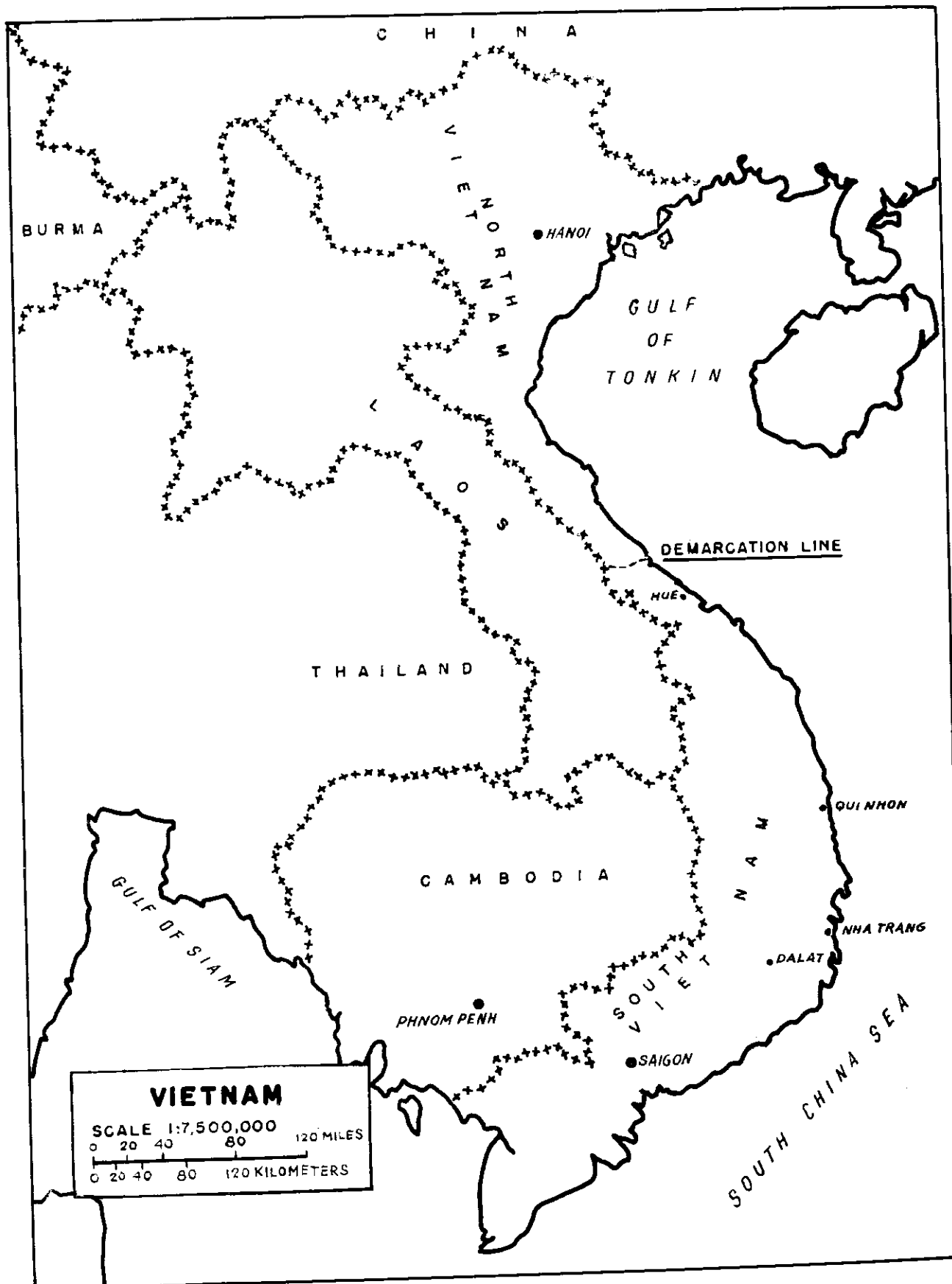


# VIETNAM

1964



AGENCY FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
**POST REPORT**



## THIS REPORT

Changing tides and times, storms and other Acts of God may make a post report obsolete before it leaves the printer. Nowhere is this more true than in VietNam. Therefore, the information in these pages is to serve as a guide only. Cost figures and prices, along with most of the other data, were current at the time of publication.

There is no substitute for first-hand knowledge. Accordingly, you are urged to contact someone in the US who has been to VietNam. During your orientation in Washington, inquire there for some person who has served in Vietnam; the chances are he will be helpful!

It is hoped the material in this report will give you some idea of living conditions and the general situation in VietNam. Contributions have been made by many people and many agencies - with YOU in mind. Some things contained in the report may not be apparent when you first arrive; however, much of the information has been obtained by and from people with long experience in the foreign service.

As programs change some employees may spend much time in the field - outside Saigon. A special section of this report is geared to general conditions in the provinces.

This information generally applies to both contract and direct-hire employees. Where there are differences, they will be explained to contract personnel on arrival in VietNam.

USOM - You will see the word frequently in this report. This set of initials meaning United States Operations Mission - came into existence several years ago. Because USOM became almost a household word in Vietnam it has been kept as the local name for AID.

We hope you will like your assignment here!

Bonne Chance!!



## EDUCATION

### SECURITY

Vietnam is a country where security is a major consideration. A communist and communist inspired dissident insurgency has existed for several years. This has been intensified in many rural areas and assistance to counter this insurgency has become our major purpose. The situation varies from time to time dependent on communist strategy and effectiveness of government measures.

At all U.S. Foreign Service posts throughout the world, plans have been formulated which can be used to meet any and all emergency situations. These plans include measures to provide maximum possible protection for all on the spot and to provide for movement should it be required. When you arrive in Saigon, ask to have a copy of "Bend With the Wind".

### WEATHER in SAIGON

Lat. N 10 47'

Temp	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Low	57	61	64	68	70	69	67	68	69	68	63	57
High	98	102	103	104	102	100	94	95	96	94	95	97
Aver	78	80	82	84	83	81	80	81	80	80	79	78
Days of Rain	2	1	2	6	17	22	23	22	23	21	12	7

United States Operations Mission (AID) employees living in Saigon who have children of school age will find an adequate educational program at the American Community School. Although the buildings, physical and extra-curricular facilities and the variety of subjects offered at the high school level will not be comparable to those of the better schools in the United States, this fact is understandable in light of its history.

The American Community School in Saigon was organized in 1954 by American employees of the Embassy, the Military Assistance Advisory Group and USOM, for a total of 20 children of elementary school age. School opened in a private home with one teacher, using the Calvert School instruction courses. Two years later, with the enrollment increased to 200 and with temporary quonset-type buildings provided, high school correspondence courses were added, through arrangement with the University of California extension service which graded work and gave credit. Continually, and currently, expanding in enrollment, physical plant and curriculum, the school continues to have problems but the quality of instruction is generally good. Students transferring to stateside schools experience no disadvantage at elementary levels and only occasionally at high school level and accreditation of the high school is presently being sought with the Middle Atlantic States Association.

Teachers are almost entirely recruited from among the American resident community, except for a few special teachers and the superintendent who were brought from the U.S. This results in a certain amount of turnover in teacher personnel during each school year because duty tours of government or military personnel do not always coincide with the school year. This is a serious disadvantage, but the qualification level of teachers has been generally high.

The total school enrollment is now 690, with 550 in the new elementary school and 140 in the high school. Approximately 13% of the students are non-American, Vietnamese and several other nationalities, most of them being in the elementary school. The school year coincides with the stateside school of 180 days beginning the day after Labor Day and ending in mid-June. The usual American holidays and a few Vietnamese national holidays are celebrated. The 5 member school board is elected annually with representation from Embassy, USOM, U.S. Military, the U.S. independent business community and one member-at-large. Every parent of a child in the school has one vote in the American Community School Association.

There are now 24 classrooms, which include two very well equipped science laboratories; a library; 2 administrative offices and a storeroom. Under construction are a building for administrative offices, more storage rooms, a conference room, a 16 classroom building and a multi-purpose structure to be used for gymnasium, auditorium and cafeteria.

The administrative staff includes the superintendent, an elementary school principal, a high school principal, with an office staff including a business manager, two secretaries and 5 full and part-time clerical assistants.

In the elementary school there are 24 full time teachers and 5 part-time language teachers, 4 of whom teach French daily in all grades above the third grade, and one Vietnamese teacher who has one lesson weekly with each of the same upper elementary classes in the Vietnamese language, culture and geography. In the high school there are 12 full time teachers. A librarian and an assistant librarian serve both the

elementary and high schools.

The high school curriculum is college preparatory. It offers four years of English; four years of French; German; General Science; Biology; Physics; Chemistry; General Mathematics; Algebra I and II and Advanced Algebra; Geometry; World History; American History; American Government; Vocal and Instrumental Music; Art; Typing; Shorthand. There is no physical education at present but it may be provided as a scheduled course after the construction of the combination gym-auditorium-cafeteria building. This building would be a necessity for a regular physical education program because of the length of the rainy season which extends into three months of the school year.

Standardized tests are administered to all the students annually, and cumulative records are maintained for student transfer purposes.

Bus transportation is provided for all students enrolled in the school.

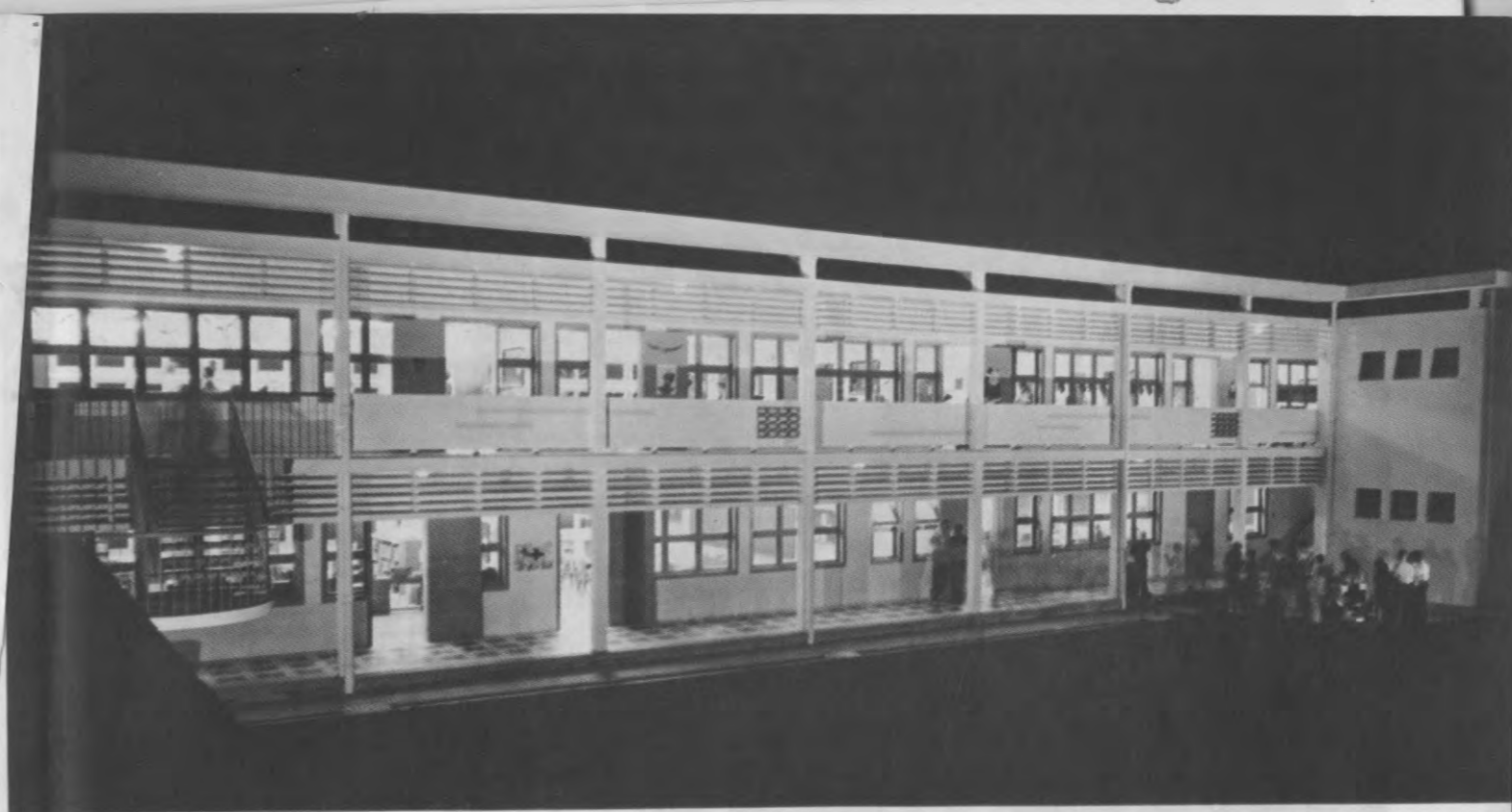
School books and other ordinary school supplies, such as paper and pencils, are furnished by the school, the cost of which is included in the tuition. The tuition for elementary school children is \$386.00 per year, and for high school students it is \$536.00. Except for the cost of the expendable supplies, this tuition is reimbursed to the employees of the U.S. Government as an education allowance. Tuition is payable in two installments, at the beginning of each semester.

