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THE FRENCH RECONNECTION?

Prospects for the U.S. in Indochina and the role of the Fifth Republic

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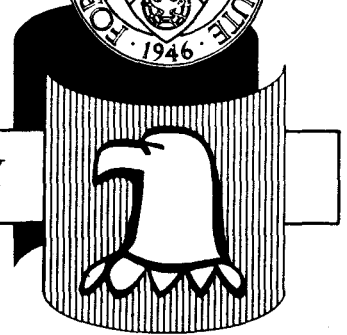
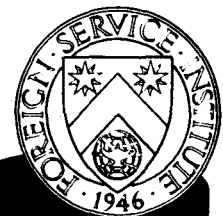
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SEVENTEENTH SESSION

SENIOR SEMINAR IN FOREIGN POLICY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE



1974-75

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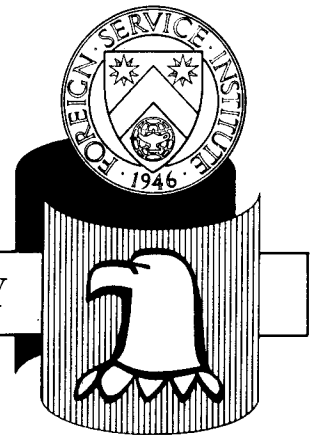
Prospects for the U.S. in Indochina
and the role of the Fifth Republic

Case Study by James M. Rentschler

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T H E . . F R E N C H . . R E C O N N E C T I O N ?

Prospects For The U.S. In Indochina And The Role Of The Fifth Republic

A Case Study

by

James M. Rentschler

"A dollar love had good intentions,
a clear conscience, and to hell with
everybody. But my love had no
intentions; it knew the future.
All one could do was try to make the
future less hard, to break the future
gently when it came....."

- Graham Greene
The Quiet American

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

Many different people, places, and impressions went into this paper, and to each of them I owe a debt of gratitude which a few sparsely sprinkled footnotes here and there can hardly hope to discharge. Moreover, some of my most important information, at once stimulating and instructive, seeped out of sources whose names do not even figure in the footnotes but whose views significantly influenced both the structure and the content of the following pages.

Political Officer Bob Whittinghill in Saigon, Political Officer Mark Pratt in Paris, Washington Post Correspondent Jon Randal and Nouvel Observateur Correspondent Olivier Todd, both Paris-based, and Acting France Country Director Bill Marsh in the Department of State: these were especially key contacts who received me with great patience -- sometimes in the midst of the most pressing operational urgencies -- and who vouchsafed invaluable intellectual sounding boards for my observations. Nor will I soon forget, or cease to be grateful for, an Easter Sunday dinner spent en famille with Ambassador Graham Martin -- the last Easter Sunday, as later weeks revealed, likely to be observed by an official American community in Saigon for a long time to come. Despite an 18-hour-a-day working stint in that embattled city and the pressure of fast-breaking, truly dramatic developments, Ambassador Martin found time to share many fragments of his fascinating experience with me.

The actual travel invested in my research spanned the period March 17 through April 15, 1975, and in the course of a globe-girdling itinerary I found myself particularly indebted to USIA Assistant Director Bill Payeff in Washington and to the Agency's Administrative Chief for Personnel Training, Dr. Claude Cross; USIA CINCPAC Adviser Bob Garrity in Honolulu; PAO Maury Lee in Manila; Minister-Counselor Alan Carter in Saigon; Minister-Counselor Al Hensing in New Delhi (superbly abetted by Deputy PAO Don Gilmore, CAO Roger Lydon, and IO Bob Haney); PAO Ned Conlon in Madras; Minister Counselor Burnett Anderson and Assistant CAO Dorothy Slak, both in Paris, and above all, Ambassador John F. Root, the Seventeenth Senior Seminar's Coordinator and intellectual conscience par excellence.

Without the help of these many friends and colleagues I could not have completed my research, and while none of them can be held in any way accountable for either the conclusions I've drawn or the views I've expressed, their counsel and practical succor were in every case indispensable to my sometimes imprecise purposes. Readily will I forgive them all if, upon perusing these scrambled pages, they should be minded to repeat the same words of the same novelist whose same dated work provides this case study's epithet:

"He looked more than ever out of place; he should have stayed home.... he belonged to the skyscraper and the express elevator, the ice cream and the dry martinis, milk at lunch, and chicken sandwiches on the Merchants Limited....."

- JMR, Washington, D.C.
April 20, 1975

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I. From Dickens Through De Gaulle: Four Assumptions
About the Indochinese Future

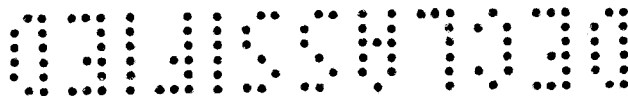
As somebody or other once said, it was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Indeed, from the standpoint of Indochinese problems the months of March and April, 1975, could be seen as not only bad but downright abysmal, and this in the purely Greek sense of that term. The cataclysmic failure of Thieu's strategic retreat from the Central Highlands, the fall of Da Nang, the panicked hordes of refugees crowding toward the coast, Operation Babylift and the tragic crash of a C-5A, recrudescence of hostilities in Laos, Khmer Rouge troops mounting their final push on Phnom Penh as Marine-secured helicopters evacuate American Embassy personnel, the haunting possibility of some similar scenario ensuing in Saigon just a short time ahead*: surely it was impossible to have chosen a more infelicitous, even ironic moment for travelling in Southeast Asia or for pondering a "Western presence" in that traumatically troubled part of the world?

And yet, and yet.... Considering that the main thrust of such a paper might address the possibilities of a special French role in Indochina, what better moment to visit both Saigon and Paris, particularly when the latter stop coincides with the French Government's first public prise de position since the Paris Accords of 1973? For better or for worse, one could easily sense the imminence of some climactic seachange in the fortunes of Indochina during those two months, could feel the irreversible tidal pressures peaking over the past thirty years of that peninsula's bleak history, sweeping in something qualitatively different, something profoundly reordered. True, Indochina had often been in flames before: the Plaine des Jarres repeatedly ravaged, rocketfire rubbing the timeless stones of Angkor Wat, Saigon itself -- that Asian cityface peering out of some dreadful 3-D version of The Perils of Pauline -- incessantly under attack in one form or another ever since 1946. Yet this time the peril appeared at once more real and more culminantly at crest. One felt it on the ground, in the rapidity with which events were unravelling in March and April, in their intensity, in the precipitous quality of their consequences. Clearly the stage was set for something new.

