

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION, WITH AMERICAN INFLUENCE: THE 1970 SENATORIAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF [SOUTH]VIETNAM AND THE OPINIONS AND BEHAVIOR OF VOTERS.

NHÂN NGÀY LỄ ĐỘC LẬP JULY 4, CỦA HOA KỲ, VỚI BẢN TUYÊN NGÔN ĐỘC LẬP LÙNG DANH, XIN NHẮC ĐẾN ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA LÝ TƯỞNG TỰ DO CỦA NÓ TẠI VIỆT NAM.
Hồ chí Minh viết Tuyên ngôn Độc Lập cho Việt Nam năm 1945 đã viện dẫn câu của Tuyên Ngôn Độc lập Mỹ “mọi người sinh ra bình đẳng ...có các quyền Tạo hóa ban cho không thể mất là quyền sống, quyền tự do và quyền theo đuổi hạnh phúc.”, nhưng hậu duệ của ông chưa thực hiện được quyền tự do dân chủ trong nước Việt Nam thống nhất, như chính con ông Lê Duẩn nói trong bài dưới đây. Tại Miền Nam Việt Nam trước năm 1975, Mỹ đã khuyến khích được một giai đoạn thực sự dân chủ, tuy ngắn ngủi và bị chấm dứt hay suy giảm với cuộc độc diễn năm 1971, như bài sau đây minh chứng.

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ABSTRACT

Prefacing and ending with brief summaries of the political history of South Vietnam (1954-75), this paper focuses on the 1970 Senatorial elections, studied through a pre-election poll and an exit poll of 875 voters in the capital city of Saigon (probably the only political poll, during that period, conducted independently by a non-governmental group of researchers under the guidance of a professor of social science research methods). The analysis of the results of the polls show that (1) Even the population sample is not idealistically a stratified random sample of the whole nationwide population, the study can predict correctly the outcome with the three victorious slates of candidates, although with a slight difference in ranking.; (2) that the mass followings of the two dominant religious forces, the Catholics and the Buddhists, and their prominent personalities, were the factors in their slates' respective victories, with the 'third force' Buddhists being the strongest political force in society and the number one victor in the elections, even they were anti-government and ran against a government-supported slate of candidates; this latter, even with the full force of government help, came second to the Buddhist slate, and the interviewed voters said they voted for the Buddhist slate because besides its religious (Buddhist) representativeness , the voters wanted peace represented by the Buddhists' position; and that (3) the Buddhists were victorious despite the fact that they did not use so much the campaign means (interviews in the press, posters and banderoles) as the other slates, and despite that they were heavily criticized in many articles in the newspapers, but they fiercely condemned the government.

It is interesting to note that this free and fair election, encouraged by US Ambassador Bunker, was the climactic development of democracy in South Vietnam, which incipient democracy, unfortunately, was to be killed---even before the Communist troops overran South Vietnam in 1975--by President Nguyen Van Thieu just one year later, in 1971, when he ran a one-man show of presidential elections.

After the Geneva Conference divided Vietnam (supposedly only temporarily) into two parts in mid-1954 and during the 20-year existence (1955-1975) of the Republic of Vietnam (or South Vietnam), supported diplomatically and economically by the United States, there were two periods of political development in South Vietnam with different degrees of American influence.

The first Republic was declared in 1955 when Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem overthrew Chief of State/ex-Emperor Bao Dai (who was in France) in a referendum, with the approval of more than 90% voters!!! . In 1956, a Constitution was promulgated which vested executive power in the President and legislative power the National Assembly, but there was no independent judiciary because all judges, including those in the Highest Court called Court of Cassation – in the French tradition-- were appointed by the President and managed by the Ministry of Justice. While the United States provided economic aid and advice in police and administrative reform (through the Michigan State University group), the US military aid program up until president Johnson's days was mainly advisory (through the MAAG-V, or Military

Assistance Advisory Group-Vietnam) (President Diem resisted importation of American combat troops into Vietnam) and the Americans left much of the internal political development to the Ngo brothers, the President and his political advisor Ngo Dinh Nhu, who fought and won over the armies of the Binh Xuyen sect and the religious sects of Cao Dai and Hoa Hao, then eliminated a number of other nationalist leaders from the scene and tried to establish a strong man regime—without much American prodding toward a more genuine democracy—probably because of American priority in fighting Asian Communism with strong men (the same policy was pursued in South Korea, for example). It was in this context that one of the two only opposition candidates for the National Assembly in 1959, Dr. Phan Quang Dan, who was elected from District 2 of the Capital of Saigon, with the nationally largest number of votes of about 35,000, in a victory over Mr. Pham Van Thung of the government Can Lao Party (with only about 5,000 votes, even including the votes of all the presidential guards and a paratroop unit brought into the Capital by the government), was not permitted to sit in the Assembly. On the opening day of the Assembly, Dr. Dan was stopped by the police at Cau Bong Bridge by the Gia Dinh Province police and “invited” to the police station by its Chief for a talk. Only after Dr. Dan was detained would President Diem go to the National Assembly to open the session of the New Assembly. During the electoral campaign, the Can Lao party used government trucks to transport supporters for its candidate to meetings and to gather and destroy leaflets distributed by Dr. Dan’s campaign, to take down Dr. Dan’s posters at night time and to come and smash the headquarters of Thoi Luan Newspaper for which Dr. Dan was editor. Later, a court nullified Dr. Dan’s victory on the pretext that he committed electoral fraud by “bribing” the voters with free medical service. Can Lao party candidate Mr. Thung was declared winner. Other opposition leaders who could not use the loyal opposition strategy in the National Assembly established the Caravelle Group in 1960. As for Dr. Dan, the pioneer in democratic development in South Vietnam, he was later imprisoned on Con Dao island for participating in a failing military coup d’etat of the paratroopers on November 11, 1960 (Details provided by US Immigration Court Judge Phan Quang Tue, son of Dr. Phan Quang Dan).. Vis-à-vis North Vietnam, President Diem had previously stopped negotiations on holding national elections over the whole country for national reunification, provided for by the 1954 Geneva Accord, and therefore, also in this year of 1960, the Communists established the National Front for Liberation of the South (Mat Tran Giai Phong Mien Nam)..

In 1961, “the National Assembly had surrendered its power to the Executive, and Ngo Dinh Diem became a dictator”, in the words of a 1968 study of the US Agency for International Development, Saigon Vietnam (THE CONSTITUTION OF 1 APRIL 1967 AND ANALYSIS, at p.2). The Ngo brothers continued their nepotism regime until it was overthrown by the military in November 1963 in the wake of the government suppression of the rights of freedom of religion of the Buddhists (such as hanging Buddhist flags) who revolted in street demonstrations and self-immolations. Although President Kennedy declared on national television that a change in personnel in Saigon might be necessary for continuing the war effort against the Communists (meaning the departure of brother Nhu), he was astounded when informed that President Diem was killed in the coup, and Ambassador Frederick Nolting (the predecessor of Henry Cabot Lodge) was strongly supportive of President Diem, and we cannot assess accurately the degree of American influence or encouragement in this 1963 coup (through the CIA, at the operational level of contact with the Vietnamese generals). The point being made here is: the American effort at exerting influence on Vietnamese political development at this stage was still minimum.

The above minimal political intervention policy of the Americans prior to 1964 was changed to more active American pressure on the Vietnamese toward political accountability and democracy in the second Republic of (South) Vietnam, that started from the 1966 National Constituent Assembly which drafted and promulgated the April 1 1967 Constitution. Indeed, during the military regimes that quickly succeeded one another in coups and countercoups from November 1963/beginning 1964 to the 1967 Constitution (intermittent with a short civilian government in 1964), Ambassador Maxwell Taylor gave the Vietnamese generals a dressing down when they talked about coup.

In June 1965, the civilian leaders, due to an agreement between Chief of State Phan Khac Suu and Prime Minister Phan Huy Quat, turned power to the military. South Vietnam lived under the Provisional Charter (Hien Uoc Tam Thoi) with a military government with two governing institutions: Committee for National Leadership (Uy Ban lanh Dao Quoc Gia), consisting of the junta headed by General Nguyen Van Thieu, and The Central Executive Committee (Uy Ban Hanh Phap Trung Uong), i. e. the cabinet, that ran the executive branch. After many demands for re-civilianizations by many groups, especially the strong demands of the Buddhists, the military government had political consultative conference and then

organized the election of a National Constituent Assembly on September 1, 1966, which then drafted a new Constitution, proclaimed on April 1, 1967.

Within this Vietnamese context, when Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker came to Vietnam in 1967--for his tour of duty until 1973--he immediately showed interest in the Asia Foundation's program of helping strengthen the new constitutional government, legal reform, court modernization and upgrading of the civil service.. Ambassador Bunker's approach was more diplomatic and more respectful of the Vietnamese sensibilities, but, as Dr. Douglas Pike, the late and beloved Director of the Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University, wrote in his Introduction to the BUNKER'S PAPERS: REPORTS TO THE PRESIDENT FROM VIETNAM, 1967-1973 (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California/Berkeley, 1990), "as evident throughout, Bunker held an unshakable faith in what he was doing, a firm belief that good, representative government was the only barrier against the encroachments of those South Vietnamese of narrow interest seeking to protect their own political fiefdoms, just as he regarded democratic self-determination as the only enduring safeguard against the tyranny of collectivism. He recognized the great educational value of the franchise and constantly urged the Saigon leadership to trust the people with the gravest questions as a means of educating them in civic values" (at p. xv).

Dr. Pike further described Ambassador Bunker's work for promoting democracy in Vietnam: "The focus of activity, for Bunker in particular, was to be on domestic Vietnamese matters, the war being a steadily diminishing factor. It seemed possible, and such was the American expectation, that South Vietnam would move from a military directorate to constitutional government, that Generals Nguyen Cao Ky and Nguyen Van Thieu would be succeeded by a civilian government chosen through universal franchise and centered on a National Assembly. There was no precedent for this in Vietnam's history".

"Bunker was seen as history's instrument in this process. He was to advise and assist, nudge and cajole, this new governing system into existence. What Vietnam required was the formation of modern political parties ... What was also required was building modern institutions of government—the National Assembly above all, served by a competent bureaucracy—but also a political communication system to link the center with the province, the district, and most importantly, with the villages of Vietnam, where lived eighty percent of all Vietnamese. To these ends he dedicated himself"

"Bunker's greatest contribution—which tragically came to naught in the end—was in helping to build this South Vietnam "second republic", the government that followed Ngo Dinh Diem. Enormous institutional progress was made in this effort, amply demonstrated and conveyed in these cables."