There is no kindergarten in the American Community School but parents of kindergarten-aged children have organized their own private kindergarten. Many parents prefer to send their young children to any of several pre-schools and kindergartens privately operated by Catholic orders or by the French Community, and in these all the instruction is in French. Educational facilities for the dependents of the U.S. employees residing elsewhere than in Saigon are very limited,

since all instruction in Vietnamese schools is in the Vietnamese language. There is an American Protestant Missionary boarding school in Dalat which serves Protestant missionaries in all Southeast Asia, but which does enroll a few non-missionary children. It provides instruction through high school. A boarding school, with instruction through high school, is also available in Baguio, in the Philippine Islands. This is the Brent school, operated by the Episcopal Church. The U.S. Government does make a special educational allowance for children who must be sent to such boarding schools, when no education facilities are available at the duty post.

There is virtually no educational opportunity for English speaking American youth of college age, since all instruction in the three Vietnamese Universities is in Vietnamese or in French, and there is also some question of the transfer of credits. A few extension courses, offered through the University of Maryland for the benefit of the American military personnel, might be available to dependents of civilian U.S. government personnel but enrollment is limited. Classes are held in the evenings and the range of subjects is not broad. For students who are dependents of the U.S. government personnel who must leave the duty post to attend colleges or Universities in the U.S. during a duty tour, the U.S. Government pays the travel expense to the college.

Extra-curricular activities for students in the American Community School are few, although the high school has a student council, a newspaper, a year-book, a softball team, a Pep Club, a Drama Club and a Science Club. The social life of high school students is quite restricted because of general circumstances although a few special affairs highlight the school year. In addition to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brownies which are semi-school associated, a Teen Club has been organized by American teen-aged students and parents. These groups are not directly affiliated with the school and the buildings housing their activities are not located at the school.



## SCHOOLS

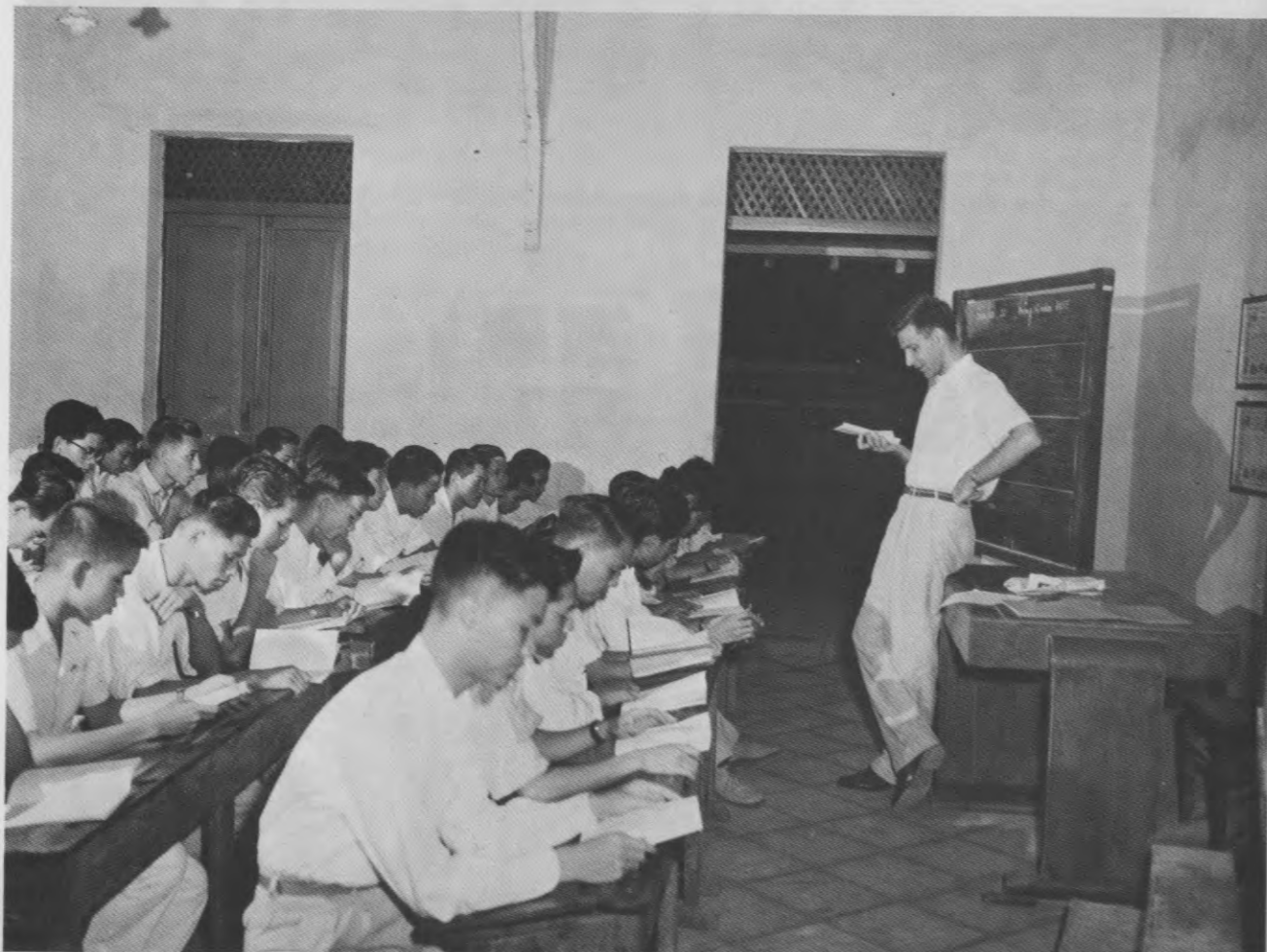
Laboratory - American School





American school classroom

VAA classroom



## MEDICAL

### 1. PREVALENT DISEASES

Some of the diseases you may expect to find in Viet Nam are various intestinal disorders, acute diarrhea, infectious hepatitis, Dengue fever and other fevers, and an occasional snake or insect bite. Malaria is rare in the Saigon area but the prevalence of this disease in other areas of Viet Nam continues to be one of the most important actual and potential problems affecting the American population. All personnel traveling outside Saigon should take malaria suppressant tablets as prescribed.

### 2. AMERICAN DISPENSARY

The new American hospital opened in October of 1963, located midway between Cholon and Saigon, with the outpatient clinic directly across the street. The hospital has a 100 bed capacity, a staff of nine medical officers (including surgeons), nine nurses, and an overall staff of 140 people, including local civilians. All departmental facilities have increased capabilities.

At the present time the Dispensary has no provisions for maternity patients and does not perform deliveries. A patient may receive pre-natal care at the Dispensary up to the seventh month and be transferred to the Philippines for delivery. If she prefers, she may consult a local doctor and delivery can be made at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital or through local facilities.

The Dispensary is set up to handle all types of immunizations, eye refractions, physical examinations, laboratory examinations, electrocardiograms, basal metabolism rate and x-ray examinations, for official personnel.

American Standard Medical facilities are available to contract personnel in lieu of the American Dispensary.

The dental section of the American Dispensary handles only emergency dental work.

It is suggested that all dental work be completed before departure from the States. There are American-trained Vietnamese dentists used by many Americans for more extensive dental work.

### LOCAL FACILITIES

Three local hospitals, the Saigon Adventist, operated by the Adventist Church, the Hospital Grall with French speaking personnel and the Clinique St. Paul operated by Catholic Sisters, are available.

### WATER

Tap water in Viet Nam, including well or spring water, is considered non-potable and should be boiled for thirty minutes to inactivate the virus of infectious hepatitis. Only potable water should be used for drinking purposes, brushing teeth, making ice cubes, final rinse of vegetables and for personal use. Filters are available locally to remove iron chemicals. Sanitary precautions should be used in handling of water. Drinking water in local hotels and restaurants is not potable. Plans are underway to have a new uncontaminated water system completed in the Saigon area within the next two years. Chemical substances may be used to purify the water, such as globaline tablets; Halazone tablets are not recommended. Contamination occurs in the city's antiquated pipe system and not at the source. Water is potable in the American (JDP) Compound.

### PREPARING FOOD

No raw, unpeeled fruits or vegetables may be eaten safely and all products from the local market should be well cooked before eating. Refrigeration facilities for meats and other foods on the local market are extremely meager and slaughtering processes and methods of distribution are not adequately controlled. Also, there is no inspection of food in restaurants.



Hospital

HOSPITAL FACILITIES

The hospital is a modern building with a large tree in front. It has many windows and a balcony on each floor. The building is surrounded by a fence and a paved area. There are some people and a small vehicle in the foreground.



Out Patient Clinic



Reception Room

AMERICAN DISPENSARY





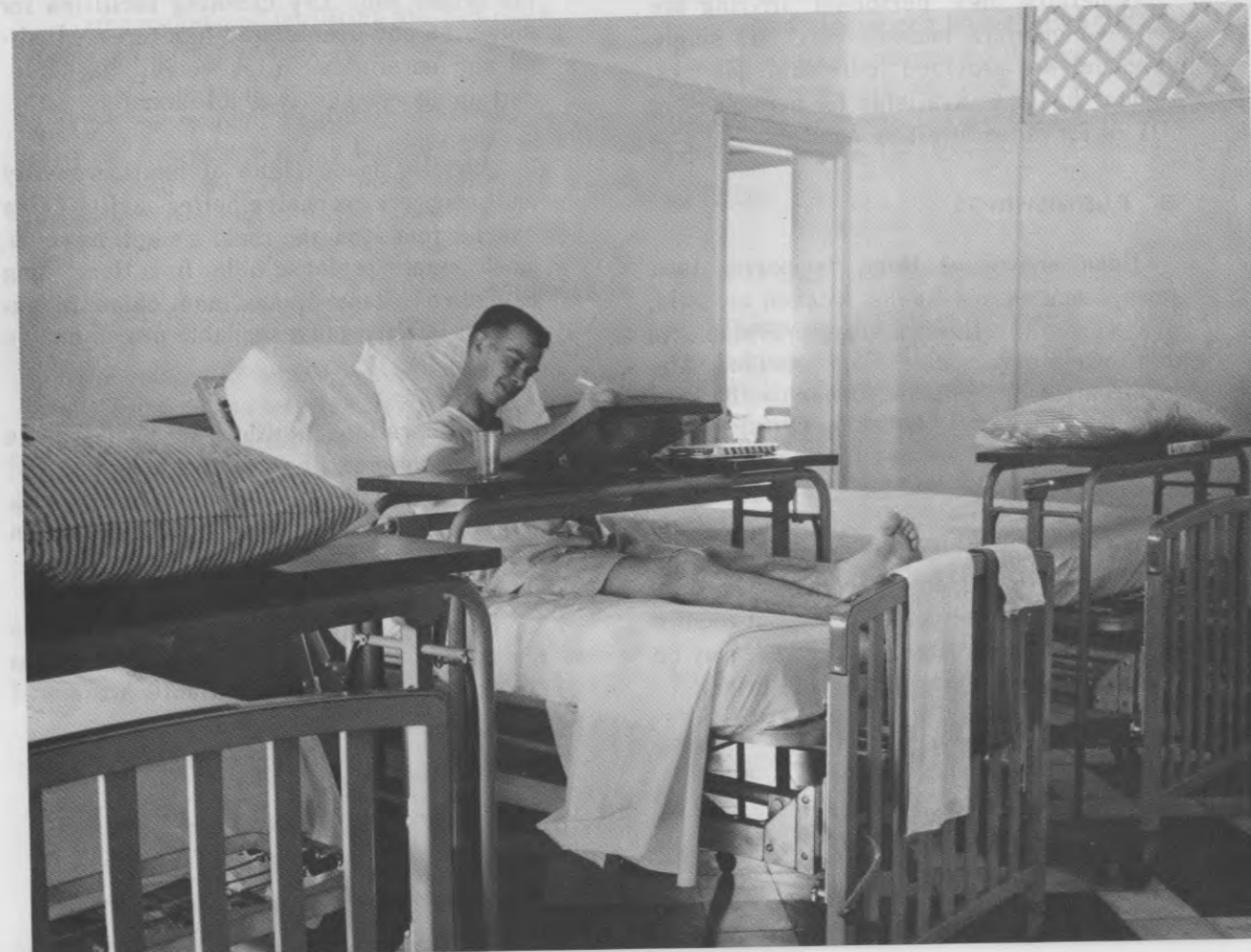
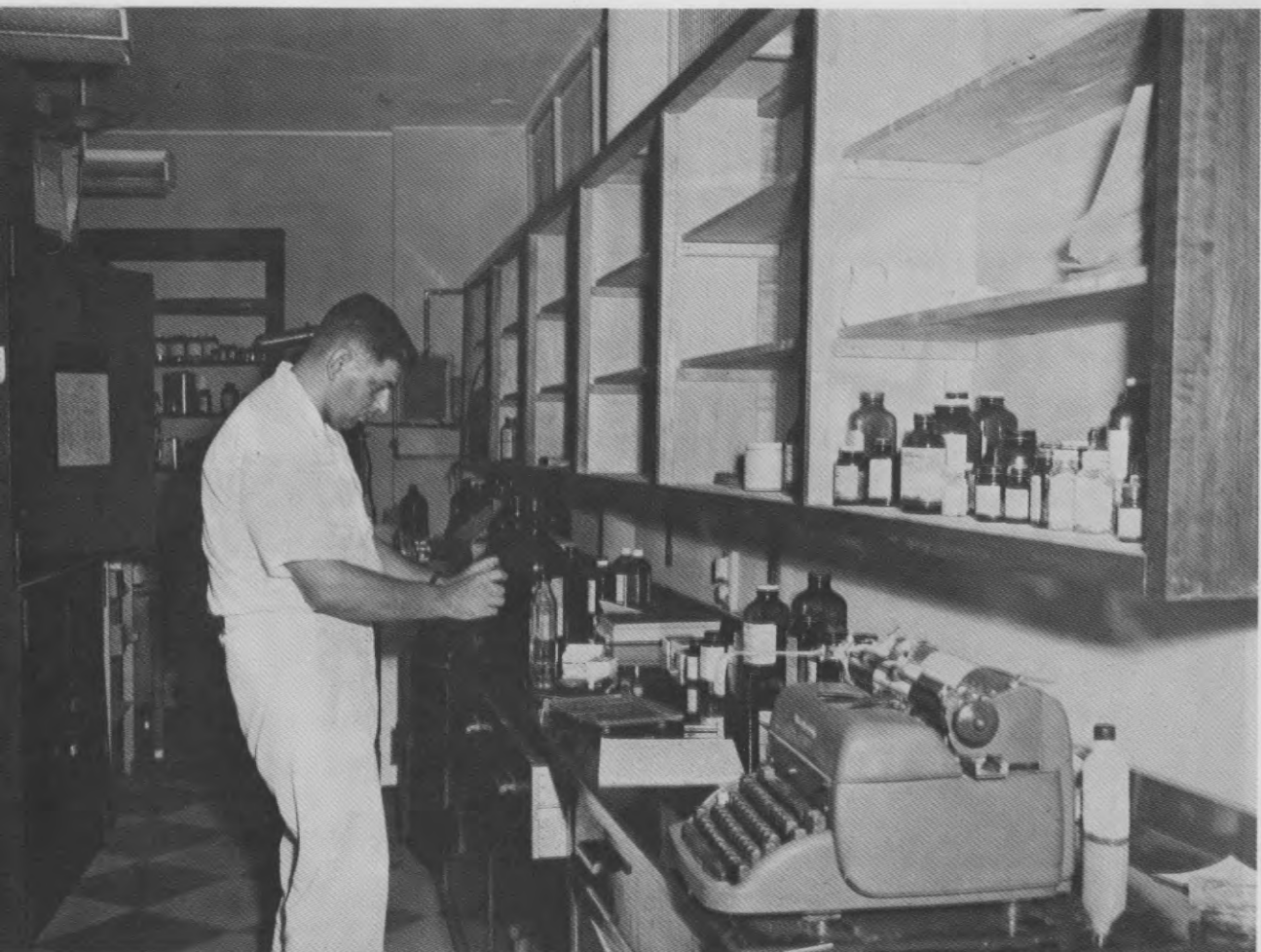
Pharmacy



