Mr. FRASER. Where did you live while the Assembly was in session?

Mr. HOAN. They put us into a hotel in Hanoi.

Mr. FRASER. How did you get back and forth to Hanoi?

Mr. HOAN. Once I used the airway but the other time just by car.

Mr. FRASER. Did the party in your district regard you as friendly or sympathetic to their beliefs at the time they chose you to be a candidate?

Mr. HOAN. I cannot know their true feeling but I feel that they trusted me; that is why they selected me.

Mr. FRASER. Did they know you were a critic of President Thieu?

Mr. HOAN. They knew it, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Now how were you able to support yourself during that year?

Mr. HOAN. Well, I went back to teaching and was teaching at a high school.

Mr. FRASER. Where?

Mr. HOAN. The name of the high school is Taberd in the Province of Tuy Hoa.

Mr. FRASER. Where is that province located in relation to Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. Tuy Hoa is the capital of the province of Phu Khanh. It is not a province, just the capital of the province of Phu Khanh and it is the same province.

Mr. FRASER. That you represented?

Mr. HOAN. Yes.

Mr. FRASER. Did you have an opportunity to travel around the country apart from your trips to Hanoi and your teaching job in Tuy Hoa?

Mr. HOAN. During my trip to Hanoi they organized some visit for me in the countryside and I had another meeting with the Cultural and Education Committee in Saigon.

Mr. FRASER. In Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. In Saigon.

Mr. FRASER. At the time that you ran for election—which was what, about 9 months after the fall of Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. About 1 year because Saigon fell on April 30, 1975, and I ran for election on April 25, 1976.

Mr. FRASER. At the time you ran for the assembly, were you satisfied with what you knew about what the Hanoi government was doing?

Mr. HOAN. I was not satisfied, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Why did you run for office then?

Mr. HOAN. According to the election law now enforced in Vietnam, you do not choose to run or not to run, it is the party who nominates you; and if you refuse to run, you will be considered a reactionary because it is considered a favor for you to run.

Mr. FRASER. So you didn't ask the party for support?

Mr. HOAN. I didn't know anything about it.

Mr. FRASER. Until they announced that they were supporting you?

Mr. HOAN. They just invited me down to the office they called the Front and informed me that I was selected by the party to run for office, that is all.

Mr. FRASER. When did you decide that the situation was so bad in the country that you wanted to leave?

Mr. HOAN. It was after the convention of the Communist Party in December 1976.

Mr. FRASER. What happened there that influenced your decision?

Mr. HOAN. That decision didn't come promptly; it was the result of doings by the regime. The deciding factor that made me leave the country was that I was aware of the plan of the Communists in their 5-year plan.

Mr. FRASER. What was there in the 5-year plan that you felt strongly about?

Mr. HOAN. At that time I realized that their main policy was for the impoverishment of everybody so that they can use a Communist leverage on the people and try to dominate their thinking.

Mr. FRASER. Were you required to go to indoctrination sessions sponsored by the party while you were a member of the Hanoi Assembly?

Mr. HOAN. It is considered obligatory. Nobody can refuse to attend those sessions so I did attend those sessions.

Mr. FRASER. How often did they take place?

Mr. HOAN. In July of 1975, I attended a session of 10 days, but afterward there were very frequent sessions not only in the political field but in my field which is the educational field.

Mr. FRASER. During the year that you served in the Hanoi Assembly, did anyone that you know or that you were a personal friend of get picked up and sent to a reeducation camp for statements that that person might have made?

Mr. HOAN. The occurrence in my Province, as in other Provinces, is so frequent that it has become a natural thing to happen, and no one can mention them all.

Mr. FRASER. It happened very frequently?

Mr. HOAN. Very frequently. I would like to cite an example, like in a bus trip. If some passenger in the bus says something about the government—it need not be a criticism, just some kind of joke about the new government—and there happened to be a security officer in the bus, he would arrest him immediately.

Another case in point is that I have a very close friend named Nguyen Minh. He belonged to a family which can be considered as very sympathetic to the cause of the Communists because many of his relatives went to the North during the period of regroupment in 1954.

I recall that at that time there was the Geneva agreement, and some of the people who worked for the Front went to the North. Mr. Nguyen has many relatives that went to the North so he can be considered as belonging to a family that is very close to the Communists, but he received a letter from abroad. He was careful enough to bring that letter down to the committee, to report it to the committee that he received a letter from abroad, but he was nonethless arrested and sent to an indoctrination camp.

Mr. FRASER. You indicated that while you were in the North you heard news about MIA's, the Americans missing in action.

Mr. HOAN. That is correct, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Gilman would like to ask you some questions about any information you have on that.

Mr. Gilman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hoan, while you were in Vietnam, did you ever come into contact with any American servicemen who were in jail or who were in prison?

Mr. HOAN. I did not have any kind of direct contact with any American.

Mr. GILMAN. At any time did you receive any information concerning any of our servicemen who were in prison or who were listed as missing in action?

Mr. HOAN. I have some information about it; I heard some rumor about it.

Mr. GILMAN. What is that information that you heard?

Mr. HOAN. I can only say that I heard some rumor and information that there are still Americans living in jail in Vietnam, but I cannot be more specific than that because it was just information and rumor that I heard about.

Mr. GILMAN. From where did you receive this information?

Mr. HOAN. In answer to a similar question in my news conference in Japan, I already stated I would like to bring that question to President Jimmy Carter himself, but since Your Honor asked me the question, I am ready to answer it in a closed session.

Mr. GILMAN. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a request that we have a closed session in order to get that information on the record.

Mr. FRASER. We need a quorum.

Would Mr. Hoan be agreeable to meeting with Mr. Gilman after this session?

Mr. HOAN. I agree completely with that.

Mr. FRASER. We are unable to move into closed session now because that requires a quorum.

Mr. GILMAN. I appreciate that.

Mr. HOAN. I would like in the open session that Your Honor inquire about the human rights violation in Vietnam because it is one of the subjects that I am most eager to talk about.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will look forward to pursuing the question with Mr. Hoan privately following this meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, you said that you had taught in the Catholic school in Saigon. Are the Catholic schools still functioning?

Mr. HOAN. No, sir. The school now is closed. In fact, all private schools now in Vietnam are closed and the buildings are confiscated by the Communists.

Mr. FRASER. That would be true of both the schools that you taught in previously?

Mr. HOAN. Not only those two schools but all private schools in Vietnam have been confiscated, including the university which is a Buddhist university in Saigon.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, has there been any criticism of the Government which has been printed in any newspaper in Vietnam that you are aware of?

Mr. HOAN. I can say that nobody dared to print anything critical of the new government except the fact that there were some articles in the newspaper but it is the line of the party to have some kind of—not real criticism, articles that mostly attack the low-ranking cadres or the rules of the bureaucracy.

Mr. FRASER. You have indicated in your testimony that the four religions of Vietnam—Buddhism, Catholicism, Cao-Dai and Hoa-Hao Buddhism—are under intense persecution. You have already indicated that the private schools were closed. What else is being done to bring these religions under perspective?

