

**APPENDIX B**

**Transcript for tapes # 30-31**

## TAPE RECORDING

VOICE: Hank Miller

SCRIPT: Ed Lansdale

EDITOR: Hank Miller

LABEL:

**IN THE MIDST OF WAR**  
**Folk Music, Viet Nam, 1965-1967**  
**A Report by SLO, American Embassy, Viet Nam**

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This is a report from Viet Nam. The year is 1967. I am one of a small group of Americans who staff the Senior Liaison Office of the United States Embassy in Saigon. During the past 18 months, it has been our privilege to have shared our feelings, our beliefs, our lives with many others. Americans, Vietnamese, Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese, Australians. The free people of the world who have been comrades here.

One of our deep interests here has been in the folk music of this time and place. As friends gathered with us in off-duty hours at the house where a number of us live, on Cong Ly Street in Saigon, there often has been music. At times, there have been the old, familiar songs, with a group joining in. At other times, there have been new songs -- just composed and being voiced for the first time among friends. Or, songs expressing the mood of men in combat, villagers, can bo, youth -- the commentary of the day by people in a war. On many of these occasions, a tape recorder captured the moment as it happened.

In 18 months, there have been many tapes. The songs they record are part of the history of a long, long war -- and, unexpectedly, we realize now that all along we have been historians without meaning to be -- that these tapes tell the story of a human side of war that should be told. So, we have re-run the tapes, put the songs into the time period in which they belong, and share them with you, now.

The first song is the one we remembered best, from previous tours of duty in Viet Nam. It was with us in our hearts when we were called back by Ambassador Lodge, to serve again. Pham Duy had written it in 1946, to arouse the youth of Viet Nam. It is a part of the Viet Nam we knew. Our friend, Pham Duy, sang it for us this way at the house to welcome our return to Viet Nam.

**MUSIC: YOUTH SONG -- Pham Duy**

When we arrived in Viet Nam in late August, 1965, the government of Nguyen cao Ky had just been established in power, backed by the Armed Forces of Viet Nam. American combat forces were newly arrived, to help in the fight. Folk music, though, still reflected the uncertainties of the months just past, of coups overthrowing governments, of an upsurge of savage attacks by the VC.

To fill what he felt was the people's hunger for something of the spirit in this period, the Vietnamese composer -- Pham Duy -- had been writing "heart songs." Pham Duy is one of those rare geniuses whose music becomes close to a people in an hour of need. We Americans had Irving Berlin and Stephen Foster. The Vietnamese have Pham Duy. One of the hauntingly beautiful "heart songs" by him, in 1965, was "Rain on the Leaves." We first heard Pham Duy singing it to Vietnamese troops. He was dressed in the black pajamas worn by village farmers. After his solo performance, a small choral group joined in with him. They also wore the villager's black pajamas. One of them was an American -- our noted folk singer -- Steve Addis. When Addis and Pham Duy sang a chorus in Vietnamese, as a duet, the Vietnamese troops went wild. One commented enthusiastically: "That one American, Addis, is worth -- yes, he's worth a battalion of Marines!"

Here are Pham Duy and Steve Addis in "Rain on the Leaves."

**MUSIC: RAIN ON THE LEAVES -- Pham Duy and Steve Addis**

Another of the "heart songs" by Pham Duy expresses the deep feelings of the people in early 1965. Pham Duy and Steve Addis sang it for us.

**MUSIC: WOUNDED SOLDIER -- Pham Duy and Steve Addis**

In the United States, the Special Forces soldier, Barry Sadler, was making a hit with recordings of his folk songs about the Green Berets, "I'm a Lucky One," "Ba Moui Ba," and others that spoke out the feelings of many of the Americans in Viet Nam in the Winter of 1964 to the Spring of 1965. More irreverent songs were being sung, though, in the camps and towns of Viet Nam, when Americans gathered. Their ribaldry was an American response to the low ebb of that time. Jim Bullington recalled a number of these songs from his service in Hue and sang them for us. Here are some, with Jim Bullington.

