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**Vietnamese Canadian Federation  
Fédération vietnamienne du Canada**

249 Rochester Street, Ottawa, ON K1R 7M9, Canada  
Tel: (613) 230-8282, Fax: 230-8281  
Website: <http://www.vietfederation.ca>  
Email: [viet\\_ca\\_federation@bellnet.ca](mailto:viet_ca_federation@bellnet.ca)

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**FEDERATION NEWS**

Helping Victims of the Katrina Hurricane

In an effort to alleviate the plight of the victims of the Katrina Hurricane in Southern U.S. in August, the Vietnamese Canadian Federation urged its member associations across Canada to make contributions in a fund-raising campaign initiated for this purpose.

Below is the Press Release issued by the Federation.

**Press Release**

**Helping Katrina Victims**

Responding to the appeal of the Boat People SOS Committee in the U.S. (BPSOS), the Vietnamese Canadian Federation is calling upon its member associations and other Vietnamese organizations in Canada to contribute to the efforts currently undertaken by this organization in providing urgent help to the victims of the hurricane Katrina in southern U.S.A.

According to BPSOS, among the victims of this calamity, there are thousands of Vietnamese - - many of whom don't speak English - - who lost all their assets and documents and are having difficulties in applying for government assistance. Consequently, the BPSOS office in Houston, TX, with the support of its headquarters in Virginia, has organized teams of volunteers to help these victims.

In the spirit of "helping one another in times of need", the Federation urges all members of the Vietnamese community in Canada to contribute to BPSOS' efforts in alleviating the plight of the victims of this horrendous natural disaster.

Please send your donations to the Vietnamese Canadian Centre, a registered charity of the Federation, at the following address, for forwarding to BPSOS:

***Vietnamese Canadian Centre***

***249 Rochester Street, Ottawa, ON K1R 7M9.***

All contributions over \$5.00 will be issued a receipt for income tax purposes.

-30-

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Tel. (613) 230-8282

**MEDIA REVIEW**

**Katrina has uprooted Vietnamese people**

By MICHAEL GRACZYK, Associated Press  
Writer *Mon Sep 5, 3:56 PM ET*

HOUSTON - Thousands of Vietnamese

settled in the familiar climate of the Gulf Coast region after the upheaval of two wars in their homeland. Hurricane Katrina uprooted them again at the third mass evacuation in a collective memory of loss.

Quan Hong Huyn first learned what it meant to lose a home and escape near-certain destruction when he was sent to a "re-education" camp in his native Vietnam in 1975 and when he fled to the United States through Malaysia.

"We have experience about escape, about evacuation," Huynh, 55, said outside the Houston church where he was among hundreds of Vietnamese-Americans being sheltered. Their homes 300 miles to the east were damaged or destroyed.

Vietnam's history is marked by two milestone evacuations when millions were uprooted at first by the war against the French that ended in 1954 and then in the 1970s.

Because of Katrina, about half of Louisiana's Vietnamese population of 30,000 have taken refuge in Houston, already the adopted home to one of the largest groups from the Southeast Asian country. Others from as far away as Mississippi and its devastated shrimping community also may be coming to Texas.

Most were staying at church shelters in Houston or with friends or relatives, and most appeared to have heeded the early warnings to leave before Katrina hit.

"We thought when we evacuated it would be like before, a couple days and back," said Liem Le, 39, a manager at a Kenner, La., plant that manufactures plastic bags.

Along with his wife and four children, they packed only a few pieces of clothing for what they thought would be a short trip.

"Now we don't have anything," said Le, who

came to the United States in 1980. "We don't know what to do."

They spotted their house on television. The water was up to the roof.

Huynh, president of the Vietnamese American Community in Louisiana, sent his wife and three children to Houston in advance of the storm while he stayed behind "to help my people." He learned before he fled that only the tip of his roof remained above the rising waters.

"It looked like bombs from a B-52," he said, describing the damage he saw from Katrina.

