

“Higher Education in Vietnam: USAID Contract in Education, Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point and Republic of Vietnam, 1967-1974.”

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2003 UWSP *Distinguished Thesis Award*
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ParamGun Sood Thesis Award
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Another New Year, another Tet, another scholar marks the anniversary with wishes for peace and a tempering of events.

It's now some forty years since the events of 1968 and a time when the USAID sponsored survey teams from Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point. For six years American educators journeyed to Vietnam and Vietnamese educators came to Wisconsin. They served together in a noble cause in which higher education was seen as a keystone for national development.

The mission would be overcome in an environment clouded by war, yet their experiences and wishes for peace remain of universal value today.

What shall I write? It must be universal, something to set the mode of life for the coming year, to create the tone and temper of events for my family and my country.

Ah, I have it!

"Hoa Binh" -- Peace. How perfect!



A Vietnamese scholar deeply engrossed in the thoughts of writing wishes for the New Year.

My Research Methodology:

The majority of my research involved primary materials held in the UW-Stevens Point Archives and the Ball State University Archives (Muncie, IN).

I set the wider context by using a broad range of other primary and secondary works on Vietnamese history, French colonialism, U.S. foreign policy, and America's general effort to implement nation-building during the Cold War era.

I also transcribed several Archived tape recordings, including:

- A developmental group discussion of WSU-SP administrators led by James Albertson in his Park Ridge, WI home (1967);

- Several campus news conferences and messages from Vietnam by Lee Sherman Dreyfus (1968-71.)

Finally, I conducted a number of oral history interviews with key USAID team participants, including:

- Burdette Eagon, (Chief of Team)

- Lee Sherman Dreyfus, (WSU-SP President/Chancellor/WI Governor)

- Charles Green (USAID Higher Education, Saigon),

- Nguyen Quynh-Hoa, (Vietnamese team interrupter).

Why Vietnam?
Why the United States?
Why Stevens Point?



President Lyndon Baines Johnson with Vietnamese University Rectors (seated)
USAID officials and WSU-SP President Lee Sherman Dreyfus (standing)

In Vietnam, the U.S. was fully engaged in two wars:
The ‘fighting war’—the familiar war—[where] men kill and are killed,
and the ‘other war...the quiet war,’ where people battle and do not kill, but still
may be killed.

Americans went to South Vietnam to wage war in differing ways, as they fought “to build a nation.” By 1966, there were some 1,200 “quiet warriors” in Vietnam.

A seven-year partnership would develop between Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point, the United States Agency for International Development and the Republic of Vietnam. WSU-SP acted as the chief institutional consultant on administrative and organizational reform in Vietnamese higher education.

The context for the U.S. educational mission in Vietnam is better understood by tracing the history of traditional education in Vietnam.

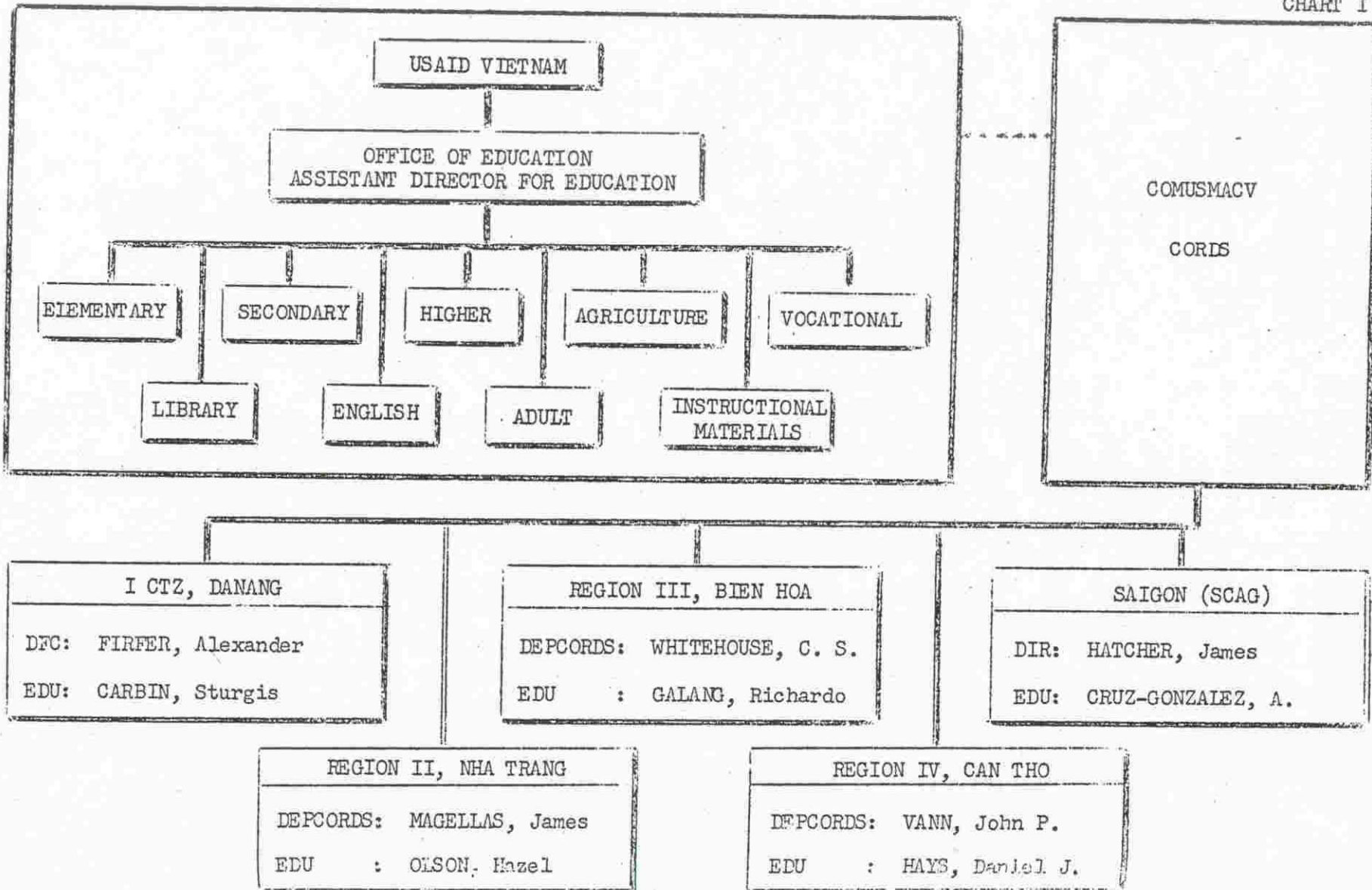
- From ancient times to the 19th century, education in Vietnam stressed the strong influence of Chinese Confucian models. A Mandarin administrative system was set in place.
- Under French colonial rule in the 19th and 20th centuries, the French revamped higher education along European lines, but skewed it to produce a subordinate Vietnamese administrative class to support French dominance.
- U.S. involvement with Vietnamese higher education began with the Geneva Accords in 1954, which established an independent RVN, and the onset of the Second Indochina War.
- By the 1960's, in order to bolster South Vietnamese resistance, the USAID launched a multifaceted effort to develop education at all levels, contracting with American universities for advice and support.
- In Vietnam, USAID projects addressed everything from pacification to economic, agricultural, educational, and institutional development.

