

VIETNAM *Magazine*

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FROM OUR READERS

Your **Vietnam Magazine** is doing a yeoman's job of revealing to the world that in the course of its labors in preserving your free way of life, you are finding time to devote to the finer things of life.

Recently I read several back issues of your magazine and the thought struck me what a great thing it would be if South Vietnam could hold an exchange visit of the performing arts with her Asian friends. I remember that a few years ago, some Filipino artists went over there and were delighted not only with their reception but also with the things they saw and experienced.

You probably have heard of our various dance troupes which have toured abroad, even to Moscow. Why cannot the Vietnam Council on Foreign Relations initiate the formation of a similar cultural or performing group to go around Asia? I believe it will contribute very much to a better understanding of what you have been fighting for in more than two and a half decades.

SAMUEL V. GARCIA
Quezon City
Philippines

Going back home from a study tour in Berlin, I was invited by a colleague to visit your embassy in Paris where I got hold of a copy of your **Vietnam Magazine**.

I must say that it is doing a creditable job of presenting the women of your country—what they are doing for your struggle to keep your independence, in business, in arts and even in your law-making body.

Your idea of holding an Asian Press Seminar annually is also a laudable venture and incidentally, it is a similar effort to the press training center we have here. Colleagues who have attended it return home with very positive impressions about your country.

Kindly include me in your mailing list. It is always a pleasure to read such informative and well-produced publication.

ROSEMINAH BINTI AHMAD
Utusan Melayu Press
46 Jalan Ampang
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

I have been reading in your **Vietnam Magazine** about the invasion launched in your country recently by the North Vietnamese Communists.

I can imagine the destruction wrought by the awesome weapons of war provided by North Vietnam's allies on your people and the dislocation of day-to-day life imposed by aggression on the civilian population.

VIETNAM *Magazine*

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Cover: Temple dancers performing for benefit of visitors at the former imperial capital of Hue.

The mass flights of refugees from places threatened by the invaders in the face of fire and death is eloquent testimonial to the bravery and determination of your people to stay free and to reject the blandishments of the enemy.

I wish the trials and tribulations of your people will soon come to an end and a just and lasting peace be your blessing after all these years of cruel conflict.

JOSE DE LA RIVA
Sao Paulo, Brazil

That your country has managed to survive despite over 20 years of struggle against an enemy bent on imposing its will by force of arms must prove heartwarming to the many peoples of this world who dearly love freedom.

Through **Vietnam Magazine**, I have learned of your efforts outside the military sphere to build a strong republic to serve your people. I am particularly impressed with your efforts in the economic field which are the more herculean considering the many difficulties that beset you in the face of war.

Freedom is for those who want it. And this you have greatly proven.

JUAN DE LA MERCED
Magallanes Village
Makati, Rizal
Philippines

On behalf of our firm, I beg to acknowledge gratefully receipt of a copy of "Doing Business in Vietnam" which reached us in good condition.

Your generous gift is a welcome addition to the library of our firm, especially in view of the recent expansion in international scope of our professional works.

H. KAWAI
Yuasa and Hara
CPO Box 714
Tokyo, Japan

My wife and I wish to adopt a child, male, about six months old or less and in good health.

Please inform us if this is possible, sending the conditions and requisites to make this a reality. We will be grateful for your kind and prompt answer.

Dr. J. ASAN FALLAS
Hospital Mexico
San Jose, Costa Rica

Enclosed is a check for \$2.50 for the 118-page book "Doing Business in Vietnam".

Gen. W.W. STROMBERG
19 rue Singer
Paris 16, France

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Would you be willing to be a Patron? Your support will assist the Vietnam Council on Foreign Relations in attaining its various objectives, including the publication of **Vietnam Magazine**.

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If you would like to learn more about our activities, we indeed would be pleased to hear from you.



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TRAN VAN LAM





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A part of Vietnamese existence

Someone has remarked that Vietnam is characterized by two odors—that of *nuoc-mam* (fish sauce) and that of incense. The Vietnamese reaction is that *nuoc-mam* represents the material life whereas incense from the places of worship symbolize the spiritual life of Vietnam.

The incense trees and cinnamon which grow in the forests of Vietnam have long been known and utilized. The tribal people gather cinnamon bark and trade these to the lowland Vietnamese for essential supplies. They also gather the incense wood for a similar reason as the tribespeople do not seem to use incense for worship as do the lowland worshippers.

Aloes wood—used as incense—belongs to the *Thymelaeaceae* family of trees. The Chinese, French, Cambodians, Hebrews, Greeks, Malaysians, Germans, Portuguese, Cham, and English speaking people all have their own words for it. The walls and ceilings of many temples are much darkened by the smoke of burning incense.

For a small fee, incense may be purchased and set to burning either inside or outside the temple in the form of joss sticks. For about three dollars, one can secure spiral formed incense that will burn continually for three months or more.

In the ancient writing of the Egyptians, Greeks, Indians and Arabs aloes is mentioned. The Arabs use it as medication for the heart and burn it mixed with camphor in worship services. In India, aloes mixed with other products is used to anoint and perfume the dead.

An additional aromatic product of the aloes wood is *Ky-nam*. *Ky-nam* is composed of aloes wood full of resin. If chewed, it tastes bitter and is gummy; when burned, its resin gives its own character-

istic scent. Since *Ky-nam* is black in color with white spots like the feathers of eagles, it is sometimes called eaglewood. It is also used as medicine against colds, fevers and dysentery, but with the warnings that if used by pregnant women, it will cause miscarriage.

Normally, the aloes incense wood is of a brownish color and makes excellent incense sticks which are often made up into small packages for easy use. Similar to the cedar in the West, aloes is sometimes made into furniture, but is very expensive by comparison. The Portuguese tell of one piece of aloes wood four feet long and two feet thick valued at 54,000 English pounds (roughly \$70,000) in the 17th century.

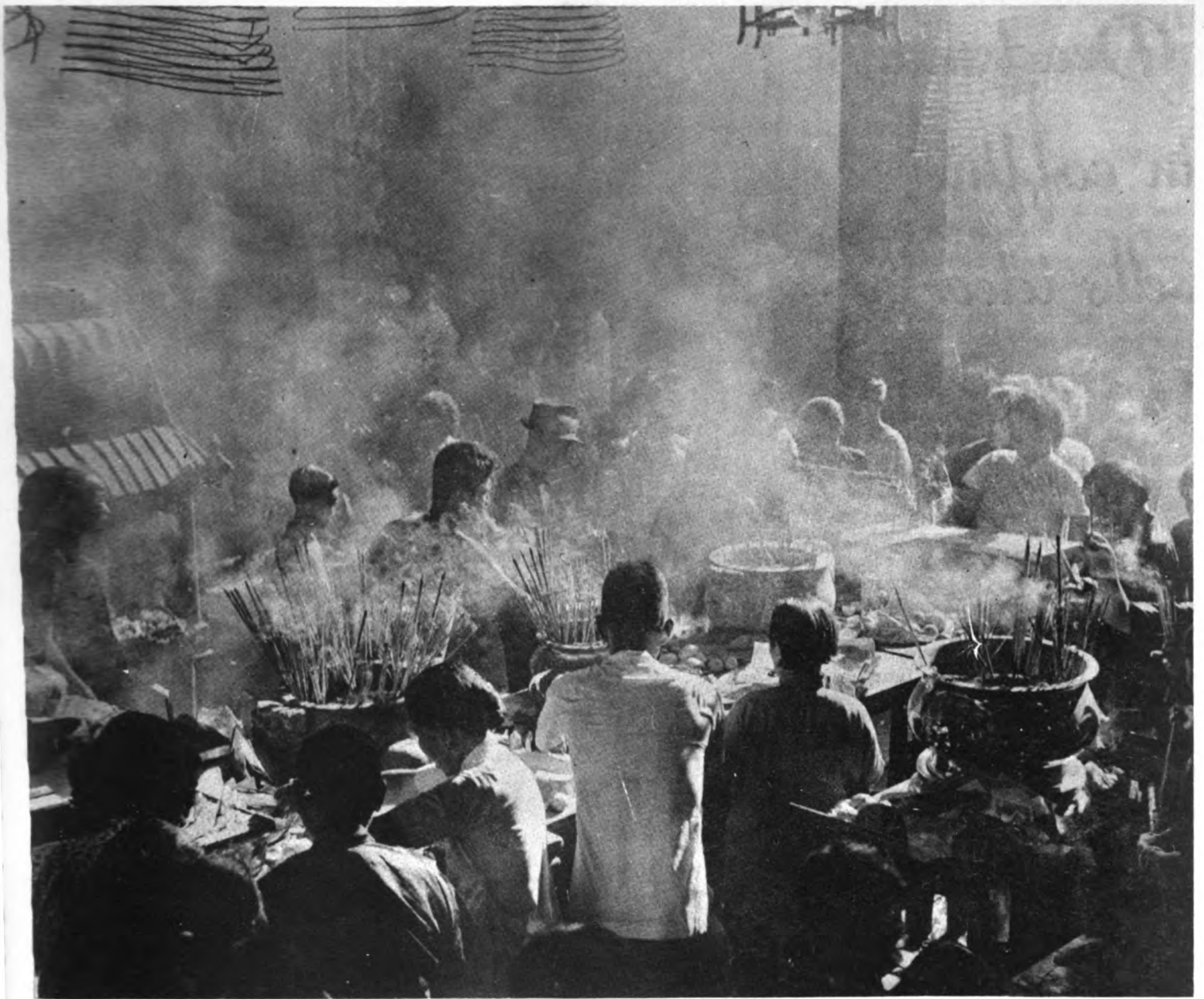
An Italian missionary in Vietnam about the same time says the King of Vietnam had a piece of aloes wood weighing about 30 pounds in his office. If made into wooden pillars, only the very rich could own such rarities. Used as incense, the smoke is supposed to please either the spirits of the departed dead or to curry the favor of the gods.

Joss Sticks

Not all joss sticks are fragrant as some are primarily for smoke and have only the faintest odor. However, the more favored joss sticks are the ones with incense which serves both as a means of veneration and as practical deodorizer.