MUSIC: SONGS OF HUE -- A. TAI SAO  
B. PERFUME RIVER  
C. BRAVE BOYS -- Jim Bullington

A new spirit was in the air in Viet Nam, though, as Summer turned to Fall in 1965. In early September, some of us visited a camp of college students in Gia Dinh, where they were building housing for a large group of refugees who had come from Central Viet Nam. Fall classes would start soon. The students were rushing against the clock to get their voluntary task done, working day and night to exhaustion. Yet, when we were with them, a sweaty, dirty, tired working crew started on a new building -- and broke into song. It was picked up by other crews in the camp, until hundreds upon hundreds of voices had joined in. The song's refrain, "Viet Nam, Viet Nam," was a pledged cry of young Vietnamese to the future of their country. It brought little "goose bumps" to those of us who heard it that day, in that place. We were to hear it many times again, among troops, among the can bo or cadre, in the villages, even by a massed choir in September, 1966, who sang it in jubilation as the election returns for the Constituent Assembly were announced -- and it became clear that here was something new, moving, forceful, expressing itself. Pham Duy and his friends have sung this song many times, with us. This is how they sang it one evening. It's from Pham Duy's tone poem, "Mother Viet Nam."

MUSIC: VIET NAM, VIET NAM -- Pham Duy and Villagers

In much this same spirit, one evening in the Fall of 1965 at the house, Bernie Yoh played the song he wrote to express the resistance of the villagers of Binh Hung, in Camau, under the leadership of Father Hoa, to Communist terrorism and beguilement. Bernie Yoh is an accomplished musician. He picked up a mandolin. Pham Duy, who was there, picked up a guitar. This is their heartfelt, musical tribute to the people of Binh Hung, whom we had just been discussing.

MUSIC: MUSICAL TRIBUTE TO VILLAGE OF BINH HUNG ("THE VILLAGE THAT REFUSED TO DIE") -- Bernie Yoh

Several nights later, the Viet Cong declared the start of "Hate America Month" and boasted that their terrorists would bomb any gathering of Americans. So, we had a gathering of Americans at the house, with Ambassador Lodge and other friends, singing the old songs and some new ones of our own, about ourselves. We didn't get blown up. But, we did share something with each other, as Americans do so far from home. Perhaps you have done the same, and can understand this moment in the Fall of 1965 in Saigon, as a little group of Americans followed the lead of

Colonel Sam Wilson, his voice and his guitar, in this song.

**MUSIC: WHIFFENPOOF SONG -- Sam Wilson and Friends**

At this same time, some of the enemy, the Vietnamese with the Communist controlled Viet Cong, were making the hardest decision a man must make: what is my reason for being alive, a man? What should I do with this life? They were making the decision in our favor, that man is endowed by our Creator with "certain inalienable rights," an individual, not the cipher man of the Masses in a Communist State, but man -- as you or I -- with our true heritage. Among these Vietnamese who "voted with their feet," who decided what they really were and fled from the Communists, was a young man named Che Linh. A "Hoi Chanh." A VC enemy who changed his heart and joined with us, under the "Chieu Hoi" -- the "Open Arms" program. One evening at the house, he opened his heart to us in song. It was his identification with the villagers of Viet Nam, as the sun goes down. If you had heard him in New Orleans, in a dive on Bourbon Street, you would have called this "gut-bucket" blues. But this is Che Linh, a former enemy, singing of a Vietnamese sunset, in Saigon, in 1965.

**MUSIC: SUNSET -- Che Linh**

Our liaison group worked closely with Vietnamese involved in the pacification campaign. We became good friends with Nguyen Tat Ung, Minister of Xay Dung Nong Thon -- which was first translated as "Rural Reconstruction" or "Rural Construction," and later as "Revolutionary Development." Minister Ung was killed in a plane crash, along with Jerry Rose and other friends. General Nguyen Duc Thang was appointed to head this Ministry and we started to become acquainted with him. General Thang joined us for dinner, Thanksgiving Day, 1965. Among others with us was Pham Duy. As a boy, growing up in North Viet Nam, General Thang had sung many of Pham Duy's early songs for fighting men, youth, and villagers supplying the troops. He wanted Pham Duy to write new songs, to inspire the villagers, can bo, and troops in the pacification campaign -- a request that Pham Duy fulfilled richly later on. But, that Thanksgiving evening, the two of them reminisced about the old guerrilla days in the North, the songs Pham Duy had written then. Here are three -- a Guerrilla March recalled by Thang, "Winter for the Fighting Men," and "Villagers Carrying Paddy to the Soldiers."

