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SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING THE PROSPECTIVE ROLE OF
VIETNAMESE HIGHLANDERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Gerald C. Hickey

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Summary of SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING THE PROSPECTIVE ROLE OF VIETNAMESE HIGHLANDERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Most economic development schemes emphasize the importance of the highlands but none have indicated a role for the indigenous highlander. Changes, however, in economic activities of an ever-increasing number of Highlanders during the past forty-five years indicate a potential for further economic development and a more important role for them in the national framework.

This report offers a series of recommendations concerning the role of Highlanders in economic development. The first recommendation is of course that a role be given the Highlanders in any future economic development schemes. Two SUGGESTIONS are offered. First that agricultural extension services be keyed to Highlander's needs and executed at the village level. (14f). Second that commercial activities be generated among the Highlanders by developing some system of investment and credit such as a Rural Bank for Highlanders. (16f). Subsequent recommendations deal with situational aspects that bear on the Highlanders' place in economic development: land claims of the Highlanders, resettlement of Vietnamese into the highlands, programs for relocating Highlander' villages. There are appendices containing relevant information on past and current economic development schemes for the highlands, data on historical trade patterns between the Highlanders and lowland groups, and cases of relatively recent economic innovation among the Highlanders. There is also material on land claims of the Highlanders, the pattern of Vietnamese migration into the highlands, and Highlander resettlement programs, past and present.

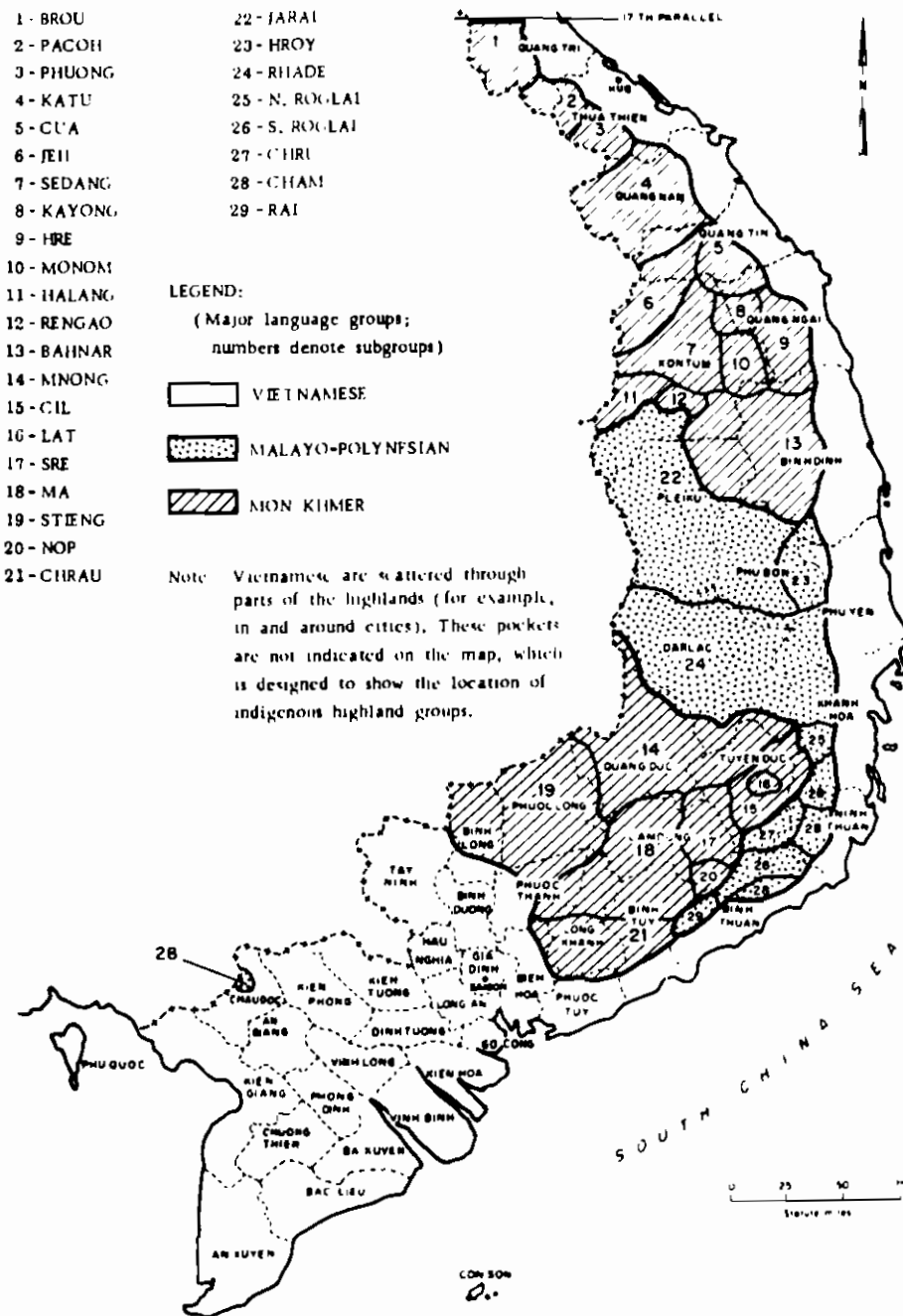
- 1 - BROU
- 2 - PACOH
- 3 - PHUONG
- 4 - KATU
- 5 - CUA
- 6 - JEU
- 7 - SEDANG
- 8 - KAYONG
- 9 - HRE
- 10 - MONOM
- 11 - HALANG
- 12 - RENGAO
- 13 - BAHNAR
- 14 - MINONG
- 15 - CIL
- 16 - LAT
- 17 - SRE
- 18 - MA
- 19 - STIENG
- 20 - NOP
- 21 - CHRAU

- 22 - JARAI
- 23 - HROY
- 24 - RHADÉ
- 25 - N. ROU-LAI
- 26 - S. ROU-LAI
- 27 - CHRI
- 28 - CHAM
- 29 - RAI

LEGEND:
(Major language groups;
numbers denote subgroups)

- VIETNAMESE
MALAYO-POLYNESIAN
MON KHMER

Note: Vietnamese are scattered through parts of the highlands (for example, in and around cities). These pockets are not indicated on the map, which is designed to show the location of indigenous highland groups.



ETHNO-LINGUISTIC GROUPS OF SOUTH VIETNAM

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING THE PROSPECTIVE ROLE
OF VIETNAMESE HIGHLANDERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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PREFACE

For several years, Dr. Gerald C. Hickey has been active in field research on the problems of minority groups in Southeast Asia, with particular reference to the mountain peoples (Montagnards) of Vietnam. The strategic importance of the mountain areas that dominate several of the main routes of access from the Ho Chi Minh trail into Vietnam, and consequently of the peoples who inhabit these mountains, does not need elaboration. In this paper, Dr. Hickey presents some recommendations as to ways and means of bettering the lot of the Vietnamese Highlanders and of drawing them more closely into the economic, social, and political structure of the country. These recommendations are consequently to be categorized as informed insight based on some years of research familiarity with the problems of the peoples under discussion rather than as in-depth analysis explicating problems.

A variety of standard anthropological techniques were used in gathering data for this study. Cases of economic innovation were collected in highland towns and villages as well as in farms and fields. Observation, frequent visits to measure change, and interviews were all part of the approach. When necessary, Dr. Hickey was fortunate in having capable linguistic assistance. International Voluntary Service (IVS) volunteers Lynn Cabbaga and Tracy Atwood provided this assistance

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on numerous occasions, and they also found excellent examples of economic innovation. Staff members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) aided greatly in communicating with informants and gathering field data.

Documentary materials employed include French monographs on the Highlanders and reports from the French administration, the government of South Vietnam (GVN) -- particularly the Ministry for Development of Ethnic Minorities -- and the U.S. Mission in Saigon. Lannie Elliott of the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA) gave valuable advice on possible banking arrangements for the Highlanders. The author benefited greatly from working and interacting with various U.S. organizations in the field, notably the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) Field Unit in Saigon, as well as by the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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I. INTRODUCTION nix

Economic development schemes for South Vietnam almost invariably emphasize the importance of the highlands as a potential source of agricultural, silvicultural, and possibly mineral wealth. It is also described as an area where a thriving beef cattle industry could be developed. These schemes usually envisage large-scale projects supported by the central government with outside assistance -- foreign aid, international banks, and so forth -- or programs financed and carried out by the private sector. In addition to the expertise of specialists to plan and direct these developmental efforts, most proposals call for sponsored migration of Vietnamese into the area to provide skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor. With the exception of a recent project proposal for beef cattle development,¹ none of these economic development proposals indicates a role for the indigenous Highlanders.² (For a review of these economic development schemes, see Appendix A.)

The need for Vietnamese labor is understandable. Culturally more advanced than the Highlanders, the lowland Vietnamese have a long tradition of relatively sophisticated skills. Even so, it is a misleading disservice to stereotype the Highlanders as "stone age" people who lead a nomadic existence and farm by indiscriminately burning the forest as they practice a form of agriculture that is inherently destructive. While some Highlanders are "primitive," in the sense that they are illiterate and only grow subsistence crops, others should be more properly characterized as "highland peasants" who have for a long time cultivated cash crops, are literate, and have served in the civil

¹Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture and Fishery Development, and the Agricultural Development Bank of Vietnam, *Vietnam Beef Cattle Development Project*, Saigon, April 1971.

²These groups are known variously as *môi* (Vietnamese for "savage"), *người thượng* (Vietnamese for "highlander") and *montagnards* (French for "highlanders" or "mountaineers"). Some French anthropologists call them "Proto-Indochinois" ("Proto-Indochinese"). This report refers to them as "Highlanders" throughout.

administration and the army. In any event, none of the Highlanders is nomadic; they move the site of their farming but normally never their villages, and those who do practice swidden-shifting agriculture carefully control the fires. Also, leaving roots in the soil and using sticks to make the holes for seeds as they do occasions less disturbance to the structure of the topsoil and undoubtedly less erosion than if a plow were used.

Furthermore, changes, particularly in economic activities, have been taking place among an ever-increasing number of Highlanders during the past forty-five years. When in the mid-1920s the French began to establish their coffee estates in the vicinity of Ban Me Thuot, they hired both Vietnamese and Highlanders as laborers. This exposure to profitable coffee planting stimulated some Highlanders to farm their own estates, and at the present time there are 326 registered Highlander coffee planters in Darlac Province. A number of other examples of shifts in the direction of cash cropping and entrepreneurial activities among individual Highlanders and groups are cited in this report. More and more Highlanders are being monetized as they are exposed to the outside world through contact with Vietnamese and foreigners, working for wages, and doing military service. These changes are significant because they indicate a potential for further economic development among the Highlanders and a more important role for them in the national framework.

This last point is particularly important in considering the future of the highlands. Historically, this area has been a buffer zone in the struggles that have taken place among the more civilized lowland people. The Cham and Khmer sought to gain control of parts of the highlands (Cham hegemony over the high plateau lasted some four hundred years). A series of Vietnamese "pacification" programs to gain control of highland central Vietnam began in the sixteenth century and lasted until 1905. The French and Viet Minh fought for control of strategic highland areas, and this pattern has been repeated in the present war.

In the present effort to extend the pacification program throughout the highlands, success depends, of course, on gaining the support of the population. While numerous political indoctrination approaches and similar programs may have some effect in doing this, real support will grow as the Highlanders are increasingly integrated into the national framework. As they participate more and more in the market, they become part of an intricate national economic network. By giving them a role in economic development schemes, the government can accelerate the process that is reflected in the examples of economic innovation cited in this report. By the same token, these examples tell us something about what that role might be: Highlanders who are citizens with titles to their land, living in the place of their choosing, and being encouraged to develop their native skills through programs sponsored by the government.

After briefly reviewing relations between the Highlanders and the central government since 1955, a series of recommendations concerning the role of the Highlanders in economic development are proffered. The emphasis here is on agriculture and small-scale enterprises rather than on other economic activities such as animal husbandry or logging. The first recommendation is that a role be given the Highlanders in any future economic development schemes; this has rarely been the case in the past. There are recommendations concerning programs designed to improve cultivation of field and garden crops with a view to initiating cash cropping or expanding existing cash cropping. A system of investment and credit for those Highlanders already engaged in more advanced economic activities and who need a source of credit for expanding production is suggested.

Subsequent recommendations deal with situational aspects that bear on the Highlanders' place in economic development: land claims of the Highlanders, resettlement of Vietnamese into the highlands, programs for relocating Highlanders' villages. Finally, there are appendices containing relevant information on past and current economic development schemes for the highlands, data on historical trade patterns between the Highlanders and lowland groups, and cases of relatively recent economic innovation among the Highlanders. There is also material on land claims

of the Highlanders, the pattern of Vietnamese migration into the highlands, and Highlander resettlement programs, past and present.

II. THE HIGHLANDERS AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

With the formation of the Republic of South Vietnam in 1955, the Vietnamese for the first time assumed administrative responsibility for all of the southern highlands; it had been a Crown Domain, directly under Emperor Bao Dai, and Vietnamese migration into the area had been severely restricted. [Ngo Dinh Diem's unofficial policy was to assimilate the Highlanders into the Vietnamese cultural sphere. This resulted in decrees and practices designed to impose on the Highlanders the social institutions and cultural traits of the Vietnamese.]

From the government's point of view, this was to be a civilizing process, but Highlanders perceived it as an attempt to destroy their traditional way of life and their cultural identity. [Moreover, the government ignored the Highlanders' claims to land in its Land Development Program, which sought to resettle lowland Vietnamese by giving them land in the highlands, and in the Highland Resettlement Plan, under which Highlanders were forced off their ancestral land and moved into "reservations."] (For further information on these Diem administration programs see Appendices C, D, and E.)

[Early in 1958, as a result of these measures, a group of highland leaders formed the Bajaraka Movement, a designation that combines the key letters in Bahnar, Jarai, Rhade, and Koho, the ethnic groups from which they came. Later the same year they called for a general strike in Ban Me Thuot, and a five-hour demonstration resulted. Seven of the leaders were arrested, among them, Y Bham Enuol, who later was to become leader of the FULRO ("Front Unifié de Lutte des Races Opprimées," or "United Fighting Front of the Oppressed Races"), and Paul Nur and Nay Luett, both later to serve as Minister for Ethnic Minorities' Development.] In February 1964, Y Bham Enuol, the last of the leaders to be released, was appointed Deputy Province Chief for Highlander Affairs in Darlac. Dissidence was again in the air because of the government's lack of concern over the discontent of the minority groups. In September 1964, Y Dhe Adrong, a Rhade civil servant, met with representatives of the Struggle Front of the Khmer of Lower Cambodia, a dissident movement that had emerged among the Khmer Krom, the

Cambodian-speaking population in the Mekong River delta of Vietnam, and the Front for the Liberation of Champa, a similar dissident group begun among the Cham population of southcentral coastal Vietnam. They plotted a revolt involving five Special Forces Camps, and when the revolt began, Y Bham Enuol joined the rebels. Out of this came the FULRO movement, which, although at first the name referred to an amalgamation of the old Bajaraka movement with the above-mentioned Khmer and Cham organizations, became identified as a Highlander dissident group. The revolt was suppressed, and FULRO established its headquarters near the old French Camp Le Rolland across the border in Cambodia.

