

NAVMC 2616

UNIT LEADERS

PERSONAL
RESPONSE

HANDBOOK





**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20380**

12 October 1967

FOREWORD

1. PURPOSE

This publication, NAVMC 2616, UNIT LEADER'S PERSONAL RESPONSE HANDBOOK, is a compilation of materials that have been published under various titles by the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, and the Chaplains Division, Bureau of Naval Personnel, in conjunction with the Personal Response Project. The purposes of this publication are:

a. To assist Marines in fighting and winning the other war in Vietnam - the winning of the lasting friendship and willing cooperation of the Vietnamese people.

b. To engender in all Marines a genuine concern and a deep respect for the Vietnamese as our friends, allies and fellow human beings.

c. To serve as a nondoctrinal reference publication for commands training Marines for duty in the Republic of Vietnam.

d. To assist unit leaders in establishing training programs designed to instruct Marines about

the Vietnamese - their feelings, loyalties, convictions and aspirations.

2. SOURCES

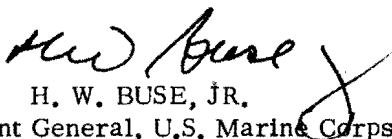
The information contained herein has been drawn from the experiences of the Marines and sailors of the III Marine Amphibious Corps with the people of Vietnam.

3. REQUISITIONING

Additional copies of this publication, not in excess of 50, may be ordered directly from the Commanding General, Marine Corps Supply Activity, 1100 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19146.

4. CERTIFICATION

Reviewed and approved this date.



H. W. BUSE, JR.
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Chief of Staff

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INTRODUCTION

I. MEETING AND COMMUNICATING

The influences and values affecting Vietnamese relationships to strangers and their own people.

Leader's Guidelines 1

Unit Discussions:

- I-1 Coming to Grips with Time and Energy: "Time Out for Lunch" . . . 5
- I-2 The Place of Women in Vietnam: "When the Marine and the Girl Held Hands" 10
- I-3 When We Depend on the Vietnamese: "The Night the Chopper Pilot Had to Hitchhike" 16
- I-4 The Purpose of Our Presence: "So Why Are You Here, Joe?" . . . 23
- I-5 Our Relationship with Children: "The Candy Handout" 29

I. MEETING AND COMMUNICATING**(Continued)**

- I-6 Recognizing Vietnamese Leaders:
"Staying Within the Chain of Com-
mand" 34
- I-7 Showing Respect For Life: "The
Friendly KIA's" 40
- I-8 A Response to Friendship: "It
Works Both Ways" 46

II. MONEY AND POSSESSIONS

How the ways in which the Vietnamese relate to the things they own and use affect their attitudes toward Americans.

- Leader's Guidelines 51

Unit Discussion:

- II-1 Money in a Developing Nation:
"When There Is No Poor House" 53
- II-2 The Plight of the Farmer in
Vietnam: "Mr. Tuyen Sweats
It Out" 58
- II-3 Sanitation and Hygiene: "Who's a
Dirty Bum?" 65

II. MONEY AND POSSESSIONS (Continued)

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| II-4 | Fundamental Equality: "Equally Important" | 70 |
| II-5 | Handling Indebtedness: "They Buy Chop, They No Pay" | 76 |
| II-6 | The Wartime Economy: "What's It Worth?" | 82 |

III. A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

How Vietnamese patterns of loyalty toward their families, communities, and nation compare with American concepts of loyalty.

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Leader's Guidelines | 89 |
|-------------------------------|----|

Unit Discussions:

| | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| III-1 | The Chieu Hoi Program: "The Making of a Kit Carson Scout" . . . | 91 |
| III-2 | The Quality of Courage: "Do They Have What It Takes?" | 98 |
| III-3 | Graft and Exploitation: "What's in It for Me?" | 103 |
| III-4 | The Revolutionary Development Cadre: "Talk About Sacrifice!" . . | 109 |

IV. THE MATTER OF PRIDE

The traditions of privacy and personal dignity affecting Vietnamese-American cooperation.

Leader's Guidelines 115

Unit Discussions:

IV-1 Common Courtesy: "The Case of the ARVN Lieutenant" 117

IV-2 Team Spirit: "The Night the PFs Got Even" 123

IV-3 The Invasion of Privacy: "The Case of the Friendly Detainee" . . 128

IV-4 Caution or Contempt: "A Word in Time" 133

IV-5 Real and False Pride: "The One Guy Who Moved" 138

IV-6 Cooperation Versus Charity: "The Wooden Crucifix" 142

IV-7 Notions of Justice: "Setting Things Straight" 148

V. THE DEEPER CONCERNS

The ultimate concerns of Vietnamese and Americans .

Leader's Guidelines 155

Unit Discussions:

V-1 Freedom of Religion: "The Buddha and the Amtrak" 157

V-2 Time and Conduct: "How the Major Struck Out" 164

V-3 Time and Destiny: "The Rough Rider" 170

V-4 The Impact of Words: "The Cut of a Word" 175

V-5 Life's Ultimate Goals: "When a Man Risks His Neck" 180

APPENDIXES:

A Personal Response Vietnamese Phrase List 185

B The Personal Response Project 191

C The Religions of Vietnam 197

D Guidelines for Understanding 251

E Background Information Articles on Vietnam 271

INTRODUCTION

This is a tactical handbook. Everything in this handbook is as tactical as an "op plan" or the manual on the Marine Rifle Squad.

Unlike most tactical manuals, however, this subject can not be "taught" or "force fed."

This handbook deals with attitudes. It takes time for all of us to develop attitudes toward people. We do this by ourselves - slowly. Changing them is even slower. . . and harder.

As this is being written we are involved in a war. Time is precious. We want to hurry to get every job done right away. But this part of the war takes time.

In a real way this is the war. It is a war for people. It is a war in behalf of people and a war for their allegiance. Unless this war is won, our strategic victories could be worth very little.

The attitude of each of your men is a vital part of the war. Their attitude is the key to how much training takes place with the PF, how many miles of road are built by civilians, how often boobytraps are pointed out to us by friends, how much intelligence flows our way, and how many VC will rally to the Chieu Hoi training center.

It is a war for people. But people are funny. If I think you are looking down at me, talking down to me, pegging me as thick-headed, I don't really care much about you or what you are saying. On the other hand, if I feel that you do care about my welfare, I'll follow you anywhere regardless of risk.

As an experienced leader of men you already know how to "take care of your own." But how do we relate to another group of people? This has disturbed more than one westerner who in Kipling's words tried to "hustle the East."

To address this aspect of the war for people, early in our operations in Vietnam, the Marine Corps requested and received technical assistance and project officers from the Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Navy. Data was collected on the religions and social customs of Vietnam. Then attitude surveys were made throughout the III Marine Amphibious Force, the Popular Forces, and civilian populations to assess how the Vietnamese-American partnership was working out and to isolate any problem areas.

Since then a growing number of commands have been taking Personal Response materials like this handbook right down to the squad level. It is, and always has been, a command responsibility. The chaplains are involved as technical advisors. Their training enables them to provide information to the command about the religious and cultural value

systems of a people. They can assist unit leaders to fulfill the responsibility which has belonged to the "line" from the beginning.

You can best provide effective leadership by taking this handbook and reading it with an eye for the needs and concerns of your men. As you think about some of the principles and questions raised, try to think also of ways in which you can use them in briefings and conversations with your men. There are breaks in the day's routine. Briefings, informal conversations and discussions will provide opportunities.

You will notice that there are five chapters in the handbook:

- I. Meeting and Communicating
- II. Money and Possessions
- III. A Question of Loyalty
- IV. The Matter of Pride
- V. The Deeper Concerns

These are not just topics that somebody decided to talk about. These are the relationships that men form. These are the areas of life with which all men must come to terms in order to go about their daily tasks. These sections deal, in turn, with a person's relationship to other people, to things, to his country, to himself, and to the world in general.

In this war for people we have to understand that men come to terms with these areas of their lives in different ways. The ways they do so are

largely determined by where they live, the things they are taught, and the overall influences that affect their lives. Not all the Vietnamese react to these influences in the same way. They are individuals just as we are. But they react in ways that are similar enough to help us know how to relate to them better. This is especially true if our knowledge has resulted in positive attitudes.

In each section are several experiences involving Vietnamese and Americans. Some of them are victories; others are setbacks. Some seemed to result in better understanding and cooperation; others in misunderstanding and mutual disrespect. We can learn a great deal from both types of experience which can give us a better chance of winning the friendship and loyalty of the Vietnamese.

The best way to use these incidents is to learn them well enough to tell them to your men without having to read them. These incidents can only become real to others if they are real to you. Then see what your men think about them - what they think caused the success or failure of the incident - how they think the failures could be avoided and the successes repeated and increased. Don't be concerned too much with hostile or negative responses. Let them vent their feelings, get it off their chests. Usually somebody else will balance the discussion. This, and information you will offer, will make it easier for the men to understand and accept the people no matter what "bugs" them initially.

Nobody has figured out all the answers. In this business we must rely as fully on our men, place as much confidence in their judgment, as we do in a fire fight. Respect their insights. Their ideas could be more valuable than any we have.

You are provided with additional information which your men may or may not know. It will help you to guide and direct the discussion, not to a pre-determined conclusion or solution, but to keep it on target. Your training and experience will help you use the "Keys to Understanding" as guidelines, rather than as some superior or ultimate wisdom.

The simple fact is, we do not have that kind of knowledge. But we do have men with a great deal of common sense and high purpose. They can understand the importance of winning the war for people. You can help them to be aware of how often we do meet the Vietnamese people and communicate our attitudes (sometimes unwittingly) to them.

Your job is to hold before them what understanding and positive attitudes can mean to the Vietnamese and to the progress of the war. In the process we can take a critical look at ourselves "as others see us" and, hopefully, improve our efficiency as allies. This, too, can shorten the war.

Remember that we are constantly looking for constructive criticism and creative suggestions. Both can help us, and those who will follow us, engage in a new kind of effort with the greatest possible chance of success.

Chapter I: MEETING AND COMMUNICATING

The influences and values affecting Vietnamese relationships to strangers and their own people.

A. Leader's Guidelines

We begin this section by considering how often we do in fact meet the Vietnamese (no matter where we are assigned in-country) and how much we do in fact communicate (no matter how little we speak Vietnamese).

Every time one of your men sets off down the road with a jeep or a truck, dozens of Vietnamese are meeting an American. Be it a routine patrol or a recon insert, every time one of your squads leaves your compound the men of that squad meet dozens of Vietnamese.

By the number of smiles and the number of waving hands your men sense immediately how the local people feel toward them. Similarly, the local people see in our men a number of signals that communicate how we feel toward the people.

Your men need to be aware of how many Vietnamese people they do meet and how much they do communicate. This holds true just as much if they are in a supporting unit (where there are civilian

workers employed) or in an aviation unit (where Americans and Vietnamese must use the same transports, etc.).

Think about it. Without ever saying a word we come to understand how our CO or our First Sergeant is feeling just by looking at him in the morning. How? We "read" certain things by his facial expression, his posture and the way he walks, or even the way he is clenching his fist.

The Vietnamese "read" us the same way without a word being passed. In fact, this is often how they communicate with each other. Some experts found that because Vietnamese is a tonal language it cannot be understood at a whisper level. Yet Vietnamese do whisper to each other and are understood. How? By facial expression, gesture and clues from the situation around them.

The next two pages give examples of how we communicate without saying a word.

There is much more to meeting and communicating with strangers. It has to do with the surrounding situation that is so important when Vietnamese try to whisper. Certain things are already understood by friends. Often we do not yet understand these things which are assumed by the Vietnamese. This is the rub! The next few discussion units try to bring your men to a greater awareness of what the Vietnamese take for granted.

COMMUNICATING WITH OUR FACES



COMMUNICATING WITH OUR POSTURE



Unit Discussion I-1: Coming to Grips with Time
and Energy



"Time Out for Lunch"

Discussion Objective

Closer cooperation between Marines and the Vietnamese based on a better understanding of their physical stamina and general attitude toward life.

The Way It Happened

In "Operation Colorado" a Marine company working with some Popular Forces was on a sweep. They were attempting to reach a designated point where they would join forces with another company and "set in" for the night. At 1200 the 25 PFs attached to the company sat down and began to eat chow saying that it was time for a break. The company was forced to stop so as not to leave its allies exposed. As a result they fell behind schedule and just missed failing to reach their objective. The Marines were resentful of the PFs since the delay might well have endangered the lives of many Americans and Vietnamese.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What things were involved in this incident which led to misunderstanding between Marines and the Vietnamese?
- ➔ What should the Marines have done in this situation?
- ➔ Can you think of anything which might have either created a favorable outcome or avoided the incident entirely?

Keys to Understanding

Understanding the behavior of people who have been brought up in an unfamiliar culture involves attempting to figure out the things which might have

caused some aspect of that behavior. Your men may remember in their responses that the Vietnamese rarely have the same sense of urgency as Americans. They have an entirely different idea of the meaning of time. For them time goes in a circle rather than a straight line. If a thing is not done now it can always be done later, or in the next life, or in any of the several lives which will present many of the same problems and opportunities. Patience is a highly regarded virtue, while undue haste and anxiety are felt to be unreasonable and unworthy of adults.

Your men may or may not have come up with the thought that differences in climate, diet and resultant physical stamina were also probably involved in this incident. The Vietnamese are more aware of the toll a very hot climate can take than are most Americans. If we had grown up here we might better appreciate the old saying, "Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the noonday sun!" Over here even the water buffalo have sense enough to take it easy around midday. Americans aren't always that smart. We have to be working all of the time, all day; no posting watches at noon and letting the rest take a break. On this operation that probably wasn't possible, but the lifelong ideas and habits of the Vietnamese should have been recognized in advance planning.

Perhaps more basic to an understanding of this incident than the above factors is the lower physical stamina of the Vietnamese. An inadequate diet requires a more frequent intake of food; foods that

are low in nutritional value leave a person tired and weak more quickly than muscle-building, high-protein foods. The only way to keep going for long periods is to stop and eat.

Vietnamese drinking water comes from wells that are contaminated with bacteria and worm eggs which cause intestinal parasites and diarrhea. Many Vietnamese feel like the guy who has a perpetual case of the "GIs." Water and food have almost everything to do with physical energy and stamina. There are some areas in the United States where people seem to have little "get up and go" for much the same reasons.

Encourage your men to talk about these things which were probably involved in this "time out for lunch" incident. They are reasonable and understandable.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Remind your men when the topic arises that "flaking out" is not always a sign of laziness or unconcern. In addition to the direct physical factors mentioned in this discussion, it should be remembered that the PFs are essentially civilian militia, many of whom work in the fields or at some other endeavor a large part of the time. It is often difficult for the PFs to accept any other role than the direct defense of their own homes.

➔ Indicate, if they have not realized it, that more comprehensive advance planning might have kept this unfavorable incident from occurring. Quick energy food might have been carried for sharing with the PFs. The rendezvous time might have been set for half an hour later. A more thorough explanation of the entire mission to the Vietnamese would probably have helped.

➔ Keep notes of any reasonable or unusual ideas that you or your men have about this incident. Pass them along to your CO or someone on your Personal Response Council, or share them with other unit leaders. It might help them to achieve greater efficiency and a higher level of cooperation in activities involving the Vietnamese.

➔ Encourage your men to try to understand things rather than just gripe about them. The habit can pay handsome dividends in a great many places and circumstances.

Unit Discussion I-2: The Place of Women in Vietnam



"When the Marine and the Girl Held Hands"

Discussion Objective

An awareness that there are important differences between U.S. and Vietnamese attitudes toward women and the public display of affection.

The Way It Happened

Lance Corporal Jones had been a successful member of Combined Action Platoon 3 for 10 months. A "good Marine" and a dependable fire team leader, he had done a great job with the local people. He taught English at the local school and was a frequent guest in the hamlet chief's home.

There was an attractive girl who worked in the local barbershop who caught Lance Corporal Jones' eye. One day after getting a haircut, Lance Corporal Jones asked the girl if she minded his walking home with her. It was broad daylight. This was no big deal to Jones.

As they came to a bend in the road they both spotted a dog that had been sniffing an old C-ration can. The dog soon had his nose stuck in the can and went careening off wildly trying to free itself. Both Jones and the girl laughed. Innocently, Jones reached for the girl's hand and held it as they continued homeward.

The next day there was a definite chill in the attitude of the whole hamlet. The Marines in the Combined Action Platoon knew right away that something had happened to their relationship with the people.

Questions for Discussion

→ How did an innocent thing like holding hands hurt a whole village?

→ In what ways do the Vietnamese show affection publicly?

→ Are there special ways that Vietnamese treat women?

Keys to Understanding

There are several facts involved in this incident which, when they are recognized, can make it become quite understandable. In Vietnam we often see girls holding hands with girls or young men holding hands with young men. This does not, by the way, indicate any "queer" tendencies. As in Turkey, Korea, etc., so in Vietnam, it is normal for members of the same sex to hold hands. This does not apply to men and women holding hands in public.

A survey among civilians in Danang showed that 98% of the local people were strongly opposed to seeing any American hold hands with a Vietnamese girl in public. Eighty-two percent (82%) felt that any girls appearing in public with Americans must be "bad girls." Seventy-nine percent (79%) just plain disliked seeing any of their girls with Americans.

In Vietnam people show friendship and affection publicly with words and smiles. Very seldom do they touch each other the way Americans do by backslapping or kissing babies. Perhaps the limit of physical contact is when one of two people,

talking quietly with each other, will reach out a hand to touch the other's arm to make a point.

Seldom in Vietnam would a stranger ever presume to pick up a baby in his arms or tousele the hair of a child. Kind words and gifts are much more acceptable. Indeed, compliments and kind words will make a much more lasting impression than any amount of hand holding would make in America.

Another thing involved in this incident is the different status of women in Vietnam. Like every part of the world, Vietnam sees some change today in the role of women. In large parts of South Vietnam, however, women are expected to defer to men. If we show interest in the women without first paying more marked deference to the men, we insult the men.

Elderly women enjoy a special status in many Vietnamese hamlets. They are allowed to wander and speak freely in other people's homes. Young men will patiently endure teasing and insults from old women.

Young women are allowed no such freedoms. In most Vietnamese families young women are told whom they will marry, what they may or may not study at school or do for a vocation. They are told whether or not they may continue their education.

Mothers will often not even eat at the same table with their husbands and children. Wives serve their husbands, then themselves.

Although in some cities the women are entering such professions as law and medicine, in some rural areas the number of concubines and "second" wives is increasing.

Women are important in any culture. (Ask any man!) In Vietnam the place of women is different than in the United States.

Yet another thing that should be considered regarding this incident is our strangeness or unfamiliarity in the eyes of the Vietnamese. It has been said, "You hurt any of my people and you hurt me!" We know what that means back home. It means if you gossip about my friend you are also talking about me. If you insult the Corps you are knocking me.

Similarly, if a stranger does something in my hometown that "just isn't done" he insults the whole town. Every man or woman who sees the stranger do what "just isn't done" will take offense and talk about it that very night. Soon the stranger will feel the whole town's resentment.

If a city boy makes fun of a beloved farmer in a country store, if a westerner wears his boots and 10-gallon hat to a New Jersey dance, if a Yankee scoffs at grits or dumplings, the local people will coldly turn against him. It's just as true in Vietnam.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Point out examples to your men of actions which are appropriate in some places but not in others. Place and circumstance have a great deal to do with the acceptability of things like holding hands, kissing, or necking in the United States. These examples can reinforce understanding of the incorrectness of public displays of affection in Vietnam.

→ Talk about the way one of us is apt to feel if even a friend is attentive to our wife or girl friend while ignoring us. The situation can, rather obviously, be made much more intense when the person is a foreigner and when women occupy a different social position.

→ Encourage your men to talk with Popular Forces members or village leaders, who have slowly become trusted friends, about how we are doing in our relationships with them and their people. This "feedback" can provide insights that might otherwise be impossible to gain. We are always on safe ground to make friends with several young men before paying any attention to the girls.

→ Have the chaplain, or someone else who knows Vietnamese customs and courtesies, talk with your men about proper behavior on a visit in a Vietnamese home, when sharing a meal, or upon meeting Vietnamese friends.

Unit Discussion I-3: When We Depend on the Vietnamese



"The Night the Chopper Pilot Had to Hitchhike"

Discussion Objective

The realization that the way Americans treat the Vietnamese can profoundly influence the way they react when we must depend upon them.

The Way It Happened

Captain Smith of the 1st MAW felt real lucky for all he had just gone through. His UH 34 had been heading back empty to Phu Bai and taken some ground fire in the transmission and engine. They happened to be over the river at the time and fortunately were able to make it to a sandspit. His copilot and crew were injured in the rough landing. One of the crew had caught a round of the ground fire earlier.

In the fading daylight his wingman had hovered over them and lifted three of them off the spit. Right then all kinds of automatic fire had opened up and his wingman had to get out of there. Captain Smith had to dive into the water. (His bird was still half full of fuel and not the safest form of cover.)

Once into the water with his head down, Captain Smith realized that this was no slow current. The tide must be going out right fast. Rather than fight it and draw attention to himself with his splashing he chose to drift with the current, bobbing up for air as he needed it and hoping for a quiet eddy real soon so he could drag himself over to the shore.

Now he figured it was safe to keep his head up. Looking around he was amazed to see how far he had traveled. He could see land but he knew how deceptive distance is over water. That spit must have been at the very mouth of the river.

A good 400 meters away he caught the outline of some poles. They must be a fishing weir. He began a steady crawl in their direction. Man, he was tiring fast! "Idiot," he muttered as he finally remembered to shake out of his flak vest.

At last he made it to the fishing weir and grabbed the first shell encrusted pole he could reach. It cut his hand but he looped an arm over a rope and hung on. He relaxed now and tried to get his bearings.

It was quite a spot, No Mae West. (It was by his seat on the aircraft.) No water. No light. No shark chaser. He did have his pistol and some tracer ammo. Now it was raining, though, and he had little hope of being spotted.

Now, almost on top of him, a wooden hull of a fishing boat slid out of the darkness. (They had been late coming back from the sea and were stopping to check the fishing weir at ebb tide.) But what next? Would they be VC? He could probably duck down and avoid being seen. But what when they left? It was a long way to shore and, boy, these ropes cut his hands with their coating of tiny shells!

Tentatively he called out, "Toy la ban!" (Thank God he had learned enough Vietnamese to say "I am your friend.") The fishermen were startled and one drew back a pole ready to swing it. "Toy la ban!" Captain Smith repeated.

As the fishermen peered at him Smith pointed to himself, then the boat, then the land. "OK," he asked. (How do you say "OK" in Vietnamese? Ans: "shjah.") After what seemed like an eternity of silent debate one of the old men reached a gnarled hand over the side toward Captain Smith.

Captain Smith scrambled up and over the side and slid right across a huge basket of slippery fish. Getting to a sitting position on the deck he turned to the men nodded and said "Cum on ung!" (Thank you.)

Now he was at their mercy. He had his pistol but did he want to chance using it? Where would they take him if they were mad? Did he really want to risk running this crate himself? It seemed that as long as they hadn't clouted him in the water they might get him back safely. Again, he pointed to himself, the boat and toward land and smiled.

As he watched their rhythmic rowing he thought of the last time he had seen oriental fishermen up close. It had been in 1962 flying A-4Ds out of Iwakuni. He and his buddy used to "flat hat" fishing boats on the Inland Sea and see if they could scare the fishermen into jumping into the water.

Good grief! He hoped that no one had "flat hatted" these men. Captain Smith did some long deep thinking as the fishermen rowed. He was startled to see the boat hit the beach 100 meters down from the LCU landing. The men were smiling at him, motioning him to get off their boat.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ Captain Smith was delivered safe and sound to his own people. How might he show his gratitude?
- ➔ What sort of things resemble "flat-hatting" of fishing boats?
- ➔ In what other ways can fishermen be threatened?

Key to Understanding

It helps to recall just what a Vietnamese citizen must do even if he doesn't much care about his central government. He must pay taxes. He must serve in the Army if called.

Beyond this, however, there are many things which the government of Vietnam hopes he will do. They (and we) hope that the individual fisherman will not assist the enemy but will help the allies by warning them of impending attacks, rescuing pilots, etc.

The Viet Cong also know what the fisherman must do for the central government and what he is free not to do. It is at great risk, especially in the daylight hours, that any fisherman assist the allies. Out in the bays, on the rivers or at open reaches of the sea, the fisherman has no trees or buildings for cover. Everything he does is crystal clear to watching VC eyes.

He is also vulnerable to VC harassment. Working off by himself it is very easy for his boat to be followed and sunk. His fishing weir can be cut at night. He is easily threatened when the VC suggest that harm may come to his family while he is many kilometers out to sea. If he brings his family with him on the boat they can be just as easily overpowered by a VC craft.

How then would we ever hope to influence the fisherman and convince him that we are really fighting for him and his family?

Only by our contacts with him can we convince him that we are not colonialists. By our attitude toward him and his family we make or lose points for his assistance. It's as simple as that.

Recently a Seabee drove a "6 x 6" wildly down the beach on the hard sand next to the surf. He was racing to get back to his unit for mail call. Ahead were some old, long fishing boats pulled up on the sand. Rather than slow down and swing around them he drove right over the one closest to the surf. He did not even stop his truck to assess the damage. It takes the entire annual income of two men to buy a new boat of modest size (20 feet). Yet when the claims officer reached the scene after being summoned by a Marine sergeant, the claims officer wanted to pay only 1/4 of the value of a new boat because of the age of the craft that was destroyed.

Pilots are not the only ones who affect the cooperation of fisherman. Patrols through fishing villages, MEDCAPS, civic action efforts and patrol boat activities are arenas in the war for people.

Steps in the Right Direction

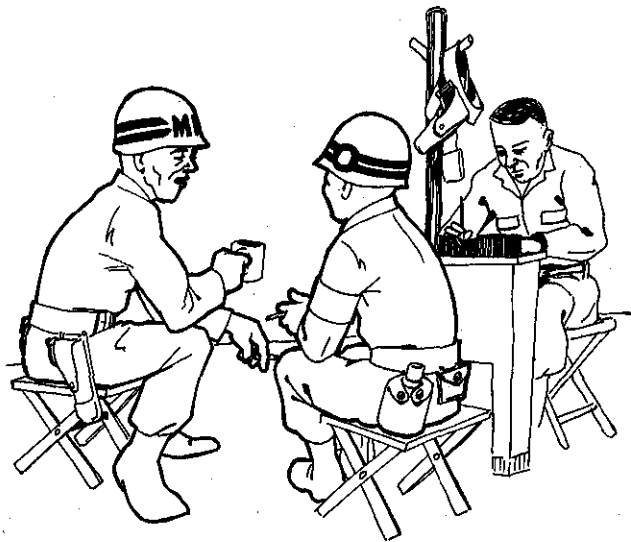
➔ At your next opportunity suggest that a few of your better men make an effort (with an interpreter) to get to know one fisherman. Learn all you can about that man, what he faces and what he fears.

➔ Observe closely the contacts that are made when Americans are in contact with fishing villages. Try to view those contacts through the eyes of the

Vietnamese. Are there mob scenes of children begging for C-rations? To whom are the Marines paying most attention?

➔ Collect all the information you can about the life of the fisherman, their problems with curfew, their superstitions and beliefs about life at sea. Pass this information along to your Personal Response Project Officer.

Unit Discussion I-4: The Purpose of Our Presence



"So Why Are You Here, Joe"

Discussion Objective

A deeper sense of meaning and purpose on the part of the Marine serving in Vietnam.

The Way It Happened

It was a hot, muggy night at the MP station in Danang. Gunny Doe was on the duty phone taking the information on an accident.

"Sergeant Smith, you and Sergeant Quay get over to Doc Loc Street and investigate an accident. Some kid was hit by a Navy truck."

Sergeant Smith and Sergeant Quay, the senior "QC" (Vietnamese abbreviation for MP), headed for the scene by jeep. They arrived to find a crowd already gathering. Pushing through the crowd they got the badly injured lad and his mother into an ambulance. The crowd thinned.

After getting statements from the driver and witnesses they doubled back to see how the boy was doing at the hospital. On the way to the USAID hospital Sergeant Quay looked at Sergeant Smith and said, "Joe - why you come to my country?"

Sergeant Smith didn't answer. Cursing the traffic, he swung out and around a stalled Vietnamese bus. Soon they drew up at the emergency ramp of the hospital.

They found the mother easily. The boy was in X-ray and she was waiting outside the door. They got her story and tried to soothe her. She was a frail, little woman.

On their way out they passed the open door of a ward. "What's this?" Sergeant Smith asked of an American nurse.

"They are all burn cases, pretty horrible," she answered.

"Oh, I hear about this," whispered Sergeant Quay. "These people are in bus on Highway One. . . VC up in tree next to road. . . Bus come under tree. . . VC drop pail of gasoline on bus. . . VC in next tree drop torch. . . This is what you call terrorism. . . It is very bad."

Sergeant Smith looked at the ward crammed with hard, wooden beds. Some of the beds had two and three people on them.

There was very little noise. The mothers seemed to lie quietly. Some of the children writhed with pain. They couldn't possibly give them enough dope to stop all the pain. They agonized silently.

Neither man said a word all the way back to the MP shack.

When they walked in, Gunny Doe was already pouring the coffee. Sitting down and after lighting up cigarettes, both men sort of stared at the deck.

"You know," said Sergeant Quay, "On the way to the hospital I asked you a question, Joe."

"Yeah, I remember."

"So why are you here, Joe?"

"Oh. . .there's a couple reasons, I guess."

"Whatever it is, I think it is a very good thing," said Sergeant Quay.

- If you were Sergeant Smith what would your answer be to Sergeant Quay?
- Gunny Doe hardly ever got out of the MP shack to mix with the people. How do you think Doe would explain his reasons for being in Vietnam?
- Why do you suppose Sergeant Quay asked the question?

Key to Understanding

There may be as many reasons for being in Vietnam as there are Americans. Some will say they were ordered to Vietnam and that's reason enough.

Many men find deeper reasons for being in Vietnam after they arrive and see for themselves the terrorism and the plight of the people.

There never has been a question about which 100% of the people agreed 100%. The very nature of our kind of government at home encourages free speech and allows people to think for themselves. One of the basic reasons for our having a Marine Corps is to protect the liberties of our people at home including those who disagree with us.

Another basic reason for having a Marine Corps is the value we attach to human life. It is precisely because every human life is valuable that brave

men go out to put their lives on the line to protect those whose lives are threatened.

For some Marines the larger picture is more important. Most of the members of the South East Asia Treaty Organization are now represented in Vietnam with troops, engineers, air support or medical teams. These countries are constantly aware of the threat to their safety if communist expansion goes unchecked. Many smaller countries which exist within mortar distance of communist states are keenly watching the conflict to see if we keep our word to answer South Vietnam's request for assistance.

For many Marines, things like what happened at the hospital with Sergeant Smith and Sergeant Quay are all the reason they need for being in Vietnam.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Whenever you can, increase your own background reading of why we are here. You are well advised to balance your reading. Beware of the man who has read one book and knows all the answers!

→ A good balance would include books written by French, American and Vietnamese authors. Here are some starters:

- Bernard Fall, Vietnam Witness
- Robert Shaplen, The Lost Revolution
- Nguyen Thuyet, History of Vietnam

→ When talking about this with your men it is wise not to cut the men off too soon if they disagree with you. Let them get any bitterness they may have out into the open. If it is "way out" the small group of men in the discussion will soon straighten out that lad.

→ It is not our place to influence the political beliefs of any of our men. As more mature leaders, however, we can and should provide opportunities for our men to grow intellectually.

→ Don't be afraid of bringing the group back to the basics, such as the importance of human life, our own beliefs about the rights of people to have some say in how they are governed and our willingness to stand up against aggressors.

Unit Discussion I-5: Our Relationship With Children



"The Candy Handout"

Discussion Objective

Improved relationships between Marines and the Vietnamese as a result of dealing with their children in appropriate and acceptable ways.

The Way It Happened

Sergeant Wayne Doe liked being a Marine. The things the Marine Corps stood for were important to him. He took as much pride in his job as he did

in his wife and their two children. They seemed a long way away now that he was in Vietnam. He didn't like the separation, the killing, the uncertainty, any more than the next guy - but it was a job that had to be done.

The day was hot and Sergeant Doe's platoon was taking advantage of a rest break in the shade of some trees. Lieutenant Smith and an interpreter talked with the elders of a Vietnamese village about some reported VC activity. Five small boys approached them and soon the Marines and the boys were trying to talk with each other. The boys knew a few words in English and the Marines had picked up some Vietnamese phrases. When they didn't understand they made signs with their hands or just grinned at each other. Some other boys and girls had come up and were watching from a short distance away.

Sergeant Doe felt very kindly toward these Vietnamese children. Their bright eyes and ready smiles made him think of his own kids back home. He remembered that he had stuck several bars of candy in his field pack and decided to break them up and give them to the boys. They crowded around eagerly and reached for the candy, but then somehow things began to get out of hand. The children who had been watching ran up and began to grab at the candy; others seemed to appear from nowhere and soon there was pushing, shoving, a mob of yelling, rowdy children. When the candy was gone and Sergeant Doe tried to back away from the

disorderly scene, the children began to fight and a near-riot resulted.

Vietnamese parents ran up in response to the noise, finally got the children under control and on their way back to their games. By that time the Lieutenant and the village elders had arrived and everyone was obviously unhappy over the incident. It was several weeks before really friendly relationships with the Marines were re-established between the Marines and the people of the village.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ Who was to blame for the bad feeling that grew out of the candy handout incident?
- ➔ Do you think the Vietnamese parents appreciated Sergeant Doe's willingness to share his candy with their children?
- ➔ Can you think of any ways that the Marines might have shown their friendliness toward the children without risking hard feelings? Any way the candy could have been shared so as to be appreciated and enjoyed?
- ➔ How do you feel about people paying attention to your children? What about someone offering them candy or gum?
- ➔ How do people in small American communities sometimes look upon a "stranger in town"?