Unlike the Bush administration which, in the October 2005 National Intelligence Strategy of the US, proclaimed that "to bolster the growth of democracy...the [US] Intelligence Community... must support diplomatic and military efforts (including pre- and post-conflict) when intervention is necessary", Bunker at that time, Dr. Pike pointed out, "suffered none of the arrogance of power that tended to characterize some American officials. 'In large part,' he wrote in cable four, 'the job must be done by the Vietnamese themselves', a theme repeated throughout the subsequent cables"

"Certainly his account here puts to rest any lingering notion historians might have that Saigon was a mere American puppet, reflexibly obeying orders handed down from the embassy or from Washington"... "The reportage here makes clear just how much progress was achieved" (pp.xiv-xv)

South Vietnam's 1967 Constitution guaranteed citizens' fundamental rights, in the same manner as the American Bill of Rights. It copied the American system of checks and balances between the three branches of government, with this difference: it set up a mixed presidential-parliamentary regime. Separation of powers was recognized between the legislative, executive and judicial. The legislature has two chambers, as in the United States, and unlike the Ngo Dinh Diem regime: the Lower House, with representatives serving a 4-year term, and the Senate, with 60 Senators serving a 6-year term (but one half or 30 Senators to be elected every three years). The Supreme Court was independent from the other branches, with judicial review power, like in the US, and differently from the Court of Cassation under Ngo Dinh Diem (However, the appointment of the 9 to 15 justices were from three lists of 30 nominees from the judiciary, the prosecution and the bar association.). Lower court judges were under the management of the Supreme Court.. The parliamentary aspect of the regime meant that the National Assembly had the right to summon the prime minister and other government officials to testify and answer questions, and can pass a vote of no-confidence against the government by a 2/3 majority vote, and then if the president vetoes such resolution, can override him by a 3/4 majority vote. The Constitution recognized political parties and the formation of political opposition.

Within the above constitutional framework, the first elections were carried out in 1967 for the Lower House and the Senate, and the President and Vice President, with many contestants in a free for all election process. The elections, a kind of “let a hundred flowers bloom” situation, were held under the scrutiny of international observers, and particularly the American dominant presence. The military junta, freshly recovering from another Buddhist protest in 1966 for democracy in Central Vietnam, had difficulty at first of reconciling the presidential ambitions of both Chairman Nguyen Van Thieu and Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky whose position was strengthened vis-à-vis Thieu after his show of determined strongman’s approach in suppressing the Buddhists through a military campaign in Central Vietnam. But facing the other civilian candidates for the Presidency and Vice Presidency in a contested election, and fearing they would lose in a fair election, the junta generals forced them to join in one slate with Thieu as Presidential candidate and Ky as his Vice-presidential running mate. This worry on the part of the military showed that they did not dare to run a rigged election, and to avoid defeat, the military decided to have only one slate of candidates for the executive branch. And they won, after heavy campaigning among all sections of society, especially within the armed forces, with such motto as “an cay nao rao cay ay” (you should take care of the tree that gives you fruit), meaning the military men should vote for Thieu and Ky.

When the 1970 election of half of the Senate came, the political process in Vietnam seemed to be destined to be mature and fair, and therefore, the great masses of the Buddhists—wounded in the 1966 suppression-- decided to abandon their election boycott strategy of 1967 and to launch a full-scale, nationwide campaign for the Senate. The Buddhists were encouraged by the American officers in the political section of the US Embassy to join the game of democracy, in order not to miss the boat of democratic government and become part of the ruling class. I know it for a fact, because my brother-in-law Bui Tuong Huan, close to Monk Tri Quang—the monk whom the Time Magazine cover article in 1963 dubbed “The Man Who Shook America”(for leading the Buddhist protest then)-- was one of the Buddhist leaders who was thus encouraged by the Americans, and I knew that Huan was pleading with another man to head the Buddhist slate of candidates: Law Professor Vu Van Mau, also known to me as my former professor and colleague at the Saigon Law School, and nationally renown for his shaving of his head in 1963 to protest the Diem regime’s suppression of the Buddhists in that year and resigning his position as Foreign Minister of President Diem. At this juncture in 1970, the game of democracy had the full participation of all population strata and political forces in South Vietnam., including the Buddhists, the only force with the great masses that had up to that time stayed on the sideline (while other forces such as the Catholics, the other religions and the political parties already participated since 1967). That is why I choose this 1970 SENATORIAL ELECTION as case study of DEMOCRACY IN ACTION in South Vietnam.

The following study is the result of polling 875 voters in Districts 3 and 10 among the 11 districts of the Capital of Saigon, before and after the August 1970 election of half of the Senate. The limitations of the population sample for study were due to time constraint and budget limit. But it is worthwhile to preserve the data collected in this poll, because the polling was probably the only political poll in the 20-year history of South Vietnam, as I was the first professor who wrote the only published (1974) textbook on social science research methods in South Vietnam (and probably the only one, because the textbook was later used by the new regime for survey, beginning in 1985, and a copy was given to Chairman Pham Nhu Cuong of the State Committee for Social Sciences in 1991 when he visited Harvard and declared that “from now on, we do research to have data for policy making and no more do research to justify policy already made”). Probably I was the only non-governmental pollster at the time and the only pollster who studied a political event, with the help of students of social science research methods (Other surveys during this 20-year history of South Vietnam –if any-- were mainly on social and economic facts, done by government agencies)

PART 1. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND STRATEGY FOR CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

Initially, we should ascertain the meaning of this study and describe the polling and method of analysis, as these would affect the validity of the findings.

In this 1970 Senatorial election in South Vietnam, the voters were to choose 3 slates of 10 candidates each, among the 16 running slates, to fill the 30 vacating seats, or half, of the Senate.

- A. MEANING OF THE STUDY. The poll was based on a questionnaire with 3 questions: (1) What slate of candidates will you (or did you) vote for, among the 16 slates? (2) Please tell your reason for that vote? (3) Through what means did you get to know and like that slate of candidates?

At the end of the answers, the pollsters would have to note these data about the voters : sex, approximate age (21-30,31-40,41-50,or above 51), occupation and educational level (if feasible), religion and party/group affiliation (if feasible).

Tabulation of the answers to the first question (votes given to a slate of candidates) would predict the ranking of slates for possible victory, in order of first place, second place etc..We might assess the predicting capacity of this kind of poll. This capacity for prediction would depend very much on three requirements: (a) no fraud in election process; (b) the sample of 875 voters must be representative of the various population strata in the whole country; if the sample was biased, then the result would be limited in validity; (c) the respondents must answer truthfully about their votes; this would depend on the skill of the pollster who must be adept at eliciting the answer and also on the political atmosphere as to whether it permitted revealing truthfully the voters' thinking.

Tabulation of the answers to the second question (reasons for the vote) would inform about the voting behavior of Vietnamese, at least of the urban population. This study of social psychology would be the first step toward the understanding of the political thinking of the Vietnamese population and would help the political practitioners in their activities.

Tabulation of the relationships between social factors such as sex, age, occupation, educational level, religion, party/group affiliation on the one hand and their votes on the other would inform us about those relationships.

Finally, tabulation of the answers to the third question (means to get to know about the candidates: press, television etc...) would suggest which media would be most effective in politics in Vietnam. Media communication is the central element in the political culture of a country.

We would not discuss election laws, the ways the government organized the elections, platform and methods of campaigning, fund raising and expenses etc..

B.STRATEGY FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH.

To realize the above aims, the ideal survey strategy must satisfy three conditions: (1) there must be based on a representative random sample of voters from each district of all the provinces to reflect the various population strata in the country ; (2) the respondents must answer candidly about their attitude; (3) no fraud in the elections. Only with these conditions can one be sure that the prediction of the voting results and the description of the voters' behavior are reliably correct

In this survey project within Saigon, we could, for the narrow purpose of predicting local results in Saigon, discount fraud because there was no indication of fraud within the capital city (condition 3). As for the voters' truthful answers, this investigator had trained carefully the student assistants in the art of eliciting the sincere cooperation of the voters in their answers. Of course, in the then political atmosphere of Vietnam, it was difficult to completely get rid of the masses' nervousness in order to reach their candid political thoughts, and acts; but the pollsters introduced themselves as students in field research practice on social survey, for a journalism class, and thus they easily secured the cooperation of the interviewees. Also, Capital urban dwellers dared to speak up their minds, not hiding their thoughts in fear like peasants. Therefore we could trust the sincerity of the voters' answers (condition 2). But we must say (as to condition no. 1) that 875 voters from Districts 3 and 10 of Saigon were slanted toward urban dwellers with higher educational level and political consciousness—without the presence of small town and countryside residents who were certainly less educated and having less access to information and media. This means that the capacity for predicting the nationwide voting results from this survey would be greatly reduced. But the survey had to be restricted to a small sampling in Saigon by the limit of available time (only one week) and finance, due to the late decision on a small funding of the survey project by the funding authority—which also would not approve our suggestion of interviewing also in a few rural districts just outside Saigon. As a Vietnamese saying does, “poverty limits wisdom”. The ideal sample would be a collection of interviewees belonging to different categories of people reflecting the nationwide percentage distribution of the population into various categories in terms of sex, age, occupation, educational level, religion, party/group affiliation and without such a stratified sample, we could not tabulate the survey results and then extrapolate and wisely predict nationwide voting results or describe the voters' behavior in South Vietnam as a whole. Not only poverty, but the lack of reliable nationwide statistics on various population strata vitiated against the selection of a nationwide stratified sample. Our group of pollsters could only make a conscious effort to make the selection of 875 voters less biased by varying the choices of interviewees in terms of sex (half male and half female), age (belonging to all age groups—by looking at the targets before approaching them), occupation and educational level and religion (by post-interview

questions on these factors). The practical measures for getting to a more representative sample were to walk to different streets where clustered different categories of people: residential, small business/shopping area, industrial/manufacturing area, slum, middle class area with villas, different religious habitation areas (example: Catholic or Buddhist inhabitant concentrations), and then in each street, to choose every 10th household to come in to interview; one inside the house, to look for people of different sex, age, educational level etc.. This kind of adjusted sample of voters can help describe and describe voting behavior better, but there would be still limitations because it is not a nationwide representative stratified random sample.

