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EDITORIAL NOTE

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Contents

Editorial Note	2
Vietnam Foreign Relations into the New Millenium/ Vietnam Economic Reporting	3
Bibliography: Books and Monographs	16
Bibliography: Periodicals	23
Names in the News	26
Obituaries	28
History Redux	29
Official Statements	30
Audio Visual	32

Việt Nam Foreign Relations Into the New Millenium

Part Two

Introduction. This is the second part of our survey of Việt Nam's foreign relations, issue by issue, area by area, country by country. (See IC XX, no. 1, Jan – April 2001, for Part One.)

The Vietnamese leaders, which is to say the members of the VCP Politburo, at root consider their chief problem (or challenge) to be dealing with change. As the young would say, they have an attitude. The Politburo's day-to-day debate is not simply one of change vs. no change. Rather, how much change, what kind of change? What are the inherent dangers within change? How to balance risk with benefits?

In Politburo thinking, the main challenge of change travels under the umbrella-word, globalization. It requires dealing with the ever-increasing flow into Việt Nam of ideas, information, technology, money, people. Globalization will leave Việt Nam better off. But there is a darker side--exacerbation of local ethnic strife, degradation of culture, empowerment of those who would do Việt Nam harm (as defined by the Politburo). New technology in particular can increase danger from weapons of mass destruction in the hands of, say, the Chinese.

Nations generally friendly toward Việt Nam are becoming increasingly frustrated at Hanoi's antipathy toward religious freedom. Embassies in Hà Nội have expressed their concern. Said one European diplomat: "Events in the past few months show Việt Nam is still ruled by a highly repressive regime, and our position on that is hardening." Those events include a diplomatic row over the fate of ethnic minorities granted refugee status in Cambodia after fleeing persecution in Việt Nam's Central Highlands, the arrest of Catholic priest Nguyễn Văn Lý, and the harassment and

detention of Thích Quảng Độ and other followers of the outlawed Unified Buddhist Church of Việt Nam (UBCV). (*South China Morning Post*, 6 Aug. 2001)

The 21 country members of the World Bank-sponsored Official Development Assistance (ODA) program in Việt Nam held a mid-year review conference in Hội An on June 19. Leading the agenda was consideration of ways to improve Vietnamese efficiency in the outside aid program. In attendance were 100 donor representatives and a 50-person Vietnamese team led by Trần Xuân Giá, Planning and Investment minister. Donors told the Vietnamese they must improve the transparency of their ODA spending (about \$2.4 billion committed at last December's meeting). The group meets again in Tokyo in December (Kyodo, 19 June).

Deputy Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng reminded all ministries and departments to observe agreements on Common Effective Preferential Tariffs (CEPT) for the ASEAN free trade area in 2001. The minister of Finance must submit to the PM a list of all commodities and tax rates that are to be subject to the CEPT agreements. The finance minister and other cabinet members are to consult the list for commodities that will require a 20 percent or less tax rate. Any item which is taxed higher than 20 percent must be quickly tariffed according the CEPT.

Meanwhile, a decision by the Finance Ministry stipulated that from March 15 a variety of fertilizers would enjoy a preferential tax status for import and export. Nine fertilizer groups will enjoy a zero tax rate, including mineral fertilizers or chemical fertilizers in the form of pills or tablets weighing up to 10 kg (including packaging), nitrate and phosphate fertilizers, and mineral or chemical fertilizers containing phosphorus or potassium.

However, mineral or chemical fertilizers containing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium will be subject to a 3 percent tax rate. Superphosphate and melted phosphate fertilizers will have a 5 percent rate (VNA, 27 March).

The oft-postponed meeting of the European Commission and Vietnam was again postponed at Hà Nội's request (June 18). It's not a problem, an EC official said; we regret it and I'm sure the Vietnamese also regret it. The official said the postponement had nothing to do with Vietnam's deportation of a member of the European Parliament earlier this month. He also said there was some concern among member states that EU firms might lose out to American counterparts with ratification imminent of a bilateral trade agreement (BTA) between Hà Nội and Washington. The meeting, which should have been held last year as part of an exchange supposed to take place every two years, would have addressed a full range of issues ranging from human rights to trade to development cooperation (Reuters, 18 June).

ASEAN. Foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations -- Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, plus the four newest members, Việt Nam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar -- together with counterparts from China, Japan and South Korea, gathered for the 34th time during the week of July 23 in Hà Nội. Inside this clutch of 27 meetings was the 34th two-day session of the ASM (ASEAN Ministers Meeting).

On the hectic agenda: a "code of conduct" for diplomatic behavior, regional integration, the Spratly dispute, income disparity among members, the possible outright elimination of import tariffs and, at a slightly lower level, rapprochement on positions on the Korean Peninsula, the future of Taiwan and the US missile defense program. Mostly, the ministers' minds were on economic matters. No golf. Rhetoric emerging from the week was standard: mutual confidence-building understandings were strengthened, deliberations

ranged widely, discussions were candid; ASEAN is stable, united, integrated and outward looking. All of this from host, SRV FM Nguyễn Dy Niên. While predictable, the characterization taken in the context of Confucian values is more than rhetoric. Niên, admitting the group got nowhere in adoption of a "code of conduct", which applied chiefly to the Spratlys, said flatly: "We could not reach agreement."

The foreign ministers signed a declaration to narrow the rich-poor divide among its members. Target is for all to reach the living standard of Singapore: "We resolve to promote, through concerted efforts, effective cooperation and mutual assistance, {measures} to narrow the development gap among ASEAN member countries and between ASEAN and the rest of the world for the sake of dynamic and sustained growth of our region and prosperity of all our peoples. We shall work together to identify, through research, analysis and consultation, the comparative strengths of our economies and their potential for complementarity, with a view to promoting regional economic integration and a sense of community and shared responsibility among our nations." ASEAN faces an enormous task in bridging a gap among its members, which includes Laos, its poorest at 100 times poorer than Singapore in terms of income per head. The declaration says ASEAN would "devote special efforts and resources to promoting the development of the newer member countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Việt Nam) through improving infrastructure, human resources and information-technology." (AFP, 25 July)

The governments failed to iron out any differences on a code of conduct aimed at easing tensions in the South China Sea despite progress in negotiations, Vietnamese FM Nguyễn Dy Niên said. The code would cover the Spratlys, the chain of islands in the South China Sea claimed in whole or in part by ASEAN members Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Việt Nam, along with non-members China and Taiwan. Believed to sit on vast

oil and natural gas deposits, the chain is seen as a potential flashpoint for armed conflict because all the claimants except Brunei have troops stationed in the area, which also covers strategic shipping lanes and rich fishing grounds. Completion of the proposed code has been delayed by a lack of consensus among claimant nations on the area to be covered. Việt Nam wants the disputed Paracel Islands which are occupied by China, to be included in the code.

In a joint communiqué issued at the end of the security or ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum) meeting, the ministers noted that the situation in Southeast Asia as a whole remained peaceful and stable. (AFP, 25 July)

The ASEAN meeting focused on integration, confidence-building measures, and what is being called preventive diplomacy. One proposal is to establish a High Council to facilitate settlement of regional disputes. Australian FM Alexander Downer advised ASEAN that it risks losing its competitiveness and investor confidence if it doesn't carry through painful structural reforms, which have taken on a greater sense of urgency after the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and China's pending entry into the World Trade Organization. Otherwise, it will be difficult for the grouping to become an effective block capable of building economic prosperity for the region's 500 million people in the era of globalization. "Commitment to structural reforms must be translated into action, no matter how painful that may be." (Reuters, 23 July).

A region-wide human rights commission for ASEAN is still years away. All 10 member states agree in principle to a commission to investigate allegations of human rights groups, but some want to move slowly, Wigberto Tanada, spokesman for an ASEAN working group recommending the commission, said in Hà Nội. The process has been slowed by ASEAN's policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of member countries, "We have been going on a step-by-step approach precisely because of the policy of non-interference – the

thinking that human rights are still matters of domestic concern rather than matters of the international domain," he said.

At the gala dinner (July 24) the two dozen foreign ministers were asked by their host to take the stage; join hands and sing "We Are the World" (cuddly musical score by Michael Jackson, lyrically altered for ASEAN use).

Sense of the aftermath of the gathering was that ASEAN had moved deeper into regional security, which the association has always tried to avoid. ARF adopted documents aimed at promoting preventive diplomacy and enhancing the ARF role in increasing dialogue on regional political and security cooperation. FM Niên listed the documents: Paper on Enhanced Role of ARF Chair; Paper on the ARF Expert/Eminent Persons Register; and Paper on the Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy. The Forum also discussed the important role of major powers in peace and stability, the Korean Peninsula, the situation in Indonesia, East Timor, developments in the Middle East, and Africa. The Eighth ARF issued a 27-point Chairman's Statement on a wide range of regional and global issues at the end of its annual session. (Xinhua, 25 July)

Indochina. Phan Văn Khải gives a pep talk to Southeast Asian neighbors. His proffered slogan: "Unite to Conquer". By way of explanation: "Our (joint) economy has a low level of development...we are still in a transitional period with weakness and pressing social issues. The weak must be protected. Currencies must never be traded as commodities. The idea of a free trade agreement with Japan could spell disaster." Khải and Cambodian PM Hun Sen agreed closer global relationships are imperative for economic prosperity at home and in the region.

The idea of a federation (or confederation) of Indochina (Việt Nam, Cambodia and Laos) remains a long range goal for Hà Nội leaders. It also remains worrisome for Cambodians and Lao who are ambivalent about the idea (are we safer

who are ambivalent about the idea (are we safer within a confederation that might restrain Hà Nội, or outside one where there are no restraints at all?).

The Mekong River Commission is the weathervane (this includes Thailand). It has advanced \$40 million to systematically develop and manage the basin and its resources. This began some 50 years ago by the British as part of its Colombo Plan, and has stayed alive but just barely.

In other Indochina news, Việt Nam and Thailand, who are the world's largest rice exporters, have announced plans for a joint-venture fund to market rice and hope that China will join them. Thailand commonly needs to export 5 to 6 million tons annually (about half its production), and Việt Nam's annual rice exports in recent years have been between 3 and 4.5 million tons, amounting to 25-35% of its national production. The export trade is fiercely competitive for sales of lower quality milled rice in which China is also often involved as an exporter, while being an importer of higher quality rice from Thailand. China has declined to participate in the proposed "rice pool", ostensibly because it expects to join the WTO. (Kyodo News Service, Japan Economic Newswire)

Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao officials met in HCM City March 27-28 to discuss regional environmental protection. Ngọc Sinh, head of the Environment Dept., Ministry of the Environment, Science and Technology, led the Việt Nam delegation; the Cambodians were led by Koch Savath, deputy head of the General Dept. of the Environment Ministry; and the Lao by Sitha Phouyavong, acting chief of the Office of the Science, Technology and Environment Agency. Meeting with the group was John Cartensen, representative of the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA). The sessions discussed projects for construction of a Việt Nam-Laos-Cambodia environmental education center and an action strategy for environmental protection and sustainable development in the region, focusing on

general management of river basins, bio-diversity, border pollution control, cooperation in implementation of international environmental conventions, legal reform, information exchange, coordination in scientific research, prevention of forest fires and the illegal trade in wild animals, and exchange of experience in poverty alleviation. (VNA 27 March)

VCP Gen. Sec. Nông Đức Mạnh paid a four-day official visit to Laos July 9-12, his first trip abroad since taking over his new post. In the delegation were: Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, PB member and permanent deputy prime minister; Nguyễn Khoa Điềm, PB member and director of the Ideology and Culture Commission; Vũ Khoan, secretary of the Central Committee; Nguyễn Văn Sơn, director of the External Relations Commission, and other high-ranking party officials. Host was Lao president and chairman of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Khamtay Siphandon. (AFP, 9 July) *Nhân Dân* (9 July) said the visit affirmed the desire to foster the special friendship, solidarity, and comprehensive cooperation between the two countries.

