The original documents are located in Box 3, folder “"The War Cradle" - Interview with Ross Meador” of the Shirley Peck Barnes Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Interview: Ross Meadon/Donniger 1976/77

We had a lot of support from the U.S. Just took care of kids had a lot of delinquent boys. A little girl was chained up because she was mentally retarded. She had a lot of scratches on her legs but you could see the rickets. Vitamin deficiency. What happens with rickets? Kind of arthritis, but calcium swells up in the joints or something, some reasons or other. I don't know exactly, but their joints get swollen and they can't move very well. They have her chained by the arms, 10 years old. What happened to her? Now? She was in this place called Phu My, which was na old folks home as well as retarded children. They were extremely understaffed., which is one of the reasons they tied up the kids. Waht she is sitting on...mentally retarded kids... They were on wooden toilets of sorts. A chair with a hole cut in and a little pan beneath and they would sit them there all day...every day. Everytime I went there, and I went there many many times, they would always be sitting there in the same place. And the kids would often want to get up and run around, but they tied them down. This was a Vietnamese orphanage, one of the biggest places...1500 people... 1200 old people alone. All the old people...picture of screen door.

Were there many Amerasians at this orphanage? Phy My in Saigon. Rosemary Taylor lived there for a long time. I mentione her as the other director. She lived there, she was Australian. I don't know how she came to live there. She must have done some work for them and wound-up living there. I believe that she moved out and got her own place. All the old peple lived in these huge rooms. About 100 people to a room and there were 12 rooms like this. Incredible. Just sit on the bed all day and wander around. Pallets for beds, no springs. Many had holes in the bed and a pipe running down to a pot, so that people who could not relieve themselves could...and those who could not get up, just do it in bed. You can imagine walking inside there on extremely hot days, the rooms were kind of cool, but still damp and the stench of the excrement and dying people was just overpowering.

I douldn't walk inside the rooms at first and to go inside the rooms to spend hours photogrphing different people, it was hard to take their picture. I would not use a flash and it was hard. But if someone agreed to it I would just laugh. I never took their picture if they didn't want me to. I could only spend an hour inthere. I would laugh and joke with them and we would just have a good time. I would tell them they were so beautiful and handsome that they woud go to Hollywood and I would put you in the movies. I would go to one man and he would say "no picture" and then take one of another and have such a good time that the one who refused me would say, "hey come back," in Vietnamese. Few spoke in English...all they could say was, "Hello, G.I." All these people got along with eachother...no fights going on...seemed complacent, resigned. Happy. My going in there was always a good occasion for them. All the possessions that this person would own in the world would be in a heap at the head of the bed.

In a little pile. Most of the patients were Vietnamese Catholic. They probably became Catholic while they were there. Services were conducted in every room. Crucifix belonged to the patient. A candle holder, bottle of lotion described in the picture. Close to dying om film. Man fanning himself. People whose family has gone or disappeared during the war. Telling how I had to run people through the gate in order to be evacuated. ..get them on the base. When they were through there they would join a group of Vietnamese who were all sitting around waiting for the plane to pick up. ONe of the things I didn't mention, what was at stake in running the gate. If they did get caught it would mean certain imprisonment, maybe not for a lont time but hat they would be arrested and that they would be put in jail in , and who knows until the government changed or what. Some employees of the orphanage and half friends of ours who I believe somebody ought to have the right to chose the government they want to, under they want to live.

They felt strongly for many years not to live under the government that was coming. So I had no trouble justifying, giving them the opportunity to live in the U.S. So I told you that we would often marry them so on. During the evacuation..we had one of our boys broke his arm playing ball or something and we took him to the hospital right toward the end, and everyone knew we were going to be leaving. A Dr. in the hospital said that you are all planning on leaving, would you mind if he came with us? On a medivac flight. I know he doesn't need it, but why don't you let him come along with us. I said what does he mean? Why is this? And it was funny at first as he wasn't honest with what he had in mind, American doctor who worked at Seventh Day Adventist hospital, which is where we had been taking our orphans. Well, after a while they revealed their plans. They had many, many docors and nursing staff in the hospital (ietnamese) who wanted to go to the U.S. They had the same problem getting them through the gate and they did nto know how to do it. So to devise this great plan they told the army that they needed a medivac plane because they were going to be flying out some patients from the hospital. Well, then without telling the Army about this all, the doctors dressed eachother with bandages and IV bottles in the arms, all fake planning on putting everyone into ambulances, because they had lot of ambulances and turning on lights ans irens and storming through the gates. They had a few real patients and they asked if they could take the 16 eyar old boy. They wanted a few real patients... said he did not need to go on the medivac plane because he just had a broken arm, but we said that it, we had a few very sick, sick children and here was the perfect opportunity and we would have 2 doctors for every child on the flight.

Vietnamese doctors , some American, devised the plan to get their friends, doctors , wom they had been working with for several years, and other people too out of the country. So the day came and we went down there to the hospital with our sick kids and put them in one or two of the ambulances and all the rest of these doctors in the hospital gowns, all dressed up with bandages and everything in all the rest of the ambulances, and me in my van, and turned on the my emergency flasher lights and took up the tail and we all went screeming down through the streets of Saigon and I was laughing and hollering. It really was fun, all the way down the street...80 miles an hour and when we hit that gate, they just cleared out of the way and saluted and we drove thorugh, right out on the airfield.

Ross with Donniger DAO DESIGNATES Deeply Placed. (1) Side I.