Keys to Understanding

A number of your men, especially those who have children, can readily appreciate the fact that attention paid their children by family and friends is one thing, but that undue attention and giving of presents from a stranger is a different matter. If the stranger is also a foreigner armed for combat he is likely to be regarded with even greater suspicion.

A customary part of a child's training is a warning against being enticed by unknown adults who offer them things or who make them appealing promises. This is true not just in the United States but in almost every country in the world. Vietnam is no exception. But the matter is complicated in Vietnam by the fact that many Vietnamese feel that people can be motivated not only by their own desires but by the whims of evil spirits.

It is believed by some that these spirits may wish to steal the spirit of a child for themselves or destroy it altogether. Great pains are taken to protect a child from such influences. Sometimes people avoid complimenting children lest some wandering spirit overhear and be attracted to them. Sometimes folk think it would be "putting on" to praise their children publicly. Often babies are handed across a doorway rather than carried in order to confuse any evil spirit who might be following. In some areas children are even called by wrong names - by girl's names or by the names of usually unmentioned parts of the body to trick the spirits.

Even more familiar to Americans is the dislike that people have for the thought that other people can do things for their children that they cannot. The Vietnamese feel that this involves a loss of "face" - of status in the eyes of their own children. Village elders and religious leaders should always be approached first in dealing with the Vietnamese. Gifts channeled through them allow them to retain their position of respect. Equally important, this indicates cooperation between the Americans and the leaders of the people. Their children then do not seem to be beggars or in any way dependent on outsiders for their welfare. The Vietnamese love their children, like we do. They also want them to remain firmly under their control and properly respectful of their parents and elders.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Direct your men not to touch children, particularly around the head. Friendliness can be shown through smiles and gestures and merely standing close together. Physical contact should generally be avoided.

→ Deal with leaders and elders first. Ways can then be agreed upon to relate to - or assist - the rest of the people.

→ Remind your men that they are "strangers" in town. They will often be regarded with suspicion and mistrust. Wisdom dictates that the friendship and confidence of the people must be won first, then we can relate to them more freely.

Unit Discussion I-6: Recognizing Vietnamese Leaders



"Staying Within the Chain of Command"

Discussion Objective

An awareness and use of the proper channels of authority and leadership in Vietnamese villages and towns.

The Way It Happened

In May 1966 the Buddhist leaders in I Corps were registering loud protests with the central government in Saigon. Our forces were told to

stay out of the way as much as possible while the Vietnamese settled their own misunderstandings.

At one point along highway one the Buddhists carried their altars out onto the road and stopped traffic in both directions. No one wanted to knock over an altar with a truck. The tactics were very effective. However, this roadblock cut off one of our engineer companies from its supply point.

Rather than create an ugly incident, the company commander stopped by to see the village chief who in turn called a meeting with the village elders and the Buddhist priests. Over several cups of tea, arrangements were made for two daily supply runs for the engineers. The villagers agreed to move the altars to let Marine trucks through and to replace them after the convoys passed. Greater friendliness was produced on both sides after that conference.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What made the company commander's efforts to obtain daily supply runs through the blockade successful?
- ➔ Why are there lines of authority and leadership in so many places and organizations? Why should they be used?
- ➔ How are Vietnamese leaders chosen? Does this differ from the way American leaders are selected? Are American leaders more important than Vietnamese leaders?

Keys to Understanding

We don't think much of a person in the military who refuses to operate within the chain of command. When someone tries to play people against each other or bring external pressures to bear in order to get his way, the result is usually a lot of bad feelings and general confusion.

The chain of command is not always so obvious in civilian organizations and communities. Rank and authority are not usually so easily seen as the stripes and bars on military uniforms. But, make no mistake about it, the rank structure is there! Men have almost always set up levels of leadership and authority whenever and wherever they are going to live and work together. It helps get things done in a more orderly and dependable way.

The Vietnamese have been trained to respect authority. They revere their elected village chiefs and their religious leaders. They also have great respect for the elderly. Age is like a rank structure for them. If we are to work with them effectively we need to know how to deal with the right people in such a way as to give the right impressions of our good will and worthy intentions.

When going in a village or town seek out the oldest man first. He deserves the most respect. Bow slightly and say "Chow Ung." Point to your rate or rank insignia so that he knows you are the senior man in your group.

Now, as you try to talk with him through an interpreter, or using a phrase list, here are some helpful tips:

- You stand on lower ground.
- Stand close to the man.
- Speak softly.
- Smile a lot.

- Don't get in a hurry; haste is considered childish.
- Fold your arms or keep them at your side; don't put your hands on your hips (it means you're all set to swing at the old gentleman).

As you talk, you may want to offer him a cigarette. If so, be sure to offer the cigarette (or any gift) with both hands, bowing slightly. Don't ever let any of your men throw candy, C-rations, or cigarettes at people. It is always considered pompous and distasteful. Always bow slightly as gifts are offered.

Now, as you talk with the old man you may learn that he is not the hamlet or village chief. That's all right. You have still done the right thing. The chief will be glad that you spoke to the oldest man first.

Next, look around to see if there is a Buddhist bonze or Catholic priest in the area. The senior man should also greet him as well.

When you are about ten feet away from the priest, stop, bow slightly, holding your hands together in front of your chest, and say, "Kin Chow Ung" ("Hello venerable"). This is called the "gassho" and it is the way everyone in Vietnam greets a priest or bonze.

Help your men to understand that an American is not degrading himself by following these customs. He is increasing his stature in the eyes of the people.

As allies, Vietnamese and Americans need mutual respect and friendship. The sooner their friendship is won, the sooner we will be able to work together to achieve our common goals.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Have your group repeat basic Vietnamese greetings after you several times so that they can use them well. Demonstrate the gassho and have them try using it.

→ Have your men discuss their reactions toward someone who comes into a home and ignores the man of the house while associating with the wife and children. Or who mingles with the employees of a business without speaking to the boss. Or who makes an official visit to a military base but does not make a courtesy call on the commanding officer.

→ Remind your men that one of the reasons we are in Vietnam is to preserve the right of the Vietnamese to live as they choose, to have the right to honor their own customs and leaders, and even the right to protest abuses when they feel it necessary. One of the ways we can prove this is by honoring their customs and leaders also.

→ When any problems or complications arise in dealing with the Vietnamese always get all the facts before taking action. Your chaplain should be able to point out the proper customs and courtesies involved. The Personal Response Project Officer, members of your Personal Response Councils, and your ARVN liaison officer can provide valuable assistance.

Unit Discussion I-7: Showing Respect for Life



"The Friendly KIA's"

Discussion Objective

The recognition that respect and concern for Vietnamese lives and feelings can create bonds of friendship and understanding.

The Way It Happened

A patrol from Bravo Company, led by Sergeant Doe, was moving west along the Song Tra Bong River to set up a night ambush in the string of hamlets referred to as the "Phoulies." Between

"Phoulie-1" and "Phoulie-2" the patrol started receiving sniper fire from an island out in the river. Spotting the answering fire, the VC raked their positions with machineguns.

The VC firing broke off when illumination appeared overhead from the battalion's 81mm mortars. Sergeant Doe noticed some moaning from a nearby dwelling. Calling for HM3 Smith to accompany him, Sergeant Doe entered the thatched hut.

There on the hard, wooden bed lay a young girl and her parents bleeding profusely. Doe and Smith administered first aid and with first light brought them down the road on litters. However, all three - the parents and the little girl - died before they could reach a helicopter LZ.

When the neighbors saw the bodies on the litters a near riot resulted. The dead parents' two surviving children were deeply shaken with grief.

When word reached the Battalion CP, the commanding officer called for his chaplain and his S-5 to see if they could explain the tragedy to the people. Two Catholic nuns were asked to go along as interpreters.

The sisters learned from the surviving children that the firing which killed their parents had come from across the river. This quickly turned the anger of the neighbors away from the Marines toward the VC. However, the S-5 officer went on to

make a solatium payment to the hamlet chief to assist with burial expenses even though it was VC fire which killed the civilians. The sisters brought the children back with them to live at their school. Today there is a new and steady friendship between the Marines and the people of "Phoulie-2."

Questions for Discussion

→ Should a solatium payment have been made to the hamlet chief when it was VC fire that killed the civilians?

→ Can you think of a better way to handle the anger and grief of the villagers than was used in this incident?

→ How can the increased friendship between Marines and the people of "Phoulie-2" benefit our efforts in Vietnam?

Keys to Understanding

Nobody likes to be blamed for something he didn't do. The usual reaction to a false accusation is usually anger or indignation. It takes a great deal of wisdom to look at such a situation calmly and to be considerate of the people involved.

But, as in the case of the friendly KIA's, such patience and understanding can pay rich rewards of friendship and cooperation. The solatium payment signified our respect and concern for human

beings and their sorrow, not an acceptance of blame.

The Vietnamese have strong personal and family ties with the members of their own hamlets and towns. Their sorrow at the loss of loved ones is just as painful and shocking as ours would be. Life is not cheap for them any more than it is for us. Because of their religious beliefs, the proper handling of the dead is a matter of great concern.

The deaths of friends and loved ones as a result of the conflict of strange military forces is even more confusing and resented. The reasons for the presence of Americans in their country are not always clear to them. We are sometimes confused with the French or other Europeans. The people of Vietnam are often unaware of the nature of their national government, much less of its request for our military assistance.

In spite of all this, they know when people care about them and when they don't. They are sensitive to the friendliness or contempt that they sense in our speech and actions. They will believe in our good intentions only when they see some tangible evidence of them. Only when they realize that the strangers want to help them, rather than abuse them.

This is not so hard to understand. We have a saying, "I'm from Missouri, show me!" A lot of us from other states feel the same way. Seeing is believing. We distrust people who are always

talking about how highly they regard us and doing nothing to back it up. We suspect that they are really just out for themselves.

For hundreds of years the Vietnamese have been exposed to foreign intervention and exploitation. It is hard for them to believe that we have nothing to gain in their country except their good will. Especially when they see some of our servicemen continually trying to take advantage of everything and everybody for their own profit or pleasure.

Expressions of sympathy in the case of the injury or death of Vietnamese are helpful. Medical aid is even more meaningful. When the KIA is a breadwinner, provisions for the welfare of dependents is an unforgettable indication of our concern.

The Vietnamese are human beings. We are truly their friends when we demonstrate our respect and concern for them as human beings.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Remind your men to be very careful to avoid walking on or damaging Vietnamese graves and other religious areas and objects. It should be apparent that members of the family can treat graves and religious objects differently than strangers.

→ Have your men repeat the Vietnamese expression "TOY R-RAT DEE-YEK VAY VEE-YEK DAH" until they can use it easily. It means "I am

very sorry about this" and can be used should they be present when Vietnamese are injured or killed.

→ Help your men to realize that surface appearances can be misleading. When there are signs of anger or irritation by the Vietnamese, take the time to find out the real reasons and the proper way of handling the situation before choosing a course of action.

Unit Discussion I-8: A Response to Friendship



"It Works Both Ways"

Discussion Objective

The realization that the way to win the friendship and cooperation of the Vietnamese is to be friendly and helpful.

The Way It Happened

A patrol starting out from the combat base at Chu Lai was conducting a series of MEDCAPS in the hamlets between Hill 69 and the beach. At one

stop while a Vietnamese nurse, a corpsman and the civil affairs NCO were working with some adult patients, several children approached the Marines who were standing by as security. Unable to speak in English, the children wrote "VC" in the sand and drew pictures of weapons. They pointed down the road and said, "Khung! Khung!" (No, No) The Marines noted that the people in the fields were quietly leaving the rice paddies.

The Marines reported this back to their CP. Two platoons were diverted to the area and flushed 30 VC from an ambush site. What might have been a disaster turned into a victory thanks to the willingness of the children to risk warning the Marines in time.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ Why did the children warn the MEDCAP team of the VC ambush?
- ➔ What could have happened to the children as a result of their warning?
- ➔ How should the Marines show their appreciation to the children?

Keys to Understanding

"Why should I risk my life for these people?" This is a question that nearly everybody in Vietnam has heard at one time or another. It's a good question. There are some good answers.

But just as important as the answers is the fact that the question works both ways. Why should the Vietnamese people risk their lives for us? Not just ARVNs and PFs, but civilian men, women and children. This is a good question too, because many Vietnamese risk their lives daily for us - men, women and children.

The VC have warned the people repeatedly of the severe reprisals they will make against anyone who helps the Americans in any way. Charlie has frequently made good on his threats. Villagers have been tortured and murdered. Whole busloads of children have had a hand chopped off for going to school in defiance of Viet Cong orders. Being forced to watch the execution of friends and loved ones because they helped Americans is a horribly vivid and unforgettable lesson.

The Vietnamese know that the VC could be watching at any time. The children who warned the MEDCAP team about the ambush endangered their lives and the lives of their family.

Why would they, and so many others, risk their lives for us? There are some good answers to this question. But more important than the answers is the fact that the Vietnamese will and do risk their lives for us, often in very daring and dramatic ways, when they are convinced that we are their friends and that we are willing to help them obtain the freedom from tyranny, disease, ignorance and poverty that they desire just as much as we do.

It takes more than just our presence in their country to convince the Vietnamese of our friendship and sincerity. Vietnam has a long history of foreign occupations, and learned the hard way that the strangers were usually there for their own benefits and purposes, not to help the Vietnamese.

But when we show our friendship through medical aid, material assistance, and more importantly, through a personal response to the Vietnamese as people whose lives and feelings, needs and hopes are equally as important as our own. . . when our demonstrations of friendly concern are as real and vivid as the VC demonstrations of terror. . . . the Vietnamese have proven that they will risk as much for us as we will for them.

It works both ways!

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Talk to your men about the need for staying alert for bad living conditions, disease, or unusual hostility on the part of the Vietnamese. Assistance in these areas can be especially helpful in winning the friendship and loyalty of the people.

→ Expressions of gratitude and material gifts are good responses to Vietnamese who risk their lives to help us. But, beyond this, every effort should be made to provide protection for them against VC terror tactics. This is not always

possible, but a real concern for our friends and allies will often help us find ways to help insure their safety.

→ Don't make promises of assistance or protection that you might not be able to keep. A broken promise is far worse than an unspoken one. Wait until you are sure that what you have in mind is right, can be done, and the channels for action cleared before you assure a Vietnamese of your ability to accomplish something in his behalf.

Chapter II: MONEY AND POSSESSIONS

How the ways in which the Vietnamese relate to the things they own and use affect their attitudes toward Americans.

A. Leader's Guidelines

To most Vietnamese the people from the United States seem unbelievably wealthy. The average Marine takes for granted things which most Vietnamese can never dream of owning. By the same token, to most Americans the Vietnamese seem startlingly poor and underprivileged.

The reactions of each group of people toward this contrast in possessions becomes the basis for a great deal of misunderstanding. This misunderstanding can be severe because people consider your attitude toward their possessions as an accurate reflection of your attitude toward them.

The following discussions are designed to help your men understand more clearly the attitudes of the Vietnamese toward their possessions and the ways they are used. In the process your men might well take a look at their own attitudes toward the things they own and the ways they use them.

The discussions on theft, sanitation and hygiene, and fundamental equality should provoke some sharp differences of opinion if your people feel free to express themselves. This is a healthy process. It may seem at times that you're not getting anywhere. But the opportunity to be heard often prompts individuals to think more deeply about a matter than if they are not allowed to talk out their feelings.

Anytime the group gets stuck, items from the Keys to Understanding sections of the discussions will usually stimulate further consideration of a topic. Learn both these items and The Way It Happened and The Way It Is sections well before attempting a discussion. The fact that you don't have to read them will make them seem more vivid and alive to your men, and their reaction will be more genuine.



"When There Is No Poor House"

Discussion Objective

Understanding stealing and graft in a struggling economy.

The Way It Happens

Case A. Combined Action Platoon 444 has just been established on the edge of a refugee village in Quang Nam Province. The Marines and the Popular Forces (PFs) are working like beavers to build bunkers, string wire and strengthen their compound's defenses.

At the end of their first week a Corporal realized that they were missing four cases of C-rations. Further inventory showed that they were also missing some blankets and a record player. The Corporal wondered what would be the best way to break the news to the Marines and to approach their PFs.

Case B. Out at Lang Vel in western Quang Tri another group of refugees was gathering out of the neighboring hills where the VC had been harassing them. These were the Brou tribespeople. Hardworking and honest, most of the Brou were nonetheless terribly short of food. They were forced to leave their rice fields and were now just starting new gardens.

Our Marine Civil Affairs people sent whole plane loads of rice to the Brou people as a temporary stopgap to famine. They couldn't believe their ears when they heard that the Brou were still hungry. On-site inspection confirmed that there were full warehouses of rice near the village but that the Brou were being forced to pay VN\$120.00 for tins full of rice that should have cost VN\$18.00. Few could afford so much money. The civil affairs officer launched a personal investigation

Questions for Discussion

➔ Were there times in the history of the United States when theft was not regarded quite the same as it is today?

→ Are there even today in the United States examples of elected officials misusing public funds?

→ What things are different when there is no organized relief or welfare system for the needy in a society?

Keys to Understanding

It might comfort the Marines in CAC 444 to know that in the U.S. depression of the thirties in some areas a man caught stealing was not dealt with as severely if his reason was that his family was starving. Even today some game wardens will turn their backs when a very poor man hunts game out of season. He will need the food for his family. Everyone who reads Victor Hugo's Les Miserables shudders that the young father, Valjean, should have been sentenced as a galley slave for stealing a loaf of bread for his son.

This is not to say that stealing can ever be "right." It is to say, however, that there are times when we need to see the complete picture before we start condemning people. Even in our UCMJ there is a place for mitigation.

It would be of even greater comfort to the Marines of CAC 444 if they realized that in a traditional society like Vietnam's there will be less and less stealing the more closely friendships are formed. People here do not steal from their friends. The best insurance against theft is to form such genuine friendships that your neighbors actually end up guarding your possessions.

Strange as it may seem, that same principle was at work in Lang Vei where the Brou were being cheated by a Vietnamese official. The Brou were outsiders. A Vietnamese lieutenant was taking care of his own people first. There was one price for the "locals" and another price for the "tourists" just as there sometimes is in resort areas of the States, Hong Kong, and Gibraltar.

In case B a diplomatic but firm means had to be found to short-circuit the system of graft. After all, babies were starving. It was done very simply by having the Brou help unload the rice, count the bags and put them in the storehouse. Someone conversant in the Brou language explained to their chief how the system was suppose to work and it did. The Lieutenant is still there, continuing his other duties. The Brou are eating rice.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ If there is a lot of stealing or graft in your area it is a good sign that there is a gap in the relationships between Americans and Vietnamese or between Vietnamese and other Vietnamese. Look into it. Stronger ties between the groups will reduce both theft and graft. As a professional leader you should be ahead of the problem with a positive approach!

➔ You will notice that in nearly every Vietnamese home there is one cupboard or chest that is padlocked. Here are kept the family's most precious

possessions. Anything else in the house is almost free for any neighbor to borrow--sometimes without even asking. Remind your men to keep their valuables locked up in a sea bag or chest--just as they were taught in boot camp.

→ Be on the alert for opportunities to provide employment for the local people, especially in refugee areas. Neither Buddhist nor Judeo-Christian ethics condone stealing or graft. Few men would rather steal than gain the self-respect of earning good wages, fair and square. Self-help projects, home industries, community fish farms, etc. are all ways to cut away the roots of stealing and graft.

Unit Discussion II-2: The Plight of the Farmer
in Vietnam



"Mr. Tuyen Sweats It Out"

Discussion Objective

An appreciation of people in rural Vietnam.

The Way It Is

Mr. Tuyen was "taking five." Seated in the shade over on the dike of his rice paddy, he let his feet dangle in the cooler water flowing into the paddy.

This year he had been able to rent a whole hectare of land (2.4 acres) from the Government for VN\$1,800. It was high rent but the land was excellent.

So far this year things looked good as far as the weather was concerned. He worried some about what he would do for plowing after this crop. He did not have a buffalo of his own. They cost VN\$18,000. His brother's buffalo was always strong enough to plow both farms. But 2 weeks ago they heard some shots from the road and his brother's buffalo fell over dead. They never saw who was on the road or knew why the shots were fired.

That road bothered Mr. Tuyen. His 10-year old son Thu-Khoa and 7-year old son Phan-Chan walked it 2 kilometers each way to school. Neither the Vietnamese nor the American truck drivers seemed to slow down for the children.

His 9-year old girl, Co-Tam, would not go to school this year. She was needed at home to take care of the two babies. In this way his wife could work on his brother's farm. True she only made 4 piastres per hour. But her wages kept them going last year when the rice crop was so poor. This year she was trying to buy ducks with her wages. The price for ducks had gone up 120% over last year's price. By working 10 hours a day, 5 days a week she could buy three baby ducks a week. She had been able to buy 32 ducks. That old snake in the mangrove had snatched six. The rats had gotten to

four of them at night and three were very weak when she got them and died soon afterward. But they now had 19 healthy ducks and they were learning how to fence them up at nights and keep better track of them during the day.

Mr. Tuyen worried about his mother who still lived with them. His father had died 5 years ago. (And now that he thought of it they still hadn't erected a concrete marker over his grave.) His mother was only in her early fifties but her lungs were very bad. When she was feeling better she had been able to weave two mats a day and earn 40 piastres a day. He had wept when he remembered the 2-month old pig she had given them last year for TET. It had cost VN\$1,500 and had taken her over 8 months to earn the money. Now she tired so quickly that he urged her to sleep during the hot part of the day.

Breaking a twig, Mr. Tuyen reflected bitterly over the government people who had come by last week urging them to buy milk for the babies. Didn't those government people know that it took a day of his wife's wages to buy one can of milk. No, those government people never stopped long enough to figure up what the totals came to for a farmer like himself. After he had paid for his family's rice Mr. Tuyen had about 180 piastres a week.

This 180 piastres a week had to cover a wide range of needs. That could buy a box of salt, one pineapple, one can of milk, and 2 pounds of sugar.

Or it could buy one container of coffee and one package of cigarettes. That of course left nothing for the school tuition or the rent or the fertilizer or insecticide for his fields or for the repairs that were needed for the roof.

He'd forgotten how badly the roof leaked until the monsoon had started again. His brother said that he thought he could get tin from the District Chief for a pig or some chickens as a "thank you gift" (tien hoi lo). Mr. Tuyen vowed that he would never part with his pig while his mother still lived with them.

For all the troubles of the last 40 years (the full span of Mr. Tuyen's life) it was still very good to have your own home—even if the land was rented. In the distance he could hear Thu-Khoa and Phan-Chan coming down the road from school. They were singing a song they had learned in school.

"The scholar comes first and then
the peasant;

But when the rice fails and men run
wildly about,

Then the peasant comes first, and
the scholar second."

Mr. Tuyen looked up at the deepest blue sky in the world, the mountains that ringed his valley and laughed because his children were laughing.

Questions for Discussion

→ A family of two adults and two children would need over a ton of rice a year to stay healthy. True or False?

→ While land reform did limit farms to no more than 100 hectares (240 acres), the majority of farmers in Vietnam still are able to rent or own less than three hectares per family. True or False?

→ No matter how sick Mr. Tuyen's mother may be at night she is going to have to wait until morning to get medical assistance. True or False?

→ If Mr. Tuyen's boys are to go to high school he will somehow have to double his income beforehand. True or False?

Keys to Understanding

Answers to all four of the above questions are true.

Adults need at least 900 pounds of rice per year by Vietnamese standards. A family of two adults and two children would consume probably 2,700 pounds of rice per year. That would come to about 34 80-pound sacks of rice. A grown man needs about 11 sacks of rice per year.

The amount of rice that people will actually use, however, depends on where they live and how much they can afford. Near Chu Lai, for example, wages are lower than in Danang but the price of rice is higher than in Danang. People tend to eat less of everything near Chu Lai.

The problem of land reform has harassed many governments. The usual procedure is to pass a law saying no man can own more than a certain amount. The Government then buys from the owner any land above that amount. Two factors make this difficult: The landowner may give some of his land to relatives (but continue to use it); the Government must have large sums of money to pay for the land. Although many sincere people have been working hard on the problem of land reform, there are many landowners who still live in Saigon and collect rents from large tracts of land.

The problem of medical assistance in rural areas is plagued by a shortage of Vietnamese nurses and by the curfew that prevents getting people to a hospital at night.

Most high schools charge some fees or tuition. Rural families count on their children helping with the farm when they finish primary school. Parents need to be quite well off financially to afford sending their children to high school.

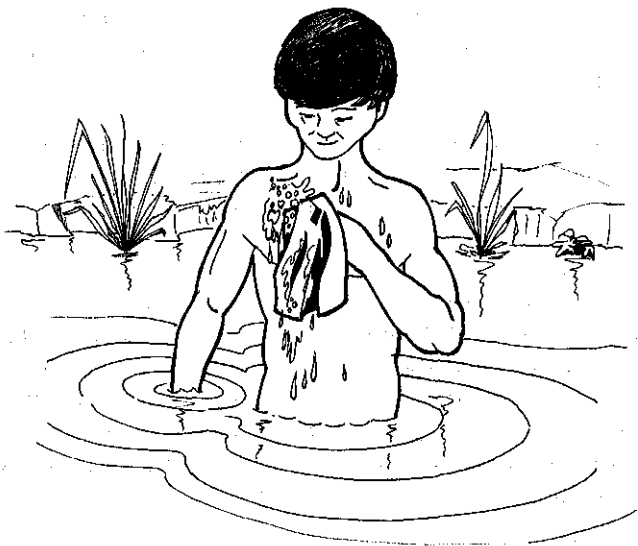
Steps in the Right Direction

- Discuss with your men what can be done to protect farm property and still get the job done on operations.

- Examine the ways your unit can be a positive help to the local economy by establishing a fair laundry service, posting price lists, etc.

- Learn all you can about the local economy and pass the information along to your Personal Response Project Officer.

Unit Discussion II-3: Sanitation and Hygiene



"Who's a Dirty Bum?"

Discussion Objective

An understanding of how cleanliness relates to what people can afford and where they must live.

The Way It Is

Packing up after a MEDCAP a Marine mutters to a corpsman, "Look, some of those people are selling the soap you gave them to that store over there!"

Down the road a Marine guarding a bridge points to a small boy squatted down on his haunches and says to his friend, "Look at that stupid kid! Don't any of them care where they go to the bathroom?"

At the side of the road a Vietnamese vendor offered a Marine a fish sandwich. "Good grief," said the Marine, "I should eat rotten fish covered with flies?"

Still further down the road a family of Vietnamese have finished their work of transplanting rice in their paddy. They are climbing up the bank of the road on their way home. Their legs and arms are covered with gray slime that rapidly dries and cakes on their bodies. A Marine sees them, points at them, and laughs to his buddy.

Questions for Discussion

→ Do Marines have problems keeping clean? Why?

→ How do you explain the following conditions back in the United States:

- The problem caused by people dumping raw sewage into lakes and rivers, the problems of spitting in subways, unsanitary restaurants?

→ Were all Marines clean coming to boot camp? What's the need for rifle inspections or barracks inspections?

Keys to Understanding

You would think that any mature adult could figure out that to bathe you need lots of fresh water. For grownups to wash their clothes, they must have another set of clothes to wear while they wash the first set. Many farmers here can only afford one set of clothes a year (about VN\$600).

In many parts of I Corps, especially along the coast, there just isn't much fresh water. Many of the wells have barely enough water for drinking. And over the years people have learned that it is best not to bathe in some rivers because of leeches or parasites that attach themselves to human bodies.

And, whenever you see people selling soap, you can figure one or all of three things: (1) They don't have enough water to use it; (2) They need something else more and are exchanging the soap for it, or; (3) They don't yet know the value of using soap over an extended period of time.

What about the business of defecating on the ground? It has been pointed out that human waste over here is used as fertilizer. Fertilizer makes up to 30% difference on the rice crop. It's like money. Commercial fertilizer costs VN\$495 to cover a 2-acre plot (7 day's wages). Because human waste is like money many people like to keep it on top of the ground in a box or a compost heap where they can see it. (We sometimes take our wallets out just to look at our money, too.)

So before we condemn anyone for being dirty, we need to ask why are people dirty. There are usually good reasons just as there are with troops coming out of the field.

When we ask some of our friends who grew up in so-called "economically deprived areas" how things were there, we learn that there are still places in the United States where people bathe once a week in a wash tub, where people spit on the ground and where there are no screens or insecticide to take care of the flies.

Sometimes back home we run into people who have lost all hope of bettering themselves. They tend to be dirty and careless. That's just the point. They have been kicked around so much that they don't care anymore. Sometimes we will run into this kind of people in Vietnam.

But bet on this. Most people like to be clean. Look how white many women keep their ao dai (dresses), how white the men keep their formal dress. Their bodies are just like ours. It is refreshing to feel clean, especially on a hot, muggy day. But as we look around we can spot many good reasons why it is hard, even for Marines to stay clean. Out in the field few men will want to bathe in the cold, winter months. When there is only enough water for drinking during the dry season everyone would like to bathe but can't.

It takes money to buy soap and toilets. It takes fresh, leech-free water and a halfway pleasant climate to take a bath.

Steps in the Right Direction

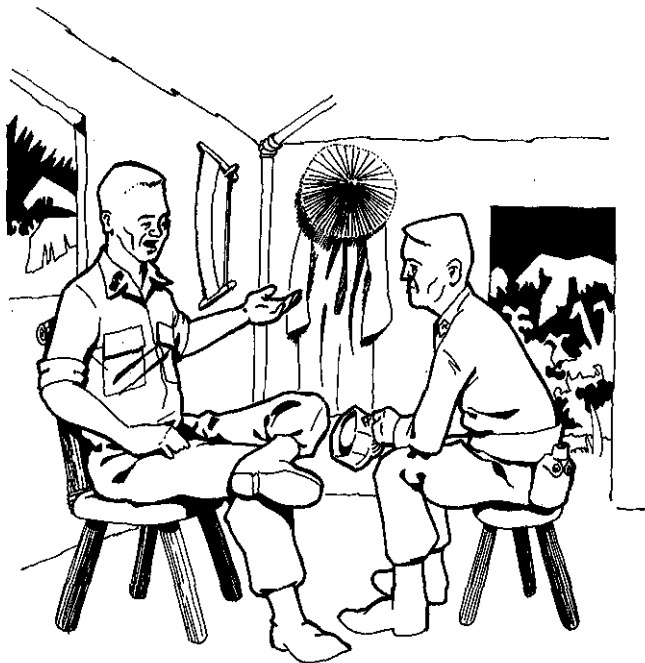
→ Examine with your men any possible ways we could make it easier for our Vietnamese neighbors to keep clean.

→ Are there ways we could treat some of their wells, screen some of their windows, to cut down on bacteria, insects, and intestinal parasites? Check with your corpsmen and engineers.

→ It takes a lot of tact and patience to suggest to anyone that they could probably be cleaner in appearance. Think of ways that you could start the ball rolling without being rude.

→ Explain to your men that some of what they consider to be stench and filth will just have to be accepted since the people can do little about it just now. Throughout Vietnam we note that as soon as people can afford sanitary facilities they get them. Let's not be shocked. Remember the jokes we used to make about our high school locker rooms? The smells? We survived.

Unit Discussion II-4: Fundamental Equality



"Equally Important"

Discussion Objective

A reinforcement of our basic belief that all human beings are equally important.

The Way It Happened

It was quite late. The battalion rear had caught up with the forward CP in a tiny hamlet in the Song

Tra Bon River Valley and the men of H&S Company were settling down for the night.

It had been a gruelling day. The last part of their sweep had been over a series of hills that took the steam out of everyone.

The men with the first watch were already in their holes and the rest of the men were cooking C-rations, talking with the villagers, stringing their ponchos and washing up. The villagers had moved into one portion of the hamlet to be safe and had offered several of the huts for the Marines to use that night.

"The skipper likes to stay close to the vills," the Sergeant Major was saying as he untied a boot.

"Why is that?" asked the Admin. Chief.

"He figures that this way the people can see us close up and realize that we're not a bunch of animals."

Corporal Smith from Comm., piped up, "If you ask me - these people are the animals. Look at these houses! Some of 'em keep pigs inside their hooches. These huts don't even have four walls!"

The Sergeant Major straightened up and said, "Come to think of it - I didn't ask you, junior, but now that you mention it let me tell you a little story about 'animals'."

"When I was your age I was on embassy duty in Turkey. Some of us went out in the hills to do some hunting. We bounced along in the back of this 'six-by', passing all sorts of crummy little mud huts. The people were dirty. Some of 'em had open, running sores on their skin. And one of the guys said, 'Just look at these people. They are just like animals. You'd think they'd rather quit living than live like this.'

"Well, I was a young buck then and I was all set to agree with him. But just then our 'top', an old geezer by the name of Jones, leaned over and said, 'You think they got nothing to live for? Here - you take this knife and jump down there and try to take that man's life away from him. You'll find they like living as much as we do. I fought alongside these people in Korea. They held their ground when other men broke under the strain. I say they're men - not animals!'"

Corporal Smith felt a little embarrassed but he liked the Sergeant Major so he continued, "But, Sergeant Major, I don't get it. You don't really think these people are the same as us, do you?"

"I'm not saying that any two people are exactly alike. What I am saying is that everybody likes staying alive and they like being left free to run their own life. In that sense you bet your life we're equal.

"Take a look around this hooch. See that chair you're sitting on? It's a good, simple chair. Someone

cared enough about this hooch to carry these four chairs 20 miles up this valley on his back.

"See that picture on the table over there? Look close at it. See that man in the ARVN uniform? That's probably a son that used to live in this hooch. You think his parents don't pray for him the way your parents do? OK - maybe not exactly the same kind of prayer - but they care, right?

"And see these few tools over here in the corner? A chisel, a knife, a saw and a square. The old man here probably does odd jobs in his spare time. I'll bet these same tools were given to him by his old man and I'll bet he can do more with those tools than you and I can with a whole set of power tools!"

