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A PROFILE OF NIA STUDENTS

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Preface

The National Institute of Administration is the primary source of recruitment for the middle echelons of civil service in Vietnam. In its brief existence, approximately as long as the Republic, the NIA has placed its students in almost every department and agency of government. The role of the NIA has been particularly significant in providing trained administrators to serve in provincial administration. Lack of physical security and physical comfort have made provincial assignments unattractive; yet it is at the local level where good administration is most needed if the Government of Vietnam is to receive the support of its rural population.

By 1960, two NIA graduates were already serving as province chiefs; 13 as deputy province chiefs; 23 as district chiefs; 18 as chiefs of service; and 55 as bureau chiefs. The impact of the NIA will be increasingly felt as Institute graduates increase in number and, in time, are promoted to policy making positions.

What effect these graduates will eventually have on the character of Vietnamese bureaucracy will be in part determined by their social, economic, geographical, and religious background. The present study is an attempt to provide such a profile of NIA students.

The author wishes to express his thanks to the Rector, the Vice Rector, and the Faculty of the National Institute of Administration for facilitating the accumulation of data included in this survey. He has also been assisted by the advice and criticism of the Public Administration Division of the Michigan State University Advisory Group.

Biographical Background

This survey is based on a questionnaire submitted to 140 students out of a total enrollment of 144 in the National Institute of Administration during the first semester of the academic year 1959-60. All respondents are classified as either Regular or Government students, depending upon how they qualified for admission to the NIA. Regular students are those who entered the NIA after successfully taking qualifying examinations open to anyone between the ages of 18 and 25 holding the second Baccalaureat degree. Those classified as government students are not required to have the second Baccalaureat degree; however, they must pass the same examination as that administered to other students as well as have attained the rank of Tham Su (roughly translated as Section Head). The age limit for government students is 30 years providing the student has at least 5 years of government service.

Both categories of students are subsidized by the government during their three years of study at the NIA: Regular students receive a stipend of 2,000 piasters per month; government students continue to receive their full salary. Regular students are expected to take one month of military training each year and all students are obligated to work for the government for at least ten years upon graduation. Of the 140 students questioned, 116 were regular students and 24 were from government service. Only 8 respondents were women, 4 regular and 4 government students.

Respondents represented each of the four classes (promotions) enrolled in the NIA ranging from promotion #4, the graduating class, to promotion #7, the beginning class. A new promotion begins each year and is made up of the entering class which keeps its promotion identity throughout the three year program. The presence of four promotions in this survey results from the fact that the NIA changed its academic calendar in 1959 and accepted an additional class at the time. Although the Institute will eventually have an enrollment of 300 students, the largest single promotion in this survey contains but 58 students.

Table I

Classification of Government and
Regular Students by Promotion

Promotion	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
4	7	29.2	18	15.5	25	17.9
5	5	20.8	11	9.5	16	11.4
6	7	29.2	34	29.3	41	29.3
7	5	20.8	53	45.7	58	41.4
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

The median age for NIA students is just under 23. Regular students have a median age of 22, and are almost five years younger than government students. Only one of 115 regular student respondents is above the age of 26 whereas 6 of 22 government students fall within the ages of 35 and 38.

Table II

Age Distribution of
Government and Regular Students*

Age	Government Students	Regular Students	All Students
18	0	1	1
19	1**	9	10
20	0	15	15
21	0	23	23
22	2	19	21
23	1	16	17
24	3	18	21
25	2	6	8
26	2	7	9
27	2	0	2
28	0	0	0
29	2	1	3
30	0	0	0
31	0	0	0
32	1	0	1
33	0	0	0
34	0	0	0
35	1	0	1
36	2	0	2
37	1	0	1
38	2	0	2
Total No. Respondents	22	115	137

*Three students did not reveal their age.

**The requirement that government students serve for five years before being eligible for admission to NIA is sometimes waived.

The marital status of government students and regular students is manifestly different. Almost two-thirds of government students are married, while only slightly more than one out of ten regular students is married. The obvious explanation for this difference is the greater age and higher income of the government students who had already established their civil service careers prior to entering the NIA.

Table III

Marital Status of Government
and Regular Students

Marital Status	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Single	9	37.5	103	88.8	112	80
Married	15	62.5	10	8.6	25	17.9
Divorced	--	--	1	0.9	1	0.7
Widowed	--	--	2	1.7	2	1.4
Total No. Respondents	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

Out of a total of 28 married students, three government and six regular students have no children. The remaining 19 married students have a combined total of 64 children. Again there appears a difference between regular and government students: the thirteen married regular students have a total of only 17 children whereas 15 married government students have a total of 47 children.

Table IV

NIA Students with Children

Number of Children	Government Students Classified by No. of Children	Regular Students Classified by No. of Children	All Students
1	3	3	6
2	-	2	2
3	3	-	3
4	2	-	2
5	1	2	3
6	1	-	1
7	1	-	1
8	-	-	0
9	1	-	1
Total No. of Students with children	12	7	19

Geographical Background of Students

Vietnam's geography has been an obstacle to national unity. A rugged terrain, elongated shape, and dense forests and jungles have made internal communications difficult. Vietnamese unity has been further handicapped by a common border with China, often violated by invasions followed by long periods of Chinese domination. The extensive coast of Vietnam facilitated French penetration in the 19th Century and enabled France to keep Vietnam in colonial status and disunited. Although nationalism remained strong in Vietnam, it existed side by side with firm sectional loyalties which often seemed a substitute for frustrated nationalism. French colonial policy in Indo-China deliberately encouraged regional consciousness and autonomy as a means of preventing Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina from combining in a common struggle for national independence.