Operating Room

HOSPITAL

Patient's Room



# HOUSING, Furniture and Household Equipment

## A. QUARTERS

All USOM residences are leased by USOM or furnished to USOM by the Vietnamese Government. They are furnished with basic furniture consisting of sofas, chairs, tables, bed, gas burning stoves, refrigerators, air-conditioners, wardrobes (if no closets are available), and lamps. Cooking utensils, silver, glasses, china, linens and rugs are not furnished.

Most of the government owned or leased houses are single units. A limited number have gardens and most are walled.

Single persons usually are assigned one-bedroom apartments. Married couples, with no children, also may be housed in apartments. Houses, depending on the number of bedrooms, generally are allocated to families with children.

Generally, new personnel arriving are assigned quarters immediately. All single personnel are provided individual quarters. A guest house is available for personnel on TDY or for those awaiting quarters.

## B. FURNISHINGS

Upon arrival at Post, temporary loan items, such as bed linens, kitchen utensils, glassware and silverware are provided. No bath towels or face cloths are provided. Air-conditioners are furnished for each authorized bedroom occupied. Curtains, curtain rods, frames and drapes are not furnished but can be made locally.

It is neither advisable nor necessary to bring rugs to Saigon. Floors are made of tile or terrazzo, are cool, and do not require a covering. Fiber mats, if desired, may be purchased locally at a reasonable price.

Furniture is subject to termites and deterioration in Saigon's hot, moist climate and since Government quarters are furnished, it is not necessary to bring furniture to this post.

Ceiling fans are furnished in the living and dining rooms by the Mission if none are provided by the landlord. However, small fans are useful and should be brought.

One refrigerator is furnished to each family by USOM. It is not necessary to have a second refrigerator but some families may wish to bring one with them, if they have it available, for additional storage of food because of the somewhat inconvenient shopping conditions and rapid deterioration of food.

Curtains and draperies are not required in Saigon but are frequently used to avoid the bright sun. Dry cleaning facilities for draperies and upholstered furniture are limited and unreliable. Lightweight washable curtain material is available locally.

Locally made china of inferior quality and some very expensive better quality china can be found on the local market; however, most people prefer to order from Hong Kong or Tokyo. Many linens and china of excellent quality and reasonable prices can be found there.

Some rattan furniture is available in Saigon; however, it is fairly expensive and the selection is limited. Visitors to Bangkok and Hong Kong can order furniture made in these cities.

Persons expecting to use card tables should make arrangements to bring them from the States. The ones available are not of

the same quality as those made in the U.S. Card tables may sometimes be rented from the American Women's Association, from USOM, or occasionally purchased at the PX.

In spite of Saigon's generally hot climate, there is usually a brief period during the year when a lightweight blanket is essential for comfort, particularly in air-conditioned bedrooms. It is recommended that blankets be brought here from the States. Occasionally the PX will have them for sale. Heating of the houses is not required at any time.

All residences are provided with storage tanks and the water is furnished by gravity feed which, therefore, causes low pressure. However, this is necessary due to the city water being shut off periodically during the day.

Garbage disposal facilities are available or else are arranged through USOM.

Very few residences in Saigon are equipped with telephones since they are very expensive and the service poor. Often servants carry messages, where possible.

## C. ELECTRIC CURRENT

The electric current is alternating 50 cycle, but most houses also have 220 for air-conditioning. Variations in consumption during the day often cause current fluctuation. Most American appliances manufactured to function on AC, 60 cycle, 110 volt current operate fairly well here at approximately 75%

efficiency. Transformers are not necessary but voltage regulators are useful for record players. Electric clocks are useless. There is no television in Viet Nam.

Electric light bulbs and light sockets in this area are of the bayonet type and electric wall sockets and plugs are of the type used in Europe, except for housing in the Tan Son Nhut Compound. Screw and bayonet type light bulbs may be purchased on the local market. Plugs on electrical appliances can be changed easily after arrival or adaptor plugs may be purchased locally and inexpensively.

## D. PROTECTION OF VALUABLES

Although properly instructed and alert servants ordinarily provide a satisfactory degree of household protection, there have been some thefts and household burglaries. Therefore, it is suggested that in selecting china, silver and art objects to bring to Saigon, it is wise to omit highly treasured or irreplaceable items, especially precious jewelry.

## E. HOTELS

There are three hotels that are suitable for personnel on TDY; i.e., the Caravelle (opened in 1960 and completely air-conditioned), the Majestic and the Continental. The Caravelle is the most expensive (\$14.00 per day, single), and the Majestic and Continental run about \$10.00 to \$12.00 per day, single.



HOUSING

*French Style Housing*





HOUSING



Kitchen



Bath



*Apartment House*



*Interior*

*Tan Son Nbut Compound*



## GENERAL

### A. SHOPPING

The Navy Exchange generally has an adequate supply of most items found in the States; however, the stock is rapidly depleted. Cosmetics and toilet articles for both men and women, bedspreads, pillows, bathroom sets (including plastic shower curtains), sheets, pillowcases and towels and washcloths are some of the items generally available. Most electrical appliances are available or can be ordered. Radios, phonographs, records, tape recorders, cameras, film and related items can be found at the Navy Exchange or ordered through that facility. These items are quite expensive on the local market. Frequent use of electrical appliances will keep them in condition. Kodak and other brands of film and photographic equipment can be purchased locally or in the PX. Black and white film and Ektachrome can be developed locally. Often film is sent to Hawaii, through APO, for developing.

Women's clothing should consist of lightweight, washable dresses, skirts and blouses, as dry cleaning facilities in Vietnam are poor to fair and all clothing is subjected to frequent washing and bleaching. Usually, simple cotton frocks are worn to daytime social functions and dressy cottons for evening affairs. Some women do wear silks or washable synthetics. Hats and gloves are never worn in Vietnam, not even to church. Stockings are a matter of personal preference. A large supply of lingerie should be brought with you, preferably cotton, as locally it is very expensive and of poor quality. Cotton slips are generally considered too bulky and rayon acetate or dacron-acetate seem to be preferred. Cotton nightwear is also recommended. Since the

weather is hot the year-around in Saigon, summer clothing is worn exclusively, with a lightweight cardigan for evenings during the cool season. Ready-made clothing is not available locally but local tailors and dress-makers do fairly satisfactory work at reasonable prices. Many materials are available, ranging from poor to good quality, but prices are generally higher than in the United States.

Shoes can be made locally but quality and size are not always satisfactory. There are many stores in Hong Kong who do excellent tailoring at reasonable prices and many personnel either stop there enroute to Post or visit that area during their assignment. However, it is recommended that a catalog from your favorite store be brought with you for ordering items from the States.

Shopping hours in Saigon are generally from 9:00 AM until noon, with siesta until 3:00 PM, and then shopping resumes until 7:00 PM.

Shorts, pedalpushers and slacks are worn only on the golf course, for other sports or in the home. They are never worn on the streets. It is recommended that bathing and shower caps be brought with you. Bathing suits are available on the local market but are not necessarily geared to American tastes. It is recommended that a minimum of four be brought with you.

Evening and cocktail handbags should also be brought from the States. Some wicker and plastic daytime bags are available locally at reasonable prices. Excellent gold and silver work can be bargained for on the local market. During the rainy season an umbrella is usually preferred to a raincoat because of the heat.

Children's clothes, such as dresses, shirts, cotton suits and sandals can be purchased for small children on the local market. Shoes can be made locally, ranging in quality and price. Local tailors and dress-makers often specialize in children's clothes at reasonable prices. However, it is recommended that a large supply be brought with you, particularly cotton slips for girls, briefs for boys and socks for both.

Toys for children are expensive on the local market, limited in selection and of poor quality.

Men--A large quantity of washable clothing should be brought for at least twice-a-day changes. Adequate tailoring is available but most men prefer to bring American-made clothing. Because buildings are air-conditioned, those men assigned to Saigon generally wear white short-sleeved shirts with tie for office work. However, some employees wear sport shirts. Shorts are never worn in the office. Unless otherwise indicated, ordinary business suits, shirts and ties are worn to receptions, official occasions, cocktail parties, etc. Saigon is an informal post and full dress is not required. Occasionally a white dinner jacket is necessary. Sports clothing such as slacks and Bermuda-length shorts are often worn by men for leisure activities. This clothing should be brought from the States. Occasionally the Navy Exchange has a supply of bathing trunks available, but it is also recommended that they be brought with you. A lightweight raincoat, hat or umbrella is necessary during the rainy season.

American magazines and books can be purchased in downtown Saigon from three bookshops with a limited selection. The PX also carries a limited supply of magazines and paperback books. Some American magazines can be purchased on the local market but are usually not current. The "Saigon Daily News" is a new local daily newspaper printed in English and the "Pacific Stars and Stripes" is available for home delivery.

Some French magazines and newspapers are available fairly regularly in Saigon. Magazine subscriptions from the States take about two months to arrive by surface mail. The International edition of "Time," "Newsweek," and other publications can be subscribed to and delivered through APO from Tokyo.

The American Women's Association has novelty notepaper, bridge scores, date books and Christmas cards available for sale.

The Navy Exchange operates a "Toyland" each year for the benefit of all official personnel, with a fairly large selection of toys and Christmas decorations. However, the stock is rapidly depleted. Some Christmas decorations can be purchased locally but are limited. It is recommended that you bring these items with you.

An additional Post Exchange has recently been opened at the Ambassador Hotel, stocking a number of "health and comfort" items, including electrical appliances, luggage, etc.

Generally, it is possible to find just about everything you want, or a fairly reasonable substitute, on the local market. However, the quality is usually poor.

### B. FOOD

It is not necessary to bring food with you to Viet Nam, except for special dietary cases. The local market and U.S. Commissary have sufficient supplies for all personnel. There is an occasional shortage at the Commissary due to irregularities in shipping and sudden increases of personnel. Baby food is always available.

Fresh fruits, vegetables, fish, poultry and limited varieties of meat are always available on the local market. Local fruits include pineapples, oranges, pamplemousse (a type of grapefruit), mangoes, mangosteens, limes, papayas, bananas, watermelon (very

small), and tangerines, but seasonal shortages do occur. Grapes and apples are sometimes imported from Japan but are very expensive. The Commissary receives irregular shipments of oranges, grapes, grapefruits, lemons and apples, which do not remain in stock very long.

Excellent imported cheese in a large variety can be purchased on the local market at prices comparable to the United States. Butter, either fresh or in cans from Europe or Australia, is also sold locally. There are occasional shortages of butter in the Commissary, but oleo is usually available.

Local vegetables available most of the year include wax and string beans, corn, summer squash, carrots, spinach, okra, green peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage, miniature celery (cooking variety only), onions, mushrooms, salsify, eggplant, sweet potatoes and leeks. White potatoes, cauliflower, artichokes and beets are grown in the mountainous region and are available in season at high prices. The Commissary stocks onions and potatoes, with occasional shipments of lettuce and celery, but the stock is rapidly depleted. Lettuce, watercress and endive are available on the local market but the Dispensary advises that NO raw vegetables nor unpeeled fruits can be made safe for eating except by cooking.

