

MONDAY, Aug. 23, 1965. My instructions were to be ready to be picked up by the USOM car at 6:15 in the morning which would take me to the Tan Son Nhut airport. A three-hour flight in a twin-engine Beechcraft would bring me to Da Nang where I would receive further instructions on how to get to Hue, a half-hour's flight from Da Nang. The first misadventure was the fact that the auto driver's manifest listed me as Prof. Arein. We finally straightened that out.

At the airport I was taken to a hangar where I was checked in by name, told the serial number of the plane and simply sent out onto the field to find a Beechcraft with those numbers. I introduced myself to the pilots. An 8-seater, we soon discovered that we had nine scheduled passengers. One, a Vietnamese worker en route to a job, was simply left behind. One of the other passengers, Gil Scheinbaum, a USOM provincial rep, greeted me by name; we had met that evening in the apartment of the Time correspondent, Jim Wilde. A second passenger, Frank Hessler, in his sixties, big and fat, was in the construction industry under contract to USOM; he was impressive in his knowledge of the country -- the dams we overflowed, the bridges, etc. The airline -- called Air America, formerly Air Cat (~~China Air Travel~~) -- was a spit-and-paste affair, and the pilots American hot-rod flyers. "They've cracked up this plane three times already," said Gil. Hessler added: "If somebody sets up four markers and calls something an air strip, they'll fly in."

Then we began the long flight north across virtually the full length of Viet Nam. For the most part we hugged the coast line, and could look way out into the South China Sea. For the most part there was little ship traffic, until we reached the main centers of activity. As we came over Cam Ranh Bay, we could see why USOM had decided that this would be the ideal spot for a natural deep-water harbor, and why so much was being invested in a program of industrial development here. It is a perfect horseshoe, protected against storm on three sides, with island-sandspits at the mouth to break rough tides.

We overflowed the peninsula just below Chu Lai where the marines were still mopping up after their outstanding victory over Victor Charlie. I heard something of the details from the men on the plane, and later from a naval lieutenant (about whom more later) who had participated in part of the naval action. The Marine command had apparently taken things into their own hands. As soon as they heard that the peninsula was being used by the VC as a staging area for an attack on our forces at Chu Lai the next day, they acted. They did not inform the ARVN (the Vietnamese Army) for fear that a week would be lost in getting approval in Saigon and in "planning" the attack; in the meantime, VC intelligence would ~~enjoy~~ know the plans and there would be no VC, only "villagers" when our troops got there. Even ~~CINCPAC~~ was not notified until after the operation started for fear that it would insist on prior notice to ARVN. ~~CINCPAC (Commander in Chief of the Pacific)~~

The story, I know, has been well covered in the States as our first major victory. The VC was surprised by the landing of our marines by helicopter across the top of the peninsula. They could not withdraw into the forests. Steadily the marines swept them down to the water's edge, routing them out of caves and tunnels with the methods used against the Japanese in Okinawa, pouring napalm into the hiding places. As the VC tried to flee to the beaches, the S.S. ~~Galveston~~ Galveston was waiting to pour a rain of shells on them. The result: some 600 known VC dead; our fatalities under 60. And what made the affair most significant was that the enemy consisted of the VC's crack troops.

We landed at Nha Trang, a tremendous military base, at about the mid-section of the Vietnamese Coast, for the purpose of refueling. For three hours we waited until a

gasoline truck was available. The wait was not tedious. Every manner of flying military vehicle seemed to be coming in and taking off. Scheinbaum, Hessler and I sat on the verandah of the airport building restaurant which was surprisingly cool. The atmosphere of war was all around us. Barbed-wire ringed the airport. At short distances, sand-bagged fortifications dotted the ground. On the other side of the airport, a series of ~~mountain peaks~~ formed a barrier against the barren, seemingly impassable mountain peaks, formed a natural line of fortifications. I had not had breakfast, and welcomed the opportunity to have a miserable cheese sandwich and ~~an~~ tea. As the hours wore on, I switched from tea to beer to coke.

