

management of his zipper. But the executive committee of the Vietnam Writers' Association—on which Mr. Poet serves as an executive member!—just issued a statement of nonintervention, claiming that it does not have authority to address this matter.

I could hardly restrain a smile when I read that Mr. Poet does “not have an opinion.” But when I read his vague statement that he doesn’t “want to speak hastily to characterize what had happened,” I stopped smiling and a chill shot up my spine. It was as if he had all the time in the world to relax and wait for the appropriate moment to deliver a fatal blow that would win over public opinion and silence his opponent. We’ll see about that! Just you wait and see!

Vietnamese language is indeed marvelous. Three simple words—“don’t speak hastily” [*chưa nói vội*]—can conjure a portrait, an atmosphere, and a scenario completely different from “don’t speak yet,” “can’t say yet,” or even “don’t hastily speak.” The word “hastily” placed in a precise position in a sentence can reveal the true nature of a personality. These kinds of men will do anything and everything to demoralize their victims.

10. HUY ĐỨC (TRƯƠNG HUY SANG)

Translated by Vũ Ngọc Kiều Khanh

Lương Ngọc An Should Step Down

Originally posted on Facebook by Huy Đức (Trương Huy Sang) on April 15, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/Osinhuyduc/posts/4876330482402094>.

I believe Bùi Mai Hạnh and Dạ Thảo Phương.

By deciding to make their accusations after “the statute of limitations for criminal prosecution” has expired, Bùi Mai Hạnh and Dạ Thảo Phương have knowingly subjected themselves to greater legal risk than the accused. This indicates to me that both women believe in themselves and possess a strong sense of social responsibility.

Even though I accept the principle of “presumption of innocence” in all cases, I still insist that some judgments must be based on trust, not just legal procedures.

Based on a posting on Facebook supposedly written by Lương Ngọc An and an email from the Writers’ Association, we can see that An and the association, where he is an executive committee member, have been unable to resolve this crisis and are actually making it worse.

It will take some time before Lương Ngọc An is either cleared of this charge or made to realize that he must make an apology. In order to lower the heat from “society’s verdict” and uphold the reputation of the newspaper and the Writers’ Association, An should quit his job as deputy editor in chief of *Văn Nghệ* newspaper and resign as an executive committee member of the association.

As the saying goes, “Even if you are neither blind nor lame at seventy years old, don’t get too full of yourself.” Heinous acts from the past may be forgiven if the attitude of the accused indicates that such behavior occurred only in the past. If the association, the newspaper, and An still want to make poetry, they will need to win society’s approval.

11. BÙI HOÀNG TÁM

Translated by Vũ Ngọc Kiều Khanh

A Comment on the Case by Bùi Hoàng Tám

Originally posted on Facebook by Bùi Hoàng Tám on April 16, 2022, <https://www.facebook.com/hoangtam.bui.9/posts/2291950677625936>.

It has been assumed that I “defended” Lương Ngọc An in one of my writings.

But let me state directly: I maintain no connection with An and we have only a passing acquaintance. In fact, I have more memories of Dạ Thảo Phương (although not that many).

Dạ Thảo Phương, the alleged victim of this crime, is a woman, one of the three groups (along with children and the elderly) that I have always protected in my career as a journalist.