

DOCUMENTARY

BOAT PEOPLE

TODAY'S "UNTOUCHABLES"



- ☐ THE HOLOCAUST OF THE 20TH CENTURY
- ☐ THẢM NẠN CỦA THẾ KỶ THỨ 20
- ☐ HOLOCAUSTE DU 20^e SIECLE
- ☐ 20 世紀の惨劇

Thân tặng Aus du Lan.

Chau

Trần-Miêu Hào

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Asian Relations Center
Socio-Economic Institute
Sophia University, Tokyo Japan
— April 30, 1978 —

★ DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO DIED IN ASIAN WATERS

They fought the seas
and won the depths.

★ DEDIÉ À CEUX QUI ONT LUTTÉ ET LAISSÉ LEUR VIE
AU FOND DE L'OcéAN,

en cherchant la Liberté perdue ...

★ アジアの海に沈んだボート・ピープルに捧ぐ

南シナ海の藻屑となった友よ！
あなたの意志をついで多くの仲間が立ち上がっている。
あなたの心は永遠に消えることはない。

★ ĐỂ TƯỞNG NIỆM NHỮNG ĐỒNG BÀO
ĐÃ BỎ MÌNH GIỮA ĐẠI DƯƠNG.

— Các Bạn không thua trong cuộc
chiến đấu giành Tự Do trên biển cả.
— Các Bạn đã thắng được lương tâm nhân loại.

FOREWORD

Many dedicated persons from several countries have contributed to the publication of this book. The pitiful situation of the Indochina refugees compels us to inform people all over the world. The preparation for this book took several months. The photographs made public here were often taken with many risks and dangers.

Forced to flee from their own countries in search of freedom, the refugees are everywhere under a most rigid custody. They are excluded from all human societies. Those "guarding" them resent any outsiders even getting in contact with them.

Infants, youngsters of all ages and the elderly are among the over one hundred thousand [100,000] Indochina men and women refugees. They have nothing that resembles a house. "Boat people" who are forced to live on their boats have an especially hard and almost unbearable way of life. Work would be a joy but there is none. Rice is insufficient and the refugees are hungry after a meal. The few doctors are unable to take care of so many sick and wounded. Their future looks black and hopeless.

The present fight of the refugees is to obtain freedom. All over the Asian region, Asians have become slaves of oppression and enslaving ideologies, destitution and illiteracy. They are the prophets of today's society, suffering their message of full liberation and freedom for the Asian people and for all of mankind.

ANDO ISAMU S.J.
Director
Asian Relations Center
Socio-Economic Institute
Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan.

LỜI MỞ ĐẦU

Trước tình trạng bi thảm của những người tị nạn Đông Dương, những người quả cảm thuộc nhiều quốc gia đã quy tụ lại và quyết tâm thực hiện quyển sách này để công bố cho cả thế giới nhìn rõ thảm kịch của thế kỷ 20 này. Việc sửa soạn cuốn sách này đã mất nhiều tháng và những tấm hình trong cuốn sách này được chụp với muôn vàn khó khăn, nguy hiểm hầu cống hiến quý độc giả.

Người tị nạn đã phải rời bỏ đất nước để tìm tự do đang bị chính phủ các nước xua đuổi hoặc canh chừng gát gao trong các trại tị nạn. Họ là những người xa lạ bị gạt bỏ khỏi xã hội loài người cũng như bị cấm liên lạc với thế giới bên ngoài.

Hơn một trăm ngàn người tị nạn Đông Dương gồm cả nam phụ lão ấu. Họ không có đến một căn nhà đứng nghĩa. Người tị nạn bằng thuyền đã bị cưỡng bách sống trên thuyền trong lối sống tưởng chừng không thể chịu đựng nổi. Không công ăn việc làm, thực phẩm không đủ, người bị thương, bị bệnh không được săn sóc. Tương lai họ thật đen tối và tuyệt vọng.

Rất nhiều đoàn thể chí nguyện trên thế giới đã và đang hiệp lực giúp đỡ dân tị nạn. Đáng tiếc thay, chính phủ các nước lại không có thiện chí cộng tác vì sợ phải đối lập với các chính phủ hiện tại ở Đông Dương. Vấn đề dân tị nạn đã trở thành cơn bệnh bất trị như các bệnh nghèo khó, thất nghiệp, kém mở mang của các quốc gia Á Châu.

Quyển sách này trình bày thực trạng khốn cùng bị thương của dân tị nạn, đồng thời truyền rao đi những lời kêu cứu thống thiết của họ đến nhân loại trên toàn cầu. Chúng ta hãy vượt qua biên giới quốc gia, dị biệt tư tưởng để cùng chung sức giúp những người đồng loại anh em tại các nước Á Châu.

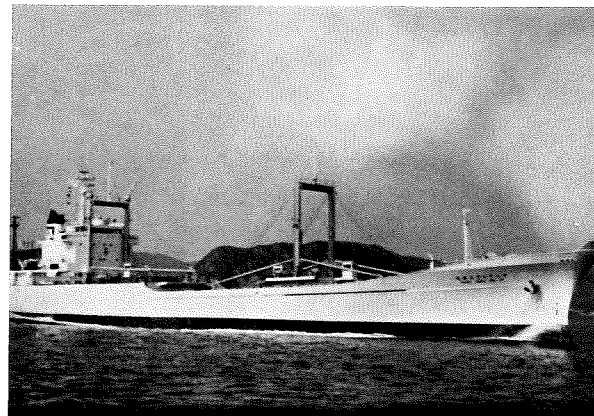
Họ đang tranh đấu để giành TỰ DO.

Hiện nay dân Á Châu trở thành nô lệ vì bị đàn áp và nô lệ chủ nghĩa, bần cùng và nạn mù chữ. Người tị nạn là những nhà tiên tri của xã hội hiện đại, truyền đạt đến chúng ta lời kêu gọi : "HÃY ĐEM LẠI TỰ DO VÀ GIẢI PHÓNG HOÀN TOÀN CHO CÁC DÂN TỘC Á CHÂU CŨNG NHƯ TOÀN THỂ NHÂN LOẠI".

Giáo sư ANDO ISAMU S.J.
Giám đốc,
Trung Tâm Nghiên Cứu Á Châu,
Viện Kinh Tế-Xã Hội, Đại Học Sophia, Tokyo, Japan.

■ **THESE SHIPS RESCUED THE BOAT PEOPLE.**
There, captain and crew will live forever in the heart of the boat people.

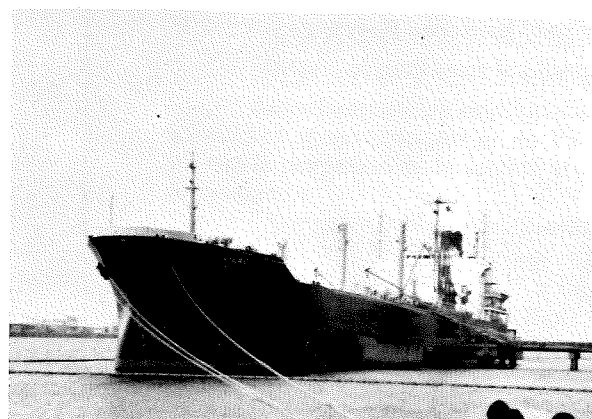
■ **CES BATEAUX ONT SECOURU LES "BOAT PEOPLE" RÉFUGIÉS.** Les capitaines et les équipages resteront à jamais dans le mémoire des "boat people" réfugiés.



TAISEI MARU NO. 87, June 26, 1975.



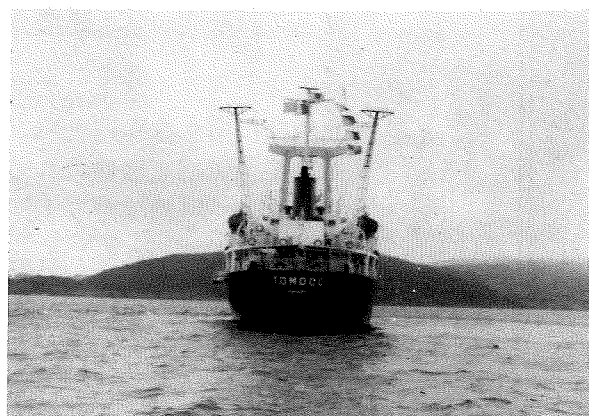
UNITED ENTERPRISE, August 29, 1976.



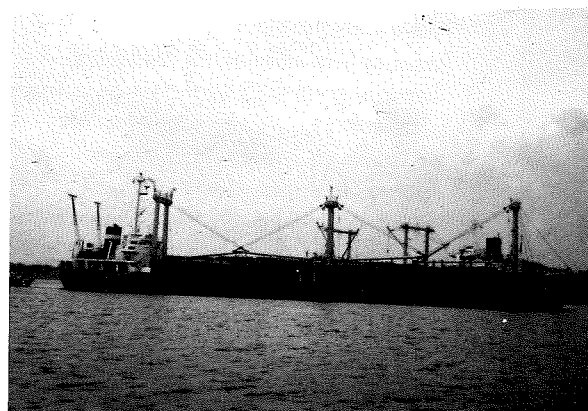
S.S. LILAC, June 6, 1977.

■ **ĐÂY LÀ NHỮNG CON TÀU CỨU TINH CỦA NGƯỜI VƯỢT NẠN BẰNG THUYỀN.** Nơi đó, hình ảnh của những vị ân nhân thuyền trưởng và thủy thủ đoàn vĩnh viễn sống mãi trong lòng người vượt nạn bằng thuyền.

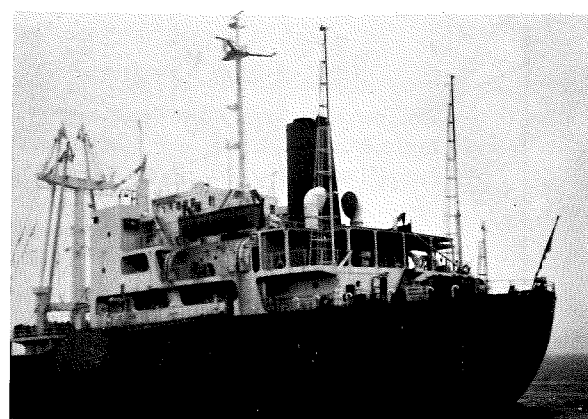
■ これらの写真は難民を救助した船。船長と船員の人たちの姿は難民の心の中に永遠に残るでしょう。



TOMOCO, July 16, 1977.

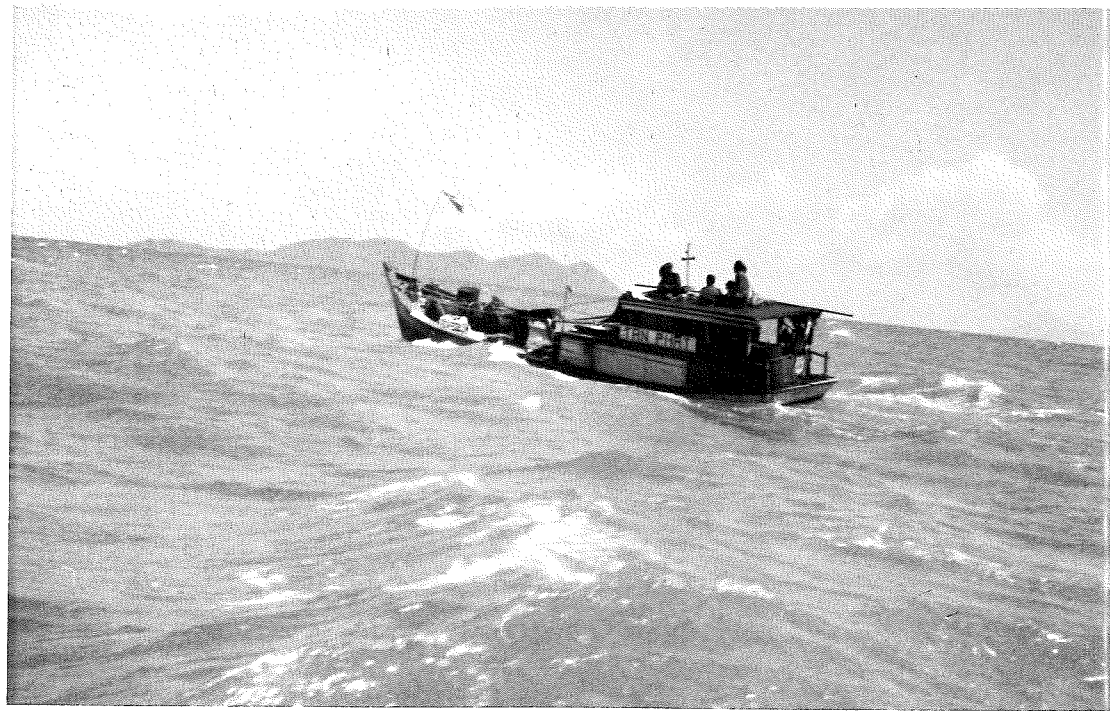
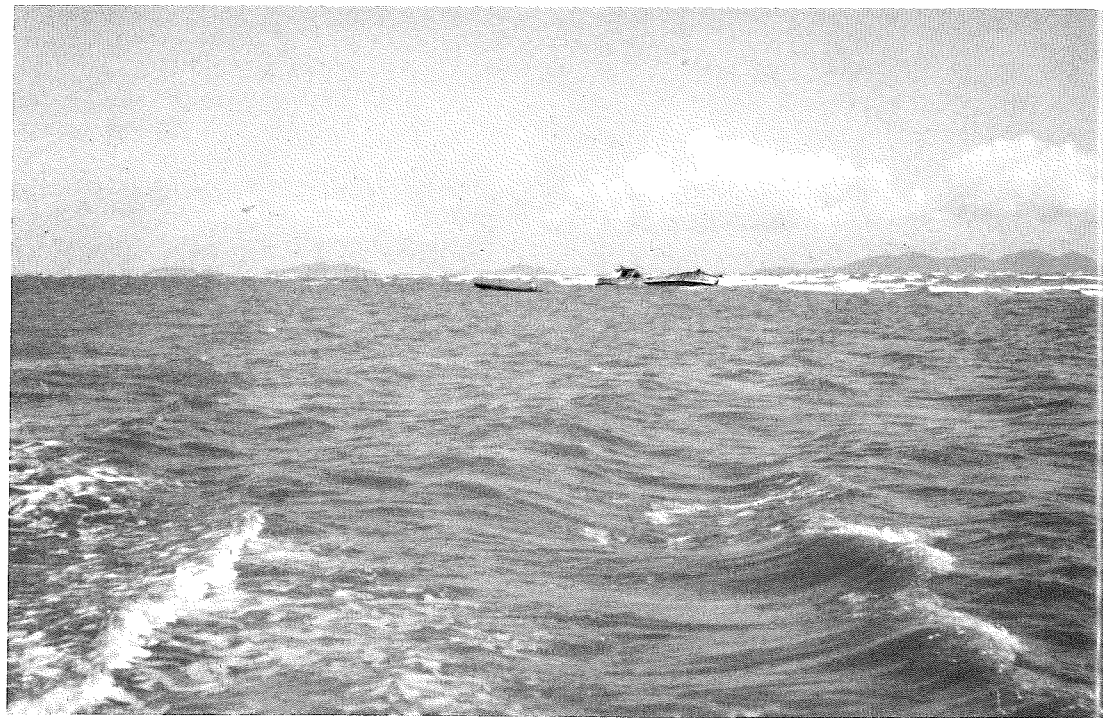


S.S. JUNYO MARU, August 9, 1977.