Finally, we were off on the hop to Da Nang, the giant base ~~almost~~ three-quarters of the way up the coast. As we approached Da Nang, one of the pilots, who were not separated from us by any door, exclaimed: "Look at him pour it on." I followed his gaze. A plane was roaring by us off to the right, and dropping bombs into the side of a mountain. Huge white billows geysered up into the sky.

A few minutes later we put down in Da Nang, and taxied over to a little shack under the blazing sun. The other passengers had arrived at their destination. A typewritten message was waiting for me: "A plane will take you to Hue at 1100. It will be the same Beechcraft that you arrived on this morning. Hue has been notified of your arrival time." The pilots had similar instructions, and we took off immediately since we were long overdue.

After a half-hour later, we were approaching Hue and the pilot told me to fasten my seat belt. As I looked off to the left, I could see huge clouds of smoke rising from what must have been three separate villages. The pilots knew no more than I of what might have happened. Coming in over Hue, I could see the old walled section of the city, and the beautifully placid surface of the famous Perfumed River. We landed at a small airfield that had only a shed-like structure for administration. Again, the barbed wire, concrete ~~in~~ pillboxes and sand-bagged emplacements. A USOM car was waiting for me, and we drove into the city along a country line, lined with huts, past little markets where women peddled fruit, pots cloth. (I learned later that I had come in via the Citadel airport, a small field very close to town.)

Hue is startlingly different from Saigon. There are no tall buildings, and there is no sense of a metropolis. Everything is low and flat. There are handsome stucco buildings, with ~~max~~ fenced- or walled-in gardens. There is little shade, and the sun seems more furious here. In town, there are soldiers, but even though we are only 50 miles from the 17th parallel, official buildings are not under the strict security one finds in Saigon. USOM is in the same building as the District Chief, but one walks in without being stopped for an examination of credentials. The only official paper I ever had to show was my travel orders so that the custodian at the USOM guest house could justify not charging me any rent. At night, however, the guest house was well guarded. A wall surrounded the structure and the large iron gate was closed. To get to my room, I would go through the building to a verandah off which my room opened. At night, when I got up to go to the john, which was in a separate side-structure that linked up with another building across a courtyard (where there were more rooms and a dining room for breakfast), I found that the custodian was sleeping in a hammock on the verandah and he had to open a door for me.

At USOM I found one very large room that opened onto a balcony overlooking the Perfumed river where sampans moved slowly. To the left I could see a railroad bridge, no longer in use, and several mountain peaks in the distance. Straight ahead, ~~max~~ on the other side of the river, was the walled city within which the old imperial palace, dating back to the

days when Vietnam was independent under its own monarchy. I was greeted by Jim Green, a blonde-haired farm-boy, with a constant grin which seemed to be saying all the time, "I'm putting something across on everybody." Politically, he is probably the most naive person I have met among our personnel in Viet Nam. He seemed indecisive about everything, had little idea what to do with me. He was expecting me; in fact, my name was listed in large letters on a blackboard as due to arrive. In Vietnamese he told me a driver to take me to the Cercle Sportif -- I was starving -- and there in the most unsavory surroundings I had a "sandwich de jambon sur un petit pain" and "une biere 33." Then I was off to see Dr. Nguyen-Dinh-Hoan, whose title is Secretary-General of the University of Hue. He explained to me that he is the second in command, working directly under the Rector, who apparently is a scholar, buried in his books, and does little actually to run the University. This was confirmed for me later by the American Consul, Samuel Thomsen.

Dr. Hoan is a very young man for so important a post, probably no more than 30 years of age himself (but I have trouble judging the age of Vietnamese). He studied at several American universities, taking his Ed. D. at Columbia, explaining apologetically that there is no Ph.D. in university administration, his specialty. The University of Hue was founded in 1957 by the Diem regime. There are five schools: Medicine (a 7-year course) with 250 students; Science (4 years) with 1,500 students; Letters (4 years) with 1,200; Law (3 years) with 600; and Pedagogy (4 years, next year to become 3-year course) with 300 -- making a total of 3,850.

