

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

**KINGSLEY W. HAMILTON**

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy*  
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## INTERVIEW

*Q: This is an interview with Kingsley W. Hamilton. It is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Mr. Hamilton, we want to talk first about your background so our researchers will know where you come from. Could you explain when and where you were born, and a little about your family and early upbringing?*

HAMILTON: My parents were Presbyterian missionaries in the Philippines, and I was born in Manila, August 1911. So most of my early life was in the Philippines, and we came home on furlough every seven years. Then when I was ready to go to high school, I had an uncle who lived up in China, stationed there. My folks thought health-wise and climate-wise, since China had a winter and changing seasons, it might be nice to go up there. So I went in 1925 for my freshman and sophomore years in high school at the North China American School just outside Peking at a place then called Tungchow. I came back to the Philippines, and on to Ohio through Europe to finish high school and go on to the College of Wooster.

*Q: I want to go back just a minute to the Philippines. Where in the Philippines?*

HAMILTON: We were most of the time in Laguna province just south of Manila, and then in Manila itself.

*Q: Just a bit about life there for a young boy. Was it pretty much missionary, were you integrated into the Philippine community? How did it work at that time?*

HAMILTON: Well, we were considerably integrated into the Philippine community when outside Manila where there were very few Americans. In Manila there was a large American community and an American school where I went for the 6th and 7th grades. In Los Banos, there was only one other American family with children, so there I was alone with the Filipino students in the College of Agriculture for two years in its preparatory courses before going up to Tungchow in China.

*Q: In China, did you pick up any Chinese?*

HAMILTON: Not to speak of, just enough to go shopping.

*Q: In Wooster were you pointed towards a missionary career at that time?*

HAMILTON: I wasn't quite sure what I was going to do at first. I did look into the ministry a little bit. One of my best professors was a professor of history, particularly what she called World History, and that attracted me. It covered the origins and development of the first World War and the formation and operation of international organizations after that. This led me to an interest in international affairs. And then the year I graduated, 1933, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy was being started jointly by Tufts and Harvard Universities on the Tufts campus in Medford, Massachusetts. My history professor heard about it, and I put in an application, received a small scholarship, and started with the school that fall. There were only 20 of us that first year. I was at the University of Strasbourg the next year, and back at Fletcher in 1935-36.

*Q: You took the Foreign Service exam when? In '36-'37?*

HAMILTON: It was the spring of '36 in Boston.

*Q: What sort of exam was it?*

HAMILTON: It was a three-day written affair, as I recall, and of course the orals came later. It covered history, economics, geography, literature, political science, international and commercial law, a foreign language, and general information.

*Q: I assume you passed it when you took it. Had Fletcher helped you? Get you ready for this?*

HAMILTON: Oh, yes. It had good courses, excellent professors, and classes averaging only five or six students.

*Q: You took your oral exams in Washington?*

HAMILTON: Yes, in the fall of 1936. It was most convenient for me since for the 1936-1937 year I was a Fellow at the Brookings Institution near the State Department.

*Q: Do you recall how the oral exam was constituted? Is this one of those things that's engraved in your memory?*

HAMILTON: I forget how many there were in the examining group, I guess four or five. Whether they treated everybody the same way, I don't know. I went in, they asked a few questions, and I guess looked me over. I was then told to go on to get a physical exam. This meant I had passed.

*Q: Do you recall any of the types of questions that were asked of you?*

HAMILTON: Not really. Some had to do with international affairs. I don't remember any specific questions.

*Q: So obviously you passed. How did the system in 1937 work? We're still in the depression, government is beginning to expand, but the United States is not a major player in the world in a way. Here you are a young guy just out of college, how did they absorb you into the Foreign Service?*

HAMILTON: Well, they sent everyone right out to a post. I went to Budapest. Some of the officers at those posts were very good at helping young officers. I was rotated through several fields of activity--passports and help to American citizens, visas, and economic reporting.

*Q: You went to Budapest and you were there from 1937 to '38, this is normal. Did we have a Legation?*

HAMILTON: A Legation at that time.

*Q: Who was the minister?*

HAMILTON: I forget his first name, [John Flournoy] Montgomery was his last name, a political appointee.

*Q: What was he like?*

HAMILTON: Very capable, a pleasant man. The office ran smoothly--thanks in good measure to Howard K. Travers, First Secretary and Consul--and he seemed to get along well with the Hungarians. Since he did not care for opera or concerts, one of my jobs--a most pleasant one--was escorting Mrs. Montgomery to them.

*Q: What was the situation in Hungary in those days?*

HAMILTON: Well, it was a dictatorship, a benevolent dictatorship. Admiral Horthy was in charge, he was relatively mild. Things ran smoothly. Everything was in order and people seemed content. As far as normal living was concerned, there were no problems. It was a very pleasant life. The Hungarians were a friendly people, at least those in Budapest, the ones I had the most contact with.

*Q: What was our Legation doing in those days? What was the main interest?*

HAMILTON: Well, I don't know that it had any special interest. Of course I didn't get into that. Although I moved around in various assignments for a few months, it was all really on the consular side. I did some economic reporting, but I never got into any of the political work. As far as I could tell, the Legation was concentrating on keeping Washington informed of whatever of interest was going on. I was not aware of anything special.

*Q: Was the news from Germany and Hitler who was consolidating his power, and consolidating part of Germany, was this a subject of much speculation or interest?*

HAMILTON: It didn't seem to be. Hitler moved into Austria just after I left to come back to the Foreign Service School. I think it took everybody by surprise. When I went through Vienna for a few days on the way back to Washington there didn't seem to be any feeling of an impending German move.

*Q: This would be in '38 when you went back to go to the Foreign Service School. Is that right?*

HAMILTON: Yes.

*Q: How long was the course, and what were they teaching?*

HAMILTON: Three months, I believe. Teaching concerned policy and office operations relating to passports, citizenship, visas, reporting, and other action areas.

*Q: Was it your impression at that time that the State Department was a pretty small organization?*

HAMILTON: Well, not at the time, but looking back at it since, it was small. You got to know most of the officers in Washington, particularly the political officers. At that time there wasn't really much of an economic emphasis. The political officers were all on the third floor...

*Q: This would be...*

HAMILTON: Old State, now the Executive Office Building.

*Q: Did you have any choice of where you went?*

HAMILTON: No; toward the end of the School term I just got the assignment one day to Zurich.

*Q: Were you married at that time?*

HAMILTON: No.