To beef up bilateral trade, Việt Nam and Laos agreed to cut import and export duties in agreements reached June 25 by a visiting Vietnamese delegation led by Deputy Minister of Trade Mai Văn Đẩu and Lao counterparts led by Sieusavath Xavengsouksa. The two sides also agreed to set up a joint venture for trading fuel and to build a Vietnamese trade center in Vientiane, Việt Nam further agreed to train Lao personnel in international trade practices. (Xinhua, 25 June 25)

Within the realm of ASEAN, Việt Nam outspends all other members on defense, an amount believed to be currently at \$2.5 billion or about 8.5% of the state's annual budget. Much of the new spending goes to air and naval forces, such as the purchase of two dozen SU27 fighter bombers from Russia. Việt Nam had one of the largest standing

as 1.2 million troops. That number was halved by 1999 and stands at less than half a million today, according to defence attaches at embassies in Hanoi.

USA. Sec. of State Colin Powell, in Hà Nội July 27, stressed the US commitment to Asia and urged ASEAN members to further liberalize their economies. He said the region would also benefit from trade talks underway with WTO, which sets the rules for international trade. "I was able to convey that the Bush administration is committed to Asia," Powell told reporters. Southeast Asian nations have worried that Washington has been preoccupied with security disputes in northern Asia. Powell said ASEAN members, still suffering in the wake of a 1997 regional financial crisis, can attract more foreign investment if they liberalize further. (AP, 27 July)

Washington treatment of the US-Vietnam trade agreement -- initialed but not ratified last summer (2000) -- has puzzled and irritated Hà Nội officials, led to a series of criticism and put strains on the relationship. They see US foot-dragging as gratuitous insult and efforts to serve domestic American politics. Proffered U.S. rationalizations (ethnic disturbances in the Highlands, restive Buddhists in Huế, various human rights and ethnic issues) are regarded as "U.S. intervention and interference." The agreement finally was sent to Congress in late spring (2001) and awaits action.

Meanwhile, US Ambassador Douglas Peterson wound up his tour of duty in Hà Nội with a round of interviews and other public statements, the gist of which seemed to be that "during my tenure we have bridged a river of pain, our two peoples have come to appreciate and understand each other and essentially to heal the past. We have come pretty close to a normal relationship that is something I am very proud to have been part of." Departure date is mid July.

Peterson spoke to the International Cultural and Economic Exchange Club in Hà Nội (3 July) and said two agreements will be signed by the U.S.

and Việt Nam in the near future: on aviation cooperation and on drug control. About the bilateral trade agreement (BTA), he expressed hope that it would be ratified in the next few months, would create conditions for Việt Nam to increase exports to the U.S. of textiles, garments, footwear, fine arts, and farm produce. Tax rates will fall drastically, from 60 percent to 5 percent. The import-export turnover between the two countries is expected to double in the BTA's first year. (VNA, 4 July). As of the end of May 2001, the U.S. had 119 investments in Vietnam for a total value estimated at \$452 million, ranking it sixth among foreign investors. (VNA)

The Communist Party of the U.S. (yes, there still is one) sent Ms. Joelle Fishman to the Ninth Party Congress; she had this to say about U.S.-Việt Nam relations: "For my generation of American communists in particular, your revolutionary patience and struggle, which withstood so many years of imperialist aggression, remains a symbol for peace, equality and justice....Twenty-five years after the criminal war against Việt Nam, a new era is opened in Việt Nam-United States relations. The heroism of the CPV and the Vietnamese people is an enduring inspiration for our Party. During the long years of atrocities against your country, carried out by US imperialism, your resistance and courage gave hope and leadership worldwide."

China. Beijing's "keep 'em guessing" foreign policy with respect to Vietnam continues unabated. With the 2008 Olympics under its belt, a roaring economy and WTO entry in sight, China appears to be at the top of its game. Despite a thorny territorial dispute and China's growing weight on the Asian scene, Việt Nam sees more opportunities than threats from the giant to the north.

The economic challenges posed by China, particularly after it enters the WTO, is high on Hanoi's agenda. Key members of ASEAN -- which was founded to halt the 1960s threat from Maoist

was founded to halt the 1960s threat from Maoist China – have shaken off old fears of China dominating their region. “I think China has developed the expertise in mingling with the rest of the world, the WTO crowd – to not act unilaterally and (realize) it is important to give regional emphasis in whatever position is taken,” said Malaysian Trade Minister Rafidah Aziz. (Reuters).

Jia Qinglin, secretary of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee met with his counterpart, Nguyễn Phong Trọng, in Hà Nội (9 July) and briefed him on a recent speech by Gen. Sec. Jiang Zemin. Jia said that over the past decade relations between the two parties and countries have kept developing, and that the two capital cities should learn from each other and increase exchange to promote common development. Trọng said Hà Nội wants to learn from Beijing’s experiences in reforms and opening to the outside world. (Xinhua, 9 July)

At the ASEAN meeting, China ruled out making Taiwan a party to any settlement of the Spratly disputes, arguing the claims of the two are identical. He said China takes a “flexible approach” to the code. Taiwan Premier Chang Chun-hsiung in July called for a peaceful settlement and urged countries in the region to tackle the issues under principles of “peaceful settlement, joint exploration and sharing of resources.”

PM Phan Văn Khải (24 July) said China and Việt Nam should continue to discuss the disputed claims to the islands, as well as other issues, always in the spirit of “friendly neighborliness, comprehensive cooperation, long-term stability and future-oriented thinking. He expressed his delight at the present cooperation in economic and commercial fields.

Other Việt Nam-China developments this summer: -- The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is welcomed by Việt Nam, said a SRV FM spokesperson on June 4. The SCO will

contribute to peace, stability, cooperation and regional development (BBC, 19 June). -- A Đà Nẵng city Party delegation (led by PB member Phan Điện) wraps up a nine-day visit to China (4 July), purpose of which was to strengthen relations between the two countries. -- Chinese VP Hu Jintao met in Beijing July 19 with a Vietnamese delegation led by Nguyễn Phú Trọng, sec. of the Hà Nội Municipal Party Committee. Hu said that since Hà Nội and Beijing became sister cities in 1994, they have enhanced cooperation and deepened the two countries’ friendship. (Xinhua, 9 July)

For good background on Vietnam and China, see “Crisis in the Taiwan Straits” by Khart Cambell and Derek Mitchell in July-August issue of *Foreign Affairs*, point of which is that growing tensions can draw in Việt Nam, as well as the U.S. China’s PLA deployed 12 warships in the Spratly chain (late June 2001), raising tensions in the region especially in Kuala Lumpur where visiting Chinese military earlier had promised that China would keep its naval vessels out of the area. China denies it all. In May Chinese ships scouted the Scarborough Shoal, and Beijing is suspected of planning permanent military installations there as on the Mischief Reef farther south. (*Hong Kong Mail*, 26 June)

Meantime (mid-June), a Beijing science delegation showed up in Hà Nội with a call for the two countries to strengthen cooperation in the fields of science and technology. Dep PM Phạm Gia Khiêm endorsed the idea in a session with President Lu Yongxiang of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Lu also said China would like to help Việt Nam develop ecological agriculture and train Vietnamese science personnel, as well as carry on with exchanges and cooperation in personnel, scientific and technological seminars, and training in specific techniques. (Xinhua, 1 July)

Japan. Tokyo will host the next Việt Nam donor group meeting (Nov 15-16), which will again

review Việt Nam's implementation of its ODA and decide on further aid, the World Bank announced June 20. Tokyo was selected because Japan is the biggest single donor to Việt Nam, and the meeting will provide a good chance for Việt Nam to expose itself to the Japanese public, a bank spokesman said. (Kyodo, 13 June)

Japan has agreed to loan HCM City \$220 million to build a new terminal at Tân Sơn Nhất international airport. It will be 7,500 square meters in size, able to handle eight million passengers a year (vs. present capacity of 3.5 million), and will be completed in 2005, said airport official Huỳnh Dương Hiệp. Vietnam Airlines meantime announces a \$42 million expansion, to increase its fleet from 26 to 40 by 2010. (AFP 19 June)

As of midyear, Japan took the lead in foreign investment in Việt Nam. Twelve new projects worth US\$86 million were licensed in the first half of 2001. Japan's total investment in Việt Nam stands at \$6.2 billion spread over 352 projects.

Russia. Việt Nam and Russia signed a deal July 1 to build two reservoirs for crude oil and oil products in Việt Nam at a cost of \$220 million. Deal also includes refinery facilities to produce kerosene, petrol and diesel fuel. (Tass, 11 July).

President Putin, in a summer visit, drew on Soviet nostalgia to rebuild ties with Việt Nam. He seems moved to court Hà Nội to gain a foothold in Southeast Asia. In paying his respects to Vietnamese communism's main public monuments (in sharp contrast to President Clinton's approach earlier), Putin called for a continued relationship grounded in ideology but on a more mature and equal footing. (VNA, 11 June)

SRV Foreign Minister Niên said (July 24) that his country highly estimated Russia's role in the Asian-Pacific region, and visiting Russian FM Igor Ivanov stressed Việt Nam's active and constructive role in ASEAN. Russian Defense Min.

Sergei Ivanov said it is necessary to close the Russian military base at Cam Ranh. "We need to leave for there is a disproportion between the price and quality" for maintaining the base. According to a 1979 agreement, the Soviet Union was given free use of the base until 2004. (Tass, 24 July).

Pakistan. President General Pervez Musharraf arrived May 3 in Hà Nội, becoming his country's first chief-of-state to visit Việt Nam. During the three-day official visit, Musharraf (who is also chief executive of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan) and his delegation discussed with Vietnamese officials an agreement to increase bilateral trade activities. Two-way trade between Việt Nam and Pakistan rose from US\$9 million in 1999 to US\$26.7 million last year. The two countries have potential for cooperation in cotton and tea planting, construction of oil and gas pipelines, consumer goods production, tourism, aviation, and information technology.

Yugoslavia. Officials in Hà Nội waded into the move by the U.N. to put Yugoslavia's President Slobodan Milosevic into the dock at the World Court in the Hague. SRV FM spokeswoman Phan Thúy Thanh (4 July) said: "Issues concerning him are obviously internal matters. This violates Yugoslavia's constitutional system, complicates a serious situation that can cause serious consequences." The statement represents Hanoi's basic attitude toward all international law enforcement. A Hà Nội official in June said the "U.S. use of DUP (Depleted Uranium Munitions) in the 1999 war against Yugoslavia bears stark evidence of its aggressiveness and its violation of human rights. (Xinhua, 4 July)

The Vatican. The Vatican news agency Fides said (18 June) that Việt Nam had approved the appointment of three new bishops. The announcement came when a delegation from Rome headed by Archbishop Celestino Migliore was in Hà Nội. Names were not released. Communist authorities, who must approve all church

appointments, had approved a new bishop for the northern diocese of Bùi Chu, an auxiliary bishop for Hồ Chí Minh City and an assistant bishop for the diocese of Phan Thiết. However, no agreements had been reached on an assistant bishop for Hà Nội where the archbishop, Cardinal Joseph Phạm Đình Tụng is 82; or on bishops for Hưng Hóa diocese that has been vacant since 1992 or Hải Phòng, vacant for three years. The government said the Vatican keeps refusing. Việt Nam insists it respects freedom of religion, but the Fides report said lack of this freedom had been shown in the recent treatment of Catholic and Buddhist dissidents. It pointed to the arrest in May of Catholic priest Thaddeus Nguyễn Văn Lý for fomenting disorder and the detention of Buddhist dissident Thích Quảng Độ. Despite years of communist restrictions, about eight million of Việt Nam's 80 million people are Catholic, more than any other Asian country except the Philippines. (Reuters, 21 June).