Few homes are without a joss stick to be utilized for some reason, and in some seasons the burning of joss sticks seems to create distinct fire hazards. When it is remembered that joss sticks are all handmade, it does not take long to realize that this is quite an industry. Basically, the joss stick is made with a thin bamboo stick which is painted red. Part of the

Incense, Votive



Incense in the form of joss sticks is burned to please spirits of the departed or curry favor of gods.

stick is rolled in a putty-like substance whose formulae are guarded by their owners.

The putty-like substance is composed of the sawdust of such materials as sandalwood and other fragrant plants mixed with water or another evaporating liquid. Nor-

mally at least three different kinds of sawdust are mixed for the best results.

The ideal woods for this sawdust come from the mountain forests and from Laos. Once the sticky brown mixture is placed on one-third of more of the painted bam-

boo stick, it is placed on drying racks in the sun. It takes about two days of sunshine to dry the mixture satisfactorily, and then these are brought indoors and placed so that several additional days of drying time is allowed. This helps to insure that all moisture has evaporated and makes a firmer, better, product.

Once completed, the joss sticks may be placed into packages along with a couple of candles for the altar, or placed loosely in larger boxes for wholesale or retail distribution. Most of the work is done by girls, who, with training and practice, can make about three

Paper, Lotus

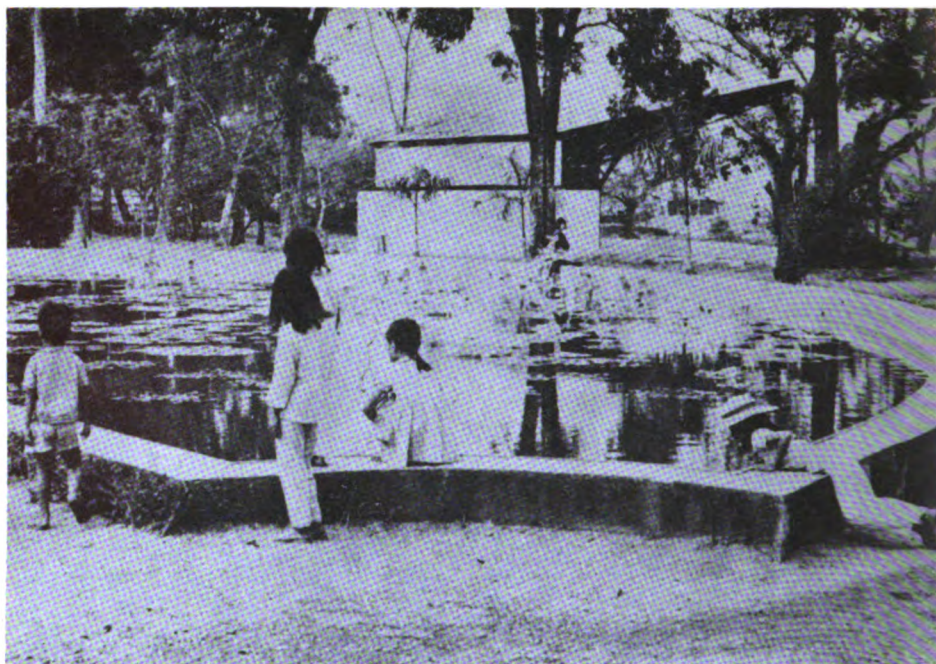
'Dead man' in coffin sells idea

thousand joss sticks a day. It is possible for a hard worker to earn perhaps the equal of a dollar for a full day's labor.

Joss sticks are very reasonably priced, and it is good for the common people that this is so, for few acts of devotion could be complete without the lighting of joss sticks. These may be placed in sand-filled containers either in the temple courtyard or in racks located in front or on top of an altar. Sometimes after burning joss sticks are placed in front of a statue of Buddha, the ascending smoke from the burning joss sticks is thought by some to have beneficial aid in pleasing that power to whom worship is made, or prayers offered.

It is possible to purchase spiral or circular joss sticks which will burn as long as one to three months with incense and smoke being cast off night and day. Quite often walls, the ceiling and sometimes the figures of devotion or veneration are smoked and darkened. Where the buildings do not have adequate ventilation, the spaces above the doorway level may be perpetually gray with smoke. The overwhelming fragrance of the burning joss sticks may also cloak any unpleasant odors that might detract the worshipper from his devotion, or which could offend the one to whom petitions are being made.

While the Chinese families of Southeast Asia use many joss sticks, it is doubtful if they use more than the Vietnamese families who may combine animism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism and sometimes even parts



Children play beside pool where lotus will soon bloom with stately beauty.

of the Christian acts of worship. To so many of these folk, it would be more unwise to forget, ignore or omit the acts of worship where the joss sticks are a basic element, than it would be to step in front of a speeding truck. It might miss you, but the angered "spirits" would not.

Votive Paper

Among the sights to be seen in South Vietnam are the temples of ancestor worship which normally have a fire into which worshippers throw money made of tissue-like paper. History reveals that in times past, when a member of royalty died, and was buried, living persons were often buried along with him so that he might still be waited upon by servants. His personal possessions were often included in this rite. Such customs seem to have been practiced in many lands. In at least one land, the widow was also slain and cremated when the husband died, so that he might have a wife in the "next world." This custom was condemned by Confucius as being inhuman.

Feeling that such a custom might be unkind, or at least expensive, someone came up with the idea of using wooden or straw figures,

representing common objects used in the person's lifetime. These figures were burned or buried with the deceased. Incidentally such burial customs have provided archeologists with valuable information of bygone ages. According to tradition, about the first century B.C. a government official developed the idea of making votive offerings from the bark of a palm tree known as *cay gio*. These were used to imitate silver, gold, clothing, common objects, and could be burned as an offering during the funeral in place of valuable objects or human beings.

Vuong-Du

Vuong-Du, the legendary inventor of the votive paper idea, was apparently not able to sell much of his product. But then struck by a "clever" idea, he decided upon a surefire gimmick to sell his product. By agreement with his fellow-makers of votive paper, he arranged for one of his sickly companions to be put to bed and told everyone that he was seriously ill, and a few days later that he was dead. Placed in a coffin (with a previously bored air hole) the funeral proceeded toward the tomb accompanied by a great number of figurines made of votive paper.

Lotus most popular Buddhist offering

Just as the heavy coffin was to be lowered into the tomb, the "dead" man was heard to groan and moan. Then as the lid was raised, the haggard and pale "corpse" sat up and spoke to the mourners. He told them that while he had been taken to the Infernal Regions (Hell), he had been released because his family had substituted money and paper figures for his person. Apparently the story was believed at the time, for sales boomed as many hurried to buy these votive items and burn them to the spirits of their ancestors.

Regardless of the truth of this legend which is recorded in a number of documents, the burning of votive paper seems to constitute one of the essential rites in homage or worship to the dead. In the courtyard or temples where worshippers may be found will be seen an open fire into which the worshipper casts votive objects including paper money as a part of their worship.

Such votive paper, along with joss sticks and candles, can be purchased for a very small fee either on the sidewalk or in front of the temple or sometimes in the temple itself. Votive paper burning in Vietnam "preceded the arrival of Chinese colonists in the first centuries of the present era, according to some students of culture.

While we may not understand or appreciate just what the burning of such votive items is to accomplish, the sincerity of the worshippers can be commended. Perhaps many of the worshippers who burn these items as acts of faith cannot give you an idea of why they do so, maybe it is done because that is the custom of the culture in which they grew up.

The Lotus

Amid the dirty waters of small streams and rivers as well as from semi-stagnant pools of water throughout the tropical area of Southeast Asia can be seen the

bright green floating leaves and the lovely colors of the lotus.

Such is the contrast of the flower to the environment wherein it grows, that long ago, Buddha used it as symbol of his teachings. Growing out of the impure, the dirty and the waste products of civilization, the lotus lifts high its stately and lovely blossom in such unsullied and pure form that it is an object lesson. Buddha taught that as the flower achieves its mark in spite of its environment, so may men lose their passions and desires and thereby find release in the spiritual serenity of Nirvana.

Food and Beauty

The lotus flower thus became a religious symbol as well as a popular food and a sight that creates aesthetic pleasure. The lotus bud is perhaps the single most popular offering of the Buddhist as he worships in his temple, or his home altar. It is quite often held in the folded hands of the listener within the temple as sermons are given or meditation is practiced. Often in the early morning hours as the Buddhist bonze makes his way through the streets with the "merit bowl" wherein the laity may earn merit by giving cooked rice, there will be a lotus bud or two within his hand. Likewise, it has come to form part of Asian architectural and sculptural motifs.

Sometimes the lotus is compared to the feet, the heart, or the life-giving attributes of the Buddhist female. Moreover it has a history that predates Buddhism as its symbolism was also of Hindu heritage. For instance, Brahman legend tells the story of how when Brahman, the god of the universe, was creating this universe, he went to sleep on the job. As he slept, the lotus appeared from his navel and its petals opened. Then Vishnu emerged and finished the creation.

Buddha used its four stages to symbolize the four types of people

and their distance from enlightenment. The four stages are:

1. The lotus bud deeply submerged as it starts its development.
2. The bud about to reach the surface of the pond.
3. After the bud has cleared the surface, but with leaf and bud still folded.
4. The bud standing tall and straight with its beauty undefiled by the mire from which it grows.

Because of this symbolism, it is always proper to use it as a floral offering to bonzes when ceremonies are performed or as a means to earn merit. The lotus bud signifies in Buddhism that the worshipper is capable of reaching enlightenment because of the opportunities within his grasp. The unopened bud also tends to last longer than other flowers, and it has the capacity to bloom when placed in water and left before the altar.

Five Varieties

Incidentally, there are at least five varieties of the lotus with the water lily being included, even if not always accepted as a true lotus; but the Thai people refer to the two types as "string lotus" and "stalk lotus" with several types of "string lotus" with flowers of purple, white to pale blue, and red. There are also at least five kinds of "stalk lotus" with its having its own characteristics and charm when closely studied.

Apart from its religious symbolism and its aesthetic and, at times, almost ethereal beauty, the lotus is also a food plant. As food it was known to the Greek Homer and was widely used by the Chinese, Japanese and Southeast Asians. Its seed may be eaten fresh or dried and used in soups and desserts. The root may be used in salad, boiled in soup, or preserved in sugar and used as dessert. From the root may be extracted a fine starch used for certain special foods.



