

Vol. 32 No. 3

SHAFR
Newsletter

*The Society for Historians of
American Foreign Relations*

Founded in 1967

Chartered in 1972

PRESIDENT: Robert J. McMahon, History, U. of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611-7320.

VICE PRESIDENT: Robert Beisner, History, American University, Washington DC 20016-8038.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY-TREASURER: Allan Spetter, History, Wright State University, Dayton OH 45435.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Richard Immerman, History, Gladfelter Hall, Temple University, Philadelphia PA 19122.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE: Sam Walker, 6502 43rd Ave. University Park, MD 20782.

MINORITY ACCESS COMMITTEE: Arnold Taylor, Howard University, Washington, DC 20059-0001.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ARCHIVES: Ted Wilson, History, U. of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045-2130.

MEMBERSHIP: Annual dues are \$35 for regular members and \$15 for student or unemployed (Annual dues will go to \$40 and student and unemployed rate will increase to \$20 in one more year). Institutional Subscription Rates for *Diplomatic History*, Vol 32, 2001 are \$75 for Institutions in North America and \$90 for institutions in the rest of the world. Make checks payable to Blackwell Publishers or use MasterCard, Visa, or American Express. Mail orders, payments, and address changes to SHAFR Membership coordinator, Blackwell Publishers, 350 Main St., Malden MA 02148 or call 1-800-835-6770. For those wishing only to receive the *Newsletter* the cost is \$15. Overseas members wishing to receive the *Newsletter* by mail should remit an additional \$10 per year to the *Newsletter's* office.

MEETINGS: The annual meeting of the society is held in the summer. The society also meets with the AHA in January.

PRIZES: The Society administers four awards that honor the late Stuart L. Bernath and two honoring the late Myrna L. Bernath; these are financed thorough the generosity of the late Dr. Gerald J. Bernath. Awards also honor Laura and Norman Graebner, the late W. Stull Holt, the late Warren Kuehl, the late Armin Rappaport, Robert Ferrell, Lawrence Gelfand, and Arthur Link. Details of each of these awards are to be found in the June and December *Newsletters*.

PUBLICATIONS: The Society sponsors a quarterly newsletter and a journal, *Diplomatic History*.

Contents

Page

- 1 Shifting Images of the Dien Bien Phu Crisis of 1954 by
P.A.J. (Pieter) Meulenduks
- 35 The Case of the “Decent Interval”: Do We Now Have a
Smoking Gun? by *Jeffrey Kimball*
- 40 Letters: *Serge Ricard*
- 43 Past Presidents’ Column - Robert Divine
- 48 Announcements
- 56 SHAFR Council Minutes
- 58 Personals
- 59 Publications
- 61 Calendar
- 62 Awards, Prizes, and Funds

ISSN 0740-6160

Website: <http://www.ohio.edu/shafr/>

Regina



Books

SPECIAL SHAFR DISCOUNTS

INTO THE DARK HOUSE: American Diplomacy & the Ideological Origins of the Cold War. Joseph M. Siracusa (1998) 273pp.
\$12.95 pap **SHAFR Price (pap) \$8.00**

THE UNITED STATES AND POST-COLD WAR INTERVENTIONS: Bush & Clinton in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia, 1992-1998. Lester Brune. xii, 177pp. (1998) \$14.95 paper
SHAFR Price (pap) \$9.00

AMERICA'S AUSTRALIA/AUSTRALIA'S AMERICA.
Joseph M. Siracusa and Yeong-Han Cheong (1997) 160pp
\$21.95 cloth, \$12.95 paper **SHAFR Price (pap) \$7.00**

AMERICA AND THE IRAQI CRISIS, 1990-1992: Origins and Aftermath. Lester H. Brune. (1993) xii, 212pp.
\$28.95 cloth, \$12.95 paper **SHAFR Price (pap) \$9.00**

EMPIRE ON THE PACIFIC: A Study in American Continental Expansion. Norman A. Graebner. 278pp. Reprint ed. (1983) \$14.95 paper,
SHAFR Price (pap) \$8.00

THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND THE INTER-NATIONAL RIVALRIES. Raymond R. Esthus. 165pp. (1971, 1982)
\$12.95 paper **SHAFR Price (pap) \$8.00**

U.S. DIPLOMATS IN EUROPE, 1919-1941. Kenneth Paul Jones, ed. (1981) cloth \$16.95, paper \$12.95 **SHAFR Price (pap) \$7.00**

PANAMA, THE CANAL & THE UNITED STATES. Thomas M. Leonard. (1993) 144pp. \$11.95 pape **SHAFR Price (pap) \$6.00**

AMERICAN-RUSSIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS, 1770s-1990s: A Survey of Issues and Literature. James K. Libbey (1989), 202 pp. \$12.95 paper **SHAFR Price (pap) \$6.00**

AMERICA AND THE INDOCHINA WARS, 1945-1990: A Bibliographical Guide. Lester H. Brune & Richard Dean Burns, eds (1992) 352pp. \$39.95 cloth **SHAFR Price (cloth) \$13.00**

SHIFTING IMAGES OF THE DIEN BIEN PHU CRISIS OF 1954 by

P.A.J. (PIETER) MEULENDIJKS

Catholic University Nijmegen

Introduction

The title of my research “Shifting images of the Dien Bien Phu Crisis of 1954”¹ draws attention to two different facets of the Dien Bien Phu crisis: the military and political entanglements in 1954 connected with the Vietminh siege of the French fortress in the north of Indochina and the image-building of the crisis. Although I have paid attention to the French, American and international contexts of the crisis and have tried to establish what happened in 1954, the central subject is the image-building of the crisis since 1954.

Two assumptions drawn from historical theory have determined the direction of this study of image-building: Firstly the notion that the historian should preferably take a middle position between the conflicting views of the hermeneutic and positivist interpretations of history and secondly the notion, derived from W.H. Walsh’s “perspectivism,” that attention to the different perspectives on the past can reveal both intersubjective and subjective elements.² From Michael Oakeshott I have derived the distinction between a “recorded past” (the past in the sources), a “historical past” (the past in the works of history) and a “practical past” (the past as a

¹P.A.J. Meulendijks, *Verschuivende beelden van de Dien Bien Phoe-crisis van 1954* (Nijmegen 2000) ISBN 90 5710 085 1 (523 pages).

²W.H. Walsh, *Philosophy of History: An Introduction* (New York 1967) 106-116.

storehouse for analogies and lessons).³ Thus I deduced four research questions regarding the Dien Bien Phu crisis:

- What different visions of the Dien Bien Phu crisis can we discern?
- How can we explain these?
- What has been their influence?
- What conclusions should the historian draw from this?

I have elaborated this deduction in six issues:

- The main lines in Anglo-Saxon and French image-building of the Dien Bien Phu crisis.
- The question as to whether the American army was going to intervene in Indochina.
- The divergent opinions on the behaviour of American politicians and soldiers.
- Contemporary American problems which influenced the image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis (how "practical" did this image of the past become because of that?).
- The issue as to what extent French politicians and soldiers were responsible for the disaster in Dien Bien Phu and therefore were to blame for faults ("l'affaire Dien Bien Phu") — questions which have been given much attention in France ever since 1954.
- The question as to what extent images of the Dien Bien Phu crisis have influenced decision making? Is there a historical image of Dien Bien Phu, or is it merely a matter of a simplistic presentism based on analogies by which the "practical past" overshadows "the historical past," or should keener questions be asked?

The main lines in Anglo-Saxon and French image-building

My study has made it clear that there never was an all-embracing image of the crisis, neither in 1954 for the contemporaries nor in the eighties when many archival sources became available nor at the end of the nineties. As early as 1954 contemporaries in America and Europe repeatedly noticed that distinct differences in

³Michael Oakeshott, "Present, Future and Past," in: Michael Oakeshott, *On History and Other Essays* (Oxford 1983) 1-44.

interpretation among journalists existed concerning important facts of the crisis. Example: American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's "united action" speech of 29 March 1954, in which he warned the People's Republic of China; the various discussions among the Western Three in April 1954; or concerning the question as to how serious were the American plans to intervene.

Since June, 1954 there have been two coherent images of the crisis provided by the American journalist Chalmers M. Roberts and the weekly *U.S. News and World Report* respectively. Whereas Roberts emphasized the willingness of the Eisenhower Administration to intervene and supposed that this was crippled through the attitude of the American Congress and the British government, the American periodical postulated that the "united action" the American government wanted implied a consensus on united defense of Southeast Asia. Whereas Roberts contended that the American government considered an air strike near Dien Bien Phu and that Admiral Arthur W. Radford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, suggested this when his French colleague General Paul Ely visited Washington in March 1954, *U.S. News and World Report* denied that the Eisenhower government considered or proposed such an air strike. On the other hand the French had asked for an American air strike and misunderstandings between the Western Three had afterwards caused rumours. Roberts and *U.S. News and World Report* in particular had different visions on what had happened on 3 April 1954. According to the American journalist, Radford and Dulles had asked the leaders of the American Congress for a resolution to use the American navy and air force for an air strike near Dien Bien Phu. According to the American periodical there was only an exploratory sounding with regard to united action in the diplomatic sense on 3 April.⁴ In the years 1954-1956 all sorts of modifications by journalists, politicians and soldiers exposed flaws in both visions.

⁴Chalmers M. Roberts, "Blocked by British 'No' — U.S. Twice Proposed Indochina Air Strike," *Washington Post and Times Herald* (7 June 1954) 1, 4; Chalmers M. Roberts, "The Day We Didn't Go To War," *Reporter* 11(14 September 1954) 31-35; "Did U.S. Almost Get Into War? - The Inside Story of What Really Happened," *U.S. News and World Report* (USNWR) (18 June 1954) 35-40.

Besides John Foster Dulles (in an interview to James R. Shepley), the Joint Chief of Staff of the American Army Matthew B. Ridgway, and the journalists Marquis Childs and Robert J. Donovan should be mentioned.⁵ After that the gradual collapse of the images continued.

I have also noticed that during the Dien Bien Phu crisis politicians approached journalists for a series of motives and often journalists and politicians were of mutual service to each other. In this way Roberts got his information from Anthony Eden (the British Secretary of State), diplomats of the State Department and John McCormack, a Democratic member of the House of Representatives, who had leaked to the journalist for political reasons. An active media and public relations policy of the Eisenhower Administration played an important role in the completion of the image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis held by *U.S. News and World Report*. The story in the periodical which questioned Roberts's vision was planted by the American administration and represented an official response to Roberts.⁶

⁵"What Ridgway Told Ike - War in Indochina Would be Tougher Than Korea," *USNWR* (25 June 1954) 30-33; "Mr. Eden's Charm: Will It Heal Breach With Mr. Dulles," *USNWR* (25 June 1954) 46-51; Among many other publications: "Inside Story: How Near U.S. Came To War. Here Are the Facts Of America's Role In Indochina," *USNWR* (6 August 1954) 21-24; Marquis Childs, *The Ragged Edge: the Diary of a Crisis* (New York 1955) 7-20, 75-97, 120-143, 152-159; James R. Shepley, "How Dulles Averted War," *Life* (16 January 1956) 70-80; Robert J. Donovan, *Eisenhower: The Inside Story* (New York 1956) xvii, 259-269; Coral Bell ed., *Survey of International Affairs 1954* (London 1957) 12-73.

⁶Meulendijks, *Verschuivende beelden*, 73-89 (Chapter 2.9. *The Government, the Press and Public Opinion in the United States*). On Roberts see Chalmers M. Roberts, *First Rough Draft: A Journalist's Journal of Our Times* (New York 1973) 107-109, 114-121; William Conrad Gibbons, *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War: Executive and Legislative Roles and Relationships I, 1945-1960* (Princeton 1987) 192. In my dissertation I discuss seventeen interferences between journalists and politicians. On the story in *USNWR* see George C. Herring and Richard H. Immerman, "Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dien Bien Phu: 'The Day We Didn't Go To War' Revisited," *The Journal of American History* 71 (1984) 343-363, esp. 343-344.

The collapse of the images was also furthered by the publication of memoirs in the fifties and sixties, in which the authors quite often constructed "their own Dien Bien Phu image." Yet, these memoirs provided important supplementary information about, e.g., Paul Ely's mission to Washington and Operation Vulture (the plans for an American air strike).⁷ Secondary literature of the fifties and sixties clearly showed the two main interpretations. In this period Roberts's vision was clearly prominent. The authors of a number of detailed monographs about the Dien Bien Phu crisis (Jean Lacouture/Philippe Devillers (1960), Jules Roy (1963), Victor Bator (1965), Bernard B. Fall (1966), Melvin Gurtov (1967) and King C. Chen (1969)) copied his approach, although some of them showed some refractory elements.⁸ Robert F. Randle (1969) wrote very clearly in line with the vision of *U.S. News and World Report*. He

⁷The Anglo-Saxon memoirs Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York 1956) 275-281; James M. Gavin, *War and Peace in the Space Age* (London 1958) 113-117, 126-129, 147-157; Maxwell D. Taylor, *Uncertain Trumpet* (s.l. 1960) 23-25; Anthony Eden, *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: Full Circle* (Boston 1960) 77-147; Donald Lancaster, *The Emancipation of French Indochina* (London 1961) 263-337; Sherman Adams, *Firsthand Report: the Story of the Eisenhower Administration* (New York 1961) 99-107; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change, 1953-1956* (New York 1963) 332-375; Robert McClintock, *The Meaning of Limited War* (Boston 1967) 8, 161-180; James M. Gavin (in collaboration with Arthur T. Hadley), *Crisis Now* (New York 1968) 41-44, 48. The French memoirs Henri Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine (1953-1954)* (Paris 1956) i-v, 199-200, 255, 315-319 (also the supplement in Henri Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine (1953-1954). Nouvelle édition* (Paris 1958) 337-345); Joseph Laniel, *Le drame indochinois. Du Dien-Bien-Phu au pari de Genève* (Paris 1957) ii-iv, 12-22, 58-62; Georges Catroux, *Deux actes du drame indochinois. Hanoï: juin 1940. Dien Bien Phu: mars-mai 1954* (Paris 1959) 111-235; Pierre Langlais, *Dien Bien Phu* (Paris 1963) 33, 236-263; Paul Ely, *Mémoires: l'Indochine dans le tourmente* (Paris 1964) 23-133; Jean Pouget, *Nous étions à Dien-Bien-Phu* (Paris 1964) 239, 261-262; Georges Bidault, *D'une résistance à l'autre* (Paris 1965) 194-207.

⁸Jean Lacouture and Philippe Devillers, *La fin d'une guerre. Indochine 1954* (Paris 1960) (also Jean Lacouture and Philippe Devillers, *End of a War: Indochina 1954* (New York 1969)); Jules Roy, *La bataille de Dien Bien Phu* (Paris 1963); Victor Bator, *Vietnam: A Diplomatic Tragedy: Origins of U.S. Involvement* (London 1965); (among many other publications of this scholar) Bernard B. Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu* (Philadelphia 1966); Melvin Gurtov, *The First Vietnam Crisis: Chinese Communist Strategy and United States Involvement, 1953-1954* (New York 1967); King C. Chen, *Vietnam and China, 1938-1954* (Princeton 1969) 212-331.

outlined a positive image of Dulles's — in his eyes — realistic foreign policy (in which the American Secretary sometimes showed Machiavellian tactical traits). The author constantly underlined the cautious and open character of his "united action" policy.⁹

In the years 1968-1971 three studies helped to establish a more well-defined image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis. The year 1968 saw the publication of the dissertation by the French military historian Pierre Rocolle and the report by the French Committee of Inquiry, led by general Georges Catroux, which investigated the battle with the Vietminh in 1953 and 1954 in Indochina, and some of its political aspects. Both studies were predominantly based on sources from French military archives.¹⁰ *The Pentagon Papers* were made public in 1971 thanks to Daniel Ellsberg. This study had been put together some years before by order of the Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who wanted an "encyclopedic and objective" study that gave answers to questions as "Were there occasions in our past involvement in the [Vietnam] war where we could have extricated ourselves without any loss in credibility?"¹¹ One of those moments was possibly 1954 at the time of the Dien Bien Phu crisis.

