a legal brief. There is much one can learn from this work. But to quote Mark Twain, it is one of those articles that, once you put it down, it is hard to pick up. In *Law and Society*, 32:1, 1998.

“India’s Southeast Asia Policy in the 1980s and 1990s: Contrasting Shades in Foreign Policy Priorities” by Tridib Chakraborti (Jadavpuri Univ., Calcutta). India’s recent relations with Southeast Asia and Indochina have been orientated toward economic problems and opportunities. But these are consistently complicated by the pulls and hauls of ASEAN; by the disintegration of the USSR; and by the Cambodian peace process. All in all it has been a hard road to travel. In *Jadavpuri Journal of International Relations*, Vol. I (1995).

“Jane Fonda is More a Traitor than a Hero” by Jeff Jacoby (staff member) in *The Boston Globe*, June 17, 1999. A strongly expressed editorial protest over the upcoming honor to be awarded the Hollywood actress and aerobics queen by the Association of American University Women. The AAUW biography is without balance: it does not note Jane’s praise for Jim Jones and his Guyana suicide cult (“the church I most admire”); nor her embrace of the PAVN AAA guns in Hanoi while urging GIs to desert; nor her comment when the American POWs finally came home (“hypocrites and liars”); nor her after-the-war denunciation of Joan Baez for criticizing Hanoi human rights violations. What seems to stick in Jacoby’s craw most is that Fonda has gotten away with it all, has never paid a price, never said sorry (Fonda did tell Barbara Walters that she had on occasion “been thoughtless and careless”).

“High Priests of Journalism: Truth, Morality and the Media” by Richard Lowry (*National Review*). A candid, highly insightful discussion of the American mass media by one of their own (Lowry rose quickly from editor of his college newspaper to editor-in-chief of the *National Review* (at age 29). “Today reporters are ill-dressed annoying types who think of themselves as high priests of the journalism profession,” he says. He takes particular exception to television handling of news (citing a newspaper-sponsored TV broadcast in which two women asked to resolve the contradiction between their condemnation of President Clinton’s perjury and their belief he shouldn’t be impeached, broke down in tears and left the room). “Soft” news features such as these, says Lowry, create an atmosphere making it difficult for a viewer to make sound moral judgements. In *Imprints*, June 1999. From Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, MI 49242.

“Toss the Menu” by Annabel Jackson (food writer) in *FEER*, April 1, 1999. When in the ancient Central Vietnam town of Hoi An, the place to eat is Restaurant du Port. Order the local specialty, *cao lau*: herbed, sliced pork on a bed of thick rice noodles. Also, try the trout with lemon

grass in banana leaf. Address: 70 Bach Dang St.; Tel: 84 510 861786.

“Softly, Softly” by Ben Dolven and Lorien Holland (staffers) and “China’s Gentler Face” by Rigoberto Tiglao. Through quiet diplomacy and economic clout, China has been expanding its influence in Southeast Asia, but its ASEAN accommodation carries strategic risks. The Tiglao piece is an interview with China’s ambassador to the Philippines, Fu Ying, and deals mostly with the Spratly Archipelago: Scarborough shoal and the (well named) Mischief Reef. She parries all questions with “What problem?” *FEER*, April 1, 1999.

“Publishing His Way: Rejection Couldn’t Stop B.G. Burkett from Printing His Vietnam Findings” by Stephen Michaud (free-lance writer, Dallas) in *Dallas Morning News*, June 22, 1999. Burkett is a Vietnam veteran and successful stockbroker. He produced a manuscript titled *Stolen Valor: How a Generation Was Robbed of Its Heroes and Its History*. He couldn’t get it published. “I had two choices, editors wanted changes, for instance to cut the page count in half. I felt I had to do it my way or not at all,” he said. Five years and a quarter of a million dollars later, he had a mountain of self-published unsold copies. Burkett found out what other authors have learned the hard way: you can publish yourself but your big problem will be distribution, marketing; learned also the way to sell a book is to create a disturbance about it: get on the David Letterman show and you are guaranteed to sell enough books to recover your investment. Book is \$36.95.

“Differing Evaluation of Vietnamization” by Scott Sigmund Gartner in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Autumn 1998. Vietnamization sought three objectives: “(1) to decrease the rate of U.S. losses; (2) to decrease lethality, or risk of death, for Americans serving in Vietnam; and (3) to make ARVN the primary combatant against the communists.” Scholars continue to debate the effectiveness of Vietnamization in achieving these objectives. This article says look carefully at both sides of the

debate, study all aspects of the data before fashioning a conclusion.

“China and the Issues of Postwar Indochina in the Second World War” by Xiaoyuan Liu (Potsdam College, SUNY) in *Modern Asian Studies*, 33: 2, 1999. Fairly extended history of China’s foreign relations, a time, as the author says, of radical metamorphosis. China emerged from its involuntary diplomatic isolation seeking to throw off its semi-colonial status under Chiang Kai-Shek. Then came the take over by Mao Zedong. President Roosevelt saw China as a surrogate in fixing Vietnam; China saw itself a primary partner.” At the Cairo summit (1944) Chiang told his associates he had invited Roosevelt to join him in making declaration to support independence for Vietnam. But the president, according to Chiang, cavalierly dismissed the idea with a laugh. The American side kept no minutes of the discussion. After the conference, President Roosevelt claimed that Chiang ‘whole-heartedly supported’ his Indochina policy. He would repeat the same story many times. He was in reality repeating word for word his own speech delivered at a Pacific War Council meeting that took place a few months before the Cairo Conference.”

“Opposing Negotiations: China and the Vietnam Peace Talks: 1965-1968” by Quang Zhai (Auburn Univ.) in *Pacific Historical Review*, 68: 1, 1999. A useful follow-on to the article on China and Vietnam during World War II. This work examines the meaning of the Vietnam War, once it got going full steam, for the leadership in Beijing. Focuses on Chinese attitudes towards the idea of a political settlement, a complex issue for Beijing. China at this time was in transformation, from a regional power which wanted the U.S. out of Vietnam to a global power in which it wanted the U.S. to stay as part of its effort to balance power with the USSR.

“Whither Vietnam?” by Ton That Thien (ex-GVN Min. of Ed., Saigon journalist, now living in Canada). Three-part essay on Vietnamese leadership in terms of public opinion and Vietnam’s diplomatic position. The leadership Thien finds is

hardline authoritarian, often goes against public will, and that, in the long run this governance cannot be sustained. A highly knowledgeable work, valuable for its insights on the leadership system in Hanoi. In *Nhan Quyen* No. 48, Spring 1999. Address: 477 Decarie, St. Laurent H4L 3L1 P.Q. Abonnement, 24 Canada. U.S. phone: (714) 972-1180; fax: (714) 962-1180.

“The Indochinese Elderly: An Emerging Problem” by Tran Minh Tung (psychiatrist, former GVN Min. of Health, now living in California). Getting old is no fun, even less so for the elderly Viet *kieu* in the U.S. Isolation, inactivity, dependency, depression—all universal symptoms—for them are more intense and complex. There are some semi-answers: relocation, community organized activities, medicines. In *Nhan Quyen* No. 48, Spring 1999 (address above).

“Academe Needs More Leaders of Asian-Pacific Heritage” by Roy Saigo (Auburn Univ.). The U.S. has 2,294 four-year colleges and universities and that number of presidents. There should be (if a quota existed) 92 of these as top dogs, in fact there are 13. Statistics for the University of California system are even worse (22 campuses, 276,054 undergraduates, 19.5% of them Asian-Pacificans, one president). Basic reason, Saigo (Japanese-American) suggests, is that mass media subconsciously fosters an image that only Americans of European descent are “real” Americans. Question is: are Asian-Pacificans being discriminated against or only being overlooked? In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 23, 1999.

“Shaped by War and Genocide: Indochina Today” by Andrea Schiffrin (New Press). “As a publisher,” she writes “I was especially curious to see what kind of intellectual life can prosper in an area still so impoverished and divided.” Everywhere she turned, cultural shock. Especially in the book stores: “filled with glossy Vietnamese language editions of John Grisham’s works, but even friendly analysis of the country’s problems are forbidden...nowhere could we find Gabriel Kolko’s 1997 *Vietnam Anatomy of a Peace*, a searing

critique of the current government.” “The issue is not money, the bars and restaurants are overflowing.” In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 14, 1999.

“America’s Lies Uncovered” BBC London report (and interview), June 23, 1999 (on the Internet). B.G. Burkett, Dallas stockbroker, has declared war on the phony Vietnam War veteran in the U.S. A few years ago, he began checking the military records of persons claiming in the media to have served in the war. He found 75% to be fakes. They lie, he says, to bolster their image. Thousands have duped the Veterans Administration and are drawing pensions. He cites as worst case the Joe Yandle story, a prisoner doing a life sentence for murder who fabricated a vet legend, sold it to the media, triggered a widespread campaign to free him. It succeeded and he walked out of prison, later admitted (on television) it had all been a scam.

“Defeat of French Still Resonates” by Paul Alexander (AP Hanoi). Vietnamese veterans who fought at Dien Bien Phu gather to commemorate the 45th anniversary of their famous victory over French forces. Alexander recapitulates the history of the battle as they remember it. “They underestimated us,” says Lt. Gen. Vu Xuan Vinh, at the time a regional commander of the Viet Minh 308 Division Good, accurate recap of the battle.

“Environmental Pollution around the South China Sea: Developing a Regional Response” by David Rosenberg (Middlebury College, Vermont). The South China Sea is the world’s busiest lane surrounded by rapidly industrializing countries; it is also a sink for regional environmental pollution. Countries bordering are more concerned with maximizing national economic growth and ensuring adequate energy supplies than in preserving maritime environment. They have staked often conflicting territorial claims to areas with potential oil and natural gas reserves. This article examines the phenomenon of smoke haze, its short-term and long-term causes and consequences, and the institutional responses to it. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 21:1, April 1999.

News of the Field

Vietnam Virtual Library. From Ron Frankum of the Texas Tech Vietnam Archive comes this report on a recommend research scene. The Vietnam Virtual Library is one of the oldest catalogs on the web. It is non-commercial and run by a loose confederation of volunteers, who compile pages of key links for particular areas in which they have expertise. Individual indexes live on hundreds of different servers around the world. A set of catalog pages linking these pages is maintained at <http://vlib.org>. Mirrors of the catalog are kept at Penn State University (USA), East Anglia (UK), Geneva (Switzerland), and in Argentina. Each maintainer is responsible for the content of his own pages, as long as they follow certain guidelines. The central catalog pages are maintained by Gerard Manning. A database of VL sections and their maintainers is kept by Alan Thornhill and Jennifer Drummond, who also maintain the VL mailing lists. The VL was first conceived and run by Tim Berners-Lee, and later expanded, organized and managed for several years by Arthur Secret. An ad hoc committee currently is working to create a formal structure for the Virtual Library, with a coordinating committee and bylaws. If you maintain a site you would like to have listed in the Virtual Library, contact the maintainer of the appropriate VL section, not the catalog maintainer.

