

5 May 85

Dear Tho:

It was good to talk with you on Saturday 4 May. However, I feel I may have confused you with some of my statements. I sometime get confused with the various letters (names) I receive from VN. On the average I receive 10 to 15 letters a month from VN plus letters I receive from France, Philippines and in the case of GIOL from the various camps. Besides GIOL letter from Indonesia I just received a letter from LUU HOANG AN who exited VN via ODP and is at the processing center at Bataan Philippines where he will be for 6 months studying English as a second language and U.S. culture. AN was a cook for the Americans ^{officers} in VN and volunteered to cook in the processing center. He has been told he will go to Arlington VA for resettlement. Sorry if I may have confused you.

I received my last letter from GIOL on 16 Apr. 85 and I immediately wrote you and a friend SANG VAN TRAN 2238 (Epistrano Dr. Santa Clara, CA 9505) and then I wrote GIOL and sent him copies of all the certificates I had received to confirm his training in the U.S. I also asked if his family was with him, in his letter he only said I left VN Feb 14, 1985 and arrived at GALANG Refugee Camp (Indonesia) on Mar. 7 1985.

In his letter he mentioned a Mr Vo Thanh BAI whom he said gave ~~me~~ ^{him} my name. Although GIOL indicated BAI was a friend of mine I do not remember him.

In his letter Gioi indicated he like to live in Wexford, PA. I doubt if he has been in the area but just had my name, he also he had a friend William G. DROSDICK 2 SGT (1967-68) in VN who lived in PA but he had no address.

I am glad that you have wired Gioi and indicated that you will sponsor him. Unfortunately, I do not have the money or the room but I will continue to assist all of them. In 75 I sponsored a family of 8 in my home Col. Huynh Thu Toan former Commander of the Vietnamese Army Arsenal (Go-Vap) where I was stationed.

I have not heard from Gioi since I wrote him, but it should take about 30 days from start to finish. I just noted his letter to me was dated 10 Apr 85 and I received it on 16 Apr. 85. I will let you know when I hear from Gioi. I intend to write him today if I hold up, I have 18 letters to write plus sending 8 applications to ODP. Again Thanks for your call

Yours Friend
Cazwell J. Page
Caz

Cazwell J. Page
Singing Oaks
P. O. Box 181
Wexford, PA 15090

Ph 412-935-1697

Dear Tho .

3 June 85

I received a second letter from Nguyen Van Gioi written May 17, 1985 on May 28, 1985. I wrote him today.

He indicated that on May 17 he received a letter from his family (all of his family are still in VN) indicating they had rec'd two letters from me in March & April 85. He also indicated ODP had sent or assigned IV 04656 to his file and ask me to expedite the LOI to his wife from ODP. I am not sure the LOI would apply since he as the principal individual has left VN. But I will check.

He does not mention that he rec'd my letter which I sent shortly after receiving his 1st letter. ~~with~~ In this letter I sent him copies of all certificate I had obtained to verify his training in the US. In his 2nd ltr he asked for them. He also did not mention receiving the telegram from you or the money from his friend Tran.

He forwarded the following address

Ordinary Mail

NGUYEN VAN GIOI
Boat # PK 6642
Barrack 2, Galang 1 Zone 1
P.O. Box 19
Tanjung, PINANG, Indonesia

Registered Mail (For Money Order only)

NGUYEN VAN GIOI
Boat # PK 6642
Barrack 2 Galang 1 Zone 1
YCK P.O. Box 5
Tanjung, PINANG (CRIA) V
Indonesia

over)

GIOL also indicated that if everything goes all right he may leave Indonesia very soon maybe on or before Nov. 85. He also included a P.S. indicating he is working at World Relief Vocational Training Program as Headmaster of occupational skills center Site 1 in Galang Refugee Camp

Let me know if you hear from G101. It is raining today so I am catching-up on my mail. I have over 15 files to send to ODP and at least 10 letters to write to friends in VN, France & the U.S.

Your Friend
Caz Page

Cazwell J. Page
Singing Oaks
P. O. Box 181
Wexford, PA 15090

Ph. 412-935-1697

12 July 85

Dear Tho:

I received a letter from Gioi today dated July 1, 85. He said that on June 25 he was officially accepted for emigration to the U.S. as a refugee, with a file number GN 82371. He said the American Delegation again reviewed all his documents, red camp release, diplomas, L.O.I. etc and declared him fully eligible. He said at 2pm on the 26th he went before the Representative of USG. for swearing and finally received the above number.

He will move to GALANG site II to attend a course on U.S. Culture to be held on or about 15 Aug. 85. He said if everything goes all right, he will be in Virginia before Xmas 85.

Said he received 2 letters from his wife and children all are in good health.

He sent me a picture of himself sitting at a desk on the back it says Nguyen Van Gioi - Head of Vocational Training Center, picture was taken or dated 1 July 85. He said he sent it so I would recognize him when we have an opportunity to meet.

I assume he writes and gives you the same info, but he never says that he writes you so I pass along the info.

Hope this finds you in good health.

P.S. I rec'd a 18 page article all in French

about the church in VN from Apr. 75 to present. Unfortunately I do not read or translate French.

Your Friend

Cay Pazo

21 July 85

Dear Tho:

It was good to talk with you Sat. morning. Sometime in the future I will arrange a visit to the D.C. area to see AA, Glot and you. At that time we can have a long talk. I live 18 miles north of Pittsburgh, PA it is about 260 miles to Washington and takes me around 5 hrs to drive.

As I told you I sent the article in French re-the Church in VN. out to be translated. I will send you a copy when I receive the Translation. Also, I gave your name to my friend Mr. Robert (Bob) DESTATT of the Defense Intelligence Agency (Pentagon) he is chief of MIA/Pow Div. I believe he has a friend who is/was a prisoner in a re-educ camp that he wants to help.

I have a friend LUU HOANG AN who with his family left VN under ODP. Presently, he is at the Philippine Refugee Processing Center (P.R.P.C.) SABANG-MORONG. BATAN - Philippines. He finished his class on English and U.S. culture on July 6, 85 and he indicates he and his family should be able to leave Batan around Aug. 25. 85 to the USA. He is being sponsored by:

MISS TRUONG-THANH-HOA

4423 N. PERSHING DR. No. 1.

Arlington, VA 22203

Keep up the good work. Keep me informed.

Your Friend
Caj Page

23 July 85

Dear Tho:

I received my first mail in over 3 Mos from my friends in VN. I received 2 letters each with 2 letters inside plus one from a girl in France.

As I suspected the VNG is tightening their Control over the people. Thought you might be interested in some of things taking place

1. An individual applied at his local district (My Tho) for Exit permit but was told ^{by interior Ministry} They have suspended review of all files for people going to the U.S. & France in April 85
2. Apparently are working on getting Exit Visas for people who have exit permit - have back log of 50000-60000 and this increases daily.
3. Gasoline & Food prices increase daily.
4. Electricity only 3 days a week ^(I understand they do not have sufficient coal to operate generators etc 7 days a week)
5. Mail (postage) for an average letter increased from 30d to 160d (so people are getting together and sending several letters together)
6. Changing name of streets - expect new mailing addresses in one or two more years
^{Ton Van Minh}
7. My friend makes the following statement - but I do not understand
"The Catholic children should be executed military service but they can not go to Pedagogic University."
Is he saying Catholic children are required to serve in the military but can not go to ^{what is this} teacher's college

Recently I received several letters from VN asking for help with ODP. Apparently they had a sponsor in France but were told French Gov't would not accept Vietnamese who were sponsored by a Sibling. Yesterday I received a letter from a girl in France who is the sister of one of these people. She said:

She is not eligible to sponsor her sister because she does not own a house and as a sibling it is considered only a 3rd or 4th degree. She said Entry Visas into France are limited and trying to sponsor her sister would result in lost time.

All my letters indicated that it is taking mail from the U.S. 4 to 5 mos to reach them.

Keep up the Good Work

Your Friend
Cay Page

9 Aug 85

Dear Tho:

I am sending you a copy of the SMA 1st news letter plus a paper on ODP from USAID and a copy of the current processing procedures used by ODP. On 25 July 85 I received a phone call from Gladys Lujan, Bureau of Refugee Program State Dept. She has been my contact for the past 3 years, she called to tell me that she was going to the Dominican Republic and said she was sending the processing procedure (New Pen) → and that her replacement was Mina Goldberg (202-632-6318) She also indicated that Mr Donald I. Colin Director of ODP had been replaced by Mr Bruce Beardsley. The State Dept. rotates its personnel every 3 or 4 yrs. This is reason for the switch.

I received a letter written in June from VN that I received around the middle of July. The letter contains the following info.

- (1) Postage for a average letter increased from 30d to 160d
- (2) Electricity only 3 days a week
- (3) Price and Food increases daily.

My friends are combining their letters into one envelope and mailing to me.

A new contact in France indicates that the French Gov't is restricting their entrance Visa and Siblings are not allow to sponsor relatives from VN because they do not own a home.

For some time I have been wondering if GLOI's family in VN could use the L01 they received since his name is on it as the principal and he is not in VN. So when Ms Lufan called I asked her and she suggested that I write to Bruce Beardsley DIR ODP and ask him to issue a new L01 minus GLOI name. I did this but of course I have not received a reply. I also asked about the length of the Culture course GLOI is to start. She thought that since GLOI spoke & wrote English very well that they might keep him there for the 6 Mos duration of the ESL & culture course to assist - We shall see

An the Vietnamese who is to leave the Philippines around 25 Aug wrote and said he is awaiting the departure of he & his family from the P & his arrival in Arlington, VA. I wrote to his sponsor but no reply.

I hope that this finds you and your family in the best of health. Write and tell me the news.

Your Friend
Cay Page

15 Sept 85

Dear Tho:

I am enclosing a copy of the by-law of a French Association - Vietnam-ESPOIR. Its founder and president is Count Michel de Periez. He was former French Army Officer who assisted in the exodus of the French from Vietnam in 1954. Its purpose as I understand is a little different than most organizations - its Aim/purpose is to maintain ~~the~~ memories of Vietnam.

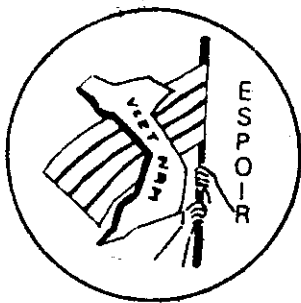
Maybe you can read and send me a short summary of the Associations Aims.

I received a phone call ^{Thurs 12} ~~from~~ 9 Sept. from The Mennonite Refugee Service indicating that my friend Lou Hoang An arrived in Arlington Mon 9 Sept.

On Fri 13 Sep. I was talking with my friend Bob Dastatt of The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). He told me that CBS 60 Min either 15 Sep or 22 Sep, ABC News 15 Sep, and Good Morning America on Mon 16 Sep were going to televise some unfavorable comments on the U.S. handling of the POW/MIA issues. He indicated no one had contacted DIA for info or comments.

Your Friend
Cay Page

ASSOCIATION VIETNAM-ESPOIR



31, rue du Palais de Justice
10000 TROYES
Tél. 25/ 74.36.56

TESTEALIST

Vendredi 26 juillet 1985

POLITIQUE

L'association « Vietnam-Espoir » communiqué

Le drame des « boat-people » a assez duré. La dictature du gouvernement communiste d'Hanoi, responsable de l'exode des réfugiés vietnamiens, doit, d'urgence, être abattue.

C'est la raison, pour laquelle des personnalités de l'ancien gouvernement du Sud-Vietnam et des réfugiés vietnamiens venus de plusieurs pays d'Europe et d'Amérique ont créé, l'année dernière à Paris, un Comité du Vietnam-Libre. Ce comité a pour but principal d'intensifier le combat contre le régime communiste qui sévit au Vietnam.

C'est l'amorce d'un front uni de lutte organisée et le début de l'espoir pour des centaines de milliers de réfugiés vietnamiens rescapés.

On entend souvent dire que jamais, dans le monde, un pays tombé sous l'empire communiste n'a réussi, jusqu'à présent, à se libérer.

Or, dans notre Occident, vaincu d'avance et prêt à toutes les concessions surgissent des hommes venus d'Asie, qui refusent d'admettre la fatalité. C'est pour nous, Français, une leçon de morale, et aussi de courage, car ces réfugiés qui ne craignent pas d'engager ainsi le combat savent que des représailles seront exercées sur leurs familles restées au Vietnam.