The demise of colonialism in Vietnam did not bring unity along with independence. The Geneva Agreements of 1954 provided for the establishment of two Vietnamese states, a communist State of Vietnam north of the 17th parallel and a Republic of Vietnam south of the dividing line. The Geneva agreements also provided that for a specified period of time residents from either side of the 17th parallel could relocate freely either in the North or in the South. During this period of free movement, there was an estimated 900,000 Vietnamese who chose to make the long exodus to the South. Only a minute fraction of that number chose to resettle in the North.

The present survey asked three questions relative to the important issue of geographical background: (1) place of birth; (2) residence at time of partition; (3) parents' present place of residence. Of 138 students indicating their place of birth in Vietnam, 73 (52.9%) were born south of the 17th parallel and 65 (41.1%) in the North. Most of those students born in the North came South as refugees after the partition of Vietnam.

Prior to partition, only five Northerners had migrated to the South and three Southerners settled in the North. After partition, 64 NIA students entered the South as refugees (45.7% of all NIA students). Of these 64 students, only nine have parents still residing in Communist North Vietnam.

Table V

Student Resident Patterns in Terms
of North Vietnam and South Vietnam

Location	Birthplace		Residence at time of Partition in 1954		Present Residence of Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
What is presently North Viet- nam	65	47.1	64	45.7	9	6.7
What is presently South Viet- nam	73	52.9	76	54.3	126	93.3
Total	138*	100%	140	100%	135**	100%

*One student indicated no birthplace; one student was born in Cambodia.

**Five students whose parents are deceased did not indicate a family residence.

A breakdown of the geographical data provided by respondents reveals that families of students were highly mobile even prior to the evacuation to the South in 1954-55. In both the North and South, there was a marked tendency to take up residence in Vietnam's largest cities, Hanoi and Saigon. Of 65 students born in the North, 20 were born in Hanoi and 45 were born elsewhere in what is now North Vietnam. Yet, at the time of partition, the number residing in Hanoi had more than doubled to 46. A similar urban trend took place in the South. Only 11 students were born in Saigon, but by the Summer of 1954 the number had increased to 27. By late 1959, of 135 students with living parents, almost half gave as their parent's residence the greater Saigon area.

The growth of Saigon's population before partition was mainly at the expense of the region to the south of the capital where the respondent population fell from 36 to 24 in the years between birth and 1954. Although the survey does not reveal a specific date for these population shifts, there is reason to believe that they occurred during the long military struggle in Vietnam and were prompted by a desire on the part of the student families to live in Saigon and Hanoi rather than the more insecure areas of the countryside. If this explanation is applicable to the general population--which the writer thinks is the case--the rapid growth of Saigon since 1945 can in great measure be attributed to insecurity in the countryside rather than the "urban pull."

Table VI

Regional Breakdown of Students' Birthplace*

Birthplace	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hanoi	4	16.7	16	14.0	20	14.5
Elsewhere in what is now North Vietnam	4	16.7	41	36.0	45	32.6
Saigon- Cholon	2	8.3	9	7.9	11	8.0
In the area South of Saigon	9	37.5	27	23.7	36	26.1
In what is Now Central Regions of South Vietnam**	5	20.8	21	18.4	26	18.8
Total	24	100%	114	100%	138	100%

*-1 regular student indicated no birthplace
 -1 regular student was born in Cambodia

**--For purposes of this survey, the Central Regions are those provinces extending north from greater Saigon to the 17th parallel. The actual regions officially designated Central Lowlands and Central Highlands does not extend as far south as this survey definition.

Table VIIRegional Breakdown of
Residence at Time of Partition in 1954

Residence in 1954	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hanoi	6	25.0	40	34.5	46	32.9
Elsewhere in what is now N. Vietnam			18	15.5	18	12.8
Saigon- Cholon	6	25.0	21	18.1	27	19.3
In the Area South of Saigon	6	25.0	18	15.5	24	17.1
In what is now the Central Regions of S. Vietnam	6	25.0	19	16.4	25	17.9
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

Table VIII

Regional Breakdown of
Parent's Place of Residence
at Present

Parent's Present Residence	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hanoi	-	-	4	3.4	4	3.0
Elsewhere in what is now N. Vietnam	1	5.3	4	3.4	5	3.7
Saigon - Cholon	11	57.9	52	44.9	63	46.7
In the Area South of Saigon	2	10.5	31	26.7	33	24.4
In what is now the Central Regions of S. Vietnam	5	26.3	25	21.6	30	22.2
Total	19	100%	116	100%	135	100%

*Five government students indicated no present residence for their parents.

The three preceding tables (VI, VII, and VIII) point to several prominent characteristics of NIA students:

1. If birthplace is considered exclusively (Table VI), NIA students constitute a fairly equitable representation of all major geographic regions of Vietnam, including North and South. The only exception is the lack of representation of the Vietnamese Highlands (PMS) where cultural differences have made it difficult for the indigenous Montagnard population to compete on equal terms with other Vietnamese.

2. Considering the fact that approximately 8% of the total South Vietnamese population is made up of refugees, this group comprising 45.7% of NIA students is heavily over-represented (Table VII). A partial explanation for this over-representation is the particular appeal that NIA scholarships have had for refugees, many of whom left their property and possessions in the North. These former residents of the North have often displayed vigor and initiative, qualities which have given them access to favorable positions.

3. Saigon, with approximately 11% of the total population of South Vietnam is the family residence of 46.7% of NIA students (Table VIII). To an extent, this situation is a consequence of the number of student refugee families who have settled in Saigon. More important, however, it reflects the educational advantages of Saigon in contrast with other cities and villages in Vietnam where fewer students obtain adequate education. Until educational facilities are improved outside

of Saigon, it is more than likely that Saigon will continue to contribute a disproportionate number of students who will be academically qualified for admittance to the NIA. Since this survey was made there has been evidence that this situation is being slowly corrected and the number of NIA students from outlying provinces is increasing. Relatively good educational opportunities are now available in Hue, Dalat, My Tho, and elsewhere; furthermore, the NIA is engaging in a more vigorous policy of student recruitment throughout Vietnam.