Mr. HOAN. I have a document prepared in Vietnamese about the violations of human rights in Vietnam but we did not have the time to translate it into English. However, I can say it right now that beside the four religions that I mentioned, the Protestants in Vietnam also are persecuted and all the pastors are considered CIA agents.

Mr. FRASER. That is sort of the party line?

Mr. HOAN. Especially Protestantism is considered as American and close to the CIA. The line of the party is to consider all kinds of religion as an enemy of the people. That is why they go all out against any kind of religion.

Mr. FRASER. There is a vote occurring now on the floor of the House so we will take a brief recess and be right back.

[Whereupon, a short recess was taken.]

Mr. FRASER. The subcommitte will resume its sitting.

Mr. Hoan, in your testimony you stated that the Government of Vietnam has sold I think you said $2 billion worth of arms.

Mr. HOAN. I think the number is correct, sir. Two billion.

Mr. FRASER. Do you know to what other countries those arms have been sold?

Mr. HOAN. The three areas that the press mentioned are Africa, the Middle East, and Taiwan.

Mr. FRASER. In other words, your information is from the press in Vietnam?

Mr. HOAN. This is not a newspaper published in Vietnam but it is published here in the United States.

Mr. FRASER. Is that your source of information?

Mr. TRAN [interpreter]. He apologizes to Your Honor because in the statement that part about the sale of arms was not translated according to his wish and that is why there may be some discrepancy in that part. The news about the selling of arms, he says that he based that statement on the press source and not his personal sources.

Mr. FRASER. What press sources?

Mr. TRAN [interpreter]. He has here a Vietnamese language newspaper published in the United States and he just based it on that.

Mr. FRASER. In other words, prior to leaving Vietnam did you have any knowledge of arms sales?

Mr. HOAN. I didn't have any kind of solid information about it before I left Vietnam.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, you have listed a number of human rights violations in Saigon in your statement. What do you consider to be the most serious of the violations from your point of view?

Mr. HOAN. I think that the most important violation of the human rights in Vietnam is the threat to life itself. Everybody can be killed at anytime, their life can be threatened at anytime.

Mr. FRASER. In your statement in listing the human rights violations, however, I don't recall that you made any statement about people being killed.

Mr. HOAN. As I once mentioned before, that translation of my statement was done in such a hurry because I did not have the time to go back and check it so this is an important omission that I will remedy when I have more time to do it. Specifically in my own province, Phu Khanh province, I know from very good sources that at least 700 people have been killed in the last 2 years.

Just to give you a specific example, one of the persons who has been killed in the last 2 years in my province is Venerable Thich Dieu Bon, a Buddhist monk. He was a deputy representative of the Unified Buddhist Church in my province. He has himself served as an adviser to the National Liberation Front. However, he received a certificate of—let's say that it is just a letter of appreciation of the American consulate in Vietnam because he took part in the search for MIA's. He helped in taking part so he was suspected as being a CIA agent.

Mr. FRASER. So what happened then?

Mr. HOAN. He was killed.

Mr. FRASER. When?

Mr. HOAN. The first day after the takeover by the Communist in March 1975.

Mr. FRASER. You mean when they took over your province?

Mr. HOAN. That is correct, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Are there other persons who you personally know have been killed?

Mr. HOAN. A case in point is the case of Mr. Tran Pho. He is the uncle of one of the representatives who escaped with me—no, he is the uncle of my secretary who escaped together with me and his only mistake was to criticize the Communists because he bears a grudge against the Communist since his own son was killed by the Communists in 1969 so he still was very angry at the Communists and he permitted himself to be, you know, criticizing the Communists and they killed him.

Mr. FRASER. When did that happen?

Mr. HOAN. July 1977. In July 1975.

Mr. FRASER. July of 1975.

Mr. HOAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Of the 700 who were killed, how many were killed immediately after the takeover of your province in March?

Mr. HOAN. Around 500 were killed on the first days of the take over. After the takeover, about 200 in the period since.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, you indicated you are going to speak about the MIA questions with Mr. Gilman personally but prior to the request to speak more about it in closed session with Mr. Gilman you said that the only information you had about MIA's was based on rumors, nothing more concrete.

Mr. HOAN. When I left Vietnam I made the decision to tell everything that happened in Vietnam to the world. However, on the MIA

issue since it is so sensitive I would like to reserve my comment for that closed session. I can affirm that I believe that the source of my information is truthful, that I can bank on it.

Mr. FRASER. Earlier you had referred to rumors, however.

Mr. HOAN. I can state again that those sources are very truthful. I believe they are very truthful, they are solid. With all respect and the gratitude I have vis-a-vis the committee, I would not say anything that I do not believe true.

Mr. FRASER. You indicated that the United States should refrain from giving the Vietnamese Government additional weapons in your statement. Do you recall that?

Mr. TRAN. May I have your question again, Your Honor?

Mr. FRASER. I am referring to the statement on the bottom of page 1, "If the United States and other free world nations will only refrain themselves from giving the Communist government additional weapons."

Mr. HOAN. Once again I must apologize to the chairman for the translation of the statement. It was done in such a hurry that I did not check on it. The only point I wanted to say, I would like, as my people would like, to continue our struggle in Vietnam for the cause of freedom and human rights. That is why I ask the United States to refrain from giving aid to Vietnam and I didn't mention anything about weapons, it is just the question of aid.

Mr. FRASER. Do you think that the United States and Vietnam should exchange ambassadors?

Mr. HOAN. I think that any kind of relationship with Communist Vietnam and the exchange of ambassadors or even the acceptance of Vietnam into the United Nations is contrary to the wish of the people. The majority of the people want to continue the struggle to liberate Vietnam from Communist rule.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Smeeton.

Mr. SMEETON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I gather from press accounts, Mr. Hoan, that you now believe our involvement in Vietnam was justified. What caused you to change your mind?

Mr. HOAN. After 2 years living under the Communist regime, not only me but most of the Vietnamese who are still living there realize how they miss the individual freedom that they enjoyed before, and it is only when you are living under one of the most cruel regimes in the world that you realize the full significance of liberty and individual rights. That is a factor that made me change my mind.

Mr. SMEETON. Of late there seems to be an increasing number of refugees with working class backgrounds, those who presumably would stand to benefit the most from the revolution. How do you explain this? Are they, too, becoming rather disillusioned with the new order?

Mr. HOAN. I am very grateful that you raised that point because it is very true that the Vietnamese people do not like to leave the country. Nobody likes to leave the country but the fact that an increasing number of Vietnamese are fleeing the country today, they cannot live under the Communist rule any more, even the working

people, the class that is supposed to benefit the most from the new regime.

Take my personal case. I am the representative in the new National Assembly of the Communist regime. I am supposed to belong to the privileged class. I have family. However, I had to leave my mother, leave my wife, and my children and flee the country, one of the most difficult decisions. I still leave them because I could no longer live under the Communists.

Mr. SMEETON. Have you communicated with your family since you left?

Mr. HOAN. I could not, sir.

Mr. SMEETON. You have not made the attempt?