EUPHRATES MARU OSAKA, October 8, 1977.





■ OUR SMALL BOATS DRIFT.
We are the foam
floating on the vast ocean
we are the dust
wandering in endless space
our cries are lost
in the howling wind

■ THUYỀN NHỎ GIỮA ĐẠI DƯƠNG.
Chúng tôi là bọt biển
trôi giạt giữa mênh mông
chúng tôi là hạt bụi
trong không gian vô cùng
tiếng chúng tôi lạc mất
trong gió rít từng không

■ NOTRE PETITE BARQUE.
Une écume nous sommes
portée dans l'immensité,
un grain de sable nous sommes
emporté dans l'infini,
notre voix se perd
dans le sifflement du vent

■ 大海のまっただ中の小舟
われらは海に浮かぶ泡
限りない宇宙にさまようチリ
怒号する風の中に
嘆きはかき消える





Mr. Yoshida.
吉田氏

■ Cover picture taken by Mr. Yoshida on Sept. 27, 1975.

■ Hình bìa do anh Yoshida, thủy thủ tàu Shokomaru chụp ngày 27-9-1975.

■ Photo en couverture prise par M. Yoshida le 27 Sept. 1975.

■ 表紙に掲載したイカダと同じもの、昭和50年9月27日 吉田氏撮影。

● The cover picture is a raft made of the used gas drums by Mr Nguyen Van Phong, 51, a small businessman in Gia Dinh. With the help of his three sons, the raft was finished after three months of assembling.

This raft was built two rows of empty gas drums which combined 18 drums per row, and the drums connected by metal chains and wooden bars. Equipped with 2 motors, 10 H.P. and 7 H.P. respectively, this raft has yielded an average speed of 10km per hour and run 22 hours per day.

Besides Mr.Phong's family, there were 3 friends of his son and specially a 3 month-old baby, totally 14 people on the raft. They left Saigon river on Sept 23, 1975 and directed toward the ocean line by passing Vung Tau gate. Luckily, they were picked up about 175 miles from Vung Tau beach on the morning of Sept 27, 1975 by Shokomaru, a Japanese commercial ship. □

● Hình bìa là chiếc bè đóng bằng những thùng xăng do ông Nguyễn Văn Phong 51 tuổi, một nhà tiểu thương ở Gia Định.

Với sự trợ lực của 3 người con trai của ông, chiếc bè đã được hoàn thành sau 3 tháng trời ráp nối.

Bè được kết thành bằng 36 thùng phuy xăng, hai hàng mỗi hàng 18 chiếc với đai sắt và thanh gỗ.

Được gắn 2 máy Yanma 10 Mã lực và 7 Mã lực. Tốc độ trung bình 10km mỗi giờ.

Chiếc bè đã chở 14 người gồm vợ, các con của ông và 3 người bạn của con ông rời Sài Gòn ngày 23-9-75 đi ra cửa Nhà Bè Vũng Tàu. Trên thuyền còn có 1 hài nhi 3 tháng được tàu Shokomaru, Nhật Bản cứu sáng sớm ngày 27-9-75 cách bờ biển phía Đông Vũng Tàu 175 dặm. □

● 表紙の写真は、小商家グエン・バン・フォン氏、51才が作ったドラムかんイカダである。

3人の息子の助力を得て、氏は3ヶ月でこのイカダを組み立てた。このイカダは36個のドラムかんで作られた。2列にとり付けられたこれらのドラムかんはイカダを浮かべるために使われ、木材と鉄板でくっつけられた。イカダは10馬力と7馬力の2個のエンジンで、1日22時間平均時速10キロメートルで走った。

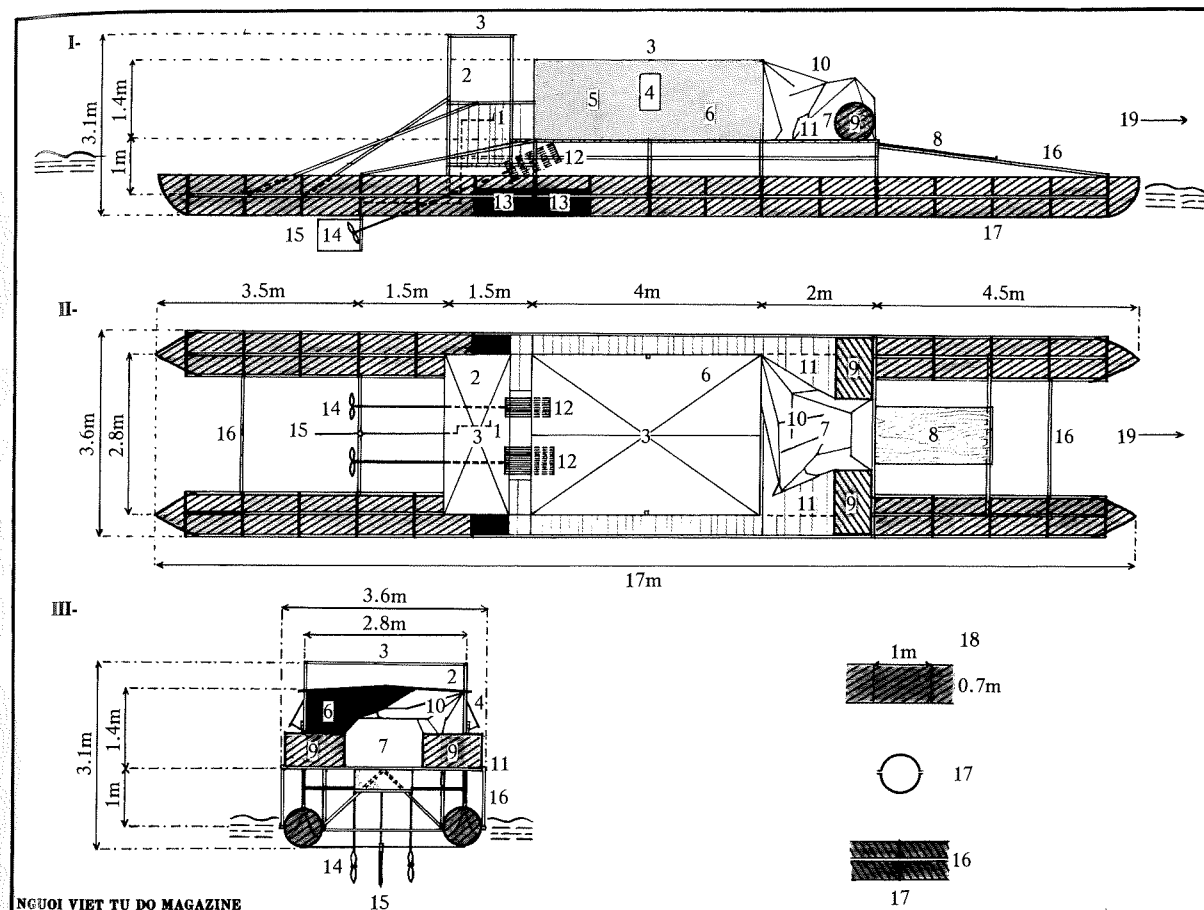
このイカダは昭和50年9月23日、フォン氏の家族と息子の友人を含めて、14人を乗せ、サイゴンからヴァンタウに向けて出発した。イカダに乗った最年少は3ヶ月の赤ちゃんである。同27日、全員は東ヴァンタウから175カイリほど離れた南シナ海上で、無事に日本の昭広丸に救助された。 □

● Voici le radeau composé de 36 tonneaux de métal de Monsieur Nguyen Van Phong, 51 ans, un petit commerçant à Gia Dinh.

M.Phong, avec l'aide de ses enfants, avait mis 3 mois pour réaliser ce radeau. Il se composait principalement de 2 rangées de 18 tonneaux vides, et était propulsé par deux moteurs respectivement de 10 et de 7 chevaux. Il se déplaçait à une vitesse moyenne de 10 km/h et pouvait fonctionner chaque jour de 22 à 24 heures.

Ce radeau transportait 14 personnes, la plus jeune...c'était un bébé de 3 mois, ayant quitté Saigon le 23 Septembre 1975, était repêché par le bateau Japonais Shokomaru au matin du 27 Septembre 1975, à plus de 280 km de Vung Tau (Cap St.Jacques). □

PLAN OF GAS-DRUM-RAFT GIẢN ĐỒ BÈ PHUY XĂNG PLAN DU RADEAU DE TONNEAUX ドラムかんイカダの略図



I- Section View II- Plan View III- Cross View

- 01- Control wheel
- 02- Control room
- 03- Cover roof
- 04- Window
- 05- Plastic wall
- 06- Rest space
- 07- Baggage
- 08- Plywood
- 09- Gas drum
- 10- Fabric roof
- 11- Wooden floor
- 12- Engine
- 13- Gasoline
- 14- Propeller
- 15- Rudder
- 16- Wooden bar
- 17- Metal chain
- 18- Dimension of one drum
- 19- Forward

I- Trắc diện II- Bình diện III- Thiết diện

- 01- Tay lái
- 02- Phòng lái
- 03- Mái che
- 04- Cửa sổ
- 05- Vách tôn
- 06- Chỗ trú
- 07- Đồ vật
- 08- Ván ép
- 09- Phuy nước
- 10- Vải bạt
- 11- Sàn gỗ
- 12- Máy
- 13- Dầu
- 14- Chân vịt
- 15- Bánh lái
- 16- Thanh gỗ
- 17- Đai sắt
- 18- Kích thước 1 phuy
- 19- Chiều đi

I- Vue de côté II- Vue de dessus III- Vue en coupe

- 01- Barre de commande
- 02- Cabine de commande
- 03- Toit
- 04- Fenêtre
- 05- Cloison en tôle
- 06- Abri
- 07- Objets divers
- 08- Planches en aggloméré
- 09- Réserves d'eau
- 10- Auvent
- 11- Pont en bois
- 12- Moteurs
- 13- Réserves de mazout
- 14- Hélices
- 15- Gouvernail
- 16- Barre de bois
- 17- Cerceau métallique
- 18- Dimensions d'un tonneau
- 19- Sens de déplacement du radeau

I- 側面 II- 平面 III- 断面

- 1. 舵輪
- 2. 操縦室
- 3. 屋根
- 4. 窓
- 5. 壁
- 6. 寝所
- 7. 荷物
- 8. 平板
- 9. 水ドラムかん
- 10. 布切れ
- 11. 床板
- 12. エンジン
- 13. 燃料
- 14. プロペラ
- 15. 舵
- 16. 板
- 17. 鉄板
- 18. ドラムかんの大きさ
- 19. 前進

- The joyful faces of 14 refugees after they are just saved.
- Những nét mặt hân hoan của 14 người tị nạn vừa được cứu thoát lên tàu Shokomaru.
- Visages remplis de joies de 14 réfugiés venant d'être sauvés.
- 救出直後の新しい希望に満ちた14人の難民たち。



- Before leaving Shokomaru, Mr. Phong receives a gift from the captain who rescued his family.
- Ông Phong nhận quà tặng từ thuyền trưởng, người đã cứu vớt gia đình ông trước khi rời tàu Shokomaru.
- Avant de quitter le Shokomaru, M. Phong reçoit un cadeau du capitaine qui a sauvé sa famille.
- イカダを作ったフォン氏と彼を救出した昭広丸の船長。



- With a warm reception when arriving Japan, 14 boat people have their first meal at the Yokohama Catholic center.
- 14 người vượt nạn được ân cần đón tiếp khi vừa đặt chân lên đất liền, dùng bữa cơm đầu tiên tại trung tâm Công giáo Yokohama.
- Accueil chaleureux réservé aux 14 personnes qui prennent leur premier repas après leur arrivée au centre catholique de Yokohama, Japon.
- ようやく上陸の希望がかなえられ横浜カトリックセンターでやすらぎを得た14人の難民たち。