VNA on the Web. On April 15 the Vietnam News Agency began offering various news services on its website: www.vnagency.com.vn. Available gratis daily are a budget of news stories and news photos on economic, political, cultural and social subjects. Subscriptions can be ordered from the *VNA Daily Bulletin* (English, French, Spanish); the *World News Daily Bulletin*, the *Domestic News Bulletin*, from *Vietnam* and *World Economic News* (Econet News in English or Vietnamese); the VNA Photo service (captions in English or Vietnamese). Subscription cost per service: US\$8 per month; (D50,000 per month domestic. Five other flash bulletin services are available in Vietnamese. All of this is via the Web; service also available via fax.

Bowers Face-off. Viet kieu activists in Orange County, CA, flexed their muscles again in June, this time against an exhibition of art from Vietnam. While it paled in comparison with the size and intensity of the protests over display of Ho Chi Minh's picture and the SRV flag at a shop in Westminster in February-March (see IC XVIII-1, Jan.-Apr., pp.34-5), it may, in an indirect way, have been a continuation of them.

Titled "A Winding River: The Journey of Contemporary Art in Vietnam", the show was organized by Meridian International Center (Wash., DC) as a cultural exchange with Vietnam, the first since diplomatic relations were established in 1995. It first opened in late 1997 in Washington and had been shown in six U.S. cities (where heated response also erupted) before opening June 26 at the Bowers Museum of Cultural Art in Santa Ana.

Selection of the mixed media works (about 75) was by a group of five independent scholars, at least three of them Americans. Most of the paintings were collected about three years ago in Vietnam from small galleries and individual artists; about a quarter of them are on loan, e.g., the Singapore Museum of Art.

After meetings with worried Vietnamese-American community leaders, museum officials, who doubtless feared a Westminster replay, said they would remove one painting ("Young Woman Forging Steel") and consider removing a few others (any depicting subjects in military uniform). They said they only wanted to be sensitive to the community.

But two days before the show was to open (June 26), Executive Director Peter Keller, besieged by protests from those who insisted on their right to see the entire exhibition, reversed the decision. About 70 people picketed the Bowers the day before the opening, and on Sunday (June 27) that number had doubled.

Critics claim the art advocates the communist cause, even if this is implicit. Van Thai Tran, a Westminster lawyer, said "the art itself is not the problem. It's the intent here. . .that Vietnam is a country that is flourishing in free expression of art and culture is a big lie." And Do Trong Duc, president of the Vietnamese Community of Southern California, also in Westminster, said

people were concerned that the paintings would portray Vietnam as a "peaceful, healthy society," and "that's not a true image."

Reminders or symbols of North Vietnam during the war or the SRV of today arouse strong emotions among the Viet kieu, especially in areas such as Orange County and San Jose, Calif., where there are large concentrations of Vietnamese who fled their country. They suffered and they are not yet ready to say, "let's put it all behind us."

But these communities are divided over attitudes toward present-day Vietnam. Many Viet kieu wish to move ahead toward a new, if tentative, relationship with Vietnam, and most of the young appear anxious to leave the war as a distant memory, even though they sympathize with their parents' pain and anger.

The attitude of the community leaders enraged some Vietnamese. Vivian Le Tran writes on the Internet: "When an opportunity such as the Bowers art exhibit presents itself, we should embrace it. Why should we deny ourselves beautiful expressions of Vietnamese art and culture? She called the protests pathetic and childish. Protesting this art exhibit, we bite ourselves in the butt. It's just as bad as living under communism."

Hong-Phong Pho agreed. "It is indeed unreasonable for people living in a free and open society to try to tuck away from view any artistic expression in order to prevent others from seeing them and be 'misinformed' by them."

Several people who viewed the exhibition on opening day said they saw nothing political in the pictures, but they noted the effect of the protestors political efforts: free publicity and controversy that will surely increase attendance at the show, which runs through October 3.

A more sophisticated view was set forth in the LA Times by Scarlet Cheng, formerly managing editor of Asian Art News in Hong Kong, who said that "if anything, the exhibition is to be faulted for some rather mediocre selections, as well as an overemphasis on the pastoral and the quaint." (Orange County Register, Los Angeles Times, June 8-28 passim).

Papers Received

“U.N. Development Program Annual Report on Vietnam Executive Summary,” January 1999. Cautious assessment of recent political and economic trends in Vietnam; and detailed descriptions of U.N. assistance programs. Also: “Vietnam Consultative Group Forum Informal Mid-Year Review,” June 13-15, 1999. Focus on national strategic planning; financing and governance promoting partnerships; strengthening capacity, building public administration reform; poverty reduction, and improving the availability of quality of information. From UNDP office, Hanoi.

“Statement on U.S. trade with Vietnam” by Do Hoang Diem (Co-Chairman of the Coalition Against the Jackson-Vanik Waiver before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means, Sub-committee on Trade (June 16, 1999). Also present was Nguyen Dinh Thang, Boat People SOS) Diem’s statement: “I believe that free trade does not mean trade at any cost and without conditions. In the case of Vietnam, certain conditions must be met in order for meaningful, long lasting trade relations to develop. The guiding principle of our country has always been cooperating and partnering with free government, free country where human rights and values are respected. Let’s not betray that principle by making Vietnam an exception.”

“The Gap Between the American Society and Its Military: Keep It, Defend It, Manage It” by John Hillen (Council on Foreign Relations, Olin Fellow). Paper read at an American Bar Association Meeting, Washington, Nov. 11, 1998. On the eternal gap between American military and civilian policy makers (and beyond them, the American public). Opinions and attitudes, are different but not separate. What to do about it.

“The Comintern and Vietnam” by Anatoli Sokolov (Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow) (July 1998). Brief paper on the training of Vietnamese students and cadres in Soviet

universities in the 1920s and 1930s. Sokolov is one of Russia’s best and most reliable authorities on Vietnam. Paper can be viewed at Vietnam Archive, Texas Tech University.

“Testimony of Ralph L. Boyce, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs, before Senate Foreign Relation Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, March 9, 1999.” The Department’s view of Cambodia, present condition, future hopes. Not a pretty picture.

“The Dynamics of Internal Migration in Vietnam: Conclusions and Recommendations” by Philip Guest, a UNDP Discussion Paper, Dec. 1998. Guest addresses Hanoi’s long running, much maligned population relocation program—denounced by some as slave labor gulags; defended by officials as a needed economic move and common in the region (often citing the Indonesian example). Paper seek to offer suggestions for making the program better understood, more palatable. From UNDP Public Publications, Hanoi and Washington.

“World Bank Reports on Vietnam’s Economic Infrastructure” on the World Bank Web Site, May 3, 1999. Why the physical infrastructure in Vietnam is weak (it has been starved for too long) and what can be done about it (no easy task; first step, develop a strategy). Also on the World Bank Web Site (May 3, 1999) is “World Bank Report on Vietnam Development” produced by the Bank’s Assistance Strategy team. Lessons learned recently and suggested Bank assistance strategy, from here to Year 2002.

Works from Jim Banerian, poet, translator, author of *Losers Are Pirates*, highly respected figure in the Viet *kieu* community in the U.S. He lives in the San Diego country enclave of 25,000 Vietnamese and Vietnamese-Chinese and 25,000 Lao, Khmer and Hmong. Recent works:

*“Fragmentation in the Vietnamese Community: Some observations and Recommendations for Change”. Paper presented at Vietnamese-American educational conference, April 1998. Commentary on disunity among Viet *kieu* including original causes; case history of rise and fall of model Vietnamese community; suggestions of ways the Viet *kieu* can become more unified, cooperative.

*“The Challenges Facing the Young Indochinese in America.” On the special problems of the Viet *kieu* young: identifying their leaders, developing confidence in themselves; bridging the youth-age gap; organizing and communicating in ways that plant democratic roots, overcoming sexism. Thoughtful article from IRAC’s *The Bridge*.

*“Free Speech and the Vietnamese Community,” a 1998 article in *Dien Dan* on a major problem Viet *kieu* have had since first arrival: how to adjust to the American first Amendment freedoms in moving out of the traditional Vietnamese value system, a 20th century debate everywhere in how to distinguish a freedom fighter from a terrorist.

“Honoring the Men Who Died for My Freedom” by Q.X. Pham (U.S. Marine reserve living in California) in *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 11, 1998. Unabashed tribute Pham planned as a youth to become an ARVN Air Force pilot. In April 1975 he left to America with his family for the U.S. and enlisted in the Marines; trained at Quantico, then on to OCS and a commission. He relates in straight forward fashion the events of his life, concludes with the meaning of it all, to him: “Those who expect to reap to blessings of liberty must undergo the fatigues of supporting it.” (a Thomas Payne quote)

The RAAF in the War in Vietnam. Proceedings of the 1998 Royal Australian Air Force History Conference (held in Canberra, Oct. 30, 1998) John Mordike, ed. Three squadrons went to Vietnam—bombers, choppers, and transports. Fourteen contributors recount the mission. Peter Edwards sets the scene; J.L. Mordike describes the Australian homefront and during the war, the flyers

homecoming; Air Marshall E.J. McCormac wraps it up with “Closure.” Produced by the Air Power Studies Center, RAAF Base, Fairbairn, Australia 2600.

Vietnam Country Report on Human Rights Practices in 1998. From U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (Feb. 26, 1999). “Vietnam’s human rights record remained poor although there was measurable improvement in a few areas. Serious problems remain...there is continued repression of basic political and religious freedoms.”

Vietnamese Boat People. “Military History and the Vietnamese Indomitable Tradition” by Lt. Gen. Nguyen Dinh Uoc (Institute of Military History, Hanoi). Paper read at Texas Tech University symposium, April 1999.

“Emerging From Conflict: The U.S. and Vietnam Three Years After Normalization,” report of a Vantage Conference, Dec. 11-13, 1998 (at Waye River Center, MD). Sponsored by the Staley Foundation; Dick Clark, chair; Mark Sidel, rapporteur; 24 participants. Sober reports, thoughtful. Concludes that, for the first time in decades, Cambodia’s future is looking bright.