*Q: You went out to Zurich again in 1938, and you were there until 1940. What were you doing in Zurich?*

HAMILTON: Most of the time visa work, passport too. Visas and passports were most of my official work, but I did a lot of economic reporting on the side, including spare time. It interested me. This was the time the Jews were leaving Germany so the demand for visas was heavy.

*Q: Here you were, a young Foreign Service officer, in a country which was becoming... '38, things were really picking up. Munich had happened by this time, had Czechoslovakia been occupied? Austria had been occupied.*

HAMILTON: Austria yes, in March 1938; Munich occurred in September 1938, as I landed in France headed for Zurich; and Czechoslovakia was occupied in March 1939.

*Q: What was our policy, and how did you treat the applicants for Jewish visas? I mean for American visas, not just Jewish, but people coming in, people trying to get the hell out of the way of danger.*

HAMILTON: Well at that time, of course, one of the first things a prospective immigrant had to have was means of support over here. Without some relative to provide an affidavit of support or somebody who would put up some other form of affidavit, he was generally out of luck, unless he was a professional coming to a specific job or, I think, a domestic with an affidavit from his prospective employer. So it was primarily a matter of trying to determine the adequacy of means of support. Health and police certificates were also required.

*Q: Did you feel...after the fact, and after the World War and the whole enormity of the holocaust became known, there was considerable criticism of the Department of State Foreign Service attitude on this. Looking at it, and trying to go back to the time, did you feel the pressures--one, to obey the law; but two, here's the problem and were you getting threats from groups in the United States? For example, Jewish groups saying we'll support these people when they come in.*

HAMILTON: I don't recall myself ever seeing any group offering to help Jewish visa applicants. As far as concerns the work there in Zurich that I was involved in, I never encountered any threats either, but I did sometimes feel squeezed between the law and the need.

*Q: What about the Swiss authorities? People coming in applying for visas were mostly non-Swiss I assume. Were they under pressure that if you didn't give them visas they'd be sent back? What was the Swiss attitude?*

HAMILTON: I don't recall anybody who indicated that. Some of them did go on. For whatever reasons they left the country and finished up their applications somewhere else, maybe in Spain, Latin America, or elsewhere. Every now and then we'd get a transfer of an application from some other office like Stuttgart or Bucharest where it had been started. Many country quotas were so small in relation to demand that the day of the first application was significant. Few Swiss applied for immigration visas. The Swiss Government seemed fairly liberal about admitting applicants to Switzerland but I never learned the particulars of their rules or policy.

*Q: I'm sure it was because it was a matter of priorities. You arrived there in '38, then there was the absorption after Munich of Czechoslovakia and Austria had already gone. In the first place, who was our Minister in our Legation?*

HAMILTON: I'll try to remember...

*Q: His name was Leland Harrison. But you say he never came out of Bern, or at least didn't come to...*

HAMILTON: He didn't come to Zurich while I was there, as far as I can recall.

*Q: That's very interesting because I notice he was there until 1947. He was there about ten years.*

HAMILTON: That's right, he was there quite a while. Now that I have the name it's familiar. I may have forgotten, probably because I never met him, never had anything to do with him.

*Q: The old Foreign Service wasn't that big a group. He was a career officer but obviously he didn't mix and mingle. As developments there you were there at the beginning of World War II, September of '39 although it was up in Poland but France was at war. Were the Swiss making defensive movements or not?*

HAMILTON: Well, not what I'd call movements, but they started to put up tank barricades along the frontier and on bridges over the Rhine in Basel. They increased military training and called some to active duty.

*Q: Did the onset of the war...albeit you were in a neutral country, what impact did that have on Zurich's operations?*

HAMILTON: Well, it didn't affect the work of the Consulate General particularly while I was still there. In our daily life what was most affected was the gasoline supply. It was severely rationed. For consular purposes there was a place where you could get a reasonable supply, but they didn't want you driving all over the place just because you could get some gas. Road traffic dropped way down.

*Q: When did you leave Zurich?*

HAMILTON: The end of January or beginning of February of '40.

*Q: So this was after the fall of Poland, it was a period of the Phony War, as they called it. So France really wasn't engaged.*

HAMILTON: No.

*Q: Then where were you assigned?*

HAMILTON: Saigon.

*Q: You were there from '40 to '42. How did you get to Saigon?*

HAMILTON: Well, by train to Genoa, and got on an Italian liner, the Conte Biancamano, and then to Singapore. We had the Italian minister of colonies aboard, he was on an inspection trip to their then colony Eritrea, on the Red Sea.

*Q: Italian Somalia?*

HAMILTON: Massawa was the port where we stopped and Asmara was the capital of the area.

*Q: That would have been Ethiopia, or Eritrea. The Italians had all of Ethiopia at that time.*

HAMILTON: Yes Eritrea. Then we went on making stops at Aden, Bombay, and Ceylon; so it took a while, a pleasant cruise. At Singapore I got off, and then waited a week until I could get a small French ship to Saigon.

*Q: So you were in Saigon February '40. What was your job?*

HAMILTON: There were two of us. The consul at first was Peter Flood, I was the vice consul. We did everything. The Cochinchina government operated fairly independently. The Governor General was in Hanoi, but we were responsible for the reporting and other actions as a legation or an embassy would have been. We communicated directly with the Department but sent copies of some things to Paris while the embassy was still there.

*Q: What was the situation in Saigon like in early 1940?*

HAMILTON: It was a pleasant and interesting situation, except that we felt cut off. It was all right up until May 1940 when Paris fell. There was regular steamship travel; a ship called once a week or every ten days en route from France to China and Japan and back. Other ships also called. People weren't worried particularly about anything. So life was good; a few shortages but quite pleasant calm. Then, after the German armistice in June, the French really felt cut off, left high and dry. Admiral Decoux, a Vichy sympathizer, became Governor General and General Catreux left and joined the Free French

Admiral Decoux was given a large measure of authority and was also appointed High Commissioner for all French possessions in the Pacific. He had authority but meager resources, physical contact with France having essentially ceased. Supplies began to be short, so he had to try to develop increased commercial relations with the Philippines and Hong Kong particularly.

Within a month after the fall of France the Japanese began moving into Tonkin, the northern part of Indochina, in various ways, first with inspectors on the railway running to Yunnanfu



in China. There were military clashes in September 1940 at Caobang and Lang Son on the Indochina-Chinese border.

Then the Japanese began making economic demands. They wanted all the rubber and much of the rice, and other things. They promised to pay, but actually all they did was to give vouchers. Generally they needed all their own supplies for themselves and sent little to Indochina.

