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Vietnam: A Report

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VIET NAM A REPORT

A CONCEPT FOR DEVELOPING THE CHURCH IN SOUTH VIET NAM

Originally Presented February 20, 1966,
at a Meeting of Church Leaders in Abilene, Texas

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INTRODUCTION

Stripped of the oriental pride of fatherhood before 12 children and his wife...unable to provide the barest rations of rice for mouths dumb with hunger...the disgraced father entered a street of Saigon to find the solution dictated by the centuries.

With five gallons of gasoline and a match, his unbearable disgrace was ended--his children's hounding hunger no longer would stalk him.

Out of the fumes and heat one pathetic soul fled. Behind, however, were left 12 mournfully knotted, hunger-bloated stomachs. They were left, but fortunately, not to starve. But perhaps they would have had the grieving mother not found missionaries of the church in Saigon who immediately placed five of the children who needed foster care in the home of a Vietnamese Christian.

As pyrocide has become the symbol of the intellectual and emotional breaking point in Viet Nam, likewise the war in Viet Nam has become a new symbol of the dilemma of the day.

The conflict tragically testifies to modern man's inability to live peaceably with his fellows. The spirit of distrust and bad faith generates mounting tensions. Fighting can promise only extended agony...bloodshed...and crushed spirits. In war, the spectrum of human suffering stands out in bold relief. Bodies are shattered. The old, the feminine, the tender children become spattered with filth and blood--

the despair of the moment and the squalor of seeking safety. Life itself becomes a cruel folly perpetrated on such a disintegrating people.

Viet Nam then, is a graphic, more harshly lighted, stronger symbol of man's inequity to man. Viet Nam marks the high point of fever in man's growing inner infection. There is a greater cure to be sought--a more effective healing than the momentary reversal of a high fever.

Nevertheless, public attention is drawn to the vicious, glaring heat in Viet Nam. Some look to see how the conflict goes, some to see the international motives at play and some to the great amount of human suffering now being precipitated by the war. In the United States, extreme protests of the nation's military involvement continue to be heard; counter protests foster nationwide support for national involvement in Viet Nam. In between, there are many thoughtful, patriotic and enlightened men who have doubts about the complete whiteness or blackness of the issue. The complex of interlocking military, international and political policies appears to be dyed in a hue of gray. Since individuals cannot derive emotional security from a position that is gray--meaning a position that is not all right or all wrong--the situation is further compounded.

Recognizing this evidence, the elders of the Royal Oak Church of Christ in Royal Oak, Michigan, nevertheless, intend to fulfill the ministry of Christ in Viet Nam. This was begun in 1964 when the Maurice Hall family went to Viet Nam.

PART ONE: THE MISSION OF CHRIST'S CHURCH IN THE WORLD OF 1966

The mission of Christ's church in 1966 is the same as it was in the days of its beginning. There is, however, a growing awareness among followers of Christ that the mission of the church, for many generations, has not been practiced in scope or depth or fullness as purposed by Christ and revealed in scripture.

There is no challenge--no command--no mission which carries any greater burden than the great commission of Christ. Let it be understood that this is the mission of disciples of Jesus--in the first century or today.

Manifesting Redeemed Lives

Many times our approach to world evangelism has reflected a distilled, and even unscriptural concept of missions. Our ministry to man can no longer be restricted exclusively to our verbal efforts, as has happened so often in the past. Manifestation of a redeemed life will be recognized as the proof of Christianity. Acts of love and deeds of compassion in virtually all our missions should precede and transcend our efforts to explain the religion of Christ.

It is significant that when Jesus spoke of the judgment that He divided the righteous and the unrighteous on the basis of the acts of their love and compassion for the suffering and needs of their fellowman. The ministry to human need shows the love of God as clearly as any sermon and usually with more enduring power.

But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.¹

The Broadest Spectrum of Teaching

Indeed, within Christians there must be reflected a quality of life and a deep concern for others than can be immediately and more readily understood than their purely verbal activities in teaching Christianity. Thus, when Paul urged Timothy that we are to influence by our example, "...in word, the manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity...",² he broadened the Christian's spectrum of teaching.

¹ Matthew 25:31-40.

² I Timothy 4:12.

The mission of the church in the world of 1966 is to continue Christ's ministry to mankind in the fullest possible way. It is in the aura of love and fulfilling of human need that the Gospel has its meaning and relevance.

#

PART TWO: VIET NAM--SYMBOL OF THE CRISIS OF MODERN MAN

There are many descriptions of Viet Nam--last stronghold against Communist domination of Southeast Asia, proving ground of the United States worldwide commitment to promote democratic ideals, buffeted pawn of the great military powers of the world, another Berlin, another Korea, the nation to win, the ground to gain--and therefore, a battleground.

The Land and People

Not only are the paradoxes of the war confusing, but the culture, geography, foods, beliefs and many other facets of life in Viet Nam are radically different from that of Western Man. The land, covering 65,948 square miles in area, is situated in a tropical climate both warm and moist, similar to that of Central America near the equator. Dotted with rice paddies in the lowlands and covered with lush green vegetation in the highlands and mountains, the land is picturesque and beautiful despite the ravages of war.

South Viet Nam is bordered on the north by North Viet Nam, on the east and south by the South China Sea and on the west by Laos and Cambodia. South Viet Nam's Mekong River delta in the southwest has been one of the best rice-growing areas of the world. The northern section consists of fertile coastal plains and a plateau leading to the mountains. There are tropical evergreen and pine forests in the mountains. In the uplands

live deer, buffaloes, wild oxen, elephants, tigers and panthers.