PART II. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the poll will be presented in 4 sections: (1) Will the sample of 875 voters permit some prediction of the outcome of the elections? (2) Would the reasons adduced by voters for their votes inform us about their opinion and voting behavior? (3) Will the social background of the voters explain that opinion and that behavior? (4) With what ways and means did the candidates make themselves known to the voters?

SECTION 1. WILL THE POLL PERMIT PREDICTION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION?

Before the election date, we interviewed 755 voters and summarized in Table I to test the predictive capacity of the survey.

After the election, we interviewed 120 more voters who already cast the real votes, to see the need for any modification of findings and these votes were combined with the intended votes of the previous 755 interviewees to constitute Table II. The integration of the votes did not change the order of vote getting of the slates of candidates, the only change being the percentage of non-participating citizens (no opinion, hiding opinion or non-voting) decreased a little bit from 25.8% to 25%. In other words, the additional 120 interviews were not necessary. Provided that we have a representative sample of the electorate who answered truthfully, there is no need for a post-election poll (or exit poll) which merely confirmed the pre-election poll.

Table I. Votes that 755 citizens said before the election that they would cast for the slates of candidates

Order in which the slates, identified by name of the leader, lined up as winner	Number of planned votes
1. Nguyen Van Huyen (mainly catholic members) (symbol:Bong Hue or Lily)	285
2. Vu Van Mau (mainly Buddhist members) (symbol:Hoa Sen or Lotus)	254
3. Huynh Van Cao (Government-supported) (symbol: Mat Troi or The Sun)	99
4. Nguyen Cao Hach (supported by one Buddhist group:Quoc Tu) (symbol:Ca or fish)	93
5. Nguyen Phuoc Dai (lawyers, professional) (symbol: Lu Dong or incense burner)	80
6. Nguyen Ngoc Huy (Cap Tien political party) (symbol: Bo cau Nong dan or pigeon/peasant)	54
7. Truong Vinh Le (supported by ethnic Chinese) (symbol: Cai Nha or the house)	49
8. Truong Cong Cuu (symbol: Me bong Con or mother and child)	45
9. Nguyen Huu To (symbol: Nong Cong Binh or peasant-worker-soldier)	41
10. Nguyen Dai Bang (symbol: Ba Bong Sen or Three Lotus)	39
11. Nguyen Anh Tuan (symbol: Ky lan or Unicorn)	36
12. Nguyen Gia Hien (symbol: Sao Sang or Bright Star)	35
13. Nguyen Tien Hy (symbol: Ba Cay Chum Lai or Cluster of 3 trees)	26
14. Phan Ba Cam (Hoa Hao religion) (Symbol: Ga gay sang or Crowing Cock)	20
15. Nguyen Van Canh (Dai Viet Party) (Symbol: Bong Lua or Rice Ear)	9
16. Nguyen Van Lai (Symbol: Chim Hoa Binh or Bird of Peace)	9
Voters who would not cast for any slate (Non-participating interviewees)	
a. No opinion yet but will vote with family or on some criterion or just drop "any vote"	132
b. Would not reveal opinion	20
c. Would not go to the poll booth or would cast blank vote (no confidence in election or candidate)	43
Total a,b,and c	195 (25.8%)

Table II. Combined number of would-be votes and actually cast votes of 875 interviewees (pre-and post-election)

Order in which the slates lined up as winner	Combined number of expected and cast votes
1. N V Huyen	336
2. V V Mau	309
3. H V Cao	115
4. N C Hach	107
5. N P Dai	90
6. N N Huy	74
7. T V Le	68
8. T C Cuu	57
9. N H To	56
10. N D Bang	44
11. N A Tuan	42
12. N G Hien	39
13. N T Hy	31
14. P B Cam	23
15. N V Canh	12
16. N V Lai	9
Non-participating interviewees	
a. No opinion (before election)	132
b. Hiding opinion (before and after election)	27
c. Not coming to voting booth or casting blank vote	59
Total of a,b, and c	218 (25%)

In Table III, we compare the actual votes cast in Saigon and nationwide (left and right columns B and C) with our survey result (middle column A), noting the degrees of error or deviation of our survey result on the 2 sides of the middle column

B. Actual votes in Saigon	A. Survey result in 2 districts of Saigon	C. Actual votes /nationwide	
	Deviation degrees	Deviation degrees	
	(must count up or down from survey to find actual ranking of slate)		
	< being doing down; > being going up		
1. Huyen 121,069	: 0	1. NV Huyen <2	: 1. Mau 1,149,597
2. Le 94,251	: <1	2. V V Mau >1	: 2. Cao 1,106,288
3..Mau 88,291	: <3	3. H V Cao >1	: 3. Huyen 882,274
4 Huy 81,226	: <10	4. N C Hach <12	: 4. Le 800,453
5. Dai 50,420	: 0	5.N.P.Dai <4	: 5. Huy 654,833
6. Cao 47,717	: >2	6. N N Huy >1	: 6 Canh 628,922
7. Bang 45,510	: >5	7.T V Le >3	: 7. Bang 611,351
8. Lai 37,464	: <2	8. TC Cuu 0	: 8. Cuu 591,258
9. Tuan 32,318	: <2	9. N H To <5	: 9. Dai 533,692
10. Cuu 31,380	: >3	10. N D Bang >3	: 10. Lai 492,131
11. To 30,028	: >2	11. N A Tuan <4	: 11. Cam 453,168
12. Cam 30,011	: <1	12. N G Hien 0	: 12 Hien 430,465
13. Hien 29,450	: <3	13 N T Hy 0	: 13. Hy 439,688
14. Hach 28,345	: >2	14. P B Cam >3	: 14 To 399,767
15. Canh 26,238	: 0	15 N V Canh >9	: 15. Tuan 342,416
16 Hy 20,604	: >8	16.N V Lai >6	: 16 Hach 320,365
Non-participant 41%	: Non-participant 25%	: Non-participant 34%	

Comparing the survey result in the middle column with the two actual results in Saigon and nationwide, we noted, in the middle column, the deviation in the ranking of the results: if there was no deviation, or the result of the survey was similar to the actual votes, we would write down 0 as the degree of deviation, but if there was a deviation of the votes in the survey and the actual votes, we would write down two numbers next to survey result to indicate how many steps counting up or down from the ranking of the slate in question in our survey, to discover the real ranking of that slate in the actual vote results in Saigon and nationwide. Zero (0) means that our survey predicted very well. Deviation of 1 to 2 degrees means the

survey was good. Deviation of 3-4 degrees means the survey is just average. Deviation of more than 5 steps means the survey was poor. We adopt this lenient assessment of the accuracy of the survey because *the 1970 election of the Senate in Vietnam was not like a typical election in the United States between two or three candidates only, while in Vietnam there were 16 slates of candidates, and the difference of a few hundred votes would change the ranking of the slates drastically, even many steps up or down in the ranking. It is easier to predict the result of a US election with only two candidates for each position.* Even given this difficulty of predicting the exact ranking among 16 slates of candidates with only a non-representative sample in only two districts of the urban area of the capital of Saigon, *we have at least predicted correctly the 3 victorious slates of candidates in the nationwide elections: Nguyen Van Huyen, Vu Van Mau and Huynh Van Cao, although with the slight difference in ranking.*

Going a little further into detail, comparing the survey result from two districts of Saigon (Column A) and the actual result of the votes in all 11 districts of Saigon (in Column B), we see that for 3 slates of candidates (Huyen, Dai, Canh), there was no deviation in ranking between the survey votes and the actual votes; for 7 slates, there was the deviation in ranking of 1 or 2 steps (Le, Cao, Lai, Tuan, To, Cam, Hach); for 3 slates with deviation of 3-4 steps, and for 3 slates, there was deviation beyond 5 steps.

Comparing the survey result in two districts of Saigon (column A) and the actual result nationwide (column C), we see that for 3 slates (Cuu, Hien, Hy), there was no deviation in ranking between the survey votes and the actual votes; for 4 slates, there was a deviation in ranking of 1-2 steps; for 5 slates, a deviation of 3-4 steps; and for 4 slates, a deviation of 5 steps.

Evaluating the predictive capacity of the sample from 2 districts for all the 16 slates, we can say that the sample, even not representative, has a higher predictive capacity for the actual result in Saigon than for the actual result in the whole country. This is understandable because the sample of two urban districts of Saigon would be more closely reflecting the real attitude of the urban voters in Saigon. The deviation of the sample result from the actual voting result in Saigon was only 1-2 steps for 10 of the 16 slates of candidates. But if remember that the ultimate and truly useful purpose of this kind of political poll is not the accurate ranking of all the 16 slates of candidates, but **the prediction of which 3 among the 16 slates would come out with the most votes and become victorious as senators, then our sample had predicted correctly at least for Huyen and Mau in Saigon and for all three, Mau, Cao and Huyen, in the whole country (again with a slight difference in ranking). And this shows also that the 1970 Senatorial elections were the freest and fairest in the history of political development of Vietnam.**

We would like to use some hypotheses derived from some data *to explain here the big deviations of more than 5 steps* in the predictions concerning the slates of N C Hach, T.V Le, N.V. Lai and N V Canh. NC Hach slate was supported by the Buddhists of the Quoc Tu wing, consisting of Vietnamese who were refugees from North Vietnam in 1954 and who were living in concentration in districts 3 and 10; therefore its ranking was high in the survey of districts 3 and 10; but these Buddhists of the Quoc Tu wing did not have followers in other districts and therefore the actual result in Saigon for it was rank 14; they did not have strong organization and/or many followers in the other areas or provinces of the country and therefore its actual rank nationwide was 16 (the lowest vote getter). Moreover, student interviewers might interview many other students who naturally supported law professor Nguyen Cao Hach for his personal prestige among them. This would be evident further in the later analysis which shows that Professor Hach had more supporters among university students than among high or elementary school graduates, in contrast to the other slates who got fewer votes from university students than high or elementary school graduates.

The survey prediction on T V Le was a 5-step deviation downward from the actual result in Saigon because the sample did not include the Vietnamese of Chinese descent in other districts of the Cho Lon Section of Saigon, where this slate spent enormous amount of money to hire campaign workers, wine and dine the Bang (clan) heads, and therefore the sample could not predict well the actual votes of this slate in Saigon.