Religious Affiliation

A survey of religious affiliations of NIA students presents many special problems. The Vietnamese people have a strong spiritual bent; however, the great variety of religious expression among Vietnamese is not fully reflected in formal religious groupings. Even Buddhism, the dominant religion of Vietnam, is a loosely organized faith that has been the source of numerous local sects. Some of these sects, such as the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao, have developed their own character to the point that they may be considered as separate forms of religious expression apart from Buddhism.

The present survey listed six possible choices pertaining to religious affiliation: (1) Buddhist, (2) Cao Dai, (3) Catholic, (4) Moslem, (5) Protestant, and (6) No Religion. While there are other religious identifications that could have been listed, it was decided to include only those religions that had an institutional base. Because Confucianism in Vietnam, as elsewhere, lacks a clergy, church, or a high degree of formal unity, and because many Confucianists are also Buddhists, it was excluded from the above listing although it is widespread in Vietnam and is sometimes more than a philosophy to many of its adherents. Animism and the practice of ancestral worship were also excluded from the religious listing on the ground that these practices do not constitute a formal religion and, indeed, permeate all religions in the country.

The largest single religious group at the NIA is Buddhist, practiced by 76 students. Catholicism, with 25 adherents, is the only other religion which has more than two members among NIA students. Significantly, 33 students indicated that they have no religion. It is impossible to compare these NIA figures with the national religious configuration as there has been no religious census in Vietnam. Most estimates place the percentage of Buddhists in Vietnam at a higher figure than the 54.7% attending the NIA. Conversely, the percentage of Catholics in South Vietnam has been estimated at 10%, a lower figure than the 18% attending the NIA.

Table IX

Religious Affiliations of NIA Students

Religion	Students	
	No.	%
Buddhism	76	54.7
Catholicism	25	18.0
Protestantism	2	1.4
Moslem	2	1.4
Cao Daism	1	0.7
No Religion	33	23.8
Total	139*	100%

Note:

*One student did not specify his religion.

No respondent specified a preference other than those listed above although the questionnaire allowed for such an indication.

The religious preferences of refugee and non-refugee students reveals an interesting pattern which differs from general assumptions about the character of the two groups. Among 64 refugee students, Buddhism commands the adherence of two thirds, whereas only 33 out of 75 (44%) non-refugee students are Buddhists. Catholicism is the religious preference of but 12 (18.7%) refugee students, almost the same incidence as among non-refugees. The unusual feature of these figures is that they are almost the converse of what might be anticipated in terms of the religious backgrounds of the refugees who abandoned Communist North Vietnam in the period following the Geneva partition. Most estimates place the number of refugees in the general neighborhood of 900,000; and of this number, about 75-85 per cent were Catholic. It is clear from these figures that the great number of students from the city of Hanoi (almost one third of all students) is not a Catholic group, but the most heavily concentrated group of Buddhists from any area in Vietnam.

Table X

Religious Affiliation of Students
and Place of Residence in 1954
(Refugee and Non-Refugee Students)

Religious Preference	North Vietnam		South Vietnam	
	No.	%	No.	%
Buddhism	43	67.2	33	44.0
Catholicism	12	18.7	13	17.4
Protestantism	1	1.6	1	1.3
Moslem	-	-	2	2.7
Cao Dai	-	-	1	1.3
No Religion	8	12.5	25	33.3
Total	64	100%	75	100%

(One student from the South did not indicate his religion)

What explanation may be advanced for the fact that while more than three fourths of all the refugees to the South were Catholic, less than 20 per cent of the refugees enrolled in the NIA are Catholic and two-thirds are Buddhist? This anomalous situation is an outgrowth of the background of the refugee groups. The great influx of Catholic refugees came from a limited area in North Vietnam, about 70 miles Southeast of Hanoi and embracing the provinces of Bui Chu, Phat Diem. These provinces were agricultural provinces and the residents of them moved South as a group under the leadership of their parish priests. Their movement was not individual but rather a transfer of entire communities

from the North to the South. These agrarian-Catholic-refugee communities were aided by the Government of South Vietnam in establishing themselves as agrarian Catholic communities in the South. The great majority of refugees are from these groups; however, these are not the communities from which the refugee students at the NIA have come. NIA students from the North resided, by 1954, in highly urbanized Hanoi where educational advantages were greater and Buddhism was the dominant religion. When the refugee students are divided into the Hanoi residents and those who came from elsewhere in the North, the above explanation becomes more manifest. Of 46 students from Hanoi, 35 are Buddhist and only 4 are Catholic. But, of 18 students from elsewhere in North Vietnam, 8 are Buddhist and 8 are Catholic.

Table XI

Residence in 1954 and Religion

Religion	Hanoi	Elsewhere in what is now N. VN	Saigon- Cholon	In the Area S. of Sai- gon	In what is now Central VN.	All Students
Buddhism	35	8	13	10	10	76
Catholicism	4	8	6	3	4	25
Protestantism		1	1			2
Moselm			1	1		2
Cao Dai			1			1
No Religion	7	1	5	9	11	33
Total	46	18	27	23*	25	139

Note: *1 student from the South indicated no religious affiliation.

A word of caution is in order about the sizeable response in the "No Religion" column. It is doubtful that these 33 students are atheists or that they hold no beliefs of a "religious" nature. Personal interviews with several of these respondents reveals that they practice ancestral worship in some form. If the survey had attempted to learn the number of students who embraced a variety of spiritual belief, it is felt that most of the 33 "no religion" respondents would fall in an affirmative column. Furthermore, almost all of them, as well as students indicating religious affiliation, would identify themselves as Confucianists if the questionnaire had so permitted them.