We had a lot of support from the U.S. . Just took care of kids had a lot of delinquent boys. A little girl was chained up because she was mentally retarded. She had a lot of scratches on her legs but you could see the rickets. Vitaman deficiency. What happens with rickets? Kind of arthritis, but calcium swells up in the joints or something some reason or other. I don't know exactly, but thir j ints get swollen and they can't move very well. They have her chained by the arms. What happened to her? NOW? She was in this place called Phu Mei which was an old folks homes as well as well as retarded children there and there were extremely understaffed. which is one of the reason they tied up the kids. What she is sitting on .. mentally retarded kids. They were on wooden toilets of sorts. A chair with a hold cut in and a little pan beneath and they would sit them there all day every day. Any time I went there, and I went there many many times they would always be sitting there in the same place. And the kids would often want to get up and run around but they tied them down. This was a Vietnamese orpaanage one of the biggest places...1500 people...1200 old people alone. All the old people ...picture of screen door. Where there any americans at this orphange? Phu Mi in Saigon. Rosemary Taylor lived there for a long long time. I mentioned her as the other director. She lived there she was Australian. I don't know how she came to live there. She must have done some work for them and wound up living there. I believed that she moved out and got her own place. All the old people lived in these huge rooms. About 100 people to a room and there were 12 like this. Incredible. Just sit on the bed all day and wander around. Pallets for beds. Many had holes in the bed and a pipe running down to a pot. So that people who could not relieve themselves cpi;d mpt could not get up, just do it in bed. You can imagine walking inside there on extremely hot days, the rooms were kind of cool but damp and the stench of the excrement and dying people was just overpowering. I couldnot walk inside the rooms at first and to go inside the rooms photographing different people, it was hard to take their picture. I would not use a flash and it was hard. But if someone agreed to it I would just laugh and hour in there. I would laugh and joke with them and we would just have a good time I would tell them they were so beautiful and handsome that they would go to hollywood and I would put you in the movies. I would go toone man and he would say "no picture" and then take on of another and have such a good time that the one who refused me would say "hey come back in Vietnamaese!! Few spoke in English...all they could say was "hello G.I ." All these people got along with eachother...no fights going on...seemed complacent resigned. happy, my going in there was always a good occasion for them. All the possessions that this person would own in the world would be in a heap at the head of the bed. a little pile. Most of the patients were vietnamese catholic. they probably became catholic while they were there. Services were conducted in every room. Crucifix belonged to the patient. A candle holder, bottle of lotion described in picture. Close to dying on film. Man fanning himself. Peoples whose family has gone or disappeared during the war. Telling how I had to run people through the gate in order to be evacuated. get them on the base. When they were through there they would join a group of Vietnamese who were all sitting around waiting for the plane to pick up. One of the things I didn't mention what was at stake in running the gate. if they did get caughter it would mean certain imprisionment, maybe not for a long time but that they would be arrested and that they would be put in jail in and who knows until the government changed or what. Some were employees of the orphange and half friends of ours who I believe somebody ought to have the right to chose the govenment they want to under they want to live

Phu Mei

works epidemic

never take picture of the dead

Speed in Rain

Self determination of government

(2)

They felt stongly for many years not to live under the government that was coming. So I had no trouble justifying giving them the opporunity to live in the U.S. So I told you that we would often marry them and so on. During the evacuation ...we had one of our boys broke his arm playing ball or someting and we took him to the hospiatal right toward the end and everyone knew we were going to be leaving. Dr. in the hospitla said that you are all planning on leaving, would you mind he if he came with us? on a medivac flight. I know he doesn't need it but why don't you let him come along with us. I said what does he mean? why is this? An it was funny at first as he wasn't honest with what he had inmind. American doctor who worked at Seventh Day Adventist hospital which is where we had been taking all our orphans. Well after a while they realealed their plans. They had many many doctors and nursing staff in the hosptial (vietnamses) who wanted to go the the U.S. They had th same problem getting them through the gate they did not know how to do it. So to devise this great saam they told the army that they needed a medievac plane because they were going to be flying out some patients from the hospital. Well then without telling the army about this all the doctros dressed eacother with bandages and IV bottles in the arms all fake planning on putting everyone into ambulances, because they had a lot of ambulances and turning on lights and sirens and storming throug the gates. They had a few real patients and they asked if they could take the 16 year old boy. They wanted a few real patients...said he did not need to go on the medievac plane becasue he just had abroken arm but we said theatt we had a few very sick sick children whoshould really go on a medevac 10 or 15....children and here was the perfect opportunity and we would have 2 doctors for every childr n on the flight.
Vietnamese doctors some American devised the plan to get their friends, doctors whom they had been working with for several years, and other people too out of the country. So the day came and we went down there to the hosptial with our sick kids and put them in one or two of the sambuleances and all the rest of theese doctors in hosptial gowns all dressed up with bandages and everything in to all the rest of the ambulances, and me in my van ahh had turned on my emergency flasher lights and took up the tail and we all went screaming down through the streets of Saigon and I was laughing andhollering it really was funn, all the way down the street,..80 miles and hour and when we hit that gate we they just cleared out of the way and saluted and we drove thru and drove right out on the airfield, Why do youthink the bandages got though? Obviously these guards didn't want to stop, obviouly it was an emergency, people who are sick and for some reason they are going out there and sirens are on.Viets have respect for authority in ha that way. And they would never stop an ambulance and there were 8 all in a row with lights and sirens on makingtremendous noise and commotion. Everyone game out of their houses to see what was going on and we just screamed through the gate. What happed when we got to the DAL. When we drove right out to the airfield the army really did think it was a genuine medevac flight and that there would be 30-40 patients. But when we got out there and they realized it was alla big joke and there were really only our babies...they were a little perterbed but for the most part they had a good laugh about it and thought houw clever. Papers with the DAl to get them on the plaen...prearrange...x number of papers and certain names and didn't realize that when we got out there actually Lin Voc Wan was actually in charge of the hospital. When they got out there they had a good laugh about it and our kids got very good care because this plane was equipped with oxygen IV and everything..lots of doctors. got off the flight and plane and flew off. It was spectacular.

