

sense of independence, which we know they valued, and it might have shown enough faith in them that they would be open to U.S. assistance as the new system grew. According to Phillips, it was also a prime time to introduce democracy given that "Diem was still open to advice" (53). Would it have worked? Who knows. However, as a country that fought for our own freedom from a mother country and developed the same "checks and balances" structure, it has always been a disappointing part of history whenever the U.S. acts hypocritically and refuses to aid other countries in following its own footsteps. In light of all of that, Phillips's story still holds some comfort. "At first the Vietnamese had very little self-confidence," but through the partnership with Lansdale and his men, they were able to carry-out a reoccupation "extremely well" (53). Overall, there seems to be a general anti-U.S. view on the Vietnam war within our own country, including blame for poor choices and the backlash on veterans. Stories like this though, help balance the scales with an example of excellent leadership and more importantly, a successful relationship with the Vietnamese. Though it didn't last, and perhaps was largely politically insignificant, the fact that it even existed still feels somewhat redemptive. Especially touching is Phillips description of civilians "coming out with bowls of water and greeting the troops" (53).

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