Because of its remote location, south of China, the people and customs of the country fall suspect to the seemingly natural mystery which fogs our understanding of the Orient. The people, who are small and have the "almond-" rather than "slant-" eyed appearance, are considered by many to be a soft-featured, pleasant people. South Viet Nam's people are ethnically related to the Chinese. There are also Chinese and Cambodian groups, and aborigines in the high plateau of central Viet Nam. The government has conducted a vigorous anti-illiteracy drive and claims that 90 percent of the people are literate. There are three universities in South Viet Nam.

Religion in Viet Nam

Religion in Viet Nam includes practices ranging from the superstitious worship of the spirits of the animals, flowers and trees to the few who practice New Testament Christianity. The strongest force is an amalgamation of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism and related sects. The average Vietnamese mind embodies this sometimes confusing potpourri of the three dominant Asian religions. Reporting in the June, 1965, issue of National Geographic, Peter T. White quotes a Vietnamese who said:

First, take Confucianism: teaching us how to behave correctly--toward our parents, teachers, rulers, everyone. The cult of the memory of our national heroes as our protectors--that is the Confucianist element.

Second, Taoism: teaching how to stay in harmony with the forces of nature, and with the supernatural--with the spirits.

Finally, Buddhism: teaching compassion, self-denial, and universal love.

Buddhism flourished in Viet Nam centuries ago and then withered. Now it flowers again--as a moral force, and lately also as a force for nationalism.

(See Appendix III for summary sketches of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism.)

Aside from the two million Catholics there seems to be no other strong non-oriental religious influence in South Viet Nam. Catholicism is not a popular religion in Viet Nam because it has been identified by many as "the religion of colonialism," a disdained concept among the fiercely nationalistic Vietnamese.

The Struggle for Hearts and Minds

While it may appear that strange people in far-off places like Viet Nam are numb--without feeling and steeled by tradition and philosophy against the traumas of war and the resulting violence--the fact remains that they are "people just like us," as one man recently said in his recognition of cultural prejudice.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts recently toured Viet Nam studying the problems of refugees, education and technological needs. His comments published in the February 8, 1966, issue of Look magazine are revealing.

We have been involved in two conflicts in Vietnam. One has been the battle against the terror brought in the name of revolution by the Vietcong guerrillas and the forces from the North.

The second conflict in Vietnam-- the struggle for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people themselves-- has not been waged with the same ferocity. The struggle in Vietnam has not been one that has produced a concern for the most important element in the Vietnam situation-- the welfare of the Vietnamese people themselves.

It is the war for the hopes and aspirations of the people that must be escalated in Vietnam. In this land of 16 million people:

--There are only 800 Vietnamese doctors, and 500 of these are in the armed forces, leaving 300 for the entire civilian population.

--Only 28 hospitals have surgical facilities, but 17 of these facilities are idle for lack of physicians.

--Eighty percent of the children of Vietnam suffer from worms.

--The vast majority of people are illiterate, and what school system did once exist in the countryside has been nearly destroyed by war. Schoolteachers have been prime targets of terrorists. In 1964 alone, more than 11,000 civilians-- a high proportion of them teachers-- were killed, abducted or wounded by the Vietcong.

--The nation's production of food, once sufficient to make Vietnam a rice basket for Asia, is so depleted that rice must now be imported to feed the populace.

--Local government has been decimated; not one of the 16,000 villages--or their officials--has escaped assassination or terror. Clearly, whatever social institutions once existed for the benefit of the Vietnamese are now crippled or totally ruined by war.

By now, there are approximately one million... refugees in South Vietnam, or six percent of its population. It is as if the population of the six New England States were homeless in America. These are people whose villages have been overrun by the Vietcong, or who are fleeing to urban areas to escape the cross fire of the fighting or the effect of the bombs from our planes. For the most part, they are grouped around the major population centers on the coastline, but hundreds of smaller centers lie inland.

Senator Kennedy's findings not only point up the need to capture the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese for political reasons, but more importantly that Christians must fight the battle at a higher level for the eternal souls of these unfortunate people.

Surrounded by traditional religions, the Vietnamese are responding to the Gospel. According to Brother Maurice Hall, missionary to South Viet Nam, the Vietnamese, tired of being in war or caught in the cross fire, are ready to respond to the expression of compassion and help which can come from Christians.

It is at this point, as it was in Germany following World War II, that actions can precede and transcend verbal teaching. Michael Mok, reporting in the November 26, 1965, issue of Life magazine said, "We cannot defeat this armed enemy unless we win the people...."

Winning the war is important; however, relieving human needs and suffering as well as winning souls are

direct applications of Jesus' teachings on brotherly love. Only through strong, positive programs of evangelism, benevolence and education can the atmosphere be best prepared for the reception of the Gospel in word.

Victims of poverty, filth, disease and war are not always too particular about where help comes from. And they are most likely to respond to whatever source of help comes to their aid. It is for this reason that God's people should be foremost with effective programs in Viet Nam.

A Beginning Has Been Made

As is so often the case, the church was established in Viet Nam by United States servicemen. Navy Lieutenant Joe Hale of Midland, Texas, started the work in his home near the Tan San Nhut Air Base near Saigon in 1962. Sergeant Ken Wilson of Bakersfield, California, came to assist. Both these men have since returned to the United States. Their work with a few servicemen, two American families and about six Vietnamese was fruitful, however.