Notre devoir est d'encourager ce Comité du Vietnam-Libre, drapeau de la résistance du Monde libre. La région Champagne-Ardenne qui accueille tant d'anciens « boat-people » se doit d'être la première à lancer, à l'échelon national, un grand mouvement de solidarité envers cette initiative.

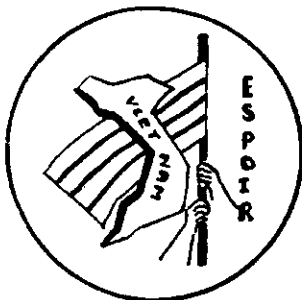
C'est pourquoi, nous envisageons de créer à Troyes une Association Française de soutien au Comité du Vietnam-Libre.

Nous demandons aux personnes désireuses de manifester leur sympathie et leur appui à ce projet de venir s'inscrire dans les locaux de l'Association « Vietnam-Espoir », 31, rue du Palais de Justice à Troyes - ou d'écrire à cette adresse.

Permanences, tous les jours, à partir du 30 juillet, de 10 h à 12 h et 14 h à 18 h - Sauf samedi.

500 000 réfugiés vietnamiens sont morts
en mer depuis 10 ans
Aucun paysan de nous ne peut assister
au drame des boat-people sans se
dire : que puis-je faire ?
La réponse est : dans la communication
entre nous, les communistes
vous faites partie de l'élite
de notre région
sur votre région
André...

ASSOCIATION VIETNAM-ESPOIR



NOTE EXPLICATIVE CONCERNANT LES BUTS DE L'ASSOCIATION

31, rue du Palais de Justice
10000 TROYES

Tél. (25) 74-38-56
(25) 21-38-24

En simplifiant volontairement, nous disons qu'il existe deux catégories de réfugiés :

- La première, de loin la plus nombreuse, comprend tous ceux qui ont quitté le Vietnam sans esprit de retour et veulent tout oublier.. Parfois un peu de nostalgie les pousse à se réunir lors des fêtes traditionnelles, au sein d'Associations culturelles ou autres, mais au fond d'eux-mêmes, ils n'ont qu'un but : s'assimiler au plus vite dans la société européenne.
- La deuxième, très minoritaire, regroupe ceux qui ont quitté le Vietnam mais ne veulent pas l'oublier. Ils se souviennent de tout ce qu'ils ont laissé là-bas : parents, amis, maisons, tombes des ancêtres, etc... Ils ont fui un régime d'oppression mais leur cœur est toujours près de ceux qui restent au pays et souffrent. Ces réfugiés ont du mal à s'assimiler car, Vietnamiens d'abord, ils se considèrent comme des réfugiés politiques et ont le désir de revenir un jour dans un Vietnam libéré. Dans cet espoir, ils gardent précieusement l'héritage culturel légué par leurs ancêtres et veulent le transmettre à leurs enfants..

Notre Association s'adresse à cette deuxième catégorie de personnes.

A ce sujet, nous pensons que la dignité du réfugié doit résider dans le fait qu'il se considère comme un exilé politique.

Exilé, il regarde son séjour dans le pays d'accueil comme provisoire.. Ce passage doit lui permettre de refaire ses forces morales en vue de la reprise du combat.

une grande famille dans laquelle règne l'entraide et surtout l'espoir de la liberté sur le communisme.

- Marx et Lénine soutiennent que la marche implacable de l'histoire assurera le triomphe du communisme.. Si vous croyez que l'évolution du monde actuel était inévitable et que rien n'aurait pu l'arrêter, alors vous êtes déjà marxiste." (Dr. Charles Malik, ancien Président de l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies).

A notre avis il y a là un grand danger.

En effet, chaque réfugié en s'évadant, emmène avec lui ses coutumes, ses traditions, sa religion, bref toutes les valeurs que lui ont léguées ses ancêtres et que le régime communiste, qu'il fuit, s'efforce de détruire.

L'ensemble des réfugiés constitue donc une force morale importante, gardienne des valeurs fondamentales de la civilisation vietnamienne. Le devoir des réfugiés est de conserver ces valeurs, de s'y accrocher, de ne pas les renier au profit des valeurs factices de la civilisation européenne décadente.

Le devoir des ^{réfugiés} est également, à notre avis, celui de ~~devenir~~ un jour au Viet Nam, apporter aux futures générations plus ou moins communisées ces valeurs gardées comme un trésor - soit lorsque les circonstances politiques ~~leur~~ seront favorables, soit par la force.

Pour toutes ces raisons, nous avons senti la nécessité de créer une Association que nous avons appelé " VIET-NAM ESPOIR " et dont le but inscrit dans le statut est le suivant : " L'Association a pour but de resserrer les liens de solidarité existant entre les réfugiés vietnamiens résidant en France et à l'étranger. Elle se propose de leur apporter le soutien moral, matériel et social nécessaire pour qu'ils puissent s'adapter dans de meilleures conditions à leur nouvelle existence, tout en les aidant à conserver le souvenir de leur culture, de leur patrie et, éventuellement l'espoir d'y revivre.

I OBJECTIFS A ATTEINDRE ET MOYENS POUR Y PARVENIR

1 - Solidarité : L'Association a comme premier objectif le renforcement des liens de solidarité entre les réfugiés. Ceci implique :

- la création d'un organe de liaison
- un effort de solidarité envers les nouveaux réfugiés se traduisant par :
 - . une aide sociale
 - . une aide matérielle

A.- Création d'un organe de liaison

Il s'agirait, en l'occurrence, d'un bulletin de liaison mensuel donnant des nouvelles du Viet-Nam : nouvelles politiques vues à travers la presse française ou étrangère, et nouvelles directes de la vie vietnamienne vue à travers les récits des nouveaux réfugiés.

3

Une rubrique " courrier des lecteurs " permettrait également aux familles séparées de se retrouver. Ce bulletin donnerait aussi des renseignements administratifs ou autres informations utiles.

B.- Aide sociale

a) Parrainage : Chaque réfugié arrivant dans les centres provisoires d'hébergement devrait être parrainé par un réfugié vietnamien déjà installé. Ce parrainage peut se faire de famille en famille. Il peut également être effectué par des personnes non vietnamiennes qui sont favorables à notre action. Mais le parrainage par des vietnamiens nous paraît préférable (pour des problèmes de langage en particulier)

Le parrainage est une sorte de jumelage. La famille qui parraine rend visite la famille qui arrive, l'écoute, l'aide à résoudre les premiers problèmes qui surgissent (administratifs par ex.), la conseille, l'invite le week-end, sort les enfants ect... La liste n'est pas limitative et dépend du sens de solidarité de chacun.

b) Animation : L'Association peut organiser des colonies de vacances, des séjours à la montagne ou à la mer et des visites touristiques du pays d'accueil.

c) Travail : C'est le premier souci du réfugié à son arrivée? L'Association, en liaison avec des entreprises sympathisantes et les pouvoirs publics pourrait créer un service spécialisé pour aider les réfugiés à trouver du travail.

Cette recherche d'emploi devrait passer par des stages de formation et des cours de français.

C.- Aide matérielle

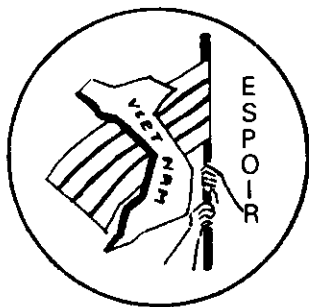
Il s'agirait d'abord d'une aide à l'installation : recherche de logement, achat de mobilier. Ensuite d'une aide financière aux plus démunis.

2- Conservation de l'héritage culturel vietnamien

Comme nous l'avons indiqué dans le préambule, nous attachons le plus grand prix au maintien des valeurs traditionnelles et à la conservation du patrimoine culturel. Ceci pourrait se réaliser de la manière suivante :

- Cours simplifié d'histoire et de géographie du Viet-Nam s'adressant à tous
- Cours plus complet réservé à un auditoire plus averti

ASSOCIATION VIETNAM-ESPOIR



31, rue du Palais de Justice
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25/ 21.38.24

VIETNAMIENS !

- Vous n'avez pas perdu l'espoir de revenir un jour dans votre patrie libérée.
- Conscients d'être des réfugiés politiques, vous voulez garder la tête haute et conserver votre fierté.
- Détenteurs des valeurs morales traditionnelles que le régime communiste s'efforce de détruire, vous désirez garder cet héritage et le transmettre à vos enfants.
- Vous recherchez une véritable amitié.

VENEZ REJOINDRE L'ASSOCIATION "VIETNAM - ESPOIR"

Nous vous proposons :

- **De vous aider à conserver le souvenir de votre patrie :**
 - En vous donnant des nouvelles du Viet-Nam par la diffusion d'un bulletin :
 - Nouvelles politiques extraites de la presse internationale.
 - Interview des nouveaux arrivés.
 - Nouvelles des réfugiés vietnamiens dans le monde.
- **De vous aider à garder vos traditions et votre culture dans l'espoir du retour.**
 - Par des réunions d'études ou conférence sur l'art, la culture, l'histoire ou la religion vietnamienne.
 - Par des cours de langue vietnamienne pour vos enfants.
- **De vous intégrer dans notre chaîne de solidarité :**
 - A votre arrivée en France.
 - Dans les moments difficiles de votre nouvelle existence, notamment en vous aidant à trouver du travail.
 - En tous temps : par des réunions, sorties amicales, soirées artistiques, culturelles.

Si vous êtes intéressés par notre Association, remplissez le bon ci-dessous, découpez-le et envoyez-le à l'adresse indiquée.



Nom : Prénom :

Adresse :

.....

N° téléphone :

Je désire adhérer à VIETNAM-ESPOIR.

Signature :

A committee called **FREE-VIETNAM** was created last year in Paris by a group of dignitaries from the previous regime and refugees from Europe and North America to strengthen the battle against the communist regime in Vietnam.

The **Association of "VietNam-Hope"** has come into existence because the people in the region of Champagne-Ardenne strongly believe that they should support this Committee. They appeal to all people to join and support this movement. The address is 31, rue du Palais de Justice à Troyes.

Two categories of refugees:

- The one group of refugees who left Vietnam without thinking of their return. These are those who want to integrate themselves as quickly as possible to the Western society.
- The second group of refugees who left Vietnam with nostalgie, with hope to return and who ran away because of the oppressive regime of the Communist government.

Our Association is aiming at the second group of refugees.

OBJECTIVE AND MEANS

The main objective is to reinforce the ties between refugees. Thus an **agence of liaison** will be created and **social aid** and **material aid** will be provided to the newly-arrived refugees.

The agence will send out monthly newsletters giving news from Vietnam derived from the local and foreign press as well as news derived directly from Vietnam.

Social aid consists of the welcoming of new refugees by families of old ones, outings or picnics for the two groups to meet together and finding works for the new ones.

Material aid includes helping the new refugees to find a lodging, purchase of furniture and provide cash to the really needed.

23 Sep 85

Dear Tho:

It was good to hear from you last week. The problem you have encountered is a tough one to solve.

The Privacy Act is a problem. When you contact The National Personnel Record Center, Civilian Personnel Records
111 Winnebago St., St. Louis, MO 63118. They says they need full name, date of birth, social security No and place of employment. Then they even with this info the Privacy Act prevents them from giving out the information.

I believe you said the individual you are seeking info on was a guard. I think most guard worked for the Embassy and possibly came under the State Dept.

I don't have an address, but the personnel office in the State Dept. could help

I suggest you contact the following Agency
Agency for International Development

Attn: Mariana L. Pribe, Chief

Foreign Service Personnel

Special Services Section

Bureau for Management

Washington, D.C. 20523

Another thing I have discovered is that a lot of the USG Agency only keep their records for 3 or 4 yrs. just today I received a letter from a Army Installation they said they have gotten rid of records from 1973-74.

