

DO CHI DUNG  
MISSION PERMANENT DU GOUVERNEMENT  
REVOLUTIONNAIRE PROVISoire DE LA  
REPUBLIQUE DU SUD VIET NAM  
44 AVE. DE MADRID  
922'00 NEUILLY-SUR SEINE  
FRANCE

WALTER TEAGUE &  
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135 W. 4TH STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y.  
10012, U.S.A.

AUGUST 6, 1975

Dear Friends,

We are writing to you in order to help explain some recent events concerning people who have identified themselves as representing Indochina Solidarity Committee. We are candid and detailed in this letter because we know it is important to you to know the truth of the politics and actions of those you have contact with.

Coming after your great victories, this matter is both unpleasant and complicated, but it does reflect the state of the political movement here in the U. S.

We will present here a selection of documents and our opinions on the split in Indochina Solidarity Committee and the New York City chapter of Indochina Peace Campaign. We will not try to present a thorough or precise analysis of the principal political group involved (the Revolutionary Union - RU). That would require much more time and space. But we have included articles and information that gives some insight into the recent practice of the RU and the people who have contacted you as ISC representatives. We will begin putting together a bibliography of articles on the RU by various newspapers and political organizations and will send them to you later.

To introduce ourselves:

WALTER TEAGUE I have been associated with public support for the NFLSVN in the U. S. for the past 10 years. I helped found the U. S. Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam in April, 1965. This led to many arrests and to my being brought along with other public supporters of the NLF, before the reactionary House Un-American Activities Committee of the U. S. Congress in 1966. This congressional committee was trying at that time to stop anti-war protest, but failed. From 1966 on I and the rest of the committee (USCNALFSVN) were in the midst of all major anti-war work and did all we could to encourage the peace movement and the general public to learn about and support the Indochinese peoples' just struggle for liberation.

I April 1969, I was sent to Paris to meet with Madam Binh as the representative of a broad coalition of U. S. and Canadian groups that wanted to invite Madam Binh to visit Canada and the U. S. We had of course, no knowledge then of the imminent formation of the PRGRSVN!

My primary motivations have been not only deep admiration and identification with your struggle, but also a clear understanding of how opposition to the U. S. war in Indochina and building support for liberation struggles (your's in particular) have led to a revitalization and advancement of our own progressive and revolutionary movement here in the U. S. I am old enough to have grown up in an America almost devoid of political or class consciousness following the set backs for the progressive forces in the late 1940's and 50's. The U. S. in the 60's and 70's is a drastically different place and the momentum and depth of the political change are irreversible.

In a word, at a time when no clear single revolutionary force existed in the U.S., it has been my way of joining the worldwide revolution.

MARTHA CHAMBERLAIN I grew up in a small farming area in mid-western U. S. and began anti-war work at 18 by campaigning for E. McCarthy - because of moral outrage at the war and killing. As years passed I understood better U. S. policies - and gained an anti-imperialist perspective on the war. I joined the committee, USCANLFSVN, early in 1971. I have a sister in the RU, but do not agree with many of their political positions. I work for the Wash. Sq. Church as Secretary and my work enables me to work closely with many different progressive political groups in New York City. In 1973 I went to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade. Recently, I was asked by the organizers of the protest at the U. S. Embassy in Saigon, to be one of the 8 or so people to go from the U. S. The ISC collective voted that time, 5 against and 2 for, and I did not go therefore. Presently, I am working with the Indochina Peace Campaign/NYC chapter and am interested in working with the national office of the new Friends of Indochina organization that is being set up in Wash., D.C.

I have come to understand clearly, because of recent events around the ISC split, and the IPC/NYC split, the important differences between sectarian behavior and united front work based upon real respect for people.

A brief description of the organizations involved:

The UNITED STATES COMMITTEE TO AID THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT OF SOUTH VIET NAM (USCANLFSVN) founded in April, 1965 as a committee of volunteers, chaired by Walter Teague, functioned as such thru 1971 when it began to develop into a more collective organization around the May day demonstrations in Wash. D. C. and other such events. The committee moved its offices to the Wash. Sq. Church which also housed the Greenwich Village Peace Center and is still a place where diverse progressive groups meet for forums, etc. In 1973 the committee changed its name to Indochina Solidarity Committee.

