

# **The Vietnamese in Palawan, Philippines: A Study of Local Integration**

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The Vietnamese people won their war against the colonizing western powers—first the French and then the Americans—rather abruptly with the liberation of Saigon and the reunification of the country in 1975.<sup>1</sup> For many Vietnamese, however, the struggle was not yet over: Because they were closely associated with the Americans, or for other, sometimes more personal reasons, thousands of Vietnamese fled the country in the next few years. Many of these people packed their families and belongings into small, often rather decrepit, boats, and set off into the sea.

The Republic of the Philippines lies directly east of Vietnam, a straight shot across the South China Sea. The island province of Palawan juts westward from the main islands of the Philippines, and thus was the first landfall, and first asylum, for many “boat people.” The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) set up a first asylum camp in Palawan, and kept it open for twenty years. For many refugees this was a stop off point on the way to the U.S. or other resettlement countries, but for many others, the Philippines became home. Therefore when the UNHCR closed the camp in 1996, how to deal with the Vietnamese community became an issue for the people of the Philippines.

This paper deals with the very unique situation of the Vietnamese refugee community of Palawan, initially under international auspices but then as an economically viable sub-unit of Palawan society. It traces the history of the first asylum UNHCR camp to its closing and the

subsequent involvement of the Philippine government and church, in their efforts to integrate the Vietnamese into the greater Philippine society. It considers the sociocultural and economic life of the camp, the steps by which the subsequent Vietville was organized, various aspects of life in Vietville, the question of Vietnamese integration into the mainstream of Philippine life, and legal support for this integration. It is based on documentary sources as well as extensive interviews with government, church, and nongovernment organization (NGO) people associated with the camp, and with resettled refugees still living in Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

During the years of American involvement in Vietnam, the Philippines, as a close ally of the U.S., sent a small contingent of engineers and other technical workers to Vietnam. Some of the members of this unit, known as Philcag, married Vietnamese and fathered children during the war years. With the final communist victory in Saigon on 30 April 1975, the Philippine government set about evacuating Philcag families, loading Vietnamese wives and children into Philippine navy boats for repatriation.<sup>2</sup> These people were the first “displaced persons” absorbed by the Philippines in the aftermath of the war. They were assisted by the Catholic Church, first through CARITAS and then the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), which is the social action arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). The Center for Assistance to Displaced Persons (CADP) was set up later, again by the CBCP, for the express purpose of assisting refugees from Vietnam.<sup>3</sup>

Thus some mechanisms for dealing with Vietnamese refugees had already been set up ahead of the influx of “boat people” who were to arrive in the Philippines shortly after the war ended. However this first group—Vietnamese wives and children of Filipinos—were of different legal status, having at least some claim to Philippine citizenship, and thus continued to be treated differently, as a unique group.

Months after the war ended in June of 1975, refugees began to fan out from Vietnam in small wooden boats, often of questionable seaworthiness. It is thought that between one and two million Vietnamese left their homeland in this manner, either because they had worked with the American military or because they were of an ethnic group co-opted by the Americans, or because they were of Chinese origin or committed capitalists. By some estimates up to half of these people died at sea, either at the hands of pirates or due to thirst, starvation, or

drowning. Boats ran into storms, capsized, got lost, fell apart—although one former boat person told the researchers that if all went well, it could be a fairly pleasant four day journey; you could sit, he said, on deck, drinking coffee and enjoying the sea.<sup>4</sup> However another younger man, who had traveled as a boy of ten, said that his father had speculated that their chances of living through the journey were about one to ten. But he had wanted to go anyway.<sup>5</sup>

At that point the law of the sea provided that ships that picked up or rescued people in distress at sea were obliged to take responsibility for those people. Many Vietnamese were picked up by ships from a variety of nations, so that they found themselves taking side trips to Taiwan or South Korea before they were delivered back to Southeast Asia. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) had by then set up camps for the Vietnamese in two locations in the Philippines (Palawan and Bataan), in Hong Kong, and in other nations. Initially these camps were set up with the idea of processing refugees for resettlement in third countries (they were in fact called Refugee Processing Centers). The understanding was that most of these refugees would be resettled in the U.S. and had to be “trained” first, especially in language. But some other nations which had rescued refugees at sea did later accept them and provided some language training in the camps as well.