In the image-building of the Dien Bien Phu crisis in France most attention was drawn by the question as to which decisions led to the Dien Bien Phu catastrophe. After 1956 French politicians and

⁹Robert F. Randle, *Geneva 1954: The Settlement of the Indochinese War* (Princeton 1969) vii, 3-157.

¹⁰Pierre Rocolle, *Pourquoi Dien Bien Phu?* (Paris 1968); *Rapport concernant la conduite des opérations en Indochine sous la direction du général Navarre*, in: Georgette Elgey, *Histoire de la IVe République. La république des contradictions 1951-1954* (Paris 1968) 551-623.

¹¹Neil Sheehan et al. eds., *The Pentagon Papers as Published by the New York Times* (New York 1971); *The Pentagon Papers: the Defense Department History of United States Decision-Making on Vietnam: the Senator Gravel Edition, 1945-1967* (Boston 1971), esp. PP(Gravel ed.), I, xv; *United States-Vietnam Relations, 1945-1967: Study Prepared by the Department of Defense* (Washington 1971).

soldiers, particularly Henri Navarre (commander of the French forces in Indochina), Georges Catroux, Joseph Laniel (Prime Minister of France in 1954) and René Cogny (commander of the French forces in the northern part of Indochina) conducted a polemic in their memoirs and outside it, by which they wanted to exculpate themselves of responsibility and blame for the defeat. Had the Laniel government given clear political directives to Navarre, had the latter acted against the will of the government, especially concerning the defense of Laos? Had Navarre's strategic decisions been justified and to what extent had other soldiers supported or criticized him? Had the government and the nation left the soldiers in Indochina to fend for themselves? Had the situation of the CEFEQ (the French army in Indochina) been obstructed by the government's decision on 18 February 1954 to start negotiations in Geneva? How bad was the military situation after 7 May 1954?¹²

A great number of issues in connection with this could be clarified in 1968 when the report by the Committee of Inquiry from 1955 and the study by Rocolle appeared. A broad consensus existed about the negligences of the government (being irresolute and vague about the war aims and the defense of Laos and leaving political decisions to Navarre) and the tactical mistakes of the soldiers on the spot. The Committee and Rocolle defended Operation Castor (Navarre's decision to occupy Dien Bien Phu in November 1953), because the military reasons he aimed for seemed reasonable at that moment. He wanted to protect Lai Chau and Laos, and wanted to create a French bridgehead in the northern part of Vietnam. However the Committee and Rocolle disagreed as to whether the decision of 3 December 1953 to fight a major battle at that spot had been right. Whereas the Committee harshly criticized the fact that the information about the size of the Vietminh forces had been

¹²Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine*, 85-88, 99, 103-104, 188-193, 199-200, 208-213, 255; Laniel, *Drame indochinois*, 17-24, 35-44, 67-70; Catroux, *Deux actes du drame indochinois*, 111-235, esp. 116, 118, 153, 226-227; Pierre Charpy, "Pourquoi je ne me suis pas suicidé," par le général Navarre, responsable de Dien Bien Phu," *Nouveau Candide* (17 October 1963); Général R. Cogny, "La libre confession du général Cogny," *L'Express* (21 November 1963) 22-24, *L'Express* (6 December 1963) 30-31.

ignored, Rocolle thought that Dien Bien Phu had done its work as “abcès de fixation” and that the tactical mistakes of the soldiers “on the spot” (Cogny, the French commander in Dien Bien Phu Christian De Castries and the artillerymen) and the decision of the government to start negotiations in Geneva had been decisive.¹³ In the literature of the eighties and nineties I still find a division in views as to where the blame should be laid. Thus, the French military historian Yves Gras (in 1979) supported the Committee’s point of view whereas the British historian Alexander Zervoudakis supported Rocolle. Gras accentuated Navarre’s ignoring of the information he got from the French Intelligence Services with regard to the rise of the Vietminh forces near Dien Bien Phu after the completion of Operation Castor — knowledge Navarre ignored, because he wanted an offensive in the middle of Vietnam. Zervoudakis gave evidence that the Vietminh planned “one final clash” against the French forces in Dien Bien Phu when they learned about the negotiations in Geneva that should end the wars in Korea and Indochina.¹⁴

Thanks to the *Pentagon Papers* our knowledge of policy planning of American governments increased but I have also noticed some striking omissions (particularly concerning the decision making at the highest level) as well as the disadvantages of the “Pentagon perspective.” Although we have information about the deliberations

¹³Rocolle, *Pourquoi Dien Bien Phu*, 8-9, 19-30, 53-62, 174-190, 215-226, 275-297, 307-344, 375-378, 556-566; *Rapport concernant*, passim.

¹⁴Two excellent studies Yves Gras, *Histoire de la guerre d'Indochine* (Paris 1979) 519-533, 537; Alexander Zervoudakis, “Nihil mirare, nihil contemptare, omnia intelligere: Franco-Vietnamese intelligence in Indochina, 1950-1954,” *Journal of Intelligence and National Security* 1(1998) 195-231, esp. 196-198. Four American studies that should be used with some reserve (because they are not always reliable with respect to “l’affaire Dien Bien Phu”) John R. Nordell Jr., *Dien Bien Phu and Bermuda: Setting the Stage for the Military and Diplomatic Climax to the French Indo-China War, November 20 - December 9, 1953* (Ann Arbor 1988); John R. Nordell Jr., *The Undetected Enemy: French and American Miscalculations at Dien Bien Phu, 1953* (College Station, Texas 1995); Howard R. Simpson, *Dien Bien Phu: The Epic Battle America Forgot* (Washington and London 1994); Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (New York 1995; Oxford 1997) 318-357, 470-473.

in the National Security Council and some of the discussed policy documents were available from then on, I couldn't find many data about the way Eisenhower, Dulles and other politicians thought or operated. The "Pentagon perspective" implied that the compilers of the *Papers* mainly had to use documents of the Pentagon and that consequently they had to give the visions of members of the Pentagon, who often criticized the American government. The reactions of the politicians very often remained obscure.

Authors of secondary literature from 1971-1983 were more difficult to position within the main body of interpretations of the Dien Bien Phu crisis than those of the sixties. The crisis received particularly strong attention in other contexts (for example in the history of international relations, the Vietnam War of the sixties or the positive revaluation of Eisenhower as a President and as a person) and to different authors it would sometimes characterize or illustrate completely different matters. Examples of a "Practical" image of Dien Bien Phu could easily be picked up.¹⁵

The ego documents of Nixon, Radford, James C. Hagerty (Eisenhower's press secretary) and Evelyn Shuckburgh (Eden's secretary) which were published after 1971 underlined the importance of some well-known climaxes of the crisis: 3, 6, 16, and 24 April 1954. On 3 April Dulles and Radford conferred with leaders of the American Congress. On 6 April an important meeting of the National Security Council took place. On 16 April Vice-President Richard Nixon mentioned the possibility of sending American ground forces to Indochina and on 24 April Dulles and Radford negotiated with the British Secretary of State Anthony Eden on the conditions for an "united" intervention in Indochina. In his memoirs Nixon mentioned a further climax: 29 April 1954, when intervention got much attention from American policy makers in the

¹⁵See further on in this article ("Contemporary backgrounds which influenced the image").

National Security Council.¹⁶ The diary by Evelyn Shuckburgh was an extremely important historical source. It showed that Eden's memoirs wrongly blamed Dulles for a breach of promise by starting negotiations in Washington for a coalition after his visit to London from 11 to 13 April 1954. According to his secretary, Eden's memoirs misrepresented reality on this point.¹⁷

Since the end of the seventies more and more archival sources have become available. By 1983 many important sources had already been published; the two parts of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* were of particularly great importance.¹⁸ On account of these archival sources a more comprehensive and more accurate image of the crisis could be given. I have concluded that the interpretations of Roberts and *U.S. News and World Report* should be replaced by a middle vision. Its most important feature is that it gives an open and dualistic character to the American Dien Bien Phu policy. After the introduction of ground forces had been rejected by the Eisenhower Administration on 8 January 1954 (more than two months before the beginning of the Vietminh assault on Dien Bien Phu), Dulles on 29 March 1954 announced "united action," a policy which kept open the possibility of a moderate or stern course and consequently had an open and ambivalent character. On 3 April 1954 the American government did not ask Congress for an intervention (as Roberts in 1954 had asserted); however its behaviour in the entire period April-July 1954 was less innocent than *U.S. News and World Report* asserted that year. The intended

¹⁶Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (London 1978) 153-154; Arthur W. Radford, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford*, Stephen Jurika Jr. ed. (Stanford 1980) 278-449, esp. 401-402; James C. Hagerty, *The Diary of James C. Hagerty: Eisenhower in Mid-course, 1954-1955*. Robert H. Ferrell ed. (Bloomington 1983) 42; Evelyn Shuckburgh, *Descent to Suez: Diaries 1951-1956* (London 1986) 148-203, esp. 160-161.

¹⁷Shuckburgh, *Descent to Suez*, 164-166.

¹⁸*Foreign Relations of the United States: the Geneva Conference, 1952-1954 XVI, U.S. Department of State* (Washington 1981); *Foreign Relations of the United States: Indochina, 1952-1954 XIII, U.S. Department of State* (Washington 1982).

coalition had to keep Indochina out of the hands of the communists and it could also imply intervention, provided a range of conditions were met. Besides the differences of opinion between the Americans and the British there was a completely different approach to the crisis by the French and American governments respectively. The French wanted an air strike both to relieve the besieged French soldiers in Dien Bien Phu and to strengthen their negotiating position. The Americans wanted "united action," by which the French were supposed to continue fighting for a considerable time. The archival sources underline the importance of the meeting of the National Security Council on 29 April 1954 in a period when the American point of view was hardening.¹⁹

Since 1983 a large number of monographs have extensively discussed the Dien Bien Phu crisis: Ronald H. Spector and John Prados (1983), Stephen E. Ambrose and Barbara Tuchman (1984), James Cable, William Conrad Gibbons and George McTurnan Kahin (1986), Alain Ruscio (1986 and 1992), Melanie Billings-Yun, Phillip B. Davidson and Lloyd C. Gardner (1988), Anthony Short and John P. Burke/Fred I. Greenstein (1989), David L. Anderson and Laurent Césari (1991), Howard R. Simpson, Jacques Valette and William J. Duiker (1994), Steven Hugh Lee and John R. Nordell Jr. (1995) and Douglas Porch (1997).²⁰ In addition, there

¹⁹See the sources mentioned in Meulendijks, *Verschuivende beelden*, 303-343.

²⁰Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years of the United States Army in Vietnam, 1941-1960* (Washington 1983); John Prados, *The Sky Would Fall: Operation Vulture: the U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954* (New York 1983); Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower II, The President 1952-1969* (London 1984); Barbara Tuchman, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam* (New York 1984); James Cable, *The Geneva Conference of 1954 on Indochina* ((New York and London 1986); Gibbons, *U.S. Government II*; George McT. Kahin, *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam* (New York 1986); Alain Ruscio, *Dien Bien Phu: La fin d'une illusion* (Paris 1986); Alain Ruscio, *La guerre française d'Indochine 1945-1954* (Brussels 1992); Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War: Eisenhower and Dien Bien Phu, 1954* (New York 1988); Phillip B. Davidson, *Vietnam at War: The History. 1945-1975* (New York and Oxford 1991); Lloyd C. Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam: From World War II through Dienbienphu, 1941-1954* (New York and London 1988); Anthony Short, *The Origins of the Vietnam War* (New York and London 1989); John P. Burke and Fred I. Greenstein, with the collaboration of Larry Berman and Richard

(continued...)

were a great many general or specialist articles, for example by George C. Herring, Richard H. Immerman, Geoffrey Warner and Denise Artaud (partly to be found in an important French-American collection published in 1990).²¹ The interpretations of Roberts and *U.S. News and World Report* at that time did not move beyond historiographical traditions that merely defined the atmosphere. Meanwhile, the view has gained ground that, in line with the archival sources, the American policy was more open and more ambivalent than had been presumed in both earlier approaches.

American diplomatic history was severely criticized in the sixties and seventies. It identified too much with political elites, it ignored social, economic and cultural backgrounds, it neglected international relations theory and it saw the world through the prism of Washington without too much interest for foreign archives. The renewal of this diplomatic history, which took place since the late seventies, could clearly be discerned in the Dien Bien Phu

²⁰(...continued)

Immerman, *How Presidents Test Reality: Decisions on Vietnam, 1954 and 1965* (New York 1989); David L. Anderson, *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953-1961* (New York 1991); Laurent Césari, *La France, les Etats Unis et l'Indochine, 1945-1957* (Paris 1991); Simpson, *Dien Bien Phu*; Jacques Valette, *La guerre d'Indochine, 1945-1954* (Paris 1994); William J. Duiker, *U.S. Containment Policy and the Conflict in Indochina* (Stanford 1994); Steven Hugh Lee, *Outposts of empire: Korea, Vietnam and the Origins of the Cold War in Asia, 1945-1954* (Liverpool 1995); (Nordell, *Dien Bien Phu and Bermuda*) Nordell, *Undetected Enemy*; Porch, *French Secret Services*.

²¹Herring and Immerman, "Eisenhower, Dulles"; George C. Herring, "Franco-American Conflict in Indochina, 1950-1954," in: Lawrence S. Kaplan, Denise Artaud and Mark S. Rubin eds., *Dien Bien Phu and the Crisis of Franco-American Relations, 1954-1955* (Wilmington 1990) 29-49, esp. 42; George C. Herring, "'A Good Stout Effort' John Foster Dulles and the Indochina Crisis, 1954-1955," in: Richard Immerman ed., *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War: a Reappraisal* (Princeton 1990) 213-233; Richard Immerman, "Between the Unattainable and the Unacceptable," in: Richard A. Melanson and David Mayers eds., *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s* (Urbana and Chicago 1987) 120-154; Richard H. Immerman, "The United States and the Geneva Conference: a New Look," *Diplomatic History (DH)* 14(1990) 43-66; Geoffrey Warner, "Britain and the Crisis over Dien Bien Phu, April 1954: the Failure of United Action," in: Kaplan, Artaud and Rubin, *Dien Bien Phu*, 55-78; Denise Artaud, "La menace américaine et le règlement indochinois à la conférence de Genève," *Histoire. Economie et société* 13(1994) 47-63.

historiography in the way that all sorts of (new) aspects established.²² Gabriel Kolko wrote (in 1986) about the social and economic contexts of the Vietnam War and explained the victory of the Vietminh fighters in 1954 by pointing at their economic platform and the support of the civilian population.²³ Other historians paid attention to ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the crisis of 1954. According to Lloyd C. Gardner (in 1988) Dulles's diplomacy was characterized by ambivalence: both threats with atomic bombs and the idea that the American idealism should be exported to Indochina. Michael H. Hunt's central theme (in 1996) was the American paternalistic attitude that the Americans should build a nation in Vietnam, an attitude which he saw mature during the Dien Bien Phu crisis. According to Loren Baritz (in 1986) and the French historian Alain Ruscio (in 1986 and 1992) western cultural arrogance and prejudices influenced the military outcome of the war of 1954. The French and the Americans thought they were superior from a moral and technical point of view. The vision of Robert Dallek (in 1984) was more complex. He concluded from the theories of the American sociologist David Riesman that "foreign policy was as much a way to express and rationalize an other-directed society at home as a means to defend the national interest abroad. It was, in part, a kind of symbolic politics in which the world outside facilitated cultural change within." The communal sense of 1954 didn't allow an intervention, only a symbolic coalition like the SEATO. So no intervention took place in 1954.²⁴

²²On this subject see my article P.A.J. Meulendijks, "Een kwijnende tak van de geschied-beoefening? De overwonnen crisis van de Amerikaanse diplomatieke geschiedenis," *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 108(1995) 336-360 (in English: "A languishing branch of historiography? The surmounted crisis of American diplomatic history").

²³Gabriel Kolko, *Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975* (London and Sidney 1986) 60-61, 81-83.