"I didn't mean to get you riled up, Sergeant Major."

"OK, OK. I just get sick and tired of Americans thinking they're the only non-animals. If that were true we could all stay home and stare at each other. When the day comes when everybody figures people are people and not animals, maybe we can all stay home! That's enough. See you in the morning."

Questions for Discussion

➔ What's the difference in saying everyone is equal and saying everyone is equally important?

➔ Are there some who would agree with Corporal Smith that these people are like animals? Why do they think that way?

➔ If people are equally important - are their homes also? Their tools?

Keys to Understanding

To get at the basics in this matter consider how important we Americans regard the right to vote. Regardless of creed or race we say that every literate adult has the right to his vote. His voice is just as important as the next man's. We fought hard to preserve this belief. Our forefathers fought hard to win that right in 1776. Some tried to say that only landowners, only college men should vote. (For a while no one would let women vote.) Our nation came on strongly to declare that any man has a God-given right to have a say in how he is governed.

Take the business of murder. Because every man's life is equally important our society cannot long endure while condoning any murder. There may be first or second degree murder depending on intent but there is no little murder or big murder. Every murder is equally serious.

Marines in Vietnam have proven again and again how seriously they take this belief in the equal importance of human life. At considerable risk to themselves they have restrained their fire just to the VC aggressors. This is the ultimate test of how strongly we believe in the importance of every human life.

It seldom gets any publicity but the American military has often been the pioneers in human

relations. The military community was the first to learn how to live peaceably with the Western Indian. It was the first large community to break through the race problem. It will be the first major-sized community to convince people overseas that we regard their lives as equally important, too.

There are good, basic reasons why the Marine Corps has built the tradition of taking care of the lowest ranks first when it comes to chow and bedding down. We believe in taking care of our men because each man's life is equally important, no matter what his rank.

In Vietnam we have opportunities to prove just how strongly we believe in the equal importance of human life.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Have your men on the lookout for examples of how strongly the Vietnamese feel for their loved ones; e.g., at a school graduation, a wedding, a funeral, or at TET.

➔ Discuss what basic issues were at stake during the American Revolution.

Unit Discussion II-5: Handling Indebtedness



"They Buy Chop, They No Pay"

Discussion Objective

An understanding of how the Vietnamese regard indebtedness.

The Way It Happened

Sergeant Smith was coming back to his Combined Action Unit after 5 days R&R. He hitched a ride with the mail truck from Regiment at air freight and was now entering his hamlet. In a way it was great to be back.

"The units' been here only 6 months," he thought to himself. Those early days were rough. They had taken casualties - Marines and PFs. Some nights the VC outnumbered them by three to one.

But now it was much longer between contacts. This was good. Sergeant Smith knew that their primary mission was to defend the hamlet and train PFs. As they did those jobs better they now had more time for helping with revolutionary development and gathering information. Things were picking up. All his men now spoke some Vietnamese. The Marines and PFs shared the same barracks, ate their meals together and pitched in equally on all the dirty jobs. Here was his CAP now.

Sergeant Smith swung out of the truck and thanked the driver. "Mahn Joyee?" (How are you?) he asked Mrs. Quy who ran the store next door. Mrs. Quy looked the other way and did not answer. "Hmph," he thought, "everyone has their bad days."

Some of the men were out on a patrol. Corporal Jones was there on the radio. "How was R&R?" asked Jones.

"Fabulous," said Sergeant Smith, "What's with Mrs. Quy?"

"I don't know," answered Corporal Jones "several people in the vill have cooled off toward us lately."

All the next week, Sergeant Smith and his men puzzled over it, something was wrong. The PF would not offer any ideas as to why some of the people seemed so hurt. The PFs seldom criticized the Americans. That would be rude.

Sergeant Smith decided to call his sub unit. "Sir, could you bring down that ARVN Lieutenant? We've got some kind of problem here and I can't get to it. No big deal. Maybe he can figure this out for us . . . thank you! "

Within an hour after Lieutenant Lien arrived at the hamlet he came back to the compound holding a notebook and pen. "Do you know these men?" asked Lieutenant Lien, pointing to a list.

"They don't belong here, sir. Wait a minute Roe, White and Doe - yes - they are engineers! They were with us before I left on R&R. They helped build that tower and put in the new bridge in the hamlet."

"I'm afraid that these three did you much harm, Sergeant. Together, they ran up bills totaling over \$150. That is a lot of credit for a humble shop-keeper to extend. I am afraid that these men did not understand another custom in our country. While you were gone we celebrated TET. Everyone in Vietnam pays his bills before TET."

"I'm sorry, lieutenant. I should have checked on those guys. No wonder they wouldn't use our C-rations. The engineers were eating in town. I'll

start with Mrs. Quy and we'll get every cent back to them one way or another. Thanks, lieutenant, for letting us know. . ."

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What is the background of the saying, "Never borrow money from a friend?"
- ➔ What recourse would Vietnamese shopkeepers have for collecting on debts if a man were transferred or wounded?
- ➔ In what specific ways do we seem to the Vietnamese to be careless with our money?

Keys to Understanding

Surely there will always be times when Marines are cut short before payday and will want to charge up laundry, etc. on the "cuff." It may very well be putting our welcome to the ultimate test when we ask a shopkeeper who may make \$6 per week to let ten Marines run up bills totaling \$30. When we get up to \$150, it is outrageous.

The shopkeeper would then have to resort to borrowing money himself to stay even. Now this brings us to an interesting sidelight in Vietnam. How do they borrow money?

For years the French would not allow the Vietnamese to own or control banks. Today if you already

have valuable property for collateral, and if you have two friends who will sign with you, you may, as a Vietnamese, be able to get a bank loan at 5%. There is tremendous reluctance, however, ever to apply for such a loan if there is the slightest chance that one could not repay it in full on time. (Mark how this differs from the attitude toward credit of many Americans.)

There is, however, an informal stopgap based on the Chinese system of money-lending. Ten or twelve friends will get together in a "Choi Bleu." Each will put in say VN\$1,000 a month for 12 months. Each month those who need capital will bid for the kitty. Highest interest offered wins. In actual practice, however, the individual may end up paying 30 or 40% interest.

Credit, therefore, is a serious business. There is an almost frantic urge to erase all outstanding debts before the season of TET (New Year). We are well advised never to be a part of their credit system lest we lose much "face" by carelessness or ignorance.

Many of the poor must use credit. For example, the farmer without land of his own may rent land for 30% of the rice yield. As happens in other parts of the world, the poor often get poorer because they are forced to pay higher interest on loans for fertilizer, seed or insecticide.

There is still another way in which many Vietnamese regard "debt." If you give a Vietnamese some clothing, he may think you are building up "credit" as the Buddhist builds up "Karma." (We could call it building up points.) He may not thank you for the clothing because in the Buddhist tradition you would ordinarily thank him for the chance to build up points.

However, he is now in your debt to some extent. (How much depends partly on how big a sacrifice he thinks you made for him.) We must be careful to let him repay that debt if he is so inclined. Not to allow him the chance to repay will cause resentment and frustration. Don't expect him to repay in just the ways you might prefer. He will repay as he thinks he should.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Find out from your men if there are any individuals (perhaps attached from other units) who are behind in their pay. See if we can't keep financial problems within the family.

➔ Look for ways that Marines can help the Vietnamese without being put directly in the line of "credit building." Try to share as much of this role as possible with a hamlet chief or ARVN officer.

➔ Take time to speak with your men about what financial hardships are faced by the Vietnamese people.

Unit Discussion II-6: The Wartime Economy



"What's it Worth?"

Discussion Objective

An awareness of ways to counter graft and unfairness quietly and firmly.

The Way it Happens

Case A. In 1965 a man could get his truck washed for VN\$20.00 (\$.17 US). Today Americans pay VN\$150.00 (\$1.25 US) to get a jeep washed.

Case B. The men of Maintenance Company wrote home to get children's clothes sent out to them to give to the refugees. Going through Vietnamese channels, they gave the clothes to the village chief to distribute. The next day a Marine noticed these clothes being sold in a neighboring village market.

Case C. Some Marines at Phu Bai were delighted to learn that housemaids were going to be employed to do laundry and clean huts. They were more than happy to pay them to do their wash. Three weeks later, however, much of their clothing was mixed up with that of other Marines. Some clothing was missing. There was much shouting and several maids quit their jobs.

Case D. Corporal Jones from Motor Transport was late getting back to camp. He had taken the mail run himself when they were short of drivers. There had been a delay at air freight. Now he was pushing it to make evening chow. Down the road toward him came a bus equally fast. Neither seemed ready to slow or give way. At the last minute both swerved. Bicycles and baskets flew off the top of the bus. Corporal Jones' truck clipped off the roof and supporting poles of a roadside store. A claims officer offered the store owner VN\$400.00 (\$3.38 US) for repairs. "Take it or leave it," he said. The next day the store owner presented the battalion commander with a note requesting VN\$50,000.00 for repairs (\$423.80 US).

Case E. At Combined Action Platoon 333 a PF was caught stealing a radio. The Marine sergeant had the PF platoon leader take the PF to the ARVN lieutenant for discipline. The radio was returned and the Marines were furious to learn that apparently nothing happened to the PF but a warning.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What causes inflation? What does inflation then do to a community?
- ➔ In these five cases is there any case where only one side is wrong?
- ➔ Are we ever justified in taking goods from merchants at our own price when an agreement cannot be reached on price?

Keys to Understanding

In cases A, B, C, D and E both Americans and Vietnamese were hurt. In case A, even a Vietnamese lieutenant must now pay VN\$150.00 to get his jeep washed. (A child does it in a half hour and gets the pay of a grown man for ten hours work.)

In case B the refugees who needed the clothing desperately didn't receive it. The Americans were also miffed.

In case C Marines lost clothing and maids quit their badly needed jobs.

In case D the store owner lost part of his shop and the battalion commander was left with an unreasonable claim.

In case E the PFs were left with less respect and the Marines were indignant.

Three common elements were lacking in each of these cases:

- There was a lack of communication.
- There were no preset arrangements.
- Each side did not understand the other side's ways.

In case A, Marines were not prepared to bargain and they did not know or press for a reasonable price. There were no price lists posted. (Today the ARVN can't bargain there with their own people because the demand of American vehicles is so high.)

In case B, more time and more communication would have prepared the Marines for the likelihood of the clothing being funneled away from the refugees. Sending an interpreter among the refugees ahead of time to get an estimate of the number of children and helping the village chief plan a fair means of distribution are vital steps. The village chief could have enjoyed new respect from his people and the children could have been clothed.

Case C was a new experience for both the Marines and the housemaids. The women became as confused trying to read faded American name tags as we would trying to read Vietnamese names. A system was needed. In its absence tempers flared and feelings were hurt. Note that some of the women would rather lose badly needed jobs than endure verbal contempt.

Cases D and E require our knowing more about the Vietnamese customs of justice. In Vietnam every effort is made to settle a dispute on as low a level as possible. We do the same thing in the Marine Corps with minor offenses that we try to take care of in our squad or platoon.

In Vietnam if the dispute can't be settled between two parties it is taken to an authority for settlement. Both parties are then expected to give a little. The guilty party is expected to show that he is sorry. An appeal is made to the offended party to show how generous and "big" he is by coming down in his demands. This has a healing effect upon the community. For after all, the end goal of the community is to assist its members to live together in harmony.

In every case, then, we need plenty of communication. We need a plan of action and we need to understand the ways of the other side.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ List with your men the number of on-limits places where goods or services are being purchased from the Vietnamese. Explore the possibility of price lists. Encourage bargaining at a pitch equal to what we would do at home when buying a used car.

→ The purpose of working out a plan is to establish a system of checks and balances for both sides. Discuss with your men where such systems are most needed.

→ Remind your men that all such agreements must be reached politely, with quiet dignity and in the spirit of friendship. It can be a very touchy matter to suggest new ways to a village chief or a PF platoon leader.

Chapter III: A QUESTION OF LOYALTY

How Vietnamese patterns of loyalty toward their families, communities, and nation compare with American concepts of loyalty.

A. Leader's Guidelines

Loyalty is widely admired. We respect those who remain faithful to their convictions, their families and friends, and their nations regardless of external circumstances or the cost involved.

But we sometimes forget that it is possible to be loyal for the wrong reasons. The individual who faithfully visits a despised relative in the hope of inheriting some money is a classical example. More important than a person's loyalties are the reasons for his loyalties.

The unit discussions in this section are meant to help your men not only to become aware of Vietnamese patterns of loyalty but also to understand the reasons for those patterns. The awareness of the patterns can help your men to understand the actions of their Vietnamese allies; understanding the reasons behind the patterns can help Marines to appreciate and respect the Vietnamese.

Remember that these discussions are not full, formal presentations. They are ways of getting started in sharing ideas and some cultural insights with your men. Do not hesitate to insert your own experiences and observations when they help illustrate the principles involved. Let your men do the same.

Honest and open discussions can help destroy mistaken and negative ideas about the Vietnamese. Most of your men will respond to the Vietnamese with friendliness and concern for their welfare once they begin to understand the experiences and beliefs that lead to their daily actions.

Unit Discussion III-1: The Chieu Hoi Program



"The Making of a Kit Carson Scout"

Discussion Objective

An awareness of how our attitude toward the Chieu Hoi will cost or save Marine lives in the long run.

The Way It Happened

A young man by the name of Thiet was for 2 years an active fighter for the Viet Cong. He listened to the propaganda lectures. He hated all the injustice suffered by his people.

To prove his loyalty he planted mines and would lay on his back in the shadows of a cemetery waiting for an ARVN truck to cross those mines before detonating them.

But as the war drew out longer and longer, Thiet was not quite so sure who was the most unjust. As the government forces got stronger it became harder to collect taxes, gather food. Some of his VC friends resorted to assassination of their (his) own people to keep them in line. One day they put satchel charges next to a school house and demolished it just to frighten the people.

One evening after collecting rice in a hamlet, Thiet and his VC comrades were ambushed by a squad of Marines. Three of his buddies fell but Thiet was in the rear. He dropped his rice and ran. Remembering an old cave not far from there he dove for its cover. He was the only one who made it. Three of his friends were killed. Two were wounded and captured.

From a distance Thiet watched the Marines give first aid to his VC friends. It was not true that the Marines tortured prisoners. His friends were given water and cigarettes. Thiet noticed that the Marines had lowered their weapons as they tended to his friends. Here was an opportunity. Slowly, Thiet inched out of the cave.

Taking the safe conduct pass out of his wallet he held the pass up in the air and cried, "Chieu Hoi!" The Marines swung around with their weapons at the ready. They did not see him at first. He raised the safe conduct pass higher and waved it back and forth.

"Dung Lai Khong toi ban!" (halt or I shoot) ordered the Marine. Thiet froze. The Marine advanced slowly with the M-16 pointed right at Thiet's heart. Another Marine came up behind Thiet, snatched his carbine and grenades and frisked him. They neither blindfolded him nor bound his arms behind him. They did, however, use extreme caution with him.

It was all over now. Had he done the right thing? Thiet expected the worst as the Marines led him back down the trail. But strangely, the Marines were very quiet.

At their company CP the Marines turned Thiet over to the interpreter and S-2 people. A few hours later he was on a helicopter headed for ITT. The interrogation was long and thorough. Thiet expected this. He did not expect such decent treatment, however. This threw him off balance.

Cleared to go to the Chieu Hoi training center at Danang, Thiet listened with new interest to all that was said. At Danang he found several of his old friends who were now working for the government, including an ex-hero of the Viet Minh.

Thiet settled into the routine of the Chieu Hoi training center. He helped build the new barracks and attended lectures on how the new government hoped to improve his country and wipe out the injustice of the old days.

One day Thiet was asked if he would like to accompany another rallier back to his old area on an operation. Thiet, with his heart pounding, went along. He pointed out two caves. When they got back Thiet was rewarded for his work.

As the weeks went by Thiet went out more frequently. He spotted VC at county fairs, identified VC bodies, advised Marines on which paths to take going into hamlets, etc. One day Thiet was ready. He was now convinced that the best thing for his country was to talk his old friends into laying down their arms so that together they could build a new country in peace.

Now armed to protect himself, Thiet brought in 19 VC in his first month as a scout. He was earning a good salary. The Marine assigned to him on the "buddy system" took good care of him, never letting him out of his sight.

Then came a golden opportunity. Thiet saw five of his old VC friends dart into the old cave he had used so many weeks ago. Thiet went in after them and talked four of them into giving up. Four came out with their hands up.

The fifth VC started to come out but balked at the mouth of the cave. Thiet struggled to keep his old friend moving. His old friend pulled the pin on a grenade and took Thiet's life as well as his own.

Thiet was buried south of Danang on 18 February 1967 with military honors of two nations. His widow

and children while grieved and stricken can take just pride that Thiet fought for justice and at the last died for a new nation.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What is the purpose of the Chieu Hoi program? The Kit Carson Scouts?
- ➔ How can we be both cautious and encouraging to the program?
- ➔ What motivates many men to join the VC and then to "rally back?"

Keys to Understanding

The Chieu Hoi program exists throughout the Republic of Vietnam. It is an effort to attract the Viet Cong into rallying back to their national government. We have supported via leaflet drops and broadcasts the plea for them to reunite with their people and build a new nation.

We have promised them on countless occasions that if they will display the Chieu Hoi safe conduct pass and bring their weapons with them that we will reward them, train them and treat them with respect.

As you might imagine there is a great deal of suspicion about the program. Because of tense combat conditions, jumpy trigger-fingers on both

sides have at times added to the distrust. VC have been shot while trying to rally. Friendly forces have been shot when they dropped their caution in going out to meet ralliers.

Mature professionals see the positive hope of the program. Many of these Viet Cong joined the VC because they were idealistic. They thought they were fighting injustice. Combat Marines have long respected their zeal. But now many VC realize that the VC are the ones guilty of injustice and they want no more to do with the VC.

Professional Marines also know that each VC that comes in without a shot being fired may save three of his Marines being wounded or killed going out after that VC.

Looking at the big picture, then, we see the need for caution and encouragement. It isn't easy right after a fire fight in which your buddy was shot to be restrained toward a man waving a Chieu Hoi safe conduct pass. Yet, doing so might save three more buddies plus bring back a potential worker for a new Vietnam.

Many VC now operate in teams of three. They may agree to rally and draw straws to see who will be the first to try. Our handling of that first man will greatly determine whether the other two come along as well.

The record of the Kit Carson Scouts in combat bravery and for their ability to peacefully persuade others to rally is - well - it's breathtaking.

One Kit Carson Scout who had fought bitterly against the French and the Diem regime, who had been a hamlet chief during the few years of peace, now wins the respect of a whole Marine Regiment.

If you ask him what he expects to get from all of this he answers, "I think I will be killed. But maybe I can help make a country where my family can live without fear."

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Emphasize caution in your briefings. Point out also that nearly every Chieu Hoi rallier is being watched by at least two others who are waiting to see what happens.

➔ Brief your men on the importance of treating a rallier's wounds (if wounded) and treating him firmly but not brutally.

➔ Set anyone straight if they are "bad-mouthing" the Chieu Hoi program. Tell them about the Kit Carson Scouts. Encourage them to see the big picture.

Unit Discussion III-2: The Quality of Courage



"Do They Have What It Takes?"

Discussion Objective

An awareness that the Vietnamese can be courageously loyal to their own people and country when they understand the issues at stake.

The Way It Happened

The quiet village of Van Trai was just on the edge of our TAOR. Late last year the village chief who had not cooperated with the VC was kidnapped. No one having heard of him since then, it is assumed that he was executed.

The new village chief, Mr. Duc, did not regard himself as a hero. Years ago Mr. Duc had fought

against the French. He was later called back under the Diem regime to supervise a strategic hamlet. For the last 6 years Mr. Duc had taught high school. He now lived with his wife and four children in a neat, modest home.

At about 2 A.M. one morning a VC squad slipped into Van Trai and surrounded Mr. Duc's home. They called for Mr. Duc to step outside. Ordering his wife and children to drop prostrate on the floor, Mr. Duc answered the VC request with his pistol. In the exchange of fire, Mr. Duc was hit in the arm. A grenade fragment struck his jaw.

A night patrol from a neighboring combined action platoon raced toward the fire fight and drove off the VC. Rushing into the house they found Mr. Duc and checked his family. They took Mr. Duc and his family back to a "B Med" where Mr. Duc's wounds were cleaned and his arm set in plaster.

Over a cup of coffee Mr. Duc was interviewed by the battalion commander nearest Van Trai and by the Combined Action Platoon Leader. The Americans felt that Mr. Duc should bring his family back inside the CAP perimeter or next to the Battalion CP.

Mr. Duc would have none of it. "If I am not brave enough to live with my people," he said, "then I am not worthy to live with myself."

Though only partially recovered from his wounds, Mr. Duc insisted on returning to his village immediately. "If my people do not see me in the morning's activities the word will be passed that the VC have won."

Questions for Discussion

- What is it that pulls a man like Mr. Duc back to Van Trai?
- Why do you think Mr. Duc resisted the VC?
- Do you know of other examples of Vietnamese who have reacted in similar ways to Mr. Duc?

Keys to Understanding

"He just doesn't have what it takes!" is a harsh statement to make about a man. It usually means that he lacks courage, or tenacity, or some other very vital quality that is needed in some circumstances. If we decide that a person "doesn't have what it takes," we are likely to feel scornful or contemptuous of him. We don't particularly want him as a friend.

Occasionally somebody out here tries to tell us that the Vietnamese don't have what it takes to fight the VC, or to be our allies. We hear that they don't care about their own people or their own country.

But what are the facts?

One fact is that there are many men like Mr. Duc who have, and will, risk their lives to fight the VC and to inspire their people to stand firm against the VC's threats and terror tactics. Many ARVNs, PFs and RD team members have proven themselves to be worthy and courageous fighters time and again. The Vietnamese have a long history of fierce resistance to invasion and oppression.

Vietnamese national heroes are men and women who made any and every sacrifice to rid their country of foreign rulers. Le Loi, who gave Vietnam its name, waged a ten-year guerrilla war against the Chinese. His valiant efforts spelled the end of the Ming Dynasty's oppression of Vietnam in the 1427. Many Vietnamese, before and since Le Loi, have served their country with his kind of zeal and devotion.

Another fact is that their systems of loyalty are different than ours. Traditionally the Vietnamese have thought of loyalty in terms of their own families or hamlets, with little idea of responsibility for those who were unrelated to them or who lived away from them somewhere. The idea of loyalty to the nation as a whole, and to a central government, takes time to develop. What may have seemed a lack of courage has often been a failure to understand the idea of a larger loyalty.

But a further fact is that once the Vietnamese become aware that a greater national loyalty can ultimately mean freedom from oppression and unjust taxation, as well as a greater voice in their own affairs, they have no hesitation in staking their lives on their people and their country.

They perform acts of amazing courage even without life insurance, often without very good health or the strength and energy that come from an adequate diet, and without the exhaustive combat training we have received. ARVN troops have come to a high level of effectiveness in a number of areas. They led the way in the May 1967, invasion of the DMZ.

The real facts are that, when they know the facts, and when they are sure of our intentions, these people have what it takes - and some to spare!

Steps in the Right Direction

- Ask your men for any examples they have seen or heard of Vietnamese loyalty and courage. If negative examples are brought up, ask for possible explanation of the behavior in question.
- Discuss the loyalties of Americans during the Revolutionary War. What problems did General George Washington face at Valley Forge?
- Have your men talk about courage. What constitutes courage? Can courage be taught? Can it be shared with friends?

Unit Discussion III-3: Graft and Exploitation



"What's in It for Me?"

Discussion Objective

The realization that graft and exploitation are problems which must be dealt with in all societies.

The Way It Happened

The August heat seemed unbearable as the second battalion waited for the 2-day county fair to come to a close. The Marines had formed a cordon around the county fair to prevent the VC from harassing from the outside and to keep the VC who might be inside from escaping.

The fair had seemed to be a successful demonstration of Vietnamese-American cooperation. The rice harvest had been protected and a number of friendly contacts established. U.S. Marines had provided security and planning while ARVN soldiers from Hoi An had distributed food and provided entertainment and medical treatment. The ARVNs had now packed up and started back to their headquarters.

Four Vietnamese soldiers hung back after their outfit left. Two of them had stopped a farmer and his family and shortly came away with a chicken. The farmer was protesting and trying to recover his chicken, but the Vietnamese soldiers roughly pushed him away and laughed at his inability to protect his property.

The other two ARVN soldiers had confronted one of the young women and were pulling her along with them in spite of her efforts to rejoin her friends.

The resulting confusion attracted the attention of First Lieutenant Smith and Gunnery Sergeant Doe who were standing by with their men of 2nd Battalion, Golf Company, to pick up tents and the remaining cooking gear.

"Look at those characters!" said the Gunny, "We ought to run them off."

"This sort of thing ruins the whole operation," answered Lieutenant Smith. "See if we can get hold of the district headquarters advisor on the radio. We'd better get this stopped before the VC laugh themselves sick!"

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ Can you think of ways the VC might profit from the actions of the Vietnamese soldiers?
- ➔ How widespread are practices which might be considered unfair or dishonest?
- ➔ Were the actions of the Vietnamese soldiers in this incident handled properly? Can you think of a better way to deal with such an occurrence?

Keys to Understanding

Men have always figured out ways to take unfair advantage of each other. If they are unable to do so through cleverness or deceit, they have often resorted to force.

But the fact that dishonesty, graft and exploitation have always been around does not make them right. They cause pain, hardships and resentment. Men could live together better if they were fair and honest with each other.

We know, however, that this is a false hope. Any mature person knows that some people will

always take advantage of others. There will always be guys (and gals) whose only question in any situation is, "What's in it for me?"

A mature person knows too that morality is not a simple matter. Standards of fairness and dishonesty vary from country to country and within countries. There is certainly no single idea of what is right and wrong even in the United States.

Certain types of graft and exploitation in the States are dealt with quickly and harshly. Our laws do not tolerate larceny, assault, corruption among policemen and law enforcement officials, exploitation of children, etc. But such things as the taking of bribes by people of influence, tax evasion and pilfering on the job are more difficult to apprehend and prosecute. Many people justify such actions to themselves and do not feel particularly wrong in doing them.

In some societies similarly questionable practices have become a way of life. Public officials receive low salaries with full knowledge and approval of the fact that bribes will supplement their income. Members of the family are hired first regardless of their qualifications for the job. People readily pay "protection" fees rather than risk the consequences. Sociological studies have indicated that there might be some beneficial effects, along with the obviously harmful effects, to such practices, especially in developing societies.

The Vietnamese soldiers at the county fair operation might have seen nothing wrong in their conduct. In Vietnam some groups have one standard of conduct for family and friends, another for strangers. But the VC know how to play up instances of unfair or self-centered behavior as examples of exploitation by the South Vietnamese Government.

Fortunately, there was a way to handle the Vietnamese soldiers, and the right way was chosen. Discipline for unworthy conduct by the Vietnamese should be administered by Vietnamese officials, just as American misconduct is handled by American officials. The obvious exception of this general rule would occur when quick action is required to prevent violence against people who cannot defend themselves.

The fact that in most cases there are corrective steps which can be taken, and responsible officials to take them, is an encouraging and hopeful sign of a growing sense of national solidarity in Vietnam.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ See how many things your men can name that Americans do regularly which must seem unfair to the Vietnamese. What ideas do your men have as to how these actions might be avoided or corrected?

→ Remind your unit that social change takes time. The Vietnamese expect a certain amount of graft and exploitation from some of their officials now. But the Government is already taking severe measures against unscrupulous individuals. As conditions continue to improve, both for them and their officials, there will be even less tolerance for actions which take unfair advantage of the people.

→ Always use proper channels for reporting and handling Vietnamese misconduct. Our intervention, except in emergencies and cases of tactical necessity, can only cause misunderstanding.

Unit Discussion III-4: The Revolutionary Development Cadre



"Talk About Sacrifice"

Discussion Objective

An acquaintance with plans for pacification; a respect for the pacifiers.

How It Happened

The Cua Valley in Quang Tri Province is as peaceful looking as any you will find in California. But looks are deceiving. For years now the Viet Cong have consistently tried to keep the rural people cut off from any assistance from the central government in Saigon.

They threatened school teachers, assassinated those who resisted, so that school buildings stood idle by the score. Catholic priests and Buddhist priests were forced to move back to safer and larger towns. The Viet Cong controlled the main road and river leading out of the Cua Valley and could stop at will any of the small boats moving either way toward Cua Viet. The people in this section of Quang Tri were prisoners in their own homes.

After Operation Prairie II a Revolutionary Development Team (RDT) moved into a corner of the valley. They were sent by the central government to rebuild bridges, open the schools and build new clinics and irrigation systems. This was a well-trained team.

The nurses had come all the way from Saigon. Two school teachers were graduates of Hue University. An engineer had built bridges and water sluices for many years. All had gone through special training to motivate people and organize them into action groups.

They would not force the people to work. Nor would the RDT do all the work for the people. The team was trained to get things done with the people as a common effort.

Their arrival in the Cua Valley was not noticed at first. The military members of the team fanned out to recon the area while the others set up a base

camp. In less than a month, however, clinics were giving shots and treating the sick. Two primary schools were holding double sessions. A large culvert was now in place on the road to highway 9.

Just before TET, however, the Viet Cong massed near the RDT camp. In a sneak attack they overran the camp. Before help arrived 43 of the 59 member team were killed. Some who had been wounded were shot in the back of the head. Eleven who were captured unarmed were similarly bound and shot. The first Marines on the scene were sick when they saw the camp. Many of the local people appeared to be stunned by it all. Some wept unashamedly.

Right after TET, however, another RD team moved into the same camp. A young Marine who was now guarding that stretch of road was heard to mutter, "Man, you talk about sacrifice!"

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What do you think motivates young people to join a Revolutionary Development Team?
- ➔ What sort of things can they do that you and I cannot do?
- ➔ What are some of the things which we are better equipped to accomplish? How can we help the RDTs besides offering them protection?

Keys to Understanding

The Revolutionary Development Team, made up of 59 members, is designed to be a positive representative of the central government out in the remote sections of Vietnam which have been isolated for so many years.

Each team has a seven-man staff to command and control the team's behavior and to coordinate activities with friendly forces.

Eighteen of the members work directly on reconstruction projects. Getting together with hamlet chiefs and elders they find out what the people need most desperately. Once they get a priority of projects they organize the people into work teams. Nurses and school teachers will work among this group. Agricultural technicians will assist farmers and look into the matter of land reform. Always there is an effort to encourage political activity and the holding of free local elections.

Because the RDT work in such remote areas, 34 members must maintain a military role. They often work closely with our CAP program to give security to the technicians.

Obviously, the war for people depends on the lasting victories of the RDTs. Healthy hamlets with roads open to markets, with children busy at school, with elected representatives being heard in Saigon are strong hamlets. Such a hamlet has everything to gain by keeping the Viet Cong out of its midst.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Discuss with your men how anyone or any group starting out on a new project will encounter setbacks and frustrations. The RDT will be suspected at first by their own people. They will be teased as "do gooders." They will be worried about VC attacks. Explore how your men can give the RDT encouragement, a "thumbs up" of approval.

➔ Sometimes there is confusion about just what the RDT is and where they belong. A team may appear in your TAOR armed and dressed in a mixture of strange clothing. It requires extra checking with the District Chief to know when and where they are working.

➔ A little praise goes a long way. Encourage your men to spread the good word toward the rear when they see the RDT's achievements. Remember how it was during the first infield practices of your baseball team at home? "Bad-mouthing" hurts everyone. "Talking it up" encourages everyone.

Chapter IV: THE MATTER OF PRIDE

The traditions of privacy and personal dignity affecting Vietnamese - American cooperation.

A. Leader's Guidelines

Everybody has a private sector of his life that he guards carefully against intruders. This very personal area includes much more than just those things that are nobody else's business. It includes a person's self-respect, his idea of his own dignity as a human being, his ideas of the way that others can deal with him fairly and acceptably.

We don't like people who violate this private sector of our lives regardless of their reasons. Those who claim to do so for our own good are no more appreciated than those who do so selfishly. If anyone is to visit this special part of our lives, we want it to be at our invitation, and on our terms.

A number of influences determine the nature and content of this private sector in the lives of men. The ways we are treated as children, the spoken and unspoken convictions of our parents, the quality of our education, the calibre of our social relationships, the way we earn our livelihood. . . .all these and many more help shape our idea of ourselves and our expectations of peoples' attitudes and actions toward us.

The unit discussions in this section will allow you and your men to take a look at some of the unique influences in the lives of the Vietnamese which helped mold their ideas of themselves and of their proper relationships with others. The best way to understand these influences is by comparing them with some of the influences that have affected the growth and personal convictions of many Americans. Several suggestions are included as to how this comparison can be made.

Stay alert for informal opportunities to use these discussions. Take advantage of breaks in the day's routine that would otherwise be overlooked. Present the incidents conversationally. They actually happened; make them seem as real as they are.

Many times the reaction to the first of the Questions for Discussion will be a period of silence. If no one speaks after a while, ask someone for his opinion. Then the best way to serve as a discussion leader is to talk as little as possible, offering ideas or questions only when they are needed to stimulate the discussion. Listening to your men will help you to understand them, even as their discussion can help them to understand the Vietnamese.

Unit Discussion IV-1: Common Courtesy



"The Case of the ARVN Lieutenant"

Discussion Objective

The realization that respect for rank is a key to good working relationships with the Vietnamese.

The Way It Happened

It was right after noon chow. Lieutenant Kuy was on his way from the Battalion's messhall back to his tent. He was going to write his wife a letter. She stayed with his parents in Hue.

Down the same path from the direction of the motor pool ran two Americans. They were late and wanted to get to the messhall before it secured.

Not only did they fail to salute Lieutenant Kuy, they forced him off the path.