FULRO expanded successfully. It built its own army of several thousand troops, some of which were organized in units and others in local militia, and it commanded considerable following among troops in the various military programs organized by the Vietnamese and Americans. In addition, FULRO gained active support among many Highlander civil servants, students, and villagers in sections of Kontum, Pleiku, Phu Bon, Darlac, Quang Duc, Lam Dong, and Tuyen Duc Provinces. The government opened formal negotiations with FULRO in August 1965, and a FULRO delegation led by Y Dhe Adrong took up residence in Ban Me Thuot. Relations were disrupted by a second FULRO revolt in December carried out by younger, more militant members, indicating some split between them and the older leaders who favored negotiation. FULRO-government relations were reestablished in May 1966.

Through a series of notes and during these meetings with government representatives, FULRO leaders made known their grievances and "aspirations." They wanted greater participation in political affairs. Explicitly, they asked for a highland leader to be placed high in the central government. They also suggested having a body of representatives from all highland ethnic groups meet periodically in Ban Me Thuot to discuss the needs of the population, and they requested that more of the administration in the highlands be placed in the hands of the indigenous people. They asked that measures be taken to resolve the land claims of the Highlanders. On the premise that only Highlanders could pacify the highlands, they proposed formation of a highland army

or "military force" under the command of indigenous officers, who would receive guidance from Vietnamese and foreign military advisors. Finally, they wanted a highland flag to be flown under the national flag.

Little progress was made until August 1968, when government representatives met with a FULRO delegation led by Y Bham and some members of the Cham and Khmer movements. The government delegation made it clear it would deal only with the Highlanders, so a meeting between Y Bham and a FULRO delegation and Prime Minister Tran Van Huong was arranged and held in Saigon. After these discussions Y Bham returned to consult with his staff at the Cambodian headquarters while his deputies, Y Dhe Adrong and Y Bling Buon Krong Pang, continued discussions with Minister Paul Nur and the Prime Minister's staff. [Since they had Y Bham's approval to negotiate, Y Dhe and Y Bling and the government representatives signed an agreement on December 19, 1968. It concerned a flag for the Highlanders, an important role for Y Bham, an increased number of Highlander administrators, and integration of FULRO military units into the Regional Forces.]

Just before Y Bham's departure to sign the agreements, a force of FULRO dissidents, some of whom were active in the 1965 revolt, accompanied by a group of Cambodian-Cham, including a few officers of the Royal Khmer Army, captured Y Bham's headquarters. Y Bham and his family were sent to Phnom Penh, and since then they have remained in Cambodia, as have the FULRO dissidents. Even without Y Bham's signature, however, the government considered the agreements valid, and on February 1, 1969, President Thieu and high government officials presided over a ceremony in Ban Me Thuot welcoming the FULRO leaders and 700 troops back into the fold.)

During this period, political activities of the non-FULRO leaders had not been carried out through any formal movement or organization. Following the September 1964 revolt, the government organized a congress of highland leaders in Pleiku, and they were invited to express their needs and desires. These did not differ greatly from what the FULRO leaders expressed. Essentially, they wanted some guarantees that the government would respect their right to retain their cultural

identity. They also asked for greater participation in the political life of the nation with representation in Saigon and more direct control over the administration of the highlands. In addition, they outlined explicit social and economic programs, emphasizing particularly the right of Highlanders to hold clear title to land.

[At this meeting it was announced that the Bureau for Highland Affairs, established earlier that year, was to become a Directorate with Colonel Touprong Ya Ba, a Highlander, as Director.] Early in 1966, the Directorate became a Special Commission for Highland Affairs with Paul Nur, one of the leaders jailed in 1958, as Commissioner. During the Ky Administration, the Highlander Law Courts were reestablished in some provinces, more Highlanders were appointed to provincial and district level posts, and more scholarships were provided for secondary schools. On August 29, 1967, General Nguyen Van Thieu, then Chairman of the National Directory, signed a kind of "bill of rights" for the Highlanders concerning a number of programs. It explicitly stated that land titles would be granted, and it made provision for a Council for Ethnic Minorities (also provided for in the new constitution). Finally, with the formation of the new government in November 1967, the High Commission became the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development. Also in the new National Assembly there was one Highlander elected to the 60-seat Upper House, and six southern Highlanders and two northern refugee Highlanders to the 137-member Lower House.

On February 11, 1969, a delegation of former FULRO leaders met with President Thieu to discuss implementation of the agreements that had been made the previous December. In keeping with the agreements, they declared that they intended to form a political party to replace FULRO, and it would be called The Movement for Unity of the Southern Highland Ethnic Minorities. Subsequently they completed organization of the new party in conjunction with staff from the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development and members of the National Assembly and the guidance of Nguyen Van Huong, who then was Secretary General at the Presidency. By the end of March, approval for the new party was sought from the Ministry of the Interior, and on April 22, the formal dedication ceremony was held at Ban Me Thuot. The chairman is

Y Bling Buon Krong Pang, a Rhade and former FULRO leader, and membership includes a number of those active in Highlander affairs. In May this movement became part of the People's Alliance for Social Revolution, and soon afterwards the Alliance joined President Thieu's National Social Democratic Front.

By the beginning of 1970 President Thieu's National Social Democratic Front had dissolved. The Movement for Unity of the Southern Highland Ethnic Minorities continued to function, although its activities became localized around Ban Me Thuot. It also began experiencing financing difficulties, which worsened early in 1971. [A welcome change took place in the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development, however, with the appointment of Nay Luett as Minister in June 1971. This energetic and widely respected leader who, as noted previously, had been in the 1958 Bajaraka Movement, initiated badly needed changes in personnel and administrative organization. He also launched new social and economic programs, and there were hopeful signs of interest and cooperation from the Presidency.]

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. It is recommended that any new schemes for economic development of the highlands include specific programs designed to give the Highlanders a role in this process. Consideration of this role should be based on a realistic view of the Highlanders' capabilities as manifest in the traditional commerce and cash cropping that has existed among some of them, and the more recent economic innovations taking place in the highlands.

In the introduction to this paper it was noted that the Highlanders' image suffers from numerous misconceptions about their living patterns and character traits. Past and present research on the highlands certainly does not support these generalities. There is, for example, the commonly held notion that all Highlanders live on a below-subsistence or near-subsistence level and are ignorant of any commercial dealings of any sort. French and Vietnamese historical sources contain considerable information on early trade between the Highlanders located near the coastal plain and the Cham, and subsequent trade between highland groups and the Vietnamese. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the Vietnamese rulers organized a series of pacification programs not only designed to protect Vietnamese settlements located between present-day Danang and Binh Dinh (eventually extended to Binh Thuan), but also to control the trade in valuable products from the highlands. These products included gold, precious woods, ivory, and rhinoceros tusks, as well as cash crops like tobacco, rice, maize, yams, ground nuts, castor oil beans, cinnamon, betel leaves, and areca nuts. The last of these pacification programs ended in 1905. (See Appendix B for further information.)

A subsistence economy is associated with swidden³ agriculture, and the ethnographic survey, which is part of the present research, has

³This form of agriculture is also known variously as slash-and-burn, primitive horticulture, field-forest rotation, shifting-field

revealed that [of twenty-eight highland groups included thus far, only eight -- the Brou, Cii, Haiang, Jeh, Katu, Pacoh, Roglai, and Stieng -- practice swidden agriculture exclusively.] One group, the Lat, practices wet-rice cultivation exclusively. Eleven groups have wet-rice cultivation along with swidden farming; they are the Bahnar, Chrau, Chru, Cua, Hre, Jarai, Ma, Mnong, Rengao, Rhade, Sedang, and Sre. Of these, the Chru, Bahnar, and the Rengao also have permanent dry-rice fields.⁴

Another misconception is that the Highlanders are nomads who periodically move their villages as local soils become exhausted. This is not the case. As indicated above, a considerable segment of the highland population practices wet-rice agriculture, which is also identified as sedentary agriculture wherein villages remain in place. In addition, [even those who practice swidden agriculture move their fields by a system of rotation with long fallowing periods providing natural refertilization, but their villages remain *in situ*.]

The present research has also yielded considerable data on changes that have been taking place in the economic activities of an ever-increasing number of Highlanders. When, in the mid-1920s, the French began to establish their coffee estates in the vicinity of Ban Me Thuot, they employed some of the Rhade as laborers. A number of them learned how to cultivate coffee trees, and they established small estates of their own. [The result, at the present time, is 326 registered Highlander coffee planters in Darlac Province. Their estates total 531 hectares, and the median holding is 1.0 hectare.] The range is from 0.2 to 16.0 hectares, and only three planters own less than 1.0 hectares.

There are numerous cases of more recent innovations resulting from the Highlanders' own initiative. Most of these involve cash cropping;

agriculture, and brand tillage, as well as by numerous local names; for example, *ray* is the term used in most French and Vietnamese literature dealing with the highlands. The revived English dialect word *swidden* for "burned clearing" has been favored in works by Conklin, Izikowitz, and others. It is an appropriate general designation not linked to any particular region, and it can also be used as a noun.

⁴For more details on twenty-one of these groups, see G. C. Hickey, *The Highland People of South Vietnam: Social and Economic Development*, The Rand Corporation, RM-5281-1/ARPA, September 1967, pp. 151-182.

Although these cases do not represent a general change among the Highlanders, they are revolutionary in their own way in that they reflect a willingness on the part of some to break with the traditional ways. (There are also manifestations of an ever-increasing monetization of the Highlanders and a deeper participation in the national economy.) Finally, all of the data, both historical and current, have a great deal to tell us about the potential role of the Highlanders in future economic development schemes.

For the Highlanders, economic development will essentially mean some changes in existing forms and functions of agriculture and animal husbandry. As indicated previously, there are varying levels of agricultural sophistication to be found among the Highlanders so the goals of economic programs will have to vary accordingly. For most of the highland villagers, economic development programs should be aimed at raising them from an economic level wherein they produce crops largely for their own consumption, to a level at which they also engage in some production of cash crops. For villagers already producing cash crops, economic development programs might involve production expansion or introduction of new crops that can be grown for the market.

The first need in planning agricultural development programs is for considerable knowledge about the existing systems of agriculture and the physical environment in which they are executed; such knowledge is prerequisite to any evaluation of an area's potential for development. It is also advisable to organize the programs as far as possible within the existing framework, beginning by improving present techniques with a view to increasing production of some traditional crops. Similarly, it will require basic research into existing conditions to plan

In a 1967 Rand report⁵ a series of suggestions concerning economic development were tendered, and one of them concerned the establishment of a research center in the highlands. A center of this kind would serve the invaluable function of generating the ethnographic and silvacultural and agricultural knowledge, as well as the research on soils and animal husbandry, without which the area's economic development cannot be properly planned and implemented. Such a center would also be the agency for coordinating research, a meeting place for those concerned with highland development, and a repository for books and documents on the highlands. In addition, it could serve as a site for agricultural experimentation and for training cadres to introduce improved techniques and new crops to the villagers. Such experimentation would supplement that being conducted at the Ea Kmat Center near Ban Me Thuot.

This report also discussed some of the cash crops currently being farmed by Highlanders on a small scale or not at all. Briefly, this would include most vegetables and fruits found in kitchen gardens, such as maize, various kinds of beans, pineapple, tomatoes, chili peppers, papaya, bananas, and sugarcane, as well as tobacco, araca nuts, and betel leaves. Lemongrass or citronella grass is grown in many gardens as a spice for food, but it could be farmed as an industrial cash crop to produce oil. Both kenaf and ramie were successfully grown by Vietnamese in the Land Development Centers begun in 1957 (see Appendix C for additional information), but with the collapse of the program, production ceased. There is a good market for the produce of both of these fiber plants. Many drug plants used in Chinese and Vietnamese pharmacology (ginger, for example) could be farmed in the highlands. At the high elevations in the vicinity of Dalat it may be possible to cultivate pyrethrum, the oil of which is used in pesticides.

⁵Hickey, *Highland People of South Vietnam*, pp. 102-113.

For most Highlanders these changes will necessitate learning some new methods other than crop raising. One of these is crop processing; for example, most oil-producing crops require distillation facilities. Also, although some Highlanders have become familiar with the ways of the market world, most have not. As they engage in cash-crop farming, they will have to learn marketing methods and develop their own commercial activities.

Some suggestions can be made concerning programs for developing new agricultural techniques and skills and for generating commercial activities among the Highlanders.

1. *Agricultural training can be improved through development of extension services suited to the Highlanders' needs.*

In recent years most of the formal agricultural training for Highlanders has been conducted in the provincial Agricultural Training Centers. These centers, by and large, have not been successful in introducing new farming and livestock-raising techniques among the Highlanders. Most of the villagers attending the training courses did not do so voluntarily, but were selected by the district chiefs to fill the quotas. The courses were too short -- two weeks at the most -- and there was no extension service to support the trainees when they returned to their villages. When asked how they felt about the training, the usual response of the Highlanders was that they found it interesting but "in our villages we do things differently."

By the end of 1969 the Agricultural Training Program in the highlands was floundering badly. It lacked support from the provincial administrations, and often the centers had to close because of a shortage of funds. The International Voluntary Service (IVS) had withdrawn its volunteer teachers in the program. In an effort to improve the program, in 1970 the Agricultural Training Centers were upgraded to a secondary school level. From all indications, however, it appears that the higher standards have resulted in an increased Vietnamese enrollment and a concomitant decreased Highlander participation in the program. Late in 1970, for example, there were seventy students at the Phu Bon Agricultural Training Center, and of these, nine were

Highlanders (only five were present). All of the instructors were Vietnamese, and none of them spoke Jarai.

