

TEXAS TECH

JENNIFER LeNOIR, M.A.

Writer

Media Relations Specialist

News and Publications

Box 42022

Lubbock, TX 79409-2022

(806) 742-2136

FAX: (806) 742-1615

E-Mail: x3jen@ttacs.ttu.edu

NEWS RELEASE**TEXAS TECH**
UNIVERSITY

News & Publications

Box 42022
Lubbock, TX 79409-2202
(806) 742-2136
FAX (806) 742-1615*men job***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****REF: 6-3-27-97****CONTACT: Jennifer LeNoir**

LUBBOCK -- Scholars, educators and former military leaders from the United States, the Peoples Army of Vietnam and the former Republic of South Vietnam are expected to gather in Lubbock April 17-19 for an academic conference aimed at establishing a more balanced perspective and dialogue about the Vietnam War. The conference "Teaching Vietnam," will be held at Texas Tech University's International Cultural Center and sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict at Texas Tech.

This conference marks a rare opportunity to see South and North Vietnam leaders together since the 1975 war ending.

Many educators continue to seek new approaches to teaching about the complex issues associated with America's involvement in the conflict, which between 1965 and 1973 claimed 58,000 American lives, cost an estimated \$120 billion and ignited domestic turmoil and government distrust, said conference coordinator James Reckner, director of Texas Tech's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict.

Providing educators with an academic conference to discuss and to exchange effective methods or techniques for teaching students about Vietnam is important, said Reckner, because the subject is barely covered at the secondary level. At the more than 200 universities offering courses on Vietnam, much of the curriculum content is dependent on a faculty member's personal interpretations and experiences, he said.

According to Reckner, who also is an associate professor of history at Texas Tech, the Vietnam War is a complex issue socially, politically and educationally. Because of these teaching challenges, many faculty members on the secondary and college levels gloss over this important time in our nation's history, he said.

"The task becomes even more overwhelming when one realizes that most young people today know very little about the Vietnam War. Many of them cannot locate Vietnam on a world map, and it's not unusual to find history majors who have never taken a college course on Vietnam," said Reckner.

The war was a crucial time in our nation's history and should be an important part of American education, said Reckner. Without an understanding of what occurred in Vietnam, future generations have only pieces of a story. This has become more difficult to put together as America's Vietnam generation leaders grow older and disappear from the scene, he said.

-more-

Selected Vietnam Conference Speakers

Peter Braestrup -- He now serves as the senior editor and director of communications at the Library of Congress. Braestrup worked as a war correspondent during the Vietnam War. His book on Vietnam, "Big Story," first published in 1977 and revised in 1994, won the Sigma Delta Chi award in 1978. He worked as a reporter for the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* (Saigon bureau chief 1968-69, reporter 1972; Washington, 1969-72). In 1973, Braestrup obtained a fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at the Smithsonian, and in 1975 became the founding editor of the *Wilson Quarterly*. He was chairman/founder of the Center's Media Studies Project from 1988-93.

Former Ambassador Bui Diem -- The author of the autobiography, "In the Jaws of History." Diem was born in Hanoi and relocated to South Vietnam in 1950. He served as a member of the South Vietnamese delegation to the 1954 Geneva Conference and ambassador to the United States and Special Envoy to the Paris Peace Talks, 1967-72. He is president and executive director of the Pacific Basin Research Institute in Washington, D.C., and a member of the National Council of Texas Tech's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict.

Nguyen Khanh -- He began his career in the Vietnamese National Army, reaching the rank of general before becoming prime minister. Khanh participated in a 1964 coup, which placed him in control of the South Vietnamese government. He was overthrown in 1965 and exiled to the United States. He currently lives in California.

Nguyen Cao Ky -- An officer in the South Vietnamese Air Force, Ky later became prime minister in 1965, sharing power with Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu. He lost power in 1971 when Thieu disqualified Ky from challenging him for the presidency of South Vietnam.

Former Ambassador Stephen Lyne -- Lyne writes on Indochina as a professor of international relations and history at Boston University, where he teaches courses in American foreign policy and on the Vietnam War. Additionally, Lyne served 30 years in the State Department, as political officer at the American Embassy in Saigon, 1965-66; as Vietnam analyst, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 1967-68; and as Chief of South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia Section, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 1968-71.