Now it just so happened that this was the fifth time today that Lieutenant Kuy had not been saluted by his juniors. He always made a point of saluting his seniors indoors or outdoors (in the style of his army). This was the final straw.

Lieutenant Kuy barked out, "Halt!" (He surprised himself by the noise he made. He seldom shouted.)

The Marines stopped in their tracks. They stood looking over their shoulders at Lieutenant Kuy.

"May I ask why you are in such a hurry that you cannot salute an allied officer?"

Still there was no salute. No apology.

"Come on, Murph, we'll miss our chow," said one Marine.

"I asked you a simple question. I expect an answer," said the Lieutenant.

"Oh the hell with him," said Murphy. They both continued to run on toward the messhall.

Lieutenant Kuy continued to his tent to write his letter.

Keys to Understanding

The tragedy of cases like that of the ARVN Lieutenant is that one or two clods can undo in a few seconds what it took everyone in a reinforced battalion to build over a period of months.

It may even sound old hat to go over it again - but let's try it for size. Let's suppose that we are stationed in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. A whole division of West German troops arrives and immediately takes over the land by our main gate. We are glad they are there to help us because we are going on a big operation soon.

But the Germans (in our imaginative scene) go ahead and build barracks that are three times as nice as ours. Their pay is ten times that of ours. For every one of our jeeps they have two helicopters. (The sky is crammed with helicopters.) Soon prices skyrocket on the beach. A guy can afford maybe one liberty every 2 months. Some of the girls in Jacksonville will only date Germans now.

We stand and salute their colors each morning. We do a lot of their interpreting for them. They are too busy to learn English. We stand ready to help them understand our customs but they don't seem interested. They smoke in our churches, walk across our front lawns to take pictures of our children without asking us, whistle at our wives and they call us a curious name, "Sammies."

Then one day two of their biggest enlisted men are running toward their beautiful, air conditioned mess. One of our nicest lieutenants who has been decorated three times in past campaigns is stopped to tie his shoe lace. The big oafs never salute. In fact they knock the lieutenant off the sidewalk. They never stop but keep on running toward their mess. You and I are watching all this. Remember - we need the help of the Germans - but, what do we do next?

It stands to reason that in that mythical example the Germans would not get much cooperation from us.

A recent survey among the ARVN and the Popular Forces working most closely with U.S. Marines showed that the heavy majority like us but they feel we look down upon them.

Again and again we note that Americans lose points by failing to show respect to the ARVN officers and NCOs or by failing to respect male elders before turning attention to the women and children.

When we hold briefings at any level of command we often overlook our ARVN liaison personnel. Seldom do we ask their advice on matters pertaining to their country.

Consider how we relied upon foreign advisors during our own American Revolution. Our armies

were largely made up of well-meaning volunteers who lacked military training. Some of those advisors pushed their weight around. They scoffed at our food and bragged about their French and Rhine wines. Is it any wonder, then, that we asked only a few to stay after the war? That we remember only a handful in our history books?

Actually a comparatively rich man does not have to be a snob. The American public has elected some very wealthy presidents. How could this be when we have such little use for "pushiness"? Obviously, these presidents impressed the American public as being genuine people who are interested in the common man.

In a word - they respected people as people.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Encourage your men to review the treatment of ARVN, RF or PF forces working in your unit. Review how much informal mixing takes place at meals or at the clubs. Are they billeted in separate tents or huts? Discuss the pros and cons of those arrangements.

→ Consider the number of times when knowing what the Vietnamese felt about things would really have helped your mission. Help your men to use ARVN interpreters as often as possible. Don't let them sit off by themselves day after day reading magazines for the lack of a challenging job to do in your unit.

➔ Explore the possibility of a language course after normal working hours. Perhaps your men would even be willing to pay a small sum for Vietnamese tutoring. (We often take more seriously that for which we must pay.)

➔ Familiarize your men with Vietnamese rank insignia.

Unit Discussion IV-2: Team Spirit



"The Night the PFs Got Even"

Discussion Objective

An awareness of the input necessary to develop team spirit among PFs and Marines.

The Way It Happened

Case A: Combined Action Platoon 111

Charlie Company had the westernmost position in the Division's TAOR. Two weeks ago they had started a combined action platoon. The first platoon had accepted twenty men from the Popular Forces training center and had tried to absorb them into their daily routine.

The first week went by smoothly. The language barrier didn't seem to present many problems, at least not serious problems. But all during the second week the PFs seemed to get more and more restless. On Friday the PF leader approached the Marine platoon sergeant. He said that he wanted to speak to him about a serious "morale" problem. The Marine platoon sergeant - already suspicious that something was up - felt that now was the time to get tough.

"Morale problem?" said the Sergeant. "We don't have morale problems in this outfit. You tell your men that as long as they are with U.S. Marines they are expected to act like grown up men. Understand? Now get out of here. I'm busy."

The PF leader walked back to his men's positions. "What did he say about our pay?" said one.

"I had one pay allowance at school and that was 6 weeks ago," said another.

"And what about that rice the village chief promised us when we joined the Popular Forces? I know he has rice. I've seen it at his office. When are we ever going to get that?"

The PF leader sighed. "I really don't think that Marine Sergeant understands our problem. He wouldn't let his own men go without pay for 6 weeks if they were home and their families were without food. Perhaps we had better make a plan to draw their attention to our problem..."

That night at exactly 2130, the PFs quietly got up from their positions and walked home.

Case B: Combined Action Platoon 222

Way to the South, in another TAOR, Delta Company had also absorbed a platoon of PFs. For the first 2 months they positioned these PFs close to their own CP. Slowly they worked the PFs into patrolling.

Each day they took time for lots of palaver. Soon the Marines could name the children of their PF counterparts. Once each day the Marine platoon sergeant, the platoon leader, Second Lieutenant Smith, and the PF leader had a conference right after colors. (They made a big point of raising the colors of both nations.)

One day a patrol was ambushed at a river crossing. One PF was killed, three PFs were wounded along with two Marines. It was a hard blow, just as it is for any unit that takes its first casualties.

Everyone from the platoon went to the Buddhist funeral and on their way back they were ambushed a second time and another PF was killed. This was too much. Immediately every PF took off up the hill after the VC. Before Lieutenant Smith could get his radio message back to the battalion the PFs were charging the VC and were already beyond shouting distance. They killed two VC. They killed four more VC that night.

Questions for Discussion

- What would be your main concerns if you were working among a few troops from a foreign nation, some who stood 8 feet tall? What would put you at ease most quickly?
- What were your main worries when you first entered boot camp? What especially worries the married man?

Keys to Understanding

A recent survey showed that it takes about 5 months for Marines and Popular Forces to move into high gear in their teamwork. Everything seems to require time. Training, language, trust, friendship - all these - require time.

Pay and food are, of course, at the foundation of personal security. Today's PF is supposed to get \$19.32/month. He is supposed to receive twelve pounds of supplemental food per month. (The lower the wage the more desperate we become when it is late.)

Then, again, when it comes to getting used to Americans, the PFs sometimes think we do things backwards. For example, they say we row a boat backwards. We sit down and can't see where we are going. "Why not stand up and row straight ahead like we do?" they ask. They have a point. We can learn from them.

There have been many cases where PFs, though outnumbered five and eight to one by the enemy, fought like tigers. Some of them have fought at great risk to save Americans. One PF was recently recommended for the Silver Star for his bravery in defending a wounded Marine. Their fellow Marines and PFs had withdrawn during an ambush. This PF refused to leave his wounded Marine friend. Single handed, he held off VC probes through the night. The Marine died before dawn but the PF defended his body until a patrol relieved him in the morning.

These are not accidents. They didn't just happen. It took time and understanding to build that kind of teamwork. Saturday's ball game is often won earlier in the week during hard practice and scrimmage.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Have your men consider how they would position new PFs in a defensive perimeter. If your men were working with PFs for the first time how would you and they arrange billeting and messing? Have them consider the need for using their ARVN interpreter.

➔ The next time you are working with PFs check on their pay and supplemental food rations. If the PFs are being shortchanged, go through your chain of command to the District level and encourage that action be taken down their chain of command.

➔ Look for opportunities to reward the PF for heroism. Often he is ignored even when he has more than earned recognition.

Unit Discussion IV-3: The Invasion of Privacy



"The Case of the Friendly Detainee"

Discussion Objective

The realization of what interrogating friendly people and searching friendly homes does to local pride and how, when operations demand it, this can be done with a minimum of resentment.

The Way It Happened

The Special Landing Force had been in-country 10 days now. Private First Class Doe and Private First Class Roe were out on the flanks of a routine patrol. Both Marines were tired and a bit jumpy.

Coming to a hamlet the patrol stopped and began checking ID cards of the local people coming to the hamlet market. A young Vietnamese man approached the hamlet from a side road. Doe spotted him and ordered, "Halt!"

Doe approached and asked the man for an ID card, using sign language to emphasize what he wanted. The man produced a laminated card that was different from the ID cards carried by the other people.

"I think this card is a fake," said Doe to his squad leader.

"We'll take him back for interrogation," replied Sergeant Jones.

At this point two of the PFs who were in the patrol and who had been with the battalion since it landed rushed forward to protest.

"Come on," said Roe, "they are probably all VC." They tied the man's arms and blindfolded him and pushed him down the road in front of them. Hours later, extremely thirsty and very mad that he had been kept from enjoying his leave this "detainee" was recognized as a member of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and released at once.

"How's a guy supposed to know?" asked Doe.

"Guess we should have gotten more info about civilian and military ID cards," said the sergeant.

"I wonder if we shouldn't have at least apologized and given him a ride home. I didn't like the way the villagers looked at us when we took him away," added Roe.

On down the road two Marines saw a large masonry jar filled with rice. "That's where they store hand grenades," said one.

"Well, tip it over and see what's inside," said the other. The old lady under the porch (a mother of one of the RFs) put her hands to her mouth and ran into the house.

Questions for Discussion

- ➔ What were the basic mistakes in this example?
- ➔ The Marines had to be careful. Did they communicate "care" to the people? If not, what did they communicate?
- ➔ What do you suppose worried Doe and Roe the most? Isn't it pretty normal to be this worried? How should a man thus act if he is worried?

Keys to Understanding

When the American colonies declared their independence from England one of their most bitter complaints was over unnecessary search and seizure.

We believe that "a man's home is his castle." Someone had better have an urgent reason and a good reason (like a search warrant) before he breaks into our house uninvited. War often is just such an urgent reason. But we are so much better off when we use tact and an interpreter in our mission.

Until ARVN, RFs, or PFs prove without question that they are not working with us, we should take their word. When we must detain a suspect or search a home, we are miles ahead to make an explanation of why we must do it.

When a person must be "frisked" it is highly desirable to search him behind a screen of trees or a building. Troops should be instructed never to touch a man or a woman in public. If he is searched in front of his neighbors he is made to feel like a criminal in their eyes. He loses face. It will take him a while to forgive you for that.

Troops should know in advance what items in a house should never be touched by an American (such as the ancestor shelf or spirit house). They should be cautioned about sifting rice. If it is necessary to go through a rice bin, then care should be taken so that the grain is not lost or mixed with dirt.

Common sense tells us that when we take a suspect back for interrogation, an explanation and assurance of fair treatment to the wife or parents will go a long way in getting more cooperation later.

Common sense also tells us that when we must search we are going to find more, and find it quicker, by showing concern and respect.

The experiences of battalions who have been working in "hot" areas the longest bear this out. Even up by the DMZ, a little tact produces big dividends. A company from the Fourth Marines took their time in a recent sweep. Realizing that the villagers were very frightened, they relaxed and waited for a few minutes before searching homes. They talked quietly with some old men in the village. One old man who had been leaning against a well came forward, smiled and pointed down the well. A Marine was lowered down the well where he found a tunnel entrance and a large arms cache.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Brief your men on search and interrogation procedures before routine patrols as well as before big operations.

→ Acquaint your men with the ID cards held by the local people in your area. (The symbol in the upper right hand corner will be unique to your province.) If you can't take an interpreter with you, have notes prepared in advance by your ARVN liaison officer explaining your reasons for search or interrogation.

→ In the case of a suspect who has been brought back, interrogated, and is now being released as a "friendly," make every effort to provide an explanation, transportation and some food to soften the inconvenience.

Unit Discussion IV-4: Caution or Contempt



"A Word in Time"

Discussion Objective

An awareness that the necessity to be cautious does not usually prevent courteous concern for the Vietnamese.

The Way It Happened

Some curious activity was noticed during Operation Oakland by the Marines of an outpost near

Highway One. A burial party was preparing a grave site. However, one of the workers was observed writing on a piece of paper and could have been plotting the position of the Marine outpost.

Two heavily armed Marines were sent by their Sergeant to see more clearly just what the burial party was doing. Meanwhile, the Battalion S-3, Major Smith, happened to come by to check the outpost fortifications. He inquired as to where those two Marines were going.

"Hold it up!" he called when he learned the story. "Get an interpreter and the S-2 out here first. Then we'll all go over to check it out."

Twenty minutes later the interpreter and S-2 arrived by jeep and with weapons slung the party walked slowly over to the grave.

Politely, they asked the oldest man what was going on. Apologetically, they asked him to open the small wooden box next to the grave. It revealed the body of his 4-year-old daughter.

They (again politely) asked the old man what the paper was that he was observed writing on. It turned out to be a Buddhist prayer slip which he had planned to burn in the funeral ceremony.

Major Smith sighed with relief that he had been there to speak a word of caution in time.

Questions for Discussion

- How do you think the Vietnamese father in this incident felt about the questions of the Americans?
- Did the approach used by Major Smith really help matters?
- Which comes first in a combat area - caution or courtesy? Does one prevent the other?

Keys to Understanding

You can never be too careful in a combat area. One careless or unthinking move can mean injury or death to yourself and your buddies. An innocent-looking trail can be mined, a VC flag can be booby-trapped, the bonze's robes on a VC soldier can conceal an automatic weapon. The ABCs out here mean always be careful!

There are two ways to be careful when dealing with the Vietnamese. One way is to be contemptuously careful. This way you shoot first and ask questions later. You avoid close contact with any Vietnamese whenever possible. You assume that every Vietnamese is either VC or a VC sympathizer. You do your job regardless of people and the way they happen to feel.

The other way is to be courteously careful. This way you go to almost any realistic lengths

to avoid killing or injuring people who might be innocent. You trust people until they prove untrustworthy. You assume that if the Vietnamese understand the reasons for our presence they will be our friends and allies in the fight against oppression and terrorism. You do your job, but you make every effort to win the friendship and loyalty of the Vietnamese.

The courteously careful way is the best way to be careful. It will come much closer to saving your life than the contemptuously careful way. It can gain the loyal support and courageous devotion of people who know this country and its enemies better than any outsider ever can. It can overcome the resentment and hostility that might make an effective attack on you and your unit possible.

A company commander recently refused to unleash artillery fire on a Viet Cong mortar position - even though it was bore-sighted - because of the danger to surrounding Vietnamese houses. He and his people braved the incoming rounds until the attackers could be gotten with infantry. A helo recently made dangerous extra passes over a running man to make certain whether or not he had a weapon.

Were these actions foolhardy? Perhaps. But were they equally responsible actions? Yes. They were unforgettable lessons to the Vietnamese about the genuine concern of American fighting men for them and their loved ones. They gave the Vietnamese a

look at an unusual combination of courage and compassion in unmistakable contrast to VC brutality. They were victories in the war for people.

They were probably among the most cautious things those who did them have ever done. In the long run these acts saved lives. Marines will face less danger in the future because of the brave caution of their buddies today.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ When confronted with any unusual gathering or suspicious incident involving the Vietnamese, get a reliable explanation of the occurrence before taking any action.

→ Learn the location and availability of interpreters or others who know both Vietnamese and English in your area. Don't overlook missionaries and representatives of foreign business interests, AID people, etc. Learn some Vietnamese yourself and always have a language dictionary and phrase list with your unit.

→ Do not interfere with Vietnamese religious or civil ceremonies unless absolutely necessary or to prevent loss of life.

Unit Discussion IV-5: Real and False Pride



"The One Guy Who Moved"

Discussion Objective

The knowledge that real manliness is not limited by nationality or reputation.

The Way It Happened

The Ninth Marines were engaged in Operation Macon - a long and exasperating campaign in a hardened VC area.

During parts of the operation the Marines worked alongside ARVN units. At times there were misunderstandings and breaks in communication. At times the Marines had to wait for the ARVN to catch up. Some Marines (the noisy few) would then blurt out such labels as, "cowards," "lazy bums," "slackers," etc.

With one company, however, there was an ARVN liaison officer, First Lieutenant Han. This company was sweeping an area on the western flank, moving toward Dai Loc. The forward platoon had just crossed a bridge and were starting to fan out across a field when the number two Marine stepped on a "Bouncing Betty." Six men were cut down by the blast. The other Marines froze like statues. They were in a minefield and no one wanted to take a step.

Lieutenant Han, seeing the wounded Marines, ran forward. Elbowing some of the stationary Marines aside, he did not even pause to remove his pack but started to administer first aid to the wounded. His work saved their lives.

Questions for Discussion

- Can you come up with some guesses as to how Lieutenant Han had been treated by that company prior to the incident?
- What makes a man really a man?
- What influences operate in a person's life to produce real manliness or a lack of it?

Keys to Understanding

A great European philosopher once said, "Treat a man as you would like him to be (good, bad, weak or strong) and so shall he become." Obviously, all

of us are influenced by our homes and our homeland. Some of us were raised in strong families. Some of us were not so lucky. Some of us came from healthy neighborhoods and some of us didn't.

But there is more to being a real man than having the right sets of parents and friends. Coming into the Marine Corps we found that we had to do many things on our own. All through training the Marine Corps expected us to "be men." Eventually we were. Not all of us are "men" all of the time but we seem to be getting better at it. The Marine Corps expects it of us.

The Vietnamese have a phrase, "Do not put yourself in the place of the Mandarin." The Mandarin was a very wise civilian or military leader. He had much power and his habit was to look down upon those less fortunate. Everyone else was supposed to look up to the Mandarin. No one would ever sit down in the presence of the Mandarin without his invitation. If a man sat down without permission he risked execution.

Over the years many Vietnamese regarded themselves very poorly. It was as the Mandarin wanted it. He alone was wise, courageous and truly manly. It was rare that any other man broke away and asserted his own manhood in defiance of the Mandarin.

Real pride, of course, goes much deeper than skin color or uniform. The Medal of Honor winners

in this war could not be predicted by their race or battalion affiliation. They had the potential down deep where it counts.

It hardly needs mentioning that Lieutenant Han possessed this inner confidence all along. Not everyone was smart enough to assume it might be there.

We give that inner pride a lot better chance of showing itself, however, if we treat people as if manliness were there all along.

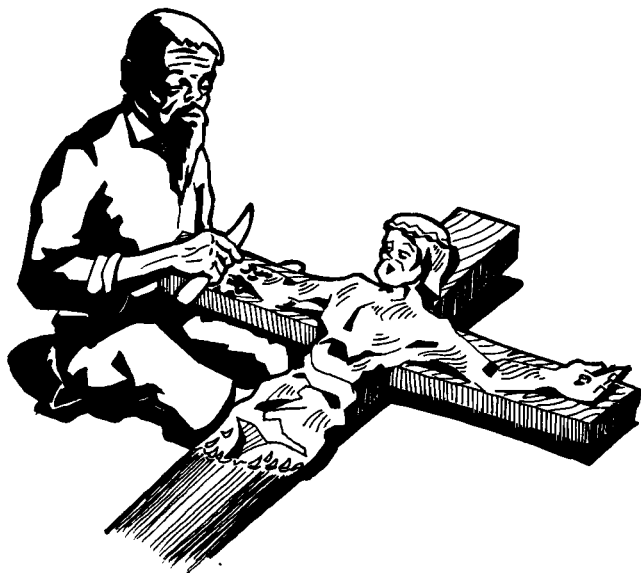
Steps in the Right Direction

→ Discuss with your men ways in which Marines "put themselves in the place of the Mandarin."

→ Think of ways that "putting ourselves in the place of the Mandarin" back home in the States causes trouble and slows progress.

→ In a war for people, we must be for the people. When you have the opportunity get to know one Vietnamese family well, learn what each member of that family wants most from life. Share these insights with your men.

Unit Discussion IV-6: Cooperation
Versus Charity



"The Wooden Crucifix"

Discussion Objective

Cooperation with the Vietnamese in the development of their talents and abilities.

The Way It Happened

A chaplain from MAG-16 was looking for ways to decorate the new chapel his men were building. If possible he wanted to get all materials locally.

At lunch in Danang one day he asked two civilian priests if they knew where he might locate someone to carve a crucifix.

They directed him to an old peoples' home where an old wood carver was living. The old man had lost a leg when a bus triggered a mine two years ago. Now he was just a burden on his family. He had moved to the old peoples' home to make it easier for his sons to support his wife.

An interpreter helped explain to the old man what the chaplain wanted. A month later the chaplain returned and purchased a beautiful six-foot crucifix.

Greatly impressed, the chaplain asked the old man if he would carve a small crucifix for his office. The old man smiled and nodded his head. Five days later that one was ready.

The chaplain spread the word about the old man's skill. Over 40 orders poured in. Within a short time the old man could afford to move out of the old peoples' home.

Making around VN\$6,000 (\$51.00 US) a month now he did not have to live with his sons but could afford a small home nearby. The man and his wife now enjoy the pride of being independent. They have even been able to help some of their friends get started in worthwhile jobs.

Questions for Discussion

- What is the best way to help somebody who is in poor financial circumstances? What about those who have no skills or are unable to work?
- How do you think most Vietnamese feel about our gifts of food, clothing, building materials, soap, etc.? Why do you think they feel as they do?
- Do charitable acts win friends? Are there better ways to win the friendship of people in a less prosperous economy than our own?

Keys to Understanding

It's a funny thing, but sometimes the more you do for a person the less he appreciates it. This seems to be true not only of individuals but of nations.

The United States has poured billions of dollars, millions of tons of food and clothing, and endless technological assistance into many nations around the world. But our embassies are stoned, the American flag burned by rioters and contempt is heaped on our citizens with seemingly increasing frequency and bitterness.

Generosity is thought to result in gratitude, but somehow it hasn't worked out that way. Many people have come to suspect that the reason lies, not in our generosity, but in the ways we have tried to be generous.

Giving and receiving gifts mean different things to different peoples. Because of Buddhist influences the Vietnamese often regard a gift as your effort to gain merit for yourself in a future life. Gratitude is due the one who receives the gift for providing such an opportunity, not to the giver. Many Vietnamese wonder what the United States has done wrong that we should do so much for their country out of our desire to accumulate merit.

All too often our gifts have been our ideas of what people needed, rather than what was really needed. Look around at the number of cement out-houses we have built for the Vietnamese that are being used as rice storage spaces. An inappropriate gift can be worse than no gift.

Sometimes, too, dependence on a person or country for charitable gifts causes resentment on the part of those who benefit. Americans have frequently given the impression that they felt superior to those they were attempting to help. This can lead to deep suspicions, or real misunderstandings, of our motives.

One effort of an air group to give some dolls to a Vietnamese orphanage became a shambles a few months ago. There were so many American officials, photographers, noise and confusion that the children were frightened and the orphanage administrators offended. One Marine was heard to mutter, "This looks like 90% publicity and 10% charity to me." What were our real motives in this affair?

Unfortunately there are also those who feel that it is unfair for you to have so much, and them so little, that their welfare depends upon your generosity.

But few people will resent or misunderstand a partnership which they feel makes them an equal rather than a subordinate or dependent person. Cooperation that results in the pride of independence and the satisfaction of personal achievement is usually eagerly sought and long remembered with appreciation.

The case of the old wood carver is a good example of this kind of cooperation. It not only made a respectable and independent existence for a family possible, but gave the Americans value received for their investment. It also started a sort of chain reaction of self-help among the Vietnamese themselves.

Charity is a noble virtue. But it is most appreciated when it wears the clothing of friendly cooperation.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Study the needs of the Vietnamese before attempting any program of assistance. Get their ideas as to their own needs without letting them know that you plan to help them. This will lead to less waste and mistaken effort.

→ Always include the local official and elders in the planning and distribution of any form of material or informational aid to the Vietnamese.

→ Learn the abilities of the Vietnamese in your area. They may be able to provide products or services that could be most beneficial as well as a means of self-support. Pay fair prices for these items and services. Do not ruin the market by paying too much.

→ Share your skills with your Vietnamese friends. After becoming friends you can teach them many things that will help them improve their standard of living.

→ Always consider ways and means for the continuation of assistance projects after your departure and even after all Americans have left Vietnam.

Unit Discussion IV-7: Notions of Justice



"Setting Things Straight"

Discussion Objective

The settlement of grievances and abuses in ways consistent with Vietnamese ideas of justice.

The Way It Happened

Little Li Tho Van had played around the place where Marines brought their jeeps and trucks to be washed. She was now 7 years old and very bright. She was already learning English just from listening to the Marines talk. Often they would give her C-rations and cigarettes which she dutifully brought home to her parents.

One day she climbed up the side of the cab of a big "six-by" that had parked. The driver seemed grumpy but she thought she could warm him with her smile. Swinging up on the rear view mirror, she smiled and asked, "Honcho, how are you?" He didn't look up from his paper. She asked again.

This time he reached out the window with his left arm and brushed her off the mirror's support as one would brush away a fly.

Li Tho fell and felt a sharp pain near her neck as she struck the running board. Biting her tongue to keep from crying she stumbled over to a shady tree and squatted down. She couldn't move her left arm.

The truck driver paid the wash boys and drove off without saying a word.

Later that afternoon two Marines stopped with their jeep and noticed the little girl. One Marine asked in good Vietnamese what was the matter. The child was startled to hear a Marine speak Vietnamese.

After they returned to the girl's home from the dispensary where the child's collar bone was set the Marine apologized to both parents in Vietnamese for the unfortunate incident. They seemed impressed that the Marines reported the incident to their headquarters and that their daughter received medical attention.

Questions for Discussion

→ What would have been your reaction if Li Tho Van had been your daughter or kid sister? How would your reaction differ from that of the Vietnamese parents?

→ Was this incident handled satisfactorily? Is it a closed case as it now stands? Are there other things that should be done?

Keys to Understanding

Most Americans have a tendency to react openly and instantly to abuses and injustices. If someone hurts us or those we love, we are likely to seek quick and angry revenge. Our Jewish and Christian religious heritages urge forgiveness of those who abuse us. . . .that we "turn the other cheek." But we often consider this to be rather impractical idealism in a time of anger or indignation. If any cheeks are going to be turned, we want it to be the guilty party's.

Strangely enough, most Vietnamese are more greatly influenced by their religious convictions than we are. Confucianism has advised them to refrain from displays of anger and open hostility. They usually manage to do so. Buddhism has assured them that those who give offense to others will pay for it both now and later because of the workings of the law of Karma. As a consequence most Vietnamese are satisfied when some remedial

action has been taken, when a proper apology has been made, and when they have been assured that the offending person will be corrected by his superiors.

It is best, of course, to avoid unthinking actions which hurt or offend the Vietnamese. But people are people. In spite of our best intentions, unfortunate incidents will occur. When they do, it is good to know how the Vietnamese feel about "setting things straight."

The following steps will help to make up for offensive actions or injury:

- Take remedial action. Get medical aid for the injured, dispossessed persons to shelter and food, etc.
- Report the occurrence and the remedial action to proper authority.
- Return to the people affected for formal expressions of sympathy, regret or apology. Go in the company of the village chief and/or elders when possible.
- Give whatever assurance you are authorized to give regarding the handling or discipline of the offending person.
- Make repeat visits, or arrange for them to be made, to the affected persons. It is possible for rewarding friendships to have their beginning in misfortune.

Remember, however, that no one set of rules is applicable to every circumstance. The feelings and reactions of people vary greatly. Notions of justice can be very complex. Do the best you can... keep the lines of communication open so that you can learn the real feelings of the Vietnamese with whom you are dealing.

The most important thing is that you really care about the people involved. Only then will your efforts be successful. If you don't care about them as individual human beings, the things you do won't help much. People know when they are regarded with disdain or contempt. We tell them in dozens of ways, without even saying a word. You know when someone dislikes you...so do the Vietnamese. Let's not kid ourselves...we're not kidding them!

The only good thing about our angry reactions to hurts and abuses is that they are sincere. They are honest projections of ourselves - at our worst. When we have hurt or offended others, we must have similarly sincere and honest projections of ourselves - at our best. At our best we care about people, we are sensitive to their feelings, we desire good for them just as we do for ourselves. When our best is a part of our response to the people of Vietnam, we will be much more able to set things straight...and keep them that way.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Stay alert for any indications of injury or resentment among the Vietnamese. Your concerned

reaction might heal a hurt and win valuable friends.

➔ Report any offensive behavior on the part of Americans toward the Vietnamese. That report might save your life.

➔ Learn to control your anger. It can only cause misunderstanding among people who guard their own anger closely.

➔ Plan helpful actions for the long run. If you cannot make repeat visits to someone you have helped, arrange for someone else to do so.

Chapter V: THE DEEPER CONCERNS

The ultimate concerns of Vietnamese and Americans

A. Leader's Guidelines

All people come to terms somehow with life as a whole - with those things that they cannot understand as well as those they do understand. Men realize that they are just a small part of a big, complex world, so they decide upon ways to relate to whatever power or powers might have created this world and might still control it.

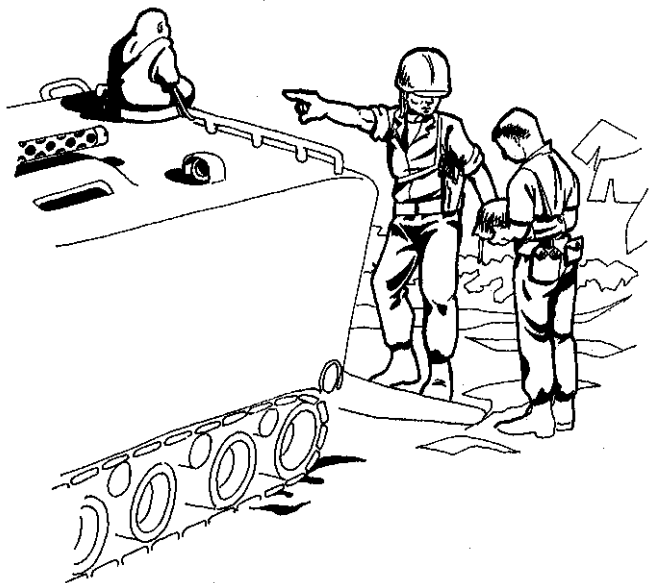
Most people come to terms with the world through some type of religious and/or philosophical loyalty. They decide what the controlling power of the world had in mind and then attempt to act accordingly. Some people make sacrifices to gods or spirits; others worship and pray to a Supreme Being; nearly all figure out standards and codes both for the ideal life and for their relationships with other people.

Since men come to terms with life in different ways, the behavior that results from their convictions and loyalties varies greatly. It is very difficult to understand human behavior without some knowledge of the influence of their religions and philosophies of life.

The unit discussions in this section contain incidents which can help your men to understand the notions of life which are important to the Vietnamese, especially as compared and contrasted with some ideas of life which are important to Americans. These discussions have to do with the deeper concerns of men's lives. They should provide the opportunity for you and your men to talk about the things that really matter and how they affect daily behavior.

It is especially important in discussions like these to have a very high regard for the ideas and opinions of your men. Don't reject statements just because they are strange or seemingly illogical. Encourage group reaction to such statements without allowing them to be ridiculed. Remind your men that they should respect the ideas of others just as much as they expect their own ideas to be respected. This is a good place to start in respecting the things that matter most to the Vietnamese.

Unit Discussion V-1: Freedom of Religion



"The Buddha and the Amtrack"

Discussion Objective

A deep respect for Vietnamese beliefs and religious places and items.

The Way It Happened

It was a simple search and destroy mission. In Bravo Company's path lay a Buddhist temple that had unfortunately been hit by artillery fire the previous night. As they picked their way through

the rubble, a young freckle-faced Marine spotted a bronze statue of Buddha laying on its side.

Thinking that surely no one would want the statue now he brought it back to his friend, Jones, who was a driver of one of the amtracks traveling with Bravo Company.

Jones looked about his tractor for a place to store the statue. Then he had what was to him an inspiration. That davit on the bow of his tractor - right above the door - would make a perfect spot. Taking some comm wire he fastened the statue to the bow. Now he had a bright ornament that would attract attention as they went through these hamlets!

That evening after they had traveled some 10 kilometers Bravo Company halted and dug in for the night. Their skipper, Captain Smith was walking past the amtrac that had just swung around into its night position.

"Jones, what have you got there?" boomed the Captain.

"Just a little souvenir, sir. We found it in a busted-up building and there was no one around who seemed to want it."

The Captain was obviously disturbed. But quietly he said, "Jones, you are, as I remember it, from South Boston. You are, I'm sure, acquainted with

the many fine Catholic families who visit their church at all times of the day to pray their Rosary. Hmm? You may have stopped on your way home from work to light a candle and say a prayer. Hmm?"

"Jones, how would it be if I stopped my big car in front of your church, went inside and picked up the statue of the Blessed Virgin, took it out and wired it to the radiator of my car and then drove around Boston with it? How would you feel, Jones? Tell me!"

But Jones had no real answer. He had gotten the point. What started as a joke was now a source of embarrassment to him. He could tell that all his buddies were uncomfortable because of his unthoughtfulness.

Questions for Discussion

→ Back home we seem to get more upset when someone bombs a church or Sunday School than when they bomb a house or an office. Why? Is one really worse than the other?

→ Why did some of the first colonists come to America?

→ What might have been done by Jones and his Captain to set matters right?