But France? A role? In of all places Indochina? The same nation whose colonial centurions literally and figuratively bled to death through nine years of la sale guerre and whose highly vaunted arms, agleam with the brightest technological polish which the era's martial arts could then confer, still lie lost and rusting in the trackless jungles of Viet Nam more than two long decades later? A contemporary French role in Indochina? -- surely such a notion, freighted with so many yellowing recollections of the ill-starred Fourth Republic, might strike the present-day student of Southeast Asian affairs as rather...um...quaint? Like examining the influence of the Lumière Brothers and their invention of the movie-camera lens on, say, the shooting script for Emmanuelle.¹

It is perfectly reasonable to argue, I suppose, that the French historical chapter in Indochina definitively ended in 1954, de jure with that summer's Geneva Conference and de facto a few months earlier with what the late Bernard Fall once called "Hell in a Very Small Place" -- the Corps Expéditionnaire's humiliating military defeat in the battle of Dien Bien Phu. As it happens, however, among the things which mildly

*That scenario, codenamed "Frequent Wind" came to pass of course during the last few hours and minutes before Saigon turned into Ho Chi Minh City on April 30, 1975.....



surprised me during my research into this subject was the very small number of voices actually willing to espouse that view. Few sources associated with Indochinese affairs, official or otherwise, would in fact concede that French political, diplomatic, economic, or cultural interests were irrelevant in the area, and indeed I found only two who utterly dismissed the idea of meaningful French involvement there.

One of these was a young USIA officer who had logged long experience in South Viet Nam, who was language-qualified in Chinese, and who expressed his contempt for such a notion with something of the same coldly implacable conviction a Viet Minh sapper might have held twenty years before.² The other was a Frenchman, an editorialist for L'Humanité who told me, "Forget it, we can't and shouldn't do anything there, and if the Left has anything to say about it -- which it does -- you can be sure we won't do anything there."³ Could both these otherwise well-informed contacts have failed to see the forest for the trees -- or rather the jungle for the vines?

On the other hand, mildly surprising too was the recognition of enduring French relevancy in Southeast Asia from quarters one might have considered at first glance unlikely. For example, retired General Maxwell D. Taylor, former U.S. Ambassador to South Viet Nam and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the most seminal period of American intervention there: "If only through the impact of language and education the French continue to have some significance in that area; most of my consultations with high-ranking officials in Viet Nam were conducted in French as a matter of course."⁴ And current U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Fred Weyand: "I was struck all the time I was there by the extent to which a proclivity for French culture permeated the country's élites and how little animosity memories of the colonial period seem to awake...."⁵

Does such recognition proceed from certain assumptions about France's own perception of her place in the geopolitical cosmos? And does the perception itself still derive from some lingering mind-set indissolubly formed by a centuries-old mission civilatrice, that essentially imperial idea, both potent and pervasive and as prevalent among French governing élites today as it was in the court of the Roi Soleil over three hundred years ago? -- the idea which sees in French cultural influence the planet's single most important humanitarian asset? I think that the answer to both these questions is yes. Surviving themes of the Gaullist legacy -- aloofness in Alliance councils, go-it-alone nuclear policies, pretensions of moral leadership in strategically important parts of the Third World -- all of these draw sustenance from those bedrock springs of the national consciousness trickling through history and contemporary events alike.

Is the government of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing different from the Fifth Republic's founder and first régime? No doubt. The addiction to "grandeur" is demonstrably less. "Destin" in the official rhetoric, already diluted under De Gaulle's successor Georges Pompidou, now gives way to a far more pragmatic view of international affairs, more subtle, more conciliatory, consciously suffused with that equally traditional French concept of the juste mesure. And yet even under Giscard, perhaps especially under Giscard, obeisance goes on being paid to "une certaine" idée de la France," if only for domestic political motive, primarily the need to appease still powerful strongholds of the UDR electorate.

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An evolution, then, in both the style of the French Government and its attitude, with an element of the national psychology immutable at its base? Oh yes. And history, never a static platform, has seen the course of recent events bring something of a similar change in permanence to the U.S. Government no less than the French, transformations on one side and the other which could in fact describe a potential convergence of the two countries' national interests with significant implications for the Atlantic Alliance in general and for Southeast Asia in particular.

There is the proper starting point for this paper. And at the risk of peppering these pages with a plethora of caveat emptors, the author is pleased to supply the reader with a warning in the form of a brief catalog covering the things he will not find in this analysis. "Indochina" is, after all, an inexhaustible mine -- and minefield -- of scholarly subject matter, as emotively charged as it is encyclopedically vast, and no research project short of a multi-volume historical treatise could begin to cover its many ramifications. U.S. military tactics, counter-insurgency doctrine, bombing rationale, intricate parsing of the Paris peace talks, the political personalities of Diem and Thieu, of Minh (Big) and Minh (Ho Chi), the anti-war movement in America, value judgments regarding the "rightness" or "wrongness" of the past U.S. involvement in Indochina, or for that matter the past French involvement, or even the involvement of the Vietnamese themselves: these are among the many important issues which The French Reconnection? will not be about.

Which leaves what? It leaves the examination of four interrelated assumptions which one can list as follows: (1) direct U.S. influence in Indochina, of whatever kind, is coming to an end, and along with it our ability to control political or military events in any one of the three Indochinese states; (2) in spite of, or perhaps because of, the American departure from that area a residual Western presence in Indochina is not only desirable but, considering our stake in a "structure of world peace," probably indispensable; (3) because of historical circumstance France may now be the one Western nation best positioned to assure such a presence; and (4) far from discouraging or finessing with indifference any possible French initiative in the near-future destinies of Indochina, the U.S. national interest would be well served if we were actively to promote, or at least endorse whatever French traffic the Indochinese market can bear. These pages will attempt to argue, in other words, that a revitalized French role in Indochina -- political, diplomatic, cultural, whatever -- need not interpose still another adversary relationship among the congeries of international issues which have so frequently divided us in the past but can to the contrary enable "America's oldest ally" to make a constructive, albeit very modest contribution there that can accrue as much to our own gain as to the French Government's.

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II. Requiem for a Bogey: America as the Odd Man Out

Let us deal cursorily with Assumption Number One. Does anyone really require any documentary material beyond the daily headlines and the seven o'clock news to establish America's removal from the embattled landscapes of Southeast Asia? As these paragraphs are being typed South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu has just resigned, North Vietnamese mortar fire is ranging in on Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport, and of course Cambodia's Phnom Penh had already capitulated several weeks before. The mood of the American Congress remains hostile to any last-ditch effort to "preserve," "contain," or otherwise "stabilize" the situation in those parts, and Secretary of State Kissinger may have said it all when he somberly informed the House Appropriations Committee that negotiations now "might avoid a battle for the city of Saigon but the choices left in the war are extremely limited."⁶ In this connection, moreover, sentiment on the Hill is undoubtedly an accurate reflection of American public opinion at large which, in a recessionary climate compounded by fears of inflation, fuel crises, renewed hostilities in the Middle East, and the high cost of food, is simply blotting out the bogey of continued involvement in Indochina with words like "we've gotta get out once and for all," "let the Vietnamese do their own thing," "the nightmare seemed to be over in 1973, hope it stays that way," "we can't afford all those millions of dollars for them, we've got too many problems here at home."⁷

Does this coalescence of Congressional and public feeling signify that we no longer have or no longer should have legitimate interests in the fate of Indochina? By no means. It may have been "right" to intervene there and it may have been "wrong." In reality such judgments are now quite beside the point given the existential fact that we did go in and that we incurred some 55,000 KIA's, 300,000 MIA's, and a war bill of 200 billion dollars in the process, not to mention engaging the loyalties and the lives of other key nations in the Pacific whose reactions to developments in one part of the "mutual security perimeter" profoundly impinge on developments anywhere else in the same general area. All of which endows the U.S. position in and approach to the Indochina equation with objective invariables which cannot be waved away.