(ISC)

The INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE functioned as a more-or-less collective of from 5 to 13 people with the assistance of many others. It published and distributed newsletters, etc. and worked with many other groups, generally continuing and expanding on the work of USCANLFSVN. Starting in 1974, some members of ISC began to gravitate toward the politics of RU\* and on May 26th, 1975, an open split occurred which effectively caused the end of ISC as an independent solidarity committee. The name of ISC is now used by the 5 RU supporters from the ISC collective and is clearly aligned with RU, as is shown in their latest newsletter. (See the attached last two pages of that newsletter.) (See also their denial that they are part of RU, but their full defense and agreement with the RU in their reply to our letter explaining the May 26th "rip-off").

(IPC/NYC)

The INDOCHINA PEACE CAMPAIGN/NYC Chapter was formed in 1973 under the joint leadership of previous IPC activists and ISC people. At first the principles of a mass organization were adhered to, but as the ISC's political collectivity dissolved, the RU supporters began to function as a separate contending group within IPC/NYC and struggled to push their line upon the chapter and the national organization. This led to IPC/NYC becoming overtly Marxist/Leninist (at least in word) and less active as a mass organization. Because of this, many less politically developed people left IPC/NYC and eventually the two sides separated into two separately functioning IPC's. At that point, the national steering committee of IPC saw an opportunity to formerly expell the RU faction for their destructive behavior and the non-RU IPC/NYC was able to continue with markedly better relations with the national IPC.

\* DESCRIBED ON NEXT PAGE

In July, 1975, National IPC was dissolved at a conference in Ann Arbor, Mich., and two new organizations were formed: 1. Campaign for a New Foreign Policy (anti-imperialist, but primarily reformist and aimed at the military spending and government spending and policies abroad.) 2. Friends of Indochina (See the summary enclosed.) Local chapters of IPC were to continue during the interim while the new organizations were being formed, as they saw fit. The New York City chapter is continuing to use the name, IPC/NYC. The expelled RU-IPC group is also continuing to use the name of IPC/NYC and is apparently raising money for material aid.

(RU)

The REVOLUTIONARY UNION came out of the 1968 splits within Students for a Democratic Society. The RU describes itself as a Marxist/Leninist/Maoist organization. It is national and fairly large. It is in the process of declaring itself a party some time late this year.

On the surface, the RU has fairly standard Marxist/Leninist/Maoist politics. It is differentiated from the rest of the organized Left in the U.S. by a number of positions that have created serious divisions and antagonisms.

- A. The R.U. is in practice and theory, strongly anti-Soviet and pro-China.
- B. The R.U.'s position on the National Question causes them to downgrade the importance of Third World or Nationalist groupings within the U.S. Because of this the R.U. is almost isolated from the left and progressive nationalist and Third World forces. (An example of this was the R.U.'s position on the recent racial conflict in Boston which centered around the question of "bussing" of black school children to predominantly white schools. The right wing and racist forces took the position that to bus black children to their (white) schools was attacking their community and what little good they had in their schools (also much outright anti-black sentiment and actions took place with the Klu Klux Klan and Nazis joining the anti-bussing movement.) The main slogan of the rightwing was "~~SMASH THE Bussing Plan~~ SMASH THE RU." R.U. headlined their newspapers with the same slogan, ~~and~~ THE RU. took the position <sup>THAT</sup> the bussing was a ruling class manipulation (which almost everyone agreed with, even many of the black parents who none-the-less put their children on the busses so that they might get a little better education.). <sup>BUT</sup> The R.U. then became the only major left group in the U.S. that did not ~~place~~ <sup>PLACE</sup> their emphasis on the question of racism (which grew to horrendous and obvious proportions as blacks were beaten and small school children had to be rescued by the police from white mobs shouting, "kill the niggers!")
- C. The R.U. downgrades or condemns many aspects of the 1960's and 70's movements in the U. S., which further isolates them from many progressive forces, such as the Women's Liberation Movement.
- D. The R.U. is functioning in an increasingly sectarian manner ( a problem that is not unique to the R.U.) which is heightening the divisions on the left in the U. S. This becomes a serious problem with the R.U. due to their self-appointed role ~~of~~ <sup>as</sup> the only correct leadership of the proletariat (one can only wish the proletariat would accept the leadership of any left groups!\*) The R.U. then uses this righteous selfconcept to justify either absorbing or destroying progressive groups. They do this with disregard for the full and long range consequences for a movement that is still growing and needs both unity and education. The left in general does not see R.U. as leadership In fact R.U. is more often seen as being destructive of genuine forces that ~~are~~ <sup>ARE</sup> providing a continuing bases for developing that leadership we so desperately need. An example has been the virtual take over of the VVAW/WSO by the R.U.