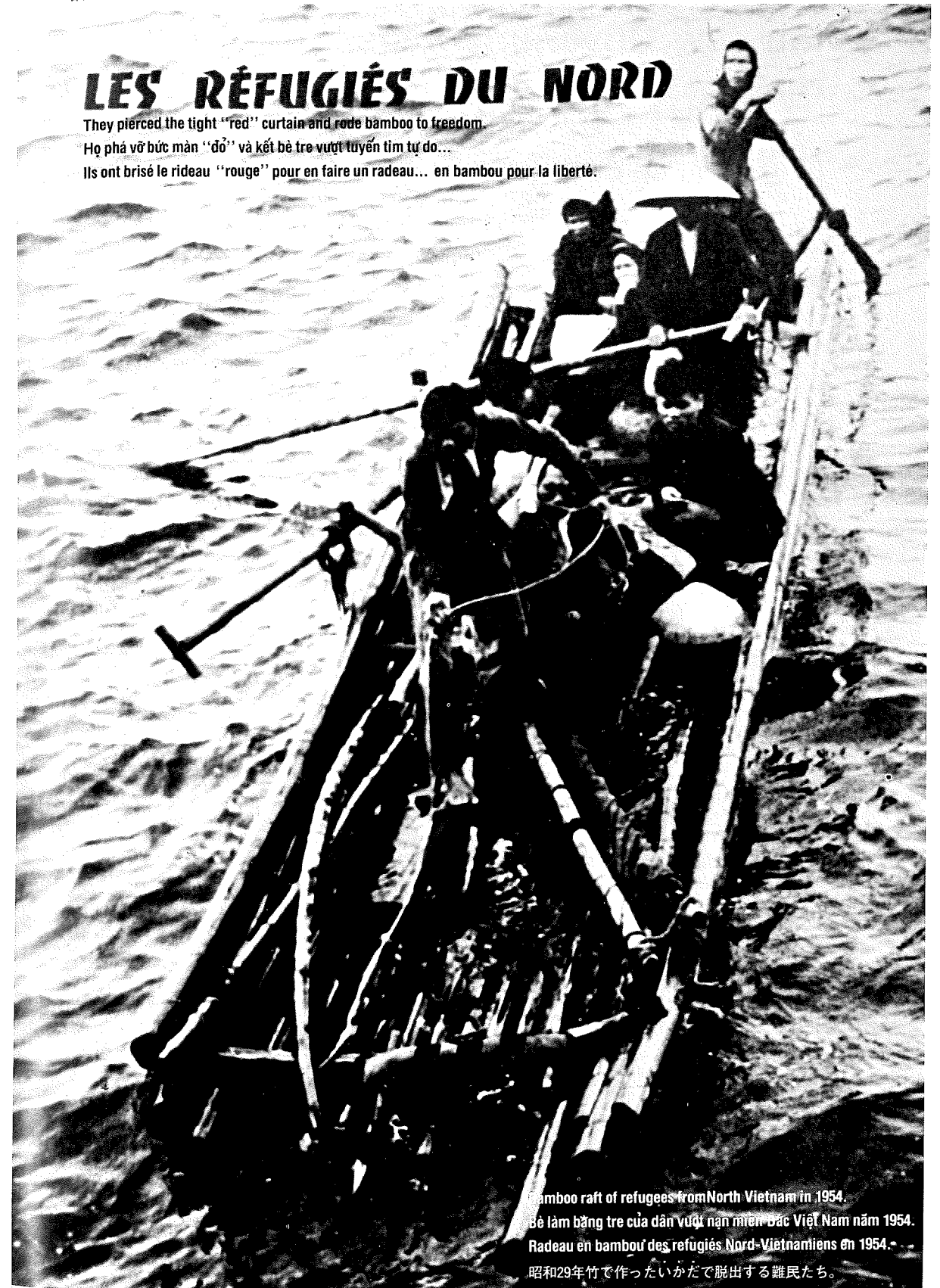
- In 1954, the Communists took over North Vietnam, more than 800,000 people had to flee to the South by every means.
- Năm 1954, miền Bắc Việt Nam bị Cộng sản hóa, hơn 800.000 người đã dùng đủ mọi phương tiện để xuôi Nam tìm tự do!
- En 1954, les Communistes se rendaient maîtres du Nord-Vietnam, conséquence : plus de 800.000 personnes, par tous les moyens, ont réussi à trouver la liberté au Sud.
- 昭和29年共産化された北ベトナムから、約80万人の人々が自由を求めて南へ脱出した。

LES RÉFUGIÉS DU NORD

They pierced the tight "red" curtain and rode bamboo to freedom.

Họ phá vỡ bức màn "đỏ" và kết bè tre vượt tuyến tìm tự do...

Ils ont brisé le rideau "rouge" pour en faire un radeau... en bambou pour la liberté.



Bamboo raft of refugees from North Vietnam in 1954.
Bè làm bằng tre của dân vượt nạn miền Bắc Việt Nam năm 1954.
Radeau en bambou des réfugiés Nord-Vietnamiens en 1954.
昭和29年竹で作ったいかだで脱出する難民たち。

- **SONG BE 12 - FREEDOM FIGHTER :**
They amazed the world by "borrowing"
the new Government's ship.
History will not forget the daring event !
- 世界を戦慄させる歴史的な「ソンベ・自由」号



- Bateau historique : "SONG BE - LIBERTÉ"
qui faisait parler de lui dans le monde !
- Con tàu lịch sử : "SÔNG BÉ - TỰ DO"
làm chấn động thế giới !





● The daring hi-jack voyage of the present Vietnam Government's ship, the SONG BE 12, made headlines and news reports all over the world.

The 120 ton, 36 meters vessel raced to Australia with 179 aboard. History will recall the ingenuity and courage of the Captain and his friends.

You'll delight in this story and pictures, by the Captain of the happy hi-jackers!

(See page 24).

● Để tìm Tự Do, người tị nạn không những chỉ vượt đại dương bằng những thuyền nhỏ mà còn sử dụng cả tàu lớn để ra đi.

Ngày 7-11-1977, 179 người tị nạn đã cưỡng đoạt Tàu Sông Bé 12 dài 36m, trọng tải 120 tấn vượt đại dương đi thẳng đến Úc Châu là một sự kiện hi hữu gây chấn động khắp nơi trên thế giới.

Chúng tôi xin giới thiệu hình ảnh và thiên hồi ký của Thuyền trưởng cùng Ban chỉ huy tàu Sông Bé 12 viết về chuyến đi lịch sử này. (xem trang 27).

● A la recherche de la liberté, les réfugiés non seulement utilisaient de petites barques fragiles, mais encore des bateaux pour traverser l'océan.

Le 7 Nov 1977, 179 personnes réussissaient de ruse à mettre leurs mains sur le bateau SONG BE 12 de 120 tonnes et de 36m de long, qu'ils utilisaient pour aller directement en Australie, c'était un fait qui surprenait le monde!

Nous vous présentons ici les photos et le récit du Capitaine de ce bateau enlevé des mains communistes.

● (ソンベ12)

自由を求めて海に出る難民は小舟の他に、大きな船も使った。昭和52年11月7日、179人の難民がソンベ12号船（長さ36メートル 120トン）を乗っ取って、大洋を渡りオーストラリアに着いた。このことは世界を揺さぶる希有な事件である。この本には、その事件の写真と、その歴史的な航海を語る船長とリーダー、グループの回顧録が紹介される。（29頁より）



● From left : Captain Tran Phuoc Hau, assistant Lu Ngoc Son and two sailmen.

● Từ trái qua phải : Thuyền trưởng Trần Phước Hậu, thuyền phó Lữ Ngọc Sơn, và 2 thủy thủ tàu Sông Bé 12.

● De gauche à droite : Capitaine Tran Phuoc Hau, Assistant Lu Ngoc Son et deux marins.

● ソンベ12号の乗組員、左端から
トラン・フック・ハウ船長、
リー・グック・ソン副船長、
船員二人



SÔNG BÉ 12
ソンベ12号

SÔNG BÉ-12

- Refugees lie all over, inside and outside the ship deck.
- Dân vượt nạn nằm la liệt trên boong tàu và trong hầm tàu.
- Réfugiés épuisés sur leur bateau.
- 船内での避難民。



SÔNG BÉ-12



- Good bye to the refugees on P. Tengah, Song Be-12 directs to Australia.
- Tạm biệt đồng bào tị nạn trên đảo P. Tengah, tàu Sông Bé-12 hướng về Úc Châu.
- Adieu aux réfugiés sur P. Tengah, Le Song Be-12 prend la direction de l'Australie.
- プラウ・テンガからオーストラリアに向かうソンベ12号





SONG BE 12: Journey to Freedom

Sydney, Australia-Jan. 6, 1978.

The smell of death, anxiety and fear pervades the city of Saigon after two and a half years of the new government's rigid rule. It is a dead city if judged by human rights, freedom and decency. People walk hurriedly and singly wherever you look. Life could change radically in a moment with the next person you meet. Even a close relative cannot be trusted. His existence may depend on providing the government's agent with information of a close one. Truly the enemy may be one in your household...the new regime has arranged all that.

I worked for the new rulers of Vietnam. It brought certain material benefits, but freedom of movement is a fond memory. Everyone is controlled like robots, or yoked like oxen, plodding mechanically in a limited circle. One longs to talk to others but dares not. The government covers its many mistakes. One may not frown or wrinkle a brow in ques-

tioning or disapproval. The one within ear-shot or walking near by might be the secret police. The devilishness of communism...it makes spies of brother on brother.

Is there a person in Vietnam who has not thought of fleeing through the forest or risking life on the seas? We heard of the barges made from metal barrels which miraculously brought people eventually to Malaysia, Japan and even Australia. The seas had claimed half their numbers we were told. I was lucky to work in a shipping company, and knew the seas and the neighboring ports to where I had travelled before. The crew of our ship hoped for a journey abroad. But no one would even hint of it to the crew member beside him, even if they had been friends. But I vowed to escape, and I knew there were others aboard of the same mind. The leaders of the SONG BE 12, sure of each others good faith, talked it over and decided to choose

other comrades. By the end of July 1977 we had our team. We would try to escape from Vietnam even at the risk of life. Aboard our ship were only three Communist cadres. Their work was in the engineering part of the operation aboard the ship, but their main mission was to observe us, control our activities, and regiment our thoughts. We took the greatest pains to hide our plans or intentions. We worked zealously, and they saw us as "a good worker and a good political learner". They were probably happy at the way we swallowed the party-line. But we didn't overact. We sensed the dissatisfaction of the three agents. They were still poor after years of "fighting against imperialism". The fall of the government, they thought, would bring them what they envied in others...money and things. They had little more than the bare essentials, and we had more than they. They craved alcohol, and so we brought them to the bars with us. It helped our relationship. Their craving for drink was to help our plan to succeed.

Two months passed since we had vowed to escape. We ignored each other in front of the three agents, with no sign of special friendship among us. We'd even argue at times or even fight. Outwardly they saw us reluctantly tolerating each other. But inwardly we were one, and on week-end evenings, we would meet in a restaurant where no one knew us. We took pains not to be followed. If another came into restaurant, we would soon conclude our meeting and depart. When we were with the three agents, we adopted their topics of conversation and even tried to walk like them and to dress as casually as they did. Our plans were being polished with the time and remained hidden. We set aside necessities we'd need for journey. We reviewed the experiences of others we had heard about, and anticipated running into problems once we made the break. The experience of the VAM CO 16 gave us some question to consider. Once we were tipped off that we were being shadowed by the secret police, in spite of our most careful planning.

The shipping company had its observers too. All this presented obstacles to our meetings, and prolonged the time of preparation. But we determined to persevere.

To leave without our families was out of the question. To help us to get them aboard meant we had to include more in our plans. Contacts were slowly and carefully made because of the ever present secret police. The preparation was completed as good as

we could expect. On November 7-1977 the SONG BE 12 would leave Saigon for its scheduled destination PHU QUOC. Our families were instructed to go to Vung Tau before. Full of anxiety we could not sleep for two days before the final departure hour. But we left at the scheduled moment on the 7th, and the SONG BE 12 plowed through the seas on the most adventuresome trip it had ever made.

Two hours after leaving we invited the three cadres into a room at 10:00 A.M. to have a drink of their cherished whisky. One of them held back from drinking. But when our conversation turned toward talk of a "smuggler" of our famous Vietnamese food condiment "nuoc mam", and peppers from Phu Quoc, the greed was touched in the man, and he drank happily with the others. Two glasses of whisky with sleeping drug as a mixer were enough to have the Government's agents sleeping like babies. While the crew ate lunch, the SONG BE 12 was turned toward Vung Tau, and we now acted boldly and were determined to carry out our well laid plan. Our leader group had tied the three sleeping men, and set aside the two loaded CKC rifles and a K-54 colt. Then we called the crew, one by one, for a thorough briefing of our escape that we had executed perfectly until now. They were with us completely.

At 3 P.M. we came to Vung Tau as planned, cast anchor and awaited the arrival of our families. The three bound cadres had slept off the drugs and the whisky, but were being carefully watched in their bound condition. Late that night, our families arrived. At 4:00 A.M. with all aboard on the 8th of November we started our journey for freedom, heading south with 149 women and children hid inside the small rooms, to avoid the suspicious eyes of the Maritime police we figured we'd meet. Around 8 A.M. when the ship approached the open deep sea area, a scouting plane flew low, and evidently signaled to two patrol ships which came after us. The motors of the SONG BE 12 seem to outdo their capacity as we raced away at full speed with 173 aboard.

Four hours later plowing through the high seas we didn't have any craft in sight. We breathed the fresh air of freedom, and our hearts tingled with delight in our happiness. After two and a half years of communism and the long hours of tension before taking off, it seemed just too good to be true. The spur of the motors and the slapping of the waves as we cut through the sea seemed to be a song of joy at their part in our daring flight from death.

We untied the three cadres and put them in a large room, but held firmly to keeping them under watch at all times. Tired from the tension and wrung out emotionally, the 149 laid down on the decks of the ship in a peaceful sleep. Our plan called for a port-call in Singapore, to replenish fuel and drop off the three communists, before going on to Australia.

After three days, however, we came to P. Tengah Island, Malaysia. 2000 Vietnamese living in this temporary camp danced and shouted with joy when they saw our ship and sensed what we had done. Kill the communists some impulsively suggested. But cool heads took charge. To do so would have marred the ideals for which we had fled. Until now we had treated them like Vietnamese brothers whose wills and minds were not their own. We continued that by feeding them the same food as the crew, which was better than that of our families who were living on the decks. All the three asked was to be returned to Vietnam. They said nothing that would show they had not accepted the ideals of the new government and we made no effort to suggest differently. Men must be true to their own consciences even if it is erroneous. Their families were still in Vietnam too.