**MUSIC: REMINISCENCES --**

- A. GUERRILLA MARCH -- General Thang and Pham Duy
- B. WINTER FOR THE FIGHTING MAN -- Pham Duy
- C. CARRYING THE PADDY FOR THE SOLDIERS -- Pham Duy

As Christmas, 1955 neared, there were other gatherings at the house. Filipinos from ECCOI -- Eastern Construction Company -- who had come to Viet Nam ten years before, in 1955, as members of the Freedom Company of the Philippines and had served with some of us then, celebrated the election of their leader -- Frisco Johnny San Juan -- the the Philippine Congress. Johnny had arrived to spend Christmas in Saigon. He and others had been Hunters ROTC Guerrillas during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II. We asked them to dig back in their memories 24 years for their early songs as guerrillas. This is one of them.

MUSIC: HUNTER ROTC IS THE NAME -- Johnny San Juan and Guerrillas

Also, among the friends who gathered with us, were Pham quoc Buu and others, from the Vietnamese Confederation of Labor. Revolutionaries from two decades before, often frustrated in the past, but filled with hope from the new spirit in the land, and as a token of affection for our comradeship with the Lien Minh and Trinh minh Tho when he was alive, they sang one of their marching songs for us, just before Christmas, 1955.

MUSIC: CVT MARCHING SONG

And, just to give you a small taste of the comradeship among many people, here is an impromptu moment with U.S. Air Force sergeant Roger Hopkins, our Chinese comrade Bernie Yoh, and our Vietnamese friends Pham Duy, Thuy Hoan, and Phuong Oanh getting acquainted with each other through their guitars, mandolins, and Vietnamese zither.

MUSIC: ROSE, ROSE, I LOVE YOU

Unknown to most of us at the time, among the American troops heading for Viet Nam, was 1st Lt. Hershel Gober, of the U.S. Infantry. He had served in Germany with one of us. Later, we all came to know him well and admire his tremendous musical talent. But, at this moment, he was composing his first song about the war in Viet Nam. This is how he sang it for us much later at the house, with the Black Patches, and when he had been promoted to Captain. It catches the spirit of the American troops heading for Viet Nam in late '55 and early '56.

MUSIC: GOODBYE TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE --

Captain Hershel Gober and Black Patches



About the same time, Pham Duy was translating some old American favorites into Vietnamese and singing them to the people in the countryside, where these songs were big hits. Here are two of them, from informal gatherings with us at the house.

MUSIC: U.S. FOLK SONGS --

- A. CLEMENTINE -- Pham Duy, Gober, Villagers
- B. RED RIVER VALLEY -- Sam Wilson and Villagers

In the early months of 1963, along with thousands of other young Americans in Viet Nam, Hershel Gober was reflecting on how far away from home he was and on the war that now was his daily business. He was stationed in Rach Gia, in the far South of Viet Nam, the Delta region, IV Corps. He was a Sub-sector advisor, one of MACV's infantrymen who worked with the Vietnamese fighting men on the battleground among the villages and people of the countryside. Loneliness, wry humor, and sadness came from his guitar as Gober put his feelings into song. Here are three of the songs he wrote then.

MUSIC: CAPT. GOBER SINGS -- A. HERE AM I  
B. ADVISORY TEAM 54  
C. TROPIC RAIN

One Saturday evening, early in 1963, Pham Duy stopped by for a visit, to tell us about his tour of the United States. He had just returned. One of the songs he had heard in the States had touched him deeply, with its statement of human purpose in a time of struggle. The song was "We Shall Overcome." Pham Duy showed us his musical note-book, in which he was translating this song into Vietnamese, fitting a tonal language to the notes of this musical score from another land. The refrain, in Vietnamese, was changed to "We Shall Win the War." He tried it out, with voice and guitar. We recorded it that night. The next morning, Sunday, Pham Duy met with a group of Vietnamese university students and taught them the song. This session also was recorded. Here is the birth of the Vietnamese verse on Saturday night, and the song again the next morning, with the students.