The UNHCR Philippine First Asylum Camp (PFAC) in Palawan was built on a stretch of land adjacent to the Puerto Princesa City Airport, and to the base of the Western Command (Westcom) Armed Forces of the Philippines. The camp was under the military supervision of Westcom, although UNHCR oversaw most of the elements of daily life. They provided the shelters, daily food allowances, health services, etc.<sup>6</sup> UNHCR worked in conjunction with other groups, such as Holy Trinity College, to provide education at various levels from pre-school, elementary, to high school and adult literacy. Not surprisingly, the focus was on English language skills. UNHCR also had a “van” service—actually, says one informant, a dump truck—that made trips to various municipalities in Palawan to pick up refugees whose landing had been reported by municipal officials.<sup>7</sup> Refugees picked up by Philippine navy boats or ships from third countries were taken directly to Puerto Princesa.

Structures in the camp were basic, and uniform, perhaps giving the camp a monotonous appearance. One interviewee said he and his

father were very discouraged when they first saw the new home they had taken such risks to reach.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, most refugees adjusted well to life at camp: they were safe, they had food to eat, and they had new and interesting challenges to meet. When things settled down, the camp became a community—if not exactly like a Vietnamese village, perhaps like a cross between that and a Filipino village.

At its height there were 8,000 refugees in the camp, so naturally it developed into an economic community. First off, of course, the refugees would want to provide themselves with “proper” Vietnamese food—so soon they began making noodles, and their special kind of Vietnamese *patis*, and the still locally-famous French bread. As refugees were allowed to go in and out of the camp, it was easy enough to buy any missing ingredients from the market. As evening settled over the camp each night, the streets suddenly hosted tables and small stalls, selling noodles and other Vietnamese specialties. There were also some food stalls, close to the gates, that were opened during the day as well and were the favorites of the local tricycle drivers. Filipino-Vietnamese Rene Sabio learned the secrets of making French bread from a Vietnamese baker, and went on to be the camp baker for some three years, until he put up his own stall selling French bread just outside the camp. His Vietnamese mother, who was commissioned by the Pho restaurant in Manila to open a branch in Puerto Princesa, eventually joined her son in selling noodles as well as Vietnamese sandwiches. The local branch of Pho, making use of Vietnamese staff from the camp, became very popular with the citizens of Puerto Princesa, and with tourists as well: it eventually made its way into tour itineraries and guide books. (The restaurant still exists, long after the camp has been closed, and it still welcomes tourists, although it is no longer the only good Vietnamese restaurant in town.)

Some of the women refugees quickly went into dressmaking, and others into hair styling—two businesses for which there are always customers. Teachers working in the camp patronized these businesses, as well as the noodle and bread shops. (Filipino teachers, enticed by the relatively good pay for work in the camp, came from other parts of the Philippines to work in Palawan. Many stayed even after the camp was closed.)

There were also goldsmiths selling jewelry. It has been said that some refugees came with gold bullion, and put this to good use by becoming petty entrepreneurs. Buying and selling was brisk inside the

camp. Refugees also sometimes sold or traded some of their food rations, although this was not approved by the administration.<sup>9</sup>

Most of the people in camp spent at least part of the day in classes, notably English class. English was taught in cultural context—i.e., refugees learned how to ask prices for goods that they might need, how to enroll their children in school, and later, how to call the school to report a child's illness, how to open a bank account, what to do if a bank teller or store keeper handed them incorrect change. Refugees also had to learn about different types of clothes—the types of women's underwear used in the west, for instance, or the types of clothing children need during cold weather.

The camp was opened for twenty years. During that time many refugees were resettled in third countries, notably the U.S., Australia, and Canada. In the late 1980s the UNHCR made attempts to come to a final settlement for the Vietnamese, withdrawing the refugee classification and making regulations against enlarging the camps. This particular rule became a problem in Palawan when a fire destroyed some of the living quarters, which could then not be replaced. But the number of refugees had dropped anyway.