POW/MIA Oversight. Hearing before the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security House of Representatives, Oct. 2, 1998. Testimony of Steve Buyer (Ind.) and Gene Taylor (Miss.); eight witnesses.

“Cambodia: From the Killing Fields to Hope” by James Zumwalt. Unpublished 38-page paper tracing military, political and diplomatic developments in Cambodia beginning with 1953, through July 1998.

“Managing Internationally: A Personal Journey” by Gary Oddou and C. Brooklyn Derr. Ways that culture affects business relations. Section of a larger work with the title “Culture in an Emerging Market: A Look at Vietnam.” On doing business in Vietnam by foreigners.

Vietnam Health and Medicine Part I

Overview

Vietnam suffers from the infectious diseases and health problems common to developing countries in tropical regions: malaria, tuberculosis, the bacterial and parasitic infections, malnutrition in young children, and periodically, the epidemic diseases such as cholera, plague, and typhoid. In the past decade and a half, the SRV government, with international donor assistance, has expanded efforts to raise the level of health and the prevention and treatment of disease. There have been some notable successes.

But this is still a poor country. While most of Vietnam's ASEAN neighbors have enjoyed phenomenal economic growth and development, Vietnam's stagnant economy only began opening up after 1986 and it was 1990 at least before the population felt the effects of economic growth and a modest prosperity. In the early 1990s, government expenditure on health was 83 cents per capita, rising to \$2.73 in 1995, among the lowest in the world. The resources, education and training needed to achieve a reasonably modern public health system are beyond current government resources and investment and international assistance will be needed for the foreseeable future. In this, Vietnam follows the more or less conventional pattern seen in the various stages of development in many countries of the world. Complicating the pattern, here as elsewhere, has been the arrival of the deadly viruses of modern times: HIV and HBV (hepatitis B). If the present rate of infection continues, the system will be strained beyond any ability to treat or care for these patients.

In its 1997 comprehensive health sector report to donors (but based on 1995 Ministry of Health statistics), the government detailed the organization of the health system, divided structurally into preventive and curative. It listed strategy, objectives, and solutions to major problems in developing the health care network. It found the present subsidized system imbalanced in expenditure, distribution, and training; as a result lower level facilities are underutilized due to poor

quality of treatment and care. Surveys have shown that 30 to 50 percent of people consult private providers; district hospitals are bypassed as patients go to higher-level institutions; health workers' salaries are very low; and commune health centers are poorly staffed. It is clear that rural people, inhabitants of mountainous and remote areas, and the poor receive the least, and the government says implementing equity in health care is an urgent objective. One suggested solution was to seek dramatic privatization of the curative sector, e.g., private sector and joint venture hospitals, even 100% foreign-owned. This would allow the government to focus investment on prevention and community health service.

Compared with other Southeast Asian countries, Vietnam has more than enough health workers but they are unevenly distributed, both among provinces and levels. The Ministry deplored the decreasing nurse/doctor ratio from 2.2 in 1990 to 1.4 in 1995, saying it indicated a "heavily curative" system whereas leading causes of death are infectious and vaccine-preventable disease. It recommended employing more nurses and placing more doctors in public health services. The success of this will depend at least in part on salary levels.

Modern medical science in Vietnam has developed alongside the age-old and still extremely popular practice of traditional medicine. The government states its objectives over the next decade are to modernize traditional medicine, structure it from the center to grassroots levels, and combine it with modern medicine. The Vietnam Traditional Medicine Assn. has around 26,000 members and the Acupuncture Assn. more than 20,000. The Ministry reported in March that more than 5,500 doctors and hundreds of pharmacists have been trained in traditional medicine over the past 30 years; some 1,400 doctors have been trained as specialists in the field. There are four specialized central institutes, 40 hospitals and 160 wards, as well as thousands of private traditional medicine practitioners throughout the country. Vietnam has conducted research on 2,000 medicinal

herbs and 70 fauna; it has a collection of more than 39,000 prescriptions as well as 200 books in modern Vietnamese and 500 in Chinese or the Nom script. More than 1,400 traditional medicine products are approved by the MOH for production and sale in Vietnam and for export.

Nevertheless, the general level of health has inched upward over the years, and the government reports life expectancy of the Vietnamese to be average compared with other countries, i.e., 63 years for males and 67.5 for females. A foreign study of the period between the 1979 and 1989 censuses suggests that mortality had declined in the decade of the 1980s compared with the 1970s. However, life expectancy was found to be somewhat lower—61.4 years for males and 63.2 for females—than what the government is currently reporting. (See M.G. Merli, "Mortality in Vietnam, 1979-1989," *Demography*, 35.3, August 1998.) Firm conclusions on mortality in the 1990s cannot be reached until data from the April 1999 census is made available, which may take several years.

Many health problems outlined in the 1997 report exist today at much the same level; some have worsened due at least in part to population movement toward urban areas and lifestyle changes in a modernizing society. These changes produce, for example, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, accidents and injuries.

The 1997 report listed infectious diseases, led by diarrhea-gastroenteritis and malaria, as leading causes of illness in hospitals, while deaths of fetuses and newborns was the leading cause of mortality, followed by chemical toxicosis.

As of March 13, Vietnam had detected 12,412 HIV/AIDS carriers, found in virtually every province and city in the country. Full-blown AIDS cases 2,404. Deaths to date 1,280.

Children's Health.

Children's health is a major concern. In the 1980's Vietnam had the highest rate of wasting (9.5%) and stunting (56.5%) among children under the age of 5 of any Southeast and South Asian country except Bangladesh; 45% were underweight. In May 1999 the National Institute of Nutrition reported under-five malnutrition at 39%. The

Institute survey showed the northern central area to have the highest local rate (47%), and even the southeast showed a 32% rate. Infants aged 6 to 18 months are at greatest risk.

The survey focused on iodine and Vitamin A deficiency as well as family feeding practices. Researchers found that only 43% of mothers were provided with Vitamin A a month after giving birth. The pregnant women and children under two are encouraged to breast feed and provide appropriate supplementary food. (Iodine deficiency is prevalent in the larger population and is being addressed largely through the promotion of iodized salt.)

The MOH began an Expanded Immunization Program (EIP) for children under five in the mid-1980s with significant effect on some common childhood communicable diseases. According to Ministry statistics, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus all were shown reduced by half or more in the 1991-95 period; EIP Director Dang Duc Trach said in January 1999 that cases of diphtheria and pertussis in 1998 dropped by 37% and 29%, respectively, over the previous year.

No incidences of polio were recorded in 1998. Trach said 90% of the children targeted actually received the polio vaccination that year, and he believes the virus is "almost under control."

Measles cases, however, rose to 10,200 cases in 1998, 58% more than in 1997. Trach said one reason was that only 80% of children under one year were inoculated. The EIP managing board said that children under 14 must be given booster shots if measles is to be eradicated, adding that this would require an investment of billions of dong.

A conference in January in Hanoi reviewed the EIP for 1998 and discussed its 1999 targets. The ultimate goal is to make immunization services available to 95% of communes, raising the quality of inspection, and eradicating polio, tetanus in newborns and measles by 2000. For this the EIP must raise funds. The UNICEF representative in Vietnam urged in a speech to the conference that the MOH further integrate EIP with primary health care at district and commune levels and said UNICEF would continue to support the process. (Myrna Pike)

Audio Visual

Ho Chi Minh. Title of 52-minute video, subtitled "The Man Behind the Mask." Excellent rare early footage. Interviews with Ho's contemporaries, American and Vietnamese scholars; guarded assessments by the latter. Good newsreel footage. Aired in January on TV Biography channel. Sale \$350, rental \$75. From Filmmakers Library, 124 East 40th St., New York, New York 10016.

Vietnam War Footage. A former East German company, Progress Film-Verleih GmbH, and the Vietnam Film Institute in Hanoi signed an agreement (Jan. 13, 1999) to market motion picture footage from the Viet Minh and Vietnam wars. The company is headquartered in Berlin; Alexander van Dulmen, managing director. He says he has access to all of Hanoi's film archival material, the work of about 130 cameramen. He adds: "we can use the material for a completely new view of the war. For example, you can really see the Viet Cong planning and carrying out an attack in the jungle, it's really live, it's not acted." (Reuters/Hanoi, April 7, 1999)

Khmer Rouge Films. Further on the missing film footage from Cambodia (See *Indochina Chronology* (October-January 1998). A Reuters report (Jan. 7) says a Paris based company has 40 hours (not 1000 hours as reported) of film bought in a secret deal in Phnom Penh (officials there say the film was "loaned for restoration"). Preliminary review of the material indicates it is tame stuff—cannot provide evidence of war crimes by Pol Pot and Company.

Forgotten Heroes. TV's Discovery Channel (Feb. 10) aired a documentary, War Dogs, about Bruiser, a German shepherd, and 4,000 other dogs who served with the U.S. military in Vietnam. They are said to have prevented at least 10,000 human casualties, sniffing out ambushes, going down VC tunnels, etc. Bruiser's handler was

wounded in an ambush in I Corps in 1969; Bruiser dragged him to safety, taking two rounds himself; both survived. Veterans who are also dog lovers are incensed that none of the dogs who survived the war was brought home: rather, all were classified as "surplus armaments" and either destroyed or turned loose. Nor have they since been honored. "There would have been a lot more than 50,000 names on The Wall had it not been for the dogs," said one. "These dogs have the right to be honored like any other American who served in Vietnam," said the program's producer.

As Seen by Both Sides: American and Vietnamese Artists Look at the War. Documents on a touring art exhibit showing works of Vietnamese and Americans on the Vietnam War. 58 minutes, \$360 (purchase), \$95 (rental). (1995) The Cinema Guild, Inc., 1697 Broadway, Suite 506, New York, NY 10019-5904; 1-800-723-5522; e-mail: theCinemaG@aol.com; website: <http://www.cinemaguild.com>.

Bittersweet Video. Interviews with Asian-Americans on the subject of coming to the United States. Treats problems such as cultural identity and developing a sense of community in a foreign land. 42 minutes, \$295 (purchase), \$75 (rental). (1995) The Cinema Guild, Inc., 1697 Broadway, Suite 506, New York, NY 10019-5904; 1-800-723-5522; e-mail: theCinemaG@aol.com; website: <http://www.cinemaguild.com>.

Asia: Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam. A document made to preserve the cultural and archaeological sites in these three Southeast Asian countries while, at the same time, improving the daily life of the villagers. 28 minutes, \$89.95 (purchase). Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1-800-257-5126.

The Vietnam War: From Start to Finish.

