

INTERVIEW WITH VIETNAM WAR PARTICIPANT

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FILE / SUBJ. WZ  
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3/24 & 27/72

NAME HOANG VAN BO alias HOANG TUNG (PAVN)

BACKGROUND Private First Class, 63rd Battalion, 95th-B NVA Regiment,

(Pleiku Province)

SUBJECT: (VI) Miscellaneous

SOURCE SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES & ANALYSES LIMITED (For JUSPAO)





# SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES & ANALYSES LIMITED

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Rallier Report 25 - F - (72)

Interview of Rallier  
HOANG VAN BO Alias HOANG TUNG  
Private First Class  
K63rd Battalion of the 95th B Regiment,  
Pleiku.

## VI. MISCELLANEOUS

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Interview of Mr. ...  
LIM HONG WAI ...  
Private ...  
National ...

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## VI. MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Let's talk about the latest (political) developments. While in NVN, did you know much about Russia and Communist China?
  - I didn't know very much about Russia and Communist China, the two big socialist countries. My knowledge about them was rather superficial.
2. What did you know about them?
  - The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China are our two big allies. Although the two are currently involved in a rift that divides them, they strongly back NVN in its anti-US war in SVN and both have poured substantial military, and economic aid and given political and diplomatic support to NVN.
3. In your opinion, what is China's attitude towards NVN?
  - In the past, China had thrown full military, political and economic support behind NVN. But since the Sino-Soviet conflict, NVN has been careful to maintain a neutral stand in this split, siding with neither side. This policy has somewhat displeased China, and the result is, today, Chinese aid to NVN is greatly reduced.
4. Which aid specifically has been reduced?
  - Both military and economic aid.
5. What about the Soviet Union's attitude towards NVN?
  - Over the recent years, Soviet aid to NVN on the contrary,

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has substantially increased compared to the past.

6. What did you think of China admission into the UN?

- I knew nothing about this.

7. Did you know anything about the friendly relationship between the Soviet Union and the US?

- I knew that these two countries maintain diplomatic relations on ambassadorial level.

8. What about Sino-Soviet relations?

- The only thing I knew was deep differences separate these two countries.

9. What did you learn about US-Chinese relations?

- I was living in the jungle then, and didn't have access to information on what was going on in the outside world, so, I didn't know anything.

10. Did you ever make a comparison between the Soviet Union and the US?

- In my opinion, if a comparison must be made, these two powers are equal militarily speaking.

11. What about China and the US?

- In my opinion, the three nations -- China, the USSR, and the US -- are the world's three major powers. Their military

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strength and population are more or less equal.

12. Deep inside you, are you more on Russia's or China's side?

- I am on Russia's side. I must admit that in the beginning we have received important aid from China. We have built our roads, bridges, etc., with China technology and money. But when the Sino-Russian conflict broke out and NVN refused to take side and get involved in it, China decided to pull back its personnel in NVN.

13. Are you absolutely sure of these facts or are you only making speculations?

- Anybody knows that China was greatly dissatisfied with NVN's uncommitted attitude. Actually, China interpreted this neutral stand as favorable to Russia, and as a result, decided to pull back part of its personnel in NVN.

14. Is this a general view?

- Yes, it is.

15. What makes you say so?

- First-hand experiences. There is no other way to learn about what was going on.

16. What about learning things from the press and radio?

- In NVN, what one learns from the press and the radio is

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very superficial and general. Most of the time one cannot make out what is really going on. This is the reason why I never rely on these media to learn about things.

17. In your opinion which side did NVN support in the Sino-Soviet border conflict?

- Neither. NVN kept a neutral attitude in this conflict avoiding to support either side.

18. Which side were the majority of NVN top leaders on?

- They did everything they could to stay out of the conflict. They would try to be fair though. They would praise the side deserving praises, and disapprove the one with shortcomings. This was the general attitude within the Party.

19. What about the young generation? Were they pro-Russian or pro-Chinese?

- On the whole, NVN youth were pro-Russian because they felt the USSR had closer diplomatic relations with NVN and had given NVN more aid than China. In other words, Russia has greater concern for NVN than China.

20. What do you mean by this?

- Russian aid to NVN is not only more substantial, it is also given without strings attached. This is not the case with Chinese



assistance. It is smaller, and very often, it is made with conditions.

21. Did Russia and China compete for influence in NVN?

- Yes, clearly so as seen in various incidents. For example, there is a lot of competition between Russian and Chinese advisors. So much so that whenever Russian and Chinese visitors were in NVN for some official function, the NVN authorities would be at pains ensuring that Russian and Chinese paths never cross.