MUSIC: WE SHALL OVERCOME -- A. Pham Duy  
B. Students

Pham Duy also composed a new song for the Revolutionary Development Cadre, inspired by a visit to the Vung Tau Training Center, where he talked with many of the 5,000 trainees as they readied themselves for the hard duties and risks of service in the hamlets. His new cadre song was a companion to his earlier "The Enemy is No Man -- we must defeat

the enemy within each of us -- become pure of spirit -- before we can defeat the enemy without." This earlier song was a favorite of the cadre. The new cadre song and the earlier one were sung for us by Pham Duy.

MUSIC: PHAM DUY -- A. 1933 RD CADRE SONG  
B. THE ENEMY IS NO MAN

Lt. Hershel Gober about this time got his first week-end pass from the battleground in the Delta and visited the big city, Saigon. Troops in town asked him to sing for them. He wrote a song just for them and sang it. Called "The Saigon Warrior," it soon gained wide fame in Viet Nam. Some months later, when President Johnson visited the base at Cam Ranh Bay, General Westmoreland had the soldier group known as the Black Patches play for the President while he was going through the mess line. They dutifully played "The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You" for the President from Texas. Then, with big grins, they broke into "The Saigon Warrior," delighting the troops. Here is Gober's local song of a wartime capital.

MUSIC: SAIGON WARRIOR -- Hershel Gober

Allied forces other than the Americans were arriving in Viet Nam. Australians. Koreans. Filipinos. The 8th Royal Australian Regiment got into a scrap with the VC in Long Khanh and suffered their first casualties. The news made headlines at home in Australia. In Viet Nam, one of the Australian troopers sat in camp and put down in verse just how the fight at Long Khanh had gone. Weeks later, Hershel Gober visited the Australian troops, read the poem, and then sang it for them. They demanded encore after encore. Here is Gober in "The Battle of Long Khanh."

MUSIC: THE BATTLE OF LONG KHANH -- Capt. Gober

Pham Duy had special treats for the troops from Korea and from the Philippines. They were songs from home, songs they hadn't expected to hear from a Vietnamese musician. Here is the Korean "Arirang," followed by "Magtanim hindi biro -- Planting Rice," from the Philippines. Pham Duy translated the latter into Vietnamese. One day, Philippine soldiers heard him singing the Vietnamese version and said, "Why, we have a song at home just like that!" The songs:

MUSIC: ALLIES FOLK SONGS -- A. ARIRANG -- Steve Addis & Pham Duy  
E. PLANTING RICE -- Addis and Pham Duy



Hershel Gober was promoted to Captain. He continued serving in the Delta, far from the scenes of major American troop commitments and actions in Viet Nam. He listened to recordings of "The Green Berets" on AFRS radio -- and responded with his own commentary in "I'm Just a Dog-Faced Soldier." As do many soldiers, he pondered on why he was serving his country at risk of his life, and wrote for his family the simply-stated, moving song, "I'm Proud to be an American." And, encountering the USAID distribution of bulgar wheat in a rice subsistence nation -- "USAID" stands for "U.S. Agency for International Development" -- Gober's funny-bone was suddenly tickled into a brief comment. Here is Hershel Gober singing his "Dog-Faced Soldier," "Proud to be an American," and "Bulgar Wheat."

MUSIC: CAPT. GOBER SINGS -- A. DOG-FACED SOLDIER  
B. PROUD AMERICAN  
C. BULGAR WHEAT

The mood of the people was changing in Viet Nam as 1963 moved on towards September. As Communists attempts at conventional large unit attacks ended in bloody chaos for them, as the Vietnamese Government emerged firmly in position after a wildly emotional challenge by the opportunistic Struggle Movement of the late Spring and early Summer -- and as preparations went forward to hold elections for delegates to a Constituent Assembly -- the hopes of the people rose. Change for the better was in the air. In Saigon, the popular songs marked the change almost rowdily. One of the new ones was Pham Duy's "Suc May Ma Buon," a challenging, slangy "Why Be Sad?"