Keys to Understanding

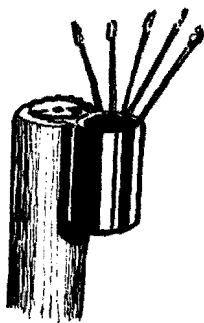
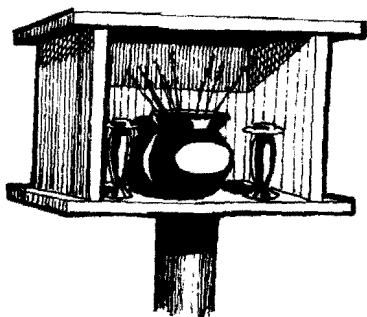
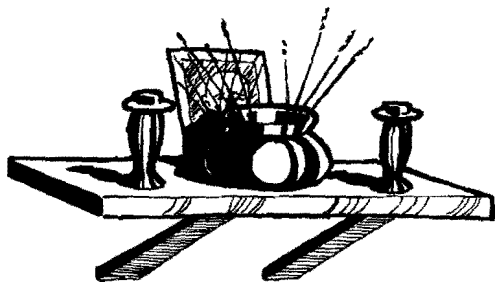
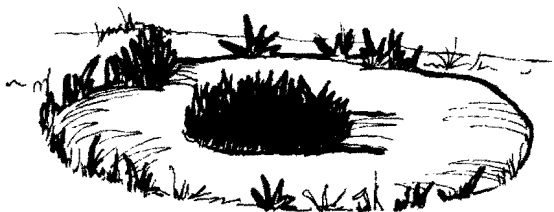
Americans don't have to be told how important freedom of religion is to people. It was one of the major factors in the founding of our own nation.

Like Jones in the example, we wouldn't like the abuse of the religious items from our churches or homes. We get very upset by anyone who desecrates a church or who bombs a synagogue. We would probably be angered more greatly if the offenders were foreigners.

The Vietnamese feel the same way toward their places of worship and the things they consider to be sacred. Some of them may seem unusual to us, but the Vietnamese have treasured them all their lives.

The VC sometimes take advantage of their feelings, and of our respect for places of worship, by using temples as places to hide rice or arms. But this is all the more reason to be professional in our actions. It is possible to be respectful and thorough at the same time.

As humble as they may seem to us there are three other religious objects toward which we should be especially careful:



To some foreigners these items will appear to be only simple mounds of earth, pretty "bird houses," a tin can nailed to a fence post, or a shelf with pictures of some old people. But to the Vietnamese they are articles of religious devotion with a lot more importance than most of us realize. The tribespeople have other items which have great religious importance to them.

The chaplain should be able to explain the meanings of religious articles and the interplay of Buddhist, Confucian, animistic and other religious influences that they represent.

Once again, this is a matter of treating others with the same respect for persons and possessions as we would like for ourselves. It all comes down to how important we consider people and their feelings to be.

Steps in the Right Direction

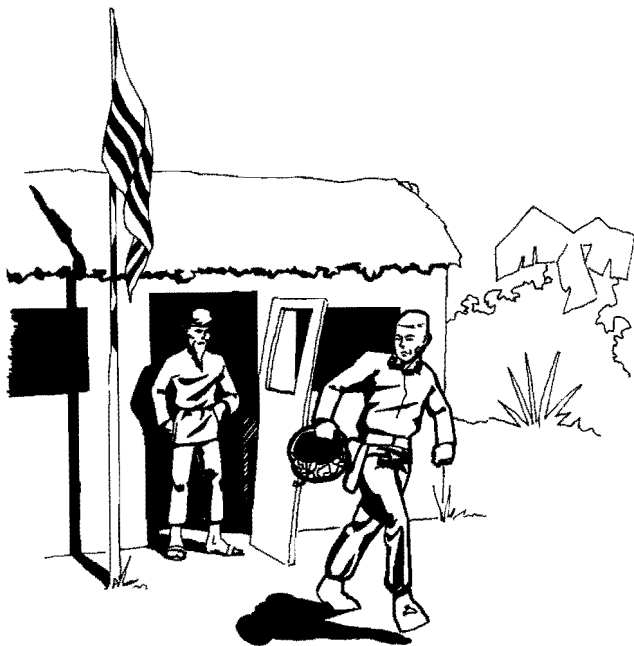
➔ If a chaplain is unavailable to explain briefly the significance of Vietnamese religious articles, consult a copy of Personal Response Resource Materials: Vietnam Supplement, for explanations to share with your men. If any of your men have not heard the Personal Response lectures on the religions and religiously-based customs of Vietnam, arrange for them to do so.

➔ If possible, arrange through the chaplain or Civil Affairs Officer for your men to visit a

Buddhist, Cao Dai or Confucian temple accompanied by a bonze or other religious authority. Many positive steps can be taken beyond simple tolerance. We can work with the people to clean up or repair their shrines or to prepare a concrete memorial tablet to their ancestors.

→ Refrain from touching or moving any religious item whenever it is possible. If it becomes necessary, make arrangements through proper channels of authority. If there are graves or spirit houses in the area of your CP which have not been fenced off, arrange for it to be done. The closest hamlet chief can help make arrangements for the moving of graves that seriously block your operating areas. Be certain that none of these places are being used as trash areas.

Unit Discussion V-2: Time and Conduct



'How the Major Struck Out'

Discussion Objective

An appreciation of some of the ways in which Vietnamese customs and courtesies are influenced by their idea of time.

The Way It Happened

Major Doe was on his way to the District Chief's office. He had a requisition for some cement needed for the orphanage his squadron was sponsoring. It was a bright morning and the Major felt good about being on this errand. He felt like he was accomplishing something.

Stepping into the District Chief's outer office, he was received politely and asked to sit down. Yes, the District Chief was in. Did he have an appointment? No. Well then, would he please wait. Would he like some tea? No, thank you. (He didn't trust their water even if it was boiled.)

Time went by. Major Doe smoked. Time went by. It had been 0800 when he left his own office. He read a Vietnamese magazine (looked at the pictures). More time went by. Major Doe was getting hungry. He looked at his watch. 1330? Oh well, he could afford to miss a lunch or two. Patience, he said to himself.

Finally, when it got to be 1500 and no one had paid any attention to him yet, Major Doe stood up, strode over to the assistant's desk, slammed down his fist and roared, 'Damn it all! I came in here at 0830 to see the District Chief to get his signature on this piece of paper. I'm a busy man and

I'll be damned if I'm going to wait one second longer. I want to see the District Chief right now! Do you understand?"

With that Major Doe stomped over to the District Chief's door and almost knocked the chief over as the Dai-uy was coming out to check on all the uproar. "Here, damn it! Sign this and I'll get out of here!"

The District Chief didn't say a word. He signed the paper. Major Doe did a smart about face and left.

Questions for Discussion

→ What do you think of Major Doe's action? Do you think he was justified in becoming angry? Why?

→ What would you have done under the same circumstances?

→ Why do you think the Major was ignored for so long?

→ What are some other ways that we see a different attitude toward time in Vietnam?

Keys to Understanding

Major Doe made two basic mistakes. He lost his temper in public. He ignored the Vietnamese concept of time.

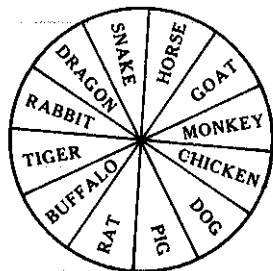
Very seldom do you see any Vietnamese lose his temper in public. The madder a man gets the more he will usually smile. If he really wants to have words with someone, he will wait until they can speak privately. In public the Vietnamese gentleman must preserve his "Binh yen" - his self-control, his appearance of peace.

It follows that if we lose our "Binh yen," our self-control, in public then we become very childish in their eyes. We are not to be trusted as professional men if we act so crudely. The Major should have waited a reasonable length of time, smiled and left quietly, or made an appointment to return the next day. Observers would have regarded him as mature and capable.

When Major Doe struck out the second time with the Dai-uy it was over the concept of time. Perhaps Major Doe assumed that it was only an academic point. They have their time. We have ours.

It is much more than that. Not only are our calendars different (western and Lunar) but our concepts are not in agreement. Briefly, one is like

a straight line and the other is like a circle. In the West we think of time as running from B.C. into A.D. and on in a straight line toward the year, 2000 A.D. In Vietnam time fits into a series of circles. There is a 12-year circle:



The year of the:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1967 Goat | 1973 Buffalo |
| 1968 Monkey | 1974 Tiger |
| 1969 Chicken | 1965 Rabbit |
| 1970 Dog | 1976 Dragon |
| 1971 Pig | 1977 Snake |
| 1972 Rat | 1978 Horse |

—And within each year there are 12 months, and within each day two cycles of 12 hours. If it is meant that we should do something important in the year of the goat in the month of the snake at the hour of the dog - well and good! If we fail to get it done, then do not fret. That appointed hour will come around again.

The worst mistake we can make is to treat this as an academic oddity. No Vietnamese would think of getting married, building a new home or opening a new business without consulting his clergy or medium on this circular time reference. Even the enemy takes this seriously. He will consult his place in the time charts before planning an operation, and if the time is not ideal he has the patience to wait until it is ideal.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ In a war we feel that we cannot always wait for ideal hours. What are some of the ways we can compromise on this matter? Surely, your men have already noticed the time patterns of the local people. They notice how early in the morning people rise, how most people rest at noon and how the evening hours are often given over to quiet conversation in the front yard of homes. Explore how we can plan ahead and make appointments that will best fit into the local time cycle.

→ Consider with your men what would happen in Vietnam if people did not have a strong image of time. What if they planted rice at the wrong time? Built a house just before the river swelled during the monsoon? Opened a fish market when everyone was busy fishing in their own flooded paddies?

→ Discuss with your men sure ways of getting your message across without losing one's temper. Point out how much more reception will be given to an idea that is presented calmly, humbly and even good naturedly.

Unit Discussion V-3: Time and Destiny



"The Rough Rider"

Discussion Objective

An understanding of some of the ways in which Vietnamese ideas of time and destiny affect their behavior.

The Way It Happened

Captain Smith was as nervous as a cat. His convoy of jeeps and trucks had fallen way behind schedule. There had been the VC roadblock of trees and dirt and the trucks had been overheating all day.

It was already late afternoon and beginning to rain, and there was still the town of Thien Dang to move through before the infantry outpost at Tam Ky could be reached. The Captain had passed the word to move through Thien Dang as rapidly as possible. But things seemed to be going from bad to worse. The narrow streets were wet and muddy. The townspeople who were walking along the streets repeatedly got in the way.

The vehicles were having to lurch and swerve to avoid hitting the pedestrians. As a consequence the Vietnamese were not only endangering themselves but were being splashed with water and mud thrown by the churning wheels. They seemed not to hear the horns and shouts of the drivers.

When the townspeople had been narrowly missed or muddled some of them only moved away smiling.

"Don't they care if they get hit?" asked PFC Jones, who was driving Captain Smith's jeep.

"I don't know, but they surely don't seem to care whether we ever get through or not," Captain Smith answered disgustedly.

Questions for Discussion

→ Why didn't the townspeople clear the streets for the convoy?

→ Why did some of the pedestrians smile when mud was splashed on them? How do you act when you clumsily trip and fall...especially if you feel that people are watching?

→ How could the convoy commander have moved his column of vehicles through Thien Dang more efficiently?

Keys to Understanding

What would you do if you had all the time in the world? How would you react if you were completely convinced that you had an endless number of lifetimes to live?

The chances are high that such an idea would affect the way you live and act each day. There wouldn't be nearly so much reason to get in a hurry. Even dying wouldn't be quite such a big deal since you would go through the experience many, many times. There would always be the possibility, too, that things might be a bit better the next time around.

If you acted differently because you had an endless number of lifetimes ahead, you would be reacting to a very old idea. This idea is that time goes in a circle rather than in a straight line. This old idea says that things happen over and over again, not just once and for all. It tells people to slow down, to become patient and wise, to meet life on its own terms.

The Vietnamese people have long accepted this very old idea about a kind of endless, circular time. They act differently than they would if they believed in only one lifetime, just as we probably would. They have, quite logically, made their daily behavior fit in with their beliefs.

It is very hard for the Vietnamese to understand our anxiety about time. Close time schedules and hurried actions are unfamiliar to them. The Vietnamese find it hard to accept people who shout and become irritated when they are delayed in getting someplace. They regard shouting, irritated people as childish and uncouth. The Vietnamese react to the things that frustrate them by controlling their emotions, and often by smiling. Americans sometimes smile, too, when things are confusing or embarrassing for them.

Even the blowing of a vehicle horn means something different to the Vietnamese than to us. The Vietnamese pedestrian does not understand the sound of a horn as a warning to get out of the way. He understands it to mean, "Continue what you are doing. I see you, so do not panic."

The apparent disregard for personal safety on the part of many Vietnamese is a different idea of what things mean as well as their response to all the lifetimes ahead of them. Nearly everybody cares about his life...it's just that you act differently when you have many lives to live rather than just one.

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Remind your men that many Vietnamese do not take time schedules seriously. Sometimes appointments and rendezvous times will not be kept. Plans must take different notions of time into account. The importance of promptness and haste under certain conditions must be explained clearly and patiently to the Vietnamese. Remember that smiling agreement does not always indicate understanding or real approval.

➔ See if your men can figure out acceptable ways for overcoming contrasting ideas of time in planning for joint operations. Be sure to pass any new or unusual ideas along to your chaplain or a member of your Personal Response Project Council.

Unit Discussion V-4: The Impact of Words



"The Cut of a Word"

Discussion Objective

A more careful use of language with the Vietnamese.

The Way It Happened

PFC Jones had been in Vietnam 5 months now. He had already gone through one whole issue of utilities and was down to three sets out of the five he had purchased last month. Coming back from Operation Prairie last week he had sent two of those sets to the laundry.

Now Jones was on his way to pick up that laundry and enjoy the feeling of some clean clothes.

"You have my clothes?" he asked the Vietnamese boy at the laundry stand by the gate.

The boy looked flustered. Another Marine named Jones had been there 2 hours earlier. (At that time there were some 3,500 troops using that base as a rest and regrouping area.)

Jones tensed. "Damn it! If you've lost those utilities I'll wring your neck!" he warned. Sure enough, the lad had mistakenly given the utilities to the other Jones.

PFC Jones was so mad that he tipped over the table in the laundry stand dumping the rest of his buddies' laundry in the mud. His abusive language attracted the attention of several other Vietnamese in the area and soon a crowd had gathered.

Questions for Discussion

➔ Do you think the Vietnamese understand the abusive language we sometimes use?

➔ What is your usual reaction to being cursed? Does it make any difference who the person swearing at you is?

➔ Have you heard Vietnamese adults curse? Do you have any ideas as to the reasons you have or have not?

Keys to Understanding

It's one thing to hear cursing in general. It's quite another thing to be cursed or to hear someone cursed that you care about. We sometimes develop a great deal of tolerance for abusive language that is directed toward nothing in particular, but we usually will tolerate only a limited amount of foul talk when it is directed toward ourselves.

There is something debasing and humiliating about being cursed or called uncomplimentary names. We become bitter and resentful toward the person involved. It helps if you can fight back either with words or physical force. But the bitterness and resentment are more severe when we are unable to fight back...when we must just accept the abuse because of fear or other circumstances.

The Vietnamese are in this latter frustrating position. They feel bitter and resentful when they are cursed or called degrading names. But, with their country overrun with strange military forces, they can't do anything directly about it. The only way they can fight back is quietly and indirectly. It could be that their chance will come when they are told by the VC to remain quiet about a proposed ambush or a mined trail.

Besides it's not their way to fight back with words or hostile actions. They have always been taught that shouting names at each other is the way children behave. That mature people control their feelings and handle anger in other ways.

We sometimes seem to think just the opposite. That cursing and calling people names is a sign that we're grown-up and tough.

Take another look at PFC Jones and his reaction to the laundry boy's understandable mistake. As he curses, knocks his buddies' laundry in the mud, and attracts a group of Vietnamese to witness his anger, is he childish or mature? Tough, or just ridiculous? His actions solve nothing they could cause a great deal of misunderstanding and hostility.

This is an instance where we can learn from the Vietnamese. We can learn that cursing and uncontrolled anger are not a sign of maturity after all. We can also learn that words are both powerful and dangerous. They can do a great deal of good when properly used. They can cause a lot of pain and misunderstanding when they are used thoughtlessly.

The Vietnamese have a saying, "The cut of a knife heals with time; the cut of a word lasts forever."

Steps in the Right Direction

➔ Talk with your men about the importance of thinking before speaking. Careless words, especially those that cause bad feeling, can destroy the friendship and loyalty that we need in this war for people. Words like "gook," "slopeheads," etc., only hurt people and cost more American lives.

➔ Impress upon your men the realization that every time we "badmouth" the Vietnamese we lengthen the war and lose more lives.

➔ Discuss the power of words to persuade, to calm, to heal, to convey deep feelings, to hurt, to anger.

Unit Discussion V-5: Life's Ultimate Goals



"When a Man Risks His Neck"

Discussion Objective

Seeing how close Vietnamese life values are to ours.

The Way It Happens

Case A. Gunnery Sergeant Smith from Engineering Battalion was supervising the repair of a bridge near Hill 37. He spotted a Vietnamese man struggling in the river. The Gunny dove into the river to save the man. Unfortunately, the river was extremely swift due to the monsoon rains. Both

men drowned before they could reach safety. A young Lance Corporal, watching all this, muttered, "Why did he have to go and do that for a Vietnamese?"

Case B. Further north in the hamlet of Than Phuoc Dong a leading elder, Mr. Duyen, asked a sentry if he could see the local Marine commander. Mr. Duyen took the Marine commander to a lane used frequently by our patrols and pointed to the spot where the VC had planted a mine the night before.

The Marine commander thanked Mr. Duyen for his assistance and thought to himself, "At last we are getting some cooperation."

The next week, however, the local Marine unit was ordered further north. The night they pulled out six VC slipped into Than Phuoc Dong. They called to Mr. Duyen to come outside with all his family. The VC leader grabbed Mr. Duyen's youngest child by the hair of its head, held a .45 to the child's ear and fired. "The next time you help an American," said the leader, "this will happen to you and to each of your children." The VC turned and left.

Today a Marine - PF combined action platoon is located on the outskirts of Than Phuoc Dong. Mr. Duyen is working harder than ever to lead his people to a more secure life. But each night he listens for that VC voice calling him to come outside.

Questions for Discussion

➔ When the chips are down, for what will any man risk his life? Can you give these things a priority? How would the priority go?

➔ What do you think was uppermost in the minds of Gunnery Sergeant Smith and Mr. Duyen?

Keys to Understanding

One safe generalization about people is that each individual is somehow different from the next guy. There may be more difference, for example, between Gunnery Sergeant Smith and the Lance Corporal than between the Gunny and Mr. Duyen.

Each of us must, in the end, size up life for himself and decide for what he will lay it all on the line. Some will put their religious faith or their country first. Others will place family and close friends before themselves. Some men will die for a cause or an idea.

We grudgingly admire many of the Viet Cong for their dogged devotion - if nothing else. They believe in their cause.

Quite often, however, it is safe to assume that some things will tend to motivate a group of people more than others. It has often been noted that Vietnamese family loyalty is extremely strong. It is crucial to every Vietnamese man to keep his

family "chain" together. He is a kind of link between those of his family who are now dead and those who are yet to be born. It is terribly important for every man to have children so that prayers will be said when he is gone. It is not uncommon for elderly bachelors to commit suicide - so deeply do they grieve not having children.

It is fairly safe to assume that a Vietnamese man would risk nearly anything for his family. Most Americans would, too. There are exceptions in both countries. A rare Vietnamese mother may abandon her baby in a fire fight. In the States we have some mothers who abandon their children, too.

The more that Vietnamese people are allowed to have a real voice in their hamlet government the more they are willing to risk for their community. The more that each individual invests in his community the more he will risk to protect it. Again, we see the same pattern in the States. In a town where local citizens participate in their local government it is no problem to organize a volunteer fire department. In large cities where it is much more difficult for people to participate in their government, we are shocked to see how hardened people can be toward their neighbors. A group of people can stand and watch a man murdered or a woman raped and not even call the police. Thankfully, in both Vietnam and in the United States there are exceptions to this trend. During the New York City blackout, for example, complete strangers reacted with real friendship.

During the May '66 trouble in Danang, Vietnamese strangers moved to protect American missionaries.

With many (not all) Americans, one's church will command first place in his life. We believe in a man's right to follow his religious beliefs. Some men have died for their faith. So, too, in Vietnam some men will put their Pagoda or their church before self or family. Some have even burned themselves alive over a matter of conscience.

How a man will act...what way will he go... perhaps this is finally between him and his God. It is frustrating to predict and even more dangerous to place labels.

Steps in the Right Direction

→ Think back to the Vietnamese people you have known, or know about, so far. Can you estimate what motivated them most? Try to get to know at least one Vietnamese family well enough (the whole family - not just one individual) so that you can observe how each member will bend his will to meet the family's total needs.

→ If your unit is in or near a hamlet that has been pacified for at least 6 months, talk with the hamlet elders about what changes they have noticed. Is it harder for the hamlet chief always to have his way? Is this good or bad? Be on the lookout for those things which seem to be most important to the Vietnamese.

APPENDIX A

PERSONAL RESPONSE VIETNAMESE PHRASE LIST

| <u>ENGLISH</u> | <u>PRONUNCIATION</u> | <u>VIETNAMESE</u> |
|---|---|---|
| Hello(or Goodbye), sir, ma'm. m'iss. several children, child. | CHOW UNG. CHOW BAH, CHOW KOH, CHOW KAK EM, CHOW EM. | (Chào ông.) (Chào bà.) (Chào cô.) (Chào các em.) (Chào em.) |
| How are you, sir? ma'm? miss' child? | UNG MAHN JOY KUNG? BAH MAHN JOY KUNG? KOH MAHN JOY KUNG? EM MAHN JOY KUNG? | (Ông mạnh giỏi không?) (Bà mạnh giỏi không?) (Cô mạnh giỏi không?) (Em mạnh giỏi không?) |
| I am your friend. | TOY LAH BAHN. | (Tôi là bạn.) |
| Thank you, sir, ma'm. miss. | COME ON UNG. COME ON BAH, COME ON KOH. | (Cảm ơn ông.) (Cảm ơn bà.) (Cảm ơn cô.) |
| Please come outside, sir, ma'm. miss. child. | MOY UNG RAH NGO-EYE. MOY BAH RAH NGO-EYE. MOY KOH RAH NGO-EYE. MOY EM RAH NGO-EYE. | (Mời ông ra ngoài.) (Mời bà ra ngoài.) (Mời cô ra ngoài.) (Mời em ra ngoài.) |
| You will not be harmed, sir. ma'm. miss. child. | CHUNG TOY SAY KUNG HANH HAH UNG DOW. CHUNG TOY SAY KUNG HANH HAH BAH DOW. CHUNG TOY SAY KUNG HANH HAH KOH DOW. CHUNG TOY SAY KUNG HANH HAH EM DOW. | (Chúng tôi sẽ không hạnh ha ông đâu.) (Chúng tôi sẽ không hạnh ha bà đâu.) (Chúng tôi sẽ không hạnh ha cô đâu.) (Chúng tôi sẽ không hạnh ha em đâu.) |
| Excuse me, sir, I would like to see your village chief. | SIN LOY, UNG, TOY MEWON GAHP UNG SAH TRUE-ONG. | (Xin lỗi ông, Tôi muốn gặp ông xã trưởng.) |
| Where is there some water? Where are the VC? | NOUC AH DOW? VIET CONG AH DOW? | (Nước ở đâu?) (Việt cộng ở đâu?) |
| How much is this? I cannot afford it. | KIGH NIGH BA-OH NEW? TOY KUNG DEW TEE-EN. | (Cái này bao nhiêu.) (Tôi không đủ tiền.) |
| The child speaks rudely. He is a polite child, | EM AHEE NOY BAH-EE EM AHEE LAH MOT DEW- AH TRAY LAY PHEP. | (Em ấy nói bậy.) (Em ấy là một đứa trơ lơ phép.) |

ENGLISHPRONUNCIATIONVIETNAMESE

Please don't beg. Wait until
Marines offer you some food.

DUNG SIN, HIGH CHO
TWO-EE KWAN LUCK
CHEE-EN BE-EW KAK
BAM THOOK AN.

(Dùng xin. Hãy chờ thuy
quân lục chiến biếu các
ban thực ăn.)

Sir, please give this to the
children as you think best.

UNG HIGH CHO KAK EM
KNOW KIGH NEW ONG
THAY LAH TOT.

(Ông hãy cho các em nhỏ
cái này nếu ông thấy
là tốt.)

I am fine, thank you.

TOY MAHN JOY, COME ON. (Tôi mạnh giỏi cảm ơn.)

I am hungry.

TOY DOY. (Tôi đói.)

I am wounded. Bring help.

TOY BEE THUWONG SIN (Tôi bị thương xin giúp đỡ.)
JSEYUP DOH.

Yes.

DAH FAYEE. (Đã phải.)

No.

KUNG. (Không.)

I am sorry. I do not understand.

TOY SIN LOY, TOY (Tôi xin lỗi. Tôi không
hiểu.)
KUNG HEE-YOU.

We go to hospital.

CHUNG TAH TOY NAH (Chúng ta đi tới nhà
THUWONG. thong.)

We go to doctor.

CHUNG TAH TOY NAH (Chúng ta đi tới nhà
BAK SEE. bác sĩ.)

Don't travel at night.

DUNG DEE CHEWYEN (Đừng đi chuyên ban đêm.)
BAHN DEM

Please stay in your home.

SIN OH THROWING NAH. (Xin ở trong nhà.)

Halt or I shoot

DUNG LOY KUNG TOWEE (Đừng lại không tôi bắn.)
BAHN.

Don't Shoot.

DUNG BANH. (Đừng bắn.)

Please accept this.

SIN NYAHN VAHT NAHEE. (Xin nhận vật này.)

Please keep away.

SIN TRAHN SAH. (Xin tránh xa.)

I like your country.

TOY TICK SUE SAH EYE-N (Tôi thích xứ sở anh.)

You are a good person.

UNG LA NGOY TOT. (Ông là người tốt.)

You are good people.

WEE VEE LA NGOY (Quý-vị là người tốt.)
TOT

He is handsome.

AHN TAH DEP TRY. (Anh ta đẹp trai.)

She is pretty.

KOH TAH DEP. (Cô ta đẹp.)

This food is good.

TOOK AHN NIGH TOT (Thức ăn này tốt lắm.)
LAM.

May I help you?

TOY KAH TAY JUUP (Tôi có thể giúp đỡ ông
DAH UNG KHONG. không.)

ENGLISHPRONUNCIATIONVIETNAMESE

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Thank you for helping. | COME AN VAY SOO SHUUP (Cảm ơn về sự Giúp đỡ.) DAAH. | |
| We want to help you. | CHOONG TOY MOC-ON SHUUP UNG. | (Chúng tôi muốn Giúp ông.) |
| I am very sorry about this. | TOY R-RAT DEEYEK VAY VEEYEK DAH. | (Tôi rất tiếc về việc đó.) |
| Happy New Year. | CHOOK MUNG NAHM. MOYEE. | Chúc mừng năm mới.) |

(NOTE: Point to the Vietnamese phrase when you have problems in speaking.)

(For use by recipients for additional Vietnamese phrases.)

(For use by recipients for additional Vietnamese phrases.)

(For use by recipients for additional Vietnamese phrases.)

APPENDIX B

THE PERSONAL RESPONSE PROJECT

The naval establishment has traditionally emphasized the requirement for all personnel serving abroad to honor and respect the customs, institutions, ceremonies and attitudes of the inhabitants of foreign countries. Navy Regulations, Articles 0623 and 1215, impose this requirement on all levels of command.

Counterinsurgency warfare adds new dimensions to this requirement. The scenario for Operation Silver Lance, a March 1965 training exercise on the west coast, included simulation of the problems which arise when military personnel fail to understand the religious and value systems of the host country. The demonstrated increase in casualties, decrease in security and alienation of local peoples resulting from this lack of understanding were determined to be immediately relevant to Vietnam.

At the request of the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, the Southeast Asia Religious Project was established in the summer of 1965. The resulting effort, which came to be called the PERSONAL RESPONSE PROJECT, developed into an attempt to understand the people of an unfamiliar culture by discovering the ways in which their cultural patterns, and especially their religious and ethical value systems, affect

daily thoughts and actions. Such increased understanding is regarded as one of the keys to the modification, and eventual elimination, of unfavorable attitudes and offensive behavior patterns toward indigenous citizens. Simultaneously an educational strategy is employed to promote constructive relationships and appropriate mutual assistance between American military personnel and the citizenry, and to increase, in some degree, their mutual respect and trust.

After being described and approved in a letter published on 23 March 1966 by the Commanding General of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, entitled, "Understanding the People of Vietnam," the Project has been conducted in the Navy under OPNAV Instruction 1500.22, General Military Training. Participation in the Personal Response Project has been designated as an appropriate duty for chaplains. The Chief of Navy Chaplains considers Personal Response to be secondary only to primary religious and counseling duties.

The stipulated objectives of the Personal Response Project are to assist military personnel

→ to anticipate and respond to the predisposition of indigenous citizens to act consistently with their deeply engrained religious and cultural value systems,

→ to respect the motives of indigenous citizens as a manifestation of these value systems,

- to identify the expression of these motives and values in daily behavior,
- to act with understanding and responsible concern in relationships with indigenous citizens, and
- to recognize that the lives, values, relationships and actions of indigenous citizens are of equal importance to those of all human beings.

As the Project has developed several indirect, but not entirely unanticipated, consequences have been observed that are considered to be unusually worthy subsidiary objectives. As military personnel have explored the effects of indigenous religions and value systems in the lives of people, they have begun to recognize the expressions of their own beliefs and values in their daily lives and to understand their own motivations more adequately. In responding to the emphasis upon the individual worth of indigenous citizens, military personnel have also shown an increased appreciation for their own humanity and dignity as being too valuable to debase or degrade. And as indigenous peoples have observed the growing understanding, concern and responsibility of American military personnel toward themselves, they have felt spontaneously and voluntarily obliged to attempt to understand and respond more favorably to the strange, and sometimes difficult, visitors in their midst.

The Personal Response Project has been implemented to date through a coordination of field

research, comparative analysis of religious and cultural value systems, production of orientation materials, and both preparatory and in-country training of personnel. In the summer of 1965, a U.S. Navy chaplain with an extensive history of successful cross-cultural interaction was assigned to make a first-hand study and collection of data on the beliefs, customs, religious practices and value systems of Vietnam. Information available in existing written sources was deemed insufficient or unsuitable for the task envisioned. This chaplain also undertook preliminary preparation of troop presentations, background resources and training aids designed to aid in understanding the Vietnamese peoples.

The data so collected has been organized, evaluated and published so as to be made available in utilitarian form to all who were serving in, or had been assigned to, Vietnam and adjacent waters and areas. A basic reference book, The Religions of South Vietnam in Faith and Fact, provides essential background information for military leadership and for instructors and key personnel involved in the project. The Personal Response Project Materials: Vietnam Supplement is a field packet containing two basic lecture-discussion formats for use in all Vietnam orientation programs - pre-embarkation or in-country (the same publication reproduced by the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, is entitled, Understanding the Vietnamese). Two other publications are in preparation: The Peoples of the Tribes of South Vietnam; and Just as Different on the Inside.

These materials are prepared and maintained by a team of chaplains which handles the Personal Response Project Files, Chaplain Corps Planning Group, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. This team, which is responsible to the U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains, maintains liaison with all known agencies and institutions, both military and civilian, concerned with cross-cultural interaction training and the evaluation of its consequences.

In the summer of 1966 a second Personal Response Project Officer was assigned the task of continuing the initial efforts of data collection, but with increased emphasis upon the development and implementation of an effective program of communication for the transmission of religio-cultural information and for attitude improvement. This chaplain, who is a specialist in adult education and communications techniques, has gained a more precise knowledge of the nature of the tasks confronting the Personal Response Project through systematic surveys of both American and Vietnamese attitudes. This knowledge has led to a communications strategy based on awareness of the social patterns of innovation diffusion, of the principles of learning involved in the modification of attitudes, and of the vital role of cognitive dissonance in the motivation of learned behavior. The communications media employed include lecture-discussions, illustrated message posters, human interest news releases, role playing in village-simulation settings at the NCO Leadership School in Okinawa, and the instillation of a heavy emphasis upon

attitude development in the Orientation School for combined action units and the school for officers from supporting units. A Platoon Leader's Personal Response Notebook has been developed in III MAF for use by officers and platoon leaders in combined action units. It contains twenty-four briefings for squad-sized groups built around successful and unsuccessful interaction experiences with leading questions designed to provoke discussion. This Notebook provided the basis for the more systematic utilization of critical interaction incidents as a basis for unit discussions in the Unit Leader's Personal Response Handbook which was originally prepared for the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Commands have implemented the Personal Response Project through the formation of Personal Response Councils and conducting schools and training sessions in the principles and purposes of the effort. Command support in the field is considered superb.

Present plans include the continuation of the functions of the Personal Response Project Officer in Vietnam; the addition of another Project Officer who will operate out of Headquarters, Naval Support Activity, Saigon, into the Vietnam Delta and into surrounding countries; the assignment of a Personal Response Area Specialist to broaden the scope of the Project to include a larger number of the nations of the Pacific area; and the development of a comprehensive and effective cross-cultural interaction training program for American military personnel prior to deployment.

APPENDIX C

THE RELIGIONS OF VIETNAM

Some knowledge of religion in Vietnam is fundamental to an appreciation of every phase of Vietnamese life, because religious beliefs richly color almost every Vietnamese thought and act, and affect the way they react to us and what we do.

We come from a different culture than the Vietnamese. Regardless of our individual faiths, we all have been conditioned by the concepts of our Judeo-Christian culture.

In large part, Vietnamese culture and religion differ greatly from what we are accustomed to. Therefore we may at first find them most unusual.