Mr. HOAN. I dare not, sir. I know that any attempt to contact them would create more problems and more suffering for them in the country. That is why I refrain from any kind of attempt to contact them.

Mr. SMEETON. Given your long-standing interest in education, I think you mentioned earlier that you taught the physical sciences in South Vietnam, what do you know about the regime's efforts to make the South's educational system conform with that of the North? In this regard we have heard that the Communist authorities burned all textbooks from the pre-April 1975 period and have shipped thousands of textbooks from the North into the South. Is there any substance to these reports?

Mr. HOAN. I can be glad that I know for sure about those things because in my capacity as a member of the Committee on Education and Culture in the new Assembly and in my capacity as a teacher in high school I have been seeing those things happen.

Mr. SMEETON. To what degree, if any, have old ethnic prejudices between northerners and southerners been a factor behind the continued dominance of northerners in reunified Vietnam?

Mr. HOAN. According to Ho Chi Minh's teaching, the regime should create a new kind of people, the people who are a new kind of people according to socialism teaching. That is why the cadre from the North who have been trained and formed for so long in the past are trusted and they take over completely the administration of the party in the South. As for the reaction of the people, it is natural that the people in the South do not like being treated as conquered people.

Mr. SMEETON. Earlier you indicated that you were privy to some of the thinking of the Communist Party hierarchy. In that context, I wonder if you could give us some idea as to what are the prospects of the regime's collectivization efforts in the South ultimately leading to draconian measures similar to those employed in the North during the 1950's when reportedly anywhere from 50,000 to 500,000 people were killed during the "refashioning" of the North's agriculture and economy?

Mr. TRAN [interpreter]. In the fifties?

Mr. SMEETON. Somewhere in the fifties, I think is when the collectivization program occurred in the North.

Mr. HOAN. It is not only through my relationships with leaders in the Communist hierarchy but since I participated in the sessions at the National Assembly I realized that what they called their road to

socialism in fact is a plan to exterminate land owners so that they can do their——

Mr. SMEETON. Exterminate in a physical sense, kill them, or just exterminate their holdings?

Mr. HOAN. It depends on the case. In some cases physical elimination, in some cases arrest and jail. Mostly in my province the people who are considered rich people bear the brunt of the prosecution.

Mr. SMEETON. I think shortly after you fled Vietnam and arrived in Tokyo you were interviewed by Henry Kamm of the New York Times, and in that interview you indicated that the North Vietnamese were very concerned about the northward spread of South Vietnam's westernized culture. I wonder if you could elaborate a little further on that. How deep is this concern? What measures are being employed to combat this threat? Is it an imagined threat or a real threat?

Mr. HOAN. I am very grateful that Mr. Henry Kamm brings out that point in his article in the New York Times. However, I can add some more details to that.

The activities and products in the South—movies, books, novels, magazines, whatever—have considered us so westernized and so capitalistic, so free that the Communist regime would not dare let them to be in the access of the people. They ban all those books, movies and magazines published before the takeover of the Communists. However, the banning is not very effective because the people who took part in bringing those products to the North are the Communist cadre themselves who have been so bored by the kind of literature in the North that talks only about the good of the party. Now they are in contact with something new and so interested in that new culture that they themselves bring them to the North. They have tried some measures to try to stop it but those measures are not very effective.

Mr. SMEETON. Shortly after the fall of Saigon George Meany of our AFL–CIO labor organization reportedly informed Congress that a number of labor officials in South Vietnam were being brutally treated and that some of them were even killed. Do you have any knowledge of the current status of the labor confederation and, if so, could you include in your response a comparison of the labor union situation today vis-a-vis what it was before the fall of Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. It is obvious that there were many cases of retaliation and revenge when the Communists took over Saigon against labor leaders in the Vietnam Federation of Labor because that federation was headed by Mr. Tran Quoc Buu whom the Communists consider one of the CIA bosses in Saigon. The labor union now in Saigon is completely different from the old one because this one is created by the Communists themselves. They just designate the leaders. Formerly, all the leaders were elected by the workers. The present labor union in Vietnam is totally created by the Communists.

Mr. SMEETON. Maybe you were asked this question earlier, I was out briefly.

How many political prisoners would you estimate presently are being detained in Vietnam?

Mr. HOAN. I can have some specific number about that question. In my own province, Phu Khanh province, I can count seven concentra-

tion camps where they put the political prisoners and the number is about 6,000 people.

Mr. SMEETON. All together?

Mr. HOAN. All together in my province, only in Phu Khanh province. Of the number of 300,000 residents in that province there are 6,000 prisoners. From that number I can infer that in the whole country there would be at least about 200,000.

Sometimes, they try to mislead the international opinion by calling those camps but in fact those are prisoners' camps. I have here the certificate of release of my secretary who was released from one of those camps and on that certificate it is stated, he was put down as a prisoner, not as a student in the reeducation camp. So there is some effort on the part of the Communists to present this as——

Mr. SMEETON. Would it be appropriate to have that integrated into the record, that certificate?

Mr. FRASER. Sure.

Mr. SMEETON. A copy of it.

Mr. FRASER. Yes.[1]

Mr. SMEETON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, could you tell me where the six camps are in your province? Maybe it was seven.

Mr. HOAN. Yes; seven.

The locations of those seven camps are as follows:

The camp of Tuy Hoa. This is the former prison in the capital.

One named A–30 in the district of Hieu Xuong. In that camp there are about 3,000 political prisoners.

There is the camp named A–20 in the district of Dong Xuan. The people in that camp are about 1,000 people who came back to Vietnam on the Vietnam Thuong Tin ship. Those people fled Vietnam in 1975 and asked to be brought back to Vietnam from Guam and 1,000 of them now are locked up in camp A–20.

There are four other camps named T–51, T–52, T–53, and T–54 in the district of Son Hoa with about 2,000 prisoners, all former officers of the Republic of Vietnam Army—the former Republic, I am sorry.

Mr. FRASER. Were those the numbers in the camps in Vietnam at the time you left?

Mr. HOAN. That is correct, sir.

Mr. FRASER. Had there been more in the camps at an earlier time?

Mr. HOAN. They were more numerous before. The number was bigger, larger.

Mr. FRASER. How much larger was it before?

Mr. HOAN. They went through several periods where they released some of the prisoners and that is why there is a difference.

Mr. FRASER. How high did the number get? What was the highest number?

Mr. HOAN. I can only speculate and give you an approximate number. About 7,000 or 8,000.

Mr. FRASER. How do you know how many were there at the time you left?

Mr. HOAN. First of all, in my capital city as a representative in the National Assembly I had the opportunity to visit those camps.

[1] Not available at time of publication.

Mr. FRASER. Did you visit all of them?

Mr. HOAN. Not all of them, a number of them.

Second, through the accounts of my friends and relatives who were released from those camps.

Mr. FRASER. Did you have some relatives that were in one of the camps?

Mr. HOAN. I have relatives who have been in prison.

Mr. FRASER. Have they been released?

Mr. HOAN. I still have some relatives in prison.

Mr. FRASER. Who are in prison?

Mr. HOAN. Who are in prison.

Mr. FRASER. Are these close relatives?

