

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 Le, 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: Girl in yellow dress. Hà Nội street scene. Photo by James Reckner.

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Abbreviations

AFP—Agence France Presse
AI—Amnesty International
AMAZON.COM—Book 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 Vietnam
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 Vietnam
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—Vietnam National University
VVN—Voice of Vietnam Network (Hanoi)
VTN—Vietnam Television Network
XINHUA—China News Agency

EXCHANGE RATES—U.S.\$

đồng (Việt Nam)	13,930 (buy)
	13,981 (sell)
riel (Cambodia)	3,835
kip (Laos)	9,300
baht (Thailand)	41.25
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 and Monographs

Argument Without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy by Robert McNamara (former Sec. Of Defense), James Blight (Brown Univ.) and Robert Brigham (Vassar); with Herbert Schandler (National Defense Univ.) and Thomas Biersteker (Brown Univ.). In this hierarchical rank of five, we are not even sure who the authors are. Who wrote what? These modern-day Diogenes go in search of Truth—in the U.S., to Italy, and finally to Hà Nội (in a sense, seven conferences) where they meet with Việt Nam's top barbarian managers in a "dialogue." Opening chapters explain the mechanistic Rube Goldberg methodology which only McNamara could have devised and employed. Operational thesis: in the beginning both Washington and Hà Nội had geopolitical objectives (indeed they did), each of which could have been achieved peacefully; when, this failed, their war could have ended quickly, presumably through negotiations. Hà Nội wanted to take over South Việt Nam. South Việt Nam, the U.S. and their allies opposed this. What issues needed negotiation? (As a Sài Gòn University dean told a visiting U.S. senator—"You want to get married, the girl does not; so I say 'negotiate.'") In the climactic scene--McNamara vs. Gen. Võ Nguyên Giáp—it is obvious Giáp does not know what his guests are talking about. The debate (and debate is what it was), neither a dialogue, nor a mutual search for answers, nor even an argument. In any case, McNamara lost the debate hands down. He failed to establish a clear definition of terms. His appeals to reason were met by moral posturing. He tried to be reasonable with those who only felt they deserved only apologies. McNamara was full of doubt, uncertain of the implications of the Cold War, Russian initiatives, domestic politics, etc. For Giáp there was nothing complex about it: you were the aggressors, we the defenders. What mistakes? We made none. A true dialogue of the deaf. For the debaters from Hà Nội, the issue was simple. The meaning of the war was exactly what they said it

was. Either the U.S. did not understand or did not want to understand. The Vietnamese admitted nothing, acknowledged nothing: true members of Shaw's Soot and Whitewash Brigade. It is clear, as we now know, that McNamara did not understand the Vietnamese or their culture. He still doesn't. Public Affairs, New York, \$27.50 (1999)

For more, see "Why Were We in Vietnam?" by Jack Matloff (ex-U.S. ambassador to the USSR) in *New York Times* Book Review, 4 Aug. 1999, and "McNamara's War: Class Explores 'Argument Without End'" (Brown Univ. student meeting with the authors) in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 7 May 1999.

What we need now is a gathering of minds such as the one at the Army and Navy Club in Washington (informally dubbed "Knife the Mac Seminar") that followed publication of McNamara's first book, *In Retrospect*. A seminar that might be titled "Argument Without End: In Search of the Mind of Robert McNamara."

Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of the Vietnam War by Fredrick Logevall (Univ. of California, Santa Barbara). It is hard to get a handle on this serious work. A sort of "rational choice" treatment of the Việt Nam War, is suggested by the title. Civilians, especially intellectuals, carry a mental picture of governmental decision-making as a clean slate on which top leaders write history. They act virtually unencumbered, as if they have the power and authority to make most any choice. In this case, Washington leaders could choose peace or escalation. With the leaders under examination here (the Principals as they called themselves) this was not reality. Rather, they saw themselves locked into policy positions inherited from their predecessors, hedged in by competing national interests, hostages to parochial pressures of their enemies (or worse, of their friends). The weakness of this study stems from an unexamined assumption that each morning the Washington Principals (President, Cabinet secretaries, NSA-CIA chiefs, Congressional chairs) went to work with unclouded minds prepared to make policy in well-defined, long-term, agreed-upon objectives. In fact, what usually was in mind

was which of the several short-term crises were most pressing? The principals in Washington hoped their people in Vietnam had a clear vision of where the war was heading, while Principals in Vietnam assumed (or hoped) that those in Washington knew what it all meant. The strength of this work, and what makes it such a treasure, is that it patiently leads the reader through the labyrinth of Washington and international politics during the crucial years of the Vietnam conflict. (August 1963-July 1965), after which the U.S. was locked into war. With telling insights, Logevall addresses the personalities involved, and includes a treatment of home front critics which is a delight to read. University of California Press, \$35. (1999)

Why Vietnam Invaded Cambodia: Political Culture and the Causes of War by Stephen Morris (Johns Hopkins Univ.). A study of Việt Nam's 1978 takeover of Cambodia set in a larger frame of Marxist-Leninist disputation, international relations and the rationality of political cultures. Chiefly it should be read for what it tells us about the war between Hà Nội and Pol Pot. In two parts: the origin of Vietnamese-Cambodian relations, rise and fall of the red brotherhood, and internationalization of the conflict (in terms of the Sino-Soviet dispute). A great deal of valuable detail, patiently set down. Morris wrestles with the long-debated question of how much Moscow knew about Việt Nam's invasion plans yet seems uncertain as to the truth. Stanford University Press, \$45 (hardcover), \$16.95 (paperback). (1999)

United States Foreign Policy Towards Cambodia, 1977-92: A Question of Realities by Christopher Brady (expert in decision-making theory and systems at City University Business School, London). A stringent, even dismissive assessment of the U.S. in Cambodia. The record is a messy one: hardly commendable, nor can it be defended by the "good intentions" argument that throughout Washington meant well. Decisions were a string of "lesser-evil" choices. Where Brady sees policy-making as a "question of reality," those on the scene saw it as cargo aboard a raft headed down the River of No Return. Brady's

methodology focuses on personality, rigidly classified (level 1, level 2, level 3, etc.,) of officials. This tends to ascribe more clout to individuals than is justified (as the French say, *le système, imbecile*). He does not have some of the names straight (Gary Porter: "What Cambodia bloodbath?"), but not Dick Holbrooke, a disaster as dep. assist. sec. state, acknowledged at the time by friend and foe alike. Still this work represents fine old-school scholarship at which the Brits excel, and readers should not be put off by Brady's haughty Royal mein. Macmillan and St. Martin's Press in association with the Institute of Contemporary British History. (1999)

Honor Bound: American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia (1961-73) by Stuart Rochester (OSD Historian Office) and Frederick Kiley (ex-director, National Defense University). A huge labor which could well prove to be the seminal work on the subject: 700 pages, 26 chapters, three appendices, extensive bibliography. Comprehensive and authoritative. Years in the making, it and a companion work on POW policies, touch on everything about POWs: capture, fending off angry farmers, tales of endurance under torture, escape attempts, collaboration with the enemy. Also maps, photographs, list of the 800 or so who went in (591 came out). Recommended. Naval Institute Press, \$36.95. (1999)

Defending the Free World: John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and the Vietnam War 1961-1965 by Orrin Schwab (Chicago-based intellectual historian of the Cold War). This began as a Ph.D. dissertation for which the author labored mightily in the two presidential libraries, at Carlisle Barracks, and at the Center of Military History in Washington. Five chapters of seminal events: the world of 1961, the Diêm coup, Gulf of Tonkin, the VC attack on Pleiku, and LBJ's sayonara speech. A trustworthy work. Author examines the war in clear-eyed, hard-nosed manner and in doing so shatters a number of long-enduring myths. Does not add much new to our knowledge about the early presidential wartime leaders, but does pull things together neatly. Offers a "corrective" to U.S.

insurgency and counter-insurgency doctrines (author thinks more of Ed Lansdale than Bob Thompson). Recommended. Praeger Publishers, \$59.95. (1998) Available from Greenwood Publishing, Westport, CT.

Light at the End of the Tunnel: A Vietnam War Anthology, Andrew Rotter, ed. (Colgate Univ.). Revised edition with 50% new entries. Honest, representative. Thirty-nine contributors who, common to the genre, don't exactly mix (but neither do opinions on the war in other gatherings). Some of the best are early writings (Robert Shaplen, George Herring, Ellen Hammer, William Duiker, Norman Podhoretz). Also the inevitable: George Ball, Robert McNamara, William Colby, Henry Kissinger, Noam Chomsky, Neil Sheehan. Best of the novelists: Philip Caputo, Tim O'Brien, Lê Lý Hayslip. An important work simply because it is so extended. Heaven only knows what an undergrad would think after taking in and trying to find truth in all 39. From Scholarly Resources, 104 Greenhill Ave., Wilmington, DE 19805, \$55 (cloth), \$22.95 (paperback). (1999)

The Vietnam War, Peter Lowe, ed. (Univ. of Manchester). Ten historians of Việt Nam, chiefly British, with American, Australian, Russian and Vietnamese, collaborated to produce this set of ten topical histories (first volume in a new history series from the University of Manchester). The result tends toward provincialism: each writer works on his own island of secular stagnation. What we get are perceptions: Chen Jian on China; Ilya Gaiduk on USSR; Carl Bridge on Australia; Tom Wells on the U.S. antiwar movement; Nguyễn Vũ Tùng on Hà Nội during the war, etc. A fine opening essay by Anthony Short (Univ. Aberdeen) is titled "Origins and Alternatives: Comments, Counter-facts and Commitments." Some of these essays represent solid scholarship; some (Ngô Vĩnh Long) play fast and loose with their adjectives. This work should not be used as a text, but rather go on the "additional readings" shelf for undergraduate history courses on the war. St. Martin's Press, New

York (printed in Hong Kong). From PHPS, 175 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10010. (1998)

Desk Warrior: Memoirs of a Combat REMF by Joe Dunn (Converse College, Spartanburg S.C.). Dunn went to Việt Nam out of graduate school mostly into the rear area as an intelligence spook. He kept a record of what he saw and thought, and here turns it into a personalized memoir. It is well written; a spirited account of a soldier who used to be idealistic, picturesque, dare we say, quixotic. A good read, full of the kind of war stories veterans like to spin around the bar. Pearson Custom Publishing, 200 Old Tappan Road, Old Tappan, NJ 07675. (1999)

The Rescue to Bat 21 by Darrel Whitcomb. Story of a controversial Việt Nam War rescue mission in April 1972. It was dangerous, costly, and successful and involved parachuting a rescuer into a PAVN force on the march. Naval Institute Press, \$27.95. (1997)

Oriental Enlightenment: The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought by John Clarke. An intellectual study of what "orientalism" has meant to Westerners in Asia in terms of philosophical encounters, religious dialogue, psychological interpretation, and scientific/ecological speculation. Contains a wealth of insights useful for historians dealing with the cultural gulf Americans encountered in Việt Nam, innocent and respectable. Routledge, London. (1997)

The Ethics of War and Peace by Paul Christopher. A carefully done, comprehensive examination of law and ethics in warfare traced from ancient Rome to the present. Addresses such questions as: what are the limits of a commander's responsibility for war crimes (such as reprisals) by his troops; what are professional military to do when their nation is engaged in an unjust war; is it possible to distinguish between ethical and unethical use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons? Mercifully, the author avoids taking a

“legalistic” tack, arguing that it is impossible to separate moral principles from “positive law.” Prentice Hall, \$24.67. (1999)

SOG: The Secret War of America's Commandos in Vietnam by John Plaster. The Special Operations Group (SOG) was a combined operations outfit about which too little still is known. They ran top secret operations into North Việt Nam, Laos, and the Trail area; all sorts of dirty tricks. With photos, \$25. (1998)

Swimmers Among the Trees: SEAL Operations in the Vietnam War by Joel Hutchins. Accounts of the Navy's elite special operations in the water and upcountry. Features details on weapons, tactics, special equipment. Presidio Press, \$21.95.

Confucianism and the Family, Walter Slote (Columbia Univ.) and George DeVos (Berkeley emeritus). Confucianism is neither religion nor philosophy, it is either both or something in between. Its essence has to do with relationships: personal, communal, society-wide. Its various manifestations—in Việt Nam, Japan, the two Koreas, and of course China—vary because of differing social influences and historical experiences. Any Việt Nam scholar worthy of the name is schooled in the subject, which is not easily mastered. There are 12 contributors here including the best in the field of Vietnamese Confucianism: Walter Slote (the master), Stephen B. Young, and the late Nguyễn Ngọc Huy. Recommended. State University Press of New York. From CUP Services, 750 Cascadilla St., P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851. (1998)

Vietnam by Spencer Tucker (Virginia Military Institute). Brief history of the Việt Nam War apparently intended for lower division undergraduate courses. Solid, carefully done, well balanced. Fair treatment of ARVN. Good coverage of the war's cultural antecedents; also includes a section on Vietnam's postwar invasion of Cambodia and China's invasion of Vietnam. University of

Kentucky Press, \$42 (hardcover), \$19 (paper) (1999).

Saigon et ses Environs: Cochinchine. An utterly charming book about turn-of-the-century French Indochina. Some 60 black and white photographs originally published by Paul Vigier in Paris (c. 1930s) as a souvenir for French colons; now republished (publisher not indicated) for latter-day tourists and returning old hands. All of the major buildings of the time are here (Governor General's Palace, the Cathedral, the Poor Law building, the Naval Barrack, the governor's villa at Cap St.-Jacques); as well as the street scenes (Catanat St. in Sài Gòn, Canton St. in Chợ Lớn, the Garnier theater square); and the people (the nobility with long nails, the rich at lunch, comedians, Montagnards, musicians, an Annamite funeral). With brief introduction; bi-lingual. Can be found in book stalls in Hà Nội and HCMC.