When VVAW/WSO was a mass organization of veterans and supporters, led by Vietnam War veterans, it was an effective and genuine force against imperialism and was, in fact had to be, listened to <sup>by</sup> many Americans. Now that it has become in the main, simply a front for a group seeking hegemony over the movement, it can too easily be discounted by non-activists and the millions of Americans who are still firmly anti-kommunist. The struggle within VVAW/WSO will educate some, but has done much harm.

- E. While it may be hard to describe or substantiate to anyone who has not witnessed their behavior, R.U.'s style of political and personal work is both an outgrowth of their political analysis and an indication of something amiss. (See the attached R.U. Cadre letter.) Immature, impolite, and unscientific are some of the many words ~~we~~ could use to describe their contemptuous manners toward anyone they disagree with.

Now let us introduce the other five people who were active in the Indochina Solidarity Collective when it split:

MIKE STOUT: Joined the committee, then the USCANLFSVN, in late 1971 and worked diligently to develop his own politics and the work of the committee. He has written and sung songs of Vietnam, and worked with many groups. In 1971 he traveled to Paris with Gina Harmon and met with Indochinese delegations. His work has been exemplary in the main. He does have a tendency toward rigidity and overreaction which is consistent with his strong reactionary Catholic family background. Mike went from a typical 1960's hippie to a staunch Stalinist in a short period of time. He has been much influenced by Gina Harmon, who has been often the only one who could curb his excesses. Mike is now a "closed" member of the R. U.

Mike is a serious and dedicated revolutionary who at present vehemently supports the R.U.'s line. He and the other five, are or were part of an R.U. "work team" whose assignment was to organize ISC and IPC/NYC for the R.U. This was accidentally revealed while we were still working together. He and the others (except Gina) claim they are not members of R.U.

While ~~we~~ disagree with much of Mike's politics and recent behavior and I think he is neurotically dogmatic and vindictive at times, ~~we~~ recognize his sincerity (within the framework of the need to rationalize and justify R.U.'s line) and praise the great amount of good work he has done in the past. ~~We~~ also feel that it is tragic that his and the others' energies are being mixed and distorted in their attempt to combine genuine international proletarian solidarity with the R.U.'s struggle for hegemony.

An example of the problem they face, is the very circumstances that prompted this letter. The conflict was avoidable, and if ISC had been dissolved peacefully and not with any public split, they could have gone on with their work with all of the materials they needed and without the great burden of distrust and bitterness they created for themselves. We offered them all of the informational items they would need and material goods have always been a false issue, since Gina had until recently close to a 100,000.00 in the bank. None-the-less, they chose to precipitate a public split and took many things that belong to others and all that they wanted from the office of ISC. These actions hurt them and us and played into the hands of the right wing forces at Wash. Sq. Church for instance, who are now pushing to expell. all political groups from the church.

A more political problem they have, is, how to be a solidarity group with the Indochinese countries and ~~not~~ take a militant and outspoken anti-Soviet position.

AT THE SAME TIME

In the first newsletter since the split in ISC, they end with a section that begins to lay out the R.U. position on the Soviet Union. We all had criticisms and private viewpoints on both China and the Soviet Union. We <sup>(MARSHA + WALTER)</sup> did not agree though, on the extent and conclusions and ~~we did not agree~~ did not think that the newsletter was the place to discuss the "Sino-Soviet split". Now they can do that without our opposition.