"Happiness is love," says singer Ngoc Minh, "and I have yet to meet the man in my life." A popular attraction in Saigon supper clubs, Miss Minh is also featured in the regular programs of Director Hai Son on national radio.

Despite her youth, Huong Lan is a well known figure in the "Cai Luong" (Vietnamese operetta) theater. She was taught the art by her father, Huu Phuoc, who is a Cai Luong star. Miss Lan is also a member of the Truong Son music ensemble.

Women of Vietnam





Final session's Executive Bureau consisted of (1-r) RVN's Tran Nha, executive director; Malaysia's John Hwang, vice chairman; RVN's Nguyen Van Thai, chairman; RP's Dave Baquirin, vice chairman & NZ's Nicholas Turner, moderator.

Third Asian Press Seminar

Vietnam in Focus

In a visit to Australia sometime in 1967, then Premier Cao Ky dared the skeptical editor of a Communist newspaper to come over to Vietnam and see for himself the true situation as starkly contrasted against the way things were being presented to the whole world by the Communists as well as some supposedly objective Western media.

The editor literally took Ky at his word and surprised the South Vietnamese by turning up in Ky's plane as it was headed for Saigon. The editor went around Vietnam which even then still had to see the beginnings of Vietnamization, was still floundering in search of viable directions in most aspects of government and still had to experience the crucial (for us and the Communists) 1968 Tet offensive.

To make a long story short, the editor must have absorbed enough with his uncanny journalist's dis-

cernment and after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1969, he quit his post.

The above story was told at a round table discussion of the 3rd Asian Press Seminar's Committee on the Political, Military and Social Problems to the collective surprise of the members who observed that they never heard of it before.

The anecdote encapsulates South Vietnam's errant world-wide public information efforts, a situation which the Vietnam Council on Foreign Relations has been trying to help remedy for the last three years through the sponsorship of press seminars with as wide a participation as possible.

Participants and observers from many parts of the world are gathered usually for a weeklong program of round table discussions, talks by knowled-

Aimed at better understanding

geable Vietnamese in various fields, interviews with persons in high positions as well as ordinary citizens and visits to various places of interest.

As a ranking Council official puts it, the seminar is aimed primarily at a better understanding of Vietnam. There is a minimum of discussion of comparative merits of contending ideologies and the accent is on the positive. Of course, the unifying thread that runs through the skein of wide-ranging discussion is

The delegates, senior and ranking members of media organizations in their respective countries, included:

Pan Phan, director of Information, **Radio Diffusion of Khmer Republic**, Phnom Penh; Paul Littaye Soun, director and editor in chief of **Le Republicain** in Phnom Penh; Lee Wan-lai, deputy chief, domestic news department, **Central News Agency** of Taipei; Charles C. L. Yeh, chief of the reporting section,

Chinese Television Services, Taipei;

Chang Kuo-sin, feature writer of the **United Newspaper News Agency** of Hongkong; D.P. Kumar, special correspondent of **The Statesman** in New Delhi; Bachtiar Djamily, managing director and editor in chief of **Harian Operasi** in Djakarta; Sdr. Adnan Kohar of **Abadi**, Djakarta; Wiratmo Soekito, columnist and member of Parliament in Djakarta; Pattiradjawane

the role of media in the numerous problems that confront Vietnam today.

The 3rd APS Participants

A total of 40 delegates from 14 Asian nations and 17 observers from 11 Asian and Western nations were invited to this year's seminar and with a couple of exceptions, they all showed up, starting to arrive in Saigon on July 1.

of **Antara** in Djakarta;

Dr. Mattityohu Peled, retired major general and journalist of **Maariv** in Jerusalem; Koji Sakurai, chief of the international section of **Nihon Shimbun Kyokai** in Tokyo; Noriyoshi Miyamoto, deputy editor of **Sankei Shimbun** in Tokyo; Yasushi Sekiguchi, assistant executive editor of **Mainichi Shimbun**; Segebumi Sato of **Jiji Press Service** in Tokyo; Masami Tabata, of **Mainichi Shimbun**;



Seventeen observers from 11 Asian and Western nations joined the ranks of this year's delegations.



Seminar Executive Director Tran Nha, chief of the VCFR information office in Stockholm, addresses body.

Atsuo Kaneko, bureau chief of **Kyodo News** in Saigon;

Chu Uchun of **Hanguk Ilbo** in Seoul; Pak Yong-kun of **Donghwa News Agency**; Choi-ho of **Choson Ilbo** in Seoul; Tan Yoke Swee, news editor of **The Nan Yang Siang Pau** in Kuala Lumpur; John Hwang of **Sing Pau** in Kuala Lumpur; Gopal Prasad Bhattarai, editor of **Gorkhadu Patra** in Katmandu; Nicolas Turner, free lance journalist of New Zealand;

Vicente Martinez, free lance journalist of the Philippines; Melchor Aquino, former ambassador and columnist of the **Evening News** in Manila; David V. Baquirin of the **Manila Chronicle** in Manila; Julian Spindler, feature writer of **The Bangkok World** in Thailand; and

Nguyen Van Thai, publisher of the **Thoi Nay** daily; Le Hien, publisher of **But Thep** daily; Ngo Ty, managing editor of **Tia Sang** daily; Nguyen Dinh Tuyen, free lance journalist; Tran Van Ngo, of **Viet-**

nam Press; Phan Lac Phuc, editor of **Tien Tuyen** daily; Pham Kin Vinh, commentator of **Chinh Luan** daily; Miss Bich Van, free lance journalist; Nguyen Trong, free lance journalist; Miss Phan Lam Huong, publisher of **Tim Hieu** weekly, and Nguyen Ang Ca, publisher of **Tin Som** daily, all of Saigon.

Observers were:

Hans-Wilfreid von Stockhausen of Austria, Henry Peyret, director of Foreign Politics Services of **Le Nouveau Journal** in Paris; Michel Voirol of **Combat**; Bernard Valette of **Actualite Radiophonique Office de la Radiodiffusion Television Francaise (ORTF)** in Paris; Dietrich Mummendey of **Der Tagesspiegel**, Germany; Dr. Dieter Buhl, editor of **Die Zeit** in Hamburg, Germany;

Giuseppe Dallongaro, chief of foreign service of **Il Gionale D'Italia** in Rome; Andre S. Spoor, chief editor of **Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant Handelsblad** in

Rotterdam; Frank Bjerkholt, foreign editor of **Morgenbladet** in Oslo; Bjorn Heimar, foreign editor of **Aften Posten** in Norway; Abdul Salam Kane of **Le Soleil** in Senegal; Bara Diouf editor of **Le Soleil** in Dakar, Senegal;

Luis de Calvo, special envoy of **Madrid Daily ABC** in Madrid; Curt Bergstrom, editor of **Argument** in Sweden; Ingemar Larsson, free lance journalist from Sweden; L. Owandjinkoi, editor in chief of **La Tribune Africaine** in Kinshasa, Zaire Republic; and David Dimbleby of the **British Broadcasting Corporation**, London.

The following day, July 2, about a score of the participants who had already checked in at the Majestic Hotel, were taken on a flying visit to the battlefield in the Central Highlands. They were briefed on the situation in Firebase 42, along Highway 14 in Pleiku.

That evening, upon their return to Saigon, they had an acquaintance dinner hosted by Tran Nha,

Khiem:



PM Tran Thien Khiem (right) greets Tan Yoke Swee of Malaysia.

executive director of the seminar and at present chief of the Council's information office in Stockholm.

Keynote Speech

The first day of the seminar opened with a courtesy call by the delegates on Col. Do Kien Nhieu, the Mayor of Saigon, who took the opportunity of briefing them on the present situation of Saigon.

Back in the Phoenix Room of the Majestic Hotel, the seminar proper formally opened with Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem delivering the keynote speech on the seminar's theme—"South Vietnam: The Transition from War to Peace."

Khiem told the delegates they came at a crucial period in the history of South Vietnam, "to witness on the scene the many current events that perhaps are not being reported truthfully and thoroughly by the international news agencies."

He said they would have the opportunity to observe the positive efforts of the government and the

people who, while fighting the war against Communist aggression, still have to cope with major economic problems and at the same time establish and strengthen democratic institutions in order to meet the aspirations of the people who are determined not to accept Communist dictatorship.

Khiem cited the sufferings of the people as a result of the war, especially the half million who, since the invasion, left their homes and risked their lives to flee away from the self-styled liberators. He said the people "voted with their feet" to show the world their resolute stand.

"Progress can be achieved only if all men join hands and build a just and free society in which human dignity is respected and equal opportunities given to all," Khiem said.

Khiem also paid tribute to the members of the Saigon press corps who paid the supreme sacrifice or suffered wounds in the performance of their profession. "These, in my opinion, shall not be in vain if

you as the successors will continue to report only the truth and will go on bearing the impartial witness of history," Khiem said.

Earlier, Nguyen Ngoc Linh, Secretary General of the Council, gave brief remarks on the aims and objectives of the series of seminars the Council has sponsored.

He said it has been a long and arduous work to organize the seminar but noted the gratifying results which lend to a better understanding of the country abroad.

The opening ceremonies were attended by high government officials and members of the diplomatic corps including Education Minister Ngo Khac Tinh, Economy Minister Pham Kim Ngoc and American Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker.

Working Committees

In the plenary session that immediately followed Khiem's speech, a Seminar Executive Bureau was elected and Committee assignments were designated.

Saigon's Nguyen Van Thai was acclaimed chairman for all the three plenary sessions of the seminar with Nicolas Turner of New Zealand as rapporteur and Tran Nha as executive director.

Vice chairmen for the first plenary session were Koji Sakurai of Japan and Pak Yong-keun of Korea; Charles Yeh of Taiwan and Paul Littaye Soun of Cambodia for the second session and John Hwang of Malaysia and Dave Baquirin of the Philippines for the third and last plenary session.

The three committees, designated to discuss specific problems in the transition from war to peace were those on political, social and military problems with Nguyen Ngoc Linh as coordinator; on the veterans, war invalids, war widows and orphans with Minister Pham Van Dong of Veterans Affairs as coordinator and on economic problems with Assistant Minister of

People 'voted with their feet'

Economy Nguyen Duc Cuong as coordinator.