For 39-year-old Peter Hoang, confined to a shelter with his wife and five children, it was the second time he has been a refugee: "The first one was from the war."

"The war was worse," he added. "But this was like the war. When you watch people on TV killing, looting."

Texas has about 134,000 Vietnamese, second most behind California, according to U.S. Census figures, which put the total Vietnamese-American population at around 1.2 million.

A Houston shopping mall that caters to Vietnamese is serving as a staging area for many refugees, who started showing up a week ago to find an air conditioned haven. That drew the attention of Radio Saigon Houston, a Vietnamese station, that began organizing some of the relief efforts.

"People wanted to help," said Thuy Vu, one of station owners.

About 200 Vietnamese were at St. Catherine's Catholic convent, normally home to 50 Vietnamese Dominican nuns, where a gym-sized hall reserved for prayer on Sundays is filled for the first time in its 20-year history with chatter and children's laughter.

"It's very different," said Sister Bernadette Nguyen. "But this was an opportunity for us to serve our people in a very tangible way."

In Mississippi, where like in Texas many Vietnamese work the gulf for shrimp, 13-year-old Nick Luong told of how his family lost their home in Biloxi but saved their boat. It's where they rode out Katrina, moored hours away, and where they sleep now.

"We may have lost everything, but we're going to rebuild everything," the boy said, speaking for his father, Non, who came to Mississippi about seven years ago and speaks no English.

"We'll probably go to Texas or something," Nick said. "We'll go for a couple months or so, 'til we can rebuild a couple of houses so we can live there. Then we can build more."

The family of Viet Thu Linh, 55, wasn't as fortunate. Linh has lived in Biloxi since he was 5 and now works at an oyster plant. His son has a fleet of fishing boats. He believes all six sank.

Linh and his dog survived the storm and now sleep in the rubble of what was once a large home just steps from Biloxi Bay. He has food, water, a hammock and a chair, but not much else except resolve.

"I build again," he promised.

## **The Long Road Home**

**By Daisy Nguyen, The Associated Press**

**Published: September 30, 2005**

ANAHEIM, Calif. —Sanh Nguyen and his family had packed everything from their past life in just a few bags.

What they received when they arrived in Southern California instantly became their

most prized possession.

It's called an I-94, the government form that proves they came here legally and the ticket to obtaining a green card next year. It's also the first document they've possessed in 16 years proving they belong anywhere at all.

Sanh, his wife and teenage daughter were among 229 stateless refugees from Vietnam who finally landed in the United States after a journey that began when they fled the communist nation by boat, hoping to follow hundreds of thousands of other Vietnamese who immigrated to the United States. Due to a quirk of timing, their journey would require years in a refugee camp in the Philippines.

"For so many years we tried to get out, it's hard to believe we are here," Sanh, 44, said Wednesday, his second day after arriving at Los Angeles International Airport.

The detour began June 6, 1989, when Sanh and his wife, then 4 months pregnant, arrived on Palawan Island in the Philippines after seven days at sea with 45 other refugees. They made it, he said, after several failed escape attempts \_ one of which cost him two years in jail.

"When you're an ex-convict in Vietnam, it's very tough to make a living because no one wants to have anything to do with you, so we had to leave for the sake of our family's future," he said.

They soon learned that they had arrived at the camp three months too late.

In March 1989, 14 years after communists completed their takeover of Vietnam, the United Nations stopped recognizing Vietnamese as political refugees, saying most were leaving Vietnam for economic reasons. The thousands who remained in refugee camps throughout Asia had to apply for asylum in various countries and undergo rigorous screening.

No country was eager to take them. Nguyen said his family had little luck in interviews with immigration officials from several Western countries because their Vietnamese translators, also refugees, couldn't clearly convey their story.

So they lingered in the camp with several thousand fellow refugees, sharing tight quarters and living on less than a quarter pound of meat, plus rice, per day.