Mr. HOAN. Not close relatives but I can say that in my province every family has some relatives in the camp, not only me. Every family.

Mr. FRASER. But your relatives who are still in the camps, they are not close relatives?

Mr. HOAN. They are not close relatives.

Mr. FRASER. Any further questions?

Mr. SMEETON. One other question occurs to me. I will make this my last one.

Can you give us any firsthand knowledge about other people who were associated with the anti-Thieu movement and/or the so-called third force movement who stayed after the fall of Saigon? Do you have any information as to what happened to them?

One case in point that would be of interest to us would be that of Trich Tri Quang who has been identified as a Buddhist leader.

Mr. HOAN. Since I left Vietnam I learned that the people in the Buddhist church have been officially arrested but when I was in Vietnam I already knew that the policy is to go all out to prosecute the Buddhists' leader. I have two examples: The Venerable Thich Bat Nha and the Venerable Thich Dieu Bon; one was arrested; the other was killed. I know about all those things because I used to be active in the Buddhist movement in Vietnam in student affairs under the leadership of Venerable Thich Giac Duc and worked in the third force movement. The Communists kept just a few of those leaders as tokens to their regime, the rest I don't know about their whereabouts.

I would like to bring to the attention of the committee one fact. In 1963 Venerable Thich Quang Duc died by self-immolation, by fire, to protest the policy of the former President Diem's regime and the press all around the world talked about it quite a bit but right now under the Communist regime we have had recently 12 acts of self-immolation by Buddhist leaders and nothing was mentioned in the press. These facts show how the religious persecution is much worse under this regime than under the former President Diem's regime.

Mr. SMEETON. Thank you, Mr. Hoan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FRASER. When did you learn about the immolation of the 12?

Mr. HOAN. I heard about it around November of 1975, about 10 days after it took place.

Mr. FRASER. Was it in the newspaper?

Mr. HOAN. It was not reported in the newspaper. The Buddhist circles knew about it and they brought the news to me. After the news reached the international press the Communist regime in Saigon called the Buddhist leaders to inquire about whoever was responsible for leaking the news abroad; they wanted to keep it in Vietnam.

Mr. FRASER. Are any foreign newspapers circulated in Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. To my knowledge there is no foreign newspaper in Vietnam, and even for the Vietnamese newspapers there are only two Vietnamese papers, Giai Phong and Tin Sang. To my knowledge no foreign correspondent is now in Saigon.

When I went to Hanoi to participate in the session of the National Assembly, the chief of my delegation was warning all the members of the delegation not to get into contact with any journalist, foreign journalist, even if they are from the Communist bloc because they suspected that even some of those journalists from the Communist countries were in fact intelligence officers and there was warning not to get into contact with those journalists.

Mr. FRASER. Did you find the people in North Vietnam sharing the same attitude toward the government as the people in South Vietnam?

Mr. HOAN. Through my contacts with the people in North Vietnam I realized that they are also very dissatisfied with the Communist regime. The main reason is that they now know about the life in the South and that life is much more prosperous and more free than it was in the North.

Mr. FRASER. Now or before the fall of Saigon?

Mr. HOAN. There are cadre that went into the South and they went back to the North and they let out the news that in the South the society is more open.

Mr. FRASER. Had been or is?

Mr. HOAN. Even after the Communists took over, the society in the South is still a more open society than in the North so that led to the situation that many people in the North are trying now to flee to the South so that they can live under not so much fear in a society which is freer than in the North.

Mr. FRASER. Well, you described a very tough regime in the South. What is better in the South than in the North today?

Mr. HOAN. The sufferings and the restriction in the South which were very serious are nothing compared to the situation in the North. It is just a question of survival.

On one occasion I went in to visit a family in the North while they were having dinner and I realized that they have only very little to eat, like a bowl of rice soup together with some kind of potatoes or something.

Mr. FRASER. The people eat better in the South?

Mr. HOAN. It is still better in the South than in the North.

Mr. FRASER. And the restrictions while harsh in the South are not as severe as in the North?

Mr. HOAN. They did not have the time yet to put strict controls on the South and that is why conditions there are relatively better than in the North.

Mr. FRASER. Mr. Hoan, how old are your children?

Mr. HOAN. They are 12 years old, 10 years old, 2 years old and 1 year old—four children. I love them very much and I am missing them.

Mr. FRASER. Well, I hope you will be able to rejoin them in some fashion soon.

Let me thank you very much on behalf of the subcommittee for your appearance this afternoon, and I appreciate it very much.

I think that we will arrange to have you meet with Mr. Gilman now for the purpose discussed earlier in the afternoon.

Is there anything more you would like to add for the record before we close the hearing?

Mr. HOAN. First of all I would like to express my gratitude vis-a-vis the chairman and all the members of the committee who gave me an opportunity to talk about the human rights violations in Vietnam.

Second, I am in agreement with the opinion of Father Gelinas who asked for an inquiry about human rights violation in Vietnam and the opinion of Prof. William Turley that we need to have proof about those violations in Vietnam. The best way to do it is to ask the authority in Vietnam to receive a delegation from this country or from other countries to come to Vietnam and inquire freely about the situation in Vietnam with the assurance that the witnesses, who came out to report about the violations would be protected. One of the requests we ask the Congress of the United States and your committee to do is to ask the Communist regime to permit a delegation to go there and inquire.

Mr. FRASER. We will leave the record open for any additional information which might prove useful to include in the record. Well, thank you very much. The subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:45 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]

APPENDIX 1

ARTICLE FROM WORLDVIEW [1] (APRIL 1977) ENTITLED "THEY ARE US, WE WERE VIETNAMESE" BY THEODORE JACQUENEY [2]

Grim accounts of human rights violations in Vietnam, once fragmentary and unconfirmed, are now increasingly provided by consistent eyewitness accounts. Opponents of the former Saigon regime—some of them victims of its police and prison atrocities—are in "reduction" detention centers and prisons throughout Vietnam. Others imprisoned include largely nonpolitical artists, writers, journalists, lawyers, professors, and doctors. Judges and civil servants who once held apolitical jobs are also detained.

Reports of massive detentions with widespread prison misery paint a cruelly different picture from Hanoi's claims that most Vietnamese "eligible for reeducation have had their full civil liberties restored." Hanoi says that those still imprisoned are former high ranking military and civilian officials, all of whom are humanely treated. Refugees so desperate they flee Vietnam on barely seaworthy coastal fishing boats or even in rowboats bring out most of the information critical of Hanoi. Other information filters out through clandestine correspondence or comes from recent Western visitors. Some of these sources have helped me prepare this report, including former prisoners with family and friends still in Vietnam.