²⁴Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam*, 11-18, 52, 126, 167-188, 196, 202-211, 237, 278-280; Michael H. Hunt, *Lyndon Johnson's War: America's Cold War Crusade in Vietnam, 1945-1968: A Critical Issue* (New York 1996) 12-13, 16-18, 105, 107; Loren Baritz, *Backfire: A History of How American Culture Led Us Into Vietnam and Made Us Fight the Way We Did* (New York 1986) ix, 52-73, esp. 70-73; Ruscio, *Dien Bien Phu*, passim; Ruscio, *Guerre* (continued...)

Other historians analyzed decision making during the Dien Bien Phu crisis. Anna Kasten Nelson (in 1983), Stephen E. Ambrose (in 1984), William Conrad Gibbons and Richard Immerman (in 1987) and Melanie Billings-Yun (in 1988) in all sorts of variations praised the way the Eisenhower government ultimately decided in 1954 against intervention in Indochina.²⁵ Yuen Foong Khong and John P. Burke in collaboration with Fred I. Greenstein wrote studies in which they compared the Vietnam decision making of the Eisenhower government in 1954 with that of other governments. They ultimately gave a positive judgement of the way the Eisenhower government handled the crisis.²⁶ The image of the crisis itself so has become more and more multiform and less Americacentric.

An American military intervention in Indochina in 1954?

Not only with respect to the main lines of the crisis but also with regard to such matters as the American plans for intervention or the valuation of Dulles and Eisenhower, the intersubjective character of the image increased in a number of respects in the course of the eighties and nineties. As far as the first matter is concerned this meant that rumours in 1954 about navy vessels which had taken up position in the Gulf of Tonkin, or Nixon's suggestion that ground forces might be sent,²⁷ could be supplemented with reliable,

²⁴(...continued)

française d'Indochine, 189-193, 199-204; Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (New York and Scarborough 1984) xii-xvii, 170-174, 186-187, 197.

²⁵Anna Kasten Nelson, "The 'top of policy hill': President Eisenhower and the National Security Council," *DH* 7(1983) 307-326; Ambrose, *Eisenhower II*; Gibbons, *U.S. Government I*; Immerman, "Between the Unattainable"; Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War*.

²⁶Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton 1992) 10, 13-47, 73-81, 103-105; Burke and Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality*, 53-67, 98-115, 256-300.

²⁷*New York Times* (17 and 18 April 1954); *USNWR* (16 April) 6.

detailed information. Initially, memoirists and authors of secondary works in the fifties and sixties had handed down fragmentary information about Operation Vulture;²⁸ one of them, Bidault, had even asserted that Dulles had offered him atom bombs in Paris at the end of April 1954, while reports about atomic weapons kept on turning up in all sorts of visions.²⁹

The image became much clearer thanks to the archival sources that became available in the eighties (and nineties). First of all they confirmed that Radford had manifested himself unequivocally as advocate of an air strike near Dien Bien Phu, that he had encouraged Ely to zealously advocate this with his government in Paris (without having given any clear promises) and that he had been looking for support for this with the other Joint Chiefs of Staff in vain. A comparison of the memoirs by Radford and Ely with these new sources showed that both soldiers in their memoirs — following *U.S. News and World Report* and Roberts respectively — had repeatedly moulded the 1954 reality to their own purposes. Ely introduced the subject intervention and exaggerated the results of the conversations in his memoirs. Radford unequivocally pleaded for an American air strike near Dien Bien Phu, something he largely hid in his memoirs. He suggested Ely to work on it in Paris but he made no promises that committed the American government.³⁰

²⁸ Laniel, *Drame indochinois*, 82-89; Ely, *Mémoires*, 82-84, 89-90; Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine*, 244-246; Pouget, *Dien-Bien-Phu*, 378; Gavin, *Crisis Now*, 41-42, 46; Eden, *Full Circle*, 77-147, esp. 77, 82, 85, 87, 90, 94, 113-114, 119, 127.

²⁹ Bidault, *D'une résistance*, 198; McClintock, *Meaning of Limited War*, 166-168, 186; J.R. Tournoux, *Secrets d'état* (Paris 1960) 48-58, esp. 48, 51, 52; Gavin, *Crisis Now*, 41; Matthew B. Ridgway, "Indochina: Disengaging," *Foreign Affairs* (July 1971) 583-592, esp. 586; Roscoe Drummond and Gaston Coblenz, *Duel at the Brink: John Foster Dulles' Command of American Power* (London 1961) 121-122.

³⁰ Compare Ely, *Mémoires*, 59, 64, 67-70, 77-79, 82-83, and Radford, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam*, 391-403, esp. 393, 395, 401, with *FRUS 1952-1954 XIII*, 1137-1141, and the sources in *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the War in Vietnam. History of the Indochina Incident 1940-1954 I* (Wilmington 1982) 372; Prados, *The Sky Would Fall*, 77; Spector, *Advice and Support*, 194-193; Billings-Yun, *Decision Against*

(continued...)

Furthermore, it became clear that there were more than ten requests and/or insinuations by French politicians and soldiers to the Americans to intervene.³¹ Meanwhile, American and French soldiers were preparing for a possible American intervention. Both in Washington (around 22 March 1954) and in Indochina (almost a month later) American and French soldiers noticed that a possible American bombardment should by preference be aimed at Tuan Giao, the Vietminh supply center eighty kilometers from Dien Bien Phu.³² On 22 April 1954 the “atomic Armageddon” was certainly not as close at hand as was often claimed later. It is clear — also from diplomatic entanglements in August 1954 between French and American diplomats — that in April 1954 the American Secretary of State mentioned atomic weapons to his French colleague.³³ But

³⁰(...continued)

War, 33-37, 50; Herring, “Franco-American Conflict,” 29-49, esp. 42; Laurent Césari and Jacques de Folin, “Military Necessity, Political Impossibility: the French Viewpoint on Operation Vautour,” in: Kaplan, Artaud and Rubin, *Dien Bien Phu*, 105-120, esp. 107-108; Césari, *La France, les Etats Unis*, 719-720, 737; Artaud, “La menace américaine,” 49-51.

³¹Mentioned in 1954 by the American journalist C.L. Sulzberger, see *New York Times* (25 April 1954), and in 1957 and 1964 respectively by Laniel, *Drame indochinois*, 83-86, and Ely, *Mémoires*, 86. See also *PP*(Gravel ed.) I, 104. More recent sources *FRUS 1952-1954 XIII*, 1236-1238, 1248, 1262, 1361-1362, 1371-1375, 1394-1395, 1402-1403; Césari and De Folin, “French viewpoint,” 110-113; Prados, *Sky Would Fall*, 114; *History of the Joint Chiefs*, 385; Denise Artaud, “France between the Indochina War and the European Defense Community,” in: Kaplan, Artaud and Rubin, *Dien Bien Phu*, 251-268, esp. 259-260.

³²Rocolle, *Pourquoi Dien Bien Phu*, 412-415, 438-445, esp. 414, 439, 445; *PP*(Gravel ed.) I, 124-132, 523-524. On the preparations in Washington the utterances of Colonel Raymond Brohon (Ely’s assistant) in 1986 Artaud, ‘Menace américaine,’ 49-51, and Césari, *France, les Etats Unis*, 719-720; also Spector, *Advice and Support*, 201, 207-208; *FRUS 1952-1954 XIII*, 1270-1272. On the preparations in Indochina Edwin Bickford Hooper, Dean C. Allard and Oscar P. Fitzgerald, *The United States Navy and the Vietnam Conflict I, The Setting of the Stage to 1959* (Washington 1976) 234-237, 247-249, 252-256; Prados, *Sky Would Fall*, 70, 121-122, 145-148; Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: The Advisory Years to 1965* (Washington 1981) 25; *History of the Joint Chiefs*, 373; Césari and De Folin, “French viewpoint,” 119.

³³The conversations between French and American diplomats in *PP* (DOD ed.) X, 705-709. On military studies in the Pentagon about atomic weapons Spector, *Advice and Support*, 199-201; *FRUS 1952-1954 XIII*, 1270-1272. Proofs that politicians and soldiers talked about

(continued...)

it is my opinion that Dulles never seriously suggested to Bidault that the French could use two atom bombs. He had no authority to do so, he was not enthusiastic when Radford suggested the use of atomic weapons, his French colleague Bidault was (these are Dulles's words) "close to the breaking point...exhausted...confused and rambling in his talk" (how could Dulles ever offer atom bombs to that man?), the American secretary didn't believe Dien Bien Phu could be saved and it was his opinion that an American air strike was "out of question under existing circumstances." Besides, talk about atomic weapons frightened the British, the intended American ally in Indochina.³⁴

Divergent opinions on the behaviour of American politicians and Soldiers

After 1954 the image that the most important American politicians, Eisenhower and Dulles, had with relation to the Dien Bien Phu crisis remained rather unambiguous for a considerable time. To his contemporaries Dulles was the dominant hawk figure of the American government during the Dien Bien Phu crisis.³⁵ Moreover, the inconsistent attitude of the government towards the outside world was particularly conspicuous.³⁶ it made for an image that could hardly be altered by the memoirs of the fifties and

³³(...continued)

atomic weapons for an intervention near Dien Bien Phu in Ely's diary in Césari and De Folin, "French Viewpoint," 113-114; Césari, *France, les Etats Unis*, 753-756.

³⁴Quotations from Dulles in *FRUS 1952-1954* XIII, 1374; see also Shuckburgh, *Descent to Suez*, 169-171.

³⁵See esp. Richard H. Rovere, *Affairs of State: The Eisenhower Years (1950-1956)* (New York 1956) 190-200 (an article of this American journalist in *The New Yorker Magazine* of 8 April 1954).

³⁶*Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-1961* (Washington 1958-1961), esp. *Public Papers: Eisenhower, 1954*, 387, 427-429, 471-473; "Words That Brought a Crisis: Tangled Allied Policy - As Told By Statesmen," *USNWR* (14 May 1954) 74-79; *New York Times* (7, 13 May and 13 June 1954).

sixties.³⁷ The secondary literature of the fifties and sixties presented the image of a strong Dulles who dominated a weak or uninterested President Eisenhower (Childs's "captive hero"), an image that dovetailed with the vision of Eisenhower's presidency held by the majority of the historians and authors in this period. Otherwise, the Indochina policy of the American Secretary of State in 1954 was usually interpreted negatively, varying from unreasonable new-isolationism or "boorish diplomacy" to the policy of a cold war hawk who was at work on "roll back".³⁸ The *Pentagon Papers* have provided relatively little insight in the points of view and motives of Dulles and Eisenhower. There were too many sources missing from the White House and the Department of State to draw clear conclusions and some sources can lead to various opinions. We have gotten more and more detailed information about the motives of policy makers in the Pentagon e.g. vice-admiral Arthur C. Davis, Matthew B. Ridgway or the Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens.³⁹

³⁷For the inconsistent image which can be deduced from these memoirs see Meulendijks, *Verschuivende beelden*, 94-98.

³⁸For a weak or uninterested President Eisenhower Marquis Childs, *Eisenhower - Captive Hero: A Critical Study of the General and the President* (New York and London 1958) 181-184; Joseph Buttinger, *Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled II, Vietnam at War* (London 1967) 818-825, 1080-1087; Bator, *Diplomatic Tragedy*, passim; Randle, *Geneva 1954*, 105, 111; Hans J. Morgenthau, "John Foster Dulles: 1953-1959," in: Norman A. Graebner ed., *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York 1961) 289-309, esp. 289, 293, 296, 302-303; Lacouture and Devillers, *Fin d'une guerre*, 175-176, 196; Chen, *Vietnam and China*, 303. Other interpretations see Merlo J. Pusey, *Eisenhower: The President* (New York 1956) 146-161; James Reston, *The Artillery of the Press: Its Influence on American Foreign Policy* (New York 1967) 45, 63, 75. Dulles's (unreasonable) new-isolationism in Norman A. Graebner, *The New Isolationism: a Study in Politics and Foreign Policy since 1950* (New York 1956) 90-93, 158-169, 184; Morgenthau, "John Foster Dulles," 292-296, 306-308, 327. Dulles as cold war hawk in Louis J. Halle, *The Cold War as History* (New York 1967) 281-282, 297; Gurtov, *First Vietnam Crisis*, 80-85, 108-111, 130-147, 158; Bator, *Diplomatic Tragedy*, 47, 52-53, 58, 65, 201. Dulles' "boorish diplomacy" in Buttinger, *Vietnam at War*, 818-819.

³⁹PP (Gravel ed.) I, 105, 477-478, 482, 499-500 for indications for various (hawkish or dovish) interpretations of Dulles's behaviour; see also Meulendijks, *Verschuivende beelden*, 224-226.

The Eisenhower revisionism — for the first time visible in the seventies — focussed on Eisenhower's part in the 1954 decision making and came to a more positive judgement of his reserve during the Dien Bien Phu crisis. According to the archival sources Eisenhower certainly was not a passive or irresolute President but a politician who skillfully sounded out which policy would find ample support among his co-workers and, if necessary, unequivocally headed towards difficult decisions. Whereas in the seventies Dulles was still predominantly typified negatively, in these new sources he came forth as the loyal executor of this cautious course which he had mapped out together with Eisenhower and other policy makers. The same sources underlined once more that Radford was pre-eminently the hawk. Burke/Greenstein, Billings-Yun and Ambrose extolled Eisenhower's behaviour during the Dien Bien Phu crisis in the heydays of the Eisenhower revisionism as the ultimate example of the wise actions of this President and especially praised "his" decision-making pattern and leadership style.⁴⁰ In the mid-nineties American historians specializing in the period of his presidency tried to find a balance between the positive revaluation of the President and some new insights. The term post-Eisenhower revisionism has been suggested for this phase in "Eisenhower historiography". Those new visions implied that he and his Secretary of State played the leading role in foreign policy together, that they operated pragmatically during the Dien Bien Phu crisis but also that they were less lucky in their Vietnam policy at the end of the crisis. In the words of the historian David L. Anderson: "A time bomb was ticking in Southeast Asia while Eisenhower was president...The trap snapped on America in 1963".⁴¹

⁴⁰ Burke and Greenstein, *How Presidents Test Reality*, 53-67, 98-115, 256-300; Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War*, passim, esp. 79, 159; Ambrose, *Eisenhower II*, 172-185, 204-212.

⁴¹On the so-called "limited Dulles renaissance" (a more positive interpretation of Dulles's behaviour as Secretary of State) H.W. Brands Jr., *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower's Generation and American Foreign Policy* (New York 1988) 3-27, 77, 87; Richard H. Immerman, "Introduction," in: Immerman, *John Foster Dulles*, 3-20; Herring, "'Good Stout Effort'," 213-233, esp. 215-218. Post-Eisenhower revisionism in Richard D. Challener, "The National

(continued...)

Contemporary backgrounds which influenced the image

Shifting images can not be explained exclusively by another "recorded past". The image-building of the crisis continued in the nineties when historians laid different emphases and reached different characterizations and descriptions of the crisis. This was still connected with personal preferences and convictions, familiar to every human being, together with the changing character of an era, or with the specific contemporary background which influenced the image of the crisis.

In the works by memoirists, which have appeared since 1956, it was not difficult to discern subjective elements which made the crisis of 1954 "their own Dien Bien Phu crisis" and with that made it into a "practical past." French memoirists (Henri Navarre, Joseph Laniel, Georges Catroux, Pierre Langlais, Jean Pouget, Georges Bidault and Paul Ely) paid much attention to the question as to who was more or less responsible for the defeat.⁴² In the memoirs by Eisenhower and Eden I could also point out subjective elements, contradictory assertions about the desirability of an American intervention and a rather simplistic and a negative opinion of Dulles, respectively; the latter probably dictated by experiences afterwards. In the years 1954-1961 Eisenhower publicly claimed that he had been opposed to an American intervention in Indochina during the Dien Bien Phu crisis. In 1963 in his memoirs he was more ambivalent. On the one hand he suggested that he didn't like an intervention, on the other hand he gave indications that he had not

⁴¹(...continued)

Security Policy from Truman to Eisenhower: Did the 'Hidden Hand' Leadership Make Any Difference?" in: Norman A. Graebner ed., *The National Security: Its Theory and Practice, 1945-1960* (New York and Oxford 1986) 39-75; Piers Brendon, *Ike: His Life and Times* (New York 1986) 5-8, 287-291; Anderson, *Trapped by Success*, 205, 209; Stephen G. Rabe, "Eisenhower Revisionism: a Decade of Scholarship," *DH* 17(1993) 97-116 passim, esp. 205, 208-209.