Sergeant Dickinson by Jerome Gold (ex-Green Beret, social anthropologist). “Spooky” is the word associated with this novel by readers and reviewers; also “hallucinatory” and “eponymous.” Narrator is an A-team radio operator in the Highlands during a nine-day PAVN siege whose radio is a psychedelic connection with the world, and reality. Gold carefully selects the telling detail; hero challenges a sniper to kill him; (11 shots, all miss). What is the meaning of this? Writing style is distinct, owes a good deal to Hemingway (e.g., extensive use of the simple declarative sentence). This is a first rate work. Initially published in 1984 as *The Negligence of Death*. Soho Press, \$20. (1999)

Market Reform in Vietnam: Building Institutions for Development, Jennie Litvack (World Bank) and Dennis Rondinelli (Univ. North Carolina), eds. This book is aimed at the academic rather than the business community. Based upon their work for a World Bank Study, “Fiscal Decentralization and the Delivery of Rural Services,” the authors provide an overview of Việt Nam's attempt to shift from command to market

economy and *đổi mới* economic reforms. Useful for economists and NGO planners, not those seeking investment guidance. A must for the think-tank library. Quorum Books, 88 Post Road West, Westport CT 06881, \$59.95. (1999)

Reversing Relations With Former Adversaries: U.S. Foreign Policy After the Cold War, Richard Nelson and Kenneth Weisbrode (Atlantic Council, Washington, D.C.), eds. Eleven national security specialists examine our condition in relation to current geopolitical constructs. Richard Childress (ex-NSC) and Stephen Solarz (former U.S. Congressman) on "Vietnam: Detours on the Road to Normalization;" Robert Sutter (ex-Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress) on "Normalization With China;" both are authoritative, recent-historical accounts. Also included: Cuba, Iraq, Nicaragua, and Russia. From University Press of Florida, \$39.95. (1999)

Đặc San: Gia Đình 81 Biệt Cách Dù (ARVN) Airborne Family 81, Phan Văn Huấn, ed. A tribute to South Vietnamese paratroopers—"the proud and the mighty"—many of whom now live in Southern California and Texas. Illustrated. Received from Jimmie Grimes of Addison, Texas. Can be seen at Texas Tech University Vietnam Center. In Vietnamese. (1998)

Jungle Dragoon: The Memoir of an Armored Cav Platoon Leader in Vietnam by Paul Walker (USA colonel, ret.). Seeks to redress the attention balance in the writing about Armor and Infantry in Việt Nam. A *dragoon* is, or was, a heavily armed cavalryman; that's how Walker saw himself as a 23-year-old, well-educated (and well-read) second lieutenant who spins a string of traditional war stories both insightful and informative. Highly personalized, as war memoirs should be. With photos. Presidio Press, Novato, CA, \$24.95. (1999)

Propaganda and Persuasion by Gareth Jowett (Univ. Houston) and Victoria O'Donnell (Montana State Univ.). This is a work

recommended for all who write or research about the Việt Nam war and need to deal seriously with the communication of ideas within that struggle. (And how can any serious author fail to do this?) Since Biblical days such has been at the heart of warfare. In Việt Nam it was essential for the Marxist-Leninists with their many institutions, agit-prop agents, criticism/self-criticism sessions, re-education camps, etc. Their opponents found countering such efforts to be distasteful, chiefly because they did not understand the process; never were able to define propaganda (or persuasion) properly, and at best believed the beginning and end of the communication process was kicking leaflets out of airplanes. All the more puzzling since Americans were masters of mass communication, not only from Madison Avenue but also from school and pulpit. This is a survey work. Vietnam is treated only briefly (about nine pages plus scattered references), mainly in Chapter V on past WWII propaganda efforts (Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf). One carp: editors would be advised in their next edition (this is the third) to sharpen the first chapter's definitional distinctions among propaganda, news and education, and stress that there is only one difference: the motive of the communicator. Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320, \$29.95 (hardcover), \$25.95 (paperback). (1999)

The Wars We Took to Vietnam: Culture, Conflict and Story Telling by Milton Bates (Conflict/Marxist sociologist). Places the war and cultural conflict in the U.S. in terms of the "frontier" of race, class, gender, and generation. University of California Press, (1996).

Prince of Peace by James Carroll. The novel's protagonist, a Roman Catholic priest, is caught up in the anti-war movement, finds himself struggling against his church, which he regards as cynically run as a corporation. Houghton Mifflin, \$13 (paperback), (1984).

Spratlys: The Dispute of the South China Sea by Bob Catley (Australian scholar) and Makur Keliat (Indonesian scholar). Early Chinese sailors

called them “the reefs of danger.” The authors say they are that again because of Chinese economic and strategic ambitions. Work sets the historical and geographical scene; the ambitions of oil men and fishermen; strategic interests of outsiders; and Indonesian efforts to arrange some sort of multinational cooperation. From Ashgate Publishing, Australia, \$63.95 (1997).

Studies in Comparative Genocide, Leon Chorbajian (Univ. of Mass., Lowell) and George Shirinian (Toronto Public Library), eds. Section Three of this work deals with genocide, denial, and prevention. Ben Kiernan has a contribution titled “Pol Pot and Enver Pasha: A Comparison of the Cambodian and Armenian Genocides.” From St. Martin’s Press, New York, \$72. (1999)

In the Eyes of the Dragon: China Views the World, Yong Deng and Fei-Ling Wang, eds. A set of essays by Chinese scholars on how China’s intellectuals conceptualize modern *weltpolitik*. Rowman & Littlefield, \$69 (hardcover); \$21.95 (paperback). (1999)

Vietnam or Indochina: Contesting Concepts of Space in Vietnamese Nationalism, 1887-1924 by Christopher Goscha (Việt Nam historian, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies). It seems that early Vietnamese nationalists of various stripes assumed their future would be French Indochina, merely without the French. This involved the five traditional entities of An Nam, Tonkin, Cochinchina, Laos and Cambodia. The paramount political question: the future political construct, whether confederation, federation, separation, or workers of the world under the Comintern flag. In Việt Nam, faithful Marxists were told simply to “think Indochina.” This is a fine work which examines the nationalists’ “contesting concepts of space” in the antecedents to present day struggles. Concludes that Hanoi leaders are, and always have been, unreconstructed hegemonists. Good early historical data scattered throughout and a lengthy bibliography. From NIAS Publications, Leifsgade, 333, Copenhagen, Denmark. (1995)

To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism by Cecilia O’Leary (California State Univ., Monterey). The U.S. is big, diverse and politically multipolar. This makes it difficult to define its patriotism. Further, says the author, American nationalism is challenged by American democracy, which is perhaps pushing it a bit too far. This is a history of the patriotic spirit (and lack of it), which ends during the Việt Nam War. Princeton University Press, \$29.95. (1999)

Tử Từ Tự Xử Lý (Self-Inflicted Punishment) by Trần Thư (former PAVN political cadre). Author served 6 years in jail and one period of house arrest all without trial. Suspected of having connections with Nhân Văn Giai Phẩm (the Masterpieces of Humanity) writers who were accused of being anti-government and anti-Party. Memoir; In Vietnamese. Văn Nghệ Culture & Art, \$15, (1996).

The Significance of the Chinese Revolution in World History by Maurice Meisner, (Univ. of Wisconsin, visiting professor at London School of Economics and Political Science). Brief monograph urging historians of China’s revolution (or any revolution, such as Việt Nam’s, for that matter), to weigh the costs of revolution against the costs of not going to revolution. (Methodological problem, of course, is determining where the road away from revolution would have led.) In China, millions perished in the run up to the revolution; millions more in the Revolution itself; still more in the “misadventures” of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Finally came the “crude and distasteful” process of capitalism. How to weigh all this against the undeniable benefits of revolution. Meisner, agonizing, seems to conclude that in the end it was all for the best. Published as Working Paper no. 1 by Asia Research Centre, LSE, Houghton St., London WC2A 2AE, UK.

Những Ngày Cuối Cùng của Tổng Thống Ngô Đình Diệm (Last Days of President Ngô Đình Diệm) by Hoàng Ngọc Thành (ex-History Dept., Saigon Univ.) and Than Thi Minh Duc (former

SVN high school teacher). Biographical history of the Diem family's efforts to "take back national sovereignty from the French...(then) protect Vietnam from the Kennedy Administration." Contends the November 1963 coup was U.S.-planned and executed. Authors now living in the U.S. In Vietnamese. Quang Vinh & Kim Loan & Quang Hieu. San Jose, CA, \$25. (1996)

Vietnam-China Relations Since the End of World War Two by Ang Cheng Guan (Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Singapore). Rather upbeat report on the last decade of Sino-Vietnamese intercourse. The relationship steadily improves, the author finds, basically because the "political will" of the two governments is to resolve some but not all of the existing territorial disputes before 2000. Short and medium-run relations will continue to develop on an even keel, he finds. From IDSS, Singapore.

Vietnamologica by Thái Công Tụng (editor, *Journal of Vietnamologica*, Montreal). What is *vietnamologica* one might ask? By dictionary definition it is the "logic of things Vietnamese." Which as an English-language term is perilously close to being oxymoronic. Content deals chiefly with Catholicism, nationalism, field theories of Vietnamese culture and history, etc. All in all, well worth pursuing. Available from the Centre of Vietnamologie, Canada, CP 51182, Montreal H1N3t9, Canada.

Vietnam's Integration in Progress: Questions and Answers by Mai Ly Quang et al. A kind of Hanoi Foreign Ministry catechism, based on pronouncement by the VCP's Seventh Congress (June 1991). Q-A (93 in all) on Vietnam's foreign relations—ASEAN, UN, individual countries, foreign policy issues, etc. Largely boiler plate, but useful for citations. Remarkable aspect of this official view is found in its 180-degree turnaround from 1976. Party line at war's end was that Vietnam would go it alone, would have nothing to do with world economic interdependence, did not need the world's economy. Now the current "great achievement" is "implementing an open,

multilateral, diversified foreign policy." That it took so long. From Thế Giới Publishers, Hà Nội. (1999)

An Artist's Portrait of Hồ Chí Minh by David Thomas and Charles Fenn. Currently in production. Described as "not a biography but an artist's sketch." Final product will be a limited edition: 55 early Hồ images and 55 extracts from his diary printed on handmade paper. In a lacquer box with a silk-slip cover. Hồ seems destined in history to outlive his narrow reputation as an ideologue and become a man for all ages. But then he never was much of a Marxist.

Report on the Violations of Human Rights in the SRV, April 1975-December 1988 by the Aurora Foundation (Ginetta Sagan). Re-issue of one of the earliest and still one of the best reports of Hà Nội's sorry postwar record of organized systematic inhumanity. Separate chapters treat persecution of RVN officials, reeducation camps (with maps), treatment of ethnic minorities, and persecution of writers and journalists. Includes nine appendices; most are interviews. First published in 1989 by Aurora Foundation, 177 Toyon Road, Atherton, CA 94027. Also available at Texas Tech Vietnam Center.

Sky is Falling: An Oral History of the CIA's Evacuation of the Hmong from Laos by Gayle Morrison (historian, anthropologist). The Hmong were recruited by the CIA to fight communist forces in Laos. General Vang Pao and the Hmong assumed that the Americans would take care of them in the unlikely event that Laos fell. In May 1975 the CIA generated an air evacuation that moved more than 2,500 Hmong officers, soldiers and family members out of their mountain-ringed airbase. Fifty or so Hmong and American's involved in the evacuation here provide a firsthand account of the evacuation and events leading up to it. From McFarland Company, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, \$39.95. (1999)

Raiders of the China Coast: CIA Covert Operations During the Korean War by Frank Holober (retired CIA Far East specialist, 1947-1971). This doesn't have anything to do with Indochina but it makes a fine read. What larger-than-life figures were these advisors to the China paramilitary who harassed the mainland: Two-Gun Creacy, Earthquake McGoon, Fat Wang, One Eyed Dragon, etc. Naval Institute Press, \$32.95. (1999)

Dark Eagles: The History of Top Secret U.S. Aircraft by Curtis Peebles (military historian, Palomar Mountain, CA). Revised and updated history of the development, testing and deployment of America's ultrasecret aircraft—those that fly faster and higher than any others, are virtually invisible, can stay aloft for months if necessary. Presidio Press, \$19.95. (1995)

The Vietnam War: Its History, Literature, and Music by Kenton J. Clymer. Essays and readings from a symposium held in El Paso, TX. Includes James Fallows, "After the Shooting Stopped: The Vietnam War and American Society"; George Herring, "History and Historiography of the Vietnam War"; William Duiker, "The Arrogance of Victory: Unlearning the Lessons of the War in Vietnam"; Ngô Thành Nhân, "Contemporary Vietnam and the Legacy of the U.S. War: Tradition, Transformation and Challenges"; Sandra Taylor, "The Long-Haired Warriors: Women and Revolution in Vietnam"; Philip Beidler, "Situation Report: American Writing about the Vietnam War"; Ray Pratt, "There Must Be Some Kinda Way Outta Here!": The Vietnam War in American Popular Music". Also poetry and prose by W.D. Ehrhart and John Balaban. University of Texas Press, \$15. (1998)

The Politics of Ritual and Remembrance: Laos Since 1975 by Grant Evans (Hong Kong University). The Lao communists, like their brethren elsewhere, seek to reinvent their place, mostly introducing new rituals and restructuring the symbolic universe. This involves tampering with the Lao language, separating Buddhism from the nation, and introducing the cult of Kasone. The

book asks how the Party has gone about this. Evans' answer seems to be, not very well, although he is highly intellectual in evaluating Lao social memory, cultural possibilities, need for cultural continuity. Appears to be first work of its kind for Laos. Univ. of Hawaii Press, Honolulu. From Maple Press, I-83, Industrial Park, POB 15100, York, PA 17405. Originally published by Silkworm Press, Bangkok. (1998).