Gulag-like conditions prevail in many camps, according to ex-prisoners. Many detainees have died. Unlike political prisons under the old Saigon regime, "people now do not perish from torture or beatings, but from overwork and disease," one detention camp escapee told me. Former internees describe deaths from malnutrition, beriberi, dysentery, malaria, forced-labor-induced exhaustion, required mine-field sweeping, and suicide. Former prisoners say that camp inmates commonly suffer from limb paralysis, vision loss, and infectious skin diseases like scabies caused by long-term, closely packed, dark living conditions. They also witnessed cases of reeducation camp insanity brought on by a combination of oppressive living conditions and incessant demands for "confessions." Prisoners are forced to detail page upon page of minute information over an over again until the authorities are satisfied. However, with detention camps scattered throughout Vietnam, conditions may very, and not all eligible for "reeducation" were detained. Some refugees recall reeducation as nothing more than a few boring classes and "self-criticism" confessions while they lived at home and continued their jobs.

Vietnamese detention camp accounts contrast with those of some former humanitarian relief workers who remained in Vietnam after Hanoi's victory. They report hearing of no human rights violations and believe none could have occurred without their knowledge. One former Ford Foundation American employee, Jay Scarborough, was even detained with Saigon army soldiers for a few months. He saw nothing worse than "boredom," he told me, although he noted that he had been imprisoned months before the reeducation program officially began and was released shortly after it went into effect. A few Westerners permitted to visit selected camps near Saigon, Tay Ninh or My Tho, describe adequate treatment, although as one observer of current Vietnam human rights tragedies noted, "Hitler too allowed the Red Cross to visit his model camps." Other Western visitors to the camps relate dramatically different im-

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pressions. Patrice De Beer, a *Le Monde* correspondent once highly sympathetic to the National Liberation Front, reported in December seeing in a detention camp "an atmosphere of misery," with some inmates obviously "nervous and frightened" and others reciting apparently rote-memorized reeduction lessons for him to the surprise of his official guides.

Western journalists, diplomats, humanitarian and religious organizations were expelled from southern Vietnam as Hanoi consolidated its administration in 1975 and 1976. Curtaining the South from outside view signaled a tightening repression, ex-prisoners charge. Reflecting on his most recent Vietnam trip, French journalist Jean Lacouture, long sympathetic to Hanoi's cause, concluded: "It is better for someone trying to preserve intact his admiration for a revolution not to know its victims." One victim I interviewed, a doctor, was detained for two months in reeducation camp in Ninh Hoa district, about thirty kilometers from Nha Trang, and then for eight months more in Nha Trang. "At first," he said, "we were provided 400–500 grams of rice each day for each prisoner. Then suddenly it was cut to 200. Two meals a day, only one bowl of rice each meal. No meat, no *nuoc mam* [a fish sauce staple of Vietnamese diet], no vegetables, no fat. Very rarely there were small amounts of fish, the kind fishermen throw away."

Treatment in the Nha Trang prison was worse, the doctor said, although he never knew why he was transferred and was not permitted to inquire. From a reasonably habitable reeducation camp ward housing eighty people the doctor was put into a crowded jail cell with fifty other people in a small room, about four-by-eight meters. "All doors and windows were closed, opened only twice each day to give us food. There were eight to ten other such rooms in the prison that I saw holding about the same number of people. The lavatory was one small pan per cell, which prisoners were permitted to empty twice each day, and which slopped over onto cell floors.

"Reeducation meant four lessons. *First*: how to hate the U.S. *Second*: the sins of the U.S. and Thien governments. *Third:* write self-criticism confessions truthfully and you will be released. *Fourth:* do forced labor, including digging wells and agricultural work," the doctor continued. Prisoners had to discuss each paragraph in a reeducation book of about a hundred pages for days at a time. "In the two months I was in reeducation we only went these four lessons into the book, with each half of the group studying from 8:00 to 11:00 in the morning, 1:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon, and 7:00 to 9:00 in the evening. Half studied while the other half worked," he recalled.

"The reeducation process had three steps," explained another refugee who experienced it and, after release, discussed the program with a Communist official. "The first is the 'confession,' where you write down everything that the Communists want to know about, and every 'crime' they want you to admit. It really is a way to obtain information for some future use against prisoners and to break your spirit. The second step they called 'assimilation'—they measure what you have 'learned' during the reeducation process. The third step they called 'recognition'—they measure the capacity of the prisoner to recognize that everything done before Communist power was wrong, and that everything the new regime will do will be good for the people."

Ex-prisoners report that writing "self-criticism confessions," sometimes called "receptivity papers," was a common reeducation requirement. "You had to write the story of your life, including your father, grandfather and children, describing their fortunes, how everyone died, what they owned, including television, radio, camera. New ones had to be written twice each month, both in reeducation and in prison. If they found you had left something out that you had included earlier, you were in trouble. You would have to write a whole new one. Some people were forced to write new confessions many times each day. Each confession was about twenty pages, handwritten," one prisoner reported.

"Sometimes people went crazy from these confessions, living under these conditions," said the doctor. "I saw many such cases—screaming, yelling people. I could not treat them with any form of psychotherapy. They would not permit it. We had to keep silent in the camps and in prison; the only thing we were allowed to discuss was the reeducation lessons. I could not even discuss with my fellow prisoners why they were in prison."

The doctor observed no instances where the Communists employed the lime-in-the-eyes, electrodes-to-the-genitals, physical torture for which the old Nguyen Van Thieu regime was notorious. He charged, however, that he had witnessed beatings "many times," despite official claims "that this would not happen."

If prisoners "did not do enough labor to satisfy them, first they talked to you, and then they beat you with their fists and with clubs." The doctor charged that the Communists did "torture," but described psychological examples rather than physical ones, including isolating prisoners in small hot rooms while providing less than the already inadequate rice ration, and no mosquito net in a malarial mosquito-infested area.

The doctor witnessed many deaths in the camps, mostly by malaria and diseases related to malnutrition and, frequently, by suicide. "Many people hanged themselves," he said. One suicide had "returned to Vietnam on the Thuong Tin ship, the one that came back from Guam when some refugees changed their minds. He hanged himself in his prison cell. His name was Lieutenant Tran Tin Viet. This time they let me try to treat him, and I gave him mouth-to-mouth and first aid. I asked them to let me send him to a hospital. They refused to permit it, although I think I could have saved him in a hospital. He needed oxygen to reanimate. Without it he died the next day.

Another grim experience the doctor recalled from reeducation was forced labor to deactivate mines. "I had no training whatsoever for this. I was a military doctor drafted into the army like other doctors and knew nothing about mines," he said. "Fortunately there were some in our camp who were proficient at disarming the mines, and when we were sent out in groups, they let me be part of their group, and they did the work. But the Communists paid no attention to my lack of expertise at this—I was ordered to do it just like everyone else."

The doctor escaped to the Philippines on a fifteen-by-three-meter boat packed with three families, twenty-three people in all. The boat was "just big enough," he laughed. He refused to discuss his release from prison lest he compromise others.

Even worse reeducation camp conditions were described to me by a former civilian merchant marine professional who was detained in a reeducation facility in Tan Mai village in Bien Hoa province for four months in late 1975. He did not know the doctor. "The Vietnamese Communists call these 'reeducation' camps, but they are really just prisons. There were eighty of us kept in a room thirty-by-six meters. We slept on the floor, no mattress, no blanket, just flat on concrete. There were two air holes, but no sun ever shined into the room," he said.