At 7:00 A.M. on November 11th we were visited by Mr Nguyen Duc of the NGUOI VIET TU DO in Malaysia. He urged us to leave quickly, lest Malaysian authorities decide to stop us for some reason. He urged us to continue on to Indonesia and not to Singapore. 8 persons asked to go along with us to Australia, so our family grew to 181. The ship ran beautifully, and we came to Surabaya port, Indonesia, and obtained food and fuel. The Indonesian

authorities granted all our requests and needs, and we took off from that port and headed for Darwin Australia on Nov 22, 1977.

When we entered the territorial waters of Australia, a Navy plane flew over us and we felt we had found freedom. Permission was given for us to proceed, and on the evening of November 27th, a Navy ship came out to meet us and lead us into Darwin.

The next day at 1 P.M., the SONG BE 12 cast anchor. We eagerly complied with all formalities and minimum regulations, and handed over the weapons we had to the Australian officials. We asked for asylum for the 181 of us, and asked that the wishes of the three communists to be returned to Vietnam be respected. History will record the official grant of the Australian Prime Minister to let us resettle in Australia. All of this took place aboard the ship. Now we were to go ashore at 11:A.M. on November 29th, and were escorted to the Quarantine office Darwin. We looked back at the SONG BE 12 from the outside, and she seemed to bob up and down happily in the sea, calmly sharing the air of freedom. After 22 days at sea you can imagine our joy to be away from the smell of death and fear in our beloved Vietnam. But our joy is limited when we think of family, friends and countrymen... still forced to endure the sad and miserable lot in Vietnam under Communist inhumanism. True Vietnamese inside and outside their beloved land will live and work for the day our country will be free again.

TRAN PHUOC HAU

Captain and Crew of the SONG BE 12. □



■ Impatient of interminable waiting, 8 men joined the Freedom Fighter, Song Be-12, to Australia.

■ Ra đi và tiếp tục ra đi, sau khi rời Việt Nam đến P. Tengah, Mã Lai, 8 thanh niên đã tiếp tục cuộc hành trình mới, nương theo tàu Sông Bé 12 tìm về Úc Châu.

■ Impatients d'attente interminable, 8 hommes joignèrent le groupe qui tentaient d'aller en Australie sur le Song Be 12.

■ ブラウテンガからソンベ12号に乗った8人のオーストラリア定住希望者。

SÔNG BÉ 12:

Hành trình tìm Tự Do

Sydney, ngày 6 tháng 1 năm 1978.

Sau hơn hai năm rưỡi ở trong tay Cộng sản, thành phố Sài Gòn mang sắc thái đau khổ lo âu, gần như một thành phố chết. Tất cả mọi người đều sống một cách vội vã, không biết đến ngày mai. Tôi tuy là công nhân nhà nước, được ưu đãi đôi chút trong chế độ hiện tại, nhưng nhìn lại ngày xưa mới thấy nay mình không còn chút tự do nào nữa. Tôi không còn được đi lại tùy ý, không được nói chuyện thoải mái, lúc nào cũng dè dặt, ngay cả đối với những người thân. Đó là chưa kể đến những trái tai gai mắt mà nhà nước cổ tình bưng bít sự thật. Chung quanh tôi, mọi người theo dõi rình mò, ai cũng có thể là công an tìm hiểu đời tư của tôi.

Trong hơn hai năm đó, mọi người đều có ý định thoát ly lên rừng hay tìm cách vượt biển. Tôi rất may mắn được làm việc trong ngành hàng hải, đường biển đối với tôi rất quen thuộc, kể cả vùng biển của những quốc gia khác mà tôi đã có dịp đến. Thủy thủ trên tàu tôi ai cũng ước một ngày nào đó tìm được lối đi thoát, nhưng không ai dám ngỏ tâm tư thầm kín ấy cho người khác, dù rất thân thiện. Cộng sản đã làm chúng tôi nghi ngờ lẫn nhau. Điều này khiến việc kết tụ một đám đông người để vượt biển rất khó khăn. Vì vậy, ban chỉ huy tàu Sông Bé 12 chúng tôi đã nhiều lần tâm sự và tìm người chung chí hướng, họp lại tuyên thệ vào cuối tháng 7-77.

May mắn hơn nữa là tàu chúng tôi chỉ có 3 tên cán bộ Cộng sản. Những người này ngoài chức vụ về kỹ thuật còn có bổn phận theo dõi và kiểm soát tư tưởng chúng tôi. Chúng tôi hết sức dè dặt và bề ngoài ra sức làm việc cũng như "học tập tốt, lao động tốt", đồng thời "hòa hợp, hòa giải" với mấy người cán bộ ấy, tạo bộ mặt hết sức trung thành. Ba người này là cán bộ nghèo túng dù đã bao nhiêu năm chiến đấu chống đế quốc". Chính vì thế, khi đến Sài Gòn, họ có vẻ khá bất mãn khi thấy chúng tôi là "ngụy" mà có số lương hơn họ. Về vật chất họ còn thua kém đủ mọi mặt. Họ rất ước ao có đời sống sung túc hơn, có tiền ăn nhậu. Vì thế chúng tôi thường mời họ đi uống rượu ngoài giờ làm việc. Dần dần, chuyện ăn nhậu này

thành một thói quen, họ thấy rằng thiếu rượu là thiếu một thứ chi cần thiết, là thiếu một lãng quên.

Suốt 2 tháng, chúng tôi hết sức khéo léo đóng kịch thật tài tình để những cán bộ Cộng sản không nghi kỵ và thủy thủ đoàn không chú ý. Chúng tôi không bao giờ đi chung với nhau, ít nói chuyện riêng tư trong giờ làm việc, đôi khi lại giả vờ gây lộn lẫn nhau. Tuy nhiên trong những buổi chiều cuối tuần, chúng tôi hẹn gặp nhau ở những quán ăn xa, họp bàn đến chuyện đi lịch sử. Ai cũng lo âu, dòm chừng những người đi phía sau trên đường đến địa điểm hẹn. Nếu đang tụ họp mà gặp một người nào đó cùng công ty thì chắc việc sẽ không thành. Bí mật và kín đáo lúc nào cũng vây bủa chúng tôi trong mọi môi trường. Từ cách ăn mặc, đi đứng, nói chuyện, chúng tôi đều dè dặt, bắt chước y như mọi cán bộ Cộng sản. Từ những tư cách này, chúng tôi càng ngày càng tỏ ra gần gũi với họ.

Trong thời gian ấy, chúng tôi chuẩn bị tất cả những vật dụng cần thiết để hành động. Bao nhiêu buổi họp chỉ nhằm đúc kết lại một vấn đề và rút kinh nghiệm những chiếc tàu đã đi như chiếc Vàm Cỏ 16. Sau đó, chúng tôi có tin là công an thành đang theo dõi chúng tôi và những sĩ quan hàng hải khác cùng công ty. Điều này là một trở ngại lớn lao, nhưng vì nhân quyền và niềm khao khát tự do, chúng tôi không nản chí.

Nếu tàu Sông Bé 12 không phải chở thêm người thì mọi chuyện đều quá dễ. Đàng này, vì gia đình, chúng tôi phải móc nối với một số người nữa để họ có phương tiện mang gia đình chúng tôi đến chỗ hẹn. Sự việc ngày càng tế nhị và khó khăn, nhất là công an đang theo dõi chúng tôi như hình với bóng.

Mọi dự tính đã tạm xong, đúng 8 giờ sáng ngày 7-11-1977, Sông Bé 12 khởi hành từ Sài Gòn đi Phú Quốc. Suốt hai ngày đêm 5 và 6 tháng 11, chúng tôi không ngủ được, lo âu luôn luôn đè nặng, nhất là chúng tôi phải đưa gia đình đi Vũng Tàu trước đó. Con tàu mở đầy xa

“Socialisme morose”

□ VU TAI LUC



Mr. VU TAI LUC, a 48 year old fortune-telling researcher and writer, escaped by boat from Vietnam in April 1977. He arrived with his wife and two children on the coast of Malaysia, and at present is living in the United States. Mr. Luc has written fourteen books on the political history of Vietnam,

the face of the money-class, and fortune-telling. All his works were confiscated by the present Vietnamese Communist regime. “SOCIALISME MOROSE” is his analysis of socialism. This is not a theoretical work, but rather the author's tears for the misery caused to so many human beings.

Since March 1975, the people of South Vietnam had listened to the neutral reports in Vietnamese, broadcast over BBC, the Government of England's financed radio station. Early in the morning for thirty minutes, and again very late at night for another thirty minutes, the people were glued to their radios. When the

unfavorable information to South Vietnam was heard a few days before the fall, we realized that it was already too late. The BBC station had fulfilled its task. The only thing left now for the people of South Vietnam was to realize their destruction. Now they had to decide whether to remain or flee their beloved homeland. For

some people this was an easy choice, but for me it was a most difficult decision.

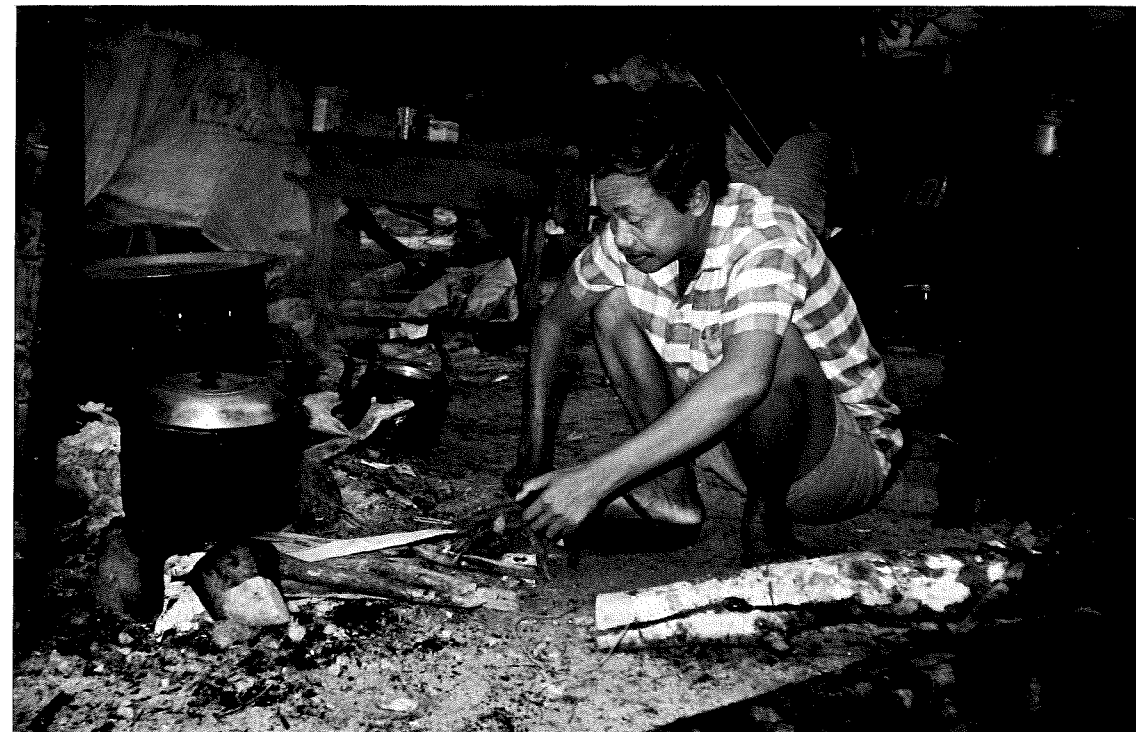
After much thought, I decided to stay. This was because I love my country with a passion, a love that is so much imbued in the Vietnamese culture. But the price of remaining was to witness the results of a 30 year long fratricidal war, and the historical changes to come. By remaining in my country the sight of the real face of the much publicized myth of the infamous socialism of our century was experienced. Thousands of books have been written in order to analyze or criticize socialism, and millions of people have been killed by it. I thought it important to have a personal, on-the-spot experience and knowledge of the real nature of this socialism, even if it brought danger to my life.

My decision to remain in Vietnam was also based on philosophical grounds, somewhat similar to the observation of Henry Kissinger: “Any important political problem of our century has a philosophical setting”. Nevertheless, I escaped from Vietnam two years later. Such a decision, philosophically is absolutely groundless. It is emotional problem. In order to realize such a decision, my family and I risked our own lives, sneaking away from the armed

guards, and fighting the rough seas in an old small boat.

During the two years I lived under Vietnam socialism, I had many experiences. When the war ended on April 30, 1975, all in Saigon exploded with relief, roaming the streets with the cracking of gunfire so loud and steady, that it seemed like a New Year's celebration. I watched what appeared during those days and nights on TV, the many heroes in the battle fields, the guerillas going through the Ho Chi Minh route and the events that led up to the victory of Vinh Linh. Women had been used as liaison —messengers—, through the woods, between squads of soldiers. Casualties were high among these heroic women of Vietnam. Pictures appeared of their dead bodies, long beautiful hair hanging from lifeless bodies wrapped in hammock cloth. One choked with pride for these valiant women who paid with their innocent lives the debt of the war of others. Such sights and emotional pressures weighed heavily on mind and soul.

The enthusiasm following the liberation lasted less than three months, and turned to contempt and resentment for the liberators as the new regime began to structure their ruthless program. Photographs which just a few



- “Comparing to present Vietnam, here is the heaven”, famous writer Vu Tai Luc waited for many dull months in this island.
- “So với Việt Nam bây giờ, thì thiên đàng là đây!” Nhà văn Vũ Tài Lục đã sống hàng bao tháng trời chờ đợi rông rã.
- “En comparaison avec le Vietnam actuel, c'est ici un paradis !”, L'écrivain Vu Tai Luc y a passé des mois à attendre.
- これでも、今のベトナムよりは天国だ。ブラウテンガのキャンプで数ヶ月生活した文学者、有名な作者のヴ・タイ・ルック。

months ago had made the blood run hot and flooded the eyes with tears now brought only passive facial expressions. Folks would view them and whisper, "the pictures are real facts, but that explanation is a pure lie" Spring flowers were covered with waves of dry dust and cinder it seemed, as truth and goodness were choked and smothered with socialism, Vietnam brand. I had read newspapers from the West and in other various publications, the expression "Socialisme morose". I had doubted that this expression was as objectionable as some writers made it to be, and thought it was overstated anti-propaganda. But now I felt I was being covered in the sorrow and despair of this socialism, and that it was engulfing both body and soul.

