

TO: Dr. Stanley Gabis, Assistant Coordinator, Vietnam Project, MSU.  
FROM: Mrs. Le Thi Bach-Lan, degree candidate, 530 W. 112th St. Apt.4, N.Y.25, N.Y.  
DATE: June 24th, 1959.  
SUBJECT: Progress Report.

With reference to your note of June 10th, 1959 concerning written progress report of my studies, I would like to describe first the PH.D. (Public Law and Government) degree requirements at Columbia University, and then go on with a report of my studies to date and plans and problems I may be encountering in my pursuit of the degree.

#### I. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.

Residence: Residence at the University for at least two academic years as a Regular Graduate Student is required.

Course Credit: Credit for courses taken to satisfy the residence requirements is of two kinds. E credit (examination credit) is given a student who has completed the required work in a course, including a final examination or paper. R credit (Registration credit) is given a student who has registered for a course but who has not taken the final examination or other tests. The requirements for the number of points of E credit and of R credit necessary for a degree are set by the departments. (In the Public Law and Government Department, out of the 60 point-credit requirement, a minimum of 21 points of E credit must be taken from the faculty of Political Science; at least 12 of these within the department. The remaining 39 points could be taken as R credits.)

Certification of Candidacy: The student will be recommended to the Dean as a certified candidate when he has fulfilled the following requirements, i.e. when he has:

- 1) Pursued graduate studies for at least one academic year.
- 2) Demonstrated his ability to read at least two languages other than English.
- 3) Fulfilled all departmental requirements for certification and satisfied the department, through qualifying examinations, that he is prepared to undertake research. In the Public Law and Government Department, these qualifying examinations are: (a) Oral Examination with two faculty members, to determine whether the student is to be permitted to proceed to the PH.D.; This is to be applied for before completing 45 points (i.e. by the end of the third semester). (b) Qualifying examination: written, in political theory.

Major Subject: One must be chosen.

- 1) American political institutions, including constitutional law with emphasis on either politics or public administration.
- 2) Foreign political institutions. (Scope and emphasis to be determined individually)
- 3) International Relations, with emphasis on either International Politics or International Law and Organization.
- 4) Political Theory.
- 5) Comparative Legal Systems.
- 6) Roman Law.

Minor Subject. (a) An adaptation of one of the major subjects; or (b) a program

of area studies from the offerings of the East Asian, European, Near and Middle East or Russian Institutes; or (c) a special combination of studies. Dissertation: Choice of subject to be approved by the department.

## II. REPORT OF MY STUDIES UP TO THE PRESENT.

During the Spring Session of 1958-59, I took the following courses:

- 1) History of Modern China. Professor Wilbur. (China's internal historical development from 1600 to 1850; Modern relations with the West; and intellectual, social, political, and economic changes during the past century resulting from foreign impact and domestic crisis.)
- 2) British History since 1689. Professor Williamson. (A survey of the political, social, and intellectual forces that have influenced the development of Great Britain since the Revolution of 1688.)
- 3) International Politics in the Far East. Professor Morley. (Analysis of the forces which have made for conflict in the Far East and the main principles of the post-war order in the Far East and Pacific areas.)
- 4) European political institutions. Professor Rogers. (The British Parliamentary System; the decline and fall of constitutional government in Europe; the emergence of dictatorships; the interplay of crisis administration, domestic policies and international relations; post-war political institutions in Great Britain and on the Continent; Party and ideological issues.)
- 5) The managerial aspects of public administration. Professor Sayre. (The managerial aspects of public administration within the distinctive legal and political context of democratic government. Structure and process as aspects of administrative organization; centralization and decentralization; the budget process as an instrument of coordination and control; personnel policies and the role of the bureaucracy; the roles of specialists and generalists in administration; and the relationships of administrative agencies with their clientele groups and with the general public.)

It was suggested by my supervisors--Professor W. Sayre, adviser in American Government and Public Administration; and Professor James W. Morley, adviser in Foreign Political Institutions--that I should take the above-mentioned courses with a view to taking Foreign Political Institutions with emphasis on Britain, the U.S.A., and China as major subject, and Political Theory as minor subject. Taking into consideration my housing, settling down and other personal problems, they thought that with my familiarity with British and European institutions, I should begin my first term by taking courses on ~~the~~ these subjects and further my reading or fill the gaps whenever required. And because China was to be one of the countries I should originally concentrate on, I should take one course on Modern China, and one on International Politics in the Far East. Finally, the fifth course I should take was Public Administration to get used to the subject before I take more courses in this field.