Economic Profile of NIA Students

The survey contained seven questions directly related to economic background; even these were insufficient to provide a clear profile of students' economic background. Responses were general rather than specific in describing "father's occupation"; the extended family system prevalent in Vietnam produces great variation in the number of relatives who may be wholly or partly dependent on a household head; finally, there is a pronounced reluctance on the part of the Vietnamese to provide personal economic data in writing, despite assurances of anonymity. Notwithstanding these qualifications, several general propositions may be advanced relative to NIA students' economic background.

The typical NIA student is a member of what may be designated the "Vietnamese middle class." There is little evidence to suggest that the NIA has attracted students from among the very wealthy or from the poor. Those from the highest social-economic groups in Vietnam are able to pay their way through the University of Saigon or to study abroad. There is a belief among Vietnamese, whether valid or not, that the University and particularly foreign study offer greater prestige and provide better access to important positions in Vietnam than does the NIA. Young men and women from poor families, on the other hand, who might be prospective applicants for admission to the NIA, have often had inadequate or interrupted educations.

Of 127 students who responded to the questions asking "father's present occupation," 31 indicated their fathers are dead and 18 stated their fathers are retired. Among the remaining respondents, 33 (42.3%) gave their father's occupation as civil servants. No other vocation or profession approaches this high percentage. This figure looms even larger when it is considered that 8 others designated their father's occupation as "teacher," an occupation that might be included among civil servants. The only other occupational category to have any significant representation is "Business and Commerce," with 20 responses. Discussions with students suggests that even those fathers involved in business and commerce are generally in the middle class rather than among the extremely prosperous.

Students were also asked to indicate their father's occupation in 1953 prior to the pervasive disruption of the last year of the war in Vietnam. The resultant pattern deviated in no significant way from the "present" occupational table which follows.

Table XII

Father's Present Occupation*

Occupation	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Business and Commerce	1	4.3	19	18.3	20	15.8
Farmer	-	-	6	5.8	6	4.7
Civil Servants	5	21.8	28	26.9	33	26
Employee of Private Business	-		2	1.9	2	1.6
Teachers	1	4.3	7	6.7	8	6.3
Lawyer	-		2	1.9	2	1.6
Laborer	-		2	1.9	2	1.6
National Assembly	-		1	1.00	1	0.8
Unemployed	-		4	3.9	4	3.1
Retired	6	26.1	12	11.5	18	14.1
Deceased	10	43.5	21	20.2	31	24.4
Total	23	100%	104	100%	127	100%

*No answer was given by 13 students, 1 government and 12 regular.

The extent to which refugees have been assimilated into the economic life of the South is evident in the similar occupational patterns of those who have always lived in the South and those who are refugees. The fathers of refugee students have not been compelled to accept lower status positions than they had in the North prior to partition. Furthermore, the type of occupations practiced by refugees is indistinguishable from those whose entire lives have been spent in what is now South Vietnam.

Table XIII*

Present Occupation of the Fathers of
Refugee and Non-Refugee Students

Occupation	Refugee		Non-Refugee		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Business and Commerce	7	13.2	13	17.6	20	15.7
Farmer	2	3.7	4	5.5	6	4.7
Civil Servant	16	30.2	17	23.0	33	26.
Employee of Private Agencies	-		2	2.7	2	1.6
Teacher	1	1.9	7	9.5	8	6.3
Lawyer	1	1.9	1	1.3	2	1.6
Laborer	1	1.9	1	1.3	2	1.6
Deputy of the National Assembly	-		1	1.3	1	0.8
Unemployed	3	5.7	1	1.3	4	3.1
Retired	8	15.1	10	13.5	18	14.2
Deceased	14	26.4	17	23.0	31	24.4
Total	53	100%	74	100%	127	100%

*No answer was given by 13 students; 11 refugees and two non-refugees.

To a great extent, NIA students are following in their father's footsteps in selecting careers as civil servants. When asked if their fathers had even been civil servants, 82.6% of the government students and 57.5% of the regular students answered affirmatively. Thus, not only are NIA students predominantly from middle class backgrounds; they represent that limited and generally conservative segment of the middle class who have chosen careers as public servants.

Table XIV

Students Whose Fathers are or
Previously Were Civil Servants

Was your Father ever a civil servant?	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	19	82.6	61	52.5	80	57.5
No	4	17.4	55	47.5	59	42.5
Total	23	100%	116	100%	139	100%

Note: 1 Government student from the North gave no answer.

When asked what positions their fathers held in the civil service, more than two-thirds of those responding indicated that their fathers held non-managerial positions or were engaged as teachers or educational administrators. Only three students are the sons of agency heads and 18 are the sons of civil servants who at some time had managerial responsibilities. Although the

designation of their father's civil service rank was not sufficiently specific, the evidence leans to the conclusion that most are sons of the lower range of middle level civil servants.

Table XV

Career Status of Student's Fathers
who are or
Previously were Civil Servants

Position Held	Government Students		Regular Students		All Student	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Head of Major Agency	0	0	3	5.5	3	4.3
Managerial	5	33.3	13	24.1	18	26.1
Non-Managerial	6	40.0	20	37.1	26	37.7
Teachers or Educational Administrators	4	26.7	18	33.3	22	31.9
Total	15	100%	54	100%	69	100%

- Notes: -2 students, one government and one regular, gave no answer.
 -2 students, one government and one regular, answered that their fathers were in the military, but gave no rank.
 -7 regular students indicated that they did not know their fathers' former position in the civil service.

There is no taboo against married women working in Vietnam, although only certain occupations are viewed as proper for a given social class. Approximately one fourth of the mothers of NIA

students are employed. Only four working mothers are in the "professional" category and three are at the other end of the spectrum, "unskilled." The great majority are engaged in business and commercial activities, a respectable "middle class" activity in Vietnam.