Evangelistic Activities

In August, 1962, at the request of the elders of the Royal Oak Church of Christ, Brother and Sister Maurice Hall, former missionaries to Germany and France, then teaching at Michigan Christian Junior College, made a survey trip to appraise the possibilities in Viet Nam. Upon their return, the decision was made to go to Viet Nam as missionaries

supported by the Royal Oak church and the Berclair congregation in Memphis, Tennessee. The Halls, including their eight-year-old son, Ronnie, arrived in Viet Nam in February, 1964. They were joined by Philip Carpenter, 23, who was reared in the Children's Home of Mount Dora, Florida, and graduated from Michigan Christian College in 1963. He is supported by the Averill Avenue Church of Christ in Flint, Michigan. Since their arrival in 1964, the church in South Viet Nam has grown to some 655 members. As of January 31, 1966, 55 Americans and 600 Vietnamese were active in the programs of the church.

Ten other congregations have been established-- some with native preachers. (See Table I.)

Training Native Preachers

In addition to evangelistic results achieved primarily through preaching, training of native preachers began soon after the arrival of the Halls and Carpenter. This continued for the next 18 months on the basis of 10 hours of instruction per week. Twelve preachers have been prepared in this training program.

Preaching In Prison

During 1965, permission was granted for preaching and personal study to be started in Saigon's Cho Ray Prison. Each Friday,

TABLE I
CONGREGATIONS IN SOUTH VIET NAM

Town or Province	Membership	Estimated Population in Town or Area	Minister	Number in Bible Classes	Type of Meeting Place
Saigon-Hong Thap Tu	125	3,000,000	Brother Hall Brother Yocum	300	Living room area of house Garage of dwelling for class
Saigon-Tran Quy Cap	30	3,000,000**	Brother Hoang Brother Duc	225	Two classrooms - living room and garage
Kinh Hoi	20	200,000	Brother Zu	35	Small, poorly made bamboo and brick building
Cholon	47	500,000	Brother Carpenter Brother Trung	75	Former barber shop made of brick and stucco
Quang Trung	33	35,000	Brother Tang	75	Brick and stucco construction
Kien Giang	135	300,000 (area)	Brother Tam	150	Bamboo - dirt floor hut
Rach Gia	155	300,000 (area)	Brother Tam	150	Bamboo - dirt floor hut
Nha Trang	10	180,000	Brother Yocum	10	Military chapel
Tam Ky	35	100,000	Brother Yen	35	Rented bamboo dwelling
Hoai An	20	100,000	Brother Yen	20	Rented bamboo dwelling
Danang	45	200,000	Brother Trancad	45	Store
TOTALS	655	4,915,000*		1,120	

* Compared to an estimated population of 16,000,000.

** Same area as Hong Thap Tu.

some 400 prisoners assemble to hear the sermons and lessons. This work is continuing with Vietnamese Christians leading in the personal study. Prisoners are homeless children, curfew breakers, thieves, prostitutes, the aged and crippled. A number have been converted in the prison work, with great interest being shown.

Radio Evangelism

In July, 1965, the Vietnamese government granted permission for a 30-minute weekly Sunday morning broadcast on Saigon Network Channel C, a 5,000-watt station covering South Viet Nam.

Subsequently, two local stations have approved time for a 30-minute weekly broadcast and have started broadcasting a program--Hue and Sedec, both 1,000-watt local stations. Production of the radio programs is being underwritten by the White's Ferry Road church in West Monroe, Louisiana, which is the congregation directing activities of World Radio.

Two outstanding native Vietnamese Christians, both members of a five-member American Bible Society team commissioned to translate the Bible into Vietnamese, are preparing the radio programs. They are Brother and Sister Phil Nhon. He was formerly on General William C. Westmoreland's staff of interpreters. According to Nhon, 400 persons have been enrolled in Bible correspondence courses as a direct result of radio evangelism.

Television Evangelism

Television came to South Viet Nam in 1966. Officials have indicated free time will be granted to show the Herald of Truth films. Although the time may be free, the cost to put new sound tracks on the film in the Vietnamese language will run at least \$15,600 per year.

Newspaper Advertising and Teaching

Presently, a program of newspaper evangelism is placing teaching ads in six newspapers with a combined circulation of 90,000. The ads average 20 column inches, each costing from \$5 per insertion to as much as \$10 per insertion in the Saigon Post. According to Phil Carpenter, there have been 278 replies to the newspaper advertising. Additional funds would allow increased use of newspaper teaching ads.

(See Table II.)

Benevolence

Child Care

The church's benevolent program was begun with orphan children in February, 1965, following the horrible suicide described in the introduction. The distraught mother of the 12 children asked the church to take the five youngest children. At present, these and 63 other children are being cared for in the homes of Vietnamese Christians.

TABLE II
NEWSPAPER EVANGELISM IN SOUTH VIET NAM

Newspaper	Geographic or Public Coverage	Language	Circulation	Present Use
Saigon Daily News	Viet Nam, U. S.	English	20,000	None
Saigon Post	Viet Nam, U. S.	English	10,000	Weekly
Song Moi Daily	Viet Nam	Vietnamese	20,000	Weekly
Hdoi Dai Daily	Viet Nam	Vietnamese	10,000	Weekly
Mein Nam Daily	Viet Nam	Vietnamese	5,000	Weekly
Thoi Dai	Viet Nam	Vietnamese	5,000	Weekly
Quyet Tien	Viet Nam	Vietnamese	10,000	Weekly
L'Extreme Orient	Viet Nam, French	French	5,000	None
Les Nouvelles	Viet Nam, French	French	5,000	None
TOTALS			90,000	

* There are approximately 75 other newspapers published in Saigon which are circulated throughout South Viet Nam.