That gives you an idea of the how the situation was and how desperatly people were trying to get through this gate to get on to the airfield so that they could get evacuatieed. JGetting shot at when they tried to get through the gate. I'll tell you how I got shot at. The third time I tried to go through the gate a I had always done it during the day. This was the first time I had tried to do it at dusk. and they changed the guards right before dusk and they are much more paranoid at night curfew starts at 10:00 an then it might have been 8:00 and the curfew got earlier and earlier. Much more jumpy and afraid , cautious and so on. They opened the gate and there was a mob at the gate and this was our third trip out and everyone knew there was no doubt about where they were going and everyone knew that if they could just get in the van they could go to the airport. VW Van. Open the gate from our big orphanage compound and ...every home, larger homes had huge walls and babwire on top.. always lining the top of all fence... incredible amount of barbwire never saw so much barbwire in my life than in that town...everything covered with barbwire. So we opened our gate and got out of the crowd around the gate and got on the road when all of a sudden I heard a shot and saw a guy on a honda 50 looked in my rear view mirror and saw this guy on a honda 50 aiming at my with a pistol aiming at my car and he shot again and the bullet passed my rear view mirror on the drivers side. I thought Oh my god. I preetty much knew what he wanted. shot the second time...he pulled up along side and held his gun at me and said, I go too. I looked down and I don't know what mede me do what I did the last minuite, I didn't even think. But I turned the wheel sharply to the left and the impact came quickly with the van hitting him in the side and it seemed like slow motion that he was spinning off to the side of the ditch of the road. I was shocked at myself...I one had an implulse to stop and see if he was hurt but on the otherhand I had these people full in the van, time was short run the gate...I didn't look back and drove on too. Go to the gate very shaken and nervous. I never thought it was something I was capable of doing. So we got to the gate and I was nervous and didn't quite know what to do and my nervousness showed through and I ran the gate and it was night...and they started calling halt halt. I stepped on the accelerator and I heard a shot ring out above my van and I just thought, should I keep going, will they stop me. I knew they knew it was an American driving, or what shoud I do. I stopped the van. They came running up to the van. They said halt halt.. I turned the van around and "where are you goind?" I said never mind I have to go now and zoomed off in the opposite directin. Wasn't rally a gate tha open and closed...just a guard house and machine gun nest..stopped and checked everyone. During the day they were satisified they could see in to the van but at night they can's see too well they nothing there...altho they had bright lights shing down they always took more careful examination and I just spun around and went back home. They didn't stop when I wat back out..they migyt have incling of what was happening. People were very disappointed. They came running up and they would not have let me thru. Matter of fact I took the same people back throuh the gate the next day. They wanted to search the van and I didn't want to deal with that a good chance the people would be arrested and I was going to calim diplomatic immunity to see if I could get that pass them even tho it was a lie.. chose not to deal with it turned around made a U turn and went right back out the gate. Halt halt. but didn't fire...going in opposite direction my back must have crawled. Terified...just shaking. got out of the van and told people I was sorry. They knew, nothing I could do and they were relieved that they were't put in jail.

hit motorcycle

Went back the next day. Different staff at night than at day guards. for one thing. That might have been thereason. During the day I was a lot more compfortable cause I hand't the experience of someone shotting at me off of a motorcycle and I just played it right. I had my wits about me...but that night I didn t slow down at all and just raced through and didn8 t slow down and acknoweledge they were guards and naturally they viewed as suspiciously t what I was doing. like gong to the studio and drive in there and say hell and wave and I ust know h m.

Diplomatic party what were they like. Intereting. Lot of drinking and samll talk. Some popele would say, I'm skick of working, wish I could go home. I would say, what do you mean this is a party. Working? Party, huh. I'd get fired if I didn't go to these things and we have to go every night State Department. Mission ffice peple. The gury next to the ambassadro Deptury Chief of Mission, Australians, loved to smoke Vietnamese grass so he had his own private parties for his friends where everyone would be getting high and they have this diplomatic party where everyone was plain, plain, what a contrast. One of the Assistance of the Ambassador of the British Emassy same kind of guy, very free, in private life, very formal in Embassy. That's it. very much a game in protocal. I enjoyed it very much found them to be very nice peole, they like me a lot and was very interested in what I was trying to do. Here I was a teenager and an agency director going to these parties..turned 20 in August 74. and so ...novelty...I tell them stories about orpahans and all and it was a diversion to hear other stories beside releive something.. they have such a diffrent existence. They live in this huge compound which is surrounded by walls giant wall and once your inside it lookes like middletown USA...big tress, nice houses, manicured lawans, and all servents and that...big ameican living compound. invididuql houses and apartments. huges compound section..like in Germany.... There the contrast.

Side 2.

We had a lot of support from the U.S.

Vietnam Slide Show- Ross Meador

Machine gun shell. Went to market to buy things. This was least expensive thing in market and used by poor people there. Sales people in market didn't want to sell it to me. A little bragging here. This is my passport which was issued in Saigon April 2, 1975, which was one of the last passports that was issued in Vietnam. After I left Vietnam I trvaelled around the world and got all kinds of visas. (for a year.) I had an passport before I went to vietnam but it expired while I was there.

Picture of little kid in black pajamas. I tried to go and get myself a pair of black pajamas like the VC wear and I couldn't go to the clothing stores and say I wanted a Vietn Cong uniform. So I had somebody write me out a piece of paper in Vietnamese describing, they couldn't understand what I wanted. Finally wrote out I wanted auniform of the Provisional Government coutry. I finally got diplomatic and went around explaining that I wanted a pair of black pajamesand the guy said "oh, same thing VC." I said yes yes. Typical clothing everybody wears. Women wear beautiful black silk pants. I never got any of those. The shoes are made from elephant hide I got them across from where I live $1.75 custom made. Background first.
Slides prepared for FCVN a group I worked for. They began by suporting specific group, of people who in their spare time, through friends supported orphans. Bake sales, etc. send over nominal support. Few adopted some kids and with th t became a lot more involved and supported a woman who was working in Saigon with orpahns. r unning an adoption agency.

Group in Colo and Vietnam split. Fund raising group woman
Group in Colorado and this woman split apart and the group in Vietnam said I really doN't want your money I have enough sources I don't need it. That's when I came into the picture. There was this fund rainisng group (FCVN) they didn't just want to send money over without it being distributed by someone that they knew, so they hired me to go over there and to set up a kind of distribution aid center. They didn't know what it was going to grow into, so that was the original thing.