Liberation had brought a short period of gaiety, and life was lived at a fast pace in Saigon. But now the streets became deathly still, hopelessness, the mood of the people, as they walked the streets with down cast faces, their foreheads furrowed with frightened looks. Thirty years of war had grieved almost every family as members were added to those who would never breathe again. But now a further family heart rendering, as political plans separated family members in planned groupings. The naturally joyous Vietnamese was no longer seen, as every bit of happiness drained from life. Socialism even dictates and controls, to a certain extent, the superficial smile on one's face. The morning noodles and black coffee at night used to frame a day of happy people, living and working in a quiet, heroic way. Now it is almost dead. Saigon has returned to the face of Hanoi twenty two years ago.

One wonders just what kind of theory is behind some of the inhuman indignities inflicted on people. Young Mothers who had just given birth, are lined up to wait for milk-rationed tickets, distributed by Government official. But in order to prove they are unable to breast feed their infant, and to receive a ticket for a far from adequate amount of powdered milk, they are obliged to the humiliation of having an official rub and squeeze their breasts. Babies nurtured under such conditions can not possess the soft, childish heart that Leon Tolstoi would have desired. Hunger always with them, they grow to fight in the streets, to get the money for the needs to survive. The Mothers do not have the energy to raise and educate their children. The sadness of socialism does not always stain the streets, but its gloominess has inundated the hearts of children and adults alike.

Clothing now is so scarce that in some instances family members or friends take turns using the same trousers. Black potatoes are mixed with rice to provide more bulk even if nourishment is not increased. Pieces of broken mirrors and colored chalk for painting the lips of a bride on her wedding day, is a concession to women. The tyrannical discrimination against young women degrades the Vietnamese woman and it is a girl in this kind of a society that has produced the drama "DRAMA OF THU THUA" (in the province of Long An, South Vietnam).

The opening of the drama begins with the double marriage of a liberation army soldier. At the time of the division of North and South Vietnam, he left his new wife in the south, and went to the north. When he returned south 23 years later, right after the fall of Saigon, he brought with him, his new wife he had married in the north. After discussing the matter together, the three agreed to live in peace, with a triangle relationship under one roof. After five months, the husband came home one evening from his place of work, and couldn't find his wife from the south. He asked the wife from the north, and she just laughed without giving him any answer. That same evening, the husband chased a snake into a pile of straw in the corner of the house, and found out two human legs. He pressed his wife for an explanation, and she confessed she had killed the southern wife. Not only that, she had cooked for supper the breasts of the deceased, cutting them into small pieces. Her excuse was that she couldn't endure the hunger pains, nor the triangular relationship. That night, husband and wife worked together in the garden, digging a hole. Once the hole was finished, the husband shot the northern wife and put her body in the hole. This tragic event is considered to tell the political tragedy of Vietnam in its story.

Sad events and experiences are the lot of every one who treasures freedom. One remains vividly in my memory. A lieutenant from the regular army of North Vietnam committed suicide by poisoning himself. He did this at a tomb in a French cemetery in Saigon. On top of the beautiful tombstone was found the suicide note addressed to the soldier's Mother:

"Mother, 10 years have passed since I was sent to the "B" Battle line. Since then we have not met. How often I wanted to see your face just once more, but I could not get leave permission. I wanted to purchase a

sweater to send to you, but never could gather enough money. If I could sell half the tombstone on which I write, it would be enough to make a little bamboo hut for you. But now I realize it is too late. Please forgive me. Goodbye."

Pitiful "socialisme morose" is a fact. I

can not live within that kind of sadness. I saw with my own eyes the real socialism in Vietnam, far different from the fairy tales told of it. I finally understood that the 30 years war was not 30 years of struggle. Without any regrets of conscience, I made the decision to escape from Vietnam. □



- Bamboo-hut on the shore of P.Tengah, waiting for 10 months.
- Chòi tạm trú tại đảo P.Tengah, Mã Lai, 10 tháng trời chờ đợi rỗng rã.
- Un abri provisoire sur la plage de l'île P.Tengah, 10 longs mois d'attente.
- ユ・タイ・ルック氏。ブラウテンガ海岸の竹小屋で10カ月間待ち続けた。

**Will fish that fed on refugees,
give hunger for freedom to those who EAT ?**

ESCAPE

Prof. LE KIM NGAN was one of 54 refugees picked up in early September 1977 by the SS MIGHTY. For over a month, several countries refused to grant landing privileges and the refugees were transferred at sea to

the SS NICHIDO. The story told here is extracted from the book of the former Professor of Phuong Nam University, "WHERE IS VIETNAM GOING".

Convinced that freedom was something that one should be willing to live and fight and die for, I planned a way of escape from Vietnam.

Toward the end of June 1976, fifty seven people which included seven families, my sister and close friends, decided to crawl from under the yoke of oppression. We lined up the things we would bring, and bought an 11 ton motor ship, and began purchasing gasoline, bit by bit. We decided to leave from Vung Tau on the outskirts of Saigon.

It took two months to make preparations. Three times we had to change the departing time, but finally it was decided to set out at 4:00 AM on the 5th of September. As we were a large number, we formed small groups, and travelled separately, finally meeting in a place agreed upon, the house of a friend. On Sep. 3rd the first group arrived at Vung Tau safely. The next day my group, disguising ourselves as merchants and fishermen and in garb other than usual, started toward the gathering point. We pretended to be strangers to each other, walking apart. Several times we were questioned by the secret police on our way from Saigon to Vung Tau. But all arrived safely at 4 PM in the home of Mr. A. However, hardly had we breathed a sigh of relief, when "Bo Doi" (a communist soldier) who had found out about our plan to escape, came to exact a bribe for his silence. We had to give him all the money we had. And now our anxiety mounted. We knew of many cases in the past, of people being arrested even after they had paid a bribe for silence. We made up our minds to commit suicide at once should we be arrested. Fortunately nothing happened, and on Sep. 5, we began at nine o'clock at night, to go to the sea-shore, one by one.

At midnight, we made all the children take sleeping drugs, and they were sleeping quietly. Each of us had made sure of the place to keep fish, or of his secluded hiding place. It took about two hours before our departure, and we left two hours earlier than the appointed four o'clock. We were examined at a check point,

but we passed through without any trouble, thanks to a sleepy-eyed unsuspecting soldier.

At 2:00 AM on the 6th of September, our ship was pursued by two patrol ships. Turning off the lights and keeping the engines at full speed, we finally drew away from them. I couldn't help but feel that our plan of escape had succeeded! From now on I would trust my life to Heaven. Now I am not in Vietnam! Here is the space of freedom! If I must die, better that it be in the space of freedom.

On the afternoon of September 6th, we were saved by the MIGHTY, a Japanese ship. I cried...we all cried. Why do they treat us so kindly, though they are a different race? And, on the other hand, why do our people, who are of the same race, why do they treat us so cruelly? And why do we have to leave Vietnam, our own country? It is an irony of fate. We want to thank over and over again the Captain of the MIGHTY and all its crew, and to express our deepest gratitude. We shall never be able to forget for the rest of our lives, what we experienced that day.

On the 10th of September, we arrived at Bangkok, but we were not allowed to land. The ship went on to Singapore, but we could not get landing permission there either. Fortunately a family of eight in our group had relatives in France. The French Embassy agreed to guarantee their resettlement, and they alone were allowed to go ashore.

Off again we sailed, looking for land... for a country that would permit us to step on their shore. We arrived in Indonesia and this was the third country that refused to let us feel land under our feet. But the Indonesia Red Cross provided us with \$200.00. Off we sailed to the fourth country, begging even temporary asylum, and arrived at Penang in Malaysia two days later. The answer was the same. Closed to refugees! On the 22nd of September, after 16 days aboard the MIGHTY, we were transferred to the VALIANT, and again started toward Singapore. The parting with the Captain of the MIGHTY was a tearful one. Most of the crew were Koreans. We owed our

life to them. At Singapore, we were put aboard the NICHIDO-MARU, and soon on the way to Japan. We arrived at Mitsumi, where we received a change of clothing. The waves had become like the floorboards of a house. It wasn't until October 20th that we landed at the port of Osaka, Japan. There we were questioned by Japanese journalists.

We knew the attitude of countries that refused to accept us. We had been "people without land" for over 40 days. Now we were to be questioned on our motives for leaving! The questions focused on the following points: "Why did you escape from your country, Vietnam, where unity and peace have been restored?" If he only knew, I thought! I answered "We escaped because we could not accept communism which has no freedom". Again they asked: "Why don't you accept communism"? What a question? I wonder if Japanese would accept communism? I tried to answer as well as I could, but it seemed so difficult to make the Japanese journalist understand on the spot. I hope that this letter will help the journalists know the present conditions of the "united Vietnam", and understand "WHY I ESCAPED FROM THE UNITED VIETNAM WHERE NO WAR IS TAKING PLACE". I believe I serve my country best, as a Vietnamese who is looking for freedom, to tell the truth as I see it, of the present conditions in Vietnam.

When I saw many Vietnamese students who came to the port when I arrived in Japan, after having been adrift on the sea for forty five days, I was really seized with fear. It was because of the fear I had in my daily life in Vietnam before I escaped, each time someone would approach me. But after talking together, my fears disappeared completely. I found that most of the students had the same ideas as mine, and they were the students who had made up their minds to remain in Japan and look and hope for freedom... These young students, now "without a country" as I am, encouraged me and treated me so kindly. It was so good to receive fraternal love again. And also I would like to thank the Japanese people who have accepted us so warmly. We, who have left our own country looking for freedom, want to spend the rest of our lives living sincerely, telling the truth for freedom and walking the way of living humanly wherever we are.

LÊ KIM NGÂN
Former President
PHUONG NAM University
SAIGON □



■ NICHIDO MARU, the life saver of 49 people, is just landing at Osaka port.
■ NICHIDO MARU, con tàu cứu tinh của 49 người vượt nạn cấp bến Osaka.
■ Nichido Maru, bateau sauveur de 49 réfugiés Vietnamiens, venait de toucher le port d'Osaka.
■ 大阪港に上陸する直前のレ・キム・ガン教授のグループ



■ President of Phuong Nam University, Professor Le Kim Ngan.
■ Viện trưởng đại học Phương Nam: Giáo sư Lê Kim Ngân.
■ Professeur Le Kim Ngan, l'ancien président de l'université Phuong Nam.
■ 脱出の理由を語るレ・キム・ガン教授

Miserable days on the sea

□ TRAN HOANG

Like helpless leaves adrift in calm or stormy seas, the "Boat People" have met icy indifference and brutal heartlessness of passing ship-Captains and port authorities.

Mr. Tran Hoang lived in spite of this inhuman irresponsibility, and tells of his surviving drift to freedom on Malaysia's shores.

The total lack of sympathy for the refugee in distress, crushed our spirits during the 13 days and nights adrift in our little boat. Leaving Vietnam soon proved a frightening experience, as the tiny craft was hurled, seemingly sky high, in preparation for a terrorizing drop, that we thought would land us at the bottom of the ocean.

As long as I live, unable will I be to forget the heroism of Mr. Dai. In spite of angry seas, he set off alone on a tiny raft in search of help. His courage strengthened what little hope and perseverance we had. But a Thailand ship soon drained us of that hope, when it crushed in the front of our boat, and sailed on in utter indifference. We had fled to be free, to tell the world of Vietnam's crucifixion and our own. But how soon we were to learn that the world was not listening, and cared not at all if we died or survived.

We had prepared well for the escape by night. Three days and nights, we had planned, would bring us to Malaysia shores. But we had not figured on the greed of the one who sold us the ship's motor. After three days at sea, the faulty motor broke down. Seventy two people almost drowned a hundred times over, because of the failure to repair the motor. The hunger for profits makes men heartless and the cause of misery and death.

Night and day, over and over, we drifted slowly on the seas, with ships from free nations frequently passing us by. The shame of those who captained these ships... from Denmark, Poland, Japan, America, England and other free nations. Deck hands waved limp greetings, as they were forced along with the murderous decision of their captain. The International law

of the sea, obliging ships to go to the aid of those in distress, were ignored, not by one, but by all. What a tragedy that the tradition of responding to an S.O.S has been ignored, by those whose rule of action is the profit motive alone.

Some refugees waved weakly, to return the greeting of deck hands. Others ignored it, scorned it, or suppressed anger at the inhumanity of it all. We were drained of courage and hope as each of the ships passed on, and were soon out of sight. I often groaned aloud. Other gave way to loud cries of grief and despondency. Two of the children began to cry bitterly and steadily on the sixth day on. I berated myself for having brought them along. And yet, they were a big part of the reason we had fled. What a future for youngsters in present day Vietnam! The irresponsible remarks that the refugee flees his homeland to avoid labor or physical hardship is a falsehood. We feel compelled to pass on the chance of free life to our children, and tell the world that it is impossible in the land of our birth.

Lack of food and water for day after day and night after night, leaves humans devoid of all restraint, but that of trying to survive. A tiny bit of food becomes the difference between life and death, and starving people have no inhibition. Thank God that we drifted ashore before we devoured one another.

Never will I forget the sufferings, discouragement and maddening nights at sea as long as I live. It was a death that will remain with me forever, as we thank God for our rebirth and a chance to live as human beings, in freedom. □

Những ngày khốn cùng trên đại dương

□ TRẦN - HOÀNG

Chơi vơi như chiếc lá giữa giòng, người "Tị nạn bằng thuyền" không những chỉ chống chọi với sóng gió hãi hùng của thiên nhiên mà còn gánh chịu những bội bạc,

nhân tâm của con người.

Sau đây là một đoạn nhật ký trong chuyến đi tìm tự do của anh Trần Hoàng đã may mắn trôi dạt đến bờ biển Mã Lai.