By 1968, the USAID allocated \$2.18 billion globally toward economic assistance, the largest portion, \$1.04 billion, was in Development and Alliance for Progress Loans.

- In supporting assistance, \$594 million of FY 1968 funds were devoted to sustaining nations under military and economic threat. Of this, South Vietnam received \$400 million.
- In 1968, the USAID had 1,396 contracts in 67 countries, with several hundred of these in South Vietnam.
 - During this time period about four-fifths of USAID-sponsored experts were from U.S. institutions of higher education.
 - American universities held foreign aid contracts in Vietnam for over two decades.
- By 1968, the USAID allocated \$2.18 billion globally toward economic assistance, the largest portion, \$1.04 billion, was in Development and Alliance for Progress Loans.
- In 1968, USAID reported “special progress” in supporting regional centers of higher education in Southeast Asia, specifically “resulting from concentration of AID effort and greater Vietnamese responsibility.”
- In Vietnam, the USAID Higher Education Division was quartered at the Rectorate of the University of Saigon. The division coordinated reform efforts in Vietnamese higher education by:
 - 1.) Contracting short-term studies with U.S. university survey teams;
 - 2.) Direct prolonged assistance programs partnering American universities with Vietnamese institutions.

USAID OFFICE OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION

CHART I



VIETNAMESE INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION (1907-1974)

[Indochinese] University of Hanoi (1907)

The *Statutes of the University of Hanoi* remained in place as modified by decrees, arêtes and customs for all of higher education in the Republic of Vietnam.

The University of Saigon (Vietnam) (1955)

The University of Saigon's enrollment of 26,916, in 1967, was greater than that of the entire Republic's other higher education institutions combined. In 1973, it claimed an enrollment of almost 64,000 among its eight facilities.

The University of Hue (1957)

Hue, as the former Imperial City, was given the challenge of establishing a university of culture in the national language.

The University of Dalat (1957)

Established in the central highlands at Dalat under Roman Catholic auspices.

The University of Van Hanh (1964)

Institution operated by the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam/Vien Hoa Dao (the Organization for Executing the Dharma).

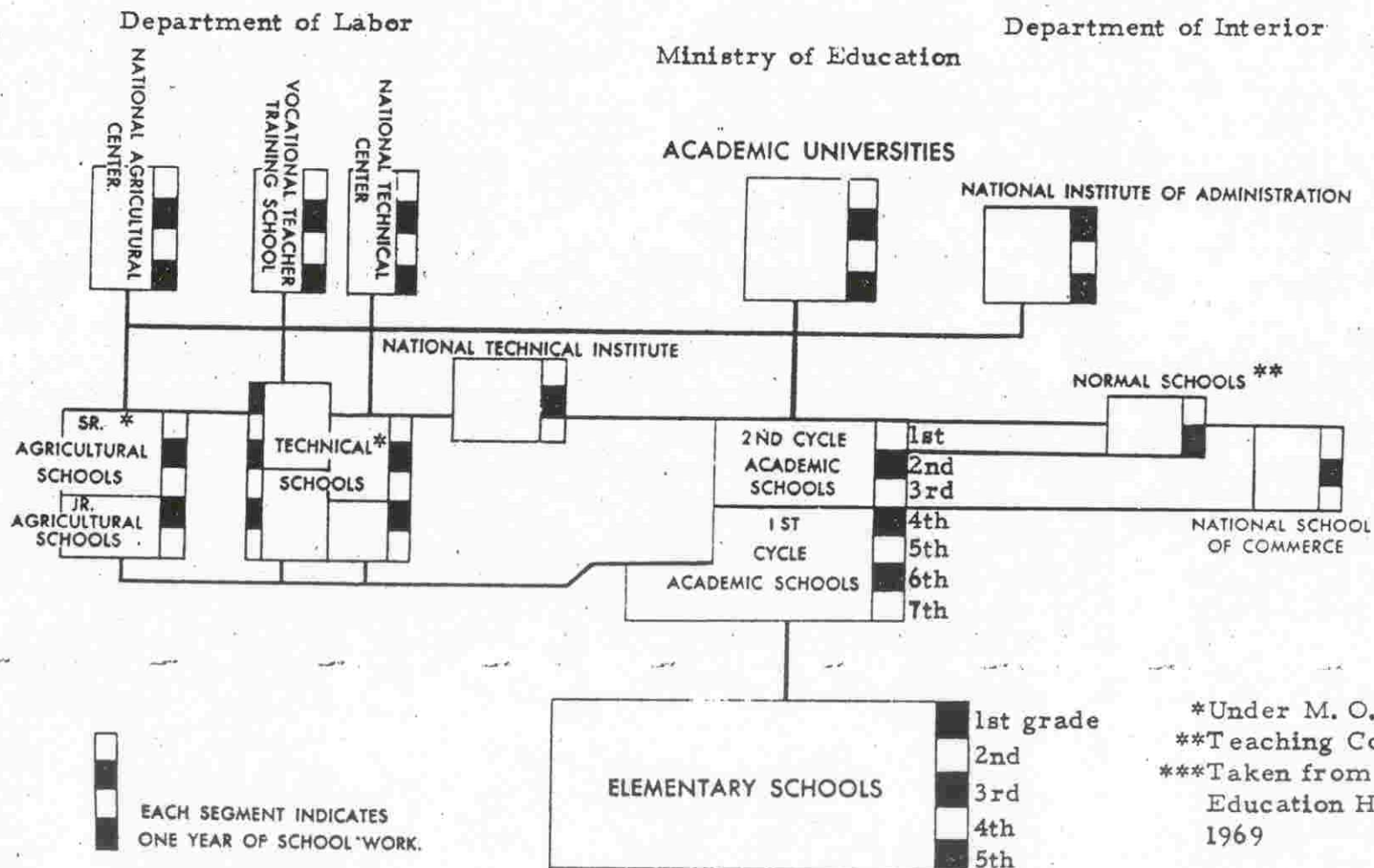
The University of Can Tho (1966)

There had been no university in the largely agricultural Delta, which contained one-third of the Republic's population. Can Tho emerged as a focal point and model university during the Wisconsin Team's advisory era, with WSU-SP serving as its virtual agent. Today, in a unified Vietnam, Can Tho emerged as an important model institute of modern higher education, striving to demonstrate a mission that serves local and national needs.