Food, medical care, clothing, education and other necessities are being provided these children with contributions of \$10 per month from individual Christians in America.

There are, however, in Saigon alone, 50,000 neglected and orphaned children who wander the streets, dazed, diseased, unloved-- and forced to eat garbage and sleep on curbs. Perhaps these pitiful children are the most heart-rending results of the war. They do not understand why they are deserted or why no one seems to care or why the pain or infection finally numbs their senses or when, if ever, they will sleep peacefully and contented. Are they to be left to roam the streets? Left to fall victim to those who would exploit their defenselessness? Only with positive programs, dedicated people and proper facilities can these children be loved, fed, given medicine and taught the love of Jesus, who said, "...Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me" (Matthew 18:5).

Refugee Relief

Already the church has done significant work in the relief of refugees. Through the generosity of Christians from the area of Greenville, Mississippi, two tons of clothing, food and cleaning materials were delivered to

the church in Saigon through the United States Navy's Project "Handclasp," a program authorized by Congress to assist in overseas shipment of relief goods. In addition to those goods, 10,000 pounds of government surplus wheat was given the church through the Protestant Relief Committee. This was distributed to needy families, Christian and non-Christian, alike.

Of the one million refugees Senator Kennedy referred to above, approximately 33,000 in Saigon alone are amputees or have other serious injuries which interfere with normal employment or ability to provide for themselves. Presently, virtually nothing is being done for these people. The church in Viet Nam has not had the resources to help any of these refugees with programs for their unique needs.

It would seem that refugee relief would never end; however, this is a stronger reason why the church must make a direct frontal attack on the problem.

Evangelism Through Educational Activities

In February, 1965, the American Community School in Saigon was closed by President Johnson as he evacuated dependents of U. S. personnel from South Viet Nam. Children of some 100 wealthy Vietnamese families who were enrolled were left without a school.

Maurice Hall was teaching in the English department of the school at the time. His connection with the school provided contact with Americans and provided other benefits personally and for the church's work. Expanding the teaching work into government and community-sponsored English classes for Vietnamese, the Vietnamese and U. S. Government provided materials and equipment to build classrooms for this work in conjunction with the church facilities.

A few months after the American Community School closed, the Vietnamese whose children had been enrolled in the school requested Maurice Hall to continue teaching English. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, earlier in 1964, had urged Hall to establish a Christian school for the apparent advantages to American-Vietnamese relations;³ therefore, a board of directors was formed, and the school, teaching English, opened in October, 1965, with an enrollment of 86 students. Serving on the board are:

President	Mr. William Meredith, U.S.O.M. Radio Advisor (formerly worshipped with Skillman Avenue Church of Christ, Dallas, Texas)
Vice-President	Mr. Billy Pratt, a pilot with Air America
Executive Secretary and Treasurer	Mr. Maurice C. Hall

3 In an interview in the office of Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge in Saigon in the summer of 1964.

Secretary Mrs. Phil Nhon

An advisory board was also elected by parents of students consisting of:

Chairman Mr. Lam

Assistant Dr. Chieu, University of
Chairmen Saigon Medical Faculty

Dr. Chat, University of
Saigon Medical Faculty

The American-Vietnamese International School, as it is now known, is fully self-supporting. Students pay \$40 monthly tuition. Operation expenses are considerably less than income tuition; therefore, Hall believes up to seven free schools could be operated from profits of the present school if it were built to its potential. The free schools would teach Bible, English and other subjects.

Personnel to teach in the schools, as well as facilities, are needed. In Saigon at this time assisting with the school and other mission work are:

Brother Lynn Yocum, 22, of Beloit, Kansas, graduate of Oklahoma Christian College in 1965.

Brother and Sister Leonard Blake, (Dona), 27 and 23 years of age respectively, and their two small children. Brother Blake was business manager and location supervisor of the Schults-Lewis Children's Home, Valparaiso, Indiana, for four years. Sister Blake served as Home secretary. Both are 1961 graduates of Michigan Christian Junior College.

Brother Gene Conner, 27, of Little Rock, Arkansas, is a 1964 graduate of Harding College.

In addition to these, two other teachers, who are not members of the church, have been added on an interim basis pending recruitment of replacements.

Many opportunities for valuable contacts are available through the operation of the American-Vietnamese International School. Children of ambassadors to Viet Nam from Australia, China and Korea as well as leading Vietnamese professional people are presently enrolled.

The school will also provide opportunities for American teachers to work with pay in Saigon and help in the church's work while there.

Strong, well-respected schools operated efficiently can be a great asset to the advance of Christ's ministry in South Viet Nam.

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PART THREE: THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH IN VIET NAM

Perhaps in the twentieth century there has been no opportunity equal to that presented the churches of Christ in Viet Nam. Because the attention of the world is focused on the war and the problems of Viet Nam, no positive humanitarian action can escape the attention or fail to capture the emotions of millions of people. And, no such action could be better timed for those who need physical and spiritual help than now!

Shall We Retreat?

Because of the response of isolated individuals, the church may be influenced to step back from a great task and retreat from what may become a long, arduous effort. It could be decided there are too many uncertainties to make a massive effort in this remote oriental country.

Limited Response

While retreat can hardly be a realistic forecast of the church's response, perhaps a greater danger lies in a possible response that would be limited, poorly timed and insufficiently planned...and, as a result, limited in its potential. Most fearful would be the response that is intense but short-lived, and without the vital follow-through that demonstrates our continuing concern for man's present and eternal needs. Such a response may relieve the consciences of brethren involved; however, a limited response will neither accomplish the task, nor challenge the capacity of the church to make a greater commitment.