I am sorry I cannot be of more assistance. If you
are filing ODP papers I would suggest that you
go ahead and file the papers send them to
American Embassy

Orderly Departure Program (ODP)

Attn: Bruce A Beardsley, Director

Box 58

~~970 San Francisco 96346-0001~~

Sometimes they have records available to them
that we can not use

Keep in touch

Your Friend
Cay Page

7 Oct 85

Dear Thu:

I tried to call you Sunday 6 Oct but I decided to send you a copy of letter dated Sept. 25, 1985 from Glol that I received 4 Oct. 85

His hypertension has probably been caused by his worrying about his family and the fact that he working & going to school.

I will write to some of my friends and have them check on Glol's wife Nguyen Thi Ten I will send thru a contact in France and it will go much faster

If every thing works out OK it looks like you will have an extra guest for Thanksgiving day it looks like Glol should be there by then. Let me know when he is ^{I can't spell} ~~Scheto~~ scheduled to arrive in the D.C. area and if the weather is not too bad will try to come.

I am alone this week (me the dog & cat) so I am going to catch up on my letter writing have 1 tr's for AID, State Dept, ODP & France (2) & VN (3)

Keep up the good work

Yours Friend
Cay Ray

Galang, September 25th 1985

Dear Mr PAGE:

I just got your letter dated 4 SEP yesterday.

Thank you very much for your kind and permanent help.

I'm still working for WORLD RELIEF Vocational Education Program in Galang while attending the CULTURAL ORIENTATION Course from 11:30 a.m to 1:00 p.m. every day, except Saturday and Sunday, and Holidays too! (just one hour and half a day).

Started on August 20, 1985 at Processing Center Galang Site II, the course is a 12 week-course and we will graduate on November 20, 1985 and as I told you, if no further change and everything will be going all right, I do hope to leave for US at the end of November 1985.

I'm lightly suffering from Hypertension while I am here (I never got it before) and according to ICM doctors (ICM = Intergovernmental Committee for Migration), I don't have to worry about that, due to my age 55 and I don't have to take medicine. Miss CHERRY (an American Nurse), a very nice and pretty girl, will check my blood pressure once a month, until my departure.

Thanks a lot for your writing to ODP in order to ask for issuing a new LOI to my wife as Principal and my unmarried children. Please inform me as soon as possible you get it.

Unfortunately, 2 months ago, I didn't receive any letter from Vietnam, so I'm very anxious to hear from my family. Dear Mr Page, and according to your recent letter, I don't know how my wife and my children can overcome so many hard circumstances in Vietnam. However, I hope everything will be better in the future. IN GOD WE TRUST! Because, after a long darkness, brightness will come and replace it. Please believe me. Communism is always a bad darkness and the Vietnamese people is looking for a nice brightness, that means they are seeking

19 Oct 85

Dear Tho:

I hope this finds you in good health. I wrote Glor last week and told him that I had asked my friends in Vn to contact his wife & see how his family is

getting along. Letters I am receiving from Vn indicate that the people are being treated rougher & rougher and they appear to be losing faith. I am inclosing a copy of a letter I rec'd. 16 Oct 85. The envelope had a false return address and the letter, as you can see, is unsigned.

The letter is from Ton Van Minh a Maj in ARVN. He was in charge of the Artillery Shop at the Vietnamese Army Arsenal (VAA) Go Vap where I was stationed.

I am also sending a copy of document - Current Policy No 747 which I just received. I am also sending a copy of current Policy No 694 (a little old) which I found when going through some papers.

Sometime ago I received a article in French dealing with the Church of Vietnam from 1925 to 1985. I sent it to my friend in the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to translate. I just it back (19 Oct) with a note that it will give them excellent background data on several cases they are working on. On P. 2 it mentions the Lasallians? Who were they? Do you have any data on them. I intend to include excerpts from this article in a future SMA News letter. Too long to include

The complete article.

Did I tell you Luu Hoang AN had a new
address 840 S. Dickerson St. Apt 514
Arlington, Va 22204

Have you had a chance to read the article
about the Vietnamese Org. in France. I would like
a short paragraph on the Org.

I worked in my garden Sat. pulling up tomato
vines, stakes etc and spading up the area where
they were. I still have some beets & carrots in my garden
and about 15' to clean-up. We are supposed to get
rain (Mon & Tues) today so I am writing letters. The
rest of the week is supposed to be sunny & in the 60's.

Keep up the good work. Do you have
any info from VN.

Tom Friend
EZ Page

HOUSES - RICE - FOODS - ADDRESS - STREET -
MARKET - - - CONTINUE TO CHANGE)

FROM 1975 TO 1985 THEY CHANGE THE VIETNAMESE
MONEY THREE TIMES ALREADY. THE LOW PEOPLE
CONTINUES TO ACCEPT THE TROUBLE AND
PEOPLE LIKE US MUST SUPPORT THE CRITICAL
SITUATION (SURVEY - VENGEANCE) I WAS CROSS
EXAMINED EVERY BIG AND CELEBRATED FESTIVAL
MY CHILDREN CAN NOT GO TO UNIVERSITY EVEN
MY NEXT GENERATION

I LIVE IN VIETNAM NOW I'M SURE I DO NOT
KNOW HOW IS MY NEXT DAY AND HOW ARE
MY LOCATION MY LIFE AND MY DESTINY.
PLEASE YOU UNDERSTAND ME AS I TOLD YOU

A LONGTIME I STOPPED WORK MY ERRANT
SHOE SHOP BEFORE 1979, I LIVE NOW WITH
MY 7 CHILDREN AND HOME WORK IS MY
PROFESSION. SO EVERY TIME I RECEIVE
YOUR LETTER AND THE NEW INFORMATIONS
OF MY DEAR FRIENDS FROM DIFFERENT
FOREIGN COUNTRY I'M VERY INTERESTING
- ABOUT ODP GOING TO FRANCE AND USA STAND BY
AND KEEP QUIET TO ISSUE EXIT PERMIT FROM
APRIL 1985 TO NOW. THEY DO NOT SAY WHY AND
WHEN THEY WILL BEGIN. I LET YOU KNOW
SOME MORE INFORMATIONS ABOUT IT

PLEASE REPLY GOOD LUCK. THEY HOPE
THEY CHANGE MONEY THE SOCIETY BECOME GOOD BUT IT IS
DIFFERENT AND NOT RIGHT. IT LOOKS LIKE BARBEY

THE LOW PEOPLE BECOME POOR MEN AND WE LIVE WITHOUT THE FUTURE

HỒ - CHI-MINH CITY 05-9-85

DEAR FRIEND

THREE MONTHS AGO I DID NOT RECEIVE YOUR LETTER I HOPE YOU ARE IN GOOD HEALTH NOW. I WISH YOUR BIRTH DAY (SEPT. - 29 - 1912) THE BEST LUCK AT ANYTIME. SUE AND MAC O.K. TOO. I KEPT PRAYING EVERY NIGHT AND I HOPE WE ARE LIVING IN FAVOR OF GOD.

EVERY MONTH I WROTE AT LEAST ONE LETTER DID YOU RECEIVE THEM. I THINK MY LETTERS GOT LOST SOME WHERE. HOW IS YOUR GARDEN EVERYTHING IS GOOD.

SO FAR I DID NOT HEAR FROM TOAN AND MY DEAR FRIENDS WORKING SIDE BY SIDE WITH US IN V.A.A. (TIET - BINH - NHON)

TIET = TIRE SHOP

BINH = ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

NHON = PRODUCTION CONTROL

DO THEY RUN AWAY?

THREE MONTHS AGO I DID SEE SAM AND DUYEN TOO. I THINK THEY HAVE THE TROUBLE ABOUT ECONOMIC LIFE

AS YOU KNOW IN SAIGON NOW THE COST OF LIFE INCREASES DAY AFTER DAY. AND EVERYTHING CONTINUES TO CHANGE. WE DO NOT HAVE ELECTRIC 6 DAYS A WEEK
4 DAYS AT DAYTIME
2 DAYS AT NIGHT TIME

Managing the Department of State



United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Following is an address by Ronald I. Spiers, Under Secretary for Management, at a Face-to-Face dinner discussion co-sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the American Foreign Service Association, Washington, D.C., September 26, 1985.

"Managing the Department of State" is the topic I have been asked to speak to. Outside critics and inside cynics have told me this is an oxymoron—a contradiction in terms. The Department of State, almost by definition, is unmanageable.

Management Tradition and Challenges

My experience has been that the management tradition at State is, indeed, a weak one. For example, I do not remember a single instance in the more than two decades I have been an on-and-off participant in the Secretary of State's morning staff meetings when issues of resource allocation, personnel policy, budgets, security—the big issues of management—were considered worthy of discussion, however much time was spent on relatively ephemeral "policy" matters.

That is, up to the present incumbent. Mr. Shultz' legacy as Secretary may well be that issues of management are accorded the attention they deserve.

Why this weak tradition? I have pondered this question and conclude that there are several contributing factors.

- The Foreign Service culture has confused management with "housekeeping" and relegated it to second place. The Department and the Foreign Service have not seen themselves as managers of programs, people, and resources. Brilliance in political or economic analysis or negotiating skill have been the most prized values.

- Most of our Secretaries of State have been recruited from the academic or legal communities, in which people tend to work alone or with a small group of colleagues. Lawyers and academics are not apt to think in management terms.

- The Foreign Service is a bottom-up system like the military. New ideas and perspectives diffuse slowly, and old traditions and values last a long time.

We now have at the top of the State Department a Secretary and a Deputy Secretary with substantial experience in dealing with management of large organizations. I believe a quiet revolution is taking place. I hope it will have a lasting impact on many institutional attitudes in the Department.

Let's turn our attention to five or six of the issues which I believe represent the greatest management challenge to the Department of State in the period ahead. Among these are the Department of State's resource base; the relevance of its personnel system and structure to its likely future responsibilities; security and dealing with terrorism; reconciling political pressures with the requirements of maintaining a career service; and the problem of controlling the size of the American official presence abroad.

Before launching into a discussion of these various management issues, I would like to redefine, as a starting point, what the principal purposes are of the Department of State and the Foreign Service of the United States. They are, I think, fivefold:

- To manage the wide range of day-to-day relations between the United States and 140-odd other sovereign entities, both bilaterally and through multilateral organs ranging from NATO to the United Nations;

- To collect the information and perform the analysis necessary to recommend, to decide on, and to carry out the foreign policy of the United States;

- To provide legally mandated consular and citizen-protective services;

- To influence the environment in which the United States acts in ways favorable to the attainment of U.S. policy objectives; and, finally,

- To mobilize, plan, and allocate the resources—essentially money and people—for the most efficient performance of these functions.

It is the last of these on which those of us concerned with management must focus. Managers, of course, must have an intimate familiarity with the policy context in which their responsibilities are exercised. The dichotomy between "administration" and "policy" must disappear. At top management levels they must meld, and our personnel policies and procedures must produce an effective melding.

Back to our management challenges: I will say a few words about each of these in turn and, perhaps, stimulate questions and comments for our discussion.

Resources

The first issue I mentioned was resources. It is my firm conviction that the State Department has paid a heavy price for prolonged inattention to management. Our resource base, judged in the light of our responsibilities, has become so attenuated as to raise questions about our ability to do our job.

I have served both as head of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs and of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research and have had an opportunity to compare the resources available to the Department of State to those of our sister national security agencies in the defense and intelligence communities. Without denigrating the contributions the latter make to our national security, I contend that the Department of State is truly the preeminent national security arm of the United States.

Diplomacy is on the front lines 24 hours a day serving the principal ends of our foreign policy: promoting human liberty and freedom of political choice, economic and social development, the rule of law, diplomatic resolution of international disputes, and constructive, peaceful change. War begins when diplomacy fails. We are not simply in the business of deterrence or contingency planning or collection of information; yet, the Department of State, primarily as a consequence of its own delinquency, has operated on a relative shoestring. The Department of State's operating budget—approximately \$1.8 billion—is .8% of what we spend on defense and a very small fraction of what we spend on intelligence. And yet, U.S. Foreign Service reporting is the principal source of the information on which our foreign affairs policy must be based.

Over the years the Department has been content to do more and more with less and less. We have cannibalized our political and economic officer positions to meet growing consular and administrative demands. Little by little, functions have been removed from the State Department because we could not perform them adequately, in good part because we did not believe the problem of resources was a significant one for us. In fact, today there are fewer American Foreign Service personnel worldwide than there are Department of Defense school teachers in the European theater alone.