1974, I was 19 when I went over th re. First thing I lived in a nutrition center My Friends House it was run by a couple of Americans and they took children from orphanages and nursed them back to health and sent them back to orphanages they were trying to get an adoptinn licenses but they were not very well to do. This group that I was with already had an ado tion license and was al rady registered with the American government so we had all the military privileges as well. First went over there I tried to feel myself around, I didn t know what I was doing. In some wasy I was critical of the organization for hiring me in the first place as I really wasn't qualified. But they did want someone who wasn't particular about salary and specific andwas willing to go over there and come what may. So we begn getting supplies in and with an established offi ce over there it began to be easier for them to raise money and we began to get more and more supplies over there and they began branching out to differednt chapter organizations all over the U.S. Ultimately some specific chapters raised a lot more money than the home group in Denver. After awhile more people came over and we started taking kids in for adoption. Tremendous amoutn of paperworkd involved in adoptions. you have to bring kids into our custody and keep them in our house. They were all very sick and the orpahange directors would give us the kids they thought were going to die because they didn't want to have to pay for medical expense and all that. We had a lot of sick kids. The whole things just expaned much faster than we ever thought it would. Mushroomed. Ultimately in the final days we took out more kids than any single organization and we did thousands of adoptions.

My Friends House

Ross with Donniger Side 3

Daly ..gone down to see Daly at world Airwarys trying to get 500 kids out and you had been refused by Viet official...you..and he said to his aid, you go down and pay them whatever it takes to get them through. The guy decided not to take the money and but you decided it was not a good way to go. because Daly was toomuch of a drinker and was after publicity. And the embassy said, look we have a plane going out C5A Clam shell type, rear doors, and we'll take all your people out at once.

I went out to Tu Duc that night and we put the kids to bed and everythin was normal and we didn't tell the kids just staff, when about 19)) 9:00 after the kids went to bed. One of the guys at Saigon house came and said, we're oing we're going, I said what happened. But he said, I don't know but the plane is stitting out on the runway. It's all set nd the plane is leaging in an hours. We were 45 min away from the airport and let's get going. its going to leave in an hour. We got all the kids up and we had taught them to sing "california here I come" and Great great... so started singing. got in the van. The older kids couldn't believe what was happeing and started to say "VC com, VC come, and I said no... De Ne...go America today. Today/ Some were very excited and some were very afraid...guess we had about 50 there aof that gro between 2 and 5 and 15 older kids... 8-9-10- one girl 14. only reason we had her is because we had her younger brothers. So, we loaded all the kids into the van all the kids singing and very excited. They were really happy about going to the U.S. and they had a reallywonderful picture of it because we always painted this nice picture of America. Also, because they were going to get parents... we would give them...one thing they missed their whole life and we had picture s and would point and say Momma, Daddy. They would take it and run around snd show it to all their frinds. We were driving down into town and to the airport and there we are at the main gate... and we opened the Van and suddenly the lgiths came on the press people found out about it and we said no no, some guy said no go directly on to the airfield and we drove out to the airfield and there was this jet already to go... World airways, all the seats had been taken out although it had the plastic walls not like a military plane...date.. April..load all the kids onto the flightl. One boy going to be adopted by cherry clark one of the women who was going to adopt him, in process, he was 16....she was a woman rujnning our organiza ion,..
The one thing about Vietnamese is that they were going to let all the orphans out but not anybody who was too old...criteria only..immigration official came and checked the plane. The plane was all mattresses all over the floor no seats, seatbelts, it wouldn't pas the FAA... regulation... the gurad came on and spotted this one boy trying to hide in the corner and asked him how old he was, he was trying to hide in the corner I'm sure to he lied about his age, the guard said too old, too old,...you cannot let him. go. We immediately said you 've got to let him go..let him go....sorry sorry, or no one's going, et him off the plane. Daly pulls a $100 bill out of his picket and hands it to the guarn and commone can't we work something out. Of-course there reporters and all around and everything...the guy say no no sorry, tek this, wouldn8 take the money, the boy had to get off the plane. Ed Daly took the $100 and put it in the boy's pocket and got off the plene. We were very sad and I took him home afterwards. but they got on the plane and w later heard the conversation with the tower whent something like after the plane was loaded...you cannot leave you are not cleared for take off.

Forty percent of the children were sired by G.I.'s. Tremendous numer, the reason for that is several. The peole who had children were branded. Particularly the black children were..be prejuciced against. We hired some half blacks left from the French days . F ench father many. No quest on there was strong prejudicely. She worked in kitchen, a girl we hired, and she was treated differently by the other Vietnamese.

Kids that w ere very ill, some success. Rain season, incredible problem crib death (..cistcrini) by the time you discov red what was wrong with them they died. We have 52 children in our house die of that. When we first went over we thought the best thing to do was to set up a hospital environment for them so we had this big house and turned it, made it all very sterile and tried to turn it to a hospital. It worked very well so than we started to put kids in a foster home. We paid them well as much as wek did one worker. It ga e the family free medical care and we found that the kids did much much better living with a family. As a benefit these kids had a family, if kids do't have a family, they die. a blunt thing to say but its true. So that we get talking about adoption I really think a kids is better having a family, any family, no matter what color they are parents are. Not to say there aren't problems, there are but the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.Did we have adoctor. A part time Viet doctor then a full time. Lots of vietnamese nurses and durin the end we had 2 American Medical Students from Harvard medical suchool to help us out.

Markets are typical all over. Oranges stamped sunkist, black market. Long gree oblanong grapefurit are sweet. Grown in Vietna,.
Black market rampant. Buy anything.
Hunder P alley 100 piaster s you could buy anything on that street for 100.

A dentist has a display of all the teeth he pulled.

2 places. Out of town to Thu Duc. Nicer to live. went to school, quieter. Prelminary training at 16, then 18. Shot you could get out. you didn't get out until 40. Tremendous amount of handicap people in town, everyon was in the army.
Army incredibly corrup. People had to buy their own clothies, guns, positions.

Temre rature. Hoter than hot and wtter than wet. 100 degres. 80% humitidty. Rain and cool off. Hotter and hotter and humid and humid and finally rain would come. The rain would turn to steam as it hit the trees. Rain a tremendous relief. Rain would turn to steam when it hit the streets. It was a mixed blessing...relief but mildew would take over. A pair of shoes actually eaten by mildew. After rain wa over it was all mold. I lived in Saigon. We were free to use military installations travel and use for fre e. free easy to travel I had my own cars.
The cicloes transporation a round town, peddle you forever for a nickel. incredible legs.