Excellent, inexpensive seafood includes crab, small lobsters, shrimp, clams, oysters and prawns. Local poultry is somewhat tough and stringy. Local pork is very good but the beef is rather tough. Generally, the meats are very good but must be thoroughly cooked before eating. Imported meats can

be found on the local market but are very expensive. The Commissary generally stocks a fairly large supply of frozen meats, including some from Australia and New Zealand.

Frozen foods are available only in the Commissary and in limited variety.

Imported canned goods are also available on the local market but again are very expensive.

Local milk is unpasteurized and not considered safe. Fresh milk is now available from the Ben Cat pilot dairy farm - an Australian project under the Colombo Plan. However, the supply is limited and only fifty per cent of the requests for milk can be filled. Canned, whole, powdered, evaporated and fresh frozen milk are available at the Commissary.

Local eggs are small but excellent and are very reasonably priced. Some large "American" eggs are available from poultry farms developed by USOM.

A limited choice of French wines, liquors, cognacs and aperitifs can be purchased locally but are expensive. Algerian wines are good and inexpensive. Whiskey and gin, when available, are very expensive. The Navy Exchange maintains limited supplies of whiskey, gin, liquors, wines and beer which are rationed. Soft carbonated beverages are bottled locally and are inexpensive. They are also available at the Navy Exchange. Cigarettes (rationed) and other tobacco supplies can be purchased at the Navy Exchange.



Main Market Saigon



*Small Shop Saigon*



*Inside Big Market*

## TRANSPORTATION and COMMUNICATION

### A. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Means of public transportation generally used in Saigon are cycle-pousses (pedicabs), motor-pousses (like pedicabs but motor driven), and metered taxis. All taxis are of the small, European-type car, generally, Renaults. They carry a maximum of three passengers.

Taxis and pousses are usually available up to midnight. Prices rise by 50% after 10 P.M. and continue at that level until approximately 5 A.M. Drivers sometimes demand more than the legal rate and they may occasionally become belligerent if not given large tips, but one should give a courteous but firm refusal. Local traffic, although alarming to persons who have never before served abroad, is no worse than that in many European and Near Eastern cities. The large number of bicycles and motor-scooters frequently makes driving an irritating experience which requires the exercise of unusual caution.

Very few taxi and pousses drivers know streets or buildings by name, and passengers must direct them by hand signals or simple French or Vietnamese directions. Most drivers' French vocabulary does not extend beyond "right," "left," "straight ahead," and "stop".

Because of traffic hazards and the inadequate service of the local public transportation system, which is also overcrowded and unsafe, Government transportation is furnished to and from work for USOM personnel who have not shipped a car to Post at Government expense.

USOM personnel not having cars at Post, may make arrangements for non-official USOM transportation after normal business hours. There will be a charge for this service, payable monthly.

### B. AUTOMOBILES

Travel within Viet Nam is now restricted much of the time for security reasons. The main streets of Saigon are in reasonably good condition but they are jammed with heterogeneous traffic which makes city driving difficult. Opportunities for auto travel outside Saigon are limited.

Any member of the official community will find a car useful in getting back and forth to the office, as well as for other social purposes. It is far more comfortable to have one's own car than to be dependent on taxis or pedicabs. It is recommended that only the most standard models be brought to Saigon. Large cars are often difficult to handle in congested traffic on the narrow streets. It is usually possible to purchase a car from a departing member of the American community. Under new regulations any foreign car purchased after March 1, 1961, may not be shipped at Government expense.

Driving is on the right in Viet Nam. All drivers must obtain driving permits but no test is required of individuals holding valid Stateside driver's licenses.

Spare parts for automobiles are generally available, except for the very latest models. Repair facilities are very good and many places are reasonable in cost. Tires are expensive but recapping facilities are good and much less expensive than in the States.

Official personnel may purchase tax-free gasoline, after obtaining books of tickets from the USOM cashier. Good quality motor oils, including detergent oils, are available.

Standard transmission is recommended. Convertibles are in the minority here due to the fact that sun, heat, humidity, and rain cause rapid deterioration of tops.

Cars and other vehicles must be registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs, which issues license numbers at no expense. The owner must have his own plates painted. CD plates are issued only to certain diplomatic and senior officials.

The Embassy requires that all members of the official community carry at least third-party liability insurance, available locally for about \$45 per year. An annual inspection of vehicles for roadworthiness is also required and is made at a local garage for a small fee.

#### RAILROADS

Since the railroad network is subject to attacks by the Viet Cong, Americans do not use rail transportation.

#### AIR TRAVEL WITHIN VIET NAM

Daily commercial air service to the main cities of Viet Nam is available for official travel. USOM has two small planes for official use to those areas not serviced by regular, commercial lines.

The domestic network of Air Viet Nam links Saigon with many important towns of Viet Nam, including Dalat, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, Da Nang, Hue, Banmethuot, Pleiku, Kontum, Tuy Hoa and Quang Ngai. Air Viet Nam has also Cessna flights to Long Xuyen, Cantho, Camau, Phanthiet, Rachgia and Phu Quoc.

#### C. AIR TRAVEL OUTSIDE VIETNAM

With jet service now in operation, it is possible to travel from Los Angeles or San Francisco to Saigon via the Pacific in approximately 18 hours. Travel time from Washington, D.C., via Europe, also jet the entire way, is about 27 hours. Air fare to Washington, D.C., via the Pacific, the cheapest route, and using jets for the entire trip, is \$1,030.20 first class and \$664.00 econo-

my class, and via Europe is \$1,186.40 first class and \$731.00 economy class.

These figures are subject to latest airlines schedules. For those coming to Saigon from places besides the U.S., other internationally known airlines are available.

Commercial transportation to nearby countries is arranged easily with any one of several Southeast Asian airlines. If desired schedules are not available from Saigon, Bangkok is a convenient transfer point with more than 20 major airlines to choose from. USOM employees are reminded, however, that official travel is usually scheduled on American carriers. USOM employees and their dependents have the opportunity to travel outside Viet Nam on U.S. military aircraft. These flights, for rest and recreation (R&R) may be available from time-to-time for Hong Kong, Manila, Bangkok, Tokyo and other nearby Asian cities. There is no charge for these flights. (See Air Travel Outside Viet Nam for information on commercial flights.)

#### D. MAIL AND PARCEL POST

International Air Mail from the States usually travels to Saigon via Paris aboard Air France planes. Letters from the United States arrive in about five days from the East Coast. International Air Post also takes about five days, and regular parcel post takes approximately two months, is very expensive and its use is not recommended.

Official Americans in Saigon find that the APO provides the cheapest and most reliable postal service both for letters and packages. It is served twice weekly by PAA flights direct from San Francisco. The arrival of airmail varies from one to two weeks after mailing. Parcel post usually takes five to seven weeks. Receipt of surface mail is very irregular, depending on sailing schedules of vessels from the States. APO mail should be addressed as follows:

Name of Individual  
USOM / (Div)  
APO 143  
San Francisco, California

(Owner's Name)  
American Embassy  
Saigon, Vietnam

Bills of Lading should continue to read for Consignee:

American Ambassador, Saigon, Vietnam

#### E. TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH

Long distance telephone service is available to Manila, Singapore, Phnom Penh, Hong Kong, Calcutta, Tokyo, Paris, Switzerland, West Berlin and the United States. Only a few cities within Viet Nam are connected with each other and with Saigon by telephone. There is a worldwide telegraphic service in Saigon.

#### F. SHIPPING AND PACKING

\* Personnel should be sure that the Mission is furnished with advance notice of the arrival of their effects and advance copies of bills of lading. This is particularly important in the case of shipments originating at points other than U.S. ports. Bills of Lading covering shipments from Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and other nearby points should be transmitted without delay as surface shipments from these points are quite rapid. Consular invoices covering shipments of automobiles and personal or household effects are not required. Persons shipping an automobile prior to or at the time of their departure from the United States or their previous post should furnish the Mission with a description of the automobile (motor number, serial number, make, model, year, horsepower, etc.) and, if possible, the name of the ship on which it will arrive in Saigon so that lengthy clearance and free entry formalities can be started as early as possible. It is not necessary to crate automobiles. Persons intending to import firearms must comply with the regulations set forth in that section.

\* Liftvans and Bills of Lading should be marked:

Outbound shipments from the United States can be arranged with one of the Despatch Agents. However, certain shipping concerns have "door to door" pick up and delivery. This system is less expensive. Customs checks and other details are taken care of and this type of arrangement is being encouraged by the State Department. You should discuss both methods of shipping with AID Travel Section prior to departure to determine which one would better serve your particular needs.

Weatherproof packing is recommended. Normal precautions in packing will ordinarily offer sufficient protection. All exterior cases should be sturdy and steel banded, which will discourage pilferage. Port facilities and local truckers can handle loads figured in tons, and size of cases or liftvans need not be limited.

There are only a limited number of waterproof concrete warehouses in Saigon and they cannot offer adequate protection against the humidity which will cause lasting damage to even durable items. No one should plan to bring items not needed upon arrival. Temporary storage facilities for effects between assignments are provided at no cost. However, there are no facilities for permanent or long-term storage of effects for those who are assigned to a post where effects can not be forwarded.

Insurance on effects is highly advisable because of the possibility of breakage.

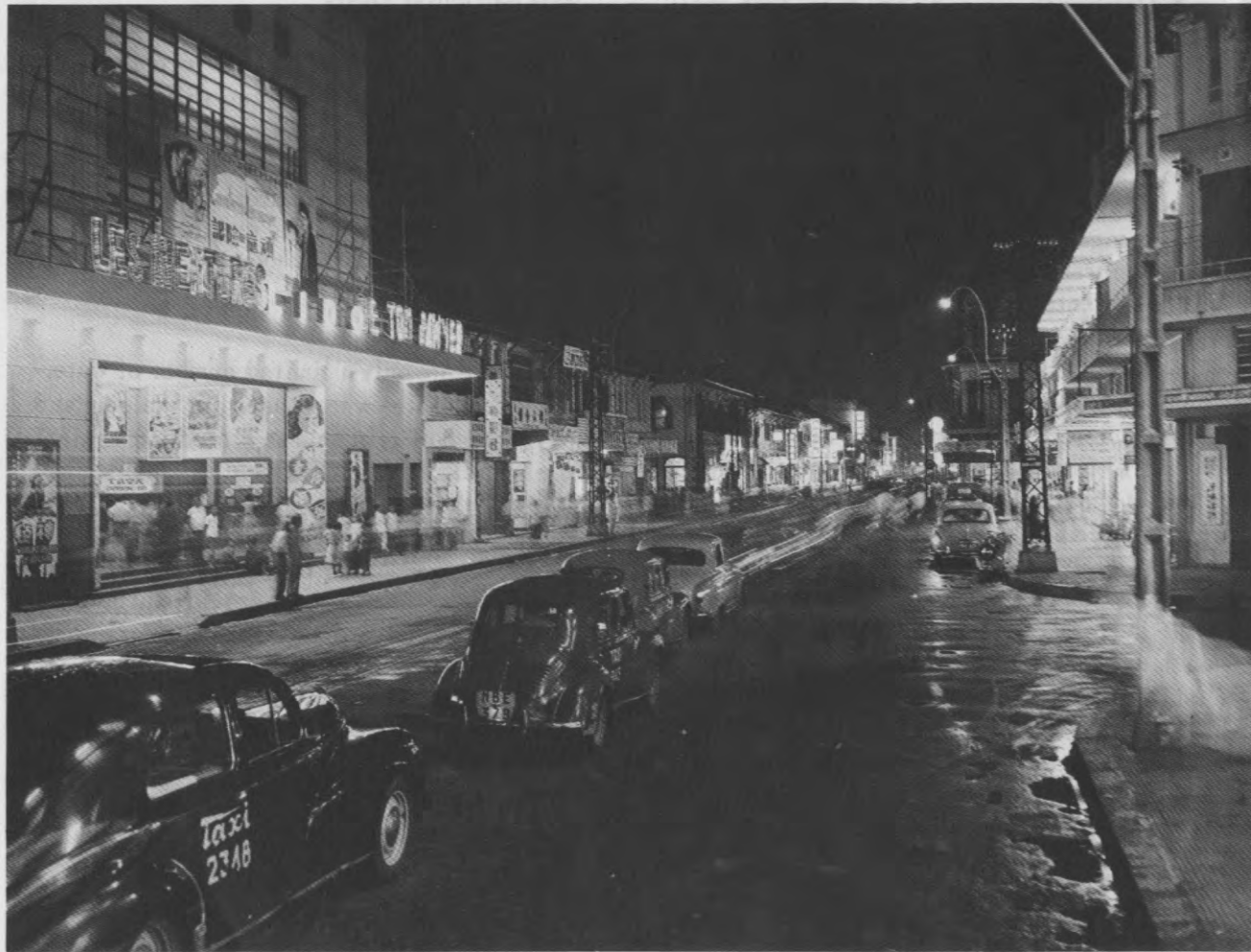
American flag vessels from the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific ports arrive in Saigon at the rate of about seven per month. They

arrive approximately 90 days after leaving New York, 55 days, after leaving New Orleans and 45 days after leaving San Francisco. Vessels of the French Messageries Maritimes and Chargeurs Reunis Companies coming from the North Sea and Mediterranean ports via Port Said, Djibouti, Colombo and Singapore serve Saigon regularly. They usually continue on to Hong Kong, Japan and Manila,

calling again at Saigon on the return voyage to Europe.

Air cargo to Saigon need not be specially packed, but should be steel banded and labeled the same as surface shipments. Insurance on air cargo is recommended. Clearance and delivery of air cargo can usually be arranged within 48 hours.