In short, the resources the United States allocates to our intelligence and defense capabilities have not been duplicated in the case of our foreign affairs capabilities.

This is a problem that has much concerned the Secretary of State and our senior managers. We recognize that it is perhaps the worst time in history to attempt to turn this situation around, but turn it we must. We face great demands in information handling and communications modernization. We need to continue to rebuild our depleted reporting and analysis capabilities. We need to be able to provide a responsible level of security for our missions overseas. We need to devote more time and attention to training, taking a cue from our military colleagues.

The Department of State is a relatively small institution. It does not need to be a big one. Our personnel worldwide total fewer than 24,000—about one-twentieth the size of IBM. These 24,000 run a worldwide communications system; staff 262 posts, from charforce to chief of mission; manage one of the world's largest real estate operations; and serve as the President's and Secretary of State's substantive foreign affairs cadre. The annual cost of this enterprise is roughly what Secretary

Weinberger wrote off when he canceled Division Air Defense—a single weapons system.

The Department needs a far more aggressive approach than it has taken in the past in identifying and going after the resources it needs to do its job. Last week the Secretary of State approved for transmission to OMB [Office of Management and Budget] 1986 and 1987 budget proposals that involve a substantial increase. Much of this is attributable to our security requirements, which I will speak to later, but there are also large sums for some of the other needs I have mentioned. We will now begin our struggle for approval of these requests.

Personnel System and Structure

After resources, our primary concern is personnel. Our main focus now is principally on the 9,500 American members of the Foreign Service—particularly the 4,100-member generalist corps which staffs the principal consular, political, economic, administrative, and managerial posts at home and abroad. What will our requirements be 5 years from now, and how do we adjust today's policies in order to meet them?

The Foreign Service does not have much of a constituency, although in recent years the security threat has done much to diminish the striped-pants image. Lately, we have had something of a raking over from Evan Galbraith, a former ambassador whose recently publicized criticisms are very much at variance with the views of most of the noncareer appointees I have talked to over the years.

The Foreign Service has been the target of many critics, some of whom are former members of its ranks: that it is beyond the control of or out of synchrony with its political masters; that the sense of discipline of a career Service has been lost; that it is inward-looking, inbred, and preoccupied with its own internal institutional interests; that it no longer attracts a high quality of entrants; that it is unrepresentative; that it is top heavy; and, depending on whom you listen to, that it is either too liberal or too conservative.

There is truth in some of these contentions. I will talk about a few of them. A number of proposals have been made from the outside for reform. Most of them have been designed to reduce the self-governing features of the Service: its peer evaluation and promotion system, for example. A proposal that any Foreign Service officer serving as a presidential appointee should resign from the Service has been advanced.

The function of a Foreign Service officer is something like that of a lawyer. He uses his skills, his substantive knowledge, and his familiarity with pro-

cedures in the service of the client's interests and objectives. He may not see these objectives as beyond doubt or question. I have many times argued in favor of a case I would not have supported had I been the ultimate policy authority. I am not conscious of having done so more consistently in one administration than another. I can say without hesitation, however, that I have never tried to undercut a policy I did not fully agree with once it was decided upon, just as I have never hesitated to give my view unequivocally during deliberations leading up to these policy decisions. I believe that this is almost universally true of my colleagues. Moreover, I can tell you I would rather have a skilled, professional, legal counsel represent me than an amateur who has emotional commitment to my case but little background in the law.

There is an irony in all this for members of the Service. I remember, during the Kennedy transition, a conversation with a friend high in Democratic councils who dismissed the Foreign Service as untrustworthy, ultraconservative, hopelessly tainted by years of working for Republicans. A similar conversation with a similarly placed Nixon official some few years later gave me a sense of *deja vu*; he saw us all as eastern liberal appeasers who had to be kept at arm's length.

There probably exists what the French call a professional deformation in the Foreign Service. Our principal stock-in-trade is not to provoke conflicts but to resolve them—or, if they can't be resolved, to contain them. There is also a problem we are all familiar with—that new arrivals don't like to be told there is background or experience or complexity they are not aware of in dealing with foreign affairs problems. We may have been insufficiently sensitive to this factor. Usually, however, the pattern is that trust grows as administrations gain experience.

Interestingly—and I am neither a Republican nor a Democrat—I have found less of this instinctive distrust on the part of this President and his advisers than any previous administration I can remember. This may be a function of this President's open and secure personality; criticisms are leveled more by self-styled Reaganites than by responsible members of the Administration themselves.

The Foreign Service has its problems. It is, in my view, top heavy. We are moving to correct a situation in which we have too many jobs classified at senior levels and, paradoxically, too many senior officers to match up with the jobs which are there. Promotions will continue to be slow, limited-career extensions granted sparingly as we weed out the less competitive and bring supply and demand into defensible

balance. The size of the 650-person Senior Foreign Service generalist cadre will probably be cut 15%-20% in the next few years.

The problem of representativeness is a serious one. Substantial progress has been made in recent years. The percentage of women has increased from 8% to 20%, minorities from 4% to 12% in recent years. However, there are still only 23 women and 9 blacks in the Senior Foreign Service. There are only five black career officers serving as ambassadors and, currently, no female career ambassadors. There are only two female and one black career ministers out of the 46 in this senior rank. There is not now a single black serving as DCM [deputy chief of mission] and only three women.

Because we had 17,000 examination takers last year competing for perhaps an ultimate 250 new entries, the Department has not seen the need for an aggressive, targeted recruitment effort of the kind probably needed to rectify this situation. This, too, we are going to work on, but this, too, requires enhanced resources. Because we have a bottom entry, "up or out" system, it will take some time for results to be felt at senior levels, but unless we continue to make a determined attempt, it will not happen. A Foreign Service which does not mirror the composition of our citizenry, I believe, cannot, over the long run, be an acceptable institution.

Some of the other problems we are working on, with Secretary Shultz' particularly strong support, are to rebuild our badly eroded reporting and analysis capabilities and to improve our executive development procedures.

Both of these problems are serious. If the Foreign Service continued in the direction it was headed, it could become a consular and security corps providing administrative support to the other agencies whose staffs already comprise about 70% of the more than 15,000 Americans at our missions abroad.

Our central mission is to assist in the formulation and execution of foreign policy, not just to administer ourselves. As our resources have been constrained and our workload increased, we have had to eat into our core capabilities. Particularly, we have cut junior positions so that economic- and political-cone entrants have often been unable to get assignments in their field before they are judged for tenure.

In the past 4 years, we have added over 350 positions to rebuild our reporting and analysis capability. The Secretary of State has been particularly effective in defending and resisting cuts in this area, and our aim is to add another 200 political and economic positions over the next 2 years.

Executive development has faced many cultural barriers in the Foreign

Service, where the political officer has generally occupied the catbird seat. What we need most at the top are managers who can handle resources and people, rather than simply higher level political counselors. Our administrative and consular officers usually have had more managerial experience than our political and economic officers but have not had equal opportunities for high-level appointments. We are trying to devise incentives which will encourage cross-conal experience, experience in dealing with Congress, the military, and intelligence communities, and with what is called "public diplomacy." We want to ensure that those promoted to the Senior Foreign Service have proven track records as managers. That is why we are paying more systematic attention to assignments of DCMs and principal officers and to limiting the "old boy" network's operations. I think that, except for a limited number of functional and geographic specialists, members of the Senior Foreign Service should lose their conal identification.

Secretary Shultz has also endorsed the view that the Department devotes too few resources to training. He has been one of the strongest supporters of a strengthened FSI [Foreign Service Institute] and, especially, the development of a new training campus at Arlington Hall to replace the seedy collection of rabbit warrens we occupy in Rosslyn. Also, we are now getting some of the Foreign Service's most talented senior officers into the management area. Ten years ago this could not have happened.

I will finish with a few thoughts about three other subjects: security and counterterrorism, the respective roles of career and noncareer appointees, and the problem of the size of our overseas presence. Interest in all of these has intensified recently for various reasons.

Security and Counterterrorism

Traditionally, the Foreign Service has given little thought to security. Its concern was with accessibility and openness. The assassination of 5 ambassadors and scores of others of our colleagues has changed all that, as has the recognition that what we now call "terrorism"—deliberate use of violence to intimidate—is probably going to be with us for a long time.

Terrorism—like other forms of warfare—is politics pursued by other means, usually by people or groups who do not have state machinery at their disposal. Terrorism is a reflection of unresolved political grievances, from Northern Ireland to the Palestinian problem. The Shi'a revolution has brought new grievances to the surface. When and if these problems find solutions, terrorism will subside.

In the meantime, we have a practical problem of protecting our employees and Americans generally. This need clashes with the culture of openness. There is no such thing as 100% safety from threats, and the Foreign Service will continue to be a risky occupation. This, however, is not an excuse for inaction.

We in the Department have seen our major challenge as twofold: to raise the security consciousness of our colleagues (i.e., to change the culture, because constant vigilance will always be the best safeguard) and to mobilize the resources needed to provide a prudent level of protection for our missions and personnel abroad. Beyond that, the arsenal of instruments to fight terrorism is the same as in other forms of warfare: deterrence, defense, intelligence information, mobilizing alliances, pre-emption, and even retaliation.

I believe we are measurably improving our ability to cope with terrorism. The Secretary of State took the lead in consciousness-raising when he instituted daily meetings on security with his senior staff and made clear to all ambassadors the personal nature of their responsibility for security.

We have had broad support in the Congress. Last year we sought and received a supplemental appropriation of more than \$300 million to begin to improve our physical security at home and abroad. The Secretary convened the Inman Panel to get a fresh and objective assessment of the nature and dimension of the problem. Pursuant to the panel's recommendations, we have drawn up a 5-year program which would involve the expenditure of over \$5 billion and the building of 61 new Embassies to meet minimum security standards at high-threat posts. The Department is establishing a Bureau and an Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security. We are taking on the responsibilities which are ours under the Vienna convention for the protection of foreign diplomats in the United States. Our intelligence is improving as it has been focused on the terrorist threat. In recent months, we have thwarted or preempted over 80 possible terrorist incidents as a result. I believe that with a major effort we will get the resources we need to provide the level of protection that we owe our people overseas. However, I reiterate that there is no such thing as 100% security, and it is quite possible that other tragic incidents lie ahead.

Roles of Career and Noncareer Appointees

One of the difficult structural problems we have to deal with is the constant uncertainty about how many and what jobs at the top will go to noncareer appointees. The Foreign Service has gen-

erally promoted and trained its personnel on the prudent assumption that we must be ready to staff all positions. Indeed, only one chief of mission job—the United Kingdom—has never been held by a career officer.

Whenever a post shifts from career to noncareer status and is not balanced by a countershift, it has a sevenfold "cascade" effect on promotion, assignment, and recruitment, unless, as in the past, we ignore the effect and promote anyway. This has been a factor in the "senior surplus"—a demoralizing phenomenon for those consigned to "makework" or overcomplement status after reaching the prime of their careers in terms of their potential for contribution. We have been able to reduce this problem of "corridor walkers" substantially. The most recent count was 30 officers in this category, and this is probably the irreducible minimum for health or compassionate reasons or because an officer is awaiting nomination and confirmation for a presidential appointment. Two years ago, however, there were 120.

The nadir of chief-of-mission appointments for the career Service came with Kennedy, the zenith under Carter. Since January 1981, the balance has shifted and a net of 18 presidential appointment-level positions have moved from career to noncareer. In January 1981, the ratio of career to noncareer ambassadors was 72%-25% [3% vacant]. Today it is 61%-35% [4% vacant].

The citizen-statesman tradition in the United States has been a source of strength throughout our history. Yet I feel that too many of our ambassadors have been appointed for reasons having little to do with their ability to meet the demands of the position. There are magnificent exceptions. I have served under three noncareer ambassadors myself, including the legendary David Bruce—and all of them were superb. Yet people of this quality are, unfortunately, in the minority. For every Arthur Burns or Mike Mansfield, there

are many who have no particular qualifications. The contention that these are better able to represent the President's policy is unpersuasive to me. Few of them have either direct access to the White House or strong foreign affairs backgrounds.

I hope it will be possible to pay more careful attention to the quality and qualifications of all appointments—career and noncareer alike—and that we can settle on a steadier ratio that will permit more coherent career planning in the Foreign Service. We need to ensure career opportunities at the top which will attract and motivate the best in our ranks. This cannot take place if there is a perception that at the end of the road lies a series of overcomplement positions.