22. Was there any unpleasant incident involving Russian and Chinese personnel in NVN?

- Yes, one. Once a Russian advisor in NVN rode in a Jeep with a Vietnamese driver at the wheel. When the car came near to a Communist Chinese unit's base area, it was stopped and Chinese guards surrounded it ready to hurt the Russian. Fortunately NVN policemen intervened in time to avoid what would have otherwise been a regrettable incident.

23. When did this incident happen?

- In 1967, in Lang Son.

24. This was in your province. Did any similar incident take place in Hanoi?

- I don't know.

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25. What about the working class people? Were they more pro-Russian or pro-Chinese?

- Judging by what I saw, they were more pro-Russian too.

26. Why do you think so?

- For the same reasons as I said above.

27. While in NVN, did you attend political studies on the Paris peace talks?

- Personally, I didn't attend any such studies.

28. Did you attend any sessions to discuss about the Paris peace talks at your agency?

- Brief mention was made about the meeting of delegates at the conference table and what had been achieved, that's about all.

29. What was the purpose of these briefings?

- For information purposes only. We were told how far the talks had proceeded, how in view of the parties' (uncompromising) attitude, the negotiations were tied in a deadlock, and therefore, prospects for a negotiated settlement were nil.

30. What solution did your cadres offer?

- In their view, there was no other alternative to the setting up of a socialist regime in SVN. To do this, the Thieu regime would have to be eliminated. They said the new government for





SVN would be patterned on the North Vietnamese communist regime.

31. To achieve this goal, what did they say should be done? Which course of action should be taken: political struggle or war?

- According to our cadres, to achieve the goal set by the Party, it is necessary to resort to the use of military force, and so, war is the only sound course of action since political negotiations would get to nowhere.

32. Were study sessions held on the trail to keep you informed on developments at the peace talks conference?

- No. Now and then, as a meeting was in process in Paris, our cadres informed us about it, repeating what had already been said, namely, that the parties were entangled in a deadlock and there was no prospect for a breakthrough.

33. What did you think of this information?

- I believed it. I was convinced that since each party (to the talks) stuck to its stand, neither wanting to yield to the others, the talks were useless. Before my coming over to this side, I was very imbued with communism, and believed almost anything the cadres said.

34. Did you still believe your cadres after going through the hardships on the trail and experiencing war realities (in SVN)?



- No, I no longer believed them after that.

35. What did you believe then?

- Not certainly our cadres' words. However, if reports of victories were backed by concrete proofs such as the case with our military successes in South Eastern Laos, I was ready to accept them. Indeed, at the time, POW's captured in Laos were exhibited. I believed we did very well in Laos.

36. What did your cadres tell you about the Eight-Point Peace Plan advanced by the two governments of the RVN and the US on 26 January 1972?

- They didn't say anything about this.

37. Do you know well about any of the present Russian, Chinese or American leaders?

- I only know about the top leaders.

38. Who, for instance?

- For instance, the US president, Mr. Nixon, Premier Kossigyn and China's Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

39. Do you know anything about Chou-En-Lai and Liu Shao-chi?

- Liu Shao-chi was China's former Vice-president (sic) and Chou En-lai China's Prime Minister.

40. Do the other men in your unit know anything about these leaders?



- A lot of NVN people are familiar with these world leaders because their pictures often appear in the NVN press.

41. Would you be able to recognize them on pictures?

- Yes, sure. Even people who never read newspapers would because pictures of Communist leaders are often seen on posters at every way station.

42. What do you think of Nixon shaking hands with Mao Tse-tung?

- To me, the fact that Nixon and Mao are shaking hands means that there has been a rapprochement between their two countries with the view of finding a political solution to peaceful coexistence between the two nations.

43. Do you think the US-China rapprochement will benefit or hurt NVN?

- It will greatly hurt NVN. At a time when the NVN government demands that the NVN people make greater sacrifices and send more men to fight the US imperialists, the US-China rapprochement is like a stab in the NVN people's back. On the other hand, although the Paris peace talks are still on, the Party has announced that they will not bring any result, and that only the use of force will help win the war. In view of such belligerent stand from the Party, the US-China entente, the goal of which is to help restore peace, is directly contrary to the Party's objectives. As a result, faith in

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the Party is greatly shattered.

48. Do you think the US-China rapprochement will result in disunity within the communist camp?

- Yes, it certainly will. For one thing, the Lao Dong Party does not approve of this new venture, and the Soviet Union has already violently attacked China for its new stand.

49. What did your cadres tell you about these new world developments. What explanations did they give?

- They didn't utter a word on this topic. They knew that a discussion on new world developments will certainly adversely affect the troops' morale.

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the party is greatly increased.

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it is increasing in number.

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