Sanh's wife, Nhi, gave birth to their daughter, Truc, but was too weak to feed the girl. They spent the little money they had on powdered milk. When the money finally ran out, they gave her sugared water.

"She always cried," Nhi, 42, recalled. "It was very difficult, very painful to see that and not be able to do anything."

They lived this way until 1996, after the United Nations cut funding for Vietnamese camps throughout Asia and some countries began forcible repatriation back to Vietnam, a policy greeted by hunger strikes and rioting.

The Philippines closed the camp where the Nguyens were staying, but then-President Fidel Ramos let the remaining Vietnamese stay indefinitely under the supervision of the Roman Catholic Church, though they were not given residency status or legal rights.

The Nguyens moved to an island southeast of Manila, where they carved out a black-market living selling perfume, flip flops and other sundries \_ work they could not legally do.

"After a certain time, of course I thought there's no other way out, it's over, the world has forgotten us," Sanh said.

But it was around that time that activists began rallying behind the Vietnamese boat people stuck in the Philippines. Some Western-educated Vietnamese lawyers took

up their cases and lobbied the governments of their adopted countries.

Small numbers of stateless refugees were resettled in nations including Australia over the years, but the largest number were granted asylum last year after the United States adopted a generous interpretation of refugee laws to qualify 1,855 Vietnamese in the Philippines for resettlement.

Last Monday, the Nguyens were among the first batch arriving on a chartered flight from Manila to Los Angeles.

Their arrival was a “triumph” for the Vietnamese overseas community everywhere, according to Lan Quoc Nguyen, director of the California-based Legal Assistance for Vietnamese Asylum Seekers.

“Their arrival marks the beginning of the end of our 30-year saga as boat people,” the lawyer said.

They were greeted at the airport by friends, relatives and supporters who burst into wild cheers. Amid the chaos, the Nguyen family quietly wept.

They’re now staying temporarily in an Anaheim apartment with friends who once lived in the same refugee camp but made it here four years ago.

On their first day they toured Little Saigon, the Orange County enclave that’s home to the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam.

“I can’t get over the fact that you can walk entire blocks and see only signs in Vietnamese,” Nhi marveled.

Sanh was surprised to find herbs he hadn’t seen since he boarded that boat 16 years ago.

On their second day, an Episcopal church employee showed the couple how to apply for welfare and housing.

“If you want to work right away, we have

people here ready to help you find a job,” Nghia Trung Huynh, 68, told them. “If you want to learn English, sign up for our ESL classes.”

The Nguyens appeared overwhelmed.

“There’s much to learn about American culture,” Nhi said. “Everything is new.”

Huynh, who has helped resettle refugees for 22 years, said he expects the Nguyens and the other refugees to become self-sufficient quickly — they’ve learned how to survive with much less.

“When I think about what they went through, I get very emotional,” Huynh said, his eyes welling.

“I was stuck in a camp for eight months and have painful memories of that time. Everyday I wondered ‘When will I get out?’” he said. “They had to ask that question for 16 years.”

## **Vietnamese Immigrants Give \$1 Million to College**

*Donation by developer, restaurateur bolsters Little Saigon's growing sense of philanthropy.*

By Mai Tran, Times Staff Writer

A pair of immigrant businessmen announced Monday that they would give \$1 million to a community college campus near Orange County's Little Saigon, a gift experts say underscores the growing level of philanthropy in the Vietnamese community.

The campus, near Westminster City Hall and a statue that honors American and South Vietnamese soldiers, will be named for benefactors restaurateur Chieu Le and developer Frank Jao.

Some observers see the donation to Coastline Community College as a sign of a maturing in Orange County's Vietnamese community, which was formed by refugees in the 1970s at the end of the Vietnam War.

The Vietnamese have a record of helping in emergencies, such as Hurricane Katrina and last year's devastating Indian Ocean tsunami. But individual acts of philanthropy on such a large scale are still considered relatively rare, said Thu-huong Nguyen-vo, an assistant professor at UCLA's Department of Asian American Studies.