Street Scene - Cholon



Cyclopushes



TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT



## RECREATION and SOCIAL LIFE

### A. SPORTS

The Cercle Sportif, in the downtown area of Saigon, is available to USOM personnel for a reasonable membership fee. The facilities include an outdoor filtered swimming pool with swimming classes for children and adults, badminton courts, tennis courts, fencing and judo rooms, reading and card rooms, table tennis, restaurant and bar. Very young children may play in a small park furnished with swings, sandpiles, etc. Duplicate bridge is played at the club every Tuesday night. Tennis balls are often available at the Navy Exchange but rackets should be brought with you or may be purchased in Hong Kong or Singapore.

The Saigon Golf Course is located near the Tan Son Nhut Airport. It has an 18-hole course with grass greens and membership is limited. Golf balls, tees and gloves are often available at the Navy Exchange. Golf clubs, shoes, gloves, etc., may be purchased from a local sporting goods store in Saigon but are quite expensive. Golfers are advised to bring their own equipment with them. Available facilities include a clubhouse, limited locker room, practice putting green, two excellent golf pros, and a small play area for children.

The Club Nautique is a boating club, located on the river near the Embassy. There is a private bar and restaurant overlooking the river and an annex located upstream on the Saigon River. There is good food at reasonable prices.

The Cercle Hippique, in Saigon, is available for riding enthusiasts. It has a small clubhouse and bar, and indoor riding ring, a bridle path through a small park area and stables for approximately thirty horses. Members may stable their own horses or rent them from the Club.

The American Bowling Alley is equipped with twelve alleys (ten pins), snack bar, completely air-conditioned. Women may wear shorts or slacks for bowling.

Members of various American agencies have organized a bowling league and a soft-ball league.

There is a dirt racetrack in Saigon conducted entirely in Vietnamese.

Hiking and picnicking are not practiced in Viet Nam because of the climate, insects and leeches and the present security restrictions. Big gamehunting is also prohibited under the current situation.

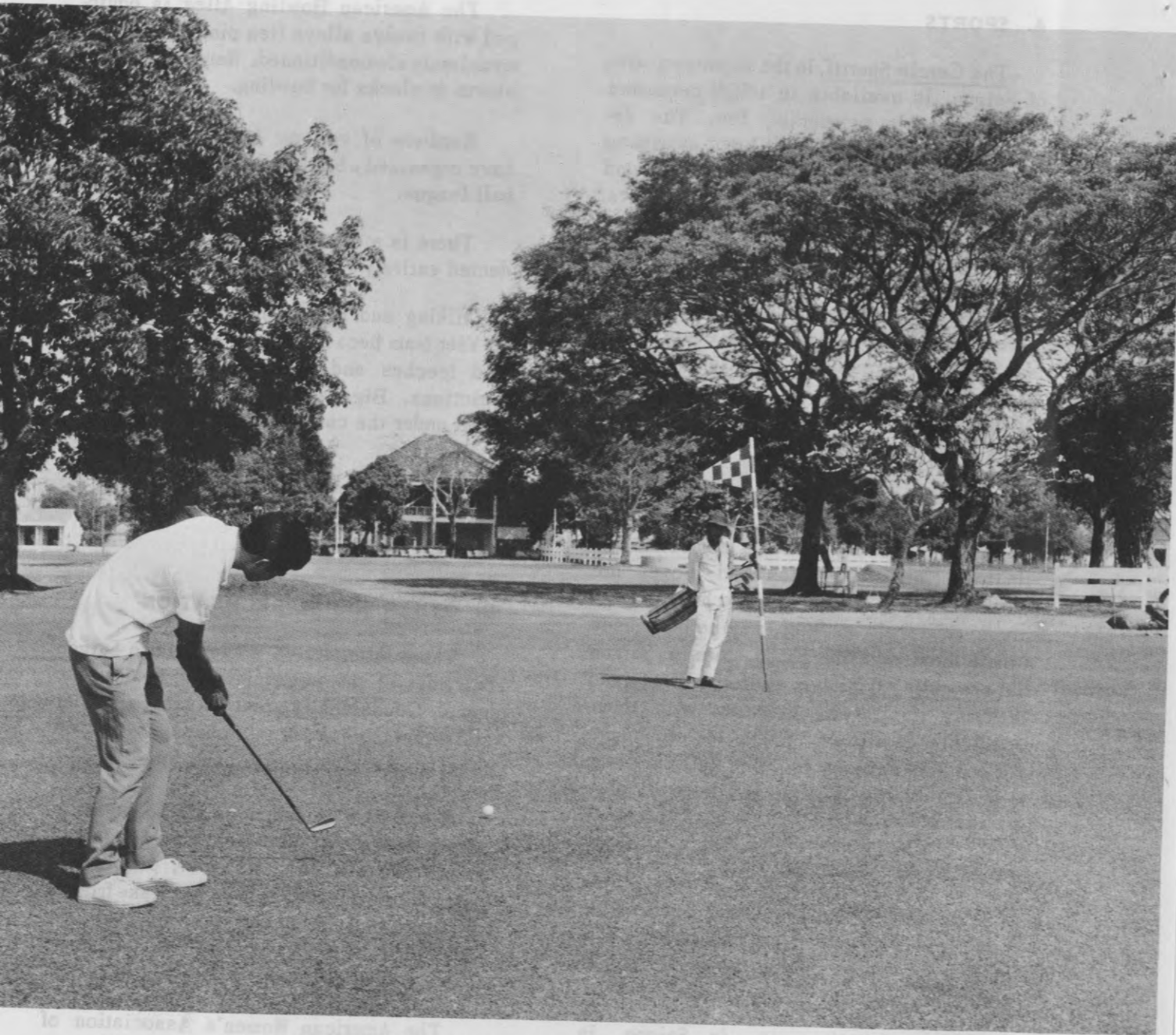
Skin diving is popular in Nha Trang. Equipment can be purchased locally but is expensive.

### B. OTHER SOCIAL RECREATION

There is an active social life in Saigon but most of the entertaining is done in the home. Occasionally dinners are given at restaurants. The social schedule generally consists of bridge, cocktail and dinner parties.

Social life in Saigon is apt to be influenced by the somewhat restrictive nature of security regulations. However, people who possess a willingness to meet and make friends of people of other categories and countries will find this a very satisfying post. Some knowledge of French is a decided asset.

The American Women's Association of Saigon is an extremely active organization with membership open to any woman who is an American citizen or dependent of an American citizen. This organization handles many charitable activities and welfare projects throughout Viet Nam.



Golf Course - Saigon



Tennis - Cercle Sportif

Cercle Hippique



SPORTS



*Racetrack - Saigon*



*Swimming Pool Cercle Sportif*



*Club Nautique*

The Vietnamese-American Association is an educational, cultural and social organization with open membership to all Vietnamese and Americans.

The Lions Club of Saigon has a membership of 195 persons; the Rotary Club has a membership of 125 persons, and the Masons are an active group in Saigon, all with regularly scheduled meetings.

The CoCo Club is a new private club for Americans and their guests. Each member must deposit \$25.00, which is returned to the member upon departure from Post. The Club features two bars, two large dining rooms (one private, one public), and air-conditioned movie to be opened soon and a game room.

The USO has recently opened in Saigon and many American women are serving as hostesses. The snack bar is available to all Americans.

The Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, Cub Scouts are active in Saigon. Recently a Youth Center for teenagers has been opened in a large quonset in the American Compound near the Tan Son Nhut Airport.

Some Americans have established a play reading group that generally meets in the homes of the participating members.

A sewing club meets once a week to sew for local charities, hospitals and orphanages.

There are no regularly scheduled concerts, opera or live English speaking theater in Saigon. Occasionally the Saigon Symphony presents concerts. The movie theaters in Saigon generally feature French or American films with French soundtracks and Vietnamese sub-titles. Chinese, Indian and Vietnamese films are also shown. Some of the local theaters are air-conditioned.

There is an American movie house, air-conditioned, maintained by the U.S. Military Group, to which all official personnel are admitted for a small charge.

A small museum, located in the Botanical Gardens, has a collection of local art, with occasional displays of paintings, lacquer and sculpture by local and French artists. USIS also has an occasional exhibition. The Vietnamese Handicraft Center and other shops carry a variety of local handicraft.

There are three circulating libraries maintained by the American and British Information Services and by the VAA, with books and magazines in English.

Several good restaurants can be found in Saigon serving either French or Chinese food with prices comparable to the United States. There are several night clubs with occasional floor shows. As of this writing, dancing is again permitted in Viet Nam. Almost all of these night clubs employ Vietnamese and Chinese taxi-girls. All liquors and wines are imported and are expensive.

Radio reception is poor to adequate and shortwave sets are needed to receive English speaking programs, other than the local Armed Forces Radio, which broadcasts from 6 A.M. until midnight daily. Other local radio programs are in Vietnamese, Chinese and French with three short news broadcasts in English.

The only recreational facilities for children are kindergartens, a zoo, the botanical gardens, museum and swimming.

#### HOBBIES

If you have a hobby, it is recommended

that you bring the supplies with you. If you enjoy painting, some paints are available on the local market but suffer from climatic conditions. Some local musical instruments are available but personal musical instruments should be brought with you and kept in an air-conditioned bedroom. It is possible to purchase a "tropicalized" piano in Hong Kong and Japan enroute before arriving at Post.

If you are interested in sewing, by all means bring your sewing machine, scissors, patterns, buttons, zippers, thread and sundry items with you. Threads on the local market are of inferior quality. There are many materials available on the local market of varying quality and price. The Post Exchange sometimes carries a supply of State-side packaged cottons, thread, pins, scissors, buttons and zippers in limited style and quantity.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES

Laundry is almost always done in the household. If your family is a large one, you may find it necessary to hire someone for this purpose. If you wish to bring a washing machine, the wringer-type is recommended.

Dry-cleaning is poor to fair and is expensive.

Several beauty shops are available and quality of work and prices vary. Barbering is equally good or bad, but prices are reasonable.

#### CHURCHES

The International Protestant Church holds services and conducts a Sunday School each week. Roman Catholic Services are held in English, French and Vietnamese.

There are also Episcopal, Baptist, Christian Science, Church of Christ, Seventh Day Adventist and Jewish services held at designated times and places. In addition, Buddhist, Confucian, Moslem and Hindu services are held.