Very happy people, hard working, ameniable. never found anyone who had bad sentiment to me. Very few bad expeiences. with any people.

Fighting every night. Gunfire curfew control All billboards had eyes shot out. Had few problems. We moved near Thu Duc. Lived near base and in the country...near a little base incoming rockets land close to our house. Inc edibally lound. a block away and think its in back yar. Delta incredible number of bridges its a big marsh land you can i agine its a big marshland. Bridges are one way and have to wait one side while traffice oncoming traffict to pass. befor you can go. We were wiating there we taking rocket fire. Briges blown up. Rocket fire and our driver had horrified look on his face and just took off and went hafl an hour and the briege blwon up. I had this van having terrible problem with hole in radiator all the water would run out and overheat and it wouldn't run. So one day we were taking all the kids to the movies in town and were driving back thu duc 25 min out. driving along, van started to overheat again and the van starts to overheat again and we're coming up to one of these bridges and every bridge has at least 5 men guarding it and we came up to the bridge and just as I got to the top the van died and lights went out and we rolled down and they started shooting us. I had this girl Vietnamese girl in the front seat and I shouted to her to tell them to stop, tell them to stop and she was on the floor before I got a word out of my mouth and the kids were instinctively on the gound. Whenev the rockets wiykd be geard the kids would immediately crawl under their beds or get to the floor and they would be screaming, Mr Ross, Mr Ross VC #10 . Finally I convinced her to stick her head out and tell that we were from a children's home we're O.KL

When they realied who were were they were very apologetic and very nice and men went down to the riverand put water in a tub and brought it up to the van and we went back home again. In the last days a lot of fighting.

Solid people and impossible to drive.

Buses getting down the street during market hours. Best way to get down the street is on the bus they wouldn't stop.

Rice. Fantastic amount of rice they eat. Little bit of fish on top. No protein. Brown rice, red rice.

Wealthy houses, it was not unusual for thew workers to sleep outside on the street where they worked during the day because they had no place else to go.

Flag was on every building in town. Viet flag.

Every building, every bridge, every highway, many many checkpoints. No problem carrying camera. Fantanstic amount of journalists, use to it. airporst, camps, touchy, but sense where it was a problem.

Very nice to americans. When congress cut off funding got angry.
Very nice before. People anti corruption. Riot in streets in end.. burned an efigy of corruption. One of the things that destory the government, corruption. . Beggers go through things, then rats go through it.
Not many rats during day but lot of big rats at night. Plague in vietnam.
A big problem.

Every building surround by barb wire, e eything is barb wire fantanstic.
First feeling of paranoid life, after got use to it and had b r wire arou d our house.

School in delta which bombed. Hundr d of orphanages while I was there.
Spent all my time doing. After while more poepl e came over to help out.
I took on foster orphanage plan $500 a month a kings salary and we did so much with that money.

Where kids were found...in garbage cans. If they had a mother abandoned them at hosptial...not take them home. Family take them to orphana es.
If orphanage would tke them only if they had no relatives. brought by friends when parets die, grandmother, etc. Most part aandoned at birth mostly because of poverty.

Never brush their teeth. Vitamain deficinency, bad teeth. Visual problems, prenatal car, nutrition. lot of sick kids. 50-80% kids died in orphanages,
Not many older kids. They would run away. Very street wise, would try to make their own wya. Didn't want to stary around orphanage
Prostitutes, what a e the orphanges release these kids bak to their own responsibility. run away 14-15.
Gneral rule, very tough, street wise, many girls got jobs, no education ofro them, there was very little gover mnet money, nothing for them.
Some school classes at orhpahange, some wealtheri nrphanges,. No school. just sit in the orphanages banging their heads atainst the wall. no chance.
Older children 8-9. One girel 14 because wh had brothers.

Most of the orphanges run by catholic nuns. Montgnard. Hill tribes, indian. More resemble cambodians.

Four kids to a bed. 1 woman takes care of roomfull of kids. See why disease spreads fast in these places.

Infants 1-2 per crib. Some places had no cribs. Sometimes no milk for months. Rice water. Completely die. Dry milk from CARE. Some orp anges were on thecircuit.

We came back a couple of days later and brought ~~back milk and they~~ were very happy. Some circuit, Unicef, CARE UN CEF, Catholic Services.
They had m ore money than what to do with. We dropped in for the day to play with the kids. Suddenly the director came and whiistpered someting in their ear. Soon they came back with this box with plastic mats and beautiful toys and put the children on the mats with the toys to show us what a good jobthey were doing. Started playing.....this guy head of World Vision...looked around smiled so proud doing the job for the children.
Give them money. Beautiful chapel...momey priot ity withmoney. Ancestors worship...no ancestors, non person.

Ross (1)

Shirley: I think that FCVN is a little concerned and didn't know what I was after.

Ross: Right, right and they were naturally suspicious.

Yes, I am making FCVN the forerunner, in the whole book. I'm eluding to FFAC. I have herard many versions regarding the split. But not from Cheryl. I haven't interviewed her. I want to get everything togethter and then meet with her to get her viewpoint and Make VCVN. the forerunner because it was the larges organization and it did survive. An Ross, I do have to bring up negative things in the book . No bbok is worth its salt unless there are the negative things mentioned.

R. Sure, yes. yes.

What I would like to hear about is whta did you know about the separation. What I had heard that she did not like financial accountability. Se was trustworthy and all that but the she just like o have money in the bank. Bd of Dir. in Denver wanted accountabillity. Rosemary wanted no part of detail.
Lisan Buchanan- Al Westlake, etc.

Rosemrary very private person, will not grant interviews.

Ross: I for one do not know all the answers.

