

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Vietnamese refugees must be prepared for integration into the American society as rapidly as possible with a minimum of adverse effects on them and the communities into which they will settle.

There is no "typical" refugee". They cover a broad spectrum from highly sophisticated western university graduates with advanced degrees to those who may not be literate in <sup>it</sup> their own language and have little if any meaningful understanding of the country to which they have fled.

Even in such a broad range of backgrounds, few ~~of~~ <sup>had</sup> any have an opportunity to live in the United States in the role of a normal citizen. Those who worked closely with Americans or observed Americans in Vietnam did not see the real American society as it functions in the United States. Many of the refugees have distorted views of the United States thus making a relearning process necessary.

The preparation of the Vietnamese for entry into American society can be accomplished by a well constructed and professionally conducted program of acculturation/orientation that is flexible and fully considers all the pertinent elements involved.

The University of Oklahoma proposes to draw upon its extensive and varied professional resources and proven experience in the field of acculturation training to create and conduct such a program for the refugees.

### OBJECTIVES

(1) The proposed program will, on a single model basis, accomplish a cultural interface between a selected group of 50 Vietnamese and their adoptive land as preparation for complete integration into American life. The University would welcome the opportunity to conduct three such models simultaneously with 150 Vietnamese.

(2) The program will develop from the participants of the initial cycle, a cadre of Vietnamese trainers skilled and motivated to assist in the more difficult acculturation programs to come, when relative

refugee skills and literacy levels drop in the non-urban refugee populations. The self-help, self-generating features of this program objective injects reality and credibility into the American acculturation effort.

(3) The proposed program will generate an acculturation model capable of replication at Fort Chaffee and such other ports of entry as Camp Pendleton, Eglin Air Force Base and Indiantown Gap.

(4) The program will develop a diagnostic model for anticipating acculturation problems and solutions for target populations yet to come.

(5) Recognizing the large numbers of refugees to be oriented and the need to accomplish the task in as short a time frame as practical, the capacity to conduct training for many additional groups simultaneously can be rapidly expanded.

#### PROGRAM RATIONALE

The program proposed recognizes communication as the key to cultural understanding.

(1) A society is reflected by its communication patterns. It is a basic anthropological tenet that group effort is impossible without communication. Human communication is language. Societies, Vietnamese and American, are synonymous with their patterns of communication, their methods and means for transferring meaning.

(2) Acculturation is interactive, a two-way "shock". A high degree of Vietnamese involvement is required in setting individual program goals and mutual expectations of the participant and the university staff member (the involvement of the staff member is individual--the Vietnamese interacts more with a team of specially trained Americans, as individuals than with a program).

(3) The interaction must sequence from an acculturation framework to the practical, problem solving needs of the participant, generated by the expressions of the participant in the initial, expectation-setting stages of Program Phase I (listed below).

(4) Though a military base is the locale for this training,

valid acculturation cannot take place in a military or government agency context. The integrity of an educational process is best preserved by reserving it to the institutions of education and all such training must remain in the aura of a civil process. The roles of the military and the federal government must be rigidly defined as emergency housekeeping and source of funding, respectively. Government for the people and the subordinate role of the military are primary features of American society, and must be defined and observed in acculturation programs. Otherwise, credibility will fail with program integrity.

P(8) Four basic assumptions undergird the proposed program.

- (a) Model program participants will be selected from Vietnamese with English language skills at the "S-2" level used in the Peace Corps and other linguistic projects. Preliminary inquiry indicates there are sufficient <sup>members</sup> ~~members~~ in this category.
- (b) Model program participants will be selected from Vietnamese expressing the personal objective of integration into American life, with the end acculturation objective as United States citizenship.
- (c) Model program participants are assumed to lack prior practical life experience in the continental United States.
- (d) Model program participants will be selected from age group ranging from young adult (15 years) and older, in an employable configuration.