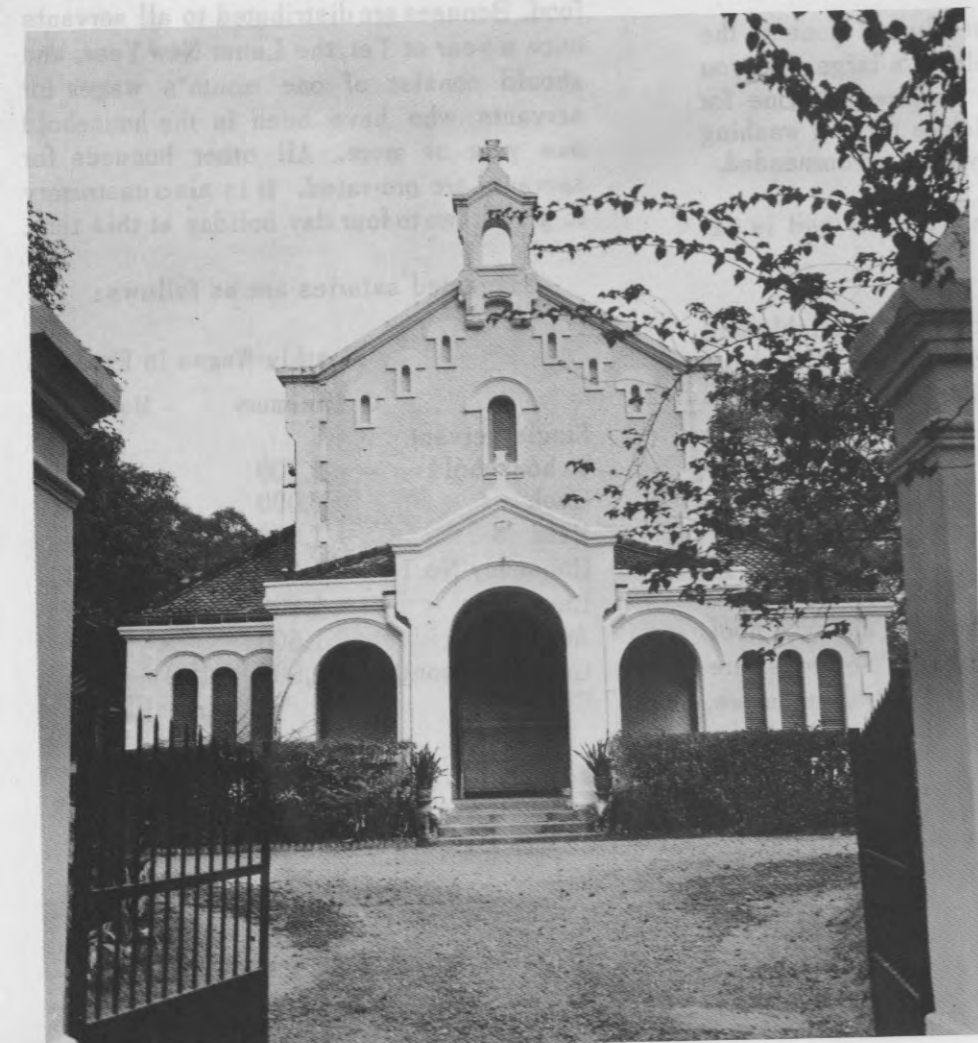
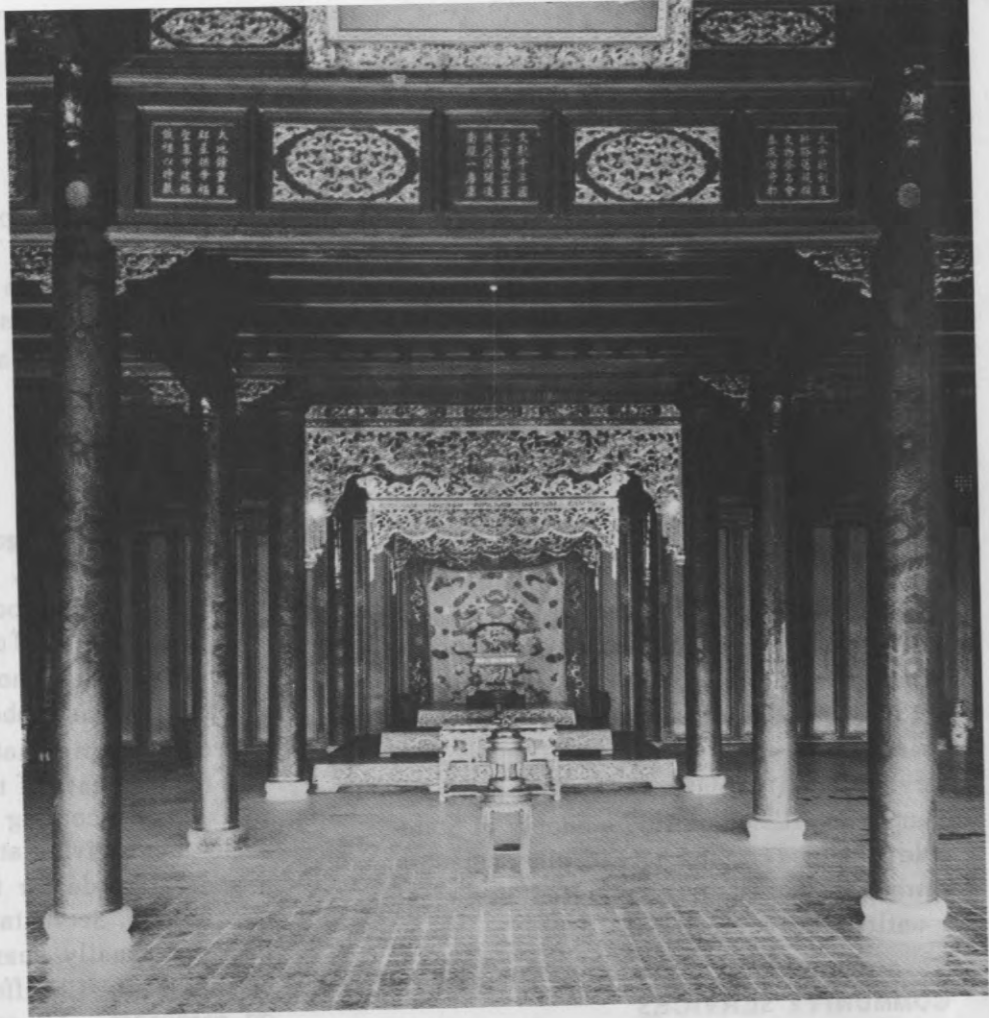
#### SERVANTS

Servants in Saigon are plentiful but efficiency is variable. It is particularly difficult to find a good cook. Most people employ their household staff on a trial basis, through other Americans who can personally recommend them. The Embassy Bulletin, published weekly, carries notices of help available. The requirements of the individual or family will vary according to the needs and all employees arriving at post will be furnished a general guide for the employment of domestic help. Servants generally live in, with quarters usually apart from the main house or apartment. Chauffeurs do not live in, nor do gardeners. All servants buy their own food. Bonuses are distributed to all servants once a year at Tet, the Lunar New Year, and should consist of one month's wages for servants who have been in the household one year or more. All other bonuses for servants are pro-rated. It is also customary to give a two to four day holiday at this time.

Suggested salaries are as follows:

	Monthly Wages in Piastres	
	Minimum	Maximum
Single servant to household	1,700	2,500
Cook	2,000	3,000
Maid	1,400	2,200
Houseboy No.1	1,600	2,500
Laundress	1,200	2,000
Amah	1,600	2,500
Gardener (monthly)	1,000 (daily)	100
Chauffeur		2,500

Interior Buddhist Temple



French Reform Church  
(Episcopal)

CUSTOMS REGISTRATION AND FINANCE



Catholic Cathedral

## CUSTOMS REGULATIONS and FINANCE

### A. FREE ENTRY PRIVILEGES AND CUSTOMS DUTIES

All U.S. Government personnel serving in Saigon are accorded free entry privileges on personal baggage and shipments of household and personal effects. Importation must be limited to actual needs of the recipient, and none of the material brought in duty-free can be released in any manner, whether through sale, gift, or loan, to persons not enjoying duty-free privileges.

Duty-free privileges will be granted for only one automobile per staff member for each two-year tour of duty. Permission to sell an automobile is usually granted after the owner has received his travel orders for transfer or home leave, or if the owner's tour of duty expires within three months. However, current Vietnamese customs laws state that a personally-owned vehicle which has been imported duty-free cannot be sold to a person not enjoying duty-free privileges (i.e. a Vietnamese, a non-official foreign national or a non-official American) until the vehicle has been in Viet Nam for eighteen months. When a vehicle is sold to a person not enjoying duty-free privileges, it is subject to local regulations. (The local value is about double the new-car value in the United States.)

### B. REGULATIONS REGARDING FIREARMS

The Vietnamese Government has strict

regulations regarding the importation and use of firearms which apply to all foreigners, including those on the diplomatic list. The Government requires an import license for all firearms (obtained before arrival), as well as a gun permit which is usually obtained after arrival of the owner in Vietnam. Only two weapons per person, one rifle or shotgun and one pistol or revolver, may be imported and licensed. Telescopic lenses are absolutely forbidden. Permits must be obtained for ALL weapons and can be obtained from USOM Travel Section. Export licenses must be obtained before weapons can be taken out of the country.

Theft or loss of weapons or ammunition must be reported within 24 hours and can be done through USOM channels. Weapons can be loaned or sold only to other permit holders. For practical purposes, this means only to foreign officials.

### C. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Entry and exit visas are required for Viet Nam. Multiple entry-exit visas can be obtained by USOM for each official and his dependents after arrival, so subsequent single entry or single exit visas will not be required. A check of the International Vaccination Certificate is also made on entry. It is necessary that personnel have the required inoculations and vaccination and carry the customary international health certificate. There are no regulations limiting the entry of personal effects of official personnel.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### PETS

All personnel planning to bring dogs or cats with them must have a certificate of vaccination against rabies. In general, dogs are exposed to greater danger from disease than in the United States and are especially subject to skin ailments. The Institute Pasteur, which has branches throughout Vietnam, can inoculate pets against rabies and other diseases and give anti-rabies vaccine and anti-rabies treatments to humans. The Dispensary also maintains a supply of rabies vaccine and anti-rabies serum. Distemper is also extremely prevalent in Viet Nam.

### SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Social obligations are similar to those normally expected at any Mission. Calling cards of fair quality are available but many people prefer to order from the States or bring them when they arrive at Post. It is recommended that you bring a small supply of cards with you: "Mr. and Mrs. John Doe," "Mrs. John Doe," and "John R. Doe (Title)." A list of social calls, obligatory and optional, will be furnished the employee upon arrival at Post.

### WHAT TO BRING

#### HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS-NON-ELECTRIC :

Blankets (lightweight) one per bed, bedspreads, table and household linens, including dish towels and dust cloths, ironing board, clock, closet accessories, glassware, china, silver, tea or coffee service, All kitchen utensils, (Some people prefer to bring a Teflon greaseless fry pan) sewing machine

and accessories, hobby materials, sports equipment, typewriter, toys for children, and favorite books. Be sure to include reading material and toys for children in your baggage during the trip to Post. Also include a sufficient quantity of the other items in your air freight to tide you over until your surface freight arrives.

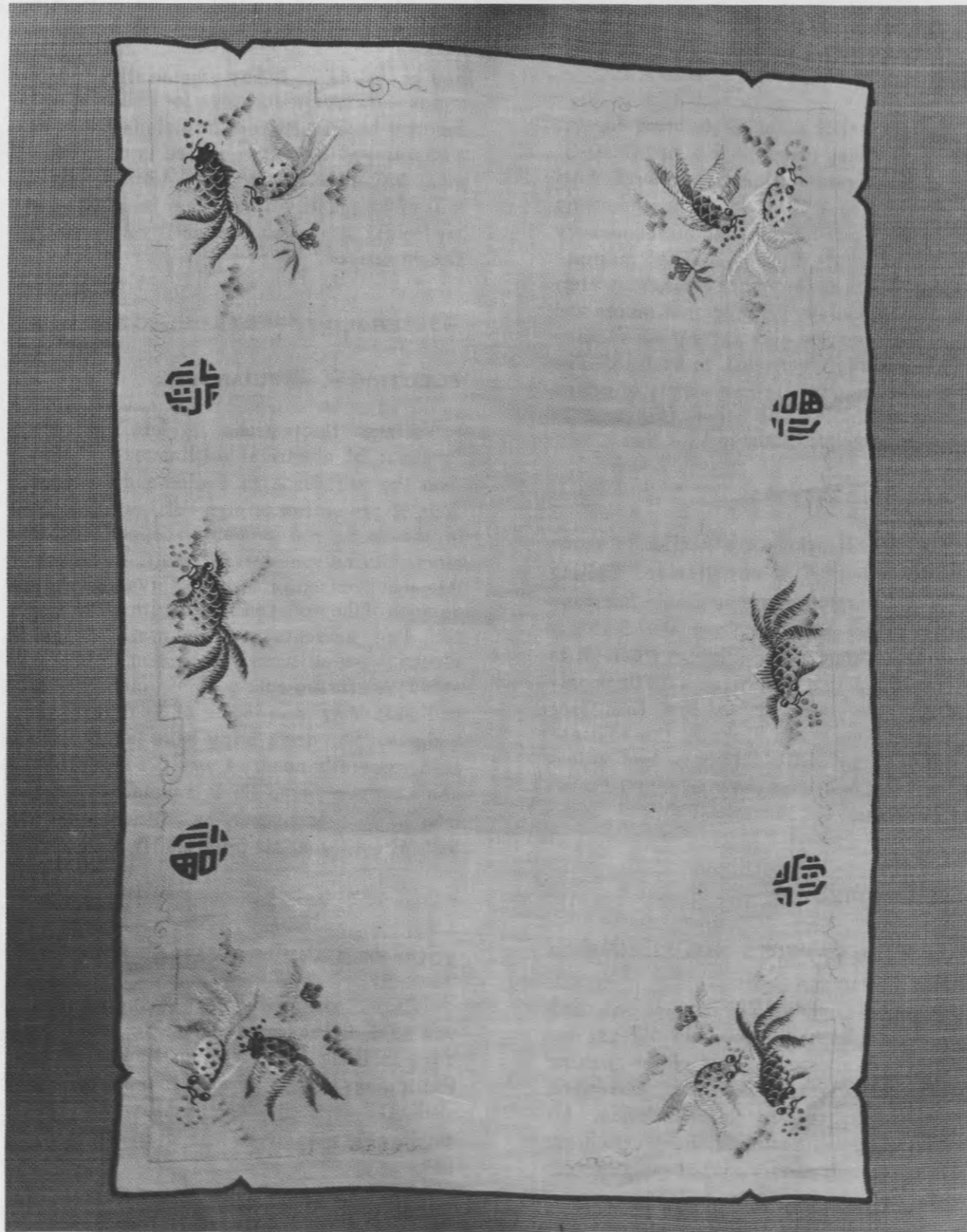
#### HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS - ELECTRIC :

#### ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Voltage fluctuations affect the performance of electrical appliances for more than the difference in cycles and may ruin them if run on low or high voltage too long. In the U.S. you probably depend upon electricity as your servant staff. In Saigon it is almost essential to have servants. They do much of the work you now do with electricity. The servants manage well without electrical appliances. They don't understand them for the most part. Careless usage and rust may ruin some of your favorite gadgets. So, don't bring more appliances than you really need. A small radio will be useful; there is no TV in Saigon. A travel iron in your accompanying luggage will be helpful until your air freight arrives.

#### YOUR TRIP AND ARRIVAL AT POST :

Check your travel prior to departure if you wish to make arrangements for a few days in Hong Kong, Tokyo, Hawaii or the Philippines. This time, if non-official, is deducted from your annual leave. For new employees, stop-overs will be leave without pay.



Vietnamese Handicraft

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

## A. HISTORY, PEOPLE AND CULTURE

The Republic of Viet Nam, of which Saigon is the capital, is a nation approximately the shape (in reverse) and somewhat smaller than the state of California, located on the southeastern coastal edge of a peninsula of South-east Asia between China and Malaysia. It is separated from the "Democratic Republic of Viet Nam" (North Viet Nam) by a narrow demilitarized zone along the Ben Hai River at the 17th parallel. At this point the east-west width of the country is only 40 miles, a distance which widens gradually to the south until it is about 100 miles across at the point where the Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam borders meet, and the rest of the country is about this wide from the South China seacoast to the Cambodian border. Dense jungle-covered mountains characterize the interior along at least two-thirds of the nearly 800 miles of border between Viet Nam and its western neighbors, Laos and Cambodia. These four small nations comprised the French colony of Indo China for approximately 80 years prior to 1954 when their present separate identities were established and French control ended with the cease-fire accord signed at the Geneva Conference.