⁴²See the second section ("Main lines") and note 12, 13 and 14. Pierre Langlais was the Commander of the French parachutists in Dien Bien Phu, Jean Pouget was Navarre's assistant and Georges Bidault was the French Secretary of State in 1954.

yet made up his mind. The following quotation suggests that he was more prepared to intervene than he wanted to admit publicly. "I had no intention of using the United States forces in any limited action when the force employed could probably not be decisively effective." I suppose that he was convinced that the importance of a success in Dien Bien Phu was too limited and that the action was not decisive. Eden may have been influenced by his experiences during the Suez Crisis of 1956, when Dulles thwarted him regarding intervention in Suez Egypt. The image Eden gave of Dulles in his memoirs probably therefore was too negative.⁴³

Into the nineties there were contemporary American developments which focussed interest on the Dien Bien Phu crisis and also re-defined its image. The struggle at Dien Bien Phu and the problem of a possible American intervention in Indochina in 1954 were judged by many journalists and politicians in the light of the discussion about the defense policy of the government (the "New Look") and of the question as to how far the authority of Congress went with regard to a declaration of war.⁴⁴ In memoirs and secondary works by critical soldiers (Ridgway, James M. Gavin and Maxwell D. Taylor) and civilian strategists (Henry Kissinger, Robert Endicott Osgood and Robert McClintock) the Dien Bien Phu crisis illustrated in various ways the inefficacy of the "New Look" and the necessity to reflect upon a limited war. The soldiers objected to cutbacks in the army expenditures. The civilian strategists pleaded for an alternative to the concentration on atomic weapons in the "New Look" because that strategy doomed the United States to an "all or nothing" response. For all of them the

⁴³For the contradictory assertions compare the following pages in Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change*, 339-341 (quotation 341), 345-347 (esp. 346), 350-354 (esp. 351), 361, 365, 372-373.

⁴⁴On the "New Look" the journalist Hanson W. Baldwin in *New York Times* (1 April and 2 May 1954); see also "U.S. to Fight More 'Little Wars'? It Depends on What's Needed to Stop Reds," *USNWR* (30 April 1954) 21-24; "What Ridgway Told Ike." On the rights of the Congress "No War Unless Congress Declares It, Says Ike," *USNWR* (19 March 1954) 29; "If Communists Attack - Can U.S. Strike Back Without O.K. From Congress?" *USNWR* (26 March 1954) 70-74; *New York Times* (17, 18 and 21 March 1954).

Dien Bien Phu crisis was the “practical past” that founded their dissatisfaction.⁴⁵

In the sixties a number of authors of secondary works on the Dien Bien Phu crisis (Gurtov, Bator and Fall) presented widely different (and sometimes, like Fall, shifting) images of the Dien Bien Phu crisis, as did the political theorist Hans J. Morgenthau, under the influence of a specific 1960s evaluation of the Vietnam War. According to Gurtov there was both in 1954 and in the sixties a political problem in Vietnam: “The lessons for today are obvious....The author believes that...today’s situation is an reenactment of the old drama.” What was needed was attention to the political context of the insurgency in Vietnam. It asked for a political solution. Bator, who defended American intervention in Vietnam in the sixties, criticized Dulles’s moral anti-colonialism during the crisis of 1954; Dulles (and Eisenhower) didn’t want to be accused of colonialism, and this attitude prevented — alas — an intervention. Fall showed shifting evaluations of the American intervention in the sixties; this influenced his shifting explanation why the Americans didn’t intervene in Vietnam in 1954. The former shifted from support to criticism for the American war effort. The latter shifted from outside causes (the British opposition to an intervention) to domestic causes in the United States (a presidential decision that prevented intervention). I suppose Fall wanted to underline in his last writings that the American politicians themselves could stop the war in Vietnam. Morgenthau wanted to deescalate in the sixties and therefore emphasized the realistic

⁴⁵Ridgway, *Soldier*, 275-278; Taylor, *Uncertain Trumpet*, 5-7, 23-25; Gavin, *War and Peace*, 128; Henry A. Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (second print; New York 1958) 1-15, 93, 115-118, 206-209; Robert Endicott Osgood, *Limited War: the Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago 1957) 214-227, 300-305; McClintock, *Meaning of Limited War*, xi, 1-13, 140-213. Gavin was Assistant Chief of Staff for planning and operations of the American army in 1954; Taylor was Chief of Staff of the American army in the years 1955-1959; McClintock was an American diplomat in Saigon in 1954.

approach of the French in 1954, when they withdrew their troops and negotiated in Geneva.⁴⁶

In this phase the Dien Bien Phu crisis also regularly served others as “practical past” for a wide range of issues. In the election contest of 1956 presidential candidate Adlai E. Stevenson criticized the strategy of massive retaliation of his Republican opponent Eisenhower with a reference to Dien Bien Phu. In 1964 conservative Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater felt that atom bombs should have been used in 1954. In order to criticize the Vietnam policy of the Eisenhower Administration the historians Fall, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Theodore Draper wrote that Vietnam had been a quagmire and that American leaders from Truman to Johnson had undertaken a series of incremental steps which led to the disastrous involvement of the sixties. The journalist David Halberstam defended Eisenhower’s cautious approach of the crisis of 1954 and criticized Kennedy’s. Halberstam offered devastating images of the “best and the brightest,” the intellectuals brought to power by John F. Kennedy, who in their arrogance couldn’t image that they could ever loose the war in Vietnam. An other example of a “practical” Dien Bien Phu image of the already mentioned historian Schlesinger was his defense of Kennedy’s Vietnam policy as he quoted Kennedy’s speech of 6 April 1954 against intervention in 1954, but “forgot” his warlike and pro-French speech of 6 March 1954. The Republican white paper of 1967 criticized Johnson’s military solution of the Vietnam problem and therefore defended Eisenhower’s political and wise

⁴⁶ Gurtov, *First Vietnam Crisis*, 131-166, esp. 135, 139, 159, 160-166; Bator, *Diplomatic Tragedy*, 13-16, 123-125, 176-206, esp. 124, 185. On Fall compare “The Truth About the War U.S. is Losing: Interview with Dr. Bernard B. Fall, Authority on Southeast Asia,” *USNWR* (28 September 1964) 58-62; Bernard B. Fall, *Viet-Nam Witness. 1953-1956* (New York 1966) 3-12, 195-205, 227, 331-349; Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place*, 293-327, 460-462; Bernard B. Fall, *Last Reflections on a War* (New York 1967) 162, 224-236. On Morgenthau Hans J. Morgenthau, *Vietnam and the United States* (Washington 1965) 9-68, esp. 26, 33; Hans J. Morgenthau, “We Are Deluding Ourselves in Viet-Nam,” in: Marcus G. Raskin and Bernard B. Fall eds., *The Viet-Nam Reader: Articles and Documents on American Foreign Policy and the Viet-Nam Crisis* (second print; New York 1967) 37-45; Hans J. Morgenthau, “To Intervene or Not to Intervene,” *FA* 45(1967) 425-436.

approach of 1954. The Democratic politician William P. Bundy however wanted to defend Johnson's policy and stressed that Eisenhower's military threat had been effective in 1954.⁴⁷ Thus the Dien Bien Phu crisis was regarded from many differing points of view at the end of the sixties.

The fact that the authors of the *Pentagon Papers* also had to look for points at which the United States could have withdrawn from Vietnam suggested that they were allowed to take a critical view on the Eisenhower Administration. For the authors of the *Papers* this meant that this government was made responsible for the American intervention in Vietnam in the sixties, in the words of Senator Mike Gravel in the foreword of the so-called *Gravel Edition*: "For twenty years this nation has been at war in Indochina."⁴⁸ The American involvement in Vietnam after the Second World War should have been described with more accuracy.

In the secondary American literature of the seventies the image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis was influenced by the Vietnam War and, occasionally, ideas of American foreign policy. To start with the latter, in 1975 when the American government tried to approach the People's Republic of China, the American historian J.H. Kalicki characterized China during the crisis of 1954 as a moderate nation that played no role of importance in connection with the Vietminh

⁴⁷Adlai E. Stevenson, *What I Think* (London 1956) 72-77, 186-191. On Goldwater Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1964* (New York 1965) 132-133. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Bitter Heritage: Vietnam and American Democracy, 1941-1966* (Boston 1966) passim, esp. 31-32; Theodore Draper, *Abuse of Power* (New York 1967; Harmondsworth 1969) 158-159; David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (third print; New York 1972) 153; Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place*, 460-462; *The War in Vietnam: The Text of the Controversial Republican White Paper*. Prepared by the staff of the Senate Republican Policy Committee (Washington 1967) 3-62; William P. Bundy, *De weg naar Vietnam. Een toespraak over de ontwikkeling van de Amerikaanse politiek in Vietnam. 15 augustus 1967* (The Hague 1967) 3-5, 9, 27 (in English: William P. Bundy, "The Path to Vietnam: A Lesson in Involvement," *Department of State Bulletin* 57 (4 September 1967) 275-287).

⁴⁸PP(Gravel ed.) I, ix.

victory. To him the Dien Bien Phu crisis seemed an early — and in my opinion a rather idyllic — example of the American-Chinese détente of the seventies. In 1981 the American historian Russell D. Buhite typified the Dien Bien Phu crisis quite differently. This opponent of the American involvement of the sixties contended that the United States should only intervene in vital areas and not in areas of major (or quasi-vital) interest like Vietnam. Eisenhower and Dulles complied with that in 1954, in contrast with Kennedy and Johnson in the sixties.⁴⁹

For Leslie H. Gelb, Richard K. Betts and Paul Kattenburg the actions of the Eisenhower Administration illustrated the stalemate concept, which implied that with regard to American intervention in Vietnam successive American governments deliberately chose a middle course, so as not to lose Vietnam during their administration.⁵⁰ I find a completely different vision on the American entanglements in Vietnam in the works by Guenter Lewy and Norman Podhoretz, two “legitimacists” among the Vietnam revisionists (authors who considered the American intervention in the sixties a just cause — which did not necessarily imply that they thought it was a reasonable affair). Lewy was above all interested in the question how the United States had lost the war and not in the occurrences of 1954. The new-conservative journalist Norman Podhoretz admired Eisenhower’s golden age of national consensus and criticized the liberal Kennedy who caused instability by intervening in Vietnam. Podhoretz was surely mistaken however when he wrote that Eisenhower never considered an intervention in

⁴⁹ J.H. Kalicki, *The Pattern of Sino-American Crises: Political-Military Interactions in the 1950s* (Cambridge 1975) 1-3, 79-119, 209-218; Russell D. Buhite, *Soviet-American Relations in Asia, 1945-1954* (Norman 1981) 207-219.

⁵⁰ Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam: the System Worked* (Washington 1979) 2, 11-13, 23-27, 53-68, 190, 231-233, 238-244, 250, 278-282; Paul Kattenburg, *The Vietnam Trauma in American Foreign Policy, 1945-1975* (New Brunswick and London 1980) 248-250.

Indochina.⁵¹ Memoirists like Richard Nixon could hardly dissociate themselves from the war of the sixties either. The former President showed shifting images of the crisis of the Dien Bien Phu crisis in 1978 and 1985 under influence of a shifting evaluation of the American war in Vietnam. In 1978 he wrote: "We all hoped that by being prepared to fight we would never actually have to do any fighting." In 1985 one could read in another book of the former President: "The military situation was tailor-made for the use of our air power....By standing aside as our ally went down to defeat, the United States lost its last chance to stop the expansion of communism in Southeast Asia." In 1978 he wanted to blame the Democrats for the intervention of the sixties; in the eighties, during the new self-awareness of the Reagan years, he pleaded for an aggressive approach of foreign policy problems.⁵²

In the eighties and nineties revisionists in Vietnam War historiography put a different emphasis on the Vietnam War, the Indochina policy of the Eisenhower Administration and the Dien Bien Phu crisis. Influenced by evaluations of the war in the sixties they sometimes turned the Dien Bien Phu crisis into a "practical past." The "legitimacists" among them were especially critical about what the Kennedy Administration had done to the South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. They paid relatively little attention to the Eisenhower period and even assessed it differently. Patrick Lloyd Hatcher and R.B. Smith praised Eisenhower for his support to Diem and Timothy J. Lomperis criticized the President's fear of escalation. The "hearts-and-minds" revisionists Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr. and David H. Hackworth blamed the politicians and soldiers of 1954 for what went wrong later: a considerable reliance on conventional troops, no notion of counterinsurgency, and confidence in atomic weapons. Another revisionist, the "Clause-

⁵¹Gunter Lewy, *America in Vietnam* (New York 1978) 3-10; Norman Podhoretz, *Why We Were in Vietnam* (New York 1983) 15-17, 31-41, 51-63, 213-220.

⁵²Nixon, *Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 150-155 (quotation 155), 232 256-258, 270, 289, 509; Richard Nixon, *No More Vietnams* (New York 1985) 19-21, 28-31 (quotation 31).

witzian" Phillip B. Davidson, regretted that a more powerful and more extended war had not been waged. He made 1954 very "practical" when he "let" Ridgway argue that in 1954 large numbers of ground forces were necessary and with this plea he motivated his own views on the intervention of the sixties. All in all, it appeared that most of these revisionists used history quite easily to leave open the perspective of an American victory.⁵³

The Vietnam historiographers who distanced themselves from this, the postrevisionists, especially stressed that the idea of containment was pushed too far. Like many Eisenhower specialists at the end of the eighties, these historiographers influenced by Johnson's revaluation, tended to mitigate the importance of Eisenhower's decisions during the crisis by pointing out his responsibility for all that went wrong afterwards because he ignored the national and local factors in Vietnam (for example David L. Anderson and Lloyd C. Gardner). Sometimes they emphasized the readiness of the Eisenhower Administration to intervene (for example Anthony Short and George McTurnan Kahin).⁵⁴

The influence of the image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis

In France the crisis divided the nation and put some fundamental questions to the French about the relation between the government

⁵³Patrick Lloyd Hatcher, *The Suicide of an Elite: American Internationalists and Vietnam* (Stanford 1990) 6-8, 15-16, 150-168, 189, 193, 212, 285-286; Timothy J. Lomperis, *The War Everyone Lost — And Won: America's Intervention in Viet Nam's Twin Struggles* (Baton Rouge and London 1984) 5-6, 44-46, 52-54, 76, 144-147, 159-176, esp. 173; Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore 1986) 18-19; Colonel David H. Hackworth (and Julia Sherman), *About Face* (New York 1989) 612 (see also Simpson, *Dien Bien Phu*, xix-xxv; Howard R. Simpson, "The Lessons of Dien Bien Phu," *Military Review* 72(1992) 62-72); Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, 161-280, 785-811, esp. 262-280; R.B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War I, Revolution Versus Containment, 1955-1961* (London and New York 1983) passim, esp. 56-61, 261.