It is worth dwelling on this latter point: the magnitude of American casualties throughout the protracted duration of our military involvement in Indochina creates both moral and emotional magnetisms within the domestic political compass which distort the True North of national purpose, consciously or unconsciously affecting U.S. policy decisions far beyond the relatively narrow confines of Indochina. And while nobody at this late date would recommend a massive reintroduction of American combat units in Indochina -- a course sure to be as disastrously futile in practical effect as devoid of public support -- careful stewardship of our global interests at the same time dictates prudence in the face we put, or contrive to put, on the dénouement of events there now. It would not, in other words, be in our interest to declare (publicly at least) a complete write-off of all that blood and treasure, to suggest that we had nothing, absolutely nothing to show for so much anguished effort spanning more than a decade. As for our Pacific associates in that enterprise, the "domino" theory may well be fallacious, a discredited shibboleth out of earlier and significantly different geopolitical realities; and yet the recent utterances of President Marcos in the Philippines, now demanding a review of

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U.S. base commitments in his country, and the traditionally skilled equivocations of the Thais as they reconsider their own arrangements with the U.S., are factors which no analysis of U.S. interests in Indochina can lightly dismiss -- especially if the focus is, as it should be, five, ten, fifteen years from now.

I will assert in a later portion of this paper that these interests do not retain the primacy once conferred (falsely?) upon them at the height of our politico-military adventure in Viet Nam, that they are in fact of secondary importance compared to more immediate regional concerns. Meanwhile -- and fully recognizing the limitations imposed on our field of maneuver by the indigenous forces at this very moment in conflict -- the U.S. should do everything it practically can do to favor the chances, however slight, of pluralism in Indochina, of national governments open to at least a modicum of Western influence, the better to encourage neutralist tendencies which the tasks of internal development rather than external ambition might absorb. Isn't that what the more enlightened elements of U.S. foreign policy in the last quarter of the 20th Century are really all about?

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III. Beyond Dien Bien Phu: France as Odd Man In

Enter the French: We left them way back there in 1954, retrieving what tattered remnants of national pride might still have been salvageable from the battlefield of Dien Bien Phu, and the green baize tables of Geneva, but both countries -- ours and theirs -- travelled a great deal of political ground since that time and it might be well to focus on four later dates, all of them important:

September 1, 1966. General de Gaulle delivers his memorable "discours de Phnom Penh" and emphasizes the need for a political solution to the Viet Nam War which "would establish and guarantee the neutrality of the Indochina peoples and their right to settle their own affairs."

May 13, 1968. The Paris peace talks formally open, presaging an especially sensitive and on the whole positive period of Franco-American understandings wherein the French, first under de Gaulle and later under Pompidou, ensure their bons offices pratiques and in particular provide special logistics for the secrecy of Henry Kissinger's repeated contacts with chief North Vietnamese negotiator and Politburo member Le Doc Tho.

January 27, 1973. The Paris Accords are signed, France assumes guarantor status and subsequently gives greater visibility to her policy of balance égale between the two Viet Nam's by (a) reestablishing diplomatic relations with Saigon; (b) raising the level of her representation in Hanoi to that of an Embassy; and (c) furnishing each of the two parties development assistance in the amount of 100 million francs.

April 9, 1975. President Giscard d'Estaing issues his government's official prise de position concerning the situation in Viet Nam; along with a veiled determination that Thieu must leave, the statement notes that "to put an end to the sufferings of the Vietnamese people, for whom I express the profound friendship of the French people, and to allow them to preserve the characteristics to which they are attached, there exists no other solution than the urgent application of the arrangements provided for in Article 12 of the Paris Accords, looking toward the working out of a political solution in a spirit of conciliation and without seeking mutually to eliminate one another."⁸

Through all four of these actions, however different the chronological circumstances and the tone, runs a common thread: the desire, unwavering in its consistency, to play a meaningful role in the enactment of Indochina's decades-old drama. In this context the statement by Giscard assumes capital importance, for at a time when other Western nations, notably the Netherlands, Canada, and Australia to name just a few, have virtually washed their hands of Southeast Asian affairs, have in fact confined whatever concerns they may still have about the area to quickening the exodus of their diplomatic representatives from Saigon and closing their respective embassies there, the French have clearly fixed their eye on the middle and long term, keeping alive a whole range of policy options.⁹

"Honest broker?" "Trusted mediator?" "Diplomatic guarantor?" "Bons offices pratiques?" To be sure. But just as surely the French envisage a considerably larger field of maneuver for their activity in Indochina, the securing of which must depend on political acceptance of whatever regime or regimes dominate Southeast Asia and among whom the French mediatory role is in a very real sense a sine qua non of national ambition.

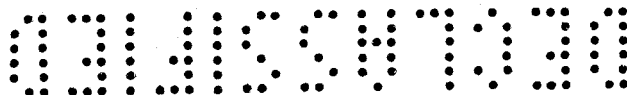
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Consider, for example, French economic interests. In view of so much war-caused disruption and turmoil in the South, and the existence of a prima facie hostile trade ideology in the North (I shall reexamine this notion a bit later on), it is in some respects amazing that French efforts in Viet Nam have remained as significant as they have over the past few years. As of 1972 France ranked fifth as a supplier of South Viet Nam and second as a destination for exported Vietnamese goods. France received 25 percent of South Viet Nam's total sales abroad, while French sales to South Viet Nam represent 5.6 percent of the latter's foreign purchases. Private French investments have been traditionally very important in the South Vietnamese economy, and French companies even now have a near-monopoly in terms of ownership of private enterprise. Neither the Vietnamese themselves nor other foreigners own a significant portion of the Vietnamese economy, and despite more than ten years of the most intense U. S. political, military, and development assistance involvement in South Viet Nam, there is almost no private American investment. Most important among French-owned enterprises are the rubber plantations which yield South Viet Nam's main product. Eight societies owned by French interests account for 90 percent of all the rubber production in South Viet Nam and 95 percent of all its rubber exports.¹⁰

In the industrial sector, the French retain substantial holdings in the production of tobacco, matches, beverages, shoes, soft drinks, liquid gas, tires, building materials, automobiles, public works, and pharmaceuticals. Financially too the French remain important, at least as of the present moment: three French banks (two subsidiaries of the Banque d'Indochine and the Banque Nationale de Paris) account for 17 percent of all financial activity and hold 19 percent of the deposits. In transportation, Air France and UTA handle almost all of the air traffic between Viet Nam and Europe, and an important part of that between Saigon and other Asian cities. At the same time, French shipping nearly monopolizes Saigon-Europe traffic and, interestingly enough, handles 35 percent of the traffic between the U.S. and Saigon.