Dramatic Advance

Prayerfully, God's people will see the opportunity in Viet Nam. Hopefully, they will apply their talents, imagination, resources and belief in Jesus' teachings to a dramatic advancement of the cause of Christ in Viet Nam. It is this kind of positive action that will manifest redeemed lives, compassionately minister to human needs, glorify God and save souls!

Steps in Expanding the Church's Mission in South Viet Nam

To formulate a well-planned program which will bear up under the pressure of examination and execution will require a great deal of basic information. The present base of information for effective long-term planning in South Viet Nam is insufficient. This can be explained partially by the fact of rapid changes in the nature of our mission and partially by the lack of sufficient research, studies and investigations by qualified personnel.

In considering the wide scope of work envisioned for Viet Nam, there are a number of critical areas in which hard and clear information must be developed to ascertain both opportunities and our needs that must be met if we are to capitalize upon these opportunities. Extensive research should be conducted in the following areas:

Legal Aspects

Certainly no church group, institution or other medium of relief should assume to begin foster care of orphan children without full legal authority and a careful understanding of the responsibilities to the

government, the children and society. It is possible to arrange for adoption of Vietnamese children in America; however, all aspects of adoption and foster-child care are generally subject to strenuous government control, both in Viet Nam and the United States. All of the implications of child-care programs should be explored with legal counsel and our limits defined.

Educational and medical activity also must be studied from the legal viewpoint to determine if such activities would be recognized by the Viet Nam Government and/or other agencies of that country.

Auxiliary Resources to Aid our Mission

Because of the great plight of the Vietnamese people, a number of United States and Vietnamese help programs have been established. These include the United States Agency for International Development,⁴ the Navy's Project "Handclasp,"⁵ the Vietnamese

4 The agency for International Development works with voluntary agencies serving refugees to provide material aid, relief, self-help efforts and other forms of assistance. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (Sec. 635 [c]), directs that the President, "in furthering the purposes of this Act, shall use to the maximum extent practicable the services and facilities of voluntary, non-profit organizations registered with and approved by, the (A. I. D.) Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid."

5 The United States Navy maintains large ships in foreign waters. This results in a steady stream of ships crossing the oceans. Each fleet-type ship has space which can be used to transport relief, educational and goodwill cargo to ports visited. Project "Handclasp" allows Americans to use the space available in these ships to deliver the type of goods outlined above for humanitarian reasons.

government's programs and perhaps others which are not now known.

These programs should be fully explored to determine the church's possible relationship with them.

Evaluate Potential of Child Care and Educational Programs

Obviously, no meaningful programs in child care and education can be formulated to serve great numbers of people without first determining what facilities are available--and if facilities are not available, what the possibilities of land acquisition and construction might be (once the legal aspects of ownership, tax status and other details are determined). Evidently, there is freedom to teach religious subjects; however, the church's determination to do this can possibly have a bearing on its relationship to government and volunteer programs outlined above.

Serious study should be given to the church's relationship to similar programs already in existence. It is not known if these programs are operating in Viet Nam or on what basis. However, two noteworthy organizations doing the type of work contemplated include the Christian Children's Fund, Inc.,⁶ which

⁶ Christian Children's Fund, Inc., of Richmond, Virginia, is a Protestant organization which works closely with missionaries of 36 Protestant denominations. It is licensed by the United States Department Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid.

cares for approximately 60,000 orphaned children around the world, and World Vision, Inc.⁷ Both organizations have extensive operations in child care and relief of refugees.

Determining Personnel Needed in Viet Nam

Detailed study must be given to the types and numbers of American workers who can be used in the work, both in Viet Nam and in America. While it is necessary to send evangelists, it probably would be proved necessary to involve competent personnel in medicine, technical fields, child care, education and other fields. The possibility of government-related employment programs or industrial and business connections for professional people who would go to Viet Nam as vocational missionaries should be explored. Opportunities may exist for Christian teachers to teach in Vietnamese schools. To carry on a program which might become quite extensive will obviously require an administrative and coordinating counterpart in the United States. Program content and job requirements will determine personnel requirements.

7 World Vision, Inc., of Pasadena, California, works in five different types of Christian service primarily to give immediate aid through established denominational and interdenominational agencies. Included among the services this agency offers is an orphan sponsor plan which currently cares for 20,000 children in 19 countries.

Analysis of Mass Media Resources

While newspapers, radio, television are being used for evangelism, further research may reveal ways to make the best investment of money in the mass media. Production of advertising, printed media, news articles and other forms of communications for use in Viet Nam should be studied in the light of what is most effective for those people.

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PART FOUR: RECOMMENDATION--ORGANIZATION OF EVANGELISTIC SURVEY TEAM

The aforementioned extensive research called for cannot be done effectively by one or two persons because of limitations of experience and time. For this reason, it is recommended that a survey team of competent brethren be assembled to carry out this research.

Validity of Such an Approach

1. Competency of individuals doing research in their own fields is imperative.
2. The fields of necessary research are interrelated and therefore call for persons who know in detail how the problems and solutions of one field may affect another. The close association of the survey team would afford the opportunity for the exchange of ideas and possible solutions.
3. The findings of such competent people would be much more authoritative and definitive than would those of personnel required to make judgments in areas outside their competencies.

The Type of People Who Might be Involved in the Survey Team Include:

1. Experienced men, specialized in overseas evangelism.
2. Specialists in social work, welfare programs and child care.
3. Health services.
4. Architects and engineers.