By the beginning of '41 gasoline was running short. The French began mixing some rice alcohol in with it, and developed what they called gazogenes, an engine able to run on charcoal gas used first in buses and then some cars. Other things began to be scarce, including new movies. Life was more somber than it had been, with fewer balls and parties.

*Q: From your observation, how was the French Colonial world? Were Vietnamese integrated into the colonial structure, or were you dealing with the French?*

HAMILTON: We dealt with the French almost exclusively. Even in the provinces the top man was always French. Outside of Saigon the French themselves, however, mingled more with the native people than the British tended to do in their colonies. The French also seemed to marry natives more often than the British did. But the French had their schools, their lycee system. There was a university at Hanoi, but the French usually went to universities in France.

A certain amount of unrest developed among the Vietnamese towards the end of 1940. It got rather serious. I don't know who was behind it. There was considerable feeling that the Japanese were. French officials referred to "communist" disturbances. The French arrested a large number of people and put many of them on an island off the coast, Poulo Condore, where they had a penal colony.

*Q: Like Devil's Island.*

Mr. Hamilton. Yes. Poulo Condore is about 90 miles east of the southern end of Indochina.

*Q: Were Vietnamese coming to you as an American representative to let you know how much they resented the French? Were they using this, or were we pretty much a neutral?*

HAMILTON: We were pretty neutral. The Vietnamese hardly ever showed up at the consulate, or elsewhere. We had a few Chinese who would come over and whom we knew fairly well--businessmen, or commercial folks, rice dealers, or something of that sort. But it was rare when a Vietnamese came into the consulate.

*Q: What was the major work you were doing then?*

HAMILTON: Well, there was no visa work and practically no passport work. Most of the time it was political and economic reporting. There was quite a bit of economic reporting because Indochina was a rich country with a lot of production and export of rice, rubber, metals, and various things of that sort. A lot of political reporting was necessary at that time. It got so heavy and we were so far from Hanoi, the capital, that the Department sent down Charles Reed from Shanghai primarily to do political reporting in Hanoi. He got a room or two, opened a little office in a hotel, and took over much of the political reporting. Normal consular matters he would usually refer to us in Saigon. People visited him but he did not really operate an office for the public, particularly not for consular services.

*Q: When you say political reporting, was this basically about what the Japanese were up to more than anything else?*

HAMILTON: Yes, plus the policies and attitudes of the French and problems with Thailand.

*Q: What was your attitude, and others with you in the consulate there, towards the French, after the fall of France? The British during 1940 were going through the Battle of Britain and it was a very difficult time, and the Vichy French and the British went in and attacked the French navy in Algeria and in Dakar. I'm not talking about our attitude. I'm talking about your attitude and people around you towards the regime in Saigon at that time as this news came out.*

HAMILTON: Personally we were naturally pro-British and Free French. The local government people, of course, could only present one front but not always with much enthusiasm. It was pro-Vichy, and Petain still had the respect of a good many people, even though it turned out he couldn't do much. On the other hand, there was also quite an anti-British feeling. Many felt that the British had let them down. Then there were plenty of the French looking to the U.S., and many were friendly towards it. Others just wanted to wait and see...they were completely taken aback about what had happened, and didn't feel up to much of anything. They were worried about the Japanese coming into the north. Initially they didn't think this would cause problems in the south.

*Q: How did that play out?*

HAMILTON: Well, the Japanese did come down. From behind the scenes, they had good control of things up north by September 1940, and then gradually worked down to the south. They had control there by August of '41, and began landing troops.

An AP correspondent, Relman Morin, tried to trail around the country to find out where all these Japanese soldiers and equipment were going. You could see that they had largely taken over the Saigon airport. This was the only place in the Saigon area where they constructed barracks and kept troops and planes. They also built or improved airfields and barracks in other parts of Cochinchina and Cambodia, took over other buildings and some homes by working through the French, erected small radio stations, and strung telephone and telegraph lines widely.

In November, the Japanese began following us to see where we were going. You'd see them not far behind when you moved about Saigon or out into the countryside.

*Q: Was it still technically French government there?*

HAMILTON: Oh, yes.

*Q: Were the Japanese calling the shots?*

HAMILTON: To a very large extent, yes. When they wanted something they got it. They asked for it, and the French pretty much obliged. Various economic and other agreements were the front for things the Japanese wanted. There was little else the French could do if they wanted to maintain at least nominal control. No help was available from France.

The French were never heavily armed in Indochina. Some 40,000 native troops and workmen had been sent to France after the outbreak of war in Europe, and by the time the Japanese moved into southern Indochina their forces exceeded the French.

*Q: What was the general feeling? Why were the Japanese there? Why were they putting troops in?*

HAMILTON: Well, that was the question. There was some speculation that they had in mind Malaya, now Malaysia, but nobody knew and that really didn't seem likely. Although things were pointing in that direction, people couldn't believe it. In fact, however, that was what it proved to be all about.

*Q: Did we have military attachés down there?*

HAMILTON: No. The nearest military attaché was in Bangkok. He came over once, I don't remember just when, for a few days, probably shortly after the fall of France.

*Q: This would be June of 1940.*

HAMILTON: I think it was soon after. All I remember is that he came for a brief visit. He may have gone on to Hanoi, I'm not sure about that either.

*Q: This is before Japan went to war with us, any problems with our operation, outside of being followed a little?*

HAMILTON: On the whole, no. On Sunday evening, November 23, 1941, however, the Japanese gendarmerie, which was a military police organization, put a bomb against the door of the consulate (which was in an office/apartment building) and blew the consulate apart.

I had an apartment across a little park, about a block away, so I heard the noise. Our American clerk, who lived a floor or two above was badly scared and shaken up. I went over and saw the office was essentially demolished. A lot of smoke and dust were pouring out the door.

In the morning we got in touch with the French who knew all about it by that time. We were able to get some space in the Bank of Indochina on its top floor. We operated there from November 24th to December 8th, when the Japanese took us into custody and stopped all our operations.

*Q: Were the Japanese seen to do this? I mean was this blatant, or was this supposedly done by Vietnamese terrorists? How did this bomb...*

HAMILTON: I know of no witnesses. The French looked into it and told Sidney Browne, the consul, what we all thought, that it was the Japanese gendarmerie who had done it. I don't know how firm the evidence was. We never had any evidence, I don't believe, of any animus among the natives toward us. We thought it quite unlikely that any of them who were operating against the French would have done it. Why the Japanese would have, is hard to say too. It might have tipped their hand. I do not recall that the Department responded to our reports, but it must have even though it would have been very busy.