2. *It would be better to have the Agricultural Training Centers function primarily as Agricultural Extension Centers in which Highlander cadre would be trained to work in the villages. Two such village programs would be:*

(a) *Demonstration Plots in the Villages:* The typical reaction of the Highlander trainee quoted above indicates that he did not relate what he saw in the center to his own village milieu. One advantage of the demonstration plot approach is that it brings the new methods right into the village. The villagers can see improved techniques being employed in a setting with which they are familiar, and this makes them more amenable to adopting these techniques. Lynn Cabbage, an IVS volunteer, successfully used this approach in Quang Duc Province. At first the villagers took scant notice of the demonstration vegetable garden, but then they began to stop and inspect the garden when it became apparent that the vegetables were clearly better than the ones in their own gardens. Eventually, some of them began to ask questions and to try some of the new techniques. This approach could also be used in introducing new animal husbandry methods.

(b) *Agricultural Training in the Primary Schools:* In some areas, basic agricultural training was part of the primary school curriculum under the French administration. This is no longer true, although some primary school teachers have organized school gardens with a view to instructing the children on improved methods. In Phu Bon Province, Tracy Atwood, the IVS volunteer, worked with several primary school teachers devising modern gardening techniques using materials available locally. The school children were given specific instructions on the tasks they were to perform. They tended the garden, and as the vegetables matured the teachers sold them to the local Regional Force unit, accumulating a profit of VN\$10,000. It was spent on sweets, cakes, and soft drinks for the children because the teachers felt that this reward would motivate them to work harder in the garden.

The advantage of working with the primary school children is that they will accept the new methods more readily than most adult villagers

Now
are v m
secondary
schools

who rely on traditional ways. The extension teams could work with the primary school teachers as the IVS volunteer noted above did. This same approach could be used in plots for field crops and for instruction in livestock breeding. It would also be well to try and devise some way of giving the school children basic instruction in marketing methods, particularly the fluctuations of prices based on supply and demand (Western children learn something of this when they play "store").

3. *To generate commercial activities among the Highlanders it would be advisable to begin developing some system of investment and credit such as a Rural Bank for Highlanders.*

It has been the experience of this researcher and others working in the highlands that there is a surprising amount of capital accumulation among some of the Highlanders (some instances of this are discussed in Appendix B). This would appear to be due to the increased monetization of the Highlanders as more and more of them engage in enterprises, serve in the armed forces (particularly in the Special Forces), and work for wages. Combined with this is their relatively low material standard of living, which does not require large or frequent outlays of cash. Though some capital is expended on radios, motorcycles, and clothes, they are still able to save considerable amounts of money.

At the same time there are Highlanders looking for credit to expand their agricultural or entrepreneurial activities, and there are no institutional sources of credit in the area. The Agricultural Development Bank is not a commercial bank and does not have a commercial approach -- its personnel are not trained for it. Also, it does not seek out deposits from local people.

The need is to tap the stored capital that Highlanders have and put it into a system wherein others who need credit can borrow. In the short run this is inflationary, since it is putting the stored money into circulation, but the aim is to invest the money in productive enterprises, which, in turn, increases the supply of goods, thus having a deflationary effect. In paying interest to borrow capital it has a stabilizing effect.

Several solutions can be outlined:

(a) *A Highlander Rural Bank:* This could be organized under the rural banking system. It might be done by a group of Highlanders, such as coffee planters who have had some experience in commercial marketing and who can amass a sufficient amount of capital to launch such a venture. One obvious shortcoming is that these Highlanders lack banking management skills. One possible solution would be to bring in a banking advisor from either the Vietnamese government or a private bank.

(b) *A Joint Venture between a Highlander Rural Bank and a Private Bank:* The Highlander Rural Bank would be like the one noted above, and it would enter into a joint venture with a private bank interested in expanding its operation. It would involve having this bank train three or four young educated Highlanders in banking principles and procedures as a first step. At the same time, the private bank would provide the initial talent to organize and manage the Highlander Rural Bank. This would be a profit-making endeavor for the private bank involved, and the Highlander Rural Bank would not only share in the profits, but it would provide the needed banking services for the local population. The private bank, if it is foreign, would want a guarantee from the Vietnamese government that it could remit some profits. There would also be a role for the Office of Private Resources of USAID Washington in obtaining for the private bank a profit remittal guarantee and risk insurance.⁶

⁶ An interesting example of tribal capitalism came to light recently when it was announced that the Jicarilla Apache, an American Indian group in New Mexico, would finance a new Hollywood movie starring singer Johnny Cash. Before they settled on their reservation the Jicarilla were roaming warriors known only for their bead and basket work, and by 1918 diseases had reduced their number to an impoverished 400. When, in the late 1940s, oil and natural gas were discovered on the reservation their fortunes changed. At the present time they number 1800, and the tribe is incorporated with capital assets of \$15,000,000 in addition to their 742,000-acre reservation. Leases on the gas and oil provide the Jicarillas with an annual income of more than \$2,000,000. Half of this sum goes directly to the Indians in the form of salaries and per-capita payments. Some \$707,000 goes for economic development, including livestock operations, tourism, public

- B. It is recommended that the Government of the Republic of Vietnam give priority to programs aimed at resolving the land claims of the Highlanders.

As U.S. military forces continue to withdraw from South Vietnam, it is inevitable that increased VC/NVA pressure will be brought to bear in the highlands of Military Regions I and II. Projecting from the present situation, the role of the Hamlet Self-Defense Force in the defense of the highlands will be of primary importance. Regional Forces and Popular Force units are widely dispersed, and unless sizable reinforcements are sent to the highlands, the ARVN units there will be thinly spread. To perform its defense role effectively, the Hamlet Self-Defense Force must be motivated to act not only for the good of its own villages, but also for the nation. The government has for some time been aware of the need to rally more popular support among the highland population, and it has attempted to do so by trying to satisfy Highlanders' needs and desires as they have been expressed by their leaders. Some progress has been made, but there have been too many cases of half-implementation and a seeming reluctance on the part of some government officials to satisfy some very basic aspirations of the highland people. It is hoped that these shortcomings will not hamper the current efforts at realizing the Highlanders' desire for land ownership.

As indicated previously, land claims of the Highlanders have been reiterated in oral and written communications and at conferences during the past decade (see Appendix C for details). The Highlanders' chagrin at land-grabbing during implementation of the 1957 Land Development Program contributed to the formation of the dissident "Bajaraka"

works, woodcutting, and student summer employment. Other expenses are for community services, including police and fire protection, accounting and utilities, rents, and maintenance of tribal buildings, and tribal government. The tribe keeps more than \$7,000,000 of the \$15,000,000 in an investment account managed by four New Mexico banks, and each quarter the banks' officers meet with the tribal council to discuss these accounts. Some of this capital is invested in U.S. Treasury bonds, and stocks in such corporations as General Motors, Sears, Roebuck and Co., and General Telephone and Electronics.

movement in 1958. Later, failure to satisfy their demands for land ownership was among the grievances expressed by the 1964 dissidents, which brought forth the FULRO movement that precipitated two highland revolts, one in 1964 and another in 1965.

The first government measure actually providing for land titles for the Highlanders was Decree Law 34/67, signed by Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu on August 29, 1967. It stipulated that Highlanders would receive titles to land permanently cultivated and also titles for their shifting-swidden fields, cultivated in rotation with fallowing periods ranging normally from five to fifteen years. On November 9, 1970, the Prime Minister signed a supplementary law decree providing each Highlander village with a defined territory ("principal living area"), the use of which can be determined by the villagers themselves. These decrees, along with others outlining schemes for identifying plots to which title is claimed by Highlanders, have paved the way for granting of titles. It would be advisable to implement this program as rapidly as possible.

- C. It is recommended that prior to implementing any plans for resettling large numbers of ethnic Vietnamese in the highlands an investigation be made of the present and future role of Vietnamese migrants already in the area.

All of the schemes for economic development of the highlands recommend large-scale resettlement of ethnic Vietnamese in the area. In addition to relieving overcrowded conditions in parts of the lowlands, such a move would also provide the necessary labor and skills for development of the highlands (see Appendix A). Too often ignored, however, is the fact that during the past fifteen years a vast movement of Vietnamese into the highlands has already taken place. Available figures indicate that since 1953 the Vietnamese population in Kontum, Pleiku, Darlac, Tuyen Duc, Lam Dong, and Quang Duc Provinces has risen from around 20,000 to as high as 480,000, and the range of variation in the population figures represents an increase of between nineteenfold and twenty-threefold (see Appendix D).

Although some of these Vietnamese settlers are engaged in farming, a large number have converged on the urban areas where most of them are sustained by the wartime economy, particularly the U.S. and Vietnamese military presence. As the wartime economy fades and the demand for their services diminishes, there is a danger of unemployment in highland urban areas. Many of these settlers, however, could be utilized in economic development programs, and in formulating such programs this potential should be investigated before large numbers of new settlers are brought into the area.

- D. It is recommended that projects involving resettlement of highland people be suspended, and that those who have already been resettled and desire to return to their original village sites be allowed to do so.

In most instances resettlement of Highlanders is a very disrupting experience, more so in many ways than it is with more advanced people. The Highlanders survive through close familiarity with their natural surroundings, and this is achieved through long experience in one locale. Their villages are established in a place where the intention is to remain permanently. In time, they come to know the soils, flora, fauna, and the rainfall pattern. To be removed from the familiar physical environment, particularly if they are not permitted to choose their new living area, involves a whole new set of basic adjustments, one of which may be their dependence on outside assistance -- a new experience for these normally independent, self-sustaining people (see Appendix E).

Where the villagers have expressed the desire to resettle and they have been given the choice of a new site, the adjustment problems have not been too severe. Most resettlement projects in the highlands, however, have been carried out without concern for the villagers' preferences, hence they have been disruptive, in some cases almost disastrous. One such example was the 1958 Highlander Resettlement Program of the Diem Regime, which was not only a failure but which also contributed to the bitterness among the Highlanders that led to the formation of the dissident FULRO movement and the 1964 and 1965

revolts already noted. According to the Hamlet Evaluation System report of July 31, 1970,⁷ out of a total of 1407 Highlander hamlets covered by the system, 722, or 51.3 percent, have been relocated within the past five years. In addition, as of early 1971 a large number of hamlets in more remote areas of Military Region II were being relocated to zones of government control in order to give the appearance of improved security in the area.

⁷The Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) is a computerized program for measuring development and security in rural Vietnam. American advisors record accomplishments and incidents that take place in each hamlet. These are compiled monthly in Saigon and the resulting report is supposed to give a fairly accurate picture of the situation throughout the country.

Appendix A

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES FOR THE HIGHLANDSPAST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

The first economic development programs for the highlands were projected by the French administration. Exploratory missions financed by the French government toward the end of the nineteenth century reported conditions favorable for agricultural exploitation in some areas, and by the early 1920s the growing reputation of Darlac Province as a place with rich and fertile soil amenable to rubber, coffee, and tea cultivation, became a lure for French investors. In 1925, when bids were accepted by the Colonial Administration in Saigon, over a hundred requests for land totaling 92,000 hectares were received within a period of months. The bidders ranged from individuals interested in establishing small or moderately sized estates to representatives of large French corporations wishing to extend their investments to this newly opened territory.

It became readily clear that the situation could develop into a land rush, so the Colonial Administration undertook a study of the land question. As a result, in 1925, Sabatier, the *Résident* of Darlac Province, issued two comprehensive reports. The first concerned land tenure systems among the Highlanders in the Province, and the second contained recommendations for coping with the problems involved in developing the area.⁸ The first report pointed out that although some land in the area was unclaimed, there were areas carefully apportioned by individuals, families, clans, or villages.

The second report contained extensive suggestions for land settlement procedures. The essence of the recommendations was that unclaimed land (*res nullius*) be made immediately available for colonization and that, with the approval of the Colonial Administration, a colonizer be

⁸L. Sabatier, "Documents de colonisation française en territoires non soumis à la juridiction et à l'administration annamites," Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1925 (manuscript in two parts).

granted title to the land. In the case of land claimed by the Highlanders, however, a colonist would be entitled only to a *bail emphythéotique*, or 99-year lease. Also, the bidder for a given piece of land would need not only the approval of the Colonial Administration but that of the Highlander (or group of Highlanders) who claimed ownership of the land as well. For example, in parts of the Rhade country it would be essential to have the accord of the *po-lan*, who is the guardian of a defined territory belonging to part of a clan, and the village headman (or headmen if there is more than one village involved). To exemplify the legal procedure, the Sabatier report included models of existing leases. One of these concerned a M. Maillot of the Paris suburb Neuilly-sur-Seine, who was negotiating for a plot of 25,000 hectares that a French corporation he represented planned to develop with coffee and rubber estates. The agreement specified a rental of VN\$97.50 (pre-World War II piastres), of which *po-lan* Y Nin was to receive VN\$58.50, and *po-lan* Y Blum the remaining VN\$39.00. Additional rental went to several village headmen.

These reports formed the basis for the Colonial Administration's land policy in the economic development of the highlands. In a decree dated July 30, 1932, the French administration allowed Highlanders to transfer land titles, provided the sale did not involve more than thirty hectares and was approved by either the local district chief or the governor of Annam. By implication, this constituted a further recognition of the Highlanders' right to own land. By 1945 there were estates totaling 6000 hectares, all of them in the provinces of Kontum, Pleiku (which included present-day Phu Bon Province), Darlac, and Haut Donnai (which now is divided into Quang Duc, Lam Dong, and Tuyen Duc Provinces). Of this total 3000 hectares were in tea, 1500 in coffee, 1000 in rubber, 400 in abrasin or tung oil, and 100 in Peruvian bark used to produce cinchonine and quinine.⁹

An agreement dated March 8, 1949, made between the French and the Bao Dai government, integrated the *Pays Montagnard du Sud* (the Southern Highlander Country) into Vietnam but gave this area administrative

⁹Etat du Viet Nam, *Plan de Développement Economique pour les Pays Montagnards du Sud du Domaine de la Couronne*, Editions de la Délégation Impériale du Domaine de la Couronne, Saigon, Juin 1953, pp. 10-11.

autonomy directly under the authority of the Emperor as a *Domaine de la Couronne* or Crown Domain. This agreement also mentions the "free development of these populations (i.e., the Highlanders) while respecting their traditions and customs." Then an ordinance of May 21, 1951, defined a "special status" for the Highlanders directly related to the Emperor's mission as head of the Crown Domain to manage the interests of the Highlanders while at the same time assisting them to achieve the modern ways of civilization. This ordinance also noted that the movement of ethnic Vietnamese into the highlands would be an important element in the economic development of the area.