Traces the war in Vietnam from its beginning with the conflict between the French and Viet Minh, and ends with the removal of the South Vietnamese regime by the North. 28 minutes, \$89.95 (purchase). Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1-800-257-5126.

Three Seasons.

Film by Tony Bui was the big winner at the 1999 Sundance Film Festival, getting both the jury and the audience awards. Plot has to do with the poor people of Saigon (prostitute, flower seller, cyclo driver, street orphan; plus an American veteran—Harvey Keitel). *Doi moi* enriches them, even as it takes much away. As might be expected, since this is Vietnam, the film has drawn effusive kudos and strident criticism. Typical reviews: (1) a hauntingly evocative vision of contemporary Vietnam; one of the loveliest films I have seen; manages to balance realism with a romantic vision; (2) I thought it was a pretty terrible film, both for its sexual politics and its unpenetrating talk about *doi moi*; (3) *Dr. Zhivago* it isn't, but stacked up against the likes of *Rambo* it does a better job of portraying the Vietnamese people; it never claimed to be a social documentary and should be allowed a wide berth of poetic license.

Dancing Through Death: The Monkey, Magic and Madness of Cambodia.

A 56-minute video by Janet Gardner. Life of Thavro Phim and the deaths of dancers under Pol Pot. Ninety percent of the court dancers were executed. What sustained Thavro Phim was his dedication to classic Cambodian dance, plus faith in Buddhism. Begins in 1975, ends in California. Sale \$295; rental \$75. From Filmmakers Library, New York.

Best War Movies.

Blockbuster Video Rentals (6,000 outlets in 27 countries) polled its customers on their choices of top war movies; also favorite movie soldiers. Four of the top ten movies were set in Vietnam: *Platoon* (3); *Full Metal Jacket* (6); *Apocalypse Now* (8); and *The Deer Hunter* (9). In the top five soldiers were: John Rambo/Sylvester Stallone in *Rambo* (2); Sergeant Barnes/Tom

Berenger in *Platoon* (4); and Captain Willard/Martin Sheen in *Apocalypse Now*. (PRN Newswire, Dallas, May 27, 1999)

Return With Honor.

New CNN documentary produced by Freida Lee Mock and Terry Sanders. Looks back at the Vietnam War through the eyes of 20 men (and six of their wives) held as POWs in Hanoi Hilton. Contains footage shot by Hanoi cameramen. Appearing are Sen. John McCain, Amb. Pete Peterson and Congressman Sam Johnson. Profile in courage.

World Beneath the War.

Video documentary (53 min.) subtitled "The Secret Tunnels of Vietnam" continues to pile up awards. This quarter it won an Emmy for Outstanding Programming and the Deadline Club's Best Feature Reporting. Earlier it won the National Educational Film's Silver Apple Award. Deals with 2,000 villagers from Vinh Moc (Central Vietnam) who in 1965 moved underground into catacombs to escape the war raging around them. Available from Filmmakers Library, 124 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016. Sale \$295; rental \$75.

Warding Off Misfortune (*Giai Han*).

From our film critic, Philip Phu Bui comes the recommendation: "If you want to see a good movie about *doi moi* (renovation) in Vietnam and how the Vietnamese, especially the women, are doing business, see this film. Produced by Xuong Phim So 1 (film studio number 1) in Hanoi. 90 minutes, in color. It was shown in Berkeley last November (1998), and I believe the film archive at UCLA has a copy."

Film Notes by Phil. TV's American Classic Movies (Jan. 12) aired two 1948 feature films, *Saigon* and *Rogue's Regiment*. From Phil Coleman (American War Library) comes these program notes: "Two feature films made Americans aware of Vietnam as an economic turf fight...helped claim America's stake in Southeast Asia. Produced by competing studio giants (Paramount made *Saigon* and Universal International made *Rogue's Regiment*), both starred box office favorites in male leads (Alan Ladd and Dick Powell)...the films were

skillfully written and produced. Anti-colonialists intended to 'educate' the American public toward our need to become involved in Vietnam, and to discredit the British, and particularly French colonialism as the root cause of hundreds of years of almost ceaseless warfare. Heavy on fact-based propaganda, *Rogue's Regiment* disclosed to Americans that many French mercenaries (Legionnaires) serving in Vietnam were former Nazi servicemen on the run. It showed the French Administration in Vietnam as inept and corrupt."

Film Notes.

*Mammoth film festival held in Hue late March, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and the Vietnam Cinematography Society. Total 114 films shown, 30 celluloid, remaining videos. Included were 43 documentaries; the rest feature films, education science films, and cartoons. Golden Lotus (1st place) and Silver Lotus (2nd place) prizes were awarded. (*Nhan Dan*, March 18, 1999)

*Photo exhibit opened in February in Hanoi titled "A Village Passer-by." Work of the late UN official, Stephan Lahusen (from Germany) and Nguyen Huu Tau, Hanoi. Visitors noted the similarity in artistic viewpoint of the two exhibits to be published as a book. Galerie Vietnam Nam, 38 Dong Khai St., Hanoi.

*Japanese film makers are in HCMC to shoot *Flashlight* (*Khoanh Khac Loc Sang*), a documentary on the life of Saviada Kyoichi, award-winning Japanese combat photographer in Vietnam during the mid-1960s. His photo *Lanh Nan* (Refugee) won him the Pulitzer Prize. Kyoichi was killed in Cambodia in 1970. (VNN, June 17, 1999)

*Bastards. Docudrama directed by Loc Do, subtitled "From Saigon, Vietnam to Little Saigon, California." About the estimated 30,000 Amerasian children born in Vietnam during the two decades of the Vietnam War. Two Viet *kieu* brothers (bus boy and a dishwasher) are plagued by nightmares about the father they never knew. One tattoos "unloved" on the chest and turns to crime. The Political Film Society (whatever that is) nominates Bastards as "Best Expose of the year."

"*Nhung Ngoi Tho Xe*" (The Sawyers) will be shown at the Carlovy Vary International Film Festival in the Czech Republic in July 1999.

A documentary film entitled "*Chuyen Voi O Buon Don*" (Elephants in Don Village) will be screened at the Valvert Nature Film Festival in Brussels in 1991. Film was made by the Central Scientific and Documentary Studio, Hanoi.

Canadian pianist Roger Lord gave a concert, June 21, at the Ha Noi Conservatoire. The New Brunswick-born pianist offered music by composers from countries of the Francophone community, Canada, Vietnam and Poland.

Music Day in Hanoi. Singers and music players gathered at a Music Day held at the Hanoi Conservatoire on June 20. Co-organized by the Hanoi Conservatoire and the Hanoi-based Centre for French Language and Civilization, Alliance Francaise. It was opened by a performance of 100 children of the French-speaking Club at the Hanoi Children's Palace, with songs "On the Avignon Bridge", "In the Forest", "the Little Fish", "Under the Moonlight" and the "Children Around the World." Followed by performances of the Music and Dance Troupe of Military Zone 2 and French and Vietnamese singers with French and Vietnamese songs. The Hanoi Conservatoire brought to the festival a special programme, from Vietnamese folk music to classical pieces. Solo and ensemble performance of guitars, flutes and clarinets performed works by Hugo de Groot, Villalobos, Mozart, Haydn and Vivaldi. The Life Support Rock band of the Hanoi International School joined the event, as did the Jazz Y Jazz band and a dancing programme by Alliance Francaise.

"Pete Peterson: Assignment Hanoi." One hour documentary from Wind and Stars, Sandy Northrop, producer. Airs on PBS 10pm EST, Sept. 7. Premiered in Hanoi May 31. Deals with AF Captain Peterson's POW experiences (shot down 1966, six years at Hanoi Hilton) and his return to Vietnam as U.S. Ambassador. Contacts Robyn DeShields (301) 495-6681; D. Ingraham at (301) 897-5511; Georgua Hyvekus (415) 441-2025.

Names in the News

Thich Quang Do. Famed Hao Dao venerable (of the United Buddhist Church, Vietnam) sent a paper to a Buddhist church conference in the U.S. (May 9, 1999) which in effect is a brief history of Buddhism in Vietnam. Do also describes events at Xa Loi Pagoda in Saigon after the end of the Vietnam War. His church was shut down; its documents were seized by the police and its patriarch Thich Huyen Quang was detained in isolation (as was Do). Text of speech available on the Web from Free Vietnam Alliance at Imvntd@best.com. Radio Free Asia interviewed Do March 26, text available from Stephen Denney at sdenney@ocf.Berkeley.edu.

Tran Van Khe. Vietnamese composer, teacher was awarded Labor Order First Class for his contributions to development of traditional Vietnamese music. The award was made in Paris where Khe teaches at the Sorbonne.

Nguyen Huu Thien, General Director of the SRV Department of Standard-Measurement-Quality (also Chairman of the Vietnam's Asia Productivity Organization) was elected president of the Asia Productivity Organization at a meeting in Tokyo. Asia Productivity, a regional inter-governmental organization was established in 1961, with 18 founding members. Vietnam has been a member since January 1996.

April Oliver. The TV producer fired by CNN, after it retracted a story on U.S. military use of nerve gas on U.S. defectors in Laos during the Vietnam War, is now suing CNN for \$106 million. Suit was filed in Atlanta, home of CNN owner, Time-Warner. Oliver filed a similar suit in the District of Columbia. At the time CNN fired a second producer, and reprimanded lead reporter Peter Arnett (who left the network because of the reprimand).

President Clinton. Many visit Vietnam before his term ends, according to quotes by Ambassador Pete Peterson in Hanoi, Clinton has

said that he had always wanted to visit Vietnam (presumably he means since becoming president).

Obituaries

Le Ba Kong (John Le Ba). Prominent Viet kieu English language teacher, translator, publisher. Died in Houston, Texas on November 11, 1998. Born in Hong Kong in 1925, his family moved to Hanoi, then Saigon, then to the U.S. Among his many famous students during his years as a teacher in Saigon was Nguyen Co Ky and Nguyen Ngoc Linh.