⁵⁴Anderson, *Trapped by Success*, xiii-xiv, 33-39, 44, 50, 65, 199-210; Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam*, 11-18, 52, 126, 196, 202-211, 237; Short, *Origins of the Vietnam War*, 113-121, 127-130, 156-157, 279, 328-329; Kahin, *Intervention*, ix, 45-65.

and the army, and between the nation and the state. It is not surprising that some years after the crisis the image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis exerted great influence in France. Based on the wrong that they thought was done to them in 1954 in Indochina, in the second half of the fifties French soldiers proclaimed the idea of the "trahison des civils" (the treason of the civilians). The French nation and the government had let them down. Soldiers highly frustrated with war experiences in Indochina consequently undertook a mission on behalf of the nation. They were determined not to let things run out of hand a second time, such as had happened in 1954, and made their "practical past" into a reality in a number of revolts against the French state at the end of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties at the time of the Algerian decolonization.⁵⁵ An assertion often found in literature is that the Dien Bien Phu crisis was an important impulse for the development of a French atomic weapon.⁵⁶ This idea had to be qualified. Generally speaking, the Dien Bien Phu crisis contributed to the climate of humiliation and catastrophe after a new military defeat which the French tried to avoid by enlarging French prestige with such matters as their own "force de frappe." Important initiatives for this had already been taken long before 1954 and no evidence

⁵⁵For the idea of the "trahison des civils" see Roger Delpey, *Soldats de la boue* (Paris 1949); Roger Delpey, *Parias de la gloire* (Paris 1953); Roger Delpey, *S.O.S. Tonkin* (Givors 1954) 27, 285; Roger Delpey, *Dien Bien Phu: l'Affaire (le commencement)* (Paris 1974); Navarre, *Agonie de l'Indochine*, 323-335. On this subject Paul-Marie de La Gorce, *La république et son armée* (Paris 1963) 496-503; Jean Planchais, *Le malaise de l'armée* (Paris 1958) 11-19, 93-95; Jacques Julliard, 'Naissance et mort...' *La IVe République (1947-1958)* (Paris 1968) 158-172, 204-208; Jean Planchais, *Une histoire politique de l'armée II, De De Gaulle à De Gaulle 1940-1967* (Paris 1967); Philip M. Williams, *War, Plots and Scandals in Post-war France* (Cambridge 1970) 13, 50-53, 192-197; Jacques Dalloz, *La guerre d'Indochine, 1945-1954* (Paris 1987) 249; Ruscio, *Guerre française d'Indochine*, 163-165; George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers: French Army and Empire in Crisis 1947-1962* (Cambridge, Mass. 1965) passim, esp. 3-30.

⁵⁶Wolf Mendl, *Deterrence and Persuasion: French Nuclear Armament in the Context of National Policy, 1945-1969* (London 1970) 15, 28, 73-79, 85, 95-105, 142, 203; Wilfrid L. Kohl, *French Nuclear Diplomacy* (Princeton 1971) 21-46; John Baylis, "French defense policy," in: John Baylis ed., *Contemporary Strategy: Theories and Policies* (New York 1975) 287-309, esp. 293, 296-297, 302.

is available that the politicians, soldiers or researchers engaged in the development of the atomic bomb in the period 1954-1960 were guided in their decision making by the feeling that the United States had let France down during the Dien Bien Phu crisis.⁵⁷

The Dien Bien Phu crisis was one of many occasions when the United States had to clarify an awkward matter in the period of the Cold War but the crisis did not affect the essence of the American nation or state. This implied that images of the Dien Bien Phu crisis could be "exchanged" without too much in-depth discussion. The relation between the Vietnam War of the sixties and the Dien Bien Phu crisis was a constant factor of historical debate and the discord of the American nation meant that different connections could be seen between "1954" and "later on". Analogies with the Dien Bien Phu crisis might be seen in the discussion among soldiers in the United States about the right strategy in the Vietnam War in the years 1965-1966. Gavin, Taylor and William C. Westmoreland (Commander of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam), in connection with the discussion about the so-called enclave strategy, both in publications and in public statements, referred to the events of 1954, either to argue that the army could get isolated by a wrong choice and that this might lead to a catastrophe or to illustrate the negative influence of the home front.⁵⁸ The Dien Bien Phu

⁵⁷*L'Aventure de la bombe. De Gaulle et la dissuasion nucléaire (1958-1969)*. Colloque organisé à Arc-et-Senans par l'Université de Franche-Comté et l'Institut Charles-de-Gaulle les 27, 28 et 29 septembre 1984 (Paris 1984) 31-33, 36-39, 43-45, 73-74, 77-78, 80-81, 223.

⁵⁸On Taylor see George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (third print; New York 1996) 144-147; Robert Buzzanco, *Masters of War: Military Dissent and Politics in the Vietnam Era* (Cambridge 1997) 191-192, 197-198, 205-212; Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, 345-346; *PP* (Gravel ed.) III, 447, 452-462; William Conrad Gibbons, *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War: Executive and Legislative Roles and Relationships* IV, July 1965-January 1968 (Princeton 1995) 241-243; John M. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor: The Sword and the Pen* (New York 1989) 329-334, 419; Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York 1972) 365-366. On Westmoreland see Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, 346-348; General William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (New York 1976; reprint New York 1980) 165-166, 180-181, 186. On Gavin see General James M. Gavin, "A Communication on Vietnam," *Harper's Magazine* 54 (February 1966) 16-21; Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, 351-352; Herring, *America's Longest War*, 151, 166;

(continued...)

metaphor was also used regularly by journalists and politicians in the fifties and sixties without intending to exert major influence on decision making but as an image of defeat, adversity or a political situation to be avoided. Republican Senator William Knowland in July 1956 thought that "a continental Dien Bien Phu" threatened if no help was given to Diem. The journalist William Prochnau mentions utterances of American soldiers in the sixties. They used the image of Dien Bien Phu in a negative connotation. In February 1966 the title of an article in *The Greensboro Daily News* read "An American Dien Bien Phu?" The paper used the title to illustrate her growing criticism on the American war effort in Vietnam. Lastly, the Joint Chiefs of Staff spoke of "an aerial Dienbienphu" when Robert McNamara proposed in November 1967 to end the bombardements on North-Vietnam.⁵⁹

The "French defeat syndrome" influenced American politicians in a number of ways. Kennedy probably (the assertions are from his former staff members) took it into account and he did not send some tens of thousands soldiers to Vietnam.⁶⁰ In July 1965 Johnson's assistant George Ball also saw a clear analogy between 1954 and 1965 during the important decision-making process on escalation in Vietnam and pleaded to end American intervention as soon as

⁵⁸(...continued)

Bradley Biggs, *Gavin* (Hampden 1980) 148-150; Gibbons, *U.S. Government* IV, 222-230, 239-243.

⁵⁹On Knowland see Gelb en Betts, *Irony of Vietnam*, 207-208. On Prochnau see William Prochnau, *Once Upon a Distant War: David Halberstam, Neil Sheehan, Peter Arnett - Young War Correspondents and Their Early Vietnam Battles* (New York 1996) 202-203, 253; see also Fall, *Last Reflections*, 235. On *The Greensboro Daily News* see Edwin M. Yoder Jr., "A Very Subdued Confession", *DH* 20(1996) 456-462, esp. 457. On the Joint Chiefs of Staff see Lawrence J. Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff: The First Twenty-Five Years* (Bloomington and London 1976) 166.

⁶⁰Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston 1965) 302-304, 339; Lloyd Gardner, "Cold War Counter Revolution, 1960-1970," in: William Appleman Williams ed., *From Colony to Empire: Essays in the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York 1972) 431-474, esp. 438-440; Khong, *Analogies at War*, 88-89.

possible but could not find any supporters. According to McGeorge Bundy (Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs) there were only superficial analogies.⁶¹ Nevertheless, in 1968 journalists and soldiers and politicians of the Johnson administration considered the siege of the American fortress Khe Sanh a "replay Dien Bien Phu." They thought that the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese wanted to win a decisive victory on that spot, as had happened in Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Because the communists wanted to attain a great popular rebellion by uprisings in the cities in the south (the Tet offensive) and considered Khe Sanh a diversionary manoeuvre, the American fascination for Khe Sanh meant that the American military leaders had underestimated the Tet offensive for some time and this had given an opportunity to the communists to psychologically exploit their surprise attacks.⁶²

⁶¹George W. Ball, "Top Secret: The Prophecy the President Rejected: How Valid Are the Assumptions Underlying Our Viet-Nam Policies?," *The Atlantic Monthly* 41(July 1972) 35-49, esp. 36, 41; Khong, *Analogies at War*, 148-174, esp. 152, 156-157; John Prados and Ray W. Stubbe, *Valley of Decision: The Siege of Khe Sanh* (Boston, New York and London 1991) 289; Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Use of History for Decisionmakers* (New York 1986) 75-91.

⁶²Westmoreland, *Soldier Reports*, 253-266, 408-418, 440-458; Davidson, *Vietnam at War*, 442-449, 551-571; Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York 1971) 381; Walt W. Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power* (New York 1972) 465. The connotation 'Dien Bien Phu syndrome' in Peter Braestrup, *Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington I* (second print; Boulder 1984) 341-347, 367-370, 380-382, 387-404, 410-423, 430-435; Khong, *Analogies at War*, 171-173; Edgar O'Ballance, *The Wars in Vietnam 1954-1973* (London 1975) 77, 107, 181; Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York 1983) 539-543; William S. Turley, *The Second Indochina War: A Short Political and Military History, 1954-1975* (New York and Scarborough 1986) 106-107; Michael Maclear, *Vietnam. 10.000 dagen oorlog* (Alphen aan den Rijn 1981) 222-234; Bernard C. Nalty, *Air Power and the Fight for Khe Sanh* (second print; Washington 1986) iii, 19-21, 38-42, 103-111; James J. Wirtz, *The Tet offensive: Intelligence Failure in War* (Ithaca and London 1991) 63, 76-80, 128-139, 203-206; Prados and Stubbe, *Valley of Decision*, 7-10, 50, 110, 173-175, 270-272, 284-293, 328, 349-352, 360-367; Internet *Khe Sanh Declassified Documents* <http://members.easyspace.com.airdrop/dien>; Ang Cheng Guan, "Decision-making Leading to the Tet Offensive (1968) - The Vietnamese Communist Perspective," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33(1998) 341-353.

In response to the outcome of the second Vietnam War some American soldiers and historians regretted that experiences or lessons from the French war and the Dien Bien Phu crisis (for example the “guerre révolutionnaire,” the revolutionary war) did not exert more influence at specific moments. The historians W. Scott Thompson and Thomas C. Thayer paid attention to this subject in the mid-seventies.⁶³ Comparable lamentations related to ignoring of the counterinsurgency can be found in revisionist Vietnam literature of the eighties and nineties. According to the “hearts-and-minds” revisionist historian David H. Hackworth, American politicians and soldiers, under influence of what had happened in 1954 to Dien Bien Phu, paid too much attention to the siege of Khe Sanh. He also criticized the American preference for “search and destroy” with large units. The American soldiers should have done better by studying the French “counterinsurgency” against the guerrilla fighters. The revisionist journalist and diplomat Howard R. Simpson stipulated that the American soldiers repeated the mistakes of the French. Both underestimated the power of a guerrilla army and the importance of the support of the civilian population.⁶⁴ Some postrevisionist Vietnam historiographers also posited that too little attention had been paid to “1954,” for instance to the opposition of military leaders and the influence of Vietnamese nationalism.⁶⁵ I have not found evidence that the Presidents

⁶³Thomas C. Thayer, “Patterns of the French and American Experience in Vietnam,” in: W. Scott Thompson and Donaldson D. Frizzell eds., *The lessons of Vietnam* (London 1977) 17-38, esp. 35-36; W. Scott Thompson, “Lessons from the French in Vietnam,” *Naval War College Review* 27 (1975) 43-52, esp. 49.

⁶⁴Hackworth, *About Face*, 579-580, 611-615; Simpson, “Lessons of Dien Bien Phu,” 62, 68-72; Simpson, *Dien Bien Phu*, xix-xxv, 180; Howard R. Simpson, *Tiger in the Barbed Wire: An American in Vietnam, 1952-1991* (New York, Tokyo and London 1992) xvi-xvii, 184-186, 193-194.

⁶⁵Buzzanco, *Masters of War*, passim, esp. 51-53, 341-351; Bob Buzzanco, “The American Military’s Rationale Against the Vietnam War,” *Political Science Quarterly* 101(1986) 559-576; George C. Herring, “Some Legacies and Lessons of Vietnam,” *Virginia Quarterly Review (VQR)* 60(1984) 210-228, esp. 222-225; George C. Herring, “Vietnam, American Foreign Policy, and the Uses of History,” *VQR* 66(1990) 1-16, esp. 2-5, 14-15; Herring,

(continued...)

Reagan and Bush were led by the experiences or the images of 1954 at any moment.

A well-considered image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis

At the end of my inquiry I have formulated some requirements for any well-considered image of the Dien Bien Phu crisis. I have stipulated that such an image should be multiform, with attention to causes both foreign and domestic with regard to the United States, France and Great Britain and that this image should position the Dien Bien Phu crisis in the whole of the Indochina policy of those three countries from the Second World War on. A less Americacentric or Francocentric image of the crisis can be achieved by breaking down the image of "the world according to Washington" or "Paris." Therefore, attention must be given to the People's Republic of China, the Soviet-Union, Canada, Australia, the domestic backgrounds, and the problems concerning the ratification of the European Defense Community. With regard to domestic backgrounds attention should be given to lessons of the past, political relations, national security, ways of decision making (among other things leadership styles, personalities and advisory systems), cultural, social and economic aspects.

Those requirements cannot easily be fulfilled. They place great demands on historians. It is not easy for them to analyse a variety of causes and to avoid one-sidedness and fragmentation. The author of a monograph is handicapped by human limitations. Omissions and specific accents are inevitable. Some of these problems can be avoided when a team of scholars cooperate and publish the results of their efforts in a single volume. In this case it is essential for them to make clear on which issues they reached consensus and on which subjects debate still continues. Sometimes two authors publish one article together so as to give a comprehensive image.

⁶⁵(...continued)

America's Longest War, 307-314; John Prados, *The Hidden History of the Vietnam War* (Chicago 1995) ix, 11-17, 294-297.

However we should realize that different points of view and subjectivity always will be connected with the historian's work.

The comparison of the different perspectives and images of politicians, soldiers, journalists and historians on the Dien Bien Phu crisis has been a meaningful enterprise. It has gradually given insight into the intersubjective character of the crisis and the contemporary colouring or deformation of the images and has thrown light on pronounced or more hidden subjective influences. The historian could draw two conclusions from my inquiry. Attention to the phenomenon of image-building in the past implies more than establishing that different images of a historical phenomenon exist and then juxtaposing these with one's own image. It is my opinion that it also means that he should pay attention to two other aspects of image-building: contemporary influences and the way in which images are used for historical argumentation in analogies and lessons, in short: as a "practical past." The quality of his own image will be considerably enhanced and the past will be a considerably improved "historical past."

Pieter Meulendijks lives in the Netherlands. In May 2000 he received his PhD at the University of Nijmegen. His supervisors were prof. J. Bosmans and J. Toebe. Meulendijks is a former history teacher and has published an article about American diplomatic history. He is now a principal of a Dutch high school in Duiven, the Netherlands.

THE CASE OF THE "DECENT INTERVAL":
DO WE NOW HAVE A SMOKING GUN?

by

JEFFREY KIMBALL
(Miami University)

Did President Richard Nixon, with the help or at the instigation of his assistant for national security affairs, Henry Kissinger, seek a "decent-interval" solution for ending direct U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War as critics have charged? Conjuring suspicions of deceit and betrayal, the decent-interval question continues to influence Americans' memories of the Vietnam tragedy. This exit strategy was one of several alternatives U.S. planners developed during the war and at least as early as 1968.¹ Its purpose was to preserve American "honor" in spite of withdrawing U.S. armed forces from South Vietnam and even while Communist forces remained undefeated. Honor would be salvaged by weakening the enemy and strengthening Nguyen Van Thieu's non-Communist government in Saigon during the period of withdrawal in order that South Vietnam's collapse might be avoided or at least postponed for a sufficiently lengthy period of time to make it appear as though defeat had not been the fault of U.S. policymakers. Implicit in this approach was the acceptance of the possibility that, while Thieu's regime might survive, it might also lose.

On numerous occasions and in many venues during and after the war, Nixon and Kissinger directly and indirectly denied they had followed this path for exiting Vietnam. They claimed instead that defeat in South Vietnam was not the result of their policies but of the enemy's perfidy in violating the 1973 Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring the Peace in Vietnam, Saigon's

¹See. e.g., Vietnam Policy Alternatives [1968], folder: Vietnam — RAND, box 3, National Security Council Files: Henry A. Kissinger Office Files, HAK Administration and Staff Files, Nixon Presidential Materials.

incompetence in dealing with the enemy, and Congress's failure to support Thieu's government adequately.