Some of the above points were more clearly outlined in a 1952 plan for the economic development of the southern highlands Crown Domain prepared by the government of Vietnam.¹⁰ Measures such as health programs would have to be organized to prevent the depopulation of the area, and coupled with this was the aim of improving the socioeconomic status of the Highlanders by changing their existing economic adaption, where they live "a semi-nomadic way of life depending on the jungle" for their livelihood, to a situation where they would live in settled communities and subsist through modern farming and animal husbandry techniques. This plan also called for relocation of ethnic Vietnamese from crowded areas of central and southern Vietnam into the highlands to provide a better life for them and to utilize their skills in the economic development of the area.

Finally, the plan envisaged overall economic development through exploitation of the potential of the area through large-scale projects. These would be largely agricultural. Truck gardening could be developed, but more promising was investment in tea, coffee, rubber, and, in some areas, rice and sugarcane estates. Existing estates could be expanded and new ones established, and production could be increased by new public works financed by the administration along with increased investment from the private sector.

¹⁰Ibid.

These same major objectives were embodied in the 1957 Land Development Program formulated by the Ngo Dinh Diem government. Noting that of the 5,700,000 hectares in the highlands only 109,000 hectares had been exploited under the French and the Bao Dai regimes, one of the primary aims of the program was to expand the production of industrial crops. To relieve population pressures in parts of the lowlands, ethnic Vietnamese would be relocated to the highlands and given land for farmsteads in Land Development Centers. These settlers would receive the guidance and wherewithal to cultivate these industrial crops. The program was also intended to raise the Highlanders' standard of living through improving their agricultural techniques and settling them in new communities.¹¹

Also, although this was never stated explicitly, the program aimed at improving security in the highlands by establishing centers of controlled population in which many of the new inhabitants would be anticommunist northern refugees. Some of these settlers were lured to the highlands with promises of land and ideal agricultural conditions, and some (including more than one political undesirable) were forcibly relocated. Between 1957 and 1963, the Special General Commission for Land Development established 225 Land Development Centers in the highlands with a population of 52,182 Vietnamese families, a total of 274,945 persons. Some 112,443 hectares were brought under cultivation; of these 3000 were planted in kenaf and 26,750 in rubber.

The Highlander Resettlement Program was launched in 1958 as part of the general development of the highlands and also as a means of implementing the Diem government's policy of total assimilation of the ethnic minorities. Whole highland villages were to be resettled and grouped together in valleys and other areas where their inhabitants would have ready contact with Vietnamese. This, it was thought, would end the isolation of their previous existence in the hills and would prompt them to follow Vietnamese ways. President Diem was particularly

¹¹ Republic of Vietnam, Commissariat General for Land Development, *The Work of Land Development in Vietnam up to June 30, 1959*, Saigon 1959, pp. 3-7.

eager to have them abandon the traditional swidden agriculture in favor of permanent field cultivation.

As planned under the Resettlement Program, there would be a total of eighty centers with 88,000 Highlanders (the government believed this number to represent 12 percent of the total highland population), who would be settled on 30,000 hectares of land. By February 1959, there were thirty-three centers with a reported population of 38,000, and encompassing 13,000 hectares. Highlanders were forced to move to these centers and, according to some of the Highlanders who were close to the program, there were many complaints of poor administration and lack of material assistance. In the An My Center in Pleiku Province and the "reservation" at Son Ha, Quang Ngai Province, residents received little more than a third of a hectare per family (as compared to the Vietnamese settlers in the Land Development Centers, who received one hectare per family). By 1960, the program had begun to flounder. A new reservation near Cheo Reo (Hau Bon) was reported to have been opened, but upon investigation it was found to be only in the planning stage. The same was true of the reservation at Nam Dong, in Thua Thien Province. In Quang Ngai Province the program was given up because of "lack of good land," and in Quang Nam Province officials admitted it to be a failure. By 1961, the Resettlement Program was ended, and as far as can be determined, none of the reservations has survived.

After the coup d'etat that toppled the Diem government on November 1, 1963, the new government discontinued the program so closely associated with President Diem. The Special General Commission for Land Development was abolished, the centers came under the administrative mantle of the province in which they were located, and the Agricultural Extension Directorate of the Ministry of Rural Affairs assumed responsibility for technical programs within the centers. As the previous rules against leaving the centers disappeared, their population began to diminish, with a concomitant decline in cultivation.

The political goals of these programs were never realized; the Land Development Centers did not provide the intended security, and the program helped stir up dissidence among the Highlanders. }

An ad hoc Committee on Land Development Centers reported in April 1965 that an estimated 7047 families, comprising more than 35,000 people, had abandoned the centers, and between 3000 and 4000 families had moved from one center to another. According to the report, security in the centers had crumbled since 1963, and 25 to 30 percent of the radios that had been presented to the centers to keep them in contact with province and district headquarters were no longer working. The lack of available young men made it difficult to provide a local defense force. Because of steadily increasing pressure from the Viet Cong, twenty-two of the 225 centers had been completely abandoned for lack of security. Crop yields were greatly diminished. At the end of 1963, rice cultivation accounted for 54,500 hectares, and secondary crop cultivation was 22,000 hectares. By the end of 1964, these figures had fallen to 43,000 and 20,000 hectares, respectively, and in 1965 it was estimated that these figures had fallen around 40 percent by the end of the year. Industrial crop yields (mainly rubber and kenaf) also declined. Cultivated areas dropped from 26,749 hectares in 1963 to 15,882 in 1965, and of these, only 10,000 hectares were reported to be tended.

By August 1965 an estimated 20 percent of the Land Development Centers in the highlands were completely under government control. At this same period the Province Chief of Darlac pointed out that most of the Vietnamese refugees in that province were Northern Vietnamese who had fled from their land development centers. For several years, he added, the centers occupied by Vietnamese from the central coastal plain had been controlled by, and served as centers of operation for, the Viet Cong, who, since they also were from central Vietnam, enjoyed the cooperation of the local people.

The Diem regime's policy of forced assimilation of the Highlanders plus the government's disregard of Highlanders' land claims generated a great deal of resentment among the Highlanders, and early in 1958 a group of leaders formed the Bajaraka movement, a designation that combines the key letters in Bahnar, Jarai, Rhade, and Koho, the ethnic groups from which they came. Later the same year they called for a general strike in Ban Me Thuot, and a five-hour demonstration

resulted. Seven of the leaders were arrested, among them Paul Nur, later to be the Minister for Ethnic Minorities' Development. The movement was dispersed but it was not dead, and in September 1964 new dissidence burst forth in the FULRO movement, which organized a revolt in five Special Forces camps. The revolt was resolved but government leaders saw the necessity of coping with the Highlanders' wants and desires. Younger, more militant members of FULRO instigated another revolt in December 1965, and while the government successfully negotiated an end to its opposition with some of the FULRO leaders in December 1968, the militant wing has continued in dissidence.

RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

The numerous resettlement programs that were part of the U.S. and Vietnamese military strategy in the highlands usually contained some schemes for improving the villagers' way of life, but none of these could be considered economic development programs. In March 1969 a comprehensive postwar plan, which included a section on economic development of the highlands, was forthcoming as a result of research carried on by a Vietnamese-American group,¹² and it reiterated some of the elements of the past schemes. The summary of the report opens on a familiar note: "One of the principal objectives for a special development program for this region is concerned with the people who make up a large proportion of its inhabitants. Much of the region consists of difficult topography and poor accessibility, and many of its people, of racial origins different from those of the majority of the nation, are still subsistence farmers living outside the cash economy. The objective is to offer them equal opportunities for social and economic advancement as are offered to other Vietnamese."¹³

¹²Joint Development Group, *The Postwar Development of the Republic of Vietnam: Policies and Programs*, Postwar Planning Group, Development and Resources Corporation, Saigon and New York, March 1969, Vol. II, pp. 465-490, Summary, pp. 61-66.

¹³*Ibid.*, Summary, p. 61.

Noting that information on mineral deposits is lacking, the report states that economic development of the highlands "must rely substantially on the exploitation of its resources in soil, water, and timber, and on such development of industry as these resources may support."

Some specific possible projects are discussed; for example, over 21,000 hectares in the Upper Se San basin and some 80,000 hectares in the Upper Sre Pok are two areas where agriculture could be developed through extensive irrigation projects. If this were done these areas could support an estimated 35,000 to 40,000 families. Although it focuses on agricultural development, this report also touches upon the potential for beef cattle industry and forestry as valuable sources of revenue.

Like the past economic development schemes, this report recommends resettlement of ethnic Vietnamese from the crowded lowland areas into the highlands to provide labor and skills needed to implement the development projects. It does, however, advise caution in this resettlement because of past failures, which it attributes to "an impulse to procure resettlement at all costs, regardless of the feelings of the settlers or of those among whom they were to be settled."¹⁴ The report also recommends the formation of a Central Highlands Development Board to manage the many aspects of the whole scheme. It would coordinate planning and organize such things as resettlement and water control projects. It would also function as trustee for areas of unoccupied lands, and it would safeguard the land interests of the Highlanders.

In 1970 the Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture and Fishery Development¹⁵ issued a report outlining a five-year economic development plan covering agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and animal husbandry. The report does not focus on any particular region of Vietnam, and it deals with economic development in a very general way. Much of it is devoted to a review of production patterns since 1960 and discussion of potential increases between 1971 and 1975 by means of very

¹⁴ Joint Development Group, *The Postwar Development of the Republic of Vietnam: Policies and Programs*, p. 64.

¹⁵ Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture and Fishery Development, *Five-Year Rural Economic Development Plan (Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, and Animal Husbandry)*, 1971-1975, Saigon, 1970.

basic techniques. In agriculture, for example, the report points to the need to develop infrastructure, i.e., roads, waterways, bridges, irrigation facilities, warehouses, and so forth, as well as providing widespread education for farmers in improved agricultural methods, and improved systems of inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, seeds, and equipment. Also more agricultural credit must be provided.

A beef cattle development project for the highlands was proposed in a report dated April 1971¹⁶ and prepared by the Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture and Fishery Development, the Agricultural Development Bank of Vietnam, USAID, CORDS, and a group of USAID consultants working under a University of Minnesota contract. The aims of the program as stated in the first report are reflected in the following excerpts:

1. The Government of Vietnam is requesting a loan on soft terms to help finance part of the first stage of a new long term beef cattle development program. The principal objective is to increase beef production, with emphasis on participation by traditional livestock owners from both Montagnard and Vietnamese ethnic groups. Because there is little experience in Vietnam of public financing of this type of development and uncertainty regarding responses from livestock owners, a pilot approach would be used at this stage, confined to specific regions selected by Government on the basis of development potential and social feasibility. The form of development for the selected regions is proposed as a ranching development scheme, involving the issuance of titles to long-term leaseholds of suitable grazing land to participating ranching enterprises, rather than a credit type program applied to the whole sub-sector. The loan would be used partly for investments in ranch development, including working capital and supporting technical services.

¹⁶ Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture and Fishery Development, *Beef Cattle Development*, pp. 1-3.

- ii. Under the Project, the four types of ranching enterprises to be established are: (a) 180 ranches made up of groups of Montagnard and Vietnamese cattle owners (Group Ranches); (b) 90 individually owned ranches (investors, cattle dealers and producers) (Individual Ranches); (c) 30 company ranches to be formed by private investors (Company Ranches); and (d) 5 ranches established by a partly Government owned Cattle Development Company (CDC Ranches).
- iii. The Project would also assist in the transition of traditional Montagnard livestock owners and low level Vietnamese village farmers from a subsistence to a market oriented economy. It is expected that between 4,000-6,000 individuals and their families would benefit from equitable land distribution under the Project, as well as substantial increases to their incomes.

Appendix B

TRADITIONAL TRADE AND RECENT ECONOMIC INNOVATION
AMONG THE HIGHLANDERS

Local trading among individuals, groups, and sometimes villages, is a common pattern among the Highlanders, and more than likely it is something that has gone on for centuries. Historical sources indicate that in the past some Highlanders conducted varying kinds of trading with the lowland people, and some of this trading has continued.

HISTORICAL HIGHLAND-LOWLAND TRADE PATTERNS

In speculating about the relocations between the Cham and the Highlanders, Maitre¹⁷ concludes that some of the highland groups were more than likely vassals of the Cham rulers. There would also appear to have been trade relations between some of the Highlanders and the Cham. Such relations, he feels, are strongly reflected in the Chinese annals that describe the contacts between the Chinese emperors and their Cham vassals. Between the fourth and eleventh centuries, Cham envoys periodically brought tributes to the Chinese court; among these were commodities that Maitre points out could have come only from the highlands. These included both domestic elephants and elephants for use in war, ivory, rhinoceros tusks, precious woods, cardamom, wax, and gold.

As the Vietnamese expanded southward along the coastal plain, they, like the Cham before them, engaged in commercial trading with the Highlanders. As the Vietnamese acquired new territory from the Cham they organized *đồn điền*, or military farming communities, composed of a garrison and dependents. Each family received a plot of land for paddy farming and a kitchen garden. After the area had been brought under control, colonists were brought in and *dinh điền*, or farm settlements, were established. The government gave them titles to their holdings after the new settlers had constructed houses and cleared and farmed

¹⁷ H. Maitre, *Les Jungles Moï*, Larose, Paris, 1912, pp. 434-435.

land. As Vietnamese moved into the valleys they took land that had been farmed by the Highlanders, who were forced to higher elevations.¹⁸

[In the area south of the present-day city of Danang to what is now northern Binh Dinh Province, the Vietnamese encountered considerable resistance from the highland groups -- the Katu, Cua, Kayong, Hre, Bahnar, and Hroy -- who persisted in raiding Vietnamese settlements, forcing many of them to be abandoned. Around 1540 the Vietnamese government organized the first of a series of "pacification" programs aimed at bringing these groups under control and regulating trade with the Highlanders. In effect, this put commerce with the Highlanders in the hands of the royal court and the mandarins. The Giảo Dích, or head of the highland area when the first program was instituted, was responsible for collecting tribute from the highland groups that came under control of the throne.]

The Giảo Dích system lasted two hundred years, and it was extended to newly acquired highland areas as the Vietnamese continued to expand southward. In the early period the most prized items were ivory, rhinoceros tusks, sandalwood, and gold. In the vicinity of Nhatrang and Phan Rang, the major product traded was eaglewood.¹⁹ This wood was sought in the forest by organized bands of Roglai who then sold it to local mandarins.²⁰ At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Emperor Gia Long organized the Tran Man or "Savage Province" in western Quang Ngai. The Tran Man incorporated many of the features of the Giảo Dích with a special military-commercial administration and fixed tributes to be paid to the Court of Hue. This continued into the reign of Minh Mang, but whereas under Gia Long the cinnamon trade had been free, it now became a monopoly of the royal family. Kien An, brother of the ruler, was in

¹⁸E. M. Durand, "Les Moïs du Son-Phong," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive*, No. 1-2, Paris, 1900, p. 286.