To avoid offending and even alienating a people with traditions just as old or older than ours we must develop understanding and appreciation of their religion, their values, their way of thinking and acting. Religious freedom is one of the principles on which our nation was founded, the right of each person to believe and worship as he pleases.

To the Vietnamese, and to hundreds of millions of other people in Asia, their religious beliefs are sacred, as sacred to them as our beliefs are to us, and perhaps more a part of their lives than ours

are of ours. In Vietnam, then, we can do no less than try to understand and respect the beliefs of the people.

Vietnam has no state religion. Often it is considered a predominantly Buddhist nation, but this classification can be misleading. All the world's religions can be found in Vietnam. At least four major beliefs have had a profound impact on the people and their culture and are reflected subtly or obviously in behavior and customs. These are Animism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

Christianity entered Vietnam later and is now a religious force. Other beliefs such as Bahaism also have gained followings. Underlying all is a prevailing ancestor veneration.

The result is a blend or synthesis of beliefs in which the forms and practices are peculiarly Vietnamese. Buddhism in Vietnam is unlike Buddhism in Thailand and other Buddhist countries.

Catholics may practice ancestor veneration and Buddhists may adhere also to the principles of Confucianism. Relatively few people could be said to be purely of one religious belief although they may say they are when asked.

Differences in religious practices may vary also from one level of society to another--westernized urban to traditionalists to rural villagers.

The Viet Cong are well aware of the importance of religion in Vietnamese life. They use the people's beliefs in any way they can, although they do not always respect the beliefs.

Our conduct in this country must reflect respect for the symbols and places held sacred, must take these things into account when we enter areas on operations, must consider them in psychological operations, and must recognize their influence during social contacts.

Additional and more detailed information can be found in The Religions of South Vietnam in Faith and Fact, NAVPERS 15991.

ANIMISM

The influence of animism can be found to some degree in the beliefs and practices of the majority of Vietnamese, although more so in the rural areas. Animism, also called the "people's religion," is the religion of the Montagnards.

Animism is a belief in spirits, both of dead persons and those of some inanimate objects such as stones, rivers, mountains and trees. This belief holds that each person has a spirit, which continues to exist even after death has claimed its possessor.

Because the spirit continues an independent existence, it must be cared for properly and provided with its needs and desires in its spirit

state. Unattended spirits may become angry, bitter or revengeful and seek to re-enter the earthly life, which would create havoc in numerous ways.

As spirits are associated with people, animists believe them to be greedy, deceptive, unpredictable, and possessing every trait known to man. Normally, the spirits of departed good people do not create too much concern if the proper rites are performed at the appropriate times, especially those rites which will send them happily on their way to the spirit world.

Those who die violently as in accidents or war, are killed by tigers, women who die in childbirth or who die childless, or those whose bodies are not recovered and properly buried or cremated; all cause great fear, because their spirits are embittered by such a fate and are hostile to individuals, families or communities.

Throughout his life the animist is fearful of offending the spirits that can cause him harm. He tries to worship and live his everyday life in such a manner as not to offend them, and to placate them in case he has unwittingly offended.

Because the animist believes that the spirits are somewhat humanized, he believes that they can be influenced as humans are, and that they have the same capacity for doing good and evil. Basically, the animist seeks to influence his gods and spirits by elaborate ceremonies, flattery, cajolery and

sometimes by angry words and actions in almost exactly the same manner that men are influenced.

The animist does not view himself as a helpless or passive victim of the invisible spirit world, but as one who by the use of the proper formulas can achieve his own goals. In his continuous power struggle with the spirit world he grapples for the best advantages so that he may avoid that which otherwise seems certain and dreadful.

The animist spends much of his thought, effort, energy and wealth in observances and rites which will cause the spirits to do the will of the worshiper and which will placate those spirits that can do him harm.

To do this, elaborate rituals and ceremonies are conducted and offerings, sometimes blood sacrifices, are made. These are accompanied by incantations and prayers.

Surrounded as he is by the spirit world, the animist is constantly on the lookout for those spirits who demand immediate attention, a situation which cannot be ignored with impunity. To aid in this search he seeks help from the important man of his village, the sorcerer.

Americans too, should show special respect to these persons because of the place of esteem they hold in the animist community.

The animist also places great emphasis on omens which may come in dreams or may appear as signs for these are believed to be sent by the spirits to warn of future evil or good.

A dog sneezing at a wedding is a sign that the marriage is not a wise one, and normally the ceremony is halted immediately. The track of an animal across a path in the jungle may be an indication of evil and the traveler may return home to seek advice on whether to continue his journey.

The animists see sickness and death as being spirit-related and so take measures particularly to protect children. Parents may give children nicknames, often very unfavorable ones, and keep the real name in strictest confidence in order to decoy the spirits away from a child.

A similar custom is related to the fact that boys are more highly regarded than girls, therefore, if a boy is sickly, he may be dressed as a girl or one ear ring put in a boy's ear in order to fool the spirits into thinking that the child is a girl.

Another important concept, again widespread in Vietnam, is that the dead must be properly buried, with the correct ceremonies, or the spirit will forever wander. The enemy makes use of the belief when they mutilate and decapitate bodies. In so doing, they harm not just the body but the spirit, too.

Various other customs are based on the fear of spirits and attempts to prevent their doing harm. Mirrors are placed in doors for a spirit will be frightened at seeing himself and may not enter. Likewise red papers representing the god of the threshold may be fixed to doorposts to frighten spirits. Barriers may be erected along pathways leading to a village to stop spirits.

For every part of an animist's life from birth to burial the spirits are his constant companion to be feared and placated and his beliefs about them control his every action.

TAOISM

Taoism (pronounced dowism) had its beginning in China. Lao Tse (the Old One) is generally credited with being its founder. It is essentially of Chinese origin and entered Vietnam with the conquering Chinese armies, unless the Vietnamese brought it with them when they migrated to the Red River delta from China.

Lao Tse lived about 600 B.C. making the religion he is said to have founded slightly older than Confucianism and Buddhism.

Essentially the Dao, or way, taught by Lao Tse is a road of life by which a man attains harmony with nature as well as with the mystical currents of the spiritual world. A Taoist accepts all things

as they are and attempts to attune his thinking and actions to things as they are; never fighting against them.

Most Taoist worship, rituals and ceremonies are attempts to assist man to attune himself to the universe. To the Western mind it would appear that Taoists use magic, witchcraft, fortune-telling and astrology in their worship.

It may appear to one who adheres to one of the Western religions as mummery, but to the Taoist all his religious activities have a deep spiritual meaning.

Taoists are not usually spirit worshippers although there is an animistic flavor to Taoism, and some beliefs may seem similar. Taoists believe that a supernatural spirit animates inanimate objects, while animists believe that these objects have spirits of their own.

The basic doctrines of Taoism seem to the Western mind to be:

→ The universe, including the nature of the physical and spiritual worlds, is supreme.

→ For every positive factor in the universe there is an opposing negative factor.

→ All these factors exert influence on all facets of the Taoist's life.

→ The positive and negative factors are as they are and cannot be changed; however, by astrology and divining a Taoist priest can forecast which factor can be in greater power at a given day, month or year.

→ The universe is controlled by a mystical, almost mythical supreme being from whom occasional mandates come to rulers or priests.

→ The harmony of the elements--metal, wood, water, fire and earth--form the basis for the religious rites of Taoism.

Taoists believe in one supreme being, the Emperor of Jade, and worship him, other deities who assist him, and ancestors.

The two principal assistants to the Emperor of Jade are Nam Tao and Bac Dau, who keep the register of all beings in the universe.

Although Taoism has a limited formal organization in Vietnam today, the concepts of Taoism are in evidence in the daily life cycle of the Vietnamese.

Many of the more basic beliefs and practices of Taoism have been absorbed into other religions found in Vietnam, and affect the cultural patterns.

These ideas are to be observed in older medical practices, the consultation of horoscopes and astrologers in making marriage arrangements, the selection of auspicious dates, and in the ceremonies

of worship pertaining to Spring, Fall, the ploughing of the land and planting of the seed.

CONFUCIANISM

Like Taoism, and to a large extent Buddhism, Confucianism came to Vietnam from China. In the mixture of religions and philosophies which have contributed to the moulding of the Vietnamese character, Confucianism has held an important place and will help us to understand much about the Vietnamese today. It is part of the cultural environment in which they are born.

Confucius, who lived 2,500 years ago, never attempted to find a religion but was content to be a scholar and teacher.

He introduced no new religious ideas and never professed to be original. Instead he held fast to ancient rites and customs, and his ethics were his chief contribution. He did not indulge in abstract philosophizing; for him man was the measure of all things.

In his teachings he combined politics, ethics and education and imbued disciples with the spirit of reverence and devotion.

His ideas survived the inroads of other major religions and lived on while dynasties rose and fell for more than 25 centuries.

The Life of Confucius

Confucius was born in Shantung, China, in 551 B.C., one of 11 children whose father died when Confucius was three. His early life was spent in poverty. Largely self-educated, he became China's most noted educator and learned man.

His Chinese name K'ung Fu-tze was Latinized to Confucius by Jesuit missionaries.

Confucius became an overseer of public lands at 19. A few years later he married, left this position and founded a school for instruction in conduct and government.

After 29 years of successful teaching he was appointed town magistrate when he was 51 and in 4 years advanced to chief justice of his state. The state ruler, Duke Ting, impressed with Confucius' teachings, followed them to the point of greatly improving his government and his people's lot. Then Confucius resigned.

The teacher-philosopher wandered for 13 years from state to state, trying to interest feudal lords in his ideas and ideals. This period of self-imposed exile, with its hardship and danger, helped spread his fame as a teacher and reformer and attracted many disciples.

When Confucius was 68 years old he returned to his home. There he completed work on the ancient Chinese classics, edited "The Book of

Songs" (containing 308 songs and several anthems), wrote a chronical of his native state and a book detailing the classic rites. He also began writing the "Analects" or "Sayings of Confucius," which were completed by his disciples.

These writings became the foundation of Confucianism.

He died in 479 B.C., disappointed because his ideas were not adopted. But in 140 B.C., Emperor Han Wu-Ti made Confucianism a state religion.

Succeeding emperors built temples in his honor in every district of China, and imperial colleges were established which taught the Confucian Classics. Graduation from these schools, or passing an examination based on his teachings, opened the door to social and official life until 1912.

His emphasis on ancestral reverence continued into modern times. When the Tientsin-Pukow railroad was being built the railroad authorities were influenced by his descendants to divert it 5 miles from the town so as not to disturb his resting place. Recently Red Guards desecrated Confucius' tomb, the first known exception to this tradition.

His teachings exerted such an influence on China and the rest of Southeast Asia that Confucius is recognized as one of the most influential men in world history.

Teachings of Confucius

"Learning knows no rank."

Confucius lived in a time of strife and anarchy. His teachings called, not for the salvation of the soul, but for good government and harmonious relations among men. He taught that men should be more conscious of their obligations than of their rights.

As taught in Vietnam today, followers of Confucius are charged with five obligations or ordinary duties:

Nhan--love and humanity.

Nghia--right actions in expressing love and humanity.

Le--observation of the rites or rules of ceremony and courtesy.

Tri--the duty to be educated.

Tin--self-confidence and fidelity toward others.

There are nine conditions under which the individual correctly performs these duties. When the duties are performed under the nine conditions, the person reaches the goal of life which is achievement of the three cardinal virtues--the correct performance of three relationships. These are:

King and subject (fatherland and citizen)

Teacher and pupil

Father and children

(References in English usually list five Confucian relationships as follows:

Ruler and subject, father and son, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, and friend and friend.)

Although subordination to the superior is directed in each case, the superior has duties and responsibilities toward the junior whether it be ruler to subject or father to children.

Reverence and respect are not owed the superior blindly. A son may, with respect, correct a father, and a people may withdraw the mandate from a ruler who does not truly fulfill his function. The individual's primary obligation is to his ruler, then his teacher, and finally his father although later Confucian teachings have stressed filial piety.

A general rule to be observed in relationships with others is: "Do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you."

One of the conditions for performance of the five duties was taught by Confucius in his work, the Chung Yung which has been translated as Doctrine of the Mean. Actually Confucius meant much more than is implied by the word "mean," or middle way.

He taught moderation and equilibrium, and harmony in actions, but advocated that a person might use the maximum means necessary. What

he deplored was an excess beyond what is required to accomplish a desired end.

To this end, he taught "Recompense injury with justice, and recompense kindness with kindness."

As the object of all Confucian teachings was the perfect moral individual and a harmonious social order, the basis for obtaining these goals was the "superior, noble or princely man."

Such a man would know how he ought to live with moderation and harmony in everything. From this superior man would grow a harmonious family and a perfect state.

One of the most frequently preached Confucian doctrines was Government by Example. Government was to be in the hands of the educated and virtuous who by their example would bring about the perfect state.

Confucius also taught the responsibilities of the state in serving the needs of the governed, a somewhat liberal view of the purpose of government for the age in which he lived.

While Confucius was a humanist whose teachings were ethical, he recognized existing beliefs in a Supreme Being; by his teachings, insistence on the observance of existing rites and customs, he perpetuated religion as a part of Confucianism.

Ancestor veneration was perpetuated also both by the precept of filial piety and the observance of rites for the ancestors. A basic Confucian precept and the basis of ancestor veneration is that children serve their parents, an obligation equally as binding after the parents' death as when they are living.

Confucianism in Vietnam

The Chinese Emperor Han Wu-Ti placed Vietnam under a military governor in 111 B.C., and for the next 900 years events in Vietnam were part of Chinese history.

In this period Chinese technology and culture came to Vietnam and were accepted under a rule of moderation and semi-independence.

The influence of Confucianism on early art was important, with the painters following his Doctrine of the Mean: neither too much nor too little; no overcrowding of details; not too many nor too bright colors, just enough to obtain the desired effect.

During the first period of national independence (939-1404 A.D.) most of the Vietnamese people accepted Confucianism. Vietnamese writers were dominated by Confucianism and rarely veered from moralistic tales until 1925 when the author Hoang Ngoc Phach published the novel To Tam that marked a departure from Confucianist tradition.

In 1404 the Chinese reconquered the country and held it for 23 years. In 1427 the Vietnamese patriot Le Loi defeated the Chinese and, ruling under the name of Le Thai To, adopted a Confucian model of government which lasted for 360 years.

The influence of Confucianism on Vietnam was tenacious because it was rooted in the country's educational system until the 20th century. (Education consisted of a study of the Confucian classics and ethics.)

At first the schools taught only sons of royalty and other high officials, but in 1252 they were opened to students of varied backgrounds. By the beginning of the 15th century Confucian-type schools were operating in leading centers and education became the most cherished of ideals.

Confucian classics and ethics also were taught at elementary level in villages throughout the country.

Because of the scarcity of schools, the theater became a way to perpetuate Confucianism. The social relations of imperial Vietnam (emperor and subject, father and son, etc.) made the basis of stage plays. The five cardinal virtues of Confucianism (humanity, loyalty, civility, wisdom and justice) were promoted.

The Hat Boi, one of Vietnam's five major types of plays, is still influenced by Confucianism.

When Gia Long became emperor in 1802, centralized administration was strengthened. He and his successors zealously promoted Confucianism and their own image as Confucian father-figures of a harmonious and submissive Vietnamese national family.

In the 19th century, to be "educated" meant to be learned in the Confucian classics.

Schooled for centuries in Confucian principles, the rulers of Vietnam were unable to conceive of another kind of civilization and sought to isolate the country from alien religious ideas and from the modern world. In the 19th century this was no longer possible.

Under French rule, Confucianism declined. It encountered new ideas and forces, and long before the end of the colonial period it had lost its dominant position. The final blow to Confucian education was the French reform of civil service examinations which required training in the European educational system rather than Confucian learning.

Its basic precepts, however, remained deeply imbedded in the morals and values of the people.

Confucianism and the Family

Confucianism is still important as a traditional source of attitudes and values among the peasantry.

The Vietnamese villager still tends to feel that the family is more important than the individual, to respect learning and to believe that Man should live in harmony with his surroundings. Therefore, the peasant takes the "dao" or way of Confucius, a harmonious path between all extremes of conduct. (The Confucian dao is ethical, while the Taoist dao of Lao Tse is mystical.)

Confucianist beliefs also contribute to the politeness of the Vietnamese.

The Confucian doctrine which commands children to respect their father and mother and honor their memory, provides strength, stability and continuity to the large family group. It is a powerful guardian of morality because of the fear of dishonoring the memory of ancestors.

Rites for the ancestors continue as important ceremonies in Vietnam. Most Vietnamese homes have an altar dedicated to the family ancestors, decorated with candlesticks, incense bowls, flower trays and the tablet containing the names of ancestors who have died in the past five generations.

The ceremonies pay respect to the dead, preserve the family lineage, and care for the spirits of the departed who would otherwise wander homeless.

Offerings of food and symbolic votive papers are made by a male member of the family on whom

falls responsibility for ancestor veneration on the anniversary of each ancestor's death and again after 2 years.

Ancestors are honored also on other special days including festivals, holidays, weddings and births.

Confucianists commemorate the anniversary of Confucius' birth on 28 September. The center of this birthday celebration is a temple (Temple of Souvenirs) dedicated to him in Saigon's Botanical Gardens.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism is the third of the great religions which have contributed to the molding of Vietnamese culture and character over the centuries. Buddha was a contemporary of Confucius, and the religion he founded entered Vietnam from both India, Buddha's home, and China. Today it is perhaps the most visible of Vietnamese religious beliefs.

Buddha

According to accounts of his life, Buddha was an Indian prince born about 563 B.C., in a small kingdom in northern India between Nepal and Sikkim. His given name was Siddhartha and his family name Guatama.

Six days after his birth an astrologer predicted that he would become a great leader. It was also noted that if the child saw signs of misery he would renounce royalty and become a monk.

His father, doting and anxious that Guatama should succeed him as king, screened his son from all unhappiness and surrounded him with luxury. Whenever Guatama went out, the king sent messengers to clear the streets of anything that would suggest other than youth, health and strength.

His early life also included a marriage, but when Guatama was 16 he married his second wife, Yasodhara, said to be the most beautiful in the kingdom, who bore him a son.

Then, the legends say, Guatama escaped from the palace one day and met four divine messengers. The first three were disguised as an old man, a sick man, and a dead man. They revealed misery to Buddha.

The fourth, disguised as a monk, caused him to decide to renounce his wealth and family to seek the way of deliverance for mankind.

Stealing away from the palace, Guatama shaved his head and put on the saffron robes of a monk and began years of wandering and austerity in search of the truth.

Finally he came to rest under a Bo-tree (also "Bodhi" tree) at Buddha Gaya where he fasted and meditated. The truth he sought, the way to relieve man's suffering, was revealed under this tree. Buddha called this truth the "Middle Way," a way of moderation between the luxury of his youth and the asceticism of his wanderings. Finding the truth, he became Buddha, the Enlightened One.

After his enlightenment, Buddha traveled and preached, attracting large gatherings and making converts from all classes of society. Yellow-robed, clean-shaven monks of his order wandered tirelessly, preaching the doctrine of liberation.

Many Buddhists believe that Buddha was 80 years old when he died in 483 B.C., on the same day of the year that he was born and on which he attained enlightenment.

Buddha's Teachings

"Lead others, not by violence, but by righteousness and equity."

The major teachings of Buddha are found in the Benares Sermon of Buddha which stressed the "Middle Way." That this "Middle Way" might be realized by humanity, Buddha proclaimed what are now known as the Four Noble Truths:

→ Existence (life) is a succession of suffering, or, to exist is to suffer;

→ Suffering is caused and created by desires or cravings; the ignorance of true reality allows ambition, anger, illusion, to continue to cause an endless cycle of existence;

→ The extinguishing of suffering can be achieved only by the elimination of desire;

→ The elimination of desire or craving can be achieved only through the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Noble Eightfold Path by which the Buddhist must strive to perfect himself consists of:

- Right views
- Right aspirations
- Right speech
- Right behavior
- Right living
- Right effort
- Right thoughts
- Right concentration

Buddha gave five Commandments or Prohibitions.

- Do not kill;
- Do not steal;
- Do not be unchaste;
- Do not lie;
- Do not drink alcohol.

Karma and the Wheel of Existence

None of Buddha's teaching is of greater significance than the doctrine of karma. The wheel, one of the earliest Buddhist symbols, stands for the unending cycle of existence through which life goes on by birth and rebirth or reincarnation.

According to the doctrine of karma the sum total of a person's good or bad actions, comprising thoughts, words and deeds, determines his specific destiny in the next rebirth in the unending cycle of life.

As translated from The Gospel of Buddha by Paul Carus, Buddha taught that "all beings have karma as their portion; they are heirs of their karma; they are sprung from their karma; their karma is their kinsman; their karma is their refuge; karma allots beings to meanness or to greatness."

While Hinduism holds a similar belief in reincarnation, the wheel of existence and karma, Buddhism differs in that Buddha taught that there is no self, therefore, no actual transmigration of the soul or continuity of the individual.

Again from The Gospel of Buddha, Buddha said, "Therefore abandon all thought of self. But since there are deeds and since deeds continue, be careful with your deeds."

The individual is likened to the waves of the sea, separate, but part of the whole sea to which they return without identity. Men remerge with the whole of being or into the total universe.

In fact Buddhists technically prefer the term "demise" to death as they assert there is no death as life is not confined to one's body, but that the life force experiences a series of reincarnations. In popular Buddhism, the adherent tends to think of himself as a candidate for reincarnation.

As a man determines his karma by his actions, he has made himself. This force, karma, is held to be the motive power for the round of rebirths and deaths endured until one has freed himself from its effects and escapes from the Wheel of Existence.

Nirvana

The state to which the Buddhist aspires is Nirvana. It is a state of being freed from the cycle of rebirth or the Wheel of Existence. It is the final release from karma and can be achieved only by long, laborious effort, self-denial, good deeds, thoughts, and purification through successive lives.

An exact definition of Nirvana seems unobtainable since Buddha refrained from describing this state. He called it the summit of existence, the enlightenment of mind and heart, the city of peace, the lake of ambrosia and peace, perfect, eternal and absolute.

It is the state in which Buddha's followers believe him to be now as a result of the Enlightenment which he achieved.

It was the lack of a clear definition of Nirvana that caused the Great Buddhist schism into two main sects. (These two divisions, Mahayana and Theravada or Hinayana, are discussed later.)

Buddhism After Buddha

The teachings of Buddha are found in more than 10,000 ancient manuscripts written after his death by his disciples. Buddha had taught no divine object of worship.

At first Buddhists made no images but used symbols to remember him. A Bo-tree recalled his enlightenment. A wheel became a reminder of the law and a suggestion of eternal truth. His tireless journeys were recalled by his foot prints carved in stone.

Symbols, relics, sacred writings and prayers were placed in dome-shaped structures called stupas and in temples and shrines as objects of veneration. As time passed the faithful began to worship Buddha images in elaborate temples.

As Buddhism spread it underwent many changes. Its speculative nature attracted scholars while its virtues and ceremonial observances appealed to the common people.

In the countries where Buddhism was carried by missionaries it adapted itself to the beliefs and forms of worship that were already there and added festivities of its own.

Major Buddhist Divisions

By the second century A.D., Buddhism was divided into two major branches: Theravada (the lesser vehicle); also called Hinayana, and Mahayana (the greater vehicle). The two branches do not necessarily conflict but they emphasize different things.

Followers of Theravada Buddhism regard Guatama as the only Buddha and believe that only a select few will reach Nirvana--thus the "lesser vehicle." Every man following this branch is encouraged to spend several months in the monkhood.

Theravada is a division of Buddhism in Vietnam, found principally in the southern Delta provinces such as Ba Xuyen and An Giang where there are groups of ethnic Cambodians. Their number is estimated at 1,000,000 or more.

On the other hand, the "greater vehicle" of Mahayana theology teaches that everyone can strive toward a better world. The followers regard Buddha as only one of many Buddhas and believe that, theoretically, any person may become a Buddha--if not in this life, then in a future life--but those who attain Buddahood are rare.

A pantheon of superhuman beings, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, are recognized and venerated in Mahayana temples. A Bodhisattva is a saint who strives for perfection, or a person who relinquishes his own chance to enter Nirvana in order to help others achieve salvation.

The Greater Vehicle emphasizes worship before the image of Buddha in temples rather than a retired life of devotion. Men are not required to spend time as a monk in Mahayana, and those who do so remain monks for life.

Mahayana Buddhism with some 12,000 monks and 4,000 pagodas is the major form in Vietnam as it is in other countries influenced by Chinese civilization: China, Tibet, Korea, Japan, Taiwan.

Theravada Buddhism predominates in countries along the Indian Ocean including Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos.

Buddhism in Vietnam

Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam in the second century A.D., and was spread for the next four centuries by Chinese and Indian monks. This was the first of three stages in the spread of Buddhism in Vietnam.

Buddhism reached its greatest heights in Vietnam in the second stage which ran roughly from the seventh to the 14th centuries. With

expulsion of the Chinese in 939, Confucian scholars with their Chinese education were exiled temporarily from political life and Buddhism received official support.

A second reason for its growth was that pagodas also served as repositories of culture.

Between 1010 and 1214 the Ly dynasty made Buddhism a state religion. Monks were used as advisers in all spheres of public life, a Buddhist hierarchy established, and many temples and pagodas built. This was the high-water mark for official support of Buddhism.

By the close of the eleventh century, Buddhism had planted its roots so deeply in Vietnamese culture that it was no longer considered an imported religion.

It had been the court religion; now it had filtered down to the villages and hamlets. Here mixed with Confucianism and Taoism it had become an indigenous part of the popular beliefs of the people.

The decline of Buddhism began with this adulteration of the pure religion and progressed with the lessening of official support. In the 15th century the rulers again favored Confucianism which continued as the more influential religion in public life until the present century.

The admixture of the three religions, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, continued and formed

the religion of many Vietnamese. Rites and practices of Animism also influenced popular beliefs.

A revival of Buddhism and the establishment of an Association of Buddhist Studies in Saigon in 1931 were halted by World War II. Centers of Buddhist revival were opened also in Hanoi and Hue, where the movement became strongest.

Since 1948, although with temporary setbacks, Vietnamese Buddhist groups have strengthened their organizations, developed lay and youth activities, worked toward unifying the various branches and sects, and joined the World Buddhist Organization. The United Buddhist Association includes all significant branches of the religion in Vietnam.

Effects on Vietnamese Life

Buddhism today retains a deep influence on the mass of the people and its effects go far beyond religion, touching on behavior, the arts, and craft forms.

Buddhism presented to Vietnam a new look at the universe, the individual and life. It had a particularly strong effect on morals and behavior.

All the arts show the Buddhist influence. The creation of Buddha's image affected the arts of the entire Far East, for giving human characteristics to Buddha's image and to those of the Bodhisattvas opened up a whole new field in the arts.

Episodes from the life and teachings of Buddha as well as the effects of good and evil deeds have been the subjects for paintings, engravings and murals.

Sculpture, painting and architecture often have been inspired by two key virtues of Buddhism; purity and compassion.

Buddhism also served as a vehicle for bringing Indian and Chinese art to Vietnam, and influenced designs in lacquer work, weaving, embroidery, jewelry and metal work.

Most of the prose and poetry of the first independent national dynasty was written by Buddhist monks who exchanged their verse with the great poets of China.

The spiritual warmth and brilliance which drew thousands of followers to Buddha during his life and has drawn millions since, is illustrated in the literature based on his teachings and parables. One of the best known has become a folk tale all over the world: "What Is An Elephant?"

Nguyen Du's famous poem, "Kim Van Kieu," based on the teachings of Buddha, has been popular for more than a century. Vietnamese children memorize long passages from its 3,254 verses. One of the main factors that made it popular is its treatment of Karma.

The effect of Buddhism on Vietnamese life was summed up in Buddhism in Vietnam by Chanh-Tri and Mai Tho-Truyen:

"In Vietnam, Buddhist influence is not limited to the realm of art, letters and philosophy. It inspires the theater, serves as a guide for certain good customs, inspires stories and legends, provides suggestions for popular songs and proverbs."

In Vietnam the fourth day of the 15th lunar month is observed as Buddha's birthday. It is a national holiday. The same day is commonly observed as the date of his death and of his enlightenment, although the eighth day of the 12th month is officially observed as the date of his enlightenment.

The first and 15th days of each lunar month are Buddhist holy days.

Terms, Symbols and Sacred Objects

The Three Jewels/Three Gems form the object of devotion in which every follower of Buddha puts his whole hope. They are Buddha, the Darma or teachings of Buddha, and the Sangha or order of Buddhist monks.

The Sangha is composed of the bonzes or monks and is basically supported by the laity, mainly through gifts which earn merit for the giver. Their shaven heads and yellow robes mark their renunciation of worldly pleasures. Besides saffron and

yellow robes, the bonzes may wear either brown or off-shade white robes. Theravada monks always wear yellow.

Though normally vegetarians, monks may eat meat on occasion. They live a life of utmost simplicity, own almost no personal property.

Personal items allowed may vary, but in general consist of one undergarment, two robes, a belt, an alms bowl, a small knife or razor, a needle and a water strainer. They are provided food by the laity.

The monks perform many services and functions for the faithful. They participate in and lead religious observances and festivals. They may be invited to weddings although they do not officiate. At funerals they lead the rites in the home and at cremation or burial, and again at intervals after burial and on the first anniversary of death.

The monks care for temples and pagodas, teach religion. Some assist in charitable work and other health and welfare projects.

Particularly in rural areas, the monk may be the best educated person in the community and serve as an adviser in community affairs and as a teacher. More important to Buddhists, the bonzes are examples of the Middle Way of Life in the travel to Nirvana.

Nuns have been part of the Sangha since the Buddha established the role of nuns in his lifetime. Nuns observe similar but stricter rules than bonzes, are usually affiliated with pagodas though living in separate establishments.

Pagodas, shrines, temples: There are distinctions in purpose and use between these three but the untrained observer will not normally be able to distinguish among them. However, all are sacred. Unless permission is granted to leave shoes on, they should be removed before entering.

The pagoda (chua) is usually the largest, best constructed and most ornate building in Vietnamese villages. Even in cities, its appearance sets it apart.

The pagodas of Vietnam are normally constructed in the highly decorated Chinese style. The dragon, the phoenix and other legendary figures are interwoven with Buddhist symbols such as the Wheel of Life and the Chu Van (swastika).

Pagodas are used for services but even more for private devotions. At the front of the main room before a statue of Buddha is an altar usually containing flowers, offerings of fruits, candle sticks, and incense.

The pagoda area may include rooms for instruction and quarters for the monks.

The Wheel of Life, earliest of Buddhist symbols, is a circle with eight or 12 divisions (spokes). The circle denotes the Buddhist concept of the endless cycle of existence. Eight spokes signify the Noble Eightfold Path and 12 spokes denote either the 12 principles of Buddhism or the 12-year calendar within an endless cycle of time.

The Chu Van (swastika to most Westerners) is the symbol of Enlightenment, the achievement of Nirvana. It is often found on medals, decorating pagodas, or on the chests of Buddha statues as Buddhists believe it will appear on the chests of the Enlightened.

Buddha statues are normally the central figure in the pagoda and wherever found are held in sacred esteem.

Gongs are used in pagodas and homes for three basic purposes: to announce the time of a service or meeting, to mark the different parts of a ceremony, and to set the tempo for chanting as an aid to one's meditation.

The drum of the pagoda is usually located on the porch and is used to alert the community that a service is beginning or ending.

Flowers are widely used for devotions in Vietnam on family altars, graves, in the pagoda, or for presentations when calling on bonzes or older

relatives. In the temple, flowers symbolize the shortness of life and the constant change inherent in existence.

Incense is symbolic of self-purification and self-dedication and is offered in memory of Buddha and as a form of meditation. When joss sticks are burned, there are usually three to symbolize the Three Gems.

Lights, candles or lamps, symbolize Buddha's teachings which give light to the mind and drive away ignorance, replacing it with Enlightenment.

Food and water are placed before the altars of Buddha and symbolize that the best is first shared with him. As only the essence of food is essential for worship, the items are later retrieved and used.

Merit bowls, often incorrectly called "begging bowls" by Westerners, are the means by which the monks receive their daily food. The receiving of food symbolizes the monk's vow of poverty and the giving is a means of gaining merit for the giver.

The lotus blossom is a much-used Buddhist decoration. Buddha often used the lotus as an example, pointing out that though it grew in the water and mire, the beautiful flower stood above the impurities untouched. The bud is a popular offering to monks and pagodas. The seed may be eaten either green or dry. Roots are also eaten in salads, soup, or candied as dessert.

Buddhist beads consist of a string of 108 beads, each symbolizing one of the desires or cravings which must be overcome. The beads are used in meditation.

The Vietnamese Buddhist flag is composed of six vertical stripes of equal width. The first five, from left to right, are blue, yellow, red, white and pink or light orange. The sixth stripe is composed of five horizontal stripes of equal width in the same colors and order from bottom to top.

Each color signifies a different Buddhist virtue, but there is no consensus on which color represents which virtue. (The flag was designed in Ceylon in the 1880s by an American ex-Army officer, a Civil War veteran.)

Lustral water, or holy water, is water which has been poured over a Buddha statue under the proper conditions to gain some of the efficaciousness of the Buddha's virtues. It may be poured over the hands of a corpse at funerals or the hands of a bridal couple or sprinkled about a newly-built house. It should be treated in the same manner as the holy water of Catholic practice.

THE HOA HAO

The Hoa Hao (pronounced wah how) is generally accepted as a Buddhist religion. Founded in Vietnam in 1939, it is a reform development of Theravada

Buddhism which stresses simplifying doctrine and practice.

Found mainly in the Delta where it began, the Hoa Hao has a history of political and military as well as religious activity.

History

The Hoa Hao was founded by Huyen Phu So, who was born in 1919 at Hoa Hao Village, Chau Doc Province. At 20, after a life of weakness and infirmity, he was miraculously healed and began to proclaim his doctrines of Buddhist reform, giving them the name of his native village.