MUSIC: SUC MAY MA BUON (WHY BE SAD) -- Pham Duy

Americans have much to learn about the elements of a "peoples' war," as fought by Asian Communists. At its heart, along with the applied behavioral psychology adopted from Pavlov, is the organizing of a disciplined political structure based upon easily-grasped maxims. After 20 years of war, the Vietnamese people had gained a deeply instinctive grasp of the truth, of the facts of life. The Communist words -- even the words and material aid of our side -- had become mere "gimmicks." Deeds, performed in the right spirit, were more important than slogans or merchandise. The Vietnamese elections of September, 1963 became one of these important deeds, due to the spirit of honesty and desire to give the electorate a free choice in which they were carried out. The Communists moved in as spoilers, but were blocked. Over 80% of the electorate voted, freely, in secret balloting, despite VC terrorism, despite rumors of selfish interference. It was a large pledge to something better

in the future, a true way of waging "peoples' war" as free people know it. Whatever may happen in Viet Nam, this was a fine hour for the leaders then. They knew they had done the right thing. They were happy. Some of this was expressed in gatherings with American friends, at intimate post-election parties. Here are moments from then.

The songs are "Gui Gio Cho May Ngan Day," a Vietnamese Air Force song likening the high cloud formations to white snow. The singer is Lt. Dinh, who flew co-pilot with Air Marshal Ky on the first missions into North Viet Nam in the war. Then Nguyen Cao Ky, who was Prime Minister but relaxing in happiness among friends, joined Pham Cui in two sentimental Vietnamese ballads. Here are the three songs from this moment in September, 1966.

MUSIC: A. GUI GIO GHU -- Lt. Dinh  
B. TIEN EN -- PM Ky  
C. TOI CO -- PM Ky

In this period, also, Captain Hershel Gober wrote two musical tributes to the Vietnamese fighting men with whom he served in the Delta. The local militia. The men in the Popular Forces. Initially, like most Americans, he was reticent to show the deep feelings he had for his comrades among the Vietnamese. He played these songs for us, in the privacy of being among friends. We urged him, one evening in the Fall of 1966, to sing them for some of the Vietnamese leaders in the country's Directorate. He did. As he sang, tears came to their eyes as they heard an American express such bonds of affection and comradeship with the Vietnamese, and they wrung his hand, unable to speak, moved. Gober had spoken to us of his own personal feelings, privately. Here are recordings, of a man speaking and singing of what's in his heart.

MUSIC: CAPT. GOBER -- A. PICTURE OF A MAN  
B. LOOK OVER MY SHOULDER

Toward the close of 1966, many Vietnamese and Americans were busy with plans and preparations for the 1967 campaign of winning back the countryside from the VC, with the program called "Revolutionary Development." The military were taking a larger share of the work-load, to support it, than was possible in past months. Thousands of young men and women from the country, wearing the black pajamas of the Vietnamese villagers, were being trained as Revolutionary Development Cadre at the Vung Tau Training Center. Teams of public health, agriculture, public works, and other technical service workers were being re-oriented for follow-up duty in the villages and hamlets. Pham Cui lived with Revolutionary

Development Cadre Groups for several days, singing his songs of the country, getting inspiration for new songs. One of the songs he sang was the stark, declarative "I Must Kill One Man" -- the statement of a villager making his choice between the appeals of the Communists and of the Free World. Here it is.

**MUSIC: ON BEHALF (I MUST KILL ONE MAN) -- Pham Duy**

From his stay with the youth of the Revolutionary Development cadre, Pham Duy had many notes for new songs, for cadre and villagers to sing. Here are the first four he wrote in this creative outburst. They are titled: "Wearing the Black Pajamas," "Let's Build a New Life Hamlet," "A Bowl of Rice is a Bowl of Sweetness and a Bowl of Blood," and "To Sing Often is Better Than to Sing with a Good Voice." The second song even has participation for those who cannot sing at all, but can join in with hand clapping. These songs rapidly made their way out onto the battleground among the people of Viet Nam.