Eventually the camps all over Southeast Asia were to be closed and the remaining refugees repatriated. However during the presidency of Corazon Aquino (1986–1992) no forced repatriation was carried out in the Philippines. But under the subsequent Ramos presidency, the pressure increased. The refugees appealed for help to CADP, and thus the issue went to the very top of the church, through the Catholic Bishops Conference. On 12 February 1996, Bishop Ramon C. Arguelles, then Chair of the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants (ECMI), and heading the CADP, got a call from Westcom saying that repatriation was imminent. This led to intensive dialoguing between President Ramos and the bishops, and the latter were assured that there would be no force used against the refugees. Nevertheless on February 14, Valentine's Day, a group of Vietnamese refugees were forcibly repatriated from the camp in Palawan to Vietnam.<sup>10</sup> Teachers recall this incident with a great deal of emotion, saying the refugees formed a circle with men in the center and women and children on the outside, thinking the military would not use force against the outer ring. When this strategy failed, they pleaded with their teachers and media representatives to help them, but nothing could be done.<sup>11</sup> However,

news clips of the incident were seen all over the Philippines with the evening news, and the refugees gained a great deal of sympathy.

Thus although the Ramos government was at pains to explain to the UNHCR in Geneva why the Philippines was unable to carry out the same sort of violent repatriation which was done in other locations, the Church had marshaled strong enough public opinion to make such a move untenable. The UNHCR then asked the Church if it could afford to take over the support of the camp, but the Church opted instead to work on a plan of progressive self-reliance for the refugees. With seed money amounting to US\$1.3 million provided by Vietnamese Americans, CADP undertook to build a new Vietnamese Village, called Vietville, on the northern outskirts of the city, in the Sta. Lourdes/ Honda Bay area. The camp was finally closed and the remaining Vietnamese moved into Vietville and began working for their own economic sustenance.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) with the ECMI of the CBCP, and CADP, signed amidst fanfare in Malacañang on 17 July 1996, was a landmark in finding a solution to the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals (RVN) problem. Three basic policies to govern the MOU were enunciated:

1. The Philippine Government was to promote the policy of voluntary repatriation to be implemented with due respect for the RVN's human dignity and human rights;
2. Representations were to be made with the US Government for the final solution to the Orderly Departure Program; and
3. Care and Maintenance of all RVNs, to be provided by the Church, was to assume the principle of progressive self-reliance and self-management.

The implementation of the MOU was to be undertaken by the GRP through the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the CADP. The rules called for assisting "the RVNs to gain access to education, skills training, livelihood project and other employment opportunities that will help them achieve an acceptable level of productivity and self reliance." It spelled out the roles and responsibilities of the Philippine Government through its various agencies, and the CBCP, with the latter assuming the cost of effective administration of the RVNs. The CADP was given the task of relocating

the RVNs from the PFAC (Philippine First Asylum Camp) to a new site, thus leading to the birth of Vietville.

It was Bishop Arguelles who secured \$1.3 million, which was used to build Vietville, from Vietnamese in the United States.<sup>12</sup> The first plan was to put up several Vietnamese centers all over the country, but because of the offer of Mayor Edward Hagedorn for a land in Sta. Lourdes, and perhaps because most of the refugees were already in Palawan, a singular Vietnamese village was put up in Puerto Princesa.

The Catholic Church through the CADP was then assigned to (1) “coordinate with the NGAs, LGUs, NGOs and international agencies in helping the RVNs in gaining access to education, skills training, livelihood projects and other employment opportunities;” (2) provide “for the care and maintenance of all RVNs under the principle of progressive self-reliance, *while assuming responsibility for the administrative cost essential for the effective administration of the RVNs*” (italics ours); (3) undertake “the relocation of the RVNs from the PFAC to a new site... (and provide) support services to housing and other support services.”<sup>13</sup>

It was thus the CADP that built and managed Vietville.