(Polytechnic) University of Thu Duc (1973)

The other model university during time of the Wisconsin Team, it has grown in modern Vietnam, near Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon).

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF VIETNAM***



In Vietnam, direct American contractual involvement began in 1955 with Michigan State (College) University's technical assistance program to the RVN Mutual Security Administration.

The Vietnam Advisory Group (MSUG) focused on police administration and occurred in close conjunction with the tenure of Ngo Dinh Diem, the MSUG contractual direction reflected the cycles of the Diem regime.

Other noteworthy contracts, of a more educational and cultural context were sponsored by the USAID in the years 1966-1974. These included:

Ohio University USAID contract focusing on faculties of pedagogy and developing programs for secondary teachers' training;

Southern Illinois University USAID program for elementary teachers' training;

University of Michigan USAID contract on advances in English language instructional and testing materials;

University of Florida USAID contract that called for economic recommendations and programs in agricultural training and development.

A much smaller school, Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point, served as the principal institutional adviser to the Government of Viet Nam (GVN) and Ministry of Education. With its USAID contract, WSU-SP recommended administrative and system-wide structural reforms for Vietnamese higher education.

In December 1966, AID/fe-274 was formally negotiated between the United States Agency for International Development and Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point Foundation, Inc., the Contractor, an educational nonprofit corporation chartered by the State of Wisconsin.

CONTRACT
BETWEEN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND
WISCONSIN STATE UNIVERSITY -
STEVENS POINT FOUNDATION, INC.

PIO/T 430-272-3-60250
PIO/T 430-272-3-70197

THIS CONTRACT is made and entered into between the Government of the United States of America, as represented by the Agency for International Development (hereafter called "A.I.D."), and Wisconsin State University - Stevens Point Foundation, Inc. (hereafter called "Contractor"), an educational non-profit corporation chartered by the State of Wisconsin, with its principal office in Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

WHEREAS, the Government of the United States has entered into agreements for technical cooperation with the Government of Vietnam (hereafter called "Government"); and

WHEREAS, the Government desires and has requested a survey of Higher Education of Vietnamese Universities, to be conducted by a competent team from an American University, which will include Program, Personnel (faculty, students and staff), Facilities, Finance, Controls, Purpose and Objectives; and

WHEREAS, Contractor is willing and able to perform such a survey; and

The Contractor (WSU-SP) was to prepare and process preliminary and final survey reports, to be submitted to USAID Far East Technical Advisory Staff, which was to distribute recommendations, goals, priorities and assist in the achievement of such goals.

The USAID called on the Contractor to provide a survey team of approximately seven members, for a period of three to six months, which were to consult with appropriate officials of the GVN, the USAID Mission to Vietnam, and Vietnamese university educators, in order to obtain and organize data and information necessary to formulate an analysis of the program and facilities.

The contract specified that the team be composed of specialists in administration, letters, science, behavioral sciences, law, business administration, foreign languages, or other fields as agreed to by the parties. *The survey team soon became known as the Wisconsin Team.*



Original seven members of the Wisconsin Team: (front row) Howard Johnshoy, Dean of Academic Affairs, Gustavus Adolphus College; A. Donald Beattie, Dean of the School of Business and Economics, WSU-Whitewater; Harry F. Bangsberg, President Bemidji State College; (back row) Vincent F. Conroy, Director of Field Studies, Harvard University; Melvin L. Wall, Head of Plant and Earth Sciences, WSU-River Falls; James H. Albertson, President WSU-Stevens Point ; Arthur D. Pickett, Director of Honors Programs, University of Illinois-Chicago.

Original amendment to contract, extended Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point services from six months to twelve. This opened an ever-widening scope of evolving goals and purposes, running all the way into 1974.

Between 1967 and 1974, numerous educators and special consultants were recruited from Wisconsin and across the U.S., coming together under the auspices of umbrella clauses to the Wisconsin Contract .

15. Objective for which the Technical Services are to be used:

The purpose of this amendment is to expand the scope of works and increase the number of personnel under Contract AID/fe-274 between the United States of America and Wisconsin State University Stevens Point Foundation, Inc.

At the present time a team of seven experts is assisting Vietnamese University officials in preparing a comprehensive plan for the development of higher education. The Minister of Education now desires, and USAID agrees, to expand the services being performed by the contractor to include, also, assistance in preparing a plan for the reorganization of elementary, secondary, vocational, technical and adult education. The Minister wishes to complete the reorganization plan in time to present it to the National Assembly when that body convenes during the latter part of 1967.

The proposed reorganization plan is to be developed by Vietnamese educators with the assistance of a team of American experts, to be recruited by the Wisconsin State University Foundation, who will make an analysis of present educational programs in Vietnam and develop appropriate guidelines for the reorganization of the educational systems.

To accomplish this expansion plan it will be necessary to (1) extend the period of service and financing of the contract from the present 6 months to a period of 12 months ending on or about December 31, 1967, (2) recruit up to 8 additional experts for periods of 3 to 5 months beginning on or about May 1, 1967 or as soon as possible after the present higher education team completes its work on or about April 15, 1967, (3) provide, in the contract, for 3 round trips by one or two contractor representatives from Wisconsin campus headquarters to Saigon and return, for the purpose of insuring continuity and progress.

21. Scope of Technical Services

Under the direction of the Assistant Director for Education, USAID, and in cooperation with the Vietnamese counterparts the team will develop a plan for the reorganization of elementary, secondary, vocational, technical and adult education in Vietnam. Such a plan to include basic guidelines for:

- (1) Goals and purposes of the educational program(s).
- (2) Curricular and co-curricular experiences necessary to achieve these goals and purposes.



Albertson set the framework for the original survey, visiting Vietnam twice 1966-1967.

At WSU-SP President James H. Albertson defined the USAID proposition of forming a Wisconsin Higher Education Survey Team with these terms:

“The United States of America, at the request of the Republic of Vietnam, agreed to sponsor a study of public universities in Vietnam and to include in its study:

- 1.) A survey of the present status of higher education;
- 2.) a determination of the needs to be met through the program of higher education;
- 3.) a definition of a development program to meet those needs;
- 4.) a definition of an organizational structure;
- 5.) suggestions for financing the programs recommended;
- 6.) identification of steps to be taken; and
- 7.) a projection for a periodic review of progress...”