To my question on the effect the war was having on the University, he raised two points: 1) physical facilities were severely limited; 2) the students were ignoring their studies, especially in the past two years, and devoting their time to politics. They had opposed Gen. Kahn and played a part in his downfall. They are pawns in the hands of adults. (Dr. Hoan, though young, has the demeanor of an American dean who is wringing his hands all the time because young people are not adults). Were the students disrespectful of the faculty? Oh no; during the November 1963 revolution they did demand the discharge of 1 or 2 professors who supported Diem but that came to nothing.

The students are organized in a formal body, the Student Union of Hue, which includes both high school and university youngsters. The trouble is that they are constantly being incited by external forces. (I assumed that he meant the Communists. Later conversations suggest that the students are being used by factions within the regime.) Most of the students come from this area and are the children of poor families. They depend on scholarships, of which there 450 last year, and they get enough to live on, plus some earnings from tutorial work in the families with which they live. Tuition is nominal and the university's expenses are met primarily from the National Budget.

Getting passing grades is not easy. This year, out of the roughly 4,000 students, only 400-500 passed their baccalaureate examinations. Either the grading is severe, or the instruction is poor. Thus, a 4-year course may take a student 6 or 7 years. Currently, the big problem is the government's mass mobilization. Though classes are supposed to start the first week in September (next week) the rector has not announced the opening date because he fears he will have no faculty, most of whom are in the 24-37 age bracket. Total resident faculty is 69, and there are about 100 visiting professors. Of the permanent 69, the University may lose 51 to the draft. Even if they are returned to their posts, it will be only after 4 months of training.

The August examinations have not been given because the faculty said, "We probably won't be on hand to grade the papers." This seemed to me a pressure move by the faculty, not really a practical necessity.

In response to my query about student organization, Dr. Hoan said it is completely independent of the University. Two days ago, however, the Union held a seminar in the conference room of the Faculty of Science and adopted a resolution against the regime, calling for civilian government. Student attitudes toward the U. S., he said, were friendly; some were strongly pro-American; a few were anti. His own attitude was indicated by his characterization of U.S. aid to the University: before the November 1963 we provided much help. So did Canada and West Germany. But now we are tapering off. We are completing the projects that were begun but are not launching new ones. Ohio State, under contract to USOM, has been carrying on a program, the most important aspect of which is the running of demonstration-schools in the School of Pedagogy. The Germans are involved in the Medical School, having provided the building and faculty, with Vietnamese to take over in a few years. (From other sources, I learn that the Germans are not getting the cooperation of the Ministry of Health which fears that it will lose its monopoly on medicine, and more important on the drugs that USOM brings in, which the officials use, in Jim Green's words, to become "wealthy rich.") In any case, there are more German teachers here than American. Some 30 students of the University have been to the United States, but they do not come back to Hue, preferring Saigon.

When I asked what more he would like the U.S. to do, Dr. Hoan emphasized a demand with which I sympathize: let more money be spent on housing for faculty; but I can hardly agree that this deserves top priority. In addition, he would like more Fulbrights. He led me outside and pointed to buildings across the road, trim modern structures, that had already been built with U.S. funds to house faculty.

With considerable agitation, he suggested that he and I should have dinner at the home of the American consul, Samuel Thomsen, something I could hardly arrange since I had not as yet met the consul.

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TUESDAY, Aug. 24th. ~~Fix~~ At the USOM office, to which I walked, I found that Jim Green had no plans for me but thought I ought to meet the consul. When he could not reach him, I suggested I would just go on down to the Student Union building myself. I did not want any official introduction; I would just walk in and introduce myself. I took a cyclo to the headquarters, which turned out to be a good-sized two-story residence converted to student use. Along ~~ism~~ the side of the house, some chickens were pecking at the ground, and every so often a rooster crowed.