*Q: Yes, by the time it was absorbed the balloon had gone up. In that part of the world it was December 8th when the Pearl Harbor attack came. What happened with you all?*

HAMILTON: I guess it was about 2:30 in the morning in Saigon that low flying planes awakened me, and soon a Japanese squad (a lieutenant, an interpreter, and several men with fixed bayonets) pounded on my apartment door, and said, "Open up." When I opened up they handed me a mimeographed statement from the Headquarters of the Nippon Army that said we were at war and that I had to stay there until further word.

They did the same with Sidney Browne and the British, although they missed one of the British vice consuls. We were all kept in our quarters until arrangements were made.

The British owned a large residence for their Consul General. The U.S. didn't own any property, and I don't know just how it was arranged that we would all be put into the British residence. But after three or four days later we were moved over there, with our servants and a radio. The AP correspondent, Relman Morin, was also brought in, as well as the head of the British and American Tobacco Company office.

*Q: What did you do? What were you up to?*

HAMILTON: We weren't up to anything. The British Consul General and Sidney Browne negotiated a little bit with the Japanese who said they would put a couple of guards in the front of the house, and they would not go into the rest of the house at all. So our guards sat there in a small room and we organized ways of passing the time; some reading, some

writing, listening to the news which wasn't very encouraging, and often bridge in the evening (which is how I learned to play the game).

*Q: The first six months particularly.*

HAMILTON: One bad military situation after another. But the servants were allowed to go out marketing every day, so we had a good food supply. They could also do the laundry regularly. There were shortages, of course, which affected everyone.

The residence had a fairly large grounds so we could get out and exercise every day. We made a deck tennis court and a miniature golf course.

It was somewhat monotonous, but not too bad a life. You had no responsibilities, nothing you had to do. The AP man, of course, was accustomed to being on the go all the time; so found it very restricting. The rest of us didn't find it quite so bad in that respect. We got along all right together for the most part.

*Q: How big was the Consulate General, or was it a Consulate?*

HAMILTON: For the British it was a Consulate General.

*Q: For us it was a Consulate. How big was the American staff?*

HAMILTON: Americans, just the two of us (officers) and an American clerk.

*Q: So the two of you and the American clerk was a woman. She was also interned too?*

HAMILTON: No, she wasn't. She had to check into the police once a week, but stayed in her apartment. I don't know that it was particularly agreeable, especially going out. People couldn't be too friendly with her. But anyhow, she was on her own. The whole staff of the Consulate was still very small. We had a French clerk, a lady, who kept the accounts, and acted as an administrative officer; an Indian clerk who helped handle the mail room, helped gather data for some reports, and a few other things; a janitor/messenger. That was it.

*Q: How did this play out? You could hear the news, they didn't take your radio away.*

HAMILTON: No, we always had a radio. In fact we had a couple. Well, the Swiss consul was finally put in charge of American interests and became the contact between the Department, the Japanese, and ourselves. I don't know just when that occurred, but it was a while before he was able to get over to see us. Even then what he could say was restricted since the Japanese listened in. He was the outside contact and if we needed money or anything else, we had to get it through him. He could arrange for us to go to a dentist, or a doctor if necessary, accompanied by a guard, which we had to do a few times. All the information regarding the exchange arrangement that came along ultimately, came through him.

*Q: But how did it play out? I mean, how did they get you out? How did you leave?*

HAMILTON: Well, the Japanese finally started two exchange ships, the Asama Maru in Yokohama and the Conte Verde in Shanghai. Passengers were mainly diplomatic personnel, but also many missionaries and some newspaper correspondents. The Asama Maru stopped at Hong Kong before reaching Saigon on July 3rd when we were put aboard. On July 4th we went back down the Saigon River to Cap St. Jacques where those who had been brought over from the Bangkok Legation also boarded. We then went on to Singapore to meet the Conte Verde with its passengers.

*Q: This would be 1942.*

HAMILTON: Yes. We couldn't go ashore and didn't dock in Singapore, but anchored out in the harbor for a day or two, on one of which the Japanese gave a military air display. From Singapore the ship was all lit up and marked. We were routed south through the Sunda Straits, and across the Indian Ocean into Lourenco Marques in Portuguese East Africa, or Mozambique, on July 23rd. We were saluted by sirens, streams of water and cheers from the many ships in the harbor.

The Japanese diplomats from the U.S. had arrived on the Gripsholm the day before and the exchange was made the following day. They left fairly promptly but it was about a week before the Gripsholm was ready to start back. Then it was still a long way around Cape Horn, over to Rio, and then up to New York, staying out of regular shipping lanes as much as possible. We finally sailed into New York harbor past the Statue of Liberty on August 25th.

*Q: What did they do with you? Here you were obviously waiting for another assignment, but we were well into the war by this time. What happened?*

HAMILTON: Well, when I got back here I resigned from the Department and found that although I was hardly an expert on Indochina, most people in Washington were less so. So I started spending half my week on Indochina with what was first the Board of Economic Warfare and then the Foreign Economic Administration, and the other half working also on Indochina in the Pentagon with G-2. Sometime in '44, I went back to the Department as desk officer for the Dominions except Canada in the Division of British Commonwealth Affairs. Soon after the UN conference in San Francisco in 1945 I became an assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs and later moved on to President Truman's Point-4 Program.

*Q: During the time you were dealing with the Indochina back in Washington, were we getting much information out of there? Or how did we find out, because this was deep in the Japanese territory at that time.*

HAMILTON: No, you didn't get an awful lot, but still a fair amount. The 14th Air Force was operating in China out of Kunming, and they could take photographs. People would come up

into the southern China area and the embassy in Chungking picked up information. Mountbatten's command in Ceylon was also a source of information. Of course, OSS got into the picture and there was a good deal of message interception.

*Q: Yes, radio intercepts of traffic.*

HAMILTON: And occasionally the military would get worthwhile information from prisoner interrogation. Now and then individuals would get out so some place where they could provide information, not always accurately, we found.

*Q: What did you do thereafter? In 1944 you say you came to the State Department in Commonwealth Affairs.*

HAMILTON: Yes, British Commonwealth Affairs. I had the Australian, New Zealand, South African, and Ireland desks. Then after Mr. Clayton, Will Clayton, became first the Assistant Secretary and then the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, I became an assistant to him and, when he left, to Willard Thorp.

