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republican 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, AUGUST 13--A chapter in Vietnamese history books

was closed at the Republican Convention in Miami Beach. With finality, an era embodying the ~~last~~ <sup>Began moving</sup> hope of Vietnamese hawks for victory had ~~been~~ ended. South Vietnam ~~was~~ in transition towards an even more uncertain period.

It seemed a giant irony here that this chapter <sup>was</sup> ~~should be~~ ended ~~by~~ by the same Republican authors who began in 1954 to write the very first page of the book of the American commitment to South Vietnam--Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon.

So, at Miami Beach, not only had a chapter ended, but history ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> paradoxically swung full circle back to the same Republicans who ~~received~~ <sup>Book Ascef.</sup> ~~created the first pages.~~ In 1954, the American commitment began <sup>?</sup> to Vietnam began with a small military advisory effort and massive political ~~support~~ <sup>==more reuter</sup> support for Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem, who rule from 1955 to 1963, during the first years of the Eisenhower-Nixon ~~governmental years.~~ <sup>D/</sup>

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republican 2 (normass/deepe)

The finale of the chapter ~~smothered~~ the smothered the last fragile ray of hope of Vietnamese hawks and anti-Communist politicians to continue pressing for a victorious solution to the war as an alternative to a negotiated peace settlement. The oft-stated Vietnamese national objective of victory was extinguished somewhere along the sands of Miami Beach, although the harsh realities of the war continue even at the doorsteps of Saigon. Rather than go-it-alone ~~at~~ without American support, the Vietnamese political circles have begun thinking about ~~foloo~~ following the American peace-path, having decided they need the American support as much--or even more--in peace than in war.

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republican 3 (norman/deepe)

Few Vietnamese politicians caught the full dimensions of the ironical ~~swing of events from~~ the Republican shift in attitudes since ~~regardings~~ Asia since the ~~Era~~ Eisenhower-Nixon era. Vietnamese newspaper comment concentrated on the fine-line differences between Mr. Nixon's peace stand and Mr. Humphrey's, without noticing much difference. Some of the newspaper editorial comment seemed consoled that both Nixon and Humphrey had stressing of late the "non-sell-out" type of peace. The issue of the war winning the war rather than ending it was largely obscured.

But, the American Embassy reportedly did notice the shift in Republican policy--especially Mr. Nixon's policy--but the Embassy noticed it only in passing and without comment.

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republican # 4 (normass/deepe)

SAIGONESE

Most of what the ~~Vietnamese~~ appreciated here is that one day, as the Republican convention began, <sup>they</sup> ~~readers of Saigon readers~~ opened up their <sup>Daily</sup> ~~any~~ newspaper with the headline: "V.N. RETREAT WILL REAP TRADEGY--IKE." Whatever the meaning elsewhere, the political translation here was the war-peace issue, the hawk-dove controversy was still alive in the American political ~~arena~~ <sup>ARENA</sup> and that conceivably an American Republican President might still press for winning the war rather than ending it. The Vietnamese newspapers <sup>PRINTED</sup> ~~quoted~~ American wire service dispatches quoting former President Dwight Eisenhower saying, "It is ~~as~~ one thing to call for a peaceful settlement of this struggle. It is quite another to call for retreat by America. The latter is the best way I know to stockpile tragedy for our children."

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republican 3<sup>4</sup> (normass/deepe)

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It sounded as though the former president-general was the last hawk in the American aviary and even his song had changed from "holding the line in Asia" to the ~~d~~ ~~pleas~~ negative pleas of non-retreat.

But, four days later, on August 11, the Saigon newspaper headline read: "NIXON PROMISES 'HONORABLE END' TO VIETNAM CONFLICT." Somehow in those four days, the emphasis, ~~and words and~~ adjectives and tone had made a subtle <sup>but ENORMOUS</sup> change. Also, Mr. Nixon of 1968 had changed significantly from the Vice President Nixon of 1954, while ~~VI~~ when Vietnamese politico-intellectuals recall he ~~adv~~ <sup>3</sup> advocated using a American atomic weapons in support of the French during the battle of ~~Dien B~~ Dien Bien Phu.