Tran Van Chinh. ARVN colonel, whose last assignment was Chief of Military Intelligence, died at his home in Chantilly, Virginia, of congestive heart failure. He was 83. (*Washington Post*, Dec. 18, 1998)

Albert Gore, Sr. Former senator from Tennessee, a liberal whose opposition to the Vietnam War ended his 12 years in Congress. December 5, 1998. He was 90. (AP, Dec. 5, 1998)

Thich Thien Chau. Died in Paris October 13. He was a member of the Vietnam Buddhist Church (VBC) Executive Council and its overseas representative. Services held Oct. 12 at the Quan Su Pagoda in Hanoi. (VNA, Oct. 13, 1998)

John Ehrlichman. Advisor to President Nixon, died in Atlanta of natural causes (he had diabetes) February 15, 1999. "His role in Watergate," said Nixon Library official John Tayler, "should be viewed against the historical backdrop of the cultural war over Vietnam that raged at the time." Wrote Nixon in his memoirs: "It was a tragedy...John Erlichman went to jail and Daniel Ellsberg went free." (AP, Atlanta, Feb. 15, 1999)

Charles Arnot. ABC News Saigon bureau chief (1963-65, 1969-71) died in Prescott, Arizona, April 24, 1998 at age 81. He covered World War II in the Pacific for United Press, joined ABC in 1956. (AP, May 5, 1998)

Official Statements

Le Thi Co. Vietnam's longest-lived woman died (October 22, 1998) in HCMC at age 118. She was born in Long An province in 1880, left 500 descendents, 300 of whom attended her funeral. At the eulogy it was said: "She knew many folk songs by heart, always set a good example for hardwork and moral behavior." (*VIR*, Nov. 2-8, 1998)

Roy Lee Johnson. The U.S. Seventh Fleet commander who ordered his ships to fire on North Vietnamese torpedo patrol boats in the Gulf of Tonkin (Aug. 4, 1964). Later he was CIC U.S. Naval Forces in the Pacific. The retired rear admiral died March 24 in Virginia Beach Virginia. He was 93.

Robert Tuckman, 85, chief Associated Press correspondent in Vietnam in 1967-68, directing coverage of the Tet offensive, died in May in London. A native of New York, Tuckman reported and edited for the AP from 1940 until his retirement in 1969, taking leave to serve in the Marines in the Pacific during World War II. During the Korean War (1951-53) he was AP's field director based in Seoul.

Hundred Best Reporting. At New York University School of Journalism a team of "experts" (not further identified in press release) compiled the Century's Top News Coverage (stories, books, columns, collected works, photos, TV stories). Vietnam fared better than in the top list (above) namely:

--No. 12—Symore Hersh. Investigation of the massacre committed by American soldiers at My Lai in Vietnam. Dispatch News Service 1969.

--No. 13—*The New York Times* Publication of the Pentagon Papers. 1971.

--No. 16—I.F. Stone, *I.F. Stone's Weekly* 1953-67 (anti-war coverage).

--No. 46—Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Vann and America in Vietnam*. Book. 1988.

No. 63—Walter Cronkite, Documentary on Vietnam, CBS Television 1968.

"Decree on Legal Consultancy by Foreign Lawyers' Organizations in Vietnam (Chapter III, IV, V and VI). VNA in English March 3, 1999. Covers: 1) "Scope of Operation, Rights, and Obligations Foreign Lawyer's Organizations and Foreign Lawyers (articles 19-34); 2) Management of Legal Consultancy Practices Conducted in Vietnam by Foreign Lawyers' Organizations (articles 36, 37), Handling of Violations (articles 39-45) and Implementation Provisions (articles 46-48)." Signed by PM Phan Van Khai on March 2, 1999. On the Internet March 3, 1999.

The Fatherland Front Law. Newly signed into law in Vietnam in May were those intended to confer added importance and prestige to the major Vietnam front organization, or as explained by President Tran Duc Luong, "enhance the Front's role in economic renovation in the spirit of patriotism and unity."

Press Law (amended). Intended to clarify proper press behavior.

Enterprise Law. Help to make planning and investment in Vietnam more rational (Planning and Investment Minister Tran Xuan Gia). New legislation goes into effect in September 1.

"Government's Guidance to the Implementation of the Law on Vietnamese Nationality" (pursuant to Law No. 07/1998 QH 10). Chapter II "Procedure and Order For Settling Nationality Matters. VNA March 3, 1999 (on the Internet). Deals with legal methods by which Viet kieu can regain lost Vietnamese citizenship.

Change in SRV Penal Code. SRV Vice Minister Uong Chu Luu (March 2, 1999) announced that Vietnam would reduce to 32 (from 44) the number of crimes carrying the death penalty. He said the higher figure "was not humanitarian or democratic." Luu advised that spreading AIDS and making of false advertising claims will now be treated as felonies. (NVA March 2, 1999)

Vietnam Chronology

The quarter in Vietnam was singularly uneventful. As with editors elsewhere, the news in Vietnam was what editors said it was each morning. Most front-page stories or lead radio-TV reports were devoid of hard significant developments. Focus was on the official: the economy and its successes (and some failures), social problems, diplomatic travel and exchanges (repeated denunciations of the NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia). In terms of coverage of news events most of it went to agricultural stories, which is what it should be since 75% of the Vietnamese make their living one way or another from agriculture (food production, food processing, food sales, food transportation, etc.).

Vietnam Census. At midnight April 1, 1999, some 4,500 census takers fanned out across Vietnam to conduct the third National Census in 25 years. (earlier: Oct. 1, 1979 and April 1, 1989). In traditional Vietnam the household (*nha*), not the individual, was counted. The sense of this emphasis remains. Le Van Toan, chairman of the Census Committee Steering Committee told a press conference: "This census collects information on population by sex, age, ethnic group, religion, urban and rural areas; levels and trends of migration; education, labor force and employment; marital status; fertility; mortality and population growth; current status of housing conditions; facilities of family households and production means." Results will be available at the end of 2000. Vietnam's General Statistical Bureau estimates Vietnamese population now is nearly 80 million.

Crime and Punishment. State security officials continue their relentless campaign against crime, malfeasance in office, smuggling and general corruption.

Hanoi customs officers in April confiscated what was termed "anti-revolutionary materials", specifically two pornographic videos, seven anti-revolutionary books, 39 foreign magazines and publications and 400 video CDs. Also five copies of the *San Jose Mercury* (Vietnamese edition).

Most of the materials came from Japan, Australia, Canada and the U.S.

Nationwide, police uncovered 462 gambling cases involving 1,646 people and 116 prostitution cases (310 prostitutes and 52 brothel keepers). Gambling in the Hanoi Dong Loi Hotel netted 19 gamblers, a staff of 10, the director and the deputy director on prostitution charges.

Police seized 521 wanted people (29 dangerous criminals, including Duong Tu Anh, leading figure in the "Phuc Bo" criminal gang).

Phone crimes: HCM City PTT authorities and police report a new form of larceny: stealing Internet passwords and telephone numbers. An Intel HCM City official said people had accessed the Internet with stolen passwords using the office's phone number. Last year, at least 44 clients of the Vietnam Data Communications Company (VDC), Vietnam's largest Internet services provider, reported that their accounts had been used without permission. "It is true that the city is encountering Internet account and telephone number theft," said HCM City PTT chief Le Ngoc Trac. Do Thu Oanh, deputy head of the economic security division under the HCM City Police, said dealing with real computer hackers is difficult. (*Saigon Times Daily* May 20)

Kian Giang Province in mid-April raised an alarm over piracy off the southwest coast. The Provincial Border Guard office says pirates last year attacked 135 ships, killing nine fishermen, wounding 10 and capturing 100 others. In the first three months of the year, 31 ships have been attacked. The pirates are believed to come from Cambodia.

Since the beginning of last year, Phu Yen provincial officers were found to have stolen 25 billion dong from the state funds. Bidding procedures create opportunities for corruption, meaning actions must be taken to improve the bidding procedures. Officials for Yen Bai Import Export Company embezzled billions of dong from state funds. (*The People* April 16).

Lang Son Province's Customs Office reports that smuggling is becoming more sophisticated. The illegally exported goods are valuable wood, wild animals and antiques. Illegally imported goods are cloth, electronics, bicycle components, sugar and motorbikes. Nong Van Diu, head of the Lang Son Market Management, says the organizers never show their faces, rather hire porters to carry goods across the border. They communicate with each other by mobile phones. Farmers, workers and students smuggle goods on bicycles, by horseback and on foot; professionals use Minsk motorbikes. There is inadequate smuggling prevention staff; equipment is outdated and salaries are low; income depends on bribes.

The Ministry of Trade reports that huge quantities of sugar have been smuggled into Vietnam across north, south and southwestern borders. The Market Management Department confiscated 95,078 kg, mainly in Lang Son, Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Quang Ninh and An Giang provinces. Le The Bao, head of the department, says that confiscated sugar amounts to 150,000 tonnes. Bathroom porcelain, illegally-imported foreign products, now makes up to 40% of the local market share, mainly with trademarks of Coto, Champion and Kerat from Thailand and imported through border gates at Dong Ha town, Quang Tri Province. The government in an effort to prevent smuggling will stamp origin symbols on gas and electric cookers, thermos flasks, bicycle frames and engines.

Farm economy development needs a proper legal environment, editorials say. "Many believe a more favorable legal environment for the development of the farm economy is needed. One of the current difficulties facing farm owners is that most of them have not been legally recognized, making it difficult when doing transactions with economic organizations. The state has no reasonable policy on farms' excessive land limits," said one editorial.

Traffic accidents in May. *An Ninh Thu Do* reports 1,898 traffic accidents nationwide, killing 584 and injuring 2,172 people, an increase of 5% over the same period last year. The figure included 1,866 cases of road accidents (574 dead, 2,152 injured) and 32 railway accidents (10 dead and 20

injured). The main causes: disrespect by drivers for traffic laws and unsafe vehicles.

Devastation by elephants has drawn deep concern in Binh Thuan Province. After causing the death of a couple on May 15, the elephants continued to attack people and ravage their fields in Tra Tan commune (Duc Linh). They killed two young men sleeping in the forest. Two days later, on May 25, a person was killed while working in the forest in Tanh Linh District, bringing the death toll to five in one month. So far no effective measures to restrain the elephants have been introduced. (*Young People* May 28)

The Party. VCP officials say they are paying increased attention to the Vietnamese young, particularly to college students and chiefly with a view to increasing their revolutionary awareness and recruiting those not members. Officials complain of lack of student interest and general ignorance about political matters. In the 1995-97 period, the Party admitted 566 students as members, 3.5 times as many as in the 1994-96 period. In 1998, however, students accounted for only .2% of new members. PB member Nguyen Thi Binh told the HCMC Student Association that there were 250,000 students in the city but only 17,000 had joined the Party.