Political. Military Situation

After lunch hosted by Dr. Nguyen Duy Tai, acting president of the Council, the delegates heard Professor Nguyen Ngoc Phach, military analyst, speak on the current political, military and social situation in the country.

It was Phach's assessment that the current Communist drive may be pronounced over whatever NVA formation try to do in the days ahead and that Quang Tri province will be retaken before the end of July.

Phach held that if the current drive had been staged five or six years ago when the Communists could still live among the people "as fish in water," they could have attacked Hue, cut the country in two along Route 19, taken An Loc and pushed on to Saigon.

He attributed the failure of the North Vietnamese invasion to several factors among which were:

1. The rejection of the Communists by the common people who would rather suffer hardships than life under Communist rule;

2. The destruction of the Viet Cong infrastructure "beyond repair for the next two to three years";

3. The retrogression of the quality of the North Vietnamese Army from a tightly knit politico-military organization into a "pale reflection of their old selves";

4. A sense of communion between Saigon's leaders and the people and

5. President Nixon's mining and bombing decision and President Thieu's agreement with his generals to move most of the regular army divisions to endangered border regions.

Phach traced the political and military developments in Indochina from 1945 with the French efforts to regain their sovereignty through 1954 when the North and



Participants pose in the former imperial city of Hue.



They inspect farm machinery in Bien Hoa Industrial Park.

South were divided and to the days of Ngo Dinh Diem until the present.

Throughout these years, it has been the dream of Ho Chi Minh and his successors to gain control over all of Indochina but it has remained a dream, Phach pointed out.

He was of the opinion that after the 1968 Tet offensive, if the Communists had come to some kind of agreement at the Paris peace talks, they would have necessarily come by some participation in the political life of South Vietnam.

Instead, he observed that the Communists spent the next four years preparing for a massive blow which they reckoned would result in the collapse of the ARVN but it did not turn out that way and the invasion was stalled.

Enormous Losses

Because of the enormous losses — 60,000 dead and wounded and a huge amount of war materiel including 500 tanks — the North cannot now mount a drive of the same proportions as in March, according to Phach. Hanoi's plan therefore has backfired not only militarily but also psychologically and politically. Phach added that Tet 1968 and the current invasion practically drove the people closer to the South Vietnamese leadership and the protection it offered.

Phach cited the case of Quang Tri province alone where 256,000 of its population of 300,000 chose to flee away from the invaders.

With or without a negotiated settlement in Paris, a degree of normalcy can be expected with the collapse of the Communist invasion, in his view. He warned however that the problems of peace are just as formidable as the problems of war, saying that measures for social justice will be urgently needed when peace comes.

He mentioned the example of Saigon where 80 per cent of the people at present exist under very difficult living conditions. He also cited the huge number of disabled veterans, war widows and orphans who live at barely subsistence level despite a generous government policy on veterans.

The same is true for civil ser-



Delegates wear flak vests during visit to Hue. Below, Mayor Nhieu greets BW's Julian Spindler.

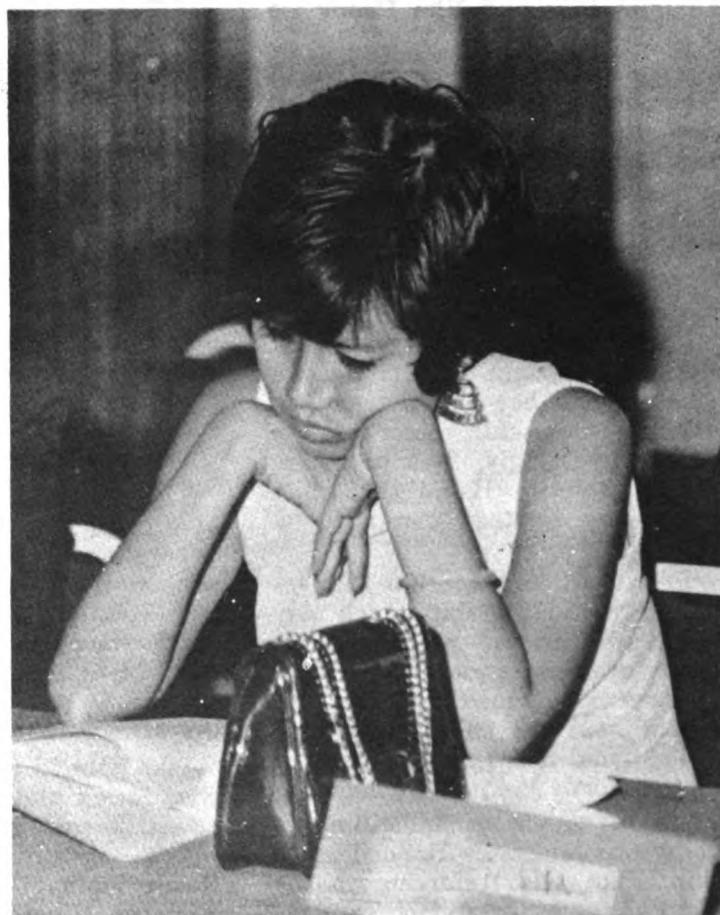




Nguyen Ngoc Linh, Minister Lam greet South Koreans.



Indonesia's Bachtiar Djamily and (right) RVN's Bich Van.



vants whose salaries have merely doubled while the cost of living has increased 1,000 per cent during the last ten years, according to Phach.

The future however is not bleak, he added, pointing out that with the recently promulgated Special Powers law, President Thieu and his government are in a position to reorganize the socio-economic frame of the national life.

He placed much stock on the five-year economic program launched by the Thieu administration which is expected to double agricultural production, treble forestry and fishery output and dramatically develop industrial potential.

He also said that in the years of transition, good leadership will be the basic answer to many future problems.

The North's Situation

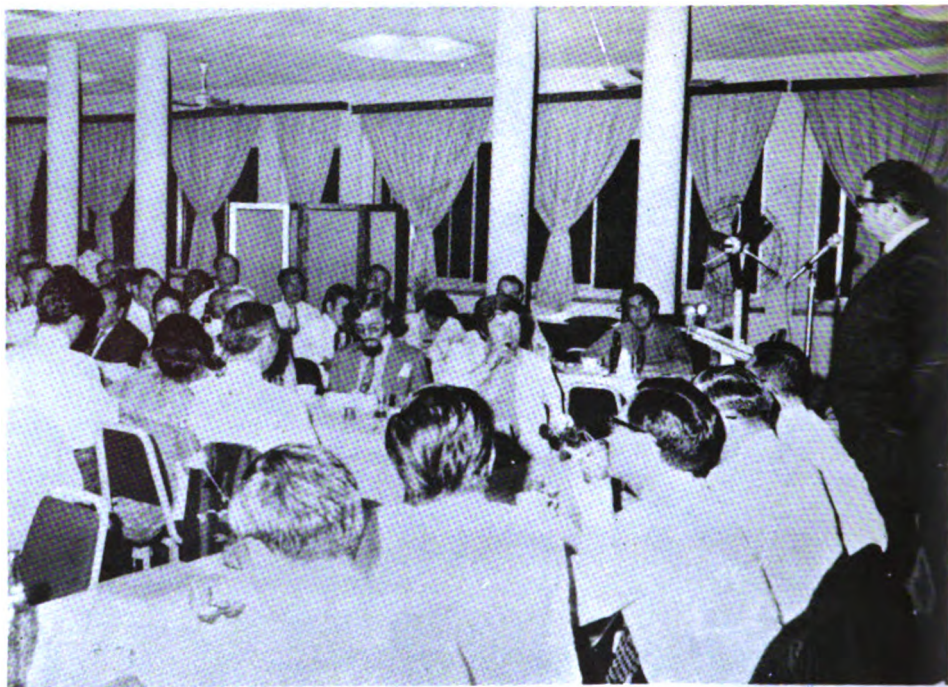
That evening, at dinner hosted by the governor of the International Lions District 311 (VN), the delegates were filled in on the situation in North Vietnam by two well-known Hanoi watchers — Douglas Pike and Nhu Phong Le Van Tien.

Pike maintained that the North Vietnamese leadership, remains dedicated to its objective of unification of North and South Vietnam under its banner and continues its twelve-year search for a military doctrine which will deliver victory.

The North's present military strategy, high-technology warfare, has yielded some results but on balance has been costly and to date, unsuccessful, according to Pike. Increasingly, it is becoming questionable to Hanoi that high technology strategy can succeed, he said.

Pike predicted specific changes in the NVN leadership which may result from some physical incapacity of Hanoi leaders whose ages average 63 or may be prompted by the current split among the professional and political generals of the North Vietnamese Army.

"I am convinced something is going on amidst the Hanoi leadership, Pike said, referring to the last two issues of the Hoc Tap ma-



Douglas Pike assesses North Vietnam situation.

gazine, an organ of the NVN Communist Party, where an article, "Counter Revolution in North Vietnam" has reportedly captured the attention of Hanoi watchers and scholars on Communist affairs.

Pike conceded that no revolution could be successful in North Vietnam, just like in any other dictatorial state, but maintained that the article indicated that "something is boiling" there.

North Vietnam's major endemic problem is economic, according to Pike, its economy stagnant, anachronistic, inadequate for its needs and is now under enormous new strains as the result of Allied efforts to interdict supply lines and reduce delivery of goods from its Communist allies.

The agricultural sector, the key one in North Vietnam, is nearly a generation out of date with one of the lowest productivity levels of any country in the world. An acute manpower shortage is another of the more fundamental economic problems Pike mentioned.

Pike pointed out the lack of mechanization and shortage of manpower as the major causes of the North's agriculture and said that North Vietnam could have remedied the situation had it not in-

vested too much in the present all-out offensive against South Vietnam.

In addition, socio-psychological problems—war weariness, misappropriation of agricultural products, malmanagement of industrial production, self-aggrandizement by party cadres, corruption, black-marketing, juvenile delinquency—all continue to be major concerns of the regime, resisting all efforts to eliminate them, according to Pike.