Due to these and other problems, Mike and the others are increasingly isolated from the rest of the movement in New York City. The very people who most need the information that a solidarity committee can provide, now are reticent to work with people who have done what the ~~RU~~ <sup>RU</sup> has done. The love and clarity that was evident in Mike's early songs, has now turned to a rhetorical stridency that is unintelligible to the working class in America and grates on the ears of the activists who want to reach and activate Americans with the messages we share.

GINA HARMON: is the daughter of the millionaire owner of Harmon/Kardon electronics and has long been a close friend of the leadership of R.U. She is the only member of ISC who admits to belonging to R.U., and this only because it was accidentally revealed. She joined ISC in 1972 and is the strongest political leader among the other 5 ISC people. She is intelligent and combative, a fairly good organizer of political discussions, etc., but often too quick to evidence antagonism. She is primarily responsible for the others joining the R.U. and led the fight for R.U.'s line in IPC/NYC, etc. She and Felice Weintraub fought for the R.U.'s line within the recent Vietnamese/American Women's Conference and lost. They were therefore not chosen to represent the U.S. women in Montreal, but they went anyway. She is a serious and dedicated revolutionary and has done much good work around Indochina. As a R.U. cadre, she led the split in ISC, and functioned with total R.U. support.

FELICE WEINTRAUB: joined the committee in 1972 and later left to go to college.  
CHRIS GOLANOS: joined in 1973 and GARY HANSJERGEN returned with Felice from Ann Arbor in 1974 to join the committee. The three have all done good work and are dedicated, but their primary allegiance has been to the R.U. since mid 1974.

#### SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON THEIR BEHAVIOIR IN ISC/IPC/NYC...

As has been mentioned earlier, the 5 ISC/RU people led the faction of IPC/NYC that was expelled by national, but they continue to use the name of IPC/NYC. Their group has now grown to about 15 people, most of which are RU members, open or closed. This other IPC/NYC has been raising money for material aid. We have no knowledge of how successful they have been.

The IPC/NYC, which we are active with, has grown to about 20 people at present and is in the process of organizing for the Friends of Indochina. We also are able to work effectively with many of the progressive groups and coalitions and we are in fact <sup>ourselves</sup> made up of people from many different groups and tendencies. We were recently very glad to have been asked by Cora Weiss and others to help assist in welcoming and establishing the PRG and DRVN observers delegates to the U. N., here in NYC.

We are now aware that both prior to and since the ISC split, the R. U. people in ISC were beginning secret attempts to ingratiate and link themselves with various Vietnamese and Indochinese groups. The documents that follow (particularly Martha's and Walter's letter on the split) do not go into these more private and serious matters for obvious reasons. But we do want to here mention two such items.

One of the final acts of the RU people that convinced Martha and Walter that ISC should be dissolved, occurred around the Victory Celebration of May 18th(?) in

Montreal, Canada.

Unknown to Martha and Walter, the others received a request for help from the Union of Vietnamese in Canada and Gina and Gary left secretly for Montreal. In the past one of the most important areas of collectivity lay with our relationships with representatives of the Indochinese people's struggles. For the others not to inform and involve Martha and Walter was a totally non-collective act and ended any principled relationship between us. We attempted to have an organizational meeting to discuss our work, and were informed that Gary and Gina were not available. We asked where they were and we were told by Chris and Felice that they didn't know! Later, Mike said they were in Montreal for some economic conference or something.

We only learned of the plans for the Celebration and the presence of Vietnamese delegations in Montreal from Doug Hosstetter and Cora Weiss with whom we were working on preparations for the huge rally in NYC on May 11th. We were informed that Gina and Gary had sat in on a meeting between Doug and Cora with the delegates and that Gina had to be asked to leave.

It became clear to us (and others) what they had been doing when we went to the Victory Celebration in Montreal. A R.U. supporter was put forward as the Vietnam veteran (He is fine person, but let himself be used) much to the surprise of the New York people. No one had any complaint with the way things went during the celebration, but the clear attempt of the R.U. people to manipulate events for their benefit, was a blotch on the spirit of this great occasion. The good and trusted relationships built up over the years with the New York people (many more than just we ISC people) were severely harmed by these events - especially since the ISC people had been among those most associated with the friendship between Americans and Vietnamese in Canada.

Another case, has been the clear attempt by the R.U. people to gain through various maneuvering, a special relationship with the Indochinese representatives coming to the U. S.