Other officials stress the importance of the Party in rural areas where the chief task is "to bring Party resolutions and decrees into daily life," as one newspaper expressed it. "Often the rural Party cadres have no political training and lack leadership skills. Some do not know how to organize a meeting. Only elderly Party members contribute to building the Party. Most Party members in local areas fail to attend meetings." Meanwhile, Hanoi says it is difficult to check whether Party members fulfill their responsibility in increasing production because "they themselves are bad at production and therefore unqualified to give any advice." (*Bac Ninh Newspaper* May 15)

The Ho Chi Minh legacy inevitably is trotted out to motivate and mobilize Party members and the general population alike. Party Gen. Sec. Le Kha Phieu at a Ba Dinh Hall (Hanoi) rally on the occasion of Ho's birthday called for a new *kiem thao* (criticism/self-criticism) campaign: "Over the years, the Party has progressed in terms of politics,

ideology and organization. Most Party members have been able to keep up with the revolutionary ideal. But segments of cadres and Party members have deteriorated in ideology, politics, morality and lifestyle. Party cells on all levels are not fully aware of the seriousness of the current situation and the urgent need to readjust and build the Party. If we do not rectify weaknesses and stop the deterioration inside the Party and State mechanism, the existence of the regime and security of the nation will be threatened."

The schedule for the *kiem thao* program as announced April 29: 1) During April all state offices will carry out criticism assessing governmental performance during 1998, and the individual morality and lifestyle of cadres; 2) At the end of April State departments will "implement criticism collectively"; 3) For two weeks in mid-May, all Party members will engage in *kiem thao*; 4) When State officers and Party members have completed the processes, reports will be submitted to the Politburo. State officials and Party cadres are asked to focus on their individual behavior in implementing policies and Party discipline. (*VET* April 30)

The *kiem thao* campaign will last for two years (19 May 1999 to 19 May 2001). During this period, the people will be asked to criticize and contribute opinions to Party building, focusing on fighting corruption, mismanagement, squandering and bureaucracy. (*The People* May 19)

Kiem thao as an institution in communist Vietnam is ancient, well entrenched and ubiquitous. It has been compared to the confessional in the Roman Catholic Church; although clearly it was copied from Chinese communism. It serves several purposes. It helps the Party keep track of what Party members are doing and thinking. It also serves a therapeutic need, unburdening the true believer of guilt for inadequacies, shortcomings, errors of omission and commission.

Specifically, the current campaign is directed chiefly against "social evils" in Vietnam. Party Advisor Vo Van Kiet met HCM City's leaders (April 6) to demand that city authorities pay greater attention to preventing social evils and crime. There are about 15,000 prostitutes in the city, 52% come from the provinces, 70% are illiterate. The

city has around 20,000 drug-addicts. (*Liberation Saigon* Apr. 7) The Social Evils Prevention Department reports a high rate of social evils among the youth. Prostitutes of the ages 14-17 are increasing, and account for 9.87% of prostitutes sent to rehabilitation centers. Drug addicts under 18 make up 8.53%. Punishment is allowed only for those over 18; teenagers, therefore, are under greater threat of being seduced into prostitution and drug-related activities. (*HCMC Law* May 11) All types of social evils can be found among students including theft, drug addiction, prostitution, gambling, drunkenness, "superstition" and fighting, the press reports. Drug addiction is serious. In 1997 the Ministry of Public Security reported 1,052 university student addicts; the figure has not been reduced since. Drug addiction has driven many students to theft, robbery, and murder. Female students also become prostitutes to support themselves; most student prostitutes are from rural areas and cannot find other work. Gambling and drunkenness are on the rise, particularly among students who live outside campuses. The major cause for the situation, officials say, is a lack of entertainment and living space for them. With the exception of some programs for students--which call for their involvement in social activities such as teaching poor pupils, blood donation, taking care of martyrs' mothers--entertainment for students is limited to cafes and karaoke bars. (*New Hanoi* Apr. 15)

Throughout, it is asserted, Marxism-Leninism remains alive and vital in Vietnam. As the government is making a desperate bid to accelerate reform, the task of training and retraining cadres has become more urgent. Le Doan Ta, director of the Ho Chi Minh Institute for Politics: "In the current world situation, we need to affirm that the training programs intended for state officials or cadres should be based on Marxism-Leninism doctrine and Ho Chi Minh Ideology. The market-orientated economy and integration into the international community means more effort should be made to develop Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Ideology. Political teaching curriculum should be simple, easy-to-understand and practical.

Note: over the past 50 years, the National Political Publishing House has printed over 400

book titles with millions of copies translated from Lenin's works, important for the country's educational development. (*The People* Apr. 22)

In Hoville (as the French would say). Ho Chi Minh City, the new census indicates, has a population of over five million. This from Le Thi Thanh Loan, local census chief. Does not include the military stationed in the city, nor expatriates. Other statistics (per thousand population): .21 km of roadway; 5.3 teachers; 2.9 health care workers; 2.9 hospital beds; 2.32 physicians. According to the City's Social Evils Prevention Department, HCMC has 10,500 homeless, 500 "Cambodian beggars", and 4,500 unemployed. There is a water shortage; the city water system can supply only 730,000 cubic meters of water daily, a shortfall of 270,000 cubic meters.

Tourism is up this year. In the first five months of the year foreign visitors totaled 289,459, up 12% from the same period last year. They spent \$55 million. Hotel occupancy remains the same as last year (34%). Viet *kieu* returning to the city rose by 20%, but most stayed with families not at hotels. Joint-venture hotels reported a 5% increase in occupancy; room prices have dropped 20-25%. New attractions at amusement parks such as Dam Sen, Suoi Tien, Vietnam Water World and Wonderland helped attract more visitors. The city's leisure industry reported a 20% increase over the same period last year. (*VNS* May 8)

The HCM City Planning and Investment Service says 30% of the City's private enterprises are operating at a loss. Most do not use the banking system and their debts are therefore not strictly supervised. Currently, HCMC has 9,608 private enterprises with capital amounting to \$624 million. Last year, private firms contributed 37.2% of the City's GDP. Around 160,000 private large-scale businesses in the city say they do not want to register themselves as private firms, liability limited or joint-stock companies. (*Vietnam Economic Times* Apr. 17).

Traffic in Ho Chi Minh City has become more and more difficult as the number of registered motorbikes rose to 1.2 million (does not include the thousands who daily commute from the provinces). With 1,800 kilometers of road, the city averages 1.2 meters road length for each vehicle (compared with

a world average of 13 meters). The mushrooming of motorcycle ownership began in the late 1980s with efforts to develop the motorcycle industry so as to "kick start" the economy. A limited public transport system and roads too narrow for anything but small vehicles helped the rapid acceleration of motorcycle ownership. Some tourists visiting the city describe the traffic as a "nightmare."

Education. Enrollment in Vietnam for the coming school year for universities and colleges totals 144,000; 86,000 in higher vocational schools (roughly junior colleges); this is 10% higher than the current year. Some curtailment is expected because of teacher shortages (teacher college enrollment is currently 41,970). About 46% of all higher education students are from rural areas.

Higher education in Vietnam is seriously "imbalanced", according to SRV Dep. Min. of Education Vu Ngoc Hai. Chief problem, he says, is that administrators and teachers cannot keep pace with the rapid enrollment increase.

Financial management of private universities in Vietnam is a serious problem, a conference of private university officials in HCMC it told by Minister of Education and Training (MOET) officials. Financial administration at such schools is not subject to MOET control. Administrators, it is said, recruit their relatives to keep books and can easily misuse student fees. An example cited: one private Hanoi university headmaster skimmed \$7,000 from school funds. The way to keep officials honest, said Dep. Min. Vu Ngoc Hai, is to offer government subsidies to provide faculty and administrators with incentives, such as tax relief and subsidized housing.

The first private university in the Mekong Delta (a region with a population of 17 million) opened in May in Vinh Long. There is only one state university in the delta, in Can Tho. At the end of last year, Vietnam had 14 private universities and one college with a total of 65,400 students; 70% of students are majoring in foreign languages, business administration or computer science.

Cambodia Chronology

The major news of international importance from Cambodia this quarter was the country's entry into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The organization now has ten members. The ceremony of admission was held April 30 in Hanoi (apparently at the insistence of the Vietnamese—note the date, selected by the Vietnamese, say the Cambodians: April 30). Attending were Foreign Minister Mohamed Bolkiah, Brunei Darussalam; FM Ali Alatas, Indonesia; Deputy PM and FM Somsavat Lengsavad, Laos; FM Datuk Serin Syed Hamid Albar, Malaysia; FM U Wing Aung, Myanmar; Sec. of Foreign Affairs Domingo Siazon, Philippines; FM S. Jayakumar, Singapore; FM Surin Pitsuwan, Thailand, and Host FM Nguyen Manh Cam. Cambodian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hor Nam Hong and ASEAN General Secretary Rodolfo Severino were also present.

Cambodian entry into ASEAN should be seen in terms of regional relationships, but even more so in terms of the Cambodian-Vietnamese association, in truth, one of the great ethnic antipathies of the modern age—not as well known as Jewish-Arab, Greek-Turkish, Hindu-Moslem, but just as well entrenched and just as impervious to outsider advice. On the Cambodian side it is characterized by enormous suspicion about virtually anything the Vietnamese do (in many cases justified).

Cambodians of all political stripes have long suspected the Vietnamese of entertaining hegemonistic designs on their country (the most extreme among them say Vietnam sooner or later will exterminate the Khmer race and repopulate the country with Vietnamese). Ho Chi Minh and his followers clearly expected that the eventual future would see a French Indochina, without the French. What this meant for Cambodia (and Laos)—whether a Hanoi takeover, federation, confederation or simply deference—in the minds of the Vietnamese leaders was never made clear and quite probably meant different things at different times. Many observers say the inclusion of Cambodia in

ASEAN will strengthen regionalism and help make ASEAN a coherent economic zone.

Elsewhere on the Cambodian diplomatic front, the major story was the visit to Phnom Penh of Vietnam's Communist Party chief, Le Kha Phieu. He and his delegation arrived June 9 to receive a red carpet welcome. Official purpose of the two-day trip was said to discuss border disputes, illegal migration and to strengthen cooperation.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, the top official from Hanoi has visited Cambodia on a number of occasions. In each case he came with a specific purpose in mind—usually to pound the table (privately) over some objectionable action by the Cambodians, none of which is known publicly at the time but leaks out afterwards. What Kieu had in mind this trip did not become apparent at quarter's end.

Preparations for the event rose to an unprecedented level. The Vietnamese friendship monument, which is loathed by Cambodians, was cleaned up; the park outside Parliament was covered with Vietnamese flags and kept under close guard. Greeted at the airport by King Norodom Sihanouk, Prime minister Hun Sen, and the entire cabinet, Le Kha Phieu was whisked to the riverside Royal Palace along spruced-up boulevards lined with thousands of flag-waving school children.