When I was 18 and just out of high school I wted to tra el and I had been to india, summer school aborad program, before my senior year in high school. Got a job cleaning annimal cages at Salk Institue to trveal (save money) to go traveling. Finally decided I had enough money and wanted to go to S. A.merica. Went to mexico and found out the world was a lot bigger than I originally thought it would be and after 4/5 months came home. Meanwhile Gay Williams was a freind of my motye mother who is a child psych. Gay is thinking of taking a trip to Vietnam to work with the orphans a friend working over ther for Rosemay. Said she was going over. I said I'd like to do that. My sister also talked to someoje who Impression I hae that they needed people to go over ther an play with the ikids and to act as escorts. 1973. I thought it souned like fun and fly around the world playing a babysitter Gay had N8t heard from the group, not answring my letters, called the other day and put me off and I don't know wha's going. Thought I should go to Colorado. She only wanted to go if its a real job. For myselr I wnted to take a trip anyway...if nothing worked out it would still be o.k. I had enough money to get myself home anyway. I hitchhiked to Colorado called FCVN from a gas station phone booth. Blink out of the blue. My sister was going to the U. of Colorado so I could stoy with her. Another excuse is that I had gone down to Mexico & met a guy who was in business selling and buying gem stones and spent all my money on buying gems tones and sold them in Calif. Cooresponded with guy in Colo who had all this turquois and I bought and sold it at the U. of Colorado. near Xmas time...so I called them and they didn't kow what was going on didn't have any openings going through reorganization and nothing doing...what was going on I later realized that the org was splitting up. I am not clear what was going on just turned 19 and didn8 know wha I was getting myself into (going on a lark.). I first met Al Westlake I did have a letter at Salk Institue. They said call back in a month. We don't have anything availabel. I said I am going there anyway is ther anything you want me to do while I am there...they were mildly interested...you are going anyway...I had a letter of recomendation from the Salk Institute sent to the I was a cage cleaner.

Very type of poverty exile with culture

Knew Eric?

Fly kind from external as typesetter, splitting up —

Xmas 1973 although

Jack Institute

scleaned 3 goats 18 chickens 250 rab bits 600 gunniea pigs 2,000 mats and 6000 mice and so there wasn't much but my employer liked me and wrote a letter. Itraveled India already, trained as nurses aid, in 8th grade worked in an old folks home...I was certainly trying to inflate myself asmuch as possible. They said goodness, we didn't realize all these things and you are going over there anyway, maybe we shoudl talk to you. So Al Westlake met me at this same gas station. When he first saw mr he asked me how old are you. I was relly embarkinging onmuch more than I'd ever anticipaed. My naivete was my strong point, not realizing what i was getting into. At 18 very brainless and courages. So went over and met the Westlakes and they took me to Cheryl's house. Then i was well, Ross, first you will do this thing, then this, then you will do this. No longer me pleading for a job. Then it was will you take this on. Then they explained things to me but it still wasn't not clear even when I left that the org had split apart and there was this other group headed by Rosemary. My sisters friend Gay's friend Edie had been working for Rosemary and got a letter and met her, shewas a child psych. develment retaration in some of the kids. I realized that they wanted me to go over and be a supply officer and we had shipment Sea Land shipment who heped up and when they had empty room in any of their containers theywould fill it upwith our supplies. Look we'll send you a ticket and you could gove over in Feb. Still not knowing what I was gettingmyself into I went home and didn't hear for 2-3 months an suddenly I got thisplane ticket. So I went over there. When I arrived at the airport in Saigon. Really creepy feeling. You fly to San F. to Honalulu crowded airplane going to hawaiian vacation. Then it goes to Guam lot of military people, then to Phillipines andlot of still very crowded, then sudenly this 747 empties and on one flight 5 of us going to Vietnam. When entire plane..one way ticket to Saigonlanded there and didn't know anyone no idea what was gong on. I did see wome women who where out of plane. Military types and middle aged wodmen were clearlynot working for the military and ithought gee they must work offor women and sure nough they worked for Rosemary. Then I met Christy Liverman who came to pick up the wmen. Told her I was FCVn and she said no shewa...FCVN...so we didscussed new owr. and she said come home with me and we'll see where you are supposed to go so she tool me home to Rathhaven...and in Saigon. Gva din. It's all rally one town. 4-5 facilites. Cheryl worked outsometing t with My Friend House. church sponsorship, Guy was ex-priest and married to woman who was a nurse they wanted to become an adoption agency reason for existance taking in all these kids...calling themselves a nutrition agency. Taking all these kids getting them back to heal and waiting for the adoption agency license. nursing the kids back to health. never go that. Consuently after while they started giving us their kids. I went there Fom that point on I met Rosemary once. I went to her places 2-3 times entire time. We were not relly welcome there and most of it was because I a young man and not anything to agency rivalry altho that too was a big factor I believe. I became a friend of Steve Johnson was in the army and was married there and liked it there working in communications, worked a teletype machine. Doug Grey mentioned. Steve young american guy working as a civilian, met cherry Clark throu and article in newspaper that Steves mother sent Steve. As a matter of fact Cherry worlt wrotethat shewas adopting a child in Quin noyn and that woudl he do this paper work and he did,. he became very close and even lived with us forwhile. but Steve had at some point dated some girls from Rosemary, Christy I remember buceuse she was in Korea with us. also.the other ones I met once or twice and

Brown / Bensalem from some group.

supplies

orphan

My Home FCVN drinks

agency rivalry

Army + Vietnam

FCVN was having bake sales & George asked to save money for Rooney.

Rooney was a tough person being such a good operator and somebody wanting her to be accomodated she was just too strong - or ego too big -

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Rooney was close to someone at the embassy in charge of agency visas for hits. Kiss ass in at least, "Yes for FCVN, an they replied - You aren't Rooney - you aren't FCVN. Rooney just changed the name -. Rooney let them have that impression -

