

INTERUNIVERSITY SOUTHEAST ASIA COMMITTEE

November 30, 1970

RECEIVED
DEC 4 1970
C. V. S. R.

Mr. H. B. Jacobini
Director
Center for Vietnamese Studies
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

Dear Jack:

In regard to your letter of November 23, please know:

(1) The VSCG is officially associated with the Southeast Asia Regional Council. The Council has endorsed a proposal the VSCG has made to the Ford Foundation and expects to assist the VSCG with modest financial support in the months ahead. I have not used the term sub-committee as you do in your letter because the terminology is now being worked out in a new set of by-laws. The new AAS constitution requires a re-working of by-laws and operating procedures all through the various sub-groups and constituent bodies of the AAS. But whatever terminology is finally decided on, the connection between the Southeast Asia Regional Council and the VSCG is real.

(2) The VSCG came into existence with the encouragement of the ISAC Executive Committee (now the Regional Council). Vietnamese studies in the U.S. has been a concern of ISAC almost from its beginning. An earlier "sub-committee" on Vietnamese studies was chaired by (was really to be organized by) Dan Lev but never got properly or fully functioning.

X (3) The idea of an "investigation" was Joe Fischer's. He proposed an investigation at the February 1970 meeting of the ISAC executive committee. The executive committee unequivocally rejected the idea of an investigation but did want to learn more about the SIU Center because, frankly, very real concern existed (still exists) as to how the Center came to be and its purposes. The executive committee decided to suggest that the VSCG meet on your campus. An informal report from the VSCG on the SIU Center would be welcome by the Executive Committee which would then consider what further action if any might be taken. The executive committee was upset subsequently to learn that Joe had left our February

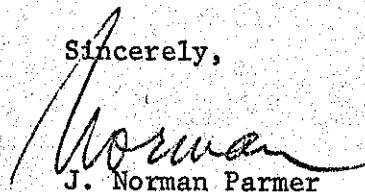
Mr. H. B. Jacobini
November 30, 1970
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meeting and gone to Carbondale and spoke of an investigation. Joe subsequently back-pedaled from the word investigation.

In summary, the VSCG and the Educational and Professional Development Sub-Committee of the Southeast Asia Regional Council have ~~never had sanction from the Southeast Asia Regional Council to speak of an investigation.~~

I know that the VSCG will soon be discussing the SIU Center. I have taken the liberty of sending a copy of your letter and its enclosures together with this reply to John Whitmore for his information. I believe that the members of the VSCG will need to arrive at some conclusions of their own about how they stand on certain questions and who speaks for them.

Sincerely,



J. Norman Parmer
Chairman, Southeast Asia
Regional Council

JNP/lis

INTERUNIVERSITY SOUTHEAST ASIA COMMITTEE

RECEIVED
NOV 20 1970
C. V. S. R.

November 25, 1970

Professor H. B. Jacobini, Director
Center for Vietnamese Studies
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois 62901

Dear Jack:

Thank you for your letter of November 4 and the enclosures. I was pleased to get your rather full documentation inasmuch as I had heard both directly and indirectly from various persons about the events of October 23 and 24. Judging from the remarks reportedly made by David Marr at these meetings, I need to say something further about the position of the Southeast Asia Regional Council in this matter.

As I had explained earlier, the Vietnamese Studies Coordinating Group was asked if it could hold one of its future meetings on the Carbondale campus. In addition to conducting its regular business, the group was asked to learn all it could about the Center not in the sense of conducting an investigation but, rather, with a view to learning about plans, problems, needs. An informal report was, indeed, forthcoming, not as a result of a meeting of the VSCG on your campus but rather a product of the views and opinions of several persons who have made visits there as individuals from time to time. It was agreed in February that if a statement was forthcoming from the VSCG it would be considered by what was then the ISAC Executive Council (now the Southeast Asia Regional Council) for what further action, if any, seemed desirable.

Our Regional Council did not move very quickly in that the statement by the members of the VSCG was circulated to the Council members only in late August or September. No responses were received by mail so the matter was discussed at the combined meeting of the Regional Council and the Inter-university Southeast Asia Committee in Washington on November 7 and 8.