As I started into the building, some students who had seen me arrive came out to meet me. I explained that I was an American professor who had been in Vietnam on a study, that I was soon to return to the States, but that I wanted first to meet some students because I knew that my own students, who belong to student groups, would be asking me many questions about students in Vietnam. During the course of the conversations that followed, I had contact with about 25 different youngsters, the composition of the group changing as students came and went. There were practically no girls -- in fact, I think I saw only one, and she was in another room. The students gave me cold tea, replenishing the glass from time to time, and at one point served me a sickly soft drink that was unchilled.

My explanation, and some 15 minutes of talk about students in America, was apparently successful in winning their confidence, though one older student who does some teaching (comparable to our graduate assistant) remained suspicious throughout. A number of the students spoke English well; with the others I got along fine in French. The graduate assistant, to whom the others obviously deferred, did not say anything to me directly; he did not speak English, but I had the impression that he knew French but preferred to

communicate through an interpreter. I found him uninformative and sullen. Frequently he kept asking, "For what purpose are you asking all these questions?" His name, I learned was Ngo van Bang, and he was president of a newly formed unit within the Student Union called the Committee of Struggle.

The most articulate spokesman was a young bespectacled, intense student, Truong Huu Kha, vice-president of the Union. Another was a chap who merely gave me his name as Dinh.

I asked what problems the students were having. The immediate answer was the draft. They confirmed what Dr. Hoan had said the day before. But they did not seem to be interested in discussing the subject per se. They had held a seminar on the government's policy, ~~had~~ three days before, had adopted a manifesto, and appointed the Committee of Struggle. I wanted to stay close to the students' immediate problem and asked what they were doing about the draft situation. They did not think they ought to do anything. "Ca nous depasse. That's up to the rector; let him handle that." Was the Committee of Struggle going to do anything about that issue? No, they had bigger things to do, bring about the ouster of the government. (I thought of the old wheeze about the wife handling the small things, like the family treasury, while the husband was permitted to handle the big things, like what should be done with the national budget.) "We don't consider this government legal; it was not set up by a free election." Had there been any interference with their meetings? None at all. Could they distribute their manifesto? Yes. How did they publicize it -- in the newspapers? No, they drove around in a car equipped with loud speakers and read it aloud. Do they have demonstrations? No. But I could not fathom what they meant by demonstrations; every night at 6 o'clock, they told me, they gather at the foot of the bridge over the Perfumed River and chat about political subjects, and make speeches.

I decided to switch to non-political matters for a while. Tuition per year in the School of Letters is only 600 piastres (about \$8); in Law, 700 piastres. It takes about 1,500 piastres (about \$20) a month to live. They earn about 1,000 piastres a month, for example, by tutorial work. There are about 100 scholarships. A ~~University~~ scholarship from the University will pay 1,000 piastres a month for eight months; national scholarships provided by the Ministry of Education fall into two categories: total, paying 700 piastres per month for 12 months; and partial, paying 350 piastres per month for 12 months.

Physical facilities -- classrooms, etc. -- are not good because "our country is destroyed by war." ~~expressing~~ All the students would like to study abroad, especially in the U.S., but military service prevents acceptance of scholarships. They were indignant that the government would not allow foreign study. I asked for specific cases. Currently, they said, in the School of Pedagogy, two students have won scholarships, one to the U.S. and one to France, but the Government says No. In the past there have been scholarships from the U.S., Australia, Canada, and New Zealand -- very few from France. The situation has worsened in the past four years.

