

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Mars (Mars [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME: 4-NOV-2000 11:05:55.00

SUBJECT: If Moon and Kim plan nuclear and biological Armageddon, Can God stop it?

TO: christian bernard (christian bernard [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: 1MAXIM (1MAXIM [UNKNOWN])
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TO: 1 Robert Parry (1 Robert Parry [UNKNOWN])
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TO: 1 (1 [UNKNOWN])
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TO: palun@undp.org (palun@undp.org [UNKNOWN])
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TO: Vice.President@Whitehouse.GOV (Vice.President@Whitehouse.GOV [UNKNOWN])
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TO: President@Whitehouse.GOV (President@Whitehouse.GOV [OVP])
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CC: Pauline & Thor (Pauline & Thor [UNKNOWN])
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CC: 1relgion cult web guide (1relgion cult web guide [UNKNOWN])
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CC: Mike breen (Mike breen [UNKNOWN])
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CC: President@Whitehouse.GOV (President@Whitehouse.GOV [OVP])
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CC: uc tyler - antichrist president (uc tyler - antichrist president [UNKNOWN])
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TEXT:
If Moon and Kim plan nuclear and biological Armageddon, Can God stop it?
CC: US Congress, Senate, UN and European political leaders.

See US Journalist Robert Parry's recent (Oct 2000) articles on arms manufacturer,
Sun Myung Moon's (aka Christ, King of Kings,) \$3.5 billion investment in North Korea.on:

<http://www.consortiumnews.com:/101100c.html>

According to Parry, Moon is a drug money launderer, the enemy of the democratic socialist revolution

Moon is a theocrat; he believes that he as Christ, should rule Eden in tyranny.

<http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html>

Humanity get a grip.

Governments of the free world; stop this man.

Hear Mother God's cry from Heaven.

From Mars in London, 4th November 2000

Nuclear and biological detonation is not a theological question.

It is one of science. Ask any nuclear scientist the question:

Have you ever seen God intervening in the process of a nuclear reaction; does She ever intervene to stop it?

The scientist will say, no. It is science, independent of God; many nuclear scientists are atheists; some work for Kim Jong Il, tyrant of North Korea.

God and theology don't come into it for them.

Kim may be evil, but his nuclear reactors work just as well as those in the democratic world; though they are of older design and are considered unsafe.

An evil person can make a nuclear Plutonium detonation and God has never been known to intervene in the workings of science; She can only scream out from the spiritual world to the soul of the nuclear terrorist for peace; but there are many souls among humanity who are not listening to the calls for peace from Mother God, who seeks only to protect Her innocents; for mostly women and children would die in such a war. The Mother God, the Creator

whom our pagan ancestors devoted their souls to seeks socialist and democratic reforms; global socialism; global democracy; the end of the reign of the tyrants and

dictators; no tyrant Christ is to come. Christ would submit himself to the demos.

He would say that woman, the mothers of all life would rule Eden with greater love than we men, for we are just their servants of Love.

Kim Jong Il is not listening to Mother God's cries for Her people enslaved by him;

nor to Her cries for peace. Sun Myung Moon (aka Christ) has for years

been threatening humanity with judgement for not receiving him as Christ; America will be judged by fire, he says. Adultery will be a capital offence.

Moon made a single investment in North Korea of \$3.5 billion in the early 90's;

he continues to flood more money into the North, year after year; he has laid off 2000 workers at his arms production plant, Tongil in S.

Korea

which was making M-16's, Anti-aircraft guns, other heavy guns and industrial

lathes for the weapons manufacturing industry;

everything is going onto North Korea and Brazil now;

Moon is selling off church properties in America according to reports on

Moon cult Usenet group alt.religion.unification.

North Korea? Where 2 million souls have died recently in the famine in the countryside;

Pyongyang has a military cordon around it; the poor cannot enter.

Kim is a slavemaster holding his people prisoner in a country full of concentration camps; where whole families are sent, the wives raped, sexually tortured and

killed

by the guards if they get pregnant according to a recent UK Channel Four documentary.

Pure Evil. Moon and Kim. They threaten Armageddon openly; particularly Moon.

Humanity get a grip.

Yo! Awake.

Am I the only person who believes that Moon is a major threat to world peace.

No, this is old news. Daphne Green, founder of a major US anti-cult organisation, the

American

Family Federation, has been saying this for years. Her son Ford, a US lawyer

bravely took the Moon cult to the Supreme Court in *Molko v. Leal*.

Woe. All the signs are there. Moon is criminally insane; thinks he's Christ and threatens biblical Armageddon; he is the only major Christ in the world today to have

invested so heavily

in military manufacturing and in the tyrant kingdom of North Korea.

He openly predicts Armageddon. It is allegedly written in the Book of Revelation;

Christ comes to kill all his enemies??? I am pagan; I reject this Christ

and turn my soul to Mother God who is Creator of all innocents of Eden,

those born into this world of suffering; and I bear my wrath on Moon;

that coward of humanity who would kill innocents anonymously for vanity;

just to prove his evil prophecies. After Armageddon; Moon will say;

'You see, I told you that will happen.'

He plans to do it; he has prepared for years;

he is stockpiling for war in North Korea; even Moon has 40 submarines;
according to journalist Robert Parry (see his site links below).

'I will not worship an unworthy god.'
Prometheus

We are all children of Mother
God; Her Soul's devotion; Her One Love is free;
Beware of higher priced competitors and impersonators.

Wake up humanity.

Kim and Moon are arms dealers; Kim supplies the political tyrannies of
Iraq,
Libya Iran, Syria and global terrorism; anything Kim has is for sale.

the nuclear and biological threat is real. Moon is one of the few who
actively promises it. His followers are waiting for his prophecies to come
true.

If no Armageddon comes; Moon opponents such as myself will say;
'so you master did not prophesy a world of peace and it came.'
Moon will not allow that to happen; Moon is completely serious about his
threats.

He has prepared for war since 1958. A military church.
A Christ figure. A threat against Eden issued unless we accept him as
Christ;
investments in North Korea. The escape hatch in Brazil; Moon's city of
Jardin (The
Garden),
his garden of Eden where spiritualists beat evil spirits out of mentally
handicapped
children;
Hell by definition, I would claim.

Moon is not kidding.

Humanity get a grip.
Governments of the free world; stop this man.
Hear Mother God's cry from Heaven.

Mars
In London

THE END OF RELIGION

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Moondocumentary.htm>
Documentary on cult leader and arms manufacturer,
Sun Myung Moon, North Korean tyrant Kim Jong Il
(who allowed 2 million of his people to starve recently) and the military
and nuclear
alliance of Kim and Moon, who prophesies the war and nuclear destruction

of Christendom

if we don't accept him as Christ (He is not Christ)

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/ACTWD.htm>

New UK political party: Global Alliance for the Cancellation of Third World Debt

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm>

Site index on the antichrist, the neo-nazi cult leader, Sun Myung Moon, Nuclear Terrorism

and many other articles on the Moon and Kim Jong Il's plans for Armageddon and nuclear

Terrorism.

Also

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/guns.htm>

Moon adds the Thompson machine gun company to his arms manufacturing collection.

Nothing to do with Mars but see articles on:

<http://meltingpot.fortunecity.com/namibia/538/m-1a.htmlh>

Pi Ka Rum and the antichrist's restorational(sic) sexual theology

www.darkriverfilms.com/sixmary.htm

<http://www.christianityonline.com/ct/8td/8td020.html>

<http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html>

Moon's links to drug laundering, neo-fascism and his military preparations for Armageddon

North Korea

Parry's new article on Moon's \$3.5 billion investment in North Korea.:

<http://www.consortiumnews.com:/101100c.html>

See other new articles on Moon and Bush (who according to Parry received up to \$12 million

a year from Moon) on

<http://www.consortiumnews.com>

Moon devotees are agents of a foreign government who prepare for Judgement Day (war)

Holocaust and concentration camps in North Korea

<http://www.nkhumanrights.or.kr/eng/defectors/index.html>

www.darkriverfilms.com/kimjongil.htm (Kim's nuclear and biological capability)

http://www.house.gov/international_relations/nkag/report.htm

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Christspeaks2000.html>

www.darkriverfilms.com/nostradamus.htm

Moon, Nostradamus and Armageddon

www.darkriverfilms.com/nuclearterror.htm

<http://moon.act.uji.es/~roc/a3/moonlink.htm>

Moon Links

www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm

Anti-Moon site

<http://www.christianityonline.com/ct/8td/8td020.html>

Rev.moons ex-daughter in law Nansook Hong, her experience Tenets of Christ

The Seven Tenets of Christ

A Pagan Ode.

1: Hate religion. Salvation is free. To know God is to know suffering;
there
is no bliss in oneness with God at this time; God is in torment. She hears
Her children's screams of pain; end the pain. They who use the name
of God and who have no Love, place a curse on themselves. It is forbidden
by Love to take
tithes;
give instead to the poor.

2: Love God. Mother God is suffering with her children; She weeps
endlessly.
End the suffering of Her children who are as slaves Babylon and in poverty
and war.
Cry out out to Her; become One with Her eternal soul.

3: End Poverty. God feels the pain of her children's torment. Share what
you
have. All churches must be sold in penance and the wealth of Christendom
given to the poor of humanity. The youth of Christendom must invade Africa
with love and wealth of nations. Teach them no religion; only practice
Love.
Love is the highest religion.

4: End all human suffering. God suffers as we suffer; be compassionate,
love
each other.

5: We are all brothers and sisters under Mother God.
Love each other as you would love God. If your brother or sister is
suffering, God is suffering with them. The priesthood is forbidden; only
the
universal priesthood of Love; do not call anyone True Father or True
Mother,
only God. Call one another only friend or brother or sister, this is
enough.
Celibacy is not required, find a lover and devote yourself to that person
as
to God; for as a male; woman is the peice of Mother God that we worship
in spiritual and sexual abandon.

6: Don't hurt anyone. Do not initiate violence. Abolish the death penalty.
Serious criminals must do penance. They must serve humanity, not be
inflicted with cruel punishments.

7: Make peace. Forgive your enemies, but remove the tyrant oppressors of
Babylon; the fascists who ensalve Eden. Build
democracies. Vote for those who are servants of humanity and Mother God's
goodness. No tyrant Christ is to come; all are
fallible, even Christ. The kingdom to come is the kingdom of our eternal
Mother's Love.

Make love, not war

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/tantrafilm.htm>

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Free expression is a gift

- att1.htm===== ATTACHMENT 1 =====
ATT CREATION TIME/DATE: 0 00:00:00.00

TEXT:

If Moon and Kim plan nuclear and biological
Armageddon, Can God stop it?
CC: US Congress, Senate, UN and European
political leaders.

See US Journalist Robert Parry's recent (Oct 2000)
articles on arms manufacturer,
Sun Myung Moon's (aka Christ, King of Kings,
,

\$3.5 billion investment in North Korea.on:
<http://www.consortiumnews.com/101100c.html> <<http://www.consortiumnews.com/101100c.html>>

According
to Parry, Moon is a drug money launderer, the enemy of the democratic
socialist
revolution
Moon is a theocrat; he believes that he as Christ,

should rule Eden in tyranny.
<http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html> <<http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html>>

Humanity
get a grip.
Governments of the free world; stop this man.
Hear Mother
God's cry from Heaven.

From

Mars in London, 4th November 2000

Nuclear and biological detonation is

not a theological question.

It is one of science. Ask any nuclear scientist

the question:

Have you ever seen God intervening in the process of a nuclear

reaction;

does She ever intervene to stop it?

The scientist will say,

no. It is science, independent of God;

many nuclear scientists are atheists;

some work for Kim Jong Il, tyrant of North Korea.

God and theology don't com

e

into it for them.

Kim may be evil, but his nuclear reactors work just as wel

l

as those

in the democratic world; though they are of older design and are
considered unsafe.

An evil person can make a nuclear Plutonium detonatio

n

and

God has never been known to intervene in the workings of science;

She

can only scream out from the spiritual world to the soul of the
nuclear

terrorist for peace;

but there are many souls among humanity who are not
listening to the calls

for peace from Mother God, who seeks only to protect

Her innocents;

for mostly women and children would die in such a war. The

Mother God, the Creator

whom our pagan ancestors devoted their souls t

o

seeks socialist and

democratic reforms; global socialism; global democracy;

the end of the reign of the

tyrants and

dictators; no tyrant Christ is to

come. Christ would submit himself to the demos.

He would say that woman, the

mothers of all life would rule Eden with greater love than we
men, for we are
just their servants of Love.

Kim Jong Il is not listening to Mother God's
cries for Her people enslaved by him;
nor to Her cries for peace. Sun Myung

Moon (aka Christ) has for years
been threatening humanity with judgement for

not receiving him as Christ;
America will be judged by fire, he says.
Adultery will be a capital offence.
Moon made a single investment in North

Korea of \$3.5 billion in the early 90's;
he continues to flood more money
into the North, year after year;
he has laid off 2000 workers at his arms
production plant, Tongil in S. Korea
which was making M-16's, Anti-aircraft

guns, other heavy guns and industrial
lathes for the weapons
manufacturing industry;
everything is going onto North Korea and Brazil
now;
Moon is selling off church properties in America according to reports

on
Moon cult Usenet group alt.religion.unification.
North Korea? Where 2

million souls have died recently in the famine in the countryside;
Pyongyang
has a military cordon around it; the poor cannot enter.
Kim is a slavemaster

holding his people prisoner in a country full of
concentration camps; where

whole families are sent, the wives raped, sexually tortured and
killed
by

the guards if they get pregnant according to a recent UK Channel Four
documentary.
Pure Evil. Moon and Kim. They threaten Armageddon openly;
particularly Moon.

Humanity get a grip.

Yo! Awake.

Am I the
only person who believes that Moon is a major threat to world peace.
No, this
is old news. Daphne Green, founder of a major US anti-cult organisation,
the
American
Family Federation, has been saying this for years. Her son

Ford, a US lawyer
bravely took the Moon cult to the Supreme Court in *Molko v*
.
Leal.

Woe. All the signs are there. Moon is criminally insane; thinks
he's Christ
and threatens biblical Armageddon; he is the only major Christ i
n
the world today to have
invested so heavily
in military manufacturing and
in the tyrant kingdom of North Korea.

He openly predicts Armageddon. It

is allegedly written in the Book of Revelation;
Christ comes to kill all his

enemies??? I am pagan; I reject this Christ
and turn my soul to Mother God

who is Creator of all innocents of Eden,
those born into this world of

suffering; and I bear my wrath on Moon;
that coward of humanity who would
kill innocents anonymously for vanity;
just to prove his evil prophecies.
After Armageddon; Moon will say;
'You see, I told you that will
happen.'
He plans to do it; he has prepared for years;
he is stockpiling

for war in North Korea; even Moon has 40 submarines;
according to journalist

Robert Parry (see his site links below).

'I will not worship an
unworthy god.'
Prometheus

We are all children of Mother
God; Her

Soul's devotion; Her One Love is free;
Beware of higher priced competitors

and impersonators.

Wake up humanity.

Kim and Moon are arms
dealers; Kim supplies the political tyrannies of Iraq,
Libya Iran,
Syria and global terrorism; anything Kim has is for sale.

the nuclear an
d
biological threat is real. Moon is one of the few who
actively promises it.

His followers are waiting for his prophecies to come true.
If no Armageddon

comes; Moon opponents such as myself will say;
'so you master did not
prophecy a world of peace and it came.'
Moon will not allow that to happen;

Moon is completely serious about his threats.
He has prepared for war since

1958. A military church.
A Christ figure. A threat against Eden issued unles
s
we accept him as Christ;
investments in North Korea. The escape hatch in
Brazil; Moon's city of Jardim (The
Garden),
his garden of Eden wher
e
spiritualists beat evil spirits out of mentally handicapped
children;
Hel
l
by definition, I would claim.

Moon is not kidding.

Humanity get a

grip.

Governments of the free world; stop this man.

Hear Mother God's cry

from Heaven.

Mars

In London

THE END OF

RELIGION

[http://www.darkriverfi](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Moondocumentary.htm)

[lms.com/Moondocumentary.htm](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Moondocumentary.htm) <<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Moondocumentary.htm>>

Documentary

on cult leader and arms manufacturer,

Sun Myung Moon, North Korean

tyrant Kim Jong Il

(who allowed 2 million of his people to starve recently)

and the military and nuclear

alliance of Kim and Moon, who prophesies the wa

r

and nuclear destruction of Christendom

if we don't accept him as Christ (He

is not Christ)

[http://www.darkriverfilms.com/AC](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/ACTWD.htm)

[TWD.htm](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/ACTWD.htm) <<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/ACTWD.htm>>

New

UK political party: Global Alliance for the Cancellation of Third World

Debt

[http://www.darkriverfilms.com](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm)

[/jihadusa.htm](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm) <<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm>>

Site

index on the antichrist, the neo-nazi cult leader, Sun Myung Moon, Nuclear

Terrorism

and many other articles on the Moon and Kim Jong Il's plans for

Armageddon and nuclear

Terrorism.

Also

[http://www.darkriverfilms.com/gun](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/guns.htm)

[s.htm](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/guns.htm) <<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/guns.htm>>

Moon

adds the Thompson machine gun company to his arms manufacturing

collection.

Nothing to do with Mars but see articles on:

[http://meltingp](http://meltingpot.fortunecity.com/namibia/538/m-1a.html)

[ot.fortunecity.com/namibia/538/m-1a.html](http://meltingpot.fortunecity.com/namibia/538/m-1a.html) <<http://meltingpot.fortunecity.com/namibia/538/m-1a.html>>

Pi

Ka Rum and the antichrist's restorational(sic) sexual theology

[www.darkriverfilms.com/sixmary](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/sixmary.htm)

[.htm <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/sixmary.htm>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/sixmary.htm)

<http://www.christia>

[nityonline.com/ct/8td/8td020.html <http://www.christianityonline.com/ct/8td/8td020.html>](http://www.christianityonline.com/ct/8td/8td020.html)

<http://www.consortiumnew>

[s.com/archive/moon.html <http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html>](http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/moon.html)

Moon's

links to drug laundering, neo-fascism and his military preparations for

Armageddon

North Korea

Parry's new article on Moon's \$3.5 billion

investment in North Korea.:

<http://www.consortiumnews.co>

[m:/101100c.html <http://www.consortiumnews.com/101100c.html>](http://www.consortiumnews.com/101100c.html)

See

other new articles on Moon and Bush (who according to Parry received up to \$12

million

a year from Moon) on

[http://www.consortiumnews.com <http://www.consortiumnews.com/>](http://www.consortiumnews.com)

Moon

devotees are agents of a foreign government who prepare for Judgement Day

(war)

Holocaust and concentration camps in North Korea

<http://www.nkhum>

[anrights.or.kr/eng/defectors/index.html <http://www.nkhumanrights.or.kr/eng/defectors/index.html>](http://www.nkhumanrights.or.kr/eng/defectors/index.html)

www.darkriverfilms.com/kimjo

[ngil.htm <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/kimjongil.htm>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/kimjongil.htm)

(Kim's nuclear and biological capability)

[http://www.](http://www)

[house.gov/international_relations/nkag/report.htm <http://www.house.gov/international_relations/nkag/report.htm>](http://www.house.gov/international_relations/nkag/report.htm)

<http://www.darkriver>

[films.com/Christspeaks2000.html <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Christspeaks2000.html>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/Christspeaks2000.html)

www.darkriverfilms.com/nos

[tradamus.htm <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/nostradamus.htm>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/nostradamus.htm)

Moon,

Nostradamus and Armageddon

www.darkriverfilms.com/n

[uclearterror.htm <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/nuclearterror.htm>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/nuclearterror.htm)

<http://moon.act.uji.es/~roc/>

[a3/moonlink.htm <http://moon.act.uji.es/~roc/a3/moonlink.htm>](http://moon.act.uji.es/~roc/a3/moonlink.htm)

Moon

Links

www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadu

[sa.htm <http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm>](http://www.darkriverfilms.com/jihadusa.htm)

Anti-Moon

site

<http://www.christia>

Rev.moons

ex-daughter in law Nansook Hong, her experience Tenets of Christ

The
Seven Tenets of Christ
A Pagan Ode.

1: Hate religion. Salvation is
free. To know God is to know suffering; there
is no bliss in oneness with Go
d
at this time; God is in torment. She hears
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end the pain. They who use the name
of God and who have no Love, place

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tithes;
give
instead to the poor.

2: Love God. Mother God is suffering with her
children; She weeps endlessly.
End the suffering of Her children who are as

slaves Babylon and in poverty and war.
Cry out out to Her; become One with

Her eternal soul.

3: End Poverty. God feels the pain of her children's

torment. Share what you
have. All churches must be sold in penance and the

wealth of Christendom
given to the poor of humanity. The youth of Christendo
m
must invade Africa
with love and wealth of nations. Teach them no religion;

only practice Love.
Love is the highest religion.

4: End all human
suffering. God suffers as we suffer; be compassionate, love
each
other.

5: We are all brothers and sisters under Mother God.
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other as you would love God. If your brother or sister is suffering, God is

suffering with them. The priesthood is forbidden; only the universal priesthood of Love; do not call anyone True Father or True Mother, only God.

Call one another only friend or brother or sister, this is enough. Celibacy

is not required, find a lover and devote yourself to that person as to God;

for as a male; woman is the peice of Mother God that we worship in spiritual

and sexual abandon.

6: Don't hurt anyone. Do not initiate violence. Abolish the death penalty. Serious criminals must do penance. They must serve humanity, not be inflicted with cruel punishments.

7: Make peace. Forgive your enemies, but remove the tyrant oppressors of Babylon; the fascists who ensalve Eden. Build democracies. Vote for those who are servants of humanity and Mother God's goodness. No tyrant Christ is to come; all are fallible, even Christ. The kingdom to come is the kingdom of our eternal Mother's Love.

Make love, not war

<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/tantrafilm.htm> <<http://www.darkriverfilms.com/tantrafilm.htm>>

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===== END ATTACHMENT 1 =====

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: We_The_People_@webtv.net (Patriots) (We_The_People_@webtv.net (Patriots) [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME: 5-NOV-2000 15:52:40.00

SUBJECT: Don't Vote !!!

TO: visa@china-embassy.org (visa@china-embassy.org [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: cuba@un.int (cuba@un.int [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: web@usdoj.gov (web@usdoj.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: little.rock@fbi.gov (little.rock@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: charlotte@fbi.gov (charlotte@fbi.gov [ONDCP])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Media.chicago@fbi.gov (Media.chicago@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: CINCINNATI@FBI.GOV (CINCINNATI@FBI.GOV [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: houston@fbi.gov (houston@fbi.gov [WHO])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: knoxville@fbi.gov (knoxville@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: los.angeles@fbi.gov (los.angeles@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: new.orleans@fbi.gov (new.orleans@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: newyork@fbi.gov (newyork@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Philadelphia@fbi.gov (Philadelphia@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: phoenix@fbi.gov (phoenix@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: raleigh.charlotte@fbi.gov (raleigh.charlotte@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: richmond@fbi.gov (richmond@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: su@fbi.gov (su@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: seattle@fbi.gov (seattle@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: tampa@fbi.gov (tampa@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: albuquerque@fbi.gov (albuquerque@fbi.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: First.Lady@Whitehouse.GOV (First.Lady@Whitehouse.GOV [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Gephardt@mail.house.gov (Gephardt@mail.house.gov [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: wisgov@gov.state.wi.us (wisgov@gov.state.wi.us [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: governor.jesseventura@mail.state.mn.us (governor.jesseventura@mail.state.mn.us [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: mayor@ci.mil.wi.us (mayor@ci.mil.wi.us [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: mayor@dcgov.org (mayor@dcgov.org [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: guiliani@www.ci.nyc.ny.us (guiliani@www.ci.nyc.ny.us [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Mrs.Gore@Whitehouse.GOV (Mrs.Gore@Whitehouse.GOV [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: president@Whitehouse.GOV (president@Whitehouse.GOV [OVP])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: president@gov.ru (president@gov.ru [OVP]) (POTUS)
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: politic@dol.ru (politic@dol.ru [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: info@kprf.ru (info@kprf.ru [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:
Don't Vote !!!

For more Corruption.

WE MUST RESIST !

Do what you can,
when you can.

Sons of Liberty Militia
; ; ; Tim Stine
312 S. Wyomissing Ave.
; ; Shillington, Pa. 19607
U.N. N.W.O. Occupied U.S.A.
1-610-775-0497
We_The_People_@webtv.net

What is a Militia ? Defenders of Liberty & Freedom, and the
Constitutional Republic. Against Tyrants ! Foreign and Domestic ! Resist
the United Nations New World Order, and it's Global Socialism, actually
a Evil Oligarchy of the Superrich. We must Declare our Independence from
the U.N. New World Order ! Or forever lose our freedom.

We_Must_Resist_For_God_And_Country.

The_American_Revolution_Continues !!!

http://community.webtv.net/We_The_People_/SonsofLibertyMilitia

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: "Weinhold, Scott" ("Weinhold, Scott" [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME: 7-NOV-2000 23:58:15.00

SUBJECT: Foreign Affairs article on VN

TO: "Adamson, Gregory" ("Adamson, Gregory" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Avery, Mary" ("Avery, Mary" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Avery, Todd" ("Avery, Todd" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: us+3Ba=+20+3Bp=gov+2Bdos+3Bo=doscab+3Bs=beatty+3Bg=michael+3B"@pd.state.gov> ("Beatty, Michael"
<"IMCEAX400-c=us+3Ba=+20+3Bp=gov+2Bdos+3Bo=doscab+3Bs=beatty+3Bg=michael+3B"@pd.state.gov> [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Bellard, Scott" ("Bellard, Scott" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Beller, Jeffrey" ("Beller, Jeffrey" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Berg, Paul" ("Berg, Paul" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Brahney, Kathleen" ("Brahney, Kathleen" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Bruno, James" ("Bruno, James" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Bruns, Eugene" ("Bruns, Eugene" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Cavanaugh, Michael" ("Cavanaugh, Michael" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Coleman, Catherine" ("Coleman, Catherine" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Cornish, Allyson" ("Cornish, Allyson" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Crider, Larry" ("Crider, Larry" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Dry, Robert" ("Dry, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Fisher, David" ("Fisher, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Flanagan, Keith - Det2" ("Flanagan, Keith - Det2" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Forden, Jasmine" ("Forden, Jasmine" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Forden, Robert" ("Forden, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Frisby, Mike" ("Frisby, Mike" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Greene, David" ("Greene, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Harter, Dennis" ("Harter, Dennis" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Hong-Phong_Pho@ita.doc.gov (Hong-Phong_Pho@ita.doc.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "John, Eric" ("John, Eric" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "John, Yoon" ("John, Yoon" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Karen C. Burchard (CN=Karen C. Burchard/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Kleine, Michael" ("Kleine, Michael" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Krzywda, David" ("Krzywda, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Leou, Nancy" ("Leou, Nancy" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Linnan, Huan" ("Linnan, Huan" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Linnan, Michael" ("Linnan, Michael" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Loose, Greg" ("Loose, Greg" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Martin, Joanne" ("Martin, Joanne" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "McMaster, Elizabeth" ("McMaster, Elizabeth" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Mertz, Mary" ("Mertz, Mary" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Midha, Kristina" ("Midha, Kristina" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Miller, Frank" ("Miller, Frank" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Miller, Lavay" ("Miller, Lavay" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Miller, Namela" ("Miller, Namela" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Monk, Amy" ("Monk, Amy" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Monk, David" ("Monk, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Mullins, Michael" ("Mullins, Michael" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Myers, Jon" ("Myers, Jon" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Nutzman, Adrienne" ("Nutzman, Adrienne" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Ogburn, Robert" ("Ogburn, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Olbrysh, Kevin" ("Olbrysh, Kevin" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Palladino, Robert" ("Palladino, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Pepper, Raymond" ("Pepper, Raymond" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Peters, John" ("Peters, John" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Peterson, Douglas" ("Peterson, Douglas" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Pierangelo, Clare" ("Pierangelo, Clare" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Porter, James" ("Porter, James" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Porter, Robert" ("Porter, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Quiram, Douglas" ("Quiram, Douglas" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Ray, Charles" ("Ray, Charles" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: RSell@hcm.vnn.vn (RSell@hcm.vnn.vn [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Schiffer, Robert" ("Schiffer, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Schmick, Henry" ("Schmick, Henry" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Schwenk, Jeffrey" ("Schwenk, Jeffrey" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Sigmon, Gary" ("Sigmon, Gary" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Specht, Linda" ("Specht, Linda" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: swhcmc@usia.gov (swhcmc@usia.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

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Foreign Affairs

November, 2000 / December, 2000

Vietnam's Contradictions

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NOT A SYNDROME, BUT A COUNTRY

IN NOVEMBER, President Clinton will become the first U.S. president to set foot in a unified Vietnam. His visit will finally draw American attention to

a country that is vastly different from the one many remember.