"We haven't had a long time to accumulate enough wealth in the United States in order to do a lot of philanthropic work," said Nguyen-vo. "We're not a rich community, but cumulatively, it has been huge."

Others believe the college donation is the beginning of a greater philanthropic effort in Little Saigon, home to the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam.

"As the community establishes itself in the United States, the leadership becomes more philanthropic," said Jeffrey H. Brody, a Cal State Fullerton professor who teaches about the Vietnamese American experience. Le and Jao "are spearheading that effort."

The Le-Jao Center will open next month. The donation will help fund a variety of programs, from biotechnology to English-as-a-second-language courses. The \$11-million facility, financed and operated by Coastline, will include 21 classrooms, three computer labs and a science lab.

"They are role models, not only for our students, many of whom are immigrants themselves starting new lives here, but also for those who understand what it means to

pay forward after they have made it," said Ding-Jo H. Currie, president of Coastline.

Coastline offers classes throughout Orange County in rented offices, industrial parks and several small satellite campuses. Many classes are aimed at fundamental vocational training, an educational staple that intrigued Le and Jao.

Jao, who has prospered as a developer, took real estate classes through Coastline. Le, who owns a restaurant chain, started as a catering truck employee in San Jose.

Le and his wife, Yen, immigrated to San Jose in 1980. As a college student studying English, he bought lunch from a catering truck and eventually took a job as a helper on the truck. In 1981, he bought his own catering truck, gradually expanding his business until he and his brother operated a fleet of nearly 500 catering trucks that served Vietnamese sandwiches known as *banh mi*.

Le and his wife later opened a sandwich shop in San Jose, Lee's Sandwiches — a name they believed would be an easier sell in America. They now own 25 shops in California and Arizona.

"This is an opportunity to benefit the community for years to come. We are so proud to do a little something," said Yen Le. "We worked hard to achieve the American dream, and we just wanted to give back."

For Frank Jao and his wife, Catherine, the donation was more personal. The Jaos immigrated to the United States in 1975 and stayed at Camp Pendleton.

Jao was a door-to-door vacuum salesman but eventually took real estate classes at Coastline in the mid-1970s. He now owns Bridgecreek Group Inc., a real estate

company responsible for building the Asian Garden Mall, a cultural and commercial landmark in Little Saigon. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees at Coastline.

At a news conference Monday, the two families shook hands and had pictures taken next to a rendering of the 33,000-square-foot college facility to be named for them.

"Thirty years ago, this country gave us an opportunity of new hope. The county gave us a new home. Westminster has given us a new chance to build a new life," Jao said. "We went into a joint venture to give back to the very community that has given us what we have today."

But he acknowledged that it was not enough.

"We hope this gift would encourage and inspire others in the community," Jao said.

## COMMENTARY

### **Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai's visit to the U.S. and Canada: in search of a new strategy ?**

**by Can D. Le**

Prime Minister Phan Van Khai of Communist Vietnam is visiting the U.S. and Canada this month. His trip takes place against the backdrop of a country in search of a new strategic alignment, and ideas to develop an emerging economy with all its teething pains and associated social ills.

On the political side, Khai's visit to the U.S. is a historical political event, since the U.S. -- together with its South Vietnamese ally -- and Communist North Vietnam were at war until 1975, and only normalized their relations in

1995.

In the 50's and 60's South Vietnam was considered by successive U.S. administrations -- from Eisenhower to Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon -- as the last line of defense against the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia. Still, partly due to Nixon's preoccupation with the Watergate affair which eventually forced him to step down in 1974, and partly due to mounting domestic pressure, the Americans finally lost the will to support its ally and South Vietnam fell the following year.