Table XVI

General Occupation Classification of
Mothers of NIA Students

Occupation	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Professional	1	50.0	3	10.3	4	12.9
Business and Commercial	1	50.0	23	79.4	24	77.4
Unskilled	-	-	3	10.3	3	9.7
Total	2	100%	29	100%	31	100%

Perhaps the most important status symbol in urban Saigon is possession of an automobile. Cars are imported into Vietnam in sufficient quantity to make them available, yet they are priced beyond the reach of all but the economic elites. Only 13 (9.3%) of NIA students or their parents possess an automobile of any kind. Considering the fact that cars of ancient vintage as well as small economy cars are common to Saigon, it may be assumed that fewer than thirteen students possess a vehicular "status symbol."

Motor scooters are more frequently the means of transportation than cars. Of those students who do not own cars, 23 count a motor scooter among their parents' possessions. Fifty three other students or their parents own no means of transportation but a bicycle and 51 own no vehicle whatsoever.

Table XVII

Type of Transportation Owned by
Students or Their Parents

Transportation	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Car	1	4.1	3	2.6	4	2.9
Car and Scooter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Car and Bicycle	1	4.1	4	3.4	5	3.6
Car and Scooter and Bicycle	-	-	4	3.4	4	2.9
Scooter	2	8.3	10	8.6	12	8.6
Scooter and Bicycle	-	-	11	9.5	11	7.8
Bicycle	9	37.5	44	38.0	53	37.8
None	11	46	40	34.5	51	36.4
Total No. of Respondents	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

Student families have shown a much greater preference for purchasing homes and land rather than cars. Whereas 13 NIA students or their parents own cars, 86 (61.4%) own homes. The high percentage of homeowners may be viewed as an urban response to the traditional Vietnamese attachment to land ownership. This attitude is further reflected by the high number of respondents who indicated ownership of land or property: 36 (25.7%) own ricefields and 26 (18.6%) own real estate other than homes or ricefields. The frequency of property ownership is deceptive in one respect: in many cases the parents of a single student owned a home plus other properties. Indeed, more than one-third of all students and their parents own no property of any kind. While it is possible that this latter phenomenon is indicative of a low level of income, it may equally be the result of a sense of insecurity among a segment of the population which induces them to maintain liquid assets instead of property.

Table XVIII

Property Possessions of Parents
of NIA Students

Property Possessions	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Home	17	70.8	69	59.5	86	61.4
Rice Field	8	3.3	28	24.1	36	25.7
Business Establishment	-	-	7	6.0	7	5.0
Other Real Estate	5	2.1	21	18.1	26	18.6
None	6	2.5	42	36.2	48	34.3

Many students families owned a home, business, etc., therefore the number of entries in the "property possessions" column exceeds the total number of respondents.

Many student families owned a home, business, etc. - Therefore, the number of entries in the Property-Possessions column exceeds the total number of respondents.

Vocational Activities and Educational Preferences

Most NIA students find no necessity to engage in outside employment while attending school. The 2,000 piaster stipend received by regular students is generally sufficient to permit a student to devote full time to academic pursuits. For those whose expenditures exceed their stipend, the extended family system provides a student with many relatives who may augment his income. Of nine students employed while attending school, seven are "refugee students" who lived north of the 17th parallel prior to the partition of the country, and the remaining two are from Saigon. None of the employed students are government students, a fact attributable to the government's policy of paying them their usual salaries while attending the NIA.

Class attendance at the NIA is mandatory; nevertheless, 99 out of 140 students (70.7%) are simultaneously enrolled in a school other than the NIA and are pursuing degrees at these institutions. The disposition to acquire additional professional training is far more marked among regular students than among government students. 78.4% of the regular students, contrasted with 33.3% of government students are entered in a school other than the NIA.

Table XIX

NIA Students Enrolled in
Other Educational Institutions

Concurrently Enrolled in Another School?	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	8	33.3	91	78.4	99	70.7
No	16	66.7	25	21.6	41	29.3
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

The Faculty of Law at the University of Saigon leads all other institutions in appeal to NIA students. The 83 NIA students undoubtedly feel that their legal training complements the administrative training they receive at the NIA. Not to be overlooked, the licence en droit is considered a badge of prestige in Vietnam and excellent preparation for political and administrative advancement.

Many students are attracted to the NIA initially because of the generous government stipend they receive while attending the Institute. There are indications that if it were not for this stipend many students would attend another institution of higher learning if they could afford to do so. When asked their choice of schools, assuming the same financial assistance as at present, almost two-thirds of the students selected schools other than the NIA. More significantly, almost one-third of the students would prefer to attend the NIA even if they had a choice of schools

under similar financial conditions. This is a strong showing considering the short duration of the NIA's existence and the recent origin of the study of public administration in Vietnam. The NIA was selected by 46 students; the older and more prestigious Faculty of Law was selected by 31 students followed by the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy and the Faculty of Sciences.

Table XX

Choice of Schools Assuming Similar Scholarship
and Stipend as Presently Awarded by NIA

School or Faculty	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
NIA	10	41.6	36	31.0	46	32.9
Law	3	12.5	28	24.1	31	22.2
Medicine & Pharmacy	1	4.2	16	13.8	17	12.1
Sciences	2	8.3	14	12.0	16	11.4
Letters	3	12.5	8	6.9	11	7.9
Pedagogy	3	12.5	6	5.2	9	6.4
Engineering	1	4.2	6	5.2	7	5.0
Commerce	1	4.2	1	0.9	2	1.4
Agriculture	-	-	1	0.9	1	0.7
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

Career Attitudes

Despite the varied educational preference pattern found in the preceding set of questions, four of five NIA students would voluntarily enter government service even if they were not required to do so upon graduation. This is not an unusually high figure when consideration is given to the fact that government service in Vietnam, as in most developing nations, offers many advantages: job security, status, perquisites, career advancement and an above average salary. Moreover, the Vietnamese bureaucracy is responsible for the implementation of government decisions, and the important decisions in Vietnamese society today are made by the government. Private employment cannot compete for attractiveness on these terms.