**MUSIC: RD CADRE SONGS --**

- A. LET'S BUILD A NEW LIFE HAMLET -- Pham Duy
- B. TO SING OFTEN IS BETTER THAN TO SING WITH A  
GOOD VOICE
- C. WEARING THE BLACK COSTUME
- C. A CUP OF RICE IS A CUP OF SWEET AND A CUP OF BLOOD

In Viet Nam, Americans in the war were as inventive with language as they have been in other wars in other places. The favorite expression became "Sorry 'bout that" and was used as response or comment for a wide range of humor or sorrow. "To kill or wound" was "to zap." If you became a casualty, you were "zapped." The word "kilometer" became shortened to "click." This last word came to have real meaning for Captain Hershel Gober one day, after a patrol of six kilometers. That evening, he expressed his feelings -- and the feelings of many other Americans in the war -- by writing a song about this patrol. He called it "Six Clicks." He sings it here with the soldier group called the Black Patches.

**MUSIC: SIX CLICKS -- Hershel Gober and Black Patches**

At Christmas, 1963 neared, as nostalgia for family and familiar scenes came to Americans serving in a tropical land ten thousand miles from home, there came a deep urge for the known, the remembered. Christmas trees were festooned, placed among the palms, near the rice paddies. Santa Claus appeared at combat units, in Vietnamese orphanages,

Gifts and greetings were exchanged. And, one evening Pham Duy, Thuy Hoan, and Phuong Danh expressed the spirit of the season with guitar, zither, and voice in a Vietnamese rendering of an old and beautiful favorite.

**MUSIC: SILENT NIGHT**

Captain Hershel Gober's tour of duty in Viet Nam was ending. He sang one last time before returning to the United States. At the end, he spoke out about what the struggle here had come to mean to him. His words speak for hundreds of thousands of Americans who served here.

**MUSIC: CAPT. GOBER -- A. BIRTH OF A NATION  
B. PROUD AMERICAN**

"I saw a nation born tomorrow" were the words from Captain Gober as he left Viet Nam. Some days afterwards, the promise in these words was expressed in another way, in Vietnamese songs. It was on the third day of Tet, the celebration of the Lunar New Year. The start of the Year of the Goat. Dinh Mui. 1967. Vietnamese were full of great expectations as the New Year started. A group of Vietnamese and Americans gathered at the house the evening of this third day of the new lunar year, when close friends get together. The last three songs of the evening state the spirit of the birth of the nation on the 'morrow. Vietnamese and Americans joined each other with guitars and voice, to sing the song of villagers working as a community to build a neighbor's house, the song of the children as they look at the new day, and then the heartfelt love of a free Viet Nam.

**MUSIC: PHAM DUY AND VILLAGERS --  
A. VIETNAMESE WORK SONG  
B. VIETNAMESE CHILDREN'S SONG  
C. VIET NAM, VIET NAM**

This ends the report from Viet Nam. As this is recorded, none of us knows what the New Year, Dinh Mui, will bring in 1967, but we are full of hope. The small group of Americans who have staffed the Senior Liaison Office of the United States Embassy in Viet Nam, will never forget the months together and our comradeship with the people of Viet Nam. Although we have been a small group at any one time, those who were members at various times covered by this recording were:

Joe Baker  
C. T. R. Bohannon  
Charlie Choate  
Lou Conein  
Mike Deutch  
Dan Ellsberg  
Ted Heavner  
Dave Hudson  
Sam Karrick  
Ed Lansdale  
George Melvin  
Hank Miller  
Rufus Phillips  
Joe Redick  
Poling Valeriano

Our Chinese friend, Bernie Yoh, was our close associate in the early months of our mission.

The U. S. Foreign Service girls who did tours of duty as secretaries with SLO during the period were:

Betty Flynn  
Pat Goffette  
Maryann Heimgartner  
Lowell Kelso  
Reggie Miskovich

This is Hank Miller, one of the SLO team who served all through these days. I hope the memories we shared with you are lasting ones.