Trong suốt 13 ngày đêm lênh đênh trên chiếc thuyền con, tinh thần chúng tôi đã bị vùi dập bởi sự thờ ơ vô tình của con người đối với những người tỵ nạn trong cảnh khốn cùng. Chuyến vượt biển này đã đem lại cho chúng tôi một kinh nghiệm hãi hùng, nhất là khi con thuyền đang bị sóng đưa lên đến tận trời cao để rồi lại rơi xuống, tưởng chừng như đem chúng tôi xuống tận đáy biển sâu.

Suốt đời làm sao tôi có thể quên được tấm lòng hy sinh cao quý của anh Đại, người đã chấp nhận xuống bè bơi đi tìm người cứu trong sự mênh mông của biển cả. Sự can đảm của anh Đại đã giúp chúng tôi tăng thêm chút hy vọng và giữ được nhẩn nại để chờ đợi người đến cứu. Chẳng bao lâu, một chiếc tàu Thái Lan đã tước mất sự hy vọng đó khi họ đụng vào mũi tàu của chúng tôi và lạnh lùng đi tiếp. Chúng tôi đã trốn đi tìm Tự Do, để nói lên cảnh bị đóng đinh trên Thập Tự Giá của Việt Nam ngày nay và của cả chính chúng tôi nữa. Nhưng chẳng bao lâu, chúng tôi đã hiểu rằng thế giới không nghe và không cần biết đến chúng tôi sinh sống ra sao, và chẳng thêm để ý chúng tôi sống chết như thế nào.

Chúng tôi chuẩn bị thật kỹ lưỡng cho cuộc vượt biển và đã khởi hành vào một buổi tối, dự định sẽ chỉ mất 3 ngày 3 đêm là đến được bờ biển Mã Lai. Nhưng chúng tôi đã không ngờ được lòng tham không đáy của người bán máy tàu. Sau 3 ngày trên biển, cái máy thuyền hư này đã ngừng chạy hẳn. Đã nhiều lần cả 72 người tưởng chừng bị đưa vào thế giới bên kia vì không sao làm cho máy chạy lại được. Đói và cái chết gần kề làm con người trở nên cuồng loạn, khốn khổ.

Ngày đêm, chúng tôi lênh đênh vật vờ trên biển, gặp bao nhiêu là tàu bè của thế giới tự do đã làm ngơ bỏ đi luôn. Từ Đan Mạch, Ba Lan cho đến Nhật Bản, Hoa Kỳ, Anh Quốc và của cả những nước tự do khác. Từ trên boong tàu, nhiều bàn tay vẫy chào yếu đuối như nhủ

rằng họ bị bắt buộc tuân theo quyết định giết người như thế của thuyền trưởng. Luật hàng hải quốc tế buộc phải cứu những người bị nạn trên biển đã bị cố tình làm ngơ, không phải bởi một người mà bởi tất cả. Không hiểu người thuyền trưởng điều khiển những con tàu đó, họ có còn biết xấu hổ vì sự hèn nhát vị kỷ của họ nữa hay không? Thảm kịch của thế kỷ hiện nay đã gây ra bởi những kẻ vì quyền lợi, làm ngơ không đáp ứng những tín hiệu S.O.S.

Một vài người trên thuyền chúng tôi vẫy tay đáp lại. Ngược lại, vài người khác chửi thề, nổi hờn căm vì sự đối xử vô nhân đạo hằn trong lòng mọi người. Chúng tôi mất dần những hy vọng cuối cùng khi nhìn những bóng tàu nhỏ dần, xa cách khỏi chúng tôi. Tôi gào lớn, những người khác rên lên vì khổ não và tuyệt vọng. Hai đứa con tôi bắt đầu khóc tím tím và ray rứt kể từ ngày thứ sáu. Tôi đâm ra hối hận và tự vấn lương tâm nhiều lần về việc đem chúng đi theo. Tuy nhiên tôi tự an ủi mình với lý do lớn nhất đã giúp chúng tôi quyết định phải ra đi: Tương lai của chúng sẽ ra sao nếu ở lại nước Việt Nam hiện tại? Chúng tôi cảm thấy có nghĩa vụ phải tìm cơ hội cho con cái được sống trong Tự Do, và nói cho thế giới biết được thực trạng của Việt Nam, nơi con cái tôi hoàn toàn không có tương lai.

Đói khát trong nhiều ngày đã khiến con người không còn tự chủ được nữa, chỉ còn là làm sao sống được thì thôi. Một chút thực phẩm cũng trở thành quan trọng giữa sống và chết, và khi con người đói khát không còn gì ngăn cản được. May mắn thay, chúng tôi đã trôi giạt được vào bờ, trước khi phải cầu xé lẫn nhau.

Chẳng bao giờ tôi có thể quên được những đêm khốn khổ, thất vọng và điên cuồng trên biển cả. Chúng tôi xem như mình đã chết và nhờ ơn Thượng Đế đã được tái sinh để được dịp sống như một con người, trong không khí của Tự Do. □

What agonies of heart, longings and hopes scald the souls and bodies of "Boat People", forced to leave their beloved VIETNAM. Mr Doan Van Dien fled from Vietnam and

My wife is still among those who are left in Vietnam. Liên gets up early and goes downstairs to put out the slippers for her husband... but I am not there ! I have her image so clearly in my mind. She stands outside the house, contemplating the dissipating happiness, and is empty inside. This kind of agony has just begun. Her heart has been crushed already. When can we meet our loved ones again ? When will I meet my darling wife, Liên , again? We cannot listen to laughing voices or whispering voices no more. I have lost contact with the past, and it has all become a memory. My love too is just a memory. The memory is an agony and together with the intuition that we cannot meet each other again, it has become a thorn in my heart from which I suffer constantly. If I should see her again, everything would probably be changed. Everything has become cold and in the past. Love is past and everything is ended. We have to experience parting more than once in our lives. I could not help but slip out quietly without saying goodbye to her. Is my lot that bad ? Parting became a bitter, sad, pathetic, gruesome but beautiful memory.

I left Vietnam on January 20, 1977. After eight nights at full speed in our boat, we came near to the Indonesian shore, and drifted to Kuching in East Malaysia. Here we stayed for two months, until a boat arrived with refugees from Vietnam. They had to leave because the Malaysian Government would not permit them to stay. Another boat arrived on April 4, 1977, with extraordinary experiences behind them.

"I have led my family and all of you to freedom, and even though I die now, I have no regrets. I am satisfied because I did what I wanted to do. Please listen to my final request. If you and my family arrive in a free country, please become useful human beings, and help the Vietnamese find freedom".

Goodbye,
Doan Van Dien

The current situation of the BOAT PEOPLE in South East Asia

The war in Indochina peninsula ended three years ago. Yet for the first time in history, Viet people have fled their own country, human rights and freedom and life itself denied to them. Newspapers and magazines all over the world have carried the stories of a new people, the "boat people". Who are they? What is their fate? Many people have but a vague answer to both questions. This book will try to show the reader the reality. As one writer put it, "Of all the horror stories in today's world, the story of Vietnam "boat people" is probably the most horrible". If their little crafts reach the coast of a neighboring country, they risk being pushed out to sea again at gunpoint, or they may be thrown into dismal camps, often after being robbed, beaten or raped. Some must exist aboard their ships, refused a step ashore under penalty of a bullet. Chances of being selected for immigration to one of the western countries, after agonizing months or even years of waiting, are slim.

I. REFUGEE CAMPS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA.

1- THAILAND

Thailand has over 100,000 refugees from the Indochinese countries. Most of them are from Laos and Cambodia. Vietnamese are about 3500, almost all of them "boat cases", and living in three large camps.

LAEMSING, CHANTHABURI. It is in South-east Thailand near the border of Cambodia. In October, 1977 there were about 1300 men, women and children all hemmed within a narrow area off the sea, with the mountain and jungle at their back. They've built make-shift structures of coconut leaves or poncho cloth as roof, or remain in the battered junks which afford some relief from sun and rain. Well water is there but not drinkable, and drinking water is brought into the camp. Many have been here over a year, and little hope of any resettlement in a third country.

SIKHIU CAMP, NAKHONRATCHASIMA.

Over 1000 Viet refugees are in this camp 300km northeast of Bangkok. Almost every one escaped by trail through the jungle between Vietnam and Laos, with the exception of some

Vietnamese who had lived in Laos before the communist take over in Indochinese countries. This camp also is wired in and visitors are not permitted.

SONGKHLA CAMP.

In October 1977 there were about 1240 refugees here, south Bangkok, 160 km. toward Malaysian border. There were also 400 aboard junks and boats hoping to be permitted landing. But in late October 1977, these people were pushed out into the sea. Following a pattern for the camps in Thailand, this one also is fenced in by wire and the inmates sheltering themselves with most primitive means... coconut leaves, wood, any thing to shield from sun and rain.

IN BANGKOK, there are two facilities to accommodate several hundred people. These come from the various Thailand camps, having been accepted for resettlement in a third country. Here the legal paper work is completed and people readied for transfer to permanent residency abroad. The United Nations care for their essential needs, and there are no problems.

In general, life in the Thailand camps is such that it is bare existence, with quantity and quality of food questionable. Food allowance amounts to U.S. currency, US\$0.20 per day for each person !! Furthermore the corruption of local authorities strips the refugees of all dignity and respect, not to say of any cherished item they might have brought on their person when they fled... and this for so called "privilege". Refugees are confined to the restricted area, and to keep the world in ignorance of all this, visitors are absolutely forbidden.

2- MALAYSIA

As of October 20, 1977, there were 12 "boat people" camps scattered on the coastline. Each place was formed by several ships landing, having run out of fuel and food, exhausted by the long trip. Some had been pushed back out to sea from Singapore or Bangkok, refused even docking facilities. They had set out again for the shores of Malaysia in the Gulf of Siam, having broken their engines or their junks, in order not to be able to be ordered

back into the sea again. At these camps, local police were sent to check them, and to prevent them from leaving the restricted area. The conditions in these camps are most primitive. They live on the junks, sampans, rafts... or huddle in some permitted areas of a beach under tree shade. Exposed to rain and sun, refugees built make-shift shelters of wood, pieces of canvass and military poncho cloth.

The barely surviving existence is made more distressful because of the interminable wait to learn anything about possible resettlement. The cold indifferent attitude of the authorities to the misery of these people would shock an informed world. No one is permitted to take pictures, so the outside world can not learn the inhuman existence in these Malaysian camps. Local people would befriend the suffering "boat people", but are afraid to go near what are inhuman pens. Kuantan seems to be the very worst of the camps as far as enforced security. The two camps in Kuantan are isolated with wire fences. Those wired off are denied sending or receiving of mail.

Refugees in Malaysia receive an allowance for food from the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees through the Malaysian Red Cross. It is equivalent to \$ 0.3 per day in US currency, and questionable as to whether a person can long survive on that amount. Visitors are restricted to the priests who come for religious ceremonies, and immigration officials from other countries, who come to arrange resettlement for a limited number who qualify for a third country.

After October 15, 1977, scattered refugee groups along the coast line in the state of Johore were moved to a small island 10 miles off shore of Mersing.

The total in early Feb. 1978 numbered about 4,500 in the camps in Malaysia alone. In January 1978, even with monsoon off the coast of Vietnam, 1361 refugees arrived in Malaysia, loaded in crowded fishing boats.

3- SINGAPORE

All vessels which rescued the refugees almost always called on Singapore, and asked for permission to land. Since April 30, 1975, 456 refugees took shelter here.

In Singapore there are two places providing housing and accommodation for refugees :

YMCA CHINESE KATONG CENTER.

Since 1975, up until Sept 20-1977, there have been 107 persons rescued by foreign vessels dropped off here. These vessels are required to assure Singapore that they will be responsible for the refugees, in the event that a third country of refugees' choosing refuse them for resettlement. The ship owners must deposit a large sum of money US \$ 4,000 as an assurance guarantee for the refugee. The refugee may stay for only three months, to give sufficient time for possible eligibility for resettlement in a third country. After this period, they have to go to the country to which the rescuing ship belonged. During the three months, they have to survive on a US dollar a day, provided by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This is rather a very modest sum according to living expense standards in Singapore. Refugees are permitted to walk around freely from their housing area.

FISHING BOAT AREA

The number of refugees here at any one time varies. For instance, in September 1977 there had been 36 people. They lived on their tiny fishing boat which had brought them from Vietnam. The local police quizzed them strictly upon their arrival. Daily the police called two or three times, checking their presence and activity. They were absolutely prohibited from leaving the boat. A group that had arrived shortly after the fall of Saigon, had been there under those desperate conditions for almost three years. With the protest from local sympathizing people, they were permitted by the authorities to go fishing, and to sell their catch on the Singapore market. Singapore did not forbid people to visit the refugees.

4- INDONESIA

There are three facilities for refugees. One in Jakarta, is for those being readied and accepted by a third country. They are here only for a short time in preparation for departure. The other two are on an Island in Tanjung Pinang. The refugees live in a warehouse of a shipping company, converted into living quarters. Aid is provided by the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, through local authorities and private supply company. The allowance is US\$0.30 per day per person. Refugees can go out freely in a human way, and visitors are not only permitted but welcomed. Of course life here is day-and-night difference to other camps in Asia.