The suggested proposal was met with wide support by campus administrators. They saw this as both an educational mission and opportunity, even envisioning the possibility of future exchange programs. They hoped the original USAID contract would move from a general-survey, to an action-plan, and then to a “brick-laying” operation.

James H. Albertson had developed an interest in USAID efforts during his earlier administrative work at Ball State University. He worked at Ball State from 1957 to 1962, assisting in a thorough reorganization of Ball State's administrative structure. My research found that Albertson not only honed his administrative skills at Ball State, but he coupled his energies and ideas with others at Ball State, in particular Robert R. Lafollette (who would be the first USAID higher education adviser to Vietnam) and Howard G. Johnshoy (eventual Wisconsin Team member.)

Albertson, at the age of 36 became the eighth president of Wisconsin State College-Stevens Point (WSC-SP), assuming his office on 1 July 1962. Albertson's energy and academic motivation fit the mold of the early 1960's, President John F. Kennedy's "New Frontier."

In Wisconsin, as college president, Albertson brought new ideas to Stevens Point, mapping a course of steady growth and change. During his tenure, WSC-SP/WSU-SP experienced unprecedented growth, evolving from College to University.

The new president moved in modern alignment with a budding national philosophy of shared government, as he called for increased faculty participation in the formation of university policies, asking the faculty to form two new policy councils, the academic council and the student affairs council. Faculty Senate was now on the horizon.

Albertson further looked to augment the campus's international participation as he envisioned WSU-SP as a leader in both innovative programming and multicultural awareness, a commitment that led to the mission in Vietnam.

The Wisconsin Team learned quickly that higher education in Vietnam had an ambiguous status, in part, due to an absence of strong leadership and lack of effective coordination at the central governmental level.

Aligned with America's 'nation building' programs, the Wisconsin Team saw Vietnam as a developing country in one of the important under-developed areas of the world.

1.) Education and training programs were seen as the major means of developing the human resources, the leadership, and the expertise needed to overcome such problems.

2.) Education was an essential priority in the building of a healthy national economy. The training programs of higher educational institutions had to be related directly to the economic development of the country.

The original Wisconsin USAID Team report noted that,

*“Success of public higher education anywhere in the world depended on the ability of institutions to serve the needs of the nation and, at the same time, to meet the needs of individual citizens. In functional terms, the university needs to transmit usable knowledge to its citizens as it provides continuing critique of the society and its standards...” **

*Higher Education Survey Team, *Public Universities in the Republic of Vietnam*, (Stevens Point: WSU-SP Foundation, Inc., 1967.)

In January 1967, the seven member USAID Team arrived in Vietnam to survey Vietnamese higher education.

In February 1967, Albertson returned briefly to Stevens Point holding administrative discussions on a second USAID request for an additional Wisconsin Team, the National Study Team.

Burdette Eagon, WSU-SP Dean of Educational Services and Innovative Programs, accepted the new leadership role for the second team.

In March of 1967, Albertson and the original team continued their tour Vietnamese universities, working to modify their report based on responses obtained from their Vietnamese counterparts in Dalat, Saigon, Thu Duc, Van Hanh, Hue, and Can Tho.

On 21 March 1967 Albertson sent an optimistic message of progress to WSU-SP, noting plans to construct a final draft and return home by early April.

Two days later, on Good Friday, 23 March 1967, an early morning phone call from USAID Washington reached Stevens Point.

On route to Hue from Saigon, bad weather the day before had forced the Air America twin-engine plane carrying the Wisconsin Team back to Da Nang to refuel. A second attempt to cross over the mountains in monsoon weather ended in a disastrous crash. There were no survivors as the pilot, USAID advisor Robert R. Lafollette, and all seven members of the Wisconsin-led survey team were killed.

Crash Kills 8 U. S. Educators

Saigon, March 24 (AP)—A plane crash in a monsoon storm yesterday wiped out a team of eight American educators who were surveying South Vietnam's high school and college problems on a tour sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

All the group, most of them Midwesterners, perished with the pilot when their twin-engine Air America plane smashed into a rain-veiled mountain North of Da Nang.

A U. S. spokesman announced today the tragic end of the educational research mission, undertaken in January, which was to have ended in mid-April.

Messages to relatives and schools in the United States identified the victims:

James Albertson, 41, president of Wisconsin's Stevens Point State University, who headed the team.

Harry F. Bangeberg, 39, president of Bemidji (Minn.) State College.

A. Donald Beattie, 45, dean of the school of business and economics at Whitewater (Wis.) State University.

Vincent F. Conroy, 44, director of field studies at Harvard's center for educational research.

Howard G. Johnson, 48, dean of academic affairs at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn.

Robert R. LaFollette, 72, of Muncie, Ind., former history professor, with AID in Saigon since 1964. He was a third cousin of former Sen. Robert M. LaFollette Jr.

Arthur D. Pickett, 51, director

of the honors program at the University of Illinois Chicago circle campus.

Melvin L. Wall, 54, head of the department of plant and earth sciences at River Falls (Wis.) State University.

Pilot Not Identified

The pilot was not identified immediately.

The Air America line is a civilian company. It operates in South Vietnam under charter to the U.S. mission.

The crash came on the last leg of a flight from Saigon to Hue, the old imperial capital 400 miles north of Saigon.

The spokesman said rain and turbulence prompted the pilot to put down at Da Nang, but he later decided to fly the final 80 miles despite the weather.

Albertson, president of Stevens Point State since 1962, received

the assignment from AID about a year ago. He left the United States with the team Jan. 2 and returned early in February for a few days to organize a second team. He was a leader in efforts to establish the community colleges system in Wisconsin.

Native of Colorado

A native of Bush, Colo., he was executive assistant to the president of Ball State College, Muncie, Ind., before becoming president at Stevens Point where the student body increased from 2,400 to 6,100 during his tenure.

LaFollette served with the field hospital corps in World War I and was an interpreter with the army of occupation in Germany after that war. He taught at Indiana State and then Ball State, where he served as head of the social science department from 1921 until his retirement in 1961.

On leave from Ball State, he returned to Germany to serve as education adviser to the U.S.



(NEWS Map by Staff AP/AG) Map locates plane crash.



Harry F. Bangeberg
Victims of plane crash



Vincent F. Conroy
Victims of plane crash



Robert LaFollette
Among the dead



James H. Albertson
Among the dead

high commissioner from 1950 to 1962 and as professor at Oldenburg University in 1956.

(Other Viet news on page 6)

Vietnamese Will Honor Albertson

The Vietnamese Medal of Merit First Class will be presented posthumously Saturday to James H. Albertson of Stevens Point and seven others who died March 23 while making a study of higher education in South Vietnam.