Austria. Hà Nội Party leaders vetoed an offer from the Austrian government of \$32 million to clean up West Lake in downtown Hà Nội. Earlier, local authorities had accepted the offer. It would have involved taking treated water from the Red River, which runs through the capital, and pump it through the lake in a cleansing circuit. The main cause of pollution of West Lake is the waste poured into it. The Party's Hà Nội branch announced its decision in the HCMC daily *Thanh Niên* (Youth) without elaborating. (AFP, 30 June).

Cuba. The chief-of-staff of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, Lt. Gen Alvaro Lopez Miera, and entourage arrived in Hà Nội June 21, bringing with them the traditional friendship toward the Vietnamese people and army. The general noted that many Cuban fighters had volunteered to come to Việt Nam, where a number of them died in the anti-US war, during which President Fidel

Castro himself visited Việt Nam and went to the battlefields. Lopez Miera stressed that the armies of Cuba and Việt Nam had been in the same trench with regard to their fights against imperialists, and that they would exchange experiences in building their armed forces and defending their countries. SRV VP Nguyễn Thị Bình in Havana earlier (29 April) noted the "lofty and exemplary spirit" of the two peoples and lauded Cuban success in the revolutionary cause despite "the many changes in the world" and "despite the imperialists" prolonged embargo. Her Cuban counterpart, VP Carlos Lage, thanked the Vietnamese people for past assistance for the Cuban people's revolutionary cause. (VNA)

Germany. Việt Nam wants to strengthen ties with the Federal Republic of Germany. That was the message given to visiting Min. of Economic Co-Operation and Development, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul (5 Oct. 2000). The minister affirmed the German government's stance of attaching importance to friendship and cooperation with Việt Nam in the economy, culture, science-technology and education/training.

North Korea. Pyongyang's number two official, Kim Yong Nam, visited Việt Nam July 11-14, and Việt Nam's Trần Đức Lương will visit Seoul in August. There is no connection between the two trips, said a Seoul spokesman. Hà Nội developed close economic relations with Seoul when they opened diplomatic ties in 1992, despite South Korea's participation in the Việt Nam War alongside South Vietnamese troops. Vietnam's relations with North Korea have long been cool. The North backed Vietnam's arch-foe, the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, in the late 1970s, and relations saw a further downturn with the establishment of Hà Nội-Seoul diplomatic ties.

However, a visit by North Korean FM Paek Nam-Sun last year marked the beginnings of a rapprochement. In the July Kim Yong Nam visit, the North Koreans said one of their purposes was to solicit food aid. An SRV spokesperson suggested

politely that Việt Nam is limited in its ability to help.

The FM spokesperson avoids confirming Pyongyang official radio news stories that North Korea sent "weapons, ammunition, millions of uniforms" to North Việt Nam during the war. (Reuters, 9, 11 July; AFP, 25 June)

Thailand. Thailand and Việt Nam signed a ten-year cooperation agreement on August 6 as the two countries observed the 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, returning from a one-day visit to Việt Nam (25 April), said the pact would cover agriculture, investment and communications, adding: "Thailand and Việt Nam are the world's top rice exporters so both countries agreed to jointly promote the rice business on a non-rival basis." To strengthen bilateral trade and investment, a road project linking Thailand's Mukdahan Province with Đà Nẵng in Việt Nam, via Laos, will be accelerated. Việt Nam Airlines also will increase its flight frequency to Thailand. Thaksin said that Thailand would never allow anyone to use its territory as a base to sabotage Việt Nam.

Reporting on his talk with SRV Sec. Gen. Nông Đức Mạnh after his brief visit, PM Thaksin said: "After the conversation I knew that he will modernize Việt Nam.... He is very open-minded, and his foreign policy will...allow Việt Nam to be more open and stand on its own feet.... "We all agree that ASEAN must be strengthened."

Thai-Vietnamese relations were marred by a bomb attack on the Vietnamese embassy in Bangkok on June 21. Bangkok Police Chief Pornsak Burongaviboon said an unidentified man arrived at the embassy in a taxi at about 4 a.m. and placed a 3 kg (6.6 lb) bomb in a backpack outside the gates. A second device, a 5 kg bomb, made like the first from fertilizer and gasoline and wired to a mobile phone detonator, was thrown into the

embassy compound inside a cardboard box. No one was injured in the controlled explosions set off after police failed to defuse the bombs. "This was a professionally built device," the chief said. Witnesses at the scene reported that the bomber was middle-aged and Chinese in appearance.

The following day police arrested three ethnic Vietnamese, one of them an American citizen, all described as members of the Free Vietnam Movement. In late May 37 persons were jailed in HCM City for "sabotage attacks" by the Movement, said to have been organized in Thailand and Cambodia. Thai Army Chief of Staff Gen Sampao Choosri said the bombs were planted in retaliation for the jailings. (BBC, AFP, 21 June; *The Nation* (Bangkok), 22 June; Xinhua, 21,28 April)

Cambodia. Cambodian opposition leader Sam Rainsy, a longtime nationalist critic of neighbouring Việt Nam, hailed it as a role model on his first visit (26 June) to the communist state. Setting aside his longstanding attacks on Vietnamese landgrabbing and illegal immigration, Rainsy said Cambodia had "a lot to learn" from its larger neighbor despite their history of animosity. He found it depressing that Việt Nam, even though it still remained nominally a communist state years after Cambodia abandoned communism, it was economically far more successful. Rainsy said he had received a warm welcome from Dep PM Nguyễn Mạnh Cầm and Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Niên during their talks. He insisted that he had not glossed over their differences on the two countries' long-running border dispute or the status of the large Vietnamese minority in Cambodia. (AFP, 26 June)

Vietnam will do its utmost to strengthen and develop neighborly, friendly and cooperative relations with Cambodia, pledged Vũ Mão, leader of the CPV delegation to the eighth congress of the National United Front for Cooperative, Independent, Neutral and Peaceful Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) in Phnom Penh in March. Vũ Mão,

a CC member and director of the National Assembly Office, is chairman of the Việt Nam-Cambodia Friendship Assn. He made the pledge at a reception given by the FUNCINPEC chairman, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who described the CPV's presence at the congress and its 20th founding anniversary as an important event. He wished the Vietnamese people further achievements in their cause of national renovation. (BBC, 26 March)

The U.S. ambassador to Cambodia (20 June) assured 54 members of a hill tribe who fled their homes in Vietnam last month for Cambodia that they would remain safe in exile. "The international community, including the U.S., will work with Việt Nam to get assurances," Amb. Kent Wiedemann told the group during a visit to the area where they are being looked after by the UN refugee agency (UNHCR). "They can go back when they can live in peace and have their rights respected... They will not have to go back until those conditions are guaranteed," he said. The asylum seekers -- members of the Jarai, Pnong and Radhe tribes -- said they fled Vietnam's central highlands because they feared for their lives after demonstrations over land and other rights erupted there in February. (Reuters, 19,21 June)

Laos. CPV Sec Gen Nông Đức Mạnh paid a four-day visit to Laos July 9-12, his first trip abroad since assuming the role of top Party official in Việt Nam. The Lao delegation at the meeting was headed by Thongloun Sisoulith, LPRP Politburo member, deputy PM and chairman of the Lao section to the Việt Nam-Laos Inter-governmental Committee for Economic, Cultural, Scientific, and Technological Cooperation. The two delegations reviewed an agreement on such co-operation over the past six months and discussed preparations for the 24th session of the Inter-governmental Committee to be held in Vientiane in 2002. They focused on measures to fulfill tasks for this year and discussed the framework agreement

for 2001-2005 signed in Hà Nội in February. economic, cultural, scientific and technological co-operation for 2001 and the framework agreement for the 2001-2005 period signed in Hà Nội on February 6, 2001.

Both delegations pointed to shortcomings to be addressed in implementing the agreement. These include slow disbursement of capital for new projects, use of grants and loans, unstable operations of some investment projects in Laos, and slow deployment of policies to encourage co-operation between the two countries. (*Nhân Dân*, 11 July)

United Kingdom. UK Min. of Education and Employment Tessa Blackstone visited Hà Nội in late March for talks with counterpart Nguyễn Minh Hiến and Deputy Min. of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs Nguyễn Lương Trao. She also visited a primary English teacher training program funded by the UK Dept. for International Development and a training project being run by the British Council at the Fisheries Research Institute. The British government has provided US\$290,000 for a British Council program to help Vietnamese government officials improve their ability to communicate in English. Six English-language classes are underway in HCMC, Đồng Nai, Bình Dương, and Bà Rịa-Vũng Tàu, with participants from city and provincial authorities and the services of Education and Training; Agriculture and Rural Development; Construction; Planning and Investment; Immigration; the Foreign Trade Development Center, and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Council. Classes have been held twice a week for the past nine months, covering both general and business English to improve communication skills at meetings, trade fairs, conferences and in social situations. (*Saigon Times Daily*, 22 March)

Iraq. Việt Nam and Iraq concluded a visa exemption agreement on June 20. Dep. FM Nguyễn Văn Nganh signed for Việt Nam and his

counterpart, Dr. Nabil Najm Salih for Iraq. Holders of diplomatic and official passports and their families from both countries will be exempt from entry, exit and transit visas for stays up to 90 days. The agreement will take effect after the two sides exchange diplomatic notes affirming the completion of legal procedures. (BBC, 20 June)

France. Vietnam Airlines is expanding cooperation with its French partners. Beginning next winter (2001-2002), direct flights will fly from Hà Nội and HCM City to Paris. Vietnam Airlines General Director Nguyễn Xuân Hiền, on a working visit to France, also discussed transferring technology for Airbus A320 maintenance, and he signed a contract for training 20 Vietnamese pilots by Sofrevia of France, costs to be paid out of the French government's Official Development Assistance (ODA). Vietnam Airlines, the country's flag carrier, flew 54,281 passengers and 2,300 tons of cargo from Paris to Hà Nội and Hồ Chí Minh City in 2000. (Xinhua, 21 June)

Israel. Việt Nam on August 2 condemned Israel's violation of the ceasefire agreement it signed with Palestine June 13. FM Spokeswoman Phan Thúy Thanh said the Vietnamese government is seriously concerned about the fact that Israel has stepped up military actions aimed at Palestinians on the West Bank of the Jordan River and in the Gaza

Strip. She called on the two sides "to bring an end to all violent actions and return to the negotiating table, seeking a fundamental and long-term solution to the conflict in the justified interests of both sides." (Xinhua, 2 August)

Việt kiều. Hà Nội has renewed efforts to lure back to Việt Nam overseas investors and wealthy businessmen. The campaign is run by the chairman of the Overseas Business Assn., which was established in HCM City in 1999. It has 81 members from 500 enterprises. PM Phan Văn Khải at a meeting of overseas Vietnamese on July 21 lauded the Foreign Ministry's proposal that overseas Vietnamese holding Vietnamese passports be entitled to the same service charges and transport fees as locals, and that Vietnamese holding foreign passports and recognized as having contributed to the national liberation cause be given the same incentive as well as exemption from visa fees.