5. Legal counsel.
6. Specialists in program development and organization.
7. Men competent in financing.
8. Men trained in communications and fund raising.

Ideally, the team should be made up of at least six or more men, according to the above classifications.

They will be selected by a committee which will be organized to assist the elders of the Royal Oak Church of Christ.

Survey Trip to South Viet Nam

The Survey Team will make a number of trips including a minutely planned three-week visit to South Viet Nam, hopefully in the summer of 1966. Since a schedule for the Survey Team's work and an exacting timetable are to be adopted, the following steps are intended to implement the Survey Team concept:

Orientation

It will be necessary for the team to meet together to receive orientation and instruction. Basic information and education about the Vietnamese situation and the church will be covered. Conceivably, reading assignments will be made before initial research is undertaken. Even the planning work must be planned.

Domestic Trips

It is anticipated that at least one trip (of possibly three days' length) will be made to Washington, D. C., to confer with officials on the various government relief programs, the State Department, the Vietnamese embassy and other key contacts.

Efforts should be made by all of the group, or at least sub-committees of the group, to visit the administrative headquarters of such organizations as Christian Children's Fund, Inc., World Vision, Inc., and other organizations participating in the United States Government's Agency for International Development Program.

Survey Trip to Viet Nam

Armed with the background information gathered in the United States and a definitive outline of necessary information to be gathered in Viet Nam, the Survey Team will go as a body to South Viet Nam. On this trip each man will have a specific responsibility for research and study as well as opportunities to meet throughout the three weeks for conferences and interchange of findings, with the possible expectation of formulating some tentative solutions. Upon the return of the Survey Team, all of these studies and recommendations will be coordinated and drafted into the Viet Nam Report and Master Plan of Action.

Timetable for Accomplishing This Survey

The following timetable is recommended as a basis for expediting, strengthening and expanding the program of evangelism, benevolence and evangelistic-educational activities in South Viet Nam:

1. Selection of Survey Team members
and underwriting financial
support.....April 15, 1966
2. Orientation meeting.....June, 1966

- 3. Trip to Washington, D. C.
 (prior to this time, Survey Team members will have received basic reading material and begun initial research in their own areas).....June 17, 1966
- 4. Visit with administrative offices of similar programs.....June, 1966
- 5. Assembly date for Viet Nam trip (final orientation and research assignments).....July 1, 1966
- 6. Trip to Viet Nam.....July, 1966

Organization of Research Material and Writing of Viet Nam Report and Master Plan of Action
Presentation of Viet Nam Report and Master Plan of Action

It is recommended that the definitive document be presented at a mass meeting of church leaders throughout the nation by October 6, 1966--probably in conjunction with the Michigan Christian College annual Lectureship.

PART FIVE: SUGGESTED 1966 BUDGET TO DEVELOP THE PROPOSED
MASTER PLAN OF ACTION
March 1 - October 31, 1966

Initial Planning and Promotion Costs

Exhibit, Accompanying Leaflet, Travel and Expenses, Planning, Preparations and Publicity \$6,000.00

INITIAL FUND RAISING GOALS

Organization of Survey Team

Recruitment Activities, Literature and Materials	\$ 750.00
Travel and Expenses for Orientation Meeting for Six Members	2,000.00
Washington, D. C., Survey	500.00
Los Angeles Survey	250.00
Three-week Viet Nam Survey Trip for Six Members	
Travel, Round Trip, Los Angeles-Saigon--Approximately \$1,000 per member	6,000.00
Expenses in Saigon	1,800.00
Final Meeting at Event to Announce <u>Viet Nam Report</u> and Proposed <u>Master Plan of Action</u>	1,500.00
Contingency	<u>1,500.00</u>
	\$14,300.00

Development of a Mission Plan

Organization of Research Data and Writing of <u>Viet Nam Report</u> and Proposed <u>Master Plan of Action</u>	\$ 2,500.00
Promotion and Production to Publicize Plan and Introduce Campaign to Brotherhood	2,500.00
Coordination and Staff Service to Assist the Royal Oak Church of Christ through Eight Months	6,000.00
Monthly Travel and Expenses for Eight Months	1,600.00
Contingency	<u>2,250.00</u>
	\$14,850.00
TOTAL	\$35,150.00

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PART SIX: CONCLUSION

This preliminary report will be presented to thoughtful church leaders throughout the nation as quickly as possible. It is our hope to receive constructive suggestions and reactions to the plan for the mission of Christ in Viet Nam.

Most vital at the present time are the names of volunteers who might be interested in being a part of the Survey Team or, ultimately, in working in the mission in Viet Nam in evangelism, the benevolent program or the educational activities. Churches throughout the brotherhood are being sought to hear and study this concept. Presentations can be made to elderships, individuals and congregations to inform as many people as possible of the great opportunities for the work of Christ's church in South Viet Nam. Only with the unified efforts of God's people can such a massive undertaking be effectively accomplished!

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APPENDIX I

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN

The church of Christ was begun in 1934 in Royal Oak, Michigan, a northern suburb of Detroit. With a membership of some 300, the Bible school attendance averages 250. Three brethren with a total of 34 years' experience as elders serve the congregation. They are Z. R. Daniel, who has been an elder 16 years (three years at Royal Oak); William H. Oliver, an elder at Royal Oak for 9 years; and John Young, an elder for three years at Royal Oak and six years in other congregations.

Clyde Balderson is the congregation's minister. He is also a member of the faculty of Michigan Christian Junior College nearby in Rochester. Former ministers include such brethren as Glendol Grimes, William D. Mederias, Bill Hatcher, L. C. Utley and others.