America in the Sixties: Right, Left and Center by Peter Levy (York College, Pennsylvania). The great cultural revolution of the 1960's changed much in America: race relations, gender relations, music styles, length of hair, attitudes toward patriotism. Depending on viewpoint, it was cause and/or effect of the Việt Nam War. Here we have a documentary history—316 pages of articles, speeches, and editorials. All the icons of the era are here: LBJ, Jerry Rubin, Billy Graham, Ronald Reagan, William Fulbright, William Westmoreland, Walter Reuther, Walter Cronkite (most appear in chapter 5, "Vietnam", which defines the Việt Nam War in U.S., not in Việt Nam). Afterviews from Tom Hayden, David Horowitz, Cal Thomas, and Philip Avilo. A rich collection of historical materials, carefully chosen and evenly balanced. For text in college course designed to sort it all out. With a good reading list. Praeger Publishing, \$22.95. (1998)

Mission The Ho Chi Minh Trail: Nature, Myth and the War in Vietnam by Richard Stevens (Univ. of Hawaii). Termed a narrative of jungle combat by an academic who specializes in the exploration of ancient trails. Semi-fictional; hero is an ex-VC named *Việt*. Stevens is a one-time U.S. foreign service officer who uses lush prose to write larger-than-life. Highly readable. Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, \$24.95. (1995)

Lost Crusade: America's Secret Cambodian Mercenaries by Peter Scott (82nd Airborne Division trooper, advisor to the Phoenix program). Traces Scott's combat experiences, and details the Cambodian people's village culture and

relations with Special Forces soldiers. Encapsulates the struggle of 6,000 Cambodian mercenaries in their battle against communism during the war and their experiences in America since. Largely from interviews with the survivors, supplemented by archival research. Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, \$27.95. (1998)

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 regionalization of international security, which means 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)

The Junk Trade from Southeast Asia: Translations from the Tosen Fusetsugaki, 1674-1723, Yoneo Ishii (Kanda University) ed. During the Japanese *sakoku* (isolation) period, Tokugawa rulers sought information about the outside world. Chinese junk captains arriving in Nagasaki were required to file reports on commerce, political systems and internal conflicts in areas where they traded. Translated from Japanese here for the first time. ISEAS, Singapore, \$29.90. (1998)

Spymasters: Ten CIA Officers in their Own Words, Ralph Weber (Marquette University), ed. Not exactly oral histories; more a set of interviews. Weber is ex-CIA, ex-NSA scholar-in-residence, author of numerous books and articles on the intelligence community, a person who knows his business. What a mix of minds and personalities one encounters here (and what a myth that these spooks ever thought or acted alike). The lineup: Allen Dulles, the Ivy League, pipe-smoking, old-school gentleman; Ray Cline, most intellectually curious of lot; William Colby, the Jesuit priest; Richard Helms, tough guy; Lyman Kirkpatrick, suspicious, bordering on paranoia; John McCone;

Sidney Souers; Richard Bissell; Samuel Halpern; Robert Amory. Each tells the interviewer exactly what each wants to tell. Like the Irishman's evidence, what they say is full of omissions. A good reference work to consult if you are writing about the CIA. SR Books, Wilmington, DE, \$55 (hardcover), \$19.95 (paperback). (1999)

Watermark: Vietnamese-American Poetry and Prose by Barbara Trần and Monique Truong (eds.). A book which says it "lifts all constraints and leaves other works on the subject to reset their boundaries, as it explores thematic and stylistic territory previously overlooked in other collections on Vietnamese-American prose and poetry." Noted on the web. (1999)

Essays Into Vietnamese Pasts by K.W. Taylor and John K. Whitmore (eds.). Essays demonstrating ways to "read" the pasts of Việt Nam through detailed analyses of its art, chronicles, legends, documents, and monuments. Many voices heard undermine the idea of a single Vietnamese past. Cornell University Press. (1995)

CIA and the Vietnam War Policy Makers: Three Episodes 1962-1968 by Hal Ford (long-time intelligence community figure at CIA, Capitol Hill, the White House). Not exactly about Việt Nam, but rather the CIA in Việt Nam. Seeks to separate that which was written and filmed on the CIA in Việt Nam from the reality. The three episodes examined are: "The Distortions of Intelligence" (the policy disputation over proposed withdrawal of U.S. military personnel from Việt Nam [1962-63]); "CIA Judgement on President Johnson's Decision to 'Go Big' in Vietnam [1963-65]); and "The CIA's Order of Battle Controversy and the Tet Offensive [1967-68]). Concludes with "Lessons to be Learned About Intelligence/Policy Making Relations." Book comes from the Center for Intelligence, which seeks to provide as clear of a record as possible of CIA's history. (Gerald Haines, Chief CIA History Staff) Purchase through: Documents Expediting Project (DOC EX), ANA Division—Government Documents Section; Library of Congress; 101 Independence Ave., S.E.; Washington, DC 20540-4172; phone: (202) 707-9527; fax: (202) 707-0380 or: National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161; phone: (703) 605-6000 or 1-800-553-6847; fax (703) 321-8547. Document will be available on the Internet at: www.odci.gov/csi

Bibliography: Periodicals

“Uncommon Ground: Interservice Rivalry in I Corps” by Peter Brush (USMC combat veteran). By trial and error the Marines worked out a strategy and set of tactics for dealing with the Việt Cộng one on one (troopers in the villages living and fighting side by side with the locals). But the Army never bought into the idea, so it more or less died aborning. In *Việt Nam*, Oct. 1999. See also in the same issue “USAID Advisor’s Story of Sowing Goodwill” by Allen Bjergo (USAID advisor Mekong Delta 1967-8). Lots of sardonic jokes about winning hearts and minds, but USAID did win some. Their efforts also had strategic meaning, as one Thai observer noted: “Don’t punish yourself about Việt Nam; your sacrifices made the peace and prosperity of Southeast Asia possible.” Editor Harry Summers also offers a perspective on right and wrong ways to look back on battles and wars.

“Colonial Scholarship on the Vietnam War” by Shawn McHale (George Washington University, Washington D.C.). On weakness in Việt Nam War history writing: “scholarship details American meetings, proposals, initiatives and so forth...leaves out elementary facts about Vietnamese politics, missing the nuances of Vietnamese history, society, and culture.” *Washington Post* July 31, 1999.

“A Survey of the New Geopolitics: the Road to 2050” by Brian Beedham et al. in *The Economist* July 31, 1999. A sophisticated, lengthy pondering about where the world is headed, geopolitically speaking. The sort of product which this eminent London publication does so well: “Shape of the World in 2020”; “Hegel Was Wrong Then and Now, History isn’t Ending”; “Why the State Stays the Basic Unit”; “Shared Culture Matters, But Not That Much”. That sort of thing. Reprints available from Economist Reprint Dept., 111 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019 (\$3.97 plus tax and postage).

“Some Comparisons of Higher Education in Việt Nam 1954-76” by Patrick Naughton

(University of Toronto). Việt Nam had a dual education system based on French colonialism superimposed upon Chinese colonialism. In the South, university training was a continuation of the French; in the North, higher education was modeled after the Soviets. Now there is underway some sort of integration. *Canadian and International Education*, 8:2, 1979.

“Policies of Prejudice: Ethnicity and Shifting Cultivation in Vietnam” by Pamela McElwee. Swidden farmers, nearly all ethnic minorities in highland areas, are blamed by the Vietnamese government (as well as the other SE Asian governments) for destroying forests. Recently, researchers are learning that their practices may not be so bad after all. *Watershed*, 5:1, July-October 1999.

“In Defense of Détente” by Henry Kissinger (ex. Sec. of State). Memoirs of America’s old left, new right, Richard Nixon and the Việt Nam War. *Foreign Affairs* May 1999.

“Farmers and Fists” by Nguyễn Ngọc Chính in *VIR* June 7-13, 1999. Visit to the Kung Fu museum in Qui Nhơn with artifacts on martial arts sports dating back to Emperor Quang Trung.

“Bitter Homecoming” by Faith Keenan in *FEER*, July 15, 1999. Despite state cooperation, the Returnee Assistance Program run by the European Program for the Vietnamese government, returnees find they are no better off than before they left home.

“Improving Political Education in Building and Developing the Army” by Maj. Gen. Phùng Khắc Đăng (PAVN General Political Directorate) in *Tạp Chí Quốc Phòng Toàn Dân*, July 1999. By political education the general means ideological indoctrination. All in all, he says, the job is being done well: “Everyone now has acquired a correct perception of Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh’s thoughts.” However, there is room for improvement, for instance, with “cadres who do not

understand the true meaning of peaceful evolution and other tricks by the reactionary and hostile forces.”

“The Most Influential Asians of the Century: Hồ Chí Minh” by Bùi Tín (former high-ranking Hanoi editor) in *Time* magazine, Aug. 23, 1999. Personalized, emotional tribute to Hồ who, Tín says, had he lived would never have allowed introduction of *đổi mới* “that forced the marriage of socialism without a soul and capitalism without a backbone.”

“Educating Cadres and Party Members in Politics and Ideology: Key Task in Party Building” by Lê Hữu Nghĩa (Hồ Chí Minh Political Institute) in *Tạp Chí Quốc Phòng Toàn Dân*, July 1999. The Party is beset by decline in ideological and political performance; there is corruption, “mandarinism” and waste to overcome. The society is beset by class struggle. From the outside comes the Asian financial crisis, the negative effects of the globalization process and the hostile forces with schemes of “peaceful evolution.” What to do? All must “remain steadfastly committed to communist ideals.”

“In Search of a New Cold War” by Chalmers Johnson in *Bulletin of the American Scientists*, Sept./Oct. 1999. In the U.S., new villains are being created and China is bad guy number one. But the U.S. has a long history of making confused and misleading pronouncements about its “vital interests” in China. Actually, the news from China is basically good.

“Notes From the Field: Western Cambodia” by David Oldfield (Burapha University, Thailand). A report on Thai efforts to offer primary health care, nursing training and sanitation education to Cambodians, in the area around Palin. In *Indochina Studies Bulletin*, June 1999, from Indochina Studies Center, Burapha Univ., Saensuk, Chonburi 20131, Thailand.

“Reinventing Diplomacy Again” by Peter Galbraight (U.S. ambassador). Thoughtful criticism and defense of the U.S. Foreign Service. Technology gives foreign service officers a way to talk, but does not tell them what to say. Staffing patterns have consequences: a system that cannot distinguish U.S. interests in Zagreb from those in Minsk is a disgrace. It is an idiotic approach to national security to have a superb military, first-rate intelligence and an underfunded diplomacy. In *Foreign Service Journal*, Feb. 1999.

“Public Opinion Makes Better Sense Without the Opinion Makers” by Anna Greenberg in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 14, 1999. On the “optimism gap” in the U.S. (Americans are satisfied with their own lives but think the world is going to hell in a handbasket. (Grade School teacher: “Jane what is the shape of the world?” Jane: “My father says it’s terrible.”) This essay is a fine up-to-date primer on U.S. public opinion. Based on recent studies, which are cited.

“The Powers That Be” by Lucien Pye (professor emeritus, MIT). One of the best China watchers ever compares governance in China and India. Pye ruminates on the reasons why, throughout history, it has not been hard for the few to rule the many. Finds it is the family and clan structures (China); the grid of the caste system (India). A very meaty essay, highly recommended. In *FEER*, Sept. 9, part of the *FEER* series on the Asian millennium. In the same issue, “The Centre Rampant” by David Marr (Australian National University) on why the Vietnamese are so good at fighting off their enemies and so bad at nurturing wealth; answer: too much central control.

“Does China Matter?” by Gerald Segal (IISS, London). Brief answer: as of the moment, no it doesn’t matter. It has a small market, it is (at best) only a regional menace like Iraq, and has little diplomatic influence. In *Foreign Affairs*. V. 78, No. 5.

News of the Field

Việt Nam Virtual Library. From Ron Frankum of the Texas Tech Vietnam Archive comes this instruction on recommend research. The Việt Nam Virtual Library is one of the oldest catalogs on the web. It is non-commercial, 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, and must 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, later was 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 that 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.

Outward Bound. Comprehensive art exhibition which opened in Hà Nội August 30, 1999. Full title: American Art at the Brink of the Twenty-first Century: Oils, Water Colors, Paper Cuttings. By 78 U.S. Artists Seeking to Introduce Contemporary America and Americans. (VNN August 30, 1999)

UCLA Project. The UCLA Asian-American Studies Center and the magazine *New Horizon* of Los Angeles plan a special edition of their publication next year to mark the fall of Sài Gòn (April 30, 1975). Title: "Twenty Five Vietnamese-Americans in Twenty Five Years", will offer publication opportunities to Việt kiều writing about their lives this past 25 years. Also sponsored is an essay contest for young Việt kiều, winners of which will receive \$2,500 scholarships (one each for elementary, junior high, senior high and college levels) on the subject "My Contribution to Vietnamese-Americans in the Next 25 Years."

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Conferences

(Chronological Order)

The Southeast Asian Community Center (SEACC), the Vietnamese American Studies Center and the Vietnamese American Coalition for Civil Rights in San Francisco staged its "Vietnamese American Community Empowerment Conference", Saturday September 18, 1999 at the Pac Bell Conference Facility Center, 370 3rd Street in San Francisco (from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.). Purpose: "It is time to look back at past achievements and problems and to look forward to the new millennium for strategies, plans, and actions toward a blue print for the community to move forward."

The 14th Naval History Symposium was held (September 23-25, 1999) at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis. Papers covered naval topics across temporal and cultural themes. Host was the Academy's department of history.

"Prosperity for the People of Vietnam".

Title of a conference of Việt *kiều* and others to be held in Paris October 8-9, 1999. Participants will include members of Vietnamese Professionals of America, Inc. Papers to be published on the Internet later. U.S. contact: Thuận Trương, Vietnamese Professionals of America, phone: (703) 256-4145; fax: (703) 256-1859.