Contemporary

Vietnam is characterized by paradoxes and contradictions. The bustling streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City are packed with youth on Honda Dream motorbikes, weaving between the bicycle-taxis and the many peddlers balancing

enormous pyramids of vegetables or other wares. The energy is palpable: 60 percent of Vietnam's population is under 30 years of age, and 85 percent is under 40.

But first impressions are often misleading, and appearances frequently deceive. The vibrant and hard-working younger Vietnamese love to congregate at the many "cybercafes" or more modest street-front computer rental shops. But this country of 80 million people -- the 12th most populous in the world -- still has fewer than 60,000 Internet subscribers, two-thirds of which are ministries and other governmental or Communist Party institutions. An hour on the Internet costs more than the average Vietnamese earns in a day (per capita GNP in 1999 was \$ 320). When one looks into those cybercafes and sees very little "surfing" going on (a lot of word-processing and games instead), the Internet revolution appears a long way from opening Vietnamese society to the outside world.

In the early to mid-1990s, the Vietnamese economy seemed to be opening, and many foreign investors rushed in with high expectations of future growth. But as a result of Vietnam's three-year-old economic decline, these investors mostly disappeared. The newly built hotels and office buildings that now stand empty starkly symbolize the lowered expectations.

Many Vietnamese would welcome the economic opportunities that increased foreign investment would create. But the country's leadership has been hesitant to open the economy. Frequent warnings cite the dangers of "peaceful evolution," a term used to deride those perceived as seeking to discredit communism by advocating the "Western" values of capitalism, democracy, and human rights. Vietnam has yet to reconcile its centrally controlled economy, one-party political system, and historic fear of foreign interaction with the growing pressures for change in a rapidly globalizing world.

PRESENT-DAY PARADOXES

THE END of what the Vietnamese call the "American war" was a truly epochal triumph for the North. Independence was finally won in 1975 after a century of struggle against the French, the Chinese, the Japanese, and ultimately the Americans. Hanoi was the cockpit of this fight and is now the nation's capital;

Ho Chi Minh, the nation's deeply venerated founder, lies here in a mausoleum fully equal to Lenin's on Red Square. But on April 30, 2000 -- the 25th anniversary of the final victory against the United States and South Vietnam's "liberation" from foreign influences -- Hanoi lay eerily quiet. Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam) hosted the major ceremony instead. The authorities' tight control over the day's festivities belied the populist rhetoric celebrating the "people's uprising." The official explanation for keeping the celebration inside the gates of the Palace of Reunification, formerly the presidential palace, was the wish to keep the costs down. But limiting the setting also protected against possible political demonstrations.

Another contradiction is that although the North won the battle, the South may yet win the war. A "Northernization" campaign during the first decade after independence included a deliberately brutal policy of land collectivization and forced more than 400,000 people into ideological "re-education" camps for as long as a decade. Tens of thousands were killed and more than 100,000 fled in boats. The government imposed communism on the South and severely curtailed freedom of speech and religious practice. The resulting economic tailspin created large pockets of famine, a tragic anomaly in a country rich with agricultural promise.

Today a gradual "Southernization" of the North is becoming visible. The industrial parks on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City and the rice paddies of the Mekong delta now drive the national economy, producing two-thirds of the nation's wealth and accounting for 80 percent of its tax revenue. Southern constituents urging privatization, entrepreneurial initiatives, and capitalist ideas are pressuring party politicians and the rigid ministerial bureaucracies of the North to change. The more robust economy of Ho Chi Minh City rewards its inhabitants with considerably higher wages than those earned in the nation's capital. Thus in the struggle for the "hearts and minds" of the people, the former Saigon could win over Hanoi after all.

This battle today lies at the center of Vietnam's greatest paradox:

both the Vietnamese people and the leadership want to strengthen the economy and improve the quality of life, but their proposals for how to do so are highly contradictory. The communist leadership talks of the need for a "market-based but socialism-driven structure of economic development." This jumble of Karl Marx and Adam Smith reveals the party's ambivalence about reforming its economic ways. But the population is growing more impatient. A surprisingly rudimentary knowledge of the outside world (the media is tightly controlled and opportunities for travel are few) has not prevented the Vietnamese from understanding that without moves toward a free-market economy, the country will be unable to reap the fruits of globalization and compete economically, even within the Asian region. Indeed, Vietnam is likely to continue its present troubling decline.

The Vietnamese government feels the mounting pressure of the people's concerns, but it also knows that any move toward capitalism would undoubtedly require a simultaneous political step toward a more democratic society. Above all, the party leadership fears social disorder and a loss of control. Globalization, some of Vietnam's top officials believe, could erode the authority of a state and party still based on Marxist-Leninist principles. Throughout the leadership is a deeply rooted anxiety that too rapid a pace of change could increase expectations, generate instability, and erode the levers of political control essential to the maintenance of a one-party state.

COMMUNISM A LA VIETNAMESE

THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY (VCP) still pervades all dimensions of life in the country, even if it faces an uncertain future. This dominance is key to understanding contemporary Vietnam. The VCP's exclusive role in government is constitutionally mandated, and advocacy of a multiparty political system is forbidden. Party members control the top echelons in the ministries, the military, the internal security services, the media, and the many state-owned enterprises. Accordingly, drawing a distinction between government and party is close to meaningless. The National Assembly is subject to party direction and the VCP approves most candidates; the judiciary is fully subservient to the government; People's Committees of the VCP begin at the hamlet level and

run
up
through the village, district, province, and so on. In effect, Vietnam's population of 80 million is now ruled by a party membership of approximately 2.5 million.

Vietnam is run by a "troika" of the president, the prime minister, and the general secretary of the VCP. The current top leadership, selected in late 1997 by the 18-member Politburo, was a cautious compromise. Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, an economic reformer, was intended to balance General Secretary Le Kha Phieu, a conservative and dedicated party worker who had climbed the ranks as a political commissar within the army. President Tran Duc Luong stands in the middle. The struggles and secretive inner workings of the Communist Party are arguably even more difficult to fathom than were those of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the fissures do not always remain hidden. Le Kha Phieu has emerged as the most aggressive and powerful within the troika and reportedly will seek the presidency in the next reshuffle, due at the Ninth Party Congress in 2001. Meanwhile, Phan Van Khai, having tried and failed to obtain greater political support for economic reform, has offered to resign and is clearly on his way out.

This discord within the triumvirate presents a microcosm of the VCP's current dilemmas. Today the party is divided over the economic and political questions that reach to the heart of independent Vietnam's identity. How can it respond to the forces of globalization when the need to adapt the country's command economy to the world marketplace is still in dispute? If the wisdom of established economic doctrine falls into question, how can the party confidently ensure the continued political direction of the nation? This dissonance within the party leadership presents a serious problem because important decisions require the unanimous consent of the Politburo. Dispute frequently leads to paralysis, as evidenced in the yearlong delay in agreeing to the recently signed trade deal with the United States.

Many -- though not all -- in the VCP's younger generation and even some elder statesmen understand the urgent necessity for economic reform and closer

integration into the global economy. But Vietnam is a Confucian society that venerates seniority, and these younger voices speak with less authority than the older leaders. The turnover is low and slow in the all-powerful Politburo, which remains the domain of conservative communists who fear that opening Vietnam would invite capitalism, and perhaps even democracy.

These party elders spent their formative political years successfully fighting for the independence of their country. The legacy they carry is a residual fear of foreign interference, which in turn influences the Vietnamese government's foreign policy: many senior party members instinctively question too much interaction with the outside world. They feel threatened by the emerging transnational forces and "soft power" of the twenty-first-century global system. In a widely noted speech marking the VCP's 70th anniversary, Le Kha Phieu condemned technology-driven globalization and pledged that Vietnam would not "change its colors" of socialism.

The party tapestry, however, is not woven purely of anachronistic threads. Members are also united by the substantial privileges that accompany party affiliation. Good public-sector jobs, better houses, cars, and opportunities for funded overseas travel come with party membership or contacts. Even in the growing but still limited private sector, obtaining the required approvals and licenses from the heavy-handed bureaucracy can be difficult without political assistance. So the VCP continues to attract some of the "best and brightest" of the younger generation, even if they personally care little about its ideology.

Inevitably, such a culture engenders pervasive corruption. General Tran Do, former head of the Ideology and Culture Department of the VCP's Central Committee, admitted being disillusioned with the party he had joined as a teenager in 1941. He observed that "exclusive power inevitably leads to the abuse of power." Abuses extend to the regional and local levels. Protests have occurred in the countryside, with angry farmers facing the local People's Committees that hold sway over crop pricing, local taxation, housing, and land distribution. In 1997, farmers from more than 100 villages in Thai Binh province, south of Hanoi, attacked local officials who had imposed multiple taxes. Although the Politburo has responded to criticism with an

anticorruption campaign that brought the 1999 dismissal of Deputy Prime Minister Ngo Xuan Loc and some showpiece executions, a great deal of cynicism about its true degree of commitment remains. Indeed, some believe that conservatives have used the anticorruption campaign to justify the removal of some reformers.

Concessions to change, moreover, are hard to make when the leaders of the VCP talk of the need for maintaining "stability," a euphemism for continued party control. Many of these officials oppose economic reforms that might undermine their political power. The drama and chaos of Indonesia in recent years is cited as an example to be avoided.

More haunting to the Vietnamese leadership is the specter of the Soviet Union's collapse and the disintegration of its empire in Eastern Europe. Many in the cadre were educated in the Warsaw Pact countries, with which Vietnam

enjoyed close fraternal relations for 30 years. The communist bloc's demise has not shattered the Vietnamese leaders' faith in communism as a political and economic system. Rather, they view Mikhail Gorbachev as having lost control of that system by recklessly undertaking economic reforms without assuring political stability. Communism's collapse is blamed on avoidable political mismanagement rather than a bankrupt economy or a failed ideology.

IDEOLOGICAL DISCORD

IN CONTRAST to Vietnam's leaders, most of its citizens are generally indifferent to communism. Ideology and politics cannot rival the people's primary and often sole concern: putting sufficient food on the table and making ends meet. Even the small proportion of the population (mostly city dwellers) that has some disposable income is preoccupied with buying a motorbike, a TV set, or a better place to live. Most Vietnamese dismiss the historic struggle for independence and the "American war" as events before their time that lack the immediacy of daily concerns. The streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City may be replete with banners displaying hammers and sickles or statues of Ho Chi Minh, but these symbols go largely ignored.

Economic concerns help account for the widespread ideological apathy, but fear and intimidation also play a role. In a society with no legal opposition, no right of assembly, and no autonomy for the national press, arbitrary arrest and detention remain conceivable results of political expression. The underdeveloped judicial system provides no guarantees because it lacks independence. The internal security apparatus is though to be massive and intrusive, comparable to East Germany's Stasi. Such circumstances prohibit free speech as it is understood in the West. Speaking critically of the party means criticizing the state and is therefore treasonous. Few Vietnamese want to subject themselves to the harassment that will inevitably ensue.

Even senior party members muffle themselves, deterred by the VCP's severe discipline. Only a very few venerable elders whose party credentials are irreproachable have felt sufficiently secure to constructively criticize the country's present direction -- and their fate will not inspire more to do so. General Tran Do was one such daring critic. The 1997 farmers' riots in Thai Binh, his home province, confirmed his belief that the party had lost touch with the masses and was leading the country to ruin: "In the past, party and people were one. . . . Today the party and the people are two. The party is an elite group of rulers over the people. People remain the voiceless subjects."

Tran Do -- like many other Vietnamese -- recognized the irresolvable contradiction between a market economy, essential for Vietnamese economic development, and the socialist direction of the VCP. Rejecting the often-asserted view that economic improvement must precede talk about political reform, he argued that economic reform actually requires vigorous political reform. Furthermore, loosening communist structures could be beneficial to Vietnam: "Claiming that democracy will end political stability is illogical." Refusing to stop his criticism after warnings from party boss Le Kha Phieu, Tran Do was stripped of his party membership in January 1999, ostensibly for having talked to the foreign media.

Colonel Tan Bin was another outspoken dissenter who was punished. Well-known as the officer who accepted the surrender of the South Vietnamese government in 1975, he had become a high-ranking party member, the widely read deputy

editor
of the party daily, Nhan Dan, and a trusted "barbarian handler" (the name given to those tasked with dealing with foreigners). But when he wrote honestly about the party's corruption and called for a legal opposition, he was forced into exile and now resides in a communist-voting suburb of Paris.

To become an outcast in Vietnam brings not only excommunication from the VCP and severed ties with former associates but threats of house arrest, cut phone lines, surveillance, and other forms of harassment. As history has shown, revolutions often consume their children, and Vietnam is no exception.

Political repression is only one black mark on a Vietnamese human rights record that has been a point of contention with the United States for many years. The State Department's most recent annual report on human rights concludes that in 1999, the Vietnamese government continued to limit some basic freedoms and commit numerous abuses, including unwarranted imprisonment in harsh conditions. Limitation of religious practices poses a particular problem. After 1975, the government banned the pre-independence Buddhist organization of southern and central Vietnam and replaced it with a state-sponsored group created specifically to put Buddhist activities under government control. Recalcitrant monks have been imprisoned or placed under "pagoda arrest." The eight-million-member Catholic Church also lies under various restrictions designed to limit its growth and influence.

Although religious and other freedoms have very gradually been increasing, Human Rights Watch this year released a strongly critical report concluding that the Vietnamese government systematically silences dissident voices. The Hanoi authorities deeply resent such charges as unwarranted interference in domestic affairs. They assert that constitutionally approved freedoms are ensured in practice and that no political prisoners exist except those convicted of breaking the law.

The next test of Vietnam's political system will be a crucial one -- the Ninth Party Congress in March 2001. The internal debate there about the country's direction over the next five and ten years could be fierce, although it will likely remain opaque to outsiders. Still, signs of discord are already

evident. In April, little agreement could be reached at the plenum of the Central Committee, part of the run-up process to the party Congress. Five years ago the Eighth Party Congress's disagreements resulted in temporizing on most issues. This logjam is the price of a political system that considers consensus essential and allows elders to hold on to power for too long. The Politburo's awareness of the country's fundamental problems does not assure forward progress.

What may come out of the Ninth Party Congress remains decidedly uncertain, even contradictory. The recent decision to sign the U.S.- Vietnam trade agreement after a year of hesitation suggests that the party finally recognizes the need to engage more fully in the global economy. The invitation to President Clinton also indicates a new openness. On the other hand, the past 18 months have witnessed a return to the old-style rhetoric that is the hallmark of the conservatives. General Secretary Le Kha Phieu has led the party into a self-criticism campaign with the avowed aim of fighting "individualism," giving priority to "stability" over "reform," and emphasizing the importance of resisting "peaceful evolution." At the November 1999 Central Committee plenum, the VCP leaders focused on "party-building work," avoiding internal disunity, and closing ranks against any external challenges. Hanoi bureaucrats, skilled at reading the tea leaves, have turned more cautious. This development suggests that the primary concern of retaining political power will continue to override all other interests. How long such an approach can last, given Vietnam's precarious economic condition, is the critical question.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL

A STRIKING CONTRADICTION lies in the huge gap between Vietnam's economic potential and its actual performance. The country is rich in resources. Its young, industrious, and disciplined population grew up in a culture that gives priority to education (Vietnam has a 92 percent literacy rate) and possesses a strong work ethic. Already a major exporter of petroleum, rice, seafood, and coffee, the country has abundant natural resources and a primitive but large

agricultural base, both waiting to be exploited. Opportunities for developing an information-technology sector abound. Yet Vietnam has been unable to match the economic progress of most of its neighbors.

The first decade after the "American war" was disastrous, as the widespread famine resulting from forced collectivization made Vietnam depend on assistance from the Soviet Union and, to a lesser extent, China. By 1986 the rigidities of the command economy had become so debilitating that the VCP was forced to embark on its policy of doi moi, or economic renovation, that reduced the state's omnipotent control. For the first time, small-scale private commerce and foreign investment, tightly regulated and limited to minority ownership in joint ventures, were permitted. Substantial economic growth and macroeconomic stability followed, but the benefits were unevenly spread. A small, consumer-oriented middle class emerged in the major cities, while in the rural areas -- where 80 percent of the population resides -- 45 percent of farmers remained below the poverty line.

For the past three years, the economy has been in sharp decline, despite the preceding decade of improving performance. Annual growth in 1999 stagnated at four percent, less than half the rate of the mid-1990s and barely enough to tread water for such a poor country. Government revenue has decreased by five percent of GDP. Stagnant job creation has left increasing numbers of the 1.3 million people annually seeking to enter the work force either jobless or underemployed. Exports have lagged, especially the goods produced by the state-owned enterprises that cannot compete in global markets but remain a major sector of the economy, accounting for 30 percent of GDP.

Particularly notable is the drop in foreign direct investment, down to \$ 1.4 billion in 1999 from \$ 8.3 billion three years earlier. Expecting Vietnam to become the next Asian tiger, with its enticing consumer market of 80 million people, international companies rushed in during the early to mid-1990s. After several years of deep frustration with the massive red tape of the Hanoi bureaucracy, not to mention the abundant corruption, however, many firms have just as quickly moved out.

Fortunately, today two supplementary sources of income help balance the

economy: \$ 2 billion per year in family remittances from the 2.5 million Viet kieu (Vietnamese living overseas), mainly in the United States; and an additional \$ 2.2 billion in official development assistance from donor nations and international lending agencies. But clear indications show that the lack of adequate economic reform is inducing "donor fatigue," which would be disastrous for the country.

Vietnam's current economic difficulties cannot be more than partially attributed to the Asian economic downturn, which some VCP conservatives cite to counter arguments for closer global integration. In fact, the country was too isolated from the world economy to have caught the Asian flu. Rather, Vietnam's key problems are internal. Poor management of the state-owned enterprises means that they require subsidies to stay solvent and thus drain scarce government resources. Structural weaknesses plague the banking sector, also largely government owned. Moreover, a Byzantine bureaucracy, unclear licensing rules, and inadequate foreclosure and bankruptcy laws persist. The centrally planned economy lacks flexibility and transparency and just is not compatible with today's fast-moving, increasingly integrated global economy.

Economic liberalization would require major reforms in Vietnam's still highly restrictive regulatory framework, which hinders foreign investment, financial services, telecommunications, intellectual property rights, and information flows. But the Vietnamese government has made some tentative steps in this direction. To stem the decline in foreign investment, amendments to the Foreign Investment Law in May 2000 streamlined the many legal and foreign-exchange control regulations that had frustrated foreign companies. Two months later, after eight years of procrastination, Vietnam's first stock market opened in Ho Chi Minh City. Initially, however, only four companies were licensed to list shares, trading was restricted to three days per week, and daily price fluctuations were capped at five percent.

The most hopeful advance to date was Hanoi's recent decision to move ahead with the U.S.- Vietnam trade agreement, signed on July 13. The signatures came after three years of laborious negotiations that began in 1996, with Hanoi surprising all observers in September 1999 by suddenly balking just before

it was expected to sign, and a subsequent further year of government hesitation. Finally, the deadlock within the Politburo broke to the advantage of the reformers.

Given the severe deterioration in Vietnam's economic situation, the trade agreement was most likely motivated by desperation to reverse the economic decline. Vietnam is one of only a handful of countries to which the United States has not yet granted permanent normal trade relations (PNTR). Increased American investments and access to American markets through the granting of PNTR could help arrest the erosion of Vietnam's economy. The reduction in U.S. tariffs by as much as 40 percent could quickly raise Vietnamese exports to the United States to \$ 800 million from the 1999 level of \$ 500 million, according to World Bank estimates. And the long-term potential for trade is far greater.

Another factor contributing to Vietnam's signature was Beijing's late-1999 decision to sign a comparable trade deal with Washington. The U.S.-Vietnam

trade agreement, like its Chinese counterpart, will boost the country's hopes for joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). By agreeing to reduce tariffs on goods and services and abide by WTO rules on intellectual property rights and trade in services, Hanoi will similarly increase its chances by becoming more compliant with the organization's requirements.

These necessary changes, however, will be far from rapid. Vietnam insisted on, and received, considerable grace periods and conditions. American banks may not open fully owned subsidiaries for nine years or issue credit cards for eight years. Telecommunications providers (which can erode the government's ability to exercise political control) will have to wait four years before entering into joint-venture agreements with local partners. Even then, they will be allowed to take only a minority equity stake. American retailers have permission

to enter the market, but are limited to a single retail store per city. A great deal will depend on how the government implements this comprehensive trade agreement over the years.

As these problems suggest, the trade agreement will not bring significant economic benefits to the United States for some time. In the six years since President Clinton lifted the nearly 20-year-old trade embargo, U.S. exports to Vietnam have averaged less than \$ 300 million annually, or just three days' worth of exports to Japan. The agreement will likely raise exports, but to no more than an estimated \$ 800 million to \$ 1 billion annually. Nevertheless, new safeguards for direct investment will encourage American companies to enter the market and establish manufacturing facilities. Market access for U.S. products, whether agricultural or industrial or services, will now be guaranteed. In 1999, the United States ranked only eighth among Vietnam's trading partners. Unfortunately, Congress is unlikely to approve the trade agreement this year, due to its crowded calendar, union opposition in an election year, and the White House's preoccupation with the China trade bill. But its passage in the next session appears safely assured.

The agreement's chief benefit could be its catalytic impact, providing momentum for economic reform and political development toward a more open, entrepreneurial, and democratically accountable society. To implement the agreed-upon measures, the Vietnamese government will have to remove the trade barriers that now protect inefficient state-run companies. The pact will also force Vietnam to adopt international norms on such matters as accounting and corporate governance and could accelerate the privatization of state-owned industry. This move should greatly help develop an expanded and more vibrant private sector. To the extent that these advances are well implemented and become the norm for bilateral trade relationships with other countries, Vietnam can better integrate itself into the regional and world economy. At that point, the contradiction between Vietnam's economic potential and its reality will have largely disappeared.

A DELICATE BALANCING ACT

CONTRADICTIONARY VIETNAMESE attitudes about the appropriate policies toward the United States and China show that, despite Vietnam's hesitation about deeper international engagement, there is a growing impatience with its relative isolation. For the reformers and much of the educated younger generation, the United States represents modernity; its technology, universities, and popular culture are especially attractive. Opportunities for travel to America and Europe are much sought after. For the conservatives and a sizable portion of the political and bureaucratic class, the United States represents an undefined threat in a dangerous and unstable world. Some within the military and security services suspect that Vietnamese-Americans, hostile to Hanoi, might seek to intervene in southern Vietnam -- the war in Kosovo is held up as a bizarre example. American visitors to Vietnam, however, remark that the proverbial people in the street could not be more friendly toward the citizens of a nation that used to carpet-bomb their country. The war was a quarter-century ago and apparently is best forgotten.

Vietnamese-American relations remained frozen for the first two decades after the fall of Saigon. But in 1994, President Clinton lifted the U.S. trade embargo on Vietnam in recognition of Hanoi's cooperation on soldiers missing in action (MIAS); the following year, diplomatic relations were established. Former member of Congress Pete Peterson, for six years a denizen of the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" (the prison where American flyers were incarcerated), has moved back to the city as the American ambassador. The thawing process is now gradually continuing but remains incomplete. For example, when Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Vietnam in September 1999, her conversations about the importance of human rights received a very cool response.

In March, William Cohen became the first serving secretary of defense to visit the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, after Hanoi had cancelled two earlier trips. The two countries reached agreement to provide equipment to clear an estimated 3.5 million remaining land mines, undertake joint research on the harmful effects of Agent Orange, and continue cooperating on American MIAS. In

turn, the Vietnamese requested assistance in finding their own MIAs, who number in the hundreds of thousands. The two sides also discussed low-level military-to-military contacts, but the Vietnamese made it clear that they preferred to proceed very slowly on matters of security and foreign policy.

President Clinton's visit will mark a new stage in relations between the two countries, but whether its lasting impact will be greater on the American psyche or on Vietnamese realities is an open question.

When dealing with the United States, the Vietnamese look over their shoulder at the reactions of the Chinese leadership. Fear of provoking anxiety in Beijing deters rapid or substantive rapprochement with Washington. China is the neighborhood titan, with growing dominance in Asia and a long, troubled history with Vietnam. Intermittent conflict between this Asian David and Goliath has gone on for more than 1,000 years and continued after Vietnam's independence. In 1979, China made a short but bloody incursion into northern Vietnam, ostensibly to punish Hanoi for its own 200,000-troop intervention in Cambodia that deposed the pro-Chinese Khmer Rouge regime. In 1988 their long-standing dispute over the Spratly Islands also led to naval clashes. Although a treaty on the Vietnam -China border was reached at the end of 1999 and the two countries have since committed to finalizing soon an agreement on a demarcation line in the Gulf of Tonkin, conflicting claims over the Spratly and Paracel Islands -- which possibly hold massive oil and gas reserves -- remain unresolved.

The Soviet Union's collapse has given Hanoi no choice but to mend its ties with Beijing. The Vietnamese are actively seeking to improve and fully normalize relations through a series of high-level visits and accords. Nevertheless, apprehension and disagreement persist about China's intentions, just as with the United States. Vietnamese conservatives, especially in the military, value China as the last important remaining communist ally. Reformers, including officials of the Foreign Ministry, point to the threat that China could pose in a decade or two as it builds up its military strength, especially the navy. The historic mistrust between the two countries is deep

and will not soon dissipate.

In recent times, Vietnamese diplomacy has become increasingly active in other areas. Vietnam joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 1995 and has since developed ties with the member countries. And it also rekindled economic and cultural contacts with France following a summit of francophone nations in Hanoi in 1997. The country maintains close contacts with Cuba and several of the formerly communist states of eastern Europe. Yet most important in the long run will be Vietnam's delicate balancing act between China and America.

HUNGER FOR CHANGE

AFTER MORE than 80 years of French colonial rule, nearly 20 years of terrible war, 15 years of xenophobic isolation and entanglement in the Soviet Union's economic web, and the last 10 years adrift as a communist country in a noncommunist world, Vietnam has reached a crucial crossroads. Will it transform itself to become a Thailand or a progressively changing China? Or will it slide into the backwardness of Cambodia or Laos? Of the four countries divided by World War II and the Cold War, Vietnam was the first to reunify. Yet compared to Germany, Taiwan, and South Korea, its performance has been abysmal. Today it faces being relegated to the communist dustbin of North Korea, Laos, and Cuba.

Change is inevitable. The real question is, Will the change be evolutionary or revolutionary? Casual observers of Vietnam, impressed by the size and vitality of the "Honda at the cybercafe" crowd, speak of a coming generational change that will sweep aside today's geriatric leadership. But this optimism is far too simplistic. True, the French-speaking veterans of the "senior" generation, esteemed for having fought the wars and unified the nation, are rapidly passing from the scene. But the next generation, 40 to 60 years of age, has begun to run the country and will not readily give up power and privilege. This "middle" generation, trained in Moscow and the capitals of the Soviet bloc, is committed to the VCP. The "junior" generation that grew up in the more open environment of the past decade will have to wait. Moreover, within this younger generation there will be competition, as the sons and daughters of current party members vie to inherit jobs and privileges.