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republican 6 (normass/deepe)

Originally, Vietnamese intellectuals and politicians had watched the prelude ~~to~~ to the Republican Convention with a great deal of interest-- interpreting American politics in their own Vietnamese ~~per~~ framework. American politics were confounding them in the same mischievous manner that Vietnamese politics have for year baffled Americans here. Obviously, many Vietnamese intellectuals <sup>thought</sup> ~~thought~~, Governor Nelson Rockefeller would win the nomination because he had high prestige and alot of money and came from an elite, famous American family. Of course, Richard Nixon could not win the nomination because he had lost previous elections, <sup>HND</sup> had low prestige. In Vietnam, no one respects a loser. Some Vietnamese still believe President ~~John~~ Lyndon Johnson will maneuver for his own re-nomination at the Democratic Convention, despite his final ~~public~~ surprise public announcement on April 11 that he would not. Few Vietnamese can envision a leader voluntarily relinquishing power; <sup>REMEMBER</sup> ~~and they have seen~~ <sup>most</sup> ~~is~~ ambitious <sup>VIETNAMESE</sup> generals throwing coups to seize power.

<sup>beginning of the</sup> More significant, however, the Vietnamese watched the Republican convention as a full-blown floor-fight between dovish Rockefeller and hawkish Nixon--all centering on either peace or victory for their little tired country. Instead, at the end of the convention, they witnessed without realizing it the transformation of a hawk. It was the transformation of a 1954 model hawk into a 1968 model dove--the change of Nixon ~~in~~ himself.

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republican <sup>7</sup> (normass/deepe)

Perhaps, the most important Vietnamese to catch the full dimension of the event was President Nguyen Van Thieu; for strangely enough, whether or not by coincidence, the ~~transf~~ transformation of ~~the~~ Nixon ~~had~~ paralleled a similar transformation of ~~the~~ Thieu ~~had~~. Officially, President Thieu did not comment on the nomination of Mr. Nixon. However, when asked if Nixon's nomination would influence <sup>†</sup> the Vietnam war, President Thieu said ~~cryptic~~ cryptically, "At ~~the~~ present, Mr. Nixon is a presidential candidate, not the President yet."

Yet, <sup>LAST</sup> significantly, <sup>LAST</sup> ~~a~~ month ~~ago~~ President Thieu left for Honolulu speaking like President Eisenhower--"we shall <sup>NOT DPT NOT</sup> surrender to the Communists"<sup>BUT</sup> last week, ~~the~~ President Thieu, like Mr. Nixon, began talking about peace. ~~Shamefully~~ In the same Saigon newspapers frontpaging Mr. Nixon's "Honorable Peace" nomination speech in Miami Beach, the <sup>BUT EQUALLY SIGNIFICANT</sup> smaller headline on page two read: "PRESIDENT THIEU: PEACE MAY BE RESTORED NEXT YEAR."

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republican 8 (normass/deepe)

It is readily accepted here that the Democratic convention will not present a hawk-dove choice on the Vietnam war issue—but will involve only a choice among the doves of various ~~political~~ political colorations. And, barring unforeseen developments in this highly unpredictable year, the American election debate will ~~not~~ center, not on the war-peace ~~issue~~ issue, but solely on peace itself. The question is simply one of which adjectives the various Presidential nominees will select to describe and ~~also~~ define the peace. And this itself opens a new chapter about a new era in ~~the~~ Vietnamese history books.

(Hank) I plan to cable several short political pieces this week.

I'm also still attempting to set the foreign minister's interview. I airmailed several days ago my long overdue Saigon mood seepager. My apologies for the delay. This week is discussed as a likely target for the Communist offensive. But, unless we get very solid exclusive information, we will file ~~no~~ no prediction pieces about the offensive until it happens. Opinions are a ~~plentiful~~ plentiful, but not even the generals know when and if the offensive will come. Regards Bev).

== END RATER.