China and the former Soviet Union were North Vietnam's strongest allies in during the Vietnam War. Yet, in 1979, China invaded several Vietnamese northern provinces "to teach Vietnam a lesson" for sending its own soldiers to Kampuchea to overthrow the murderous Pol Pot regime.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the fall of Communism throughout Eastern Europe in 1989 forced Vietnam to rely on China as its last ideological lifeboat. However, this hasn't been easy.

According to the memoirs of Tran Quang Co, a former Deputy Minister of External Affairs of Vietnam, Pham Van Dong -- the late and longest-serving Prime Minister of Communist Vietnam -- once said at a meeting of its Politburo in 1990: "After thousands of years, China is still China, we shouldn't be gullible. We should probe and push, but should beware and avoid miscalculations".

Given its precarious position, Vietnam doesn't dare to upset China. Still, this obedient policy isn't always sufficient. In 1999, under China's pressure, Le Kha Phieu, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), signed a secret agreement

to concede large tracts of Vietnam's land and sea, including the historical Nam Quan Pass (*Ai Nam Quan*) and the Ban Gioc Falls at the border.

Despite being officially described as Vietnam's "best ally", China doesn't hesitate to take matters in its own hands when dealing with Vietnam. On January 9, 2005, Chinese navy police opened fire on two Vietnamese fishing boats in the Gulf of Tonkin, killing nine Vietnamese fishermen, wounding seven, and detaining eight other for alleged "piracy". All the detained fishermen were eventually found not guilty by Chinese authorities and allowed to return home. The Vietnamese government only produced a meek protest in response.

Prior to Khai's trip to the U.S. and Canada, he has visited Australia. Among his colleagues in Vietnam's ruling triumvirate, State President Tran Duc Luong has also gone to China, and CPV's General Secretary Nong Duc Manh, to France. The purpose of these trips is either to get ideas for a strategic re-alignment or to allay the fear that China and France may have for a possible *rapprochement* between Vietnam and the U.S.

While the political posturing is going on, Vietnam has to struggle with its own economic and social problems.

On the economic front, with an annual per capita Gross National Income of around US\$480 (2003), Vietnam has a lot to catch up with other countries. According to the Global Competitiveness Report of 2004-2005, Vietnam ranks 77<sup>th</sup> in terms of global competitiveness index out of 104 countries assessed. But this overall ranking doesn't tell the whole story. Other indices reveal a more disturbing picture. For example, Vietnam's

performance is also very poor on freedom of the press (100<sup>th</sup>); irregular payments (meaning bribery) in loan applications (102<sup>nd</sup>), in exports and imports (100<sup>th</sup>), and in tax collection (97<sup>th</sup>).

On the social side, the situation is not much better. The United Nations' Human Development index, which focuses on three dimensions of human development -- living a long and healthy life, being educated, and having a decent standard of living -- places Vietnam 112<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries in 2002. Vietnam's neighbours ranks much higher, for example, Malaysia at 59<sup>th</sup>, Thailand at 76<sup>th</sup>. Transparency International, a non-profit organization which tracks corruption around the world placed Vietnam 75<sup>th</sup> out of 91 countries in 2001, in the same league as Zambia, and worse than Zimbabwe, Romania, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

The serious problems faced by Vietnam are well known. A candid assessment was recently provided by Le Dang Doanh, an economic adviser to a succession of Vietnamese Communist leaders, including the late Prime Minister Pham Van Dong and former General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh. In a secret 32-page briefing to a top-secret meeting of Party leaders on November 2, 2004, he admitted that the current Communist regime is unable to find solutions to the fundamental and long-term problems faced by the people and the country. He pointed out the most serious flaws of this regime: it is controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, it is authoritarian, and it is undemocratic.