So's apparent power of healing, of prophecy (he foretold defeat of French in World War II, coming of Japanese and later of Americans), and his zeal and eloquence quickly gained him a large following. In time So was being called Phat Song, the Living Buddha.

Considering his teaching anti-French, the French exiled him to My Tho and Cai Be where he gained more converts. The French then placed him in a mental institution in Cholon, where So converted the psychiatrist in charge.

Declared sane and released, So was next exiled to Bac Lieu Province and then in desperation sent to Laos.

After the Japanese came, they insisted on his return in late 1942. With the Japanese defeat, So led the Hoa Hao into the National United Front, a group of nationalist organizations seeking Vietnamese independence. However, So would not accept Viet Minh leadership and the break led to open conflict between the Hoa Hao and the communists.

In April 1947 the Viet Minh ambushed and executed So in Long Xuyen, a fact still not discussed or accepted by Hoa Hao followers, some of whom believe So is still alive. All believe that he will return.

Ever since, the Hoa Hao have been joined in implacable opposition to the Viet Cong. However, on other issues the sect divided and has not had cohesive leadership.

Most of the Hoa Hao also opposed the Diem government, maintaining their own military forces (used against the Japanese, French and Viet Minh) up until reconciliation with the government in 1963.

Hoa Hao adherents are estimated at between a half-million and a million, although they claim two million. They are concentrated in An Giang and Chau Doc Provinces and are also influential in the provinces of Ba Xuyen Bac Lieu, Chuong Thien, Kien Phong, Phong Dinh and Vinh Long.

Though the sect is united now only on religion, its background of military and political involvement

growing out of a time of war and struggle make it still a faction of some strength.

Hoa Hao Beliefs

The appeal of Hoa Haoism is attributed to its simplicity and lessened demands on the peasants. The founder advocated a return to basic Buddhist precepts, the absence of temples, statues, monks and other outward forms of Buddhism. He stressed individual worship as the means of attaining a richer spiritual experience and working toward salvation.

The faithful are free to practice their religion whenever and wherever they please.

The four major precepts So taught are:

- ➔ Honor parents
- ➔ Love country
- ➔ Respect Buddhism and its teachings
- ➔ Love fellow men

So stressed four virtues which prescribe that marriage partners be faithful to each other, that children obey parents, and that officials be just, honest and faithful in behalf of their people even as parents care for their children.

Members of the Hoa Hao recite four prayers a day, the first to Buddha, the second to the "Reign of the Enlightened King," the third to living and dead parents and relatives, the fourth to the "mass of small people to whom I wish to have the will to

improve themselves, to be charitable, and to liberate themselves from the shackles of ignorance."

These prayers are said before a small, simple altar in home or temple. The altar is covered with a red cloth as a symbol of universal understanding, because the Vietnamese accept red as the all-embracing color. Four magical Chinese characters, "Bao Son Ky Huong" (a scent from a strange mountain), adorn the cloth.

The only offerings sanctioned by the Hoa Hao are water (preferably rainwater) as a symbol of cleanliness, flowers as a sign of purity, and small offerings of incense.

The Hoa Hao have permitted some restricted forms of Confucianism and Animism such as the incense which is to chase away evil spirits, and prayers and offerings to Vietnamese national heroes and to personal ancestors.

Hoa Hao are forbidden to drink alcohol, to smoke opium, or to kill either buffalo or oxen for food. The ban on killing oxen and buffalo does not preclude eating beef when it is offered by a host. However, Hoa Hao must not eat either meat or greasy food on the first, 14th, 15th, or 30th days of the lunar month as these are days of abstinence.

The Hoa Hao celebrate the anniversary date of their founding on the 18th day of the fifth lunar month, gathering to listen to sermons and speeches.

The mother of Huyen Phu So, Mrs. Huyen Cong Bo, still lives in Hoa Hao Village and is the recognized head of the To Dinh faction of Hoa Hao which claims at least 60 percent of Hoa Hao followers.

The major pagoda is located in Hoa Hao Village, undoubtedly the center of the religious faith.

The Hoa Hao flag is rectangular in shape and solid maroon as the Hoa Hao believe that maroon is the combination of all colors and thus signifies unity of all people.

CAO DAI

The Cao Dai (pronounced cow die) like the Hoa Hao is a distinct religion which originated in Vietnam and has been active politically and militarily; unlike Hoa Hao, however, the Cao Dai are not accepted by the Buddhists as Buddhists.

Cao Daism was organized in 1919 as an indigenous Vietnamese religion composed of "spiritism" and a oujboard device called corbelle a bec (beaked bag), Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism and Christianity. It has a Roman Catholic-type church organization.

It was formed in an attempt to create a universally acceptable religion in an area of the world where an intermingling of religious beliefs might be found in the same person.

Basis of Cao Daism

The Cao Dai believe that there have been three major revelations of divinity to mankind.

The First Revelation was given to several missionary saints including a Buddhist, a Taoist, an ancestor worshipper and Moses. The Second Revelation came to Lao Tse, Confucius, Ca Kyamuni (for Buddhism), Jesus and Mohammed.

The Third Revelation was given by God to the Cao Dai founder Ngo Van Chieu on Phu Quoc Island in 1919. The name Cao Dai means the high, tower-shaped throne of the Supreme Emperor (God).

Major Doctrines of Cao Dai

The major doctrines of the Cao Dai are:

→ That Cao Daism is the Third Revelation of divinity to all men and supersedes or corrects previous teachings.

→ Cao Daism worships the Absolute Supreme God who is eternal without beginning or end, who is the Creator of all, Supreme Father of all, and unique Master who created and creates all angels, buddhas and saints.

→ Cao Daists believe in the existence of three distinct categories of invisible beings.

The highest deities composed of buddhas, saints, and angels; the medium beings which include sanctified spirits; the lower beings which include both phantoms and devils.

This belief includes the concept that all three orders must pass through human existence in order to help humanity and normally move from the lowest toward the higher forms. Of all living creatures, only man can become a devil or an angel because he has a special soul.

→ Cao Daists believe that the human soul may go up or down the ladder of existence, and that man by his will and actions determines the direction.

→ The ultimate goal of Cao Daism is the deliverance of man from the endless cycle of existence. Man possesses an immortal soul which must obtain release from the cycle for complete victory.

→ The worship of ancestors is a means of communication between the visible worlds, between the living and the dead, and is a means of expressing love and gratitude to ancestors.

→ Cao Dai ethical concepts teach equality and brotherhood of all races, the love of justice, the Buddhist law of Karma, Buddha's Five Commandments and Eightfold Path, and the Confucian Doctrine of the Mean.

→ Cao Daism recognizes a pantheon of saints and deities which include Joan of Arc, Sun Yat Sen and Victor Hugo.

→ Last, but not least, Cao Daists believe that divinity speaks to man through spiritual mediums using the corbeille a bec.

When this beaked bag is held by two members of the Legislative Body of the Cao Dai over a board which holds the alphabet, the divinity causes his spirit to move the bag to spell out the divine communication. Such messages must be revealed at the Tay Ninh Temple.

Organization

The Cao Dai church has three major administrative sections, executive, legislative, and charity.

The Executive Body (Cuu Trung Dai) runs the temporal affairs of the church. The titular head, the Pope, is reputed to be the spirit of a Chinese poet. The position of Interim Pope (living head of the church) has been empty since 1934 due to an inability to agree on a successor.

Other members of the executive are cardinals, archbishops, bishops, monks, nuns and some laity.

The Legislative Body (Hiep Thien Dai) is a 15-man college of spiritual mediums who regulate the use of the beaked bag.

The Charity Body (Co Quan Phuoc Thien) has the duty of caring for the sick and aiding the needy, orphans, handicapped and aged.

Within the hierarchy of Cao Daism are three major branches: the Confucian group who wear red robes as a symbol of authority; the Buddhist group who wear yellow as the symbol of virtue and love; and the Taoists who wear blue, the color of peace. These colors are normally worn on special occasions; otherwise the clergy wear white and black robes.

Ordinary clergy may marry. All clergy are required to be vegetarians.

Holy City of Tay Ninh

There are several sects of Cao Daists with centers throughout Vietnam but the center of the faith is at Tay Ninh City in the Tay Ninh Temple. It is built to the same pattern as other Cao Dai temples but in a more grandiose style. It sits in a large, well-ordered compound which includes a school, a hospital, an orphanage, a home for the aged and a residence for nuns.

The temple has nine floor levels, rising from the door to the altar, which represent the nine levels of spiritual ascension possible.

The main altar is a huge globe symbolizing the universe. On the globe is painted a human eye which symbolizes the all-seeing eye of divinity. The eye,

by which all Cao Dai altars can be recognized, is in other uses set within a triangle. (Americans will recognize it as the same eye and triangle as that on the back of our one dollar bills.)

Cao Dai laity must worship at least once a day in home or temple at one of four set times; 0600, 1200, 1800 or 2400.

Special occasions for services include 8 January, the anniversary of the First Cao Dai Revelation, and 15 August, which honors the Holy Mother of the founder.

Cao Dai use tea, flowers, and alcohol as offerings, representing the three elements of human beings; intelligence, spirit, and energy.

Five joss sticks are used in worship to represent the five levels of initiation; purity, meditation, wisdom, superior knowledge, and freedom from Karma.

The Cao Dai flag has three horizontal bars, red, blue and yellow (from the top) representing the same attributes as the robes of the clergy.

Influence in Vietnam

The Cao Dai claim about two million members in the Republic of Vietnam, with the largest numbers concentrated west and south of Saigon. Other estimates put the number at about a million. In the

disorganized times during and after World War II they acted in political and military roles, often largely controlling some provinces.

In general the Cao Dai have been anti-communist. They are still a major factor in Vietnam, particularly in areas where they form the major part of the population.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity has a longer history in Vietnam than most Americans might suppose, dating back to 1550 when the first Roman Catholic priest landed in what is now South Vietnam.

Today Christianity must be considered one of the major religions, claiming approximately 13 percent of the population of the Republic of Vietnam.

The comparatively high educational level of many of Vietnam's Catholics tends to place them in positions of influence.

Roman Catholicism

Roman Catholics form the largest Christian group in Vietnam. The religion was brought to Vietnam during the 16th century and expanded during the 17th century. Alexandre de Rhodes, S.J., who was in Vietnam from 1624-1645 and who developed the present Vietnamese alphabet, headed one of the more prominent missions.

Catholicism persisted despite recurrent persecutions until religious freedom for all Christians was guaranteed by treaties with the French regime late in the 19th century.

Spokesmen for the church point out that cultural patterns not in conflict with church theology may be practiced. Thus, ancestor veneration is practiced in nearly all Vietnamese Roman Catholic homes.

Today the Roman Catholic Church counts 11.5 percent of all South Vietnamese as members. This includes 650,000 Catholics who migrated from North Vietnam after the Geneva Accords of 1954.

There are two archdioceses and 13 dioceses in South Vietnam. The archbishops, at Saigon and Hue, and the 13 bishops all are Vietnamese but one--a French bishop at Kontum. Heavy concentrations of Catholics are in urban areas of Saigon, Nha Trang, Hue, Qui Nhon, Dalat and Kontum.

Protestantism

Protestantism was introduced at Danang in 1911 by a Canadian missionary, Dr. R. A. Jaffray, under the auspices of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. This international organization has more than 100 missionaries in Vietnam and has been largely responsible for the growth of Protestantism here.

As more missionaries came, most from Canada and the United States, Protestantism spread to Hanoi, Saigon and Dalat.

Today missionaries from this organization are found throughout the Republic of Vietnam; they ceased their work in North Vietnam after the 1954 Geneva Accords.

One important outgrowth of this missionary work was the establishment of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam which has 345 churches and approximately 150,000 adherents. The church and the Christian and Missionary Alliance carry on extensive health, education and welfare work.

In more recent years, other Protestant groups have begun work in Vietnam. While their outreach has been less extensive, their impact has been significant in both religious and welfare activities.

RELIGION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Listed below are miscellaneous religious practices, beliefs and traditions which for reasons of clarity were omitted from the sections on particular religions. Many of these are so blended with Vietnamese daily life that they are not easily attributable to any one religious belief.

* * * * *

The "lay" (pronounced "lie") or "gassho" is a hand sign used both as a form of greeting and as the highest gesture of respect. In making this sign

the hands are placed palms together, fingers pointing upward, in front of the chest. When showing respect to clergy or when worshiping, the hands are raised in front of the face.

Customarily, the lay is performed three times after lighting joss sticks in front of a pagoda. (Unless specifically invited to do so, it is not proper for those who are not members of the faith to light joss sticks.)

Funerals vary depending on locality, ethnic groups, religious beliefs and wealth and position.

Normally the chief mourner leads the funeral procession, followed by the hearse, religious objects, pictures of the deceased, women mourners in white, a band, and other mourners. Jokes about sickness and death should be avoided and the dead should be treated with the same respect that you would show in our society.

Graves in Vietnam vary from those in regular cemeteries to circular piles of dirt which may dot the countryside in paddies and fields.

Wherever found, graves should be respected and extra trouble taken not to desecrate them. The Vietnamese believe that desecration of a grave angers the spirits, causing an attack on the living.

The communal house (dinh), along with the pagoda and the market, is one of the places of greatest importance in any Vietnamese community.

The communal house is first of all a place to worship the protective genii of the village.

Secondly, it is the place to receive the king or, in more modern terms, to receive the representative of the government, the province chief or other officials; and a meeting place for the notables of the village.

Lastly, the communal house is a place for keeping memorial tablets to village dead who died without descendants to carry out their ancestor worship.

Over the door to a communal house will be found Chinese characters which mean "Long Life to the King," indicative of its purpose as a place to receive the king.

Spirit houses, little shelters like birdhouses ranging from simple to elaborate, are erected for the happiness of the spirits. They often contain candles and joss sticks. They reflect the belief in ancestor veneration and are vitally important to those who erect them.

Americans and Vietnamese see time differently.

For Americans, time is linear with a beginning, an end, and measured segments. For the Vietnamese, time is circular, unending and endlessly repeating the 12-year cycle. They have developed patience and the hope that Karma will improve their lot in their next existence.

The role of the family is particularly important in Vietnam, more so than that of the individual or society as a whole. Vietnamese concepts of family have been affected by Buddhism, ancestor veneration and Confucianism.

Each individual is a part of the family, a link to yesterday and tomorrow. The value placed on the family encourages large families, respect for the aged and conformity to what is best for the family.

Votive papers, representing gold, silver, clothing and other common objects, are burned to provide for the needs of ancestors or other persons being venerated.

In ancient custom, not only in Asia but also in other lands, the actual objects (sometimes including servants) were buried with the dead. The use of votive papers evolved as a more humane and less expensive way of caring for the spirits.

APPENDIX D

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING

The basic physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of man are universally the same, but the ways in which these needs are expressed and satisfied differ as radically as the languages he speaks. The reason for this disparity is two-fold. In the first place, varying geographical, historical, economic and religious factors determine the value systems of a people or locality. In the second, these various value systems then dramatically influence the manners, customs and daily behavior patterns of communities and individuals. So behavior, no matter how unusual or unique it may seem, is never haphazard, but habitually consistent with the structures of value built by a particular complex of influences.

In South Vietnam religion plays an unusually determinative role in the establishment and operation of the value systems of indigenous peoples. This influence is observable not only in the presence of the bonzes and other clergymen, temples, pagodas, dinhs, and spirit houses, but also in the sacrifices, taboos, fetishes, magical practices, etc., so frequently encountered. The various religious rites and ceremonies can be individualistic, or may require collective community participation.

Americans cannot really understand the Vietnamese, nor work harmoniously with them, without

an awareness of these religious beliefs and the ways in which they affect everyday attitudes and practices. Only when their seemingly strange and puzzling behavior is seen as reasonable and logical in its environmental context can it be fully appreciated. American patterns of thought and action might be just as bewildering and confusing to the Vietnamese as their ways are to us. Our familiarity with our own cultural values and behavior patterns should not be allowed to create a negative reaction toward differing systems of values and behavior. We can, instead, strive to comprehend their underlying motivations as a way of deepening and broadening our experience of life as a whole. SO:

- ➔ When moral principles are not involved, be prepared to adapt to local customs and etiquette in the interest of friendly relationships with the people.
- ➔ Search for areas of agreement, rather than disagreement, and as understanding develops, harmony and unity of purpose will result.
- ➔ Demonstrate a keen and vital interest in people as individual persons and in their personal beliefs.
- ➔ Be willing to ask genuinely interested questions of "Why....?" Questions which sincerely seek information are normally considered

to be complimentary. The most foolish question is the one not asked!

The following are some positive attitudes and actions which can help you relate more effectively to the people of Vietnam:

DO TREAT TEMPLES, SPIRIT HOUSES, SACRED PLACES CAREFULLY

Reason: Vietnamese religions teach the presence of ancestors as spirits. Credits or debits may be earned for the future life through the faithful practice or neglect of veneration and respect for the spirits of departed ancestors. So treat these places like you would want others to treat places or things that are sacred to you.

DO TREAT RELIGIOUS LEADERS WITH RESPECTFUL COURTESY

Reason: Religious leaders are considered to be "holy" men and are very important in their communities regardless of different religious beliefs. Special courtesy is given them by the Vietnamese. Their friendship and support can often make your mission more successful; their opposition can mean its failure.

DO BE PREPARED FOR THE VIETNAMESE TO SMILE OR LAUGH AT UNEXPECTED TIMES

Reason: Confucius said, "The smiling face calms the anger." Buddhism teaches its adherents

not to retaliate for wrongs done them, but rather to smile and turn wrath away. The Vietnamese often smile when in doubt, confusion or embarrassment. They may smile when they are most unhappy or use laughter as an antidote for weeping. A smile may also be used to conceal disagreement rather than risking offense. It may be used as a means of hiding genuine bewilderment as to just what the "strange" American wants. If directions are not understood the Vietnamese will sometimes try to "smile his way through" in the hope that all be well.

DO BE PREPARED FOR POSSIBLE VIETNAMESE TARDINESS

Reason: Tardiness by American standards may be perfectly acceptable for the Vietnamese who utilize an entirely different concept of time. They do not normally compute time in a straight-line manner as do the Americans. Their religiously-influenced calendar year cycle repeats itself every 12 years, in contrast to our idea that once time and its opportunities have passed they are beyond recovery. Consequently, the pressure to get things done quickly is not felt as acutely by most Vietnamese as by Americans.

DO BE PREPARED TO BOW TO THE VIETNAMESE INSTEAD OF SHAKING HANDS

Reason: Many Asians, including the ethnic Vietnamese, bow to others with hands pressed together in front of their chests rather than shaking hands.

Both excessive humidity and religious beliefs discourage touching people; it can be uncomfortable and may be regarded as overfamiliarity. Contrastingly, the tribespeople will often shake hands by grasping your hand with both of their hands. The friendly thing to do is to respond in a like manner.

DO BE PREPARED FOR HOROSCOPES AND OMENS TO CHANGE OPERATION PLANS

Reason: Many Vietnamese believe, because of religious influence, that their lives are controlled by the stars or the relationship of the elements of the earth. A reading of a horoscope or earth element table may cause them to change proposed plans or action timetables. Thus, an individual or group of Vietnamese may fail to execute a previously agreed upon mission without notifying the other people involved. Superstitious tribesmen may also alter their actions upon observing certain negative omens such as the unfavorable movement of birds, animals or people. Such omens are strong enough reason for them to change plans and actions without advance warning.

Patience and understanding are necessary if success is to result from joint endeavors.

DO BE PREPARED FOR AN APPARENT DISREGARD FOR PERSONAL SAFETY BY VIETNAMESE

Reason: The Vietnamese are conditioned by religious concepts to ignore many safety factors

and combat precautions deemed essential by Americans. Belief in reincarnation and karma, as well as the concept of resignation to fate, makes them more likely to disregard danger. This helps to account for the startling sight of rural villagers continuing their routine tasks while battle rages about them.

Another example of seeming indifference to personal safety is the Vietnamese failure to react to the sound of the horn of a moving vehicle. Most of them will proceed along their intended course without hesitation because of a culturally-determined interpretation of the horn's meaning that is different from that of Americans. An American regards the sound as a warning and reacts by getting out of the way. But the Vietnamese, influenced by religious ideals of patience, humility and restraint, interprets the horn to mean, "Continue what you are doing. I see you, so do not panic." The driver who fails to understand this interpretation, or who shouts or swears at those who do not clear the way, only creates confusion and hostility.

DO BE CONCERNED WITH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Reason: There is an obvious language barrier to quick and easy understanding between Vietnamese and Americans. Even in dealing with those who speak English, it is wise to remember that to them it is still a foreign language. Textbook

English is quite a bit different from speech that has been "Americanized" both by accent and colloquial expressions. Since Vietnamese is a tonal language, changes in the tone of one's voice can be interpreted as changing the entire meaning of his words. Faulty understanding can create havoc, especially when the Vietnamese will often indicate comprehension and agreement rather than risk offending the person with whom they are talking. Take the time to make sure that you are understood and that you understand what you have been told. Allow the tribesmen especially to talk over your ideas among themselves and reach agreement as to a course of action; once it is their decision they will hold to it tenaciously. Learn some Vietnamese to increase your chances of exchanging ideas clearly. It's not only good human relations, your life may depend on it.

DO BE AWARE OF FOOD CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

Reason: Good manners at a meal are highly regarded in almost every culture. To be invited to share the food of a Vietnamese family is an important gesture of friendship and an opportunity for improving cross-cultural relationships. Take an inexpensive gift to your hostess, but give it to the host. If there are children in the family, a small gift for each child is most appropriate. Remember that age is highly respected in Vietnam; let the older folk start eating before you do. Eat all the food on your individual dish, but never take

the last food from the main dish. To do so is considered impolite and an insinuation that the hostess did not provide enough food. If offered the last bit of food, politely refuse. Express appreciation to the host, not to the hostess.

Since Buddha taught that life is not to be taken, some Buddhists are vegetarians. When inviting known Buddhists to eat with you, courtesy indicates that vegetarian fare be served. Bonzes are almost always vegetarians.

When informal visits are made in Vietnamese homes or shops, a hospitality drink is frequently offered. If it is hot it will not be harmful; if cold, it is better to risk an upset stomach than offend your host. If alcoholic beverages are offered and you are a nondrinker, you may simply state that they are "taboo" for you and no offense will be given. When it is possible your Vietnamese visitor should be accorded similar hospitality and offered something to drink. The use of cookies or small pieces of cake, etc., at such times is appropriate. Such small courtesies can pay rich dividends in good relationships in the days and months that lie ahead.

DO BE AWARE OF THE VIETNAMESE ATTITUDE TOWARD WOMEN

Reason: As a result of religious and ethical concepts Vietnamese women have a different status than American women. While exposure to our movies in the cities has modified traditional

attitudes and behavior among the young, most Vietnamese still adhere to time-honored customs. Public displays of affection between the sexes (holding hands, kissing, embracing, fondling) are unacceptable. Since most marriages are arranged by the family, "nice" girls do not associate with Americans except in a properly chaperoned environment, nor can they have their pictures taken with any male except their own relatives. Girls seen in public with servicemen are considered to be involved in improper conduct and are regarded with disdain. Hostility toward the Americans is an understandable result and is often exploited by the communists.

Visits to Vietnamese homes should not be made without specific invitation and only when an adult male member of the family is present. At social occasions conversation is normally directed to those of one's own sex.

DO SHOW RESPECT TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Reason: The religions of Vietnam emphasize respect for village elders, older men and authority figures as a cardinal virtue. These leaders should be contacted and consulted before dealing with the people of a village or community. Their tacit consent or support will, not only avert resentment, but increase cooperation and friendliness.

DO LEARN TO CONTROL ANGER

Reason: A display of bad temper, like the public display of other emotions, is offensive to

the Vietnamese. Their religious teachings encourage admiration for patience and composure under all circumstances. Any number of irritations can combine to make calmness difficult, but "letting off steam" by shouting, swearing or erratic behavior will only make things worse. Such actions can alienate the Vietnamese and give the communists an effective propaganda weapon.

The following are some attitudes and actions which should be carefully avoided in the interest of wholesome and effective relationships with the people of Vietnam:

DON'T TAMPER WITH SACRED OBJECTS WITHOUT DIRECT ORDERS

Reason: Many Vietnamese are concerned with the welfare of the spirits of the deceased and wish to avoid giving any offense which might anger them. Some country areas, for example, have bamboo "spirit poles" which look identical to anti-helicopter landing devices. They have been placed about so that the spirits may have resting places as they move about through the rice paddies and fields. Their needless removal, like the desecration of graves and molestation of spirit houses, can create potentially dangerous antagonism among those who might otherwise be our friends. Similarly, mirrors or red crepe paper located about some Vietnamese homes are not merely decorations but are placed there to guard against evil spirits.

DON'T USE INAPPROPRIATE GESTURES

Reason: Vietnamese religions assign differing values to the parts of the human body. It is unacceptable for a stranger to touch people, particularly children, about the head since it is believed to be the residence of the soul. The feet are assigned the least value, so care should be taken not to point the sole of your shoe at a person or sacred object lest it be considered an insult. The best rule is to keep both feet flat on the deck. Do not beckon someone with a finger or point as we sometimes do; to the Vietnamese this is similar to snapping your fingers at a "naughty" child. If you want to signal to them the custom is to use the whole hand with the palm down and move all the fingers rather than just one.

DON'T JOKE ABOUT SICKNESS OR DEATH IN THE PRESENCE OF VIETNAMESE

Reason: Many Vietnamese believe that sickness, death, and other misfortunes are caused by angry "spirits." Joking about such things is in bad taste since the spirits may be provoked into harmful activity.

DON'T USE OBSCENE OR DEROGATORY LANGUAGE

Reason: The religions influencing Vietnamese culture idealize the qualities of patience, quiet humility, restraint and unusual degrees of politeness

and courtesy. The serviceman who staggers along the streets swearing in loud, vulgar language is particularly offensive and often creates hostility. It is possible for such actions to create a negative impression that can outlast the memory of heroic deeds on the battlefield. Strangely enough, the "tough foxhole warrior" is often more concerned for the consequences of his behavior than are some servicemen who are not usually exposed to enemy fire.

Intentionally derogatory terms used to describe other peoples are obviously improper. Even such seemingly neutral terms as "native," "foreigner," etc., can be misunderstood. It should be remembered that language is comprised, not only of words, but of gestures, facial expressions, and tones of voice as well. Sometimes in these ways we convey attitudes that seem to imply that others don't count as people. American self-assurance and overt confidence can appear to disregard the needs and desires of others. Individual efforts must continually be made to make it apparent that the feelings and concerns of the Vietnamese people are of vital importance to us.

DON'T EXPECT EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION

Reason: Acts of charity and the giving of gifts are considered by many Vietnamese as a means

whereby the giver can gain merit for future existences. He is the one, therefore, who should be grateful rather than the one who receives the gifts. The Buddhist bonze, for example, with his "merit bowl" into which people place rice is not considered to be begging but to be giving others an opportunity to acquire merit through their gifts. He does not thank people for the food; instead, they express their appreciation to him.

DON'T EXPECT A HOLIDAY FROM MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Reason: Many Vietnamese know what Americans claim to believe about acceptable moral standards. When they observe us in drunken or vulgar behavior which is outside these standards, they come to regard us as insincere and untrustworthy and will disbelieve our avowed standards and intentions in other things as well. The things we do speak so loudly that people cannot hear what we say in our idealistic speeches and publications. If you transplant the experiences mentally to your own home town it becomes easy to understand Vietnamese resentment of increasing prostitution among their young women, of the growing "red light" and bar districts in their towns and cities, and of unwholesome advances toward their wives and daughters.

Friendly and mutually-enriching relationships with the people of Vietnam will become increasingly

likely if the following realizations are kept in mind:

REMEMBER THAT RESULTS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS MOTIVES

Reason: The American serviceman is normally quite generous in helping those who seem to be in need. Sometimes, however, while the motive behind his gifts and actions may be excellent, the techniques and methods he uses can be misunderstood and do more harm than good. The random distribution of candies, money, cigarettes, etc., especially among children, may create a habitual attitude of dependence which can come to be resented by both Vietnamese and Americans. On the other hand, gifts and services that are carefully planned and administered in close cooperation with respected Vietnamese leaders can help bring about the self-respect and progress so vital to effective intercultural endeavors. Careful consideration should be given, both by individuals and organizations, to a determination of what practical help is needed, what indigenous peoples can - or prefer to - do for themselves, and how valid mutual involvement can be achieved. The finest gift that can be given is that one which helps a person, or a people, to help themselves.

REMEMBER THAT NUMBERS ARE IMPORTANT TO MANY VIETNAMESE

Reason: Because of deeply engrained religious and cultural traditions the Vietnamese regard

numbers as significant and directly related to their personal welfare. Even numbers are generally more acceptable than odd numbers. Many Vietnamese prefer not to pose for pictures with a small group of people unless the group is even-numbered. Good etiquette in the giving of gifts indicates the advisability of even-numbered giving; it is often better to present two inexpensive gifts than a single more expensive one. Incidentally, gifts should be offered with both hands rather than just one as an indication of your fullest personal participation in your gift.

REMEMBER THAT SELF-SACRIFICE IS CONSISTENT WITH VIETNAMESE ETHICAL TEACHINGS

Reason: Confucian and Mahayana Buddhist principles make it possible to witness for personal convictions by bearing pain. Hunger strikes, burning one's self, or otherwise afflicting the body can be used to dramatize a grievance publicly and to bring "shame" to those believed responsible for the injustice involved.

REMEMBER THAT "FACE" IS IMPORTANT

Reason: Prestige in the eyes of one's contemporaries is treasured by most people regardless of their cultural background. Vietnamese religious and ethical customs add significance to the importance of saving "face." Extreme discretion is required in offering advice and practical

suggestions so that others involved are not made to appear incapable. Private consultations should be held with Vietnamese leaders to avoid any possible public disagreement or seeming reprimand which might cause embarrassment. Such discussions allow ideas and plans of action to be their own rather than an external imposition by an outsider. The role of partners with, rather than benefactors to, the Vietnamese is the goal. Adequate public acknowledgement should be given for their part in planning and executing joint activities.

A noteworthy example of the importance of "face" is the attitude of some Vietnamese toward education and manual labor. It is felt that education places one above the performance of manual labor in contrast to the American idea that any work well done is honorable. Personal example is more effective than exhortation in demonstrating that educated people can perform manual labor honorably in the interest of national security and development.

REMEMBER THAT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES
MAY BEWILDER BOTH VIETNAMESE AND
AMERICANS

Reason: Americans have a dynamic concept of life filled with needs and desires requiring satisfaction; while many Vietnamese think of the world, its social order and man's place as essentially "pre-ordained." American culture is often conceived as active, material, and logical, while that

of the Vietnamese is primarily passive, spiritual and mystical. The abundant American vitality created by these concepts, and by such factors as health and diet, sometimes seems to overwhelm the Vietnamese who by their religious and ethical backgrounds, and because of diet, climate and disease, are less exuberant and extroverted. Unless these cultural differences are remembered, American vitality can be mistaken for egotism and arrogance, even as Vietnamese passivity can be wrongly interpreted as lethargy and indolence. Awareness of these differences does not require the surrender or compromise of ideals and principles, but it can help develop attitudes of patience and understanding that supersede the differences.

REMEMBER THAT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AFFECT WARTIME CONDUCT

Reason: Certain practices and reactions of the Vietnamese peoples under wartime circumstances seem bizarre and illogical without a comprehension of religious motivations. The mutilation of corpses, exposure of naked prisoners, removal and hasty burial of bodies, threats to mutilate the living are all traceable to religious beliefs. Proper funerals for the dead, for example, are believed necessary to prevent the wrath of the "spirits" which may cause grief and death. This explains the intense desire to recover and bury the dead. Bodily mutilation is feared because its effects are believed to continue in the spirit world or in future existences.

REMEMBER THAT GENERALIZATIONS ARE MIS-LEADING

Reason: Stereotypes of a people are usually superficial and unrealistic; they are often barriers to understanding and respect. The idea, for example, that Asians are cunning, devious, impassive and inscrutable can retard the development of effective interpersonal relationships. The notion that all Americans are rich, live in mansions, "drink like fish," and are completely sex-centered except while attending sporting events or committing murder, conveyed by our movies, magazines and unthinking Americans abroad, can create distrust or even hostility.

A good guide to intercultural understanding is to discard any preconceived notions about the Vietnamese based on rumor or distorted evidence and form your own opinions through personal involvement and a knowledge of the facts. Such personal investigation will not obscure the reality of cultural differences. In comparison with most peoples of the world, for instance, an American is rich. One pack of cigarettes a day burns up more money than most Vietnamese earn in a year. It becomes understandable that the "rich" American is a natural target for higher prices and other forms of exploitation. When we react with understanding rather than resentment we make it possible for the Vietnamese to re-examine his negative preconceptions about us and about others in general.

REMEMBER THAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE STRONGLY ORIENTED TOWARD FAMILY AND VILLAGE

Reason: Religious beliefs and traditional customs tend to make the family the important social, economic and religious unit in Vietnamese society. Most Vietnamese live in small, rural, agricultural communities which are rather isolated from meaningful contact with events larger than their local concerns. The lack of communications media, insufficient educational opportunities, and inadequate financial resources severely limit any world view and reinforce the importance of the family and local community. A sense of nationalism and its consequent privileges and responsibilities, as understood by most Americans, is a new and strange experience for them. This realization can help account for the seeming lack of courage and loyalty occasionally observed.

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE A STRANGER IN TOWN

Reason: Strangers are always watched more closely and critically than those with whom we are familiar. Most people who have lived in small towns remember how the unusual or incorrect behavior of a stranger could cause indignation and be regarded as typical of all those who lived in his home locality. As foreign guests in Vietnam we are subject to the same type of scrutiny and reaction. An American stands out like a coconut

tree in a rice paddy - every phase of his activity is carefully observed. In contrast, the Viet Cong, or even the Vietnamese violator of accepted mores, blends more readily with the environmental scenery. The end result is that a foreigner gets most of the unfavorable attention, and beyond this, his conduct will be considered typical of all his countrymen.