North Vietnam is also being increasingly isolated, if not alienated from its major allies, China and Soviet Russia, both of whom are displaying growing disenchantment with North Vietnam and its war, Pike added. "The two big brothers, indeed have pledged continuous support for NVN in such fields as logistics and supply... they mean that but have not done much," Pike observed.

NVN Factions

Tien, who failed to show up at the dinner but whose prepared speech was made available to the delegates, traced the relationships among the various factions sharing the power in Hanoi today.

He recalled that when Ho Chi Minh died nearly three years ago,

North's situation is assessed

a power struggle was predicted but did not materialize as the party leadership agreed on the oldest member of the Central Committee, Ton Duc Thang who was then already vice chairman, to replace Ho Chi Minh and for the second oldest, Nguyen Luong Bang, to take over Ton's job.

As early as 25 years ago, the Communist leaders agreed on the division of power and this division has been twice confirmed by the 1952 and the 1960 Party Congress, according to Tien. Tien also cited three salient characteristics of the relationships among Hanoi's leaders.

One is that the Vietnam Workers' Party, although founded 42 years ago, still keeps the distinct nature of a coalition party. At the time, Ho Chi Minh used his own prestige as representative of the Comintern to urge the three regional Communist parties—the Indochinese Communist Party operating in the North, the Annamite Communist Party in Central Vietnam and the Indochina Communist League in the South—to merge. After the merger, the three parties became the northern, central and southern branches of the Communist Party.

Two Party Branches

At present, according to Tien, there are two party branches—the local branch in the North and the second which includes only members from the South who have gone North and now specialize in support operations for the southern local branches.

The second characteristic Tien cited was that nearly all the 70 members and alternate members of the Central Committee are loyal to a unique brand of Communism and follow the same working method, namely Stalinism and the Chinese Communist style.

Tien pointed out that all of them got acquainted with the Communist theory through documents written in French in the 30's and

provided by the French Communist Party. Until they seized power, all of them except Ho Chi Minh had not travelled abroad to get additional training and those who returned from study abroad were excluded from the center of power and discriminated against.

In the course of the war, according to Tien, they gradually found out that the Chinese Communist methods were more suitable to the situation of Vietnamese society than those of the French or Russian Communists. Subsequently, they organized the party and its activities in accordance with the teachings of Liu Shao-shi, built their armed forces after the Peoples' Liberation Army in Yenan, fought along the tactics designed by Lin Piao and carried out land reform and tried the landlords along the same lines Mao Tse-tung did. Because of that, the party leaders were able to keep watch on one another as closely as the secret police did on the population.

The third characteristic, in Tien's view is that an absolute majority of party members came originally

from the petty bourgeoisie and this accounted for the subsequent errors of the party and that this petty bourgeoisie thing heavily influenced other comrades coming from the working class.

Tien observed that the case is true not only of regular party members but also of party leaders and this class affiliation has led party leaders and members at all levels to unite and mutually cover up for the mistakes in order to protect their positions and preserve their privileges.

Tien said that so long as the present Hanoi leaders maintain the same relationship as they did during the last 15 years and as long as they do not commit majors mistakes likely to antagonize cadres, soldiers and the people, they will continue in power.

He added however that by launching the present invasion and if they were defeated, not only General Giap but the whole Politburo will have to admit their error. In that case, no one could be found with the stature of Ho Chi Minh to apologize to the people on be-



Delegates are briefed in a firebase in Pleiku.

half of the whole party. And even if they are defeated, not only Tien doubted if the North Vietnamese people would forgive their leaders' mistake which washed down the drain 15 years of reconstruction efforts and caused 3 million dead.

"This debt would thus be too great to ignore... I think that a way out for this eventual situation has already been thought of by some second echelon leaders in North Vietnam, especially those from local party branches," Tien said.

The Economy

On the second day of the seminar, the delegates were taken on a field trip to the industrial park in Bien Hoa where they toured the complex and visited the Vicasa steel mill, the Vinapro agricultural machinery factory and got a briefing at the Sports Club before returning to Saigon in the afternoon.

The following day, Economy Minister Pham Kim Ngoc delivered the second major address which was on the country's economy.

Ngoc's theme was that the economy was stunted by the demands of war during the last decade but that with the new economic liberalism of the government, the country can and will make a successful transition from war to peace.

He traced the travails of the economy through the last ten years which delayed economic development to the point where the economy today is only a little ahead of where it was in 1962. The bright spots are that the capital of the country is intact as are its natural resources and that the labor force is more literate and better educated, more mobile and better skilled.

Ngoc tagged three problems which must be met simultaneously as the prospects brighten. These are:

1. The need to create a million productive jobs for returned soldiers and an expanding population;
2. The need to find export markets for about half a billion dollars a year of exports; and
3. The need to obtain from savings and from foreign sources

several billions of dollars of new capital investment.

Ngoc pointed out that imports will have to be reduced to the 1960 level of US\$250 million and a program of import substitution devised simultaneously with a growth of exports. Rice, rubber, fish and lumber will be important but other agricultural products in quantity will have to come forward.

Finally, capital-investment to the tune of US\$5 billion in the next ten years will be imperative,

Vietnam could never survive as a closed economy.

Subsequently, a series of reforms were initiated in September, 1970 with the following main features, according to Ngoc:

1. The exchange rate has been moved to a point which roughly balances supply and demand for foreign exchange and the rate is readjusted at frequent intervals to keep it so, allowing the removal of most exchange restrictions and license controls.



Economy Minister Ngoc and French newspaperman.

according to Ngoc. For a country with a gross national product of only US\$2.5 billion, this is a vast sum. Without foreign aid sustained over a period of years after the war, it will be difficult, almost impossible, to make the transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy, he said.

The government response to these problems is a new economic liberalism, Ngoc said, anchored on three tenets. The first is that even with the war in progress, it was necessary to establish an economic framework geared for development right from the start.

The second is that development should depend heavily upon the private sector and third, that South

2. Tariff has been drastically simplified and it now has only four rates, from zero to 200 per cent rather than 290 rates ranging up to 1,000 per cent, resulting in an easier customs enforcement.

3. Interest rates were raised to a level which is attractive to savers and restrained speculation. Savings and time deposits have nearly quadrupled during the last 18 months as a result.

4. A new investment law was passed which grants substantial benefits to all investors and guarantees fair treatment for foreign capital including full profit repatriation.

5. A National Economic Development Fund has been created to

'Open Society' projection urged

extend medium and long term credit to private sector investment projects.

6. The Export Development Center was strengthened and exports now receive preferential exchange rate as well as credit on special terms and other benefits.

Ngoc pointed out that the exchange system and monetary structure have been made to operate on the free market principles; prices have been set free to seek their own levels and have shown a reasonable degree of stability; inflation amounted to 25 per cent in the past two years combined as compared to more than 30 per cent in each of the preceding years. Confidence in the new economic liberalism is clearly attested by the absence of capital flight and the low price of gold throughout the Communist invasion, he said.

He tagged two principal policy actions which remain to be implemented, the first, a reform of the tax system which is still a patchwork with the old colonial tax system overlaid with numerous revisions and arditions. This must be simplified to make it easier to collect taxes and do away with many small nuisance taxes. The second is a reform of the civil service which is badly underpaid and badly organized.

Ngoc admitted that while the task looks formidable, he is hopeful that they will achieve results especially with the grant of special emergency powers to President Thieu in economic and financial matters as well as in other fields.

Committee Work

After an informal buffet luncheon hosted by Nguyen Huu Chung, Deputy and chairman of the Council's Journalists' Committee, the delegates broke up into the three previously designated work committees, taking all the afternoon for the purpose.

A scheduled cocktail hosted by President Thieu was indefinitely

postponed as the President was busy conferring with his generals on the rapidly developing situation in Quang Tri province.

Dinner that night was hosted by Chieu Hoi Minister Ho Van Cham, highlighted by a briefing on the chieu hoi program and a cultural show by chieu hoi (returnee) artists.

Committee Reports

The final session on the fourth day opened with the three working committees rendering their final reports before Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam, also the president of the Council, delivered the final address followed by a wide-ranging question-and-answer period.

The Committee on Political, Social and Military Problems:

1. Anticipated a graver problem if the Communists choose to fight politically because of several factors including the relaxation of national discipline with the end of the war, demobilization of hundreds of thousands for whom jobs

must be created and the huge mass of war victims for whom social equity must be devised;

2. Observed that the case of South Vietnam is not being adequately and faithfully presented to the world and urged that RVN information representatives abroad improve their information policies as well as expand the program of visits of foreign journalists to the country:

3. Observed that in many other countries, the Chief Executive is invested with special emergency powers (like in Hongkong) and that South Vietnam's top leaders can use such powers in view of the crucial period the country is in today;

4. Urged a more vigorous projection of the fact that South Vietnam is an "open society" while North Vietnam is a "closed society," since this would promote a better understanding of the issues at stake; and

5. Recommended that in line with the objective of making South Vietnam's presence better felt, the



Delegates going to III Corps headquarters, Lai Khe.

Lam: 'We are all Vietnamese'

country should participate more extensively in international gatherings like trade fairs.

The Committee on War Veterans and their dependents:

1. Noted the progressive legislation to ameliorate the plight of veterans, war invalids, war widows, dependents and orphans and urged that all forms of assistance from abroad be given them;

2. Recommended that an exchange of visits between delegations of war veterans from other countries and from South Vietnam take place to promote better understanding and incidentally, could foster trade and other relations; and

3. Noted that technical and material assistance from abroad would prove invaluable to servicemen being demobilized especially since they had acquired some technical skills during their military service.

The Committee on the Economy:

1. Observed that further foreign aid will be needed by the country to see it through the transition from wartime to peacetime economy;

2. Noted that foreign investments will greatly help in the development of South Vietnam's economy and that accurate reportage on conditions here will provide a favorable climate for foreign investors to come in; and

3. Noted the efforts of the government towards economic development even while coping with the tremendous requirements of war.

Resolution

The only resolution passed by the seminar was a cabled request to Kurt Waldheim, secretary general of the United Nations, to take steps immediately to restore the accreditation of the UN correspondent of the Central News Agency.

The resolution, authored by Chang Kuo-sin of Hongkong, noted that former Secretary General U



HK's Chang Kuo-sin (center) authored resolution on UN press.