But can such activity continue in an environment whose political coloration sooner or later -- and probably sooner -- is likely to be that of the PRG? The French are nothing if not self-confident. The individual who may be Saigon's most knowledgeable French resident is Marie-Georges Sauvezon-Gois, the curious woman who runs the city's equally curious French-language daily Le Courrier d'Extrême-Orient. Whether or not she has been, as widely rumored thereabouts, on the payroll of the French S.D.C. since 1946, the fact is that she does seem to know an exceedingly large number of interesting people in Viet Nam and appears to have an especially sensitive feel for developments in the financial community. She talks convincingly of the "visiting card" approach: "There may be panic in Da Nang today, and perhaps even in Saigon tomorrow, but don't forget that these companies -- the banks, the Michelin people, and so forth -- they all have enormous capital resources. Even during the worst periods, in the early Fifties and then again under Diem, they kept personnel there, highly salaried personnel, a kind of carte de visite, if you will, ready to respond to any invitation or opportunity. Remember, we're not talking about today or tomorrow, but five or ten years from now."¹¹

Madame Sauvezon-Gois' imperturbable view of events finds a confirmatory echo in the remarks of Jean Manescau, director of Saigon's Banque Française Commerciale: "Listen," he says, "we're bankers, ergo realists, or at least we try to be, we're not victims of self-delusion,



and a realist attitude more or less commits you to believing that the political tide here is running in favor of the PRG. That much seemed clear even before the Paris Accords were signed... But so what? Assuming the other side takes over, there is going to be an immense need for development capital, for reconstruction programs, for all kinds of enterprises that banks and private corporations, government-backed, can help finance. Of course there is always the possibility that we'll be confiscated, driven out, completely taken over as we were in Hanoi after 1954. We don't discount it. But times have changed. If the Soviets can buy computer technology from the U.S., and if the Chinese themselves can buy Boeings from you too, why can't an eventual socialist regime here take advantage of the services a French financial presence could offer?"¹² And in something of a poetic coda which possibly betrays M. Manescau's colorful Romanian antecedents, he adds: "Besides, this is the South, the spirit and mentality here are 100% meridional. The Romans are hoping to absorb the Greeks once again, and they'll have their hands full trying to prevent the usual historic reversal; maybe they'll find we can help..."¹³

The possibility that M. Manescau is right, that times have changed so far as the North's ideological stance vis-à-vis economic and commercial matters are concerned, may be supported by the assurances which Frances Fitzgerald brought back from her most recent trip to Hanoi: "The North Vietnamese officials we met," she writes, "hardly mentioned their country's social achievements, and in conversation they treated them much as they did the bombing damage -- as assumptions from which they had to proceed. What concerned them was future development and the state of the economy as it has emerged from the war... While planning for economic development, the North Vietnamese government has also been engaged in planning for a new stage in its international relations. Over the past year or so it has taken steps to increase its diplomatic ties with non-Communist countries... What is most surprising, North Vietnamese officials say that they would like to make joint-venture agreements with governments and private companies. They think that foreign companies might be interested in some of their mineral and agricultural resources that other Communist countries don't need; they also think that Western or Japanese companies might want to use their largest resource -- their manpower."¹⁴

Yet economic advantage is not the only, nor even the primary incentive for continuing French interest in Southeast Asia. Again one must allude to the lingering French preoccupation with rang, France's place in the comity of nations, the kind of shadow she casts on the world stage. Since the days of Talleyrand France has traditionally secured that rang through diplomacy, and at the heart of French diplomatic practice lies the abiding impulse of the mission civilatrice. A young U.S. Army officer assigned to CINCPAC's J-2 had another word for it: promiscuity. Reviewing with me the current status of French arms sales around the world, a military training mission in Laos, and the bilateral cooperation between France and India in the sensitive field of nuclear technology, he noted that the Fifth Republic's "promiscuous" efforts to extend its influence in so many different and sometimes contradictory ways was out of all proportion to the nation's rather limited, or at least modest, economic base.¹⁵ Modesty, of course, has always sorted poorly with the basic concept of the "civilizing mission," and by way of illustrative example the J-2 officer's reference to French activities in India invites a closer look.

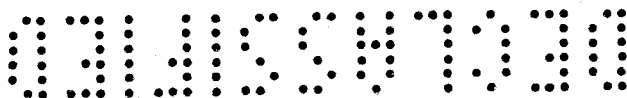
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IV. A Side-Trip to the Subcontinent: The Politics of Promiscuity

First, the cultural scene. Jean-François Thillier, the French Embassy's Deputy Cultural Counselor in New Delhi, summed it up when he asserted that, "Frankly, to see our mission here as an attempt to provide an alternative to the Anglo-Saxon cultural heritage. You'll tell me, perhaps, that the gesture is an extravagant one given the overwhelmingly large number of factors which favor anglophonie in the subcontinent. And I'd have to say that you are right, how can we possibly presume to have any impact here at all with our limited resources? Six Alliance Française centers with maybe a total of twenty native French teachers for a multilingual nation now exceeding, what -- 500 million? Peanuts. But is it really? Look, if we manage to teach, say, 350,000 from among the élites, that could have an effect in qualitative terms and influence far beyond the bare numbers. We'd never replace English, we'd never really try, but the groundwork would be laid for mutually beneficial efforts in a variety of fields. Science, for example."¹⁶

Science, for example. While this is not the place for a comprehensive examination of French arrangements with India regarding joint development of nuclear energy sources -- a subject which would easily support several separate research theses by itself -- it may suffice to note that French activity in this field throws a particularly revealing light on some of France's current national priorities. Franco-Indian cooperation of this kind actually goes back as far as the late Forties when exchanges of information and informal contacts occurred between India's Department of Atomic Energy and the French Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique. The two organizations reached more formal agreements in 1955, and since that date subsequent pacts significantly broadened the range of Franco-Indian nuclear cooperation. Of special interest at present, however, is the Fast Breeder Test Reactor being constructed at Kalpakkam near Madras, an experimental project whose primary purpose is to perfect breeder reactor technology. India, it should be noted, possesses the world's largest known deposits of thorium, a potential nuclear fuel and one which, if properly harnessed, would theoretically furnish the Indians with an inexhaustible energy source. The French are providing the design for the 15-megawatt Kalpakkam reactor and, while priming the pump for an important part of India's nuclear energy program, will be in a highly favorable position to reap whatever long-term benefits may accrue from technological investment and experimentation now.

Here, as in so many other areas of their international exertions, the French are backing the long shot. A significant body of expert opinion in the United States, and in France as well, is unwilling to credit the concept of thorium-fueled reactors with any but the most remote and problematic prospect of practical utility, seeing in it a range of all but insoluble engineering, financial, and security checks. Yet long though the odds may be, the French do not hesitate to play them, in the meantime picking up whatever shorter-term advantages -- by no means negligible -- which can be exploited in the purely political realm. It was, after all, France -- in still another of those opportunistic gestures of calculated promiscuity at once the despair of her old friends and the delight of her putative beneficiaries and which cost her virtually nothing -- whose government was the only one to send India an official telegram of congratulations upon the latter's successful May 18, 1974 detonation of a nuclear device in the Rajasthan Desert....