Frank Snepp, a senior intelligence analyst in the CIA's Vietnam station from 1973 through the final fiasco in 1975, agreed that Nixon and Kissinger had not *deliberately* chosen the decent-interval option. In his bitter memoir, *Decent Interval: An Insider's Account of Saigon's Indecent End* (1977), which introduced the term to Vietnam-watchers outside the corridors of government, Snepp argued, however, that a decent interval had nonetheless come to pass, even if unintentionally. The two-year interlude between the flawed Paris Agreement of January 27, 1973, which formally completed the American withdrawal, and the final battles between Vietnamese adversaries, which led to the defeat of Saigon's forces at the end of April 1975, obscured the true causes of South Vietnam's collapse and made it possible for Nixon and Kissinger cover up their own errors.

The debate continues. In one recent philippic, *No Peace, No Honor: Nixon, Kissinger, and Betrayal in Vietnam* (2001), political scientist Larry Berman, offered a twist on Snepp's thesis. Like Snepp, Berman denied that Nixon and Kissinger deliberately pursued a decent-interval solution, even though a decent interval in effect came about. He, like Snepp, proposed that they had intended instead to bring about an equilibrium or stalemate between South Vietnamese and Communist forces following the American withdrawal. And like Snepp, he blamed Kissinger more than Nixon for the deceptions of the U.S. government. The twist Berman offered was that the stalemate was to be achieved, not by great power diplomacy between the U.S., the USSR, and China, but by continued fighting between the Vietnamese parties and heavy bombing by American B-52 airmen.

Nixon and Kissinger, the makers of policy, knew what the truth was but, having their interests to protect, concealed and distorted it. Snepp, a CIA agent on station, possessed intelligence information about people and events in Vietnam but lacked knowledge of White

House intent. Berman, a scholar who had access to recently declassified White House files, misinterpreted, I believe, the evidence he examined. The cumulative weight of this evidence, which consists primarily of National Security Council documents of the Nixon White House and transcripts of U.S.-North Vietnamese negotiations, has persuaded me that Nixon purposefully selected the decent-interval option at least as early as the fall of 1970 — after his initial victory plan of 1969 had failed. This was *Nixon's* strategy. Kissinger was its implementer, not its creator, though he, in his frequent conversations with Nixon and in his staff's preparation of studies and plans, contributed to its formulation. I developed this argument at length in *Nixon's Vietnam War*, which was published in November 1998, and which drew upon a significant portion of currently available declassified documents, including the first installment of NSC documents.

Since 1998, audio tapes of Oval Office conversations for the year 1971 have been released, additional NSC documents have been declassified, and virtually the full record of negotiations has been made available. This new material only adds more support to the thesis that Nixon and Kissinger adopted a decent-interval solution to their Vietnam problem in the fall of 1970.

One document in particular would seem to provide incontrovertible incriminating evidence of their support for a decent interval. This smoking gun, so to speak, consists of two notations Kissinger wrote in the "Indochina" section of the briefing book for his July 1971 trip to China to talk with high-level Chinese leaders in preparation for Nixon's 1972 visit. The briefing book was prepared by Kissinger's staff and reviewed by Nixon shortly before Kissinger departed for China. Kissinger probably scribbled these marginalia while re-reading the latest revision of the briefing book on his flight to Beijing.²

²Briefing book for HAK's Oct. 1971 trip POLO II [Part I], box 850, NSC. For the President's Files (Winston Lord) — China Trip/Vietnam, NPM.

On page five of the “Indochina” section, the first paragraph reads: “On behalf of President Nixon I want to assure the Prime Minister solemnly that the United States is prepared to make a settlement that will truly leave the political evolution of Vietnam to the Vietnamese alone. We are ready to withdraw all of our forces by a fixed date and let objective realities shape the political future.” The adjective “objective” before “realities” was most probably a reference to the military developments that would influence the political balance of power after American troop withdrawals. Kissinger edited in “South” before “Vietnam” in the phrase “evolution of Vietnam,” and in the margin of the paragraph, he wrote: “*We need a decent interval. You have our assurance.*” In brief, what I think is significant about this scribbling is that (1) Kissinger actually used the phrase “decent interval”; (2) it serves as a direct summation of the mountain of additional evidence to be found in other places, such as White House tapes;³ (3) he wanted to *assure* the Chinese, with whom Nixon and Kissinger very much desired rapprochement and whom they wanted to assist them in persuading Hanoi to sign a cease-fire agreement.

Moreover, on the cover of the “Indochina” section, he jotted this instruction for his staff: “*Get Mao quote on betraying allies.*” I cannot be certain about the precise quote to which Kissinger was referring, but in a 1937 exhortation Mao wrote: “To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship when a person has clearly gone wrong, and refrain from principled argument because he is an old acquaintance, a fellow

³I will cite this material in a forthcoming book about crucial documents and tapes regarding Nixon-Kissinger-Ford policy on linkage diplomacy and the Vietnam War. I referred to the pre-October 1998 sources in *Nixon's Vietnam War* (1998).

townsman, a schoolmate, a close friend, a loved one, an old colleague or old subordinate, or to touch on the matter lightly instead of going into it thoroughly, so as to keep on good terms, the result is that both the organization and the individual are harmed.” In Nixon’s conversation with Zhou Enlai in February 1972, in which the President made an obligatory declaration in support of America’s obligation to stand by its friends, Zhou said in response: “That is still your old saying — you don’t want to cast aside old friends [referring to Thieu]. But you have already cast aside many old friends. Of these, some might be good friends and some might be bad friends, but you should choose your friends carefully....” Clearly, Kissinger’s marginal notation, asking his staff to look up Mao’s saying, was an attempt to come up with an anecdote that was compatible with realist Chinese thinking about the vagaries of friendship, in order that in his talks with Chinese leaders he, with Nixon’s concurrence, might justify how the U.S. could “betray” an ally but at the same time maintain its great-power credibility with the Chinese.

I do not believe that Nixon and Kissinger actually betrayed President Thieu of South Vietnam, for, after all, before the Paris Agreement was signed, Thieu was aware of the concessions made by the Nixon administration in the negotiations. I do believe, however, based on the evidence I have seen and heard, that Nixon and Kissinger failed to win the war, which is what they hoped to do when they came to power in 1969. Realizing in late 1970 that they could not win the war, but knowing that “objective” political and military realities compelled them to end American involvement, they settled on the decent-interval solution.

LETTERS

Serge Ricard (Sorbonne Nouvelle), author of *Theodore Roosevelt: principes et pratique d'une politique étrangère* (Aix-en-Provence, Université de Provence, 1991), wishes to take: "Another Look at *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire*."

In the Spring 2000 issue of *Diplomatic History*, Lewis L. Gould has contributed a "feature review" of William N. Tilchin's book *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).¹ Gould's review of Tilchin's excellent book is unnecessarily condescending, patronizing, and snide, and it either misrepresents or overlooks most of the contents and main arguments of *TR and the British Empire*.² I have the utmost respect for Lewis Gould's admirable scholarship but cannot help feeling that on this occasion he has treated a fellow scholar most unfairly.

Gould, who has published widely on Theodore Roosevelt, though not, to my knowledge, on his diplomacy, devotes well over half of his review to identifying and locating for the author's benefit collections that Tilchin never visited. But historians know that historical scholarship is to a large extent a cumulative enterprise, and that they are not obliged to reinvent the wheel each time, though they are aware they

¹*DH*, Spring 2000, 341-344.

²It is rare that a book reviewed in both the *American Historical Review* and *Diplomatic History* is described more fully (whether favorably or unfavorably) in the former, but this is such a case. See the review of *TR and the British Empire* by Lloyd Ambrosius, *AHR*, December 1998, 1709-1710.

should always make peace with their predecessors. In this instance, there exists an abundance of secondary literature on TR and Anglo-American relations (authored by Howard K. Beale, David H. Burton, Bradford Perkins, and *a great many* other scholars) which has drawn heavily from Gould's list of "neglected" manuscript collections. Tilchin obviously has studied this secondary literature with great care and great skill, has made exemplary use of it in writing *TR and the British Empire*, and has thus incorporated extensively, albeit indirectly, into his book manuscript sources about which Gould lectures him rather superciliously. For example, Tilchin does deal satisfactorily with TR's interactions with the Britons Cecil Spring Rice and John St. Loe Strachey, notwithstanding Gould's erroneous implication that he does not. In addition, Tilchin has utilized very effectively the voluminous Theodore Roosevelt Papers at the Library of Congress and important document collections housed at the National Archives and the Public Record Office, along with many significant printed primary sources. Visits to the collections enumerated at length by Lewis Gould would have been of relatively marginal value to Tilchin's project — although such visits would undoubtedly have yielded some additional bits of corroborating evidence. As a matter of fact, *TR and the British Empire* rests on "meticulous archival and manuscript research," to quote Richard H. Collin's laudative comment in the *International History Review*.³

What was Tilchin's project anyway? Gould's review says precious little about it. The purpose of Tilchin's study was to combine an intellectual diplomatic history and a traditional narrative diplomatic history of Theodore Roosevelt, with a primary emphasis on Roosevelt's thoughts on and dealings

³*International History Review*, December 1998, 1000.

with issues involving Great Britain and her empire. Tilchin undertook to build on the substantial body of earlier work on TR and Anglo-American relations and to author a more thorough and systematic treatment than had been provided heretofore. The end product of Tilchin's effort is extremely impressive — "a near definitive statement of Anglo-American relations from 1901 to 1909," as David Burton (a foremost authority on the subject of TR and U.S.-British relations) has put it in the *Journal of American History*.⁴

Gould regrettably fails to present the major themes of *TR and the British Empire* (cf. the author's preface, pp. xii-xiii). Tilchin's highly revealing discussions of Roosevelt's thinking on British imperialism and of the president's handling of various important diplomatic episodes are not even addressed by Gould. For example, Roosevelt's brilliant hands-on management of the Alaskan boundary dispute, richly related by Tilchin in chapter two, is not given any real attention. The same can be said about Tilchin's eye-opening accounts of TR and Britain and the Russo-Japanese War, the Moroccan Crisis, the Newfoundland fisheries question, and the U.S.-Japanese immigration-racism crisis. Roosevelt's deft cultivation of an Anglo-American partnership through personal relationships, another central theme of Tilchin's book, is also missing from the review. Instead, Gould curiously presents as "the core" of the book Tilchin's detailed description and analysis of the Jamaica incident of 1907, which Tilchin puts forward in part III as "an excellent window on the condition of the Anglo-American relationship by 1907 and on Theodore Roosevelt's perspectives on that relationship" (p. 166). Gould actually approves of Tilchin's reconstruction of the complicated diplomacy of the Jamaican affair, but he totally

⁴*JAH*, September 1998, 726.

distorts the author's clearly explained purposes for providing a comprehensive treatment of this incident (see especially pp. xiv, 117).

Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire is a remarkable book. It is very carefully researched, exceptionally well written, and replete with important insights on TR and Britain. Moreover, because such a large percentage of TRs diplomatic forays involved Britain to one degree or another, Tilchin's book constitutes one of the widest ranging and most compelling assessments of Roosevelt's presidential statecraft ever published. It is indeed highly complimentary of Roosevelt's statesmanship, and admittedly with good reason: even the severest critics of the 26th president pay tribute to it. Readers of *DH* are encouraged to set aside a somewhat misleading review and to give themselves an opportunity to enjoy and to benefit from a very enlightening first-rate work of scholarship in the field of U.S. foreign relations.

PAST PRESIDENTS' COLUMN

This is the inaugural essay by past SHAFR Presidents. The topics were open and completely at the discretion of the writers.

Robert Divine, Littlefield Professor Emeritus at the University of Texas - Austin, was president in 1976.

How I Became a Diplomatic Historian

My career as an historian of American foreign policy confirms the shrewd insight of Scottish writer John Buchan on the role of chance in history. Best known for his thriller *Thirty-Nine Steps*, Buchan

was also a prolific historian who pointed out the haphazard and often accidental way that events can unfold in his essay, "The Causal and the Causal in History." All too often, looking for a rational explanation of how things happened, historians neglect the way chance can determine the outcome.

In my case, three unrelated accidental occurrences were decisive in my becoming a diplomatic historian — a broken hip, the discovery of the total lack of linguistic aptitude, and the unexpected cooperation of political scientists.

The broken hip (actually a slipped epiphysis as the result of growing too fast) occurred when I was thirteen. Up to that time, while I had gotten reasonably good grades in public school in New York City, I had little interest in reading beyond comic books and juvenile pot-boilers. But when I found myself flat on my back for six months in a body cast, I discovered history. My older brother, then an undergraduate at Yale, came home for the summer and brought his European history text with him. I began reading about masters and serfs, kings and nobles, Napoleon and Bismarck, and I was hooked. History, I decided, was a fascinating subject and one that I would pursue as soon as I returned to school.

In 1943, my father, a physician, returned to the Navy (he had served in World War I), and with the family on the move, I was sent to Phillips Exeter Academy. By now my hip had mended, but my previous lack of academic diligence forced me to drop back a year and enter as a freshman. Exeter proved to be just what I needed — small classes, a heavy emphasis on writing, and a good library. I took the required course in American history, but it did not excite me — partly due to an uninspired instructor, but more because my real love was European history. The next year I was fortunate enough to have a genuinely gifted teacher in Henry Bragdon for modern Europe. He introduced me to the reformation and the enlightenment, explored the impact of the industrial revolution and made 19th century nationalism come alive. After another course on the history of England, I graduated from Exeter determined to major

in history in college and devote the rest of my life to teaching and writing about modern Europe.

It was at Yale that I discovered that an insurmountable obstacle stood in my way. I had taken Latin at Exeter and did well, but Spanish proved more difficult — I barely made a B. I could work laboriously on translating Spanish into English, but I had no facility in speaking a foreign language, much less in becoming absorbed in it. I then learned I had to pass reading tests in both French and German to enter graduate school in history, which came as a great shock. I struggled manfully with French and passed the exam. For German, I took an intensive summer course that enabled me to read Thomas Mann in eight weeks and pass the entrance exam, but I forgot it all just as quickly!

Aware that I lacked the language skills to do the reading and research I craved in European history, I reluctantly shifted my focus to the American past. Three courses, taught by scholars of very different temperament, helped confirm my decision. As a sophomore, I took Ralph Gabriel's course on the history of American thought. A shy, scholarly man, Gabriel's lectures shined with elegant prose and coherent organization that made them fascinating to me. I found Samuel Flagg Bemis a little overbearing in my first exposure to diplomatic history, provoking us with his dogmatic interpretations but succeeding in making the subject both lively and compelling. Finally, my favorite course was Howard Lamar's survey of the American West. A young instructor, low-key but with a dry sense of humor, Lamar went beyond the usual cowboy and Indians approach to show the complex nature of the expanding American frontier.

By the time I had graduated from Yale and was accepted into graduate school, I was sure I would write my dissertation on some aspect of the frontier experience, drawing on the Coe collection of Western Americana which Yale had just acquired.

In graduate school at Yale, first year students took a year long seminar on the literature of American history and wrote a paper on an historian of their choice. I naturally chose Frederick Jackson Turner and though the paper turned out well (David Potter later asked for a copy when he was writing *People of Plenty*), I began to lose my initial interest in the West, perhaps because Howard Lamar was not yet teaching a seminar. My second year, I found my dissertation topic in Ralph Gabriel's seminar, writing a research paper on the 1924 National Origins Immigration Act which I later expanded in a dissertation on American immigration policy from the 1920s through the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952. Since I was writing in 1953, I had difficulty in persuading my committee to accept so recent a topic (Bemis was particularly dubious), but the dissertation was approved and later published by the Yale University Press.

When I entered the job market in 1954, the outlook was grim. Enrollments had been falling after the postwar surge of veterans and jobs were scarce. I billed myself simply as an American historian, as was the custom before the age of specialization. Fortunately, Texas had hired a colleague, Otis Pease, for a one-year replacement slot in 1953, and he worked so well that the department decided to add four more new instructors to take over the survey course, which had previously been taught mainly by teaching assistants. My new colleagues, in addition to Pease, who soon left for the University of Washington, included David Van Tassel, an intellectual historian who later moved to Case Western Reserve, and Otis Singletary, who eventually became the president of the University of Kentucky. All of us taught four sections of History 615, the American survey, covering the first half in the fall and the second in the spring. I realize now I was fortunate to have only one course preparation in my first year of teaching, but I think I could have repeated each week's lectures in my sleep after delivering them four times to listless undergraduates.