Thant's action in discrediting the CNA correspondent was an infringement on the freedom of the press and that the restoration will repair the damage done to the cause of freedom of the press.

Lam Address

Minister Lam, in his closing address, expressed the certain belief that the Vietnam war is coming to an end. He based his statement on the exhaustion of the North Vietnamese, the positive American actions of interdiction bombing and mining of ports and the lukewarm response of Hanoi's allies — China and Russia — to these steps.

He also strongly hinted that "something will come out very soon" saying it is the very reason why South Vietnam has agreed to reopen the stalled Paris peace talks.

In the question and answer period that followed his speech, a wide range of subjects was covered and Lam also:

1. Expressed the belief that Thailand, which is not directly in-

volved in the war but has been infiltrated by no less than 40,000 Communists, should have a positive role, as well as Laos and Cambodia, in any international effort to resolve the Indochina war;

2. Fully approved of the idea of neutrality for the Southeast Asian region but added that small nations should not be inhibited from seeking help from their allies in case of aggression, adding also that the proposal needs further clarification by its authors;

3. Opined that as a consequence of the strong Sino-Soviet differences with regard to their national interests and security, the Russians are reluctant to see an end to the Vietnam war since it will result in an increase of the Chinese influence in the region;

4. Lauded the recent rapprochement between North and South Korea, expressing the hope that it will open the eyes of Hanoi although he said that in his experience, the North Vietnamese are intransigent in many respects.

Lam exuded confidence as he told the seminar, "I am no prophet

but I believe that the war is coming to an end." He said that in contrast to the rigid take-it-or-leave-it position of the Communists at the negotiating table, the South Vietnamese position is flexible and allows for discussion and negotiation.

He stressed however that the South Vietnamese position still features the four "no's" enunciated earlier by President Thieu — no coalition, no territorial concession, no neutrality and no Communist troops on South Vietnamese soil.

He added that the trouble with the North Vietnamese is that they refuse to talk to the South Vietnamese, preferring to talk to the Americans. He recalled that when he was still a senator three years ago, he was sent by the Senate to Paris to observe the talks. He tried to open contacts with the North Vietnamese/VC delegates some of whom he personally knew but they refused even his invitations for a friendly drink.

He surmised that the situation in Paris might be different now in view of the insistence of the Communists on a resumption of the talks and the reverses they have suffered on the battlefield.

Adverting to the North-South Korean rapprochement, Lam said Hanoi should reflect on it, pointing out that "we are all Vietnamese and we even have families on both sides of the fence."

Regarding prisoners of war, Lam reiterated South Vietnam's offer for an exchange of the 40,000 North Vietnamese POWs held in the South for the 5,000 South Vietnamese and about 1,000 Americans held in the North.

He recalled North Vietnam's repeated refusals and expressed the view that any private initiative towards resolving the POW issue would be welcome.

In his capacity as president of the Council, Lam thanked the various delegations and expressed the hope that their visit will contribute to a better understanding among nations. He also paid tribute to media representatives many of whom have died in the course of their coverage of the war.

He also hoped that the seminar will strengthen the faith of the



General Truong (center) and newsmen pore over map.

delegates in the future of South Vietnam which has "fought so long and so hard to build a free and democratic society."

Hue Visit

With the close of the final plenary sessions, the delegates devoted the next two days to visits to the northern front in Hue and the southern front in An Loc.

In Hue, they were briefed by Col. Le Van Than on Operations Lam Son 72 which is aimed at recapturing Quang Tri province. Than compared the operation with Operation Lam Son 719 last year in Laos. In the first, the troops included American ground forces but in the present drive, only South Vietnamese ground troops are participating while the air units include American forces.

Lt. Gen. Ngo Quang Truong, I MR commander, also met the delegates in the imperial Tombs area for a brief interview. Later, the delegates drove to Hill 39 fronting the My Chanh defensive line.

Earlier in the day, they were taken on a tour of the old imperial capital of Hue including the world famous Citadel. Individual members of the delegation expressed admiration for the gallant stand of the defenders of Hue and expressed hopes for their eventual victory.

An Loc Stand

In the III Corps headquarters in Lai Khe, Binh Long province, just 12 kilometers from the famous battle of An Loc, the delegates were given a fill-in on the significance of the gallant stand of An Loc's defenders by Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Minh, the corps commander.

In a dugout which served as a briefing room, and aided by maps, General Minh traced how his command blunted the tank-tipped North Vietnamese drive in April which was aimed at the nation's capital, Saigon.

Minh paid tribute to the An Loc garrison commanded by Brig. Gen. Le Van Hung which withstood more than two months of enemy siege, weathering daily shellings that reached a peak of 8,000 in one day in May.

While until the day of the visit, An Loc was still surrounded by scattered North Vietnamese units and the road leading to the city was still interdicted by the enemy, Minh said the enemy was ejected from the city last June 12 and mopping up operations will force them back to their sanctuaries in Cambodia.

The delegates returned to Saigon at noon and most of them flew back to their respective countries the following day.

A Unique Breed: RVN Veterans

By LE NGOC

"The nation is grateful to the noble sacrifice of the combatants who fought for the defense of the Fatherland... recognizes and secures the moral and material rights and benefits of disabled soldiers, war dead's families, and war veterans... has the obligation to support war veterans, disabled soldiers, war dead's parents, war widows and war orphans."

— Articles 1 & 2, Law 08/70.

South Vietnam's war veterans are a unique breed when compared to their counterparts anywhere in the world today. Very few return to civilian life without some degree of disability; most who hang up their uniform do so only because of wounds or incapacitating diseases like malaria and tuberculosis.

Roughly 10,000 servicemen are being discharged from all branches of the armed services each year and only about 40 are mustered out of the service without any disability each month for completing from 20 to 25 years in uniform, having joined when the armed forces were still under the French.

In 1971, there were 28,200 who retired from the service without the 10 to 100 per cent disability of their other retired comrades. But these can be considered incapacitated for full combat duty if only because of their age; Vietnam's type of war is too tough on a man physically after age 45.

This, however, is not unusual when we consider how long the fighting has been going on and how big — 1.1 million under arms today — is the armed forces.

In Vietnam, most servicemen have never known a year of peace;

there was fighting when they were born and soldiering has become their lifetime profession. For many, the war has become a cradle to the grave proposition; to a great number, a cradle to the wheelchair prospect.

And it is not only the 1.1 million potential war veterans who have become a cause for concern of the state. Ministry of War statistics indicate that the average family of a pensioned veteran or serviceman killed is four children and a wife.

Of all categories — veterans, disabled veterans, war widows, forebears of deceased veterans and national wards — the number comes up to a formidable 730,385 which the state has to care for.

State Concern

It has become a national policy to give all within the state's power to veterans and their dependents, in recognition of their sacrifices based on the concepts of gratitude, equality and justice.

War Veterans Minister Pham Van Dong said in the recently concluded 3rd Asian Press Seminar where the problems of transition from war to peace was discussed:

"We hope to pursue our policy of self-help for our veterans and provide them all the support they need in returning to normal lives. With the help of our allies, the burden of healing the wounds of a nation torn by nearly 25 years of war will be lightened by the humanitarian gestures of men of good will all around the world."

To administer to the needs of this huge segment of the state's concern, the Ministry of War Veterans was created in 1966 with the main mission of organizing the systems of pensions and benefits and to develop projects for the physical, vocational and social rehabilitation of veterans, invalid and dependents of the deceased.

As of January 1, 1972, the ministry was responsible for:

- 216,000 veterans
- 62,378 disabled veterans or invalids
- 99,408 war widows
- 89,311 forebears of deceased veterans
- 303,288 orphans including 260,000 national wards.

Legislation

The major legislation concerning veterans is Law 08/70 titled "Rights and Benefits of Disabled Soldiers, War Dead's Families and War Veterans." It revised previously existing pension benefits and granted new benefits in the field of social, medical and educational assistance.

Just to give an idea of the scope of the ministry's work, its budget for 1972 is VN\$20,253,000,000 compared to VN\$590,000,000 in 1967.

Various executive orders have been promulgated to implement the law in the field of pensions and benefits, social welfare, medical care and other benefits.

A noteworthy feature is the application of the law to some paramilitary organizations like rural development cadres, special forces and religious forces like the Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and the Tu Ve Cong Giao.

To show the extensive coverage of the law, it is reproduced in full following this article.

Pensions and Benefits

Pensions and benefits are granted not only as a result of wounds received in action but also for service-connected disabilities. It is based on the extent of the disability and the rank and pay of the individual soldier.

Devising this system constituted the major burden in the early years of the ministry and during fiscal year 1970, new operating procedures and better organization and training of personnel enabled the ministry to clear all backlog of claims.

By the end of 1971, the ministry had processed and completed 324,769 benefits cases for invalids, widows and forebears pensions and national wards allowances: 23,033 retirement pensions and 8,172 claims on the refund of the 6 per cent contribution to retirement pensions for reserve components.

Social Welfare

The law grants priority of employment to qualified veterans and the ministry so far has located jobs for 15,773 and caused the employment in the civil service of another 5,936.

Various programs have been developed for vocational training in the fields of handicraft, agriculture and light industries to enhance veterans' chances of landing jobs.

The National Institute of Rehabilitation with its annexes in Da Nang, Qui Nhon and Can Tho is responsible for the physical and vocational rehabilitation of veterans invalids including military personnel and civilian victims of war. These include in and outpatient care, physiotherapy, orthopedic surgery, vocational orientation and education.

Out patient care and physiotherapy included 178,960 cases, 1,491 orthopedic surgery cases, 2,239 vocational orientation and education cases and 201 trainees in physiotherapy and orthopedics.

An Institute for the Education of National Wards was established and recently expanded with the creation of new secondary schools.

National wards are legitimate and legitimized children, recognized extra-marital children and legal foster children of war dead, war veterans. War orphans are children of veterans under 18 years of age.

During the school year 71-72, some 5,000 students were admitted in the schools operated by the Institute and 5,279 others were admitted to public schools. In the high school bracket, 15 were awarded in-country scholarships while 203 received scholarships in other countries like Germany and the United States.