The U.S.-ASEAN Business Council and the Vietnamese-American Business Council (VABC) co-host a conference on trade and investment in Việt Nam on October 15-25, 1999 in both Hà Nội and HCMC—locations TBA. To register contact either (202) 271-8200 (east coast) or e-mail vietsgroup@aol.com (510) 524-3432 (west coast) or e-mail bbbenton@juno.com.

The Texas/Southwest Regional Popular Culture/American meets February 9-12, 2000 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Call for papers (deadline December 1, 1999). The sessions will include the Vietnam War in Film. Send 100-word proposals about relevant film and history to the area chairman: Peter Rollin, Film and History, RR3 Box 8, Cleveland, OK 74020; e-mail: rollinspc@aol.com.

IAAS—The International Association of Asian Studies will hold its annual meeting Feb. 21-26, 2000 in Houston, Texas. Papers solicited. Send two page abstract by Lemuel Berry, Morehead State Univ., 212 Rader Hall Morehead, KY 40351.

The Atlanta History Center will commence the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam war, February 27-June 6, 2000. Panelists are being sought, especially war correspondents. Contact: Marc Gilbert (e-mail: mgilbert@ngcsu.edu).

The Association for Asian Studies, Inc. (AAS) holds its annual national meeting March 9-12, 2000 in San Diego, CA at the Diego Town and Country Hotel, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108. Chairman is program co-chair Suzanne Wilson Barnett, Dept. of History, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington 98416; phone: 253-756-3168; e-mail: sbarnett@ups.edu.

Information from website:
www.aasianst.org/annmtg.htm

An International conference on the Việt Kiều experience will be hosted by the Việt Nam Center, Texas Tech University. Tentative date is March 31-April 1, 2000. Panels will deal with acculturation problems and successes, secondary migration, Việt *kiều* attitudes toward Hà Nội, Việt Nam human rights violations, etc. Contact James Reckner, director of the Vietnam Center Texas Tech University. Phone: (806) 742-3742; fax: (806) 742-8664; e-mail: vietnam.center@ttu.edu or website at <http://www.ttu.edu/~vietnam>. The conference in part is a contribution to the on-going effort by Texas Tech to secure archival material from South Vietnamese abroad, a project being led by Bùi Diễm, former GVN Ambassador to Washington.

The Popular Culture Association will host a Vietnam War conference April 19-22, 2000 at the Marriott Hotel, New Orleans, LA. Themes: the 30th anniversary of the Kent State shootings, 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, etc. Send 250-word abstract of proposed paper or panel to Mary Sue Ply, Dept. of English, Southwestern Louisiana University, SLU 10861, Hammond, LA 70466; e-mail: mply@selu.edu; phone: 504-549-3383; fax: 504-549-5021.

The 8th meeting of the Conference of Directors of National Libraries of Asia and Oceania (CNDLAO) will meet in Singapore on April 25th, 2000 from 8:30am-5:00pm. Event will be hosted by the National Library of Singapore. This meeting will be held back-to-back with the 11th Congress of SEA Libraries, (CONSAL) April 26-28. The theme

for this second conference will be Stepping in the New Millennium; Challenges for Library and Information Professionals. For more information contact the website of the CNDLAO:
<http://www.nla.gov.au/cdnalo/2000.html>.

The Key Center for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance (KCELJAG) and the Griffith Asia Pacific Council, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia will host a conference on Governance, Law and Ethics in the Asia Pacific Region, April 28-29, 2000 (Sheraton Hotel Brisbane). Information from Barbara Johnson, (KCELJAG), Griffith University, phone: 617-3875-6671; fax: 617-3875-6634; e-mail: b.johnson@mailbox.gu.edu.au or by mail to R.E. Elson, School of Asian and International Studies, Director, Griffith Asia Pacific Council, GU, Nathan Queensland 4111 Australia.

The Asian Association of Asian Studies Annual Conference will be held May 24-28, 2000 in Scottsdale, AZ. Politics and Power in Vietnamese-American Communities. Christian Collet, Dept. of Political Science, University of California, Irvine (address 3151 Social Science Plaza, Irvine, CA 92697-5100; phone: 949-824-5361; e-mail: ccollet@uci.edu)

"Exploring Cultural Differences." In Beijing, China June 28-July 3, 2000, meeting of the International Cultural Research Network, an organization established last year in Canada. Contact: ICRN, 551 Education South, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 265, Canada.

The Council of International Educational Faculty Development Seminars announce a seminar conference on Contemporary Vietnam. The host institution is the Vietnam-USA Society, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, July 8-18, 2000. Fees range from US \$1,500-\$1,995. For further information call 1-800-40-study or 212-822-2747. E-mail is ifde@cief.org. Also see website: <http://www.cief.org/ifds>.

Philatelic.

The longest war in U.S. history was remembered July 27 at the New Jersey Vietnam Veteran's Memorial when the U.S. Postal Service unveiled a new commemorative stamp. New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman and New York city dignitaries were in attendance. Designed by Carl Herman, Laguna Niguel, California, the Vietnam War stamp features a photograph by Sgt. Howard Breedlove (U.S. Army DASPO) of men of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Division (Airmobile), (of Operation Task Force Oregon) leaping from a chopper near Chu Lai, 1967. The design was selected in 1998 nationwide balloting, part of a sheet of six that noting historic events of the 1960s. The sheet goes on sale (as do First Day covers) September 17, 1999 in Green Bay Wisconsin. The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial is located off the Garden State Parkway near the PNC Arts Center in Holmdel. Consists of 366 polished black granite panels, each 8-feet high, to honor all who served, particularly New Jersey's sons and daughters who went to war and did not return.

Collecting Việt Nam, Cambodia and Laos postage stamps (as well as old currency from the three countries) have become increasingly valuable as collectibles during the past decade. Paper money is graded by collectors from best quality (uncirculated) down; some issues sell for as high as \$40,000, (see "Cashing In: Old Currency Could Prove Noteworthy" by David Vincent, in *FEER*, April 22, 1999; see also "Vietnam" by Trần Anh-Tuấn [Oakland, California Việt kiều, a prominent authority on Việt Nam stamps] in *American Philatelist* Dec. 1997.

SICP. The Society of Indo-China Philatelists is a collectors professional association. President is Mark Isaacs of Chicago; Ron Bentley is executive secretary. (Membership \$15 per year.) It publishes a bi-monthly journal, The *Indo-China Philatelist*, on postal subjects and results on periodic stamp mail auctions run by SICP.

Việt Nam Health and Medicine Part II

(**Editor's Note:** Part One, carried in Indochina Chronology XVIII No. 2, April-June 1999, briefly described resources and organization of the health system and touched on children's health. Part II looks at Major Diseases and Sanitation. Both parts drew on a comprehensive 1997 government report to donors, updated by more recent Ministry of Health statistics.)

Clean Water and Sanitation

The root cause of the most common of all illnesses in Việt Nam – the gastrointestinal infections – is poor public sanitation and lack of clean water. The official news agency (VNA) reported in January 1999 that some 23 million rural people have gained access to clean water as a result of projects carried out over the past 16 years. The program was raised to national status in 1997, one of seven designed to raise living standards. The Centre for Rural Clean Water and Environmental Hygiene receives major financial and technical support from UNICEF, e.g., \$2.5 million of the total \$4 million budget for 1998. The goal is to provide clean water to 80% of the rural population and sanitation facilities for 50% by 2005.

The Centre and UNICEF give priority and, if necessary, emergency aid to provinces that have water shortages in the dry season. This becomes a particular worry in periods of drought; in early 1999 many parts of Việt Nam were suffering what was said to be the longest dry spell in this century. Aside from the obvious public health risks arising from water shortages, hundreds of thousands of hectares of rice and other crops have been lost. In some central and mountain areas, hunger has been reported and malnutrition, especially among children, will doubtless increase.

In July, the Office of the Prime Minister issued Directive 152/1999/QT-TTg, a 20-year master plan for managing solid waste in urban areas. It requires localities by zones to process all 80-95% of solid waste from urban areas and 100% of toxic solid waste by advanced technologies; recycle solid waste; invest

in construction of two toxic solid industrial waste treatment centers in key economic areas.

Toxicosis

Ministry of Health reports on toxicosis (condition caused by poisoning) did not define toxicosis in its brief references, except to associate it with U.S. activities in Việt Nam (pesticides, agent orange) during the war. It is difficult to know what is lumped under this category, since the government report includes references to drug addicts, misuse of drugs, and alcoholism. Studies on disease attributed to wartime contamination have often been used by the government (and foreigners) as a propaganda tool, and evidence from the early years is episodic and unreliable. Greater effort has been made in the last decade to conduct more rigid statistical surveys of disease in relation to areas of exposure, and the approach to the issue now appears to be more objective. But the direct relationship between exposure and specific disease remains unclear and experts agree more work needs to be done if cause and effect, as well as the source of contamination, is to be established. The effort is aided by researchers from other countries, including Americans. (A leading expert is Dr. Arnold Schecter, Univ. of Texas School of Public Health, Dallas, who has done rigorous scientific studies over many years. He is encouraged by recent developments that he hopes will lead to Vietnamese and U.S. scientists working together on the problem. See *San Jose Mercury News*, 7 July 1999.)

“Prescription” drugs have been readily available in Việt Nam for many years and self-medication is extremely common. There is a large pharmaceutical production and trading industry, which besides the central and provincial-level enterprises includes many small operations in localities all over the country. Manufacturing consists mostly of processing common drugs from imported components. The quality is not considered satisfactory, and national drug policy is attempting to both develop and regulate the industry. But health authorities see the most critical

issue is the widespread use of self-prescribed drugs from all of the above sources -- how to avoid misuse and still make safe, effective drugs available to the population at reasonable price.

Malaria and Tuberculosis.

Malaria was cut almost in half from 1991 -- when more than a million cases were reported -- to 1995 (650,000 cases). The government announced in 1999 that the malaria reduction program's current goal was to reduce mortality by 5% from 1998 and incidence of infection by 10%. The century-plus battle to combat malaria was the subject of a six-nation conference in Hồ Chí Minh City in March. Focusing on prevention and treatment, the conference emphasized reducing mortality and set a goal of cutting deaths in half by 2010.

Việt Nam claims significant gains in the control of tuberculosis, especially during the late 1990s. Projects assisted by the Netherlands, Sweden and the WHO concentrate on raising the effectiveness of treatment and the dissemination of information in an effort to detect TB at an early stage and control its spread. A 1999 report stated that 67% of current cases had been diagnosed during the first stage of the disease. The advanced DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short Course) is extremely effective and is now widely used in Việt Nam. It offers a complete cure if applied over an eight-month period, as opposed to about two years for the earlier treatment. In 1998 official figures put the number of TB cases at 87,497; Director Nguyễn Viết Cơ of the Central Hospital for Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases suggests a much higher number. He estimates that around 130,000 cases are identified each year and that another 200,000 exist but are not identified. (see *Vietnam Investment Review*, 12-18 April 1999)

Other morbidity.

Pneumonia and various bronchial infections are common. In fact, the 1995 statistics showed more patients hospitalized with these infections combined than either malaria or the gastrointestinal illnesses. Pneumonia was also a leading cause of death (in hospital), although it is hard to tell whether it was the originating pathology. Dengue fever and the more serious dengue hemorrhagic fever is a mosquito-borne disease in which early

treatment must be sought. In 1995 dengue hemorrhagic was listed as the 10th leading cause of death in hospital. There is no vaccine or specific cure, but a project by Australian and Vietnamese scientists has shown dramatic success in reducing the *Aedes* mosquito population. (*Reuters*, 30 July) Plague is not widespread but is endemic in certain areas; vaccines are very effective but use and distribution are not certain. Cholera epidemics are periodic. For example, in 1991 only 475 people were reported hospitalized with cholera, while in 1995 there were 6,356 victims. In early 1999, cholera struck Cambodia and three southern Việt Nam provinces. An epidemic was declared on January 30 when the cases reached 100. Encephalitis, particularly type B, or Japanese encephalitis, appears to have become more widespread; the vaccine is very expensive.

Leprosy still exists and probably could be stamped out were it not for the stigma attached to it and consequent reluctance of people to seek treatment. The need here is to identify cases. Leprosy is treated effectively with drugs but even those who are cured are discriminated against. They cannot find work, nor are their children likely to find anyone who will employ them. Thus, they work at the leprosariums. Vietnam reportedly has six -- four in Hồ Chí Minh City and one each in Bình Dương and Đồng Nai provinces.

An estimated 750,000 Vietnamese are said to be blind, although cataract surgery reportedly would enable many of them to see. The National Institute of Ophthalmology, supported by several NGOs, directs the effort to make cataract surgery available to Vietnamese. Thousands of Vietnamese children who have suffered birth defects or facial deformities resulting from accidents have been helped by visiting orthopedic and plastic surgeons and dentists who work with Vietnamese doctors in various NGO-supported projects. The MOH estimates that 1,500 to 3,000 infants a year are born with deformities, most commonly harelip and cleft palate.

HIV and AIDS

Early in the decade when infection with the HIV virus was spreading rapidly in Southeast Asia, Vietnam was thought to be relatively unscathed due to its more closed society and low level of tourism. The MOH listed one case of AIDS in 1991; by 1995 the number recorded had risen to 1,004. The trend has continued--in August 1999 infections totaled 14,500, with 2,736 AIDS cases--HIV infection is now a major public health problem.

Foreign experts, believe that data has simply been lacking and that at least 100,000 persons are infected with the virus. *Vietnam Investment Review* in April reported a National AIDS Committee prediction of 120,000 infections by year's end with 15,000 cases of AIDS. This surge from official figures is expected because an intensive survey effort is being undertaken and there is growing drug use and prostitution.