Col. Bui Tin -- Former People's Army of Vietnam colonel and editor of the Communist Party newspaper, *Nhan Dan*, Col. Tin accepted the South Vietnamese government's surrender in April of 1975. His memoirs, "Following Ho Chi Minh," appeared in English in 1995. Col. Tin currently lives in Paris, France.

Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr. -- He served as commander of U.S. naval forces in Vietnam from 1968-1970 as chief of naval operations from 1970-1974. Zumwalt has served as the chairman of the Vietnam Center's National Advisory Council since 1989. As a veteran of three wars, including WWII and Korea, Zumwalt was noted for his innovative approaches to solving the grievances of enlisted men. In particular, he initiated and implemented a variety of policies at the end of the Vietnam War aimed at achieving racial and gender equality in the Navy and removing unnecessary regulation.



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

Box 41013 / Lubbock, Texas 79409-1013 / (806) 742-3742, 742-3744 / Fax: (806) 742-1060 / E-Mail jjrec@ttacs.ttu.edu

March 25, 1997

1997 "Teaching Vietnam" Conference Agenda

Thursday, 17 April 1997

- Afternoon Participants arrive at Holiday Inn Civic Center
- 6:00 p.m. Reception/Tour of the Vietnam Archive
Welcome by Chancellor John T. Montford
Unveiling plaques *in memorium* to
Former CIA Director William E. Colby
Author Marshall Gene Harrison (*A Lonely Kind of War*,
Cadillac Flight, *The Delta*)
Unveiling plaques for service to the Vietnam Center for
Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Professor Douglas Pike
Mr. John Lowey (First President of the Board)
Unveiling plaques for outstanding financial support
Carl & Florence King Foundation
W.B. "dub" and Mozelle Rushing
- 8:00 p.m. Dinner at a local restaurant

Friday, 18 April 1997

- 8:30 a.m. Opening Remarks
- 9:00 a.m. VIP Panel. Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Air Vice Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky,
General Nguyen Khanh, PAVN Colonel Bui Tin.
- 11:00 a.m. Teaching the Fiction of the Vietnam War. Dr. John Clark Pratt,
Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO.
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch. Speaker: Ambassador Stephen Lyne.
- 1:30 p.m. Teaching the American Experience of the War: American Literature
and the War. Dr. Randy Fertel, Tulane University.

1997 "Teaching Vietnam" Conference Agenda

- 2:30 p.m. **Teaching Vietnamese Perspectives.** Dr. David Marr, Australian National University.
- 3:30 p.m. **Teaching the Sixties and Vietnam.** Dr. Paul Lyons, Stockton College.
- 4:30 p.m. **Critical Approaches.** Dr. Marc J. Gilbert, North Georgia College.
- 7:30 p.m. **Reception at International Cultural Center**
- 8:30 p.m. **Conference Banquet.** Colonel Norman McDaniel, USAF (Ret), Vietnam POW.

Saturday, 19 April 1997

- 8:30 a.m. **Teaching in the University Setting.** Dr. Steve Potts, Hibbing Community College & Mankato State University, Minnesota.
- 8:30 a.m. **Teaching in the Secondary School Setting.** Dr. Dave Berman, University of Pittsburgh.
- 10:15 a.m. **Teaching Resources and the War.** Dr. Joe P. Dunn, Converse College, Spartanburg, SC.
- Noon **Lunch Speaker:** Peter Braestrup, Director of Communications, Library of Congress.
- 1:30 p.m. **Recent Workshop Experience.** Dr. Jane Hamilton-Merritt, Southern Connecticut University.
- 2:30 p.m. **Research Resources.** Charles Shaughnessy, National Archives.
- 3:30 p.m. **Roundtable discussion of all attendees; discussion of experiences.** Marc J. Gilbert and Joe P. Dunn.
- 4:30 p.m. **Conference concludes.** Time to tour Ranching Heritage Center, etc.
- 7:30 p.m. **Dinner (West Texas Barbecue) at County Line Restaurant**