Mais je divague. If one has paused here to look at the picture of French activity in a place like India, it is merely to suggest not only something of the broad compass which France brings to its overseas concerns but to accentuate as well the fact that a nation willing to operate in an environment so culturally and linguistically far afield as the subcontinent's¹⁸ might well be expected to retain an even livelier interest in an area such as Indochina where, with or without thorium deposits, the cultural and political links are infinitely closer and of much longer date, going back indeed as far as 1787.¹⁹

The terms "cultural" and "political" are, of course, inextricably tied together in the French conception of foreign policy. Official documents releasable to the public -- for example a report on the second five-year plan for French cultural expansion -- makes this unambiguously clear: "The expansion of her language, the radiation of her culture and her ideas, the attraction of her literature, of her science, of her technology, and her arts, the quality of her educational methods constitute for France essential means of action for her foreign policy. Cultural action is tightly linked to political and economic action and...it directly contributes to the power of our country on the international level."²⁰

Giscard himself clothed essentially the same idea with even more of the familiar rhetorical vestments of the mission civilatrice when he met for the first time as President with the French capital's diplomatic corps: "France," he stated, "confirming and accentuating her liberal mission, will do everything in her power to contribute to the dawning of a new era in international relations founded on reciprocal respect and esteem, on a spirit of understanding and liberty, in order that the Bastilles of constraint and intolerance crumble everywhere in the world...."²¹ Now, a typically practical and concrete expression of this idea might well be discerned in the four-man mission recently headed by National Assembly Deputy Francois Missoffe who, following two previous visits each to Saigon and Hanoi, scheduled consultations with local government authorities in Singapore, Bangkok, Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Peking, and even Pyongyang. The ostensible purpose of the Missoffe mission was to compile a detailed and comprehensive report of economic possibilities in various Asian countries for dissemination among French industrialists, financiers, and investors; yet not for nothing did the French delegation include representatives from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

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V. Links in the Reconnection: Will the Other Side Play Ball?

The central question, of course, remains: assuming that the French do retain important interests in Indochina having primarily to do with "politico-cultural" motives and prestige, and assuming too that France is perhaps the only Western country whose influence, however modest, might still survive in that part of the world over as much of the future as we can reasonably foresee, does it follow that the indigenous forces there will permit her to play the role she so discreetly yet energetically seeks? While it is probably far too early to essay any definitive answer to that question, there are bits of evidence to suggest that for either tactical purposes of their own (propaganda), or for genuine raisons d'état (reconstruction and development, diplomatic buffering), whatever political groupings finally do take power in Indochina might not be adverse to some French "presence" there, might in fact solicit it.

One such straw in the wind, admittedly fragile, was produced for my inspection on the veranda of Saigon's Cercle Sportif during an exchange of views with the French Embassy's relaxed, brightly competent Political Counselor Pierre Brochand. Sitting there among the ghosts of the Expeditionary Corps, sipping a long cool drink and watching the beautiful métisses gently lobbing tennis balls back and forth or sunning themselves in abbreviated bikinis while the whir of Honda motor bikes bearing Saigonese schoolgirls in their white silk ao dais flitted by -- a tableau in itself ironically redolent of history's contradictory signals in that troubled land -- Brochand discoursed at some length upon his contacts with North Vietnamese army officers and the fact that so many of them still spoke fluent French, still looked upon their past exposure to French culture with pride and pleasure, and who made a point of predicting that France, by virtue of its "sympathetic attitude" throughout the past ten years, would enjoy a favored position in the "new Viet Nam" of tomorrow.²²

Somewhat less tenuous views of this sort are available from the North itself. Correspondent Jean Lacouture, long an impassioned student of Indochinese affairs, reports that Premier Pham Van Dong assured French diplomats in Hanoi that "For peace in the South we need you. The people, that's us. But the intellectual élites, that's you. Do not shirk this duty."²³ And in Saigon the "independent" daily Trang Den, commenting on Giscard's April 9 policy statement, asserted that "France is in a more favored position than anyone else to act in Viet Nam."²⁴ Still another influential voice in the same location is that of General Duong Van "Big" Minh, on whose leadership not a few have pinned their frail hopes for a viable "third force" and who may yet emerge as the only Saigon figure with whom the North and its PRG associates will be willing to deal now that Thieu has left the scene. In a communiqué released by his son, Duong Minh Duc, the general stated that "Only France, by reason of her diplomatic position in the world, can act for the pursuit of a negotiated solution and for the reestablishment in Saigon of a political authority respectful of democratic rules and international agreements." And the statement added: "The recent declaration by the French government thus brings an immense hope of peace for all Vietnamese people."²⁵

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VI. From Saigon to Brussels: Son of "Directoire"

With few or no practical options remaining so far as the control of events in Indochina is concerned, the United States might well reconsider the possibilities of residual Western presence which France could conceivably secure. Such possibilities may prove to be little more than wishful thinking. And as Brochand himself, along with other informed Frenchmen, emphasizes, "Whatever we do there will no doubt be modest." And yet even a modest, even a minimal Western presence of the sort that France is willing and eager to pursue would be better than nothing and might be used as a moral counterpoise, however feeble or ultimately unavailing vis-à-vis what George Ball once termed "the cruel face of Tonkinese Communism." 26

The reconsideration of these possibilities -- and even more a decision to encourage active French initiatives in the area -- imply, of course, a concerted degree of bilateral and probably even multilateral consultation, the aim being to pick up at least some of those newly shattered shards of our political objectives in Southeast Asia. It's a long way from the tropical jungles, swamps, and rice-paddies of Indochina to the chill, barracks-like enclosure which houses NATO's political headquarters just outside Brussels, yet any real appreciation of "post-war" perspectives in the Far East properly begins with the primacy of our Atlantic relationship. Here again history has hardly stood still, for what may have seemed, and indeed was, intractable, even refractory in a NATO setting with France some years ago, could be significantly less so today. Compare these two texts:

"Mr. Rusk warned his partners that the destiny of the Alliance was at stake in Viet Nam. Irony of Ironies!! It reminded us that somewhat the same atmosphere prevailed during those Atlantic consultations of the years 1951, 1952, and 1953 when Mr. Bidault, putting the same problem before the same allies, requested them to assist, at least morally, the Fourth Republic in its efforts to impose the Bao Dai regime on the Vietnamese people..."

"It is remarkable that....the Atlantic Declaration which has just been adopted gives so much space to Europe's specific problems and can be seen in a certain sense in advance of its time. The document allows that by virtue of the evolution and the vulnerability of the various members of the Alliance, Europe's defense problems have taken on a 'different and more distinct' character. It gives a polite tip of the hat -- and this is the first time that such mention is made in a multilateral document signed by the United States -- to the French and British nuclear forces, now officially credited with a 'deterrent role of their own.' Finally, for the price of this security the allies concede that everything is interrelated in today's world, that their economic policies should not conflict and that events outside the Treaty zone

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can affect them all. These are sensible observations, but they imply the equally good sense of consulting on all subjects, in other words of limiting that European liberty of action which France would like to preserve...."