Viet Nam's geographic location has been attractive to a variety of people for at least 20 centuries. The oldest indigenous inhabitants were undoubtedly the Champas, some of whom still remain among the many minority tribes of people who chiefly populate the higher mountainous regions. These tribes reflect migrations from sometimes far removed people from north, east, south and west, having a relationship in language, handicrafts and many other respects to Lao, Cambodian, Thai, Chinese, Malay, Indonesian Phillipine and possibly other South-Pacific island people. The lower coastal areas and the broad flat southern Mekong River delta regions are populated by the Vietnamese

people who originally migrated from China and whose cultural heritage has been much influenced by this background. The Vietnamese people have fought for centuries against successive invasions from China, against rulers who sought to control the rich rice-producing land. The language of the Vietnamese is a tonal one, which sounds similar to Chinese to western ears, but its written base is of western phonetic character. The total population of the country is approximately fourteen million.

Portuguese traders, who set up a trading station near Tourane (now called DaNang) in the 16th century, were the earliest known European or western contacts but they were followed by Spanish, Dutch, English and French traders and missionaries for 300 years. French Catholic missionaries prevailed on the French government to colonize Viet Nam and in 1859 a French Expeditionary Force attacked and occupied Saigon, thereafter taking control of Southern Viet Nam (Cochin-China) and eventually all the territory of Central Viet Nam (Annam), North Viet Nam (Tonkin), Cambodia and Laos, through protectorates. Before the seizure of Cochin-China in 1859, Saigon was a small town surrounding the citadel of the Emperor Gia-Long, although the ancient capital of the Vietnamese emperors was at Hue in Central Viet Nam. The citadel at Saigon was destroyed by the French troops in the occupation of the town so nothing remains of it now.

During World War II Viet Nam was occupied by the Japanese. At the end of the war when the French tried to re-establish themselves in Indo-China they were faced with the armed resistance of revolutionaries led by Ho-Chi-Minh, who, as a young man had been trained in Russia to be a Comintern agent. The Vietnamese struggle for independence from the French was thus aided and led by Communist interests. In 1954 the bitter and costly eight year war ended with



*Vietnamese child*

**GENERAL DES**

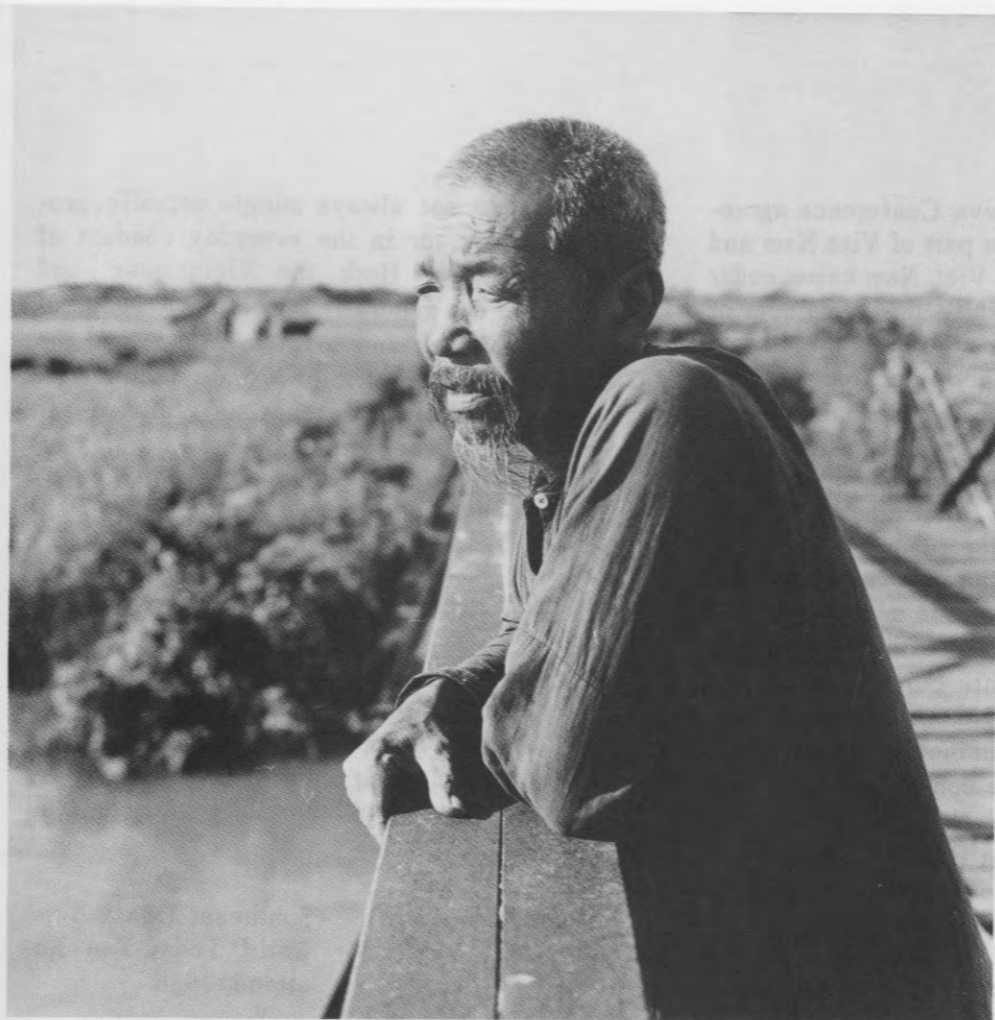
**A HISTORY, PEOPLE AND CULTURE**

The Republic of Vietnam was founded in 1954 as a result of the Geneva Conference. It is a young nation with a rich history and a diverse population. The country is divided into two main regions: the north and the south. The north is ruled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, while the south is ruled by the Republic of Vietnam. The country has a long history of conflict, including the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975. Today, the country is a developing nation with a growing economy and a young population.

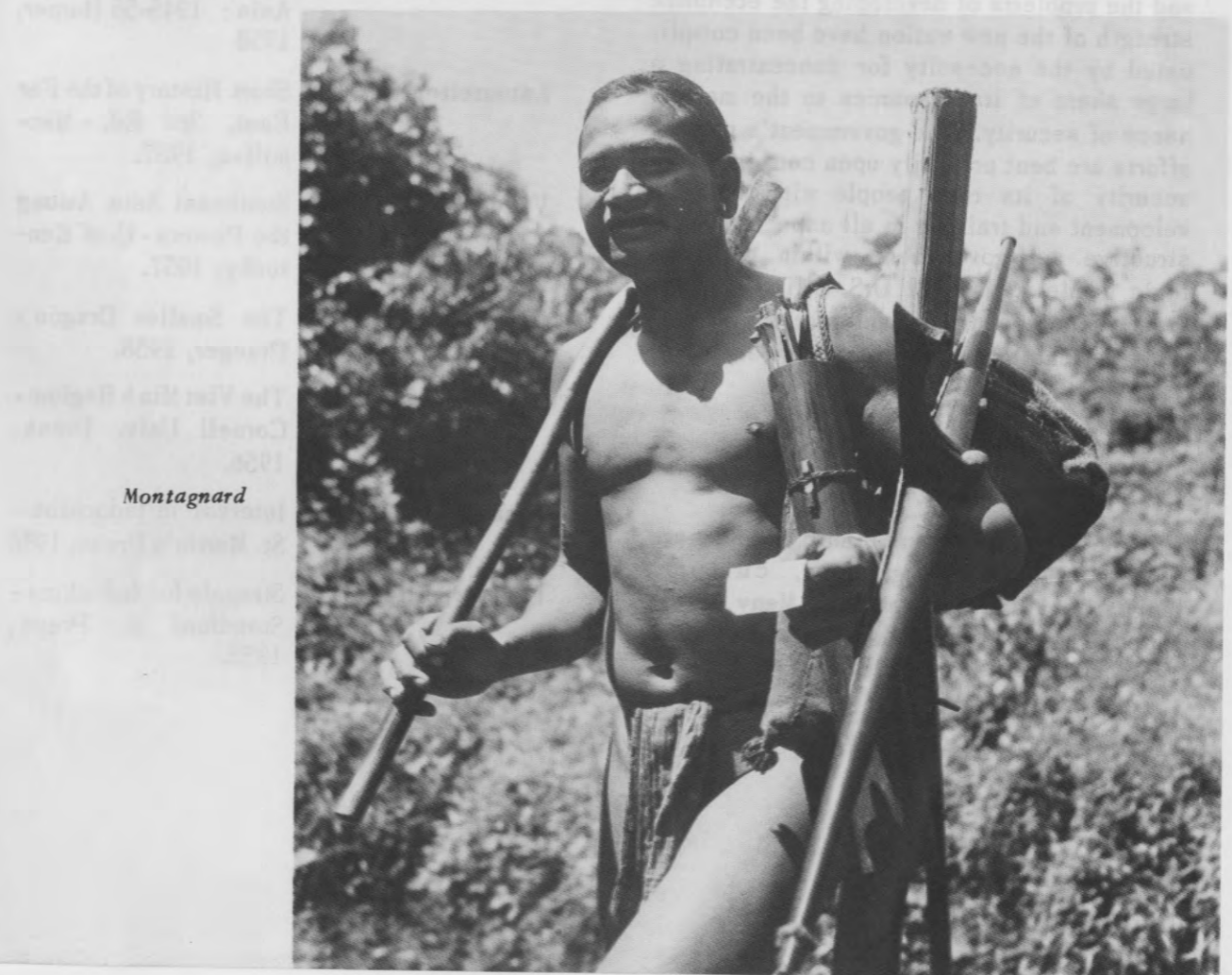
During World War II, Vietnam was occupied by the Japanese. At the end of the war, the French tried to re-establish their control over the country. This led to the First Indochina War, which ended in 1954. The Geneva Conference divided the country into two parts: the north, which was to be a Communist state, and the south, which was to be a non-Communist state. The Republic of Vietnam was founded in the south in 1954. It was a young nation with a rich history and a diverse population. The country is divided into two main regions: the north and the south. The north is ruled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, while the south is ruled by the Republic of Vietnam. The country has a long history of conflict, including the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975. Today, the country is a developing nation with a growing economy and a young population.

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*Girl in native dress*



*villager*



*Montagnard*

the signing of the Geneva Conference agreements. All the northern part of Viet Nam and about half of Central Viet Nam came under Communist control, while the remainder of Central Viet Nam and all the South became free, with a young French-educated Emperor, Bao-Dai, as head of the government. Under the same agreements Laos and Cambodia also became independent. The agreements provided for the mass migration to South Viet Nam of all northern Vietnamese people who did not wish to remain under the Communist rule and so in 1954 approximately one million refugees were moved and resettled either in Saigon or in many new settlements built by the government with American aid. At the same time, many Communists remained in the south and continued to exercise control in some areas. The Republic of Viet Nam was actually established in 1955 when Emperor Bao-Dai was deposed and President Ngo-Dinh-Diem was installed by popular vote.

There have been continued Communist efforts to weaken and destroy the government and the problems of developing the economic strength of the new nation have been complicated by the necessity for concentrating a large share of its resources to the maintenance of security. The government's present efforts are bent primarily upon combining the security of its rural people with their development and training in all aspects of constructive self-government within the strategic hamlets. In 1961 U.S. military aid was greatly increased to counteract the increasingly serious threat to Vietnamese survival.

#### OTHER CONDITIONS

The Vietnamese and ethnic Chinese are closely related through race, culture, language, history and mores. Many of the Chinese in Viet Nam have now taken out Vietnamese citizenship. However, the two

groups do not always mingle socially, professionally, or in the everyday conduct of their affairs. Both the Vietnamese and Chinese are generally intelligent, resourceful, ambitious and loyal to friends and employers. Their attitude toward the vicissitudes of daily existence is resigned and cheerful, indeed, one of their most delightful characteristics is their essentially happy nature and excellent sense of humor.

#### BEFORE YOU COME

When you accept an assignment to Viet Nam, the following reading list will give you a better understanding of the country and the people:

- Buss, Claude - Southeast Asia and the World Today-Van Nostrand, 1958
- Fifield, R.H. - Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-58 Harper, 1958
- Latourette, K.S. - Short History of the Far East, 3rd Ed. - Macmillan, 1957.
- Vandenbosch, Amy - Southeast Asia Among the Powers - U. of Kentucky, 1957.
- Buttinger, Joseph - The Smaller Dragon - Praeger, 1958.
- Fall, Bernard B. - The Viet Minh Regime - Cornell Univ. Press, 1956.
- Graham, Andrew - Interval in Indochina - St. Martin's Press, 1956
- Hammer, Ellen - Struggle for Indochina - Stanford U. Press, 1955.

- Hammer, Ellen - Struggle for Indochina - Stanford U. Press, 1954.
- Lindhold, R.W. Ed. - Viet-Nam the First Five Years - Michigan State U., 1959.
- O'Daniel, J.W. - The Nation That Refused To Starve - Coward-McCann, 1960.
- Thai, Nguyen Van - A Short History of Viet-Nam - Saigon, Times Pub. Co., 1958.
- Tung, Tran Van - Viet-Nam (Photographs) Praeger, 1959.