Tourism. International arrivals in Việt Nam (first half of 2001): tourists 655,303, business 204,013; family visits 251,866. Largest number from Hong Kong followed by the US, South Korea, Philippines, and Indonesia. (Gen. Statistical Office, 26 June)

VIET NAM ECONOMIC REPORTING

The U.S. General Accounting Office has produced an assessment of Vietnamese economic data, looking at it in terms of quality and availability. It makes the basic point that economic reporting leaves much to be desired. In defense of the General Statistics Office (GSO) in Hà Nội, the main fountain from which economic data flow, one can say that the effort and output are vastly superior to what they were early in the decade. As for the

war years, there simply is no comparison. For example, journalists then seeking any statistics on, say, per capita income were stiffed at every turn, ran the risk of being charged with treason for any figures published. The point is that while much better collection and reporting is needed, statistics in Vietnam have come a long way. The

Besides the GSO, economic data also comes from the Ministry of Industry and the State Bank of

Việt Nam. The government publishes key economic indicators, but there are major gaps. By law, Việt Nam's state budget is classified as a secret document. Some estimates of the budget appear in aggregate economic indicators but the government does not provide a breakdown of the data, making it difficult to determine specific allocations.

Several economic magazines and journals also provide economic and trade data on Vietnam. The *Vietnam Business Journal*, for example, publishes indicators of Vietnam's economy, foreign investment, imports, and exports, using the government and international agencies as its sources. The Economist Intelligence Unit, Ltd., also issues quarterly reports on the Vietnamese economy and covers major economic and trade indicators. It pools data from various sources, including its own estimates.

If the accuracy and quality of published economic and trade data are to be properly assessed, the GAO report says, methods used by the sources of the data to collect, analyze and present the data must be transparent, that is, clearly defined and explained. In Việt Nam information on data collecting and reporting methods generally is either missing or unclear. International agency officials and other experts say the quality of available data has improved in recent years. However, data on key indicators such as GDP, growth rate, and foreign investments still contain weaknesses. Assessment of economic conditions by the UNDP (June 1998) concluded that Việt Nam is in the middle of an information crisis that needs to be urgently addressed to avert a financial crisis, and particularly advocated more reliable data in banking and corporate sectors. Most banks are partly or wholly State-owned, and information on their debt levels, loan portfolios and investments is not available in sufficient detail or is of questionable reliability. The IMF has indicated that the banking sector is in worse condition than is shown by the official data. Moody's has also noted weaknesses in banking and

uncertainty due to a lack of transparency in reporting foreign exchange reserves.

Việt Nam does not effectively measure certain components in calculating GDP, e.g., the large informal economy, small businesses, telecommunications, or the service sector. Official trade estimates do not include illegal smuggling of consumer goods, estimated by analysts to represent a significant portion of the economy. Reporting of other indicators may be overestimated. There also are unexplained differences between reports of different international agencies and even those of the same agency.

The IMF has developed two sets of standards for data production and dissemination by member states, the General Data Dissemination System, a general guide to help countries provide comprehensive, timely, accessible and reliable statistics, the Special Data Dissemination Standard, dealing with specific elements of data quality. A number of East Asian countries have subscribed to the Special Standard but Việt Nam has not. (Source: "Vietnam Economic Data: Assessment of Availability and Quality," U.S. General Accounting Office Report to Congressional Requesters, June 1999. Available from USGAO, PO Box 37050, Washington, DC 20013. See also <http://www.gao.gov>)

Six-Month Report. Việt Nam's economy expanded 7.1% in the first six months of 2001, below the target of 7.5%. The agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors increased 2.1% vs. 3.7% in the same period a year earlier; industry 10.6% vs. 10.8%; construction 11.9% vs. 0.3%; and services 6.7% vs. 5.5%. Gross domestic product was VND222,332 billion (\$=VND14,847). The agro-forestry and fisheries sector contributed 23% of the six-month increase; industry and construction 37.8%; and services 39.2%. First-half State budget revenue increased 6.3% year-on-year and realized 54.2% of this year's projection. Budget spending in

the period grew 13.2% on year and met 44.7% of the annualized plan.

Jobs. Some 20,400 new jobs were created in Việt Nam in the first half of 2001. Three main fields: construction, industry and services. Some 32,000 persons (in 6,000 households) were sent off from the cities to New Economic Zones. (*The People*, 4 July)

Sex Trade. Official prostitute count at the end of 2000 was 13,609; unofficial estimate is 40,000. A conference in Hà Nội Jan 5-6 hears the deputy PM review the program to stop prostitution. He says half the girls work not because of poverty but because “they are lazy and want to enrich themselves without having to work hard.” Survey in HCMC shows that the average age of prostitutes is falling; those ages 15-17 has increased from 14% in 1996 to 15.65% in 2000; those between 18 and 25 from 43.3% to 70%. Up to 27% of the city’s sex workers are drug addicts, and the HIV infection rate has increased from 2.8% in 1998 to 21.6% in 2000. (*Young People*, 4 July)

VCP Head Counts. New members admitted (Jan 2000 to July 2000): 40,000; Hà Nội (10,168), Hồ Chí Minh City (4,846), Thừa Thiên

– Huế (2,542), Hà Tây (4,584), Nghệ An (7,578), Sơn La (2,627), Hải Phòng (3,858) Đà Nẵng (1,568). Highest sector of new members: the railroads with 1,035. (*The People*, 4 July)

PAVN Marching Orders. Nông Đức Mạnh at military conference: “Vietnam needs to build a revolutionary, regular, war-like and modern army. The army will focus on improving education in politics and ideology, review Party construction and adjustment campaigns, train soldiers in flood prevention measures, care for ethnic minorities, send soldiers to localities to assist people and develop projects and build defense – economic zones.” (*Quân Đội Nhân Dân*, {Peoples Army}, 4 July)

PAVN Personnel Change. Lt. Gen. Lê Văn Dũng to become chief, General Political Department, Min. of Defense, replacing Lt. Gen. Phạm Ngân, who was dropped from the Party CC at the 9th Congress. Dũng previously was chief of the General Staff. *Quân Đội Nhân Dân* (4 July) announced the appointment but did not state when Dũng took over the post.

Bibliography: Books and Monographs

The Battle of Ấp Bắc. Việt Nam: They Did Everything But Learn From It by David Toczek (U.S. Military Academy). It was the first truly “regular” battle of the Việt Nam War, which is to say, one beyond politically oriented guerrilla war. Its history got off to a bad start, resting on the accounts of a trio of cocky young journalists aided by an opinionated American army lieutenant colonel who did not know as much about warfare as he thought he did. Other accounts were dismissed or trivialized by the brass in Sài Gòn; the North Vietnamese, for their part, did not know quite how to judge the outcome of the *đấu tranh* (struggle) strategy they employed (they have revised their judgment several times since). Briefly, Ấp Bắc was a 1962-63 battle at the village of Ấp Bắc, 40 miles west of Sài Gòn, in which an outnumbered (ten to one) ARVN division fought and defeated (“history’s final judgment”) the Việt Cộng. Toczek has written the first full study of the battle. The point he makes is not so much whether it was a victory or a defeat but that neither the American nor the South Vietnamese military learned much from it, including what it would take to win a guerrilla war. Recommended. Greenwood Publishing, \$62 (2001).

Fifty Years of Vietnamese Diplomacy 1945-1995 by Lưu Văn Lợi. A more or less official history of DRV/SRV foreign relations beginning with the end of World War II. A useful introduction, titled “Vietnam’s Traditional Diplomacy”, gives a brief account of earlier (pre-French) efforts to “preserve the national sovereignty, territory and (national) interests (vs. China).” With bibliography and chronology. In English from Thế Giới Publishers, Hà Nội (2000).

Apparently a second volume, 1995 to date, is underway.

Vietnamese Public Management in Transition: South Vietnam Public Administration 1955-75 by Hải Bá Phó (now Univ. of Massachusetts) Solid bilingual political science study of the *ancien* regime. Governmental development was clearly on the right track; then came the postwar Northern cadres who turned everything upside down. At least their error is now tacitly acknowledged in Hanoi, as this edition was published there by Nhà Xuất Bản Thế Giới (October 2000). Original edition by University Press of America, \$19.95 (1990). Pho’s academic contact: Hai Pho@umi.edu.

The Unwanted: A Memoir by Kiên Nguyễn (Việt kiều now living in New York). Account of a hellish life in Nha Trang after communist takeover (confiscation of home, sexual abuse by his mother’s boyfriend, etc.). Finally Kiên makes it to the U.S., goes to college, becomes a dentist. In this story, he exorcizes the hate he faced as an Amerasian child in Việt Nam. Little Brown, \$24.95 (2001).

Renovating Politics in Contemporary Vietnam by Zachary Abuza (ISEAS, Singapore). Political change in Việt Nam since 1996, insinuated into the system by economists under the cover of *đổi mới*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, \$49.95 (2001).

Education and the Politics of Language; Hegemony and Pragmatism in Cambodia, 1979-80 by Thomas Clayton. After invading Cambodia the Vietnamese set about to convert the society into a

socialist system, beginning with education. This involved messing with Cambodian linguistics and education policies. Clayton's treatment is highly intellectual, perhaps too much so for that time and place. He finds the Vietnamese were "hegemonists but not linguistic imperialists." In any case, it didn't work but Clayton finds the experiment interesting. Comparative Education Research Center, Univ. of Hong Kong, \$32 (2000).

Legacy of Discord: Voices of the Vietnam Era by Gil Dorland (Việt Nam vet, film producer). A discouraging book to peruse. Nineteen individuals, most of them Americans, give brief answers (or edited answers) to complex questions, which tend to make them sound like a bunch of morons—even the most articulate such as Henry Kissinger and James Webb. Dorland tries to be objective, fair, and balanced but produces what resembles sound bites from CBS's "Sixty Minutes". One is left with the feeling "their's was not to reason why." Brassey's, Inc., \$26.95 (2001).

Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada by John Hagan. A somewhat turgid account of the 100,000 (author's estimate) Americans who fled to Canada to avoid military service in Việt Nam. Author was one of them, living on the fringe of the deserter community, taking notes. His writing suffers from lint-choked language on social theory. Says the amnesty offered by President Carter did not settle the Canadian draft doger issue as most Americans believe. Harvard Univ. Press, \$27.95 (2001).

Desertion In the Time of Vietnam by Jack Todd. A sad, rueful memoir of a true loser: Todd washed out of Marine Corps officer training (bad knees, he says); was drafted into the army; fled to Canada where he quickly found himself a junkie bum on Vancouver's Skid Row; then renounced US citizenship and got himself listed as a deserter. Self-pitying tone throughout. Houghton Mifflin, \$24 (2001).

American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson and the Origins of the Vietnam War by David Kaiser (US Naval War College). Historical revisionism at work. Eisenhower put us on the road to the Việt Nam war. Kennedy resisted the effort. Johnson revived it. Kaiser claims this clear cut case is based on documents others have ignored. Harvard Univ. Press, \$29.95 (2000).

Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency from the Cold War Through the Dawn of a New Century by James Bamford (intelligence historian). History of the NSA (aka No Such Agency; aka Never Say Anything). Excellent work with enormous detail. Particularly good on the SIGINT war in Việt Nam, in which Hà Nội's radio intercepts by NSA clearly proved (to no avail) that Hà Nội was running the war in the South (despite assertions to the contrary by the French and others). Hà Nội's massive intercept operation employed 5,000 listeners. Doubleday, \$29.95 (2001).

Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression by Andrew Solomon. Insightful examination of crippling depression by one who has both suffered it and done extensive medical and cultural research. Includes study of Cambodian holocaust survivors. Simon and Schuster, \$28 (2001).

Cambodia, the Churning: Portrait of a People Tormented by David Mead. Verse and photographs by well-known local writer. Available at Phnom Penh bookstores and airport (2001).