The first of these, part of an editorial by Maurice Devillers in the December 18, 1965 issue of Le Monde Diplomatique, appeared in the aftermath of that year's winter Ministerial meeting in NATO's former Paris headquarters at Porte Dauphine and conveyed more than just a faint whiff of the rancor, disagreement, and acrimony which then characterized U.S.-NATO and especially U.S.-France differences over Viet Nam. The second comes from Le Monde's front-page editorial of June 20, 1974 and comments on the signing of the NATO Declaration of Atlantic Relations in Ottawa the day before. Between these two reports the whole tenor of NATO's transatlantic dialogue -- between the U.S. and the rest of its allies in general and between the U.S. and France in particular -- had undergone significant change, not least of all in atmospherics and in political substance as well. Would Secretary Kissinger agree? Let's monitor his Ottawa press conference:

Q: Some papers and some radio stations have mentioned that there was some disagreement up to the last minute between France and the United States with regard tothe Atlantic Declaration. Would you specify what kind of compromise took place between you and the French representative?

A: The problem really concerned less the substance of two or three competing formulations which existed....than to reach an understanding of what was intended by the practice of consultation, whether it was intended to be a legal obligation or a practice reflecting the spirit of the Alliance....I had a very satisfactory talk with the French Foreign Minister, and once we understood each other's purposes we found formulations which took account of each side's concern and which met the approval of all our allies.²⁷

It was not always thus. And this sense of "something new" in the substance of U.S. consultative exchange with France is shared by influential officials at the Quai d'Orsay. An example of this influence -- and an example too of the younger, more newly dynamic policymakers who are beginning to populate that venerable address -- is Renaud Vignal, key member of the Quai's Centre d'Analyse et de Prevision, a recently created body purposely structured after the Department's own Policy Planning Staff. Vignal speaks of "complémentarité," a process which he has seen in significant development for about a year whereby the "more mature political attitude of both countries" enables the strengths of the French ally inside NATO to complement as it were those of the American, and this for the greater good of the Alliance.²⁸ Moreover, in Vignal's view this is a process which may work best, paradoxically enough, when the French position does not fully comport with, and may even in some respects be opposed to, the American. He cites the Cyprus

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issue as an exemplary case, noting that France's policy assessments regarding Greek and Turk responsibility in the crisis, at variance with those of the U.S., prevented a harmful polarization of forces inside the Alliance and made it easier for both Greece and Turkey to eschew drastic courses of action, such as complete and precipitous withdrawal from Alliance affairs and from the Alliance itself.

Specifically addressing the more immediate issue of Indochina, Vignal conceded that France may presently be in a position far more promising than any other Western nation so far as exercising some meaningful role in that area is concerned. And such a role, he opined, should and would be the subject of considerable consultation with France's Atlantic allies, particularly the United States. Here he seemed to envisage some modern avatar of that old Gaullist idea of the "directoire," emphasizing as he did a need for a carefully calculated "partage des compétences," a division of political labor and coordination within the Alliance which would permit France, with the blessing and encouragement of the United States, to pursue whatever diplomatic and even moral initiatives might be possible anent all contending parties in Indochina, now and later. The day will surely come, he predicted, when passions born of war will have sufficiently subsided and when America's natural "Pacific center of gravity" will enable it to return to Indochina "in full political force," perhaps in a way analogous to the French "reentry" in Algeria that very week. "Who at the end of our bloody North African war," he rhetorically mused, "would have been ready to believe that thirteen years later a French president could be enthusiastically acclaimed by crowds in the Algerian capital?"

Like the Le Monde editorial which was practically coterminous with his own remarks, Vignal saw no fortuitous coincidence in the fact that Giscard had taken "a leading position with regard to Viet Nam....at the very moment that he was getting ready to board his plane for Algiers,"²⁹ nor did he doubt that the significance of this gesture went well beyond Algeria and that "by the Algerian door Giscard could find only reinforcement for a global policy whose instruments were both independence and cooperation...."³⁰

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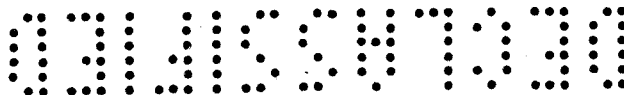
VII. Of Dominoes and Dreams: Japan vs. Indochina

At the height of America's military involvement in Viet Nam -- a moment which already seems historically remote, separated from the present by an era-long evolution in our judgments, our zeal, and our national sensibilities -- Professor John Fairbank was among the foremost scholars of Far Eastern affairs in the U.S., one of those whose voices helped animate the country's divisive public debate over Indochina. Contrasting the French colonial experience in Viet Nam and our own military intervention Fairbank observed that "Superficially the circumstances are similar; the U.S. seems to have lain down in the same cot once occupied by the French, but the U.S. dreams profoundly different dreams." ³¹

What he meant, of course, was that the French had acted out of very narrow and anachronistically acquisitive interests of an imperial character, whereas U.S. initiative sprang from larger, more enlightened, essentially idealistic motives permeated by hard-nosed geopolitical principle: we aimed to secure the post-war peace and to protect the existence of free, newly independent states threatened by externally supported insurgency and subversion. In a popular catch-phrase of those long-ago Sixties, one whose strategic implications ranged well beyond even the domino theory of the Fifties, it was averred that "Democracy is Indivisible" -- the fall of South Viet Nam could menace, say, the security of West Berlin.

All of which brings us to the point where, instead of concluding, this paper might more logically have begun: the decreased importance of Southeast Asia to the U.S. and how it got that way. ³² First let's screen a few quick flashbacks from the film of 1948-1950: Moscow consolidating its hold on Eastern Europe, probing for weak spots in Iran, Turkey, and Greece, imposing a blockade on the Western sectors of Berlin, successfully exploding a first atomic bomb. And more, much more: Moscow supporting Communist insurrectionary moves in the Philippines, Burma, Indonesia, and Malaya, a Sino-Soviet alliance which seems to extend hostile power across the whole breadth of Eurasia, and most critical of all, a Soviet decision to use satellite North Korea as a cat's paw for naked aggression in the Far East. With this kind of historical footage flickering in the background it is not difficult to understand how our eventual military involvement in Southeast Asia was an outgrowth of the containment concept that dominated U.S. policy since 1950, nor how the Korean war experience, coupled with concern about growing Chinese military power, ensured that military strength would naturally be viewed from the outset as the principal means of containment -- especially in complicated politico-military situations like that in Viet Nam where the immediacy of military needs tended to be given priority over longer-term political considerations.