5- PHILIPPINES

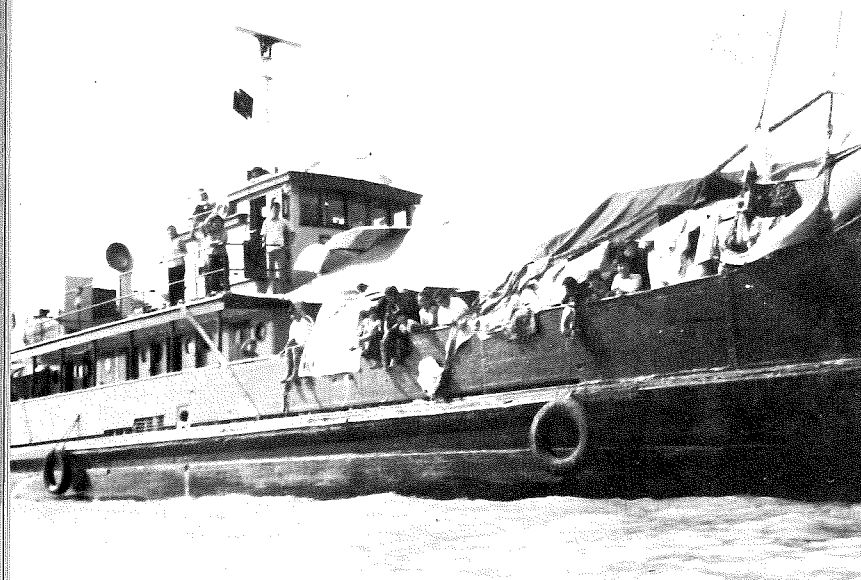
Although the Philippines is distant from Vietnam, 1500 km, with the deepest seas in the world between, the Vietnamese have risked it all and arrived in goodly numbers. After the Communist take-over in their homeland, thousands have fled in tiny fishing boats no bigger than 10 m by 2 m, and some arrived in the Philippines. Undoubtedly, many had their little junks burst asunder beneath them, and lay at the bottom of the deep ocean. Up until late in 1977, over 2000 had arrived. During the monsoon season in January 1978, 55 arrived. There are two camps for the refugees, preparing them for third world resettlement. Life in these camps is austere but fair, and the refugees are grateful. There are about 700 in Philippines now.

II- EFFORTS TO HELP "BOAT PEOPLE".

The world knows that thousands of Indochina refugees have escaped their homeland, in junks, drum-can made barges and in almost anything that will float and move. Undoubtedly some are drifting on the Asian seas as you read this, often passed up by dozens of ships, some finding peace... at the bottom of the seas. The life of the "boat people" in Asian countries where they are permitted to land is, in general, very primitive. The first effort to go to their rescue in an organized way was made by the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace in November 1976. In the declaration of the Commission on Peace, Security and Human Dignity in Asia, we read :

"In this connection, the members of the Commission expressed their deep concern with the fate of the refugees from Indochina who are floating on the South China sea without any country willing to accept them, and with practically no food supply. Since the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace is meeting in Singapore it would be a great opportune service, to humanity and to peace, if the ACRP explored all possibilities to help these floating refugees, and also other refugees such as in the Middle East, whose case is one of the most flagrant manifestation of the violation of human rights".

Later, the "Boat People's" project sponsored by the World Conference on Religion and Peace and the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace Chartered two ships, Leap Dal and Roland were sent to South China seas to pick up refugees. But this project did not meet with success because of efforts to make it fail on the part of groups and even Governments. In certain countries, distressed refugees got into trouble with governments, whose primary aim was to undermine the praiseworthy aim of the two ships. Governments refused to permit refugees to disembark from the two ships. The project suffered from other reasons, and funds became a major problem too. With cooperation and an understanding of difficulties involved, the project could have probably succeeded. But it could not be successful with pressure from every side.



- Refugees aboard Roland.
- Dân vượt nạn trên tàu Roland.
- Bateau Roland dans le programme de sauvetage.
- ベトナム難民と彼等の船 Roland 号



- Leap Dal and "Boat People" rescued at Southeast Asian seas.
- Tàu Leap Dal và dân vượt nạn được cứu vớt tại Đông Nam Á.

- Le Leap Dal et des réfugiés rescapés au Sud-Est Asiatique.
- 東南アジアの国々に救出されたベトナム難民と Leapdal 船

III- DIFFICULTIES OF THE ISSUE.

Recent policy of some Governments toward arriving "boat people" in South East Asia amount to a "go and die, but not here" stand. Creaking vessels are refused landing privileges, and towed out to sea if they try to dock. If they manage to land before authorities are present, one Government has patched the ships so that it will float, and forced them again out to sea. If they return, they are warned, they will face bullets. Some have had to turn about, with gunfire the result if they don't. Often these ships will then attempt the long trip to Australia, where rumor has it, they will receive a warm reception.

From late 1977, Thailand Government ordered all arriving "boat people" boats to be immediately pushed out into the sea. The Malaysian Government, however, agreed to let these unhelped, unwanted witnesses to freedom, go ashore at least temporarily. Because of this, the number of arrivals in late 1977 and early 1978 increased to 8335 from 1080 in 1976.

Waters off Cambodia and Thailand have proven to be a corridor of horror, as fleeing refugees are killed, raped and robbed by sea bandits who freely operate in those waters. At Laem Sing, 80% of the "boat people" had been seized, and their sentimental items of ancestors

they treasured, ripped from them, along with anything of the least value. Local Government authorities are well aware of all this, but close their eyes, ears and hearts!

The Singapore Government has demanded that vessels bringing in refugees deposit a guarantee of US\$4,000 per person, to assure the resettlement of the refugee in a place other than Singapore. This puts pressure on the ship Companies and schedules of the ships, and may it not account for so many reports of refugees having their SOS ignored by so many vessels? Could not a plan be worked out which would even reward a Captain for assisting people in distress? Or has this traditional law of the sea been set aside during the agony of the "boat people"?

Japan's highly restrictive policy towards the Vietnamese "boat cases" is only accidentally less frigid than the other nations in Asia with closed ports to the refugees. Recently it is reported, there was an instruction given to all Japanese ship corporations which frequent the waterways of South East Asia, not to rescue the refugees because it would embarrass the Government's dealings with the present Government of Vietnam.

(This report has been denied by officials in the Japanese Government). □

World opinion on BOAT PEOPLE

This article was compiled by some leading international newspapers and magazines from informations of their own sources toward the Boat People's problem.

The following news and opinions could

show partially the true pictures of Boat People; however, the positive spirit and good will of writers did awake many concerned authorities to change their policies and action affirmatively based on Human Rights and Freedom Loving.

The following quotes from several articles listed will answer some questions often asked. "Is the present government of Vietnam a communist one?". From the Far Eastern Economic Review [December 16, 1977]:

"We don't want to drive our compatriots abroad," said Hoang Tung. "We wish all our compatriots to remain in our country to build a new life. But there is always a section of our people who leave the country, who don't want communism."

He hastily added that communism was still far away and that what was happening now was just the overthrow of an order. "We are going to change the lifestyle, but that is not communism."

*

Those who meet the Vietnamese "Boat-People" find them, for the most part, to be a most friendly, industrious and loveable people. Over half the numbers who have survived the seas are children.

"Why then the reluctance of others to grant them asylum?". The reason is from within the countries rather than any serious objection to the Vietnamese people. Says the Strait Times of Singapore [November 30, 1977]:

"There appears to be no end in sight to the exodus of Vietnamese refugees from their home country two and a half years after the Vietnam war was ended. Indeed it increased in March this year when thousands of them began to flee their country in small fishing craft, and the flow has continued since. This has given rise to a veritable floating population of some 7,000 dubbed the "boat people" of Vietnam. Virtually prisoners of their boat, they have subsisted for months under the most miserable con-

ditions in open vessels while awaiting a decision on their fate. As with refugee problems anywhere else, it is a monumental humanitarian problem that cries out for humane treatment.

The recent refugee arrivals in the north coast of Australia, uninvited and worse, unknown to the authorities—nine boatloads with 317 refugees have arrived in the past week—have sparked off outcries from some sectors of the population for a greater surveillance of the country's isolated north and north western coasts and steps to stem the inflow of illegal boat landings amidst fear that an "armada" of Vietnamese refugees are on their way to Australia. This plus the latest arrival of 177 refugees on board what is believed to be a hi-jacked Vietnamese trawler promises to be a hot political potato for the Fraser Government on the eve of the Australian election. Controversy over the arrival of the refugees has already prompted against the "illegal entrants." The strong negative attitude towards the refugees is doubtless directly linked with the current economic conditions where unemployment is the main Australian worry. A government's first responsibility is clearly to its people. The crux of the matter, however, is whether the government of the day will show compassion and accept a fair quota of Vietnam's "boat people" while assuring the Australian public that additional refugees could be admitted without too great an economic price."

*

"Boat People" who survive the seas are believed to be less than half of the number who flee. Resettlement is all in Western nations and Australia. "Why are Asians in

need totally ignored by Asian neighbors?" The most affluent nation in Asia, Japan has set the pattern by her refusal to assume international responsibility for any one but Japanese. Writer Tokyo Chief Andrew Malcolm of the New York Times:

"..... interviews with Government officials and refugee workers here reveal that Japan has decided not to change its policy toward these so-called "boat people." They will still be forbidden to settle permanently. And before freighter captains can bring in refugees they have picked up at sea, they will still be required to obtain a written guarantee from their home Government assuming responsibility for resettling the refugees elsewhere.

Japanese ships arriving with refugees are required to get the guarantee from the United Nations commission....

This nation's policies have drawn increasingly bitter comments from relief workers here who see the stand of Japan, Asia's most affluent nation, as setting a standard of what is acceptable for other Asian lands.

Despite a reported crackdown by the Vietnamese Government, a new flow of boat people is expected next month as the Pacific's seasonal storms subside. No exact figures are possible, but experts here estimate that because of the weather and the refusal of some captains to pick up refugees, only half the refugees who flee by boat survive."

DỰ LUẬN BÁO CHÍ THẾ GIỚI VỀ TỊ NẠN

Thế giới đã nhắc đến những người tị nạn bằng thuyền với nhiều quan niệm khác nhau, phản ánh phần nào các khó khăn hay bối rối mà các quốc gia phải gánh chịu trong vấn đề tị nạn.

Các báo từ New York Times, Washington Post, Time, Newsweek, Far Eastern Economic Review, The Times, Asia Week, Mainichi, Asahi, Yomiuri, Sankei, Japan Times, Le Monde... đã mô tả thảm trạng của người tị nạn bằng thuyền bị đuổi ra khỏi dưới họng súng, chờ đợi trong tuyệt vọng tại các "trại" trong vùng Đông Nam Á.

Tờ Times của Anh Quốc, Yomiuri của Nhật đã nêu ra việc vi phạm điều ước quốc tế về hàng hải Bruxelles khi biết bao nhiêu thuyền từ chối không chịu vớt người tị nạn. Những trường hợp người tị nạn được vớt cho biết, tàu vớt họ là chiếc thứ 18 hay chiếc thứ 24..., những chiếc trước đó đã làm ngơ trước những lời kêu cứu hoặc dấu hiệu SOS.

Dự luận còn mạnh mẽ cho rằng việc cứu và nhận tị nạn không thể được coi là hành động thù nghịch với các chính quyền hiện tại ở Đông Dương. Tờ Times còn nhắc đến vài trường hợp tàu Trung Cộng vớt người tị nạn. Tờ Mainichi (Nhật Bản) cũng nói đến việc có chỉ thị của

chính phủ đến các hãng tàu Nhật qua lại vùng biển Đông Nam Á không nên cứu vớt người tị nạn đang lênh đênh ngoài khơi như làm ngơ khi thấy người tị nạn, tắt đèn trên tàu, dấu quốc hiệu và tên tàu...

Sự tiêu cực hay miễn cưỡng giúp đỡ người tị nạn đối với người tị nạn bằng thuyền của một vài quốc gia giàu có tại Á Châu đã bị kết án là hành vi vô luân và phi nhân đạo của những người chỉ biết hành động vì động lực quyền lợi ích kỷ. Dự luận thế giới cũng cho rằng viện dẫn các lý do nước chật, đông dân, thất nghiệp nhiều... để không nhận hay không giúp người tị nạn là điều không thể chấp nhận được.

Tất cả mọi người đều nhìn nhận vấn đề tị nạn bằng thuyền ngày nay đã trở thành một thảm kịch và vấn đề nan giải lớn trong thế kỷ 20 này.

Với lương chức thông tin, các báo chí trên thế giới kêu gọi lương tâm nhân loại và các chính phủ liên hệ giải quyết mau chóng vấn đề người tị nạn Đông Dương. Đây là một thử thách lớn lao cho lý tưởng Tự Do, Dân Chủ mà nhân loại đang theo đuổi. Lý tưởng này sẽ được soi sáng một lần nữa hay bị quên lãng vì quyền lợi ích kỷ trước mắt.

Vấn đề này hoàn toàn nằm ở mỗi chúng ta. □



The Japan Times Sunday, March 19, 1978

THE WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

Will the U.S. Welcome Indochina's Refugees?

By JACK ANDERSON

WASHINGTON — "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," proclaims the lady who stands, with torch thrust proudly skyward, on Liberty Island in New York harbor.

And they have come by the thousands. Jews from Hitler's Germany; Hungarian Freedom Fighters who fought Russian tanks in Budapest; Cubans who opposed Castro.

Now, the nation's willingness to open its arms to the world's homeless is about to be tested again. At this moment, the Carter Administration is trying to hammer out a comprehensive policy on refugees. But the President's advisers are hung up over what to do about the thousands of refugees who have fled Indochina since the Communists took over Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

The United States has already approved, on an emergency basis, the admission of 172,000 Indochinese refugees into this country since Saigon fell in April 1975. But thousands upon thousands more are crammed like sardines into squalid camps in Thailand, Malaysia and elsewhere.

Their only route out of the limbo in which they are trapped appears to be emigration to other nations. But no country has been willing to step forward and accept them.

In preparation for testimony before Congress, the Immigration and Naturalization Service recently sent investigator Michael Harpold to Southeast Asia on a fact-finding mission. He has compiled a compelling eye-witness account of the trials the "boat people" have

undergone in their flights to freedom.

Harpold and his boss, INS Commissioner Leonel Castillo, told our reporter Doug Southland they have been waiting since Jan. 24 to make public the account. Meanwhile, we have obtained a copy of the document.

In Songkla, Thailand, Harpold spoke to a group of Vietnamese refugees who had fled in a 34-foot fishing boat. "Aboard it were 13 men, five women and 16 children," wrote the investigator. "Most were sick because they had been reduced to drinking sea water. Many of the children, in particular, were ill. The boat's engine was not working. They had only 20 kilos of rice left, about enough for one day."

The night before they arrived in Thailand, the refugees were intercepted by Thai pirates who robbed them of watches and jewelry. Had they been turned away from Thailand, the refugees said, they had intended to sail on to Australia, some 3,000 nautical miles away.