The traditional Vietnamese way of transition is evolutionary. Thus gradual reform from within the structures is the most likely path. A Soviet-style breakup of the VCP in the next ten years is unlikely. But nothing lies beyond the realm of plausibility. In those rural areas mired in poverty and corruption, a new wave of riots targeted at the local People's Committees could erupt. In the increasingly crowded major cities, which attract peasants seeking work, unemployment is rising. Within the younger, educated elite an increasing dissatisfaction feeds hunger for fundamental change. All of Vietnamese society is subject to the revolution of rising expectations. The VCP's legitimacy cannot continue to be based on the victorious wars of the past century. Legitimacy will now have to be earned through sound management of the economy and widening prosperity in the twenty-first century. How long a one-party state can continue to absorb these pressures before moving toward pluralist democracy is uncertain.

The risk remains that the desperately needed economic overhaul and political rejuvenation will not come about soon enough. Without reform, Vietnam will fall still further behind its ASEAN colleagues, now recovering from the Asian economic flu. Even the communist government in Beijing is moving faster toward a market economy. Given its impressively rich potential, however, Vietnam can turn itself around and become a prosperous, multiparty, democratic nation. But when?

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This is your customized Daybook E-mail Alert. For a complete listing of all today's events -- or a preview of tomorrow's -- please see the NationalJournal.com Daybook at <http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar>.

To change your preferences, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=email>

Senate Committees

There are no events scheduled today that match your preferences.
For all the week's Senate Committee listings, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAS>
ENATE

House Committees

There are no events scheduled today that match your preferences.
For all the week's House Committee listings, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAH>
OUSE

Joint Committees

There are no events scheduled today that match your preferences.
For all the week's Joint Committee listings, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAJ>
OINT

White House

EDUCATION SECRETARY RICHARD RILEY'S SCHEDULE

10 a.m. - Visits the Fillmore Arts Center with D.C. Schools superintendent Paul Vance, Fillmore Arts Center, Room 307, 1819 35th St.

Location: Location Not Listed.

Contact: 202-401-3026

****NEW****

For all the week's Administration listings, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAW>
HHSE

Federal Agencies

COAL ISSUES

Energy Department (DOE) (F.R. Page 61157)
Meeting of the National Coal Council Advisory Committee, to provide
advice, information, recommendations to the Secretary of Energy on
matters relating to coal and coal industry issues.
Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, 14th & K Sts., NW. 9 a.m.
Contact: Margie Biggerstaff, 202-586-3867

For all the week's Federal Agency listings, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAF>
EDAG

Economic Reports

AGRICULTURE EXPORTS

Agriculture Department, Foreign Agricultural Service
Releases weekly Export Sales Report
Location: 12th St & Independence Ave, SW. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: 202-720-7115; <http://www.fas.usda.gov>

BANK STATUS

Federal Reserve Board
Releases weekly reports on: Condition Statement of Federal Reserve
Banks Factors Affecting Reserves of Depository Institutions Money
Stock, Liquid Assets, Debt Measures
Location: Constitution Ave between 20th & 21st Sts,
NW. 6 p.m.
Contact: 202-452-3206

BOND RATES

Treasury Department
Releases daily reports: State and Local Government Bond Rates and Treasury
Yield Curve data
Location: 15th St & Pennsylvania Ave, NW. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: 202-874-9890

DAILY FEDERAL BUDGET

Treasury Department
Releases Daily Treasury Statement
Location: 15th St & Pennsylvania Ave, NW. 5 p.m.
Contact: 202-874-9890

EMPLOYMENT

Labor Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Releases Producer Price Indexes for October 2000
Location: 200 Constitution Ave, NW. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: 202-606-5902

MORTGAGE RATES

Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation
Releases weekly survey on fixed-rate mortgages.
Location: 8200 Jones Branch Drive, McLean, VA. 1 p.m.
Contact: 703-903-2000

SOYBEAN YIELD

Oilseed Processors Assn.
Releases weekly report on the soybean crush.
Location: 1255 23rd St, NW, Suite 850. 4 p.m.
Contact: 202-452-8040

UNEMPLOYMENT STATUS

Labor Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Releases unemployment insurance claims for the week
Location: 200 Constitution Ave, NW. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: 202-606-5902

For all the week's Economic Reports, go to
<http://nationaljournal.com/members/calendar/index.cgi?func=week&ion=WAE>
CREP

General News Events

ARTS

National Press Club
23rd Annual Book Fair and Authors' Night.
Location: National Press Club, 14th and F Sts., NW,
Ballroom. 6 p.m.
Contact: 202-662-7593

COMMERCE

eSchool News
"Business to Education Technology Summit," to assemble corporate leaders
to divide the \$8.45 billion that America's K-12 schools are set to
spend on technology products and services this school year, November
9-10.
Location: Sheraton Premiere Hotel, 8661 Leesburg Pike,
Vienna, VA.
Contact: Kay Campbell, 301-913-0115, kcampbell@eschoolnews.com,
or <http://www.eschoolnews.com/b2ed>

COMMERCE

Operon Partners
"Generating Loyalty and Customer Retention," Part 2 of a three-part
mini series on transforming an organization for e-business.

Participants: Jim Datovech, president, Operon Partners,
formerly ComVersant
Location: Tower Club, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Suite
1700, Vienna, VA. 7:30 a.m.
Contact: Candi Roby, 703-556-6300, ext. 116; robym@merittgrp.com;
or <http://www.operonpartners.com>

COMMERCE

Direct Marketing Assn. of Washington, DC
"Database Day - Focus on CRM," regarding customer relations management
with technical and marketing/strategic tracks.
Location: Holiday Inn on the Hill, 415 New Jersey Ave.,
NW. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: Susan Yurko, 703-821-3629, susan@hqstaff.com,
or <http://www.dmaw.org>

EDUCATION

Fillmore Arts Center
Visit by Education Secretary Richard Riley.
Participants: District of Columbia Public Schools Superintendent
Paul Vance
Location: Fillmore Arts Center, Room 307, 1819 35th
St., NW. 10 a.m.
Contact: Stephanie Babyak, 202-401-3026
NEW

EDUCATION

American University Washington College of Law (WCL)
National Youth Leadership Forum
Location: 4801 Massachusetts Ave., NW. 2 p.m.
Contact: Lisa Bethel, 202-777-4099

EDUCATION

Fred Pryor Seminars
Seminar, "Speak with Confidence and Clarity: Overcome Your Fear and
Nervousness and Make Powerful Presentations."
Location: Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle,
NW. 9 a.m.
Contact: 800-255-6139, or <http://www.pryor.com>

EMPLOYMENT

American Law Institute and American Bar Assn. (ALI-ABA) Video Law Reviews
Annual Fall "Employee Benefits Law and Practice Update" via live satellite
TV broadcast. private viewing is available for buildings with satellite
receiving dishes.
Location: Bar Assn. of the District of Columbia, 1819
H St., NW, 12th Floor; Montgomery County Bar
Foundation, 27 West Jefferson St., Rockville,
MD; Northern Virginia Community College, TV
Technical Building, Third Floor, 8333 Little
River Turnpike, Annandale, VA. 12 noon
Contact: Susan Tomita, 800-253-6397, 215-243-1661,
or <http://www.ali-aba.org>

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Law Institute (ELI)

ELI Associates Seminar, "Looking to the New Administration and Its Environmental Priorities."

Participants: Jonathan Cannon, University of Virginia Law School; Ernie Rosenberg, Soap and Detergent Assn.; Faith Weiss, Natural Resources Defense Council; Michael Evans, legislative counsel, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee; and Paul Locke, ELI's Center for Public Health and Law, moderator

Location: ELI, 1616 P St., NW, Seventh Floor Conference Room. 12 noon

Contact: 202-939-3858

ENVIRONMENT

National Building Museum

Symposium, "Restoring the Core in DC: The Sierra Club Challenges Sprawl," featuring the Sierra Club National Challenge to Sprawl Initiative.

Participants: Deron Lovaas, Sierra Club, presenter; Linda Cropp, chairman, City Council; Toni Griffin, DC Planning Office; Jim Dougherty, Sierra Club; and Toby Millman, Eakin/Youngentob Associates Inc., developers

Location: National Building Museum, 401 F St., NW. 6:30 p.m.

Contact: 202-272-2448

FINANCE

The Johns Hopkins University Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)

Annual Ernest Sturc Memorial Lecture on "What Did You Learn About International Finance in the 1990s?"

Participants: Alan Blinder, former vice chairman, Federal Reserve Board of Governors

Location: SAIS, Nitze Building, 1740 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Kenney Auditorium. 6 p.m.

Contact: Felisa Neuringer, 202-663-5626; e-mail, fneuringer@jhu.edu; or <http://www.sais-jhu.edu>

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Woodrow Wilson Center (WWC)

"Oil Wealth and Political Breakdown: Are They Linked? The Case of Algeria."

Participants: Miriam Lowi, visiting fellow, Center for International Studies, Princeton University

Location: WWC, One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. 5 p.m.

Contact: Sharon Coleman Jones, 202-691-4016, or 202-691-4100

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

German Historical Institute

14th Annual Lecture, "Political Religion in Modern Germany: Reflections on Nationalism, Socialism and National Socialism."

Participants: Wolfgang Hardtwig, professor, Humboldt University,

Berlin

Location: GHI, 1607 New Hampshire Ave., NW, Lecture Hall, Second Floor. 5 p.m.
Contact: 202-387-3355, or christab@idt.net

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Woodrow Wilson Center (WWC)

"Paths to Regional Integration: The Case of Mercosur."

Participants: Jose Tizado, Industry secretary, Argentina;
Jose Botafogo Goncalves, special adviser to the president on Mercosur, Brazil; Felipe de la Balze, professor, Council on International Relations, Argentina; Jose Tavares, trade economist, Organization of American States (OAS); Roberto Bouzas, senior research fellow, FLACSO-Argentina; Alcides da Costa Vaz, professor, University of Brasilia; Jose Augusto Guilhon de Albuquerque, director, Research Center for International Relations, University of Sao Paulo

Location: WWC, One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. 8:30 a.m.

Contact: Sharon Coleman Jones, 202-691-4016, or 202-691-4100

HEALTH

Food and Drug Law Institute (FDLI)

Interactive audio conference, "Need a Drug or Biologic Approved? FDA Wants to Help.. Believe It!"

Participants: Frank Sasinowski, partner, Hyman, Phelps and McNamara PC, moderator

Location: As noted. 1 p.m.

Contact: To register or for information call 800-956-6293 or 202-371-0649; comments@fdli.org; or <http://www.fdpi.org>

HEALTH

International Dyslexia Assn.

51st Annual Conference, November 8-11.

Location: Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St., NW. 8:30 a.m.

Contact: 410-296-0232, or <http://www.interdys.org>

HEALTH

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE)

2000 IEEE International Symposium on Bio-Informatics and Biomedical Engineering, November 8-10.

Location: Key Bridge Marriott Hotel, 1401 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA. 9 a.m.

Contact: 202-371-0101, or <http://pinon.cs.unr.edu/~bebis/BIBE/>

MEDIA

Associated College Press and the College Media Advisers

National College Media Convention, November 8-12. Highlights: 8 a.m.

- Where's the News? 9 a.m. - Is Copying Right: A Primer on Copyright

Law 11 a.m. - Newsgathering on Trial: Food Lion, Chiquita Banana and

Other Horrors 1 p.m. - Technology Journalism: How to Get Into It,

Why It's a Blast and Why It's Hot! 3:30 p.m. - Michael Isikoff, reporter,
Newsweek
Location: Grand Hyatt Washington, 1000 H St., NW.
Contact: 616-626-1857; <http://www.studentpress.org/acpdc/sessions.html>

POLITICS

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI)
"Election Watch 2000."
Participants: Karlyn Bowman, Norman Ornstein, William Schneider
and Ben Wattenberg
Location: AEI, 1150 17th St., NW, Wohlstetter Conference
Center, 12th Floor. 12 noon
Contact: 202-862-5800

POLITICS

Public Affairs Council and National Journal Group
"Election 2000: Box Scores and Scouting Reports." Highlights: 8 a.m.
- Charlie Cook, Cook and Co. Political Analysts, and Chuck Todd, editor,
National Journal's The Hotline, "The Horse Race: Election 2000 Results"
9:30 a.m. - Bill Scheider, senior political analyst, CNN, "Polling:
What Did the People Want?" 10:20 a.m. - Doug Bailey, founder/publisher,
The Hotline, moderator, "The Campaigns: Behind the Scenes" 12:45 p.m.
- Vaughn Ververs, managing editor, The Hotline, "The Best and Worst
of the 2000 Election Advertising" 1:45 p.m. - Michael Barone, senior
writer, U.S. News and World Report, moderator, "Winners and Losers:
People and Issues" 3:45 p.m. - Larry Sabato, director, Center for
Government Studies, University of Virginia, "Towards 2002," regarding
redistricting battles and the fight to control the House in 2002.
Location: Ronald Reagan Building/International Trade
Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. 8 a.m.
Contact: 202-739-8400, 202-872-1790, or
<http://www.pac.org/confer/election2.htm>

POLITICS

Health Insurance Assn. of America (HIAA)
Breakfast briefing on post-election survey results regarding the influence
of health care financing issues, such as prescription drugs for seniors,
patient protections and the uninsured, on voters' decisions.
Participants: Chip Kahn, president, HIAA; Bill McInturff,
partner, Public Opinion Strategies; and Mark
Mellman, the Mellman Group
Location: National Press Club, 14th and F St., NW. 9 a.m.
Contact: Richard Coorsh, 202-824-1787, rcoorsh@hiao.org,
or Joseph Luchok, 202-824-1786, jluchok@hiao.org

SOCIAL ISSUES

National Right to Life Committee (NRLC)
Post-election news conference to discuss the election results and the
impact of the abortion issue on the elections.
Participants: Carol Long Tobias, director, NRL Political
Action Committee; David O'Steen, executive
director, NRLC and Darla St. Martin, associate
executive director, NRLC
Location: National Press Club, Zenger Room, 14th and

F St., NW. 10 a.m.
Contact: 202-626-8825

SOCIAL ISSUES

Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC)
Discussion on "How the Internet is Changing Corporate Philanthropy."
Participants: Adam Goozh, CreateHope Inc.; Brian Murrow,
PriceWaterhouseCoopers; and Kate Hawkin, Broder
Communications
Location: Concourse Building Auditorium, 1593 Spring
Hill Road, Vienna, VA. 7:30 a.m.
Contact: Shannon Burke, 703-904-7878, sburke@nvtc.org,
or <http://www.nvtc.org>

SOCIAL ISSUES

National Civic League
"Wired for Civic Engagement: Using New Technology to Build Community"
conference, November 9-11.
Location: Hilton Crystal City at National Airport, 2399
Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA. 8:30 a.m.
Contact: 703-418-6800, or <http://www.ncl.org>

TECHNOLOGY

National Civic League
106th National Conference on Governance, "Wired for Civic Engagement:
Using New Technology to Build Community," November 9-11. Highlights:
9 a.m. - Concurrent workshops: An Introduction to Geographic Information
Systems; HandsNet: Strategic Planning for your Website; 1 p.m. - Engaging
Youth Through New Technology 5:30 p.m. - Howard Rheingold, author,
"The Virtual Community," Keynote Address
Location: Hilton Crystal City, 2399 Jefferson Davis
Highway, Arlington, VA.
Contact: 202-783-2961; <http://www.ncl.org/NCL/NCG00sch.HTM>
NEW

TECHNOLOGY

University of Maryland Baltimore County Department of Computer Science and
Electrical Engineering
Ninth Annual Conference on Information and Knowledge Management, November
7-9
Location: SAIC Campus, 1710 SAIC Drive, McLean, VA.
Contact: 410-455-3500; <http://www.cikm.org/2000/schedule-prelim.html> TECHNOLOGY
London First Centre
Discussion on "London - Europe's High Tech Capital," regarding London
as the preferred gateway to Europe where there are exciting opportunities
for technology companies.
Location: Virginia's CIT/Building, 2214 Rock Road, Suite
600, Herndon, VA. 3 p.m.
Contact: Karen TerHaar, 703-821-8867, kterchaar@odellsimms.com

TECHNOLOGY

NASA (NASA)
Briefing via NASA Television with space station flight directors on
Expedition One crew aboard the International Space Station.

Location: NASA Headquarters, 300 E St., SW. 4:30 p.m.
Contact: Dwayne Brown, 202-358-1726

TECHNOLOGY

Women's Business Center Inc.

"Search Engine Optimization," regarding building online business visibility
by maximizing search engine standings.

Participants: Greg Myer, WestLake Internet Training's webmaster

Location: WBC, 101 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 312. 6 p.m.

Contact: Rosemary Barton, 202-785-4922, info@womensbusinesscenter.org,
or <http://www.womensbusinesscenter.org>

TECHNOLOGY

Cato Institute and Forbes ASAP

Technology and Society 2000 conference, "The New Entertainment ERA:

The Convergence of Technology and Entertainment," November 9-10 Highlights:

6:30 p.m. - Strauss Zelnick, president, BMG Entertainment, dinner

speaker 8:30 p.m. - Tech Demos

Location: Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St.,

Reston, VA. 6:30 p.m.

Contact: Robin Hulsey, 202-789-5293

TECHNOLOGY

Capital PC Users Group (CPCUG) Internet SIG (Special Interest Group)

Monthly meeting, featuring "Content and Operation of a Topically Focused
Web Site."

Participants: George Silva, About.com, originally called
The Mining Co.

Location: Washington Gas Light Co. Auditorium, 6801

Industrial Road, Springfield, VA. 7 p.m.

Contact: Gabe Goldberg, 703-941-1657, gabe@acm.org,
or <http://www.cpcug.org>

TECHNOLOGY

Greater Washington Society of Assn. Executives (GWSAE)

GWSAE Technology Solutions Series, featuring "Taking Your Website to
the Next Level."

Location: Ronald Reagan Building/International Trade

Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW. 8:30 a.m.

Contact: 202-429-9370, general@gwsae.org, or <http://www.gwsae.org>

TECHNOLOGY

Defense Technology Information Center (DTIC)

Annual Users Meeting and Training Conference on "Information Solutions
for the 21st Century," November 6-9.

Location: DoubleTree Hotel, 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville,

MD. 9 a.m.

Contact: Julia Foscue, 703-767-8236, jfoscue@dtic.mil,
or <http://www.dtic.mil/annualconf>

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

National Economists Club

Luncheon meeting, featuring "Economics of Universal Service in
Telecommunications."

Participants: Robert Crandall, senior fellow, Brookings Institution
Location: Library of Congress, Madison Building, 101 Independence Ave., SE, Montpelier Dining Room, Sixth Floor. 12 noon
Contact: 703-739-9404

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo PC
"The FCC and Emerging Broadband Technologies."
Participants: Frank Lloyd, former chief of staff, Federal Communications Commission (FCC); Howard Symons, former senior council, House Telecommunications Subcommittee; Christopher Harvie, former Senate Judiciary Committee counsel to former Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio; and Sara Seidman, former special counsel to FCC general counsel
Location: Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston, VA. 7:30 a.m.
Contact: Tara Malone, tmalone@mintz.com, or <http://www.mintz.com>

TRADE

The Export Promotion and Control Section of Women in International Trade
Discussion on "International Trade Policy Past and Present."
Participants: Lael Brainard, former deputy national economic adviser to the president
Location: Hotel Washington, 15th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW. 12:30 p.m.
Contact: Michelle Wildstein, 202-452-7000

TRADE

American Law Institute and American Bar Assn.
17th annual ALI-ABA Course, "Fundamentals of International Business Transactions," November 9-11.
Location: Madison Hotel, 15th and M Sts., NW. 9 a.m.
Contact: Alexander Hart, 800-253-6397, 215-243-1630, or <http://www.ali-aba.org>

For all the week's General News Events, go to
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EN

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TO: Karen C. Burchard (CN=Karen C. Burchard/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])
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TEXT:
Clinton Vietnam Trip Stirs Debate among U.S. Vets

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Clinton's plans to visit Vietnam next week have stirred controversy among U.S. veterans who fought there in a war the president opposed and avoided as a young man.

Some veterans interviewed by Reuters said Clinton's trip could help heal lingering wounds from the war, which killed more than 58,000 Americans and 1.5 million Vietnamese and devastated Vietnam's landscape and economy.

Others said they are offended by Clinton's draft avoidance and how his administration manages the military, and that he cannot adequately represent those who fought there.

The United States withdrew from Vietnam in 1973 but the war didn't end until 1975, when the communist north defeated South Vietnam.

"I'm all for having relations back with Vietnam (but) to me, he's probably the last person that should be doing this," said Army combat veteran Steve White, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. White fought in Vietnam in 1968-1969.

Said Manuel Cabrero, of New York: "I support his going on behalf of the country and bringing another message of peace and reconciliation to Vietnam.

I think that's what each of us has had to do personally." Cabrero was an Army infantry soldier who was wounded in Vietnam in 1970.

Clinton is to travel to Vietnam next Friday through Sunday. He will be the first sitting U.S. president to visit Hanoi, and the first to visit Vietnam since Richard Nixon in 1969.

Clinton has been progressively easing the pressure on Vietnam. He lifted the U.S. trade embargo on Hanoi in 1994, restored diplomatic relations the next year and reopened the U.S. embassy in Hanoi in 1996.

The White House says Clinton will encourage Vietnam to further liberalize its economy and open its political process. He will also highlight lingering war issues, such as the fate of 2,000 U.S. soldiers still listed as missing in action and the land mines that continue to kill and maim in Vietnam.

"THINGS TO APOLOGIZE FOR"

George Duggins, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America, said he supported Clinton's trip as a high-level opportunity to press the case for an accounting of those missing in action. "I know the president has a lot of baggage, but if he helps bring solace to some families then it's well worth his making the trip," Duggins said.

The visit could help fulfill the ostensible aim of the war in Vietnam, said Lon Weston, of Bethlehem, New Hampshire. "The whole object was to bring them into the capitalist world, and this is part of the process," he said.

Cabrero said news of Clinton's trip stirred his unresolved feelings about the war. It led him to begin a search to return a letter he had removed from a dying North Vietnamese soldier.

"I hope that he takes a piece of me and brings back something from there

that
says it's going toward normalcy, we have a relationship. We have things to apologize for to those people," he said.

Providing U.S. help for disabled Vietnamese veterans who fought the United States would be an appropriate gesture, he said.

"I wish I could go there personally to touch the land and talk to the people," he said. "I left a piece of me there. I left my blood. ... I left my boyhood."

Cabrero now serves as a lay chaplain of the state chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization representing wounded veterans. He said he is proud to have served, but that he now believes the war was a mistake and he does not resent those who had "ill feelings" about it.

SEETHING AT CLINTON

But some veterans are seething.

Clinton, whose term ends in January, was an active opponent of the war. He escaped military service by declaring his intention to enroll in a college officer training program. He later dropped the idea and made himself eligible for the draft in 1969 under a new lottery system. He received a high number and was not called to serve.

"For him to do this (trip) at the last minute is sort of an insult to all of us," said retired Marine Lt. Col. Ed Cathcart of Altamonte Springs, Florida.

He said he would have no objection to the next president going, but that he would rather that Clinton go after he leaves office.

White, who founded a business network for Vietnam veterans, said he and other vets he has spoken with are also disturbed by Clinton's administration of the military.

This includes a U.S. mission in Somalia, where 18 Army Rangers and Delta Force troops were killed in a 1993 firefight, air strikes against Iraq and suspected terrorist targets during his impeachment scandal, and what White said was a military decline during much of Clinton's presidency.

"He didn't serve. Under his administration the military certainly is not at the level that it was before he came in, and it seems as if he's used it in the past

to take
some of the heat off his own actions," White said.

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Groups Urge Clinton to Press Issues
By PAUL ALEXANDER

11/10/2000

AP Online

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HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - Human rights and Buddhist groups said Friday that they have urged President Clinton to press for greater freedoms in Vietnam when he visits the communist country next week.

U.S. officials have said no issues will be off limits during Clinton's three-day visit, which comes as the two countries build on the rapprochement that began when diplomatic relations were restored five years ago.

But Human Rights Watch, the Vietnam Committee on Human Rights, and the International Buddhist Information Bureau said Clinton has a unique opportunity - and a responsibility - to effect change and urged him to make a more public call for human rights.

Clinton's trip, which begins Thursday, will be the first visit to a unified Vietnam by an American president. It comes 25 years after U.S.-backed South Vietnam surrendered to the forces of North Vietnam.

While praising the government for easing some controls on daily life in recent years and welcoming Clinton's visit, the New York-based Human Rights Watch said in a statement that the government "continues to seriously curtail fundamental freedoms - particularly freedom of expression by dissidents and freedom of association by independent religious groups and trade unions."

Vietnam has repeatedly denied claims by rights groups that it holds anyone in prison for their political or religious views, and bristles at outside criticism of its human-rights record.

The Paris-based Vietnam Committee on Human Rights said in a statement that it sent a letter to Clinton urging him not to tacitly accept single-party rule.

"I cannot believe, Mr. President, that you will accept a bilateral relationship on these terms, even in the interests of geopolitical stability and peace," wrote the group's president, Vo Van Ai.

Thich Quang Do, a prominent leader of the banned Unified Buddhist Church, claimed the government would step up surveillance and other controls on dissidents during Clinton's visit.

"The reality of life in Vietnam today - the reality which you surely

will not see - is one of intolerance, controls, restrictions and repression," Do wrote in a Nov. 5 letter that the Paris-based International Buddhist Information Bureau said had been sent secretly out of Vietnam.

The groups said Clinton should press Vietnam to release jailed political and religious dissidents, end censorship of the media and the Internet, and improve prison conditions.

Friday, November 10
Vietnam Lawmakers To Review Econ, Laws, Not US Trade Deal

HANOI (Dow Jones)--Vietnam's National Assembly will next week meet to review this year's economic growth, outline key growth targets for 2001, pass new insurance and narcotic laws, and discuss draft laws on cultural heritage and fire prevention, an assembly official said Friday.

According to Vu Mao, head of the National Assembly's administrative office, ratification of a bilateral trade agreement signed with the U.S. in July won't be on the agenda during the upcoming meeting.

"The U.S. will ratify it and we will ratify it," Mao said, noting that under Vietnam's constitution, President Tran Duc Luong could conceivably ratify the deal without consulting the National Assembly.

However, he said such a move by the president is unlikely. Mao noted that a border demarcation treaty with China was presented by President Luong to the assembly last year for ratification even though he was constitutionally able to pass it into law himself.

Assuming Luong officially forwards the trade deal to lawmakers, Mao said the 300-odd National Assembly members may consider its ratification when they next meet in the spring of 2001.

Some observers note the deal could be held until next year's fall session. They say Hanoi will likely ratify the deal only after U.S. lawmakers have passed it.

The agreement must be ratified by both the U.S. Congress and Vietnam's National Assembly before it can take effect.

"After it's ratified, the BTA will take effect immediately so preparations must be very careful," Mao said.

The National Assembly is Vietnam's highest lawmaking body. It meets twice a year to amend laws and discuss national economic and social development.

This fall's meeting - due to last around one month - will begin Tuesday.

Insurance Law To Encourage FDI

According to Nguyen Van Phuc, director of the National Assembly's Economic and Financial Department, Vietnam's new insurance law will "create momentum for the activities of foreign insurance companies in Vietnam."

However, he stressed that "insurance is a very sensitive sector, so we need a comprehensive roadmap" for its development and opening to foreign participation.

Phuc declined to comment on whether the new law's passage will mean more foreign insurance firms can enter Vietnam's market, but he noted the U.S. trade deal lays out a timetable for the liberalization of Vietnam's insurance sector.

He said Vietnam has to date allowed the establishment of five Vietnamese-foreign joint venture insurance companies, four wholly foreign-owned insurance companies and four foreign insurance representative offices.

Separately, Mao said Vietnam's lawmakers this session will discuss the development of various large-scale infrastructure projects including a urea plant in the southern province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau and a Vietnamese-Russian joint venture oil refinery in Dung Quat on central Vietnam's coastline.

They will also look at how plans to reforest 5 million hectares of denuded land are progressing, he added.

Mao said a new major north-south highway - called the Ho Chi Minh Highway - and a huge hydropower plant in northern Son La province will be discussed next spring.

In response to a reporter's question Friday morning, Mao said U.S. President

Bill Clinton won't address Vietnam's National Assembly during his upcoming visit to Vietnam as some observers had suggested he might.

"There's no precedent for that," Mao said.