They complained that there was little cooperation from the government in education because "most of the effort of the government is reserved for the war." I asked how they could pay for this building. They explained that it was provided without cost by the Provincial government. This led me ~~and~~ to sound out their attitudes toward

various officials. The provincial chief is a good man; he is friendly to the students and does all he can to help them, but he is limited by the national government. Gen. Ti (the warlord who is the real power in this area) has been friendly to the students. Yesterday Kha, my most articulate spokesman in the group of students, met with Gen. Ti for about ten minutes at Ti's request. The day after tomorrow Ti was going to talk with a group of the student leaders.

We returned to the question of the national government. There was no question about their blunt, direct opposition to Saigon. "We live in our future; therefore we rose up against Diem and Khan. We will all die in the war. The nation~~will~~ will be ~~maximized~~ destroyed." Why? "For two reasons: first, because of the call-up the intelligentsia. Secondly, because there will be no leadership left."

What do they want of the U.S.? "We want the U.S. government to help us efficiently and sincerely. We want it to build factories and give us economic aid." Militarily, what do they want? And here the answer was a bombshell, one that came as a complete surprise to me and would be a shocker to students in the U.S.---"Bomb China! Do not bomb North Vietnam. The people there are our cousins. The real enemy is the Chinese."

I wanted to make sure that this was not just Kha's opinion, or Dinh's or Bang's. I polled everybody in the room. They were all in agreement. Kha made notes on a piece of paper in Vietnamese, listing four numbered points.

"This is what America must do," he said, "if we are going to win the war and have peace:

- 1) The U.S. must give much more economic aid -- not consumer goods, but capital goods. Help us to industrialize.
- 2) Hear the true voice of Vietnam -- our wishes for the creation of a popular government elected by the people.
- 3) Support the government that is backed by the majority.
- 4) Bomb China. There is no other way to have a peace conference. China does not allow North Vietnam to negotiate. You must help North Vietnam to escape from the domination of China. If you don't bomb China now, it will be impossible in two or three years. China will have the intercontinental ballistics missile with a nuclear force. It will no longer be possible for the U.S. to do anything, and China will expand her aggression."

With the 17th parallel only 80 kilometers away, some 50 miles, I asked if they had any information about what was happening up there. No news comes through directly, but the students believe that conditions are bad there. How do they get this information? From Time, Life and other magazines.

Now I approached the key question, but very gingerly. "In the U.S.," I said, "students are always arguing with each other. There are all shades of opinion. Do you have such disagreements in your own ranks?"

"No, we are agreed."

"When you adopted your manifesto a few days ago, was there much debate and argument?"

"No."

"Didn't some students feel that it was too strong, and didn't others perhaps say it was too weak?"

"Very few disagreed -- very few."

"In our classes, you can hear almost any opinion. Some students, ~~will~~ when they read the works of Marx and Lenin, will argue that Communism as an idea is good. Don't some

some of your students argue such a position?"

"No, we are against Communism. We students have a strong national feeling for Viet Nam," said Kha. "As I a boy I lived in the countryside under the Communist threat, and my family had to move into the city."

"Hasn't the VC tried to influence the students?"

"The VC tried to infiltrate but the Hue students have a clear anti-Communist stand-point. The VC has failed. If we found that any student was for the VC, we would denounce him to security." Now he became very passionate. "Why is everybody allowed to talk for peace. President Johnson says he is fighting for peace. When we say we want peace they say we are Communists."

I returned to the question of the direct student grievances. They said that 30-40 percent of the students were now subject to the new mobilization law. Did they intend to carry on any actions on this question and on the question of the cancelled examinations? No, that was in the province of the faculty. "Our objective is to get a peaceful situation so that such questions will not arise."

Without prompting, they turned immediately to the question of the government. "Even though Ky was not legally elected, we support him. Ky is able to fulfil the duty of general. Our intention is to turn down the government but not to eliminate Ky; we want to confine him to a military role."