This seemed to be reasonable, and I followed the advice, bearing in mind that having many personal problems to solve, I could take most of these courses as R credit, and take more examinations later. The schedule turned out to be heavy, with 10 hours lectures a week, papers to write, and long lists of books to read. I began to realize that a normal load of work ~~should~~ have been 4 courses instead of 5 if one considered taking final examinations for all the courses. In any case, as a newcomer in this country, with new adjustments to make to graduate school and conditions of living, I should have been warned not to take as many courses as 5. I had to find out later on that this proved to be a great pressure, especially when I had to look for a school for my daughter.

during term time, when all schools had been practically booked up a year ~~in~~ ahead, and also change lodgings three times! By the middle of term I received a letter from Mr. H. Waltman in Saigon expressing his concern about my choosing "Foreign Political Institutions" and "Political Theory" as major and minor subjects, respectively, rather than Public Administration. At the Public Administration conference in Washington D.C., at the beginning of April this year, you yourself suggested that I should shift ~~the~~ emphasis of my studies over to Public Administration. When I consulted my Public Administration Adviser, however, the latter held that there was no such degree as Public Administration at Columbia; and any student wishing to do this, had to belong to the Faculty of Political Science, Department of Public Law and Government. After careful consideration, he thought I could choose the following:  
1) Major: American political institutions including constitutional law, with emphasis on Public Administration.  
2) Minor: Foreign Political Institutions, with emphasis on 2 countries.

In short, owing to the existence of several problems to solve, and the shift of emphasis by mid-term, I did not feel very happy with my first term. But ~~I~~ this can't be helped, and now that I have secured a nice place to live, and my daughter is admitted to Dalton Schools for the next school years, I feel much relieved, and I am looking forward to future work with more confidence and high spirits.

### III. MY FUTURE PLANS.

So far, I have earned 15 points of credit, and will have to earn 45 more points of credit before I can satisfy the 60 point residence requirement, and take the oral examination. The following is my calendar for the next three terms:

- 1) Summer and Winter 1959: earn 15 credits. These will have to be all examination credits, as I believe that in trying to take the examinations, I shall do more adequate reading and get myself ready for qualifying and oral examinations in the future.
- 2) October 1959: take one language examination.
- 3) Spring 1960: earn 15 examination credits.
- 4) February 1960: take another language examination.
- 5) May 1960: take the political theory examination.
- 6) September 1960: Satisfy the Department by means of an oral interview ~~in~~ that I am able to carry my work to a satisfactory conclusion.
- 7) Summer and Winter 1960: earn 15 examination credits.
- 8) By November 1960: apply for oral examination on major and minor subjects. The date of the examination will be set by the Department.
- 9) February 1961: choose and define a topic for dissertation under the guidance of a sponsor.
- 10) 1961 onwards: Research work.

The Doctorate is conceived as a three-year program of full time work, but in the course of conversation with friends and other people who had done it, I was told that one would normally take four or five years instead.

As I have mentioned before, for the next three terms, including Summer Sessions, I shall take all the remaining 45 points as points of E credit, though the minimum number of points of E credit required is only 21. This may sound ambitious, but it will help me greatly towards oral examination which I understand, is very difficult. I shall therefore spread my work in such a way that in Summer Sessions I shall take part of the courses to enable me to take less than 5 courses in term time. I could perhaps use this tentative schedule:

Summer Session 1959-59: 2 courses.

Winter Session 1959-60: 4 courses.

Spring Session 1959-60: 4 courses.

Summer Session 1959-60: 2 courses.

Winter session 1960-61: 3 courses.

Total : 15 courses, earning 45 points of E credit. This is what I intend to do, but whether I can take all the 45 points as points of E credit depends on whether I can cope with the pressure of work. I will perhaps find out that I might not be able to take all of them as points of E credit, and therefore some R points have to be earned instead. But I fully realise that there is great advantage in trying my best to keep to the planned schedule, for this will enable me to carry on with my work steadily and to avoid the "cramming" during the last few months to pass the oral examination by the end of 1960.

I would like also to report that Professor Fainsod at the school of Public Administration of Harvard University has kindly asked me to attend any of his lectures in which he will make full use of the case method, during the next Winter Session. I understand that he will lecture for 2 hours every Thursday, from 2 to 4 p.m., and I think it might be good for me to attend one or two such courses to see how the teaching of case methods is carried out at Harvard.

If there were any problems which might arise in the future, I should be pleased to write and discuss them with you and seek your advice./.