And yet as Ralph N. Clough has pointed out, "A policy that served well as a deterrent to overt attack on South Korea and the island nations with which the United States had signed defense treaties proved less well suited to the complexities of mainland Southeast Asia, where U.S. interests were less direct and where the threat was infiltration from outside mixed with internal revolt, instead of overt attack." ³³ And he adds: "When economic and military aid and advice to non-Communist governments proved inadequate to keep them from being overwhelmed, the containment policy required that the U.S. put in its own forces to contain North Viet Nam." ³⁴



In an analysis whose soundness seems to me unassailable, Clough goes on to document the sweeping changes which have occurred in the balance of forces throughout East Asia -- the most important of these being the breakdown of the Sino-Soviet alliance and the resurgence of Japan -- and to assert that such changes make it necessary to reappraise both the importance of our interests in that area, together with our means to defend them. Once allegedly important to the United States for its "rich natural resources and some 200 million people" and for its great strategic significance "because it dominates the gateway between the Pacific and Indian Oceans,"³⁵ what does Southeast Asia in the decade of the 1970's present as a regional picture? -- diversity of peoples and languages, political fragmentation, a generally low level of economic and political development, a transformation of local attitudes under a slowly awakening national consciousness, all of which are likely to reduce America's intrinsic security or economic interests in any of the developing countries of that area, at least in comparison with its preponderant interests of all kinds in Japan. And even the "gateway" argument loses whatever force it might have had in the rapidly accelerating technological sweep of the 20th Century's last years, for as Clough again points out, "the closing of the Suez Canal has shown that in the day of the supertanker it may sometimes be easier and cheaper to take the long way around a formerly 'vital' waterway than to muster the military force necessary to keep it open. Fear that important sea routes might be cut seems to assume a large-scale, prolonged conventional war between major powers, a somewhat questionable assumption in the nuclear age." And he concludes: "No matter how one assesses the strategic importance of Southeast Asia, the region is clearly of more concern to Japan and Australia than to the United States."³⁶

If Clough's thesis is correct -- and I think it is -- Japan, by reason of its economic strength, its advanced industrialization, the stability of its institutions, the revitalized nature of its impact on a global as well as a regional environment, and the strategic stake Japanese leaders themselves perceive in conditions of peace throughout the Orient, assumes the character of a truly vital American interest in Asia, the importance of which can be indirectly gauged by the effect on Japan's own thinking of events elsewhere in Asia. In this connection the evidence persists that Japan, while regarding the continuity of U.S. commitments in Korea and even Taiwan as crucial, never considered our activity in Indochina as anything more than marginal, and indeed quietly deplored it, fearing that large-scale U.S. military involvement there would at best weaken our defensive posture or our resolve in more critical areas (Korea) and at worst suck Japan into a war with China. An article in the Washington Post as long ago as May 14, 1970 quoted an unnamed "ranking figure in the Japanese government" as saying "Most of us feel you should be working to salvage what you can of a bad bargain... We know you will respect your commitments, but what we are concerned about in Viet Nam is not good faith, but good judgment."³⁷

Prophetic words. If not yet totally erased, the old "containment" line has certainly been visibly blurred over the past few weeks and months by the force of events. And despite the immediate drama, this is not necessarily a process to be deplored as Southeast Asia, its political weight redistributed in the shifting tidewaters of historical circumstance, becomes more and more of a secondary U.S. absorption and as the Washington-Tokyo locus of power and interest continues to develop ever stronger lines of force throughout the Pacific area. Meanwhile, as the political future of Viet Nam shakes down over the next few months and years, Clough is

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among those who sees the desirability of some residual Western presence there as a means of influencing long-term developments which, if not altogether favorable to U.S. interests, might at least be something less than firecely hostile. "The cooperation of other Western powers," he states, "should be sought."³⁸ Use of multilateral channels for economic aid, such as the Asian Development Bank, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and intergovernmental groups may be a way, in Clough's analysis, to help bring about what former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Harlan Cleveland, called a "widening of the community of the concerned,"³⁹ reducing, incidentally, the tendency to rely excessively on bilateral aid from the U.S. in any post-war settlement of Southeast Asia's future. Would present-day U.S. policymakers find this idea congenial? Clearly they should. Listen to Winston Lord:

"What we need now are cooperative patterns and policies rather than using exclusively national assets and resources for pressure purposes."⁴⁰

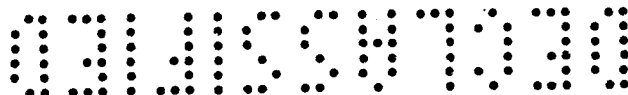
Listen to Dean Brown:

"The future will not be bilateral; we have to evolve a whole new mechanism for dealing with foreign communities, and in fact we're well down that road; after all, everytime Henry Kissinger lands an airplane somewhere he sets up a new joint commission!"⁴¹

And listen to the airplane lander himself:

"This Assembly should strengthen our commitment to find cooperative solutions within the appropriate forums such as the World Bank, the IMF, the CATT, and the World Food and Population Conferences. The United States commits itself to a wide-ranging multilateral effort."⁴²

Enter France once again. The French and the Americans may indeed have dreamed profoundly different dreams in the cot of Indochina some decades ago, but are those dreams so very different today? The cot unquestionably is, or soon will be, and in these markedly altered circumstances might it not be sound policy for the U.S. to steal a favorite page from de Gaulle's own book, that is, by foreseeing the inevitable and exploiting it? Après vous, Alphonse: the French badly want to play a role in Indochina and probably can play a role. And since they are determined to do so in any event, can we not encourage them wholeheartedly in that effort, reaping not only some benefit of a psychological sort but at the same time strengthening an important link in our Atlantic relationship? Such encouragement would be the easier to offer since we now have little or nothing to lose. We would have recognized that our interests in Southeast Asia and our capacity to control change there are both limited, and having disengaged our prestige from the defense of an outmoded security perimeter -- not to mention a disproportionate amount of our moral and material resources -- we might enjoy an enlarged freedom of maneuver likely to strengthen our hand in more vital areas East and West.



The era of dollar love in Indochina is over, and if the succeeding new era has a modest place for the French franc -- in either financial, diplomatic, or moral currency -- so much the better. Lessons need to have been learned in such a process, and there is hope that the French, and the Americans, and the French again, will have learned them at last.

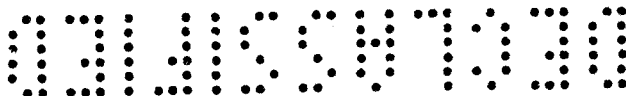
In the meantime, one remembers The Quagmire War of French journalist Lucien Bodard -- still among the most hauntingly relevant histories of Western, and specifically French experience in Indochina -- and in that book one remembers most of all the words of a young French administrator whom Bodard interviewed in Saigon shortly before the fall of Dien Bien Phu:

"The time of the conquerors and the missionaries is over. If they persist, they can only achieve false victories, ending in frightful defeats. Every people must be left to return to its own origins, pure or impure, good or bad. It's not for us to judge. All that one can do is help, offering our civilization only in the degree that it might be desired. For that, one must love, not like I loved before, relying on naked force, but with a profound and philosophic detachment, putting oneself above every insult and knowing how to submit....."