Rosemary didnt like the girls dating she ran a strick and tight organization I didn't know why. People had all kids of rumors and relatioshi s going on at Rosemarys place and none of the dirty rumors were true and shewas strick my feeling she was strict and peopleweren there to foot around andhave a good time and that epople were there for a purpose and t ere wasnot time for night clu bbing.
If you want to work for her you don8t go to nightclubs and dont date, itwas her feeling i dontknow why and what really goin going with her.
I did meet her once and everyonw was surposed she spoke to me.
Because wh sgenerally didnit talke to anygenerally FCVn. I learned more aabout the split after I was in Vietn m I didnt realize what was go'ng on after Iwas therI got a sense of trouble. The big thing I go to work on when I got there the Viet govt and Am govt very strict about who go to do adopitons.FCVN had license first. 7 org go. "hat's kind of funny and chery never agree. we kind of slipped in on the sly, I think. Rosemary was the one who had been there years and years and ran a good org and so selfless and worked so harad and pioneersed adoptions for everyone and if tiit wasn8t for her nobofy would be there doi jg adoptio she dealt with thousand of childrn and v ry qualifed peo le helping her nd was everyone model ..suddenly rosemary goes down to the embassy & Viet govermnet one day and say we've changed our naem FFAC because we want to go into other countries and take care of children and Dont want to have Vietnam in our name...we want to have all childre, so chhnaged our ame to various authroies. here comesme, some dumb children and said no we are FCVn, Sw we have adoption license, military permission,free on flights PX and Comm periviles then I went to USAID and they said what is this, hold it who are you, this is Rosemary privi les,...this is Rosemary. I told them Rosemayr quitted our org. and started her own. we hthought she just changed hermame. it was a real confusion and nobody wanted us to let us have the license and itwas through our persistance and stionaery had out name on it an letter from Pres dsaid I was in charge.now. Notheing they could do.
Point of pit we intially we didn't deserve to get it, we were really a new group, Rosemarys old anem. we really. are all new.
Charterd in1967 ....etc. Adotopins were not doing t em in 67.
The whole group grew fqster than everyone expected. and talk when everyone volunteers and you can't fire anyone and for one thing and hard to work with people because you are talking about hurt feelings and not adhereing to administative policies.
I can ad a little to that. In some of my impressi ns you are filing in lot of gapes. from my perspective what I had sen FCVN had some point or other FCVN was ..the Viet govt decided that all adoption agecies working there had to have some form of registration foreign.
as I understand it. FCVN and Rosemary became oficaial partners at least in the eyes of viet gove who was regiring this. I thought that FCVN was having bake sales an garages sales to help Rosemary. and doing some adoptions. more adoptins than I realized. They were only in eyes of VET govt Rosemary attached 1 year. People in Colo well intention as theymay be and giving so muchmoney to Rosemary, felt they had rosep to donors and accountability.From Rosemary paoint of view, well intetnioned tho they may be "naive" housewifes from Colorado who had been to Vietnman once and extremely naive pepople people instant experts wtwlling R who had been in viet many y ars.. and telling such a tough person and runing such a good operation and someboyd wanting her to be accounable..she was just too strong. ego too big...nurse strained lines of authroity. ...Lisan adopting children started it. Meshed with FCVN .Ros. close to one lady at the embassy in charge of sig ning visa for kids. I first went in I can be

sure of...I went into thewe offices and said I'M FCVN and they said, "you aren't Rosemary. you aren't FCVn." Rosemay cjust changed her name." Rosemay let them have that impression. The lady wouldnt recognise me nothing todo with rsented my presence resentef even trying to move in on Rosemay. Rosemary who was to know at other en..d shw still gettin suppliees...shw wsas getting away with it. Then Ross was hired. Some sor t of double-cross. Who know wat the agreement was..then they had doube thoughts..why give it all to Rosemay? Same ball game just changed name. I see it as ..2 groups came together didn t work out. When initally spit just split and will work together and then found out they wouldnt work and went their own way. When I first contacte FCVN shw said we will know more than in a month. I believeRo came thouth the U.s.last straw. .Rosemary acame to U.S. they scheduled big press conference. She came angry, telling her how to spend her money, what to do. I have a lot of respect for Rosemary, when you are over then you know what needs to be done. Somebody from U.s.telling you what do...spend more on diapers..etc. Something destroyed some k ind oftrust.you have a good man you don't mess. press convference arranged and Rosemary arrrefused to come down FCVN embarassed befor the press. Cheryl and Carol Westlake...what do we do nowVietnam side walked out on us we can keep sending her mateials but she isn't going to change she isnt going to be cccountalb e anyway...what do we do ,ayfe wwe should send somebody else over...we can't send someonb oner there with that kind of risk involved that it would fold and I camee along. Iwas supply officer.. when it go kind of papers signed ...you have to ave t sthis siged by your director...papers..I wrote to Cherry and told her that I have to have to be director call yself directo. I hope thats fine wirh you...canti get anything done..Cherly said that s fine... do whateve. Cheri Clark. This worman is interest and work for my friends house." Never heard of her until a few day before I went over Sue Walters. suCherys sister didnit know what she was going to do either. She stayed at myfreinds. Directo fo hthe house...from Mass. came over he and I hit it off beautiffull...didnit like Cherrie. Farm girl from middle west, know what Imean Ross.. farm girl from imiddles west. she as one of themost ama zing gras I ever knew. He didnit think it would work out but youraoosss can work w th me. he worte a letter sorry cheri isnot going to wrok out...Sue ..didnt know whats going on I chaged ahead. Once nice thing Viet Minister of Social wlfare, would you write me a letter saying that thr ministry recognned me. He said you write someting and I'll sign it. I wrote up a great letter of what a great org we were andministry behing us andhoped for cooperation and all thais... nd he signed it and had secretary translate it and it opened all the dors and things began to fall into place. I also went up to visit every foreng voluntaryn gency I couldg dge ahold of ARCcrosos could Imeet your director I ha et his other orgl They here i am I knownothging of what I am doing, but can you halepme. Ego are destroyed..power struggles destroy I cam in most humble the ony way I can be.. Here is that ckid 19 sincere...and I'l help him out. Catholic Relief servides game ause of vehicles and one guy knew whow to get thing released from the dock and hebecame my mentor and help me out somewhat.

Catholic Relief was the only one. 5 women in 1 room. Fr. McVey head of Cthold relief other agencies had lot of foreigners who lived very ver nice. spacious air conditin, etc. Hope especially seemed to spend a lot on office supplies and all. Hard...did bring Cheri into picture. Got letter from Cheryl, Caollll.. Don Scott. head of My friends house. After tht letter came out Cheri work for us. Money was coming in now and we were opeing a new office
Money pouring in...having me thate great for fund raising...new office we need help. phenomenal amount of money pouring in..
cheks poured in.
I took pictures and wrote stories.. fund raising.
Told me to rent a house Sue and went around and found a beautiful old French house villa...run by Saigon Tru min Yong. street. 2 at one point. mostly 1. Grat place rally...rented it hired few staff and hee comes cheri clark with all her kids. Cheri 26 or 27. ababes in the woods. Afraid . not squeemish. Beautiful houe. Register everwhere military proivalges Px but air flights big for us...Buck Tuy came not the picure met her 1 and twide. twie was instrumental in everything we did. Addttractive capable. Everybody out go get what they could.
Terry super later building.