*Q: Could you tell me a bit about Will Clayton? He's one of the major figures in the Department of State in economic affairs. What was his style of operation as you saw it?*

HAMILTON: Well, he was very hard working, gracious, knowledgeable, considerate, a leader, and one who tried to get into the substance of things thoroughly himself. He'd outline what he wanted to do at regular staff meetings and his office directors would try to do it. For routine matters, he relied first on his Deputy Willard Thorp who would hold the regular staff meetings once or twice a week with the four office directors. The offices were International Trade Policy, Financial and Development Policy, Transport and Communications, and Economic Security Policy. On important problems, Mr. Clayton worked closely with the office directors. He had good relations around the rest of the government. People found him pleasant and easy to work with.

*Q: He was Assistant Secretary, and then became Under Secretary William L. Clayton, and in 1947 he left the State Department.*

HAMILTON: Yes, or in early 1948 after he had helped conceive and start the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program). Then in early 1949 the rest of us helped develop President Truman's Point-4 or Technical Assistance Program and I shifted to it.

*Q: And then you continued as it moved into ICA and AID?*

HAMILTON: It changed names. First it was TCA (Technical Cooperation Administration, within the State Department), then part of FOA (Foreign Operations Administration). When Eisenhower came in, and Stassen took over FOA, they made a study to enable them to put in as many Republicans as possible. This pretty well cleaned out people from the original TCA.

I got a job with Air Force Intelligence, and that later became part of DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency).

*Q: I think with people who were fired when Stassen came in, the term was they were Stassenated. This interview covers the time particularly I wanted to pick up about Saigon which I found very, very interesting. I served in Saigon much later in '69-'70, and it was quite a different ball game. This was to give you an idea. I was Consul General in Saigon and I ranked just in the upper half of the diplomatic list. I don't think I talked to the ambassador more than once or twice. It was a huge embassy.*

HAMILTON: The only other thing I mentioned in that letter I wrote you was fighting between Thailand and Indochina.

As indicated earlier today, the Japanese had established their control of Tonkin by September 1940. In November, military skirmishing broke out between Thai and French frontier forces on the Cambodian border, soon reaching the scale of undeclared war. The apparent immediate source of the situation was a Thai demand, which the French refused, for an adjustment of the frontier, particularly with regard to some islands in the Mekong River. Many people saw a connection between this development and the arrival of the Japanese in Indochina.

Any remaining French reserves were called up and put on the fighting line. At least in southern Indochina, the principal cities were blacked out at night and there was some air activity. Civilians were evacuated from some border towns and the inhabitants of the picturesque Burmese precious stone mining village of Pailin, just within Cambodia, abandoned their homes to return to Burma. It was still deserted when I visited the area in March 1941.

After about two months of relatively heavy military activity between the French and Thai forces in which the Thais were gaining, the Japanese Government offered to mediate. They called a conference aboard a Japanese cruiser at Saigon where an armistice was signed on January 28, 1941.

Under the final peace agreement signed in Tokyo on March 11, 1941 the French ceded to Thailand about one-tenth of the total area of Indochina. This was mostly in Cambodia, and included its richest province of Battambang but excluded the ancient Angkor ruins. I believe Thailand had to give up this territory at the end of World War II.

It was in the midst of the hostilities with Thailand that the internal native disturbances that I mentioned earlier occurred in parts of Cochinchina and to some extent in Tonkin. Their rather severe suppression and sending some of those rounded up to the Poulo Condore penal colony undoubtedly had a correspondingly unfortunate attitude and temper of many Vietnamese.



*Q: I think you're adding some interesting areas that aren't covered; the Thais fighting essentially the French to take over part of Indochina, and also what happened to our Consulate in Saigon. Just to be clear, up in Hanoi, we had a Consulate General up there.*

HAMILTON: Well, all we had was the political officer, Charles S. Reed, who was sent down from Shanghai, plus an American clerk, Iris Johnston. I don't think the British had anybody up there. The Japanese moved Mr. Reed around a good deal under harsher conditions than ours in Saigon. Then on June 18 he was brought to join us.

Mr. Reed had not really operated an office for the public. He was there to report and have direct contact with Admiral Decoux's office. This caused some problems for Miss Johnston. She was at liberty until January 29, 1942, but then the Japanese held her in solitary custody for two months during which she was severely questioned in an apparent effort to learn about Mr. Reed's sources of information. She was then allowed to go to the mountain resort of Da Lat in Annam because of her health, and was brought to join the rest of us in Saigon a few days before the Asama Maru's departure.

*Q: Okay, I want to thank you very much. It has been really very interesting. I appreciate it.*

HAMILTON: You're quite welcome.

#### ADDENDUM FRENCH INDOCHINA

##### Summary of Developments during the First Seven Months of War in the Pacific

Kingsley W. Hamilton  
American Vice Consul

August 4, 1942

#### 1. Outbreak of the War:

The Department has been informed of developments through December 6, 1941. On the morning of December 7 the Japanese military authorities completely closed off the Saigon airport which had hitherto been partially accessible to the public. By the same afternoon very few Japanese vessels were left in port. Between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. December 8 a large formation of Japanese planes flew over the city. Later that morning the inhabitants of the city awoke to find notices posted in French, Chinese, and Annamite indicating that war had broken out between Japan and the United States.

#### 2. Treatment of Consular Officers:

All consular officers, with the exception of a British Vice Consul, were roused from their beds and placed under custody by the Japanese military authorities about 3:00 a.m. December 8. In Saigon they were presented a mimeographed sheet giving the reasons for this action and outlining the conditions of the treatment to be expected. The American Consul had some slight contact with two French policemen stationed before his residence, but was soon cautioned not to speak to them. The American Vice Consul never saw any French official. The acting British Consul General was able to deal through a French liaison officer for about a day. When one of the British Vice Consuls reported to the acting Consul General at his residence about 9:00 a.m. December 8, he was taken into custody.

American consular officers were taken to the temporary quarters of the Consulate for a few minutes on the morning of December 8 while the office was given a preliminary search, their living quarters having been previously searched.

The two American consular officers in Saigon were held in their respective residences until December 11 when they were removed to the British consular residence. Here they remained quite comfortably until July 3, 1942 when they boarded the M.S. ASAMA MARU.

The American Consul in Hanoi was held for a time alone in a room of a building not far from the Hotel Metropole where he had resided. Later he was moved to a house furnished for him by the French Government General but where he was still under Japanese guard. Still later he was removed to the premises of the Standard Vacuum Oil Company in Haiphong; from there to a Japanese military camp on the outskirts of Haiphong; and from there to a private house in Haiphong. He received much harsher treatment than the officers in Saigon. Much of the time he was alone; the rest of the time the British Reuters correspondent was with him. On June 18, 1942 he was also transferred to the British consular residence in Saigon.