Aside from the \$1.3 million, other funds came in which the CADP used, among others, to help fund business enterprises of the needy Vietnamese to help them start out a business. The Chair of the CADP was the Mother Directress of the Daughters of Charity. Bishops Arguelles and Pedro Arigo of the Palawan Vicariate were Board Members together with Sister Maura and others. Sister Pascal Le Thi Trieu was the administrator.

The briefing on Vietville obtained on-site in Sta. Lourdes contains the following Vision-Mission Statement:

The remaining Vietnamese Nationals’ very existence, embodied with the Viet Village community, is a reminder to the world of the Philippines’ great gift—returning human dignity to the unfortunate boat people so that they might be able to rebuild a decent life that has been lost through endless hardships and traumas.

The community leaders envision the Viet Village:

1. As a symbol of unselfish brotherhood and cooperation between Vietnamese and Filipinos, determined to become an integral asset to the city of Puerto Princesa, in its efforts of building a

community strengthened in solidarity, rich and unique in blended cultural endowments, seeking to live in harmony with Filipino neighbors, while adapting a pro-environment and community tourism approach to its development.

2. As a home to all the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals who are guided to become law abiding, productive, self-reliant and entrepreneurial individuals and have a deep sense of gratitude for the dignity redeemed on the land of the Philippines.

When Vietville was first set up, it housed approximately 150 families. It provided its residents with a simple but congenial and healthy life style: there was a park and children's playground, with various pieces of play equipment, a Catholic chapel, and a Buddhist shrine and temple. A Vietnamese woman ran a small nursery school, so that children could have their earliest education in Vietnamese. Economic endeavors included a bakery for French bread, a noodle factory, fish sauce or patis making, and eventually meat packing. Some residents worked in the on-site restaurant, as cooks, waiters and waitresses, etc. The restaurant sometimes put on cultural shows, featuring singing and dancing, mainly for tourists. (Vietville is about a kilometer north of the entrance to Honda Bay and is also along the north road to Sabang and the underground river, and is thus a natural stop for tourists coming home from the river or enjoying the beaches in the bay.)

For governance, an Executive Committee ran the affairs of Vietville, headed by an elected Executive Director and eleven (11) appointed Directors. The Executive Director was the liaison with the Government officials of Palawan, and with the RVNs living outside Vietville.<sup>14</sup>

But the community could not, of course, employ all its residents, and did not provide education beyond preschool. So residents did participate in the greater community, going to town to go to market or to look for other forms of livelihood, to engage in buy-and-sell, etc. The young children went to the public schools in nearby Tagburos, where they generally learned to speak Filipino rather quickly. Older children went further to high school, the more prosperous going to Holy Trinity. Some went on to college in Holy Trinity or in Palawan State University, or enrolled in some of the more specialized computer schools.

The major difficulty of living in Vietville is its distance from the city and the fact that there is very little transportation going to town. Partly for this reason, residents gradually drifted off, moving into Puerto



Princesa, or even to other parts of the Philippines and setting up their business concerns.<sup>15</sup> At present only about 50 families are still living in the village.

Vietnamese festivals and religious holidays are celebrated in Vietville, but there are now a few other centers of Vietnamese convergence around the city. There are many restaurants, mostly *Chao Long* houses—Rene’s Saigon is probably the most popular as a gathering place. There is a vegetarian Vietnamese restaurant set up in close relationship with the Buddhist group of Suma Ching Hai, a living Chinese woman who visited the camp on at least one occasion and actually helped some Vietnamese Buddhists find resettlement in the U.S. (Vietville’s Mr. Lam estimates that about one third of the refugees are Buddhist, and another third are Catholics.) There are also several Vietnamese boutiques and stores in which Vietnamese goods are sold.

