

Today is NOV.23th,1980.

MR.CHU THIEN CAU's interview takes place at his sponsor's house at 8031 New-Salem st, San-Diego,California 92126.

The interview takes approximately 45 minutes from 9.00 p.m. to 9.45p.m.

Mr.Cau felt pretty comfortable during the interview.He answered my question very clear and meaning.

His enthusiasm and cooperation were the important factors to complete this interview.

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My name is GIAP NGHIA, the Mr. CHU THIEN CAU'S interview takes place at his sponsor's house at 8031 New-Salem street, San-Diego California 92126.

Q: Mr.Cau, Could you tell me that since the year of 1975, Where had you been ? What did you do for living and Where were you born ?

A: My name is Chu-Thien-Cau, my birth day is 12/18/1950 at Hung-Yen, north VN. My family had evacuated in 1954 to South VN and I had lived there with my parent and my brothers and sisters. My father was an official for the Department of Justice, and my mother was a merchandiser. I grew-up in South VN since then. Our living was pretty much comfortable and I graduated senior high school when I was 19 years old. One year in College of Education, after that I joined the Vietnamese navy. I graduated at Academic Navy Officer Center of Nhatrang as ensign in a year and half of training. Then, I serviced on the Escort Ship in one year, I was transferred to another ship, The Landing Ship Tank. One year later, I was transferred to a Navy Base of NamCan until the day of South VN was taken over by the North VN.

Q: After the South VN was collapsed, Did you still live in South VN ?

A: Yes, When the South VN was collapsed, I was there with my family.

Q: How long had you been lived with the Communist-Regime ?

A: I had been lived under the communist-regime since 1975 until 1979.

1979 was the year that I had left VN. During that time (1975), a month later, I and all of the South Vietnamese officers were called to go to Reeducation-Camp. I had been through in two camps in three years: one located in Tayninh and the other in PhuocLong. During that period of time, we did not hope having a day of return home. But fortunate, after three years in reeducation-camp, I was released and returned home. When I got home, I realized that I could not live with the communist. So, I looked for a way to escape out of VN. After five times of attempted escape but failed, I finally succeeded in a trip at My Tho Port of

South VN. After ten days on the sea, I arrived to Indonesia.

Q: What religion are you ?

A: I am a buddhist .Buddhism is my principal religion and my family too.

Q: Are your parent still buddhist since ?

A: Yes.

Q: I hear that there are many religions in VN such as Buddhism, Catholicism, Confucianism. Can you tell me the difference, the change between these religions ?

A: You mean after the year of 1975, Is there any changing of religion in South VN ?

Q: Yes, that is right.

A: There is a restriction in any religion, no matter what religion is. Even during the benediction at church, temple or pagoda, there are the undercover-polices to mingle in the crowd with the purpose of watching any action, talking between the people. Therefore, the religion in VN was going down so badly. Beside that reason, because of the bad economic's situation so any body had to work 7 days a week to take care their family. So that they had no time going to church, pagoda .. An addition, the people was afraid of following up by the secret-polices.

Q: Are you married man ?

A: I married in 1978, and I have a little girl who is two years old now. But my wife and my daughter are still living in VN.

Q: When did you come to U.S.? Where ? And how were you at that time?

A: After I arrived to Indonnesia. There was a long time of waiting for interview, health check and did some papers work. About ten months later, I arrived to U.S. on the 11th of April, 1980.

Q: Could you tell me during the time in Refugee-Camp in Indonnesia. How did you live ?

A: The island that I had arrived, was KU-KU 'The refugee Camp Ku-Ku'. There was about 3000 people living there before I. Until the month of

June of 1979, so many refugees arrived to Indonnesia. There were three Refugee-Camps; The chain-island of Anapas itself had three sub-island as Galang, Abia and KU-KU. I ~~were~~ were so happy when I had arrived to KU-KU island, freedom's island, there was not much food, water left over, no support from the islanders. For a some times later, there was a supply of medicine, food, water from the Nation-Union. On my island, there were a lot of refugees recently arrived. About a month later, the hospital french ship, named 'In the Lummiere', arrived to Ku-Ku island and helped the sick people on the island. They delivered baby food, milk for baby and the elders, later, the hospital w. German ship, ' La Lumiere ', arrived. Since then, the life on the island seemed more comfortable than before. A week later, the Indonnesia government gave approximately 300 grams of rice for each person, with fresh meat and fresh vegetable every day. But we were under control of Indonnesia government, Every time, there must be a permission from Indonnesia government to go out of camp.

Q: Were you living under the Indonnesian control ?.