Dr. Albertson, president of Wisconsin State University, headed the team. He and his companions were killed in a plane crash near Da Nang in the northern part of the country.

Dr. Burdette W. Eagon of WSCU, who is heading a team currently studying elementary, secondary and vocational education in South Vietnam, will accept the awards.

The presentation will be made at Saigon University by Premier Nguyen Cao Ky.

In addition to Dr. Albertson, the educators were:

Dr. Harry F. Bangsberg, president of Bemidji State College, Minnesota.

Dr. A. Donald Bestie, dean of the school of business at Wisconsin State University, White-water, Wis.

Dr. Vincent F. Conroy, director of field studies at Harvard University's center for educational research.

Dr. Howard G. Johnson, dean of academic affairs, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn.

Dr. Arthur D. Piccoli, professor of biological sciences, University of Illinois, Chicago.

Dr. Melvin L. Wall, head of the department of plant and earth sciences at Wisconsin State University, River Falls, Wis.

Dr. Robert R. La Follette, higher education adviser with the Agency for International Development.



RVN Memorial Service for Wisconsin Team, the mutual commitment and loss had found a new common-ground.

Burdette Eagon (WSU-SP, Dean of Education and Innovative Programs) had been preparing to lead a second three-man survey team to Vietnam, to survey all levels of Vietnamese education. The plan was accelerated as the second Wisconsin Team now left in mid-April of 1967 to complete the first team's higher education survey.

Joining Eagon, were T.C. Clark, Education Adviser for the USAID, and Russell Davis, Assistant Director of the Harvard University Center for Studies in Education and Development.

By June, a third Wisconsin Team had been formed, beginning the wider study of national education in Vietnam that included elementary, secondary, vocational, technical, and adult programs.

Eagon was Chief of Party of the new *National Study Team*, which included:

Harold Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Director of Elementary Schools, Wausau, WI;

Glen Atkyns, Assistant Dean for Teacher Education, University of Connecticut;

Willard Brandt, Director, In-Service & Extension Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee;

John Furlong, Vice President for University Relations and Development, Wisconsin State University-Stout;

Fred Harris, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Baldwin-Wallace College, Beren, Ohio.

In 1967, when Eagon met Nguyen Quynh-Hoa, WI Team interrupter, she had already worked for nine years as an elementary school teacher, and served three years as an International Voluntary Services (IVS) instructor with the Mobil Science Laboratory for Elementary Instruction (pictured here.)

Quynh-Hoa evidently migrated to the U.S., earning a degree in Stevens Point and then her Masters at the American University in Washington, D.C., where she became a U.S. Documents librarian. Upon retirement she returned to Vietnam during the 1990's to assist with the development and implementation of electronic cataloging for Vietnam's national library system.



President Albertson was the genesis and inspiration for the Wisconsin Team.

Burdette Eagon characterized the objective expertise that led the Team to its culmination. Eagon went to Vietnam for seven extended tours and consultations. The USAID often called upon Eagon to introduce other arriving AID teams to Vietnamese counterparts.

President Dreyfus credited Eagon for the project's longevity. Eagon worked on all specific reports and synchronized all in-the-field surveys completed by team consultants.

Dreyfus characterized his own efforts as being "diplomatic" and "door-opening," efforts enabling educators to do the real work.

Dreyfus made three trips to Vietnam:

- One under the strict auspices of the Wisconsin Contract;

- One in conjunction with the work of the higher education team and his interests in ROTC;

- A final trip funded by the U.S. Defense Department as he traveled with Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird looking at the possible conversion of U.S. military installations.

Bill Vickerstaff harmonized most details on the home front for the Wisconsin Contract.

Plan Reception For Vietnamese Rectors

A dinner and reception are scheduled Tuesday evening for five Vietnamese university rectors who will arrive here that day to begin a study of American higher education.

The rectors are counterparts of American university presidents.

The dinner and reception will be at the University Center. The rectors are Tran Quang De, University of Saigon; Pham Hoang Ho, University of Can Tho; Nguyen The Anh, University of Hue; Nguyen Van Lap, Catholic University of Dalat; and the Venerable Thich Minh Chau, Buddhist University of Van Hanh.

Dr. Nguywn Hua, counselor of cultural affairs and information at the Vietnamese embassy in Washington, D.C., will be a guest at the program.

Other guests will include WSU administrators, workshop program participants, and members of the board of directors of the WSU-Stevens Point Foundation, Inc. who are co-sponsoring the rectors' visit with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

William Vickerstaff, foundation executive secretary, and Dr. David Coker, WSU faculty member and workshop program coordinator, have arranged a three-week study program on the WSU campus.

The Rectors will also visit Lawrence University, Stout State University, WSU-River Falls, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

In late October they will tour educational and governmental offices in Madison, and will meet Gov. Warren Knowles.

Vickerstaff said workshops and tours have been planned to help the team gain a comprehensive understanding of the rules that state governors, legislators, university boards of control, administrators, faculty and students play in American higher education.

Angus Rothwell, chairman of the state Coordinating Committee for Higher Education, will address the opening workshop session on the historical prospective of higher education in Wisconsin.

The roles of higher education boards in the state will be discussed by Mrs. Robert Williams, a member of the Board of Regents of State Universities, and William Kraus, citizen member and secretary of the CCHE. Both are from Stevens Point.

Out-of-state program speakers for the workshops include Dr. James Doi, professor of higher education at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Robert Schaffer, dean of students at Indiana University; and Fred Harris, vice president for aca-

demie affairs at Baldwin Wallace College, Ohio.

Dr. Lee S. Dreyfus, WSU president, will welcome the rectors at the opening workshop session and will also accompany the group on their state tours and later visits to New York; Harvard University and Washington, D.C.

Other WSU administrators taking part in the program are Dr. Gordon Haferbecker, Dr. Paul Yambert, Dr. William Stielstra, Raymond Specht and Leon Bell.

The rectors will also attend the Youth Leadership Workshop conference at WSU on Oct. 24 at which John Gardner, U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, will deliver the keynote address.

On Nov. 1 the rectors will leave for Chicago, and continue on to the East Coast.

The rectors' tour is a continuation of the WSU-Stevens Point involvement in Vietnam's higher education begun by the late President James A. Albertson.

The rectors worked closely with Dr. Albertson, who directed a study of Vietnam's system of higher education, and later with Dr. Albertson, who directed the WSU College of Education, who completed the final report on the study after Dr. Albertson's death in a plane crash.

The Wisconsin campus was a hub for contract activity across the U.S and Vietnam.

Numerous Vietnamese and American educators and government officials met in Stevens Point.