As in other areas of health prevention and delivery, Việt Nam's ability to control the epidemic is limited by lack of resources, education, and training. In January, two weeks after health authorities reported a 37% increase, the NAC said the AIDS budget for 1999 was being cut 10% to \$3.2 million due to economic problems. A spokesman said the committee was spending about \$7 million p/a in its program.

All of Việt Nam's 63 provinces and all cities have reported cases of infection; the last one, Hà Giang on the border with China, joined the total in January. Many people have the impression that the danger of contracting AIDS exists only in urban and tourist centers. However, the Epidemiology Institute has recorded rapid increases in cases in mountain and border areas. Its studies indicate that Quảng Ninh and Lạng Sơn provinces have the highest rates of transmission, but testing has only been done recently in these areas so it is impossible to know how long some people have been infected. Quảng Ninh's rate rose from six in the first six months of 1997, to 600 by the end of the year, to 1,500 by the end of 1998.

Border areas are sites for trade and exchanges, including drugs. Also, mountain people have long grown opium poppies, and while poppy cultivation has been reduced considerably, habitual opium users have drifted toward other drugs,

including those injected. Needles have been commonly shared, especially before any information on HIV reached these areas.

The government says 70% of HIV patients are drug addicts, and that 90% are under the age of 30. In Quảng Ninh in particular, 15% of AIDS victims are under 19, years, 70% are in the 20-29 age bracket, and if calculated in the 15-30 year range, the rate was found to be 90%.

A new monthly publication, *AIDS and the Community* is being published by the NAC, succeeding the previous AIDS Bulletin. The Committee said it will distribute 10,000 copies on the 25th of each month.

Hepatitis B (HBV)

The director of New Zealand's Hepatitis Foundation, in a dramatic plea that the Vietnamese government request more funding for hepatitis B vaccine, estimated that since 1950 more men who carried this virus have died than the total combatants of Việt Nam's French and American wars (around 3 million). In a letter sent to the Việt Nam News but addressed to Prime Minister Phan Văn Khải, Alexander Milne warned that without sufficient supplies of vaccine 100 people a day would meet early deaths from effects of the virus. The principal victims, he said, are men who die prematurely from liver cancer or cirrhosis.

Milne, who has been working on a health program in Việt Nam, says the country now has some 8 million carriers, and warned of the cost of providing health care for them in the future. "Your problem is 200 times worse than ours in NZ, where the cost is daunting," he said. Milne has been testing the WHO-approved vaccine on babies born in Qui Nhon Province, Central Việt Nam, in a NZ government program to provide the vaccine free of charge. "The response in your babies has been excellent," he said, "far better than in some countries we have assisted. We have the means to control your problem."

The National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology in Hanoi is manufacturing the vaccine but Milne said the amount being produced now and for some years to come would be sufficient to protect only a small proportion of the infants at extreme risk. He urged the government to launch a campaign for funding (\$7 to \$8 million a year) to bridge the gap in vaccine until Việt Nam can produce enough for itself. (Myrna Pike)

Audio Visual

The Mekong: A Turbulent River. Four-part documentary series with fabulous footage of this 3,000-mile river that runs through Asia: (1) Mekong in China and Tibet (14 dams planned), (2) Mekong in Laos and Thailand (stops ashore), (3) Mekong in Cambodia (& Ton Le Sap), and Mekong in Vietnam (the Delta). People, customs, villages, spectacular scenes—mixed with interviews and commentary, \$325 the set; \$89.95 each.

The Fall of Vietnam. Color documentary, 42 minutes. End game in the war. Peter Jennings and ABC TV footage on “how the U.S. misjudged its ability to thwart a people’s revolution.” \$79.95. (1999)

Asia: Laos, Cambodia, Việt Nam. Short documentary (28 min.) on archaeological preservation at Angkor Wat and elsewhere; aid workers improving agricultural practices in Laos; culture in Việt Nam, etc. \$89.95.

Minefield: Coping With Life in Cambodia. Psychologically oriented documentary. Stories by survivors of Cambodia’s killing fields. Sad tales on the road back to normalcy. \$149 purchase (rental \$75).

Secrets of S-21: Legacy of a Cambodian Prison. Seventeen thousand men, women, and children went into S-21. None came out. Two American photographers produced this documentary for BBC. Photos of the dead, interviews with surviving guards. Not for the faint of heart. (30 minutes, color) \$129 purchase (\$75 rental).

(All the above four from Films for the Humanities and Science, P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543-2053. Tel: 1-800-259-5126.)

Cambodian Documentary. Greg Colgan reports on plans by an Australian team to produce a documentary series on contemporary Cambodian

history. Looking for people who were there in the 1960s and mid-1970s. Also for academics and writers with expertise. Contact in Australia: Electric Pictures or Wildfilm Australia; phone: +61 89 339 1133; fax: +61 89 339 1183; e-mail: gc@electricpictures.com.au or colgan@q-net.net.au

Ten Most Beloved. (On the Internet) from music lover Hong Phong Pho comes a report on an audio tape produced in HCMC by VVN/Radio (1998). It is titled, *10 Ca Khúc Yêu Thích Nhất* (Ten Most Loved Songs). List: (1.) *Ngây Thơ* (by Ngọc Châu, sung by Mỹ Linh), (2.) *Chị Tôi* (by Trang Đài from poem of Đoàn Thị Tảo, sung by Mỹ Linh), (3.) *Sông Về Đâu* (by Trịnh Công Sơn, sung by Cẩm Vân), (4.) *Hà Nội Mùa Vắng Những cơn Mưa* (by Trương Quý Hải, sung by Cẩm Vân), (5.) *Chim Sáo Ngày Xưa* (by Nhất Sinh, sung by Quang Linh), (6.) *Bên Em Là Biển Rộng* (by Bảo Chấn, sung by Thanh Lam), (7.) *Con Gái* (by Ngọc Lễ, sung by Ngọc Lễ, Phương Thảo), (8.) *Có Đi Khi* (by Lã Văn Cường, sung by Hồng Nhung), (9.) *Cho Em Một Ngày* (by Dương Thu, sung by Thanh Lam), (10.) *Tình Thôi Xót Xa* (by Bảo Chấn, sung by Lam Trường). Production director: Trần Hồng Tâm, Nguyễn Hồng Thắng; Chief Editors: Huỳnh Tiết, Lê Đức Ngô; editors: Blue Wave editorial board; arrangement: Bảo Chấn, Bảo Phúc, Đức Trí, Nguyễn Hà, Ngọc Lễ, Vinh Tâm; sound engineer: Việt Tân. Not sure how tapes can be obtained abroad.

ADM. America’s Defense Monitor is a Pentagon weekly television series fed to PBS and U.S. cable networks. The programs are widely used in classrooms and discussion groups. Among these are:

–“Casualty Phobia”-- warfare technology that attempts to reduce or eliminate American casualties. (1999)

-“The Limits of Air Power”--risks and benefits in seeking military objectives solely through air power. (1999)

-“The Environmental Impact of War”--the environment and modern warfare. (1999)

-“Refugees: War’s Newest Weapon”-- “forced migration” used in contemporary warfare. (1999)

-“Human Rights: Universal and Supreme?”--the rights of nations vs. rights of humans. (1999)

-“U.S. Military Strategy in Asia After the Cold War”-- political and social conditions in Asia today. (1997)

-“The Military in the Movies”-- the government’s use of the movie industry to promote military interests with the American public. (1997)

-“The CNN Effect: TV and Foreign Policy”-- impact of the media’s broadcasting of images quickly from around the world. (1995)

Catalog available from Center for Defense Information, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Tel: 1-800-CDI-3334; FAX: (202) 462-4559.

Pete Peterson: Assignment Hà Nội:

Return to Việt Nam. The Internet this quarter carried lively exchanges on this PBS documentary (see *Indochina Chronology* XVIII: No. 2, most of it laudatory, not only because of its focus— Ambassador Peterson handling himself so well— but because of the producers’ intelligence and sophistication. The University of Wisconsin Internet Scout Project offers teachers a Scout Report. For classroom use. See also “Join a Discussion on Television” by Walter Goodman (*NY Times* TV critic) in the *New York Times* Sept. 7, 1999. And the interview with Ambassador Peterson by Elizabeth Farnsworth, PBS San Francisco, in *Online Newsletter* Aug. 9, 1999.

The Century. Title of Peter Jennings/ABC/History Channel’s 12-part chronological journey through the past 100 years. Slick production, but superficial; inevitably stereotypical (for specialists); too American say non-Americans, i.e., parochial. Of interest to Việt Nam war buffs are the three mid-century programs:

(1) 1960-75, *Poisoned Dreams*; (2) 1965-1970, *Unpinned*; and (3) 1970--Approaching the Apocalypse. \$399 the set; or \$59.95 per program (each 45 minutes; in color). From Films for the Humanities, P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543-2053; Tel: 1-800-257-5126.

Requiem. The grand opening of *Requiem: The Việt Nam Collection*, commemorating the work of Việt Nam War photographers, October 1 at the Kentucky History Center, Frankfort, Kentucky. Hosts will be Gov. Paul Patton, photographer Horst Faas, and author Tim Page. Details from: (502) 774-7224.

Return With Honor. A 102 minute documentary on American POWs of the Việt Nam War. Interviews with 25 and some of their wives. Heartwrenching, but with chills and humor. Inspiring. Would have been a more powerful documentary if the producers had reigned in their maudlin moralizing; the images do the job. Good review by AOL News/Entertainment Wire, Los Angeles May 25, 1999, and by Elsa Arnett in *San Jose Mercury News*, July 2, 1999.

Việt Nam War: Descent into Hell. Discovery Channel documentary aired Aug. 7, 1999. Narrated by actor Martin Sheen. Much of the three hours is devoted to the Domino Theory— that mechanistic notion that all of Asia would go if Việt Nam fell (only Dwight Eisenhower actually took this notion seriously). Robert McNamera signs off with “We were wrong.”

Vietnam Music. T.C. Nguyễn (tcnguyen@yahoo.com) says a good website to sample Vietnamese music from Việt Nam (folk music and pop) is <http://www.vnn.vn/vnn3/music/index.html>; adds: you need RealAudio Player to listen.

AV Bibliography. Recently published print materials on audio-visuals:

*“Televising the Cold War: The Problems and Promise of Video Documentary” by Thomas

Doherty (Brandeis Univ.) in *Chronicle of Higher Education* 1999. Academic critique of the 24 part *Cold War* (Time Warner and Brit team from BBC). Described as typical "video doc"; scathing, dismissive: "When *Cold War* parts the Iron Curtain, the folks behind it are quite friendly, really, even if poorly attired." Series proves, says the author, that "in this age of the moving image, history on film is more dynamic and influential than history in books."

*"Watching the Cold War" by John Harper (Johns Hopkins Univ., Bologna campus). Another intellectual review of *Cold War* (see above). Harper finds it gritty, provocative, trenchant, with concise narration and good use of participant talking heads (and conspicuous absence of talking head historians and political scientists). In *Parameters*.

*"The 'Television War' Is Back in a Big Way on the Small Screen" by Marc Leepson in *VVA Veteran*, June/July 1999. A Việt Nam War veteran's opinion of *Việt Nam, Missing in Action, Battlefield Vietnam* and *People's Century*. His view in brief: all favorable stuff. Also by Marc Leepson in *VVA Veteran*, April/May 1999, "Vietnam War-related Films Make Big Splash at Sundance." On film festival in Utah which honored Tony Bui's *Three Seasons* as well as *Regret to Inform* and *Return With Honor*. Leepson notes negatively *Another Brother*, about black ex-Marine Việt Nam veteran turned antiwar activist who died of AIDS in 1980. Produced by PBS.

*"Apocalypse Then: Vietnam Marketing War Films" by Edmund Andrews, *New York Times* May 5, 1999. Report on Hà Nội's eagerness to strike deals with Western documentary makers and sell them their wartime footage. Chiefly through *Mitteideutsche Rundfunk*, Germany's new public television operation.

China Stamp Show. At the International Philatelic Exhibition in Beijing (839 entries) three Việt Nam collectors won awards: "The Indochina Postage Stamp 1920-1950" by Tạ Phi Long (HCMC), "The Struggle for National Reunification"

by Trần Quang Vỹ and "Orchids and Life" by Trần Đức Thông (both of Hà Nội).

Huế Documentary. The Huế Heritage Foundation and the Indo-Chinese-American Organization of Mountain View, CA have produced a 43-minute documentary on the culture of Việt Nam during the Nguyễn Dynasty (1802-1945). Narrated by the great-great granddaughter of the Tenth Nguyễn Dynasty emperor. Production by Việt Nam veteran, Jim Barker. (From: Indo Chinese American Volunteer Organization, P.O. Box 390752, Mountain View, CA 94039-0752; tel: (916) 393-9195; fax: (916) 393-9194; e-mail: iavo@aol.com; <http://www.iavo.org>)

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Việt Nam's Great Wall? Wade Kane writes, "I served in Vietnam, 1967-8. While flying over the Central Highlands near Gia Vuc or maybe Dak To, I could see what appeared to be an ancient structure similar to the Great Wall of China. It was smaller, but ran in the same manner across hills and valleys. I would guess it was 15-20 feet high, perhaps 4 feet thick at the top. It did not appear to be in use by anyone, nor was it located next to any villages or roads. I would like to know when it was constructed, by whom and for what purpose. Thank you," Kane, Wade O. (Wade.Kane@akeiel.ang.af.mil)

Berkeley Job: The University of California (Berkeley) South and Southeast Asia Studies Department is recruiting a faculty appointment (tenure or not) for the Fall 2000 semester. Criteria: distinguished Southeast Asia area scholarship; mastery of at least one area language; skill in program building. Rank, field, specialization and career emphasis are open. Send letter, C.V., names and addresses of three references (or dossier for junior candidates), and sample of publications or dissertation to: Chair SEA Search, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. Deadline: November 18, 1999.