Vietnamese, Chinese ideologues discuss socialism

11/10/2000

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - Officials from Vietnam and China on Friday began a two-day seminar on treading the socialist path, official media reported.

The seminar focused on Doi Moi - the renovation process that Vietnam launched in the mid-1980s - along with reforms in China, bolstering both countries' ruling Communist Party in a market economy, globalization and international relations, the Labor newspaper said.

The 20-member Chinese delegation is led by Politburo member Ly Tie

Ying, chairman of the Chinese Institute of Social Sciences. The first seminar of this kind was held in Beijing in June.

Vietnam and China are among handful of communist countries which also include North Korea, Cuba and Laos.

Vietnam Flooding Dropouts 11/10/2000

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - More than 10,000 children, mostly primary school students, may be forced to drop their education in flood-stricken An Giang province, an official said Friday.

Families are too poor to send them back to school, said Vo Hong Dung, deputy director of provincial education and training department of An Giang, one of the worst-hit provinces.

Dung said 130,000 An Giang students were forced to stay home during the floods, which have inundated seven provinces in the Mekong Delta since July. Some 28,000 students still can not go to school because waters remain high in some areas in the province, which has nearly 500,000 students, he added.

The worst floods in 40 years in the Mekong killed 468 people and caused estimate damage of \$280 million, according the Flood and Storm Control Department for southern provinces.

Overall, 834,000 students in the seven affected provinces have been out of school for two to eight weeks, officials said.

Figures on how many students may have to drop out in other provinces were not available.

Vietnam Assembly won't Discuss Leaders, Trade Pact

HANOI, Nov 10 (Reuters) - Vietnam's National Assembly will not address leadership changes or ratification of a bilateral trade pact with the United States in its new session starting next week, a senior official said on Friday.

Vu Mao, chairman of the National Assembly Office, told a news conference the session starting next Tuesday would review and pass bills on insurance, drug prevention and the legislative programme for 2001.

He said neither leadership changes, nor the landmark trade pact agreed between Vietnam and the United States in July would be on the agenda.

Mao said that under the constitution, responsibility for ratification of the

market-opening pact rested with President Tran Duc Luong, but it was also likely to go to the National Assembly since it had to be ratified by the U.S. Congress.

"The constitution states that if necessary, the president of the state may submit an issue to the National Assembly... We think the U.S. Congress will ratify this agreement, therefore the Vietnamese National Assembly will do the same."

Mao said Vietnam did not need to wait for the U.S. Congress to ratify first but preparations for implementation of the pact still had to be carefully considered.

The U.S. Congress is not expected to consider ratifying the trade pact until the middle of next year.

While the assembly is now not expected to discuss any immediate changes to the government leadership, new faces could appear following the ruling Communist Party's key five-yearly national congress due in March.

There has been speculation that among those who could step down after the congress is Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, who is rumoured to have become increasingly frustrated by the slow pace of reform in Vietnam. In August, the Foreign Ministry rejected as groundless a foreign newspaper report that said Khai had tendered his resignation earlier in the year and planned to step down in March.

Last month, official media said ineffective government agencies had increased Khai's workload and interfered with his role as a macro-economic manager.

Some analysts also believe powerful Communist Party chief Le Kha Phieu has been pressing to add the presidency to his current role in order to raise his international profile.

However, they said this appears to be being resisted in some quarters by those who fear too much concentration of power.

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Friday, November 10
Vietnam's Hanoi Govt Will Miss '00 Privatization Target

HANOI (Dow Jones)--The government of the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi privatized just five state-owned enterprises in the first 10 months of this year, well below its full-year target of 30, a city Peoples Committee official told Dow Jones Newswires Friday.

She said difficulties "finding solutions to overdue and outstanding debt problems" have slowed the city's privatization process.

She added that "ineffective coordination between various authorities" is also delaying the sale of equity in state-owned firms.

Vietnam is working to restructure many of its non-strategic state-owned companies in a bid to increase their efficiency and reduce the government's financial burden. It sells shares mainly to company employees and sometimes to the public.

Statistics on the rate of privatization in other provinces and cities weren't available Friday.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam)

For Immediate Release

November 19, 2000

PRESS BRIEFING BY
NATIONAL ECONOMIC ADVISOR GENE SPERLING

Caravelle Hotel
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

3:25 P.M. (L)

MR. DIRINGER: Good afternoon, everyone. For our final briefing on the President's trip to Vietnam we have Gene Sperling, who will recap some of the President's announcements regarding new efforts to strengthen economic ties between our two countries.

MR. SPERLING: The President focused today on economics and in addition to announcing the \$200 million OPIC line of credit for investment in Vietnam and the creation of a new high-level economic dialogue between the United States and Vietnam, he also made very clear that he believed that Vietnam's future and amazing potential will be much determined by the degree that it embraces a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation and competition.

Vietnam has certainly -- has many impressive statistics, economic statistics for a developing country and has made some further progress on reforms with its enterprise law, which makes it easier for private enterprises to get started without as much onerous licensing and some modification of foreign direct investment. And they do -- have started a, the very, very beginning of opening a stock market in Vietnam.

But while the Vietnam people very clearly share the values that those in the United States do of work ethic, education and

entrepreneurship, there is no question that there is a different vision that still exists on economics at the highest levels of the government.

When the President met with Party Secretary General Le Kha Phieu, there was clearly a noticeable difference in philosophy. He saw their return to growth as a reaffirmation of their socialism, even in the face of the Soviet Union's collapse; and that he described Vietnam as an economy in which there were several sectors -- a state sector, a cooperative sector, a private sector -- in which there was no particular preference between which of those sectors was more likely to lead future growth and job creation.

As the President said today, however, we clearly believe that while these choices will ultimately be those of the Vietnamese people, we think that the degree for them to expand and promote their potential will be very dependent on the course they take, particularly with regards to encouraging a vibrant private sector.

If you look at Vietnam right now, 70 percent of the loans, of the capital, goes to state-owned enterprises, even though they make up only 6 percent of the jobs and only 30 percent of the GDP. And the President addressed that today by simply saying, imagine what could happen here if that capital was going into the hands of the young people with the ideas, with the innovation; imagine what the potential job creation could be if that capital was not being directed by the state sector, but was allowed to go to those people with the best ideas and the best ability to expand companies and expand jobs.

The President also talked about imagining what Vietnam could do with a more vibrant, more business-friendly environment. In 1997, there was \$2 billion of foreign direct investment in Vietnam. There was significant excitement on Vietnam by foreign investors. But over the last three years, that has slowed down. the foreign direct investment in '98, '99, and 2000 combined is less than the \$2 billion that was invested in 1997. Now, that is just to say that foreign investors had high hopes and are waiting and looking right now. I think that most see the bilateral trade agreement with the United States as perhaps the most promising sign that Vietnam may be on a course to more significant structural reform, restructuring their financial sector, and people will be looking very closely at that.

The business people he will talk to here will no doubt talk about the difficulties with bureaucracy and being priced at different levels, and high cost of telephones and air traffic, all things that Vietnam could do to make its economy even more terrific.

When you talk about potential, there is very high literacy rates for a developing country, unquestionably. Ninety percent of the kids are at least in primary school. The rates fall off a bit as you get into the high school area. But it is strong.

One of the places where I think you would see the most significant difference in philosophy and where I believe the U.S. bilateral trade agreement could make a difference, and where I think just the realities

of the market will make a difference, is in the telecom and Internet area. When you listen to the party General Secretary speak, there is a great understanding that information technology is the future, but there's a sense that somehow the state can somehow manage that itself, almost as if the United States were to have decided 10 years ago we really didn't need Microsoft and Cisco and AOL.

Clearly, everything that we have learned is that the best way to foster growth in the telecom and Internet area in a way that benefits average people is to create an environment of competition that allows for the new ideas and new competition to just emerge. Motorola, one of the best companies in the world, their CEO would tell you that their iridium project will be the last time any major company will ever try to plan something in this area five years in advance. It just -- things move to fast. They're now dealing with what to do with the satellites in space. The notion that a government can predict these things is very suspect.

What does that mean for the Vietnamese people? Right now one-tenth of one percent are on the Internet; by 2005, the projection is still that there will be less than 1 percent. Cost will tell you a lot there. There's a state-controlled telecom industry. The price of being on the Internet for an hour is nearly \$3.00. If you consider that the per capita income for a week is \$6.00, if \$2.00 on the Internet is your entire per capita income average, you're not going to have an expansion and you're not going to be able to fully participate.

And so, again, I think that the movement in the U.S. bilateral trade agreement is promising in that that trade agreement is more than just cutting tariffs. It lays out essentially a road map for integrating in the world economy. It allows for joint ventures by the United States, two years with Internet, in three years -- I think how open that they are to that in implementing that, and will say a lot as to whether foreign direct investment does come back.

Again, this is a country with just remarkable economic potential -- I mean, truly remarkable economic potential. And I think that the President did not want to leave here, again, without saying that while each of us has our different philosophies, the President said in the meeting with Le Kha Phieu, he said, each of us has to come up with our own way of balancing the rights of individuals and the community, the rights of the private sector and the state. But clearly, we felt, the President felt, that at least sharing our experience on the importance of the strong, vibrant private sector, particularly in the new information technology era, in bringing benefits that can be spread throughout the society to all the people was an important message that we wanted to give before leaving here today.

So, thank you.

Q The President has spent a lot of time these last few days trying to connect to young people and talking about young people. For a lot of these young people, as Vietnam develops a more vibrant private sector, the best opportunities are in sneaker factories and garment

factories that are of such a source of concern in the U.S. Can you talk about the extent to which that is a potential source of tension for the U.S., and also what the administration is doing in discussions now on labor standards with Vietnam?

MR. SPERLING: Let me make three points. Obviously, one of the reasons the President talks to the young people is that this is a young country. One of the most disturbing facts you will see on Vietnam is that there are only 5 percent over 65 years old. And that is the kind of statistic one sees only in a very wartorn country -- only 5 percent over 65. So one, by necessity, talks to the young people.

When you talk to, I think, the people -- the top economists here or World Bank, IMF -- one of the things they will tell you is that it's not just foreign direct investment that matters, but what is the quality of that. Is it foreign direct investment and high value added products that can be exported or is it just in hotels and consumption here or just in lower products? And, again, that goes to the general message that we're giving today. You know, when you have 92 percent piracy rates, when the state pretty much controls telecom, that shuts off a lot of the potential for there to be investment that could put Vietnamese people -- who, again, are very educated and skilled -- it cuts off a lot of potential for them to get a lot of the high value added jobs in the world economy.

On your next point, one of the things that we were very happy with and it's worth commending the Vietnamese government for, was that they were willing to enter into a labor dialogue with us. In fact, if you remember, on the first day the President witnessed the signing of the memorandum of understanding, which Andrew Samet, the Under Secretary of Labor, has done an excellent job on working on. That was not a so-called deliverable that we knew would be here. In fact, we probably didn't think that that would happen.

So I think the fact that they were willing as part of this visit, as part of the overall economic dialogue to have a labor exchange with us, an ongoing labor dialogue, shows that we have at least opened the door to discussing with them issues that could go into, clearly, technical assistance on health and safety, but also can get into the issues of core labor standards that we think are appropriate when having such an economic dialogue.

So within the economic dialogue that set up is a labor dialogue, there will be a focus on trade -- implementation of the trade agreement, a focus on the science and technology.

Q The President mentioned some flooding. Is the U.S. going to provide any direct financial support, like it did in Mozambique or Central America?

MR. SPERLING: You know what, you moved just a slight bit out of my area, so let me have PJ or Jake get back to you on that. I just don't know. Sorry.

Q Gene, realistically, how far is the Vietnamese government from bringing about the kinds of reforms in the court system and in sort of free market reform that it will bring in new kinds of investment that will really make a difference? I mean, we're years from that, aren't we?

MR. SPERLING: Well, this is where I think there is such importance in things like these bilateral trade agreements which essentially open the economy. And it's no secret that this is much of our philosophy, as some of you have written on, in terms of the President's philosophy on open markets, which is that in bringing openness you bring to bear larger forces. Those forces affect free expression, human rights. Those forces also express basic competition. And by forcing countries into the global -- or by having countries enter into the global economy they have an opportunity to seek their comparative advantage.

Ultimately, as Secretary Summers always says, no other country can want to perform more than the country, itself, does. Every country will make its decisions based on what they see as best for their people. But to the extent that you have an outdated ideology holding back the potential of the people, to the degree that you are subjecting your economy to more open, competitive sources through trade, through openness, you may have a greater speeding up of some of those processes.

If somebody -- I mean, I always feel that we can come and talk about these things, and we should, but there's nothing as effective as when private sector companies come here, or come to any country, and say, we'd love to invest. A lot of times you go to countries and they say, we'd like to invest but you just don't have a strong enough work force. Here you have a very highly motivated, literate work, but to say there's just not strong enough intellectual property regime, there's just not a competitive enough telecom or low enough prices for us to do business here. So the question you're asking on the speed could be very much, I think, improved by the opening of their economy and, hopefully, their decision that they should speed up these processes -- not because the United States or anybody thinks it's a good idea, but because they see a chance to leapfrog development.

And there's no question that the Prime Minister, the President, Le Kha Phieu, all of them talked about the important of information technology, the degree that this can allow a certain leapfrogging in development. Our hope is that as they continue to go further, they'll have a greater sense that fostering private sector competition is the irreplaceable means to getting there.

Q Would it be fair to infer that you got different impressions from various members, senior members of the Vietnamese government than the President spoke to, and that the General Secretary seemed to be more opposed or more concerned about the consequences of economic reform for the government than the other two senior leaders he spoke to?

MR. SPERLING: I think that there is no question that there was a more ideological bend from the party General Secretary. I think many of the specific goals are the same. As you know, they are coming forward

with their next 10-year plan, and so there is certainly an understanding. But there was a little more -- in one sense a little more of a pragmatism and a little less ideology in the first two meetings. There was a very strong statement about the USSR has failed, but we're still on our feet, socialism reaffirmed. There was not that kind of discussion. I did not hear that in any of the other meetings.

Again, I think though there was -- to be fair, and this is a country that has returned to growth this year that could be over six percent, it's not at the nine percent level it was prior to the financial crisis. The foreign direct investment has not returned. But, again, you have a new enterprise law, which is at least a start. You have a stock market that is a start. You have this historic bilateral trade agreement which is a start. You have some easing of foreign direct investment.

So again, I think the important thing is what is done, not so much what is said. But I think in one sense, the difference is that one may get the feeling that if there's a determination that telecom in the Internet is the most important thing, then, therefore, the government should control it, where obviously we would believe and have believed and have had the policy that this was so vibrant and such a potential for productivity growth that we should be ultra-careful in getting in the way.

And much of the compliments that we get in the Clinton administration from some of the CEOs of the major companies, it won't surprise you, is as much about what we didn't do as we did. The people appreciate the Telecom Act; they appreciate the deficit reduction act that lowered interest rates; but they also appreciate that there was a general view that vigorous private sector competition would bring down prices for all Americans, and not that you don't have common sense regulation, but you do so with care when you have such a vibrant industry. I think there might be -- one could here a somewhat different tone at times in the third meeting.

Q Just to expand on that -- you said there was a statement the USSR failed, we're still on our feet. What was the party General Secretary trying to say? That their system worked and central planning worked because they're still around? How did you interpret this?

MR. SPERLING: I interpreted it as that he was saying that they have a multilevel economy, and that they do not believe that one has to have a sole priority per the private sector. He described a state sector, a cooperative sector, a private sector, perhaps even a foreign investment sector, and said all of them could operate on equal terms, all of them consistent with the law, and that -- he referred to the fact that China had had to import rice in the '80s, and that they had now -- were up to 20 million in production in the Mekong Delta where they'd been --

Q You said China. Did you mean Vietnam?

MR. SPERLING: I'm sorry, what did I say?

Q You said China.

MR. SPERLING: Vietnam. That they --

Q Wrong communists.

MR. SPERLING: Just a little more used to talking about the prior country. But he was referring to I think the self-reliance, the autonomy, and that they have come back in going from being an importer to a major rice exporter to production of 2 million tons a year in the Mekong Delta to 20 million tons a year, and that they're doing well. He said the USSR had gone down, but that they had been -- that they were still on their feet was the interpretation we were given. Were still on their feet, and that had reaffirmed at least their brand of socialism, which he then went on to describe as having these several sectors that all could operate equally, as opposed to the United States where there was a clear priority that the private sector was the engine for economic growth.

Q When you talked about the officials talking about the imports of government control over telecoms and the Internet, was that a message from all of them, or just from the General Secretary?

MR. SPERLING: I think that that -- I think I said there that I think that was more of a tone type of issue, more of -- that this was extremely important and that, therefore, the state sector would focus appropriately on training workers. And that is -- in the United States, as well -- an appropriate function for the state sector is the education and private sector. But there did not seem to be a reflection of the importance of opening up the telecom system to vigorous competition or that high prices were pricing out the overwhelming majority of the Vietnamese population.

So that was more of an impression and interpretation from the tone and from just what is happening in the economy right now. But, again, there is still, then again, this bilateral trade agreement where there is a fairly significant commitment, 50 percent equity investment by United States' companies within three years; two years, I think, in base telephone; four years in, I think, mobile and cellular -- though I think 49 percent equity. So, again, there is much one can point to of positive signs, but I think people are looking at the pace and the commitment and I think the degree that the bilateral trade agreement is enforced and implemented, that will be one of the most positive things.

I should say in all three meetings there was -- all three meetings, entering the WTO was a top priority; all three meetings, the President, the Prime Minister and the Party Secretary General all said that they were very focused on being able to have permanent normal trade relations with the United States and enter the WTO. And, again, if that commitment is serious, too, that takes with it a series of additional reforms that one would have to go through that would open the economy and I think be ultimately to their benefit.

Q Gene, where specifically is the \$200 million line of credit coming from? Is it export-import or --

MR. SPERLING: I'm sorry, it's OPIC. It is OPIC, and I believe George Munos will be here in December to do an announcement. And it's a line of credit for both export financing or political risk insurance -- I think consistent with others we have done.

Q What do you say to American companies about the prospects for the trade agreement? The phase-ins are pretty long, up to seven years sometimes. What do you say -- what might you say or advise American companies coming here, or thinking about coming here, given the fact that piracy is so high? Nike doesn't sell shoes here; Microsoft says it's 99 percent pirated. What do you say?

MR. SPERLING: I think you have an interesting picture here. I mean, you do have a very young, extremely hard working populous, and I think companies talk about the commitment to working hard. You have a very -- again, as I say, the numbers fall off, but one can't downplay the literacy rate that they have, the number of skilled people that they have here -- you can walk the streets and see the entrepreneurial spirit in people, itself.

So I think -- I can remember when Secretary Rubin visited here a few years ago, he called me about something else while he was here, but he said he thought this was -- he had really been impressed and that if he were back in the private sector, this would be a place you'd really be looking at. Now, that was 1997 and that was a year in which there was \$2 billion of investment.

So I think what you saw here was significant excitement because of the potential; but then there was, you know, a little less optimism about the pace of structural reform. There's always symbolic things, there was a big BP Amoco project here that has sat on the shelf for a while. Often, things like that become symbolic.

So I think -- I guess what I would say is that there is enormous potential in this country and that there are lots of positive signs, including the BTA, of moving forward and that this is a place I'd be watching closely to see what they do and which path they follow.

The fact that there are complaints about the licensing and the sub-licensing and bureaucracy, that is true. In fairness to Vietnam, those are criticisms one who hear of many, many developing countries. But, on the other hand, some have made a commitment to wanting to attract foreign investment and really working on those things. So this would be a place I would be optimistic of, but watching closely.

Thank you.

END 3:33 P.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam)

For Immediate Release
19, 2000

November

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE VIETNAMESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Vietnam International Container Terminal
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

1:35 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Ms. Liu, thank you for your remarks and for your introduction -- and for your excellent English, much better than my Vietnamese. (Laughter.) I thank Secretary Mineta and the other members of the American delegation. And thank you Flemming Jacobs for making us feel welcome in this magnificent port. I would also like to thank the members of the Vietnamese government and the government of Ho Chi Minh City who are here. I thank you all for the time that we have had together these last few days.

I wanted to come here today to this remarkable place, which symbolizes Vietnam's gateway to the future, to say that one of the things I have learned in the last three days is that Vietnam has an ancient history, but it is still a very young nation. Over half your people were born in the last 30 years. And your best days clearly lie ahead, as you continue to find the means to release the skills and the ingenuity of your people.

Over the last decade, Vietnam has taken positive strides toward economic and social reform. In less than a decade, you have seen income per person rise almost 70 percent. You have lifted more than \$15 million people out of poverty. You have eradicated polio. And this container port is an astonishing example of how Vietnam is seizing the new opportunities of the 21st century.

You should be very proud of what you have built here. I can tell you that any nation in the world would be happy to have a facility like this. And it should cause you to imagine just how much more you can achieve.

Already in the last decade Vietnam's exports to the world have increased by six times over. You will grow even more as your economy becomes more open and the rule of law develops. More investment will come when people see Vietnamese entrepreneurs creating companies like APL. And many more companies like APL will be created if foreign and domestic investors see barriers to investment fall in a more business friendly Vietnam.

Already the people of Vietnam have the highest rate of literacy in

Southeast Asia. Imagine how much more you will achieve as even more young people gain more freedom to shape the decisions that affect their lives; if vigorous competition and innovation bring down the cost of using the Internet for all your school children and all your entrepreneurs, so that all Vietnamese people can benefit from the free and open exchange of ideas.

Another of your great strengths is the burst of ambitious young people who enter the job market every year, about 1.4 million of them. Your country's leaders have acknowledged that state-owned enterprises alone cannot create enough good jobs for all of them. But Vietnam's young people have the talent and ideas to create the jobs of the future for themselves in a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation and competition. That must be the future for Vietnam and its young people.

Among those who are ready to work with you to build that future are Vietnamese living abroad, including about 1 million in the United States. With us here today are two Vietnamese American sisters, their names are Nguyen Cao Thang and Truong Bich Diep. They run a pharmaceutical company named OPV. It was one of Vietnam's most successful companies in the early 1970s, and now our government has given them a loan to build a new manufacturing plant just outside this city.

Overseas Vietnamese want to invest in your country, not only with their money, but with their hearts. We are glad to be helping them to return and we thank you, the people and the government of Vietnam for welcoming them home.

The trade agreement the United States has signed with Vietnam will help even more investors come to your country. It will also help to develop a more open, sophisticated free market, based on international rules of law. And that will bring more rewards for the creativity and initiative of the remarkable Vietnamese people. Both our nations should ratify this agreement and implement it. The changes it will bring should be embraced, not feared.

I told your leaders in Hanoi a couple of days ago, that the United States is committed to providing assistance to Vietnam to help to implement this trade agreement. Among other things, we will establish a \$200 million line of credit to support U.S. investment in Vietnam. And we and your government have agreed to begin an economic dialogue to discuss how we can work together to grow our economies in ways that truly improve people's lives.

I believe you can avoid some of the mistakes that the United States and other industrialized countries made on their way to prosperity, thanks to the revolution in information technology, and in the economics of energy. For example, we know today that protecting the environment is actually good for the economy. It preserves natural resources, and helps to prevent natural disasters like the terrible flooding Vietnam has experienced these last two years. We now know that the more you invest in workers, raising their skills and protecting their rights, the more productive they will be and the more profitable companies will be, and the stronger national economies will grow.

I am very pleased that on Friday we signed an agreement with the Vietnamese government to begin a dialogue on labor issues, on safety and standards in the work place, and on the skills workers need for this new information economy, as well as the protections they will need from its disruptions. No one can deny the importance of these issues as we work together for a better future. But no one should deny Vietnam the opportunity to grow. That is the meaning of our trade agreement; that is the meaning of this port. The workers here at this port know better than anyone that trade lifts wages, raises standards, opens opportunities.

It has been a great privilege for me to see today and over the last few days what the Vietnamese people have accomplished. I have been deeply moved by my visit here. I came here, in part, because I believe that America and Vietnam are linked not just by a shared and often tragic past that must be honored and remembered, but that we have a bright future that we can build together to liberate our people and their potential.

The years of animosity are past. Today we have a shared interest in your well-being and your prosperity. We have a stake in your future and we wish to be your partners. We wish you success. Chuc cac ban suc khoe va thanh cong. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 1:44 P.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam)

For Immediate Release

November 19, 2000

FACT SHEET

PRESIDENT CLINTON: NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE UNITED STATES & VIETNAM THROUGH EXPANDING ECONOMIC TIES, TRADE, & INVESTMENT

President Clinton today will speak about the potential of trade and investment liberalization and the free flow of information to empower Vietnamese entrepreneurs, open new markets for U.S. investment and exports, and build a closer relationship between the two nations in speeches at the Vietnam International Trade Container Terminal and at the U.S.-Vietnam Business Reception.

THE BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT (BTA) SIGNED ON JULY 13, 2000, EXPANDS THE POTENTIAL FOR U.S. - VIETNAM COMMERCE. The BTA is a result of the ongoing historic reconciliation between the United States and Vietnam and an essential roadmap for Vietnam's integration into the global economy. By normalizing trade relations and committing Vietnam to sweeping economic reform in the areas of new market access for agricultural and industrial goods, increased intellectual property rights protections, access for services, transparency of laws, rules,

and regulations, and safeguards for foreign investments, it will open markets and increase investment. U.S. total (two-way) goods trade with Vietnam totaled \$900 million in 1999 - up from \$666 million in 1997. Exports to Vietnam have already increased considerably from \$4 million in 1992 to \$291 million in 1999 reflecting normalization of U.S. - Vietnam relations and should continue to grow as tariff and non-tariff barriers are lowered.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL HIGHLIGHT THE POTENTIAL OF A STRONGER U.S. - VIETNAM ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP:

- Vietnam International Trade Container Terminal (VICT): The VICT is a joint venture between a Vietnamese state-owned company and a multinational company on the Saigon River just south of downtown Ho Chi Minh City. Completed in 1998 at a cost of \$53 million, VICT is Vietnam's newest container terminal and the only one with completely computerized operations.
- U.S.-Vietnam Business Reception: President Clinton will also address over 300 Vietnamese and U.S. business leaders at the U.S.-Vietnam Business Reception at Ho Chi Minh City Hall on potential of increased trade and investment.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S VISIT BRINGS STRENGTHENED U.S.-VIETNAM ECONOMIC TIES:

- OPIC \$200 Million Line Of Credit For Vietnam: OPIC will provide a \$200 million special line of credit to support U.S. investors seeking financing for projects in Vietnam.
- High-Level Economic Dialogue Between the United States & Vietnam: The United States and Vietnam have agreed to enter into a high-level dialogue on economic cooperation. The dialogue will be a forum for exchanging views on economic, trade and labor issues, and coordinate efforts to deepen the benefits of US-Vietnam engagement on these issues.
- 10 New Contracts/Letters Of Intent: During and around President Clinton's visit to Vietnam, there have been several developments in U.S.-Vietnam commerce -- contracts or letters of intent were signed for 10 sales of U.S. goods and services.

DETAILS OF SITES

Vietnam International Trade Container Terminal:

The President's visit will help demonstrate how foreign and domestic investment are combining to modernize and industrialize Vietnam and integrate it into the regional and global economy. VICT is a joint venture between a Vietnamese state-owned company and a multinational company with holdings that include American President Lines, owner of one of the two U.S. flag cargo fleets. Completed in 1998 at a cost of \$53 million, VICT is Vietnam's newest container terminal and the only one with completely computerized operations. The facility is providing modern market-access with the basic infrastructure to move goods in and out of a developing country efficiently. American President Lines provides VICT's technical expertise, its senior managers and carries 50 percent of VICT's cargo of 5,000 containers per month. American President Lines is a co-sponsor, along with Ford Motor Company, of the "Helmets for Kids" initiative, part of the Safe Vietnam Program.

American President Lines is donating the transportation and logistics support to bring motorcycle helmets by container to the Vietnam.