The survey result deviated from the actual rank of N V Lai, with symbol: Bird of Peace, in Saigon and nationwide, by 6-8 steps because a lot of voters of lower education level mistook this slate for another slate headed by Professor Nguyen Ngoc Huy of "Nationalist Cap Tien Movement" Party, with symbol: Pigeon of Peace and Peasant, and voted for the Bird of Peace while thinking of the Pigeon of Peace, giving the former a windfall profit in votes (a proof was the first rank of Pigeon of Peace in Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces, followed by the second and third rank of Bird of Peace there). Moreover, some less knowledgeable Buddhist voters might have thought Mr. N.V. Lai was indeed a real monk and voted for him.

As for N.V. Canh slate (with symbol of Ear of Rice), the survey predicted correctly the rank in Saigon but deviated downward from the nationwide result by 9 steps, because in Central Vietnam, The Dai Viet Cach Mang Party had cadre spread the word among the population that the Buddhist clergy ordered that Buddhists should first support the Hoa Sen slate headed by Vu Van Mau and then secondly, support the the Ear of Rice slate (the technique of riding on the coattail); moreover, probably the Dai Viet Cach Mang Party was strong in Central Vietnam ; it was second in Thua Thien and Phu Yen Provinces, third in Hue City, Quang Nam and Quang Tri Provinces. Therefore, a survey in 2 districts of Saigon could not predict well the votes in Central Vietnam of this slate.

The survey also predicted the non-participation percentage of voters as 25%, far from the actual non-participation of 41% in Saigon and 34% nationwide. We detected the reason for this deviation: in the poll, the interviewees wanted to show off their knowledge about current events, and their opinions on the candidates, but on election day, they might not go to the poll due to laziness. Another reason was that the student interviewers met with quite a few people who refused to answer, did not have opinion or declared not in favor of any candidate, but then these students failed to record or count these people as part of the sample ; therefore the non-participation percentage in the sample was reduced. (The students reported this to me only after the interviews had already been conducted, so there was no way to correct the data tabulation). Although we did not predict correctly the non-participation percentage of voters, but we did predict there would be a sizeable percentage of non-participating voters (25%)—which was the general trend in a free election. In any case, the survey did collect the reasons for non-participation: no clear opinion on the candidates (knowing only one or two among the ten in a slate), no confidence in election (fraud?), no confidence in candidates (what can they do to change public affairs?) or no voting card.

SECTION II. THE REASONS FOR CHOOSING DIFFERENT SLATES OF CANDIDATES.

In this empirical research, we recorded faithfully the reasons adduced by the voters for their impending votes (755) or votes already cast (120) and then tabulates them in TABLE 4, in this order from most to least mention: (1) *the candidates' ability*, (2) *the candidates' moral quality*, (3) *personal sympathy*, (4) *populist platform*, (5) *representative of a religion*, (6) *influence of others*, (7) *anticommunist or neutral stand*, (8) *sex and age factors*, (9) *peace platform*, (10) *effort to introduce themselves to voters*.

TABLE 4. Reasons for choosing different slates of candidates.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1.N V Huyen	151	109	22	13	11	14	14	2	9	--
2. V V Mau	126	26	33	26	42	21	2	6	18	--
3. H V Cao	52	8	17	6	7	6	14	4	--	2
4. N C Hach	33	6	29	5	8	6	1	6	1	2
5. N P Dai	31	5	7	13	6	4	--	13	4	1
6. N N Huy	23	13	16	17	1	6	6	1	1	2
7. T V Le	18	3	8	4	--	4	4	4	--	2
8 T C Cuu	19	3	5	4	8	3	9	1	--	--
9. N H To	7	1	7	10	--	--	3	21	--	--
10.N D Bang	2	--	2	11	17	3	--	1	3	--
11.N A Tuan	18	--	2	2	--	5	--	8	2	1
12.N G Hien	8	2	9	2	4	--	15	--	--	--
13 N T Hy	8	2	--	7	--	6	5	2	--	--
14 P B Cam	11	1	5	2	--	1	1	1	--	--
15.N V Canh	3	--	1	2	--	--	--	1	1	2
16.N V Lai	1	1	2	1	2	1	--	--	--	1
Total of all slates	511	180	165	125	106	80	74	71	39	13
	(37.5%)	(13.2%)	(12.8%)	(9.2%)	(7.7%)	(5.8%)	(5.4%)	(5.2%)	(2.8%)	(1%)

Looking at this table, we see that the 3 most important criteria for voters' choice of candidates—ability, moral quality, personal sympathy—are all related to the personality of the candidates. They were mentioned 856 times (or 63.5% of the reasons adduced). The remaining 7 reasons, mainly representing the platform or stand of the slates of candidates (except somewhat reason 8 on sex and age and 10 on process

of introduction), were mentioned 36.5%. *The voting behavior was influenced more by the quality and personality of the candidates than by their platform.* In developing countries, personality counts more than political stand. This also conforms to the next conclusion: *the voters' religion influenced their votes, but religion must be supported by the candidates' personality.*

After this general observation, we have here several remarks on particular reasons for votes.

1. First, *the candidates' ability.* This meant educational level and professional achievement was mentioned by voters 511 times (or 37.% of the reasons adduced), referring to the ability of the head or members of the slate of candidates. Vietnamese voters at the time were practical, paying attention to the ability of the candidates to do their job in serving the public interest.

2. Second, *the candidates' moral quality.* Voters used such terms as “ethics”(dao duc), “integrity”(thanh liem), or “rectitude”(tu each dung dan) to describe the moral quality traits they said they had found in the candidates they chose. For example, voters chose the Lily (Bong Hue) slate because of the the moral quality--which they mentioned 109 times-- of the honest senior attorney Nguyen Van Huyen, the head of the slate, and of the resolute elder statesman status (“Ong gia gan”) of former Prime Minister Tran Van.Huong.

3. Third, *the personal sympathy for the candidates.* Recorded 165 times (or 12.8%) as the reasons adduced for voting, this sympathy might arise from acquaintance with the candidates, but in most cases was due to the relationship as students to the head of the slate in question. That was why V V Mau and N C Hach received 33 and 29 votes for this reason, more than other slates, including N V Huyen. N N Huy as head of his slate also received 16 votes for this reason of sympathy of students.

4. Reasons for voting number 4 to no.10 concern the platforms of the slates or other social characteristics of the slates as groups (such as in 8 and 10).

The reason no. 4 was *the populist stand*, embodied in voters' descriptions such as “opposition to the government”, “dedication to the people's interest”. It was mentioned 125 times (9.2% of reasons adduced). For the three opposition slates, it was mentioned more times than in the general trend: V V Mau (26 times), N N Huy (17 times) and N D Bang (11 times)

5. *The religious representativeness* of a slate, inducing the voters to vote for it as having the same religion as voters, such as Buddhism, Catholicism, or CaoDaism etc, was mentioned 106 times (7.7% of reasons adduced). The Buddhist voters clustered to the support of V V Mau (Lotus) and N D Bang (Three lotuses), 47 and 17 times respectively, showing that the Buddhist voters wanted them to represent the majority of the Vietnamese population who were Buddhists and who had not yet, up to that time, been adequately represented in the National Assembly, especially in the Senate. This observation on the religious representativeness of the members of the slates reinforces the below analysis (in SECTION III) of the impact of the religious background of the voters themselves.

6. The 6th factor, *the influence of others on the voters' choice*, was mentioned 80 times (5.8%, not very high percentage) and was mainly true for female voters, who would refer to the influence of “husband”, “father”, “brother”, or “eldest son” and only a few of whom would mention “public opinion in general”. Vietnamese women, especially the housewives, seldom had clear political ideas. Candidates would aim their campaign mainly at the adult males in a family.

7. *The anti-communist and anti-coalition stand* was listed because this election occurred during an anti-communist war in South Vietnam. But it was mentioned only 74 times (5.4%), a proof that anticommunism and anti-coalition were no longer vote-getting stand as before. Moreover, most of the voters who adduced this reason said their votes were to be for the Catholic slates of N V Huyen (14), H V Cao (14), N G Hien (15). The war-hawkish, anti-communist/anti-coalition image of this N G Hien slate (factor causing the receipt of 15 votes), as well as other factors influencing the votes for this slate (ability, 8; moral quality,2; personal sympathy, 9; populist stand,2) did not help this slate whose ranking was number 12 both in the survey and in actual voting result, nationwide; or number 13 in actual voting result in Saigon. *The people wanted peace, no more anti-communist war at any price.*

8. *The sex and age groupings of the candidates as vote-getting factor*, adduced as reasons for the voters to support them, were embodied in such descriptions as “the slate consists of young people”, “new people”, “intellectuals”, “with women”. This factor, not very important (mentioned 71 times, or 5.3%), did not decide on the success or failure of a slate. If we consider the criteria “young people”, “new people” and “women” separately (they were indeed separate criteria of choice), we would see that sex and age were not important, with the exception of the slate of the lady attorney N.P.Dai who received 13 votes on this basis of female voters' preference for a slate headed by a charming woman.

9. The *peace position of candidates* was mentioned by some voters. Although the number of votes for this position in the survey (39) and its percentage in the totals (2.8%) were not very high, reflecting the realistic assessment of the Vietnamese electorate that question of war and peace had gone beyond the control of the Vietnamese themselves and 10 more Senators for peace might not be the swallows that make the Spring, it was *this peace position of the Lotus slate headed by V V Mau which was an important factor in receiving 18 votes in the survey and in carrying it to its nationwide victory as the number one vote-getting group, especially among the Buddhist voters*

9. Finally, *the effort of self-introduction to the electorate*, such as captivating symbols, many posters, talks on the television, might be a factor, but not very important(mentioned 13 times, or 1%), in the choice of voters.