Housing

Housing is one area of operation where the ministry has done very well and to date, 9,552 housing units have been constructed in 46 provinces and cities all over South Vietnam, at a total cost of VN\$5 billion.

In Thu Duc, a large Disabled Veterans Village was put up with 3,000 housing units and facilities for vocational training, markets, school, infirmaries, churches and pagodas at a cost of VN\$1.6 billion. The village covers an area of 67 hectares.

Another 100 housing units was set up in Vung Tau and was allocated free to severely disabled veterans.

A vocational training center was set up by the New Zealand government and will soon be transferred to the National Institute for Rehabilitation for the training of invalids in various trades like electronics and engine repairs.

The above covers the first phase of the ministry's housing program and in the second phase, a credit of VN\$1.5 billion has been set aside for the construction of more units for veterans who want to build their own homes in their own villages.

Some 600 plots of land in Phu Tho Hoa and Tan Quy Dong areas in Gia Dinh province have been set aside for future development into similar villages.

Production Center

The ministry has developed a pilot project for a War Veterans

Production Center whose main objective is to create job opportunities for invalids, veterans and dependents of deceased soldiers.

As of the time of writing, the Center supplied 6,249,045 medals and insignia, 382,204 military uniforms, 18,818,570 printed forms, 922,199 kilograms of bread and 449,686 kilograms of dehydrated rice to the Army Logistics Command.

The ministry also encourages the activities of veterans, invalids and war widows associations working for the improvement of living conditions for their members.

With the technical assistance of allied countries, the ministry has under study several projects for the establishment of agricultural farms and other production centers to be run by these groups and help not only give them a means of livelihood but contribute to the reconstruction and economic development of the country.

Veterans' Future

In the plenary sessions and round table discussions of the recent 3rd Asian Press Seminar sponsored by the Vietnam Council on Foreign Relations, much thought was given to the role of veterans in the transition of the country from war to peace.

Resources speakers and discussions coordinators agree that one of the weightiest problem will be how the country can absorb the 1.1 million men in uniform back into civilian society. A million jobs will be needed for the returning soldiers as well as the expanding population, pointed out an economist. A sociologist expressed concern with the problem of readjustment of the soldier into civilian life pointing out that reversing the process of urbanization has not always been easy or painless.

But, as the seminar concluded, the state has made adequate provisions for the veteran in the fields of legislation and what is needed now is responsive implementation of the sense of the legislature and the top leadership to grant the men who leave the uniform the full benefits accorded by a grateful nation.

RVN LAW ON VETERANS

July 9, 1970

LAW 8/70

SUBJECT: Rights and Benefits of Disabled Soldiers, War Dead's Families, and War Veterans.

Considering the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam of 1 April 1967, and after discussion and vote by the Congress, the President of the Republic of Vietnam promulgates Law 8/70, July 9, 1970 specifying the rights and benefits of disabled soldiers, war dead's families, and war veterans.

Following is the full text of this Law:

CHAPTER I

NATIONAL OBLIGATION

Article 1. The Nation is grateful to the noble sacrifice of the combatants who fought for the defense of the Fatherland.

The Nation recognizes and secures the moral and material rights and benefits of disabled soldiers, war dead's families, and war veterans.

Article 2. The Nation has the obligation to support war veterans, disabled soldiers, war dead's parents, war widows, and war orphans.

CHAPTER II

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF DISABLED SOLDIERS

Section I. — Disability Allowances

Article 3. Considered as disabled soldiers entitled to the rights and benefits as prescribed by this Law are all military men who are elements of the Vietnam Armed Forces and who have received disability included in one of the two following cases:

1. Disability as a result of wounds received in war actions or as a result of service-connected accidents.

2. Disability as a result of service-connected diseases.

Article 4. Disabled soldiers are entitled to inherent disability allowances based on the following formula:

Inherent allowances are equal to the salary (base salary in active service based on grade and rank, plus high cost of living allowance and all increments excluding function allowance) multiplied by the degree of disability.

In addition to the inherent disability allowances, disabled soldiers also are entitled to full family allowances for their wives and children based on the family allowance rate for men in active service.

Article 5. If recommended by the Medical Council, disabled soldiers whose limbs are either paralyzed or impaired to such a degree that they cannot use them any longer for moving or making indispensable acts in their everyday life such as eating, bathing, etc., are entitled to an additional monthly special allowance enough for them to hire a laborer as an attendant.

Article 6. The inherent disability allowances will be suspended during the following periods:

— Period in which corporal punishment and penalties, except for offenses committed due to negligence, are inflicted on disabled soldiers.

— Period in which disabled soldiers are deprived of civil rights. While the inherent disability allowances are suspended, disabled soldiers continue to receive special allowances, if any, and their wives and children still are entitled to family allowances.

Article 7. Within 30 days beginning the date this Law is promulgated, a Decree of the Prime Minister will determine the following:

1. Classification table of disabilities based on various degrees of disability.

2. Rate of special allowances.

3. Procedures for establishment of dossiers and procedures for payment of allowances.

Section 2. — Medical and Social Support

Article 8. Disabled soldiers are entitled to the following:

— Health recuperation free of charge (orthopaedics, physical therapy, etc.)

— Professional readaptation free of charge (professional orientation and vocational training).

Article 9. Disabled soldiers and their families (wife and children) are entitled to medical examination and treatment free of charge, including medicine expenses at public hospitals (military and civilian hospitals).

Article 10. Disabled soldiers with disability degree at 80 per cent and higher are given priority of being admitted to "Veterans Sanatoria." Statutes of Veterans Sanatoria will be published in a Decree of the Prime Minister, and the establishment of these

Sanatoria must be completed within one year at the latest, beginning the date this Law is promulgated.

Article 11. After his death, a disabled soldier is entitled to the following:

1. Being buried at a military or public cemetery.
2. All allowances for the last month.
3. A burial allowance equal to that of a deceased soldier in active service.

Section 3. — Employment for Disabled Soldiers.

Article 12. A number of proper jobs and places of employment at Government and private offices and enterprises should be reserved for disabled soldiers. Based on recommendations from the Minister of War Veterans, in agreement with the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Economy, the Prime Minister will issue a Decree determining this number of jobs and places of employment.

Article 13. Disabled soldiers are admitted or reclassified as career employees without examination if they meet all required educational conditions or professional skills. Their service seniority will include the period of their military service.

Article 14. All disabled with disability degree over 70 per cent may concede the rights to be admitted as career employees without examination and priority to be admitted to Government Offices to their legal spouse or to one of his children. In these cases the spouse or child entitled to the conceded rights must meet all required educational conditions or professional skills.

Article 15. At their request and based on their option, disabled soldiers are entitled to the following:

1. Be admitted to Veterans Villages, or allocated land and materials to construct houses at their residing place if they do not have their own.
2. Be included in priority one (next to farmers who are presently cultivating their land) to be allocated land based on the "Land-to-Tillers" law.

Article 16. Ownership priority is given to disabled soldiers if they meet all conditions required of other candidates.

Article 17. At their request, disabled soldiers will be authorized to receive vocational training free of charge at Government's technical, industrial, and handicraft training centers, and food allowance during their training period. Food allowance during the training period is paid only once to each disabled soldier.

Article 18. At their request, disabled soldiers and their wives and children are given priority of being admitted as employees in Government and private offices and enterprises if they meet all conditions required of other candidates, and are not subject to examination in case an examination is organized for other candidates.

Section 4. — Other Rights and Benefits

Article 19. In entrance examinations or educational and technical graduation examinations up to the degree of high school terminal courses, disabled soldier candidates are granted exemption from age conditions and are entitled to an increase of 10 per cent of the marks. This increase of marks will be calculated based on the minimum total of marks required for graduation in graduation examinations.

Article 20. Disabled soldiers are exempted from fees of examination and entrance into different University Faculties.

Article 21. Each disabled soldier will be issued a Disabled Soldier Card by the Ministry of War Veterans. With this card disabled soldiers are entitled to the following:

- a. Be given priority of being rendered permanent services reserved for the public.
- b. Be exempted from administrative fees prescribed by Government Agencies.
- c. Entitled to special rate of public transportation fee determined by the Prime Minister.
- d. Entitled to all rights and benefits reserved for Disabled Soldier as prescribed in this law.

CHAPTER III

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF NATIONAL WAR DEAD'S FAMILIES

Section 1. — Definition

Article 22. Considered as "War Dead" are all military men of all elements of the Vietnam Armed Forces:

— Who died for their country or were missing in specific circumstances under which they were fighting for the Nation.

— Who died of a cause which is not a result of war wounds, but which is connected with service.

Article 23. Considered as "War Dead's Family" members to be entitled to the rights and benefits fixed by this Law are the following persons:

1. The paternal grandparents, parents, or widow who was first-rank, or stepwife of war dead mentioned in Article 22.

2. Wards of the Nation and war orphans mentioned in Articles 24 and 25.

Article 24. Considered as "Wards of the Nation" are legitimate children, legitimated children, officially recognized extra-marital children, and legal foster-children of the following persons:

1. War dead mentioned in Paragraph 1, Article 22.

2. Disabled soldiers with disability decree at 60 per cent and over caused by wounds received in action or wounds resulting from war actions.

3. Personnel or Cadres of all civil branches of activities who become disabled under circumstances mentioned in Paragraph 2 of this Article.

Article 25. Considered as war orphans are all children under 18 years old of war dead mentioned in Paragraph 2, Article 22, including legitimate children, legitimated children, legal foster-children, and officially recognized extra-marital children.

Section 2. — Category of Allowances

Article 26. The father or mother of war dead mentioned in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 22 is entitled to parents allowances. The war dead's paternal grandfather or grandmother will be entitled to these allowances if his parents are deceased or missing.

The entitlement to parents allowances (father or mother) is also granted to anybody who can justify that he had brought up and provided for the war dead, and for a long period had replaced his parents until he was 16 years of age.

Article 27. The following widows are entitled to "war widow allowances."

— Widow who was first-rank wife, or step-wife of war dead mentioned in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 22.

— Widow who was first-rank wife, or step-wife of disabled soldier who died when he was being entitled or had the entitlement to allowances of disability at 60 per cent degree or higher.