Whom do the students favor as a successor in the prime ministry? "It is not for us to find successors. That is up to the people." Well, from what social forces can a representative leadership emerge? Are there any leaders who cut across religious and regional lines? But here I could find no comprehension of social forces operating within a nation, maintaining differences and yet at the same time preserving cohesiveness. What of the conflict, for example, between the Buddhists and the Catholics. "Oh, they are uniting. Both are so fed up with the military that they are ready to join hands. In Saigon, the Catholic leaders are meeting with the bonzes so that they can work together. When you talk about social forces, our faculty can be more precise in giving you answers."

I pressed the problem. They responded by citing the provincial elections for local (really nominal) offices that were held in May. It was a free popular vote; 72 percent of the people voted. That proves elections can be held even in the middle of a war.

I asked about religious differences among the students. There is no conflict, though 20 percent are Catholic and the rest Buddhist. There are problems among only a few individuals.

By now, after some four hours the discussion was becoming repetitive. They gave me a copy of the manifesto, and since one of the students had made a crude translation into English, I copied the bulk of it:

"Manifesto of Youth and High School and University Students of Hue and Thieu Province.

"With a desire to serve the nation and build up a prosperous, peaceful and independent Viet Nam under the Republican regime; with a strong faith in the non-submissive tradition of the people; through the people's good will and sacrifice aiming at revolutionizing the country, which have been manifested many times in the past and specially in the recent seminars at the University of Hue;

"We students of and youth realize:

"(1) The measure of mass mobilization . . . is either a 'non-policy measure' which wastes the energy of the state's cadres, and causes our society to fall into a dark and chaotic situation, or a cruel plot aiming at militarizing opposition forces to create a dictatorial militarist regime in Viet Nam;

"(2) under the leadership of Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, an ambitious and incompetent dictator the national sovereignty and autodetermination have been totally violated.

"Therefore the government has failed to stabilize the present society, to manage the struggle against the communists, to outline a clear and logical policy for peace and war for Viet Nam. On the contrary, it has, in an adventurous way, ~~which~~ (nullified) the noble sacrifices of thousands. We

(1) vigorously protest . . . against the mobilization . . . although we are conscious of our duty as citizens.

"(2) We condemn the state's leaders who are unable to safeguard the national sovereignty and autodetermination in all the fields of activities - social, political, military and economic.

"Finally we demand:

(1) The elimination of three-star Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu and his clique from the National Directory;

(2) The establishment of a government elected by the people in order to realize a social revolution which the people are expecting, to safeguard the honor and national sovereignty before strangers, and to point out a new direction for the country at this very tragic moment.

"We earnestly appeal to the Vietnamese armed forces, the religious leaders and the intelligentsia and other groups to be aware of the present pathetic situation and to fulfil their duty in a positive manner towards the people and history."

At lunch, again the Cercle Sportif, I ran into Sam Wray, the provincial rep for USOM. He stopped by and had a beer with me. A summary of his remarks:

Security is pretty good inside of Hue. The people are anti-Communist. Many of them are people from the North who fled after the partition. Only 10 percent are Catholic, but they are very influential. The VC leadership locally seems to be inept. They could cause a great deal of trouble, but their tactics have been so vacillating that the morale of their own people is low. The Chieu Hoy program is pretty effective, especially when the rally-ers slip back for a brief visit in their own hamlets. After a VC defeat, ~~people~~ guerillas come in as rally-ers. Moreover, the VC life in the mountains and the jungle is tough, particularly from the mosquitoes.

Hue has little industry, mostly agriculture. Handicrafts do not abound. There is trade, with people buying products in ~~one~~ one hamlet, transporting them by sampan, and selling at a small profit. This is an economy with a heavy emphasis on the middle-man.

The monsoon season will soon begin in Hue. In November, it gets quite cold, dropping to about 40 degrees. There may be VC trouble soon.