Bernard Bourotte, "Essai d'histoire des populations montagnards du Sud-Indochina jusqu'à 1945," *Bulletin de la Société des Etudes Indochinoises*, Vol. 30, Saigon, 1955, pp. 42-43.

¹⁹This is called *bois d'aigle* by the French, and it can be translated as eaglewood or aloes-wood. The botanical name is *Aquilaria Agallocha*, and it is the heart of the tree that is valued for its fragrant odor.

²⁰A. Cabaton, *Nouvelles recherches sur les Chams*, Paris, Leroux, 1901, p. 52.

charge of the trade, and his agents passed their roles on to their descendants.²¹

In 1863, Emperor Tu Duc launched a new pacification scheme called the Son Phong.²² Initially it was military in character, but by 1887 the Son Phong also included a civil administration and markets for trade between the Highlanders and Vietnamese. As in the other programs, this trade was carefully controlled by the central government. According to Durand,²³ in addition to cinnamon and eaglewood, the Highlanders traded ivory, rhinoceros tusks, stag horns (used in Chinese medicine), hardwoods, tobacco, betel leaves, areca nuts, beeswax, rattan, cardamom, cotton, rice, maize, yams, ground nuts, and castor oil plants. The Son Phong lasted until 1905.

[Writing in 1886, Navelle²⁴ describes slavery in the vicinity of Kontum carried on by the Halang, Sedang, Jarai, and Bahnar. There were systematic raids on villages to obtain slaves who were transported to the Mekong River valley and sold to Lao traders. Each year hundreds of these slaves were sold to the Lao, and farther south other highland groups conducted a slave trade with the Cambodians.]

One of the famous missions organized by Pavie to secure French control over the left bank of the Mekong River was led by Capitaine Cupet into the southern highlands of Vietnam. This expedition departed from Kratie late in 1890, and in February 1891 it reached the town of Ban Don in what is now Darlac Province. Ban Don was an important center for the elephant trade, and Cupet found that this trade was a monopoly organized by Koun Iounop, son of a Lao father and "Penong" (probably "Mnong") mother. The Highlanders brought the elephants to Ban Don, and Koun Iounop sold them to the Khmer, Lao, and Thai.²⁵

²¹Maitre, *Les Jungles Moï*, p. 513.

²²Lê Triêu-Phu-Su, "Phu Man Tap Luc ou Notes Diverses sur la Pacification de la Région des Moï," *Revue Indochinoise*, 1904, No. 8, pp. 455-469, No. 9, pp. 641-648, No. 10, pp. 706-716, No. 11, pp. 789-796.

²³Durand, "Les Moïs du Son-Phong," pp. 307-317.

²⁴E. Navelle, "De Thinaï au Bia (Notes et Impressions)," *Excursions et Reconnaissances*, No. 29, 1886, pp. 139-211.

²⁵Capitaine Cupet, *Mission Pavie Indo-Chine, 1870-1895*, Vol. III, Paris, Leroux, 1900, pp. 295-296.

The present research has revealed that some of these old trade patterns persist. (Historically, as noted above, the Cua people in the Tra Bong area traded their high quality cinnamon with the Cham and the Vietnamese, and today it still continues to be their major cash crop. The Cua villagers gather cinnamon bark in the upland forests, and they also cultivate cinnamon trees, the produce of which they sell to Vietnamese dealers. It takes four or five years for a cinnamon tree to reach maturity, and the quality of the cinnamon cannot be predicted. The bark is carried to the district town of Tra Bong, where it is sold to Vietnamese merchants, and the mid-1965 price was VN\$120 per kilo. Since 1964, however, the intensification of the war and dislocation of the Cua from their traditional areas has brought about a diminishment in the cinnamon production.)

In the vicinity of the Song Ba River in Phu Thuc District, Phu Bon Province, the Jarai Mdhur traditionally have farmed paddy fields using plows pulled by buffalo, and in the midst of these fields there are patches set aside for growing sesame, a cash crop they have grown "for many generations." The ground is plowed, and planting takes place in May when the rains have begun. The plants require little care as they tend to crowd out the invading weeds. The harvest takes place in August, and they estimate that each plant normally produces about four Western-style teacupsful of seeds. The seeds are spread out to dry, and itinerant Vietnamese buyers come into the area to purchase most of the crop. The Jarai in this area also cultivate tobacco, planting it in December and harvesting it in March. It, too, is sold, and most of the buyers are Vietnamese.

The Chrau people in the vicinity of Xuan Loc, Long Khanh Province, have lived in proximity to the Vietnamese for a long time, and many of them farm paddy fields using the same techniques as the Vietnamese — transplantation, a plow pulled by water buffalo, and a Vietnamese harrow. For most of the Chrau farmers, rice is a cash crop, and they sell it to the Vietnamese as well as to other Chrau who work in the nearby rubber estates.

(Among the Halang in Kontum Province, panning for gold in the local rivers near villages like Dak Rode was a traditional full-time economic

activity for some people until 1965 when the events of war forced them to abandon the area.) One informant pointed out that the worth of the gold was measured in units resembling rice kernels. Five such kernels were worth one water buffalo, and the Lao used to bring buffalo into the area to trade for gold. On a particularly good day a villager might pan enough gold to make one kernel.

SOME EXAMPLES OF RECENT ECONOMIC INNOVATION: THE FRENCH PERIOD TO THE PRESENT

As pointed out previously, the first economic development schemes for the highlands were devised by the French, and by 1925 individuals and corporations were bidding for land on which they could establish plantations. Vietnamese were brought to the area to work as laborers, but Highlanders also participated. By 1930, the planters in Darlac Province employed 1200 laborers, of which 400 were Rhade.²⁶ Through their familiarity with French coffee planting methods, some of these workers and other Rhade in the Ban Me Thuot area began small plantations of their own. (This has led to the present situation of 326 registered Rhade coffee planters in Darlac Province with estates totaling 531 hectares, and a median holding of 1.0 hectare.)

The coffee estates represent a variety of types of investments for the Highlanders involved. With some it is a full-time effort, with others it is a supplementary source of income, and then there are those who have continued to expand their investments into other enterprises. Some cases reflecting this variety in investment can be presented.

Retired Civil Servant Planter

Y Sok Eban of Buon Krong-Prong was one of the first Rhade to enter the French civil service when he was appointed to the Darlac Province administration in 1921. Over a period of time he acquired land in his village and began planting coffee trees. In 1948 he had a road constructed from the village to National Route 21, and following

²⁶ A. Monfleur, *Monographie de la Province de Darlac*, Imprimerie d'Extrême Orient, Hanoi, 1931, p. 46.

his retirement he began to devote all of his time to the coffee estate. At the present time, Y Sok has 4000 trees, and he sells his coffee to Chinese dealers in Ban Me Thuot.

A Full-Time Coffee Planter

Along the road bordering the city airstrip in Ban Me Thuot there is a small coffee estate within the boundary of Buon Ko Sier. This estate is owned and operated by Y Ju Nie Kdam, a man about sixty years of age. Y Ju purchased the land in 1945 from Y Ut Nie Buon Rit, a well-known figure among the Rhade, who is reputed to have been the first formally educated Rhade and the first school teacher in the area. During the Diem regime, Y Ut was elected to the National Assembly, and in 1961 he was a member of a delegation en route to the village of Buon Blot when the Viet Cong ambushed them. Y Ut was killed, and a main street in Ban Me Thuot was named in his honor. The original deed to the parcel of land was for 5 hectares, but in 1965 a new title for 5 hectares 600 square meters was given to Y Ju by the government.

Y Ut had established a banana estate, and when Y Ju took over the property he cleared the land to farm upland dry rice, and in 1957 he shifted to coffee. He had worked on the Roussi coffee estate for twenty-two years, and it was there he learned the techniques involved in planting and caring for coffee trees. Subsequently, Y Ju worked as a nurse in the Provincial Hospital. After he had accumulated sufficient capital, Y Ju purchased *robusta* seedlings from the Roussi plantation, and in 1957 he established his own estate. He wisely planted banana trees and pineapples that would provide a steady income while the coffee trees grew. Y Ju continued to expand his estate, and by 1966 he had 5000 mature trees producing coffee berries all year round. Members of his family assist in the operation of the estate, and he hires four female workers, all refugees from Buon Yawan, a remote village that lacks security. Because he does not have the wherewithal to ship his produce directly to the Saigon market, Y Ju is forced to sell it to a local Chinese merchant at a lower price. In 1966 he noted that in Saigon he could have sold at VN\$90 per kilo, but in Ban Me Thuot he was only receiving VN\$70 per kilo.

Nonetheless, Y Ju clearly is prospering, and his masonry house with tiled roof attests to his prosperity. In 1966 he received a new title to his land, but whereas his 1945 deed had specified 5 hectares, this title was for only 3 hectares 600 meters. He would like to have additional land so as to expand his coffee estate.

A Coffee Estate and New Paddy Farming

In 1965, Y Yong Nie Ktuol cleared a half-hectare plot of land in Buon Drie Hling some five kilometers from Ban Me Thuot, just off National Route 21. He then planted 300 coffee trees, and to provide some cash income (he cultivated enough upland dry rice to feed his family) he also planted pineapples, jackfruit, and sourap. During 1968-1969, the mature trees produced 300 kilos of coffee berries, and in the 1969-1970 season this increased to 450 kilos. The produce was sold to a Vietnamese coffee planter from the vicinity, and with the first profits Y Yong constructed a two-story frame house and workshop near the highway.

Across the highway there is a tree nursery that is part of the Ea Kmat Agricultural Experimental Station. Most of the trees are a hardwood variety that the Vietnamese call *sao*, and which Y Yong identified by the botanical name of *hopea odorata*. Behind the thick green forest of *sao* trees there is a depression drained by a small stream called the Ea Kam, and in 1965 Y Yong and his family cleared an area of about one hectare on the slope to plant upland dry rice. He estimates that each year he has harvested around two metric tons of rice, which he keeps for family consumption (he and his wife have ten children).

The bottomland in the depression is kept marshy by seepage from an underground source, and in 1968 Y Yong decided to expand his area of cultivation and grow wet rice. Using their Rhade hoes, axes, and other farm tools, he and his family cleared a half hectare, and turning over the grass, banking soil for bundings, and digging channels, they arranged paddy fields on slightly varied levels so as to allow the water seeping into the highest field to drain into the lower levels. Y Yong obtained some "American" rice seed at the Ea Kmat Center, and he planted it in seedbeds, later transplanting the seedlings in the fields. He describes the first harvest as "good" and in 1969 he and his family

expanded the paddy fields by another half hectare. One of the Rhade who works in the Agricultural Service returned from a training course in the Philippines and brought some IR-5 and IR-8 rice seeds that he gave to Y Yong along with instructions on their use. Y Yong purchased a commercial fertilizer called Amophosko, which contains nitrogen, phosphorus, and ammonium. It is sold in bags of fifty kilos for VN\$1000 per bag, and Y Yong figured he would need some 200 kilos to fertilize his fields. The 1969 harvest was successful, and Y Yong estimates that he realized 6.8 metric tons of paddy for the one hectare area of cultivation. He expressed a preference for the IR-5 rice because it "grows better" and produces more kernels per plant.

Y Yong and his family have continued arranging additional paddy fields, and by the 1970 planting season they had almost two more hectares ready to plant. They intended to continue cultivating these new varieties, and Y Yong had obtained some of the IR-20 seeds, which he also intended to grow. He has been putting aside money to purchase a Kubota Rototiller to use on the paddy fields, and he also expressed a strong desire to obtain title to the land he is farming.

Coffee Estate and Rice Milling Enterprise

In Buon Ea Khit, a village some forty kilometers southeast of Ban Me Thuot, Y Ngung Knuol has a coffee estate four hectares in size and containing some 4000 trees. He, like most other Rhade planters, learned to cultivate coffee while working on the French-owned estates in the area. In a normal year Y Ngung's estate produces between one to two tons of processed coffee, which he sells to a Chinese merchant in Ban Me Thuot. Since 1965, when processed coffee was selling for VN\$40 per kilo, the prices have been increasing rapidly -- VN\$305 per kilo in 1968 and VN\$400 per kilo early in 1970. Y Ngung reports that in 1969 his trees produced four tons of coffee berries, which, when dried and husked, weighed two tons. Should he produce the same amount in 1970, at VN\$400 per kilo he will sell the crop for VN\$1,600,000. This income, Y Ngung figures, will enable him to begin purchasing chemical fertilizer, the use of which will increase production. At the early 1970 price of VN\$18,000 per ton and using one ton per hectare, his four-hectare area would cost VN\$72,000 to fertilize.

Y Ngung pointed out that for several years there has been an increasing number of his fellow villagers embarking on new enterprises; for example, some have been buying tractors and Rototillers to increase their crop output, while others have been purchasing tri-wheel Lambrettas to go into the transport business. Y Ngung decided that he would start an enterprise that he hoped would "help his people," so in December of 1969 he opened a rice mill. He constructed a building of wood plank walls and a tin roof, and then he purchased milling equipment from a Chinese dealer in Ban Me Thuot. This included a twelve-horsepower Yanmar motor of Japanese manufacture and a heavy wood mill made in Scotland. Both were set on large concrete blocks. There is also a sizable metal scale used to weigh the rice brought to be milled. Y Ngung paid cash for his investment, and he figures that the building and equipment cost VN\$220,000.

One of Y Ngung's nieces, a girl of about seventeen, left school to operate the mill, and she has obviously become adept at running the machines as well as maintaining them. Most of the customers are women, and they carry their rice in back baskets or gunny sacks, which they place on the scale. Y Ngung's niece accepts their figures on the weight of the rice and does not record it. As a customer's turn comes, she pours rice into a small basket and passes it to the girl who empties it into the hopper. The rice descends through rudimentary sifters and polishes that separate rice bran and husks from the kernels. The rice kernels, mixed with a lot of husks, are collected from a chute in the front of the mill, while the bran pours out a chute on the side and is collected in gunny sacks. If the customer wants to retain the bran, a charge of VN\$2 per kilo is made for the milling, but if she lets the miller retain the bran, the service is performed free of charge. Y Ngung sells the bran as pig food for VN\$10 per kilo, and most of the buyers are Vietnamese from the neighboring settlement of Kim Chau.