It was thus a great relief when the chairman informed me that I could begin teaching an upper-division course in the spring of my

second year. He asked what I wanted to teach — in effect, inviting me to name my speciality. Western history was out of the question — it was taught by our one true star, Walter Prescott Webb. Not wanting to infringe on David Van Tassel's interest in the history of American thought, I recalled how much I had enjoyed diplomatic history, despite ambivalent feelings about Sam Bemis. Diplomatic history, I realized, would allow me to weave in quite a bit of European history. When I told the chairman I wanted to teach the history of American foreign policy, he replied that while it had never been taught in the department, it was considered to be part of political science and was under the control of the Government Department. Fortunately, my chairman entered into delicate negotiations with his counterpart in Government, who finally persuaded Lloyd Meacham, a specialist in Latin American relations, to turn over the *history* of American foreign relations to me. The only sticking point was the dividing line between history and current relations; I was informed that I could teach diplomatic history as long as I did not go beyond the Washington Conference of 1921-22. For someone who had written about legislation only a year old in a dissertation, that was a real problem, but one easily solved. Aware that few in authority ever know what instructors actually teach in their classes, I labeled the second half of my two-semester survey, U.S. foreign policy since 1890, and happily included not only World War II but the Korean War in my lectures.

There were both advantages and disadvantages in being a self-taught diplomatic historian. While I did rely on some old lecture notes from Bemis' class, as well as on Thomas Bailey's text for anecdotes, I had to scramble to read the literature I would have mastered earlier if I had been trained in diplomatic history. Some late nights were devoted to reading Bemis on the diplomacy of the founding fathers, Arthur Whitaker and Julius Pratt on territorial expansion, Dexter Perkins on the Monroe Doctrine, Norman Graebner and Frederick Merk on Manifest Destiny, Arthur Link on Wilson and World War I, Langer and Gleason and Robert Sherwood on the Second World War. But it was all fresh in my mind, and I was able to integrate this literature with what I had

learned about political, cultural and intellectual history to avoid too narrow a focus. The result, I hope, was a generalist's view of how diplomacy fit into the larger story of American growth and expansion, first on the continent, later in the world.

I taught the survey of American diplomatic history for the next forty years. As I became known as a diplomatic historian, I often had to correct those who identified me as a Bemis student. While I am indebted to Professor Bemis for first introducing me to the mysteries of American foreign policy, I feel that I gained as much insight from my other professors, Howard Lamar, Ralph Gabriel, David Potter on the U.S., and Archibald Foord, Tom Mendenhall, Leonard Krieger, and Hajo Holborn on the European side.

The vastness of the literature and the complexity of the subject make specialization mandatory today, but I believe that there are great benefits to developing a broader understanding in order to place the field of concentration in its proper setting.

Had it not been for the broken hip, the language difficulty and cooperative political scientists, I would not have become a diplomatic historian. Buchan was right — too often we search for rational causes for historical events, when often the outcome is the result of pure chance. In my case, at least, the accidents were all happy ones which led to a career I had not expected but have thoroughly enjoyed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shafr's Roster and Research List

Members may search SHAFR's roster and research list electronically at:
<http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/shafr>

All members are encouraged to log on to the site and supply current research interests, courses taught, e-mail address, and a phone and/or fax number. You may also log in order to request that your information remain unlisted. To log onto the site, all you need is the mailing label from your most recent issue of *Diplomatic History*. In the top left-hand corner of the label is your customer number, which you will need to receive your password. If you have lost this information, you may also e-mail Blackwell at:

<e-help@blackwellpublishers.co.uk>

As you make use of the site, we hope that you will report any problems, concerns, or suggestions to Amy Staples <astaples@mtsu.edu> and/or Blackwell Publishers at the e-help address above.

Centennial Perspective on the Russo-Japanese War

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the University of Haifa, Israel, are organizing in February 10-12, 2003, a conference on: "The Russo-Japanese War & the 20th Century: An Assessment from a Centennial Perspective." The organizers are considering panel proposals until December 31, 2001; and paper proposals until February 28, 2002.

Contact: Dr. Rotem Kowner, Japan and Asia Program, Dept. of Multidisciplinary Studies, The University of Haifa, Mt. Carmel 31905, Haifa, Israel

Fax: (972) 4-824-9155

Tel: (972) 4-824-0559

E-mail: kowner@research.haifa.ac.il

or

Prof. Ben Ami Shillony, Dept. of East Asia Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem 91905, Israel

Fax: (972) 2-532-2545

Tel: (972) 2-588-3728

E-mail: shillony@h2.hum.huji.ac.il

Wilson Center Fellowships

The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars announces its 2002-2003 Fellowship competition. The deadline is October 1, 2001.

The fellowship are awarded to individuals in the social sciences and humanities with outstanding project proposals on national and/or international issues — topics that intersect with questions of policy or provide a historical framework to contemporary policy issues. For application materials, visit the Center's website:

www.wilsoncenter.org

For other information contact:

Woodrow Wilson Center, One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington DC 20004-3027.

Fax: (202)691-4001

Tel: (202) 691-4170

E-mail: fellowships@wwic.si.edu

Call for Papers

The 4th Annual Society for Military and Strategic Studies Student Conference, War and Security: Historical Perspectives, Contemporary Interpretations, Science and Technology, and Missing Dimensions will be held on February 15 and 16, 2002, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta. The Society (SMSS) is a multidisciplinary group of students who share an interest in security, strategy, and military issues. The goal of this conference is to provide a forum for discussion as well as an avenue for unique intellectual development.

All proposals will be considered. Past panels have included: Imperial Warfare, Security and Strategy, Civil Military Relations, Human Security, Future War: Technology and the Revolution in Military Affairs, Cultures and Conflict.

Both undergraduate and graduate students from all disciplines are welcome and encouraged. Proposals should be no longer than 250 words and presentations should conform to a 20-minute format.

PAPER PROPOSAL DEADLINE: November 1, 2001

Please submit proposals via e-mail or regular mail to:

Jillian Dowding/Chris Bullock, smss@ucalgary.ca
Centre for Military and Strategic Studies
University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive NW
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4

Tel: (403) 220-7091

Fax: (403) 282-0594

20th Century Japan Research Awards

The Center for Historical Studies, History Department, and McKeldin Library, University of Maryland, announce a competition for two Research Awards on 20th Century Japan. Each is worth up to \$1200.00 for use of the Prange Collection and East Asia Collection (McKeldin Library, University of Maryland) on research topics related in whole or in significant part to the period of the Allied Occupation of Japan and aftermath, 1945-1960. Holders of doctoral degrees or equivalent, established scholars, and advanced graduate students at the dissertation stage are eligible; historical topics are preferred. The deadline for application is October 15, 2001. Funds may be used at any time up to September 15, 2002. Announcements of successful applicants will be made by November 15, 2001.

Reimbursements up to \$1200.00 for travel, photo duplication, living or other related research expenses (not including the cost of computers or software) will require receipts for processing by the University. Competition is open to scholars in all parts of the world; University of Maryland faculty, staff, and students are not eligible.

Send resume and description of research project (two or three pages), and, if a graduated student, please include a brief letter from your chief faculty adviser, to:

Prange Fellowship Selection Committee, Center for Historical Studies,
Department of History, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742
E-mail: historycenter@umail.umd.edu

For further information about the Prange Collection and East Asia Collection, please consult the following websites:

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/UMCP/PRC/prange.html>

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/UMCP/EASTA/eastasia.html>

Independent Scholars Sought

The National Coalition of Independent Scholars (NCIS), is searching for new members. Formed in 1989, NCIS is a multi-disciplinary international association dedicated to supporting the work of serious scholars not affiliated with, or supported by, an academic institution. NCIS is a member of the American Council of Learned Societies and seeks to advance the interests of independent scholars in such areas as access to research libraries and archives, equal consideration in competition for grants and fellowships, inclusion in the scholarly review process, and the making of research policies. NCIS offers its members a number of services, including a quarterly newsletter/journal, **The Independent Scholar**; small research grants; a national conference every two years and occasional regional conferences; formal administration of grants; and a directory to facilitate contact with scholars with similar interests. Membership applications are available from: www.ncis.org, or by writing to NCIS, P.O. Box 5743, Berkeley, CA 94705.

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell Appointed to Head Veteran' History Project

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell has been appointed director of the Veterans' History Project, a project of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress to collect and preserve oral histories and documentary materials from veterans of World War I, World War II, and the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf Wars.

The project will receive video and audio-taped and written accounts, as well as letters, diaries and photographs from war veterans and those who served in support of them. This will become the first national collection of these materials.

For information contact: Public Affairs Office, 101 Independence Avenue
S.E., Washington DC 20540-1610

Tel: (202)707-2905
E-mail: pao@loc.gov

Fax: (202)707-9199
www.loc.gov

Call For Papers

The Society of Military History will hold its 69th annual conference at the Monona Terrace, Madison, Wisconsin, April 4-7, 2002. The theme for the conference will be "War and Remembrance: Constructing the Military Past and Future." The program committee particularly invites proposals for papers and panels that assess the military classics, memoirs and reminiscences, military reformers, and military leadership. Proposals for papers and panels treating all aspects of military history are welcome as always.

Proposals should include a one-page abstract for each paper, outlining topic, thesis, and sources and a brief c.v. for all participants. The program committee intends to post the abstracts on the SMH Web site, <http://www.smh-hq.org>. The committee welcomes volunteers to serve as chairs and/or commentators. Volunteers are asked to provide a brief c.v.

Please submit proposals for papers and full panels no later than November 1, 2001. Remit to Prof. Jerry Cooper, Dept. of History, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 63121.

Tel: (314) 516-5735

Fax: (314) 516-5781

E-mail: cooperj@msx.umsl.edu.

Juergen Heideking Doctoral Fellowship

Sponsored by the Friends of the GHI and funded by the Annette Kade Foundation, the Kade-Heideking Fellowship is awarded annually to a German doctoral student working in the fields of twentieth-century international history, the early national period of American history, or the history of German-American relations. This is a residential fellowship of twelve months duration, and the recipient is expected to divide his or her

time between the GHI and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The stipend amount is \$30,000. Application is by nomination by the candidate's primary adviser; the deadline is announced in the spring of each year.

For information: <http://www.ghi-dc.org/heidekingkade.html>

Call For Papers

Transatlantic Studies Conference 8-11 July 2002

The University of Dundee, Scotland

Co-sponsored by Baylor University Texas

Launch Conference of the Transatlantic Studies Association and *The Journal of Transatlantic Studies* to be published by Edinburgh University Press in 2003

The Atlantic region has been defined by a long history of economic, political and security links, migration and cultural cross-fertilization, and the growing intensity of interdependence. It forms a focus for research, which *The Journal of Transatlantic Studies* will service as a dedicated publication.

As the world globalizes there will be an increasing tendency to deal with larger aggregates of actors. *The Journal of Transatlantic Studies* and the Transatlantic Studies Association are in tune with this development. Both focus on the interface between the nation state and the world community in all its complex make-up by using a clearly defined region to structure research, and both aim to stimulate co-operative multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research in this field.

If you wish to offer a conference paper, please send a 200 word synopsis of your proposal directly to the appropriate panel convener: **deadline 22 February 2002**

1) Diplomatic, Political and Bilateral Relations: Convener: David Ryan, dryan@dmu.ac.uk

2) Economic Relations: Co-conveners: Joe McKinney, joe_mckinney@baylor.edu and Tom Zeiler, Thomas.zeiler@colorado.edu

- 3) Defence, Security and Intelligence Relations: Co-conveners: John Bayliss: j.bayliss@swansea.ac.uk and Susanna Schrafstetter, sschrafs@galm.ac.uk
- 4) Literature and Cultural Relations: Co-conveners: Geoff Ward: g.c.ward@dundee.ac.uk
Heidi Macpherson, hrrsmacpherson@uclan.ac.uk
- 5) Transatlantic Area Studies: Convener: Will Kaufman, wkaufman@uclan.ac.uk
- 6) Race and Migration: Convener: Tony Parker, a.w.parker@dundee.ac.uk
- 7) Comparative Constitutionalism: Convener: Mark Evans, M.A.Evans@swansea.ac.uk
- 8) Planning, Regeneration and the Environment: Convener, John McCarthy, j.p.mccarthy@dundee.ac.uk

Direct queries on panels and papers to the Conference Organizer: Professor Alan Dobson, E-mail: a.p.dobson@dundee.ac.uk Tel. +44(0) 1382 344588.

Venue: University of Dundee West Park Conference Center.

Cost: £196, for accommodation, meals, including conference dinner, and conference fee. Payment by UK Bank cheque payable to University of Dundee/Transatlantic Conference, or by VISA or MASTERCARD.

All conferees receive two years free subscription to the Journal and the Transatlantic Studies Association.

Application forms from 1 September at:

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/~awparker/transatlantic.html>

In the meantime hardcopy application forms may be obtained from the conference secretary. Carol Benoit-Ngassam,

E-mail: c.j.benoitngassam@dundee.ac.uk

Tel: +44(0) 1382 344648

SHAFR COUNCIL MINUTES

Mary Graydon Center, American University

June 16, 2001, 7:30 a.m.

Bob McMahon, presiding

Those Present: Frank Ninkovich, Sam Walker, David Painter, Ken Osgood, Bruce Craig, Peter Hill, Richard Immerman, Jim Matray, Amy Staples, Allan Spetter, Malcolm Crystal, Deborah Kisatsky, Tom Zeiler, Bob Schulzinger, William Brinker, David Anderson, Keith Nelson, Bob McMahon, Randall Woods, Mark Stoler, Bob Beisner, Anna Nelson, Carol Anderson.

1) Carol Anderson, for the Holt Committee, announced that Mary Montgomery (Maryland) was the winner for study on Britain, the United States and Ghana.

There followed a discussion regarding whether one person should be the recipient of more than one award each year. It was the sense of the Council that committee members should take the issue under consideration when selecting winners.

2) Fredrik Logevall was selected the winner of this year's Kuehl Award.

3) David Anderson, reporting for Mary Guinta, announced Warren Kimball to be this year's Link Award winner.

4) Bruce Craig from the National Coordinating Committee discussed the changed situation in DC and current issues such as pending legislation and significant document openings.

5) Malcolm Crystal from Blackwell Publishers presented an update on membership and renewal numbers. In response to questions about the Electronic Roster and Research List, Amy

Staples urges members to update their entries. A note in the September *SHAFR Newsletter* will instruct members on using the List.

6) Representing SHAFR's financial management firm, James Cullen commented on the healthy condition of SHAFR's returns on investments. After a brief discussion it was decided that Ted Wilson's standing committee should report at the AHA regarding possible adjustments to SHAFR's allocation of funds.

7) Bob Beisner, the editor of the Guide, requested Council to approve a motion to continue paying Kurt Hansen at his current hourly rate (up to a limit of \$6,000) when previously allocated monies are exhausted. The motion carried.

8) Bob McMahon announced the soon to be arrangements for *Diplomatic History*. The journal is to be moved to the University of Colorado with Bob Schulzinger and Tom Zeiler as editors. A motion to have SHAFR support the journal by paying for one graduate student (ca. \$10,500) and operating expenses amounting to \$3,000 annually was approved to be in force during the four year contracted arrangement.

A second motion was approved for SHAFR to support copy editing up to \$500 per issue of *Diplomatic History*.

9). Allan Spetter requested Council to consider changes to the dues structure. Members' dues are scheduled to increase to \$35 this year and \$40 next year. Dues for students and the unemployed (not to include retirees) are to remain at \$15 for one more year, then increasing to \$20.

10) Anna Nelson, speaking for the 2001 conference committee members asked for a brief discussion of problems of last minute "drop outs" and "no-shows". Council

continues to be concerned about what appears to be a growing problem. Discussion followed but no action was taken.