What is most tragic and ironic about their efforts (which include the splitting and seizing of the ISC resources) to gain political stature and legitimacy for the R.U. is that if they had simply continued their good work without resorting to secrecy, factionalism, maneuverings and outright theft and threats, then they certainly would have been able to contribute much more effectively to the Indochinese and American peoples' struggles. Such continued good practice without all the confusions, suspicions and damage their recent behavior has caused, might have gained them naturally, what they are now seeking to manufacture.

As to their claims of assistance, we can't really say how practical they are. We do feel that they probably are both genuine and opportunistic. Certainly too close association with the R.U. would be great cause of concern for politically active and aware people in the U. S. On the other hand, they certainly could be of some material assistance. A mysterious \$350,000.00 showed up in our IPC/NYC bank account several days ago. It was withdrawn before we knew about it by the bank which has not yet explained the "mistake." It might be that Gina had been able to obtain a large contribution from one of her industrialist friends and the money got deposited in the wrong account. The question though is really one of politics and not money.

Yours in the struggle,

Martha Chamberlain  
Walter Teague

DOCUMENTS AND CHRONOLOGY

## CHRONOLOGY:

1. (April 27) The RU faction in IPC/NYC - still one group at this time - submitted their own proposal to a national issues conference of IPC. It was similar to RU's line and clearly did not support the principles of unity of national IPC and was in conflict with the other section of IPC/NYC.
2. (April and May) After months of struggle, IPC/NYC found itself unable to function with unity. The RU faction had been meeting separately and secretly and functioned as a block. The non-RU people in IPC/NYC therefore decided to caucus also and announced that they would also meet separately, but wanted to work together as much as possible. The RU faction, led by the RU people, refused to cooperate and finally the two groups no longer met together.
3. (May 13) National IPC's steering committee expelled the RU faction in a long letter, (which is attached) for their factionalism. Most IPC chapters agreed with the expulsion, but many disagreed with the method. They thought it should have been done more democratically.
4. (Late May) The RU faction replied to and tried to gain support against the National steering committee's expulsion, but they failed. (document attached.)
5. All of this happened in the general context of RU's many attempts to gain control of groups around the country such as; Ithaca Rest of the News, VVAW/WSO, U.S. China People's Friendship Assoc., Union of Radical Political Economists, San Francisco Newsreel, People's Translations Service, etc.
6. (May 26) Growing conflicts with ISC led the RU people to taking the valuable items from the ISC office in the early hours of the 26th along with many items that belonged to the church and other individuals. They held onto the gutted office by force and threats to the church staff for four days. These actions were preplanned for some time. On May 31, they had to leave the office with only their personal belongings and they had only returned some of the church property.
7. (June 1) IPC/NYC and the Church condemned the RU action and called a mass meeting of anti-war and progressive people at the church for June 1st where over 50 groups were represented. This meeting formed the Coalition to Reclaim the Indochina Resources which tried to convince the RU to turn over the materials to a neutral group which would hold them until the larger anti-war movement could determine how they could be handled so that everyone would have access to them. If the RU did not agree to this, then CRIR would publicize what had happened so that pressure on RU might cause them to reconsider their actions and at least would forewarn others about this kind of behavior.
8. (May 30) IPC/NYC, the non-RU group, issued a statement on the RU "ripoff".
9. (June 10) IPC /NYC issued its statement on the expulsion of the RU faction of IPC/NYC.
10. (June 10) The minister of Wash. Sq. Church, after consulting with the board members of the church, issued a letter expelling the RU people from the church premises until such time as they rectified their actions.

- (June 15)
11. Martha and Walter issue a statement on the ISC split detailing the event and asking for past supporters of ISC to sign the CRIR petition and to write to both the RU people and to Martha and Walter urging the RU people to return the personal items and to turn over the Indochinese materials to the War Resisters League (the items left in the ISC office after the ripoff were voluntarily turned over to the custody of WRL by Martha and Walter and the working committee of the CRIR) or to some such neutral body.
  12. (June) The ISC/RU people issue a reply to Martha and Walter's statement. In it they try to justify what they did and they give an account of events that no one involved except themselves agrees with. They accuse Walter of "becoming a Mad Dog" and they also urge people to support them and to write to Walter and urge him to return what he "has taken."
  13. (June) The CRIR working committee issues its "working paper" on the events.
  14. (June to Aug.) During the following period, CRIR and Martha and Walter receive many letters of support from around the country and hundreds of people voice their solidarity. Many organizations sign the petition call upon the RU people to return the Indochinese materials and send carbon copies of letters of criticism of the RU people, to CRIR.