The agenda of the Washington meetings was crowded, and in this circumstance approximately 45 to 60 minutes were devoted to the VSCG informal report and SIU's Vietnamese Studies Center in general. While I suppose a number of detailed points could be made, it is fair, I believe, to sum up

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by saying that there was considerable dissatisfaction among the larger body of 27 (the Council and ISAC together) with the way the statement by the four persons had been framed. It seemed to several persons present as a biased document, lacking criteria for the judgments that were offered and especially lacking in background information and documentation.

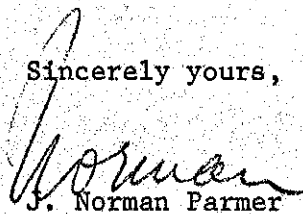
At the same time, however, there was an equally strong feeling that some further discussion and action was necessary. The decision was made to return the informal report to the VSCG and ask that they provide a statement which would provide considerably more information and probably against a background of criteria for establishing Vietnamese studies programs. John Whitmore, who is the chairman of the VSCG, will raise this matter with the members of the group at a meeting sometime in the weeks ahead.

If the VSCG is willing to revise and expand the statement or draft a new one, it is likely that the Regional Council and ISAC will wish to publish it in some form. This may be done in conjunction with information about newly-established Vietnamese studies centers at Cornell and Harvard. I do not, however, wish to prejudge what the Council and ISAC may wish to do. If the VSCG can provide a new statement or report in time for the Regional Council's next meeting in early February, I suspect that some decision will be reached at that time.

Please let me add to this letter that our Educational and Professional Development Subcommittee has a new chairman. It is Professor Charles Keyes, who, as perhaps you know, is a faculty member at the University of Washington. I hope very much that Joe Fischer will remain on the subcommittee and that the subcommittee will be strengthened by some additional members.

Again, thank you for the materials which you sent to me. I will endeavor to keep you informed.

Sincerely yours,



J. Norman Farmer
Chairman, Southeast Asia
Regional Council

JNP/ls

cc: John Whitmore
Charles Keyes
Shirley Clarkson

November 23, 1970

Professor Norman Parmer
Assistant Dean of Faculties
for International Studies
Clubb Library
Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701

Dear Norm:

I am enclosing a proofed copy of David Marr's comments in the meeting held here by one of our local critics.

It raises a question which has also been raised by Professor Hoa following his recent meeting with the Language Resources Subcommittee. I know that this must be a tired subject for you by now, but it keeps coming up in one way or another and I think it deserves a definitive word. Is the Vietnam Studies Coordinating Group an official subcommittee of the Southeast Asia Regional Council or not? If so, how did it come into existence? If not, how can some of its members continue to speak of it as an official and, by implication, a representative entity within A.A.S.?

If there is to be such a group with official professional weight there needs to be some discussions about its role, its method of selection, its thrust, and the behavior of its members in their official role. If on the other hand it is merely an association of eight scholars, none of its members should purport to speak authoritatively for the Regional Council or for A.A.S. or for a subcommittee of either. In this connection, I'm afraid that Marr has really carried on in a very shoddy fashion which does credit to no one.

Although you have stated on several occasions that no such group has been authorized to investigate this Center, Mr. Marr and his associates have continued to publicly represent or imply that their partisan activities constitute

an authorized investigation.

I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.

Best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

H. B. Jacobini
Director

HBJ/sk

Enclosure

P.S. I am also enclosing a xeroxed item from the A.A.S. Newsletter which is most interesting in light of Joe Fischer's antics.

November 4, 1970

Professor Norman Parmer
Assistant Dean of Faculties
for International Studies
Clubb Library, Ohio University
Athens, Ohio 45701

Dear Norm:

I understand that you wanted a full statement of the material disseminated here in connection with the "scholarly integrity conference" especially that pertaining to ISAC.

I'm enclosing several items. Please note the items marked in red.

In fact, the "conference" had only three Asian experts, Marr, Whitmore and Khanh. Altogether it was a fiasco. I believe, however, that what Marr may be saying about the ISAC subcommittee report, suggests that he is clearly off-base in the impression he is giving. Any information which you can give me in regard to what is going on would be much appreciated.

Best wishes.

Very sincerely,

H. B. Jacobini
Director

HBJ/ab
Enclosures