At USOM headquarters, a young man approached me and introduced himself as the head of the Catholic Students Union of Hue. He spoke no English, and we conversed in French. He told me he had seen me at the Student Union but had decided not to intervene. He was clearly not in sympathy with the views of the other students. He sneered at their meetings at the bridge, referring to them as the "radiodiffusion des etudiants." He told me that he had headed up a Summer Youth Project of the Catholic students building shelters for refugees from the VC. He invited me to visit it, and in a USOM car we drove 9 miles kilometres down the road to Phu Bai -- the national highway that goes down to Da Nang which is now impassable. Just outside of Hue it is negotiable by day-light, but after dark it belongs to the VC.

Through the hamlets we drove, along rice paddies, passing water buffalo, peasants, local markets -- hot and dusty. Near our destination we turned off the road, drove by a Catholic Church, and behind it was the refugee settlement. I took pictures of one of the two wells dug by the students: cut into the cement was a statement, "Built by the Catholic Students Union of Hue." Large long-houses of bamboo and thatch provided the temporary quarters; other such were being built by refugees. I watched them raise the bamboo poles and weave the sides of the house; I was told that these structures took four days to build. Then I visited the permanent concrete-block buildings put up by the students. They seemed sturdy and well-built. There were ~~some~~ five of these, each having room for 6 families. The students were proud of them; so were the refugees who proudly invited me in. An elder came up to shake my hand, his wispy beard white and scraggly. The children crowded up to me, touching my hand. ~~They invited~~ I was invited to have hot tea from a common dipper, but I begged off, saying I was too hot to have hot tea. Around us water buffalo, goats, ~~and~~ geese and chickens foraged.

Across the road, an ARVN encampment crowned at the foot of a mountain peak. On the other side of the mountain was a U.S. marine encampment. My Catholic student friend Hoang Van Dinh) told me that the student workers used to sleep nights at the refugee site -- when they could sleep with the marine artillery firing away every night. Even during the day, inside Hue, I could hear the boom of the guns. I learned later that the marines ~~in this area~~ here have a large "tactical area of responsibility." But they are spread very thin. (On leaving via the Phu Bai airport the next day, I saw the defenses around the airport. Many 50 mm. guns were in clear view.)

Going back to Hue, I had a second chance to see the local defenses. Particularly well guarded, surrounded by chain link fence, and sand-bagged bunkers, ~~and~~ concrete watch-towers was the local station of the Vice of America.

Back at USOM I recognized Samuel Thomsen, the American consul, from description given to me by Wray. He was leaving the building with the Province chief. I introduced myself and Thomsen invited me to the consulate to tell him about my visit with the students. This gave me an opportunity to confirm my impressions which he seemed to share. He add some information, however, that shed a great deal of light on the situation. He was most interested in the students' attitude towards Gen. Thi & who he believes is the manipulator behind the scenes, along with the Buddhist leader, Thich Van Trang (Thich - Most Venerable). He seemed quite perturbed about what was happening.

At 6 o'clock I was in the square at the foot of the bridge, near the Perfume River. The students were assembling, almost all of them with bicycles. In addition, the cyclo drivers seemed to have massed. I estimated a crowd of 1,500, completely blocking the main thoroughfare so that traffic could not get through. From loudspeakers hung high on a nearby building, speeches were emanating in Vietnamese. Finally, there was one speaker in French, and I could understand that he was delivering the general line contained in the manifesto. I tried to talk with some of the students, using both English

and French, but no one seemed to understand, and I finally gave up. The crowd was orderly and did not seem to respond with any emotion to the speeches. Copies of the manifesto were being distributed.