Names in the News

Trần Văn Trường. The stubborn little shopkeeper from Little Sài Gòn (Westminster), Calif. who sparked weeks of demonstrations by putting a SRV flag and photo of Hồ Chí Minh in his window and dared anyone to make him take them down (see IC XVII, No. 2), was hauled into court in early August on charges of felony piracy. Raiding police seized 15,000 videos, chiefly Vietnamese soap operas. A non-jury trial in a Santa Ana Superior Court found him guilty. He was sentenced to 90 days in jail, 80 hours of community service and probation for three years. Earlier, the Westminster City Council refused permission to the Việt kiều community to fly the South Vietnamese flag from city light poles for this year's observation of the fall of Sài Gòn. Thus, the First Amendment issues remain unsettled in the minds of the Việt kiều in the U.S.

Cardinal Joseph Pham Đình Tung, Archbishop of Hà Nội, in June observed the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a priest, receiving congratulations from Pope John Paul II. In an interview, the 80-year-old Cardinal said he has asked to retire and has proposed a successor, which the Vatican is now negotiating with the government. He said there have been problems in gaining clearance for new bishops, and was "delighted" to learn of three new appointments (announced June 3) including a bishop for Lạng Sơn Diocese near the China border.

The Cardinal sees lack of personnel as the most serious problem facing the church in Việt Nam. The Hà Nội Archdiocese has just 40 priests to serve some 400,000 Catholics in 130 parishes, which are from 5 to 20 kms. apart. Lạng Sơn Diocese, with 5,000 parishioners in 16 mountain parishes, has only one priest and one nun, Cardinal Tung said, and they are 97 and 100 years old, respectively.

On the possibility of a papal visit, the Cardinal said the government, in response to a request from the bishops' conference, accepts in principle the possibility of a papal visit but plans to

link its approval to establishment of diplomatic relations with the Holy See. (FIDES News Service, 29 June 1999)

Kent Wiedemann. The newly named U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia arrived in Phnom Penh August 10. A Peace Corp Volunteer before he joined the Foreign Service in 1974, Wiedemann's Asian assignments include Beijing, Shanghai, Taiwan, Việt Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and, most recently, Myanmar (Burma). A California native, Wiedemann has a BA in History from San Jose State University and a Masters in International Relations from the University of Oregon. He is married to the former Janice Lee Weddle, an educator. Together, they have a son, Conrad. He was Diplomatic-in-Residence and Senior Fellow at the East-West Center; received the State Department's Meritorious Honor Award and Superior Honor Award and has been awarded the Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service by the Secretary of Defense.

"Grampa" Ngô Toai. He ran the Phở Bình Noodle shop at 7 Lý Chính Thắng, Sài Gòn which, he tells customers, was a favorite hangout for Americans and also, he says, headquarters for the Việt Cộng in the 1968 Tết Offensive. He spins his story for all who ask: born in Thái Bình province, trained as a silk weaver, was part of the 1930 Nghệ Tĩnh Sô Viết uprising, ran a series of *phở* shops in Sài Gòn, arrested after the Tết Offensive, spent five years on Côn Đảo Island; now runs a small bed and breakfast place in addition to his *phở* shop. See "Something More With Your Noodles" by Đỗ Huy Liêm in *VIR*, Aug. 2-8, 1999.

Bishop Andre Nguyễn Văn Nam. The 77-year-old Catholic leader retired April 15 as head of the Mỹ Tho Diocese. Bishop-designate is Msgr. Paul Bùi Văn Đốc, whom Hà Nội says is acceptable, which in turn drew Vatican comment: "This is a good sign that shows a positive and constructive

attitude” by Hà Nội authorities. (*America Press*, May 1, 1999)

Thích Nhất Hạnh. Việt Nam’s internationally known Buddhist monk, 32 years in exile, says he wants to go home. He told newsmen at a Santa Barbara (CA) retreat that he has written a book—*Going Home: Jesus and Buddha as Brothers*—urging Việt kiều also to return to Việt Nam. (“Zen Master’s Quest for Home” by Teresa Watanabe, *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 11, 1999)

William Colby. From Berlin this quarter comes a lurid journalistic report that a hit team from Israel’s Mossad was responsible for the death of the former CIA director, that his river drowning while on vacation was not accidental. Ostensibly, the motive was to end Colby’s efforts to protect the CIA from Israeli intelligence infiltration. The German documents suggest that a “Zionist army of allies and agents in the U.S. academy, mass media and high places manipulated and distorted the CIA’s production of strategic intelligence, which exacerbated the cold war and cost American taxpayers hundred’s of billions in wasted dollars.” Colby was out of the Agency in 1978, but according to this story, was writing a book on the CIA and Israeli intelligence (See *Spotlight*, July 19, 1999)

President Clinton. The press covering the White House was told this quarter that President Clinton plans to visit Việt Nam before he leaves office drawing sardonic comment from veterans’ publications as to why he changed his mind from his draft dodging days. Clinton this quarter went to New Zealand, a trip that put him in the history books as the most traveled American president ever (58 countries in seven years).

Foreign Awards. Former RVN PM Nguyễn Khánh and Assistant FM Tôn Nữ Thị Ninh were awarded the French Legion of Honor Medal June 8 by the French Government. Tôn Thất Bách, Hà Nội Medical College rector, was named Honor Fellow of the Sydney Institute of Medical Research in Australia (June 23) for his

work in liver and gall bladder surgery. The Vietnamese Order of Labor First Class was awarded (May 25) to the Moscow Institute of Engineers for Geodesy, Aerial Photography, and Cartography, the Order of Friendship to the Institute rector, and the medal of Friendship to eight of the Institute’s professors and lecturers.

King Sihanouk. In mid-August Cambodia’s 78-year-old monarch warned his countrymen that his health is failing and he may not have long to live. He has cut back on public appearances, spends most of his time on his palace grounds in Phnom Penh. Recalling two recent mild strokes, the king attributed his continued survival to the skill of his Chinese doctors and various medications.

On the Campaign Trail

*John McCain (R. Ariz.) was in South Carolina in early August with his “Straight Talk Express” bus tour. He met with hundreds of veterans in Anderson, SC, spoke of the allegiance to special interests and big money by both the Democratic and Republican parties. South Carolina primary is Feb. 19. While in Anderson, McCain met with James Bailey, 56-year-old school administrator who was in a North Việt Nam POW camp with McCain.

*Senator Bob Smith, darling of many Việt Nam veterans, angrily quit the Republican party (July 25) saying the GOP had abandoned its principles and succumbed to the siren call of pollsters, gun-control fanatics and abortionists. Smith’s military service included a year of active duty with the Navy in the Tonkin Gulf (1966-67). Last November he was in Russia as a member of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POWs and MIAs. During his term in the House from 1985-90, Smith served on the Veterans Affairs and Armed Services committees and the House Task Force on POW/MIAs.

Dương Thu Hương. Việt Nam’s literary genius (she who boldly goes where no man in Hà Nội goes) looks into the Vietnamese mind and writes: “Twenty-five years after the war, there still is no sound of piano through the windows. People

only start timidly to learn the lessons of democracy while enduring severe oppression. War in this place left a different wake [than in Europe]. War did not make people more mature, wiser, bolder in making their civil rights count. On the contrary, it made people more cowardly, easier to accept humiliation, more ready to look away from the face of evil." How does she get away with it?

Dr. Vannavong Lasjukul, 67, the first Lao referee to be registered in the International Federation of Football Assns. (FIFA), profiled in *Vientiane Times* (20 Sept. 1999). A footballer since the age of 12, Vannavong now runs his own agricultural production company. In 1948 he was the star defender on the first Lao national football team, and in 1966 was elected president of the Lao National Football Federation. In between he spent five years studying agriculture at a Canadian university. In 1967 he began the FIFA tests and training for referees and in 1968 officiated for the first time at the final of the King's Cup in Bangkok. From then on, he regularly refereed at international events such as the SEA Games. Asked to compare today's players with those of his time, Vannavong said he notices a lack of discipline among players now. During my time, he said, we considered it a great honor to be chosen for the national team and we did everything we could to deserve it.

Trần Bạch Đằng. Trần Bạch Đằng, 73, one time top figure in the National Liberation Front of South Việt Nam (Việt Cộng), visited the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech University in September. He was accompanied by his daughter, Tran Hong Anh, director of the Women's Museum in HCMC; Nguyễn Hữu Châu, son of the late NLF Chairman Nguyễn Hữu Thọ and Nguyễn Văn Quang, interpreter. Đằng addressed a history class, did research at the Archive, participated in an oral history session. He and his party were guests at dinner with several University officials and the mayor of Lubbock. Đằng, a native of Kiên Giang Province (Mekong Delta), rose to prominence in the party Vietnamese Independence League (Việt Minh) in the waning days of WWII. Then with

communist youth organizations in the Sài Gòn-Chợ lớn area and member of the Communist Party executive committee. In mid-1947 he was general secretary of the South Việt Nam Independence League (Việt Minh). He was captured and sentenced to death in 1949 but escaped from prison. In 1950-54 he was leader of the National Salvation Youth League in the South and editor of the newspaper *South Vietnamese People*. Dang was a leader in Việt Nam Communist Party political affairs in the South during the next six years and in 1960 was one of the founders of the NLF.

Đằng describes himself currently as one of the leaders of the *đổi mới* policy and a high-end consultant to Party and State leaders. He holds the position of first vice chair of the Social Sciences Council of HCMC, chancellor of Hồng Bàng Univ. and advisor to HCMC Open Univ. He also is an author of books on history, culture and the economy as well as poetry and works of fiction.

Obituaries

Lê Quang Đạo. President of the Việt Nam Fatherland Front died July 2 after a long illness. He was 78. Đạo was bom Nguyễn Đức Nguyên, Aug. 8, 1921, in Dinh Bàng village on the outskirts of Hà Nội. He joined a revolutionary youth group at age 17 and the Indochina Communist Party in 1940. Throughout his long career Đạo was associated with the Fatherland Front and the National Assembly, both key mechanisms to organize, mobilize and motivate public opinion in North Việt Nam through the war years. (*VIR* 2-8 Aug. 1999; *VNA* July 28, 1999)

Howard Simpson. Retired FSO and author died of cancer at his home in Chevy Chase, MD May 3, 1999. He was 74. Simpson had a long and colorful career with the U.S. Information Agency. He joined the service in 1951, was posted to Sài Gòn to cover the Việt Minh War and served as a press officer for President Ngô Đình Diệm. During the Việt Nam War he returned to Sài Gòn as advisor to PM Nguyễn Khánh. All in all, his was a legendary career.

Dissidents

Three prominent Vietnamese dissidents were questioned and harassed again this quarter in Việt Nam for activities that earlier sent them to prison or detention on charges of undermining the “unity of the people.”

The three are: the 72-year-old Buddhist monk, the Venerable Thích Quảng Độ, summoned for questioning in August by the Phú Nhuận People’s Committee (HCMC) in connection with a letter written to European Union (EU) ambassadors urging them to press Hà Nội for release of prisoners of conscience and protection of human rights; Dr. Nguyễn Đan Quế, 57, long-time activist who has spent 20 years in jail, was released in an amnesty last year, now says his house is under constant surveillance and members of his family repeatedly questioned; Dr. Nguyễn Thanh Giang, who was detained for two months earlier this year and says that his children have lost their jobs as punishment for his activities.

Thích Quảng Độ also wrote to Sec. of State Madeleine Albright, the letter (dated 18 August) spirited out to the Việt Nam Committee on Human Rights in Paris and handed to Albright before she left on a trip that would include a stop in Việt Nam. Containing requests similar to those made to the EU, he denounced Hà Nội for using religion for political ends and asked the foreign representatives to urge reestablishment of the de facto banned Unified Buddhist Church of Việt Nam (UBCV), which he said would never become a member of the Party-controlled Fatherland Front. The VBC (Việt Nam Buddhist Church) is officially recognized by the government.

One of Thích Quảng Độ’s most urgent requests in both letters was for efforts on behalf of the UBCV supreme patriarch, 82-year-old Thích Huyền Quang, who is detained at Quang Phước pagoda in Quảng Ngãi Province. Quảng Độ says the Venerable has been under house arrest since 1982, is critically ill, and is refused visits by his personal doctors. U. S. Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah also wrote to Sec. Albright expressing “deep concern” and

urging her to take up the matter of religious freedom in her discussions in Vietnam.

The letter to the EU (dated 20 June 1999) was sent to coincide with a meeting the EU ambassadors were scheduled to hold in July with the Việt Nam government to discuss religious freedom and human rights. This letter was produced at Quảng Độ’s interrogation along with a “Statement” informing Buddhists of new appointments made at a UBCV Congress as evidence that the monk had “violated national security” and contravened a decree that says the SRV prime minister must approve all high-level religious appointments. One of the appointments made was of Quảng Độ himself, to head the UBCV’s Viện Hóa Đạo (Institute for the Propagation of the Dharma).

The Eighth Congress of the UBCV was held in California in May, and the International Buddhist Information Bureau (IBIB) says there has since been a clampdown on Buddhists in Việt Nam, e.g., increased surveillance of the Patriarch, questioning of certain monks, and tighter controls on monks and Buddhists in Quảng Ngãi and other provinces.

Quảng Độ says he visited Thích Huyền Quang in March to discuss preparations for the Congress, and that both of them were detained and questioned for several hours by security police. Quảng Độ was then escorted back to HCMC. The Congress adopted a plan of action for religious freedom and human rights said to have been smuggled out by the two UBCV leaders. (IBIB, Gennevilliers, France, 9 Aug. 1999).

Prior to Quảng Độ’s summons for questioning, he gave a press interview in which he demanded the immediate release of the patriarch. “During the night he is there alone. We are very worried. . . . All his visitors are checked and questioned. We ask for international help. . . to press the government to release him as soon as possible.” (Reuters, 3 Aug. 1999).