A generous congregation, concerned with benevolent and other types of mission work, the Royal Oak church has assisted evangelistic and benevolent efforts of numerous sister congregations including Potter's Children's Home of Bowling Green, Kentucky; Home for the Aged in Romeo, Michigan; assistance with regular support for Eddie Dunn in Helsinki, Finland, Ernie Stewart in Jerusalem and Stephen Bilak who preaches on Radio Russia. The congregation also established and supported for 12 years a local congregation for the deaf. Additionally, the congregation assisted the evangelistic exhibit of churches of Christ at the New York World's Fair and purchased an automobile for Brother Ira Rice, missionary to Singapore, to use

in his work while in the United States. Their work with Brother Maurice Hall began in 1962, and in February, 1964, the Hall family was sent to South Viet Nam.

Now, the elders of the Royal Oak church are planning and studying ways to significantly expand and strengthen the church's impact in South Viet Nam.

APPENDIX II

SISTER CONGREGATIONS ASSISTING EVANGELISM IN SOUTH VIET NAM

The following congregations have been assisting the Royal Oak church in the work in South Viet Nam for the past two years. Other congregations are contemplating ways in which they will assist. Although reports are expected from those congregations, the present list is complete through January 31, 1966.

Berclair Church of Christ
Memphis
Tennessee

Florissant Church of Christ
Florissant
Missouri

Bristol Road Church of Christ
Flint
Michigan

Lincoln Park Church of Christ
Lincoln Park
Michigan

Central Church of Christ
St. Louis
Missouri

Southside Church of Christ
St. Louis
Missouri

Church of Christ
Greenville
Mississippi

APPENDIX III

BUDDHISM, CONFUCIANISM AND TAOISM

The following is quoted from World Religions by Benson Y. Landis, E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1965, pages 25-31:

BUDDHISM

Buddhism is the religion founded by the Buddha in India in the sixth century, B. C. It has over 160,000,000 adherents in nine nations. The whole country of China is dotted with Buddhist temples, many of great beauty. Buddhists in large numbers are also found in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, and in sections of the Soviet Union. In China many Buddhists are also Confucianists. In Japan, many Shintoists are also Buddhists.

Historical Notes. The young man Buddha, born Prince Siddharta c. 568, B. C., led a reform movement in protest against the formalism of the Hinduism in India of his day. Although the Buddha founded his religion in India, the number of his followers in that country is small, perhaps only 100,000 in a land of vast population.

The Buddha, the Enlightened One, led the princely sheltered life prescribed for him. But the young prince could ride forth in his realm, and thus he saw sights that made deep impressions on him. He saw people ill, old, and suffering, and religious people unconcerned. One day he resolved to consider the meaning

of what he saw and the ways whereby men should live. He soon renounced his royal rights and set out to find the Truth that would save man. He wandered about for seven years, visiting with many people, including holy men and teachers. Sometimes their answers to his questions left him perplexed. But he became widely known as a holy man.

Living an ascetic life, highly disciplined, he practiced meditation. Remove ignorance, remove selfishness, remove the thirst for things, he reasoned. Blessed becomes he who understands the good Law. Blessed is he who overcomes sin and is free from passion. The highest blessedness comes to him who conquers vanity and selfishness. He may become blessed, the holy, the perfect.

Soon he was recognized as the one wise, the one enlightened. Tradition has it that he once lingered under a tree seven times seven days, becoming aware of his emancipation. Those who passed by recognized him as a man of peace and majesty. To whom should he preach and teach? He began with five former ascetic companions near Benares. The Buddha taught them the way to immortality, to Nirvana. It is reported that men and animals were affected by him when he spoke.

Principal Beliefs and Teachings. He urged men to cleanse their minds: to avoid extremes of austerity and of sensuality. He taught the wheel of the Excellent Law, which consisted of a hub of truth, a tire of wisdom, and spokes of pure conduct.

He set forth four noble truths:

1. The truth of suffering.
2. The cause of suffering.

3. The cessation of suffering.
4. The means of overcoming suffering.

The methods are an eight-fold path, often called "the middle way":

1. Right views.
2. Right aspirations.
3. Right speech.
4. Right conduct.
5. Right livelihood.
6. Right endeavor.
7. Right mindfulness.
8. Right meditation.

These are simply the foundations, the cornerstones, of Buddhism. The ultimate aim has been called the transformation of the personality. The path is a method of habit formation.

Buddha did not teach a personal deity. He emphasized "Kharma" as the moral law of the universe. He also had no interest in rituals and originally did not think of a priesthood. Today, Buddhists refer to Buddha as the great example, but every person is called upon to seek his own enlightenment. Selflessness and the seeking of peace on earth are taught.

Originating 500 years before Christ, many of the accounts of Buddha are much the same in detail as those about Christ. In Buddhist literature there is a marriage feast, a prodigal son, the Buddha dining with sinners, a rich young man seeking deliverance, a woman at the well. Buddha taught: "Overcome evil with good...Purify your hearts...Self is death, truth is life." This is a story of the mustard seed in Buddhist literature.

Nirvana as taught by the Buddhist means a state of no flame of selfish desire--no passion. It is akin to teachings of other religions to deny self and find true life. It does not mean to attain to a state of indifference, or of unconsciousness. It signifies a state of attaining to an expansion of personality--a larger consciousness.