That night I spent a little time with a young Naval lieutenant from Brooklyn, a graduate of Hunter College in Phys. Ed. A Jewish boy, his father had been a Marine Sergeant during the war and had brought him up in marine style, slugging him if he got out of line, but he obviously admired his father very much, boasting that he had been an amateur boxing champion and had taught him to fight. He said he ~~liked~~ killing, himself liked killing, that it was a good thing to do because we had to beat the Communists, that the GI's nowadays were too soft-hearted, that he enjoyed pouring in the artillery and if innocent people got killed, it was their tough luck; there was no other way to beat the VC, and they should get out of the villages if the VC was around. Since the Vietnamese army was no good and the officials were corrupt, we simply ought to take over the whole show. It would be a good thing to end the whole affair by dropping a nuclear bomb on China; that wouldn't bring the Russians in because they're afraid of the Chinese too. For a while he talked about being a Jew, and complained that Judaism was dying out because of intermarriage, though all his own girl friends had been non-Jewish but he wouldn't marry them because of their religion. A few minutes later he was talking about his apartment in Saigon; whenever he has leave, he buys a Vietnamese girl for \$75 for two weeks and he screws his time away ~~not~~ because it would cost him more playing poker with the fellows if he weren't in his apartment fucking. And besides the girl did the cooking, cleaning and laundry.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 25th. During the morning I went sight-seeing in Hue with my naval lieutenant friend. We shopped and bargained over some cheap lacquer paintings of which I bought four as examples of Vietnamese handicrafts. (They were probably made in Saigon but were cheaper in Hue because there ~~were~~ are so few Americans in this city.) We visited the old imperial palace in the walled city -- an ornate, gilt, red structure was the great hall where court was held.

I flew back to Saigon on Air Vietnam in a DC-4~~1~~ filled with Vietnamese. There was a long wait at the Phu Bai airport, and being hungry I bought a coke (or rather Jim Green bought the food which made me think it was safe) and a chicken sandwich -- French bread with chunks of chicken and bone and gravy. On take-off and landing, the usual seat-belt-no-smoking sign went on, but it was in English, so nobody paid attention to it, making me nervous indeed. The stewardess simply didn't bother. At Saigon airport we were stacked up for an hour, after a long four-hour flight. When I tried to get my luggage back, I found they had automatically sent it into town, leaving me in a sweat since my passport and papers were in the luggage. I chased after it, and arrived at the terminal just as they were unloading; ~~and~~ everything was intact.

THURSDAY, AUG. 26th. I spoke to ~~the~~ a joint meeting of the two employers' associations. The Minister of Labor was present and greeted me profusely in a long speech. A number of USOM people were present - our labor representatives and some of our management advisory team. ~~The~~ One of the latter grabbed the floor as soon as the question period opened to ask me a hostile question that implied that small business had been ruined by the American labor unions, but I was able to handle it without any overt conflict. I learned later that the management people were angry that a professor of management could be on hand without their being involved.

Following the meeting, I was guest of honor at a dinner, and having some of the management men seated near me I systematically went to work on them to calm their feel-

ings since I didn't want to be the cause of any internal conflict in USOM. The meal was sumptuous in Oriental style. We all took our food from a common platter. Since I was the guest, I had to help myself first before the others could eat. Again I was glad I had mastered the chopsticks. I enjoyed everything, even the pigeon, except for seeing the bald, crisp heads with wide-open beaks. The last item was fried rice, and just as soon as it was finished everybody rose and left abruptly. Such is the custom, though tonight it was imperative because of the curfew.

FRIDAY, Aug. 27. Diarrhea! Thank goodness I have three lines of defense -- entero-vioform, Donnagel and sulfasuxidine.

Al Strachan phoned to say that Acting Deputy Director Leroy Wehrle and Col. Wilson, hearing I had been with the students in Hue, wanted me to report first-hand at 11:15 a.m. At the meeting, Col. Mark Huss sat in for Wilson who couldn't make it.

Wehrle listened very attentively. He seemed genuinely worried that a new coup was in the making, and that Gen. Thi and Thich Van Trang were really up to something. Thi had apparently reversed his position in the past week. It seemed significant that the move was primarily against Thieu, who is a Catholic, with no attack on Prime Minister Ky in the manifesto, and the students even saying some nice things about him as an able general; Ky is Buddhist.

~~SATURDAY~~, Al Strachan had me over to dinner in his vast apartment to say good-bye.

SATURDAY, Aug. 28. Left Vietnam. Arrived Hong Kong.