Literature in South Vietnam 1954-1975 by Võ Phiến (trans. Võ Đình Mai). New updated edition of this fine 1972 reference work on South Vietnamese literature from the end of the French era to the end of the Việt Nam War. Includes lengthy list of biographical entries. From Vietnamese Language and Culture Publications, Melbourne.

America's Strategic Blunders: Intelligence Analysis and National Security 1936-1991 by

Willard Matthias. Chief point made here is that the intelligence community through the years gave American policy makers accurate data, which they chose to ignore. Penn State Univ. Press, \$35 (2001).

Constructing a Security Community In Southeast Asia by Amitav Acharya. Political analysis of ASEAN's emerging defense arrangement, which is seen as a social process to develop regulatory norms that eventually will result in an enduring collective entity. Routledge, \$90 hc, \$29.99 pb (2000).

Moral Victories: How Activists Provoke Multilateral Action by Susan Burgerman. Track record of UN and human rights workers' accomplishments in curtailing oppressive governments. Brief treatment of Cambodia, 1975-1992. Cornell Univ. Press, \$29.95 (2001).

The Myth of Inevitable U.S. Defeat in Vietnam by Dale Walton. Challenges the common belief that it never was in the cards for South Việt Nam to survive, regardless of what her allies, chiefly the U.S., might have done by way of assistance. Plenty of blame for the outcome to go around, Walton says, but chiefly belongs to U.S. leadership with its inability to understand the significance of its errors made repeatedly over a long period of time. Frank Cass Publishers, \$59.50 hc, \$24.50 pb. (2002).

Mao's China and the Cold War by Chen Jian. Argues that ending of the Cold War was result of Beijing's split with Moscow and Beijing's détente with the U.S.

Univ. of North Carolina Press, \$49.95 hc, \$19.95 pb (2001).

Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism by A-Chin Hsiau. Update on the longstanding face-off between Taiwanese who own the real estate on the island and the mainlanders who have the political power. Working arrangements now in existence. Routledge, \$90 (2000).

You Can Write a Memoir by Susan Carol Hauser. How to get it down on paper. A good investment for all those first time veteran writers out there. F&W Publications, Inc., \$14.99 (2001).

Hot Sour Salty Sweet: A Culinary Journey through Southeast Asia by Naomi Duguid and Jeffrey Alford (Toronto couple). Third in a series from these two. Earlier came *Seduction of Rice* (1998) and *Flatbreads and Flavors* (1995). From Random House, Canada, \$55 (2001); Artisan, \$40.

Ethnopolitical Warfare, Daniel Chirot, ed. Essays from political scientists and sociologists on causes, consequences of, and possible solutions to ethnic conflicts, such as Cambodia. Published by American Psychological Assn., \$49.95 (2000).

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War Letters: Extraordinary Correspondence from American Wars, Andrew Carroll, ed. From 50,000 letters Carroll has picked 150 written from the American Civil War to Bosnia. Mostly from the uncelebrated—soldiers, sailors, nurses, journalists, people on the home front. Sample from Capt. Thomas Noonan in Việt Nam: "I've cast out my razor, divorced my soap, buried my manners, signed my socks to a two-year contract and proved you don't have to come in out of the rain." Scribner, \$28 (2001); cassette, Simon & Schuster, \$32.

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Khmer Rouge. Based on documents and interviews with survivors. Full account; well done portrayal of a tragedy compounded by tragedy. Carroll & Graf Publishers, \$27 (2001).

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muntjak and the striped rabbit. With Vietnamese, English and scientific names; also how to identify the animals by footprints. In Việt Nam bookstores.

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Propaganda and the Public Mind: Conversations with Noam Chomsky with David Barsamian (radio journalist). Collection of the thoughts of the MIT guru, respected as a linguist, traveling as an intellectual social critic. Includes comments on Việt Nam War in which Chomsky departs from the conventional wisdom. Discussion of the war and propaganda, for instance, deals with whether or not it was "internal aggression". As usual, stimulating. From South End Press, \$16 (2001).

Document Album of Cu Chi, 1960-75 by Lt. Col. Dương Thanh Phong (HCMC photographer). Some 60 photographs of the now famous tourist attraction, the tunnels of Củ Chi, the 120 miles now enlarged to accommodate fat tourists and claustrophobes. Trilingual cutlines. On sale in HCMC bookstores (2001).

The Secrets of the Flower City of Dalat (Thành Phố Đà Lạt) by Trương Phúc An (horticulturist). Everything you wanted to know about flowers, fruits, vegetables, trees and shrubs in this mountain town. Some history worked in. Not exactly a guidebook (nothing on where to stay or

dine) but useful if you go to Đà Lạt, love nature, and have time to spend. Bilingual. From Lâm Đồng Books, HCMC (2000).

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Foreign Relations of the U.S. 1964-68, Vol. XXIX: Part 1, Korea. Includes LBJ's efforts to draw South Korea into the Việt Nam War. Increasingly, the ROK was willing to become a major military supporter of South Việt Nam. This was also the time of the USS Pueblo. Supt. of Documents (see above), \$60 in US, \$75 foreign, order processing number 8366 (2000).

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U.S. bombed Hà Nội during a visit by Alexsei Kosygin (early 1965), relations plummeted. Orchestrated demonstrations against the U.S. embassy in Moscow were followed by open hostility by Soviet leaders toward the U.S. for its "aggression" against a sister socialist state. For the next two years, US-USSR relations were in a "controlled freeze." The Soviets had long been annoyed by the US practice of welcoming Soviet defectors, and this reached a boiling point in March 1967 when Joseph Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, walked into the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and was subsequently granted asylum in the United States. Moscow charged that the U.S. was inciting Alliluyeva to make anti-Soviet statements. Toward the end of the Johnson administration, converging national interests began to produce agreements, or at least progress on some issues. Supt. of Documents (see above), \$59 in US, \$73.75 foreign, processing order 8371 (2001).

Việt Nam: Di Tích Và Thắng Cảnh (Việt Nam: Attractive Landscapes and Vestiges). Coffee table-size picture book. In full color, some of the photos are stunning. Organized by geographic region from the northern cradle (Hà Nội) to the Cà Mau peninsula. Good geographic reference work for the non-specialist. From Nhà Xuất Bản Hoa-Thông Tin, Hà Nội, 280,000 đồng (approx.US\$20) (2000).

Operation Tuscaloosa by John Culbertson. The 2nd battalion, Fifth Marines, at An Hòa, 1967, caught on a sandbar in the Thu Bồn River – a predicament that easily could have become the "Little Bighorn" of Việt Nam. Ivy Books, \$5.99 pb (1997).

The War that Would Not End by Charles Melton. About the dying days of the war for US Marines in Việt Nam (after the 1972 Easter Offensive). PSI Research, \$19.95 (1999).

Laos: Culture and Society, Grant Evans (Univ. of Hong Kong), ed. Essays on Lao society, ethnicity, literature, tourism, relations with neighbors. From IEAS, Singapore, \$24.95 (2000).

Intervention and Change in Cambodia: Towards Democracy? by Sorpong Peou (York Univ., Toronto). (Sophia Univ., Tokyo). The three interventions in Cambodian since 1954 -- competitive, cooperative and co-optative—have not led to what is necessary, that is, democratic compromise and maturation, only to hegemonic instability. ISEAS, Singapore, \$59 hc, \$39 pb (2000).

Does America Need a Foreign Policy? by Henry Kissinger (former US Sec. of State). Assessment of, and set of prescriptions for US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Briefly, a call to return to Prince Metternich, Austrian diplomat whose balance of power scheme kept the peace for so long in 19th C. Europe. What is new in world affairs, Kissinger says, is increased complexity. Basic US policy should be to focus on peace, justice, balance. And above all, it should eschew dogmatism. Simon and Schuster \$30 (2001). Also available on audio cassette.

Regional Outlook: Southeast Asia 2001-2002, ISEAS editorial committee, Chia Sio Yue, chair). Recap of politics by nine fellows of the Institute: David Koh on Vietnam; Nick Freeman on Laos; Tin Maung Maung Than on Cambodia. Also economic outlook by Freeman on Vietnam and Laos; Mya Than on Cambodia. All professionally done. Numerous economic indicators, tables, charts and other tabular data. Good reference work. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasir Panjang, Singapore 119614, \$19.95 (2001).

Engaging Russia in Asia Pacific, Watnabi Koji, ed. Nine contributors from Japan, China, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines and Russia met in conference in Cebu in 1998; they produced five essays on Russia and Northeast Asia, three on

Russia and Southeast Asia; Việt Nam got short shrift. Not a great deal of consensus among the participants as one might expect. From IEAS (see above), (2001).

Year of the Heroic Guerrilla; World Revolution and Counterrevolution in 1968 by Robert Daniels. Author contends that in 1968 the world—all of it, Washington, Moscow, Peking, Paris—tottered on the brink of collapse. It was quite a year true but not that tumultuous—except perhaps in the memories of surviving urban guerrillas. Harvard Univ. Press, \$15.95 pb (1996).

Modern China: A Companion to a Rising Power by Graham Hutchings (London *Daily Telegraph* correspondent in Beijing). A series of 200 pithy, stand-alone essays, some brief, in alphabetical order. Mostly on culture and politics; not much on economics, science or art. Still, highly useful as thought-starters for those writing on China. Penguin Books, \$29.33 (2001).

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the War in Vietnam. What might easily be called the Joint Chiefs' reply to McNamara's Pentagon Papers. Commissioned by the JCS Secretariat. Declassified, then published by Dalley Book Service, Christiansburg, VA. Web site: www.dalleybookservice.com

Memories of Pure Spring by Dương Thu Hương. Latest work from this major Vietnamese novelist. Trans. by Nina McPherson and Phan Huy Dương. Hyperion, \$23.95 (2000).

The Mekong: Turbulent Past, Uncertain Future by Milton Osborne (former Australian diplomat, academic, Southeast Asia specialist). Historical travel guide to the great river. Vibrant writing, authoritative, eminently readable. Grove/Atlantic, Inc., \$30 hc, \$16 pb (2000)

The Million Dollar Hole by Michael Casey. Slim volume of what might be called military poetry. Casey was an MP in Quảng Ngãi. His

work, says one reviewer, is for readers in search of authentic gut poetry. Orchises Press, Alexandria, VA, \$12.95 pb (2001).

Into the Green: A Reconnaissance by Fire by Cherokee Paul McDonald. Stark and stirring account of one man's experience as an artillery forward observer in Việt Nam. Dutton/Plume, \$14 pb (2001).

Hmong Women and Reproduction by Pranee Liamputtong Rice. Customs, spiritual beliefs and rituals from cradle to grave institutionalize a system of ensuring reproduction and continuity in Hmong society. For example: 30 days confinement of mother and child after birth (meals rich in meat; husband does the cooking and other work) to ensure the healthy survival of both. Book of is full of this sort of thing. Anthropology at its best. Greenwood Publishing, \$65 (2000).

Việt Nam War Novels from Australia

Highways to a War by Christopher Koch, Viking Penguin \$23 pb (1995).

Freedom Highway by Nigel Krauth, Allen & Unwin, A\$16.95 (1999).

The Vietnam Volunteer by Peter Corris, Southern Cross Univ. Press, A\$16.20 (2000).

Running Dogs by Barry Klemm (Australian veteran), no data.

The Odd Angry Shot by William Nagle, no pub.data but movie made in 1979, same title.

Canada and the Việt Nam War

Documents on Canadian External Relations, 1954 and 1955, vols. 20 and 21.