Limiting American Official Presence Abroad

Finally, I believe we need more attention to the issue of the number of our personnel abroad. I mentioned earlier that 70% of the staffing of our posts is from agencies other than the Department of State. Since the beginning of this Administration, the State Department composition of our missions abroad has increased 4%, and this has been largely due to the need to provide administrative support to the personnel of other agencies, which have increased 15%. With the increasingly hostile security environment and the high cost of protection, we need to find a mechanism for judging the value and contribution made by these personnel. Since the procedures called "MODE" [Monitoring Overseas Direct Employment]—under which the Department of State performed a monitoring and controlling function for a number of years over the level of our personnel abroad—were abandoned in 1982, the United States has not had a satisfactory mechanism for keeping control over numbers. Notionally, this responsibility is in the hands of ambassadors. However, an am-

bassador is often not in a position to judge the pros and cons of enhanced staffing, particularly when regional responsibilities are cited as the rationale for increases. I do not have an answer for this problem, but I believe it is an inherent responsibility of the Secretary of State to determine what is a sensible level of our presence at diplomatic missions abroad. I do not believe that this can be left up to the judgment of individual agency heads.

Conclusion

This review exhausts both speaker and audience, but it does not exhaust the management agenda at Foggy Bottom. Every day we encounter new issues to cope with: there is the question of developing and gaining understanding of the need for a coherent information handling strategy for the years ahead. Information is the lifeblood of foreign affairs and there is an accelerating revolution in information handling. There is the much discussed but very difficult problem of spouse compensation and employment. In a few years, 70% of American married couples will be two-income families, and what are the implications for a Foreign Service as we have known it? There is the perennial problem of harmonizing discipline and equity in our assignment, promotion, and evaluation procedures. There is the problem of planning and implementing professional development and training, including language training programs to span whole careers in a service which has been resistant to taking time out for training. These issues, however, will have to be left for later discussion. ■

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Secretary Shultz

The Meaning of Vietnam



United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.



State Department photo by Robert Kaiser

Following is an address by Secretary Shultz at the Department of State, Washington, D.C., April 25, 1985.

Just a few hundred yards from here stands the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Its stark beauty is a reminder of the searing experience our country went through in its longest war. From a window of my office I can see the crowds of people—veterans, families, old and young—coming to search for names on the black granite slabs, or to search their souls in meditation. It is more than a memorial; it is a living human tribute taking place day after day. This is not surprising. That war left its mark on all the American people.

There are three dozen names that do not appear on that memorial. Instead, they are here in this diplomatic entrance, on our own roll of honor. Many civilians served in Southeast Asia—from the State Department, AID [Agency for International Development], USIA [United States Information Agency], and other agencies. Many of you here today were among them. While the war raged,

you were trying to build peace—working for land reform, for public health and economic progress, for constitutional development, for public information, for a negotiated end to the war. I am here to pay tribute to you.

The 10th anniversary of the fall of Indochina is an occasion for all of us, as a nation, to reflect on the meaning of that experience. As the fierce emotions of that time subside, perhaps our country has a better chance now of assessing the war and its impact. This is not merely a historical exercise. Our understanding of the past affects our conduct in the present, and thus, in part, determines our future.

Let me discuss what has happened in Southeast Asia, and the world, since 1975; what light those postwar events shed on the war itself; and what relevance all this has to our foreign policy today.

Indochina Since 1975

The first point—and it stands out for all to see—is that the communist subjection of Indochina has fulfilled the worst predictions of the time. The bloodshed and misery that communist rule wrought in South Vietnam, and in Cambodia and Laos, add yet another grim chapter to the catalog of agony of the 20th century.

Since 1975, over 1 million refugees have fled South Vietnam to escape the new tyranny. In 1978, Hanoi decided to encourage the flight of refugees by boat. At its height in the spring of 1979, the exodus of these “boat people” reached over 40,000 a month. Tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands never made it to safety and today lie beneath the South China Sea. Others managed to survive pirate attacks and other hardships at sea in their journey to freedom. We have welcomed more than 730,000 Indochinese refugees to our shores. The

work of people in this Department has saved countless lives. Your dedication to the refugees of Indochina marks one of the shining moments of the Foreign Service.

In addition to “boat people,” Hanoi has given the world its own version of the “reeducation camp.” When the North Vietnamese Army conquered the south, it rounded up officials and supporters of the South Vietnamese Government, as well as other suspected opponents. Many were executed or disappeared forever. Hundreds of thousands were sent to these camps, suffering hard labor, indoctrination, and violent mistreatment. To this day, upward of 10,000 remain imprisoned. They include Buddhist and Christian clergy and intellectuals, as well as former political figures. According to refugee reports, they face indeterminate sentences, receive food rations below subsistence levels, are denied basic medical care, and are punished severely for even minor infractions of camp rules—punishment often resulting in permanent injury or death.

Hanoi has asserted for years that it will let these prisoners go if only we would take them all. Last fall, President Reagan offered to bring all genuine political prisoners to freedom in the United States. Now, Hanoi no longer adheres to its original proposal.

Another communist practice has been to relocate people in so-called new economic zones. In the years after the fall of Saigon, hundreds of thousands were uprooted and forced into these isolated and barren rural areas to expand agricultural production and reduce “unproductive” urban populations. Many have fled the zones, returning to the cities to live in hiding, without the ration or neighborhood registration cards needed to get food or jobs. Indeed, no one in Vietnam may change residence or place of work without permission, and

unauthorized absences open whole families to arrest.

The 24 million people of South Vietnam are now victims of a totalitarian state, before which they stand naked without the protection of a single human right. As Winston Churchill said of another communist state, they have been "frozen in an indefinite winter of subhuman doctrine and superhuman tyranny."

Compare conditions in Vietnam under 10 years of communist rule with conditions in the South Vietnam we fought to defend. The South Vietnamese Government accepted the principles of free elections, freedom of speech, of the press, and of association. From 1967 to 1971 the South Vietnamese people voted in nine elections; opposition parties played a major role in the assembly. Before 1975 there were 27 daily newspapers, some 200 journals of opinion and scholarship, 3 television and 2 dozen radio stations, all operating in relative freedom.

No, South Vietnam was not a Jeffersonian democracy with full civil liberties by American standards. But there was a vigorous, pluralist political process, and the government intruded little into the private lives of the people. They enjoyed religious freedom and ethnic tolerance, and there were few restrictions on cultural or intellectual life. The transgressions of the Thieu government pale into insignificance next to the systematic, ideologically impelled despotism of the regime that replaced it.

The neutralist government in neighboring Laos was swiftly taken over in 1975 by local communists loyal to Hanoi. As in Vietnam, thousands of former officials were sent to "reeducation camps." Fifty thousand Vietnamese troops remain in Laos to ensure the "irreversibility" of communist control—in Hanoi's version of the Brezhnev doctrine—and thousands of Vietnamese advisers are in place to monitor Laos' own "socialist transformation."

Hmong villagers in Laos who resisted communist control were suppressed by a military juggernaut that relied on chemical weapons produced and supplied by the Soviet Union in violation of international treaties. Six decades of international restraints on chemical warfare have been dangerously eroding in recent years, and "yellow rain" in Indochina was the first major breach—yellow rain, another addition to our vocabulary from post-1975 Indochina.

Finally, in Cambodia, the worst horror of all: the genocide of at least 1 million Cambodians by the Khmer Rouge, who also took power 10 years ago this month. The Khmer Rouge emptied the cities and murdered the educated; they set out to destroy tradi-

tional Cambodian society and to construct a wholly new and "pure" society on the ruins of the old. A French Jesuit who witnessed the early phases of communist rule called it "a perfect example of the application of an ideology pushed to the furthest limit of its internal logic." We say at least 1 million dead. Maybe it was 2 million. The suffering and misery represented by such numbers are beyond our ability to comprehend. Our imaginations are confined by the limits of the civilized life we know.

In December 1978, Vietnam went to war with its erstwhile partners and overthrew the Khmer Rouge regime. Naturally, some Cambodians at first welcomed the Vietnamese as liberators. But as the Vietnamese invaders came to apply in Cambodia the techniques of repression known all too well to the people of Vietnam, resistance in Cambodia grew.

In 1979, Cambodia was ravaged by widespread famine that killed tens, if not hundreds, of thousands. Vietnam bears much responsibility for this famine. Its invasion prevented the planting of the 1979 rice crop; its army adopted scorched-earth tactics in pursuing the retreating Khmer Rouge. Many will recall how the Vietnamese obstructed international relief programs and refused to cooperate with the efforts of the Red Cross and others to establish a "land bridge" of trucks to bring relief into the country from Thailand.

Today, Cambodia is ruled by a puppet regime stiffened by a cadre of hundreds of former Khmer Rouge; it is headed by Heng Samrin, a former Khmer Rouge himself. The Vietnamese shell refugee camps along the Thai border in their attempt to smash the resistance.

Hanoi's leaders are thus extending their rule to the full boundaries of the former colonial domain, seeking dominion over all of Indochina. Not only do the Vietnamese threaten Thailand—the Soviets, with naval and air bases at Cam Ranh Bay, are now better able to project their power in the Pacific, Southeast Asian, and Indian Ocean regions and to threaten vital Western lines of communication in all these regions. Cam Ranh is now the center of the largest concentration of Soviet naval units outside the U.S.S.R.

Retrospective: The Moral Issue

What does all this mean? Events since 1975 shed light on the past: this horror was precisely what we were trying to prevent. The President has called our effort a noble cause, and he was right. Whatever mistakes in how the war was fought, whatever one's view of the strategic rationale for our intervention,

the *morality* of our effort must now be clear. Those Americans who served, or who grieve for their loved ones lost or missing, can hold their heads high: our sacrifice was in the service of noble ideals—to save innocent people from brutal tyranny. Ellsworth Bunker used to say: no one who dies for freedom ever dies in vain.

We owe all our Vietnam veterans a special debt. They fought with courage and skill under more difficult conditions than Americans in any war before them. They fought with a vague and uncertain mission against a tenacious enemy. They fought knowing that part of the nation opposed their efforts. They suffered abuse when they came home. But like their fathers before them, they fought for what Americans have always fought for: freedom, human dignity, and justice. They are heroes. They honored their country, and we should show them our gratitude.

And when we speak of honor and gratitude, we speak again of our prisoners of war—and of the nearly 2,500 men who remain missing. We will not rest until we have received the fullest possible accounting of the fate of these heroes.

Retrospective: The Strategic Price

We left Indochina in 1975, but the cost of failure was high. The price was paid, in the first instance, by the more than 30 million people we left behind to fall under communist rule. But America, and the world, paid a price.

Our domestic divisions weakened us. The war consumed precious defense resources, and the assault on defense spending at home compounded the cost; years of crucial defense investment were lost, while the Soviets continued the steady military buildup they launched after the Cuban missile crisis. These wasted years are what necessitated our recent defense buildup to restore the global balance.

For a time, the United States retreated into introspection, self-doubt, and hesitancy. Some Americans tended to think that *American* power was the source of the world's problems, and that the key to peace was to limit *our* actions in the world. So we imposed all sorts of restrictions on ourselves. Vietnam—and Watergate—left a legacy of congressional restrictions on presidential flexibility, now embedded in our legislation. Not only the War Powers Resolution but a host of constraints on foreign aid, arms exports, intelligence activities, and other aspects of policy—these weakened the ability of the President to act and to conduct foreign policy, and they weakened our country. Thus we pulled back from global leadership.

Our retreat created a vacuum that was exploited by our adversaries. The Soviets concluded that the global "correlation of forces" was shifting in their favor. They took advantage of our inhibitions and projected their power to unprecedented lengths: intervening in Angola, in Ethiopia, in South Yemen, and in Afghanistan. The Iranian hostage crisis deepened our humiliation.

American weakness turned out to be the most *destabilizing* factor on the global scene. The folly of isolationism was again revealed. Once again it was demonstrated—the hard way—that American engagement, American strength, and American leadership are indispensable to peace. A strong America makes the world a safer place.