Eagon and Vickerstaff joined with campus faculty to coordinate a series of seminars at WSU-SP, tours to other campuses, and organizational meetings in cities like Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., and back in Vietnam.

While motivated in part by institutional ambitions, Wisconsin Team members revealed a strong and sincere ideological commitment to exporting American educational values, improving their Vietnamese counterparts, and widening educational opportunities in the RVN.

Not surprisingly, while emphasizing the importance of developing a Vietnamese blueprint, the thrust of the Wisconsin Team's advice was to restructure public higher education in the RVN on the model of the American state university system.

Teams of leading South Vietnamese educators frequently visited the U.S., including extended stays on the WSU-SP campus.

The Vietnamese were impressed by the organizational structure at the institutional and state system levels in Wisconsin.

In Stevens Point, they detected a model for growth from the rapid expansion of American higher education.

The Vietnamese admired the independent nature of universities with campus units that afforded educators and students with most necessities.

During a short visit, Stevens Point was easier to understand than campuses like UW-Madison, UCLA, or Harvard.



WSU-SP, Vickerstaff, Dreyfus, Nguyen Qunyh-Hoa, Eagon, Radtke, with Vietnamese Deans on steps of WSU-SP University Center



Republic of Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu and WSU-SP President Lee Sherman Dreyfus (LSD) meeting in Presidential Palace, Saigon

Dreyfus And Rectors Meet With LBJ

For the second time in one week, the president of Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point met Thursday morning in Washington, D.C., with the President of the United States.

Dr. Lee S. Dreyfus' latest invitation to the White House was to accompany rectors of five South Vietnamese universities.

The Asians gave the chief executive a report on the progress of higher education in their native land, and cited their recent three weeks of study on the Stevens Point campus.

The meeting lasted 45 minutes.

On Tuesday, Dr. Dreyfus attended a ceremony at which President Johnson signed into law a bill creating a nationwide educational television-radio system.

The Stevens Point president had worked about seven years promoting enactment of such legislation.

President Johnson, endorsing the type of educational television advancements which Dr. Dreyfus has been involved in, told the rectors that TV as a teaching tool should be considered in upgrading South Vietnam's higher education programs.

Mention was made of a televised satellite intercontinental classroom connection which tied West Bend, Wis., high school and the Lycee Henri IV in Paris. This May 31, 1965, program via Early Bird Satellite was developed by Dr. Dreyfus.

Also in Washington with the rectors are Dr. David Coker, director of counseling and psychological services, and William Vickerstaff, executive director of the WSU Foundation, Inc.

Dr. Coker and Vickerstaff arranged for the rectors' Oct. 10 to Nov. 2 stay in Stevens Point.

State U Head, Viet Educators Meet With LBJ

Special to The Sentinel

Washington, D. C. — Stevens Point State university President Lee Dreyfus and rectors of the five South Vietnamese universities met for 45 minutes Thursday morning with President Johnson as the rectors reported on the progress of higher education in their nation.

Dreyfus hosted the rectors from Oct. 10 through Nov. 2 in Stevens Point, while the Asian educators studied administration methods and instructional television.

Mr. Johnson referred to instructional television as a teaching tool which should be considered in developing the South Vietnamese educational system.

1968

Since LSD had met with the president of South Vietnam in Saigon, the rectors expected to meet with LBJ in Washington, D.C.

LBJ, a graduate of Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, instantly recognized why Stevens Point, a small teacher's college but rapidly emerging comprehensive university, served as an understandable model for higher education development.



(seated) President Lyndon Baines Johnson with Vietnamese Rectors (standing) USAID officials and Dreyfus

1968. In Stevens Point,
the Venerable Chau,
University of Van Hanh,
gave a gift of Buddhist
literature to WSU-SP
President Dreyfus.

The red-vested Dreyfus
and orange gowned
Chau made quite a
lasting impression on
Stevens Point.





In return, LSD gave Vietnamese rectors The Wisconsin Story. President Lee Sherman Dreyfus and Vietnamese rectors at WSU-SP: Mr. Binh, Father Lap, University of Dalat; Rector Anh, University of Hue; Rector De, University of Saigon; LSD, Rector Ho, University of Can Tho; Venerable Chau, University of Van Hanh; Dr. Bao, Saigon professor and secretary for tour.

The sheer magnitude of WI Team recommendations amounted to a total assault on the problems of higher education in Vietnam.

In an abridgment, the Wisconsin Team and their Vietnamese counterparts called for:

- 1.) Additional regional and national studies and conferences;
- 2.) Massive training programs and structural and functional reorganization;
- 3.) Cooperative inter-ministry efforts;
- 4.) The establishment of a national training center for leadership;
- 5.) The creation of new educational models offering break-through points at all barriers;
- 6.) The allocation of twenty-five percent of the national budget for education; infusion of a technical emphasis at all levels through method and curriculum;
- 7.) Initiation of a three year curriculum revision program;
- 8.) Widespread participation in a plan for decentralization; and
- 9.) The establishment of educational standards by professional committees, enforced by the Ministry of Education.

The Team's initial report and contract served as a guideline for additional reports. A chronological review of the partnership yields some 38 major reports, tours, and seminars, all coordinated by the Wisconsin Team.

The Chronology:

Preliminary Report Public Universities of the Republic of Vietnam: 14 March 1967.

Public Universities of the Republic of Vietnam: April 1967.

Education in Vietnam: Proposals for Reorganization: June 1967.

Seminar in Higher Education: 7 October 1967.

Suggestions on Public Universities of the Republic of Vietnam: 18 September 1968.

Seminar in Higher Education: 2-8 October 1968.

Visitation of Vietnamese Minister of Education: 10 December 1968.



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*A Study-Observation Tour of
Vietnamese Secretaries-General and
Deans to Universities and Colleges in
the United States: April 1969.*

*Proposals for Preparatory Center at the
University of Saigon: July 1969.*

*A Study-Observation Tour of selected
Members of Congress, Republic of
Vietnam to the United States, Republic
of Korea, and Republic of China: 4-10
August, 1969.*

*A Report on Consulting Regarding-
University Development, Manpower
Needs, Documents and Policies
Related to the Governance of
Vietnamese Universities: 30 July 1970.*

*A Report from Wisconsin State
University-Stevens Point Foundation,
Inc: May 1970.*

*Observations and Reflections on
University of South Vietnam: 7 July
1970.*



Basic Student Services Program: July 1970.

Basic Studies: Common Trunk: 6 July-27 August 1970.

Assistance in Modernization of Student Records in South Vietnamese Universities: 15 September-15 November 1970.

Evaluation Seminar in Higher Education, Wisconsin State University-Stevens Point Foundation, Inc.: 18-31 October 1970.