The British consular officer in Haiphong was at first confined with his family above the Hong Kong Shanghai Bank, but was soon removed to a small private house where he has remained with other British subjects in Haiphong. The men have been obliged to remain within the premises, but the women have been free to go into the city during the day. The French wife of one of the men actually boards with her family.

### 3. Treatment of American Consular Personnel Other Than Officers.

In Saigon American clerk Miss Carolyn C. Jacobs was not molested. She lived normally in her apartment and reported once weekly to the French police.

In Hanoi American Clerk Miss Iris Johnston was at liberty until January 29. She was then held in solitary custody for about two months when she was allowed to proceed to the hill station of Da Lat in southern Annam for reasons of health. She was subjected to severe questioning apparently with the primary object of obtaining information regarding the sources of information used by Consul Charles S. Reed II.

Other employees of the Consulate in Saigon have not been hampered in their movements. French Clerk Mme. Petra has been re-employed by the Swiss Consul, but other employees are finding it difficult to obtain new positions.

#### 4. Treatment of Other American and British Nationals:

With the following exceptions American and British nationals in Southern Indochina have been at liberty and obliged merely to report to the French police once weekly. They have had to abandon commercial activity but have been able to carry on missionary work.

The exceptions are: (1) The American correspondent of the Associated Press was taken into custody on December 12 and brought to the British consular residence on December 13 to remain until July 3; (2) The British manager of the French Manufactures Indochinoises des Cigarettes, an employee of the British and American Tobacco Company, was held with the American Consul from the first; (3) All officers of the British banks in Saigon were held from December 8 to December 31; (4) The Canadian representative of the Singer Sewing Machine Company was held in jail under harsh treatment for 59 days from January 29; (5) A British accountant of the Standard Vacuum Oil Company was similarly held for about 68 days; (6) A British employee of the firm until recently known as Dreyfus and Cie. was similarly held; (7) A Filipino no longer entitled to the protection of the United States while abroad was held for a month and then turned over to the French on a charge of illegal possession of firearms. The object of the treatment given the three British subjects, as well as one Dutch subject not mentioned above, was to obtain information regarding the affairs of their firms and to break their spirit so that they would consent to work for the Japanese as one or two are now reported to be doing.

In northern Indochina the treatment given American and British nationals differed only in the fact that men have not been at liberty at all while women have been able to go shopping, et cetera during the day. A naturalized Philippine citizen of Swiss-American origin by the name of Corvissiano was picked up by the Japanese on January 29 and apparently held in much the same manner as those taken into custody in southern Indochina at that time. The British Reuters correspondent has been held from the first, part of the time alone, part of the time with the American Consul, and latterly with the other British in Haiphong.

#### 5. Treatment of Chinese:

The Chinese Consul at Saigon, who had remained closely sheltered in a villa at the hill station of Da Lat for some time prior to the outbreak of war, is reported so far to have eluded the Japanese together with his subordinate officers. However, it is not positively known whether he managed to escape the country and, accordingly, the Japanese are holding three of the local clerks in jail until they give information regarding the consul's whereabouts. The treatment given these men is so severe that it is not believed they can long survive.

Other Chinese in Cholon (Saigon) are also harshly treated. They are picked up indiscriminately, imprisoned, and tortured until they consent to report weekly on anti-Japanese activities.

#### 6. Treatment of Consular Establishments:

The American Consul in Saigon refused to open the consular safes, but on December 12 or 13 the Japanese Gendarmerie delivered to the consular officers their personal belongings which had been in the safes. Evidently the safes were forced open and the Japanese obtained the Brown and Grey codes, readings and copies of all telegrams, blank passports, and all confidential matter.

The Japanese always pretended to know nothing of any other regular office of the Consulate. Accordingly, the only other archives which they seem to have obtained were the current files. All other archives and most of the furniture were still in the office damaged by the bomb explosion on November 23. The Consulate's French clerk, Mme. Paulette Petra, managed to remove these to her home in the first day or two following the outbreak of war and is believed still to have them in her possession.

The Japanese also obtained consular files in Hanoi. The safe has been returned to the Swiss consular agent in Haiphong, but is believed to have been previously opened.

The British Consulate General in Saigon was taken over by the Japanese naval rather than military authorities. British officers have never been taken back to the office and do not know what action has been taken with regard to it. Since the British Vice Consul in Haiphong is an employee of the Chartered Bank, it is presumed that any documents he had were taken over with those of the bank.

#### 7. Political and Military Developments:

A further Franco-Japanese agreement was signed on December 9, 1941, but its contents are not known. Somewhat later the Vichy Government appointed Governor General Jean Decoux as High Commissioner for all French possessions in the Pacific.

It is reliably reported that the French cruiser Lamotte Picquet has remained continually in French waters. The sloop Amiral Charner has probably so remained. Nothing is known regarding the movements of the single French submarine which was in Indochina and under repair on December 8 except that it has been repaired and was in Saigon on July 3.

It is reliably reported that much of the Japanese air offensive against the Allies in the early weeks of the Pacific war was directed from Indochina. The planes which bombed Manila are understood to have left from Nha Trang just north of Camranh Bay in Annam and those which bombed Singapore from Baclieu and Soctrang just south of the mouth of the Mekong in Cochinchina. In the early days of the war damaged planes were frequently seen to return to these points, often to crash before landing.

Most of the active planes have now left the Saigon area for unknown destinations, but there is every reason to believe that Saigon itself is being used as a repair base not only for planes but also for trucks and other mechanized equipment. It is definitely known, for instance, that the foundry belonging to the French firm of Faci (Forges, Ateliers, Chartiers Indochinois) and located about 300 yards up the Arroyo Chinois from the Saigon River is straightening propeller blades for the Japanese.

The Japanese have completed the 60 kilometers of railway between Mongkol Borey in the province of Battambang, formerly in Cambodia, and the Thai city of Muong Aran Pradhet thus linking Phnom Penh with Singapore by rail. They are now reported to be bringing their supplies and troops down the Chinese coast by vessel and through the channel between Hainan Island and the mainland to Haiphong. From Haiphong transportation is by rail to Saigon, by truck from Saigon to Phnom Penh, and by rail from Phnom Penh to points beyond in Thailand or Malaya. Thus the hazardous voyage down the Indochinese coast and across the Gulf of Siam is avoided.