11) Council agreed to consider providing expenses for the Program Committee for each Annual Meeting.

12) William Walker III will serve as chair of the Program Committee for the Annual Meeting in 2002. William Stueck is in charge of Local Arrangements at the U. of Georgia.

13) Peter Hill provided some details on the Annual Meeting in 2003 at George Washington U. The dates are June 19-21. Several organizations in the Washington area have expressed interest in participating in the planning of the program.

14) Bob McMahon suggested that the Annual Meeting of 2004 be held at a major university in the Midwest, perhaps Wisconsin.

15) Council voted a resolution of thanks for the Program Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee.

PERSONALS

Michael J. Devine (Wyoming) recently delivered the presidential address before the National Council on Public History.

Charles T. Johnson, Valdosta State in Valdosta, Georgia, has been awarded a Fulbright grant by the German/ American Fulbright Commission to lecture and conduct research in Germany during 2001-2002. Professor Johnson will be on the

faculty of the American Studies Department at the University of Tübingen.

Jo Maiolo is moving from the University of Leeds to King's College London.

Naoka Shibusawa has joined the faculty at the University of Hawaii.

Lawrence S. Wittner (SUNY/Albany) has been granted a fellowship by the United States Institute of Peace for the spring of 2002 to complete the final volume of his trilogy, *The Struggle Against the Bomb* (Stanford U Press).

PUBLICATIONS

James L. Baughman (Wisconsin-Madison), *Henry R. Luce and the Rise of the American News Media*. Johns Hopkins, 2001. ISBN 0-801867169, \$18.95.

Warren I. Cohen (Maryland-Baltimore County), *East Asia at the Center: Four Thousand Years of Engagement with the World*. Columbia, 2001. ISBN 0-231-10108-2, \$35.00.

Wilson Dizard, Jr., (Center for Strategic and International Studies), *Digital Diplomacy: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Information Age*. CSIS, 2001. Cloth: ISBN 0-275-97227-5, \$69.95; paper: ISBN 0-275-97228-3, \$24.95.

Kurkpatrick Dorsey (New Hampshire), *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy: U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Treaties in the Progressive Era*. U. of Washington, 1998. ISBN 0-295-97676-4, \$35.00.

Yukiko Koshiro, (Yokohama), *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*. Columbia, 1999. Cloth: ISBN 0-231-11348-X \$45.00; paper: ISBN 0-231-11349-8, \$18.50.

Shane J. Maddock, ed. (Stonehill College). *The Nuclear Age*. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. ISBN 0-618-00737-7.

Patrick M. Morgan and Keith L. Nelson (Maryland) eds., *Re-Viewing the Cold War: Domestic Factors and Foreign Policy in the East-West Confrontation*. Praeger, 2000. Cloth: ISBN 0-275-96636-4, \$72.50; paper: ISBN 0-275-96637-2, \$24.95.

David Reynolds (Cambridge), *One World Divisible: A Global History since 1945*. W.W. Norton, 2000. New in paper: ISBN 0-393-32108-8, \$18.95.

-----, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt's America and the Origins of the Second World War*. Ivan R. Dee, 2001. ISBN 1-56663-389-3, \$24.95.

Benjamin D. Rhodes (Wisconsin-Whitewater), *United States Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period, 1918-1941: The Golden Age of American Diplomatic and Military Complacency*. Praeger, 2001. ISBN: 0-275-94825-0, \$70.00.

Marie-Jeanne Rossignol (U. of Paris) and Marcel Dorigny, eds., *La France et les Amériques au temps de Jefferson et de Miranda (France and the Americas at the time of Jefferson and Miranda)*. Societe des etudes robespierristes, 2001. ISBN 2-908327-43-0, 21 euros.

Nancy Bernkopf Tucker (Georgetown), compiler and editor, *China Confidential: American Diplomats and Sino-American Relations*. Columbia, 2001. Cloth: ISBN 0-231-10630-0, \$49.50; paper: ISBN 0-231-10631-9, \$21.00.

CALENDAR

2001

- November 1 Deadline, materials for Dec. *Newsletter*.
November 1-15 Annual election for SHAFR officers.
November 1 Applications for Bernath dissertation fund awards
are due.
November 15 Deadline: SHAFR summer conference proposals.

2002

- January 1 Membership fees in all categories are due,
payable at Blackwell Publishers, 350 Main St.,
Malden MA 02148.
January 3-6 116th annual meeting of the AHA in San
Francisco. Deadline has passed.
January 15 Deadline for the Bernath Article Award.
February 1 Deadlines for the Bernath Book Award, the
March *Newsletter*, and the Ferrell Book Prize.
February 15 Deadline for the Bernath lecture prize.
March 1 Deadline for Graebner Prize nominations.
April 11-14 The 95th meeting of the OAH will take place at
the Renaissance Hotel in Washington DC.
April 15 Applications for the W. Stull Holt dissertation
fellowship are due.
May 1 Deadline, materials for the June *Newsletter*.
June 13-15 SHAFR's 29th annual conference will meet at the
U. of Georgia. William Walker III is Program
Chair, William Stueck is Local Arrangements
Chair.
August 1 Deadline, materials for the Sept. *Newsletter*.

Sites for future AHA meetings are: Chicago, January 2-5, 2003; and Washington, January 8-11, 2004.

The 2003 SHAFR annual meeting will be held in Washington.

The 2003 meeting of the OAH will be held in Memphis (April 3-6), the 2004 meeting, in Boston (March 25-28).

AWARDS, PRIZES, AND FUNDS

Complete details regarding SHAFR awards, prizes, and funds are found in the June and December issues of the *Newsletter*, abbreviated information in the March and September issues. Changes and updates are presented here in italics.

THE STUART L. BERNATH MEMORIAL PRIZES

The Stuart L. Bernath Memorial Lectureship, the Memorial Book Competition, and the Memorial Lecture Prize were established in 1976, 1972, and 1976, respectively, through the generosity of Dr. Gerald J. and Myrna F. Bernath, in memory of their son, and are administered by special committees of SHAFR.

The Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize

DESCRIPTION: This is a competition for a book dealing with any aspect of the history of American foreign relations. The purpose of the award is to recognize and encourage distinguished research and writing by scholars of American foreign relations. Five (5) copies of each book must be submitted with the nomination and should be sent to: *Garry Clifford, Department of Political Science, University of Connecticut, Storrs CT 06269*

Books may be sent at any time during 2001, but should not arrive later than February 1, 2002. *Recent Winners: Gregory Mitrovich and Joseph Henning*

The Stuart L. Bernath Lecture Prize

DESCRIPTION: The Bernath Lecture Prize seeks to recognize and encourage excellence in teaching and research in the field of foreign relations by younger scholars. The winner of the 2001 competition will deliver a lecture at the SHAFR luncheon at the annual meeting of the OAH. The lecture is to be comparable in style and scope to the yearly SHAFR presidential address and is to address broad issues of concern to students of American foreign policy, not the lecturer's specific research interests. The prize is open to any person under forty-one years of age whose scholarly achievements represent excellence in teaching and research. The nominating letter requires evidence of excellence in teaching and research and must reach the Committee no later than 15 February 2002. The Chairperson of the Committee is: *Bob Buzzanco, University of Houston, Houston TX 77204-3785*

The Stuart L. Bernath Scholarly Article Prize

The purpose of the prize is to recognize and to encourage distinguished research and writing by young scholars in the field of diplomatic relations.

ELIGIBILITY: Prize competition is open to any article or essay appearing in a scholarly journal or edited book, on any topic in United States foreign relations that is published during 2001. The author must not be over 40 years of age, or, if more than 40 years of age, must be within ten years of receiving the Ph.D. at the time of acceptance for publication. Nominations shall be submitted by the author or by any member of SHAFR by January 15, 2002. Three (3) copies of the article shall be submitted to the chairperson of the committee: *Fredrik Logevall, Department of History, UC/Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara CA 93106*

The Stuart L. Bernath Dissertation Grant

This grant has been established to help doctoral students who are members of SHAFR defray some expenses encountered in the writing of their dissertations. Applications, in triplicate, should be sent to: *Lorena Oropeza, History, University of California at Davis, Davis CA 95616*. The deadline for application is November 1, 2001.

Georgetown Travel Grants

The Bernath Dissertation Grant committee also administers grants to be funded from the SHAFR Georgetown fund to support travel for research in the Washington area. The amounts are determined by the committee.

Most Recent Winner: Elisse Wright (Ohio State)

The Myrna F. Bernath Book Award

A prize award of \$2,500.00 to be offered every two years (apply in odd-numbered years) for the best book by a woman in the areas of United States foreign relations, transnational history, international history, peace studies, cultural interchange, and defense or strategic studies. Books published in 2000 and 2001 will be considered in 2002. Submission deadline is November 15, 2001. Five copies of each book (or page proofs) must accompany a letter of application. Contact: *Carol Adams, Salt Lake Community College, 4600 Redwood Road, Salt Lake City, UT 84130.*

Most recent winners: Cecilia Lynch (Cornell) and Jessica Gienow-Hecht (LSU)

An award of \$2500 (apply in even-numbered years), to research the study of foreign relations among women scholars. The grants are intended for women at U.S. universities as well as for women abroad who wish to do research in the United States. Preference will be given to graduate students and newly finished Ph.D's. The subject-matter *should be historically based* and concern American foreign relations or aspects of international history, as broadly conceived. Work on purely domestic topics will not be considered. Applications should include a letter of intent and three copies of a detailed research proposal of no more than 2000 words. Send applications to: *Carol Adams, address above*. Submission deadline is November 15, 2002.

THE W. STULL HOLT DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP

This fellowship is intended to help defray costs of travel, preferably foreign travel, necessary to the pursuit of research on a significant dissertation project. Applications and supporting papers should be sent before April 15, 2002 to: *Stephen G. Rabe, Humanities Div., University of Texas at Dallas, Box 830688, Richardsons TX 75083-0688*.

*Most recent winners: Jason Parker (Florida) and Jeffrey Engells (Wisconsin)
Mary Montgomery (Maryland)*

THE NORMAN AND LAURA GRAEBNER AWARD

The Graebner Award is to be awarded every other year at SHAFR's summer conference to a senior historian of United States foreign relations whose achievements have contributed most significantly to the fuller understanding of American diplomatic history. The deadline for nominations is March 1, 2002. Current chairman: *Lloyd E. Ambrosius, Department of History, University of Nebraska, Lincoln NE 68588-0327*. Phone: 403-472-2414, Fax: 402-47208839, E-mail: *lambrosius@unl.edu*

Most recent winner: Robert Divine (Texas, Austin)

THE WARREN F. KUEHL AWARD

The Society will award the Warren F. Kuehl Prize to the author or authors of an outstanding book dealing with the history of internationalism and/or the history of peace movements. The subject may include biographies of prominent internationalists or peace leaders. Also eligible are works on American foreign relations that examine United States diplomacy from a world perspective and which are in accord with Kuehl's 1985 presidential address to SHAFR. That address voiced an "appeal for scholarly breadth, for a wider perspective on how foreign relations of the United States fits into the global picture." Deadline for submissions is February 1, 2002. Current Chairperson: *Mary Ann Heiss, History, Kent State University, Kent OH 44242-0001.*

Most recent winner: Fred Logevall

ARTHUR LINK PRIZE FOR DOCUMENTARY EDITING

The prize will recognize and encourage analytical scholarly editing of documents, in appropriate published form, relevant to the history of American foreign relations, policy, and diplomacy. By "analytical" is meant the inclusion (in headnotes, footnotes, essays, etc.) of both appropriate historical background needed to establish the context of the documents, and interpretive historical commentaries based on scholarly research. The competition is open to the editor/author(s) of any collection of documents published after 1984 that is devoted primarily to sources relating to the history of American foreign relations, policy, and/or diplomacy; and that incorporates sufficient historical analysis and interpretation of those documents to constitute a contribution to knowledge and scholarship. Current Chairperson: *Mary Guinta, NHPRC - Room 300, National Archives, Washington DC 20408.*

Most recent winner: Warren Kimball

THE LAWRENCE GELFAND - ARMIN RAPPAPORT FUND

The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations established this fund in to honor Lawrence Gelfand, founding member and former SHAFR president and Armin Rappaport, founding editor of *Diplomatic History*. The fund will support the professional work of the journal's editorial office. Contact: *Allan Spetter, SHAFR Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Department of History, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435.*

This is competition for a book, published in 2001, which is a history of American Foreign Relations, broadly defined, and includes biographies of statesmen and diplomats. General surveys, autobiographies, or editions of essays and documents are not eligible. The prize is to be awarded as a senior book award; that is, any book beyond the first monograph by the author. The deadline for submission of books is February 1, 2002. Current chairperson: *Frank Ninkovich, History, St. John's University, Utopia Parkway, Jamaica NY 11439.*

Recent Winners: Jeffrey Kimball (Miami U)
Emily S. Rosenberg (Macalester)

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY AWARD

SHAFR has established an award to recognize students who participate in the National History Day (NHD) program in the area of United States diplomatic history. The purpose of the award is to recognize research, writing, and relations to encourage a better understanding of peaceful interactions between nations. The award may be given in any of the NHD categories. For information contact: *Cathy Gorn, Executive Director, National History Day, 0119 Cecil Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742*

The SHAFR Newsletter

SPONSOR: Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tennessee.

EDITOR: William J. Brinker, Box 5154, Cookeville, TN 38505

Tel. (931) 372-3332; e-mail Wbrinker@TNTECH.edu; FAX (931) 372-6142.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS: Tara King and Jason Moore.

BACK ISSUES: The *Newsletter* was published annually from 1969 to 1972, and has been published quarterly since 1973. Copies of many back numbers of the *Newsletter* may be obtained from the editorial office for \$2.00 per copy (for members living abroad, the charge is \$3.00).

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION: The *Newsletter* solicits the submission of personals, announcements, bibliographical or historiographical essays, essays of a "how-to-do-it" nature, information about foreign depositories, biographies, autobiographies of "elder statesmen" in the field, jokes, *et al.* Papers and other submissions should be typed and the author's name and full address should be noted. The *Newsletter* accepts and encourages submissions on IBM-formatted 3½" diskettes. A paper submitted in WordPerfect is preferred. A hardcopy of the paper should be included with the diskette. The *Newsletter* goes to the printer on the 1st of March, June, September, and December; all material submitted for publication should arrive at least four weeks prior.

FORMER PRESIDENTS OF SHAFR

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1968 Thomas A. Bailey (Stanford) | 1985 Warren F. Kuehl (Akron) |
| 1969 Alexander DeConde (CA-Santa Barbara) | 1986 Betty Unterberger (Texas A&M) |
| 1970 Richard W. Leopold (Northwestern) | 1987 Thomas G. Paterson (Connecticut) |
| 1971 Robert H. Ferrell (Indiana) | 1988 Lloyd Gardner (Rutgers) |
| 1972 Norman A. Graebner (Virginia) | 1989 George Herring (Kentucky) |
| 1973 Wayne S. Cole (Maryland) | 1990 Michael Hunt (North Carolina) |
| 1974 Bradford Perkins (Michigan) | 1991 Gary Hess (Bowling Green) |
| 1975 Armin H. Rappaport (CA-San Diego) | 1992 John Lewis Gaddis (Ohio) |
| 1976 Robert A. Divine (Texas) | 1993 Warren Kimball (Rutgers-Neward) |
| 1977 Raymond A. Esthus (Tulane) | 1994 Melvyn Leffler (Virginia) |
| 1978 Akira Iriye (Chicago) | 1995 Robert Dallek (UCLA) |
| 1979 Paul A. Varg (Michigan State) | 1996 Mark Gilderhus (Colorado State) |
| 1980 David M. Pletcher (Indiana) | 1997 Emily Rosemberg (Macalester) |
| 1981 Lawrence S. Kaplan (Kent State) | 1998 Arnold Offner (Lafayette) |
| 1982 Lawrence E. Gelfand (Iowa) | 1999 Walter LaFeber (Cornell) |
| 1983 Ernest R. May (Harvard) | 2000 Robert D. Schulzinger (Colorado) |
| 1984 Warren I. Cohen (Michigan State) | |