Where We Are Today

Today, there are some more positive trends. In Asia, the contrast between communist Indochina and the rest of the region is striking. Indochina is an economic wreck; the countries of ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] are advancing economically. In 1982, their per capita income averaged \$770; Vietnam's was \$160. ASEAN is a model of regional cooperation. It is now our fifth largest trading partner. In the past 5 years, total U.S. trade with East Asia and the Pacific surpassed our trade with any other region of the world. Our relations with Japan remain excellent and our ties with China are expanding. The regional picture is clouded by the growing Soviet military presence and by Vietnam's continuing aggression. But a sense of community among the Pacific nations is growing. A decade after the war, America is restoring its position in Asia.

At home, the United States is recovering its economic and military strength. We have overcome the economic crisis of the 1970s and once again are enjoying economic growth with stable prices. We are rebuilding our defenses. We have regained the confidence and optimism about the future that have always been the real basis for our national strength. We see a new patriotism, a new pride in our country.

A lot of rethinking is going on about the Vietnam war—a lot of healthy rethinking. Many who bitterly opposed it have a more sober assessment now of the price that was paid for failure. Many who supported it have a more sober understanding now of the responsibilities that rest on our nation's leaders when they call on Americans to make such a sacrifice. We know that we must be prudent in our commitments. We know that we must be honest with ourselves about the costs that our exertions will exact. And we should have learned that we must maintain the ability to engage with, and support, those

striving for freedom, so that options *other* than American military involvement remain open.

The Relevance of the Vietnam Experience

That experience has many other lessons. We acted under many illusions during the Vietnam period, which events since 1975 should have dispelled. We have no excuse for falling prey to the same illusions again.

During the Vietnam war, we heard an endless and shifting sequence of apologies for the communists: that they were "nationalists"; that they were an indigenous anticolonial movement; that they were engaged in a civil war that the outside world should not meddle in. As these arguments were proved hollow, the apologies changed. We heard that a communist victory would not have harmful consequences, either in their countries or the surrounding region. We were told that the communists' ambitions would be satisfied, that their behavior would become moderate. As these assertions became less convincing, the apologies turned to attack those who fought to be free of communism: our friends were denounced as corrupt and dictatorial, unworthy of our support. Their smallest misdeeds were magnified and condemned.

Then we heard the theme that we should not seek "military solutions;" that such conflicts were the product of deep-seated economic and social factors. The answer, they said, was not security assistance but aid to develop the economy and raise living standards. But how do you address economic and social needs when communist guerrillas—as in Vietnam then and in Central America now—are waging war *against* the economy in order to maximize hardship? Our economic aid then, as now, is massive; but development must be built on the base of security. And what are the chances for diplomatic solutions if—as we saw after the 1973 Paris agreement—we fail to maintain the balance of strength on which successful negotiation depends? Escapism about the realities of power and security—that is a pretty good definition of isolationism.

And finally, of course, the critics turned their attack on America. America can do no right, they said. Now, criticism of policy is natural and commonplace in a democracy. But we should bear this past experience in mind in our contemporary debates. The litany of apology for communists, and condemnation for America and our friends, is beginning again. Can we afford to be naive again about the consequences when we pull back, about the special ruthlessness of communist rule? Do the American people really accept the notion

that *we*, and our friends, are the representatives of evil?

The American people believe in their country and in its role as a force for good. They want to see an effective foreign policy that blocks aggression and advances the cause of freedom and democracy. They are tired of setbacks, especially those that result from restraints we impose on ourselves.

Vietnam and Central America

Vietnam and Central America—I want to tackle this analogy head-on.

Our goals in Central America *are* like those we had in Vietnam: democracy, economic progress, and security against aggression. In Central America, our policy of nurturing the forces of democracy with economic and military aid and social reform has been working—without American combat troops. And by virtue of simple geography, there can be no conceivable doubt that Central America is vital to our own security.

With the recent legislative and municipal elections, El Salvador has now held four free elections in the past 3 years. When the new assembly takes office shortly, El Salvador will have completed an extraordinary exercise in democracy—drafting a new constitution and electing a new government, all in the midst of a guerrilla war. The state of human rights is greatly improved, the rule of law is strengthened, and the performance of the armed forces markedly better. Americans can be proud of the progress of democracy in El Salvador and in Central America as a whole.

The key exception is Nicaragua. Just as the Vietnamese communists used progressive and nationalist slogans to conceal their intentions, the Nicaraguan communists employ slogans of social reform, nationalism, and democracy to obscure their totalitarian goals. The 1960 platform of the communists in South Vietnam promised:

Freedom of expression, press, assembly, and association, travel, religion, and other democratic liberties will be promulgated. Religious, political, and patriotic organizations will be permitted freedom of activity regardless of belief and tendencies. There will be a general amnesty for all political detainees [and] the concentration camps dissolved . . . [I]llegal arrests, illegal imprisonment, torture, and corporal punishment shall be forbidden.

These promises were repeated time after time. We find similar promises in the letter the Nicaraguan revolutionary junta sent to the Organization of American States in July 1979. The junta, which included the communist leader Daniel Ortega, declared its "firm intention to establish full observance of human rights" and to "call . . . free elec-

tions." The Nicaraguan communists made the same commitment when they agreed to the Contadora Document of Objectives in September 1983, and when they said they accepted the Contadora draft treaty of September 1984.

What the communists, in fact, have tried to do since they took power in Nicaragua is the opposite: to suppress or drive out noncommunist democratic political forces; to install an apparatus of state control down to the neighborhood level; to build a huge war machine; to repress the Roman Catholic Church; to persecute Indians and other ethnic groups, including forcible relocations of population; and to welcome thousands of Cuban, Soviet, East European, PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization], and Libyan military and civilian personnel. They have formed links with PLO, Iranian, and Libyan terrorists, and are testing their skills as drug traffickers. Like the Vietnamese communists, they have become a threat to their neighbors.

Broken promises; communist dictatorship; refugees; widened Soviet influence, this time near our very borders—here is your parallel between Vietnam and Central America.

Brave Nicaraguans—perhaps up to 15,000—are fighting to recover the promise of the 1979 revolution from the communists who betrayed it. They deserve our support. They are struggling to prevent the consolidation and expansion of communist power on our doorstep and to save the people of Nicaragua from the fate of the people of

Cuba, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Those who assure us that these dire consequences are *not* in prospect are some of those who assured us of the same in Indochina before 1975.

Particularly today, what can we as a country say to a young Nicaraguan: "Learn to live with oppression; only those of us who already have freedom deserve to pass it on to our children"? What can we say to those Salvadorans who stood so bravely in line to vote: "We may give you some aid for self-defense, but we will also give a free hand from a privileged sanctuary to the communists in Nicaragua to undermine your new democratic institutions"?

The critical issue today is whether the Nicaraguan communists will take up in good faith the call of the church and of the democratic opposition for a cease-fire and national dialogue. This is what President Reagan called for on April 4. What does it tell us about the Nicaraguan regime that it refuses dialogue combined with a cease-fire? What does it tell us about who is prolonging the killing? About who is the enemy of democracy? What does it tell us about the prospects for peace in Central America if the democratic forces are abandoned?

The ordeal of Indochina in the past decade—as well as the oppressions endured by the people of Cuba and every other country where communists have seized power—should teach us something. The experience of Iran since the fall of the Shah is also instructive. Do we want another Cuba in this hemisphere? How many times must we learn the same lesson, and what is America's responsibility?

America's Responsibility

Today, we remember a setback, but the noble cause of defending freedom is still our cause. Our friends and allies still rely on us. Our responsibility remains.

America's Armed Forces are still the bulwark of peace and security for the free world. America's diplomats are still on the front line of efforts to reduce arsenals, settle conflicts, and push back the danger of war.

The larger lesson of the past decade is that when America lost faith in itself, world stability suffered and freedom lost ground. This must never happen again. We carry the banner of liberty, democracy, the dignity of the individual, tolerance, the rule of law. Throughout our history, including the period of Vietnam, we have been the champion of freedom, a haven of opportunity, and a beacon of hope to oppressed peoples everywhere.

Let us be true to the hopes invested in us. Let us live up to our ideals and be their strong and faithful champion around the world. ■

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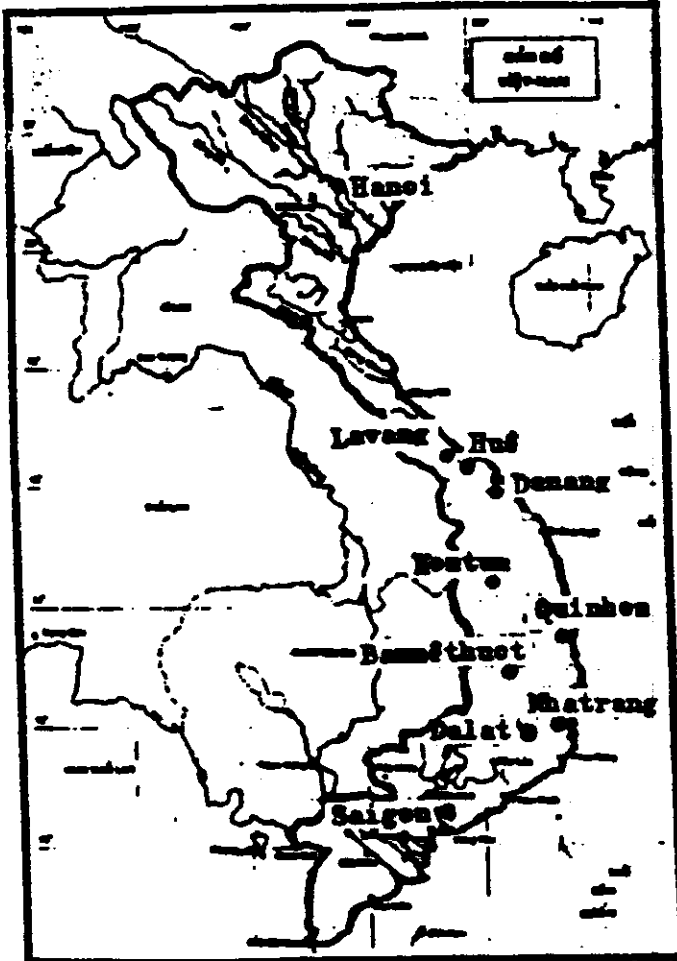
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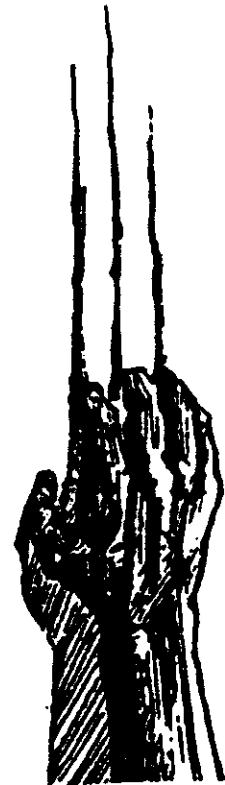
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THE CHURCH OF VIETNAM

FROM 1975 TO 1985



LN 830-85

pastoral and caritative mission, in favor specially of the Northern refugees and the war victims. With John XXIII and specially with Paul VI, it took part in all the peace initiatives. But above all, it intended to pursue its spiritual mission, no matter what the political regimes were. In several "Collective Pastoral Letters"¹ (Lettres Pastorales Collectives), it proclaimed its refusal to give its allegiance to a party or regime, even if it was Catholic. It encouraged the Christians to be faithful to their country, to respect public authority and to seek their country's interest.

In 1964, following the advices of Msgr. PALMAS, an apostolic delegate, the "Council on Religions" (Conseil des Religions) was created. Except for the "Reunified Buddhism" (Bouddhisme Réunifié) tendency, all the religions of South Vietnam decided to be unified, in order to work towards the reconciliation and harmony between religions. Together, they will strongly undertake the fight against the corruption that existed in particular after the fall of NGO-DINH-DIEM.

During this period characterized by troubles, with regimes being overthrown in the South and with the war against the North, a lot of people asked themselves whether it was possible to find a compromise solution with the National Liberation Front (NLF) which will later become the PRG². Some wanted a neutralist solution, without any clue on how or what would be the outcome. Others, finally, who constituted an active minority formed by the progressive elements of the Young Christian Working Class (the JOC, La Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne), the civilians, the priests³ and the progressist buddhists who sought direct negotiations with the North Vietnamese Communists.