#### APPROACH TO PERFORMANCE

(1) The model program proposed uses a team approach, rotating the staff to interacting individuals with 15 participants. The total group will be engaged, in different subgroups, for the total life of the program, 8 to 10 hours <sup>every day</sup> of day and evening involvement in structured and informal sessions. Total group sessions will be scheduled for such activities <sup>as</sup> ~~as~~ film viewing, cultural activities, ~~and like activities~~.

The concentrated content requires frequent breaking up into informal interactions.

(2) Program content and sequencing will follow the developing needs of program participants, but will be patterned as indicated below.

Phase I - Establishing Communication between Program and Participant

During this critical initial period of interaction, a communication model will be established based upon:

- (a) communication patterns of Americans and Vietnamese
- (b) expectations of the program and the program participant

Phase II - Adapting Personal Perceptions

In this phase the participant will be involved in activities which introduce the concept of comparative cultural and individual perceptions and which explore examples drawn broadly from comparative:

- (a) Vietnamese and American jurisprudence
- (b) Vietnamese and American government
- (c) Vietnamese and American economics
- (d) Vietnamese and American monetary systems
- (e) Vietnamese and American social conventions
- (f) Vietnamese and American weights and measures
- (g) Vietnamese and American customs of health, hygiene and nutrition
- (h) Vietnamese and American attitudes toward and the economic role of agriculture
- (i) Vietnamese and American attitudes toward and the societal role of police
- (j) Vietnamese and American attitudes toward and the civil role of the military
- (k) Vietnamese and American attitudes toward and the societal roles of family units and family members

### Phase III - Adapting Perceptions Interpersonally

During this phase the perception adaptations developed in Phase II will be applied to person-to-person and to small group problems in transfer of meaning, the essence of communication. Participants activities will be based upon:

- (a) person-to-person relationships and
- (b) small group communication

### Phase IV - Perceptions in American Organized Activity

This crucial phase will engage the career expectations of Vietnamese in the American economy and personal expectations in community/political spheres. Participant activity will be directed toward self-discovery, in a new American context, around perspectives relating to:

- (a) status in organizations, achievement, maintenance and meaningful relationships to
- (b) power in organization, how it is achieved, how it is exerted, limitations in an open society, abuses, and effectiveness; how this and status are achieved, exerted and expressed through
- (c) organizational communication networks; the means, the directions and the importance of information flow in American organized activity, aids and barriers to organizational written and oral communications.

Preceding the participant activities in organizational communication will be explication of American organizational characteristics on models drawn from:

- (a) military organizations
- (b) educational institutions
- (c) private enterprise
- (d) social organization:
- (e) police organizations
- (f) professional organizations
- (g) religious organizations

(h) governmental organizations

American work norms will be identified, with emphasis <sup>on</sup> on-the-job expectations in such matters as productivity and time, and work scheduling.

#### Phase V - American and Vietnamese Cultural Perspectives

This final phase builds upon the perceptual adaptations of the previous phases. Having participated in activities, ~~demonstrations~~ <sup>skills</sup>, cultural perceptions at personal, interpersonal and group levels, the Vietnamese will apply these <sup>skills</sup> to comparisons of Vietnamese and American cultures, ~~as a whole~~. Roles and norms of citizenship and community membership and strategies for initiating and accepting change in a mobile society will be explored.

Subcultures which impact an American information systems-- the news media, periodicals, non-fictional and imaginative literature -- will be identified as forces in ~~a~~ national life.

Among the cultural norms to be explored are American attitudes toward and uses of leisure time, recreation and entertainment, including motion pictures and television.

Facilities for program activities will be base theaters, churches or other facilities furnished by Commanding Officer, Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. Pre-program preparation will include surveys for suitable shaded outside areas to counter the enervation effects of Arkansas summer heat and humidity.

(4) Materials, listed specifically in the cost proposal, include:

- (a) Handout reproductions
- (b) Student Materials -- notebooks, participant and staff biographies, dictionaries
- (c) A modest reference library
- (d) Motion Picture Film
- (e) Video Tape Equipment to support role-playing session
- (f) Certificates of completion, an important document in Vietnamese society and a helpful reference for potential employers.