#### B. LAND AND CLIMATE

Viet Nam is a scenically beautiful country, richly varied between lovely beaches along its long coast, forested mountains and green rice fields. Both mountainous and low lands are productive and potentially rich. Fishing is naturally a prominent industry, while rice, which is grown at both lower and higher elevations, constitutes the chief food of the people as well as one of their principal exports. The terrain of the southern coastal areas is flat and laced by numerous waterways developed by the French for the irrigation of rice and the "terreroige" rubber plantations. The mountainous regions are adapted in climate and soil for the raising of potentially valuable and exportable agricultural products, including high quality tea, coffee, vegetables, avocados, and assorted forest products, although inaccessibility presents problems. Wild game, such as tigers, deer, and elephants, abound in the jungle and it is said that there are more than 2,000 varieties of orchids to be found there. A desolate marshy region, called the Plain of Reeds, occupies part of the Mekong valley to the west of Saigon, and there are also extensive marshy regions farther south beyond the delta

of the river. These regions have long offered concealment and protection for Communist infiltration, as have the jungle forests along the Lao border.

The climate is generally semi-tropical in Viet Nam but temperatures and climate vary somewhat between Saigon and Hue, and also between the mountain areas and the low lands. There are only two seasons, rainy and dry. In Saigon the rainy season begins in May or June and continues until November and is followed by the two coolest months of the year. Warmer weather returns in February and increases steadily until the rains bring a welcome, if slight, cooling change. In Hue and in Dalat the same pattern exists, but the elevation makes a cooler climate all the year, the rains come in April. During the cooler months, and at any time at the higher elevations, light wraps are comfortable in the evenings and early mornings.

#### C. THE UNITED STATES AND THE AID MISSION IN VIET NAM

The United States is represented in Viet Nam by the Embassy in Saigon and a Consulate at Hue; by the USOM Headquarters and advisory staff offices in Saigon and the work of these advisors throughout the whole of Viet Nam; by the United States Information Service in Saigon, Cantho, Dalat, Hue and Qui Nhon, in connection with which a binational center, the Vietnamese-American Association is maintained, which has branches in Hue and Dalat; and by the military aid program which has headquarters in Saigon. AID helps and advises the Vietnamese government in public health, agriculture, education, business and industry, public works, communication, finance, civil administration, public safety, and rural development. The headquarters offices of USOM in Saigon are located at 32 Duong (Street) Ngo Thoi Nhiem, a few blocks from the hub of the city . . . . .



*Planting Rice*



*Rice*





EMBASSY - MAIN BUILDING



USIS Building

U.S.O.M



#### D. SAIGON

Saigon, which has an elevation of 25 feet, is a large city, located about 60 miles inland on the west bank of the Saigon River. Since the river is navigable and can accommodate small ships, Saigon is a busy commercial center for the country, as well as its political and cultural center. It is about 10 degrees north of the Equator, about the same latitude as Panama, and almost directly opposite from New York City on the globe. The population is approximately two million, nearly a third of whom are Chinese. There were formerly two separate cities, Saigon and Cholon, which have literally grown together and which were officially merged by Presidential decree in 1956. Saigon was built by the French as the seat of their colonial government, while Cholon, to the south of Saigon, is a Chinese marketing and industrial community. The metropolitan area has grown, as many village communities sprang into being and became joined along the arterial roads and waterways connected with the river and the city. Many of these communities are refugee communities, originally populated by people from Hanoi, Haiphong or other North Vietnamese cities, and later including residents coming from the less secure rural areas in the past two years or so.

Developing industrial production in the urban district includes textile, cement, glass and ceramic, cigarette, pharmaceutical, factories, fish sauce plants, rice milling and the preparation of duck feathers for export.

Architecture of both public and residential buildings is of distinctly French style, though most recent construction has

an original modern character. It is a fairly clean and generally attractive city, but as in all Asian cities there is a great contrast between the western-style homes of official or wealthy Vietnamese people, or most foreign residents, and the small, crowded thatched-roofed homes of a large portion of the city's population. Small shops are commonly housed in the front of single-room living quarters, and narrow unpaved streets extend often to deadends providing access from tiny houses adjoining one another as far as space permits away from the main street. In the modern shopping district there are air-conditioned hotels, beauty salons, restaurants and bars, specialty shops, a flower market and a large general market, but there are no supermarkets or department stores.

Mildew forms the year around but is worse during the rainy season. Although closet light bulbs help control mildew, garments should be aired frequently. Books, records, electrical appliances and leather goods should be inspected often for mildew. Mildew preventatives sold in the U.S. are not recommended as they are not effective here.

Mosquitoes and cockroaches are common here. At times large groups of termites will appear for several days during the year. Also found here is another insect which will eat clothing and wood. The PX usually stocks bug spray bombs which should be used nightly. All snakes should be considered potentially poisonous until a thorough knowledge is acquired. The small lizards which live on the walls and ceilings of houses and apartments are harmless and useful because they eat mosquitoes and other insects.

#### SAIGON



*Downtown Saigon*



*Ambassador's Residence*

SAIGON

*Hotel Majestic*



*Hotel Caravelle*

*Hotel Continental*





*Assembly Building Saigon*

*Waterfront - Saigon River*



**SAIGON**

*Dragon Dance Performed at Tet*



*Botanical Park*



## PROVINCES

a. At present, there are forty-two provinces in South Viet Nam, with chief towns as follows:

<i>Names</i>	<i>Chief towns</i>
1. An Giang	Long Xuyen
2. An Xuyen	Quan Long
3. Ba Xuyen	Khanh Hung
4. Bien Hoa	Bien Hoa
5. Binh Duong	Phu Cuong
6. Binh Dinh	Qui Nhon
7. Binh Long	An Loc
8. Binh Thuan	Phan Thiet
9. Binh Tuy	Ham Tan
10. Chuong Thien	Vi Thanh
11. Con Son	Con Son
12. Darlac	Ban Me Thuot
13. Dinh Tuong	My Tho
14. Gia Dinh	Gia Dinh
15. Khanh Hoa	Nha Trang
16. Kien Giang	Rach Gia
17. Kien Hoa	Truc Giang
18. Kien Phong	Cao Lanh
19. Kien Tuong	Moc Hoa
20. Kontum	Kontum
21. Lam Dong	Bao Loc
22. Long An	Tan An
23. Long Khanh	Xuan Loc
24. Ninh Thuan	Phan Rang
25. Phong Dinh	Can Tho
26. Phu Bon	Hau Bon
27. Phu Yen	Tuy Hoa
28. Phuoc Long	Phuoc Binh
29. Phuoc Thanh	Phuoc Vinh
30. Phuoc Tuy	Phuoc Le
31. Pleiku	Pleiku
32. Quang Duc	Gia Nghia
33. Quang Nam	Hoi An
34. Quang Ngai	Quang Ngai
35. Quang Tin	Tam Ky

36. Quang Tri	Quang Tri
37. Tay Ninh	Tay Ninh
38. Thua Thien	Hue
39. Tuyen Duc	Dalat
40. Vinh Binh	Phu Vinh
41. Vinh Long	Vinh Long
42. Hau Nghia	Khiem Cuong

### b. PROVINCE HOUSING

Adequate housing for personnel stationed outside the area varies according to location. In such cities as Nha Trang, Danang, Qui Nhon and Hue, quarters are fairly adequate. However, renovations are usually required prior to leasing. Adequate housing in other parts of the country is practically nonexistent. Whatever is available requires extensive remodeling. Some cities have 220 volt electricity; however, stepdown transformers are provided.

### c. HEALTH AND SANITATION

Sanitation control is practically nonexistent in the provinces. There are no public toilet facilities and consequently the streets and other public areas are utilized by the local population. All water should be considered non-potable and treated before drinking. Many diseases are more prevalent in the provinces outside Saigon and medical facilities limited. Wherever possible, all USOM employees on field assignments should seek medical care by a physician, nurse or corpsman rather than depend upon self-medication. There is a permanent U.S. Army 8th Field Hospital at Nha Trang with excellent facilities. Usually doctors are attached to the military units in the field and can be contacted if medication or treatment is required.



Street in Qui Nhon

## PROVINCES

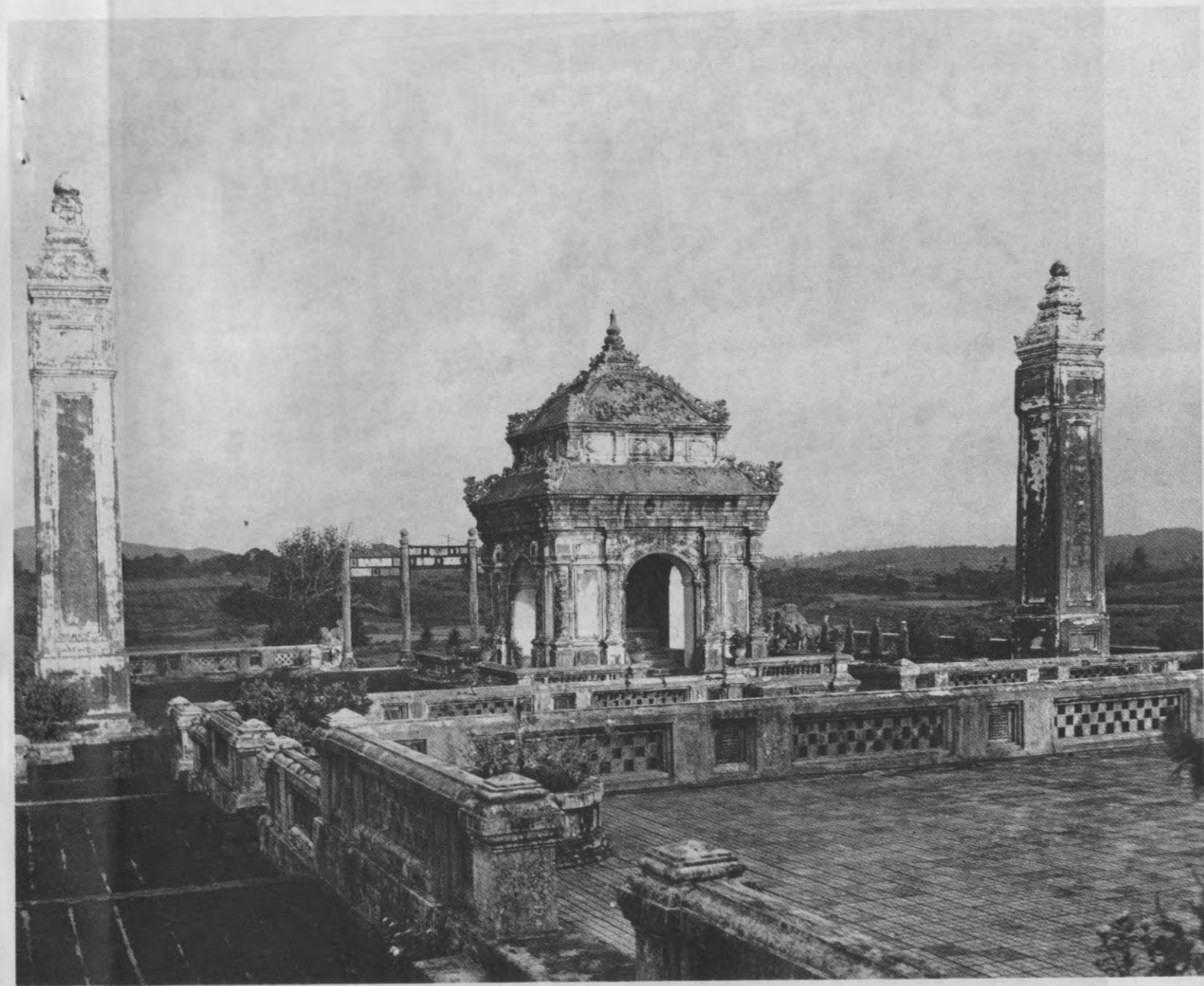
Dalat





*Strategic Combat Hamlet Wall*

*Hue*



*Hue*

PROVINCES



*Market Scene*



*Fishing Scenes*

PROVINCES

*Montagnard Housing*





PROVINCES

#### d. FOOD AND EATING PLACES

At present, military units are found in each province and arrangements can be made for eating meals there at a nominal cost. However, many employees prefer to eat local Vietnamese food, which is quite good. All food should be thoroughly cooked before eating and the fruit washed in potable water. Care should be exercised in using ice made from non-potable water.

#### e. INSECT AND REPTILE LIFE

Since much of Vietnam is covered with jungle, abundant insect and reptile life can be found. Insect repellent should be carried at all times. Boots, instead of low cut shoes, are recommended.

#### f. CLOTHING

Clothes for men should consist primarily of washable light cotton trousers and shirts. Many employees in the field prefer to wear khaki, with engineer type leather boots. Sport shirts and lightweight dress trousers should be included for attending official functions.

Families who plan to live in the provinces should include a large supply of washable cottons as laundry facilities are poor and clothing does not last. Raincoats and umbrellas should be included for the rainy

season. The weather becomes quite cool in many of the northern provinces, so consideration should be given to including jackets, sweaters and blankets.

#### g. LANGUAGE

Many of the officials in the provinces do speak French and are gradually learning to speak English. However, most employees going into the field who do not speak French or Vietnamese will find a local interpreter a decided asset.

#### h. TRANSPORTATION AND ROADS

In many instances transportation is furnished to USOM employees in the field, usually in the form of Jeeps. There are a few good highways but all secondary roads are poor and traveling sometimes becomes difficult. This is especially true during the rainy season.

#### i. GENERAL

Anyone going into the provinces should become thoroughly familiar with the living conditions peculiar to that area in which he will be located. The above statements are based on general conditions throughout Vietnam. Living standards outside of the Saigon area are much more primitive than in the city of Saigon.



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