SECTION III. SOCIAL CATEGORIES OF THE ELECTORATE AS FACTORS IN VOTING BEHAVIOR

As stated above, the social categories we paid attention to in the survey were: Sex (male/female), age (classified into 4 groups: 18-30, 30-40, 41-50, and above 50), occupation, education level (primary school, high school, university), religion and party/group affiliation. Except for sex, which could be recorded without asking, and age, which could be asked or guessed by interviewers, the above remaining factors had to be elicited skillfully from the electorate, sometimes successfully, at other times not successfully, depending on the voters' willingness for cooperation. Consequently, readers will see that for each slate, the total votes in all subcategories in a category--for example buddhists, catholics ,Cao Dai, Hoa Hao within the category of religion--might not be equal to the total number of votes the slate received, because voters would not reveal their religion. But on the whole, we were able to record the social categories of most voters. And therefore we can classify with reasonable reliability the votes according to the said social categories and can set forth a number of credible hypotheses on impact of social categories on voting behavior.

A. *Impact of sex and age.*

In the sample of 875 persons, we had 502 males (57.3%) and 373 females (42.7%) and 332 persons in the 18-30 age group (38%), 240 in the 31-40 group (27.4%),211 in the 41-50 group (24.1%), and 92 in the age group above 50 (10.5%).

The interviewers' choice of these social categories was not on a stratified sampling basis after knowing the exact percentages of sex and age in the population as revealed by an accurate census (there was no such accurate census), but it was a conscious effort to get as many different social categories as possible, and constant adjustment of their choices to reflect reality , when they went out to search for and meet voters.

Table 5.Sex and age and the voting behavior.

Voters in:	MALE	FEMALE	AGE			
: sample :	502	373	: 18-30	: 31-40	: 41-50	: 51→ :
: 875 :	(57.3%)	(42.7%)	: 332	: 240	: 211	: 92 :
			: (38%) : (27.4%):(24.1%): (10.5%)			

TOTAL: DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES ACCORDING TO SOCIAL CATEGORIES VOTES

For:

1. N V Huyen, 336	: 218	: 118	:	: 138	: 81	: 87	: 30	:
2. V V Mau, 309	: 186	: 123	:	: 110	: 88	: 80	: 31	:
3. H V Cao, 115	: 80	: 35	:	: 45	: 32	: 27	: 11	:
4. N C Hach, 107	: 63	: 44	:	: 47	: 21	: 29	: 10	:
5. N P Dai, 90	: 32	: 58	:	: 37	: 24	: 13	: 16	:
6. N N Huy, 74	: 46	: 28	:	: 28	: 21	: 21	: 4	:
7. T V Le, 68	: 39	: 29	:	: 21	: 25	: 13	: 9	:
8. T C Cuu, 57	: 35	: 22	:	: 17	: 20	: 13	: 7	:
9. N H To, 56	: 31	: 25	:	: 33	: 12	: 7	: 4	:
10.N D Bang 44	: 23	: 21	:	: 16	: 10	: 12	: 6	:
11.N A Tuan, 42	: 27	: 15	:	: 25	: 7	: 5	: 5	:
12.N G Hien, 39	: 30	: 9	:	: 16	: 10	: 12	: 1	:
13 N T Hy, 31	: 21	: 10	:	: 8	: 9	: 8	: 6	:
14.P B Cam, 23	: 21	: 12	:	: 3	: 8	: 7	: 5	:

15. N V Canh,	12	:	5	:	7	:	:	:	3	:	5	:	2	:	2	:
16. N V Lai,	9	:	4	:	5	:	:	:	2	:	3	:	1	:	3	:
No opinion yet	132	:	63	:	69	:	:	:	35	:	35	:	42	:	20	:
Hiding opinion	27	:	19	:	8	:	:	:	3	:	7	:	8	:	9	:
Not going to vote		:		:		:	:	:		:		:		:		:
Or will cast blank	59	:	40	:	19	:	:	:	20	:	21	:	13	:	5	:

We have two observations from Table 5.

1. The voters under 30 years of age were the largest group, those in other age groups are lesser and lesser in number, as we move to higher age groups. This percentage is typical of the pyramid of population in developing countries. But this also showed that *younger people were more politically conscious than older people*. However, in general, age had little influence in terms of voters' choice of candidates of similar age. *Young voters*, in the 21-30 age group, still voted in large numbers for *elder men of prestige* such as N V Huyen and V V Mau. The cases of *young voters voting for young candidates* occurred in the cases of the slates of N H To (young military officers) and N A Tuan (young intellectuals): they received 5 times more votes from age group 21-30 than from age groups 31-40 or 41-50.

2. On the influence of sex, in the sample, the ratio of male to female voters was 57.3%/ 42.7% and most slates received more male votes than female votes. However, Mrs. N P Dai's slate received twice as many female votes as votes from male voters. *The women voters seemed to decide to vote for the representatives of their sex*. This confirms the observation in section II above.

Moreover, more female voters than male had no opinion at the time of the interviews. This confirms the observation in Section II, about the influence of "father", "husband", "elder brother", "eldest son".

But twice or more male voters than female ones were among those who kept secret their opinion or decided not to participate in the voting or decided to cast a blank vote. Probably *women seldom had clear political opinion and seldom had a negative attitude or skepticism about politics*.

B. Impact of occupation and educational level.

We were able to collect data on occupation for only 730 interviewees and on educational level for 817 interviewees, among the sample of 875 persons. The method of work was ex-post facto or a posteriori control, i.e. we did not, because we could not, choose certain percentages of occupations or educational levels when we met people, because we did not have accurate census data, but we could only ask after interviewing people what their occupations or educational levels were and these facts were revealed only if the interviewees agreed to cooperate. Therefore, in Tables 6 and 7, we lack complete occupation and education data on a number of voters. We simply hoped that with the good size sample of 875 people, we would cover almost all occupations and education levels, in the urban setting at least

1. *On impact of voters' occupations*, we can look, in Table 6, at how the different occupations of 730 voters (in the sample of 875) voted for the slates of candidates

Table 6. Occupations and voting behavior.

VOTERS		OCCUPATIONS (of 730 VOTERS)														
IN SAMPLE	:	civil servants	:traders	: military	:housewife	:workers	:liberal	: clergy	: farmers	:						
875	:	teachers	:business	: police	: taxi,cyclo	:profession	:	:	:	:						
	:	212(29%)	:202	:115	:102	: 70	: 25	: 2	: 2	:						
	:		:(27.7%)	:(15.8%)	:(14%)	:(9.6%)	:(3.5%)	:(0.2%)	:(0.2%)	:						
TOTAL VOTES FOR		DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES ACCORDING TO VOTERS' OCCUPATIONS														
1. N V Huyen,336:	94	:	60	:	53	:	29	:	22	:	14	:	1	:	--	:
2. V V Mau, 309:	76	:	61	:	32	:	35	:	25	:	13	:	--	:	--	:
3. H V Cao, 115:	27	:	23	:	23	:	6	:	7	:	5	:	1	:	2	:
4. N C Hach, 107:	24	:	18	:	7	:	12	:	2	:	5	:	--	:	--	:
5. N P Dai, 90:	23	:	18	:	6	:	12	:	11	:	--	:	--	:	--	:
6. N N Huy, 74:	18	:	15	:	8	:	8	:	4	:	--	:	--	:	--	:
7. TV Le, 68:	14	:	20	:	8	:	12	:	7	:	2	:	--	:	--	:
8. T C Cuu, 57:	16	:	7	:	11	:	7	:	3	:	--	:	--	:	--	:

9. N H To, 56:	7	:	8	:	22	:	4	:	1	:	2	:	--	:	--	:
10. N D Bang, 44:	13	:	6	:	5	:	7	:	8	:	1	:	--	:	--	:
11. N A Tuan, 42:	7	:	6	:	11	:	5	:	3	:	--	:	--	:	--	:
12. N G Hien, 39:	15	:	7	:	4	:	2	:	6	:	2	:	--	:	--	:
13. N T Hy, 31:	12	:	6	:	2	:	1	:	1	:	2	:	1	:	--	:
14. P B Cam 23:	6	:	9	:	6	:	2	:	4	:	1	:	--	:	1	:
15. N V Canh 12:	2	:	2	:	3	:	3	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	1	:
16. N V Lai 9 :	1	:	3	:	1	:	1	:	2	:	--	:	--	:	--	:
No opinion 132:	11	:	35	:	7	:	19	:	8	:	2	:	--	:	--	:
Hiding opinion 27:	--	:	4	:	--	:	--	:	1	:	--	:	--	:	--	:
Not going to vote		:		:		:		:		:		:		:		:
Or cast blank 59:	20	:	12	:	20	:	5	:	7	:	2	:	1	:	--	:

In *general*, we can say that voters' occupations did not have much impact on their behavior. If we read the numbers in the columns of various occupations (civil servants and teachers, traders and businessmen, military and police etc..) which we arrange in order of large to small numbers of persons of each occupation, we see that the votes received by each slate of candidates from the various occupations decreased in the same order. In other words, *no particular slate was favored by any particular occupation*.

However, certain *particular cases* need analysis. T V Le slate of candidates, which campaigned heavily among business people of Chinese descent, received a somewhat high percentage of votes from small traders and business people (the slate received 20 or 32% of the total votes – while the percentage of traders and business people in the sample was 27.7%), especially if we compare with the votes from other occupations. The housewives, 14% of the voters in the sample, voted less for N V Huyen (only 29 votes or 8.5%) and H V Cao (only 6 votes or 5.2%) than their percentage number in the sample. But the clearest example of occupation impact is the military and police (15.8% of the sample) voted overwhelmingly (50 % or 22 votes among the 44 votes) for N H To slate (with motto: “Peasants, workers and military vote for soldiers”). In the interview, the military clearly stated that “as soldiers, we vote for soldiers”.

If occupations did not in general have much impact on voters' choice of candidates, *they had clear influence on the voters' knowledge of contemporary political issues of the day and therefore on their participation/non-participation in the political process*. Among the interviewees who said they “did not have opinion yet”, we found comparatively many traders/business people (35) and housewives (19), more than in other occupations. But among those who said they were going to stay home on election day or would cast blank votes, we found comparatively many civil servants/teachers (20) and many military and police (20)—as if having been exposed to corrupt aspects of political life, they were skeptic and non-participating.

2. On the *impact of educational level on voting behavior*, we can look, in Table 7, at how the 817 voters (among the sample of 875) belonging to different educational levels cast their votes for different slates of candidates.