"There was no reeducation class, nothing but prison. We were let out of the room for only two reasons. Once per week they let prisoners out of the cells, one cell at a time, to get some daylight for fifteen-minute periods. Once every two weeks they made us come to an office and write confessions for about two hours. If you left something out, they would make you start over so it could be longer. Besides that there was nothing. We woke up at 5:00 in the morning and went to bed at 10:00 at night. The cell was so crowded there was no room to move. Our day was spent sitting up, laying back, sitting up, and laying back. All day long was like that—that is all we did."

"In four months there was never enough to eat—not even one kilo of fish all together. No meat, no vegetables, no *nuoc mam*. Just two bowls of rice with salt," the same sailor said. About sixteen hundred people were detained at the Tan Mai camp with him, all packed approximately eighty to a room in twenty rooms. Other prisoners included soldiers, from privates to full colonels, and a few civilians such as himself, including judges, former deputies in Saigon's National Assembly, lawyers, and local government officials. None of the others were attending reeducation classes either, he said.

"Under these conditions many got sick, many died. People developed paralysis, caught malaria, or their whole skin turned yellow and swelled so that you could poke your finger deep into their skin, which may have been a form of beriberi. Every day many died. The Communists would try to hide these deaths from people in other cells. In my cell alone, in four months, three out of the eighty died, another two or three developed paralysis. Many people went crazy under these conditions—you could hear them screaming in the other cells. Fortunately no one in our cell went insane like this."

Lavatory facilities for the eighty men was one hole in the floor, "the size of a rice bowl," the sailor recalled. The cells were infested with flies, mosquitoes, lice, and rats. Prisoners wore standard peasant black-and-brown pajamas. "After you were in for six months they would issue you a second set." Many prisoners made shorts out of sandbags and wore them.

Unlike the doctor and other former prisoners, this man said that in his camp no labor was required. "They just put you in the cells until you died. The Communists did not want to kill or beat people, only to keep people in jail until they

died or were driven crazy. People kept under these conditions will die, be driven mad, or be paralyzed." But he never saw beatings or physical torture, he said. He estimated that perhaps two or three people in each cell were paralyzed. "To eat, they were spoon-fed by others in their cell. I saw many such people. They could not use their arms or legs or get up. They had to be carried even to use the toilet."

Besides the lack of protein, vitamins, vegetables, exercise, daylight, and room to move in the cell, he suggested other factors that may have contributed to paralysis and disease: "We had to lie on the bare cement floors, which were always wet from our sweat during the hot days, and damp and cool at night."

The lack of light also caused vision problems, the sailor charged. He wears glasses now, although he said he never needed them before his internment, and is troubled with other eyesight disorders. "Everyone had a problem seeing. When they let us out of the dark room for our fifteen minutes of weekly daylight, it was like we were all blind. We could see nothing. It felt like someone had put a big spotlight on your face."

The camp authorities permitted no medical treatment for any of these problems, he said. "The Communists did not even permit us to talk to each other in the cells. If they saw three people whispering together in the cell, they would put them in special 'dark rooms.' These were very small, for one person, with no light at all, no air holes like in our cell. One time every day they would throw in some food for you. There was no toilet. You went right on the floor. Once a week they would throw two buckets of water on you to bathe. If you were caught talking, the first time they would put you in a dark room for one week, the second time for two weeks, and so on. These were little concrete rooms with a steel door."

The only exception to the no-talk rule seemed to be the people who went insane. "They would let people scream because they knew they were crazy. You could hear them screaming all over the prison, although I only saw four or five people whom I knew to be crazy from observing them, because of the way the Communists kept each cell isolated from the others."

He said that he saw no mail, no packages, no relatives; nor was he permitted to communicate with his family. He was released from reeducation after four months, probably, he thought, because he was unpolitical and had not been involved in the war. His reeducation camp experience, however, impressed him negatively, and he escaped to Thailand in a small boat with four other men.

Most other civilian prisoners held in Bien Hoa were not kept with the sailor but in a onetime orphanage called Lang Co Nhi (literally "orphan village") now reportedly housing about three thousand people in fifteen buildings, located in Long Thanh district, near the city of Bien Hoa. Other eyewitness accounts describe conditions in this camp as milder than in the sailor's nearby facility. As in most other reeducation detention camps both men and women were held, kept in separate sections of the camps. Another major civilian detention center is reportedly in Long Khanh province where there are said to be at least eight separate camps. For some civilian prisoners Lang Co Nhi and Long Khanh were only brief "screening" centers before they were sent to harsher institutions, including once-notorious Chi Hoa prison and Thu Duc women's prison. The two prisons now hold both male and female inmates, some reported desperately ill.

Some of my friends in Vietnam were former "tiger cage" inmates and other victims of the old Saigon regime, and I feel strongly that those responsible should be punished. (I also know people dismembered—literally!—and otherwise tortured during wartime interrogation by Vietnamese Communists, and I believe that those responsible deserve punishment too.) However, many in the camps not only were not responsible for Saigon's police state practices; they were the tormented prey. Vietnam's detention camps and prisons are full of onetime Thieu opponents of the left, center, and right, many of whom were once victimized by the old regime for advocating democratic liberties and accommodation with the Communists to end the war.

Tran Van Tuyen, the elected chairman of the South Vietnamese National Assembly's opposition bloc, has been repeatedly identified as a prisoner. Now sixty-four years old, he is reportedly gravely ill. Tuyen was officially classified as "obstinate" by reeducation authorities. When ordered to write a lengthy confession, the fearless lawyer is said to have turned in two sentences: "I have committed no crime against the Vietnamese fatherland or the Vietnamese people. If I have done anything wrong, it is only in the eyes of the Communist Party of Vietnam."

Tuyen was once chairman of the Vietnam chapter of the International League for Human Rights. The chapter has ceased to function since Hanoi's victory, League executive director Roberta Cohen observed in a December, 1976, press conference calling for Tuyen's release. He was once imprisoned on Con Son island prison—famous for its "tiger cages"—after he helped draft the 1960 "Caravelle Manifesto," which attacked the dictatorship of Ngo Dinh Diem and demanded a new government with civil liberties, free political parties, fair elections, and a social democratic economic program. Released after Diem was overthrown in 1963, Tuyen was a deputy prime minister in the three-month Phan Huy Quat government in 1965, the last civilian government, which was ousted by Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky. Sometimes attacked as a "pacifist" by rightist Saigon newspapers on issues such as his opposition to the introduction of U.S. troops in Vietnam, he later became a forceful critic of Thieu government repression and corruption and a tough-minded advocate of negotiating Communist participation in a new government to end the war. He was regularly harassed for his efforts. Among Third Force leaders there used to be countless pictures of him leading demonstrations to free political prisoners, to open closed newspapers, or to negotiate an end to the war. Many of these pictures survive, as do his outspoken published protests calling for Thieu's resignation.

I visited Tuyen once after he had returned from a court battle for the freedom of four fellow opposition deputies. Thieu's police had beaten them and charged them with being Communists because the deputies led a peaceful march on behalf of families of imprisoned journalists. Tuyen himself had been at the demonstration, hoping that his presence could deter the Saigon police from assaulting the families and deputies. I had just come from the hospital room where three of the beaten deputies were being treated, and I told Tuyen about their severe injuries, which I had photographed.