Tu Duc and kept abpt bldy for short while and got rid of and mved to last ouse we were in.
Terry and John cam over we had huge apt bldy. biggest facility in all of Saigon, Tu Duc house and things moving full speed. Chery at Cah Dinh. All our plaes in Cah Ding. Tu Duc 45 min outside

Road to Binh Wah. 2 lane paved...land jets on it. Binh Hoah. 4 lanes... Cheri joined us. Chery with Thuy visited orphanges. Cheri was chapter pres and had lot of good connections expecially Quinlan and Steve took us on military flight. Most of them did not have thatch froof some dirt floors some not. Orphan es inmaind stream, american soldiers been there for 10 yarsand usually had taken good care of the places. The orphanges had more money than they let on they could havetaken better care than they did. Sue...lot of thenuns adding on, accumulating more peopoerty than tking care of the children.

Fat pigs. on Milk. Many Viet Viet children are allergic to milck powder mild was horribl k hard to dissorlve, too rich, we didn't us it either.. infamil fancy good stuff. another side to the pig story. the kids were eating the milk. Misuse of funds..not toomuch.
A tremendous amount of FCVN nmoney was not misused better accountablity than ther agencies. We were not afraind to go visit some of the orphanges in the boonies..it as rought getting out there...other agencies didnot venture out. Its dangersous we shot at...miles and miles of bumpy roads in 3 wheel taxi...no accomodations of hotels.. we didnit mind butsomebody 40,00 year sexecutive social type... no nhotesl...international s cial work type don't want to put up with lall these terrible things...even airplane rides. Never arrurace that you wold receive things.. supplies on the eock...
pilfering. A problem but not as bad as it soujds bout supplies. mot of our upplies were shipped thrugh sea land and had an american in saigon very helpful and friend with us and he knew and we knww in us when things would arrive and we know through him. Problem getting things realseased through custsoms and iwas naive...you hve to bribe...and I wouldn't do that sort of thing. Finally I caught on

and realized that everyone expected to be bribed. We service fees.. guay who would kind of hong outside the docks and watch people... I'll help you...first went ther dont need anyone. I first ent to office andno one would be there and I'd have to come back. I kept following up and came back the following week.eventually get someting releaeed a month or two. Starving babiew...eventully worked...they werenot so eveilthat they would ignore humanitarian work just to get a brinbe and eventially get the stuff. But the guy outside pay him leave us along in the office...fountain pens and leave them on the desk. Cross pens...get anything signed with cross pen..didnt give liquor but i think fom gave liqu or. .or a perhpas wer can pay a service feell....to go faster.....

Get the stuff often wet and diapers...and eaten by rats. Stusff shipped through the mail. Steve 47 boxes..forumla mailed very il.eegal. Guyat APO p.o. furious with us but eventually let us have it.

Ed Daly was piloting the plane or had pilots...Ed Daly said
You cannot take off....Oh yeh, just watch me. We stood beside the
just roared... fence and watch the plane take off and drove off to back out
Tud Duc. and there was a certain sadnress to it. We were happy to have
itall done but we went out there to this empty house and toys and clothes
all lying around and all of the girls that had been working for us there
knew that they were out of a job and we had mixed feelings about it.
At any rate when they go, as we later found out one of our child care
workers snuck on the plane and her picture was on the front page of
the star s and stripes starring out of the plane as they landed in
La Joya. We said oh that Ann our diaper washer, she snuck on the plane
really funny. Big thing was "freedom bird flies again, babylift begins."
everyone was real excited headlines.
Everyone excited about the whole thine.. We went with Daly didn't
go with the embassy flight Decided not to go with embassy plane. I
don't know what went on. Tell ..during that time to change thier mind.
I think they go a call from Daly saying they were ready to go and
called the embassy people Vet imigration people at the airport who said
lwe will let you go. and here it was a plene ready to go. All the
immigrations o fficials said yes we will let you go ...why wait sit
around for a mybe. maybe somet ihing will work out later, lets do it.
everything go no lets do it.
Have you heard that Daly was trying to get an Airline route of his
own Trans USA or what...and one of his reasons for doing it, aside of
his other whatever motivatons he had was to get publicity to glorify
him and his airlines to put pressure on the government to grant the
airline rights in order
to him.

Did you hear this...since then I have. At the time I had heard of
WA Ed Daly the name meant nothing to me except after the Danang thing
everyone knew who he was national news... he became national news.
We read small biographyies of him in the press...I knew he was enjoying
I didn't know too much about him... enjoying the glory about it
carrying apistol did' hide that...cary a pistol all the time surrounded
by airline hostesses.

You were tellimg me about this one orphanage run by this nun who kept
the toys on the shelf unless when visitors came and who chain the children
which seems off hand like a very cruel thing, but was necessary because
some were retarded so retarded and dangerous to themselves and you
couldn't reach them and the area around them was dangerous to them.
What happened to the poelple in the orphange. The nun and she and other
org and foreign nun org tried to paun off the ill the sick too old
children peo le didn't want to adopt, the non-acceptable mixtures,
black, principle black and Viet ton to you so that they wouldn't have
the expense of burying people they wouldn't have the almost impossible
pbolemn of getting those mixtures that wehe not acceptable adopted
whichwas unlikely that they could do it. Alsoyou told me that there
was very little adoption of these mixtures or pure vietmnamese
orphans by the viet people because their people was a family culture and
they refused to accept adoption as part of their societial living.
Also they put some of these children out with families to give them
environment of touching where they'd get feeling, hopefully loving and

Were devotion to duty — didn't want to have
choices like losing memories in life.
Compassion for life —