A: We were controled all the time. But I understood that this island belonged to Indonnesian, we should obeid their regulation.

Q: Compare the life in Indonnesia and the life in VN under communist-regime ?

A: The life in Indonnesia was much more better than the life in VN under communist-regime. Because under communist, some times there was an unreal comfortable time but it was always afraid of something, even when you were sleeping. I were released from the reeducation-camp and I were worried and afraid of capture, I had to hide myself whenever there was someone knocked at the door at night time before let the polices came in.

Q: Who was your sponsor ? When were you sponsored ? Where did your sponsor live ?

A: Eight months later, I got a sponsored letter from my sister, who has been living in San-Diego. After that, I had through the papers-work, health-checked, taken an oath. I were approved to arrive to U.S. A month later, I had left the island for Singapore and three days later, I flew to U.S. on 4/11/1980.

Q: When you arrive to U.S., Did you find yourself in language, custom and working problem ?

A: When I arrived to U.S., Everything was new and strange to me. It seemed as I went from the dark night to the moon sight. The language was the biggest problem for me, it seemed as I had an ear but deaf, as I had a mouth but dumb because nobody would understand what I said and vice-versa. Next, I had no transportation as someone else. Therefore, I were in fear, in hesitation and I admired the American very much in building of their country.

Q: During the time in living with your sponsor, Did you contact with any Vietnamese Community in San-Diego ?

A: Because I had so many problems, beside I had no transportation, so I had not contacted them yet. Although, I liked to join with the Vietnamese groupe in San-Diego.

Q: What was the biggest problem meaning to you?

A: The biggest problem was the transportation. My sister and her husband worked from eight to five every day. Therefore, I had nobody to take me going somewhere. I were alone at home and studied English.

Q: How long have you been alone at home ?

A: About two months and half.

Q: Then you had a job ?

A: Yes, I got helped from IRC agency. They found a job for me in a very short time. I were accepted to work for the Heater Company in San-Diego.

Q: What did you think about the job? Were you comfortable and happy with this job or you forced yourself to work because of living?

A: Actually, this job was not satisfied my desire. Because I did not know how my ability was. But working was my first plan to take myself. I did like to leave my life whether in my sponsor's hand or the welfare department. Before I arrive to U.S. I had heard that the American had the prejudice about the Vietnamese on welfare. Although this plan was made out for helping and support the new refugee.

Q: Did you have a American friend?

A: I had not a American friend yet. Because the language problem. Although, I liked to make friend with any body but I had not enough vocabularies to express my feeling and ideas about thing. This matter made me felt timid whenever facing with american.

Q: Did you intent to go to school ?

A: I wish I could, because first of all, I wanted to improve my language in getting along with neighbourhood. Secndly, it was the basis in finding the right job which fit my skill.

Q: Compare the American Education and the Vietnamese Education ?

A: The American Education was more practical than Vietnamese Education. An addition, the American Education offerred more professional field to his students.

Q: Have you any idea and plan in the next ten years.?

A: My expectation is to be a way to bring my wife and my daughter to U.S. This is a main motivity forcing me work so hard. An addition, some day I would return to my fatherland, but it is not happen, I willing accept the U.S. as my secondcountry and look forward to my future.

Q: Did you have any satisfaction or disappoiment in VN before the year of 1975 ?

A: I found the life in VN was pretty comfortable. The physical and mental living were so delightful, we had spare-time to meet some friends and had a good time together.

Q: How did you think of U.S. through tourists and the American soldiers?

A: Actually, I did not think about U.S. at all. But I realized that U.S. was a strongest and richest country in the world. The U.S. represented for freedom, for independence and democracy for the whole world.

Q: Did you have a American friend when you were in service?

A: I had a American friend who was a lieutenant in the Navy. We serviced in the same LST ship.

Q: How did you react to the neighbourhood nearby your house?

A: When I am living in U.S., I try very hard to make them look up on me by any means.

Q: How did you feel when you looked back at the time when you were in Refugee-Camp.? Experience ?

A: There was a big difference since I was living in U.S. in refugee camp, there was few things, but in U.S. there was so many different things.

Q: How long do you continue to live with your sponsor? Do you have intention to move out ?

A: I am here alone. Present time, I am living, with my sister's family, very comfortable but I think that when ~~the~~ the time comes, my wife and my daughter arrive to U.S, then I will move out of my sister.

Q: How did you react and think about working place ? Because, you are sponsored by your sister, therefore you have no trouble at all in speaking communication at home.