Table 7. *Educational levels and voting behavior*

VOTERS IN	: EDUCATIONAL LEVELS (KNOWN FOR 817 INTERIEWEES)		
SAMPLE : 875	: High school or “good level”	: Elementary school	: University
	: 444 persons (or 54.4%)	: 209 persons (or 25%)	: 164 persons (20%)
TOTAL VOTES	: DISTRIBUTION OF VOTES ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL LEVELS		
FOR SLATES			
1. N V Huyen, 336	: 136	: 54	: 79
2. V V Mau 309	: 106	: 63	: 77
3. H V Cao 115	: 36	: 21	: 35
4. N C Hach 107	: 29	: 14	: 37
5. N P Dai 90	: 38	: 16	: 14
6. N N Huy 74	: 20	: 22	: 16
7. T V Le 68	: 27	: 23	: 5
8. T C Cuu 57	: 28	: 9	: 10
9. N H To 56	: 26	: 10	: 3

10.N D Bang	44	:	11	:	12	:	6
11.N A Tuan	42	:	18	:	12	:	7
12.N G Hien	39	:	14	:	14	:	7
13.N T Hy	31	:	8	:	6	:	10
14. P B Cam	23	:	5	:	9	:	1
15.N V Canh	12	:	2	:	4	:	3
16.N V Lai	9	:	2	:	4	:	2
No opinion yet	132	:	20	:	22	:	7
Hiding opinion	27	:	--	:	1	:	--
Not going to vote or will cast blank vote	59	:	26	:	17	:	18

In *general*, the slates of candidates received the numbers of votes from voters of high school, elementary school and university education levels in the same proportion as the numbers of people of these levels: many from high school people, average from elementary school people and few from university people. In other words, we find *voters' educational level to have no decisive impact on how they chose the candidates*. But there were 4 leading slates in our sample which showed that *education levels of voters could have some impact in terms of voting-getting in case the voters paid attention to the heads of the slates as scholars or teachers*. University graduates were only 20% of the total voters in our sample, and yet, 37 of them voted for the slate of N C Hach, law school professor (or 46.2% of his supporters), 77 of them votes for the slate of V V Mau, also law school professor (or 31.3% of his supporters), 79 of them voted for the slate of N V Huyen, who was a famous attorney, and who had a famous teacher, former Prime Minister. Tran Van Huong, in his slate (or 32.6% of their supporters)

Similarly to occupation, *the education level of the voters influenced the level of knowledge of current political events and therefore the participation/non-participation of the electorate*. People with no opinion yet on the elections during interview were more likely to be elementary and high school graduates (22 and 20) than university graduates (7 only)

C. Impact of religion and party/group affiliation

We were able to get the data on religion for 832 persons in the survey sample of 875, but we could only record the party /group affiliation of 17 interviewees. Table 8 summarizes the findings on impact of voters' religion and party/group affiliation on their votes.

Table 8. Religion, party/group affiliation and voting behavior

In this table, we classify and list the voters as follows: Religion of 832 voters in the first 5 columns (1) Buddhists, (2) Catholics and protestants, (3) Confucianists /ancestor worshippers, (4) CaoDaist, (5) Hoa Hao Buddhists, and then Party/group affiliation of 17 voters in the remaining 5 columns: (6) members of Buddhist youth and women associations, (7) Catholic students, (8) union members of General Confederation of Labor, (9) Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (Nationalist) Party, and (10) Cap Tien Party

VOTERS	:	832	VOTERS' RELIGION AND	17	VOTERS' PARTY/GROUP AFFILIATION
IN SAMPLE:	:	(1)	;	(2)	;
875	:	557	voters:	197	;
	:	(70%)	;	(21.3%)	;
	:	(8.4%)	;	(0.6%)	;
	:	(0.4%)	;	(0.4%)	;
	:	(0.34%)	;	(0.8%)	;
	:	(0.2%)	;	(0.01%)	;
TOTAL VOTES :					
FOR:					
1.N V Huyen	336:	180	:	110	:
		28	:	1	:
		1	:	1	:
		1	:	2	:
		1	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
2. V V Mau	309:	252	:	30	:
		16	:	2	:
		--	:	--	:
		2	:	2	:
		--	:	--	:
		2	:	4	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	4	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
3. H V Cao	115:	41	:	61	:
		5	:	2	:
		4	:	--	:
		--	:	1	:
		4	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
4.N C Hach	107:	78	:	14	:
		8	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
5. N P Dai	90:	57	:	18	:
		8	:	2	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
6. N N Huy	74:	52	:	8	:
		8	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
7. T V Le	68:	35	:	23	:
		5	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
8. T C Cuu	57:	14	:	38	:
		2	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		1	:	1	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
9. N H To	56:	38	:	8	:
		3	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:
		--	:	--	:

10 N D Bang	44:	40	:	2	:	1	:	1	:	--	:	1	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--
11. N A Tuan	42:	27	:	7	:	5	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--
12. N G Hien	39:	10	:	28	:	1	:	--	:	1	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--
13. N T Hy	31 :	17 :	8 :	5 :	1 :	-- :	-- :	1 :	-- :	-- :	1 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
14. P B Cam	23 :	16 :	2 :	1 :	-- :	2 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	1 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
15. N V Canh	12:	6 :	2 :	3 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
16. N V Lai	9:	7 :	1 :	1 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--	:	--
No opinion	132:	54 :	12 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
Hiding opinion	27:	2 :	2 :	1 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :
Not voting or blank vote	59:	50 :	11 :	11 :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :	-- :

1. On the *party/group affiliation*, one may be surprised at the fact that very few voters revealed their party or group affiliation. It might be that some voters wanted to hide away their party or group affiliation and our interviewers did not make extra effort to elicit it. But the more probable truth was most of the voters did not participate in any political party or group, because *Vietnamese parties and groups had not been successful in organizing masses of followers*. In terms of vote-getting in Saigon and nationwide, probably only the Cap Tien Party, the slate of which was headed by Professor Nguyen Ngoc Huy, had some mass following.

But *once becoming a party or group member, a voter had the tendency to vote for his/her party or group* and not for any other party or group, even though he/she had the right to vote for 3 slates of candidates. For example, V V Mau received 2 votes from Buddhist students and women associations, while N V Huyen and N N Huy only one vote (for N N Huy, it was a vote from a student for “Professor Huy”). N V Huyen had 2 votes from Catholic students while V V Mau, representing the Buddhist force, got none from Catholic students. H V Cao had 4 votes from the Confederation of Labor (Tong Lien Doan Lao Cong), many more than other slates, because the Confederation had pledged support for and actively campaigned for this slate. One Nationalist Party (Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang) vote was for N C Hach. One Cap Tien vote was for N N Huy.

2. *The impact of the voters’ religion was the strongest factor in the political alignment of the voters.* If we look at the 3 victorious slates, we can conclude that:

--The Buddhist voters gave the victory to the Hoa Sen (Lotus) Slate headed by Professor V V Mau, because among its 309 votes in our sample, the Buddhist votes were 252 or 81.5%. This slate had many Buddhist political leaders such as Bui Tuong Huan, Pham Dinh Ai, Tran Quang Thuan etc. and was headed by the famous Professor Vu Van Mau, who shaved his head to protest Ngo Dinh Diem’s suppression of the Buddhists in 1963, while he was foreign minister of President Diem. It was actively supported by the monks, including monks Tri Quang (the charismatic monk and symbol of the Buddhist movement, who “shook America”, in the words of the Time Magazine cover in 1963) and Thien Minh (the great organizer of Buddhist political masses and moves), and Tri Thu. etc..

--As demonstrated by the sample, Catholic voters made victory possible for N V Huyen (with 110 Catholic votes of the total of 197 Catholic persons in the sample, or 56% of the total Catholic voters) and H V Cao (with 61 of the 115 votes or 53%).

--For other slates, voters’ religion also decided their behavior. N C Hach had the support of the Quoc Tu Buddhist followers (immigrating from North Vietnam in 1954) and gathered their votes concentrating in Districts 3 and 10 to the level 6 times higher than the Catholic votes for it (78/14). N N Huy had the support of Monk Thien Hoa, Chief of the Institute of Propagation of the Dharma (Vien Hoa Dao) of the An Quang Buddhists and got 52 votes, while it obtained only 8 Catholic votes (but in Central Vietnam,, where the great masses of the An Quang Buddhists concentrated, the monks decided to support only one slate, the Lotus, of V V Mau and reneged on the promise to help also the Cap Tien slate of Professor N N Huy, to assure the Lotus slate’s victory—one decided that “everyone for himself” was better than helping others who then might secretly refrain from reciprocating the help and therefore might surpass one in votes and get elected while one would be left out on a limb). There were only 4 Hoa Hao Buddhists in the sample and they all supported H V Cao (with Le Phuoc Sang as Hoa Hao representative) and two of them supported P B Cam (Dan Xa Party of the Hoa Hao Buddhists). On the influence of Cao Dai religion, T C Cuu slate came out victorious in Tay Ninh province because in the slate there was a former well-known province chief who was Cao Dai.

Comparing the voting behavior of Buddhists and Catholics, the latter had more discipline in voting behavior. The Catholics gave to N V Huyen 110 votes (56% of the Catholic votes) and to V V Mau only 30 votes (15% of the Catholic votes), and moreover, concentrated their votes for other slates with Catholic elements : H V Cao, T C Cuu, and N G Hien. The Buddhists gave 252 votes (or 44% Buddhist votes) to V V Mau—a not very high percentage—but gave 180 votes (or 32%) to N V Huyen, and spread their votes to other slates too.

-- Once again, looking at the few victorious slates, we see that voters' religion was only one factor and the prestige of the candidates or the support of the government was also important. We have to explain, for the case of N V Huyen, the higher number of Buddhist votes than Catholic votes by referring to the personal prestige of N V Huyen and former Prime Minister Tran Van Huong. Both Buddhist slates, V V Mau and N D Bang, were supported by the Buddhist clergy and population, but V V Mau received more votes than N D Bang (252 versus 40), because of the track record and prestige of the members of V V Mau's Lotus slate. In reviewing the answers to the questionnaire, we found that many people voted for both V V Mau and N V Huyen and the reasons or considerations they adduced were the ability, past record, and personal prestige of the candidates. The above observation is not contradictory: Voters' religion had only the effect of aligning the voters politically (general suggestion to voters of one religion to vote for candidates of that religion), but the actual choice by voters of which slate among the many slates with the same religious tendency would be determined decisively by the personal prestige of the individual candidates (for example, voting for N V Huyen but not N G Hien; voting for V V Mau and not N D Bang)

--On the support of the government, H V Cao received few votes in the sample of Saigon voters, but its nationwide success made it electoral victor number 2, partly because of the Hoa Hao Buddhist factor, but especially because of the support of the government (one just has to check its votes in the provinces in the high plateau). Slate number 16 was very weak in the capital of Saigon, but scored as number 1, 2 or 3 in Pleiku, Phu Bon and Darlac provinces because of the order of the government to support it.