Dr. Nguyễn Đan Quế, who formed the Human Rights Movement in Việt Nam, posted a communique on the Internet in May calling for

democracy and an end to human rights abuses and soon found his telephone service cut; in June Reuters noted that his Internet account was ordered shut down. But Quế continued to speak out during the summer, telling reporters he was going to organize a meeting of former political prisoners. When he arrived in Hà Nội, Quế issued a statement saying Việt Nam needed an independent human rights organization, although he knows the Politburo “certainly” would be against it. He said Party Sec. Lê Khả Phiêu was out of touch with the people. (Reuters, 6 Sept. 1999)

He startled the émigré community in August by urging the Việt kiều, (in remarks reported by Reuters) not to oppose the preliminary trade agreement between the U.S. and Việt Nam signed in July. He reportedly believes the comprehensive agreement would destabilize the regime in Việt Nam, a view that aroused debate in a community that grows more and more diverse in its opinions on relations with Hà Nội. Nguyễn’s action was a lead story in Vietnamese media in the U.S. and he was the subject of hundreds of Internet chat room entries. Those who believe the U.S. must demand human rights improvements before concluding any trade agreement were “hugely disappointed” that one of the “very people we are trying to liberate” is rejecting our help.

However, Quế’s stepson, Hoàng Trọng Thụy, who lives in California but communicated regularly with Quế until telephone and e-mail services were cut, said his father’s views about communism have not changed but he sees the trade agreement as an avenue to change for Việt Nam. He denied suspicions some had voiced that Quế had made his statement under duress. (Hiếu Trần Phan, *Orange County Register*, 27 Aug. 1999)

Dr. Nguyễn Thanh Giang, the geophysicist who was held for two months earlier this year charged with possessing anti-communist documents, said in late July his movements were still restricted and he had to report weekly to the police. In August Giang faxed a seven-page letter to the AP saying his children has lost their jobs and adding some details of his arrest.

He said he was so upset by the confiscation of his computers, books and photocopiers that he went on a six-day hunger strike. Later he wrote letters to government leaders and, when there was no response, undertook another hunger strike demanding that he be given a trial or freed.

Giang had written letters on party corruption that appeared on the Internet and in Việt kiều newspapers. Well-known as a scholar and dissident, his arrest aroused international protests, including from the U.S. State Dept. and members of Congress. (AP, 20 Aug.; Reuters, 27 July, 1999).

History Redux

Up the Down Staircase. The Gerald Ford Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan, this quarter became the recipient of the metal stairs salvaged from the leveling of the U.S. Embassy building in Sài Gòn (earlier the Smithsonian Institution turned down the offer of the 16 feet of black metal.) Sentimental press and television coverage accompanied its reception. It means a lot to Jerry Ford, one journalist reported; he put the arm on Madeline Albright to get it for his library. One historian declared it was “bridge to freedom for thousands of Vietnamese.” Almost all reportage carefully noted that this was the staircase made famous by the photograph of evacuees departing from the chopper pad on the roof of the U.S. Embassy in the final day of the Việt Nam War. In fact, the staircase in the photograph did not lead to the roof of the Embassy at all, but to the roof of the Annex Building down the street. However, the myth is now well entrenched and will continue to frustrate future historian’s efforts to keep the record straight.

British and the War. British government documents released in London (Sept. 14) provide details about a 1967 diplomatic initiative by Britain to end the Việt Nam War. Harold Wilson made strenuous efforts to secure the co-operation of the then Soviet prime minister, Alexei Kosygin, in gaining an undertaking from North Vietnam to end incursions into the South. In return he wanted an end to American bombing of Hà Nội. The initiative did not succeed—partly because of what British ministers privately called a disconcerting lack of frankness by the Americans. (*BBB* 9/14/99)

Vietnam Chronology: Future Challenges

Hà Nội leaders spent some worrisome days this past quarter locked in internal debate over the future of *đổi mới* (roughly economic reform) in the face of often conflicting signals from abroad and confusing internal indicators. The debate is a continuation of a seemingly never ending argument over the meaning and nature of economic change and its impact on political change, one which grows ever more tangled. What is most significant here is the question: what are the prospects for survival of the governing system and its economy introduced in the North in 1954 and now extended to all of Việt Nam? Answering this is the challenge.

What has come increasingly in this disputation is pressure the sort which, also increasingly, has taken on sinew and shape and points ominously in only one direction: toward stronger open socio-political challenges. These take various forms: from within the Party; from the military (itself internally challenged); from a balky legislature and a restive bureaucracy; from an ever more restive intellectual community and an even more restive youth; from dissidents, secular and sacred. Finally there are the outside challenges—diplomatic, national security, economic—from neighbors and the world system.

There was this quarter small indication of movement toward leadership consensus on how to meet these challenges. Neither, however, were there signs that the situation was getting out of hand. The central inference to make then, from this mix of developments, and non-developments was that when all is said and done (to paraphrase the poet) Vietnam continues to stand between two worlds, one dead and the other refusing to be born. And so the debate went on, guided by the spirit of a former Party Secretary General who delighted in reminding all: “Comrades, the future comrades, lies ahead.”

During the war years, Hanoi’s governance system, a unique form of Leninism, performed well in the service of the golden cause, unification of all Việt Nam under its banner against a formidable foe

through protracted conflict. But it proved to be totally unequal to the peacetime challenges of binding up the wounds of war, launching a nation-building and economic development program and establishing reasonably good relations with its neighbors and the world. Instead, a shroud of failure settled on the survivors, victor and vanquished alike, measurable by any yardstick one chooses to employ—economic, sociopolitical, diplomatic, military, psychological. Various explanations have been offered by the Vietnamese themselves and by outsiders for this postwar failure. The explanation most commonly heard in Hà Nội and from left-wing defenders around the world has been the “Evil Enemy” thesis. It propounds that Việt Nam is beset by enemies: at home by counter-revolutionaries and recalcitrant Southerners; in its immediate backyard by the Pol Pottists and the Lao revanchists; and Thais; on its border the Chinese; at a somewhat greater distance by ASEAN states, the United States, Japan, multinational corporations and international lending agencies. All are in this conspiracy, it is asserted, to punish Việt Nam and deprive it of the opportunity to develop economically. Việt Nam, it is true, is isolated by regional hostility, and in fact has only two fully supportive friends anywhere in the world (Russia and Cuba), the Evil Enemy explanation tends to beg the question: why is this so? Any economic system, in any society, in order to succeed must overcome all sorts of challenges. There is no free lunch in the world of international economics, and whatever one gains there the more one earns. So the question remains, why can Hà Nội not compete well—or even cope—in this arena of competition? Its victory in 1975 was one of strength and advantage. Yet the opportunities presented by peace, won at such a high cost, were thrown away in a seemingly casual manner, which the Evil Enemy theory does not explain.

The central reason for Việt Nam’s postwar failure probably is traceable to the dozen men in Hà Nội, who proved themselves incapable of dealing with their postwar world despite their unchallenged

monopoly of political power. What the leadership should have done, as it acknowledged later, was to map out plans for massive overhaul of the Northern economic system, restructure the Southern production system, establish a firm national financial policy, and devise a strategy for economic development. It did none of these things. Mistakes and errors in judgement led to the invasion and subsequent military bog down in Cambodia, to the cold (and sometimes hot) war with China; to the loss of valuable human assets as people fled.

The dominant anxiety among the top leaders—and not confined to them—is fear of *bất an* (instability)—that is, fear of revolution in the style of eastern Europe; the disestablishment of the USSR; and, in a different way, the massacre at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Specifically, the threat is termed “peaceful evolution”. The leadership believes—hopes is perhaps a better term—that the way to prevent *bất an* is by proscribing political change, or if political change cannot be stopped entirely, to ensure as little political change as possible. This at root has to do with political pluralism (term used in Hà Nội and universally denounced, is *multi-party system*). On the one hand are those top leaders who advocate moving now toward political pluralism. They are opposed by those who say: not now, later.

Thus the Vietnamese leadership, and the society itself, remain in a condition of profound flux and change. Of necessity a certain degree of confusion reigns which is to be expected. Also, there is considerable leadership uncertainty; gone is the extraordinary self-confidence of the past. This doubt may not necessarily be detrimental. As Socrates has told us: not to know and to know that you know not, *ah*, that is the beginning of wisdom.

The Generals. Front and center this quarter were the voices of the conservatives, in new form to what some observers describe as political backlash. Cited was the circulation in April of an unsigned manifesto addressed to Party Sec. Gen. Lê Khả Phiêu and two old guard “consultants” to the Politburo, Đỗ Mười and Gen. Lê Đức Anh. The message said in part, “The nation is in danger, the Party faces the threat of a leadership split.” Blame

rests on former PM Võ Văn Kiệt, accused of leaving state enterprises ‘half dead,’ and Nguyễn Văn Linh: ‘if you want to fight against corruption, you have to start from Kiệt’s family.’ The manifesto suggests that economic reform is being held hostage by ideologues. *FEER* April 1, 15, 1999.

Earlier Lt. Gen. Phạm Hồng Sơn circulated an open letter among PAVN officers consisting chiefly of a series of rhetorical questions and subsequent answers: “What do we do? Is it the way we are doing? What are the guidelines? What is the policy the Party promulgated? What powers belong to government? What are its limits? Does Việt Nam have three separate branches or only the superb one? Why did Russia collapse, because the people no longer supported the leadership? Does the Party lead, or govern, or rule? What is the mechanism of government? There are two (state and party) which are hefty, costly, and quite different from the capitalist countries’ governments. Everything including guidelines, points of view, and policy are decided by the Party, even arresting dissidents as Hoàng Minh Chính, Đặng Kim Giang, Lê Hồng Hà, Hà Sĩ Phu and others. The Fatherland Front is an absolute mechanism of the Party, which nominated its leaders.”

This was preceded by leading Party member from Hải Phòng, Hoảng Hữu Nhân, who gave the press a copy of a letter sent to Lê Khả Phiêu saying “sooner or later there must be political reform in Việt Nam.” Motive for the letter, he said, was to protest the “calumnious, brutal and dictatorial treatment of Gen. Trần Độ (expelled from the Party after a lifetime of service, also for writing a manifesto). (See *Indochina Chronology* XVIII No. 4 Oct. 1998-Jan. 1999).

Part of the meaning of this high level military disputation is that it revives the red-vs-expert argument which seemed to be fading. The important result of such challenge is to drain legitimacy from the Party, an all important matter in a society founded on Confucianism. Anxiety ridden military leadership merely compounds the problem, does not yield solutions.

The Youth. Standing noisily in the wings, so to speak, are the young; their political outlook

differs from the older population in ways not clear. Clearly however, they march to a different drum. The early postwar Vietnamese young could be labeled the silent generation. Now as the baby boomers grow older and their ranks multiply—they represent 50% of the total population—they increasingly become cool-headed capitalists who identify more with the Internet than with past warfare, and certainly seldom with communism. They are defined by karaoke bands, motorbikes, and getting into graduate schools abroad. They bowl, cry at “Titanic”, argue over Confucianism, abortion, and use of heroin. They are not hostile to parental views but cannot accept the political rationale that Việt Nam must cling to socialism because the country paid such a high price for it.

Generation gaps are nothing new in history; read the complaints of early Greek and Roman adults. But this does not negate adult criticism. A poll by HCMC university found that only 39% could identify the founder of the nation, King Hùng Vương; only 44% knew of the most famous teacher in Vietnamese history, Chu Văn An. “The youth of Việt Nam” says a *Nhân Dân* editorial (Mar. 30, 1999) “have placed their hope on the leadership of the Communist Party out of poverty and backwardness and express their positiveness in social activities and volunteer drives”, although admittedly it adds “fostering the revolutionary generation for the future poses many problems.” This is not to say life for many young Vietnamese is either the fun and games of the city kids nor the Party’s rousing call to revolution. Many students drop out of school early because of family poverty. A Ministry of Labor survey (May 1999) estimated there are 800,000 needy children in the mountainous provinces; 665,000 in the central highlands; 440,000 in the central coast; and 630,000 in the Mekong Delta. It also found that parents with five or more children pay little attention to their children’s schooling; that most do not believe educating their children will improve their living standards nor do they consider higher education a priority, hence are reluctant to spend money on it. As a result, a majority of needy pupils leave school early. They bring skill in reading and writing;

further education is considered unnecessary. (VNS, May 29, 1999)

Drug addiction among HCMC students rose in the past two years from .68% to 3.25% (of the total addicts in the city). Heroin addiction increased from .92% to 86% (*Labor* April 23, 1999)

Probably the greatest educational need in Việt Nam today is for vocational training. To this end the Asian Development Bank this quarter announced a \$120 million dollar project to build 15 high tech vocational schools and launch a nationwide program to train and improve vocational teaching. (*Youth* April 6, 1999)

Schooling Abroad: 120 scholarships in Russia (80 university, 40 for postgraduates); 100 in Japan; 10 Hungarian scholarships are for math, physics, foodstuff technology, electron technology, petrochemistry and information technology. Singapore provides 30 scholarships to ASEAN countries, of which five are for Việt Nam, during the school year 1999-2000.

Foreign Affairs. The U.S. and Việt Nam, July 25th initialed a trade agreement following months of delays, mostly political engineered in Hà Nội by opposition and by revanchists and others in the U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was in Hà Nội in early September. She said officials told her they had overcome most of the doubts of the local opposition which they said were based on the belief that the pact required economic reform by Việt Nam that would move it too far down the road to capitalism. “I am hopeful,” she said (see below). Albright also brought up the POW and human rights issues. *Albright*: “Our relationship can never be totally normal until the human rights situation is dealt with.” *VN journalist*: “Do you rank your standards higher than human rights in the world, or what?” *Albright*: “This is not an American idea; it is the universal Declaration of Human Rights that the U.S. supports.” (AP, *Los Angeles Times*, *Dallas Morning News*, Sept. 7, 1999)

On East Timor’s worsening situation, SRV U.N. Ambassador Ngô Quang Đạo (Sept. 12): “Việt Nam hopes the situation will soon stabilize thus creating a favorable atmosphere for a long-lasting solution acceptable to all concerned parties. A final solution must be based on the May 5, 1999

memorandum of understanding between Indonesia and Portugal. Development of an international force must conform to that understanding, just be approved by the Indonesian government and the United Nations.” (VNA)

Việt Nam and China finalized an agreement on issues relating to their mainland border, expressed determination to sign the agreement before the year 2000. (*The People* May 9).