A: Language is the big problem to the new comer to U.S. I am living in my sister's family, speaking same language so we can express our feeling very comfortable to each other after return home from a ~~hard~~ working day. But this is a problem for me because I do not have chance to improve my language. Thus, at work I can speak only a few words and sometimes I have to use body language. This matter hurts my feeling very much and I always feel as coward when facing with

American. Therefore, I think that it is the best way for the new comer is that he should live with an American family to have a chance to pick up quick and efficient language from them.

Q: Since you have been living with your sister's family, you eat Vietnamese food, speaking Vietnamese, living in Vietnamese style. Can you see the changing of custom from Vietnamese to American? What is your thought when you have an American sponsor?

A: I think I have a lot of troubles in custom, eating habit and language problem.

Q: Suppose that your wife and your daughter are in U.S. In VN, what is the obligation of wife to the husband and vice-versa? And the child to his parent?

A: When the economy is in good condition, the life of Vietnamese family is very much respectation. The husband is the main thing in the family. The working is the husband's obligation and brought the budget home to take care the whole family. Taking care child and doing housekeeping is the wife's obligation. But when the economy is in shaking condition both husband and wife have to work. But in American society, all the husband and wife have to work. Because of the Equal Right, women can take some men's job. Thus their child has to put in child care center. This matter causes losing relationship in the family.

Q: Suppose your wife and your daughter are in U.S. How do you react when your family is Americanized?

A: I am living in American society, I try to change to fit with what society desires. But I can not change completely becoming the American without keeping Vietnamese traditions. Under any changing condition my child still is Vietnamese. The eating habit, and behavior must be Vietnamese and he absolutely speak Vietnamese at home.

I regret very much when there is a vietnamese child who can not speak vietnamese. This is a big mistake.

Q: What do you think about 'living together' without marriage? Divorce?

A: The relationship between boy and girl should be limited. Nowaday, parent is no more having power to set up the marriage without having the agreement of their children. I do not accept the divorce.

Q: Is there any changing the present way of life? In job? In sleeping? eating hours? Sport?

A: I am changing very much in life, habit. In U.S., everybody works so hard as machine, it seems as there is no time for eating, for pleasure time. Although, the standard of living is very comfortable in material thing, but my mentality is worst than ever before the time in the year of 1975 in VN. In VN, after the hours of hard working, I still enjoyed going out with some friend, having a good time together. but in U.S. every hour of working is counted, therefore I can easy get tired of doing the same thing over over again.

Q: Did you miss some graet memorization when you were in VN?

A: Yes, I miss VN very much. But there was one thing I did not want to remember that was the communist-regime in VN. I disgusted them very much.

Q: Are you happy to live in U.S.?

A: Because of the collapse of my country, thus I have to go, I am not happy and please to live in U.S. Under communist-regime, there is no one can live as a man on earth, even the dog, the cat still wants to go. I accept the U.S. as my second country.

Q: How do you think if there is a day of return to VN?

A: This is not only my own wish. I think there are many vietnameses who wish to home some days, but the return is under one condition: there is no more a sigle communist in VN.

Q: Do you intent to become the american citizen?

A: I have not thought about it yet, because I had arrived here 7 months. I am a vietnamese but I am not happy as well as other vietnamese when they become american citizen.

Q: Suppose your wife and your daughter is here in U.S. How do you think when your and your daughter become american citizen.?

A: I still feel the same way as before.

Q: There is a big difference between two generations: you and your child. You are in deep influence of vietnamese society, but your child is too young when she arrived to U.S., therefore she is easily influenced by american society and custom. Thus there is no way you can do about it to change her thought ?

A: I do not like to become american citizen but maybe my child will become an american citizen. Probably, she will be happy living in U.S.

Q: What do you think about your future in U.S.?

A: I arrived to U.S. as a child who begin to learn how to walk, I fall down myself if there is no body around me. I take time to learn the language and look for a good job which is fit my skill.

Q: Therefore, because of language problem you have no choice in finding a right job for yourself ?

A: I had just arrived to U.S., then I have to work to take care myself. When I progress very much I will look for another job which is better and propriate to me.

Q: What kind of job do you look for in the future?

A: I am still thinking about this matter. I intent to study in Computer or Electronic technician because of the job market's needs.

Q: How much time do you need.?

A: May be five years or ten years.

Q: You think english language is very hard to study?

A: I think it is hard because when I studied english in high school, they paid attention grammar more than vocabulary and writing comprehension.

Q: Under the communist-regime in VN, What kind of foreign language is popular and is taught in school, beside Vietnamese language ?

A: English is still the language that is taught in school and popular in VN, but the Russian is popular and is taught in school of North VN.

Q: Thank you for your cooperation and your time to complete this interview.

A: You are welcome, Thank you.

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