Table XXI

Students Preference for Civil Service Careers

Do you choose to enter Civil Service even if not required to do so?	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	20	83.3	91	78.4	111	79.3
No	4	16.7	25	21.6	29	20.7
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

There is no significant difference between government and regular students in their desire to enter the civil service. Those students who made the NIA their first choice of schools (See Table XX) had a slightly greater desire to work for the government ~~than~~ ⁷ those students who chose a school other than the NIA. Of the 46 students selecting the NIA as their choice of schools, 89.1% (41) indicated a desire to work for the government whereas 73.4% (69) of the other students were similarly disposed.

NIA graduates are given no voice or option in their particular work assignment upon entering government service. The government ¹¹ does take into consideration whether the student was in the administrative or financial program at the NIA; beyond that the government assigns students to positions exclusively on the basis of governmental needs.

A question was included in this survey designed to reveal the branch of government or agency that students would prefer if they had a choice of assignments. While 13 different agencies were mentioned by students, almost 3/4 of all the students selected the departments of Foreign Affairs, National Economy, or Interior. At the other end of the scale, only one student selected each of the following departments or directorates: Agriculture, Budget and Foreign Aid*, and Social Action.

*Comparable to the Bureau of the Budget in the United States.

Table XXII

Work Assignment Preference of NIA Students *

<u>Department or Agency</u>	<u>Government Students</u>		<u>Regular Students</u>		<u>All Students</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Foreign Affairs	4	21	42	38.9	46	36.
Economy	7	36.9	18	16.7	25	19.
Interior	4	21	18	16.7	22	17.
Finance	-	-	11	10.2	11	8.
Education	2	10.5	4	3.7	6	4.
Public Works	1	5.3	3	2.8	4	3.1
Health	-	-	4	3.7	4	3.1
Information	-	-	3	2.8	3	2.4
Defense	-	-	2	1.8	2	1.6
Budget and Foreign Aid	-	-	1	0.9	1	0.8
Agriculture	-	-	1	0.9	1	0.8
Social Action	1	5.3	-	-	1	0.8
Police	-	-	1	0.9	1	0.8
Total	19	100%	108	100%	127	100%

Footnote: No answer was given by 8 regular and 4 government students. One government student indicated a preference for election to the National Assembly.

There is an unrealistic and romantic aspect to the strong preference shown by the students for the Department of Foreign Affairs. The course curriculum at the NIA stresses public administration and public finance; little time is devoted to world history, international law and organization, diplomatic studies, and the general body of courses considered preparatory to a career in foreign affairs. The great stress Vietnam has placed on winning friends in the International community, especially among the Afro-Asian nations, contributes to the attractiveness of the Department of Foreign Affairs and partly explains why 46 students made it their first career choice. An equally pertinent consideration may be the great prestige attached to studying or serving abroad and the prevalent Vietnamese feeling that the route to the upper echelons of Vietnamese bureaucracy is through experience overseas.

A second choice of students at the NIA was the Department of National Economy. Inasmuch as approximately one fourth of all students at the NIA are studying economics and finance as a major, the strong showing made by the Department of National Economy is not surprising. The fact that the Department of National Economy deals with one of Vietnam's most challenging problems and is headed by the Vice President of the Republic, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Tho, contributes to the attractiveness of the Department in the eyes of students. While National Economy was the overall second choice of students, it was actually the first

choice of government students, the group which had experience in the public service. Of nineteen government students who responded to the question, seven (36.9%) gave first preference to National Economy and four (21%) to foreign affairs. Among 108 regular students who responded to the question, 42 (38.9%) selected foreign affairs while 18 (16.7%) selected the Department of National Economy.

The third choice of all students at the NIA was the Department of the Interior, selected by 17.3%. The Department of Interior has more civilian employees than any other agency in the Vietnamese government as it is responsible for the management of the 38 provinces throughout the country. Past experience indicates that more NIA graduates will be assigned to Interior than to any other single agency. The Department of Interior offers the NIA graduate an opportunity to occupy a position of genuine responsibility early in his career and it is not uncommon for NIA graduates to begin their service with the Department of Interior as assistant province chiefs or in other important provincial posts.

Geographical Assignment Preference

The central government in Saigon has primary responsibility for filling the personnel needs of Vietnam's 38 provinces. In the past, assignments to unpleasant provincial posts had been used as a form of punishment for the politically and administratively errant. In principle, this practice has ceased; nevertheless, provincial assignments continue to be viewed as disagreeable interludes in an administrative career. Uneven internal development and insecurity in many provinces have contributed to the desire of civil servants to be located in the few urban centers of Vietnam. NIA students, as well as those already in government service, show an aversion to being assigned to provincial posts.

Students were asked to list in order of preference the three cities, towns, or provinces where they would most like to work. The most frequently mentioned answers were Saigon, Dalat, Nha Trang and Hue. These locations share two common characteristics: (1) they offer more of the physical comforts than any other cities or regions in Vietnam; (2) they are all among the most physically secure areas in Vietnam. Saigon, appearing on the list of 109 students, was most popular. The two famous resort areas, Dalat and Nha Trang, followed in frequency of provinces mentioned. The only other city mentioned by more than 25 students was Hue, the old imperial capital of Vietnam.