On May 6, Tunisian Foreign Minister Said Ben Mustapha arrived in Hà Nội on an official visit, the first of a Tunisian foreign minister since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1973. Mustapha and his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyễn Mạnh Cầm signed cooperative agreements on economy, science and technology and culture. (*Liberation Saigon* May 7)

US-Việt Nam Trade. Negotiators this quarter hammered out what is hoped will be the final details of a US-Việt Nam trade agreement, a process that has been underway for the past three years. Purpose of the pact is to reduce tariffs on good and services, protect intellectual property and improve U.S. investment opportunities in Việt Nam. The hundred page document was drafted in Washington meetings by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshevsky and SRV Dep. PM Nguyễn Tấn Dũng (who, Hà Nội rumors, thus greatly enhanced his political standing, possibly to become the next prime minister). In mid-September the pact went to Auckland, New Zealand where the 7th summit meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) was being held. There it was signed by President Clinton and SRV PM Phan Văn Khải. Now the draft goes back to the SRV National Assembly and the U.S. Congress for final approval. Once passed by both legislatures, Việt Nam will benefit from the Normal Trade Relations status which allows Vietnamese goods into the U.S. at the same low rates some other countries enjoy. The Agreement also commits Hà Nội to undertake a broad range of measures that open its markets to U.S. good and services. The Vietnamese political Action Committee in Washington lobbied hard against the pact saying the U.S. should not trust the Vietnamese government

and should tie trade relations more closely to human rights issues.

The American Consulate General in HCMC opened Aug. 16th. Ceremonies were attended by Ambassador Pete Peterson; US Assistant Secretary of State Mary Ryan; US Senator Charles Hagel; foreign consuls general in Hồ Chí Minh City and the vice chairperson of the HCMC People’s Committee, Phạm Phương Thảo. The newly assigned consul general is Charles Ray. The Consulate is located at No. 4, Lê Duẩn Street, HCMC. (VNA)

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Sacred vs. Secular. Hà Nội officials nervously watched two religious phenomenon, possible challenges, this quarter. The first was 200,000 Vietnamese Catholics gathered at La Vang (Aug. 13) to mark the 100th anniversary of the apparition of the Virgin Mary. The second was Beijing’s crackdown on the Chinese spiritual movement Falun Gong, spirit of which has not spilled over into Việt Nam (but could).

The La Vang issue got extensive attention on the Internet, first came narrow discussion of the event. It soon widened into broad scale religious disputation; Catholic vs. Protestant; Christian vs. Buddhist, Taoism and Confucian; then recalling bitter memories of French colonial use of religion to manipulate the peoples of Indochina. Finally to the broadest dimension pitting the sacred in Việt Nam against the secular. Hanoi leaders regarded La Vang as a further of “social evils” to be eradicated, being little more than a plot by religionists to attack state policies under the cloak of religion.

Looking across the border into China, Party officials noted that the Falun Gong movement is “mere supernaturalism” akin to Taoism, in which Chinese erroneously put their faith in superstition rather than in communism.

References: Internet *passim* (Father Hồng Phúc; Đức Cơ Lê; materials from Vern Weitzel; Reuters, AP Aug. 13). *Quê Mẹ* (Paris) Sept. 10, 1999, “Welcoming the U.S. Report on Religious Intolerance in Việt Nam”; “U.S. Bishops See Việt Nam Easing Religion Controls” Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, in Hà Nội (Reuters, Sept. 1, 1999).

Cambodia and the Rule of Law

The predominant policy issue facing the leadership in Phnom Penh this third quarter of 1999—also the major topic of conversation in foreign embassies and business circles—was how, when, and if the Khmer Rouge gerontocracy would be brought to justice. Principal figures involved are Khieu Samphan, Ta Mok and Nuon Chea. Outsiders, including foreign governments, say they want to see all those responsible for the Cambodian killing fields put in the dock. While there is near universal sympathy for this view in principle, in and out of Cambodia, the matter is deeply imbedded in the country's politics and social relationships. Such trials would subject most of the current CPP and FUNCINPEC leadership to high embarrassment at best; mortal danger at worst. Some foreign governments, China, for instance, worry that a trial would unearth some uncomfortable truth about them, if not the international community.

There is also the question of jurisdiction. Outsiders call for a U.N.-funded and U.N.-run trial. Increasingly successful opposition from officials in Phnom Penh charges that this would subvert Cambodian sovereignty. The Human Rights Action Committee, a coalition of 17 human rights groups, is trying to get 500,000 signatures on a petition calling on the government to support the trial. It says no national reconciliation can ever take place until the top leaders are brought to justice. The prime minister flatly rejected a proposed tribunal run jointly by U.N. and Cambodian personnel, saying any international involvement must be subject to authority of Cambodia's existing court system. As the quarter ended, it appeared prospects were remote that a trial would ever be held.

Elsewhere on the Cambodian scene, a calm seems to have developed over the summer. The increased confidence results from the perception that the CPP/FUNCINPEC is assuming the trappings of government. It may not be much of a coalition but it seems to be working.

The economy is recovering from the Asia-wide economic crisis and is beginning to grow. The

GNP, at a standstill for two years, is expected to grow by more than 4 percent this year, still down from its 1991-96 average of 6.1 percent p/a. The IMF is reconsidering a \$120 million aid package, suspended midway in 1997 due in part to the government's poor revenue collections. Earlier, Japan and Western donors agreed to extend \$470 million in assistance over a 12-month period. However, foreign investment approvals in the first half of 1999 totaled just under \$164 million, about a third of the amount in the same period last year. The World Bank says actual direct investment last year was a meager \$120 million.

So while the signs of recovery and growth are present, Cambodia remains one of the poorest countries of Asia. Half its populations of 10.9 million people is undernourished; 20 percent of children under five are seriously malnourished. Food reserves are minimal (currently threatened by flooding) and health care is practically non-existent. There has been no significant institution building, only planning. Some prosperity is evident in the city, and what once was a trickle of foreign visitors now is a steady stream. They are greeted by new hotels, good restaurants, bars, poolrooms, and karaoke bars.

Even the most churlish critics grant that Cambodia has made a good start by reconvening the National Assembly, establishing a Senate, rejoining the U.N., gaining membership in ASEAN, winning back vital donor support. But running through this new mood is the clear recognition that political stability is the imperative for Khmer peace and progress.

Sources: The Internet, especially Bill Herod's transmissions; See also *Phnom Penh Post*, "Trials for Khmer Rouge Ever More Remote" and "Khmer Rouge Trials Could Renew Trauma" by Anette Marcher; (Aug. 9-19) and "UN Seen Softening on Trial for Khmer Rouge" and "How the CPP Weaves Its Judicial Web" by Bora Touch (Univ. New South Wales) (Aug. 20-Sept. 2)

Laos: Third Quarter

Struggling to get its ailing economy moving, Laos has again reshuffled economic managers. The finance minister and central bank governor were both replaced in August and more changes are expected. Dep. PM Bounyang Vorachith replaced Fin. Min. Kamphoui Keoboulapha and Soukanh Maharath (former provincial governor) took charge of the bank, replacing Cheuang Sombounekhanh.

Reports of policy disagreement between the ministry and the bank had surfaced in Vientiane but, as usual, no official reason was given for the moves. A Thai report said diplomats in Vientiane were "perplexed" by these changes coming at a crucial time, but also expressed confidence that economic reforms would stay on track. New appointments of younger leaders are predicted. (*FEER*, 19 Aug., *Nation* (Bangkok), 18 Aug.)

Kamphoui and Cheuang both had been named to their positions in the new government line-up early last year, following national elections at the end of 1997. (See IC 17:1, Jan.-Apr. 1998). Kamphoui, described as one of Laos's most capable managers who would oversee foreign investment, was said to be making a comeback after having been dropped from the Politburo and CC at the 1996 Party Congress. Cheuang is a Russian trained economist. At the time, observers saw these and other appointments as a response to the need to drive economic reform.

The summer also saw high-level Lao-Vietnamese efforts to improve and increase economic relations.

Việt Nam's chief economic figure, Permanent Deputy PM Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, accompanied President Trần Đức Lương on his official visit to Laos in June, where he inspected joint venture (import-export, construction) operations and attended the opening ceremony of the new Vietnam-Laos Joint Venture Bank (see IC 18:1, Jan.-Apr. 1999).

In August, delegations headed by Dũng and Deputy PM Somsavat Lengsavad met for two days

in Vinh (central Việt Nam) working out measures to streamline procedures on border trade (checkpoints, fees, taxes). They also agreed on the need to promote the sale and introduction of consumer goods in each other's countries and to encourage use of the dong and kip in bilateral trade and investment. Trade between Việt Nam and Laos reportedly doubled in the first half of this year over the same period in 1998. (*VNA*, June 22; *Nhân Dân*, 25 Aug. 1999).

What was said to be the first Lao-Vietnamese trade fair opened Sept. 1 in Vientiane to promote trade products and encourage cooperation among merchants. But most of the promotion seemed to be by Vietnamese; of the 40 stalls at the fair showing and selling goods, only six were Lao handicraft stalls. Perhaps this is inevitable, as Việt Nam could display such items as agricultural and construction equipment, consumer goods, medicine, and education materials. Consumer goods, such as noodles (good quality and cheaper than Thai), were most popular with fair visitors. One man, who bought running shoes for 120,000 kip (US\$1=9,350), said it was rare to find such shoes at this low price and hoped they are as good as they looked. (*Vientiane Times*, 20 Sept.)

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Trust and old friendships are commonly used by Thai and Laotian traders to conclude business deals, a convenience that hampers the government in regulating currency flows. Lao Ambassador to Thailand Hiem Phommachanh says this has contributed to the kip's plunge in value (250 to the baht compared with 125 earlier this year) and urged traders to adopt formal practices. According to the *Bangkok Post* (3 Sept.), Lao traders need baht to pay for Thai imports, which causes them to dump kip for baht in the black market, further devaluing the currency.

(In Thailand, the baht is in a steep slide against the dollar, falling to 41.250 on Sept. 23

from 38.71 a week earlier causing investor concern and a 2.4% drop in share prices).

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Laos hosted the Eighth ASEAN Youth Day meeting Aug. 25-27, a 3-day conference attended by delegations from 10 countries considering the theme "Youth and Tourism." As 1999 is "Visit Laos Year" (2000 now designated as well), issues related to tourism are on many agendas, from the government to the proprietors of the proliferating cheap guest houses to the drivers of speedboats that carry passengers and goods on the Mekong between Vientiane and northern provinces. The drivers are bemoaning the rainy season that has idled some 200 of them as people desert the boats for buses and planes. During the dry season business booms, even though the 8-hour boat trip is considerably more expensive than the bus. (*Vientiane Times*, 20 Sept.)

No major flooding is expected on the Mekong this year, according to the National Meteorology Dept., whose forecasts call for decreasing rains (season runs from June to October). The Mekong is still well below flood stage, but there is concern in northern Laos where rains have been heavy and water level in some rivers has risen dramatically.

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U.S. Customs officials are reporting a huge surge in the smuggling of Asian opium into California. They noted that, unlike other drugs (crack, methamphetamines), the opium appears aimed mostly at Laotian immigrant communities. Jim Miller, chief of Customs' international mail branch in Oakland, at a news conference in September, said he had never "in the history of this facility" seen so much opium arrive in such a short time. Most of it has come "ingeniously" hidden in airmail packages of dried mushrooms, herbal tea, clothing and many other items sent from Laos to residents of California's Central Valley. The opium flow seemed relatively normal until June when it went up sharply. Four people have been arrested and officials said it was believed they were connected with Asian gangs who sell opium within their communities. A DEA spokesperson said opium is part of the Lao culture but "it is still a

controlled substance and a prosecutable offense. Officials also said it was very unlikely the opium was intended for processing into anything stronger, e.g., heroin. (Reuters, 10 Sept.)

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Communicate. Peter DeCaro is a rising figure in the seriously neglected sub-category of Việt Nam studies, the communication-of-ideas process within the society and the dynamics of external Vietnamese communications. He has created a list serve called Vietnamese Communication Scholars, affiliated with his Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa. DeCaro, a recent Ph.D., served with the U.S. Army engineers in Việt Nam (Tây Ninh province, 1968-69), titled his dissertation "The Reconstructive Rhetoric of Hồ Chí Minh", which focuses on Hồ's "revolutionary discourses and activities, 1919-1946." He says: "I've created this listserve so information and discussion can flow between any and all participants. Being a neophyte, I can use all of the help I can get." To join the listserve either (1) send e-mail to mailserv@mail.bvu.edu (in the body of your message type the following: subscribe avcs-1) or (2) send snail mail to Peter DeCaro, Director, Public Relations Program, Department of Communication and Theatre Arts, Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, IA 50588; phone: (712) 749-2125; FAX: (712) 749-2037.

Speaking of Indochina. Over the years, in fact from its inception, the Indochina Chronology has received complaints on the name of our publication. "Indochina" it is asserted is a colonialist term invented by the French. Not so, say the geographers, it is a neutral term applied to the land lying between India and China. Lately we have been getting a spate of messages on e-mail wanting us to change the name. Our standard answer has been—can't go further than this—you give us a substitute and we will use it. DP

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