A protest by university students burning their Vietnamese flags on the motorcade route was broken up by heavily armed police, and two protestors arrested. "All we want to do is remind our neighbor to respect our national integrity," said Saro Sivatha, head of the Student's Movement for Democracy.

The demonstrations threw into the limelight two militantly anti-Vietnamese political groups in Cambodia. The Movement of Free Vietnam (MFV) headquartered in Phnom Penh is composed chiefly of Cambodians with outside support from Viet *kieu* and human rights groups. The second organization is the Cambodian Freedom Fighters (CFF) which directs its activities against Vietnamese governmental presence in Cambodia. According to

police secret agents, CFF has three divisions in Cambodia, the MFV has one. The CFF is led by Chhun Yasit, a Cambodian who lives in the United States and frequently comes to Thailand to map out plans for CFF forces in Cambodia. A Phnom Penh officer described the CFF as "a peculiar organization that has its own networks and suicide commando units all over the country." In mid-April police seized an Armbrust anti-tank gun which the group planned to use against oil company depots from the other side of the [Mekong] river.

Meantime, a puzzling story of Vietnamese behavior in Cambodia. The governor of Kirivong District (Takeo Province) in May reported to Phnom Penh that 60 Vietnamese laborers had crossed 500 meters into Cambodia near Ohnum Den and dug a trench 1,400 meters long, six meters wide, six meters deep, with embankments on both sides. Purpose was not clear—the workmen said they were not told—but trench appeared to be a World War I-type fortification. The governor sent in a crew of 60 to fill in the trench. One explanation was that the trench was part of a bridge and road construction project in Vietnam; a Takeo provincial official was dispatched to the area (which Cambodia claims based on French maps) who was forbidden by the Vietnamese from taking pictures (he managed to take some shots of Vietnamese trucks dumping stones as part of bridge construction).

On the domestic side, the chief news of interest turned on political/judicial actions against the Khmer Rouge leadership.

The Cambodian known as Deutch (or Duch) AKA Kavk Kek Leu, one time warden at the infamous Tuol Sleng (S-21) prison was taken into "protective custody" (in May) and is being held in Phnom Penh, ostensibly as a witness in the forthcoming trial of Khmer Rouge leaders. In late April Deutch met with Nate Thayer (FEER correspondent) and others in a Batambang hotel room and gave a lurid description of Khmer Rouge brutality. Deutch could provide a wealth of secret information about the Khmer Rouge, says Youk Chhang of the Cambodian Genocide Documentation Center in Phnom Penh, "He said he can identify signatures and handwriting on key documents likely to be used as evidence in trials,

outline the chain of command and implicate number two Nuon Chea and prime minister Khieu Samphan." Harch Kalyan, who works as an archivist at Tuol Sleng, describes Deutch as the key to the riddle of Khmer Rouge leadership. "Duch was a very strong man in this prison, I saw a lot of his signatures and orders in the documents. I really want to see him and ask him why he did what he did. He killed people like birds."

Ta Mok, 72, was arrested earlier this year and is awaiting trial. Known as "the Butcher" he spent the quarter looking for a lawyer, having rejected a military court appointed lawyer as too young and inexperienced. (The court had selected Chiv Songhak, a young attorney in his 30s.) Several legal firms approached refused to take on the case. Instead Ta Mok picked US-educated Benson Samay, 56, who said, "Like the Cambodians I have suffered but everyone has the right to a lawyer." The one-legged Ta Mok is charged under a 1994 law outlawing the Khmer Rouge, but faces a string of other charges related to his role in the bloody 1975-79 "killing fields" regime that claimed up to two million lives. Under Cambodian law prosecutors must bring the case to trial within six months. Ta Mok faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Meantime the remainder of the top DK leadership Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan, who defected to the government earlier, are living freely in a former rebel stronghold near the Thai border. Pol Pot died in the remote jungle last year.

Other Cambodian news briefs of the quarter:

*Chinese President Jiang Zemin met with King Sihanouk in Kunming May 16 and told him that a country can make economic and social progress only when there is stability. The occasion was China's '99 International Horticultural Exposition. Sihanouk invited Jiang Zemin to visit Cambodia.

*The Mekong River Commission inaugurated its new headquarters on the banks of the Mekong in the southern outskirts of Phnom Penh on May 4. The MRC (Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam) works to promote sustainable development of the resources of the river. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen presided over the opening and said "The sustainable development of the Mekong river—hydro-

electricity, transport, bridges, fisheries...is but one aim of MRC." Commission Chairman, SRV Development, Le Huy Ngo, said its long-term aim "was an economically prosperous socially just." Headquarters with Laos will alternate between Vientiane and Phnom Penh every five years.

*Foreign aid donors—representing some 200 agencies and governments—say they are "satisfied" with the Cambodian government's progress in implementing the reforms. "So far, I am satisfied with the Cambodian government's commitment," said Japanese ambassador Masaki Sato. Japan is a leading donor country assisting in the rehabilitation of Cambodia.

*The Human Rights Watch (New York) and other organizations say the Cambodian Government (and its military) are getting away with murder. Its report followed two months of investigations to document "the failure of the government at all levels to prosecute civilian and military authorities for killing and torture." It alleged that between January 1997 and October 1998 at least 263 people were killed by police, military, police, militia, or civil servants. The vast majority of cases were neither investigated nor punished. Cambodia's government was quick to dismiss the report.

Departmental View. U.S. State Department official Ralph Boyce on Cambodia (Congressional testimony March 9, 1999). "We appreciate the engagement and leadership the Congress and the Senate in particular have demonstrated throughout Cambodia's prolonged political crisis. It is too early to say with certainty that stability and real political plurality are finally at hand. Indeed, it is important to avoid raising unrealistic expectations about what Cambodia's new government will be able to accomplish in the short term. In an impoverished nation so new to the democratic experience and so lacking in basic institutional development and human resources, the road to full democratic development will be a long one. Cambodia's new coalition government represents a step forward on that road. We will continue our close and cooperative consultation with the Subcommittee on how best to ensure that Cambodia continues in the right direction."

LaoRefugees

Laos, Thailand, and the UNHCR will meet in July to find a way to repatriate the 1,345 Lao who remain in the Ban Napho refugee camp in Thailand. The government of Laos up to now has agreed to take back only those who return voluntarily; the Ban Napho refugees are unwilling to return to Laos.

Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan said, after a late June meeting with the UNHCR regional representative, that all Laotian refugees must be sent back "We cannot allow these people who have proof of origin to remain here permanently," he told the Bangkok Post (June 26). The UNHCR will continue to help pay the Ban Napho camp expenses.

Background information on repatriation of Lao refugees over the years has been supplied to IC by UNHCR, which said that the statement on Lao refusal to accept refugees in IC XVIII:1, derived from Thai press reports was inaccurate. The UNHCR report says:

The government announced a general amnesty in 1977, in which they formally welcomed back all Laotian citizens that had left the country, with the exception of 34 people condemned by the People's Court for acts committed before 1975. The government has renewed this repeatedly, and in fact has received 23,932 people from camps in Thailand, 3,759 that resettled to China, and 159 that resettled in other third countries (such as the US and France). Returnees from Thailand had left Laos between 1975 and the late 1980s and included people recognized by the Government of Thailand as having a legitimate claim to refugee status, as well as those that were screened out for refugee status. Returnees under the UNHCR repatriation program from Thailand and China have all received the same assistance, regardless of their status.

"The Government of Laos continues to welcome the return of the residents of Ban Napho, but they have recently stated that they will not accept involuntary return. Anyone (again, regardless of refugee status) that volunteers for repatriation will receive the standard repatriation assistance that has been provided by UNHCR to previous returns."

LAOS: Second Quarter

Reinforcing Relations

Regional diplomatic activity occupied the Lao leadership in June as the country hosted an official visit by the President of Vietnam and Lao military and party officials visited China, Cuba and Malaysia. No agreements were signed, and all of the trips appeared to be in the socialist-world tradition of frequent goodwill exchange visits by senior delegations to reaffirm government relationships and Party solidarity.

Vietnam. President Tran Duc Luong, on a five-day visit at the invitation of Lao President Khamtay Siphandone, held separate talks in Vientiane June 21 with Khamtay, Prime Minister Sisavat Keobounphan, and National Assembly President Saman Vignaketh. Luong reaffirmed the special relationship between the two countries fostered by Ho Chi Minh and the late Lao President Kaysone Phomvihane and Vietnam's determination to strengthen it.

According to KPL, the two sides noted special satisfaction at results of agreements reached (but with no detail) between the two Politburos in January during Khamtay's official visit to Vietnam. These covered economic cooperation, investment, and construction of an agricultural processing factory.

Luong ended his stay with a visit to Luang Prabang where he and Mayor Chansi Phomsikham (also Party Committee secretary) discussed provincial cooperation, particularly relations between Luang Prabang and Lai Chau (Vietnam) provinces which share a common border.

China. Defense Minister and Deputy PM Choummaly Sayasone arrived in Beijing June 8, leading a high-level military delegation on a six-day goodwill visit at the invitation of Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian. The group met with China's premier, Zhu Rongji, discussed bilateral military relations with Chi and ranking PLA leaders, and met separately with Fu Quanyou, chief of the PLA General Staff. Choummaly hopes that Laos can learn from China's experience in army economic work and construction, and Chi promised further

support for cooperative ties between the two armed forces but no specific agreements were reported. The Lao delegation also visited Shanghai and Kunming (which borders Vietnam).

A China-Laos Friendship Assn. delegation also visited Laos in June.

Cuba.

An LPRP delegation, led by Politburo member Thongsing Thammavong, arrived in Havana June 3 for a six-day "working visit" with Cuban party leaders and tours of various sites on the island. In an interview with the Party newspaper *Granma*, Thongsing said the Cuban people and party are an example for the world in overcoming problems imposed by the "crumbling of the Socialist bloc" and the economic blockade. He noted that strengthening mutual understanding was a main objective of the delegation's visit, "more so now when the enemies of the revolution are trying to destroy us." The Lao visitors toured a crocodile breeding center, tourist resorts, an ecological station, educational and health installations, a youth labor army camp, and the Centro Oil Drilling and Tapping Enterprise.

UMNO.

Another LPRP delegation, this one representing the Central Committee, attended the summit meeting of the United Malay National Organization (UMNO) June 18-20 in Malaysia at the invitation of the UMNO executive board. The Lao Party group was led by Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Somavat Lengsavad, who also heads the CC's External Relations Board. (KPL, VNA, Xinhua, Havana television)

Debt Relief.