Table XXIII

Most Preferred Cities, Towns or Provinces
Appearing on More Than 10 Lists

<u>Location</u>	<u>1st Choice</u>	<u>2nd Choice</u>	<u>3rd Choice</u>	<u>Total</u>
Saigon	80	15	14	109
Dalat	13	31	28	72
Nha Trang	11	18	20	49
Hue	7	16	6	29
Can Tho	3	5	10	18
Gia Dinh	2	11	3	16
My Tho	1	8	6	15
Bien Hoa	1	3	10	14

When asked to indicate the areas they least preferred to be assigned, NIA students remained consistent in their aversion to isolation and insecurity. The most frequently mentioned areas were Ca Mau, Con Son, Pleiku, Banmethuot, and Kontum. Ca Mau, the least preferred city of 76 students, is located at the southern tip of Vietnam where Viet Cong terrorism is rampant. Twenty one students included the island of Con Son on their lists. This island, lying off the southeast coast of Vietnam, gained notoriety as the French prison of Poulo Condor, and is still the site of a prison. Frequent mention was also given to Pleiku, Banmethuot and Kontum which are situated in the rugged central highlands of Vietnam where there are numerous settlements of primitive highlanders presently undergoing acculturation and assimilation. These pioneer provinces constitute a new frontier

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in Vietnam's economic development and contain few of the comforts of urban life.

Table XXIV

Least Preferred Cities, Towns or Provinces
Appearing on More Than 10 Lists

<u>Location</u>	<u>1st Choice</u>	<u>2nd Choice</u>	<u>3rd choice</u>	<u>Total</u>
Ca Mau	32	20	24	76
Banmethuot	5	12	14	31
Kontum	5	12	13	30
Pleiku	8	10	7	25
Con Son	10	8	3	21
Kien Giang	-	5	7	12
Quang Tri	3	6	2	11
Saigon	7	1	3	11

Foreign Language Attitudes

When France withdrew from Indo-China in 1954, French was the language of instruction in universities and in better secondary schools. Even today, French is used in a number of courses at the University of Saigon, especially in the sciences, although these courses are fewer each year as Vietnamese replaces French. The reasons for this shift are not difficult to discern: the nationalism of the Vietnamese people, the diminishing importance of France in the life of Vietnam, the lesser number of students who plan to pursue degrees in France, and the closer ties between Vietnam and the U.S. as well as other English speaking nations -- all of these factors have contributed to the decreased emphasis on the French language.

Contrary to what might be expected in a nation which struggled long for independence, neither France nor the French language are in disrepute. French influence is evident in many facets of Vietnamese culture, Governmental decrees are occasionally published in French as well as Vietnamese, and the President, Vice President, and other high ranking dignitaries rely on French when meeting with foreign dignitaries and journalists. Nevertheless, the young generation of Vietnamese students have far less facility in the French language than do their elders. Many Vietnamese of high school and university age now study

English as their first foreign language. As is the case with French, their command of English is not adequate for instructional purposes. Moreover, students entering the NIA are divided between those who have studied French and English, a factor which adds to the difficulty of introducing either language in the classroom.

The NIA has instituted a compulsory English program for all students in the belief that the English language will become a valuable tool for government administrators. Students have concurred in this judgment. When asked their opinion whether French or English would be more beneficial to them in their future work as civil servants, the great majority of those who made a definite choice selected English. Of 110 students who chose one language or the other, 92 (83.6%) selected English and only 18 (16.4%) selected French.

Despite the wording of the question which asked them to select the language they thought would be "more" beneficial, thirty students made marks opposite both English and French. Thus, 18 students made French their first choice and 30 students were unable to choose between French or English. These 48 students represent Vietnam's lingering respect for the French language and culture.

Table XXV

Student Attitude on Whether French or English
Will be the More Beneficial in Their
Future Careers as Civil Servants

More Beneficial Language	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
French	3	12.5	15	13.	18	12.8
English	14	58.3	78	67.2	92	65.7
French and English	7	29.2	23	19.8	30	21.5
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

NIA students are aware that their own competence in English is not satisfactory. Ninety per cent of them responded affirmatively when asked if the NIA should place more emphasis on the study of English. Only fourteen out of 140 students felt there was no need for additional emphasis.

Table XXVI

Student Attitude on Whether the NIA Should
Give More Emphasis to the Study of the English Language

More Emphasis on English Language Study	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	19	79.2	107	92.2	126	90
No	5	20.8	9	7.8	14	10
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

The high percentage of NIA students favoring greater emphasis on the study of English should not be viewed as admiration for American or Anglo-Saxon institutions or culture. It is, rather, a realistic acknowledgment that English is the lingua franca of Asia. Since independence, Vietnam has actively sought to strengthen its international position by sending delegations to international conferences in Asia and elsewhere. These conferences are almost always conducted in English. Furthermore, Vietnam has been the recipient of much American aid including the award of scholarships to students, administrators, and professionals to study and travel in the United States. The government also provides additional compensation for civil servants who have a command of the English language and usually selects personnel for foreign travel from among those who speak English.

Slightly less enthusiasm was expressed by students when they were asked if they would prefer to have more courses taught by visiting foreign professors. Whereas ninety per cent of the students wanted more emphasis on English, 70.7% expressed willingness to have more courses taught by foreign professors. Even this lower figure signifies an avid interest in the English language, for the term "foreign professors" in actuality means American professors. Michigan State University professors utilize office space and share many facilities

with the NIA faculty. They are clearly in evidence and are almost the only foreign professors who have taught courses at the NIA in recent years.

Table XXVII .

Student Preference on Whether More Courses
Should be Taught by Visiting Foreign Professors

More Courses by Foreign Professors?	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	14	58.3	85	73.3	99	70.7
No	10	41.7	31	26.7	41	29.3
Total	24	100%	116	100%	140	100%

Attitudes Toward the Classroom

The usual class in Vietnam is conducted in a formal atmosphere with the professor reading a completely prepared lecture, while students assiduously transcribe his words, verbatim, if possible. Questions from students and classroom discussions are rare. Classes are large and student absences are numerous, as those who are not in attendance can always borrow or purchase the notes of their classmates. Examinations are largely exercises demanding that the student repeat much of the professor's lectures.