The younger Vietnamese, especially those outside the camp, naturally come into contact with Filipinos. Many can speak Filipino—the really young ones almost as well as they can speak Vietnamese. There is some agreement that the two cultures, both Southeast Asian, are much the same. Nevertheless there has not been a great deal of intermarriage and many seem to think that bridging the divide—mostly linguistic, apparently—might be too difficult. It would be natural, of course, for the Vietnamese to want to preserve their culture outside Vietnam, and especially to raise Vietnamese speaking children. One interviewee did say that his father is married to a Filipina (although his mother is still alive in Vietnam), and he didn’t think the cultures were too different, but his nieces and nephews were definitely Filipino.<sup>16</sup> They ate both Vietnamese and Filipino foods, but spoke Filipino—as they were usually with their mother.

The people of Palawan have been most welcoming of this group and seem to consider them a permanent part of the community. On 12 March 1996, in a meeting convened for the purpose, a declaration of support for the efforts of the Catholic Church in addressing the problems of the Vietnamese Asylum seekers was unanimously approved and signed by Mayor Edward Hagedorn, officials of government agencies on the provincial and city levels, and representatives of non-government organizations. As the move for giving permanent residency to the Vietnamese refugees gained grounds, the Sangguniang Panlungsod (City Council) passed Resolution no.770-98 on 12 February 1998, strongly endorsing to President Fidel Ramos the granting of permanent

residence to the remaining Vietnamese nationals in Puerto Princesa, citing the support that Puerto Princesa had been giving to the programs of the CADP.

Even the resolutions, however, make it clear that a permanent solution should be found. The status given the Vietnamese was conceived of as temporary from the start, and while they are certainly an economically viable and self-supporting group, they are essentially here on an extra-legal basis. They have no passports and therefore cannot travel outside the country. (And by this time many are anxious to go back to visit relatives in Vietnam.) And because they are neither citizens nor permanent residents, they are barred from taking government board exams for the various professions. Some colleges will not grant them diplomas. These limitations put a ceiling on their economic mobility, and because they are a particularly energetic and hard working group, they do feel the limitations.

The original MOU, of July 1996, assumed that many Vietnamese would be settling in third countries, and that some would take up voluntary repatriation. The option was also opened to apply for Permanent Residency (although one informant says that this option was actually only opened to the initial group of Philcag people —i.e., wives and children of Filipinos.)<sup>17</sup> It was hoped that one or the other option would be taken up by all remaining refugees by the end of 1999.

The deadline lapsed on the date specified, that is, 31 December 1999, but was extended to 15 May 2000. Amidst fears of the RVNs that they would be forced to leave the country, the representatives of the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation came to Puerto Princesa in April 2001, and through Atty. Tomas Syquia, reiterated that forced repatriation was not the Government policy.<sup>18</sup> Instead, the committee came to confer with the RVNs on problems with their applications based on existing laws, and recommended that these problems be brought to the attention of Congressman Roilo Golez for appropriate action on the bill he filed granting permanent residence to the RVNs.<sup>19</sup> A similar bill was filed in the Senate by Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. However, the 11th Congress did not act on the bills. It was left to Congressman Abraham Kahlil Mitra to re-introduce a House Bill in 2002 under the 12th Congress.

In his explanatory note, Congressman Mitra lauded the RVNs as “self-reliant, law-abiding, and civic oriented earning the respect of the

community,” yet pointed out concerns because they “have no firm protection from our laws and are therefore vulnerable to manipulation, harassment, abuse and may be subject to deportation.” He then sought the granting of permanent residence to qualified Vietnamese Refugees and asylum seekers consistent with the adherence of the Philippine Government to the principles of human rights.

Congressman Mitra then authored House Resolution no. 782 “directing the House of Representatives through its appropriate committees, to conduct an immediate study on the status of the remaining (RVN’s)” and to determine appropriate remedies.

As debated upon and approved, Mitra’s House Bill, this time co-authored by 14 other congresspersons, was approved as House Bill no. 5970.