The above bleak picture doesn't do justice to Vietnam's potential, with its vast natural resources, fertile land, industrious people, young workforce, and high literacy rate. This "performance gap" is due many reasons, including: the lack of dynamics in

the political system in which the Communist Party of Vietnam has the sole and supreme power in the country and no political opposition is tolerated; lack of mutual trust between the government and the people; non-existent freedom of the press; a burdensome and secret bureaucracy; a weak governance structure with a cumbersome legal system and a lack of transparency in the application of the laws; and rampant corruption. It's no wonder that this environment is not conducive to innovation and the traditional entrepreneurial spirit of the Vietnamese people is prevented from having its fullest impact on the economy.

Much progress has been made since the adoption of the "Reform" (*Doi moi*) policy in the 80's, but by far the real benefactors have been the Party's elite who are able to amass tremendous wealth while the majority of the population is still condemned to abject poverty. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening and this can't go on for long. In fact, it has resulted in social unrest in several places such as the Thai Binh Province in the Red River delta and some northwestern provinces. This is a time bomb that the government just can't ignore.

In the above context, Vietnam needs a lot of help to improve its political and economic systems. Canada and the U.S. -- with the largest overseas Vietnamese communities in the world, including many young professionals in all major fields -- can certainly provide resources and expertise in this endeavour. It remains to be seen whether there's the political will within the current Vietnamese Communist leadership to take bold steps to make Vietnam a free, democratic, and prosperous country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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Can D. Le is a past President of the Vietnamese Canadian Federation

June 2005

<b>BOOK REVIEW</b>
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**A book non-Vietnamese speaking  
Americans of Vietnamese descent should  
read:**

***WHENCE...WHITHER...  
VIETNAM?***

***A New Assessment of Vietnam's  
Predicament***

Author: Nguyen Gia Kieng. Translator:  
Nguyen Ngoc Phach  
Reviewer: Ton That Thien

Canh Nam Publishing House, Arlington, Va,  
USA, 2005, 336 pages<sup>1</sup>

It is a well known fact that most, if not all, young Americans of Vietnamese descent, born or grown up in America, have experienced animated debates with their parents on the subjects of anti-communism, preservation of Vietnamese "fine customs" and "traditional values", and what kind of government system would be best for Vietnam.

Quite often, the debates turned into angry altercations. Usually, the children did not share the visceral, unconditional, anti-communism of their parents, paid little attention to their persistent exhortations to do everything possible to overthrow the present Hanoi regime, and failed to understand their repeated calls for the preservation of Vietnam's "fine customs" and "traditional values" in a modern American environment. As regards the best system of government for Vietnam, it is the parents' fear of too much democracy and their unbending insistence on the exclusion of communists, against the rejection of such a view by their children.

It is natural that the children should seek to understand the reasons which had led their parents to hold such strange views. On the other hand, they acutely realized that they knew little, if anything, about their country of origin, and felt the need to remedy this situation. But in this, they were greatly handicapped by their inability to read Vietnamese. They naturally had to read books on Vietnam written in English.

Here, there was another great handicap: most, if not all, the books on Vietnam in English were written by American journalists, academics, or politicians, and they were essentially military and political analyses of the war, with focus on America. Furthermore, American writers, in their majority, were sympathetic to the communist side, and put the blame on what went wrong on the anti-communist – their parents' – side. Obviously, truth and balance of views did not obtain. The Vietnamese side of the story was not told. Yet, the failure in Vietnam was also a failure of Vietnam, and the Vietnamese wanted to know where and why Vietnam had failed, and not only before 1975, but more particularly since then, under communist unfettered rule.

To ensure balance and reliability, one would need a book dealing with the Vietnamese side of the story, based on serious researches, exploring the subject in depth, and explaining Vietnam's failure in terms of Vietnamese endogenous factors, especially bringing into play the whole gamut of Vietnam's historical, political, social, cultural and psychological backgrounds, and covering the whole span of Vietnam's history, past and present; in other words, a study broader in scope, more searching, using a new approach.

The natural thing for non-Vietnamese speaking young Americans to do would be to turn to books written in English by

Vietnamese. But there was no book written in English by a Vietnamese dealing with the above kinds of problems, and in the novel manner described.

