

**COMITE INTERNATIONAL TRAN VAN BA**  
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**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON VIETNAM**

**Paris – December 1987**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION – COMITE INTERNATIONAL TRAN  
VAN BA**

**THE LEGACY OF VIETNAM**



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Major Western participation in Vietnam ended fifteen years ago. However, the world continues to suffer from the negative consequences of this terrible war which raged in the region for over thirty years.

Many people are no longer conscious of the role which the settlement of the Vietnam War plays in their daily lives, but the failure of international diplomacy still weighs heavily on world-wide public opinion. Its impact on governmental decision making in the Western democracies is pervasive.

Today the Vietnamese government prevents a peaceful balance of power in Asia. Vietnam's expansionist tendencies are clear: it has occupied Cambodia and Laos. Its concession of strategic bases to the Soviet Union is extremely dangerous in light of Vietnam's continued dominant presence in the region.

Several generations of Vietnamese have been sacrificed. Thousands of foreigners have lost their lives in Indochina. Vietnam is the catalyst for violence and hopelessness throughout the region.

Moreover, the original conflict has not yet been resolved. When will the complexities of this interminable problem be clarified? How can the Free World, particularly the United States and Europe, overcome their "Post Vietnam" syndromes in order to cope with serious crises erupting in the Third World?

Current media coverage of Vietnam focuses primarily on the "Boat People" drama. Tragic as their plight is, they are not the only "Forgotten Men" who continue to struggle for liberty.

The realities of a communist dictatorial regime and Western indifference towards its far-reaching significance must be analyzed in depth. What remains of the commitment of the Free World to liberty and human rights in Vietnam? Is a reversal of its totalitarian regime foreseeable?

Through the Symposium, the directing Committees hope to lay to rest some of the myths which continue to surround the War to bring to

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the more objectives lessons which may be gleaned from that experience, and to alleviate the Vietnam syndrome which has hampered democracies, particularly the United States, from pursuing and defending their national interests, and from promoting democracy generally.

During the Symposium, the attention of the participants and the public will be focused not only on what may be done to reverse the Vietnamese-Soviet subjugation of Indochina, but also on the best means of fostering democratic resistance movements world-wide.

## Directors of the Symposium

The two committees directing the symposium are well-equipped to mount such a project.

The lead organisation is the Comite International Tran Van Ba, founded by Tran Van Tong, son of the late South Vietnamese patriot, Tran Van Van.

(The Committee takes its own name from Tong's brother, who was executed in 1985 by the North Vietnamese after leading an armed democratic resistance movement for several years.)

Along with Tong, Jean-François Revel is taking a major role in guiding the Symposium to success. Other directors of the Comite International are Edward Behr, Cao Trieu Phong, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Olivier Todd.

The American adjunct to the Comite International is the Committee to Rethink Vietnam. Midge Decter is its chairman, and Blair Dorminey is its secretary and executive director.

Other directors of the Committee to Rethink Vietnam include Peter Braestrup, William F. Buckley Jr., Jeane Kirkpatrick, Neal Kozodoy, Hilton Kramer, Irving Kristol, Guenter Lewy, Douglas Pike, Norman Podhoretz, AL Santoli, Robert Scalapino, Adm. James Stockdale, Col. Harry Summers and George Will. Most will actively participate in the Symposium.

## Participants

At this early date, the committees have already received a very strong response to their invitations to participate. Among many other distinguished participants, Henry Kissinger has definitively agreed to take part in the Symposium. We are also very hopeful of securing the participation of Richard Nixon, Dean Rusk and Robert Mc Namara, as well as other leading decision-makers of the Vietnam era.



Comité International Trân Van Ba - Committee to Rethink Vietnam  
91, rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 75008 Paris 211, East 51st Street, Suite 11 A, New York, NY 10022

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM

Paris, 3 et 4 Décembre 1987

Fifteen years ago, in January 1973, the Paris Peace Accords were signed at the Avenue Kléber International Conference Center. They were meant to end the thirty year war in Vietnam and to establish "peace" in Indochina.

More than a decade later, and despite the sacrifice of several generations, the questions for which so many men died and so many resources were committed have yet to be satisfactorily resolved.

Politically and morally, the world continues to suffer the consequences of the Vietnam War.

The Comité International Trân Van Ba and the Committee to Rethink Vietnam are the organizers of the International Conference on Vietnam held at the Avenue Kléber International Conference Center on December 3 and 4, 1987.

### Directors of the Conference

The Comité International Trân Van Ba is a registered not-for-profit French association (loi 1901). Created in 1984 when the first major show trials following the fall of Saigon were being mounted by the Communist regime in Vietnam, the Comité's aim is to find the ways and means of permitting a return to democracy and freedom in Vietnam. In addition, it promotes and supports democratic resistance movements struggling against totalitarianism.

The President of the Comité is Trân Van Tong. The Board of Directors is comprised of the following: Edward Behr, Jacques Broyelle, Cao Trieu Phong, Françoise Gautier, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Sabine Renault-Sablionière, Jean-François Revel, Olivier Todd.

The Committee to Rethink Vietnam is a United States not-for-profit corporation devoted to learning and sharing with the American public the strategic lessons of the Vietnam War, and to promoting the protection and advancement of the world-wide interests of the United States.

The Chairman of the Committee is Midge Decter, the Executive Director is Blair Dorminey. The Board of Directors is comprised of the following: Peter Braestrup, William F. Buckley Jr, Albert Jolis, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Neal Kozodoy, Hilton Kramer, Irving Kristol, Guenter Lewy, Douglas Pike, Norman Podhoretz, Al Santoli, Robert Scalapino, Adm. James Stockdale ret., Col. Harry Summers Jr, George Will.

### Objectives of the Conference

The directing Committees hope to accomplish several related objectives:

- to promote a general re-examination of the Vietnam War and its consequences;
- to catalyze a major change in world opinion about the nature, scope and immediacy of the Communist totalitarian threat and the means required to counter it;
- to focus attention not only on what may be done to reverse the Vietnamese-Soviet subjugation of Indochina, but also on the best means of fostering resistance movements world-wide;
- to contribute to the intellectual foundation in democracies of public policies that will facilitate and promote effective national and international action on behalf of individual political and economic liberty around the world.

### Funding for the Conference

The directing Committees gratefully acknowledge those who generously supported the Conference:

Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Committee for the Free World

Smith Richardson Foundation

John M. Olin Foundation

Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation

Ligue des Vietnamiens Nationalistes

Sir James Goldsmith,

*Secrétariat d'État aux droits de l'homme - France*