The two recent volumes containing material on Canada in Indochina. Vol. 20, published in 1997, deals in part with the beginning of Canada's participation in the International Control Commission (ICC). Vol. 21 (1999) covers Canada's involvement in the developing problems

in Việt Nam, Cambodia, and Laos. The series expects to publish new volumes at a rate of about one a year (the most recent (2001) for the years 1956-57 did not relate to Indochina.) All volumes are \$99.95, Canadian Government Printing Office. For information, see Canadian Govt. Publishing on the Internet or the web site: http://canada.gc.ca/publications/publication_e.html

Vietnam: Canada's Approach To Participation in the International Control Commission: Oct 25, 1972-March 27, 1973 by Mitchell Sharp. Information Canada, Ottawa (1973).

Snow Job: Canada, the United States and Vietnam, 1954 to 1973 by Charles Taylor. House of Anansi Press, Toronto (1974).

I Volunteered: The Story of Canadian Vietnam Veterans by Tracey Arial. Watson and Dwyer, Winnipeg, \$19.95 (1997).

Why is Canada in Vietnam?: The Truth About our Foreign Policy by Claire Culhane. NC Press, Toronto (1972).

In Defence of Canada: Indochina: The Roots of Complicity by James Eayrs. No. 5 in Studies in the Structure of Power Decision-Making in Canada, Toronto Univ. Press (1983).

Unknown Warriors: Canadians in Vietnam by Fred Gaffen. Dundurn Press, \$19.95 pb (1990).

Cross-Border Warriors: Canadians in American Forces, Americans in Canadian Forces from the Civil War to the Gulf by Fred Gaffen, Dundurn Press, \$19.99 (1995).

Quiet Complicity: Canadian Involvement in the Vietnam War by Victor Levant. Between the Lines, \$14.95 pb (1987).

In the Interests of Peace: Canada and Vietnam 1954-1973 by Douglas Ross. Univ. of Toronto Press (1984).

Note: Most of the above are out of print but may be available through Internet or used book sellers.

Book Buying

A Paris source for books on Indochina and Southeast Asia -- 10,000 titles in French, English, Vietnamese—is Asia Books Direct, 9 Rue St-Bernard 75011 Paris, France (Tel: 33 1 43 71 68 84, Fax: 33 1 49 77 53 07).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: PERIODICALS

“Misreading the Pentagon Papers” by Leslie Gelb (Council on Foreign Relations; ran the Pentagon Papers Project 1967-69). Gelb says public treatment of the Papers over the past 30 years has been based chiefly on myth rather than fact. Project began as a massive briefing paper for then Defense Sec. Robert McNamara as a favor to the Camelot crowd. Gelb at the time feared publication would be misrepresented. He was certainly correct in this. (*New York Times*, 29 June 2001). In the same issue: “Lying About Vietnam” by Daniel Ellsberg, who purloined the Papers “to help save the country, from the Washington conspirators,” he says.

“Cambodia is Key to Contain Malaria” by Paul Zachary (*Wall Street Journal*, June 26). Cambodia has become the center of a worldwide battle against malaria, once thought to have been contained in Asia. Now the disease threatens to spread across the world with new drug-resistant strains.

“Recipe for a Fashion Brand” by Robert Frank (*Wall Street Journal*, June 25). About the silk business in Thailand but chiefly a peg for recounting the story of Jim Thompson, one of the truly legendary figures in Southeast Asia before, during and after the Việt Nam War. Thompson

Errata

The author of **Battle Notes; Music of the Vietnam War** in IC, vol. XX, no.1, is Lee Andresen.

The author of **Patriots and Tyrants: Ten Asian Leaders** in the same issue, is Ross Marlay.

The name of Cornell Professor **George McT. Kahin** was misspelled in the Obituary column, IC XX: 1, Jan-April 2001. We regret the errors.

began with the OSS during World War Two; moved on to the CIA working the region; retired from government to rescue the Thai silk weaving industry from oblivion by marketing production in 35 boutiques across Asia and Europe; built a magnificent Thai-style, canal-side home in Bangkok (now a museum); then while on vacation in the Cameron Highlands of Malaya walked into the jungle one evening and was never seen again.

“Can Democracy Survive the Mass Media?” by Sander Vanocur (veteran journalist on ABC, *Washington Post*, History Channel). Witty critique (e.g., quote from Adlai Stevenson: “the chief function of journalism is to separate the wheat from the chaff. And then print the chaff.” Vanocur’s answer to his title’s question: he is not sure. In *The Forum*, Winter 2001.

The April-June 2001 issue of the Việt kiều journal, *Viet Marketing and Business Report*, published in Canada, has a lengthy analysis of the VCP Ninth Congress by a half dozen contributors. They seem agreed on these judgments: (1) never has a Party Congress been so troubled by internal politics, ethnic unrest, religious activism and an ugly public mood; (2) leadership governance strategy is to buy time to strengthen totalitarian dictatorship; (3) selection of Nông Đức Mạnh as VCP Sec Gen. (the choice was between him and Lê

Khả Phiêu, or Nguyễn Văn An) and the vetting of the Politburo (eight removals, four additions, new total of 15) will permit the political scene to calm down; 3) the “direct opposition movement”, in and out of Việt Nam, continues to take on sinew through new religious activism, its continuing goal the democratization of Việt Nam; (4) Hà Nội leaders somehow must overcome sharp differences of policy and strategy. *Report's* address: 517 College, no.238, Toronto M6G4A2 Canada. email: Articlewriting@vietmarkeetingbr.com

“Flash Point Asia: The Most Dangerous Place?” by Andrew Scobell (Army War College). The author removed the question mark from his title by giving a strong answer: yes! He cites: “The situation in the Taiwan Strait could lead to a crisis more dangerous than any of the other crises” (William Perry); “Korea is the single biggest flash point” (Adm Dennis Blair); “The most dangerous place in the world today is the Indian Subcontinent and the line of control {LOC} in Kashmir” (Bill Clinton). The question is do any of our East European friends know anything about this? (*Parameters*, Summer 2001)

“Seven Days of Cambodian Justice” by Phelim Kyne in *Phnom Penh Post*, June 22–July 5). Day-by-day commentary on the trial of Richard Kim and 32 other members of the Cambodian Freedom Fighters (including two in absentia (living in Long Beach, CA). Charges are terrorism and conspiracy stemming from Nov. 24 street fighting in Phnom Penh, which left 8 dead, 14 injured. Kyne’s account suggests serious flaws in Cambodian legal system.

“Idols of Young Vietnamese” by Đặng Tươi et al. in the Tết issue of *Tuổi Trẻ* (Youth). Some 200 randomly chosen young people (age 15-28) in HCM City were asked to name their idols.. Bill Gates (89%) led the list, followed by Hồ Chí Minh with 39%, Gen. Võ Nguyên Giáp 35%, Bill Clinton 6.5%, PM Phan Văn Khải (3.2%), Hilary Clinton (3.2%). This was official sacrilege. The

magazine was pulled from the racks, the offending article replaced by a piece on literary critic Phan Cư Đệ, recently accused of buying the fake title of “academician” in Russia. Rumors are rife in HCMC that Lê Văn Nuôi, *Tuổi Trẻ's* publisher, and his deputy may be fired following a precedent set over ten years ago at the same magazine. In 1988 publisher Vũ Kim Hạnh was fired for printing an article about a French wife that Hồ Chí Minh had in his youth, a fact revealed by French historians and amply confirmed thereafter. (RFE, 10 Jan.).

Volume eight of *“Positions and Asian Culture”* (Winter 2000) is a special issue titled “Visual Cultures of Japanese Imperialism,” Jennifer Weisenfeld, ed. Articles deal with attitudes of Japanese leaders and intellectuals (Meiji period onwards) toward colonialism, imperialism and Japan’s role in Asian affairs. Nothing here directly on Japanese imperialism in Indochina but there are scattered references. Useful for anyone teaching or writing about the Japanese in Indochina. Duke Univ. Press publication.

“Cambodia: Try Again” by Brian Mockenhaupt (*FEER* 5 July). Pessimistic report on prospects for the franchise. First-ever local elections look doomed from the start; full democracy is still some way off. What to do? Let the young people take over, says one 58 year old.

“The Hmong in America” by Kuo Yang in *Journal of Asian-American Studies*, June 2001. A very upbeat perspective 25 years after the end of the war in Laos that saw 750 Hmong coming to America (population now has reached 200,000). Among them, 120 hold Ph.D’s; eight occupy tenure track positions at U.S. universities; one is on the St. Paul, MN school board, and many operate successful enterprises (mom-and-pop stores, car dealerships, insurance sales, vegetable farms, chicken raising, restaurants). The Hmong spirit of independence over several hundred years of adversity has stood them well. Author does not deal

with difficult acculturation struggle of many in the Hmong community.

“Buddhism and the “Subversive Science” by David Barash (Univ. of Washington) in *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 23 Feb. 2001. On similarities between ecology, which is a science, and the Buddhist religion and/or its spiritual/philosophical tradition. Both lead to the same insights on the nature of reality and the reality of nature. Draws on writings of Thích Nhất Hạnh, famed Zen master.

“Beyond the Wall: China Looks Abroad Challenging the U.S. For Influence in Asia” by Karby Leggett (staff reporter, *Wall Street Journal*, 7 June). Dated Phnom Penh, article says Cambodia caught between the U.S. and China, finds a mix of guns and propaganda adds up to subtle pressures.

“Accounting for American MIAs” by John Haseman (US Army, ret.) in *Vietnam*, August 2001. Update on the work of the Joint Task Force – Full Accounting in Vietnam. Still searching for 1,991 remains. In same issue, Blaine Taylor looks at the most visible Việt Nam War veteran, John McCain. Also, “Missile Ambushes: Soviet Air Defense Aid” by Sergi Blagov (Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow), an authoritative history of the aid (advisors, weapons, tactics to employ) provided by the USSR and its 22,000 specialists in Hà Nội, 1965-75). Brief descriptions of similar aid from China, North Korea. Charts and numerous statistics.

“The Impact of Economic Reform on Industrial Labor Relations in China and Vietnam” by Y. Zu and S. Faey in *Post-Communist Economies*, June 1999.

“The Thousand Year Aspiration: Human Rights in Vietnam” by T.G. Nguyễn in *Index on Censorship*, May-June 1999.

“My Brush With History: Worlds Apart” by P.K. Thayler. An American family resumes contact with a Vietnamese, wounded during the war, who

lived with the family for a few years then returned to Việt Nam (*American Heritage*, Feb-Mar 1999).

“Linking Research, Policy, and Strategic Planning to Education Development in Lao People’s Democratic Republic” by Don Adams, Geok Hwa Kee, and Lin Lin in *Comparative Education Review*, 45:2, 2001. The authors concede many positive changes in educational policy and administration underway in the Lao PDR, but their conclusions present a gloomy picture of the current situation and a daunting description of what is required for progress. While specific educational needs may be addressed, the more difficult process will be “fundamental changes in the organizational and policy environment”. Carefully researched.