The situation was thus blocked.

But no more.

Non-Vietnamese speaking young Americans now have at their disposal a book written by a Vietnamese, but available in English, though in translation, which deals precisely with the kind of questions which have agitated their minds over the years. The book is *Whence...Whither...Vietnam?* It is by no accident that the book carries the subtitle: *A NEW Assessment of Vietnam's Predicament.*

*Whence...Whither... Vietnam?* is the English translation of *To Quoc An Nan (Remorseful/repentant Fatherland)*, a book in Vietnamese written by Nguyen Gia Kieng, and translated into English by Nguyen Ngoc Phach.

Kieng is an engineer graduated from the French prestigious *Ecole Centrale*, now living in Paris. Nguyen Ngoc Phach is a journalist as well as professor (of languages) and translator now settled in Australia.

The book seeks to answer the question: why Communism has conquered Vietnam with such great ease, and why Vietnam has consistently failed to become a free society and achieve economic development, and the Vietnamese had to constantly suffer oppression and poverty. It uncovers the connections between Vietnam's cultural heritage and its sorry state. It shows that the weight of Vietnam's heritage is very heavy and inhibitive, and that an effective reconstruction of Vietnam must begin with a full reassessment of its cultural values

leading to changes of certain of them to allow Vietnamese society to modernize itself in order to move forward and achieve freedom and prosperity.

In the process of elaborating on his main thesis, Kieng has been led to discuss the major problems of Vietnam – lack of freedom and democracy as well as economic development -- , against the cultural background of Vietnamese society, and the various options available in the world, past and present. After studying the cases of the various countries which have achieved spectacular success, as well as those which have failed, he came to the very firm conclusion that freedom and democracy are the preconditions, and not the consequences, of economic development, and that pluralistic democracy is the system of government the Vietnamese should adopt if they want to achieve modernization to move forward and get the freedom and prosperity to which they are entitled as hardworking and intelligent people. This should be done democratically, through national reconciliation, and non-violence.

Those who are interested in development, especially in the economic development, or rather lack of economic development, of Vietnam, will find the book very enlightening, especially when they read the pages in which Kieng discusses at length the inhibitive effects of Confucianist culture on Vietnamese society throughout its history.

Non-Vietnamese speaking Americans of Vietnamese descent will derive four major benefits from this book.

1/ They will gain valuable insight in their search for answers to the questions which have weighted heavily on their minds, as pointed out above.

2/ They will acquire an extensive knowledge of Vietnam's history, politics, society, economy, culture, at very little cost in terms of time and effort, the book being the result of extensive researches and meditations by Nguyen Gia Kieng, and reading it will spare them the trouble of searching for relevant material in libraries.

3/ The readers who are particularly interested in the problems of political and social changes, and economic development, will find a frame, as well as the concepts and terminology for thinking about those problems.

4/ The last benefit derivable from this book is a really unexpected one: it can be used as a perfect textbook for the study of Vietnamese or English. Taken together, *Whence...Whither...Vietnam?* and the Vietnamese original *To Quoc An Nan*<sup>2</sup> would make an ideal bilingual textbook: those learning English can use the WWV as a reader and TQAN as control book, and those learning Vietnamese can use TQAN as reader and WWV as control book. This would be a very good arrangement, as the translation is very accurate, and the English used is of very high quality.

Ottawa, September 2005

(1) Nam Canh Publishing House, 2607 Military Road, Arlington, Va. 22207, USA.

Also available through Internet, from Amazon. Price: \$ US 35.

(2) Nguyen Gia Kieng, *To Quoc An Nan*, 2004, available at major bookstores in Westminster, Ca, USA; or at: Nguyen Gia Kieng, 11 Mail Le Corbusier, 77185, Lognes, France. Price: \$ US 35.

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**Vietnamese Canadian Federation  
249 Rochester Street  
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