

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Cracking a Vietnam War Mystery

From: "National Security Archive" <archive@GWU.EDU>

Date: Sat, January 14, 2012 8:58 pm

To: NSARCHIVE@HERMES.GWU.EDU

Cracking a Vietnam War Mystery

New Book Uses Long-Hidden Communist Sources to Explore a Potential Missed Opportunity for Peace in 1966

Evidence from James G. Hershberg, *Marigold: The Lost Chance for Peace in Vietnam* (Stanford University Press/Wilson Center Press, January 2012)

For Further Information contact:

For more information contact:

James G. Hershberg - 202/994-7000

jhershb@gwu.edu

Washington, D.C., January 15, 2012 – Casting new light on one of the most controversial and enduring mysteries of the Vietnam War, a new book using evidence from long-hidden communist sources suggests that the U.S. Government missed a major chance to open peace talks with North Vietnam in late 1966, more than eighteen months before the opening of the Paris peace talks and more than six years before the accords that finally ended US direct involvement in the fighting. The revelations contained in *Marigold: The Lost Chance for Peace in Vietnam* by James G. Hershberg imply that the United States might have escaped its Vietnam predicament with a far lower toll: the secret Polish-Italian peace attempt code-named "Marigold" by U.S. officials culminated at a time when roughly 6,250 Americans had perished, compared to the more than 58,000 who ultimately died in the war.

At one point the clandestine diplomacy verged on a breakthrough, with the apparent mutual agreement to hold an unprecedented meeting between US and North Vietnamese ambassadors in Warsaw to confirm Washington's adherence to a ten-point formula for a settlement. "I thought I had done something worthwhile in my life," recalled the American ambassador in Saigon at the time, Henry Cabot Lodge, of that moment of seeming success with his diplomatic partners from Poland and Italy. "We had a drink on it." A date was even tentatively set for the enemy ambassadors to meet: December 6, 1966. But before the encounter could take place, the covert effort was first suspended—due, the Poles said, to the U.S. bombing of Hanoi, the first such strikes around the North Vietnamese capital in more than five months—and then collapsed, for reasons which were disputed in acrimonious

private US-Polish exchanges at the time. Before long, those arguments seeped into the press, sparking an international scandal and leaving behind a convoluted historical mystery—until now.

The inside story of these murky diplomatic machinations, as well as other revelations concerning the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Sino-Soviet split, and American politics and journalism in the 1960s, can now be found in Hershberg's book, published this week by the Stanford University Press and the Woodrow Wilson Center Press. Challenging the conventional wisdom that both Washington and Hanoi were so dug in at the time that no real chance for peace (or even serious peace talks) then existed, the study utilizes more than a decade of archival research in more than a dozen countries, both communist (and former communist) and Western, as well as interviews with veterans of the events in Poland, Vietnam, Italy, and the United States—including roughly 50 hours of interviews in Warsaw with the key figure in the affair, former Polish diplomat Janusz Lewandowski, who comes in from the cold war to offer his perspective openly and in depth for the first time.

To see the new documents click here

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB369/index.htm>

Find us on Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/NSArchive>

Unredacted, the Archive blog - <http://nsarchive.wordpress.com/>

THE NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE is an independent non-governmental research institute and library located at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The Archive collects and publishes declassified documents acquired through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). A tax-exempt public charity, the Archive receives no U.S. government funding; its budget is supported by publication royalties and donations from foundations and individuals.

PRIVACY NOTICE The National Security Archive does not and will never share

the names or e-mail addresses of its subscribers with any other organization. Once a year, we will write you and ask for your financial support. We may also ask you for your ideas for Freedom of Information requests, documentation projects, or other issues that the Archive should take on. We would welcome your input, and any information you care to share with us about your special interests. But we do not sell or rent any information about subscribers to any other party.

Daniel C. Tsang, Distinguished Librarian
Data Librarian
Bibliographer for Asian American Studies, Political Science & Economics
University of California, Irvine, Libraries
PO Box 19557
Irvine CA 92623-9557
USA
1 949 824 4978 (Telephone)
1 949 824 0605 (Fax)
dtsang@uci.edu
Office hours: 4-4:30 p.m. Mondays when on campus, or by appointment
My library guides:
<http://libguides.lib.uci.edu/profile.php?uid=2616>

Vsg mailing list
Vsg@u.washington.edu
<http://mailman1.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/vsg>