It is probably because of this increased traffic that express shipments have been suspended on the Saigon-Hanoi-Haiphong railroad. The extra wear on equipment which cannot be replaced is also probably responsible for the increased number of wrecks which are occurring on the Indochinese railways.

It was reported on July 3 that the Japanese plan to move most of their troops from Indochina to other fronts, leaving only a police force of about 6,000 men. This would ameliorate conditions for the French considerably, but would not necessarily affect the transit of supplies through Indochina. Accordingly, the railway, which is extremely vulnerable at several points, particularly where it runs with the highway, would remain a worthwhile bombing objective. (1)

A Canadian artillery unit of about 1,000 men from Singapore, as well as Australian and Indian troops, has been in Saigon for some time as prisoners of war. The men are employed on the docks, in general throughout the port area, and at the airport. Their quarters except those of the Indians are in the port area about 200 yards from the river. Six have died; two have tried to escape -- with what results is not known. Their food is believed to be poor. A considerable group outside is working secretly to ameliorate their conditions. In this the Annamites took the initiative under the leadership of Dr. and Mrs. Tranh van Doc, 16 Boulevard de la Somme, Saigon, but there are also French working through several men in the Surete and Mme. Gaillard, the Vogue Dress Shop, Rue Catinat, Saigon. The Indians are quartered at Nhabe on the Soirap River 15 kilometers south of Saigon.

Practically all French merchant shipping has been taken over by the Japanese and now flies the Japanese flag. Most of the vessels have left Saigon and some are reported to have been damaged already. Efforts are being made by the Government General to locate the 850 men from their crews in shore positions in Indochina.

Allied submarines appear to be effective off the Indochinese coast, for the French now consider Saigon a dangerous port from which to sail.

The Allied bombings of the Hanoi airport are reported to have done considerable damage in spite of the offhand manner in which they were treated by the French press. At least one American pilot by the name of Bishop from California is now interned at Saigon.

Japanese participation in the administrative affairs of Indochina has increased since the beginning of the war. They censor the postal and telegraph services, using a French stamp, and listen to telephone conversations. On one occasion they even arrested the Director of Posts and Telegraphs and held him a few hours because one of his subordinates had interfered with one of their own telegraph lines. Later the director was replaced.

The Japanese seem particularly anxious to take over the administration of justice. To prevent their having any excuse for doing so the French are becoming increasingly severe in law enforcement, generally convicting and inflicting heavy penalties, particularly on Europeans.

There is good reason to believe that the Japanese are compiling evidence for a "White Book" or some such document to be issued in justification of their action when they are ready openly to take over the administration of Indochina. The basis of this book is apparently to be an exposure of French morals; for, in the questioning to which they have subjected many persons this has been one of the principal points on which they have endeavored to obtain statements.

It also appears that the Japanese may be trying to gain influence with certain sections of the population by selling them drugs in much the same manner they adopted in North China. The French opium monopoly is short of opium and the Japanese have brought some heroin and cocaine into the country. The French are reported to have increased the area devoted to poppy cultivation in Laos, but the crop is not yet ready. In this connection it is also reliably reported that opium smoking has increased greatly in Hanoi since the outbreak of war, particularly among the women who have lost hope of returning to France.

## 8. Economic Developments

Economic conditions in French Indochina have steadily deteriorated since December 8, 1941. Business activity is negligible. Supplies of all imported products are extremely low or have already been exhausted. What remains is generally strictly rationed. Wheat flour was exhausted within a few weeks after the outbreak of war; butter and margarine can no longer be purchased except occasionally on the black market; potatoes are a rarity; medical supplies are very low; wines are exhausted and liquors practically so; chemicals for the manufacture of matches are deficient; lubricating oils have to be cleaned and re-cleaned because fresh oil is lacking; iron and steel for construction purposes can scarcely be had; and machinery is not obtainable. Even supplies of some domestic products such as fruit, charcoal, fish, and vegetables are inadequate, primarily because they are bought up by the Japanese. Milk supplies are exceedingly low. What canned milk remains is reserved solely for infants and

the sick. All fresh milk in the Saigon area is now being pasteurized for the same purposes, but it is doubtful whether it will be adequate for the need.

Although the Government General endeavors to prevent profiteering and to control prices, it does not try to maintain prices at any given point. Accordingly, both prices and the cost of living have greatly increased since December 8, 1941.

The Government General has also intensified its efforts, begun some time ago, to encourage the development of substitutes for deficient commodities. Thus, a relatively satisfactory flour is now made from a mixture of 70 percent rice and 30 percent maize flour. The production of oil from peanuts, castor beans, coconuts, fish, and millions of rats caught in the rice fields has greatly increased and is used for illumination, other household purposes, and industrial fuel. Soya bean milk, certain toilet articles such as powder, and food side-lines such as jams and jellies and some alcoholic beverages are also being produced. The production of industrial alcohol, principally from rice, for motor fuel has been further increased, but it is now being mixed with 10 percent water according to the Swiss Consul in Saigon. This has probably become necessary because the Japanese are known to be using alcohol and charcoal in some of their trucks.

The Government General has also established an agricultural credit society organized on a sectional basis to foster the production of various crops in different regions throughout the country, to lend money for this purpose, and to purchase the resulting output.

Even fewer supplies than before the war are arriving from Japan, although the higher prices keep goods in the stores longer. Some shipments reported to have left Japan have never arrived, and one cargo of milk is said definitely to have been sunk.

The 1941-1942 rice crop is reported to have been good and the maize crop poor. Further details are not available, but a good rice crop is one which would provide about 1.5 million tons for export after domestic consumption had been provided for in all the territory formerly belonging to Indochina. Without the Cambodian province of Battambang ceded to Thailand in 1941 a good exportable surplus would be about 150,000 tons less. All rice exports are going to Japan, or Japanese occupied areas. It seems probable that much of it goes by rail to Haiphong and only from there by the empty vessels which have brought military supplies.

It is understood that most of the rubber is being stored for the time being.

The financial position of the Government General of Indochina probably deteriorated further during the first seven months of the war, but may not be as bad as might at first be supposed. On the one hand charges incurred on behalf of the Japanese army continued; revenue from import and export duties was low and, as from July 1, the Government General assumed the payment to landlords of the rent due on premises which had been requisitioned and which continue to be requisitioned for the Japanese and on which the Japanese seldom pay more than a month's rent. On the other hand large sums of money normally sent to France, particularly by business firms, have remained in Indochina; payments due abroad for imports

are negligible; and taxes have been increased either through raising the rates, lowering the exemptions, or both.