U.S.-Vietnam Business Reception

President Clinton will also address a gathering of over 300 Vietnamese and U.S. business leaders at a gathering organized by the U.S. Vietnam Trade Council, the U.S. ASEAN Business Council and the American Chamber of Commerce at Ho Chi Minh City Hall. Representatives from U.S. business organizations join Vietnamese businesspeople to participate in discussions on the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement, integration of Vietnam into the international economy, and challenges and opportunities for doing business locally. Companies represented at the Forum include: American International Group, Boeing, Caltex, Cargill, Cisco, Citigroup, Coca Cola, Crane International, Daimler-Chrysler, Federal Express, Ford, General Electric, General Motors, Motorola, New York Life, Nike, Procter & Gamble, Oracle, UPS, United Technologies Corporation, and Unocal.

DETAILS OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **OPIC \$200 MILLION LINE OF CREDIT FOR VIETNAM:** OPIC will provide a \$200 million special line of credit for Vietnam to support U.S. investors seeking financing for potential projects in Vietnam. Since reopening in Vietnam, OPIC has committed \$15 million in finance support to three projects and has registrations for 29 projects seeking political risk insurance. OPIC also supports four privately managed private equity funds that are eligible to invest up to \$640 million in projects in Vietnam.

- **HIGH-LEVEL ECONOMIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES & VIETNAM:** The United States and Vietnam have agreed to enter into a high-level dialogue on economic cooperation. The dialogue will provide a forum for exchange of views on economic, trade, labor, science, and technology issues and coordinate efforts to deepen the benefits of U.S.-Vietnam engagement. This dialogue will help take stock of progress in the U.S.-Vietnam bilateral economic relationship, including the implementation of the Bilateral Trade Agreement.

CONTRACTS/LETTERS OF INTENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE U.S. & VIETNAM AROUND VISIT

- **10 NEW CONTRACTS/LETTERS OF INTENT BETWEEN U.S. BUSINESSES & VIETNAM:** Developments in U.S.-Vietnam commerce surrounding President Clinton's visit include contracts or letters of intent for 10 major sales of U.S. goods and services to Vietnam.

- **Boeing 777 Aircraft:** The Government of Vietnam and the Boeing Company have signed a letter of intent to negotiate the procurement of three Boeing 777-200ER widebody commercial aircraft.

- **Fiber Optic Cable Project:** Corning International Corporation intends to purchase Siemens AG's 50 percent interest in Fiber Optic Cable and Accessories Limited, subject to the consent of joint venture owner, Vietnam Post and Telecommunications. Corning will supply optical fiber to the joint venture.

- Marine Propulsion Engines and Gear Boxes: V-Trac Holdings, Inc., a Vietnamese subsidiary and exclusive dealer of Caterpillar, Inc. will sign an equipment supply contract with Ha Long Investment and Development Company for the sale of 7 units of Caterpillar's Marine Propulsion Engine, Model 3421B and gear boxes.
- Sale of Ellicott Dredges: Ellicott International intends to sign two contracts for dredge and associated support equipment with Vietnam Waterway Construction Company, a state-owned enterprise.
- Business to Business (B2B) e-Commerce Platform (MeetVietnam.com): MeetChina.com and the Corporation for Financing and Promoting Technology will sign an MOU for the creation of a joint venture company and website, MeetVietnam.com. The project will provide Vietnamese exporters with a "virtual storefront" to display goods/services and allow online ordering/shopping opportunities for overseas buyers.
- Vietnam Business to Business (B2B) Exchange: Oracle Corporation and KHM, Inc., an international consulting firm, will sign an MOU with the Peoples's Committee of Danang City on the creation of a B2B joint venture that will contribute to the development of Vietnam's two-way foreign trade. The U.S. export content include software, computer hardware, networking and telecommunications equipment as well as engineering, business and management expertise.
- Beach Resort Investment: American Indochina Resorts, Ltd. intends to sign a joint venture agreement with Danang Tourism and Service Company that will enable them to obtain a license to pursue a beach-front resort development project.
- Eco-Tourism Resort: Treehouses of Hawaii, Inc. will sign a joint development agreement with Huong Giang Tourist Company of Thu Thien-Hue for engineering and technical support for the creation of an eco-resort treehouse project designed to bring environmentally friendly tourism to Hue Province.
- East-West Transportation Corridor Project: Stanley Consultants, Inc. and the Louis Berger Group, Inc. along with Vietnam's Transport Engineering Design Corporation, a subcontractor to the Ministry of Transport, have been selected to provide detailed design and construction supervision services for the Asian Development Bank financed Vietnam East Transport Corridor in Quang Tri Province.
- TDA Grant for Vietnam Airlines IT Procurement Plan: Grant agreement will provide Vietnam Airlines Corporation \$475,000 to fund the development of an Information Technology procurement plan that will include assessing its technology needs, a strategy for implementation and integration, and a financing structure for equipment.

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RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Victoria L. Valentine (CN=Victoria L. Valentine/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

CREATION DATE/TIME:20-NOV-2000 12:42:52.00

SUBJECT: SJ Merc News VIETNAM coverage (Nov. 18 and 19)

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TEXT:

The San Jose Mercury News' complete coverage of the President's trip to Vietnam is available in Vietnamese (as a service to the many Vietnamese-Americans living in their readership area) at the following site:
<http://www.vietmercury.com/>

Posted at 10:15 p.m. PST Sunday, Nov. 19, 2000

Trade takes center
stage as Clinton
ends journey

President unveils program of \$200
million in loans for investing in
Vietnam

BY MARK MCDONALD
Mercury News Vietnam Bureau

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam -- On the final day of his

landmark

trip to Vietnam, President Clinton took a suite at the New World Hotel -- an appropriate choice because, in many ways, it does seem to be something of a new world here.

This city formerly known as Saigon, the onetime capital of South Vietnam, now has an emerging skyline, an emerging software industry and an emerging generation of adventurous capitalists. A dozen years ago, Saigonese were still standing in line with ration books to receive their allocations of food from government stores.

Vietnam's economic emergence was Clinton's focus on this blistering and humid Sunday, and he used meetings with young people and business leaders to emphasize that ``your best days clearly lie ahead as you continue to find the means to release the skills and ingenuity of your people."

Late Sunday afternoon, at a business forum held before Clinton departed for the United States, the president met with the Roman Catholic archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City, Jean Baptiste Pham Minh Man.

``They discussed some of the problems the archbishop is facing in helping the church develop within Vietnamese society," said P.J. Crowley, a White House spokesman, who noted that the president had sought the meeting with the archbishop. ``It was not," Crowley said, ``an accidental meeting."

Vietnam has an estimated 8 million Catholics, making it the second-largest Catholic country in Asia after the Philippines. The government controls all religion in the country, from the appointment of Catholic bishops and Buddhist monks to the building of churches and the renovation of pagodas.

Important meeting Clinton also met briefly Sunday with Vo Viet Thanh, who, as chairman of the People's Committee, functions like the mayor of Ho Chi Minh City. Strategically, the chat with the reform-minded Thanh was an important one: He is rumored to be the leading candidate to replace Phan Van Khai as Prime Minister when the Communist Party convenes its five-year Congress next spring.

If Clinton was publicly upbeat about Vietnam's economic potential, he was privately startled by a meeting with Le Kha Phieu, the leader of the Communist Party and arguably the most powerful man in Vietnam.

The meeting was described as cool and formal, and Clinton's national economic adviser, Gene Sperling, said Phieu pointed to Vietnam's 6 percent growth rate as ``a reaffirmation of their socialism."

``He told the president, `We have seen the collapse of the U.S.S.R., but we're still on our feet,' " said Sperling, who used the word `throwback' to describe Phieu's socialist rhetoric. ``There's still some tension between their ingrained ideology and the economic realities that are necessary for them to leapfrog their economic development. The more they open up, I think, the more the ideological debate will become academic."

Each member of the country's ruling troika -- Phieu, Khai and President Tran Duc Luong -- told Clinton they recognized the importance of information technology to Vietnam and the promise of the knowledge economy.

The leaders stressed, however, that it would be the government that would map the cyber-future for Vietnam, not foreign investors or

private enterprise.

``It's almost as if the United States were to have decided 10 years ago we really didn't need Microsoft and Cisco and AOL," Sperling said.

It was another furiously busy day for Clinton, who spent 70 hours in Vietnam, the first sitting U.S. president to visit the unified country. His first two days were spent in Hanoi, the capital.

Clinton had a late morning bowl of pho, the traditional Vietnamese soup. He ate at Pho 2000, a noodle shop owned by Alain Tan, a former maitre d' from Los Angeles, who owns a number of upscale restaurants in Ho Chi Minh City.

Later, he talked politics with a group of government-approved young people, made a speech at a modern container port on the Saigon River, and attended the business reception at City Hall.

Crowds of curious Saigonese gathered on nearly every downtown street corner to watch as the presidential motorcade passed by, but there was rarely the euphoria that was seen often among Hanoians.

Heightened security Beyond the heightened security for the visit itself, authorities were on edge after being embarrassed once again by anti-communist provocateur Ly Tong, who commandeered a small plane Friday and scattered thousands of pro-democracy leaflets on the city. Police hustled to scoop up as many fliers as possible and warned residents not to pick them up.

Clinton said over and over on this visit that a new trade agreement between the two countries would be critical to Vietnam's future prosperity, and Sunday, he announced that the administration had

established a \$200 million line of credit for U.S. businesses looking to invest in Vietnam. Some of that money would clearly be directed toward Vietnamese-Americans.

“Overseas Vietnamese want to invest in your country, not only with their money but with their hearts,” Clinton said in his speech to a heat-addled crowd of 2,000 at the container port. “We are glad to be helping them to return, and we thank you, the people and the government of Vietnam, for welcoming them home.”

Even if Phieu, the Communist Party leader, wasn't jumping on Clinton's free-trade bandwagon, Vietnam's leading political and religious dissidents were.

Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-Garden Grove, privately visited with six of the more prominent activists in Vietnam, and they told her they wanted her to change her political direction and push for congressional passage of the trade agreement. She has fought to restrict economic relations with Vietnam until the communist regime undertakes serious religious and human rights reforms.

“I was really surprised,” said Sanchez, whose district covers Little Saigon in Orange County, home to the largest Vietnamese population outside Vietnam. “I asked the dissidents repeatedly, ‘Are you sure you want this?’ They told me that opening up the economy would help them and their cause. It's an interesting message to bring back to my constituents.”

Published Saturday, Nov. 18, 2000, in the San Jose Mercury News

DID LY TONG
MAKE DARING

FLIGHT OVER HO CHI MINH CITY?

BY ELSA C. ARNETT
Mercury News

The daring stunt had Ly Tong's name written all over
it.

Just hours before President Clinton arrived on his
historic trip to
Vietnam, a small airplane buzzed downtown Ho Chi
Minh City and
dropped thousands of anti-communist leaflets over
the area Thursday
afternoon, witnesses reported.

``Rise to overthrow the inhumane Viet Cong regime,"
said one sentence
of the paragraph-long statement printed on the
leaflets, which also
featured a prominent picture of the old
mustard-yellow-and-red-striped
South Vietnamese flag. ``Countrymen, when President
Clinton comes,
you must stand up, and we'll help you from outside
the country."

The 52-year-old Tong is a former South Vietnamese
fighter pilot who
lived briefly in San Jose. He prides himself on
risking his life to pilot
planes into communist air space to spread democracy
and condemn
communism.

Eight years ago he hijacked a Vietnam Airlines jet
and dropped 50,000
anti-communist pamphlets over Ho Chi Minh City. He
parachuted from
the plane but was arrested and sentenced to 20
years. The Vietnamese
government released him in 1998.

Then this past New Year's Day, Tong took a
single-engine Cessna low
over Havana and dumped 50,000 pink, orange and
yellow fliers urging
Cubans to overthrow ``the old dinosaur Fidel
Castro."

Although the leaflets that fell Thursday on Ho Chi
Minh City bore
Tong's name and signature, he has not made an

official statement or
been heard from publicly since. He reportedly was
detained by officials
in Thailand after landing there Thursday. Vietnamese
officials made no
official comment.

Details could not be independently confirmed Friday,
but people close to
Tong provided a second-hand account of Thursday's
dramatic display
of opposition to the communist government.

Luong Si Truong, 55, of Fort Worth is a member of a
national network
of Tong supporters, known as The Brotherhood of Ly
Tong. He met
Tong frequently over the past two years, and the
past few months.

Truong said Tong spent two months planning a flight
over Ho Chi Minh
City.

With the logistical help from fellow former fighter
pilots, and with the
financial contributions from hundreds of people
around the country,
Tong was supposed to head to Thailand, where he was
going to rent a
two-seat plane and set off on the seven-hour flight
to old Saigon with a
friend of his, a man from Thailand, Truong said.

The plan was to slip into Vietnamese air space, and
fly so close to the
rooftops they could elude the sophisticated radars.
The goal was to
reach Notre Dame Cathedral in the center of town,
the city's
architectural and geographic focal point, a looming
cinnamon-red brick
cathedral. Then, he would open his window and shove
the leaflets out,
and be far away before the first leaflet wafted to
the ground, Truong
said.

Truong said he believed Tong had completed that
mission this week.

Truong said his brother living in Florida got a call
from Tong today,
saying he had indeed succeeded in the mission. Both
Truong and his

brother believe Tong has been apprehended by police in Bangkok. An official at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok said this afternoon that she had no information regarding Tong.

For those Vietnamese here who maintain fierce animosity toward the communist government, the leaflets' right-to-the-people, right-in-the-government's-face approach was what they wanted.

Thue Trang, 56, of San Jose, who assembles electrical parts, said he wanted someone to go ``deep into the communist territory and spread the word about freedom and democracy."

And if, indeed, it was Tong who did this, his friends, admirers and detractors aren't surprised.

Tong's dramatic pro-democracy campaigns and his brushes with danger have branded him the Vietnamese James Bond. He is believed to prefer the more modest title of ``Impossible Man."

His actions always capture the Vietnamese community's attention. But attitudes toward him are mixed.

``Some people consider him a daring hero," said Minh Dovan, 49, a San Jose attorney who serves the Vietnamese community. ``And some people think he's too extreme."

Many in the Vietnamese community chuckled with delight at the thought of the consternation these leaflets must have produced within the ranks of the Communist Party. However, they also said these kinds of antics aren't enough to spur real change in Vietnam's repressive government.

Liem Huu Nguyen, who teaches philosophy at City College in San Jose, said leaflets are only symbolic. But they do not carry the weight of a person who quietly works to help bring freedom and

human rights to the
people.

Tong has long been a near-mythical figure in the
emigre Vietnamese
community.

In his autobiography, ``Black Eagle," Tong wrote of
being captured
when his A-37 Dragon Fly fighter plane was shot down
just days
before the fall of Saigon in April 1975.

He tells of the penalty for an escape attempt: being
dumped for six
months in a freight container the Americans had left
behind. He tells of
a two-month hunger strike he led, where he lost 30
pounds, but
succeeded in ending hard labor in one prison camp.
And, of course,
there's the story of the 1,600 mile trek across
Southeast Asia to
freedom in 1980. He showed up at the doorstep of the
U.S. Embassy in
Singapore, soaking wet. They gave him asylum.

Now a New Orleans resident, Tong lived in San Jose
in 1984 and in
1998.

As they await word of his whereabouts, Tong's
supporters scattered
across the country are already in the process of
collecting signatures to
deliver to the Thai Embassy in Washington, D.C.,
calling for his release,
if they are holding him.

But knowing that Tong has talked about making his
trademark flights
over North Korea and China, they will also brace
themselves for what
he'll be up to when they hear from him next.

RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: "Weinhold, Scott" ("Weinhold, Scott" [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME:20-NOV-2000 00:00:03.00

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READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Avery, Todd" ("Avery, Todd" [UNKNOWN])
READ:UNKNOWN

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TO: "Greene, David" ("Greene, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Harter, Dennis" ("Harter, Dennis" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Hong-Phong_Pho@ita.doc.gov (Hong-Phong_Pho@ita.doc.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "John, Eric" ("John, Eric" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "John, Yoon" ("John, Yoon" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: Karen C. Burchard (CN=Karen C. Burchard/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

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TO: "Ray, Charles" ("Ray, Charles" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: RSell@hcm.vnn.vn (RSell@hcm.vnn.vn [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "Schiffer, Robert" ("Schiffer, Robert" [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "Schmick, Henry" ("Schmick, Henry" [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "Sigmon, Gary" ("Sigmon, Gary" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Specht, Linda" ("Specht, Linda" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: swhcmc@usia.gov (swhcmc@usia.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Tannenbaum, Jane" ("Tannenbaum, Jane" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: trisha.tran@mail.doc.gov (trisha.tran@mail.doc.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Wagganer, Kevin" ("Wagganer, Kevin" [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "Waller, James" ("Waller, James" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: wconnerley@hotmail.com (wconnerley@hotmail.com [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Weech-House, Gilda" ("Weech-House, Gilda" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Weinhold, Laura" ("Weinhold, Laura" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: WeldonLC@state.gov (WeldonLC@state.gov [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "West, Gary" ("West, Gary" [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "White, Sharon" ("White, Sharon" [UNKNOWN])

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TO: "Wise, David" ("Wise, David" [UNKNOWN])

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READ:UNKNOWN

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READ:UNKNOWN

TO: "Young, David" ("Young, David" [UNKNOWN])

READ:UNKNOWN

TEXT:

Clinton wraps up historic visit with ecstatic welcome in Ho Chi Minh City

HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 19 (AFP) -

President Bill Clinton was wrapping up his landmark reconciliation visit to communist Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City Sunday, receiving an ecstatic welcome from tens of thousands at the scene of America's humiliating retreat from the war.

Massed crowds of waving and cheering Vietnamese brought the former Saigon to a standstill early Sunday as they welcomed the first American head of state to return since the US-backed Southern capital was taken by North Vietnamese troops in 1975.

Surging throngs were packed outside the old presidential palace where communist tanks crashed through the gates during the fall of Saigon.

Residents, many dressed in nightclothes, formed an almost unbroken line from the city centre along the five-kilometre (three-mile) road to the airport. Police blocked off the route and streets around Clinton's hotel, causing gridlock.

"I was here 25 years ago when the Americans left and I am very honoured today to see President Clinton," said Trinh Quang Dai, 44.

US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, leading talks on a bilateral trade deal signed in July, told an audience of students: "This is a very

emotional visit.

"The reaction of the Vietnamese people on the streets to President Clinton is heart-warming and something all of us will always remember, most particularly the president.

"Of all the trips we have taken over the last eight years, this is the one that will always stand out."

The rapturous welcome accorded Clinton and his wife Hillary on their last scheduled foreign trip appears to have taken Vietnam's communist regime by complete surprise and there were signs of irritation Sunday.

Clinton has been free to take walkabouts in Hanoi, make a number of public speeches -- including a live address to the nation -- and visit excavations for the remains of Americans still listed as missing in action (MIA).

But the state press has maintained a stony silence on the crowds and made no mention of his attempts to raise the issues of human rights, religious tolerance or freedom of information.

On Sunday Vietnam's conservative communist leader, in a tone contrasting with Clinton's pleas to heal the past and reformers in his own government, hailed the guerrilla resistance against the United States in the Vietnam War as the cradle of determined socialism.

Communist party secretary general Le Kha Phieu demanded the US respect Vietnam's monolithic political system and banged the drum of the North's victory over the American-backed South.

"The resistance wars brought the Vietnamese people national independence and reunification to advance the country toward socialism so for the Vietnamese people the war was not ultimately a story of darkness, sadness and unhappiness," the official Vietnam News Agency (VNA) quoted Phieu as saying when he met Clinton on Saturday.

"The future of the Vietnamese nation is independence and socialism ... socialism (will) not only exist but further develop."

He also stressed the "primary role" of the state sector in business, taking a different line from Trade Minister Bu Khoan's statement Saturday that the economy had to open up to develop.

White House officials gave no immediate reaction, but said Clinton had made his views "very clear" during the two leaders' talks.

The loss of Saigon brought an end to the Vietnam War and saw the United States' undignified exit from Vietnam by helicopter from the US embassy roof.

Tens of thousands of Vietnamese fled the city as boat people after America's exodus.

Many Southerners accused Washington, and in thousands of cases their American soldier fathers, of abandoning them as they faced re-education at home or internment in camps across Southeast Asia.

Twenty five years on, the city renamed after the leader of America's guerrilla enemy is once again Vietnam's commercial capital and a key destination in Clinton's effort to seal rapprochement.

On Sunday, at the risk of inflaming his hosts, Clinton was to meet the city's Roman Catholic Archbishop Pham Minh Man as well as addressing American and Vietnamese business leaders. He was due to leave for Washington on Sunday night.

After lifting an embargo in 1994, Washington and Hanoi signed a trade agreement in July, opening American markets to Vietnam in return for market-led reforms.

While focusing on business to engage Washington's former foe, Clinton has also taken pains to lay to rest the ghosts of the past.

On Saturday he vowed to bring home "every fallen hero" at an excavation site northwest of Hanoi where a US pilot was shot down in 1967 and oversaw a repatriation ceremony for the suspected remains of American war dead.

Clinton visits archbishop on last day of Vietnam visit
HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 19 (AFP) -

President Bill Clinton on Sunday met Ho Chi Minh City's Roman Catholic Archbishop, the leader of a church persecuted in the southern city after America's 1975 retreat from Vietnam.

The president spent around 10 minutes with Archbishop Pham Minh Man during a business reception at City Hall in the former Saigon, said White House spokesman P.J. Crowley.

Clinton "sought the opportunity to meet him and had the opportunity to talk about what he is doing and the problems he is facing in helping the church develop within Vietnamese society," said Crowley.

Crowley sidestepped questions over whether the venue for the encounter had been planned away from the clergyman's home or a church to avoid antagonising the authorities.

And he added: "As a prominent leader it is something that is important. The Catholic church is a major institution of this society."

The meeting was steeped in sensitivity as Vietnam's communist authorities still keep churches -- indelibly linked to the US-backed Southern regime it defeated with the fall of the former Saigon -- under heavy surveillance.

This month, after a relaxing of restrictions on religion in the 1990s, US-based human rights organisations reported the authorities were once more becoming alarmed at the growing popularity of Christianity.

Clinton came under intense pressure before his departure for Vietnam to pressure the authorities into allowing greater personal and religious freedoms.

During his three days in the country, Clinton has lauded religious and individual freedoms, while arguing a more open society is vital to Vietnam's economic development.

In a keynote speech Friday, broadcast live across Vietnam, Clinton said: "In our experience, guaranteeing the right to religious worship and the right to political dissent does not threaten the stability of a society.

"Instead it builds people's confidence in the fairness of our institutions."

On Sunday he told a group of young Vietnamese outside the Musee des Beaux Arts: "One of the debates every society must have is how to balance individual freedom with the need for ... cohesion of families, communities and nation."

Clinton started his day Sunday by visiting the Musee and was due to address both American and Vietnamese business communities at several events later in the day.

He was scheduled to depart for Washington in the early evening, ending a week-long Asian tour which also took in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum summit in Brunei.

Christianity has between seven and eight million followers in Vietnam, or around 10 percent of the population, making it the third largest Christian church in Asia after the Philippines and China.

Monday, November 20
Visit May Affect Vietnam Exchanges
By MORT ROSENBLUM, AP Special Correspondent

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (AP) - On a Sunday morning in what used to be Saigon, war is just a dim, bad memory. Kids in Nike shoes play pickup basketball and couples laugh over leisurely lattes in cafes.

If nothing else, President Clinton's 72-hour trip to Vietnam formalized for

his countrymen what people here have known for a long time. The American war, like all the other ones before and since, is over.

“It took three or four presidents to get us into the Vietnam War, and now he was the one to finally get us out,” observed Mark Barnett, an American in Hanoi who exports spices and exotic herbs.

What the Vietnamese saw in Clinton's short stay had far less to do with the past than with the future.

To many Vietnamese, it seemed as if he just the right thing: Vietnam would do well to open its economy to the world and relax its political rigidity.

But only the Vietnamese can determine how, and how fast, to do this.

The professionals who watch Vietnam know this is a tricky balance. Countervailing currents run deep within a small but powerful Communist Party with principles for which a great many soldiers died.

Vietnam clearly wants a market economy, foreign investment and trade with others on equal footing. But Ho Chi Minh and his teachings are hardly ready for any historical scrap heap.

Dennis De Tray, senior International Monetary Fund representative in Hanoi, describes the distance Vietnam has come in 25 years as “literally unbelievable.” But, he adds, there is an equal distance still to go.

This mixed mood, often ironic, is obvious in any direction one turns.

After Clinton's address at Vietnam National University, a young student spoke his mind to an American journalist and then, unasked, wrote down his phone number. Minutes later, he grabbed the reporter's notebook and scratched it out.

At one point, Chelsea Clinton nodded to a Vietnamese policeman in his formal peaked cap, a Soviet relic with a large star on a red badge. “Nice hat,” she said.

The president moved in a motorcade behind tinted glass and only in the two big cities. He managed a noodle soup stop in Saigon, but had limited time to squeeze hands in the street. Still, he saw today's Vietnam.

Below his hotel windows in both cities, endless streams of life flowed past on swarms of bicycles and motorbikes among rattletrap trucks, taxis or the occasional Mercedes.

Ubiquitous tiny-engined Honda two-wheelers are Vietnam's urban beasts of burden. One might carry a family of four, along with the morning shopping. Another's rider might be masked by a mountain of coconuts.

Sidewalks are dotted with women squatting besides charcoal fires,

dispensing
savory noodle soup to all comers. On main streets, shops overflow with
fancy
new refrigerators and luxury salon suites.

Lissome women in dazzling ao dai sheath dresses ride by on motorbikes,
wearing flowered hats instead of helmets. Others still stick to their
conical hats and baggy blue shirts. Men wear silk ties or torn shorts.

Ao dais, designed by a French priest, were politically incorrect after the
war. Now they are more common in conservative Hanoi. Down south, women
prefer trendy gear redolent of Paris or Palm Springs.

Authorities tidied up the bustling center of Saigon, chasing off the usual
crowd of pedal rickshaw drivers, street hustlers and prostitutes. They also
swept away a rare expression of discontent.

For several months, a group of farmers had camped downtown to protest
government corruption. On Sunday morning, before Clinton's motorcade was
really to roll, they were gone.

“Mr. Clinton make big problem for me,” said Emily, who uses only that
name, a 4-foot-6 Saigon fixture whose sidewalk stand features ships, bikes
and whatnot cut from beer cans. “All of my stuff have to go inside.”

These days, Emily sells fewer helicopters, tanks and warplanes. Today's
tourist prefers tin-can motorcycles and trucks.

Americans of all extremes who have settled in Vietnam describe what they
say
are people of the past and people of the future.

The latter, almost all agree, are far more prevalent.

Jay Ellis, who owns the R & R Tavern in Hanoi, realized the war was over
eight years ago when he visited the Cu Chi tunnels with a veteran who
wanted
to fire an AK-47 on the tourist rifle range there.

“He just sprayed wildly,” Ellis said. “But I'm old farm boy. I took aim
and hit a bunch of targets. The Vietnamese guy laughed and said, 'If we
have
a problem again, will you be on our side?'”

Ellis, who opposed the war, sees the funkier side of life in the new
Vietnam.

Chuck Searcy is a serious-minded, buttoned-down veteran whose efforts at
bringing together Americans and Vietnamese during the 1990s made him an
unofficial ambassador in Hanoi. He shares Ellis' point of view.

Clinton's visit, he said, will go down in history.

“Without any apology, which would have embarrassed the Vietnamese, he made

all the right references to the pain of the past," Searcy concluded.
``This
was what they wanted to hear. Now we can have a sort of closure."

Clinton Says Years of U.S.-Vietnam Animosity Over By Arshad Mohammed

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (Reuters) - President Clinton said Sunday the years of animosity between the United States and Vietnam were over as he ended a historic three-day visit in which he and the country's communist rulers sparred over human rights and political freedoms.

Making the first visit by a U.S. president to Vietnam since Richard Nixon at

the height of the Vietnam War in 1969, Clinton drew throngs of delighted onlookers in Ho Chi Minh City.

The U.S. president encountered no obvious bitterness in the bustling commercial city, the former South Vietnamese capital Saigon, which the United States abandoned as communist forces closed in at the war's end in 1975.

``The years of animosity are past. Today we have a shared interest in your well-being and your prosperity ... We wish to be your partners. We wish you success," Clinton said in a speech.