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F O O T N O T E S

1. The analogy may not be all that weirdly ill placed. This piece of soft-core porno erotica, released in Paris in the summer of 1974 and currently packing them in here in Washington, does after all have a topically political and geographical setting, filmed as it was on location in and around Bangkok.
2. Conversation occurred February 4, 1975 in USIA's Washington headquarters. I prefer to retain the anonymity of the interviewee.
3. Interview conducted April 18, 1975 in Paris. The editorialist in question, though an acquaintance of long standing, was reluctant to meet with me and resisted more specific identification.
4. Conversation with author, March 5, 1975.
5. Conversation with author, March 7, 1975.
6. Testimony of April 21, 1975.
7. These direct quotes are a representative sampling culled from a variety of citizens across the country -- a tomato-grower in California's San Joaquin Valley, a worker on Ford's River Rouge assembly line, a New Orleans municipal official -- which the author recorded during five Senior Seminar field trips in the course of the academic year 1974-75. And lest the reader discount such sampling on the basis of incomplete and/or unscientifically collated data, it is well to draw attention to the results of a Louis Harris poll by-lined in the April 24, 1975 edition of the Washington Post. "A huge 68-to-22 percent majority of Americans," Louis reported, "opposes sending any American troops into South Viet Nam to help evacuate U.S. citizens or Vietnamese allies whose lives may be endangered by a Communist takeover. Despite the urgent appeals by President Ford and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, a 47-to-43 percent plurality of Americans opposes spending \$250 million for humanitarian aid to South Viet Nam. A lopsided 81-to-12 percent are also opposed to President Ford's request for \$722 million to subsidize military aid to Saigon. These results from an April 16-18 survey indicate that Americans oppose further U.S. involvement in Indochina no matter how poignant the plight of refugees or how imminent a bloodbath." (Italics added)
8. The French text of this statement was released by French Government Spokesman Rossi. The English version of this, as in all other French sources quoted throughout the paper, is the author's own translation.
9. A typical news item recently reported from Saigon provides especially instructive reading in this connection: "The Dutch government sent a plane to pull out the last of its nationals and Canada and Malaysia were reported planning to follow Australia in closing their embassies. French officials at the presidential palace in Paris said the French government wants its nationals to remain in Saigon. This was made known following a meeting between President Valery Giscard d'Estaing and Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues." (Washington Post, April 23, 1975)



10. For most of this statistical material I am indebted to Marianna P. Sullivan, Assistant Professor and Chairperson of the Political Science Department at Trenton State College in New Jersey, whose piece entitled "France and the Viet Nam Peace Settlement" in the June, 1974 issue of the Political Science Quarterly was a particularly useful source during the elaboration of my own paper. I also interviewed Ms. Sullivan by phone on February 28, 1975.
11. Interview conducted in Saigon March 28, 1975.
12. Interview conducted in Saigon March 29, 1975.
13. Ibid.
14. "A Reporter at Large (North Viet Nam);" The New Yorker, issue of April 28, 1975. For still another but essentially complementary view of French economic prospects in post-war Viet Nam (in a paper of normally different political orientation) it will be of interest to read Norman Pearlstine's front-page piece in the April 29, 1975 Wall Street Journal, published at the moment this study is "going to press." Headlined "Although Americans Pull Out of Vietnam, French Hope to Stay," Pearlstine's findings square with Fitzgerald's and support the overall thrust of my own observations.
15. During a two-day period March 21-22, 1975 at CINCPAC Headquarters in Honolulu I was able to secure, through the office of USIA Adviser Robert Garrity, much useful documentary material, as well as informal exchanges with CINCPAC staff personnel, covering a broad range of French activities in Asia.
16. Interview conducted in New Delhi April 2, 1975.
17. For most of my information on Franco-Indian cooperation in nuclear affairs I am indebted to three people in particular: Information Officer Robert Haney of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi; Science Attache Clifton G. Metzner, Jr. of the same Embassy; and Gerard Deviondis, the French nuclear expert whom the Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique assigned to the Kalpakkam experimental breeder reactor site near Madras.
18. Which is not to say that France has never had a cultural foothold in India of any significance. Some of the most interesting and illuminating moments I spent in the course of my research travels occurred during an excursion to the former French enclave of Pondicherry. The situation I found there would make an extremely absorbing case-study project in itself; however, as one of the keenest observers of the subcontinent used to say, "But that's another story....."
19. The date modern French historians generally ascribe to the genesis of French relations with Indochina, when Louis XVI, impressed by missionary contacts, signed a treaty with the emperor of what was then Cochinchina.

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20. Quoted in Suzanne Balous' L'Action Culturelle De La France Dans Le Monde (Paris, 1970). I was fortunate to acquire this information from a piece which Embassy Paris Minister-Counselor for Public Affairs Burnett Anderson published in the January 2, 1975 edition of Le Monde. Entitled, "L'Impérialisme Linguistique De La France" (France's Linguistic Imperialism), this piece provides some especially apposite insights into the central idea of the mission civilatrice and its pursuit in contemporary times.
21. Reported in Le Monde of June 22, 1974.
22. Interview conducted in Saigon March 31, 1975.
23. Quoted in Le Nouvel Observateur of April 7, 1975.
24. Reported in Le Monde of April 12, 1975.
25. Reported in Le Monde of April 9, 1975.
26. The Discipline of Power (see Bibliography).
27. Quoted from the complete press conference transcript carried in the USIA Wireless File of June 20, 1974.
28. Interview conducted in Paris April 14, 1975.
29. Le Monde of April 11, 1975.
30. Ibid.
31. Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, August 1965.
32. For much of the material in this section I owe a great deal to Ralph N. Clough's thoughtful essay on East Asia included in the Brookings Institution volume The Next Phase in Foreign Policy (edited by Henry Owen) (see Bibliography).
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Testimony by Secretary of State Dean Rusk before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, August 1965 (cited by Clough in The Next Phase in Foreign Policy).
36. Ibid.
37. Cited by Clough in The Next Phase in Foreign Policy.
38. Ibid.
39. NATO: The Transatlantic Bargain (see Bibliography).
40. Informal remarks delivered by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff during his meeting with the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy, September 25, 1974.

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41. Ambassador Brown, then Under Secretary for Management, expressed this view during an informal meeting with the Senior Seminar membership on October 23, 1974. Of perhaps coincidental interest in the present context is the fact that the Ambassador, hurriedly recalled from retirement at the moment these pages are being completed, has been asked to organize and oversee the emergency evacuation of American and Vietnamese citizens from South Viet Nam.
42. From "The Challenge of Interdependence," an address delivered April 15, 1974 by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger before the Sixth Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

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B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Note: A complete bibliography on even the most narrowly focused sub-plct connected with contemporary Indochina might well eclipse the sub-plct itself, so vast is the literature and so varied the views. And while one could always bull the reader -- or, even worse, bore him -- by indiscriminately listing everything in the catalog to date (a time-honored technique in Academe) -- I have included only those works which I found to be the most useful to my understanding (still woefully limited, alas) of the subject in question. Thus:

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