#### 9. Axis Propaganda:

Two types of propaganda are being conducted in Indochina; the Japanese in favor of themselves and co-property for all Asiatics in a greater Asia, and the French in behalf of French administration in general and the Vichy government in particular.

The Japanese propaganda consists principally in showing Japanese motion pictures, news reels of the war, and educational films; staging exhibitions of Japanese art, particularly painting; bringing dramatic and other artists from Japan; distributing pamphlets and other literature; and publishing a large illustrated weekly newspaper. The Japanese also allow nothing derogatory of themselves or especially favorable to the Allies to appear in the French or vernacular press or to go over the radio. The French press, in fact, features Domei despatches and for the most part prints its selected Allied despatches in the final page. It is doubtful whether this Japanese propaganda is effective.

French propaganda features motion picture films and the publication in various forms of material on the achievements of France in Indochina. A fair which served this purpose was held in Hanoi in December 1941 and another is to be held in Saigon in December of this year. Every effort is being made to make the natives believe that the French still control the country, while social and other functions are staged to convince the natives of the French interest in them and of the cordial relations which have existed between the two peoples.

French propaganda is directed both towards the natives and toward the French and, in accordance with the Nazi-Vichy stress on youth, special emphasis is being laid on youth organizations and the value of sports for both the French and native young people. Numerous youth demonstrations and sporting spectacles have been staged. Summer camps are being developed, a youth code has been drawn up, uniforms designed, and the responsibilities of youth stressed. The immediate response to this type of propaganda is strong, particularly among the natives who love spectacles, but how effective it will actually prove to be cannot yet be told.

Pictures, posters, quotations from, and laudatory statements regarding Marshal Petain are to be found everywhere. The French Legion, composed principally of small business men, clerks, mechanics, and low salaried government employees, is striving ever harder to set itself up as the leader of French life and chief interpreter of the Vichy code. The press and radio are extremely critical of the democracies and frequently violently anti-Ally, yet they seldom are positively pro-Axis.

It is doubtful whether French propaganda has been very effective except in its anti-British aspects, which have featured it since June 1940, and in the immediate response to its youth program.



#### 10. Attitude of the French and Annamites:

So far as is known the Government General never made any attempt, at least in southern Indochina, to assist or communicate with American consular officers after the outbreak of war, although on March 23 the Japanese Consul called because, he said, the Governor General wished information regarding the welfare of consular officers and the conditions of their internment.

There were always two policemen, usually Annamite, stationed opposite the house in which the consular officers were interned, but their object appeared to be more to note those who made friendly signs to the internees or attempted to communicate with them than to guard them in any way. On one occasion in particular the Consulate's French clerk, Mme. Petra, came to the fence, and the next day, when she was out, the French police questioned her two young daughters in an effort to ascertain why she had called.

In this connection there is now reported to be an extensive Gestapo organization in Indochina particularly designed to detect those who express pro-Allied sentiments. Persons have on occasion been reported by their servants, and even in small private gatherings people are extremely careful in expressing opinions. In the early days of the war friends of British and American citizens were generally careful not to show undue friendliness or interest in their fate for fear of the possible consequences and, since that time, the French authorities have let it be known that it was not advisable to be seen in the vicinity of the British consular residence.

Nevertheless, British and American consular officers never observed any signs of hostility among the many persons who passed the house daily, nor on the several occasions when sporting or other events brought considerable crowds before the house. A competent observer who had had an opportunity to question many people since the outbreak of war has reached the conclusion that the French in Indochina may be divided into four groups: (1) 20 percent who are totally pro-Ally, (2) 20 percent who are pro-American but anti-British, (3) 20 percent who are totally indifferent as long as their own immediate welfare is not in question, and (4) 40 percent who are pro-Petain and the majority of whom are wholly pro-Axis. The pro-Ally group is predominantly commercial and the pro-Axis group predominantly governmental.

The majority of the native population is undoubtedly indifferent to the political aspects of the present struggle. Nevertheless, there is an appreciable group of upper class Annamites, particularly those who had relatives working for British or American interests -- some of whom have been interned by the Japanese because of "disloyalty" -- which is strongly anti-Japanese. There is also a lower class group which is anti-Japanese because the Japanese have made it difficult for them to obtain their normal articles of food and because the Japanese treat hired labor harshly and pay poorly.

\* \* \* \* \*

(1) In this connection the following data is given regarding the most vulnerable points on the railway and highway between Haiphong and Saigon, proceeding from Haiphong to Hanoi and south to Saigon: leaving Haiphong there is one railway bridge and one small highway bridge. About 15 kilometers east of Haiphong, there is an important combined railway and highway bridge. Entering Hanoi there is an important railway and highway bridge which is 1.7 kilometers long. South of Hanoi there is a small but important railway and highway bridge 6 kilometers north of Thanh-Hoa. Immediately south of Vinh (at Benthuy) there is a large railway bridge where road traffic uses a ferry. A few kilometers south of Dong Hoi there is a railway bridge where road traffic again uses a ferry. Just north of Quang Tri there is an important railway and highway bridge. At Hue there is a railway bridge slightly west of the city and a highway bridge in it. At the Col des Nuages about 65 kilometers south of Hue the railway and highway run together along the cliffs, the railway under the highway in about three tunnels. At Quang Ngai there is one railway and one highway bridge. At Cap Varella the railway and highway run along the cliffs, the railway below the highway in the Baxbonneau tunnel. This is perhaps the most vulnerable spot in the whole line, since repair would probably be the most troublesome. It was the last section of the railway to be built and caused the French the greatest difficulty. One and a half kilometers south of Tyhoa and 128.5 kilometers north of Nha Trang a steel railway bridge runs close beside a concrete highway bridge. Each has long spans and both would be vulnerable to a single powerful bomb. Between Bien Hoa and Saigon about 5 kilometers south of Bien Hoa are two important combined railway and highway bridges about half a mile apart.

On the highway between Saigon and Phnom Penh there is one concrete bridge about 120 meters long about 85 kilometers west of Saigon and another similar bridge about five kilometers east of Phnom Penh.

Other possible bombing objectives outside of Haiphong, Hanoi, and Saigon are: a distillery 10 kilometers south of Hanoi on the Mandarin Road to Nam Dinh; a distillery near the railway and highway bridge at Than Hoa, and the railroad yards at Vinh which is more important than Saigon as a repair center.

*End of interview*