The motor is run on gasoline, which early in 1970 cost VN\$12.8 per liter, and both Y Ngung and his niece estimate that they use about four liters on a normal day and as much as ten liters during a particularly busy day. The niece calculates that there are usually between twenty and thirty customers a day, and the medium-sized back basket in which the rice most commonly is carried holds around ten to twelve kilos.

Most customers let the miller retain the bran, so she estimates that between VN\$100 and VN\$200 is received each day. Y Ngung plans to purchase a new mill because the one in use only half polishes the rice kernels. He will retain the old machine simply for husking, and increase both the size and efficiency of his mill.

During the past decade there have also been numerous kinds of innovation taking place in the Highlanders' traditional ways of farming. In many cases these changes are due to the influence of Vietnamese settlers who have brought more sophisticated methods to some areas. Highlanders, seeing the more abundant harvests of the Vietnamese, adopt some of their methods. They also often borrow Vietnamese artifacts; for example, in Buon Ki, close to Ban Me Thuot, a number of Rhade villagers have begun constructing combination chicken coops and pigsties, which they saw in neighboring Vietnamese farmsteads. Constructed of wood and thatch, the pigsty is on the bottom with a base of logs under a layer of soft mud, while the chicken coop, with woven bamboo strips on the side, is above.

There are cases where the innovation involves increased crop output using the swidden-shifting method while others entail a change from swidden-shifting to wet-rice agriculture. There are also some examples of new cash cropping or expanded cash cropping in rice farming and gardening.

INNOVATION IN SWIDDEN CULTIVATION

Mr. Katouilly-Plowatt, a Rhade who has worked for a long time in the Darlac Province Agricultural Service, devised a scheme for extending the cultivation period of any given swidden. Rather than planting in the entire swidden for several years and leaving it fallow, the area would be divided into sections that would be planted in crops, fertilized, and finally cover crops would be planted in a rotating system whereby the swidden could be farmed continuously and productively. For example, to take a hypothetical swidden divided into three sections, A, B, and C, the utilization sequence over a period of five years would be as follows:

Year	Swidden A	Swidden B	Swidden C
1st	Cultivate with no fertilizer		
2d	Cultivate using fertilizer be it organic or chemical	Cultivate with no fertilizer	
3d	Cultivate cover plants such as: A. Cajanus, indicus, or pois de angole B. Millet C. Squash D. Potiron (gourds) E. Liana vines	Cultivate rice using fertilizer be it organic or chemical	Cultivate with no fertilizer
4th	Cultivate with no fertilizer	Cultivate cover plants as in Section A during 3d year	Cultivate using fertilizer
5th	Cultivate using fertilizer	Cultivate using no fertilizer	Cultivate cover plants

FARMING NEW SPECIES OF RICE BY THE SWIDDEN-SHIFTING METHOD

In Buon Kram, some fifteen kilometers southeast of Ban Me Thuot, Y Bham Nie, an innovative villager and local leader, began to cultivate several new varieties of upland dry rice in 1966. One variety he had seen in 1942 when visiting the Mnong Rlam village of Buon Dong-Bac in Lac Thien District. It was a type of rice that matures in four months, and locally it was known as "Bih rice" because it was grown by the Bih, a subgroup of the Rhade. In 1966, Y Bham saw this same rice being grown in the Ea Kmat Agricultural Experimentation Center near Ban Me Thuot. It was called "Lac Thien" because it came from Lac Thien District, and it was found to be hardy and well suited to the Ban Me Thuot area. Another variety being grown at the Center was a black kernel upland dry rice known only as "American rice," although it was not one of the new "miracle rice" types. It matures in three months and fifteen days for consumption, and seed rice is produced in four months.

In 1966, Y Bham planted a small amount of both species and they thrived. In the 1967 planting season he expanded cultivation of both types, and at the encouragement of Michael Benge of USAID, Y Bham compared the productivity of the new varieties with one of the traditional

local species. At harvest time they staked out plots ten by fifteen meters, and they found that the traditional type produced around 3-1/2 tons per hectare while the new species produced approximately 4-1/2 tons.

CHANGE FROM SWIDDEN-SHIFTING TO WET-RICE CULTIVATION

Traditionally, the Sedang in Kontum Province have been swidden farmers, but in the vicinity of Kon Horing they have been adopting paddy cultivation. According to informants, this is due to the influx of Vietnamese since 1957. These new settlers began to arrange paddy fields on available well-watered bottomland and on slopes where there were springs, and the Sedang were impressed with their abundant harvests so they began to try the same techniques. As the first attempts succeeded, an increasing number of Sedang began to farm paddy fields along with their swiddens. They arranged terraces on slopes where springs fed water into the top level, and through a system of channels and bundings water was released into the lower fields. Dikes, channels, and bundings controlled water levels in the bottomland paddies. With the intensification of the war since 1964, the Sedang around Kon Horing, due to military operations and Viet Cong incursions, found themselves increasingly restricted as to where they could practice swidden agriculture, so they turned to paddy farming in the more secure areas.

INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION: A VILLAGE EFFORT

Buon Jat is a small village located in Phuoc An District, Darlac Province, near National Route 21, some forty-five kilometers east of Ban Me Thuot. Until July 1969 the village was located on low ground several kilometers east of Provincial Route 425, but due to periodic flooding the villagers decided to relocate to higher ground. The new location also provided better security, and they constructed bunkers and a fortified perimeter around the settlement. All adult males were organized into a People's Self Defense Force, and on the day the village was visited they successfully withstood a Viet Cong assault on the perimeter.

To the east of Buon Jat is an extensive swamp known as the Chur Su in Rhade, and closer to the village is a smaller marshy area where,

"from the time of the ancestors," as the villagers say, they have farmed paddy fields. This area is fed by the Ea Kwang, a small stream, and they control the water levels through a system of channels and bundings. The traditional method of planting is to soak the rice seeds in water for a day, and then wrap them in wet banana leaves and place them in a basket for two days, during which time they germinate. Seedbeds are prepared by breaking the ground and hoeing it to a fine texture; then, after the soil is moistened and water released into the bed, the seeds are broadcast. Soil in the larger fields is simply turned over by workers using hoes. If a farmer lacks labor or time he may broadcast his rice seeds without transplanting, but most farmers first plant in the seedbeds and after twenty-one days transplant the seedlings in the larger fields. *Guor lao* is the most commonly cultivated rice in the Buon Jat area, and it requires three and a half months to mature. Of the four other species planted, three of them are four-month varieties and one takes three and a half months to mature.

During the 1969 dry season, the people of Buon Jat began to implement a plan to enlarge their paddy fields and irrigate the area more effectively. This actually was part of a larger plan worked out by some of the local Rhade leaders, particularly Y Dhe Adrong, one of the FULRO activists, who owns a coffee estate not far from Buon Jat. The plan's objective is to bring the whole Chur Su swamp under paddy cultivation, and the first phase is focused on the smaller marshy area. With the 1:25,000 topographic maps of the area and research on the ground, they devised a scheme to dig a canal from the Ea Kwang stream into the area. A series of channels and dikes would permit the necessary water control. The USAID office in Ban Me Thuot provided a ditch-digging machine, but it proved too heavy for the soft, swampy ground so they decided to dig the canal by hand. The villagers of Buon Jat agreed that each adult would be responsible for digging six square meters. By the end of 1969 the canal, which is about one meter in width, was completed, and it carries water from the Ea Kwang, through dense bamboo thickets to the area where the villagers were clearing new fields. A provisory dam to control the flow of water is located where the canal connects with the Ea Kwang, and the villagers were seeking some cement to construct a more permanent dam.

INCREASING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION: A FAMILY EFFORT

In the village of Buon Ea Khit, where, as noted previously, Y Ngung Knuol began his rice milling operation, there are other interesting cases of economic innovation. One of these, launched by an elderly villager with the help of his family, is an operation to increase agricultural production. About two kilometers from the village there is a grassy swamp area that slopes gently from high ground at the base of two hills to relatively level bottomland, drained by a small stream. The swampy condition is caused by ground seepage that ceases after the rains begin. Part of this area is claimed by Y Bok Buon Dap, a man of about seventy years of age. His wife's family for several generations has farmed wet rice in terraced fields on the property, and they relied on the rains for sufficient water. They were Bih, a subgroup of the Rhade, and the Bih cultivate paddies in level areas that are also well watered.

Y Bok has no idea of the size of his fields, but they would appear to be around two hectares. In 1967 he decided to double the size of the farming area by arranging new terraced fields; he also devised a scheme for irrigating the fields by tapping the stream behind the hills. With the help of his kinsmen he cut additional terraces on the slope, with a one-foot drop from each descending terrace. They then dug a narrow canal through the draw between the hills and constructed a dam in the stream to divert water into the canal. The canal was extended down the slope on one side of the terraces, and from it two feeder channels, one at the top of the highest terraces and one farther down, carry water to the fields. Breaches in the bundings around each field release water to the levels below.

By the 1969 planting season, the irrigation system was working and they could successfully control the flow and level of the water. Most of the rice they planted was *guor lao* (Y Bok explained that it was called "lao" because it is said to have originally come from Laos), the preferred variety at Buon Jat. The planting method is similar to that at Buon Jat: seeds are soaked, planted in seedbeds, and when the seedlings reach a height of around thirty centimeters they are transplanted. The traditional hoea were used to prepare the fields, but in 1969 Y Bok

purchased a Kabota eight-horsepower tractor and Rototiller from Y Chuat Buon Krong, a fellow villager. Y Chuat is considered particularly adept with machinery (he constructed a water-powered electrical generator), and in addition to being a Christian and Mission Alliance preacher, he owns a small coffee estate. Y Bok noted also that Y Chuat was once arrested by the French for fabricating rifles without the proper approval. Y Bok paid VN\$140,000 for the equipment, raising most of the money by selling his cattle and some rice. The machines were necessary, he explained, because at his age he lacked the "ai" (a kind of life force) to do the arduous work in the fields. Although, during its first plowing the tractor got stuck in the mud (and had to be extricated by one of the village elephants), it proved an efficient innovation. Still, the women, using their bamboo rakes, broke up the large chunks of earth.

Another innovation was the cultivation of IR-8 rice. Y Bok obtained around 795 grams of this new rice from a Truong Son cadreman, and he planted it on a plot that was estimated to be about 7/10 of a hectare. Following the 1969 harvest, Y Bok reported that he realized a total of 300 kerosene cans of the new rice. Each can holds 12 kilos, so this amounts to 0.9 metric ton. He sold 100 cans of unhusked rice at VN\$350 per can to Vietnamese buyers from Kim Chau village. Part of this income was expended in servicing and repairing some parts of the tractor (Y Chuat does both), and part went for the purchase of oil and gasoline.

After Y Bok finished plowing his own fields he rented the tractor and Rototiller to other villagers for between VN\$6,000 and VN\$7,000 for an area of around one hectare. The rate varied, depending on whether the client was a kinsman, a friend, or just an acquaintance.

By the beginning of the 1970 planting season, twelve additional household groups had begun clearing more of the swamp area to arrange terraces on the slope and fields of the bottomland. One of the villagers had purchased a new twelve-horsepower Rototiller to use on the new fields. Y Bok did not expand his fields further, but in addition to planting the *guor lao* rice, he increased the cultivation of IR-8, which he and his family found "a bit hard, but good to eat," and they also found it excellent for making jar wine. His newest innovation was the

use of chemical fertilizer, which he put on some of the seedbeds, and he noted that they were much greener than the other seedbeds.

In spite of all these innovations, Y Bok continues to farm his traditional swiddens. Located on the slopes of the hills away from the terraced area, there are alternating rows of upland dry rice and maize, and in scattered patches some fruits and vegetables are being grown.

Early in 1970 Y Bok was rewarded for his efforts by being invited to Saigon to receive a medal from the Ministry of Agriculture. He was also taken to Can Tho where he was astonished to see extensive paddy fields and the large farm machinery being used.

CASH CROPPING: KITCHEN GARDENING BECOMING TRUCK GARDENING

Throughout the highlands it has long been a practice for the villagers living near market centers to sell some of the produce from their gardens and fields or things they have gathered in the forest. Normally the markets themselves are dominated by Vietnamese, and the Highlanders, usually women, walk in from the surrounding areas with their back baskets filled with papayas, bananas, perhaps some betel leaves and areca nut, or a bundle of firewood. For the most part, these trips to the market are periodic for the purpose of selling the produce in order to purchase some manufactured item with the cash, although they were not produced with an intent to market them.

This was the situation in the vicinity of Cheo Reo (Hau Bon), capital of Phu Bon Province, but since 1960 the pattern has been changing. Villagers have begun to grow crops destined for the market. Keor Wol, a Jarai leader who lives in Buon Ma Djong, just on the edge of Cheo Reo, pointed out that since 1962, when Phu Bon became a province, there has been an influx of Vietnamese civil servants and military personnel, many of whom brought their families. The Jarai saw some of the Vietnamese planting gardens containing cabbage, tomatoes, onions, and chili peppers, which they sold at the Cheo Reo market for high prices. Some of the Jarai began to grow some of these vegetables, preferred by the Vietnamese, to sell in the market. By 1970, a number of kitchen gardens in the villages of Buon Ma Djong, Buon Broai, Buon Blanh, Buon Ama Kenik, Plei Pa, Buon Biah, Buon Tul, Buon Ring, and Buon Haoai

were transformed into truck gardens, producing for the Cheo Reo market. The women now make daily trips to the market, and in the morning better than half the open vending area is composed of Jarai villagers. Their produce includes maize, eggplant, tomatoes, cabbage, chili peppers, jackfruit, lettuce, soursop, papayas, mangoes, bananas, pineapples, oranges, coconuts, several kinds of onions, pumpkins, melons, bamboo shoots, manioc leaves, several varieties of watercress, a type of long green bean called a "mountain bean," and limes. Tobacco, banana leaves, and dried vines used as cord are also sold. Generally it is considered unusual for Highlanders to sell livestock in the markets, but at Cheo Reo the Jarai vend chickens, ducks, pigs, and sometimes cattle. Some of the women even sell small live river fish in polyethylene bags.

The Vietnamese complain that the Jarai women are too inflexible with their prices, but the trading nonetheless appears to be very brisk. All female members of the household assist in caring for the gardens, which are located in the vicinity of the swiddens. The income is put to a variety of uses; clothing and household necessities are purchased, and cash is saved to buy wine jars and gongs, both of which are prestige items. Keor Wol expended some of his family's profits improving his longhouse with a new tin roof and plank wood walls.