``It's good that he's visiting, it will clear away all the hatred," said 68-year-old Do Chinh Giang, a former guerrilla who fought the Americans during the war that killed 58,000 Americans and three million Vietnamese.

But Clinton and the Vietnamese did not see eye-to-eye on human rights and political freedoms, with Clinton saying the trend toward freedom was all but

irreversible and Vietnamese officials making clear they did not want to be lectured.

Asked in an interview with CNN if he had confidence that the government would allow greater religious, political and personal freedoms, Clinton said:

``The truthful answer is that we don't know where it's going. But I think that the trend toward freedom is virtually irreversible...these folks are too young and too vigorous.

“You can see in the streets that there's a lot of goodwill toward America here,” he added. “There's a lot of interest in our country and how we're dealing with a lot of the challenges of the new century. So I believe that the trend is positive.”

“Nice Little Debate”

For all the talk of partnership, Vietnam's most powerful political figure, Communist Party General-Secretary Le Kha Phieu, demanded Washington respect its choices, and others said Washington should not interfere in their country's affairs.

“We respect the choice, the lifestyle and political systems of other nations,” the official Communist Party daily Nhan Dan (The People) quoted Phieu as saying. “We in turn demand that other nations respect our people's choices.”

Phieu was also quoted as saying the Vietnam War stemmed from the imperialist

designs of the West, a view Clinton disputed.

“I had nice little debate with the general secretary of the Communist Party

here about our country and stoutly disputed that we were an imperialist country,” he told CNN.

“We had never had any imperialist designs here. The conflict here was over what self-determination for the Vietnamese people really meant and what freedom and independence really meant.”

During the first two days of his visit in Hanoi, Clinton got mixed signals on the economy, with some Vietnamese officials eager to liberalize but Phieu, speaking what a senior U.S. official called the language of “old socialism.”

Clinton gave Vietnam a gentle nudge to offer greater religious freedom by holding a brief meeting Pham Minh Man, Roman Catholic archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City, and he urged the country to unleash its economy.

“Your best days clearly lie ahead,” he said in a speech at a computerized container shipping terminal, containers stacked behind him beneath two massive cranes in a symbol of Vietnam's growing trade links to the world.

“Vietnam's young people have the talent and ideas to create the jobs of

the

future for themselves in a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation and competition," he added.

``That must be the future for Vietnam."

Line Of Credit

Clinton announced a \$200 million line of credit to help finance investment by U.S. companies in Vietnam and said he hoped his visit had changed perceptions in both countries.

``I hope this trip has helped the American people to see Vietnam in a new way and has encouraged the people of Vietnam to see America in a new way so that we will have a partnership for the future," he said.

To demonstrate concerns over religious freedom, Clinton met for about 10 minutes with Pham Minh Man, Roman Catholic archbishop of southern Ho Chi Minh City, who has said the church in communist-ruled Vietnam still faced problems.

``We do believe in the universal right of citizens to speak freely, to worship and the president wanted the opportunity to meet him during the course of his visit," said U.S. National Security spokesman P.J. Crowley.

Archbishop Man told Reuters ahead of Clinton's visit he planned to tell Clinton, ``the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam has improved to some extent, but it still faces some difficulties and limitations."

Man said authorities continued to place restrictions on Church business, including training and social activities.

An estimated 10 percent of Vietnam's 79 million people are Christian, most of them Catholics. Many Catholics were driven underground in the hard-line period of communist rule until the 1990s, but now openly display their faith.

Sunday Stroll

Earlier Sunday, Clinton put his money where his mouth is, strolling down a shopping street in former Saigon and lunching on noodles to shine the spotlight on Vietnam's private sector.

``Welcome! Hello!," cried out one man as Clinton walked down a choked street of small shops in the city center, browsing among the antiques, pottery and statues on display.

Clinton bought a small granite figure called ``Buddha on a turtle" at one of the half dozen shops he visited, shaking hands at each with the dozens of Vietnamese crowded around but not with the Vietnamese police posted outside every store.

At the end of the street, a crowd of a few hundred people exclaimed with ``oohs" and ``ahs" when Clinton approached them to shake hands. One man, hanging on to a metal grill to reach out, was so excited that he shook hands

twice with Clinton.

Clinton then sat down to a lunch of pho -- a Vietnamese dish of noodles topped with chicken -- and a mango shake at Pho 2000, a restaurant on a large traffic circle surrounded by billboards for Coca Cola, Pepsi, Seiko and Casio.

``I am very, very happy, I won't need eat for the rest of the day," said noodle shop manager Vo Van Lang, 50.

``I don't know whether he's used chop sticks very often but he used them very well, like a Vietnamese."

Not everyone was delighted by the visit.

One older, gray-haired man standing on the street where Clinton shopped, speaking in clear English, thought for a long moment when asked if it was a good thing that Clinton had come to Vietnam and then said reluctantly: ``I don't know."

Monday, November 20
Clinton Concludes Vietnam Visit
By TERENCE HUNT, AP White House Correspondent

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (AP) - Returning from a historic trip to Vietnam, President Clinton said Sunday that ``a big welcome" awaits Americans in this struggling communist nation as it looks with hope to the future without bitterness about the wartime past.

``The years of animosity are past," Clinton said, a quarter century after the Vietnam War ended with a communist takeover of U.S.-backed South Vietnam. ``Today we have a shared interest in your

well-being and your prosperity."

Clinton urged Vietnam to open its economy and allow greater individual freedoms. Despite Clinton's optimism, Vietnam's powerful Communist Party chief, Le Kha Phieu, expressed wariness about economic reforms and America's involvement in Vietnam.

Phieu emphatically stated that while the former Soviet Union has crumbled, the socialist system in Vietnam still stands, Clinton's economic adviser Gene Sperling said, recounting the talks Saturday in Hanoi.

"What was the cause of our resistance against foreign aggression," the Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan quoted Phieu as telling Clinton. "The root cause was because imperialism colonized other countries."

In an interview with CNN, Clinton said he had "a nice little debate" with Phieu about the United States and "stoutly disputed that we were an imperialist country. We had never had any imperialist designs here."

Clinton said the trend toward freedom in Vietnam "is virtually irreversible ... And as you can see in the streets, there is a lot of goodwill toward America here."

The president flew back to a nation still uncertain whether it will be George W. Bush or Al Gore who takes Clinton's place on Jan. 20.

"I don't think we should have all this hand-wringing, dire predictions," Clinton said in the CNN interview broadcast on Sunday.

"We've got a system that's under way and you know ... these guys, the advocates for either side, are under enormous pressure and, of course, they are being pretty snippy with each other from time to time."

Departing Ho Chi Minh City on Sunday, Air Force One was loaded with silks, purses, paintings, lacquer ware and other gifts purchased by the presidential entourage on a 22,192-mile, weeklong trip to an Asian summit in Brunei and the groundbreaking stop in Vietnam. Clinton's plane was stopping in Alaska to refuel, with a scheduled arrival in Washington before dawn Monday.

"I am going home determined to continue the partnership we have for a better future for the people of Vietnam, the people of the United States and all those whom we can reach together," Clinton told a group of business leaders just before his departure.

Clinton was the first president to visit this country since 1969 and the first ever to stop in Hanoi. While he spoke hopefully of the future, there were reminders of the painful past.

During his stay he visited an excavation site near Hanoi, where searchers

probed the mud for the remains of a U.S. pilot shot down 33 years ago. He met with children disfigured by forgotten land mines. And he watched silently as the remains of three MIAs began the journey home.

In a gesture for religious freedom, Clinton met Sunday with Jean-Baptiste Pham Minh Man, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City. White House officials said they spoke of problems the archbishop faces in a country where international human rights groups and the State Department cite a pattern of harassment and imprisonment of Buddhist and other religious leaders.

Earlier Sunday, he plunged into crowds in a narrow shopping street, shaking hands and stopping at open-front markets to buy last-minute gifts. To a generation of American GIs, this bustling city of 5 million people was known as Saigon before its surrender to communist forces in America's most humiliating military defeat.

Ho Chi Minh City is the commercial hub of Vietnam. Clinton visited a container port on the Saigon River and assured Vietnam that it will benefit by embracing the global economy.

“Already in the last decade Vietnam's exports to the world have increased by six times over,” the president said. “You will grow even more as your economy becomes more open and the rule of law develops.”

In July, the United States and Vietnam signed a major trade agreement this year that will force major economic reforms and allow normal commerce. Clinton said it would bring more investors here. Clinton promised that the United States would establish a \$200 million line of credit to support U.S. investment in Vietnam.

“It will also help to develop a more open, sophisticated free market based on international rules of law,” Clinton said. “And that will bring more rewards for the creativity and initiative of the remarkable Vietnamese people. Both our nations should ratify this agreement and implement it. The changes it will bring should be embraced, not feared.”

The president was upbeat about his visit.

“It's been amazing,” he said. “I think it says a lot about what the people of Vietnam would like their relationship to America to be. It's basically been a big welcome for America, for the United States.”

Hillary "overcome with emotion" at changed relations with Vietnam
HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 19 (AFP) -

US First Lady Hillary Clinton Sunday thanked the tens of thousands of Vietnamese who had feted her husband on the streets, saying she had been "overcome with emotion" at the changed relations between the former foes.

"This has been a very special few days for my husband, my daughter, my mother and me, and this is in large part because of the warm welcome we

have
received first in Hanoi and now in Ho Chi Minh City," she told a women's
meeting here.

"I am very grateful to the government of Vietnam and to the ordinary
citizens who lined the streets ... and who stopped their bicycles and
mopeds
to wave as we passed by."

Clinton and his wife Hillary, on their last scheduled foreign trip, have
been given rapturous receptions in walkabouts in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh
in unprecedented scenes that have suprised both the communist authorities
and the American delegation.

Earlier in the day, US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, leading
talks on a bilateral trade deal signed in July, called the reception
"tremendous" and "heart-warming ... something all of us will always
remember, most particularly the president.

"Of all the trips we have taken over the last eight years, this is the one
that will always stand out. This is a very emotional visit."

The First Lady added: "It is hard not to notice how young and enthusiastic
this country is," saying the "resiliency and hard work" of the Vietnamese
people filled her with confidence for its future.

"I hope that future includes a close relationship with the United States,"
she told her audience in the French colonial opera house which served as
the
parliament building for the Saigon regime so disastrously backed by
Washington during the war.

"Over the past few days, I have found myself being overcome by emotion on
many occasions when I think how dramatically our relationship has changed
since my youth when our countries were at war.

"Back then I could never have imagined that the United States and Vietnam
would have signed an historic bilateral trade accord this summer," she
said,
referring to the July agreement which has been the cornerstone of her
husband's policy of rapprochement through trade.

"There is much that Vietnam and the United States can do together as we
build a new relationship," the First Lady said, announcing Washington would
provide 30 million dollars in assistance for the battle against AIDS here
over the next five years.

A total of 7.5 million dollars will be spent by the US Agency for
International Development on expanding its existing programme here while
22.5 million dollars will be spent by the Centre for Disease Control on
boosting screening and research.

The widely-trailed package is the largest boost to Washington's still small
aid budget, announced during the Clintons' visit here, despite heavy

pressure from the Vietnamese authorities for a much bigger gesture as recompense for the enormous destruction wrought by the war.

US aid officials acknowledge they had to "strip the closets bare" to offer even that amount as Clinton lacked the authority to commit new funds in the lameduck months of his presidency.

Like her husband in his televised address to the Vietnamese nation Friday, Hillary did not neglect to raise the issue of human rights.

People should not stay silent about the continuing litany of abuses against women and nor should they do so about the repression of religious and political freedoms, she told the meeting hosted by the state-sponsored women's union.

City council deputy chairwoman Pham Phuong Thao thanked the First Lady for her "message of peace and friendship" and said she hoped she would continue to promote closer ties with Vietnam when she joins the US Senate.

The Clintons had "turned a new page in relations" through their visit, the first to communist Vietnam by a US president.

Thai police arrest Vietnamese-American over leaflet stunt
BANGKOK, Nov 19 (AFP) -

A former South Vietnamese fighter pilot has been charged with forcing a Thai charter plane to fly him to Vietnam on a mission to drop anti-communist leaflets on Ho Chi Minh City ahead of US President Bill Clinton's visit, police said Sunday.

Ly Tong was charged with taking an aircraft out of Thailand without permission and inflicting physical harm on the pilot.

"According to our initial questioning, he considers himself a patriot who wants all the Vietnamese to fight against communism," a senior police spokesman said.

"We are investigating whether anybody else is involved with this matter."

A Thai foreign ministry spokesman said Ly Tong, who was granted US citizenship after fleeing his homeland at the end of the war, booked the plane and pilot on the pretext of taking some flying lessons.

Once aboard, he told the pilot he was carrying a grenade and would detonate it unless the aircraft diverted across the Gulf of Thailand and towards the former Saigon, flying low to evade radar detection.

He forced the pilot to buzz the city so he could dump the leaflets, which exhorted the Vietnamese people to rise up against their communist leaders.

Ly Tong was arrested on his return to Thailand aboard the light plane Friday

night, as Clinton prepared to arrive in the Vietnamese capital Hanoi.

"Initial investigations found the man worked alone, with no help from any group in the US or Thailand," said foreign ministry spokesman Don Pramudhvinai.

Thai authorities were keeping their Vietnamese counterparts informed on the progress of the investigation, and would begin liaising with US officials from Monday, he said.

"Whether or not there will be a question of extradition remains to be seen," he said.

Thai newspapers said the leaflet-dropping incident was the latest in a series of stunts Ly Tong has carried out over the past decade, including the 1992 hijacking of Vietnam Airlines jet which put him in jail for six years.

In January this year he reportedly flew from Florida to Cuba to drop leaflets over the communist enclave.

Meanwhile, police in Cambodia said they had arrested another Vietnamese-American man, Lee Sun Bao, on suspicion of recruiting for the anti-communist Free Vietnam movement.

"The arrest is based on a warrant from the military court on charges of forming an illegal armed force," a military police spokesman told AFP.

Vietnamese diplomats in Phnom Penh said they had not been informed of the case but that they believed the movement regularly used Cambodia as a base for operations.

On Sunday Clinton wrapped up his landmark trip to Vietnam with a visit to Ho Chi Minh City where he received an ecstatic welcome from tens of thousands of supporters.

Monday, November 20

Vietnam Protests Broken for Clinton
By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press Writer

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (AP) - Truong Thi Thu's story was a common one.

In January, she said, local officials took away her plots of mango and other fruit in Thu Duc district, promised to compensate her and sold the land to developers.

She was never paid.

So Thu joined more than 150 angry peasants who spent months camping out

beneath protest banners on a sidewalk near a government office. To the surprise of many, Vietnam's communist regime allowed the protest to go on; Protesters pondered the possibility that their complaints would reach President Clinton's ears.

"I hope he can do something for the people here," Thu said in an interview Saturday.

But police broke up the encampment before Clinton came to town, revealing the limits of government tolerance and underscoring its sensitivity to global scrutiny.

"Urgent! Urgent! Urgent!" read one sign that had been tied between two trees by the farmers. They maintained that corrupt officials swindled them out of their property.

"We have no hope because the government stole our land," protester Le Thi Nam said Sunday. She said she was told not to return to the protest site by the same authorities who had allowed the show of discontent to remain set up on a busy road.

Complaints about corruption by local officials are growing in Vietnam, where the government often embarks on infrastructure projects such as road-widening by pressuring landowners to turn over property.

Many of the protesters who lazed in hammocks and in deck chairs on Le Duan Street had prized land in the lush Mekong Delta, which produces over half the rice in the nation of 78 million people.

They displayed black-and-white snapshots of ramshackle dwellings that they said had been seized by greedy state bureaucrats.

Also hanging from ropes and banners were government certificates recognizing their sacrifices - for example, the loss of loved ones - during the war against the Americans and South Vietnamese government.

As Clinton made his way from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City late Saturday, police started removing protesters, erecting metal barriers at one end of Le Duan Street. Sunday, the site was vacant and clean; Gone were the cooking pots, straw mats and plastic water containers the farmers had left.

Human-rights groups have long criticized Vietnam for curtailing freedom of expression, and major aid donors such as the European Union have pressured its leadership to be more lenient on dissidents. The Southeast Asian country is one of the region's poorest.

Hanoi has relaxed its grip somewhat in recent years, freeing a number of prominent dissidents and allowing more religious freedom. The encroachment

of foreign traders, the Internet and satellite television have eased the climate of control.

Hanoi is also pursuing an anti-corruption campaign, perhaps partly because it wants to shore up its legitimacy in a country where passion for communist ideology is not widely evident.

Individuals who directly challenge the state are treated harshly. But officials may have acted with restraint toward the sit-in outside the central government office in Ho Chi Minh City because the farmers said they sought the help of the Hanoi government, not its overthrow.

On Saturday, plainclothes and uniformed police officers closely monitored the demonstrators and briefly detained two Associated Press reporters who approached the site.

Clinton sees irreversible trend to freedom in Vietnam
HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 20 (AFP) -

Communist Vietnam is moving along a "virtually irreversible" trend towards a free society, President Bill Clinton told CNN after his historic three-day mission of reconciliation to the country.

In an interview conducted Sunday before he left Vietnam for Washington, Clinton said that as the country became more integrated into the global economy and access to the Internet multiplied, "there will be more freedom."

"I think that the trend toward freedom is virtually irreversible, and these folks are too young, they are too vigorous" he said, referring to hundreds of thousands of the post-war generation of Vietnamese who lined the streets during his visit.

Clinton also revealed what went on inside a meeting with one of Vietnam's most unapologetic communists, party general secretary Le Kha Phieu, who later told the official press the war against the United States was the cradle of modern Vietnam.

"I had a nice little debate with the General Secretary of the Communist party here about our country, and I stoutly disputed that we were an imperialist country," said Clinton.

"We had never any imperialist designs here. The conflict here was over what self-determination for the Vietnamese people really meant, and what freedom and independence really meant."

During his three-day visit to Vietnam, Clinton stressed that it was time to consign historical differences to the past, in favor of anew future of trade-based cooperation.

He also said he found a visit to a site northwest of Hanoi where investigators are digging for the remains of a US pilot who crashed on a bombing raid in 1967 "profoundly moving."

"It was an overwhelming moment. But it should make every American proud," he said, remarking that the visit had made him think of four high school classmates who were later killed in the Vietnam War.

Clinton, who was vilified by political opponents when he was first running for the White House in 1992 for his historical opposition to the war, acknowledged that the conflict had cleaved deep divisions in both American and Vietnamese societies.

But he expressed the hope that his policy of engaging Vietnam, with which he normalized US relations in 1995 had gone some way to soothe the pain.

"My sense is that it did, that we're -- that at least the rifts are nowhere near what they were eight years ago, not to mention 10 or 20 years ago.

Tens of thousands await Clinton's arrival in Ho Chi Minh City

HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 18 (AFP) - Tens of thousands of people were lining the streets of Ho Chi Minh City late Saturday awaiting the arrival of US President Bill Clinton, the first visit by an American head of state since the fall of the former Saigon.

Huge crowds were massed outside the old presidential palace where North Vietnamese tanks famously crashed through the wall during their taking of the city in 1975.

Swelling masses of people also formed an almost unbroken line from the city centre all along the main road to the airport.

Side roads off the main roads were blocked by police barricades, behind which more people were massed.

The loss of Saigon brought an end to the Vietnam War and saw the United States' undignified helicopter exit from Vietnam via the US embassy roof.

Clinton was due to arrive in Vietnam's economic capital around midnight local time (1700 GMT).

The president is on a landmark visit to Vietnam, the first since the end of the Vietnam War and the last scheduled foreign trip of his presidency.

Clinton's Vietnam trip accomplishes two missions
By WALTER R. MEARS

11/18/2000

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - Bill Clinton came to "a country not a war," 31 years after he maneuvered to avoid the Vietnam draft but still "maintain my political viability." His missions were accomplished beyond the imagining of the youth who became the president.

He came to a Vietnam at peace, spoke of "shared suffering" in the war, and said he was honored to be the first president to see Hanoi. He did not mention his own turmoil over the war he protested against as a young man, when the city was a target for U.S. bombers, not diplomats.

Clinton was the third president to come to Vietnam, the first since the south fell in 1975 to the communists who rule now.

"Finally, America is coming to see Vietnam as your people have asked for years, as a country, not a war," Clinton said in a nationally televised speech Friday at Vietnam National University.

Perhaps, but slowly. The name of the country remains a synonym for the war to a generation of Americans.

The young Clinton said he wrote, spoke and marched against a war "I opposed and despised." He does not discuss those feelings now.

"I don't see this so much as coming to terms with the past as moving forward into the future," he said.

"The best thing that we can do to honor the sacrifice and service of those who believed on both sides that what they were doing was right is to find a way to build a different future, and that's what we're trying to do," Clinton said in an interview with The Associated Press.

As president, Clinton oversaw the normalization of diplomatic and economic relations with Vietnam, ending the U.S. embargo that dated from the communist victory in 1975.

In 1995, he opened diplomatic relations with Hanoi. In 1997, he sent an ambassador. This year, the United States and Vietnam signed a trade agreement.

Amid the diplomatic rounds, speeches and the trade conferences of Clinton's three-day visit, the indelible imprint of the war remained: in "the bravery shown and the tragedy suffered by all sides," in Clinton's own words; in efforts to find and identify the remains of Americans still missing in action; in the warnings he joined against the perils of land mines and unexploded bombs that kill or injure about 2,000 people a year.

By the military's count, there are 1,498 Americans unaccounted for in Vietnam. The remains of 283 have been returned to the United States since 1993.

Beyond that, the war has haunted American politics since the earliest chapters of U.S. involvement. The draft issue was raised against Clinton when he ran for president in 1992. He withstood it then, along with the

taunts of his critics about it later, after he became commander in chief.

President Kennedy sent military advisers to help the South Vietnamese resist the communist North in 1961. In 1965, President Johnson sent the first U.S. combat troops. By 1969, there were 534,000 Americans there.

President Nixon came to office promising to win the peace, but first, he widened the air war in Southeast Asia. President Ford presided over the last chapter, the surrender of Saigon on April 30, 1975.

The war cost 58,000 American lives, and 3 million Vietnamese dead.

For a generation, Vietnam was a dominant issue in American politics.

It forced Johnson from office after tens of thousands of demonstrators marched on Washington, then marched again. They closed campuses, set siege to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. Nixon won the election that year largely on the war issue. He promised peace with honor, but the war went on. The seeds of Watergate were in a Nixon operation to find Vietnam policy leaks.

Clinton avoided the draft in 1969 with a deferment to serve in an ROTC unit he never joined. He dropped the deferment that fall. "I decided to accept the draft in spite of my beliefs for one reason: To maintain my political viability within the system," he wrote.

By then, the draft was a lottery. He drew a high number and was not called.

Clinton wrote then that he was preparing himself "for a political life."

He lived it.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Walter R. Mears has reported on politics and government for The Associated Press for more than 35 years.

Clinton Ends Vietnam Visit; US Executives Encouraged
By Catherine McKinley
11/19/2000

HO CHI MINH CITY -(Dow Jones)- U.S. President Clinton Sunday wrapped up a four-day visit to Vietnam, telling foreign and local business executives in Ho Chi Minh City that he is "going home determined to continue the partnership we have (built) for the betterment of the people of Vietnam (and) the people of the United States."

During various speeches in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City - formerly Saigon - the president stressed Vietnam's potential for economic growth and his desire that the U.S. have a role in that growth.

"I hope this trip has helped the American people to see Vietnam in a

new way and has encouraged the Vietnamese to see America in a new way so that we will have a partnership in the future," he said.

Clinton arrived in Hanoi late Thursday and remained in the Vietnamese capital until Saturday evening - the first U.S. head of state ever to visit northern Vietnam.

During his stay there he spoke with all three of Vietnam's senior leaders, addressed students at the National University, and traveled to a site where Vietnamese and U.S. researchers are looking for the remains of U.S. forces personnel recorded as missing in action during the war that ended 25 years ago.

While touching on human rights and other issues regarded as sensitive by the government here, Clinton's address to students focused largely on Vietnam's integration in to the global market place and its efforts to liberalize its domestic economy.

According to Gene Sperling, the U.S.'s National Economic Advisor, meetings with Communist Party General Secretary Le Kha Phieu, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai and President Tran Duc Luong also focused largely economic issues.

He noted that the three leaders openly discussed reform plans, and that General Secretary Phieu - known for his relatively anti-reform stance - "described Vietnam as an economy in which there were several sectors - a state sector, a cooperative sector, a private sector - in which there was no particular preference between which of those sectors was most likely to lead future growth."

In Ho Chi Minh City Sunday, the president again focused on Vietnam's economic future and the role of its huge young population in that future.

Well over half of all Vietnamese were born after 1975. Indicating their interest in the presidential visit, large numbers of young people lined the streets of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City this weekend hoping to catch a glimpse of the U.S. head of state.

"Vietnam has an ancient history, but it is still a very young nation. Your best days clearly lie ahead," the president said during a speech at the International Container Terminal, which is expected to benefit from increased Vietnamese exports once the U.S. and Vietnam ratify a bilateral trade agreement they signed in July.

"The trade agreement with the United States will help (Vietnam) to develop a more open, sophisticated free market based on international rules of law," the president said, adding that "that will bring more rewards for the creativity and initiative of the remarkable Vietnamese people."

Clinton in 1994 lifted a trade embargo on Vietnam and, two years later, established diplomatic with Hanoi. His trip here is viewed by many as a personal one, during which the president can visit the country he once refused to fight in.

"I have been deeply moved by my visit here," Clinton said Sunday. "I came here...because I believe that America and Vietnam are linked not just by a shared and often tragic past...but (by a) bright future," he said.

Business Confidence Growing After Visit, Govt. Reform

After several years of shunning Vietnam because of corruption, red tape and other difficulties, the business executives attending Clinton's addresses this week were eager to echo the president's positive views.

"The fact that the U.S. president has (visited Vietnam) has given the government some credibility. People will look at that," said Raymond Pisarczyk, a financial analyst with PriceWaterhouseCoopers in Ho Chi Minh City.

He noted that the president's high-profile visit comes on top of a series of government moves to improve Vietnam's investment climate.

"Granted, (investment in Vietnam) is still risky, but there's a move to make things more stable and more beneficial for businesses that come to work here," he noted.

As well as signing a trade deal with the U.S. that compels Hanoi to open its economy according to a strict time table, Vietnam's socialist government has this year amended its foreign investment law in an attempt to get rid of some of the existing barriers to investment and has also made clear strides toward a more liberal private sector. It has opened a small stock market and has promulgated a law giving greater freedoms to non-state companies.

In light of the recent changes, Gill Watts, a U.S. entrepreneur and veteran of the U.S-Vietnam war now based in Ho Chi Minh City, noted Sunday that he's seen a palpable change in U.S. corporate attitudes toward Vietnam.

"American businesses are really coming here now. There's a lot of activity. There are more new people," he said, speaking after Clinton's closing address. "It is happening. I can feel it."

Earlier Sunday, the president announced a \$200 million line of credit from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, or OPIC, to support U.S. investment in Vietnam.

"When we first arrived here in 1995 it was hard to conceive of an American president and Vietnamese government officials coming together in a time of peace," said Vada Manager, Director Of Global Issues Management for Nike, which, according to Manager, now produces almost 12% of its total output in Vietnam and comprises 8% of the country's annual exports.

-By Catherine McKinley; (84 4 8250732); cmkinley@ap.org

VIETNAM WAR'S OLD MINES CLAIM NEW VICTIMS

Associated Press

11/19/2000

HANOI, Vietnam -- When President Clinton reached out to shake Hoan Quang Sy's hand, the 11-year-old boy responded with a traditional show of respect, extending both arms. But the left hand was missing, the result of a bomb from a war over long before his birth.

Sy was among four young boys who met the president Saturday during an event highlighting efforts to clear an estimated 3 million land mines and 300,000 tons of unexploded ordnance scattered about Vietnam.

The youths were maimed in the central province of Quang Tri, which straddled the Demilitarized Zone during the Vietnam War and was the site of fierce fighting.

Clinton squeezed the boys' shoulders and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton put her arm around the short, slightly stocky Sy as the couple viewed an exhibition of art by children injured by unexploded ordnance.