--On non-participation, as revealed by the answers " no opinion" or "not voting" or "blank vote", Buddhists in Saigon were more inclined to non-participation than Catholics. But in Central Vietnam the Buddhists went to the polls much more numerous than the Buddhists in the South.

SECTION IV. WHAT WAYS AND MEANS FOR CAMPAIGNING DID THE CANDIDATES USE FOR REACHING THE VOTERS?

There were people who would not know how to answer this question, mainly among those who said they would not go to the polling booth, they did not vote for anybody or just said "only decide when in the voting booth" or " just pick up at random some votes and cast them". These people did not know the means used by the candidates for campaigning because they did not even read newspaper.

However, there are a number of means for campaigning in that 1970 Senatorial election, not unlike those used in the American political campaigns, which we summarize in Table 9.

Table 9. Ways and Means of campaigning

In order from most used to least used, we list, in the following columns, the ways and means of campaigning which the voters mentioned that they had the experience of being exposed to: (1) the press, (2) posters and banderoles, (3) radio and television, (4) rumor and organized propaganda, (5) influence through persons, (6) infusing fixed idea, (7) relying on personal sympathy, and (8) by all available ways and means.

The SLATES OF CANDIDATES	WAYS AND MEANS THEY USED TO REACH VOTERS							
	: (1)	: (2)	: (3)	: (4)	: (5)	: (6)	: (7)	: (8)
1. N V Huyen	: 216	: 150	: 108	: 37	: 33	: 34	: 6	: 11
2. V V Mau	: 152	: 135	: 85	: 67	: 32	: 34	: 16	: 11
3. H V Cao	: 66	: 59	: 33	: 25	: 11	: 12	: 3	: 4
4. N C Hach	: 45	: 50	: 52	: 17	: 9	: 6	: 15	: 1
5. N P Dai	: 31	: 43	: 56	: 14	: 8	: 4	: 4	: 0
6. N N Huy	: 25	: 22	: 25	: 9	: 10	: 5	: 7	: 8
7. T V Le	: 27	: 29	: 30	: 13	: 10	: 2	: 1	: 1
8. T C Cuu	: 19	: 28	: 25	: 12	: 3	: 6	: 0	: 3
9. N H To	: 18	: 27	: 30	: 5	: 4	: 6	: 0	: 1

10.N D Bang	:	23	:	23	:	13	:	12	:	5	:	1	:	0	:	3	:
11.N A Tuan	:	14	:	22	:	28	:	3	:	4	:	4	:	0	:	2	:
12.N G Hien	:	23	:	20	:	11	:	7	:	7	:	4	:	1	:	1	:
13.N T Hy	:	19	:	12	:	17	:	7	:	2	:	2	:	0	:	0	:
14.P B Cam	:	5	:	10	:	10	:	8	:	3	:	2	:	0	:	1	:
15.N V Canh	:	2	:	6	:	7	:	0	:	0	:	1	:	0	:	2	:
16. N V Lai	:	4	:	9	:	6	:	1	:	3	:	2	:	0	:	0	:
TOTAL	:	689	:	655	:	636	:	237	:	144	:	125	:	53	:	49	:

Our overall observation on the ways and means to reach the voters is: in a society much poorer than the United States for extensive use of expensive mass media, such as radio and television, or much poorer than the American politicians to organize large face-to-face meetings with the electorate, the Vietnamese candidates had tried to use the three most important mass media for them to reach the voters: the press, posters and banderoles, and radio and television, in vigorous and energetic way, as in the United States . For the leading slates ,a lot of voters mentioned these three means of mass media communication : N V Huyen 216,150,108 times; V V Mau, 152, 135, 85 times; H V Cao, 66,59,33 times. The remaining five means of reaching the electorate were mentioned by the voters only occasionally.

A. *The press*

Mentioned 689 times, the press was the predominant means for the candidates to reach the voters. Our sample in Saigon showed that for the 3 leading slates of candidates, the press was twice important than radio and television, even in an urban area where many families had radio and television sets and there were widespread distribution of posters and banderoles. Outside the urban areas, where fewer posters could be found due to the large territory to cover, and where radio and television sets were not everywhere, the press would be much more important.

The press introduced the candidates to the voters who would otherwise knew nothing about them: this was evident from the answers of some voters that they knew the candidates through the interviews of the slates published in Chinh Luan Newspaper, or other newspapers and magazines.. But perhaps more importantly in terms of effect, the role of the press was mainly to reinforce the meager knowledge of the voters about the candidates and reminding them of the record, ability and moral quality of the candidates, without those personal qualities, the press would not be able to create instantly winnable candidates: most interviewees were obsessed with the personal prestige or qualities of a few candidates in a slate, for example, thanks to the newspapers, they remembered former Prime Minister T V Huong in the Bong Hue (Lily) slate as an incorruptible man, NV Huyen , head of that slate as a lawyer of rectitude, and Professor V V Mau , head of the Lotus slate, as a courageous minister of President Diem who shaved his head to protest president Diem in 1963. In other words, the press could not, in a short time, create vote-getting politicians , but would mainly remind the electorate of the intrinsic qualities of the candidates which had been built up over the years.. V V Mau’s slate refused to be interviewed by Chinh Luan newspaper but still became victor; on the other hand, the controversy caused by this slate of peace—heavily criticized by many articles in the press, and counterattacking fiercely—helped elect it (One interviewee said : “I voted for this slate because the members fiercely condemned the government” --“chui du qua”).

The scarce press reports on the slates of the political parties—N V Canh (2 mentions),P.B. Cam(5 mentions)—was due either to the low prestige of the parties or their meager financial resources to mobilize the press. Only the Cap Tien slate partially escaped this fate

B. *Posters and banderoles*

Second to the press, these means of exposure to the voting public were equal for all slates, in terms of size, quantity, time of posting. They should have had equal impact for all slates., but the voters many times mentioned these means in connection with N V Huyen and V V Mau slates (150 and 135 times), although we saw very few of their posters and banderoles in Saigon, but these means still reminded the voters about them and helped them, while they hardly remembered the posters and banderoles of other slates (from H V Cao slate down, only 59 times and less—especially P B Cam, 10 times, N V Canh, 6) . Some of these slates posted many more posters and hang many more banderoles than Huyen and Mau : N D Bang, T V Le, N P Dai, N A Tuan (rumors said that some spent more money than allowed to print more posters). Again the personal prestige of the candidates counted a lot and the fixed ideas of the voters about their merit made the voters remember the posters and banderoles, no matter what quantity of them was

used.. Psychologically, that was understandable, because the empty mottoes such as “freedom, food and clothes, welfare” and even “peace” similarly used by many slates in their posters and leaflets would compare badly with the difficult real life situation of the people and make them insensitive to the means of campaigning to a great extent.. Again, the personal qualities of the candidates and the fixed ideas about them in the mind of the voters who were already impressed by them prior to the campaign—all built up in long years before the balloting-- were more decisive factors.

C. *Radio and television*

They were third in importance and the number of times they were mentioned (636) was more than all the rest of the ways and means listed in columns 3 to 8 (608), such as rumor and black propaganda,, infusing of fixed ideas and personal sympathy. This fact allows us to predict that as Vietnam develops more access to television and radio for the rural people, these means would become important means for political mobilization and campaigning, as in the United States and other advanced countries.

Going a little into the substance of the radio and television messages, we see that the personality image projected by the candidates and their art of performance (eloquence, competence, confidence etc..) had a great impact on the choice of the voters. Besides the exceptions of the N V Huyen and V V Mau slates which relied on religion and personal prestige of the head—and other members-- of the slates and thereby succeeded in using radio and television to refresh the memory of the voters, the elegance, sweetness, and eloquence of the lady attorney N P Dai gave her slate the most mentions by the voters compared to the remaining slates. Next came professor N C Hach with 52 mentions, who, however, was subject to ridicule by the press because he sat at a separate table with his stern professor’s face while the other members stood up; the derision might have harmed him a lot. H V Cao was mentioned less in terms of radio and television performance but became the second highest vote getter nationwide, probably with help of the government. The N H To slate (motto: “peasants, workers, soldiers vote for soldiers”) had no personal prestige but built up its image of young men in wartime and attracted the votes of military men. Also belonging to the slates with skill in theatrical performance was N A Tuan which introduced lively its members.

D. *Other means, less important: rumor and propaganda, influence through others, fixed idea, personal sympathy and “all means”*

--First, campaigning effort *with open propaganda, or rumor mongering*, by the candidates or by supporters such as clergymen in churches and buddhist temples, political party leaders in official or semi-official meetings. V V Mau led the pack with 67 mentions, compared with NV Huyen, with 37, and H V Cao, with 25. With the antigovernment stand and the determination of the Buddhists to gain victory in the first trial at political engagement, the V V Mau slate used effectively the mass propaganda and rumor among followers.

-- Second, *the use of the influence of other people*. It applied mainly to women voters. Even the hardship of wartime economy necessitated women’s prominent role in economic activities, they still did not pay much attention to politics. Men still dominated in politics, and political opinion, and therefore their choices (especially those of the husbands and the eldest sons) influenced the votes of the women in their families.

-- Third, *the fixed ideas about slates of candidates* were due to the voters’ subjective identification with their party/group or religion. That was one reason for the influence of religion and party/group.

--Fourth, also subjective, *the voters’ sympathy with certain members in a slate*. Professors Hach (15 mentions) and Huy (7 mentions) ranked above attorney Huyen by far (only 6 mentions) and only ranked below Professor V V Mau (16 mentions). The ranking of the three professors must be attributed to respect for the three well-known professors in the capital city of Saigon. Mrs. N P Dai gained a lot of female votes, because of her personal performance.

--Finally, the knowledge about a slate could be through “all means” over the years, including the press, radio and television and group discussions combined. This lumping together of all means of exposure was mentioned by the voters in connection with the slates of V V Mau, N V Huyen and N N Huy (who just formed the Cap Tien Movement with many political activities)

PAART III. CONCLUSIONS.