IMPROVED PADDY CULTIVATION AND TRUCK GARDENING: AN INDIVIDUAL EFFORT

The Valley of Dran in Tuyen Duc Province is the traditional area of the Chru, an ethnic group whose legends link them with the Cham. The Chru, like the Cham of old, are wet-rice farmers, and they have a relatively sophisticated irrigation system resembling that which historians describe the Cham as having in the past. Chru paddy fields are in the low, level bottomland in the valley and on terraces arranged on the gentle slopes. Rain provides some of the necessary water, and the Chru also have an elaborate irrigation system that taps water from the tributaries that feed the Dan Him River. Dikes, canals, and feeder channels control the flow of water. Every Chru village designates a "Water Chief," who, each year before the planting begins, organizes the residents into work groups that clear the water courses and repair

the dikes and bundings affecting their fields. Should inter-village cooperation be necessary, it is the Water Chiefs who meet and coordinate their activities.

Between June and December the Chru produce three types of wet rice. The traditional method was to plow the fields using a water buffalo, after which the seeds were broadcast. In the late 1950s Vietnamese settlers began moving into the Valley of Dran, and many of the Chru eventually began adopting some of their planting techniques. In 1962, Touneh Ton, who at the time was Deputy Chief of Canton, tried, with success, the Vietnamese system of transplanting and using a chemical fertilizer in the paddy fields. Other farmers in the vicinity of Diom village were impressed with the results, and the first to adopt the new methods was Touprong Hiu, brother of Colonel Touprong Ya Ba, Chief of Pleiku Province.

Hiu enjoys the reputation of being a very resourceful farmer and he has been responsible for numerous innovations in the valley. He had been a civil servant during the French administration, and over the years he has expanded not only his landholdings but also his cash crops. Many other Chru farmers eventually followed suit. At the present time, cash crops cultivated by Hiu and others include rice, tobacco, lettuce, escarole, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, squash, beets, cauliflower, carrots, celery, cucumbers, chili peppers, green beans, butter beans, white beans, bean sprouts, radishes, tomatoes, eggplant, watermelons, pumpkins, ginger, lemongrass, and some artichokes. Three kinds of maize with black, red, and white kernels are also grown and sold. Hiu also vend some of his oranges, jackfruit, mangosteens, pineapples, mangoes, sugarcane, grapefruit, limes, and coconuts. Recently, he has begun to cultivate avocados and relatively extensive patches of purple sweet onions. One of his largest cash crops is garlic -- a hectare is devoted to this crop, which he estimates amounts to around two metric tons annually.

Hiu's most striking innovation in cash cropping was to join with some Vietnamese farmers in 1966 to purchase seed potatoes, which they imported from Holland. Hiu's share was three metric tons, and he hired a truck to transport the potatoes from Saigon to Dran. He bought a

small building abandoned by the Agricultural Service, and it provides a good place for storing the potatoes (they can be kept in storage for four to five months), garlic, and other produce. Hiu points out that with irrigation he can cultivate vegetables and fruits throughout the year, and he purchased five gasoline-powered pumps for this purpose. He and other Chru farmers have a plan for a large-scale irrigation system that will benefit all of the Dran valley residents by tapping water from the Dan Him dam lake, and they requested VN\$60,000 in 1966 from the district authorities to finance construction of the first phase. Hiu also has vigorous ideas on marketing. He rents trucks to transport his produce to Nhatrang, Phan Rang, and Saigon where he has made direct contact with wholesalers, and he managed to obtain a contract to sell vegetables to the Truong Son Training Center when it was operating in Pleiku. He transported his produce to the Dalat airport where American aircraft flew it to Pleiku.

SOME HIGHLAND BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

During the past decade there has been an increase in the number of Highlanders involved in nonfarming enterprises, and most of them are engaged in petty commerce, usually operating village shops. These shops resemble those of the Vietnamese; they are small, built of materials available locally, and the stock includes a limited variety of manufactured goods likely to be demanded by villagers, items such as laundry and face soap, toothpaste, rubber sandals, hair pins, matches, cigarettes, cut tobacco, beer, rum, anis liquor, rice alcohol, soft drinks, cookies, candy, soy sauce, fish sauce, dried fish, canned fish, sugar, kerosene, and some school supplies (plastic pens, pencils, chalk, and paper). Some also sell locally grown produce such as chili peppers, cucumbers, pineapples, bananas, and sugarcane.

Another new economic activity for some Highlanders is the transport business, although it has attracted relatively few people because it normally involves ownership of a vehicle, and the initial investment is too costly. Some share this investment with kin or friends, others save money or sell livestock to realize the necessary capital. Methods of shopkeeping and the transport business vary considerably, and some can be reviewed briefly.

SHOPKEEPING: VARIED EXAMPLES

The Highlanders who undertake shopkeeping appear, for the most part, to be individuals who, for whatever reason, have been removed from the traditional village expectation that everyone be engaged in farming. In Buon Kosier, close to Ban Me Thuot, several shops have been established by Rhade in the past five years. One was started by a former CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group -- a Special Forces Program) non-commissioned officer who had saved money, and preferring not to return to farming, he opened a shop. Another shop was begun by a Hamlet Chief from Buon H'drah, who had been captured by the Viet Cong and held for two months before he escaped. He was afraid to return to his village so he came to Buon Kosier, where he has relatives, and went into shopkeeping. The first Chru in the Valley of Dran, Tuyen Duc Province, to open a shop was a son of the Diom Village Chief. In 1966 he quit secondary school and constructed a shop of wood and thatch to sell goods he purchases from a Vietnamese dealer in Duong Don district town.

Luoi is a Halang from the village of Polei Khok Hnar, now resettled in the Polei Krong area west of Kontum city, and his family was considered very well-to-do. In 1969 he sold a good wine jar for VN\$50,000 and his Japanese motorcycle for VN\$35,000, and combining these sums with savings he constructed a masonry house with an aluminum roof for VN\$300,000. In this new house he opened the first shop in the area run by a Highlander, and he estimates that he realizes a profit of around VN\$10,000 per month. He has swiddens back in the nearby hills but he is afraid to farm them because of the Viet Cong in the vicinity, so he has an agreement with a Lao friend to rent some of his bottomland fields to farm permanent rice fields and sugarcane and bananas as cash crops.

In the vicinity of Cheo Reo, Phu Bon Province, some of the village shops are run by primary school instructors who normally live in the rear of the shop. IVS volunteer Tracy Atwood reports an interesting case of shopkeeping in Bon Ju Ama Huet village, Thuan Man District, Phu Bon Province.²⁷ The owner of the shop is Kpa Pham, a young man who had

²⁷ T. Atwood, *Pham's Store*, International Voluntary Service Special Report, Saigon, May 1970.

worked for the U.S. Special Forces and USAID until January 1970 when he returned to his village and went into business. He used his accumulated savings to defray the VN\$48,000 cost of bamboo, beer-can sheeting, transportation, and labor involved in building the shop, as well as the VN\$18,000 for initial stock bought from a Chinese merchant in Cheo Reo. Many of the items noted above were included in his stock, and he wisely obtained an ice chest, which he keeps filled with ice at a cost of VN\$150 per day. This, however, enables him to charge a higher price for cold beer (purchased for VN\$60 a bottle and sold for VN\$90 and soft drinks (orange is bought for VN\$17 a bottle and sold for VN\$35). Within a month most of the stock was sold for VN\$33,000.

Pham occasionally sells chili peppers, cucumbers, and watermelons obtained from Vietnamese farmers, and he barter from time to time; for example, one village brought him a back basket of unhusked corn, which Pham traded for two bottles of rum. Pham has been looking for a source of credit so he can increase his inventory with one large purchase of items, thus decreasing the number of trips now needed to purchase goods in Cheo Reo (VN\$750 for transportation twice a month). Also, Pham faces a problem common to many other Highlander shopkeepers: he has VN\$13,000 in unpaid bills for purchases by kinsmen and fellow villagers. Since among the Highlanders it is more important to maintain good social relationships than it is to make money, Pham cannot force payment of these bills, and it is unlikely that they will ever be paid.

Multiple Enterprises: A Jarai Refugee Village Chief

Kaor Ngeng was chief in Buon Kri village in Thuan Man District, Phu Bon Province, and in August 1965 insecure conditions forced him and his fellow villagers to relocate in Buon Hosi village near Cheo Reo. Even before this move, however, Ngeng had gone to the Buon Beng Special Forces camp near Cheo Reo, where he received medical training for which he was given a certificate qualifying him to practice very basic medicine such as giving inoculations. After the relocation Ngeng opened a small shop in his house to supplement his income, and he also began to perform a middleman function guiding buyers of buffalo who came from Ban Me Thuot to prospective sellers in the Cheo Reo area, and for each buffalo sold he received VN\$1,000.

In 1967 Ngeng unearthed his cash savings while his brother sold his pigs and cattle, and together they purchased a used jeep that they transformed into a bus capable of carrying twelve people and some goods. They began a transport service between Cheo Reo and Buon Bleck, sometimes making trips to Pleiku, and it proved a profitable venture. In May 1970 Ngeng's brother paid him VN\$400,000 for his share in the business, and Ngeng went to Saigon to purchase another vehicle. His brother also gave him VN\$180,000 to buy a rice mill, which Ngeng did, and the Ministry of Ethnic Minorities' Development arranged to have it sent to Cheo Reo by truck. Finding a vehicle, however, turned out to be a difficult task, and finally he located a garage where he purchased a used jeep engine for VN\$200,000. The engine, however, was in need of repairs so Ngeng accepted the promise of the garage owner to fix the engine and send it to Qui Nhon by boat. In Qui Nhon the Ethnic Minorities Affairs Service were to notify Ngeng when it arrived. Ngeng then pursued another scheme and arranged through a Chinese transport firm to send large quantities of candy, beer, and soft drinks to Cheo Reo, where he could restock his own shop and sell goods to other Jarai shopkeepers.

The jeep engine was finally delivered to Cheo Reo, and by January 1971 Ngeng had installed it in a vehicle and was back in the transport business. The other venture, however, ended badly. The Chinese trucker delivered his goods to a Chinese merchant in Cheo Reo, who informed Ngeng that he would sell him the shipment "at the Cheo Reo wholesale price," which is the price charged for any goods sold to Highlander shopkeepers. Ngeng was downhearted at this turn of events, but he declared that he had learned something of the ways of the world beyond the highlands.

Lambretta Transport Service

In 1967 some of the Rhade in the Ban Me Thuot area began to engage in the transport business using tri-wheel Lambrettas. By early 1968 six operators were reported to be in Buon Ale-A, just south of Ban Me Thuot, and one of them rented two Lambrettas to other villagers. In January 1968 Y Hue Buon Krong, resident of Buon Kram, purchased a tri-wheel Lambretta from a Vietnamese for VN\$200,000. He paid cash, drawing on savings accumulated over a six-year period, most of it spent

In the army. Y Hue operates his transport service from Ban Me Thuot to the village of Buon Ea Khit, some forty kilometers southeast on the road to Lac Thien district, with some stops at villages on the route. The vehicle carries up to eleven passengers, and the fare to Buon Ea Khit was VN\$25 per person when the service began. Passengers are allowed to carry produce and other bundles, which are placed on the roof. He charged VN\$250 to transport a full load of produce from Ban Me Thuot to Buon Ea Khit. Y Hue figures that for the four round trips made on a normal day, about twenty liters of gasoline are needed, and at the time his service began, a twenty-liter jerry can of gasoline cost VN\$350. Usually he takes his midday meal with kinfolk in Buon Ale-A on the edge of Ban Me Thuot to save the cost of buying lunch. Also, with the aid of his wife and some relatives, Y Hue continues to farm, and he shuts down the transport service during the short periods when clearing fields and harvesting require his presence.

Y Hue and other Rhade present agreed that when most villagers accumulate some capital they invest in livestock, and he explained that he did not follow the pattern for several reasons. Operating the transport service is more lucrative than farming, and it can be done all year round. When, late in 1967, security in many parts of Darlac Province was deteriorating, Hue pointed out that if a villager were to have to evacuate rapidly he would be forced to leave his livestock, but with the Lambretta he could quickly load his family and some possessions on it and go to Ban Me Thuot. If he should be pressed for money he could always sell the Lambretta. Ironically, Y Hue made these observations the day before the 1968 Tet Offensive began, and while Buon Kram was untouched, parts of Ban Me Thuot were devastated.

Appendix C

HIGHLANDERS' LAND CLAIMS

As noted previously, the implementation of the Land Development Program in the late 1950s contributed greatly to the formation of several Highlander disident movements, i.e., the Bajaraka movement and FULRO, and by the same token it also had a bearing on the Highlander uprisings in 1964 and 1965. Since 1958, whenever the Highlanders formally expressed their needs and desires to the GVN, there has inevitably been a request that their land claims be resolved. Progress in the direction of satisfying that request has been very slow.

Under the Diem government, land for which title had not yet been granted was regarded as public land. This policy was first articulated in the Land Development Program (1957) and the Highlander Resettlement Program (1958). Its legal basis was established by Decree No. 513-a/DT/CCDD, dated December 12, 1958, and Memorandum No. 981/BTC/DC of May 28, 1959, both of which said, in essence, that Highlanders had the right to enjoy only the produce of the land they cultivated, implying thereby that they did not have the right of ownership. The next legislation was in 1964, when on May 19 the GVN issued Decree No. 26-DD/DB/KS/TT directing all heads of the Provincial Land Service to begin surveys of "public lands illegally occupied and cultivated," a total area estimated to be 390,000 hectares. The Decree stated that the government would soon provide farmers who had theretofore occupied those lands with "concessions on a temporary or definitive basis."

Following the Highlander revolt in September 1964, the GVN organized a conference at Pleiku to hear the requests of the highland leaders, and the question of land ownership was again raised. At the conference, the two decrees of the Diem era noted above were publicly rescinded, and on November 24, 1964, the Ministry of Rural Affairs issued Circular No. 16, 601b-BCTNT/HC/TC 3 concerning "adjustment of illegal appropriation of public lands for private use and for farming." It instructed the province chiefs "to advise the population of the adjustment of their illegal use of public lands for farming by means of providing them concessionary ownership within the provincial

abilities." These concessionary titles would be limited to ten hectares unless approval for additional land was obtained from the Rural Affairs Ministry and payment made. The decree carefully stipulated "cultivated land," and it warned the province chiefs to be alert to any attempts to enlarge areas now being farmed. Where the illegal occupation was within the limits of "reserved forests," the land had first to be reclassified before any adjustment could be made.