Laos, along with Zambia and Rwanda, may see between a one-half and two-thirds drop in their debt service payments in a deal approved by the G7 nations. This estimate was made by Jubilee 2000, a debt forgiveness campaign coalition that, while welcoming the G7 action, listed numerous other countries that will get little or no reduction. The G7 arrangement promises to reduce debt by \$70 billion

but the coalition says only \$45 billion is new money, the rest having been committed in the first relief under HIFC (highly indebted poor countries) in 1996. The campaign's goal is forgiveness of \$370 billion owed by 52 countries by the end of 2000. (Reuters, June 18)

Border Encroachment

A Phnom Penh newspaper has accused Laos of moving its border "deep" into Cambodian territory. The Reaksmei Kampuchea reported on June 4 that Lao people have been clearing land and planting crops at three different sites inside Cambodia or on the border. Some 10 acres were recently cleared to make way for orchards within Vireakchey national park, according to the report by Kong Hean.

Representatives of the two countries have been meeting on border problems, most recently May 22 in Phnom Penh at which time reporters were told agreement had been reached on numerous technical issues but more work remained to be done. The Reaksmei Kampuchea is described as a pro-government newspaper; it also accuses Vietnam and Thailand of border encroachment.

Rail Link with Thailand.

Construction is expected to start in midyear on a rail track to run 14 kms. from Vientiane to the Thai-Laotian Friendship Bridge over the Mekong. The track will accommodate both standard and narrow-gauge trains and is estimated to cost \$33 million. The project will be carried out by the Lao Railways Transportation Corp. (LRT), a joint venture between the Lao government and Pacific Transportation Co., a Thai development enterprise. The Bangkok Post (April 1) reports the LRT is considering bids from Chinese and Italian companies to build the track, expected to take 18 months to complete.

A second phase of the project, which a Pacific Transportation spokesman said would begin before the first is finished, envisions a 220-km. track from Vientiane to Luang Prabang and another from Luang Prabang to Boten. The LRT's plans for rail connections to Bangkok are based on expectations of heavy tourist traffic annually as well as cargo shipments between the two nations. Pacific Transportation is looking for partners to undertake projects related to the railway (which the

LRT's 30-year concession allows), such as industrial zones, trade sites, hotels, and supplementary transportation.

MIA Conference Planned

The United States and the three countries of Indochina have agreed in principle to hold a conference on MIA accounting and how to improve operations in the future. U.S. Deputy Asst. Sec. Of Defense Robert Jones told reporters in Phnom Penh that such a conference would focus on (1) return of remains; (2) priority discrepancy cases; (3) access to archives; and (4) cooperation between countries at border-area searches. On a fact-finding mission to discuss issues and logistics of such a conference, Jones was scheduled to visit Laos and Vietnam after Cambodia.

Countries Meet on AIDS Crisis

Lao officials joined Thai, Cambodian, Burmese and southern China representatives at a regional conference in June that called for cross-border cooperation and pooling of experiences to fight the AIDS epidemic. More than 7 million people in Asia-Pacific are believed to be infected with the HIV virus

UNESCO Consultant David Feingold, an anthropologist who attended the conference, said in an interview with Reuters that "cultural resources" must be used to address the problem because there is too little money and too many people to take a public health approach.

Among these cultural resources, he said, are the Buddhist monkhood, the media, and traditional medicine practices. And the conference agreed, Feingold said, to try to create a cross-border relationship among monks who often find it easier to travel between countries. He noted that Thai monks were already playing a key role, both in providing care and spreading AIDS information. He also suggested that Thailand's aggressive press may have saved tens of thousands of lives by continuously confronting the government on the issue. A closed society where the issue is not publicly discussed and debated is endangering its people, Feingold warned, adding that Myanmar could become the "AIDS disaster of Southeast Asia." (Reuters, June 16)

An Essay: A Case for Veterans' History

Understanding of the nature and meaning of service in the Viet-Nam War has recently undergone drastic change. That our perception of a given group of war veterans has changed at all is a historiographic rarity peculiar to the Viet-Nam era. Academic assessments have revealed only select parts of the veterans' experience, and have actually perpetuated some of the myths surrounding it.

During and immediately following the war, veterans' accounts shaped much of the public perception of the war. Americans, deceived by their government and horrified by the nightly news, were ready to believe the worst. Civilians could not reconcile words like friendship, bravery, or self-sacrifice, used for so long to describe American soldiers, with Search and Destroy mission SOP. Narratives of villages burned, civilians killed, illicit drugs taken in the field and officers "fraggd" thus dominated the field. The image of an immoral, irresponsible soldier, unfit heir to his predecessors' glory, became ensconced in the American memory.

Initially, scholarship on America's involvement in Viet-Nam proceeded from a critical perspective, focusing on what, and especially *who*, went wrong. Sociologists (i.e., John Helmer, *Bringing the War Home*), historians (Gabriel Kolko, *Anatomy of a Conflict*; et al) and psychologists (Robert Jay Lifton, *Home From the War*) all pointed to an allegedly unprecedented problem of readjustment for the Viet-Nam veteran as proof of the moral bankruptcy of American policy. The guilt of fighting a war so patently genocidal, they contended, left permanent scars on the psyche of all veterans.

The reactionary reply generated more heat than illumination. The first wave took the form of *quid-pro-quo* refutations of the anti-involvement interpretation, (George Herring, *America's Longest War*; Guenter Lewy, *America in Vietnam*). Herring and Lewy led the "blunder-and-recover" so convincingly that they provoked a demand from veterans for specifications of culpability. The

literature so induced absolved the armed forces except for those at the very highest levels (Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army in Vietnam*; Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Air Power*; Harry Summers, *On Strategy*).

Currently, only a precious few monographs and even fewer texts present reasoned accountings of the above dichotomy of issues. Those which present opposing viewpoints together give veterans' questions short shrift in favor of panoramic scope (Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam*; Dunnigan and Nofi, *Dirty Little Secrets of the Vietnam War*). The past year has seen two veterans finally craft solid works that rehabilitate the veterans' image. Though each gives different causes for disconnected vet phenomena, both impart the same central thrust: Vietnam veterans are *not* all troubled or in need of help or forgiveness. (Jerry Lembcke, *The Spitting Image*; B.G. Burkett, *Stolen Valor*).

In the past year, virtually all of the inquiries posted to the National Archives with regard to the Viet-Nam War have been for material on the My Lai massacre. The slaughter indeed offers a gripping topic for research--I have done extensive work on My Lai and other atrocities in Viet-Nam myself. Concentration on such a narrow aspect of the Viet-Nam experience, however, produces the same pitfalls that Thomas Szasz posited for similar pursuits in psychology: it preempts study of the true object. Christian Appy's review article (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Feb. 1999) offered that studies of individual American experience too often dominate scholarship in that area. Yet his own student confessed ignorance of the Viet-Nam War precisely because she was afraid to ask anyone who participated. The Vietnam Archive is now pursuing an Oral History project, and the Vietnam Center at Texas Tech is committed to providing scholars with a broad spectrum of veterans' experiences. Perhaps in the near future, then, understanding will eliminate fear of the Vietnam veteran. (Ben Dubberly)

Lieutenant General Nguyen Dinh Uoc

One of the few PAVN general officers to participate in a U.S. academic conference, Lt. Gen. Nguyen Dinh Uoc traveled to Lubbock, Tex., in April to present a paper at the third triennial Vietnam Symposium at Texas Tech University.

In a conversation between sessions, General Uoc was asked about conditions in the PAVN in light of the Defense Minister's plaintive observations last winter about the plight of the poor, both military and civilian. While not addressing this directly, Uoc stressed the army's role in both security and rural development, especially in Vietnam's border areas, many of which are remote and poor. We try to develop industries and industrial crop production, he said, under the government's requirement that enterprises must be profitable for the local people.

Uoc said conditions for soldiers were much better than during the war, adding that a gradual demobilization would take place over the next 10 years that would reduce PAVN personnel from about a million to around 400,000. There are plans to establish an NEZ to help former soldiers set up enterprises as well as provide land for them.

Responding to a suggestion at the Symposium that veterans of the former South Vietnamese army now living abroad provide help to poor or disabled ARVN veterans in Vietnam, Uoc said local authorities deal with poverty and health problems of these people without discrimination. Any aid of the sort proposed, he added, should go through the Ministry of Social Welfare.

As to the Vietnam-U.S. relationship, Gen. Uoc said it was most important for economic development in Vietnam. He pointed to his visit to Texas and the Symposium as a sign of opening and cooperation that cannot but help development of good relations between the two countries.

Gen. Uoc was born into peasant family in 1927 in Phu Tho Province near Hanoi. His formal schooling, including three years in Hanoi, ended in 1944. He joined the Viet Minh in 1945 and took part in *khôi nghĩa* (general uprising) in his province. Later that year he joined the Liberation Army, becoming first a group commander, a company commander in 1947, a battalion

commander in 1948, and vice-commander of a regiment in 1952. He was regional commander of Artillery Unit 675 at Dien Bien Phu.

With victory and departure of the French, Uoc began a five-year period of education in military and political studies, including two years in Beijing, which launched him on his career during the Vietnam War period as editor, first of *Ly Luan Quan Doi*, the army's theoretical journal, then of the army newspaper, *Quan Doi Nhan Dan*. He said he was in Loc Ninh on the HCM trail in Laos in 1973 and at war's end was vice-commander of Zone 4.

In 1985 he joined the Institute of Military History where he is an associate professor. General Uoc and his wife live in Hanoi; they have four children. (M.P.)

Hanoi Hilton. A genuine Hilton hotel opened in Hanoi February 26. It claims to be the first and only five star facility in the capital. It is located next to the Opera House, a few blocks away from the infamous Hoa Lo/Hanoi Hilton prison. There are 269 rooms; rates from \$60 to \$325 per night. Observers say the opening could not have come at a worse time—first class hotels in Vietnam saw their occupancy plunge 30% in 1998. General Manager Jan Verduyn says, not to worry, this is a cyclical thing; Vietnam's potential remains enormous.

Vietnam Census. At midnight April 1, 1999 some, census takers fanned out across Vietnam for the third National Census in 25 years (censuses: Oct. 1, 1979 and April 1, 1989). In traditional Vietnam the household (*nha*), not the individual was counted. The sense of this emphasis remains. Le Van Toan, chairman of the Census Committee Steering Committee told a press conference: "This census collects information reflecting the status of population and housing condition. It will collect information on population by sex, age, ethnic group, religion, urban and rural areas, levels and trends of migration, education, labor force and employment, marital status, fertility, mortality and population growth, current status of housing conditions, facilities of family households and production means."

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