

MARK MCGREGOR

4/26/03

Don Thompson

Dear Don,

Several years ago, I read in some publication that Dr. Douglas Pike was heading up an organization called the Indochina Archives at the University of California, Berkeley. I remembered Dr. Pike's name, because we were given copies of his book *Viet Cong* during counterinsurgency School at NAB Coronado. At that time (1970/71), it was the only book written about the VC.. Anyway, I was interested in doing some research about the various programs in Vietnam that came under the heading of Pacification. There wasn't too much being published about anything other than the Phoenix Program, and I knew from having talked to some of the CORDS people in Can Tho and Saigon that there was much more to Pacification than assassinating VC cadre. So, as soon as school was out for the summer, my wife and I hooked up the trailer, and drove from Fallbrook to Berkeley. We dropped the trailer at the Family Camp at NAS Alameda, and went in search of this reputed repository of VN information. I didn't have a clue as to where this Indochina Archive might be, but I (naively) thought that the main campus of UC, Berkeley was a good place to start. Wrong! Good old UC, Berkeley hadn't changed much at all since I used to be stationed at NAS Alameda in 1967, and I was told in no uncertain terms that Berkeley wasn't connected with anything having to do with the war, except to protest it!

I was finally able to get an address and a phone number, and finally found Dr. Pike's hide-out in a warehouse in (I believe) northwest Oakland. While my wife took off to go shopping, I ventured inside, and on the second floor, was greeted by the archivist, Steven Denney. I explained what I was interested in, and he said that I was welcome to look around, but that most of the stuff was uncatalogued. While I was browsing around, Mr. Denney came back to tell me that Dr. Pike wanted to have a chat with me. We talked for about 45 minutes, and it was one of those times that I wished I had a tape recorder. You can access Dr. Pike's bio at http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/vietnamcenter/general/douglas_pike.htm, but suffice to say that it was a most enjoyable and enlightening conversation. I got enough information from that conversation to have written a book, or as Dr. Pike said, "Sounds like a good idea for a doctoral thesis."

After our chat, he told me to make myself at home as I browsed through the archives. He had an incredible amount of stuff collected, mostly print material, and mostly his own personal collection. It was hard to tear myself away at the end of the day. Dr. Pike and Mr. Denny let me use a copier, at no charge, and I carried away several hundred pages of information, as well as several pages of longhand notes. I also got my name on their mailing list, and for several years afterward received a newsletter called the *Indochina Chronology*, essentially an annotated bibliography of virtually everything published about Southeast Asia, with Dr. Pike's personal (and many times humorous) comments about most of the publications.

Around 1997, Dr. Pike moved his collection to the Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. Apparently, the University of California cut off funding for his position at Berkeley, and he was offered a similar position at Texas Tech. Shortly after the move, I found myself in receipt of the Friends of the Vietnam Center newsletter, which I am enclosing. I continued to enjoy the *Indochina Chronology* up until the time Dr. Pike suffered a stroke around 2001, when it ceased to be published.

Anyway, the point of this relatively long diatribe is that, although I still haven't written a book or a doctoral thesis, I am interested in the historical aspects of "our" war, and I don't recall having seen anything about the Vietnam Center in the *Wolfgram*. So, I wondered if any of the Seawolves would be interested in finding out about it. They (the Center) are always looking for people to participate in their oral history of the Vietnam War project, as well as being a legitimate repository for VN memorabilia. Perhaps we could publicize this info for interested 'Wolves.

Sincerely,



Mark McGregor
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