We have two groups of conclusions: on the relative success of the first (and probably the only) political poll and on the free and fair election in this incipient democracy in South Vietnam

A. Lessons drawn from this first and relatively successful political poll in South Vietnam.

Even the sample of 875 people in two districts of Saigon was not representative of the nationwide population or even the population of the capital city of South Vietnam at that time, this survey succeeded in predicting the three victorious slates of candidates : Huyen, Mau and Cao, although the order of ranking was a little different than the final actual result, due to the sample being not random stratified sample because of lack of funding and time and accurate census data. This relative good result should be satisfactory enough if we know that the comparison of poll data among 16 slates of candidates was much more difficult than predicting the relative ranking of only two major parties contending in an election as in the United States .

The prediction was possible because there was no indication of actual fraud and litigation in this election on loss of ballot boxes, or stuffing the boxes, even though there were complaints about not enough ballots in some voting sites, or government adding voting sites to make it difficult for slates to have enough campaign workers to supervise them (this might not be a problem for the Buddhists and the Catholics who had enough followers to cover them). The result reflected the relative strength of various political forces in South Vietnam at that time: the strongest being the Buddhist masses (supporting the number one victor, nationwide: V V Mau slate), then the government supporters such as the military, the police and the administrative personnel (which made H V Cao slate came second) and then the Catholics (for whose support, N V Huyen came third); as for the political parties, they are second in strength, including the experienced ones such as the Dai Viet , which supported N V Canh and the Tan Dai Viet or Cap Tien , which launched the N N Huy slate.

Other findings of this poll that can be of value to the understanding of the behavior of Vietnamese voters: the grounds for their choice of candidates, the impact of their social background on voting, and the various ways and means for candidates for reaching them.

B. On the free and fair Senatorial election of 1970 in South Vietnam and lessons derived from it.

There is no dispute that the 1970 Senatorial election was a free and fair election, with the encouragement of the Americans.

Dr. Douglas Pike wrote in his Introduction to the book Bunker's Papers that all this democratic development with the encouragement of US Ambassador Bunker came to naught after South Vietnam fell to the Communists in 1975 . But the disintegration of the nascent democracy in South Vietnam started earlier in 1971 when President Nguyen Van Thieu, with the machination of his supporters, tried to assure his victory in the 1971 presidential election to the extent that only he remained as the sole candidate. Thieu first used technical reasons to eliminate the candidacy of his Vice president and rival Nguyen Cao Ky (alleging that he Ky did not have enough signatures of supporter) in order not to split the pro-government votes when he had to face General Duong Van (Big)Minh, who had the support of the Buddhist masses and Buddhist leaders of the Lotus slate in the Senate . But then General Minh withdrew his candidacy when he knew that facing Thieu without the splitting of the pro-government votes, especially with the machinations of the elections, would not be very promising. Thieu was the sole candidate for presidency and thus he made the incipient South Vietnamese democratic regime become a one-man show. The man, who thus delegitimized the democratic character of the regime and further lost popular support with the popular movement of denunciation of corruption in his government, later just counted on President Nixon's promise of forceful retaliation with B52 bombings in case of North Vietnam's military advance. Thieu was not being politically wise enough to know that the US, with Congressional War Powers Resolution that bound the hand of the US President, only gave South Vietnam a few years of "decent interval" for Vietnamization of the war and internal political strengthening to reach a negotiated peaceful solution with North Vietnam . With President Thieu's continued resistance to a political solution (his "4 nos" policy—no negotiation with the Communist North and National Liberation Front in accordance with the Paris Cease Fire Agreement etc..) while he no longer had any popular base of support, North Vietnam's Political Bureau, under Le Duan, detecting the political weakness of Thieu regime, and aware through Kissinger's assurance in 1971 to Breznev of the Soviet Union and Chou En-lai of China that the US would not return to South Vietnam and will "let the political process start" ("We are prepared to let the real balance of forces in Vietnam determine the future of Vietnam", "if local forces develop again, we are not likely to again come 10,000 miles", he said in recently declassified documents, NY Times Dec.24,2006, Associated Press

March 1,2002), decided to launch an all-out attack.. When the unilateral, secret promise of President Nixon for forceful retaliation against Communist attack did not come under President Ford when Nixon already resigned, Thieu blamed the Americans on national television and resigned and resigned to the necessity of looking for democratic popular support by ceding the Presidency to Tran Van Huong who then turned over the presidency and vice-presidency to General Duong Van Minh and Senator Nguyen Van Huyen with the new cabinet headed by Prime Minister Vu Van Mau of the Lotus slate, with the hope that the democratic leaders who were for peace would be acceptable to North Vietnam in negotiation for a cease-fire.. But by then, this belated and desperate search for democratic legitimacy did not stop the advancing Communist troops, because the Politburo in the North had already decided on an all-out victory.. The South Vietnamese forces no longer fought, except for a few units, and the Duong Van Minh government surrendered to the advancing North Vietnamese. Before North Vietnam decided to launch an all-out attack, if NV Thieu did not kill the incipient democracy in South Vietnam by running a one-man show and ignoring the opposition forces in the legislature, and accept the “Third Force” into the government, a peaceful solution negotiated with North Vietnam with the help of the Buddhist “Third Force” in the government of South Vietnam could have, in retrospect, create a chance for a viable coalition government leading to peaceful reunification of the country, because in reviewing the history on March 31,2005, former Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet (in Tuan Bao Quoc Te and Tuoi Tre papers) wished that the two former opposing sides during the Vietnam War could return to each other’s side (tro ve ben nhau) to join in the reconstruction of the country and he said “ it is time to recognize the great contribution of Vietnamese patriots living inside the former regime... and one must think of the role of Duong Van Minh cabinet and the political opposition forces of the Thieu regime.”

Did Ambassador Bunker’s well-meaning acts of encouragement of Vietnamese democracy really come to naught? I do not think so. Fast forward to the current situation in 2007 unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The elections in the last 35 years, prior to 2007, of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam did not allow the competition of alternative leaders running from outside the groups of candidates introduced by the Communist Party through the mechanism of Mat Tran To Quoc (Patriotic Front) . Also, the number of candidates only exceeded the number of positions to be elected in each electoral district by one or two , meaning the people had to accept the 3 or 4 or 5 candidates introduced by the Party and could only eliminate one or two extra candidates present in the voting only for show purposes. However, Socialist Vietnam has changed the wording of article 4 of the previous Constitution, which claimed the Party to be “the sole leading force” in the country, to the current wording of claiming that the Party is “a leading force “ of the country; as well as adopted the national motto of striving for “ wealthy people, strong country, just, democratic and civilized society”. Also, the current process of preparation for the election in May 2007 of the 12th National Assembly permits the self-introduction of independent candidates . The regime’s policy, as per the Instructions of the Politburo and the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, also specifies the criteria for free and fair elections: that for each electoral district, the number of candidates to be introduced must at least double the number of positions to be elected, in an effort to change from past practice of introducing only one or two extra candidates for each electoral district, and that at local voters’ assemblies to nominate candidates, the reasons for rejections of those not chosen for nomination should be immediately made transparent, and that during the campaign, even the Party Secretary General competing with a village teacher should be treated equally in the electoral district , and that whatever result of voting would be accepted , no matter who wins, without distinction as to “blue candidate or red candidate” (“quan xanh, quan do”) (VietnamNet.vn March 17,2007). Of course genuine free and fair elections and democracy would exist only if the nomination process as well as the campaigning are not going to be sabotaged by local party cadre, as happened in the past, when capable but non-party candidates were obstructed by all machinations from running (Ex: the case of the patriotic Professor. Nguyen Thien Tong, Ph.D. from Australia who remained in Saigon in 1975 to serve, who, after getting a MPP at Harvard, also contributed to the Fulbright program of Harvard in Vietnam for economic development, but who was still rejected twice when offering his candidacy in Saigon). This above-described new trend toward more democracy , even a still-to-be-tested democracy, is the outcome of Vietnam’s long process of Doi Moi (Renovation) since 1986 , in all areas of life, from permitting the people to improve their life in a market-oriented economy, to more advance toward the rule of law, to more and more respect of human rights (more needed to be done), to opening up to the outside world with diplomatic and trade relations with many countries and especially with the United States. After lifting the long embargo and normalization of relations, the United States has provided legal assistance

through the STAR program of USAID to improve the rule of law in Vietnam, by helping Vietnam conform Vietnamese law to the obligations of international standards; it has encouraged Vietnam in human rights performance through regular dialogue in bilateral contacts, and an agreement on freedom of religion; and although not having suggested any multiparty democracy (because that form of multiparty democracy is not specified in any international human rights document, so that socialist/communist countries can adhere to them, provided that they comply with the requirement of free and fair periodical elections with secret ballots), the United States has encouraged Vietnam to allow dissenters to freely express opinion on political reform. Ambassador Bunker has posthumously vindicated the well-meaning intention of the United States for promoting democracy and development in Vietnam, which, at this time in the 21st century, is being carried out only by means of the power of persuasion, and not coercion, as Ambassador Bunker always advocated.

However, the good will gestures and the persuasion of the United States, as well as the pressure of rules of transparency and fair dealing due to Vietnam's opening to the outside world (such as admission to the World Trade Organization), may have some impact on the economic, social and civil rights of the Vietnamese people, but still they may have only limited impact on Vietnam's democratization for more political, especially electoral, rights of the people. Despite the above-mentioned instructions on free elections from the Politburo and National Assembly Standing Committee, and the many suggestions (even of some retired Party leaders such as Mr. Vo Van Kiet) for more freedom for citizens, even non-party members, to put up their candidacy for National Assembly, the list of 1322 candidates for the National Assembly elections in May 2007 has been reduced to only 880 (of which, only 30 are self-nominated candidates), not even twice the number of 500 seats in the Assembly, because through 3 "rounds of negotiation", the Party wanted to reduce the number of candidates, and thus, to guide the voters, in each electoral district, to a few candidates so that the voters can easily choose among them the ones that the Party wants to be elected, by simply "crossing out the name(s) to be eliminated in each electoral district"[the easy choice of "3 bỏ 2" or the choice of "see 3 vote for 2"] as Mr. Le Kien Thanh, the son of the late Party General Secretary Le Duan, himself described the tactics..

END

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