But did the Northern Communists, of which the NLF is only a product, give to the word PEACE the same meaning that their fellow citizens of the South give to it? In 1966, Msgr. HIEN who was bishop of Dalat conveyed his fears:

¹ 'Collective Pastoral Letter' (Lettre Pastorale Collective) (Rome, November 7, 1963)

² 'Pastoral Letter For Lent' (Lettre Pastorale à l'occasion de carême) (January 22, 64)

³ PRG: Provisional Revolutionary Government, it was to rule South Viet Nam since the downfall of the Southern regime up to July 2, 1976, date of the reunification of the 2 Vietnams.

³ According to their own account, 9 priests out of 1,500 which are found in the 15 (rest of the sentence has been cut off).

"We want to have the liberty to chose our future, we do not want to come under the yoke of the Communists. Peace under servitude would constitute a betrayal of our hopes".

The future will prove him right!

II.- THE SOUTH DOWNFALL. THE PRG AND THE FIRST ANTI-RELIGIOUS MEASURES.

Immediately after the fall of Saigon (April 30, 1975), the PRG of the Republic of South Vietnam ruled South Vietnam officially until the official declaration of the country's Reunification, on July 2, 1976.

It declared the freedom of religion, and called for the cooperation between the monks and the priests for the reconstruction and edification of the country. However, texts that warned against the active members of the Church were already available:

"If suspicious schemes are intercepted, particularly when they consist of searching for a secret place in order to devote oneself to scandalmongering and anti-communist propaganda, the Revolutionary Government will not tolerate them and will react accordingly".

The monks and priests had, of course, the possibility to organize religious services, study centers and reunions but had the DUTY to ASK FOR AN AUTHORIZATION from the Government, and to give specifications on the program, place and object of the reunion. It was also required of them "not to devote too much time to religious services", so as not to harm production but to perform instead their civilian duties.

These measures, as we know, were applied in North Vietnam as of 1954! In turn, South Vietnam entered the Socialist era which required a radical transformation of its society. The report of Mr. LE DUAN, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Workers Party, on June 25, 1976, does not leave any doubt:

"Patriotism and Socialism are closely linked: the nation and Communism are only one. The South must undertake the Socialist transformation and the Socialist edification, which will concentrate on FORMING THE NEW SOCIALIST MAN... who will contribute to the execution of the PLAN and the edification of the great Socialist production... He will be a good patriot and will be driven by the proletarian internationalist spirit..."

"The new man enjoys the collective freedom of the working people, but only through the Socialist State, ruled by the avant-garde Party of the working class, can this right be enjoyed... This crucial right is the DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. Our State is thus a proletarian dictatorship State."

This is a major text which explains the attitude of the new regime towards the Church of Vietnam.

According to the texts, the freedom of religion will be repeatedly proclaimed, the monks will be given authorization to continue their work IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONS, within sectors such as education⁴, health and hygiene.

This actually meant that before classes started in September 1975, all the teachers and monks had to undergo political training sessions. All the programs and manuals were changed.

The Catholic chaplains of the South Vietnamese army, which numbered 70 (300 according to other sources), the chaplains of other denominations (Protestants, Buddhists, Caodaists, Hoa-hao, etc.) were invited to go to rehabilitation centers (concentration camps in reality) and to join the 500,000 intellectuals, former civil servants, and former officers of the old regime for a maximum period of six months⁵.

Other measures will follow that will strike mainly against the foreign Missionaries.

On June 5, the Apostolic Delegate, Msgr. HENRI LEMAITRE had to leave Saigon. A departure that was organized by the progressist Catholics who tried to occupy the Apostolic Delegation. The groups signing the letters demanding his departure have all disappeared since, except for the "Catholic Movement for the People" which publishes the weekly "Công-Giáo và Dân-Tộc" (Catholicism and the People).

On August 15, Msgr. NGUYEN VAN THUAN, former bishop of Nhatrang and who was appointed on May 12, 1975, as Coadjutor Archbishop of Saigon, was arrested and kept under house arrest. He was later jailed in a village near Nhatrang, then in Nhatrang itself. Reason for the accusation: having prepared the Christian Communities to live according to their faith under any circumstances.

⁴Since September 1975, the bishops were forced to hand to the state all the private Catholic schools.

⁵Some are still there. Many have died there.

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On August 12, 1975, Msgr. SEITZ, bishop of KONTUM, and the Missionaries of his diocese were expelled (6 Fathers from the Paris Foreign Missions and 3 French nuns) having been accused of being imperialist agents.

Before June 1976, the Provincial Committees asked successively the foreign priests and monks from the DALAT, BANMETHUOT, HUE, and DANANG dioceses and from the Central Coast provinces to return to their respective country.

On November 19, 1976, the last foreign Missionaries had left the Vietnamese ground.

On the whole, the attitude of the new regime towards the Church seemed to be benevolent enough. A benevolence which was probably due to the attitude of the South Vietnamese Episcopate -- distinct as such from the North Vietnamese Church attitude -- which invited the Catholics to participate loyally to the reconstruction of the country, and to follow the authorities' orders in terms of politics and economics.

Several meetings will take place at a high level, in 1975, between the political and religious authorities.

On June 18, meetings between the PRG representatives and the South Vietnam Church officials took place during the BIG Seminar of HO CHI MINH CITY.

On December 15, Mr. NGUYEN HO, vice-president of the Ho Chi Minh City Front, delivered a long speech in front of 21 bishops and coadjutors, with the exception of Msgr. THUAN who was arrested earlier, on August 15. The tone rested on benevolence and good understanding: policies concerning religious freedom remained unchanged.

On Christmas 1975, "Letter addressed to the Catholic Compatriots of the South Region" by MR. NGUYEN HUU THO, president of the National Assembly.

Finally, on December 31, Mr. PHAM VAN DONG, prime minister, received Msgr. TRINH NHO DHUE, bishop of HANOI, who was accompanied by three other bishops.

III. - THE VINH SON AFFAIR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

On February 12 1976, according to official informations, rebellious groups took up refuge in the VINH SON Church (Saint-Vincent in Ho Chi Minh City), with the help of the parish priest, Father NGUYEN VAN MINH and counter-revolutionaries, equipped with receiving sets and Offset printers for the printing pamphlets and fake bank notes.

The progressist weekly "Công-Giáo và Dân-Tộc", organized the campaign. Important delegations came to examine the scene and exhibits.

On February 17, Msgr. NGUYEN VAN BINH, Bishop of Saigon, condemned the counter-revolutionaries and invited insistently the Catholics to work toward the reconstruction of the country with patriotism and courage.

The PRG and the progressist catholics papers used this story to remind the anti-communist attitude of the Catholic Episcopate for thirty years, before the fall of Saigon.⁶

Priests, monks, nuns and catechists were arrested here and there in all the provinces, as imperialist agents fomenting division and opposing themselves to the Socialist Revolution, under the name of religion. The "Popular Revolutionary Committees" arrested more than two hundred priests, often for no real motives. This kind of religious pogrom had a real objective which was not avowed: to impress the Catholics, and in particular the Northern refugees' parishes which are numerous in the greater Saigon area.

The trial of the VINH SON case, to which all the medias devoted maximum attention, lasted four days (September 13-16, 1976) and ended with three death sentences -- including that of the parish priest VINH SON --, three sentences to perpetual reclusion and six sentences to twenty years of jail.

The persecution era was thus reopened?

⁶The "Common Letter of the Bishops of Indochina" (1951) which reiterates the Condemnation of the Atheist Communism by Pope Pius XI as "intrinsically perverse".

IV. - THE POLITICAL AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE AND THE PRAXIS

Notwithstanding this special case and the humiliations that followed, the Episcopate wanted to play loyally the politics of the Vietnamization of the Church.

On November 22, 1975, Msgr. NGUYEN VAN BINH, Archbishop of Saigon, urged the Catholics insistently in his "Pastoral Letter" to live their faith within the country new situation.

In the Spring of 1976, he encouraged priests and monks to participate to the large amount of work, in particular in the "New Economy Areas" and in the "Socialist Working Fields".

Before the reunification of the country (July 2, 1976), the clergies of the different religions were asked to take part in study sessions and seminars which were organized on their behalf by the authorities. It would be tedious to name all the subjects that were tackled and required, each time, studies, examinations, examinations of conscience, criticisms and self-criticisms. Let us mention-some of the themes:

- The life and merits of President Ho Chi Minh.
- New situations, new duties.
- Relationships of the Church with the people. Etc...

These political study sessions aimed at transforming the Church and, in the first place, its pastors and leaders, into obedient servants of the State according to the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

But on another level, the language and the conduct of the new regime were very ambiguous.

On August 31, 1976, Prime Minister PHAM VAN DONG, received the first Vietnamese Cardinal Msgr. TRINH NHU KHUYE, Archbishop of HANOI, and his coadjutor Msgr. TRINH VAN CAN, both recently back from Rome.

On September 1st, he received Msgr. NGUYEN KIM DIEN, Archbishop of HUE, appointed in 1964, who strongly encouraged his congregation to collaborate with the new regime.

On September 22, he received Msgr. NGUYEN VAN BINH, Archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City. They talked about the Gospel and Religious Freedom. But they avoided talking about the sensitive problems related to the revolutionary ideology which is incompatible with Faith that refutes class struggle. This, because he regime was still ambiguous about the POLITICAL DISCOURSE (the

language of tolerance) and the daily PRACTICE of an underhand repression vis-à-vis the communities of all denominations. Because the official and legislative discourse was different from the PRAXIS.

This ambiguity will entirely disappear when the DOCUMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY which, on the one hand, analyzed the position of the Church of Vietnam, and on the other adopted an implacable strategy for repressing the Church and changing it into an obedient instrument of the ideology.

V - A TEXT WITHOUT AMBIGUITY AGAINST THE CHURCH

This document of the Communist Party titled "Our duty towards the Catholic Church" written between September 2, 1978, and September 2, 1979, time of its publication, was explicit in its analysis.

According to the text, the Vatican tried to have contacts with the socialist countries in order to protect the Church in the countries where it existed. Since April 30, 1975, the main leaning of the priests and bishops was toward collaboration through obedience to the state laws, in an effort to avoid conflicts and to stay in contact with the power and the Party organs. But the anti-communist nature of the Church had not fundamentally changed. It deceitfully encouraged dialogue, collaboration, the country's edification and the establishment of a new common life where religion would continue to survive.

The Revolution had to answer to these new tactics of the Church by a struggle on the ideological and organizational level, in order to control increasingly the faithful masses.

The Party members are given a general objective which is the transformation of the Church into a religion that would be at the State service and a patriotic Church which would be close to the Nation and to Socialism. In order to get to these objectives, everything must be tried to reform its doctrine, its organization, its legislation, its ceremonies towards socialist progres.⁷

⁷Text published, in extenso, in "Echanges France-Asie" File N° 72, February 1982.

VI. - THE END OF AMBIGUITIES

Soon the relations between the State and the Church were not ambiguous anymore as to the political discourse on the Constitution and the regime. The noose will increasingly tightened against the Church, and in particular against the clergy.

In 1977, a Curriculum Vitae (Lý-Lịch) was requested from every Seminary candidate, from every Seminarist. The sons of civil servants, merchants or officers of the old regime will not be allowed to join the Seminary. This was an upsetting measure that would stop the recruiting and the training of the clergy at its root. This affected all the seminarists of the country. (Saigon, Hué, Đà-Nang, Dalat, Long-Xuyên).

Another upsetting measure in order to watch all the citizens: the HỒ KHAU, a rationing Card that would link every person to a certain area of residence, like the serf to its land as it was the case in Europe, in the past. This was an essential Card in order to stock up in the State shops (private commerce being forbidden), and gave the authorization to switch from one residence to the other which would be always justified by a new job and an investigation from the authorities. This measure will prevent the seminarists from starting or continuing their training in a seminary.

On April 19, a letter attributed to Msgr. NGUYEN KIM DIEN, Archbishop of HUE, declared: "There is no religious freedom... There is discrimination vis-à-vis the Catholics since the Liberation."