“Establishing Normal Trade Relations with Vietnam and Laos” by Andrew Wells-Dang in *Foreign Policy in Focus* August 8. If presented in a culturally sensitive manner, U.S. public and private assistance can help to strengthen emerging civil society in both Việt Nam and Laos. The Vietnam Education Foundation Act, passed by Congress in January 2001 with the support of Sen. John Kerry, is a good beginning. The foundation recycles Việt Nam’s wartime debt to the U.S. into scholarships for Vietnamese students. In addition to continuing the humanitarian, educational, and community development programs now in place, Washington might contribute to developing the legal system and rule of law in both countries, increasing the public space open to local NGOs and religious groups, and countering criminal activity and corruption. Normal trade relations will give the U.S. more, not less, leverage in addressing problem areas of human rights and governance. With patience and a sound foundation for bilateral relations, almost anything is possible to discuss; without them, the U.S. may continue to repeat the mistakes of the past. Source: Interhemispheric Resource Center/Institute for Policy Studies Foreign Policy In Focus Program, Box 4506 Albuquerque, NM 87196 505-246-1601 (fax) ircalb@swcp.com. infocus@fpif.org

Names in the News

Nguyễn Văn An. Elected chairman of the 450-member SRV National Assembly after endorsement by the VCP Politburo. He is 63, has been a member of the Party Organization Committee throughout his 19 years in the Central Committee. An is regarded as a loyal Party man in tune with the thinking of Party conservatives. In the early 1990s, he proved that he had influential backers within the party when he survived a scandal surrounding the bankruptcy of a huge state-owned textile factory in his home province of Nam Định which cost some 10,000 jobs. An reportedly was elected to the Assembly chair by 60 percent of deputies. He told a news conference he shared Nông Đức Mạnh's views on economic reform and said Việt Nam's "central task" was to develop its economy. He said the Assembly would aim for a more efficient and better planned legislative process, adding: "We are creating a legal framework for a level playing field for all businesses, so business people can have the conditions to bring into play their talents." Foreign investment is an "extremely important" component of Việt Nam's development efforts, he said, but the country also needed to promote its "internal strength." An was born in October 1937 in Nam Hà, now Nam Định province, and elevated to the Politburo in 1996. He had been considered a contender for the party chief's job himself in the run-up to the April Congress. He is considered to belong to the reformist rather than the conservative camp and has made tough statements in the past against rampant corruption. As such, his election should be welcomed by the business community, which hopes to see the new leadership push ahead with implementation of wide-ranging economic reforms and begin to revamp the administrative and legal system. A Western diplomat said only time would tell whether An, who has a relatively spare

public profile, would live up to a reputation as a reformer and demonstrate the administrative skills necessary to push through change. (Reuters, 22 June 2001)

Powell in Việt Nam. The media did not make it easy for Sec. of State Colin Powell, in Việt Nam for the first time since his war years. Some of the treatment, especially by the European press, was maudlin, pseudo-sympathetic and ignored his arrival statement that there were no ghosts for him to exorcise, that what Việt Nam of the past chiefly meant to him "was a place where I lost some of my best friends." AFP reported that Powell "startled the locals" one morning by taking a 15-minute walk from his Daewoo hotel along the Lake of the Restored Sword. He met a policeman who said he was glad Việt Nam and the U.S. now had good relations, and a college student who told him "I want to come to your country."

Joseph Ellis, Pulitzer Prize winning historian (early U.S. history) is revealed by the *Boston Globe* as a Việt Nam War wannabe. His claims: served as a paratrooper with the 101st Division; returned from Việt Nam and joined the anti-war movement; went south with civil rights activists and was hounded by Mississippi police; none of it true. Ellis released a statement of regret, saying that "even in the best of lives mistakes are made." The president of Mount Holyoke, Joanne Creighton, where Ellis teaches, issued a statement questioning "what public interest the *Globe* is trying to serve". (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 15 June 2001)

Trần Trung Kiên, 17, high school student from Mộ Đức, Quảng Ngãi Province, is sentenced to six months in jail for beating Trần Út, his literature teacher, on the head with a stick and

hospitalizing him for a week. Kiên earlier had been reprimanded by Ut for his "bad attitude". Officials say there recently has been an increase in violent attacks by Vietnamese students on their teachers. (AFP, 7 June)

Oliver Dupuis, Belgian member of the European Parliament and sec.-gen. of the Italy-based Transnational Radical Party, is expelled from Việt Nam. Police say he demonstrated in front of a HCMC Buddhist monastery over the detention of Buddhist leader Thích Huyền Quang. Police escorted Dupuis back to his hotel; he returned later waving a banner calling for religious freedom in Vietnam and was picked up, interrogated and deported along with a compatriot, Martin Schulthes of Germany. Foreign diplomats in Hà Nội view with mounting concern such drawing of international concern to Việt Nam's human rights record. (AP, Reuters, AFP, 6 June)

Oanh Ress, Việt kiều wife of an American citizen, is sprung from a Vietnamese jail after the visit of US Sec. of State Colin Powell. She had been arrested in the spring at the airport carrying in pamphlets, apparently of a religious nature.

Robert Mueller, Việt Nam veteran named new FBI chief. Sixth person to hold the post since 1924 when the bureau was formed. Mueller served in the US Marine Corps in Việt Nam, won the bronze star. (*Washington Times*, 31 July)

Raymond Burghardt, 56, said to be in line as next American ambassador to Hà Nội, replacing Douglas Peterson. Burghardt, 56, has had a wide range of foreign service assignments: Hongkong, Sài Gòn, National Security Office, Manila, Seoul, Shanghai, and his last posting, Taipei. He is a graduate of Columbia University, is fluent in Vietnamese and Mandarin Chinese. (Mark McDonald, *Mercury News* (San Jose, CA), 10 June)

Nguyễn Tâm Chiến, SRV career diplomat with economic expertise, named (29 June) new ambassador to the U.S., vice Lê Văn Bằng,

Chiến, 53, was born in Nghệ An Province, schooled in Moscow, and has served as vice foreign minister in charge of international organizations and economic issues. (AP, 29 June)

Phương Cảnh Ngô, Việt kiều millionaire politician, is convicted of murdering a political rival, MP John Newman. It is Australia's first political assassination. (*South. China Morning Post/KFP*, 30 June)

Ken Clarke, Britain's Conservative Party chief, trounced in recent election, holes up in HCMC. He says Sài Gòn -- run for years by a corrupt clique, bombarded into rubble, then overrun by a gang of bloody ideologues -- is a fine place to find inspiration in contemplating the future of his party. Clarke arrived in town representing a British tobacco company. Place is a bit noisy, he says. *The Guardian* (London, 25 June) says Clarke is not fit to lead the Tory party because he lacks morality and judgment. (*The Times*, 19 June)

Madeleine Albright. The former Secretary of State will join the William Davidson Institute on Sept. 1 as its first Distinguished Scholar. Affiliated with the Univ. of Michigan Business School, the Institute is a think-tank supporting and promoting development of new market economies through research, student education and business assistance. Its faculty and students have worked in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, China, Việt Nam, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa.

Vũ Tuyên Hoàng, president of the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Assn. and (former Min of Agriculture), is awarded the Hồ Chí Minh Prize for his work in agriculture. He is chiefly noted for his team's development of "new spring rice", i.e., strains that shift winter and short-term rice crops to summer crop. He has also developed new seeds for potatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, and orchards. (*Nhân Dân*, 22 June)

Edson "Dido" Silva, Việt Nam national soccer coach, a Brazilian, has received death threats via e-mail and mobile phones prompted by his

criticism of a local club for releasing a Brazilian player. Officials ask Silva to get on with his coaching and allow police to provide escorts and protection for this family. (EFE News Service, 17 May).

Nguyễn Thị Bình, SRV vice president, launched a campaign in mid-May to implement the Asian Women's Plan of Action for Culture, Peace and Sustainable Development. At ceremonies in Hà Nội, she called on the women of Asia to raise their capacities to settle conflicts, heal wounds of war, and fight the use of force and violence by focusing on education, mass media, and hunger and poverty alleviation. Her organization is supported by UNESCO. In late May, Bình paid a week-long official visit to France, met with President Jacques Chirac to discuss the "Francophone summer" next October in Lebanon. (Xinhua, 17 May)

Lewis Stern, veteran Hanoi watcher at the Pentagon (14 years) will spend a year as visiting scholar at the School for Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins Univ., where he plans to research a book on US-Việt Nam defense relations.

Thị Đình Bùi, 60, of Garden Grove, CA, is being investigated by the US Immigration and Naturalization Service after local Việt kiều survivors of the Thanh Cầm reeducation camp identified him as an "enforcer" who committed atrocities against camp prisoners, including beating one of them to death. Bùi, who has been living in the U.S. since 1990, was an ARVN captain during the war.

John De Camp, Nebraska lawyer, winner of the Medal of Assininity for the year 2001. Camp says he gave Robert Kerrey (Medal of Honor winner) five days to meet his demands for reparations for leading a US Seal operation against Viet Cong leadership during the Việt Nam War. Deadline has expired. As Shakespeare suggested, "First of all, we will hang the lawyers." (AP, 25 June)

Obituaries

Dương Văn Minh, GVN military and political figure, president of South Việt Nam for a moment, died at 86 after falling from his wheelchair at his home in Pasadena, CA. "Big Minh", as he was commonly known to distinguish him from another general, "Little Minh", and because of his size (6'1" and 200 lbs). His military career began in the French ERA as one of 50 Vietnamese army officers commissioned into the French colonial army. In 1963, Minh was one of the troika who led the overthrow of the Diệm government, which was overthrown in a coup two months later. He accepted the surrender of South Việt Nam to PAVN in 1975. The communists "reeducated" him for eight years, then allowed him to emigrate to France. Later he moved to the U.S. to live with his daughter in Pasadena. His two sons live in Paris. In Hà Nội, a spokesperson expressed the SRV's "sincere condolences" to his family.

Queen Moineath, prominent Cambodian female politician, died June 18 in a Bangkok hospital at age 62. As a member of the Cambodian National Assembly she was a tireless and outspoken advocate on women's rights ("women are regarded as notably inferior beings, or as formidable competitors to be ruthlessly eliminated" she said in a debate on women's property rights and inheritance laws). She is survived by her husband, Pung Peng Cheng, and two daughters. Her cremation ceremony on June 17 was attended by King Sihanouk. (*Phnom Penh Post*, 22 June)

Bishop Louis Van Nam, HCM City prelate, died June 7, age 82. He had served for many years as assistant to the archbishop of HCMC.

Charles Whitehouse, 79, longtime, highly respected US career diplomat died of cancer July 9 at his home near Marshall, VA. Whitehouse was born November 5, 1921, in Paris, graduated from Yale in 1947 after service as a Marine pilot 1942-46. In 1947 he joined the CIA and worked in

Congo, Turkey, Belgium and Cambodia. He moved to the State Department in 1956, where he became acting assistant secretary for East Asian affairs, and in 1972 deputy to Ellsworth Bunker, the American ambassador in Sài Gòn. When Whitehouse arrived in Vientiane (September 1973) he oversaw decreasing American military aid to mountain people fighting a war against the Communists in northern Laos. Eight months later Whitehouse left Vientiane to take up his new post in Bangkok. In 1988, he was called out of retirement to become the first assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflicts.

History Redux

Phoenix Program. During the Việt Nam War the old men of the Hà Nội Politburo (and they were old, even then) sent tens of thousands of North Vietnamese, mostly teen-agers, down the Hồ Chí Minh trail to their deaths. In the South, the NLF fighters encountered a determined South Vietnamese program to eliminate them; it was called the Census Grievance Program (CGP), part of which was what the public knew much better as the Phoenix Program. Essentially, the CGP (and Phoenix) was an effort to separate Việt Cộng leadership from Việt Cộng rank and file. It was modeled on the experience of the British in Malaya during the Emergency in their effort to rid the scene, one way or another, of the Communist Terrorists (CTs) – bribe them to quit; isolate them, hire their bodyguards to assassinate them. It worked quite well in Malaya (where most of the CTs were ethnic Chinese) for reasons obvious if you examine the program closely, but it did not work nearly as well for the CGP in Việt Nam.

The idea of a campaign in warfare aimed at cutting off the head of the leadership raises two questions. First, is it sound strategy; does it make tactical sense? Second, is it immoral, a war crime?

With regard to the second question, we ask whether the leadership, safe behind the lines, is to be regarded as sacrosanct and untouchable? This does not have to do with leadership on the battlefield. If you lead men into combat you take your chances with them; if you order them in via a radio message you do not.