One had suffered severe burns to his face that led to extensive treatment, including eight months at Boston's Shriners Hospital; more reconstructive surgery is possible. A second lost his left hand and right eye. His twin brother still has fragments in his body from the same explosion.

Noting that unexploded leftovers of war still wound or kill at least 2,000 Vietnamese a year, Clinton called land mines "the curse of innocent children all over the world." He said the United States will help remove them in Vietnam and war zones in Africa and the Balkans.

Yet neither nation has signed the 139-country treaty outlawing land mines; the United States stockpiles an estimated 11 million of them, and Vietnam is still listed as a producer. Washington says mines remain a necessary deterrent protecting South Korea from the North.

The United States has provided more than \$3 million since July to buy mine-removing equipment and survey the countryside. Clinton said Washington had spent \$350 million in the past eight years for such efforts around the world.

"I think we should do more," he said.

Clinton tour of Vietnam opens door a bit wider

David E. Sanger

11/17/2000

HANOI, Vietnam -- More than a quarter century after a war that cost 58,000 American lives and shaped the politics of his generation, President Clinton arrived here last night promising a new relationship with Vietnam, a country at once fascinated by its former enemy and ambivalent about opening its society and economy to a world that America dominates.

As he stepped into the cool nighttime air, with barely two months left in office, Clinton became the first president to set foot in Vietnam since Richard Nixon made an unscheduled six-hour visit to U.S. troops outside Saigon in 1969. Clinton is the only president to visit Hanoi, which as the headquarters of the North Vietnamese command was the target of countless U.S. bombing sorties.

He received a formal state welcome from President Tran Duc Luong this morning as a Vietnamese military band played the national anthems of both countries at the edge of Ba Dinh Square, where the remains of Vietnamese revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh rest in a mausoleum.

Clinton opposed the Vietnam war as a young man, and did not serve in the military. But on this trip he plans to focus on the future. He has made Vietnam a test case of his proposition that deepening commercial ties create a powerful gravitational pull that can draw former enemies, even hard-line communist governments, into gradual alignment with the West. It is still far from clear that experiment will work in Vietnam.

Last night, Air Force One descended through the same skies where B-52s once flew, coming in low over rice paddies that once were dotted with bomb craters and now bear billboards advertising Korean-made cars and electronics.

A motorcade sped the president over the Red River into one of Asia's most gracious capitals, where people began to line the streets in groups of a dozen or so, almost none of them old enough to remember the war.

Shortly before midnight the crowd grew to thousands as Clinton, in a limousine bearing Washington, D.C., license plates, drove by on the way to his hotel, just a mile or so from the simple house where Ho and his generals led the war.

But that carefully preserved site, one of the city's most-visited attractions, and Ho's mausoleum, have been carefully omitted from Clinton's three-day itinerary. So have most other reminders of the past.

Except for a trip tomorrow morning to a site where investigators believe they have just found the remains of a U.S. pilot whose plane crashed outside the city 35 years ago, the White House has said Clinton will not be looking back at the war.

Today, Clinton will give a speech at Hanoi National University that will be broadcast nationwide. Besides Hanoi, Clinton also will

visit Ho Chi Minh City, the former Saigon, before leaving Vietnam on Sunday.

What little he has said on this trip suggests that Clinton's time as president -- and the decisions he has had to make about military interventions -- has led him to think differently about the hard choices, from bombing the north to expanding the U.S. military presence here, that President Lyndon Johnson made.

"I see now how hard it was for him," Clinton said the other day, on his way to Brunei. "I believe he did what he thought was right under the circumstances."

The president added: "One of the things that I have learned, too, is when you decide to employ force, there will always be unintended consequences."

Asked whether America owes Vietnam an apology, though, he quickly said: "No, I don't," and left it at that.

Instead, he wants to focus on Vietnam's economic and political potential. In Brunei during an economic summit, Clinton noted that this year, for the first time, Vietnam is the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, "which means it is heading an organization that was invented to contain it."

Clinton was preceded in Vietnam earlier yesterday by his wife, New York Sen.-elect Hillary Rodham Clinton, who went shopping on one of Hanoi's main streets and drew a crowd of hundreds of curious residents. Today, Hillary Clinton is scheduled to visit a village outside of Hanoi.

President Clinton will spend a considerable part of the visit celebrating the results of his 7-year-long effort to draw Vietnam out of its self-imposed economic isolation, and his bet that both Vietnam and China will discover that prosperity in the information age necessitates a measure of political openness and the free flow of information.

In fact, Clinton and the U.S. ambassador in Vietnam, Pete Peterson, a former prisoner of war in the now-demolished Hanoi Hilton, argue that personal freedoms have improved since the administration made its overtures to the country in 1994.

That year, Clinton lifted the trade embargo that had been in place since the fall of Saigon 25 years ago. With the support of former POWs in Congress, including Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., he offered diplomatic recognition to Vietnam in 1995.

He dispatched his secretary of state at the time, Warren Christopher, to lay the groundwork for a new relationship, and Christopher warned that economic reform was akin to "a passage over a ravine. You cannot do it by taking several little steps; only one giant leap will get you across."

The Vietnamese ignored him. It took five years to negotiate a comprehensive trade agreement that promises -- but hardly guarantees -
- far more vigorous economic ties between the United States and a nation of 78 million.

Ho Chi Minh City expecting business boost from Clinton visit By
Olivier Baube

HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 18 (AFP) - US President Bill Clinton will be in Vietnam's southern economic centre of Ho Chi Minh City Sunday to talk business with local entrepreneurs won over by America's return to the country, this time as an economic force.

Twenty-five years after their last soldiers escaped from the roof of the US embassy in what was then Saigon, the Americans are back -- and the locals are not complaining.

Dang Le Nguyen Vu, who will meet Clinton on Sunday, has spent six years setting up a firm selling and brokering coffee, of which Vietnam is a major regional producer.

His company now employs more than 4,000 people and turns in a profit, its founder said without wishing to add more. The firm is hoping Clinton's visit will bring American investment to Vietnam and allow it to sell more produce in the US.

But for that to happen, Dang Le Nguyen Vu stressed, the trade accord signed by the two countries in July must be ratified by their respective legislatures, which has yet to happen.

The July deal will offer to Vietnamese products, including coffee, the same favourable access to American markets enjoyed by most other countries.

This commercial advantage, paradoxically, will also benefit some American firms established in Vietnam.

Sports giant Nike, who came to Vietnam in 1995, a year after the US commercial embargo of the country was lifted, now employs 46,000 people in five factories in the country.

"We are the most important employer in Vietnam after the state," said a proud Chris Helzer, a Nike manager in Vietnam.

The US-Vietnam trade deal will allow Nike to increase its sales to the US and perhaps open new production sites.

"Bill Clinton's visit is extremely important, it will make possible the opening of a new era," Helzer said.

"Vietnam is very attractive, the government is stable and very keen to develop foreign investment," he added.

Vietnam's gross domestic product per capita reached 220 dollars in

1994, eight years after the policy of "Doi Moi," or opening up, was launched. Last year it had climbed to 372 dollars.

"Vietnam is one of the most stable economies in Asia," said Swamy Vaidanath, a manager in the country for Procter and Gamble, also present since 1995.

Moreover "our turnover is 270 billion dong (22 million dollars) a year, and it increases each year by approximately 20 per cent," he added.

There have been difficulties at first, Vaidanath said, "but we see progress being made day after day, particularly in regard to bureaucracy."

Nike has also suffered its share of teething troubles, but these have now been solved.

"We have learned to respect local practices better," Helzer said.

Although there is still widespread counterfeiting and piracy, something the US firms would like to see the local authorities act firmly against, do American businesses encounter major problems engaging with the country's former enemy?

No, US business people chorus.

"We meet only enthusiasm in our relations with the Vietnamese," said Coca Cola representative Robin Wilson.

Monday, November 20
South China Morning Post

President heads home the people's hero

US President Bill Clinton left Vietnam last night after an historic three-day visit lit up by a hugely enthusiastic reception from ordinary people but which drew stinging defiance from the country's Communist Party chief.

Preaching a message of reconciliation between two foes whose bitter war 25 years ago ended in defeat for the United States, Mr Clinton said the trend in Vietnam towards freedom "is virtually irreversible".

"These folks are too young and too vigorous," Mr Clinton added of the huge crowds of mainly young people who have thronged to glimpse him.

The first US president to visit Vietnam since the war, Mr Clinton, his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea departed for Washington from Ho Chi Minh City - formerly Saigon, the capital of the US-backed South Vietnamese regime defeated by northern communists in 1975.

It was to that victory which Communist Party Secretary-General, Le Kha Phieu, harked back when, in talks with the President, he demanded the US respect Vietnam's political system.

Mr Clinton made a live televised address to the nation on Friday and was greeted on his arrival in Hanoi by cheering crowds of tens of thousands. Similar ecstatic crowds followed his every step yesterday in Ho Chi Minh City.

General Phieu's tone was in sharp contrast to that of the reformers in the Government who welcomed Mr Clinton's visit, and was a rebuff to his pleas to heal "shared suffering".

The Vietnam News Agency quoted General Phieu as saying when he met Mr Clinton: "The resistance wars brought the Vietnamese people national independence and reunification to advance the country towards socialism, so for the Vietnamese people the war was not ultimately a story of darkness, sadness and unhappiness. The future of the Vietnamese nation is independence and socialism . . . socialism [will] not only exist but further develop."

But in Ho Chi Minh City, Mr Clinton said: "No one should deny Vietnam the opportunity to grow." He said the country would only fulfil its potential if the authorities loosened their grip on dissent. He said the thrust of July's trade deal between Hanoi and Washington was to open Vietnam to new ideas.

"Imagine how much more you will achieve as even more young people gain the freedom to shape the decisions that will affect their lives," he told business leaders at a port in the country's economic capital. He pledged US\$200 million (HK\$1.5 billion) to help implement July's deal.

The rapturous welcome accorded Mr Clinton and his wife on their last scheduled foreign trip has taken Vietnam's regime by surprise. A Vietnamese diplomat said: "Over human rights, the authorities are very suspicious of the American influence on the younger generation, who did not fight in the war and are more and more susceptible to foreign cultural values."

Mr Clinton has been free to take walkabouts, make a number of public speeches and visit excavations for the remains of Americans still listed as missing in action.

He met John Baptist Pham Minh Man, archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City, in a demonstration of support for the right to religious worship.

"Welcome! Hello!" cried out one man as Mr Clinton walked down a choked street of small shops in the centre of Ho Chi Minh City, shaking hands every time he stopped with the dozens of Vietnamese crowded around.

The President sat in a museum courtyard to discuss Vietnam's future with young people in business, academia, the arts and the media.

"One of the great debates every society must have is how to balance individual freedom with the need for . . . cohesion of families, communities and nation," Mr Clinton said.

The President said his reception had been "a big welcome for America and for the United States". "I think it says a lot about what the people of Vietnam would like their relationship with America to be."

Vietnam Government Wary of Worship
By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA, Associated Press Writer

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam (AP) - As their ancestors had done for centuries, ethnic Chinese worshippers burned incense, bowed, and deposited tokens of oranges and grimy bank notes beneath the smoke-stained rafters of an ornate Chinese temple.

``What did you pray for?" To Lam, a 65-year-old worker at the Thien Hau Temple in old Saigon's Chinatown, asked a devotee Saturday as he hoisted a burning coil of incense onto a wire. The worshipper, one of many who prefer to keep their wishes secret, only smiled.

The previous evening, a scattering of Roman Catholics in the pews of the dimly lit, cavernous Notre Dame Cathedral sang hymns as rain and wind swept the square outside. A few bats glided through the arched doorway past tarpaulin-draped cyclos - three-wheeled bicycle taxis.

Such daily scenes of spirituality belie a troubling theme that shadowed President Clinton's trip to Vietnam: charges that the communist government curtails unauthorized religious expression out of fear of threats to its authority.

In a demonstration of support for the right to worship, Clinton was to meet Sunday with John Baptist Pham Minh Man, archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City.

The Southeast Asian nation of 78 million officially endorses religious freedom, but international human rights groups and the State Department cite a pattern of harassment and imprisonment of Buddhist and other religious leaders.

On a visit laden with symbolism at the close of his presidency, Clinton sought reconciliation with Vietnam a quarter-century after the U.S.-backed South surrendered to the North in a conflict in which more than 3 million Vietnamese and 58,000 Americans died.

But Vietnamese officials were cool to Clinton's speech Friday about religious and civil liberties.

``In our experience, guaranteeing the right to religious worship and the right to political dissent does not threaten the stability of a society,"

Clinton said. ``Instead, it builds people's confidence in the fairness of our institutions."

Predominantly Buddhist Vietnam, which is pursuing closer trade links with the outside world, appears to have become more tolerant of religious worship in recent years.

Last year, authorities did not intervene when more than 200,000 Roman Catholics streamed into the village of La Vang in central Vietnam to commemorate the reported sighting of an apparition of the Virgin Mary. There are 8 million Catholics in Vietnam, the most in any Southeast Asian country except the Philippines.

Also in 1999, the government officially recognized the Hoa Hao sect of Buddhism and 50,000 of its members were allowed to attend a religious festival, the group's largest gathering since 1975.

Still, human rights observers worry that more outspoken religious groups are being made targets by the government.

``The government continues to ban independent religious associations and all religious groups have to register with the state," said Mike Jendrzeczyk, Asia director at the Washington office of Human Rights Watch.

In September, five members of the Hoa Hao sect were given jail terms of up to three years for complaining about abuses of power by local officials in An Giang province.

Last month, Thich Quang Do, a monk of the outlawed Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, was barred from delivering aid to Mekong Delta flood victims under a government ban on independent relief distribution. But shortly before Clinton's visit, Hanoi relented and let him proceed.

Happiness, better business and long life - not religious freedom - are on the minds of those who clasp their hands in prayer at the temple of Thien Hau, or Goddess of the Sea. ``I come here just as my parents and grandparents used to," said Tran Le, a 38-year-old tailor.

The temple is a popular stop for tourists who marvel at the ancient, iron bells, carved, painted pillars and gold leaf masks of the Chinese deity. Temple worker To Lam occasionally bangs a drum to summon the spirits, and the echo mingles with the chatter of children at a neighboring school.

History might play a role in the decision of Vietnam's leaders to keep a tight rein on any signs of religious dissent. In the 1960s, Buddhist monks galvanized protest against South Vietnam's rulers by immolating themselves in public.

``Maybe the Buddhists represent an alternative seat of legitimacy in the minds of the Vietnamese people," said Stephen Denney, Vietnam coordinator

for Amnesty International USA. ``The Communist Party, as an ideology, doesn't really have an appeal anymore."

Clinton greeted warmly on historic Vietnam visit
Robin Wright, David Lamb
11/17/2000

HANOI - In a trip designed to bring formal closure to one of the most painful chapters in American history, President Clinton today became the first U.S. president to visit Vietnam since the war ended - and the first ever to visit Hanoi, one of the last bastions of communist rule.

More than symbolic, the historic visit - a quarter-century after U.S.-backed South Vietnam surrendered to North Vietnam - has substantive and strategic importance. The goal is to expand and deepen ties that could, over time, leave a stronger U.S. imprint than the war did, according to Vietnamese officials and Americans alike.

"For totally different reasons, this could rank with (President) Nixon's trip to China - beyond its contribution to closing a chapter for both Americans and Vietnamese," said Stanley Karnow, who covered Vietnam as a journalist and wrote the acclaimed book "Vietnam: A History."

Clinton was greeted with full state honors at Hanoi's Presidential Palace by Vietnamese counterpart Tran Duc Luong and posed with him for pictures beneath an enormous bust of Ho Chi Minh, America's Vietnam War nemesis.

"I am glad to be here and I'm looking forward to building a new future. This is very moving this morning, this welcoming ceremony," Clinton said.

Even though the visit to a city once bombed by U.S. warplanes received scant advance publicity, Vietnamese lined the 15-mile route between airport and downtown in darkness, some just looking on and others waving and clapping when the president's motorcade passed.

Clinton flew here from economic talks with Pacific Rim leaders in Brunei, where he met separately with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and Chinese President Jiang Zemin. Clinton and Jiang made progress toward curtailing China's missile exports and tentatively decided to resume human-rights talks, a senior State Department official said.

Clinton was accompanied by his daughter Chelsea and mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham. First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived yesterday from Israel where she delivered a eulogy at the funeral of Leah Rabin, widow of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Regional commitment

Strategically, Clinton's three-day visit signals that the United

States is committed to remaining a major part of the Pacific community. That's important to a Vietnam fearful of a strong and growing Chinese influence in the region.

"The Vietnamese are deathly afraid of the Chinese and have been for 5,000 years," so in an ironic twist, Hanoi now wants the United States in the region as a counterbalance to China, author Karnow said.

Substantively, Clinton will encourage political and economic openings, press human-rights and religious-freedom issues, promote trade and announce joint programs in education, law enforcement and health to foster cooperation.

The visit will also mark a turning point in the American psyche, analysts say.

"It's a curious thing. A lot of American kids don't know about Vietnam, yet it's become a buzzword about far more than the war," Karnow said. "It resonates.

"Ever since then, when the United States has become involved in a conflict, the big question is whether it will become another Vietnam. Vietnam has become an adjective. This trip helps exorcise that ghost."

Criticism from some

The fact that Clinton, who protested the war and avoided the draft, is the first U.S. leader to make the trip sparked bitter reactions in some quarters.

"He has a lot of nerve after he dodged the draft and failed to do his part," said retired Adm. Thomas Moorer, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman from 1970-74. "I wrote to the mothers of the men who were killed, and I know how they feel. I don't see how he has the nerve to go. It's totally inappropriate."

The war cost 58,000 American lives and split the U.S. emotionally and politically. The U.S. military buildup began in 1961, growing to 60,000 combat troops within four years and to 543,000 by 1969. U.S. forces in 1973 made a humiliating withdrawal that still haunts the Pentagon. North Vietnam's army captured Saigon in 1975, leading to the unification of the country under communist control.

Although the remains of 283 Americans have been discovered and repatriated since 1993, 1,498 Americans are still listed as missing in action.

The losses to the Vietnamese were staggering: 3 million dead, thousands missing and an economy left in tatters.

Vietnamese admiration

Yet, Clinton is widely admired in Vietnam.

In a cautious rapprochement, Clinton lifted a trade embargo against Vietnam in 1994 and the next year restored diplomatic relations. He opened the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi in 1996 and in 1998 issued his first waiver of a law that bars trade relations with communist nations that deny citizens the right to emigrate. In July, the United States and Vietnam signed a sweeping trade agreement.

"I think it's a new chapter," Clinton said then. "The thing that makes America work over time is our ability to visualize new futures and achieve them."

"Oh, we'll miss Clinton so much. He's done many good things, especially for Vietnam," said Nguyen Anh Diep, a college-educated waitress at Au Lac Cafe in Hanoi. "I wish he could stay in office another 10 years."

Indeed, as historians judge his legacy, Vietnam is likely to be rated one of Clinton's major contributions, experts say.

One focus of the trip is reflected in the delegation accompanying Clinton, which includes executives from more than 30 U.S. corporations, among them General Motors, Boeing and Coca-Cola. Representatives of another 20 or so major U.S. companies have come for the visit, although not part of the official delegation.

The visit produced almost immediate financial benefits for Boeing. Vietnam Airlines today signed a letter of intent to purchase three Boeing 777-200 ER aircraft.

Boeing Vice President Ray Bracy and Nguyen Xuan Hien, general director of the state-run flag carrier, signed the letter at a Hanoi hotel.

"We will aim for delivery within two or three years," Bracy said.

Christopher Flint, sales director for the Asia-Pacific region, said a sales offer of about \$480 million would probably be made Monday. The deal would require approval from the Vietnamese government.

Senator-elect Clinton proves popular in Vietnam.
By Robert Birsell

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam, Nov 19 (Reuters) - U.S. Senator-elect Hillary Rodham Clinton may be setting out on her own political career, but she stuck firmly to her role as first lady while accompanying her husband in Vietnam.

Yet even with a modest programme, she made her mark. Hillary proved almost as popular with the people of Vietnam as her husband

and
she sparked near pandemonium on the streets of normally staid Hanoi when
she
went to visit an art gallery and some shops soon after her arrival on
Thursday.

Police struggled to hold back hundreds of excited residents who jammed the
streets to catch a glimpse of the first lady, and screamed with delight
when
she greeted the crowd.

She seemed pleased by her reception and moved by how far the two nations
have
come since the Vietnam war.

"Over the last few days I have found myself overcome by emotion on many
occasions when I thought about how dramatically our relationship has
changed
since my own youth when our countries were at war," she said on Sunday
afternoon.

Just days ago Mrs Clinton was campaigning hard for her U.S. Senate seat,
shaking hands at agriculture shows in upstate New York.

This week, she was gliding along in black limousines with a coterie of
White
House aides and embassy officials to smooth her path in Vietnam.

Mrs Clinton joined her husband at most of his official state functions and
declined opportunities to talk to the large press corps traveling with the
president.

She focused her activities in Vietnam to meeting local women and discussing
their issues, something she traditionally does on overseas trips with the
president.

INTENSE SPOTLIGHT

"What's been interesting is that she's leaving the White House under an
even
more intense spotlight than she entered it," said a senior U.S. official.

"A lot of her activities have garnered more attention than normal," he
said.
"This is, in many ways, a traditional role for her trip, it's just being
done
under a more intense spotlight."

The official said while she was apparently enjoying her trip to Vietnam,
Mrs
Clinton was also thinking about her new career and keeping in touch with
the
United States.

"She seems to be enjoying it but she's also spending more time thinking and preparing (for) her new life in the Senate," the official said.

In an afternoon speech in Ho Chi Minh City, the U.S. first lady implicitly called on Vietnam to offer greater political freedoms to its people and to respect human rights.

"We should speak out in the face of human rights abuses," she said. "There should be no silence when the press is muzzled, when religious freedom is suppressed or political expression is denied."

The Clintons are due to leave Vietnam for home on Sunday evening.

Vietnam Hillary
By TINI TRAN
11/18/2000

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - Trafficking of women and children, domestic violence and children's health were among issues discussed Saturday at a forum of top Vietnamese women leaders attended by Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Mrs. Clinton, who arrived Thursday to join her husband, U.S. President Bill Clinton, on his historic trip to Vietnam, has made a point of having a separate agenda that focuses on women's issues.

In her opening remarks, she referred to the commonalities shared by American and Vietnamese women.

"Women from both sides suffered greatly during the war," Mrs. Clinton told the audience. "In the past, we were united mostly by a shared pain, but I am encouraged that today we are united by a vision of a brighter, shared future."

"There's a lot we can learn from each other and a lot we can do together," she said.

Moderated by Vi Le Peterson, wife of U.S. Ambassador Pete Peterson, the forum included eight speakers representing a cross-section of government, business and youth leaders.

Panelists included Nguyen Thi Hang, who heads the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs; Pham Chi Lan, vice president of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Nguyen Thi Mai Thanh, general director of REE, one of the four companies listed on the new stock market.

The forum was also attended by members of the U.S. delegation to Vietnam.

Mrs. Clinton, who was elected to the U.S. Senate on Nov. 7, has chosen to spotlight women during her trip to Vietnam.

On Friday, accompanied by her daughter, Chelsea, Mrs. Clinton visited

a project of special interest to her - a "microcredit" program focusing on alleviating poverty among rural women.

Addressing a town hall meeting of women who had benefited from the lending program, Clinton said, "For many years, I've believed in the power of small loans. You have once again proved what can be done by women with some small help and hard work."

"The Affectionate Fund," which has given loans to about 11,000 women over the past eight years, is modeled after the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, which gives loans those considered credit risks by mainstream banks.

Mrs. Clinton is scheduled to make a major speech Sunday afternoon while her husband addresses a business reception.

War children divided between two countries
HO CHI MINH CITY, Nov 19 (AFP) -

Nguyen Soa Thi's tortured family history is a microcosm of the divided society left behind by the American pull-out at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975.

Fathered by an American GI whose name she never knew and taunted for her parentage as her grew up, Soa Thi left her homeland in 1993.

She was one of 9,000 who have moved to the United States since 1987 when a programme enabling children of US troops and their families to travel there was established.

Leaving should have been easy. "At school I was always being humiliated," she said. "The best I could expect was for people to stare at me in the street. I could feel their hostility."

However under the rules of the programme, Soa Thi travelled with her mother and brother but had to leave behind her husband Nguyen Phu Tai as she married after her application to enter the US was accepted.

After six months of intensive English lessons in the Philippines, she ended up in Fargo, North Dakota at the age of 23.

She lasted two years but, missing her husband, decided to return to Vietnam.

The couple's daughter, born in the Philippines, did not see her father until 1995.

After her return Soa Thi tried in vain to persuade the American authorities to allow her husband to come with her to Fargo.

Eventually, in 1997, her own green card expired and her American dream was finally at an end.

"Living in the US without my husband was too hard," she told AFP. The couple, who now have two children, do not live in luxury but their large house just outside the city is comfortable.

She works as a dressmaker. Her husband is employed by a company that rents tool machines.

"Everything is okay for us but it would be much better for our children's future if we were in America," she said.

Of her father, she added: "My mother attempted to find him in the US without success. She is not trying any more."

Today attitudes to her and fellow Amerasians are changing, she said.

"There are many foreigners in Ho Chi Minh City and I'm better accepted."

In fact, less and less children of American troops are moving to the US and others have, like Soa Thi, returned to their native land.

In the year to April, a total of 982 people -- the children of GIs and Vietnamese women, and their family members combined -- moved to the US, according to the American consulate here.

But a shortage of candidates means the numbers are now much lower than they were at the beginning of the 1990s.

But she still feels a longing for the crisp cold and huge prairies of Dakota. "I never knew that it could get so cold," she said with a smile. "Now my mother is getting old and I would like to see her again."

Her chances are slim.

She is a regular visitor to the US Consulate but her attempts to see the official in charge are blocked by the security guards.

From Bill Clinton's landmark visit here, she is hoping for just one thing -- that it will make it easier for people like her to return to what was almost her new country.

Monday, November 20

Communist Chief, Clinton Debate U.S.
By PAUL ALEXANDER, Associated Press Writer

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) - The tone was pleasant when President Clinton stopped at Communist Party headquarters in Hanoi.

But he got an earful from Vietnam's top communist leader, who labeled the

United States an imperialist country and said the Vietnam War reunited his nation under a socialist system that has endured.

In a gesture of reconciliation, Clinton went to the party headquarters Saturday and chatted amiably with party secretary Le Kha Phieu, head of an 18-member politburo that determines Vietnamese government policy.

"I hope you have enjoyed your stay," Phieu said.

"I'm very much enjoying my time here," Clinton replied. "The people have been very kind."

But the two exchanged more than pleasantries.

"I had a nice little debate with the general secretary of the Communist Party here about our country, and I stoutly disputed that we were an imperialist country. We had never had any imperialist designs here," Clinton said in an interview with CNN that was broadcast Sunday.

"The conflict here was over what self-determination for the Vietnamese people really meant, and what freedom and independence really meant."

He said the trade agreement the two nations intend to implement will likely force more openness in Vietnam. "I think that the trend toward freedom is virtually irreversible," Clinton said.

Phieu said Vietnam cannot separate its future from the past.

"Regarding the lessons of the past, the important thing is that those in power should not repeat what happened in the past," the Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan quoted Phieu as saying. "For us, the past was the root, the foundation, the strength of the present and future."

"The result of our anti-aggression resistance was that we gained independence, reunified our country and brought our country to socialism. Therefore, for us, the past was not a dark, sorrowful and unhappy past."

Without asking directly for help, he repeated Vietnam's contention that Washington bears some responsibility for dealing with effects of the war still being felt 25 years after the war - particularly the impact of unexploded ordnance and toxic defoliants.

Phieu also gave Clinton a history lesson on the war from Hanoi's perspective.

"I agree with you that we should not forget the past, should not repeat the past," he said. "The important thing is to have a correct understanding of the nature of that past."

"What was the cause of our resistance against foreign aggression? The root cause was because imperialism colonized other countries."