On April 22, 1977, a second letter attributed to the same archbishop declared point blank that the orders of some officers are in contradiction with the official politics. The letter mentions a specific example: on April 10, 1977, the Catholics of the TRI BUU hamlet were not given authorization to help with the Easter Mass in spite of the repeated requests. It ends with these words:

"The history of the Church shows clearly that, in spite of the difficulties, the Christian faith is still transmitted even though, and especially because, there is destitution. Religion cannot be annihilated. Religion cannot be forbidden since it is part of the spirit and of the soul".

The same year, the authorities of Ho Chi Minh City prohibited the Buddhist public festivities that commemorated Buddha's anniversary.

Nonetheless, at the Synod of the Bishops in Rome, Msgr. NGUYEN VAN BINH reiterated that the Church of Vietnam pledged to continue its collaboration, recognizing however that this policy of collaboration required that the Christians be trained to avoid being impregnated and seduced by the Marxist ideology: "We are Vietnamese who are living on Vietnamese land. For several years already, we are called 'Catholic Vietnamese' and even 'Vietnamese Catholics' to emphasize the fact that we are Catholic, but above all Vietnamese... In all the large State factories and in all the fields, the Catholics are everywhere and positively so... Thanks to the evolution of the Catholics, which is more noticeable, we have succeeded in bridging part of the division gap and in erasing most of the prejudices".⁸

But the implacable strategy of the Party was to increasingly deny these freedoms.

On March 16, 1979, the decree on the reorganization of the seminaries was published: a curriculum vitae (résumé) was required from the seminary teachers and from their students, half of the day was to be dedicated to classes and the other half, to craft work, four hours of political classes every week...

In 1977 already, the measures affecting the movement of people hampered the recruiting and the training of the seminarists and novices. In 1978, the HUE Seminary started to experience the first direct intervention of the authorities, the police investigations and the pressure exercised by the Popular Committees. Result: among the 18 seminarists who were detained, 15 will be detained permanently.

These upsetting measures were applied to all the seminaries which would be obliged to close their doors one after the other.

VII. - THE FIRST EPISCOPALIAN CONFERENCE OF VIETNAM

Took place from April 24 to March 1st, 1980, in Saigon. 35 Bishops among 40 were present to represent the 25 Dioceses of the country (10 in the North and 15 in the South). The absence of two was noticed: Msgr. NGUYEN VAN THUAN, Auxiliary Bishop of Ho Chi Minh City (jailed) and Msgr. NGUYEN NGOC CHI, isolated in his bishopric in DANANG.

⁸Documentation Catholique (Catholic Documentation), June 1st, 1978, N° 1754.

In its pastoral letter, the Episcopalian Conference reminded the Catholics, the priests and the laymen about the importance of the Church among the Vietnamese people, not forgetting about the nature of the Church mission. With this respect, it the Church pledged to show solidarity as to the homeland destiny, to carry on the traditions of its people, and to be part of the present life of the country (See: Documt. Cathol., N° 1802).

The second Episcopalian Conference will take place on March 11, 1983.

On September 1980, thirteen bishops were able to go to Rome for an 'ad limina' visit, and three nuns from the Providence were allowed to visit their General Chapter in PARIS.

But the Socialist Republic of Vietnam switched back and forth and did not play a fair game as it will later be proven.

On November 6, a trial was held against 7 priests and two monks. Motive put forward: interference with the State security. Two death sentences, two jailed for life. The others, from four to twenty years in jail.

On December 2, 6 Jesuits from the ALEXANDRE DE RHODES Center, in DAC LO (Ho Chi Minh City) were arrested. The Center was closed and the monks were jailed. The Head of the Jesuits of Vietnam, Father NGUYEN CONG DOAN, was in turn arrested in January 1981. They were tried (6 priests and one Father) and condemned on June 29 and 30 and the sentences ranged from 5 to 15 years in jail.

On December 13, 1980, the large HUE Seminary was requisitioned. The Archbishop, Msgr. DIEN, protested strongly. No result.

In September 1981, the Seminary of HANOI reopened its doors for the start of the 1981-82 new academic year. Sixty candidates for the entire territory of North Vietnam applied instantly. The authorities arrested only four of them (two from Hanoi and two from Haiphong). To draw a comparison, the Seminary of Saigon received 50 seminarists from 1976 to 1981. There were only six ordinations during these 5 years in the entire diocese!

VIII. - THE LA VANG PILGRIMAGE AND THE 2ND EPISCOPALIAN CONFERENCE

On August 15, 1981, in spite of an official prohibition and police roadblocks on the highways, more than 10,000 Catholics coming from different parts of the country went on the LA VANG pilgrimage, site where the Virgin had appeared, in the QUANG TRI province, during the great persecutions of the 19th Century. The Archbishop of HUE performed the celebrations with 40 priests. The authorities did not try to react, faced with the crowds of people.

The next year, on the same day, the same pilgrimage was organized despite the warnings and the prohibitions. Three months later, on November 20, 1982, its leader, Father NGUYEN VAN LY, parish priest of DOC-SO, was arrested and jailed during seven months before being tried in front of the people's court.

On January 17, 1983, he was condemned to relinquish his title of priest, to leave his parish and to retire to his native village. Father LY protested and refused to surrender to the authorities which were investigating his cure. The people, Christians and non-Christians alike took to his defense. The authorities retreated.

On April 9, 10 and 11, 1983, the parish priest listed, with the help of a loud-speaker, the interferences with the freedom of religion and raised against what he called the persecutions. On May 18, two hundred security agents arrested Father LY, amidst general confusion, and sent him to an unknown place in detention.

From May 6 to 11, 1983, the second Episcopalian Conference took place in Saigon. Only 29 Bishops among 40 attended. Some were sick. Others were isolated in their Bishopric or jailed by the authorities and could not attend. The Bishops who were present noted that the Church was not paid in return, despite its loyalty to the regime: the training of seminarists was interrupted and hampered; priests, monks and laymen were arrested and religious freedom and the freedom of expression was restricted all over the territory.

Like the first Conference (April 24-May 1st, 1980), it reaffirmed its faithfulness to the Gospel and to the Vietnamese people and its loyalty towards the State. Better yet, it noted that if the break up with the Western world constituted an OPPORTUNITY which was to be grasped, in order to express the faith of the Church of Vietnam in a way that would comply to the tradition of the country then, the Church would increasingly become the Church of the poor, even if the price to be paid was expensive!

This careful letter conveyed the worries of the Episcopate concerning the future.

IX. - THE PERSECUTION INTENSIFIES

On June 29 and 30, in Ho Chi Minh City, six priests, a Jesuit Brother and six laymen were put on trial. The conclusion of a story that was once again made up and which lasted more than two years after the Alexander de Rhodes Centre had been closed.

On December 13, Father NGUYEN VA LY, the main organizer of the LA VANG pilgrimage, was condemned to ten years in jail.

In February 1984, in CAN THO, in the Mekong Delta, and in other cities, almost all the Sainte Famille Brothers (Brothers of the Holy Family) were arrested; their Congregation was founded in BANAM, CAMBODIA (now known as KAMPUCHEA), at the turn of this century.

But it was the Archbishop of HUE, Msgr. NGUYEN KIM DIEN, who was fiercely attacked by the authorities. On April 5, 1984, a police intervention was set up against him, and the Archbishop was subjected to daily interrogations that were held in the morning and in the afternoon in the headquarters of the Central Intelligence of HUE. This was the result of his straightforward and non-ambiguous stands on the next Congress of the Catholic Patriots in HANOI, in the name of the freedom and of the independence of the Church.

Afraid to see this Committee transformed into a patriotic Church, as in China in 1951, and to have the authorities turn it into an instrument for the Control of the Catholic Church, the Archbishop, on October 19, 1983, warned the Christians against the attempt to separate the Church from Rome. In an open letter to the acting President of the Committee, Father NGUYEN THE VINH, he reminded him that such an initiative belonged to the Episcopalian Conference. Consequently, he asked him to drop his project.

Other Bishops had also forbidden their congregations and their clergy to participate to the next Congress of Catholic Patriots but they did not do it as forcefully. This is why the civilian authorities decided to strike him and to isolate the other Bishops and congregations from his diocese.

Apparently, it was the conjunction between the LA VANG pilgrimage episodes and the open letter against the planning of the next Congress that led the local authorities and the Central Intelligence of HUE to increase the pressure against Msgr. DIEN.

Interrogations were first held against his coadjutor. At the same time, in DANANG, Msgr. PHAM NGOC CHI, who was old and sick, was subjected to the same type of harassments. Without any doubt, these were means of intimidation in order to put pressure on Msgr. DIEN.

After being readied, he was subjected to two successive series of 'work sessions' (interrogation in the communist jargon) at the headquarters of the BINH TRI THIEN province, for about 120 days, and 50 of them were held day and night.

On October 15, 1984, he was released. The Archbishop had remained firm on his positions in the testimony that he was asked to make, firm but courteous. We would give a detailed account in his LETTER TO THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE OF THE HUE DIOCESE, on October 17, Saint Ignatius of Antioch (Saint Ignace d'Antioche) day.

On September 24, 1984, Father VUONG DINH BICH, president of the Patriotic Church Movement, submitted to the Western press, in Paris, the reply of his Movement to Msgr. DIEN.⁹

X. -THE CATHOLIC PATRIOTS UNION COMMITTEE OF VIETNAM

On November 10, 1984, in HANOI, a new Catholic organization was proclaimed, at the invitation of the Patriotic Front of Vietnam and at the conclusion of the congress that reunited 299 delegates of the Patriotic Church, and was called CATHOLIC PATRIOTS UNION COMMITTEE whose members were chosen without the approval of the Bishops and without the vote of consent from the laymen.

Significant fact. At the time of the Congress opening, only two Bishops were present. One, for purely deferential motives, since he was the Coadjutor bishop of HANOI, the other because he had already adhered to the Congress ideas.

On November 14, Msgr. DIEN struck with "suspensis a divinis", Father NGUYEN VAN BINH, the only priest in his diocese to take part in it, despite the interdiction of his Bishop.

⁹Father VUONG DINH BICH is chief editor of the only Catholic newspaper in South Vietnam: 'CONG GIAO VA DAN TOC' (Catholicism and the People), and the most politically committed one: member of the popular Council of the 1st district and founder of the CATHOLIC PATRIOT UNION COMMITTEE OF VIETNAM which will see the light on November 10, 1984.

The authorities did not appreciate his attitude as he asserted during his interrogations that "when the laws of this world are in opposition to the law of God and of the Church, we should obey the word of God rather than that of men, as it was the case in the past for the Apostles and all the martyrs of every generation." (Letter of October 17, 1984).

It was feared that the existence of the new Catholic Patriots Union Committee would mean that the civilian authorities in 1984 would want to keep only one type of priest in the Church of Vietnam, one who would be subservient to the political and civilian authorities, who would have good relations with them and who would move more freely than his Colleagues, organizing his religious and pastoral activities without any difficulties.

But for the hierarchic Church, which is faithful to Rome, and, consequently, always suspected, watched, and harassed, what are the freedoms that are left in 1985, ten years after the seizure of the Church by the State? The seminaries have all been closed. No ordination can be done without the approval of the power. The priests and monks are constantly controlled and cannot move without authorization.¹⁰

When the laymen reveal their Catholic identity, they are subjected to the same surveillance and to the same harassments. The Seminary masses are eliminated. The same is true for the LA VANG pilgrimage to the Virgin. All the religious and caritative associations have been abolished. Some priests have had serious problems for having refused to integrate to their homilies an exhortation to military mobilization. In Ho Chi Minh City, a priest was put in jail for having asked his congregation to pray for the atheists.

Faced with a patriotic clergy that pledges allegiance to the regime, the authentic Church is no more able to make itself heard. It senses the dangers of such a situation. For ten years now, it has been very hard for the Church to see itself constantly accused, suspected, rejected and left on the fringe of national life, even though it has wished to comply to the destiny of the Vietnamese people. There have been attempts to reduce it to silence. From now on, its congregation could run the risk of not hearing the Word of the Church of Vietnam and the Universal Word except through the medias of the Party and the Union Committee. It is

¹⁰ Msgr. NGUYEN VAN BINH, Archbishop of Saigon, made it known that 200 among the 2000 Catholic priests who are in Vietnam are in jail. These priests have allegedly declared that they were not accepting the Communist regime. (MISSI, N° 466 dated August 7, 1984-- pp. 258-259).