- (5) The program model will exploit the demonstrated resourcefulness, mental agility and adaptability of the Vietnamese through small group seminars. As program content moves from generalities to practical, seminar conduct will urge participants toward group society wherein organized activity supplants (or at least complements) the traditional Vietnamese family unit. That is, there will be no attempt to discourage family units, but adaptability to American group activity will be instilled. At the close of the model program separate group "societies" will attempt to integrate with each other.
- (6) Continuous individual participant evaluation will facilitate recruitment of Vietnamese for staff assistant service in future programs as interpreters, instructors, group moderators and consultants. This Vietnamese cadre, working with University staff in subsequent programs will greatly ease the linguistic and acculturation processing of Vietnamese with low skills and literacy levels.
- (7) American cultural group activities will be invited on site to provide program participants participative experience with aspects of American culture -- Boy and Girl Scout groups, school musical groups, athletic contests staged for and in competition with Vietnamese, motion pictures, television programming and other such activities as may become available.
- (8) Ideally, field trips, regulations allowing, will transport small participant groups to visit and experience American group and community activities, implementing Vietnamese interaction with American leisure, recreation, culture, economic and social life.

#### SCHEDULE

- (1) The University is prepared to commence program preparation activities immediately upon award of a contract. Developmental effort is underwritten by the University of Oklahoma and will not be

charged to the contract.

(2) The University is prepared to begin acculturation program model activities ten working days from award of a contract.

(3) Program scheduling contemplates a five day compression of a two week program, through daytime and evening sessions approximating eight to ten hours of participant involvement, or more if desired by participants. University staff will remain in close and continuing association with Vietnamese participants throughout the life of the program. Scheduling will be planned and revised continuously around the basic model program content and sequence:

Phase I - Establishing Communication

- (a) Expectations
- (b) Communications Model

Phase II - Personal Perception

- (a) How information is processed by the human mind
- (b) Human perceptions
- (c) The meaning of meaning
- (d) Comparative attitudes, beliefs and values

Phase III - Interpersonal Perceptions

- (a) Relationships between individuals
- (b) Communicating in small groups of individuals

Phase IV - American Organizational Perceptions

- (a) Status -- meaning, uses and abuses
- (b) Power - meaning, uses and abuses
- (c) Networks of Communication -- importance, barriers, aids

Phase V - Intercultural Perspectives

- (a) Roles
- (b) Norms
- (c) Communication Roles
- (d) Social Change:
  - (1) How innovations are diffused into the fabric of society.
  - (2) Communication strategies for change and acceptance
- (e) Certification of achievement (awarded to participants)



## EVALUATION

The two dimensions of evaluation of the proposed program are evaluation<sup>24</sup> the model program and evaluation<sup>24</sup> the model program participants.

- (1) Program evaluation strategy will be developmental, designed to improve programming in anticipation of acculturation problems of subsequent programs with Vietnamese target populations of varied skills and language proficiencies<sup>4</sup>. It is hoped that programs will continue to cycle refugees toward societal integration at the Fort Chaffee site.
- (2) Participant evaluation will serve the dual purpose of defining individual progress toward societal integration and screening Vietnamese for recruitment as staff assistants for future programs following this model. It is conceivable that a potential Vietnamese staff assistant will participate in more than one program for reasons of
  - (a) remedial needs,
  - (b) increasing potentials as staff assistant.
- (3) Evaluation data will serve to:
  - (a) develop program models for replication at Fort Chaffee and other refugee points of entry.
  - (b) Assist D.O.L. and other interested government and private agencies in assessing employment and social potentials of program participants and, by projection, the total refugee population.
- (4) Means can be provided for immediate evaluation of the program by the participants and for follow up evaluations by the participants after a period of time following entry into a community and/or by agencies within the community.

The evaluation system can be as simple or as complex as the directing authority seems necessary for modifications of the ongoing program or for use in future programs.