The House Bill known as “The Social Integration Act of 2003 for the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals,” grants permanent residence to Vietnamese nationals who arrived in the Philippines before 30th June 1996 as asylum seekers, upon compliance with the following requirements:

1. Filing of application/registration form; complete finger print card; Police and National Bureau of Investigation clearances; proof of identity; affidavit of good moral character from two Filipino citizens; proof of financial capacity; history of stay in the Philippines; residential address for the last five years; and four passport size pictures;
2. Payment of the following integration fees to the Bureau of Immigration: one time application fee of P10,000; and for married RVN, a single payment of P5,000 for the Vietnamese spouse and P3,000 for each biological child below 18 years of age;
3. Submission of medical certificate from a Government Hospital stating the applicant, his spouse and/or children (if any) are not users of prohibited drugs; and
4. Upon compliance with the requirements, the Bureau of Immigration shall issue an Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) and an Immigration Certificate of Registration (ICR) to the applicant.

However, before the bill could be passed by the Senate, some new ideas emerged, and a group of Vietnamese lawyers from third countries (notably Australia and the United States) came to visit the Philippines

and suggested to the RVNs that perhaps becoming permanent residents of the Philippines—or apparently even having that option—might block opportunities for settlement in third countries. Some of these “third country” Vietnamese went as well to the CBCP to intercede, asking that the bill be dropped. Bishop Arguelles of the CBCP, the man most closely associated with the church’s attempts to aid the Vietnamese and with the building of Vietville, stands firmly in his belief that the permanent residency option is the only viable one for Vietnamese still living in the Philippines, as it is at this point necessary for them to have legal status and the full rights that this would ensure. It may be true that opting for permanent residency in the Philippines would make it more difficult for an individual to be accepted in a third country. It is not at all clear that having the opportunity available would have a negative effect on anyone who does not take up the opportunity, except that the passage of the bill may result in totally illegal status for those who don’t take advantage of the offer.<sup>20</sup> But there have been no threats of any forcible expulsion.

But the community has been split and the bill has been dropped. The process will have to begin again under the next congress if there is further agitation for it. At this point it seems that most Vietnamese still dream of resettlement in one of the “rich” countries of the world, whether or not this dream is realistic. In all likelihood the situation will drift on for a few more years, as Vietnamese disperse over a wider area, but they will probably retain their extralegal status and presence in Puerto Princesa for the foreseeable future.

From the very beginning of the Vietnamese odyssey in Palawan and the Philippines, the Catholic Church, through the CBCP, has been involved. Early on they worked within the structure of the UNHCR camp system. When the UNHCR stopped the refugee program, and adopted a repatriation policy, the Church stepped in and convinced the National Government to implement only voluntary repatriation. The establishment of Vietville and the program to give the Vietnamese refugees opportunities to improve their economic and social standings, opened the way for local integration. Rapport between the Vietnamese community and the people of Palawan went on smoothly, both economically and socially. The *Chao Long houses* and Vietnamese French bread have become a part of life in Puerto Princesa, and symbolize the coexistence between the two communities. However, the pervasive dream of resettlement in one of the Western countries has stymied

moves to give them permanent residence. The Philippine Government and the people of Puerto Princesa, and Palawan in general, have provided the means for the Vietnamese to stay on. The final decision rests with the Vietnamese community.

## NOTES

- 1 For a backgrounder on the Vietnam War, see Joseph Buttinger, *The Smaller Dragon, A Political History of Vietnam*, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1958. A fuller treatment of the war, and the subsequent establishment of the Socialist Government of Vietnam is in Damien Kingsbury, *South-East Asia, A Political Profile*, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- 2 Interview with Rene Sabio, of Filipino-Vietnamese parentage, in his restaurant, "Rene's Saigon."
- 3 Open Letter of Bishop Ramon Arguelles to the Remaining Vietnamese Sisters and Brothers, 14 December 2003.
- 4 Interview with Nguyen Lan Lam, Current Assistant Administrator of Vietville.
- 5 Interview with Nguyen Ngoc Hung.
- 6 Interview with Commodore Constancio T. Velasco, former Assistant Director of PFAC.
- 7 Interview with Ruby Diao, formerly a teacher in camp.
- 8 Interview with Nguyen Ngoc Hung.
- 9 A former teacher in the camp, who prefers to remain anonymous.
- 10 The details of these negotiations are found in the open letter of Bishop Ramon Arguelles to the Remaining Vietnamese Sisters and Brothers, 14 December 2003.
- 11 Ruby Diao, former teacher.
- 12 Interview with Bishop Pedro Arigo, Vicariate of Puerto Princesa.
- 13 Memorandum of Understanding ..., 17 July 1996.
- 14 The position of Executive Director was held by Che Nat Giao from the inception of Vietville until his resignation and disbandment of the Committee in late 2003. Vietville is now run directly by CADP.
- 15 Because of the extra legal status of the refugees, they did not have to report annually to the Immigration Office. As a means of following up their whereabouts, those putting up business concerns were issued certifications by the Immigration Office attesting to