Certain courtesies and limitations of action are expected of strangers that are not required of others. The Vietnamese, for example, may come in contact with graves through the play of children or as a laundry-drying site. After all, the spirits about the grave are all "in the family." But an American should avoid touching, molesting or damaging a grave; he is an outsider who could dangerously provoke the spirits about it.

You are a "Stranger in Town," a guest in this country, a representative of all Americans. When you behave accordingly, on duty, behind the wheel of a vehicle, or on liberty, you help build a bridge of understanding and respect between our nations.

APPENDIX E

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ARTICLES ON VIETNAM

SNAPSHOTS OF THE VIETNAMESE

Most camera enthusiasts dream of a time and place where they can take an outstanding picture regardless of the direction in which their cameras are pointed. That time and place might well be on your present tour in Vietnam. Here can be found a mosaic pattern of peoples, cultural influences, habits and customs that is startling in its vivid diversity.

Even if you are not a shutterbug, the remarkable scenes of this section of Southeast Asia are worth framing with your eyes and recording on the film of memory. They can then be shared with others who are interested whenever you would like to do so.

Just look at the remarkable variety of peoples that can be seen in the cities and villages. There is a shaven-headed Buddhist bonze in his yellow or brown robes out in the early morning hours with his merit bowl. He seems to be begging but in the context of his faith he is allowing the people to place rice or other foods in the bowl as a means of gaining merit which will improve their plight in future lives.

Over here is a Cao Dai ("Cow Die") monk in his white robes and "strange" headpiece; we recognize

him as the same man who was seen earlier in more brightly colored robes performing rites in front of a temple altar. Before him was a huge globe representing the earth with an "all-seeing" eye in a triangle painted on it and symbolizing the vision of his god.

In another direction are some lissome Vietnamese girls wearing white or pastel ao dai ("Ow Die"). This appealing attire consists of pajama-type trousers, and form-fitting high-collar tunics that are slit on either side from the hem to the waist. Their dark hair stays neatly arranged even as they cycle or ride motor-scooters along the busy, crowded streets.

On every hand, in a constantly-shifting array of facial expressions and types of attire, there are bronze faces, yellowish faces, brown faces, white faces and black faces. Not all of them can be recorded in a photograph, but all of them can become a part of your experience of the people of a turbulent and fascinating land.

SNAPSHOTS OF VIETNAM

Vietnam is a beautiful and fascinating country in spite of the ravages of war. A photographic album could rapidly be filled with striking pictures of its dense jungles, coastlines, waterways and rugged mountains. The memory of an observant person serving in Vietnam can similarly be filled with vivid and rewarding "snapshots" of the Vietnamese countryside and its people.

The peasant farmers can be seen everywhere tilling their rice paddies, plowing with water buffalo, or laboring in the cane fields. They have become so accustomed to war and so detached from its holocaust that they seldom look up at the screaming jets overhead or toward the explosions of heavy shells a short distance away. Their "black pajamas" and conical hats make it difficult to distinguish the men from the women without approaching them closely.

Along the waterways and coastlines are thousands of fishermen in their plaited-bamboo boats working their nets or fish traps. Sometimes fishermen can even be seen along the flooded rice paddies or the numerous irrigation ditches pursuing their efforts to increase the nation's food supply.

In the hills and mountains the various tribal peoples in their scanty clothing can be observed going about the endeavors of their daily lives. They stalk game with crossbows and arrows that

sometimes have deadly poisoned tips. Long spears are used to hunt "Mister" Tiger, wild elephants and other jungle animals, as well as for blood sacrifices of water buffalo or even men. They slash an area of the jungle, burn it off and plant it with their crops in a process called swidden farming in order to have vegetables and grain.

The religious rites of the tribespeople are designed to ward off evil spirits, believing that such spirits must be appeased, controlled or deceived if life is to be free of disease and misfortune. Fear of evil spirits is complicated by fear of wild animals and human enemies so that the mountain villages are often protected by the dangerous punji sticks (sharpened bamboo stakes) and traps as well as by barriers erected to obstruct the movement of the spirits.

Here are such contrasts of the old and the new, of the beautiful and the unsightly, of the familiar and the unfamiliar that numerous unusual mental pictures will remain with those who really see them for the rest of their lives.

VIETNAMESE SCENES: DANANG

Strategically, economically, militarily and politically, Danang is one of the big cities of South Vietnam. Being the headquarters of the Vietnamese I Corps as well as the Third Marine Amphibious Force adds to its importance at the present time.

Danang is located in Quang Nam Province on the Bay of Tourane, whose entrance is guarded by Tiensa Island (the Island of the Fairy). It is a city of more than 130,000 inhabitants and an increasing number of refugees. With the green Annamese mountain ranges to the west, Monkey Mountain on one side and the Five Marble Mountains on the other, the city possesses a natural view found in few others.

Monkey Mountain with its tree and brush-covered sides is the home of numberless monkeys, while the Marble Mountains are known widely as a source of excellent marble. Near Danang is a Buddhist shrine with a great stairway symbolizing the 108 desires which Buddha taught that man must overcome if he would enter Nirvana. In the Danang area also are the Cave of the Wind and the "Road of Hell" which, during TET festivals in peacetime, were sites visited by thousands of people.

Prior to World War II the beaches of Danang added to its lure as a delightful vacation spot. Now, of course, their utilization has been restricted greatly by the necessary precautions of warfare.

Before Viet Cong activities increased, Danang was tied into a rail and road system to the south as well as northward to Hue, the old royal capitol; to Quang Tri, Dong Ha and across the 17th parallel. Being a port of entry and transit, imports and exports were handled by its merchants. Goods imported were either used locally; moved by road or rail to nearby cities; or started on their way to neighboring countries. Outgoing products were as varied as rice, cinnamon, swallow's nests and rubber.

In Danang, located next to III MAF Information Center, is the famous CHAM MUSEUM. Statues and stone carvings, gathered from many sections of Vietnam by archeologists studying the Khmer civilization of ancient Vietnam, quickly give the serviceman an understanding of a once-proud civilization which now has only a few thousand remaining descendents.

This city, which blended Oriental and French customs so well, is now firmly controlled by the U.S. Marines and the forces of the Republic of South Vietnam. Undoubtedly the Marines will leave their marks on this city as they have elsewhere through the years.

Vietnamese Language

The language of Vietnam falls very strangely on the ears of most westerners. The average American is intrigued when he first hears the unusual sounds of spoken Vietnamese. Among the reasons is that the language spoken by the ethnic Vietnamese is tonal; the meanings of words are radically altered when the tones in which they are spoken are changed. As a consequence there is a strange, almost musical quality in Vietnamese speech.

The language seems to have originated among the Muong tribesmen of North and central Vietnam and was probably an amalgamation of Thai and Chinese dialects. It remained for a Roman Catholic missionary priest, Father Alexander of Rhodes, to formalize it as a speech and writing style called Quoc-Ngu in about 1651. The Centre' du Rhodes in Saigon is a memorial to this priest who did so much for the country.

Vietnamese is monosyllabic and may be written in either Chinese characters or the more popular national script. It is far from being the only language in South Vietnam. The tribal or highland Vietnamese speak a large variety of languages and are often unable to communicate with each other. Some of these tribal dialects are tonal while others are nontonal; some can be written but others have no written form.

Still, the unusual qualities and seeming complexities of the Vietnamese language should not deter a person from learning as much of it as possible. A land and a people become much more understandable, and relationships with them much more enjoyable, when their language is comprehended and spoken.

A number of Marines and sailors have become quite proficient in Vietnamese during their tours of duty. Phonetic listings of many helpful words and phrases are available and a number of the Vietnamese people are glad to exchange language lessons in order to learn English. It's a good way to have some fun, and a superb way to form some interesting and rewarding friendships.

THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL DISH

Nuoc-mam, a fragrant fish sauce, must be called the national dish of Vietnam. With the exception of rice, no other food can possibly take precedence over this dish.

Rice is filling, and, when properly prepared, is an excellent food. It is also comparatively reasonable in price. But even the best rice lacks the protein which is essential to good health and vitality. Fish, in its various forms, supplies much of this need for protein. Fresh fish, dried and salted fish, and nuoc-mam are the common ways that the catch of the fisherman is consumed in Vietnam.

To make nuoc-mam, 250 to 300 grams (8.8 to 10.5 oz.) of salt are added to each kilo (2-1/5 lb.) of fish, which is then placed in a vat with pressure applied to create constant compression of the ingredients. Six pounds of fish will produce 1 pint of nuoc-mam.

This process is continued from 4 months to a year. When bacterial fermentation has completed its action, the liquid is drawn off, strained and placed in containers made of clay. This liquid is nuoc-mam and, according to the Vietnamese, it is "the quintessence of concentrated nutritious fish."

Nuoc-mam is an excellent source of the amino acids needed by human beings. It is rich in nitrates and contains both iodine and vitamin B. However,

a word of warning is advisable for those who are tempted to try it. Sometimes the Vietnamese use hot peppers to "spike up" the nuoc-mam. The unwary foreigner has a sudden sensation of being on fire internally. A very small taste is wise unless you have already seared your mouth, throat and stomach with "hot" foods. Some Americans learn to like this national dish so well that they have been seen to dip dessert, crackers, etc., into it.

There are a number of grades of nuoc-mam on the market. The most desired brand is produced on the island of Phu-Quoc in Southwest Vietnam. Nuoc-mam is to the Vietnamese what soya sauce would be to Chinese and Japanese diets. While the odors of nuoc-mam permeate the local markets, and overwhelm the foreigners' sense of smell at first, they seem to come from the empty containers rather than the usable nuoc-mam.

The customary way in which nuoc-mam is served is in small bowls for common use. While it may be spooned into the individual dish, the prevalent practice is to dip the food lightly into the bowl of sauce with a fork or chopsticks and then place it in the mouth.

While the taste of nuoc-mam seems strange at first, it is probably no more unusual to us than our Western dishes would seem to the Vietnamese.

VIETNAMESE FOOD

Some Vietnamese claim that their civilization is a spiritual culture as opposed to the material culture of the West. This may be! However, their practical sense and the gifts of tropical climate and geography allow them to enjoy the earthly pleasure of an abundant variety of foods also. For rich or poor, most South Vietnamese have enough to eat, and, under peaceful conditions, their diet could be fairly adequate and varied.

Most of the Vietnamese who live in the large towns and cities eat at least three times a day. An adult may eat as much as a kilo (2-1/5 lb.) of rice per day as a basic food. Rice, in some form, is normally found at all three meals when foreign-aid foods are not utilized. Although foods vary according to season and economic class, standard items of food for a Vietnamese businessman include rice, fried shrimp, fish or vegetable soup, scented leaves (rau song), bean sprouts (gia) and fish stewed in a fish sauce (ca' kho). When this becomes tiresome, substitutions such as salt fish (mam), pork and fish cooked in fish sauce (nuoc-mam), red pepper, or shredded banana stalk mixed with scented leaves and cucumber can be obtained most of the time.

The most popular vegetables among all classes of Vietnamese are the germinated bean sprouts (gia), and the vinelike vegetable which grows in rivers and waterways called bindweed (rau muong).

Both are reasonably priced and may be eaten raw or cooked by the Vietnamese, but until an American's resistance is high, the cooked may leave him in a happier state of health.

Along the coast and delta, fruit also forms an important part of the diet. Pineapples, watermelons, oranges, tangerines, bananas, mangoes, and mangosteens seem to be on the market most of the year.

The poor man of the large towns and cities does not fare quite so well in spite of the so-called "luxury of city living." Since the average family of six has no more than about 70 cents a day for food, the housewife's problem is not variety and quality, but quantity! At home the laborer's food, in addition to rice, consists of bindweed, shrimp, pork fat, hard-boiled duck eggs seasoned in nuoc-mam, or a bit of soya cheese, salt fish, and nuoc-mam. The amounts of the above items are quite small since they are used basically as condiments, and not as Americans use meats or vegetables.

While at work in the cities and towns, the laborer can buy food from a "sidewalk mobile Howard Johnson." For about a dime he can get a good-sized bowl of rice, some fried omelet, a bit of fried fish or shrimp, perhaps some dura mam (preserved cucumber), and a bowl of hot tea to settle the meal. Should a between-meal pickup be needed, and funds available, bowls of soup can be purchased from women "Hot Shoppe" attendants

who move their businesses around town balanced on their shoulders. Among the favorite soups are a rice soup with hog intestines, liver, stomach, etc., and rice noodles with a clear meat consomme.

As one climbs to higher economic levels, the diet tends to become richer, so perhaps the day will come when the Vietnamese will have their percentage of heart attacks also. The wealthy seem to enjoy a species of rice called "fox fangs" (nang chon) and prefer their fish sauce to be from Phu-Quoc Island or Phan Thiet. Other delicacies include swallow's nests, octopus, half-hatched eggs, abalone, shark's fin, etc. Incidentally, gathering and exporting swallow's nests in South Vietnam is government controlled in order to maintain the quality of the product as well as to preserve this unique industry of some of the off-shore islands.

Perhaps the day is not far off when the Vietnamese can fully enjoy their abundant variety of foodstuffs without the restrictions and insufficiencies which are the consequences of war.

EATING IN A VIETNAMESE VILLAGE

The Vietnamese have a proverb which says: "If a man can eat and sleep well, he is as happy as the gods."

In a land torn by war, violent actions and sometimes sudden death, food does play an important role in the lives of the people. For most of the Vietnamese, the major daily and yearly tasks involve growing or securing and preparing food-stuffs. Several military operations have had as their objective the protection of crops for the Vietnamese peasants and the denial of these foods to the Viet Cong, who like all human beings must eat if they are to live and fight.

Southeast Asia has been described as the land of the poor and hungry. But were it not for the war, Vietnam would not suffer for lack of food. A tropical country watered by numerous rivers and streams, abundant rains and irrigation ditches, and with miles of beautiful coastlines teeming with multiple varieties of seafood, Vietnam could produce a wide variety of foods under peaceful circumstances.

Even the tribal peoples in their remote jungle homes need not follow a highly restricted dietary routine. The experienced jungle dweller can locate nuts, fruit, roots, and leaves, which, when added to his rice or fish, give unusual and sometimes nutritional values to his diet. One long-time

American resident of the mountainous jungles remarked, "When I get fed up with cruel, mean people, I like to go into the jungle - it's friendly, and its natural foods are unbeatable in taste."

But to the outsider the dark, rugged jungles are strange, dangerous, and difficult to live in without experienced guides, a high degree of adaptability, and a perceptive awareness of how nature treats its own.

About 70 percent of the Vietnamese people live, not in the jungles, but in villages and small towns. Most of them have simple homes and, out of economic necessity, fairly simple diets. It is not unusual to observe a family using the wooden surface of their bed as the family table. At meal-times the members of the family sit on the bed in a rough circle around the various dishes of food.

The oldest person present, or the head of the family, is supposed to be the first to pick up his bowl and have hot cooked rice put in it. Then the others in the circle may be served. Most frequently the meal consists of a central bowl of rice and small side dishes of fish, fish sauce or greens which are used merely for flavoring the rice. All goods have usually been reduced to bite-size prior to the meal so that a knife is seldom seen at meal time.

Each person old enough to eat by himself has a small bowl and a pair of chopsticks. The bowl is

normally held in the left hand and the chopsticks in the right. As the various condiments are desired, they are picked up with the personal chopsticks, placed in the rice bowl, and then with rice placed into the mouth. As this is masticated, preparation of another mouthful proceeds uninterrupted except for occasional small talk.

Even this seemingly meager fare reminds the Vietnamese family that, although its welfare depends on the outcome of a complicated modern war, its ultimate dependence is still, as through the ages, upon the soil and the sea.

"DRINKS" - VIETNAMESE STYLE

The Vietnamese have a number of drinks and, while not encouraging anyone to try them all, it is good to know about them. This knowledge may prevent unpleasant surprises and allow one gracefully to accept or refuse those which are not acceptable by reason of taste or personal conviction.

Since it is presumed that the serviceman knows what commercial drink he is buying, be it Vietnamese or imported, only hospitality drinks are included here.

Rice wine is often served at mealtimes in the home to men, but not to women since the Vietnamese women ordinarily do not drink alcohol. (This does not apply to the hill-tribeswomen during their various religious rituals.) The Vietnamese drink their rice alcohol straight, and without chasers. Quite often such drinks are accompanied by foodstuffs such as fried palm worms, snake or dog meat, peanuts, pork tripe or a bit of acid fruit.

As Vietnamese men grow older they seem to favor a drink of goat's blood mixed with alcohol. Likewise during the so-called "cool months," chrysanthemum flavored alcohol is said to be a favorite drink of aging gentlemen.

Fortunately for some of us, not all Vietnamese drinks are intoxicating. The Vietnamese drink both Chinese tea and green tea as well as many natural

teas made of berries, leaves, etc., which may be served either piping hot or cool.

The use of rainwater as a drink seems acceptable to those who drop in for a casual visit on a warm day or a muggy evening. Normally, rainwater is caught from the house roof after a few rains have cleansed away the dirt. The water is stored in earthen containers for use during the dry seasons, and in some areas, numerous large earthenware jars give silent witness to the long dry seasons.

On the hot afternoons found throughout Vietnam, a freshly picked pineapple, either sliced or squeezed for its juice is quite refreshing as are other fruit juices. The coconut provides one of the most common drinks. It seems to be a fairly safe drink since any prior opening of the coconut quickly causes spoilage.

Some foreigners have found that the Vietnamese tea brewed in large earthenware vessels over a wood fire is refreshing as well as thirst quenching. There need be no undue concern for side-effects. Perhaps the steaming tea scalds the "germs" as much as it does the mouths of those who drink it.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE VIETNAMESE

The selection, courtship and ultimate marriage of one's life partner seems complicated enough in the United States, but the process is very simple when compared with the marriage customs of Vietnam.

The choice of a marriage partner among the ethnic Vietnamese is a complex process involving the use of astrology, age studies, the symbolism of the five elements of the earth, social class, etc. The persons who are to be married have less to say about their future mates than other members of the family, since the needs of the total family take precedence over the desires of individuals.

But the various peoples of Vietnam approach marriage in different ways. In some of the mountain tribes the father and mother decide upon when and whom their children will marry. Among others - the Chil tribe for instance - the husband is chosen only by the mother, and in a most unusual way. Eligible young men are invited to spend the night with her daughter. When the girl is large with child, the mother picks from the lot of likely fathers the one she wants most for a son-in-law. Homer Dowdy describes in *THE BAMBOO CROSS* (New York: Harper and Row: 1964) how the mother then sometimes invites the young men and their parents to a feast, and the one who finds a brass ring at the bottom of his gourd of cloudy rice alcohol is thereby betrothed to the girl.

Regardless of the specific methods used for choosing the prospective brides and grooms, businesslike negotiations precede every marriage. Once steps are taken toward an agreement they cannot be annulled without the risk of a "lawsuit" which can lead to a considerable settlement. Bringing suit against a neighbor is a favorite pastime of the mountain peoples. Sometimes the trial is before civil authorities, but, more frequently, by tests of fire or water before fellow villagers.

To avoid these costly judgments, the negotiators in a marriage contract deal skillfully and carefully with each other. Each side holds out for the maximum possible settlement--why settle for two water buffalo and a basket of rice when the figure might be pushed higher?

The actual marriage ceremonies vary according to tribal customs and the wealth of the family. Sometimes they consist of the mere eating of rice from a common bowl held by the village chief or elder; at other times there is elaborate feasting by the entire village. The couple may then move in with parents or establish their own household.

Marriage can be either monogamous or polygamous, once again depending upon the tribe involved. Marriages are also occasionally consummated without parental agreement, but the couple must establish an independent household and there is no community recognition of the event.

A couple whose marriage is peaceful and happy are thought of as a jade tray and a pair of golden chopsticks since these objects go well together. Because the production and consumption of food are both the major activity and chief enjoyment of the people, the ideal compliment is to speak of a married couple as being like these lovely and useful items.

THE KING OF THE FOREST

The lion has frequently been called the "King of the Jungle," but in the forests of Vietnam another "King" reigns supreme. It is, strangely enough, a kind of wood -- bamboo.

Bamboo is so important to Vietnamese life and economy that it occupies the central and most prominent position in the country's official Coat of Arms. There it is flanked by a paintbrush signifying spiritual worth and a sword symbolizing the fighting potential of the Vietnamese peoples. A scroll with "Vietnam" inscribed upon it overlays and connects the three items. The bamboo itself is said to symbolize the rectitude, the perenniality and the desired union of all Vietnamese people, but its actual and symbolic significance far surpass even these worthy qualities.

Bamboo grows in great abundance throughout Vietnam. The two major types are the "Tre" or male variety which has tough knots, cylindrical stalks and a thick, durable lining; and the "Nua" or female bamboo which is slender with well-spaced knots and a fine lining within the circular sections. Both types are used in an almost endless variety of ways.

Before steel became available, bamboo was used in the reinforcement of concrete by the building trades. It is still utilized in the construction of houses and other buildings for studding, joists and

beams; it is plaited for walls, split for flooring, and sliced into strips and softened in water for tying beams together.

The fishermen of Vietnam use bamboo to make fish traps, fish baskets, and the bottoms of their fishing boats. These unusual boat bottoms are built from plaited bamboo which is coated with a tropical forest resin to make it watertight.

Bamboo is also involved in the storage and preparation of foods. It can be dried as fuel for burning, woven into storage containers, and green bamboo sections can even be used as utensils for cooking. In addition, young tender bamboo shoots are a delicious food which is prepared in a number of ways. When rice or fish need flavoring, the addition of the shoots creates a more tasty dish.

The great variety of its uses finds bamboo utilized for hat making, the manufacture of luxury paper and cellulose, and as the basic material in a number of instruments of warfare. American forces have encountered it as sharpened stakes in the deadly punji traps, as arrows for the crossbow, and as the casings of explosive mines and booby traps.

Considering its remarkably diverse usefulness, there is little wonder that the lowland Vietnamese have been a bit awed by the qualities of bamboo. Its gracefulness and its capacity to bend with the force of the wind only to return to its upright position have led them to aspire to similar qualities of poise and tough resiliency in their personal lives.

Vietnamese Symbolic Animals

Most nations have symbols by which they are represented. The United States, by an Eagle; England, by a Bull; Russia, by a Bear; and Vietnam, by four symbolic animals. These are the Turtle, the Dragon, the Unicorn and the Phoenix.

The turtle is the symbol of longevity because it can live for 200 or 300 years. To the Vietnamese, its shell -- flat underneath and round at the top -- suggests earth and sky. In its symbolic use, the turtle is shown with a set of books on its back, portraying the ancient vision supposedly seen by the legendary Chinese emperor Phuc Hi. In the courtyards of some temples are ponds filled with turtles, which worshippers have brought and set free in order to earn merit.

The dragon is the most frequently seen symbolic figure in Vietnam. To the Vietnamese, who have been influenced by Chinese culture, the dragon is the symbol of power and nobility. Because of its mythological background, it is believed to be immortal. Some people believe that the dragon can live in the ground, the air or the water, and that the vapors of its nostrils can be turned into water or fire at will. The use of the dragon as a mythological symbol seems to have diminished as western ideas have come into Vietnam.

While the dragon represents the male, the phoenix represents the female, so murals in pagodas

and elsewhere show the dragon and phoenix representing man and woman, man and wife. Like the turtle with his books, the phoenix has a ribbon binding two rolls of paper in its beak. These, again, were among the signs supposedly seen by Phuc Hi.

The design of the phoenix is suggestive of graceful movements, nobility, and pride. The symbolic significance of the phoenix of Vietnam differs from that of the phoenix of the Nile Valley. In Egyptian mythology the phoenix was a beautiful bird which lived alone in the desert for 500 or 600 years. It would then be consumed in fire, only to rise from the ashes to start its life anew. It was, therefore, a symbol of immortality to the ancient dwellers along the Nile.

The fourth symbolic animal is the Sacred Unicorn. The unicorn is the symbol of bounty and wisdom and in the past was used as insignia by high dignitaries of the Emperor.

Understanding the symbols used to represent a nation is a valuable guide to the feelings and motivations of its people.

SAILING IN A PLAITED BAMBOO BOAT

Did you ever hear of a bamboo basket for holding water? Then learn of the Vietnamese who make and use boats of plaited bamboo to travel canals, rivers, and the sea--for harvesting the crops, for transportation of the family, or for catching the fish which provide the basic protein of the Vietnamese diet.

According to a Vietnamese book, HAI DUONG CANG CHI, it was a military commander--Tran Ung Long--who invented this unique boat of plaited bamboo in about 975 A.D. In pursuit of an enemy, he came to a river, only to discover that all the boats had been destroyed. Determined to capture his foe, and having observed how some of the Vietnamese fishermen could actually walk on water in plaited bamboo baskets, he ordered that bamboo be secured and boats built. But when these boats were placed in the water, they quickly sank. He then ordered his troops to search for a natural lacquer which would act as a varnish and water-proofing for the bamboo. When this was accomplished by the use of a forest resin, victory was the result. Later as the political tide changed, Tran Ung Long resigned and spent the rest of his life as a plaited bamboo boat builder.

Anyone visiting Vietnam today will see literally tens of thousands of these craft that range in size from the one-man, round, bowl-like craft to the larger junks that run regularly along the coastlines

and rivers. Each of the small craft seen in this country has been developed to meet varying geographical circumstances of tides, winds, surf conditions, water depths, etc. Due to the extensive irrigation system, the smaller ones can even be used to carry rice from the fields to the storage areas.

The warm tropical waters in this area are filled with teredowood worms, mollusks and other marine life which can readily destroy untreated boat bottoms. While sao-wood makes good sides for the hull, these forms of sea life would quickly ruin the boat bottoms. The Vietnamese discovered that bamboo, being strong, light, flexible and tough, resists the assaults of sea life, especially when treated with a resin binder. Moreover the flexible bamboo bottom allows boats to squeeze into shallow waters. They can shift sufficiently to allow passage into otherwise impassable areas.

The bottomless wooden sideboards are fitted into a basket made of strips of bamboo woven into a watertight construction and kept in shape by long flexible bamboo stringers. The solid sides and the bamboo bottom are fitted together with longitudinal gussets to form the hull of the boat. Removable boards form a false deck for working space and allow the transportation of rice, produce and people. These strange craft may run up to 14 tons gross weight or be just large enough for one person.

In areas where a wooden hull might be dangerous, unwise or unworkable, the bamboo bottom

works well. When grounded, the flexible bottom absorbs the shock and, by spreading out, allows the boat to continue on its way. The low cost and simple construction permits replacement as frequently as necessary while the sides of the hull may stay usable for many years.

Some Americans serving as Junk Force advisers, have found that the Viet Cong utilize such craft. By this means they are sometimes able to escape from the rigid-frame boats in the shallow waters of the delta, much to American dismay and disappointment. If engines are mounted on these boats, care has to be taken to spring-mount them to prevent the vibrations from causing the bamboo to spring leaks. Mounting with a long drive shaft gives these craft maneuverability as well as speed. Because bamboo is used in so many important ways by the Vietnamese, there is little wonder that they like to feel that they reflect its tough resiliency and effectiveness in their personal lives.

THE BETEL NUT SMILE

American personnel serving in the Vietnam countryside will quickly notice the "Betel Nut Smile" which is so obviously different from the "Ipana gleam." The lips and mouth of the betel nut chewer are very red, and the teeth appear to have been coated with black enamel. While "betel chewing" seems to be found largely among the middle-aged and older people, it still is seen frequently enough to create interest in its nature and purpose.

The betel nut is the small fruit of the areca palm. The nut along with a leaf or leaves of the betel climber, a vine which is usually found growing with the areca palm, and a bit of raw limestone are mixed into a paste. In places such as Danang, you may see the user preparing this mixture in a rather small mortar bowl with a small pestle. Usually only one "chew" is prepared at a time. Sometimes in order to prolong the chew, tobacco is added.

This mixture creates a red stain which colors the mouth as well as any spot where sputum is projected. Unless forewarned of this colorful habit, when you first see it, you may think the chewer has a serious chest wound or, at the very least, is spitting up excessive blood.

While the betel nut smile is predominantly a countryside, village, and low-economic-class

affair, occasionally more affluent and better-educated individuals will be seen participating. Continuation of this practice--which seems to be habit forming--turns the teeth black.

Doctors indicate that this "chew" may have some pain-killing effects. But a natural question at this point might be, "Which comes first, the betel nut or the pain?" Still, where dentists are so few, this was perhaps an original pain-killer.

When Vietnamese villagers seek help from their village mayor (or it may happen when they come to you seeking formal help), they present him with several quids of betel as a mark of respect. This is not to be considered a bribe, or even a gift, as the value is too small. Sometimes as little as one betel climber leaf and one areca nut upon a plate are presented. It is understood that the plate will be returned at a later date.

The use of the betel nut chew, incidentally, is also found in a number of South American countries, particularly among the jungle and mountain people there.

While the use of the betel nut is dying out in the cities, at almost every non-Christian wedding party, along with the cakes, sweetmeats, tea, etc., the betel chew will be found.

THE LEGEND OF THE BETEL NUT

The reddened mouths and blackened teeth of the betel nut chewers of the Vietnamese countryside are a strange and startling sight to most Americans. It seems especially unusual that the betel nut mixture should be found at almost every non-Christian wedding party along with the other refreshments. Its presence there undoubtedly grows out of the legend of the betel nut which is related by a Vietnamese, Le Huy Hap, as follows:

There once were two identical brothers, whom no one could tell apart, who fell in love with the same girl. The older brother married her, but through mistaken identity the wife became involved with the younger brother. Although she was unaware of this, the younger brother's sense of guilt drove him from the home. Driven by his guilt to insanity, he soon died beside a small brook. The older brother, following the Vietnamese pattern of thought, felt compelled to leave his wife and find the brother. For while wives can be replaced, brothers cannot.

The legend continues by saying that in his search he came to the brook and leaned against the areca tree which had grown in the spot where his brother had died. Being tired, he fell asleep while leaning against the tree and turned into a block of limestone.

The wife, looking for her husband, came to the same place and, instinctively realizing what had

happened, asked forgiveness and then beat her head against her limestone husband until she died. She later became a betel creeper growing around the areca tree.

Later, a Vietnamese emperor, passing that way, was told the story of the brothers. He ordered a nut, a leaf, and a bit of lime brought to him and chewed on them as he contemplated what purpose fate had in this strange drama. He soon noticed that he felt rested and not so tired from his long trip. When he spat the juices, the liquid was red as blood, symbolic of the bond of relatives and marriage.

Thus, the presence of the betel chew on the wedding tray is, to many Vietnamese, an emblem of love and marriage. In some areas, if a girl accepts an offered betel nut, she will marry the giver, if parents agree. If, upon chewing the betel quid, it proves scarlet, she believes her marital future will be a happy one.

Typical of many Vietnamese customs--this is a blending of the past, the present, the future with an infusion of religious, cultural and economic overtones.

WHY ARE MARINES IN VIETNAM?

Sometimes in puzzlement; sometimes in hostility; sometimes really trying to understand, the Vietnamese will ask, "Why are Marines in Vietnam?" This opener is often followed by, "Are you married?" and then, "How many children do you have?" If your answers are accepted, the next question seems almost too personal, but it is usually asked merely out of curiosity, "How much do you make?" When this has been settled diplomatically, and if they feel you are still friendly, many ask, "Why are you in Vietnam?"

When confronted with these persistent and important questions regarding their presence in Vietnam, a number of Marines are at a loss for a meaningful answer. Many Vietnamese are genuinely bewildered by our involvement, and the Viet Cong propaganda agents are busy trying to cast Americans in the role of villains, so Marines ought to know just why they are in Vietnam, both as a group and individually. A patient and intelligent answer might do much to win staunch friends in time of danger; and the ability to answer might well make an individual Marine more purposeful and effective during the months of his tour.

The answer to the more general question is simply that the presence of Marines in Vietnam is required by our current national foreign policy. The United States is fulfilling a commitment to assist the people of Southeast Asia in their efforts

to maintain their freedom and to develop their nations without externally imposed and tyrannical control. We have joined them in their battle against a common and desperate enemy--militant international communism. To turn our backs on a country like Vietnam in this life-or-death struggle would prove us to be unworthy allies and, ultimately, place our own Nation in greater peril.

The answer to the personal question about our reasons for being in Vietnam is often not so obvious nor capable of such concise statement, but it is no less important. The initial response that most of us must make is that our presence in Vietnam is something over which we have virtually no control. We forfeited the determination of our physical location when we were sworn into the Corps and became a part of a proud tradition of the self-sacrificial defense of our Nation and her interests. We might be deeply convinced of most, or all, of our official policy statements concerning American involvement in Southeast Asia. Many Marines are so persuaded of the legitimacy of our concern for the freedom of the Vietnamese, and of the dangers of communist aggression, that they request repeated tours of duty in Vietnam in spite of personal discomfort and the perils of combat.

But regardless of the nature of our individual convictions regarding official policy the simple fact remains that we are here, and the only question that penetrates to the heart of our personal

situation is, "How are we going to deal with the experience?" Are we going to restrict ourselves to doing only what must be done and trying to stay alive, or will we seize upon these months as a unique and incomparable opportunity to learn all we possibly can about Vietnam and its people and to do all we can to win their friendship and respect? Are we interested enough to try to understand why their behavior and attitudes are so different from our own? Are we willing to attempt experimentally to relate to the people in a really wholesome and effective manner? Are we going to return to the States truly wiser about our world and its inhabitants or just a year older?

These are questions that only the individual can answer for himself. There are a number of people who can offer some help. They can provide language instruction, information about religious beliefs and their daily consequences, and guidelines for effective relationships, but the first steps are really up to you. Taking them could make a great deal of difference in the kind of answer you give to a favorite Vietnamese question.