The NIA has been experimental in attempting to break this pattern of education. Term papers, mandatory attendance, classroom discussion, and field experience are part of the education program at the NIA. The NIA was the first institution in Vietnam to introduce the "case method" as an educational technique. In collaboration with Michigan State University, the NIA sponsored a case program which resulted in a volume of cases depicting administrative processes in Vietnam. These cases, and the case method, are used in three separate courses at the Institute.

Student response to the case method is highly favorable. Of 87 students who had come in contact with the case method in the classroom, 70 expressed approval, four disapproved, and 13 students had no opinion. In follow-up discussions, students revealed that there were two aspects of the case method which were particularly attractive: (1) It provided them with

insight into concrete problems of government and administration rather than legal and theoretical situations. (2) It afforded students an opportunity to express their views in the classroom and raise questions about administrative issues. The 13 "no opinion" responses probably reflect the qualms felt by students about an educational technique which does not provide them with a solid body of lecture notes for examination purposes.

Vietnamese students are generally uneasy in participating in classroom discussion; yet, as indicated by their response to the case method, they have an appreciation of the intellectual advantages of classroom participation. When asked if the NIA should provide more opportunity for classroom discussion, only 15.8% of NIA students answered negatively. The remaining 84.2% constitute strong endorsement for the idea of classroom discussion.

Table XXVIII

Student Attitude Toward More
Discussion in NIA Classes

More Classroom Discussion?	Government Students		Regular Students		All Students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	20	83.3	97	84.3	117	84.2
No	4	16.7	18	15.7	22	15.8
Total	24	100%	115	100%	139	100%

Note: One regular student did not answer the question.

One serious obstacle to more classroom discussion at the NIA is the size of classes which on occasion number in excess of 100 students. Most students feel they would receive greater benefit from their education if classes were smaller. This would obviously afford them a greater opportunity to ask questions, express their own ideas, and critically analyze concepts and principles of administration. Of 114 students who feel class-size is of importance, 99 (86.8%) favor smaller classes. Large classes receive the endorsement of only 15 (13.2%) students.

Appendix

Questionnaire Submitted to NIA Students

1. Are you a regular student or a government employee-student?

Regular _____ Government _____

2. Promotion: _____

3. Sex:

Male _____ Female _____

4. Age: _____

5. Your marital status:

a) Single _____

b) Married _____

c) Divorced _____

d) Widowed _____

6. Number of children now living: _____

7. Birthplace:

a) Hanoi _____

b) Elsewhere in what is now North Viet Nam _____

c) In what is now the Central Region of South Viet Nam _____

d) In greater Saigon _____

e) Elsewhere in what is now South Viet Nam _____

f) Other (please indicate) _____

8. In which city of province were you living before the partition of Viet Nam in July, 1954?

a) In Hanoi _____

b) Elsewhere in what is now North Viet Nam _____

c) In what is now the Central Region of South Viet Nam _____

- d) In greater Saigon _____
- e) Elsewhere in what is now South Viet Nam _____
- f) Other (please indicate _____

9. Where do your parents presently reside?

- a) In Hanoi _____
- b) Elsewhere in what is now North Viet Nam _____
- c) In what is now the Central Region of South Viet Nam _____
- d) In greater Saigon _____
- e) Elsewhere in what is now South Viet Nam _____
- f) Other (please indicate) _____

10. Religious affiliation:

- a) Buddhist _____
- b) Cao Dai _____
- c) Catholic _____
- d) Moslem _____
- e) Protestant _____
- f) No religion _____
- g) Other (please indicate) _____

11. What is your father's occupation at present? (be specific)

12. What was your father's occupation in 1953? (be specific)

13. Was your father ever a civil servant?

Yes _____ No _____

14. If so, what position did he hold? (be specific)

15. Is your mother presently employed?

Yes _____ No _____

16. If so, what is her profession or employment?

17. Which of the following means of conveyance do you or your parents own?

a) Automobile _____

b) Motor Scooter _____

c) Bicycle _____

18. Which of the following do you or your parents own?

a) Home _____

b) Rice fields _____

c) Plantation _____

d) A business establishment _____

e) Other real estate _____

19. Are you currently employed while attending the NIA?

Yes _____ No _____

20. Are you currently enrolled in any other school while attending the NIA?

Yes _____ No _____

21. If so, what school? (be specific)

22. If you were able to attend the school of your choice and receive the same financial assistance as you are presently receiving, which of the following schools would you attend?

a) Faculty of Medicine + Pharmacy _____

b) Faculty of Law _____

- c) Faculty of Letters _____
- d) Faculty of Sciences _____
- e) Faculty of Pedagogy _____
- f) National Institute of Administration _____
- g) Other (please indicate) _____

23. If you were not required to work for the government upon graduation, would you nevertheless choose to enter the civil service under present conditions?

Yes _____ No _____

24. If you have a choice, in which agency or department of government would you prefer to serve?

25. List in order of preference the three cities or towns or provinces in Vietnam where you would most like to work.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

26. List the three cities or towns and provinces you consider least attractive in which to work (in order of unattractiveness)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

27. Do you feel that the French language or the English language will be more beneficial to you in your future work as a civil servant?

French _____

English _____

28. Do you feel that there should be more emphasis on the study of the English language at the NIA?

Yes _____ No _____

29. Would you prefer to have more NIA courses taught by visiting foreign professors than at present?

Yes _____ No _____

30. Have you ever used the book, "Cases in Vietnamese Administration" in any of your courses?

Yes _____ No _____

31. If so, what is your opinion of the use of "case studies" as an approach to education?

- a) Approve _____
 b) Disapprove _____
 c) No opinion _____
 d) Other comment _____

32. Do you feel that there should be more opportunity for classroom discussion by students than at present?

Yes _____ No _____

33. Do you feel that large lecture classes are as beneficial to you as those classes with fewer students enrolled?

Large classes are more beneficial _____

Large classes are less beneficial _____

The size of the class does not matter _____