— Any widow who remarries will be considered as automatically renouncing the entitlement to these allowances.

Article 28. The widow allowances consist of:

— Main allowance, based on the war dead's rank and grade.

— Allowances for children based on the number of legitimate children, legitimated children, officially recognized extramarital children, and legal foster children (including the case their father was entitled only to a flat salary without family allowances when he was alive).

Article 29. Wards of the Nation are entitled to an allowance called "Allowance for Wards of the Nation."

Article 30. The Family Council will designate a tutor to receive allowance and bring up the children when the widow is in one the following cases:

— Death.

— Loss of reason (in this case the right to receive allowance will be returned to the mother when she recovers from illness).

The Family Council will confirm the case of loss of reason and the case of indignity based on a medical certificate issued by a Government physician for the first case and on a Court sentence or an evident proof for the second case.

Article 31. The entitlement to allowances for Wards of the Nation and war dead's children (War widow allowances) can be extended until they are fully 21 years old, if these children are continuing their study, and will be extended for their lifetime if they receive an incurable disability and cannot earn their living by themselves.

Article 32. A Decree of the Prime Minister will fix the following:

— Rate of the above categories of allowances.

— Procedures to establish dossiers for allowances and procedures for payment of these allowances based on each category of allowance.

Section 3. — Procedures for Recognition of Wards of the Nation

Article 33. The recognition of Wards of the Nation will be pronounced in the chamber by the Civil Court of First Instance at the residing place of the legal representative of the child based on the request of this representative, or of the child's relative, or of the Public Prosecutor's office, no later than 30 days beginning the date of receipt of this request. All necessary details related to the application for recognition must be included in the request and submitted with all necessary justificative documents.

Article 34. In case there is any doubt, the Court can order a supplementary investigation and request the complainant to present documents, or designate an Expert for re-examination.

Article 35. The Public Prosecutor's Office must be notified of the case of request for recognition of wards of the Nation for conclusion.

The Court sentence for approval or denial of the request for recognition of Wards of the Nation will be provided by the Court Clerk to the complainant and the Ministry of War Veterans, in which are mentioned the reasons for approval or denial. Within two months after receipt of this notification, the complainant, Public Prosecutor's Office, or the Ministry of War Veterans can lodge an appeal to the Court of Appeal.

The sentence pronounced by the Court of Appeal will be provided in the same way as the sentence pronounced by the Court of First Instance.

In case the request for recognition is rejected, and if later there are new factors which can justify that the child meets all necessary conditions prescribed by law to be recognized as Ward of the Nation, the persons or agencies mentioned in Article 33 are entitled to submit another request to the Court for re-examination of the case.

All procedures related to the request for recognition of Wards of the Nation are exempted from all fees and Court Costs.

Section 4. — Education for Wards of the Nation and War Orphans

Article 36. Wards of the Nation and War Orphans are given priority of being admitted to public primary schools throughout the country, in case schools reserved for Wards of the Nation and war orphans do not have enough rooms for them.

Article 37. Wards of the Nation and war orphans are entitled to an increase of 10 per cent of the total marks obtained in all entrance examinations to general and Technical Junior schools in Provinces where Nation Wards schools are not available.

Article 38. Wards of the Nation and war orphans who have to attend private schools will be granted scholarships by the Government.

In addition to scholarships for further studies incountry or overseas especially reserved for Wards of the Nation, these students are also entitled to other scholarships based on a ratio to be fixed yearly by the Prime Minister.

Section 5. — Medical Support and Employment Support

Article 39. In case of sickness, parents, wife, and children of war dead mentioned in Article 23 will be entitled to medical examination and treatment free of charge, including medicine expenses, at public hospitals (civil and military hospitals).

Article 40. In case they meet all prescribed conditions, war widows, Wards of the Nation and war orphans are given priority of being recruited as employees at public and private offices and enterprises, and are exempted from examination if an entrance examination is required of other candidates.

In case they meet all necessary conditions on diplomas required by the particular statute of the grade of career employees they want to join, war widows, wards of the Nation and war orphans are also exempted from an examination to be classified or reclassified as career employees.

War Widows without diplomas will be automatically admitted as daily hired personnel.

In examination for admission of students to professional courses, war widow's are entitled to an increase of 10 per cent of the total marks obtained.

Article 41. War widows are given priority of being provided with ownership if they meet all necessary conditions.

Article 42. Based on their application, war widows, wards of the Nation and war orphans are entitled to attend vocational training courses free of charge at Government's vocational, technical, industrial and handicraft training centers and to food allowance during the whole training period.

Food allowance for vocational training will be allocated only once to each veteran.

Article 43. All provisions concerning the rights

and benefits mentioned in Section 5 are not applicable to remarried war widows.

CHAPTER IV

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF VETERANS

Section 1. — Employment Support

Article 44. Considered as veterans and entitled to the rights and benefits fixed by this Law are all military men of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces who have served during war time and were discharged as prescribed by the Law, excluding the sentences.

War time is counted from the day of establishment of the Vietnam Armed Forces (23 May 1948) to the day the present War is ended.

Article 45. When they meet all prescribed conditions veterans given priority of being recruited as employees at public and private offices and enterprises, and are exempted from examination if an examination is organized for other candidates. In examinations for admission of students to educational and professional courses, veteran candidates are entitled to an increase of 10 per cent of the total marks obtained and are exempted from age conditions.

Article 46. Veterans are given priority of being provided with ownership if they meet all conditions required of other candidates.

Article 47. Based on application, veterans are entitled to vocational training free of charge at Government's vocational, technical and handicraft training Centers, and food allowances are given only once to each veteran.

Section 2. — Medical and Social Support

Article 48. Veterans and their families (wives and children) are entitled to medical examination and treatment free of charge, including medicine expenses at public hospitals (military and civil hospitals).

Article 49. Old and weak veterans over 60 years of age who can no longer earn their living by themselves or have not any relatives to support them will be admitted to Veterans Sanatoria at their request.

Article 50. Deceased veterans are entitled to be buried at military or public cemeteries.

Section 3. — Other Rights and Benefits

Article 51. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of War Veterans will organize special classes of primary and secondary education free of charge for veterans and disabled soldiers.

Article 52. Veterans are exempted from examination to be classified or reclassified as career employees in administrative or technical branches if they meet all conditions prescribed by regulations of each cadre branch concerned. Their military service seniority will be added to their service seniority.

Article 53. In cultural and professional examinations up to the terminal classes of the Secondary education, veteran candidates having been discharged for less than two years are entitled to an increase of 10 per cent of the minimum total of marks required for passing these examinations.

Article 54. Veterans who meet all requirements for diplomas are exempted from age conditions and fees for undergoing entrance examinations or for enrollment in Colleges, Institutions, and University Faculties.

After discharge, veterans who are ex-students of Colleges, Institutions and University Faculties will be re-enrolled in order to resume their studies in case their education was interrupted by the draft.

Applications of Veterans for overseas training at Superior Schools or Universities will be considered in priority based on national requirements.

CHAPTER V

RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF DISABLED SOLDIERS', VETERANS' AND WAR WIDOWS' ASSOCIATIONS

Article 55. The duty of the Government is to give support for the development of Disabled Soldiers', Veterans' and War Widows' Associations whose operations are legal.

Article 56. Disabled Soldiers, Veterans and War Widows Associations are entitled to the following:

— Government assistance in the establishment or development of business or production enterprises, partial or total exemption from all categories of taxes, loan of capitals with favorable conditions.

— Special favors and privileges in the exploitation of natural resources with the purpose to provide jobs and advantages for Association members in every service.

CHAPTER VI

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 57. All production Centers subordinate to the Ministry of War Veterans and belonging to Disabled Soldiers' Veterans' and War Widows' Associations are exempted from production tax during the first four operational years.

Article 58. When recruitment of personnel is needed, all Government and private offices and all

Government and private industrial and trade enterprises of all categories must notify in advance the Ministry of War Veterans for introduction of candidates with priority prescribed in the Law.

Article 59. A Decree of the Prime Minister will determine the types of para-military forces and military forces not mentioned in the above Chapter to be entitled to a part or the total of the rights and benefits prescribed in the Law.

Article 60. The Decrees indicated in Article 59 must be promulgated within thirty days at the latest after the promulgation of this Law.

Article 61. Allowances prescribed in this Law are of an inalienable and unseizable nature under all circumstances.

Article 62. Disability allowance is given beginning the day the concerned is discharged for disability. Parents allowance, war widow allowance, and Wards of the Nation allowance are given beginning the day the person concerned is dead or confirmed to be disabled.

Article 63. Facilities for the gratification of the rights and benefits of disabled soldiers, war dead's families, Wards of the Nation, War orphans, and Veterans prescribed in this Law, especially on the education, vocational training and convalescence must be completed within two years at the latest after the promulgation of this Law.

Article 64. Applications for allowance must be examined and concluded within a month at the latest after submission of full dossier concerned.

Article 65. Disabled soldiers, war dead's families, Wards of the Nation and War Orphans, who have been entitled, prior to the promulgation of the Law, to any allowances not prescribed by this Law or of a higher rate than that prescribed in this Law or by executive document, are still entitled to the allowances based on the former rate.

Article 66. In all circumstances, the priorities prescribed in this Law are classified as follows:

- Disabled soldiers.
- War dead's families.
- Veterans.

Article 67. The allowances prescribed in this Law will be reviewed once every year for amendments suitable to current costs of living. Amendments will be decided through a Decree by the Prime Minister.

Article 68. All provisions concerning the rights and benefits of disabled soldiers, war dead's families, and war veterans prescribed in existing laws which do not agree with those in this Law are cancelled.

This Law is promulgated through emergency procedures and will be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Vietnam.

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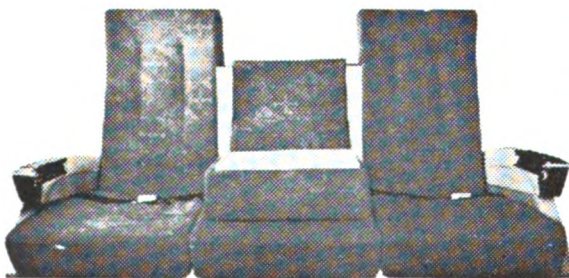
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