Phieu said Washington never should have tried to make the 17th parallel - which had been used to split Vietnam into the communist North and U.S.-backed South - as a de facto frontier.

``It was extremely illogical that a country in the Western hemisphere wanted to make Vietnam's 17th parallel its border," he said. ``Unable to reunify the country by peace, we had to use the liberation war."

Phieu said the country's future will continue on a strong socialist path and that the state sector will always play a leading role in the economy. Socialism still exists in Vietnam, despite more than 30 years of war and 19 years of a U.S. embargo.

``In today's international relations, all countries need cooperation for mutual development. We respect other nations' choices of lifestyle and political systems," Phieu said. ``We also demand other nations respect our country's political system and choices."

Clinton sets steps to boost investment in Vietnam.
By Randall Mikkelsen

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam, Nov 19 (Reuters) - President Bill Clinton on Sunday announced new steps to boost U.S. investment in Vietnam, including a \$200 million line of credit, as he urged the communist-ruled country to open its economy to "a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation and competition."

"Your best days clearly lie ahead, as you continue to find the means to release the skills and the ingenuity of your people," Clinton said on the final day of his three-day visit to Vietnam. It is the first visit by an American president since Richard Nixon in 1969. Clinton spoke on the banks of the Saigon River at a large computerised container shipping terminal, a joint venture of a Vietnamese state owned company and American President Lines.

He addressed the crowd in a parking lot surrounded by shipping containers of many colors, with two massive loading cranes looming over it.

Clinton announced a \$200 million credit line, through the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation, aimed at supporting U.S. investors seeking financing for projects in Vietnam.

The White House also announced new contracts or letters of intent with American firms, including plans for Vietnam to buy three Boeing 777-200 ER commercial aircraft.

The United States and Vietnam had agreed to begin new high-level talks on economic cooperation, it added.

Clinton said the U.S.-Vietnamese trade agreement signed last July would be

an engine for Vietnam's development, and called for both countries to ratify it despite a lack of enthusiasm for the pact in both legislatures.

"Both our nations should ratify this agreement and implement it. The changes it will bring should be embraced not feared," he said.

Vietnamese officials say the National Assembly will not take up the pact in its current session, and the U.S. Congress is not expected to consider ratification until sometime next year.

Vietnamese leaders continue to debate the level of economic openness they are willing to accept, and many U.S. politicians have grown wary over trade pacts in the face of labor and environmental opposition, or concerns over human rights.

But Clinton said it was clear Vietnam needed to unleash its fledgling private economy to support its growing population of young people.

"Your country's leaders have acknowledged that state-owned enterprises alone cannot create enough good jobs for all of them, but Vietnam's young people have the talent and ideas to create the jobs of the future for themselves in a new era of entrepreneurship, innovation and competition. That must be the future for Vietnam and its young people," he said.

The president also said economic cooperation was helping Vietnam and the United States heal the wounds of the Vietnam war, which ended with a communist victory in 1975 after 58,000 Americans and 3 million Vietnamese were killed.

"The years of animosity are past," Clinton said.

REFUGEES RECALL HARDSHIPS
SPENCER HEINZ of the Oregonian Staff
11/18/2000

Even as a figurehead of the free world makes a historic visit to Vietnam, Oregon's refugees remain not so free as others might imagine.

Bill Clinton is the first U.S. president to walk in Vietnam since the war ended in 1975, yet some Vietnam refugees say the communist government will make trouble for their families back home if refugees say what they think about the government.

Some say opportunities are huge but that chronic government corruption and religious oppression continue to keep their homeland down. Of those who talk, some decline to share their names.

"You really can't do business with the Vietnam government at this point," said a 41-year-old business owner in outer Northeast Portland.

He said he escaped Vietnam in 1981. He said that he has become a United States citizen, that he has returned for three or four visits and that he could not imagine permanently returning to open a business.

"You could invest all your money there and boom -- they can take it away and put you in jail," he said. "There's really no law to protect you."

He said government red tape and bribery ("You have to be there to believe it; everything is just under the table") perpetuate poverty. He said he imagined it would take 25 to 50 years for new generations to erase the old ways. He said Clinton's three-day visit could not hope to accomplish much.

"I think Mr. Clinton is just trying to go on vacation," the business owner said.

A few miles away, Fr. Vincent Minh, longtime pastor for Portland's Southeast Asian community of Roman Catholics, said he holds hope that the Vietnam government can see Clinton's visit as an opportunity to end oppression on the way to improving Vietnam's economy. Minh said the Vietnam government had confiscated many schools and universities held by Buddhist, Catholic and other faiths.

"I would hope that the president would emphasize human rights and religious freedoms," Minh said. "Give the people their freedom, and they will build the country."

Clinton's visit offers exciting opportunities for the Vietnam government to right some wrongs, said the pastor of a Vietnamese Christian church who asked not to be named.

"A lot of Christian workers are in jail right now," the pastor said, "because of their faith and their activities."

Kim Laurent, 53, who has owned the Lanai Cafe on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard for 16 years, said she is against Clinton's trip because she thinks he will not try to demand that the communist government improve its treatment of people.

She said she is the daughter of a French father and Vietnamese mother, that she was 9 when a booby-trap bomb killed her father, that communists arrested and tortured her as a young woman and that she escaped Vietnam on a boat in 1980. She said all of her 10 children,

ages 18 to 35, now live in Oregon.

She remembers life in Vietnam.

"Why do we walk away from pain for some people?" Laurent said. She added that she would hope the president asks, "How many people (are) in prison now? How many people (have) died? And how many bodies of soldiers do you have?"

Paul Duong, manager of Portland's refugee and immigrant coordination program, said it made no sense that a Vietnam filled with tremendous human and natural resources should lag way behind many other Southeast Asian nations a full 25 years after the war.

He said Clinton should try to shake free of simply official tours of improvements to also see the oppression and great rural poverty: The average, personal annual income in Vietnam has been reported as a few hundred dollars.

"I hope that the trip of Clinton will open the eyes of the leaders in Vietnam," Duong said. "And I hope it will provide an opportunity for the world to see Vietnam."

Duong said the local Vietnamese community was closely following Clinton's journey. Duong estimated its Portland-Vancouver population as 35,000 to 40,000 people. As reflected in part by numbers of registered voters, Duong said, he estimated 10,000 are U.S. citizens. Many are second and third generation, born in the United States, and hold jobs in many trades and professions.

Jimmy Nguyen, 59, said he escaped Vietnam in 1979, became a U.S. citizen and used to work for Boeing in Gresham. While some Vietnam refugees say they think Clinton's visit holds great promise, Nguyen says he thinks the communist government will use it as propaganda while changing nothing.

He sat in a Northeast Portland business. The owner asked that it not be named or described. A little later, two other men in the room said they thought it was a bad idea for an outgoing president to make what they saw as a largely business-driven visit to a government that oppresses its people. They described themselves as a former South Vietnam policeman and a former South Vietnam navy officer who had spent eight and nearly 10 years, respectively, in communist "re-education" labor camps after the war. They said they later made it to the United States, became American citizens, made new lives and hoped for human rights for relatives back home.

"I love my country, but I don't love the communist," said the former navy officer, now 62. "Communist is my enemy forever."

And so the divide remains, as some see it, between the past and possibilities.

Families try to manage.

Paul Duong said a refugee once told him why Oregon is where he waits.

"Because it's close to home," the refugee explained. "We share the same ocean."

Clinton's Tricky Vietnam Mission

Twenty-five years after the end of the Vietnam War,
a U.S. president faces a hard balancing act in
appeasing the old guard and seeking a new start

Far Eastern Economic Review By Nayan Chanda/HANOI
Issue cover-dated November 23, 2000

OVER 30 YEARS AGO, Vietnam's late leader Ho Chi Minh said the Vietnamese people would "spread red carpets and flowers" to encourage U.S. forces to leave. After the war ended, however, they "would not hesitate to cooperate with the American people" because of their advanced technology.

But when Bill Clinton arrives in Hanoi on November 16 and becomes the first U.S. president to visit a reunited Vietnam, stiff handshakes rather than warm embraces are expected--because of lingering suspicions among Hanoi's old guard over U.S. motives. Clinton has to placate the old guard during his four-day trip as well as reach out to Vietnam's vibrant post-war generation and seek a new start.

For behind the official welcome, forces are already at work to narrow the gap between a prosperous, capitalist America and a communist-run Vietnam looking to survive in a world where free enterprise reigns. Despite a lack of official ardour, a market economy is gradually developing and opening Vietnam up to the world. In addition, its national interests and changes to the security map of Asia might in the long term bring it closer strategically to the United States.

In the waning days of his presidency, Clinton has clear aims in Vietnam. Before leaving Washington, he told the nation: "I will stress the remarkable progress we have made with Vietnam in accounting for Americans who did not come home from the war, and I will seek to open a new chapter in our relationship with the people of Vietnam, encouraging their efforts to open their nation to the world."

A Vietnamese official was blunter, reflecting perhaps how Vietnam's old guard leaders will scrutinize the U.S.

make

president's carefully scripted words and gestures for any slight: "Clinton's task in this historic visit is to

a good impression."

But the hopes of many of Vietnam's post-war generation, who make up half the country's 76 million people, will be riding on Clinton's warmth, charisma and public gestures of reconciliation to help wash away the negative images that haunt both sides.

Le Phuc Nguyen, deputy editor of the army daily Quan Doi Nhan Dan in Hanoi, says the trip will be "a milestone in the normalization of the two countries."

Fred Brown, a Vietnam scholar at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, notes: "The president's visit will be an implicit 'laying-on of hands' by the United States, if not an endorsement of the status quo."

The appearance of Clinton, who as a student opposed the Vietnam War and avoided the draft, at a crash site for some of the nearly 1,500 U.S. servicemen listed as missing in action in Vietnam will highlight the deep emotions that underlie his trip. He can point to his success in starting to resolve this painful legacy and thank the Vietnamese for their help. Progress on MIAs has enabled the U.S. to move economic cooperation and trade with Vietnam to the centre of their relations. Clinton is expected to prepare the ground for new trade, education, science and technology exchanges.

U.S. SEEKS CHANGES

But beyond that, the U.S. doesn't make any bones about its desire to use trade to push Vietnam toward greater openness and democracy. Clinton's National Security Adviser Sandy Berger told reporters: "We want the Vietnamese people to see that America supports their economic development, while encouraging those in Vietnam who have been willing to risk opening the country, both economically and politically."

Berger said Vietnam would decide internally whether to maintain "a command-and-control system and shut out the world, or build prosperity by loosening controls and joining the world." But he said that Clinton "can and will encourage it to continue its reforms, strengthen its respect for human rights and for religious freedom."

Virginia Foote of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council believes there is a renewed sense that Vietnam is serious about economic reform, based on the signing of

a landmark trade agreement between Washington and Hanoi in July. It's expected to go into force next year. Foote will accompany some 60 U.S. business executives to check out Vietnam's prospects during the president's visits to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon. Clinton lifted a punishing trade embargo on Vietnam in 1994 and established diplomatic relations in 1995. But little substantial

change

has followed since a series of free market reforms stalled in the late 1990s.

Another major aim for Clinton is to be heard by Vietnam's young people in the hope that reaching out to them will help promote the idea of change. Clinton's speech at Hanoi National University will be broadcast live by television in Vietnam, the first time that the communist leadership has allowed a visiting leader to address the nation.

A senior Vietnam official says Hanoi understands that Clinton will address the question of human rights--as Washington says it will. But he adds that the motivation will only be for U.S. domestic reasons, warning: "It will be foolish if he is seen as lecturing the Vietnamese about human rights right in Hanoi where populated areas were bombed by B-52s only 28 years ago." He

those

among the Vietnamese who still feel much bitterness toward the United States.

It won't be easy. A Vietnamese source says Washington proposed that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff accompany the president and meet their counterparts in Vietnam, including retired war hero, Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap. Clinton would drop in on the encounter. But Hanoi refused, saying that such drama was unsuitable for Vietnamese culture. A request for Clinton to address the National Assembly also was turned down.

But in the run-up to the visit, the state softened its hostile rhetoric against what ideologues hold is a Western scheme to topple socialism through "peaceful evolution." Asked about the change, Dao Duy Quat, deputy head of the Commission for Ideological and Cultural Affairs of the Communist Party Central Committee, says confidently: "Hostile forces want to change Vietnam to capitalism. But we are not worried that this might happen."

Meanwhile Hanoi and many Vietnamese seek compensation from Clinton for their suffering in the war (see article on page 94). "The United States has a spiritual and moral responsibility, and thus should

says that Clinton's warmth could help silence

contribute to the settlement of war consequences," says Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Phan Thuy Thanh.

On the outskirts of Hanoi, Col. Nguyen Khai Hung, the director of the Friendship Village, where victims of the Agent Orange defoliant are treated, gestures to photographs of deformed children. "If he wants to see the truth he should come to our village."

But U.S. officials are clear that no economic aid will be forthcoming during the trip. Even Vietnamese officials don't expect Clinton to apologize for the war.

Washington has over the past few years given humanitarian and other aid but in various guises--from researching the effect of chemical agents to destroying mines. U.S.-Vietnamese cooperation on MIAs and mine-clearing has allowed the military on both sides to work together. "That's been the big benefit of the MIA cooperation," says Brown of Johns Hopkins. "They started getting used to each other."

The question of U.S. military cooperation with Vietnam beyond the current steps has repercussions for Vietnam's giant neighbour and historic enemy, China, with whom Hanoi is currently seeking to strengthen its ties. Some Vietnamese argue the United States could be Vietnam's best friend in dealing with a resurgent China.

STRENGTHENING TIES

Vietnam's older leaders however are concerned about antagonizing Beijing while exposing their country to U.S. capitalism. "Heaven is very far but China is very close," says Nguyen Thiet Son, the director of the Centre for North American Studies in Hanoi.

Vietnam's leadership reflects this ambivalence. To reassure Beijing that Vietnam will remain loyal to its socialist friends, a stream of statements about cooperation with China were issued and meetings were held between Chinese and Vietnamese officials before Clinton's trip. A U.S. official involved in dealing with Vietnam compares Hanoi's behaviour to an awkward dance by a longtime spinster, who wants to give no sign of favouritism while at the same time keeping the attention of numerous suitors. The result, he fears, is that her behaviour guarantees all her suitors will grow indifferent.

Both sides say the visit has nothing to do with China and has no global strategic significance. But privately U.S. and Vietnamese officials see it strengthening Vietnam's position. Brown says cultivating a "strategic

relationship with Vietnam at a moderate pace" is now a goal as important as improved economic relations.

The Vietnamese however know they will be meeting the man who leaves the White House in January, and that the chances of more progress largely rest with his successor.

Both Sides Now

In Vietnam's north and south two very different families probe the painful personal meaning in this week's visit by U.S. President Bill Clinton

Far Eastern Economic Review By Margot Cohen/HANOI and KHANH HOA PROVINCE

Issue cover-dated November 23, 2000

IN VIETNAM, a historic rift between north and south was deepened by the U.S. intervention during the 1960s. After the war, unity became the prime political goal. Northern bureaucrats moved south to carry out the mandate of the new regime. The communist victors used various methods to gather their southern countrymen into the fold, including forced "re-education" in camps that required hard labour. Hundreds of thousands of those who supported American intervention fled the country as refugees and ultimately gained entry to the United States and other Western countries. In the defeated south, other families were left to adjust to new circumstances, never quite shaking off the stigma.

This week's visit by U.S. President Bill Clinton seems to have inspired a shared vision among Vietnamese across the country. There's a common hope that more U.S. investment and scholarships will follow, thus enhancing the job prospects of future generations. But the divisions of war haven't entirely faded, particularly when it comes to the issue of war compensation. REVIEW Hanoi bureau chief Margot Cohen tells the story of two families--one from Hanoi, and one from southern Vietnam--as they ponder the personal meaning of the Clinton visit.

A VIEW FROM THE NORTH

The pride of war is lodged deeply in the heart of Pham Duy Thieu, as too is a 1.2 centimetre piece of shrapnel that the doctors couldn't remove. His five children grew up immersed in stories about their father's extraordinary war record: Thieu says that single-handedly he shot down 14 enemy aircraft, killing 82 Americans, before

an enemy bomb landed him in hospital for two years. "I'm a criminal," the 58-year-old says with a chuckle, gazing at the seven red-ribboned medals on display in his Hanoi living room.

But the mood of self-satisfaction fades into bitterness as talk turns to President Clinton's visit. Thieu insists

that

flowery words of reconciliation aren't enough to appease wounded veterans like himself. What do they want? Money, and lots of it. "I think the U.S. government should pay people like me, but now I get nothing," he complains. "If the U.S. doesn't provide any compensation, the hatred will still be there."

In his household, that sentiment spans the generations. "If they don't pay, it's not fair," says Thieu's eldest daughter, Pham Thuy Nhi. Can the U.S. still be friends with Vietnam, even without handouts? "Yes, but not a very good friend," she replies.

Predictably, the family harbours little sympathy for compensation demands voiced by southern Vietnamese who supported American intervention. "They always got paid by the Americans. So when the Americans went home, and they had to fend for themselves, they consider that suffering. We always had to fend for ourselves," says Thieu's wife, 55-year-old Nguyen Thi My. "I don't think these people deserve any compensation, because they betrayed the nation by following the Americans," Thieu adds hotly.

In 1964, at age 22, Thieu obeyed the calling of the Communist Party to enlist as a soldier. Six hundred men joined his unit that year; 42 would survive the war. Three days before going into battle in the south, this son of silk farmers married My, his sweetheart of five years. She stayed home to work as a saleswoman in a state-run department store, a job she would hold until her retirement in 1990. Like her husband, My joined the Communist Party, and reported faithfully to the monthly meetings of her party unit, or cell.

At these meetings, she was told that "the Americans themselves are good people. It's the ruling class that's interested in expansion." Three decades later, she believes that Clinton's trip shows that the U.S. no longer "looks down on" Vietnam. But some of her fellow cell members remain worried about economic expansionism. "They think that the U.S. didn't win the war, but they may win the economy," she reports.

Her five children suffered the hardships of scant food and clothing both during and after the war. "I hated the

Americans," recalls her daughter, Nhi, born in 1969. "Why did the U.S. invade, killing so many Vietnamese people, destroying so many areas of the country?" Today, like her parents, she believes that Clinton's visit will be "very important" in healing the emotional wounds and spurring economic development.

Nhi was only two years old when her father narrowly escaped death in central Vietnam's Quang Nam province. Thieu eagerly shows off his scars to a visitor, with a precise description of the shrapnel still lurking

in

his flesh: five pieces in his arm, two in his head, two in his lungs, one in his heart. Regular reunions with war veterans also reinforce the memories. Each year, members of his unit take turns hosting a gathering on May 19, the birthday of the late President Ho Chi Minh.

Two of the children already have some contact with Americans. Nhi, the eldest daughter, works in a state-owned company that promotes Vietnamese art. A fluent English speaker, she interacts easily with American businessmen who are starting to include Vietnamese works in their collections. Her brother, Pham Lam Son, works in a state-owned company that produces toilet bowls and other ceramic items for clients that include a prominent U.S. firm. Son, 29, says that he would welcome the chance to visit or study in the U.S., even though he believes that the Vietnamese remain superior to the Americans in some ways. "Americans are less courageous than the Vietnamese," he insists. And from what he sees on TV, it looks like Americans tend to be spendthrift, compared to the frugal Vietnamese.

Another sister, Pham Tan Hai, spends her time teaching the Vietnamese labour code to aspiring applicants for jobs in her country's new industrial zones. She, too, looks forward to a stint at an American university. During her studies in Vietnam, the 27-year-old Hai did learn a bit about the American legal system. "The legal system in the U.S. protects the rights of the ruling class," she maintains. "The Vietnamese legal system protects the rights of the people."

Yet the system hasn't worked in favour of her father, who's still fighting to protect his rights as a war

veteran.

For all Thieu's bitterness over the lack of war compensation from the U.S., he also professes disappointment with his own government for failing to provide any pension. Hundreds of protest letters have fallen on deaf ears.

The way he tells it, skirmishes with local communist party leaders have prevented him from obtaining a hero's decoration. That award would allow him a monthly allowance of 160,000 dong (\$11). In 1983, Thieu resigned from the Communist Party after alleging that corrupt local cadres were cutting illegal land deals. One Vietnamese magazine reported that 30 party members were demoted or expelled following Thieu's charges.

"I think that the party is good, and the government's policies are good," he says. "I'm just fighting against those officials who incorrectly implement government policy." It's not easy to be a whistle-blower in Vietnam, but the wiry veteran is hanging in there. Says Thieu: "Other people would go mad."

A VIEW FROM THE SOUTH

A small organ plays behind a screen as Nguyen Vu Hung welcomes visitors to his Khanh Hoa province home with a plate of candied strawberries. Illustrations of Jesus and Mary hang overhead. A devout Catholic, Hung--whose real name and those of his family are withheld in this article at his request--has always relied on faith to pull himself and his family through the worst. "It was God's will to end the war," he says with a peaceful smile.

But the emotions stirred by talk of Clinton's visit soon shatter his calm facade. Once a noncommissioned officer working with American personnel in the south--supplying food and other logistics--Hung still feels a deep sense of betrayal at the U.S. departure in 1975.

"Why did the Americans leave us? I'm still very angry about that. We were a good ally for them. I thought they would never lose. Capitalism always wins," says the 67-year-old. In one sense, he was lucky. Instead of toiling for years in a re-education camp, Hung spent only 10 days cooped up in a village hall listening to political lectures from the communist victors. The stigma, however, was long-lasting. The skills that Hung picked up in the army--typing, photography, driving--were spurned by the new regime, and he turned to raising goats for a living. Even with his wife and eight children scrabbling for extra income, it was hard to keep body and soul together.

Clinton's trip should mean payback time. Or at least, that's how Hung sees it. "We had to survive on our own when the Americans left us. Now, it's their responsibility to support us. All we want is a 'humanitarian allowance.' Don't they want to console

the people they left behind?"

In this household, that sentiment spans the generations. "It's like my father invested something, and now he'll get the dividend," says Hung's 28-year-old son, Tuan, a security guard.

But the family also believes that the U.S. president's visit offers a broader redemption. In the days before the visit Hung was counting on Clinton to bring more respect for human rights and religious freedom. His sons see a chance for levelling the playing field. If the U.S. and Vietnam can establish a normal relationship, says 22-year-old Tien, "father will have a chance to be

benefits will
trickle

down the family tree. "Psychologically, I'll be treated normally. And economically, I'll be given some opportunities," he says.

The children grew up burdened by their father's war service. Hung's eldest son, Hai, 34, dropped out of school at age 12. "My friend said, 'what's the use of school? With your father's background, you'll never get a good job,'" he recalls. He ran off to sell petrol, then worked on a farm, planting potatoes and bananas.

But within two years he was back at school. Hai and the other children heeded their father's most oft-repeated advice: learn English. A well-worn dictionary sits proudly in the living room. "People said that capitalism won't come here in 100 years! What's the use of studying English?" says Hung. "I told my children, just keep on learning. I know that the government will have to open the door one day. You'll be able to work in a foreign company. You'll just come and say hello to them, and you'll have a job."

Sure enough, Hai landed a job in a Malaysian firm, where his English skills helped beat rival applicants. Previously he worked as a tour guide. Two other brothers found work as English teachers. "After Clinton comes, companies and investment will follow. Vietnamese can have better jobs," Hai predicts confidently.

If so, the boom times will come after a long period of economic struggle. "I'm not saying that we're second-class citizens, but we faced many disadvantages," says Hung. Much of the responsibility fell on his wife. To help keep the family afloat, Mai hauled fish from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., often working till 1 a.m. if a ship docked late. The heavy labour triggered a miscarriage, she says.

treated equally, like others." And the

Subsequently she travelled from province to province, peddling commodities like rice and coffee. But such trade was considered illegal in the 1980s, and after losing her wares repeatedly at checkpoint strip-searches, she heeded her husband's advice to stay home. Meanwhile, the children sold ice-cream and worked as cyclo drivers to help put themselves through school.

As for Hung, he thought he could support his family by growing corn on a one-hectare plot 35 kilometres from his home. Nothing doing. "The police told me that I had to get a permit to work as a farmer, because I had worked for the enemy side," Hung recalls. Not surprisingly, the permit never came through. Nor was he allowed to use the land to raise rabbits and chickens. So he returned to his own village, and started raising dozens of goats.

Hung remains proud of his farming skills. But he can't quite forget the humiliation that drove him to work in his own backyard. "The communist government insulted me for 25 years because I worked for the Americans," he says. Why should his former allies now begrudge him a small pension? "It's just a gift," says Hung. "If I have that, I'll be happy."

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RECORD TYPE: PRESIDENTIAL (NOTES MAIL)

CREATOR: Jonetva@aol.com (Jonetva@aol.com [UNKNOWN])

CREATION DATE/TIME:21-NOV-2000 18:12:02.00

SUBJECT: Fwd: election perspective

TO: MBusinessl@aol.com (MBusinessl@aol.com [UNKNOWN])
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TEXT:

Interesting that what some would call autocratic rule or a dictatorship or communism or socialism.....we call "democracy"????....."of the people, by the people and FOR the people"???????

Return-path:

Received: from rly-zd02.mx.aol.com (rly-zd02.mail.aol.com [172.31.33.226]) by air-zd04.mail.aol.com (v77.14) with ESMTP; Tue, 21 Nov 2000 02:32:43 -0500

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Date: Tue, 21 Nov 2000 02:32:07 -0500

From: "Raymond W. Suarez"

Subject: Fwd: election perspective

Sender: "Raymond W. Suarez"

To: Blind.Copy.Receiver@compuserve.com

Message-id: <200011210232_MC2-BB99-2700@compuserve.com>

MIME-version: 1.0

X-Mailer: Unknown

Content-type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1

Content-disposition: inline

Content-transfer-encoding: quoted-printable

>>>>A history professor from Uppsala Universitet in Sweden, called to tell

>>>>about an article she had read in which a Zimbabwe politician was

>>>>quoted as saying that children should study this event closely for it

>>>>shows that election fraud is not only a third world phenomenon:

>>>>

>>>>1.? Imagine that we read of an election occurring anywhere in the third

>>>>world? in which the self-declared winner was the son of the former prime
>>>>minister? and that former prime minister was himself the former head of
>>>>that nation's secret police (CIA).
>>>>
>>>>2.? Imagine that the self-declared winner lost the popular vote but won
>>>>based on some old colonial holdover (electoral college) from the
>>>>nation's pre-democracy past.
>>>>
>>>>3.? Imagine that the self-declared winner's 'victory' turned on
>>>>disputed votes cast in a province governed by his brother!
>>>>
>>>>4.? Imagine that the poorly drafted ballots of one district, a district
>>>>heavily favoring the self-declared winner's opponent, led thousands of
>>>>voters to vote for the wrong candidate.
>>>>
>>>>5.? Imagine that? members of that nation's most despised caste,
>>>>fearing? for their lives/livelihoods, turned out in record numbers to
>>>>vote in? near-universal opposition to the self-declared winner's
>>>>candidacy.
>>>>
>>>>6.? Imagine that hundreds of members of that most-despised caste were
>>>>intercepted on their way to the polls by state police operating under
>>>>the? authority of the self-declared winner's brother.
>>>>
>>>>7.? Imagine that six million people voted in the disputed province and
>>>>that? the self-declared winner's 'lead' was only 327 votes.? Fewer,
>>>>certainly, than the vote counting machines' margin of error.
>>>>
>>>>8.? Imagine that the self-declared winner and his political party
>>>>opposed a? more careful by-hand inspection and re-counting of the
>>>>ballots in the disputed province or in its most hotly disputed district.
>>>>
>>>>9.? Imagine that the self-declared winner, himself a governor of a
>>>>major? province, had the worst human rights record of any province in
his
>>>>nation and actually led the nation in executions.
>>>>
>>>>10. Imagine that a major campaign promise of the self-declared winner
was
>>>>to appoint like-minded human rights violators to lifetime positions on
>>>>the high court of that nation.
>>>>
>>>>Imagine that the decision whether the hand
>>>>recounts should be completed and validated rests solely with an official
>>>>from the self-declared winner's party, an appointee of the self-declared
>>>>winner's brother.
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