Three refugee boats which arrived at Trengganu, Malaysia, Harpold found, were told to ride at anchor at the mouth of a nearby river. "During the night, a storm came up and one of the boats broke anchor and capsized. There were 21 refugees aboard. Fifteen of them drowned and only six were able to swim to shore. We found that drownings and piracy are the most frequent hazards the boat people face."

While in Singapore, Harpold heard of a boat carrying 27 Vietnamese refugees which had been rescued by a tanker. He hopped a ride with a pirate

and sped to the location, about 120 miles east of the Vietnamese coast.

"We found the Italian crew joyfully feeding spaghetti to the 13 children, four adult females and 10 males," reported Harpold. "Originally, they had planned that only the one family group of 12 would go, but 15 other neighbors who knew about the plot simply came along."

"Using a compass, the same as used by our foot soldiers in World War II, and a political map showing only Vietnam, they set a course... and headed out for 'any country out of Vietnam.'"

The escapees from communism, and the thousands yet to come, Harpold concluded, are truly facing a "life and death situation." And their ultimate fate, he wrote, is in the hands of the U.S. If the American people open their arms to these homeless fugitives from oppression, other governments would probably cooperate.

"We should adopt and announce as policy," he urged, "our willingness to accept and resettle refugees rescued by vessels at sea and those who arrive by boat on the shores of those countries bordering the South China Sea. Only by doing so can we ensure that masters of commercial vessels and the governments of Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore will treat the boat people humanely."

Footnote: Only four Immigration and Naturalization Service officers have been assigned to the vast Indonesian archipelago to deal with the swelling refugee problem. (UFS)

Death, terror mar flight from Vietnam

TOKYO — Nguyen Yen Linh is a 22-year-old Vietnamese refugee who went through three months of secret escape preparations before fleeing his country.

PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1978

brother and a sister at sea after more than 20 ships refused to rescue them. For another nine months of gnawing uncertainty, Miss Nguyen waited here, and a Japanese...

But now, despite over-... Nguyen is scared. Foreign plan...

"Oh, I know where to get relief... how to get to New York or the U.S. Relief...

SINGAPORE (Kyodo-Reuters) — As the doors close against them in one country after another in Southeast Asia, more and more Vietnamese refugees are making family makes room for...

"We wanted to stay in Asia..."

66 Vietnamese refugees arrive in Israel and then...

refugee policy being studied

by Henry Kamm

with the High Commissioner's suggestion that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should...

governmental aid

Why Vietnamese Gamble on Getting Out

Why Vietnamese Gamble on Getting Out

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Why Vietnamese Gamble on Getting Out

Hijacked refugee boat heads troubled waters

VIETNAMESE MON... boat has left Indonesia with 100 refugees and 100... captured Communist guerrillas aboard.

The boat, the Song... arrived in the Indon... K... and sailed...

As the World Turns a Deaf Ear

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Waiting for a Place to Call Home

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PARTIAL LIST OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES WITH THEIR ARTICLES
DEDICATED TO BOAT PEOPLE :

TIME :

04-05-1978, "The dilemma : To return is death".

04-07-1978, "Refugees : Seeking safe harbor".

NEWSWEEK :

02-20-1978, "We are doing our share" by Patricia Derian.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE :

02-18-1976, "Thailand bars illegal refugees from Indochina".

12-20-1977, "Nishimachi students collect clothing since the refugee's life is so inhuman" by Anthony Spaeth.

JAPAN TIMES :

6-13-1977, "Viet Refugees Risk For Freedom, But Often Find Something else" by James Abrams.

07-04-1977, "Vietnamese continue to attempt risky voyages on boats to freedom".

10-23-1977, "Vietnamese boat people may not be here in 1978" by Kathryn Tolbert.

11-20-1977, "Waiting for a place to call home" by Keisuke Okada.

11-30-1977, "One by one, doors shut on refugees" by Granville Watts.

03-19-1978, "Will the U.S. welcome Indochina's Refugees?" by Jack Anderson.

NEW YORK TIMES :

06-08-1977, "Vietnamese escapees wait, as world turns a deaf ear" by Henry Kamm.

01-22-1978, "...And Vietnamese refugees are still fleeing" by Henry Kamm.

03-15-1978, "Japan decides to keep its curbs on Vietnamese" by Andrew H. Malcolm.

04-24-1978, "The road from Vietnam to New York city is a lonely one" by Andrew H. Malcolm.

WASHINGTON POST :

1977, "Japan reluctantly takes refugees, Provides few amenities" by William Chapman.

NEW NATION [SINGAPORE] :

11-07-1977, "18 boatloads of refugees turned away".

NGUOI VIET TU DO MAGAZINE :

Số 29, tháng 9-1977, "Hội nghị về luật pháp Quốc Tế lên án việc bỏ rơi người tỵ nạn trên biển". (Hội Nghị về luật pháp Quốc Tế lần thứ 8 tại Manila).

Số 30, tháng 10-1977, "Vấn đề người tỵ nạn CSVN đã trở thành một vấn đề quốc tế". (Tổng thư ký LHQ Waldheim).

Số 33, tháng 01-1978, "Sau sắc lệnh khắc nghiệt của chính phủ Thái, hàng ngàn đồng bào tỵ nạn đã bỏ thân trên biển cả". (Tin Tức NVTD).

Số 34, tháng 02-1978, "Tổ quốc chúng tôi đã bị cưỡng đoạt, chúng tôi trốn CS chứ không bỏ tổ quốc". (Bác sĩ Nguyễn Văn Tạng).

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW :

12-16-1977, "Slow boat to nowhere" by Peter Weintraub.

THE STRAITS TIMES [SINGAPORE] :

11-24-1977, "Boat People seek a home".

11-29-1977, "Viet Refugees now a pain in the neck" by Neil Dibbs.

NEW STRAITS TIMES [MALAYSIA] :

01-14-1978, "Six Viet refugees drown of the East Coast".

12-08-1977, "Refugees warned : Don't come without go ahead".

THE ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL [HONG KONG] :

02-03-1978, "Vietnamese refugees find Japan a wayside on road to freedom" by Edvard Lachica.

YOMIURI SHIMBUN :

10-22-1977, "Vietnamese refugees can stay in Japan only temporarily".

ASAHI EVENING NEWS :

11-14-1977, "Sword of alien culture pointed at Japan" (1).

11-15-1977, "Reasons for refusing settlement" (2).

11-16-1977, "Government attitude is still cold" (3); (1), (2), (3) by Shigekatsu Toba.

11-18-1977, "Changing the Japanese People's Heart" by Keisuke Sasahara.

12-01-1978, "I will die ! I will die !".

難民に関する世論

ベトナムは終わっていない！

November 09, 1976 THE YOMIURI SHIMBUN

日本上陸を前に救助船内で事情を問われる難民たち
(さる8月、ユナイテッド・エンタープライズ号内で)

さまざま小舟の難民

SOSも無視

政治の波今も

「一帯の国々、その船の救助の義務を、海難救助法で定められている。だが、その義務を履行しない国々がある。その結果、多くの難民が、海に沈んでいく。これは、人道の危機である。日本は、この危機にどう対応しているのか。それは、政治の波に左右されている。日本は、人道の危機を無視している。これは、政治の波に左右されている。日本は、人道の危機を無視している。これは、政治の波に左右されている。」

「救助はモラル」と国際制度
「一帯の国々、その船の救助の義務を、海難救助法で定められている。だが、その義務を履行しない国々がある。その結果、多くの難民が、海に沈んでいく。これは、人道の危機である。日本は、この危機にどう対応しているのか。それは、政治の波に左右されている。日本は、人道の危機を無視している。これは、政治の波に左右されている。」

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言葉
堂々
衆人
睽睽常時
二千人

何隻も沈んだ

引き取り迷惑

日本は滞在だけ

PLEA OF BOAT PEOPLE

WE, today's "untouchables" of Asia, half members on the bottom of the sea,

HOLOCAUSTED, the world has yet to know.

But on we come, like waves and tides, out from the land we love, in a new **EXODUS**.

GOD CALLED, to hold high up the torch of freedom. Our souls are His, we'll yield them to no foe.

ASIAN NEIGHBORS, our fight for liberty is also yours. And yet you pinned us down in beach corrals and hovels, the decks of junks and rafts the only land you'd let us walk.

Pig-pens you so reluctantly provided, are to your shame, forbid to visitors to see.

SEA CAPTAINS of the world, you oathed to rescue those in peril yet yielded to command or whim, reluctantly?

"Full speed ahead", an executioner's cold-blooded order. Again you'll have to choose between your oath and oath-breaking orders.

Black flags of death fly on the ship you pilot, if you pass by the junks and boats of refugees.

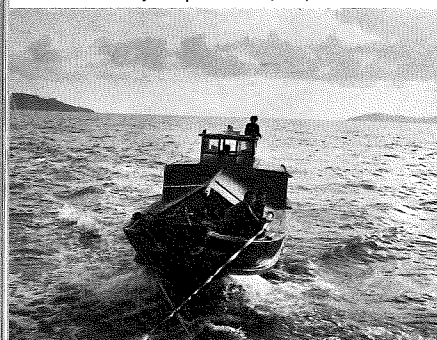
THE RISING SUN, it's leaders' icy hospitality, harassed the ships that dared to pick us up, "dumped" temporary asylum upon the charities...

PEOPLE of the **RISING SUN**, rise up! Undo the blot your leaders laid on you

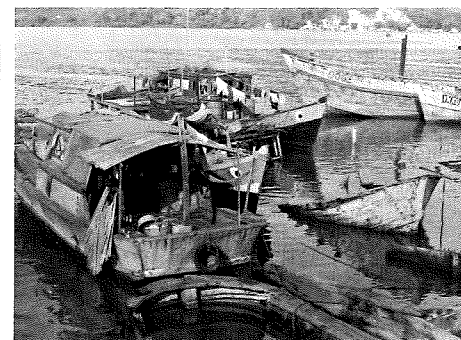
THE WEST, how great you loom within our hearts, as thousands found a home within your freedom's walls. You'll not regret the freedom faith that is our salt, as to you we'll pledge our loyalty.

PEOPLE OF THE WORLD, hear our cries! **Boat People untouchables - holocausted - dumped - but a power to any nation who receives us.**

Kéo thuyền bạn chết máy vượt thoát!



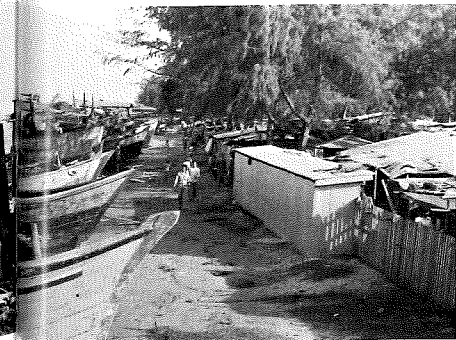
Bao nhiêu chiếc đã chìm sâu dưới đáy biển?



Nhiều tháng chờ đợi trên những con thuyền cứu tinh!



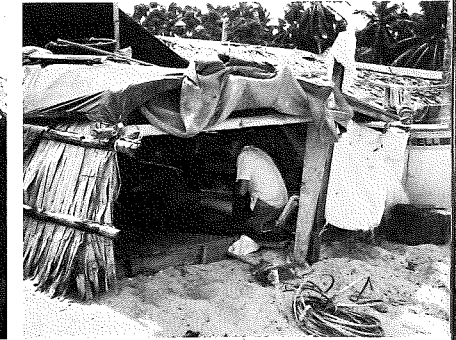
Thuyền cập dọc bãi Songkhla, Thái; nhưng sẽ phải đi...



Được neo tạm tại Laem Sing, Thái Lan.



6 tháng chờ đợi, dựng tạm chòi trú nắng mưa (S. Rengit)



LỜI KÊU GỌI CỦA DÂN VƯỢT NẠN BẰNG THUYỀN

◆ Thế giới chưa biết đến thảm nạn của chúng tôi, những kẻ khốn cùng của thế kỷ. Mà đã quá nửa bị vùi sâu trong lòng biển.

◆ Vượt biển! Vượt biên! Chúng tôi tiến lên, những lớp sóng triền miên vượt ra khỏi mảnh đất hiền! Nơi tình thương đã bao đời gắn bó.

◆ Không hãi sợ trước gian nguy, Quyết không phụ lòng trời, Giơ cao đuốc tự do, Hết sức mình khơi sáng.

◆ Hỡi các bạn láng giềng Á Châu đáng mến! Chiến đấu vì tự do chúng ta cùng chiến tuyến sao các bạn làm ngơ bỏ chúng tôi bơ vơ lê gót chân lên cầu tàu gãy nhọc nhằn sợ hãi trong túp lều lụp sụp, không một ai đến thăm vì đã có lệnh cấm. Ôi xấu hổ! Thật xấu hổ cho tầm tiếng bạn.

◆ Hỡi các vị thuyền trưởng đáng kính! nhớ chăng lời thề cứu người lâm nạn, sao các vị làm ngơ thờ ơ hay cố ý? bỏ mặc chúng tôi chìm. Tàn nhẫn! Sao nỡ quên lời thề? Mà nhắm mắt nghe lệnh. Các thuyền trưởng đáng kính! Tàu không cứu chúng tôi, sẽ mang màu chết chóc.

◆ Hỡi các bạn Tây Phương! lớn lao đường nào rộng rãi là bao. Nhà tự do cho hàng ngàn chúng tôi, xây dựng cuộc đời mới chúng tôi không bao giờ ngừng, các bạn cũng đừng ngưng. Vì, Tự Do của bạn, và Tự Do của chúng tôi trộn cuộc đời nhớ mãi.

◆ Hỡi con cháu Thái Dương thần nữ! Đây uy quyền và tiền của Hãy đứng dậy yêu cầu, các nhà lãnh đạo vô tâm làm khó dễ tàu bè. Hãy cứu vớt chúng tôi vì nhân đạo.

◆ Hỡi các dân tộc trên thế giới! vì lương tâm nhân loại Hãy nghe tiếng kêu chúng tôi "Người vượt biển, dân vượt nạn bằng thuyền, bị bạc đãi, bị bỏ rơi, sống trong thảm hại". Nhưng ai nhận chúng tôi Phước đức thật muôn vãn!

