

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

THE VIETNAM CENTER

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September 22, 1999

Ambassador Pete Peterson
Embassy of the United States
Hanoi, Vietnam

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I deeply regret that our schedules were such that I missed the opportunity to introduce you to Texas Tech University Chancellor John T. Montford during our trip to Vietnam last month. I am pleased to report, though, that the trip was in every other respect completely successful. Chancellor Montford was most impressed with the Vietnamese people and many of the things we saw during our trip.

We met with the leadership of Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Hue University, Phu Xuan Private University, VNU Ho Chi Minh City, Can Tho University, the Southern Fruit Research Institute and the Cuu Long Delta Rice Research Institute. Additionally, the medical members of our party (both also Vietnam vets) visited medical schools and medical facilities at each of the cities we visited.

One of the requests received at each and every stop was that we send to the universities books, particularly college level texts and medical books. We have taken on these requests, and thus far have assembled about seven or eight thousand volumes. We anticipate receiving an additional eighteen- to twenty-thousand volumes in the next couple of months. These include a complete medical library from a small hospital which Texas Tech University has purchased.

It is our intention to send about 1,000 volumes to each of the universities within the next few weeks. However, the logistics of getting very significant quantities of books to Vietnam is rather daunting. Therefore, I have approached Secretary of the Navy Danzig to consider assigning a ship of the US Navy to accept these books before deploying to WestPac, in the hope that we could arrange a port visit in Vietnam. A copy of that correspondence is attached for your information.

I traveled to Washington last week to get Texas Tech's lobbyists, Cassidy & Associates, busy trying to find funding for our proposed \$12 million biotechnology project with Vietnam, a copy of which your agricultural staff have already received via e-mail. I am very hopeful that we will receive at least some initial funding to get this very worthwhile project underway.

While in Washington I also stopped by and visited with Ambassador Bang. I briefed him on recent developments with the Vietnam Center and our plan to ask Secretary Danzig's assistance with a port visit and also provided him with a copy of our biotechnology project. I also visited with Congressman Sam Johnson and briefed him on our trip to Vietnam. Chancellor Montford, who was state senator here for 14 years, is a long-time friend of Congressman Johnson.

Tran Bach Dang and his party arrived in Lubbock last evening and spent an hour or so meeting with my graduate history course which is focusing on the Vietnam War. After some preliminary comments by Mr. Dang, we asked one question, which elicited a response that lasted over an hour, and thus ran over the end of the class! We have scheduled to do an oral history interview with him this afternoon. In the morning he will meet the Chancellor, President and Provost of Texas Tech and in the evening he will have a dinner with the Mayor and

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various civic leaders. I am certain he will leave with positive feelings about Texas and Texas Tech. I mentioned to him our request to Secretary Danzig, and he has asked for a copy of the proposal in order that he might present it to senior individuals of the SRV government. He seemed very enthusiastic about it.

Permit me to close, Mr. Ambassador, by renewing our long-standing and open-ended invitation for you to visit Texas Tech. Should your schedule bring you back to the United States with 24 hours to spare, it would be my great honor to introduce you to the leadership of Texas Tech University, which is now totally supportive of all efforts to assist Vietnam. Additionally, I would like to introduce you to the civic leaders of Lubbock and West Texas, who are equally supportive of our efforts.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James R. Reckner', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

James R. Reckner, Ph.D.
Director

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