their being residents of the city. These certifications were then brought to the City Licensing Office for the appropriate business permit.

- 16 Interview with Nguyen Ngoc Hung. Another informant had a brother married to a Filipina. Records of the City Registrar for the calendar years 2000-2003 had only three Filipino-Vietnamese marriages.
- 17 Interview with Rene Sabio.
- 18 *Bandillo ng Palawan*, 17–23 April 2000, p.1.
- 19 *Bandillo*, 17–23 April 2000.
- 20 Open Letter of Bishop Arguelles.

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4. Immigration, Office of, Palauan Field Office, Puerto Princesa, Record of Certifications Issued to Vietnamese, 2002–2003.
5. Open Letter of Bishop Ramon C. Arguelles “To our beloved Remaining Vietnamese Sisters and Brothers in the Philippines” (14 December 2003).
6. Philippines (Republic) House of Representatives, Twelfth Congress, House Resolution no. 782. A Resolution Directing the House of Representatives Through Its Appropriate Committees, To Conduct an Immediate Study on the Status of the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals (RVNs) In the Philippines, Determining the Appropriate Remedies Thereto, and for Other Purposes.
7. \_\_\_\_\_, Bill no. 5271, Introduced by Representative Abraham Kahlil Mitra, Explanatory Note.
8. \_\_\_\_\_, An Act Granting Permanent Residence Status to the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals (RVN) through a Social Integration Program.

9. Pilipinas (Republika) Tanggapan ng Sangguniang Panglungsod, Puerto Princesa, Resolution no. 770-98. A Resolution Strongly Endorsing to His Excellency Fidel V. Ramos, The Granting of Permanent Residence to the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals in the City of Puerto Princesa (12 February 1998).
10. Memorandum of Understanding Between the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the Philippine Government, (17 July 1996).
11. The White House, Washington, 21 October 2003. Memorandum for the Secretary of State. Subject: Residential Determination on FY 2004 Refugee Admission Number (Fax copy for the Refugee Council, USA).

#### Interviews

1. Bach Xuan Hoa and Dang T. Minh Tam, owner of a boutique, February 2004. Interviewed by student interviewers Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno, all of the College of Education, Palauan State University.
2. Diao, Ruby, Teacher in the PFAC, 11 November 2003 and January 29, 2004.
3. Lam Kim Tai, Businessman, February 2004.
4. Nguyen Anh Phuong, *Chao Long* owner, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
5. Nguyen Hoang My and Tran Hong T., Businesspersons, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
6. Nguyen Lan Lam, Assistant Director, Vietville, 12 November 2003.
7. Nguyen Xuan Thieu, *Chao Long* owner, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
8. Pham Tien T. and Nguyen Hien, Dry Good Store owner, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
9. Interview with Rene Sabio and his brother Danny (Danh), 18 January 2004.
10. Ta Chinh and Nguyen Nam, Boutique owners, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
11. Trie Li, Boutique owner. February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.
12. Van To Hue and Tran Trieu Cao, Boutique owners, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.

13. Velasco, Constancio T., Commodore, Former Assistant Director of the PFAC, 18 March 2004.
14. Vo Thi Phien, Boutique owner, February 2004. Interviewed by Annie Palao, Amie Salvador, and Joan Sareno.

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