Campus Planning Consultants: 28 March-11 April 1971.

Follow up and Evaluation with Ministry of Education and USAID-Education: July-August, 1971.

Relating Area Resources to Curriculum Planning: September-October, 1971.

Seminar in Policy Formulation and Administrative Structure in American Higher Education: September-October, 1971.

Registration and Record System: October 1971.

Administrative Procedures: October-November, 1971.

Administrative Internship: November, 1971-February, 1972.

Assistance in the Planning and Development of Community Colleges: December, 1971-January, 1972.

Recommendations for the Use of Military Facilities for Educational Purposes: January 1972.

Projection-Higher Education Ministry of Education and USAID-Education: January 1972.

The Baccalaureate Examination: June 1972.

Consultation with Ministry of Education, USAID-Education Officials: 3-19 August 1972.

Administrative Reorganization: August-September, 1972.

Consultant Conference with Chief of Higher Education-Vietnam and Current Consultants in the Vietnam Contract: 11-12 October 1972.

Instructional Development Planning: December, 1972-January, 1973.

Campus Planning: December, 1972-January, 1973.

Community College Planning: December, 1972-January, 1973.

Administrative Internship-AACTE, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point: February 1973.

Higher Education Project Planning: Vietnam, March 1973.

Community College Development: Vietnam, April 1973.

National System of Higher Education-Higher Education Law: Vietnam, April 1973.

Two final reports were issued in 1974, WSU-SP/USAID .

While Team members showed very little fear of the wartime conditions, they were conscious of the security risks, delays in the distribution of supplies, destruction of educational facilities, and limitations imposed on educational funds. Many communiqués from Vietnam noted the shifting terrain on which education operated, they would report sounds of distant artillery, bullet holes in campus buildings around Saigon, skirmishes near Hue, and even damage by U.S. air strikes on Can Tho.

In 1968, RVN Education Minister Tri had visited Stevens Point just weeks before his assassination on the streets of Saigon.

than an effort to die the Soviet Union, which fears a Sino-American deal as much as Peking worries about U.S.-Soviet collusion. But there have been other signs as well.

The treatment of foreign diplomats in Peking has markedly improved in recent months. They are allowed to travel outside the capital again, and even such arch-resisters as the Yugoslavs are treated with courtesy. Two years ago, the depots of Soviet diplomats were surrounded as Red Guards spat on them at the Peking airport and made them crawl under portraits of Mao Tse-tung; now these Soviet citizens are returning. A recent complaint in Lima over an attack on the Chinese embassy in New Delhi was stern but unimportant, and there was no massive demonstration in Peking—in stark contrast to 1967, when at least twelve foreign embassies were besieged by Red Guards at one time or another. There is also evidence that overseas Chinese communities, most notably in Hong Kong and in Burma, have been quietly told to go easy on the kind of ardor Maoism that led to bloody disturbances in both places during the heyday of the Cultural Revolution.

Peace Hooks. Admittedly, there are ugly stories in the wind. On a more typically dissonant note, Peking exploded an H-bomb last month. Also, it still has only one ambassador in Cairo posted abroad. All the other Peking envoys were recalled and humiliated by Red Guards in 1967, and their missions are still headed by change. Demolition of the Viet Nam "peace talks tract" continues, and the Chinese have yet to elaborate on their coexistence formula as regards the U.S. However, all this is still a far cry from 1967, when Red Guards, virtually in control of the Foreign Office, humiliated Foreign Minister Chen Yi so often that, by his own admission, he lost count of the numerous indignities he was made to suffer. It was a time when the Foreign Ministry was ransacked by extremists who stole classified documents, and when one meeting with the then British chargé d'affaires, Sir Donald Houston, had to be held in a restaurant because officials were barred from their own Ministry. At one point in 1967, the temperamental Chen Yi became so angry with his young associates that he asked them, "Against whom are you rebelling? Instead of rebelling against me, why don't you go to Viet Nam and rebel against the Americans?"

China watchers believe that Peking's new look at foreign affairs is part of the moderate line that, over the past five to six months, has slowed down what is left of the Cultural Revolution. They surmise that a foreign policy review was included in a Central Committee plenum session in late October, during which the Chinese leaders must have discovered their country's circumstances and dangerously isolated. Only one ally remained a real ally. Relations with Hanoi had turned killy bit-

ter user North Vietnam's decision to talk peace with the U.S.

Moreover, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia during the summer was surely a traumatic event for the Chinese who, after all, share more than 4,000 miles of exposed border with the Russians. It may very well have occurred to the Chinese that the U.S., an enemy for the past 20 years, was considerably more predictable than the Soviet Union, a former friend. As Chen Yi reportedly told one European ambassador in Peking not so very long ago: "The Americans are bastards, but honest bastards. The Russians are liars and traitors."

Does the Viet Cong. This time both prize and the government looked elsewhere. A mission of education, especially one to effect no quiet four months, is an odd target for attention. Moreover, examination of transcripts showed that the grenade was a U.S. model rather than the Chinese type that the Viet Cong are likely to use. Police soon arrested a discharged South Vietnamese marine sergeant on the basis of what they described as incriminating evidence: a notebook, notes on Tri's daily routine, and the Topset's license (DG 0311) written in ink on his hand.

Premier Tran Van Huong, who had appointed Tri, one of his former pupils



EDUCATION MINISTER TRI (FOREGROUND) & AUTO
An odd target for attention.

SOUTH VIET NAM

The Price of Honesty

The morning was muggy in Saigon, and normally punctual Education Minister Dr. Le Minh Tri was late leaving his villa for the ministry. When a red light halted the minister's Toyota four wheels from the refuge, Tri, his chauffeur and his bodyguard were more intent on the signal than on the motorcycle that flew up alongside them. Noise was quick enough when one of the bike's two riders tossed a paper bag into the car, as the bike sped away, a hand grenade in the bag exploded. The chauffeur died instantly in the car's flaring wreckage. The bodyguard, units shaken, managed to pull the minister from the flames. But Tri, 47, died half a day later, his stomach slashed by shrapnel, an eye gone, a leg broken and his head grievously battered.

Usually after such attacks, Saigon ac-

tion in Huong's schoolmaster days, died when he heard the news. President Nguyen Cao Ky and U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker Acheson left the funeral, and Triek honored Tri posthumously with the National Order, second class. Meanwhile the dead man's friends bitterly suggested a motive for someone more highly placed than a first-rate sergeant. Huong had tossed out the previous education minister after discovering that schoolships to universities abroad, which carry built-in exemptions from military duty, were being sold to rich men's sons instead of awarded on merit. Tri, an ex-1000-005-throat specialist and plastic surgeon who had been teaching at the National Medical School, accepted Huong's change to clean up the scandal. He apparently was making progress. He had seen threatened lawsuits by telephone as well as in several unsigned letters.