Divisions. After the death of the leader came division. The simple abodes of the Buddha and his immediate followers were succeeded by monasteries, shrines, and temples. The simple teachings of the master teacher became subjects of speculation. Sects developed. Two great groups emerged:

The Mahayana, or Greater Vehicle, or Northern Buddhism. This group developed its own scripture, including the Lotus Gospel. It also produced an elaborate theology with the Buddha regarded as a divine savior.

The Hinayana, or Lesser Vehicle, or Southern Buddhism, which regards Buddha as not a supernatural being. Theology is less elaborate.

Era of Expansion. About 200 years after Buddha died there came an era of missionary endeavor largely as a result of the conversion of an emperor, Asoka. He came to rule in 272 B. C. and soon governed a large area. He took his religion seriously and his reign was marked by many constructive practices. He endowed numerous Buddhist temples, built hospitals, promoted education, taught and exemplified moral standards. He sent missionaries to other nations. In Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand, Hinayana Buddhism, strongly monastic, became well established. Mahayana Buddhism moved

to the north, going into China prior to the Christian era. From China it went to Korea and to Japan. But by the sixth century, A. D., it was declining in India, and by the thirteenth it had almost disappeared. As before noted, there are relatively few Buddhists in India but the Buddha is revered as a great man by the Indian people. Buddhism was vigorously opposed in India by the Hindus and still more effectively by invading Moslems.

Great Council. The Sixth Great Council of Buddhism was convened in Rangoon, Burma, 1954-56, for the purpose of re-examining the teachings of the religion. Laymen and monks by thousands took part. The government of Burma provided the buildings, and the Parliament of that nation took the initiative in calling the council. The members of the Parliament called for consideration of new measures for the spiritual and moral well-being of man.

CHINESE SAGES--CONFUCIUS AND LAO-TZU

The Chinese philosophers Confucius and Lao-tzu both lived at the time of Buddha.

Confucius was an educator and statesman, a philosopher and a practical man who has been called the symbol and model of all things Chinese. For almost 2,500 years many Chinese people have recorded their debt to this man and have acknowledged him as the most powerful single force in their ancient culture.

Confucianism is often called philosophy rather than religion, but many people have certainly regarded it as a

religion. In China what we term Confucianism is called Ju Chaio, the teachings of the scholar. These teachings embrace those of Confucius and other tradition that has been developed over the centuries.

Confucius, born 551 B. C. in Shantung, was not the originator of this body of teaching. He studied the past and simply made formulations of the religion of the people of the past. His own references to religion are usually indirect and not frequent.

Confucius was a government employee when a young man. At age twenty-two he began to teach and soon had many students as followers. Out of his talks to these students, sometimes numbering several thousand, came the Classics that he edited.

Shortly after reaching the age of fifty, Confucius became administrator of justice in the state of Lu. His capacities were great and the practical effects remarkable. So marked were the results that the state was envied by a neighboring ruler, who influenced the Prince of Lu against Confucius. Confucius resigned and went from state to state seeking an employer, in vain. He returned to his native place and edited the compilations: The Book of History, The Book of Poetry, The Book of Changes, and The Book of Rites. His closing years were sad. In all the land there was not one monarch who would make him a minister.

After his death came disciples to bring together his own sayings: The Confucian Analects. They also brought out other works based upon Confucian teachings: The Great Learning and

The Doctrine of the Mean. Two centuries later Mencius wrote somewhat popular versions of Confucius' sayings: The Works of Mencius.

Although writing little about the gods, Confucius became among many of the people the object of worship. Early in the twentieth century, his followers gave him a rank equal to heaven and earth. His complete veneration had been achieved, and he was praised in hundreds of temples. But with the coming of the Republican era, the edifices fell into poor repair, and Confucius was formally revered only by old teachers.

The number of Confucianists today can hardly be estimated. There may be 300,000,000, but many Confucianists are also Buddhists or Taoists.

For a brief period, under Japanese occupation of parts of China, the teachings of Confucius were ordered restored in the schools. Under the present Communist regime the Classics is reported to have been suppressed.

To what extent the ethical teachings of Confucius would live on among the people, without formal teaching, cannot be stated. The main teachings are:

The nature of man is good.

Man possesses free will to make choices.

Virtue brings its own reward--one does not refrain from evil because of fear of punishment.

"What you do not want others to do unto you, do not do unto them."

Confucius urged filial piety. He sought the moral cultivation of "the princely man" as the cornerstone of "the good society."

Among the steps in moral cultivation are:

Knowledge of the final objective.

Rectification of the heart.

Sincerity of purpose.

Lao-tzu, sometimes spelled Lao-tze (sixth century, B. C.), known as the founder of Taoism in China, expounded doctrines much at variance with those of Confucius. The number of present-day followers is not determinable, although Taoist priests function in a number of communities. It is believed to be a religion of the uneducated. There may be 50,000,000 adherents. Observers appear to agree that present-day organization and practice have little resemblance to the beautiful words and ideas of the founder. Practical acts of service are recommended by the teachers, but priests are reported to be of a low order.

Lao-Tzu wrote in language of power and grace. "A constant giver is the man who loves." "We must be able to be at peace in order to be active in love." "All beings will be transformed from within themselves."

He advocated the practice of daily periods of silence. He taught that men should return good for evil. He taught unity, selflessness, the endlessness of man's real life, the high value of the inner life versus outer possessions.

He was continually interpreting the Tao, the Way. This is something mysterious. There is no word, no combination of

words, to describe it. He called it "great" in endeavoring to describe it. The law of the Tao is its own spontaneity. It is the mother of the universe but its name is not known to the teacher. Possibly he came in his writing closer to certain of the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount than any other religious teacher.

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