"Please tell the American people who want to be 'friends' of the Vietnamese people what you saw," he responded. "Tell them it is not so 'friendly' to provide dollars and ammunition to the Thieu regime. It is a police state regime, and worse."

Tuyen commanded an entire province in the anti-French colonial resistance and held the second-ranking position in the foreign ministry of Ho Chi Minh's 1945 coalition government. He had to flee after the Communists started assassinating non-Communist leaders or betraying them to the French for arrest. "The Communists were not interested in sharing coalition power democratically. They simply wanted to dominate," Tuyen told me. Later, when the French proposed to grant independence to a Vietnamese state under Emperor Bao Dai, Tuyen agreed to join this cabinet too. But Tuyen insisted that the French permit the new state to be as independent as they had proposed, and ordered the French governor general to leave a Vietnamese cabinet meeting. The French governor in turn ordered Tuyen into exile the next day. Tuyen responded with a celebrated public letter saying that no Frenchman could expel a Vietnamese from Vietnam, and escaped to Tay Ninh. There he became a colonel in the army of the Cao Dai Buddhists, who fought both the French and the Communists.

A democrat and a Socialist, Tuyen was a leader of the Sun Yat-Sen-inspired Vietnamese Nationalist Party. He frequently displayed his progressive social and economic views, attacking forms of monopoly, speculation, and other instruments of peasant exploitation, and called for jobs programs to reduce unemployment "in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy."

Bui Tung Huan, a former prominent antiwar senator, Hue University president, law school dean, and economics professor, was a leading Third Force leftist. Huan is a secular leader of Vietnam's majority An Quang Buddhists and personally close to top Buddhist leader Thich Tri Quang, who is himself reportedly confined to his pagoda, permitted to leave rarely and under obvious police escort. According to relatives, Huan was sent to reeducation camp in the fall of 1975, months after the first wave of reeducation camp arrests in June. His arrest coincided with communications released by an An Quang Buddhist delegation office in Paris describing the self-immolations of twelve Buddhist monks and nuns in Can Tho protesting Communist persecution in November, 1975. Vietnamese Buddhists smuggled photographs of the Can Tho Twelve and their touching appeals for religious tolerance to the West, and last fall many former American peace activists expressed their concern to the Vietnamese Government.

In February many of them received Hanoi's reply in an "aide-mémoire" containing preposterously lurid charges that the chief monk of Can Tho was actually a sexually promiscuous monster who impregnated and then murdered his nuns, housed prostitutes in his pagoda, killed them all, and then burned his temple.

In the elliptical style Vietnamese Buddhists can use to impart information, news from Vietnam is that Huan has "lost weight" in detention camp, is "tanned" and "more sinewy," and is "practicing yoga." He was quite thin already when I last saw him in Saigon in 1975. Huan was elected a senator in 1970 on the Buddhist-endorsed "Lotus" peace slate, whose political slogan was "national reconciliation." Shortly after the election he was instrumental in creating a political movement called the National Reconciliation Force, which actively promoted an end to the war. He strongly opposed further U.S. aid to the Thieu government, Huan told me during my visits to his Cong Ly Street apartment.

Gentle, peaceful Huan was jailed repeatedly by various Saigon governments, including the Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorship in 1963 and the Nguyen Cao Ky regime in 1966, largely for his leadership role in Buddhist mass demonstrations protesting religious and political oppression. Invited to join a 1964 coalition government headed by General Nguyen Khanh as a Buddhist representative in the post of Minister of Education, he resigned almost immediately protesting Khanh's attempted power grabs. He refused to leave Vietnam at the time of the Communist triumph because he believed that he and other Buddhist leaders could help reconcile the warring sides, a hope encouraged personally by the then French ambassador during the last, tragic days of the war, according to those who participated in these contacts.

Father Tran Huu Thanh, a popular Catholic priest whose dramatic protests against Thieu government tyranny and thievery included mass demonstrations and ringing public manifestoes, now has the distinction of being one of the few prominent Thieu opponents to have his incarceration publicly confirmed to Westerners by Hanoi. Americans who signed a November petition expressing humanitarian concern for Vietnamese political prisoners have received, in the same aide-mémoire that sensationalized sex-and-murder charges against a martyred Buddhist abbot, accusations that the Catholic priest participated in an alleged insurrection plot. The plot is said to have culminated in a shooting incident at Saigon's Vinh Son Church in February, 1976, during which one government soldier was reported killed. The charge is viewed skeptically by recent refugees with whom I have talked, who lived in the Saigon area and escaped Vietnam after the gunfire occurred. The sixty-two-year-old Father Thanh may already have been in confinement when the incident took place, and the names of Thanh's alleged co-conspirators were not among his former associates or friends, according to close confidants of Thanh now in exile. Thanh is only one of a growing number of Catholic priests and even prelates now reportedly in detention, including the bishops of Danang and Nha Trang.

Sometimes termed a "rightist" because he publicly opposed Communist sharing power after many other former Third Force leaders had advocated coalition, Thanh modified his views in 1974, when he changed the name of his anti-Thieu protest organization to "The People's Anti-Corruption Movement to Save the Nation and Build Peace in Vietnam." Thanh also preached a vivid "social gospel" comparable to that of Brazilian Archbishop Helder Camera or Martin Luther King, Jr. "I do not agree with the 'anti-Communist' position of the Thieu government. I want to fight against the Communists by making social reforms, by bettering the conditions of society," he told me once in his church rooms.

Father Thanh lectured widely on his social gospel anticommunism : to officers of the Saigon army psychological warfare section and, many years ago, to dictator Ngo Dinh Diem. "Diem never really listened to me, or to anyone. I tried to give him two important bits of advice. The first had to do with social reform, social justice, land for the people. The second was when I advised that a road be built from Danang through Laos. He followed my suggestions about neither one," the priest said, chuckling inside his usual conversational cloud of cigarette smoke.

Thieu considered Father Thanh dangerous. "In this church where we sit now there are three gates, and at each gate there are two secret policemen who follow me wherever I go," Father Thanh told me at the height of his movement activities. "I consider myself to be a member of the Third Force," Thanh related to me once. "But . . . the only reason there is a Third Force at all is because the U.S. Government has provided a military dictatorship with the means to repress

the people. So the popular forces—the large religions and important political leaders—were driven out of the first element and became an opposition, against both Thieu and the Communists. The Third Force was once a French creation, forcing the people to create a third choice between colonialism and communism, and now it is an American creation, because you have forced people to make a third choice between a corrupt dictatorship and communism.

"If you had only Communists or a military dictator in America, I think most Americans would be in the Third Force too, don't you?" he asked.