It would seem opinion holds that leadership, especially high-level leadership, should be regarded as sacrosanct. Why is this so? In war, we don't object to killing the enemy at the front but we do object to deliberately searching out and assassinating their leaders. Why do we seem to be apologetic about even considering such a strategy? It would appear there is something of an unwritten gentlemen's agreement among leaders of the world; namely I won't send assassins after you if you treat me the same. Or is it a matter of threat assessment? Abo Ben Ladin sends out his assassins knowing his targets find it infinitely difficult to kill him, even if they wish to do so.

Pentagon Papers. The press has made much of the 30th anniversary of the surfacing of the Pentagon's classified history of the Việt Nam War, commonly known as the Pentagon Papers stolen and turned over to reporters by Daniel Ellsberg (the Justice Department's case against him for grand larceny was botched when the White House sent some goons rummaging through the files of Ellsberg's shrink. The study was officially titled "The History of US Decision Making in Vietnam"; in reality, it is the history only of the Defense Department and Việt Nam, with little input from the White House, State Department, or CIA. It was ordered by Robert McNamara chiefly as a favor to the Camelot crowd. to save JFK's reputation. The plain fact is that in the 7,000 pages of this 47-volume work there is hardly a single hard fact or news story that had not been carried at the time of occurrence by the wire services, New York Times, et al. The irony here is that had the Pentagon published the whole study itself (which it should have done) instead of going to court to block

publication (with a very weak national security case), had it then promoted the study to the press the Papers it would have been treated as massive official propaganda and torn apart by the media. Instead the myth that has come down to historians is that government efforts of secrecy did not work, and that publication led to the Watergate scandal, which shattered the cult of government secrecy.

Examples of media treatment on the 30th anniversary of publication:, "Secrets and Lies: remembering the Pentagon Papers" by Martin Nolan, *Boston Globe*, 7 June 2001, and columnist Anthony Lewis, "When Truth is Treason" , *New York Times*, 9 June. Saying publication of the Papers was possible because experience of the Việt Nam War had changed attitudes at the *Times* and other mainstream media, Lewis wrote: "In the old days in Washington the press respected the confidence of officials because it respected their superior knowledge and good faith. But the war had shown that their knowledge was dim, and respect for their good faith had died with their false promises and lies." (See Bibliograph Periodicals)

PAVN in Cambodia. Official casualty figures for PAVN's adventure in Cambodia are now in: ten thousand soldiers dead or missing. Confirmation came when the Vietnamese army announced it had completed preparations to locate the dead and bring them home. The operation was agreed during a visit to Phnom Penh last year by Dep. P.M. Nguyễn Tấn Dũng. Four army search and recovery teams from Seventh Command headquarters in Hồ Chí Minh City will run by military commands at Tây Ninh, Long An and Bình Phước close to the Cambodian border. Western analysts have long estimated Vietnamese losses from its December 1978 to 1989 intervention at 10,000 dead and 20,000 wounded. Việt Nam still insists its troops in Cambodia were all "volunteers" even though they were mostly ordinary recruits doing their national service in an increasingly unpopular overseas campaign. (Hà Nội Mới, July 19)

Official Statements

PM Decision No. 71/2001/QĐddd-TTg: Implementing 2001-2005 National Program (May 4, 2001)

Việt Nam strives to reduce the poverty rate to below 10 percent by 2005, a 1.5-2.5 percent annual decrease. Hunger eradication, poverty alleviation, and job creation programs hope to alleviate chronic hunger and improve basic infrastructure in poor communes. About 1.4 to 1.5 million jobs are expected to be provided every year, thus reducing the unemployment rate in urban areas to 5-6 percent, and the rate of working time in rural areas raised to 80 percent by 2005. The program for population and family planning hopes to reduce the growth in the birth rate by an annual average of

.04% to a rate of 1.16% growth by 2005. The program on education and training plans to complete secondary education universalization in 30 provinces and cities by 2005 and the remaining 31 provinces by 2010. About 30% of working age people will be provided with vocational training by 2005; and 40 per cent by 2010. Relevant ministries, agencies, and localities will work out and submit for approval plans to carry out the target programs. The prime minister will fix annual budget allocations, including costs for infrastructure and administration. (VNA, 9 May 2001)

Hà Nội Capital Ordinance (7 chapters, 28 articles), Dec 28 - January 11, 2001. Stipulates issues involved in the positions, mechanisms, policies, assigning responsibility and dividing levels

of State management of construction and development in Hanoi; policies on investment in construction, urban management and international co-operation; and responsibilities in building, developing and defending Hà Nội Capital offices, sectors and people at all levels. (*Nhân Dân*, 15 Feb. 2001)

Library Ordinance (7 chapters, 31 articles), effective 3 Feb. 2001). Stipulates functions and duties in preserving bibliographical heritage of the nation and archives, collecting and organizing the exploitation and use of materials in order to propagate knowledge and meet the needs of study, research, working and leisure activities, labour forces training, talent education, development of science, technology, economy and culture for the cause of national modernization and industrialization. (*Nhân Dân*, 15 Feb. 2001)

State Secret Protection (5 chapters, 22 articles), effective April 1, 2001. Stipulates issues relating to the protection of state secrets and responsibilities of State agencies, political organizations, political-social organizations, social organizations, economic organizations and armed force units; and of citizens with duties of protecting State's secrets contributing to the national construction and defence. (*Nhân Dân*, 15 Feb. 2001)

Ninth Congress Resolution The Ninth National Representatives Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam held in Hanoi from April 19-22 adopts: The Political Report the Strategy for Socio-Economic Development for Ten Years from 2001-2010 and the Report on Orientation, Tasks and Plans for Socio-Economic Development for Five Years (2001-2005) it endorses the whole supplemented and amended Statute of the Communist Party of Việt Nam; it assigns the Party Central Committee, Ninth Tenure, and Party Committees of all levels to build plans and detailed action programs for implementing the line and orientations mentioned in the Congress documents. The Ninth National Representatives

Congress of the Communist Party of Việt Nam calls on the entire Party, people and army to uphold the revolutionary heroism, promote the glorious tradition and unity strength of the entire nation and entire Party, persist in the objective for national independence and socialism, seize opportunities, overcome challenges, continue with the process of renovation, accelerate industrialization and modernization, to build and defend the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland for a rich people, a strong country and an equitable, democratic and civilized society, thus firmly advancing into the 21st century." (VVNA, 8 May 2001)

Circular No. 18/2001/TT-BTM, dated Jul. 12, 2001 by the Ministry of Trade, guiding the organization of trade fairs and exhibitions in line with Decree No. 32/1999/ND-CP (dated May 5, 1999 by the Government) concerning sale promotion, advertising, and trade fairs and exhibitions.

Circular No. 17/2001/TT-BTM, dated Jul. 12, 2001 by the Ministry of Trade, guiding the implementation of sales promotion in line with Decree No. 32/1999/ND-CP (dated May 5, 1999 by the Government) concerning sales promotion, advertising, and trade fairs and exhibitions.

Decision No. 893/2001/QĐ-NHNN, dated Jul. 17, 2001 by the governor of the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV), on dollar-đồng swap between the SBV and commercial banks to ease dong liquidity shortage.

Decision No. 894/2001/QĐ-NHNN, dated Jul. 17, 2001 by the governor of the SBV, on the spot rate applicable to swap service.

Official Letter No. 6568 TC/TCT, dated Jul. 13, 2001 by the Ministry of Finance, concerning import tax levied on materials for producing exports which must be destroyed.

Official Letter No. 1727/TM-XK, dated Jul. 13, 2001 by the Ministry of Trade, on the import of automobiles under non-trade channel.

Decree No. 39/2001/ND-CP, dated Jul. 13, 2001 by the Government, regulating punitive sanctions against violations of overland traffic order and safety regulations in urban areas.

Decision No. 908/QD-TTg, dated Jul. 26, 2001 by the Prime Minister, on measures for export promotion and import management in the second half of 2001.

(Source: Vietlaw Ltd. (Saigon Times Aug 2, 2001)

Audio Visual

“Apocalypse Now Redux”. Movie reviewers persisted in labeling it a Vietnam War epic, says producer Francis Ford Coppola; it was really “more of a surreal, quasi-philosophical piece on hypocrisy and morality.” It was also a near disaster for Coppola’s career (star problems, a typhoon, bad press) and he had to mortgage his family’s wine estate to finish the movie. But it won big at Cannes and this May it returned to the French film festival in restored format.

Let’s face it, the original “Apocalypse Now” was a whopping good movie with incredible visuals but it had no more to do with Vietnam than upcountry Africa had in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. The new version adds 53 minutes that had been cut from the original and has now been re-edited, runs 3 hours, 17 minutes, and in it:

- Col Kurtz (Marlon Brandon) is not simply deranged; he speaks dispassionately and logically about the hypocrisy of the news media.
- Capt. Willard (Martin Sheen), at a French plantation, has a romantic encounter and witnesses a fierce debate over dinner among French colons about their empire in Indochina and why they must never abandon their plantations.
- Humor has been added, says Coppola. For instance, Willard swipes the beloved

surfboard from a beach-crazed colonel (Robert Duvall) and gives stranded Playboy playmates helicopter fuel in exchange for sex with his men on his patrol boat.

- Not restored was the demolition of Kurtz’s jungle lair. Said Coppola: “We shot it because we had to destroy it. So I said ‘let’s blow it up and take shots of it’. But it became mere decorative backdrop to the closing credits and I realized people would react as if it were an alternative ending. I did not want to send the message that the film ends in destruction and death.”

(Sources: AP, Cannes, 14 May; *Los Angeles Times*, Kenneth Turan, 11 May; AP, David Germain, 1 August.). Release date 15 August in LA and NY, 24 August other cities.

Mark Twain & Warfare. This son of Missouri (1835-1910) Late in the civil war joined the Marion Rangers, a band of confederate irregulars. His two weeks of service consisted entirely of avoiding combat and constituted the totality of his military experience. After two were deserted moved to Nevada and occasion returned to his Marion days in writings and lectures: sample: “I learned more about retreating than the man who invented retreating.” “The epitome of war is the killing of strangers against whom who you feel no personal animosity”.

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Abbreviations

AFP—Agence France Presse
AP—Associated Press
AI—Amnesty International
AMAZON.COM—For reviews, cite Amazon.com as source, URL (<http://www.amazon.com>)
ASEAN—Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CPP—Cambodian People's Party (ruling party)
CS—Council of State
THE ECONOMIST—International Weekly (London)
FEER—*Far Eastern Economic*
FBIS—Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FDI—Foreign Direct Investment
FUNCINPEC—National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (opposition party)
GSSP—Grandfather Son San Party (Cambodia)
INDOCHINA INTERCHANGE—USIRP quarterly, New York
KPL—Lao News Agency
KR—Khmer Rouge
LPDR—Lao People's Democratic Republic
LPRP—Lao People's Revolutionary Party
NATION—Bangkok Newspaper (English)
NHAN DAN—People's Daily (Ha Noi)
NRC—National Radio of Cambodia (Phnom Penh)

PAVN—People's Army of Vietnam
PRC—People's Republic of China
RENMIN RIBAO—People's Daily (Beijing)
RGC—Royal Government of Cambodia

RKAF—Royal Khmer Armed Forces
SCMP—*South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong)
SRV—Socialist Republic of Vietnam
UNDP—U.N. Development Program
UNHCR—U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva
USIRP—U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project, New York
VBJ—*Vietnam Business Journal*
VC—*Vietnam Courier*
VIR—*Vietnam Investment Review*
VNN—*Vietnam News* daily (Ha Noi daily news sheet)
VNU—Vietnam National University
VVN—Voice of Vietnam
VTN—Vietnam Television Network
XINHUA—China News Agency

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