The Wisconsin Team encountered disparities that existed in education systems worldwide. Higher education was growing at a great pace in the U.S. WSU-SP served as a model for growth and developmental parity on a scale that could be quickly understood.

Still, disparities had their most debilitating effect in undeveloped nations—particularly in a nation like Vietnam, with its history, culture, and a society torn by decades of war.

The situation in Vietnam was marked by:

- 1.) An increasingly obsolete curriculum, as higher education had not kept pace with advances in new knowledge and technology.
- 2.) A disparity between education and the nation's development needs. The gap between education and employment figures was exacerbated by a history of colonialism and war.
- 3.) A growing gap between the rising costs for education and the amount the nation was able or willing to pay for it.
- 4.) No definitions of the relationships of government and various institutions and Faculties and the responsibilities of officials at all levels.

Over the length of the Wisconsin Contract WSU-SP administrators submitted numerous detailed reports suggesting changes in curricula, faculty training, student relations, student services, and administrative organization.

The Wisconsin Team identified numerous weaknesses in Vietnamese higher education:

- 1.) There was an absence of a visibly stated and systematized National Policy for higher education.
- 2.) There was great ambiguity in the term “university autonomy.”
- 3.) There was a distinct lack of institutional unity.
- 4.) Curricula were narrow in scope and theoretical in nature. A rigid system of annual exams determined class progression.
- 5.) Reforms called on institutions to inaugurate semester and credit systems in place of their traditional block and certificate systems, and allow transfer of school credits.
- 6.) Instructional methods in Vietnamese higher education were highly structured, carrying colonial Franco traditions.
- 7.) Higher education allowed multiple registrations. Students often registered in two or more faculties and more than one university. Such multiple registrations only added to the problem excessive enrollment in some faculties.
- 8.) All institutions had inadequate classrooms, laboratories, and library facilities.
- 9.) Higher education in the Republic of Vietnam had too few university professors.

Notice of termination for
Wisconsin Contract, March 7,
1974.

The United States had
moved into Vietnam with a
vision of halting the
Communist monolith
emerging on the horizon.

Somehow, this illusion failed
to record ten centuries of the
Vietnamese conflict with
China. The American
military machine would learn
the hard way that in Vietnam
its own destiny was limited,
as it controlled only the land
on which it stood for the
moment.

USAID efforts at educational
reform were important and
sincere endeavors, but their
fate was as limited as that of
the effort to conquer a land
in an environment
characterized by the lack of
a stable government, or true
national identity and unity.

1. Contract No.: AID/vn-77 (Vietnam)	2. This Amendment Number: 8	3. Effective Date of Contract: 12/29/69	4. Effective Date of Amendment: Date of Last Signature
5. Contractor (Name and address): Wisconsin State University Stevens Point Foundation, Inc. Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481		6. Administered by: Contracting Officer Regional Operations Division - SA Office of Contract Management Agency for International Development Washington, D. C. 20523	
7. PIO/T No.: 750-367-3-(31)50432, A1 Appropriation No.: 72-1131006 Allotment Symbol: 356-50-750-00-69-31		8. Previous PIO/Ts: N/A	
9. The above numbered Contract is hereby modified as follows:			
1. <u>Appendix C - Approved Budget</u> - delete in its entirety and substitute the following in lieu thereof:			
(SEE ATTACHED)			
CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY THIS <u>35th</u> DAY OF <u>MARCH</u> , 1974 BY: <u>Deane Collier</u>			
10. This Amendment is entered into pursuant to the authority of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and Executive Order No. 11223. Except as herein provided, all terms and conditions of the Contract referenced in Block #1 remain unchanged and in full force and effect.			
11. Contractor is required to sign all copies of this document. One copy may be retained by the Contractor; the remaining copies must be returned to the Contracting Officer. One fully executed/certified true copy will be returned to you.			
12. Contractor: WISCONSIN STATE UNIVERSITY STEVENS POINT FOUNDATION, INC. BY: _____ PRINTED NAME: <u>William B. Vickerstaff</u> Executive Secretary TITLE: <u>Wis. State Univ-SP Fdn., Inc.</u> DATE: <u>2-26-74</u>		13. United States of America Agency for International Development BY: _____ PRINTED NAME: <u>A. Bjorlykke</u> TITLE: <u>Contracting Officer</u> DATE: <u>MAR 7 1974</u>	

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BURDETTE EAGON greets the family on his return home.

Mission Completed, Eagon Back Home

Eagon returns home to family and WSU-Stevens Point. To this day Eagon remains in contact with many Team associates, now friends, in the U.S. and in Vietnam.

*My research found that over the seven-year USAID Wisconsin Contract corruption and instability in South Vietnam **combined** with a general lack of creditable “progress” in the wider war to form a recipe of American political and public disfavor, which caused diminishing financial support for USAID foreign aid programs and the war itself.*

In South Vietnam, problems persisted as higher education was guided by an overly centralized bureaucracy and there was little coordination between Vietnamese universities.

- 1.) The universities operated with fractional units.
- 2.) Vestiges of French colonialism remained with autocratic officials and Francophile faculty entrenched at the University of Saigon.
- 3.) During the 1960's and early 1970's enrollment at all levels of education increased dramatically.
- 4.) Shortages of trained teachers and adequate facilities slowed the resolution of South Vietnam's educational problems.
- 5.) Graduation rates within higher education paled in comparison to the growth in enrollment.

Wartime conditions inhibited broad changes, and the mission was eventually overwhelmed by events —

The gradual withdrawal of U.S. forces;

The “cease-fire” of 1973;

The diminished funding for USAID contractual obligations in South Vietnam;

The collapse of the RVN during the North Vietnamese Spring Offensive of 1975.

Upon the termination of the contract and the ultimate collapse of South Vietnam, Team members and their associates worked caringly to *assist scores of Vietnamese families in relocating to the United States.*

Indications of the *resiliency of mission objectives* surfaced with the attempted renewal of educational relations on the part of Vietnamese educators from a unified Vietnam who visited Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1998.

However, a proposal to assist in the development of Vietnamese distance education was unsuccessful in finding financial support. Eagon and several others revisited Vietnam the following year.

My interviews with former Wisconsin Team members yielded some signs that Team recommendations can be found in a unified Vietnam. The National Survey did have a lasting impact on elementary education, pre-college and vocational programs, and limited success in some higher education areas, such as university record-keeping at Hue and administrative practices at Hue, Can Tho, and Thu Duc. A number of team recommendations for educational uses for some of the former U.S. military installations were carried through.