So far, neither CRIR nor we have received a single letter or telephone call supporting the RU version of what happened.

#### DOCUMENTS:

1. Letter from Martha and Walter, dated August 6, 1975.
2. IPC/RU Faction's program paper given at IPC National Issues conference, ~~April~~ April 27.
3. IPC/National Steering Committee's Letter of expulsion of the RU Faction, dtd May 13.
4. IPC/RU Faction's reply to expulsion, May.
5. Background materials on some recent RU activities:
  - A. Michigan Free Press "Perspective"
  - B. RU reply to MFP, dtd May 15
  - C. California, non-RU chapter/region of VVAW/WSO pamphlet on RU
  - D. Letter from non-RU Ithaca Rest Of The News, dtd. June 10
  - E. "RU Cadre Effects on VVAW/WSO" letter from non-RU St. Louis chapter of VVAW/WSO
6. IPC/NYC non-RU chapter, letter on expulsion of RU faction, dtd June 10.
7. "Chapter Vote on RU expulsion" from the National IPC Newsletter.
8. ISC/non-RU letter on the RU "ripoff" from Martha and Walter, DTD June 15.
9. IPC/NYC non-RU letter on RU "ripoff", dtd May 30.
10. Minister of Wash. Sq. Church letter on RU people, dtd June 10.
11. ISC/RU people's reply to Martha and Walter's statement.
12. List of major items taken from ISC office (Page 9)
13. Summary of proposal for FRIENDS OF INDOCHINA organization approved at National IPC conference July 12/13
14. WORKING PAPER OF CRIR ON RU RIPOFF.
15. ISC/RU NEWSLETTER (4 PAGES) JULY, 1975



## PARTIAL LIST OF ITEMS TAKEN FROM

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ISC OFFICE MAY 26

1. Vietnamese books and pamphlets in English, approx 500 gathered from 1964 until the present.
2. Vietnamese Documents, many large files, gathered from 1965 until the present.
3. Vietnamese films, in English, Fr. and Viet., over 50, gathered from 1966 until 1974.
4. Cambodian and Laotian books, pamphlets and films, many
5. Vietnamese artifacts - some held in trust for others.
6. Indochina art work and display items.
7. Display on Indochina - part belonged to IPC.
8. Indochinese flags and poles and demonstration equipment.
9. Information files of many kinds. Very important to ongoing work.
10. Film scripts for Vietnamese films...
11. Boxes of ISC buttons.
12. Files of ISC and USCANLFSVN published literature.
13. Photo files of ISC activities.
14. Correspondence files with Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, Movement, and Individuals in the U.S. and outside of the U.S.
15. Tapes and records of Vietnamese and anti-war movement activities, etc.
16. Many other political items.

## Material goods taken:

1. IBM Selectric II typewriter, ½ bought by Walter, remainder by Gina and ISC.
2. Mimeograph, Rex Rotary, bought by John B.
3. Press Type file, extensive,
4. Office equipment, extensive,
5. Amplifier, donated
6. 8 foot movie screen
7. Large shortwave radio, loaned by Ivan B.
8. \* Three microphones
9. \$ on bank account
10. Wash. Sq. Church Projector valued at \$1750. (was returned eventually)
11. Wash. Sq. Church folding machine (also returned later)
12. Stereo Tape deck, Walter's, (finally returned)
13. Many other personal and organizational items.
14. (NOTE: They also left various debts to the church which Martha and Walter had to pay, totaling over \$300.)

When we briefly discuss what had been taken by them, during the four days they held onto the ISC office, they tried to claim other items not theirs and would not give up anything they already had with the exception of offering a few minor things and offering to split some of the less important items left in the office. There are undoubtedly many items they took which we could not determine so this list is incomplete.

P.S. Please feel free to request any additional information or documents you need!  
W.T.