Tran Ngoe Chau, rumored to have been killed last year, has more recently been seen alive and in detention. Once elected third-ranking member of the Saigon National Assembly, Chau had been a Viet Minh officer. Ho Chi Minh had "dissolved" the Indochinese Communist Party to prove the good faith of his nationalism in the early 1940's, but when the Party was publicly revived and placed in control of the anticolonial resistance after a few years of fighting, Chau and others quit. Later, despite Saigon regime bias against former Viet Minh, Chau became a celebrated progressive mayor of Danang, South Vietnam's second largest city, province chief of Kien Hoa, the largest province in the Mekong Delta, and head of the CIA-sponsored Revolutionary Development training school at Vung Tau, resigning after one year to run successfully for the lower house in 1967.

In 1965, after years of separation, Chau was contacted by his brother, Tran Ngoc Hien, then a ranking official in Hanoi's intelligence network. Hien asked Chau to introduce him to American officials to promote peace negotiations, which Chau did. Chau and Hien met frequently, each trying to convince the other to join the opposite side in the war, and Hien's stated interests in reaching a peaceful settlement made a deep personal impression on Chau. Once a strong supporter of the Saigon government's hard-line positions. Chau, grew to become an advocate of a peace settlement that included political representation for the National Liberation Front, and attacked one of Thieu's closest collaborators for paying bribes to subvert National Assembly peace initiatives. As a result, in 1969 Chau was arrested and literally dragged out of the lower house building on charges of being in contact with his brother Hien. The contacts had been dutifully reported and encouraged all along; only after Chau became a peace advocate was he arrested.

Chau is a charismatic leader with strong convictions about constitutionl democracy, free elections, and social justice. In February, 1975, I interviewed him in his home in a remote Saigon suburb. Recently released from Thieu's prisons, Chau was under house arrest, his home surrounded by secret police during the day. The person who arranged the meeting drove me to Chau's residence late at night, close to curfew, when lazy secret policemen would go home after taking for granted that Chau was tucked in for the evening.

Chau believed that Thieu jailed him because he spoke out publicly for a negotiated coalition settlement to the war. "See the papers I introduced into the lower house in 1968. They called for a meeting with representatives of the North. Remember at that time the official policy of the South Vietnamese government was to refuse to talk to the National Liberation Front. At that time I got 76 out of 135 lower house deputies to sign a petition to form a delegation to meet with the National Liberation Front and the Government of North Vietnam to make arrangements for a peaceful settlement. That is the beginning of the story of my arrest.

"I personally am willing to forget the past. I do not hate Thieu now, or anyone else, even the people who treated me so badly. I am a true Buddhist in that sense," Chau said in his living room, which was filled with Buddhist religious pictures and shrines. "But I believe that we must adapt ourselves to the realistic situation," he continued, calling for a compromise peace and a neutralist government with a freely elected legislature.

Published statements by Chau's brother Hien corroborate Chau's statement that Hanoi had invited him to join the Front. From the outset Hien urged the Front "to forbid the guerrillas to assassinate Chau," and reported back in late 1967 that Chau remained a "potential target who deserved to be won over in a long process." In 1968, well after Chau had left Vung Tau and was serving in the legislature, Hien was still reporting to superiors that as per "instructions from above" he was continuing attempts to persuade Chau to "understand and sympathize with the policies and programs of the Front" and to recruit him to "participate in" Hanoi-sponsored political groups supporting the Front. Failing

in this, Hien's further reports centered on Chau's proposals for a parliamentary delegation visiting the North to discuss peace with Hanoi and the Front. According to Chau's formula, the Front would be "considered a political party," Hien reported, "and adjustments could be made for it to have deputies." Hien was seeking to assess the strength of Chau's following when he was arrested in April, 1969, with Chau seized shortly thereafter.

If Hanoi wanted to recruit Chau or possibly negotiate with him up until he was arrested by Thieu in 1969, what justifies his current detention, since after 1969 he was either in a Saigon regime prison or under house arrest? There is one possible cause of Hanoi's annoyance: In 1973, after nearly four years in jail, the Thieu government tried to turn Chau over to the Front's Provisional Revolutionary Government as a grotesque demonstration of Saigon's charge that Chau was a Communist. Although acceptance would have meant his release from the notorious Chi Hoa prison, Chau refused. Thieu's cynical propaganda gesture and Chau's courageous response were widely reported in the Western press. In 1975 Chau recalled to me: "They told me that to get out of prison I had to either go over to the Communist side or come back to the government side as a *Chieu Hoi* (literally "a defector from the Communist forces"). I responded that I wanted to come back to the non-Communist side, but as a free citizen." And so Chau stayed in prison until late 1974, when he was released to house arrest.

Word comes out of Vietnam about Tran Van Tuyen, Bui Tung Huan, Father Tranh Huu Tanh, and Tran Ngoc Chau because they were well-known. Other former well-known Third Force figures are not suffering. About half a dozen sit in unified Vietnam's new 492-seat National Assembly. Those who have been detained appear to lack legal representation, specific charges lodged against them, reasonable family contacts, factual information on release prospects, and other basic human rights. Some well-known detainees are:

● Luong Truong Tuong—leader of Vietnam's two million-member Hoa Hao Buddists. Tuong's daughter published a letter in French newspapers last spring pleading for the release of her seventy-three-year-old father from Chi Hoa prison. Also arrested with Tuong on July 2, 1975, were his brother, Loung Truong Dau; his son, Luong Truong Lo; and his son-in-law, Ly Trang. The entire Hoa Hao leadership, and tens of thousands of followers, have been arrested since June, 1975, his daughter said. Through March, 1976, only one letter has been received from any jailed member, sent the previous November.

Tuong and his followers were periodically repressed by various Saigon regimes. Hoa Hao leaders complained bitterly to me in early 1975 about Saigon government soldiers oppressing their followers, and charged that Hoa Hao leaders were jailed and tortured by Thieu's police in Can Tho. Some of the same leaders are imprisoned now, it is charged.

Communist officials have accused Tuong of helping lead Hoa Hao to join anti-government resistance groups operating in Mekong Delta areas. Tuong's relatives and followers in Vietnam deny this and say that Tuong has begged Hoa Hao members "not to allow Vietnamese blood to be shed again," threatening to "shorten my life by cutting open a vein in my body" if they did not throw down their arms.

● Phan Huy Quat—the last civilian prime minister of South Vietnam before Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky seized full control from a short-lived government that the military never permitted to function. Quat and his son-in-law are reported in Chi Hoa prison too, accused of trying to escape the country. Quat was a member of the Vietnam affiliate of the International League for Human Rights. Like Luong Truong Tuong, Tran Van Tuyen, and others now jailed, Quat was imprisoned in 1960 for signing the Caravelle Manifesto demanding release of political prisoners, civil liberties, freely functioning opposition parties, a free press, open elections, and social justice.

● La Thanh Nghe—a liberal Catholic former Third Force senator. Nghe was known for advocating reconciliation with the National Liberation Front, and was repeatedly accused of "neutralism," then a criminal offense, by the Saigon regime.

● Dr. Nguyen Van Ai—former director of the Pasteur Institute of Microbiology and leader of Catholic welfare projects. Dr. Ai is a well-known apolitical scientist and religious charities worker. He is reported held in a detention camp on Phu Quoc island that was once a prison under Thieu and is accused of trying to flee Vietnam.