In December 1964, a group of fourteen highland leaders (representing the Rhade, Jarai, Bahnar, Mnong Rlam, Sedang, and Chru) met in a seminar under the chairmanship of Major Ngo Van Hung, then Deputy Director for Highland Affairs, to discuss the need for land registration, which the delegates based on the following grievances:

1. In many areas, privately owned lands had been expropriated by local authorities wishing to set up Land Development Centers for Lowlanders on these lands.
2. In other areas, Lowlanders had abused their authority and taken advantage of the Highlanders' lack of experience to obtain concessions, such as the lease or purchase of tea and coffee estates.
3. Highlanders whose fields were within areas being cleared by local authorities had been promised compensation in the form of land, but these promises were never carried out.
4. Highlanders whose lands had been sequestered for public works programs (such as roads, bridges, district headquarters, and the Dan Him dam) had received less compensation than did Lowlanders in similar circumstances.

The participants in the gathering were agreed that these practices had to be remedied, and reached accord on a set of land registration measures. These specific proposals were preceded by statements expressing the respect of both Highlanders and Lowlanders for state-owned lands and for the laws and regulations governing them. At the same time they affirmed the right of both groups to develop wastelands and use state-owned lands in accordance with these regulations. The seminar also called for equal status for Highlanders and Lowlanders in their claim to lands that they cultivated and used for farmsteads. It was noted that Highlanders, because of their "underdeveloped economy," should be exempted from taxes for periods to be determined by local circumstances (that is, by the extent of cultivated areas and available

resources in each locality). The seminar then recommended that Land Registration Committees be set up at province, district, and village levels and the specific organization of each be outlined.

As a result of the aforementioned May 19, 1964 legislation, several cadastral surveys were completed, and some villagers in Tuyen Duc and Darlac provinces were given title to land late in 1965. All of these were concessionary titles that could not be "ceded" (the titles did not say "sell") for a given period — six years in the case of the Tuyen Duc titles and six months for the Darlac titles. They also stated that the GVN could appropriate the land for the public welfare at any time, against just compensation to the owner.

Early in 1966 staff members of the Special Commission for Highland Affairs drew up a document that outlined some basic principles relating to a land tenure program for the Highlanders. When this document was submitted in December 1966 it was rejected because it had no provision for land title for the northern Highlanders. Nonetheless, it formed the basis for a new land law for the Highlanders, which Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, then Chairman of the National Leadership Committee, signed at Ban Me Thuot on August 29, 1967. It stated:

Article 1. The right of the Highlanders to own land which they have been cultivating is hereby confirmed.

Article 2. The Highlanders are granted the right of ownership of the land farmed under a system of rotating cultivation. A decree of the Ministry of Agriculture shall specify a maximum area of land for rotating cultivation that each family shall be permitted to own.

Article 3. In each *buon* (Highlander village), after the required technical work is completed, Land Registry offices will be established, and free ownership titles will be issued to Highlanders.

Article 4. The Chairman of the Central Executive Committee is responsible for carrying out this order.

Other than a scattered distribution of some token titles, nothing was done to implement this new law. Decree No. 076-SL/CCDD/CN dated July 15, 1969, did, however, provide a scheme for identifying lands being cultivated by the Highlanders. It called for a Land Identification Team in each village and a Provincial Administrative Commission.

By mid-1970 the Ministry for Land Reform and Agriculture-Fisheries Development had prepared a draft of a new decree to supplement the August 29, 1967, law noted above, particularly Article 2 concerning "land farmed under a system of rotating cultivation." On November 4, 1970, fourteen members of the newly formed Ethnic Minorities Council, all of them Highlanders, gathered at the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development to discuss the draft of the proposed decree. It stated:

Article 2. There is hereby created for each Montagnard *buon* or hamlet a "principal area for living" including land presently cultivated, shifting fields, land for housing, and land used privately by the village.

Hectarage of the principal area for living as stipulated above will be determined on the basis of ten hectares per family residing in the area if there is permanent cultivation, and twenty hectares per family if there is shifting cultivation.

Article 3. The boundary of the principal area for living will be defined during the first surveying operation.

Article 4. Except cultivated land belonging to private individuals and land belonging to State Forests (permanent forests and temporary forests), all privately used State Land within the perimeter of the principal area for living as defined in Article 2 will be allotted to the village as private land for the benefit of the people in the hamlet.

In addition, the members of this delegation requested the government to:

1. Stop allocation of concession land to individuals until after the boundaries for the Highlanders' principal areas for living in the hamlets are defined.
2. Do Land Identification for Highlanders in resettled hamlets and in the area of the original village site.
3. Give back to Highlanders land occupied by ethnic Vietnamese who have since abandoned it, and compensate Highlanders for land that had been expropriated for Land Development Centers by the First Republic.

As of November 1970, the Directorate General of Land Reform reported that in Region I, Land Identification surveys for Highlanders' claims had been completed on 168 hectares. In Region II, surveys had been done on 21,012 hectares, and of these, claims for 8471 hectares had been approved by the Directorate General for Land Reform. In

Region III, some 702 hectares have been surveyed. The stated goal at that time was 40,000 hectares for all three regions.

By January 1, 1971, a total of 29,000 hectares had been identified throughout the highlands.

Appendix D

VIETNAMESE MIGRATION INTO THE HIGHLANDS

It was noted previously that recent and current economic development schemes for the highlands reiterate the need expressed by plans formulated during the French administration for resettlement of ethnic Vietnamese in the area. Such a move, it is argued, would relieve overcrowding in parts of the lowlands, particularly the coastal plain of central Vietnam, and it would provide labor and skills not readily available among the indigenous Highlanders. During the time of the French administration, Vietnamese migration into the highlands was severely restricted; consequently, the number of Vietnamese in that region when the first economic development plans were put forth was relatively small. Since 1955, however, the situation has changed considerably. With the establishment of the Republic of (South) Vietnam in 1956, Vietnamese civil servants and military personnel, usually accompanied by their families, were sent into the highland provinces. Individuals and families migrated into the highlands to seek new opportunities, and the GVN, as noted previously, sponsored the movement of large numbers of settlers into the area. Then with the intensification of the Vietnam War in 1965 these new settlers were joined by additional administrative and military personnel and their families, as well as Vietnamese seeking employment with the greatly expanded U.S. military and civilian presence. The result over the past fifteen years has been a vast increase in the Vietnamese population in the highlands.

This population expansion can be seen in the area that the French organized administratively as the provinces of Kontum-Pleiku, Darlac, and Lang Biang or Haut Donnai, and which eventually became a Crown Domain under Emperor Bao Dai. At the present time this would encompass the provinces of Kontum, Pleiku, Phu Bon, Darlac, Tuyen Duc, Lam Dong, and Quang Duc.

In 1932 Kontum-Pleiku Province was reported to have had 300,000 residents, of whom 15,000 were Vietnamese, 30 were Chinese, 69 were Europeans, not including the military, and the remaining were Highlanders. Of the estimated 80,000 in Darlac Province, some 1500 were Vietnamese,

30 were Chinese, and there were 58 Europeans, not including the military. The rest of the population were Highlanders. Haut Donnai Province had some 43,000 residents, and other than 400 Vietnamese, 80 Chinese, and 106 Europeans, the bulk of the population were Highlanders. This would be an estimated total of 20,500 Vietnamese and around 402,137 Highlanders.²⁸ Population estimates reported in 1953 did not vary significantly. The provinces of Kontum-Pleiku, Darlac, and Haut Donnai contained some 500,000 inhabitants, and with the exception of about 20,000 Vietnamese, most of them concentrated in the Dalat-Dran area, and a small number of Chinese and Europeans, the remainder of the population were composed of Highlanders.²⁹

Population figures for Kontum, Pleiku, Phu Bon, Darlac, Tuyen Duc, Lam Dong, and Quang Duc Provinces reported in the Hamlet Evaluation system in May 1970 indicate a total Vietnamese population of 383,000, which is over nineteen times larger than the 20,000 population figure reported in 1953. The September 1970 Vietnamese population figure for these same provinces released by the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development in September 1970 is 448,349, which is over twenty-two times greater than the 20,000 population figure (see table).

²⁸ Annuaire Administratif de l'Indochine, Hanoi, Imprimerie d'Extrême Orient, 1932, pp. 389-400.

²⁹ Annuaire des Etats-Associés: Cambodge-Laos-Vietnam, Editions Diloutremer et Havas, Paris, 1953, p. 356.

Table
POPULATION FIGURES

Province	Ministry for Ethnic Minorities' Development, September 1970 ^a		Hamlet Evaluation System, May 1970			
			Ethnic Vietnamese		Highlanders	
	Total No. Highlanders	Total No. Vietnamese	No. Hamlets	Population	No. Hamlets	Population
Kontum	61,245	40,164	29	45,000	215	61,000
Pleiku	116,228	78,454	48	99,000	391	107,000
Phu Bon	48,359	19,419	11	11,000	128	48,000
Darlac	103,830	146,644	71	116,000	261	93,000
Quang Duc	17,266	10,922	26	15,000	23	17,000
Tuyen Duc	53,234	40,392	45	51,000	54	40,000
Lam Dong	37,953	28,747	31	46,000	51	26,000
Dalat City	385	83,607	--	--	--	--
Total	436,500	448,349	261	383,000	1,123	392,000

^aThe total number of Highlanders for all of South Vietnam is 848,174.

Appendix E

HIGHLANDER RESETTLEMENT

Relocation, whether forced or voluntary, is a disruptive experience for people like the Highlanders who must live in close harmony with their natural surroundings in order to survive. They must successfully exploit the ecology, and this necessitates complete familiarity with it. A village is located so as to provide residents with a good supply of water, and usually this is a stream or river that also provides fish. The village is also placed so that it may be protected against natural catastrophes such as floods, and in the current situation a good defense position is desirable. The vicinity of the village must have soils known to produce good crops, forests known to yield firewood, and materials for house construction, weapons, tools, and other artifacts, as well as game to supplement their diet staples.

Relocation of Highlanders away from their familiar surroundings involves a complete new set of adjustments, one of which may be their dependence on outside aid — a new experience for these normally independent, self-sustaining people. There are sufficient examples of Highlander refugees with a "mendicant mentality" to demonstrate the worst effect of this particular adjustment. Where the villagers have expressed the desire to resettle and have been given the choice of a new site, the adjustment problems have not been too severe. Most resettlement projects in the highlands, however, have been carried out without concern for the villagers' preferences, and they have been disruptive, in some cases almost disastrous. Such was the 1958 Highlander Resettlement Program of the Diem regime. It was not only a failure, it also contributed to the bitterness among the Highlanders that led to the formation of the dissident FULRO movement and the 1964 and 1965 revolts. A more recent case of poor planning and inept implementation was the 1967 Edap Enang Project, where, to clear an area west of Pleiku city for a free-fire zone, some 7200 Jarai villagers were resettled in a large agglomeration with inadequate facilities and insufficient land. The forced relocation took place in mid-1967, and by early 1968 only

2700 of the inhabitants remained; those who fled returned to the free-fire zone even though their villages had been burned.

The most disruptive resettlements, however, have occurred because of the events of war, and the most graphic example of this is the case of the Bru refugees in Quang Tri Province. The Bru are the indigenous inhabitants of the Khe Sanh area. Late in 1967 and early in 1968, when some of the most intense fighting of the war took place in the vicinity of Khe Sanh between the North Vietnamese Army and the U.S. military forces, the bulk of the Bru population were caught in between. A large number of them were killed, all of their villages in the area were destroyed, and eventually some 8000 Bru made their way eastward to the lowlands. Most of them have been settled in the Cua Valley, but they have found themselves in an untenable situation. The fertile land in the area is already being farmed by Vietnamese, and the refugees were allotted small plots of bottomland and nearby slopes for their swidden-shifting cultivation. Because they were removed from their native ecology at higher elevations in the cordillera, they were unfamiliar with the soil and rainfall pattern in the Cua Valley. Their first crop in 1969 failed, and they had to abandon their fields on the slopes because they were being shot at by both sides. Their garden plots provide only partial sustenance, and because they have not had refugee status since the end of 1969 they only receive occasional assistance. Like many other relocated Highlanders, the Bru have become poverty-stricken people living on the fringe of Vietnamese rural society.

Available figures indicate that a great many Highlanders have experienced relocation. According to the Hamlet Evaluation System report of July 31, 1970, out of a total of 1407 Highlander hamlets (villages to the Highlanders) covered by the system, 722, or 51.3 percent, have been relocated within the past five years. A recent survey³⁰ conducted among resettled Highlanders in Darlac, Pleiku, and Tuyen Duc Provinces revealed that 61 percent wanted to return to their former area, and 33 percent wished to remain where they were, while 6 percent

³⁰ H. C. Bush, *Montagnard Desire to Return to Original Hamlet Sites and Vietnamese Farming Within Montagnard Hamlets*, Control Data Corporation, Saigon, November 1970, pp. 5-9.

were divided in their opinions. This survey concluded, "Most of the Montagnards prefer where they were before relocation to where they are now. Most want to return to the hill country life of swidden agriculture, cattle raising, and abundant land."

Forced resettlement of Highlanders has continued in 1970 and 1971 with some very harmful results. In January 1971, some 1000 villagers of Plei Ea Mah (also spelled Ia Maih) in Pleiku Province were relocated to the Plei Blang III area southwest of Pleiku city. There were no houses or shelter of any kind so they lived in the open, sleeping on the ground. They complained to visitors that it was hot in the daytime and cold at night; combined with this was a lack of food³¹ and drinking water. By the end of March 1971, over 100 of the villagers had died, and on March 31, when a Vietnamese government delegation visited the village, two more residents died.

The situation was even worse farther south where 3250 Bahnar Alakong were settled in the Plei Degroi area. They too suffered the same lack of housing, food, and water, and within three months after they were resettled in December 1970, over 300 had died. In Darlac Province at Buon M'Bre the resettled villagers have military packing crates for shelter, and since they were moved in October 1970, just before harvest time, they have been woefully short of food. Many have been forced to work for local Vietnamese at the low wage of VN\$200 per day (unskilled laborers usually receive over VN\$300 per day).

³¹The Ministry of Social Welfare's rice allowance for these resettled people is VN\$450 per month. At current rice prices this amount will purchase between seven and nine kilos per month, depending on the grade of rice. By comparison, the students in government-sponsored boarding schools and prisoners in the Ban Me Thuot jail are allotted 650 grams of rice per day or over 18 kilos per month.

Hickey

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING THE PROSPECTIVE ROLE OF
VIETNAMESE HIGHLANDERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT