

Vietnam courier



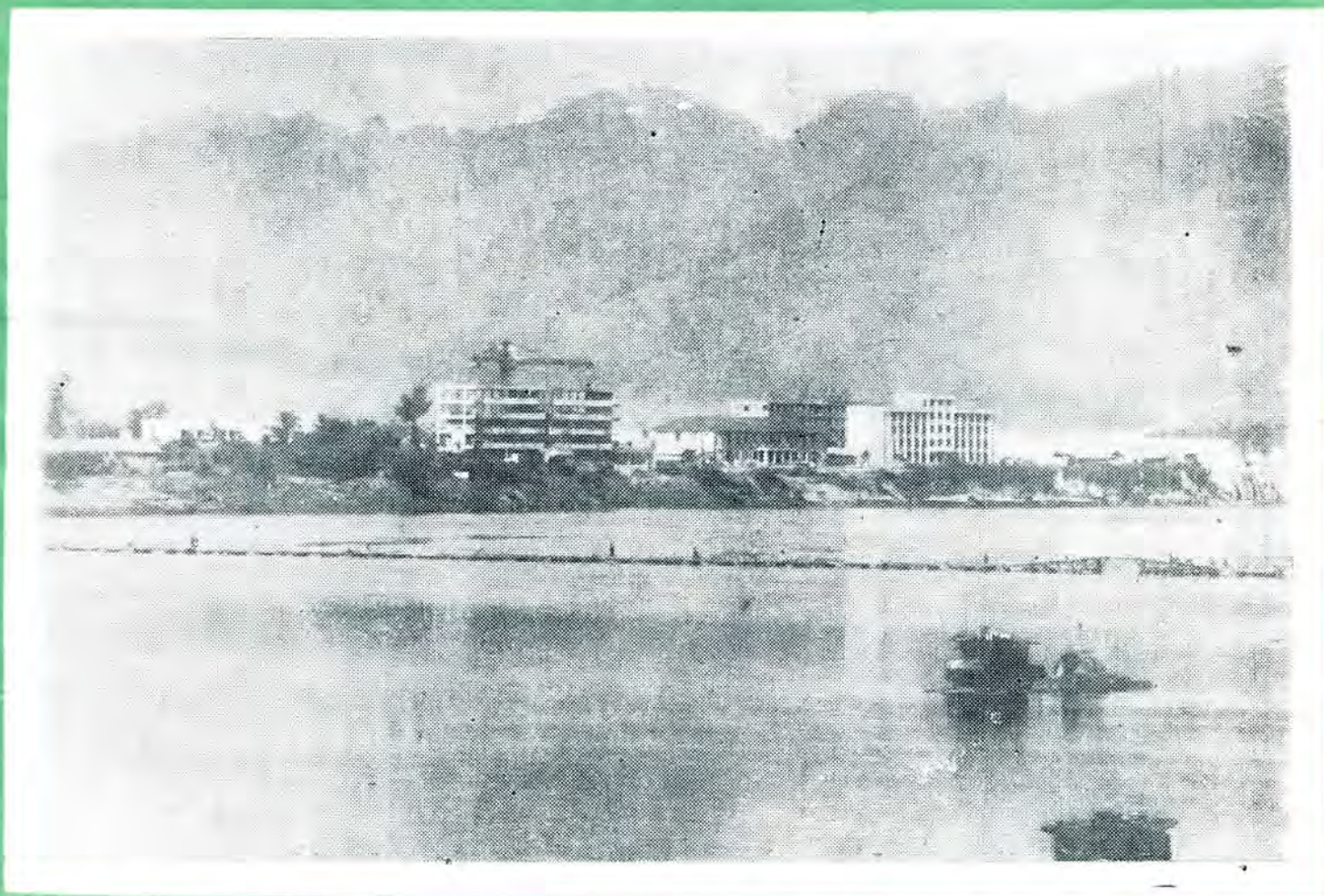
VOLUME 16
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● POLITICS

● ECONOMICS

● CULTURE

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THE AUGUST 1945 REVOLUTION IN HANOI



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CÁCH-MANG THÁNG TÂM



1. President Ho Chi Minh reading the Declaration of Independence in Ba Dinh Square on 2 September 1945 in Hanoi.

2. Guerillas from revolutionary bases entering Hanoi on 30 August 1945.

3. A Self-defence unit.
Photos:
NGUYEN BA KHOAN

4. Revolutionary leaflets distributed in Hanoi.
Photo: Archives of the Institute of History

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Front Cover:

A 1,920,000 kw hydro-electric plant will be built on this section of the Da river.

The living quarters and offices of the construction site.

Photo: NGUYEN TAN

**Vietnam
COURIER**

9 - 1980

FROM being erased from the world map to setting an indomitable example for all to see; from economic backwardness and 95% illiteracy to becoming the first developing country to send one of its citizens into space—the progress and the achievements recorded by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam—now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam—over the last 35 years appear incomprehensible to many an observer searching for reasons for the success of the Vietnamese revolution.

After defeating the French colonialists, we had to wage war against the U.S., the most powerful imperialist country. In this war of survival against great odds, said Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, we benefited from the experience accumulated during the four thousand years of our history of indefatigable struggle. This is one of the strongest points of the Vietnamese revolution.

But the "national" element alone is not sufficient. The Vietnamese leaders headed by President Ho Chi Minh have correctly chosen the best line as charted by Marxism-Leninism, itself a product of human intelligence. Its fundamental precepts are those of scientific socialism: in the country, to guarantee leadership of the proletarian revolution by the party of the proletariat, and in the world, to maintain close solidarity with the forces of peace, independence, democracy and socialism.

The Vietnamese revolutionaries have applied these conceptions with creativeness to the practical circumstances within the country, particularly in the political and armed struggle for national independence. The gains recorded in this great cause, together with the victories won over thousands of years against the northern enemy—who still is today our most dangerous and immediate enemy—and the sympathy and support afforded by the socialist countries and progressive forces, have given the Vietnamese people the firm confidence that the State they set up 35 years ago cannot be overcome by any imperialist or reactionary force. On the contrary, it becomes stronger and stronger with every passing day and will fulfil its task of ridding the country of poverty and allowing our people who have overcome countless difficulties and hardships to enjoy the happy life to which they are entitled.

We are not yet satisfied with our achievements in national construction, substantial though they may be, such as guaranteeing to our people a sufficiently high cultural standard and a good health service in difficult conditions, building a body of scientific and technical workers not existing in most developing countries, and above all creating amongst the various strata of the population an identity of views concerning the targets to be achieved. As we all know, this is not an easy task, because of our low economic level, our lack of experience in economic management, the aftermath of a long war and the threat of war still looming large over our country.

In this 35th year of its existence, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is in a state of half peace, half war—a war threatened by the Beijing expansionists acting in collusion with imperialists who have already bitten the dust in Vietnam. Our task is a very difficult one as we have to defend and build our country at the same time. This

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A COMPARISON OF THE KAMPUCHEAN

EDITOR'S Note: On 26 August 1980, the SRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a memorandum to clarify the truth about the tension now prevailing in Southeast Asia, and the correct path to a settlement of this situation.

In Part I, the memorandum points out: "... the policy of great-nation expansion and hegemony pursued by the Beijing ruling circles acting in collusion with the US imperialists constitutes a general, direct and long-term threat to the independence, peace and stability of the countries in this part of the world". It also points out: "... there is no question of Vietnam threatening aggression against Thailand. It is only a question of China, the main aggressor Vietnam has had to contend with throughout history, and Thailand, the main aggressor Kampuchea and Laos have had to contend with throughout history, entering into a collusion against the three Indochinese countries."

In Part II, the memorandum says: "The key to a settlement of the so-called 'Kampuchean problem' lies in China's putting an end to its policy of hostility towards the three Indochinese countries. China is treacherously trying to create a diversion, by pitting Thailand and other ASEAN countries against the Indochinese countries... In face of this situation, the ASEAN and the Indochinese countries should put aside their differences to promote relations of lasting cooperation and friendship on the basis of mutual understanding, respect for each other's legitimate interests, and peaceful coexistence without foreign interference. Such is the spirit and essential content of the peace proposals put forward in the Joint Communiqué of the First Confer-

ence of Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese countries, held in Phnom Penh on 5 January 1980, proposals which were further elaborated in the Statement of the Second Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese Countries, held in Vientiane on 17 and 18 July 1980."

The proposals put forward at the Conference in Vientiane include the four-point proposal of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council on the settlement of the explosive situation at the Thailand-Kampuchea border.

The Thai authorities, however, rejected this proposal. We reproduce herebelow excerpts of the memorandum.

By comparing the stands taken by the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea and by Thailand, one can clearly see where the goodwill is, and which is the correct and fair path to peace and stability on the Kampuchea-Thailand border, and contributes to peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

a) On a demilitarized zone along the Kampuchea-Thailand border.

The People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea has proposed that "Kampuchea and Thailand undertake to maintain peace and stability in border areas and to refrain from using these areas as springboards from which to violate each other's sovereignty", and:

"To establish a demilitarized zone in border areas between the two countries; and to set up a two-party joint commission to implement the agreements ensuring peace and stability on the border and reach agreement on a form of international control."

The Thai side has rejected the Kampuchean proposal on the

grounds that Thailand is not a party to the conflict in Kampuchea and that there are only military clashes between opposing sides on Kampuchean territory. However, it is well-known that over the past year and more, the situation in Kampuchea has become more and more settled, and that military clashes have taken place not inside Kampuchean territory, but in Kampuchea-Thailand border areas where remnants of Pol Pot troops and other reactionary Khmer groups have infiltrated from Thailand into Kampuchea for disruptive activities with the protection and assistance of Thailand. Military clashes on the Kampuchea-Thailand border along with massive concentrations of armed forces on both sides of the border have led to a very tense and explosive situation which is causing concern to world opinion. All the measures proposed by the Thai side (establishing safe dwelling areas, U.N. control...) are related to the situation on both sides of the Thailand-Kampuchea border. This in itself reveals that there are destabilizing factors on both sides of the border between the two countries. Over the past year and more, particularly since June 1980, some people in Thai ruling circles have raised a constant hue and cry about a "threat to the security of Thailand from Kampuchea"; yet now they claim that there is no problem on the Kampuchea-Thailand border. From this, it can only be concluded that their propaganda over the past year and more concerning a threat to Thailand is sheer fabrication, designed to give them a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea, and to cover up the fact that they are trying hard to help the Pol Pot clique and other reactionary Khmer groups use "sanctuaries"

STAND WITH THAT OF THAILAND

in Thailand to oppose the Kampuchean people.

The Thai ruling circles have also maintained that the establishment of a demilitarized zone on the Thai side of the border amounts to a loss of Thai sovereignty over the said zone and a sacrifice by Thailand of a part of its territory... If they fear a loss of Thai sovereignty, why then do they demand the establishment of a peaceful demilitarized zone inside Kampuchea?

Thailand has proposed the establishment on Kampuchean territory only of a peaceful demilitarized zone, where the Kampuchean Government's power would be abolished and replaced by U.N. power; whereas on the Thai side of the border only U.N. observers would be stationed. Thus Thailand clearly wants to abolish the sovereignty of Kampuchea over part of Kampuchean territory, to set up "a state within a state", and by the presence of U.N. observers to legalise the "sanctuaries" of the Khmer reactionaries in Thailand-Kampuchea border areas. It wants to remove the presence of the Kampuchean armed forces in Kampuchean border areas, while the Thai armed forces, including artillery and air force, would have a right to be stationed close to the border, thus posing a constant threat to Kampuchea's sovereignty and territory, and would also be free to support the reactionary Khmer groups which infiltrate into Kampuchea to oppose the Kampuchean revolution, without fear of counter-attack.

As is well-known, the remnants of Pol Pot troops and other reactionary Khmer groups in Kampuchea are now only armed bandit groups hiding in Kampuchea-Thailand border areas. In Thailand and a number of other Southeast Asian

countries, there are also anti-government armed rebel Maoist groups; will it now be considered necessary to establish peaceful demilitarized zones in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries to provide those Maoist rebels with safe sanctuaries under the aegis of the U.N. as well? Don't the various countries have a right to take necessary security measures to punish armed rebels opposing the people?

Thailand's proposal is clearly designed not to avoid clashes and ease tension, but, instead, violate the sovereignty of Kampuchea and interfere in its internal affairs, in keeping with Beijing's schemes. On the other hand, according to the proposal of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea, the demilitarized zone would only mean an absence of armed forces and of military activities in or across the area laid down by the two sides; the civilian administrative services of each side are to continue exercising their power, and civilians are to live and carry on their normal work in the demilitarized zone; the international control in the demilitarized zone is to be mutually agreed upon on the basis of respect for each country's sovereignty. In short, the purpose of the demilitarized zone as proposed by the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea is to avoid armed clashes, to preserve peace and stability in border areas, to safeguard the sovereignty and security of each country, and to protect the normal life of the people of the two countries in border areas.

b) On the problem of Kampuchean refugees in Thailand and humanitarian aid.

Points 2 and 3 in the 4-point proposal of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea have

put forward measures for a proper settlement of these humanitarian problems. However, the Thai side has adamantly stuck to its mistaken standpoint.

The Thai ruling circles hold that it is necessary to establish safe dwelling areas or a peaceful demilitarized zone on Kampuchean territory to ensure safety for the refugees. If they are really concerned about the safety of the refugees, why do they not move them to centres far from combat areas, or to third countries, in accordance with their wishes? Why have they brought Kampuchean refugees to the very areas along the Thailand-Kampuchea border where military clashes are taking place, and then demanded that their safety be guaranteed? Why have they turned refugee camps into sanctuaries for the reactionary Khmer armed forces? Why have they used the repatriation of refugees to cover up the military infiltrations of the reactionary Khmer forces into Kampuchea? If they really have humanitarian concerns, why have they deliberately turned the refugee and relief issues into political conflicts and provocations leading to military clashes?

It is common knowledge that the Kampuchean refugees in Thailand include civilians who left their country because of famine, because of the fear of war, or because of the coercion from remnants of Pol Pot troops compelling them to flee with them. Mixed with the civilian refugees are fairly large numbers of remnants of Pol Pot troops and other armed Khmer reactionaries, who are also regarded as refugees by Thailand. Under the 1949 Geneva Convention on Neutral Status and the 1951 Convention on Refugee Status, the remnants of Pol Pot troops and the other Khmer armed forces opposing the

People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea who have fled to Thailand, are not to be regarded as refugees. They must be disarmed and concentrated in separate camps far from combat zones. However, the Thai side has allowed the armed Khmer reactionaries to remain in refugee camps on the Thailand-Kampuchea border and to control these camps; and now it demands that these camps be moved inside Kampuchean territory to so-called "peaceful demilitarized zone"! So the Thai ruling circles are not interested in ensuring the safety of the refugees. The point is, the Pol Pot clique being no longer in control of the population or land in Kampuchea, the humanitarian label has to be used to create refugee camps which can be placed under the control of the armed Khmer reactionaries, and to create zones which serve as footholds for them inside Kampuchea. If we really are considering refugees, what other country has established inviolable "sanctuaries" on its territory to encourage its own refugees to settle there?

On the pretext of giving aid on a fair basis to both sides (1), the Thai ruling circles insist on distribution of relief goods on the Thailand-Kampuchea border and transportation of the same by land across the Thailand-Kampuchea border. What is the real situation? Over the past year and more, three-quarters of the relief goods from Western countries channelled through international humanitarian organizations, have been sent to the Thailand-Kampuchea border areas, and only one-quarter has been delivered inside Kampuchean territory. Many objective observers have affirmed that hardly any of the relief goods have actually reached the Kampuchean refugees; almost all of them have fallen into the hands of the Pol Pot clique and the other Khmer reactionaries. In November 1979, U.S. Congresswoman Ms Holtzman visited a refugee camp on the Thailand-Kampuchea border and

said that she had found Pol Pot soldiers looking healthy and well-fed while children were starving" (VOA, November 5, 1979). Various people in the Thai ruling circles have even brazenly tried to pressurize the international organizations to distribute the relief goods on the Thailand-Kampuchea border, threatening that Thailand would otherwise cut off the air and sea transport of the same from Bangkok to Phnom Penh. In 1979 there was famine in Kampuchea, but the situation was not as serious as was loudly claimed by the propaganda machines of Thailand, China and the United States. The famine in Kampuchea was deliberately exaggerated, and figures topping the million mark were bandied about (while there were in fact only 150,000 refugees). The purpose was to misuse the humanitarian aid label to supply the Khmer reactionaries; to entice Kampuchean to flee to Thailand as refugees so as to have a source of new recruits for their political and military forces; to create instability along the Kampuchean border; to facilitate their infiltration into Kampuchea for disruptive activities against the Kampuchean revolutionary power; and to misuse humanitarian aid to enrich a number of people in Thailand.

The Thai ruling circles claimed that they had allowed the voluntary repatriation of refugees on humanitarian grounds. If it really was so, why did they adamantly refuse to negotiate, and unilaterally took measures to be imposed on Kampuchea, when the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea stated its readiness to negotiate such repatriation? Obviously they want to use the refugees to further their political and military designs. In the dry season of 1979, when the remnants of Pol Pot troops faced the prospect of disintegration, they opened the border to them and used food to entice Kampuchean to flee to Thailand as refugees. When the rainy season set in, and the Pol Pot clique and

other reactionary Khmer groups imagined that they might be able to indulge in disruptive activities under cover of favourable weather conditions, Thailand pushed the refugees back across the border, using civilians, women and children as shield behind which to send back Khmer reactionaries, after their recovery and with better equipment, to fight the Kampuchean people. This is the truth about the massive and brutal driving back of tens of thousands of refugees across the border during the 1979 rainy season. This is also the essence of the so-called "voluntary repatriation plan" that the Thai ruling circles are trying hard to carry out in the current rainy season.

The proposals of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea constitute practical measures for a good solution to the refugee and relief problem, through negotiations and cooperation between the two sides and with international organizations. Their aims are humanitarian, they will contribute to peace and stability in border areas of the two countries, and are based on respect for the independence and sovereignty of Kampuchea and Thailand. Any measure taken under a humanitarian label which has not been negotiated and which tramples upon Kampuchea's sovereignty cannot be implemented.

c) On the form of negotiations.

The People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea has shown great flexibility and much goodwill with regard to the conduct of negotiations: the negotiations may be conducted directly, or indirectly through a country representing Kampuchea and another representing Thailand, or through an intermediary to be mutually agreed upon.

The Thai side has refused to negotiate with the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea on the grounds that it does not

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KAMPUCHEA AND THE GENUINE INTERESTS OF THAILAND

THE proposals put forward by the People's Republic of Kampuchea and supported by the People's Democratic Republic of Laos and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the foreign ministers' conference of the three countries in Vientiane on 17-18 July 1980 were rejected by the Thai authorities. Beijing has not concealed its satisfaction at this rejection.

For nearly two years now the Kampuchean situation has drawn the attention of world opinion. Beijing, which has lost a new-type colony and a bridgehead for expansion in Indochina and Southeast Asia, reacted vio-

lently to the fact that Vietnam, responding to the call of the Kampuchean patriotic forces, had come to help this country overthrow the genocidal regime of the Kampuchean Maoists. It slanderously alleged that Vietnam had "invaded" Kampuchea. Some Western circles, still unreconciled to Vietnam's victory over imperialism, seized this opportunity to stain Vietnam's image and hastened to join the chorus led by China, their new ally in the conspiracy against peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

The anti-Vietnam propaganda machine has completely distorted the

situation in Kampuchea. It tries to make believe that in Kampuchea bloody conflicts are taking place between Heng Samrin's and Vietnamese forces on the one hand and Pol Pot's and other opposing forces on the other. They also talk of an imminent and terrible famine for which Vietnam would be responsible. They particularly stress the threat presented by the Vietnamese forces stationed in Kampuchea to the security and territorial integrity of neighbouring Thailand.

(Continued on page 15)

Hanoi's Viewpoint

ISRAEL'S ILLEGAL DECISION ON JERUSALEM

IN spite of strong protest of the Arab countries and public opinion throughout the world, the Israeli Parliament on 30 July 1980 declared Jerusalem its capital city.

Six years ago, on February 1974, the Islamic summit conference held in Lahore declared that no Islamic countries would accept any agreement or arrangement allowing the Israeli aggressors to continue their occupation of Jerusalem city or transfer this city to a non-Islamic or non-Arab country or turn it into the object of bargaining or compromise... Since then, public opinion in the Arab world and elsewhere has continued to condemn the illegal occupation of Jerusalem by the Israeli expansionists. However, Israel has not desisted from its scheme to permanently occupy this city of the Arab world.

Jerusalem, capital city of Palestine in ancient times, a city which blends the antique and the modern, has played an important and sacred role in the liberation struggle to restore the fundamental and inalienable national rights of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples. By trying to perpetuate their occupation of Jerusalem and turning it into their permanent capital city the Israeli expansionists actually scheme to definitively annex the homeland of the Palestinian people. In addition, by turning a holy site of Islam into one of the Jewish faith Israel has earned large sums every year from the pilgrims.

Israel's scheme to annex Jerusalem dates back to the days when it seized the homeland of the Palestinian people. But condemned by world opinion it resorted to "nibbling" tactics. First, it took a series of measures aimed at preventing the Arabs from returning to Jerusalem, prohibiting municipal elections in Arab areas, abolishing all Arab laws in this city, imposing heavy levies on Arabs in order to force them to leave Jerusalem, strictly prohibiting all

relations between the Arabs in Jerusalem with those in other Israeli-occupied areas, then occupying the whole eastern sector of Jerusalem and gradually transferring the production and administrative establishments of Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The Israeli aggressors' adoption of the illegal resolution turning Jerusalem into their permanent capital city and their declaration on the following day that they would also assimilate into Israeli territory the Golan heights of Syria seized by them in 1967, their drafting of the law on the so-called "Israeli sovereignty over Golan", their continued drive to force hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs to leave their native land in the areas occupied by them in order to set up Jewish settlements, have exposed the extremely reactionary nature of Zionist expansionism. The Zionist expansionists, henchmen of the United States in this important strategic area, are plotting to annex one by one the lands of the Palestinian Arabs and other Arab peoples in an attempt to consolidate and expand their territory.

Israel's illegal decision to make Jerusalem their capital city has generated a broad wave of protest among the Islamic countries and the whole Arab world.

The World Peace Council has issued a statement pointing out that Israel's decision is a brazen violation of all the resolutions of the United Nations and a challenge to public opinion. All the peaceful and democratic forces throughout the world are supporting and uniting with the Palestinian people in their just struggle under the leadership of the PLO, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Quan Dot Nhan dan
(People's Army daily), August 1980



35 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

EVER since its foundation, the Communist Party of Vietnam has regarded the international factor as one determining the success of the revolution. In their unequal fight against enemies many times stronger than themselves, the Vietnamese people have combined their own national strength with the strength of the epoch to create an aggregate strength and used correct revolutionary methods to win victories.

Taking advantage of the most favourable international conditions and seizing strategic opportunities

The Russian October Revolution opened up a new era, providing an extremely favourable opportunity for the oppressed peoples of the world to embark confidently on the road of national independence and socialism. This favourable international situation was considerably enhanced after the Second World War, when the Soviet Red Army had defeated fascism and militarism; socialism had transcended the boundaries of one country to become a world system, and imperialism had entered a stage of general crisis and irremediable decline.

Never before had the national aspirations enjoyed such favourable international conditions. In feudal times, those nations who were victims of aggression could only rely on their own strength to win victory in their struggle, taking advantage of the power struggle within the ruling class of the aggressor country, of popular insurrections in that country, and of punitive wars between feudal empires. But even if they managed to regain and maintain their independence, small nations had to accept the hegemony of the big nations to some extent, and could hardly hope to preserve complete and firm independence.

The imperialist era was marked by a few imperialist countries occupying almost all the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and imposing their rule on the

world. Jungle law prevailed and justice was scorned.

As early as spring 1941, when the Second World War broke out, the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh were already predicting that "just as the previous world war gave birth to the Soviet Union, a socialist country, so this world war will give birth to many other socialist countries, enabling the revolution in many countries to succeed." (1) The Party consequently undertook to vigorously step up the Vietnamese people's struggle, and step by step changed from political struggle to political struggle combined with armed struggle, in order to wage partial insurrections and eventually to launch a nationwide uprising to seize power throughout the country. Seizing the unique opportunity offered by the annihilation of German fascism and Japanese militarism — the most bellicose and strongest forces of imperialism — and the weakening of the whole imperialist system, the Party led the entire people, in both rural and urban areas, to rise up in general insurrection and establish revolutionary power throughout the country. This correct policy and the quick triumph of the August Revolution in 1945 practically paralysed the 60,000 Japanese troops which remained on Vietnamese soil and presented the allied forces which came to disarm the Japanese troops with a fait accompli — the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, an independent and sovereign country, had been founded.

Thirty years later, in 1975, the Vietnamese people were offered a similarly favourable international situation; the US defeat in Vietnam which forced it to withdraw its troops from Vietnam marked a new world situation — the post-Vietnam period characterized by a generalised and determined opposition by the American people to a second Vietnam. Meanwhile, the petrol war in late 1973 plunged the capitalist world into an all-round, far-reaching, drawn-out and insoluble crisis. Seizing this historic opportunity, the Party led the Vietnamese people to the complete liberation of the South and the reunification of the country

This came as a complete and utter shock to the US imperialists and the Beijing reactionaries.

Closely combining the strength of the nation with the strength of the epoch for invincible aggregate strength

Compared with the French colonialists, or the US imperialists or the Beijing reactionaries, the economic and military strength of Vietnam is tiny.

The aggressors' weaknesses lie rather in the injustice of their actions, on the one hand, and in their inability to concentrate their economic and military forces on their aggression against Vietnam alone, on the other. And indeed their goal is more far-reaching. Because of their great ambitions, they have to disperse their forces in many parts of the world to serve their aims of expansion and domination, to cope with rival imperialist powers, and they have to keep some forces at home to defend their regimes. In particular, they have to reckon with the Soviet Union when deploying their forces since it is the biggest force of containment and deterrence blocking the imperialists' aggressive and bellicose plans. Finally, they also have to guard themselves against the growing offensive of the world revolution. The Vietnamese revolution has thus come out stronger than any enemy force because Vietnam is fighting for a just cause, has the strength which lies in the solidarity of the entire people, and moreover, enjoys the solidarity and support of the people of the world united in a common front against imperialism and reaction.

This does not mean that any form of national struggle for peace, independence and socialism can optimally combine at the highest level the strength of the nation with that of the era by itself. This must be the conscious work of the leaders of the revolution. It is the consistent policy of the Vietnamese Party and State to closely associate the struggle of the Vietnamese people with the revolutionary cause of the people of the

ON THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT

world and to give active support and assistance to the revolutionary movements in different countries.

We have always paid due attention to the interaction between the Vietnamese revolution and the world revolution and judiciously combined the interests of our nation with the interests of other nations in the world, and we strive our best for the common cause of the world revolution. We always uphold the banners of national independence and socialism and we closely combine genuine patriotism with proletarian internationalism.

The Vietnamese people's struggle for independence has always been closely associated with the struggle of the people of the world for peace. Our people's fight itself constitutes a positive contribution to the safeguarding of world peace. During the anti-US war of resistance when the US escalated and broadened the war to its largest scale we stood by our policy of containing the struggle within the borders of Vietnam.

The Vietnamese people were deeply moved by the declarations of many fraternal countries offering to send volunteers to Vietnam, but we were confident that with our own forces and with wholehearted world support and assistance, both moral and material, we would be able to defeat the US aggressors. This reflected our correct conception of the interaction between our national interests and the interests of world peace.

Throughout their struggle the Vietnamese people have regarded their solidarity with the Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries as a factor of vital importance for their own cause as well as for the revolutionary cause of the people of the world as a whole. Now as before we resolutely oppose all imperialist schemes to interfere in and weaken the world socialist system. We fully support the justified retaliatory measures taken by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries during the counter-revolutionary putsches in Hungary and Czechoslovakia masterminded by

imperialism and the other reactionary forces. We have uncompromisingly struggled against those forces which seek to divide the world revolutionary movement, of which the Soviet Union and the socialist system is the pillar—the Beijing reactionaries who plot to destroy the unity of the movement and eventually to abolish the socialist system, the common fruit of the revolutionary struggle of the people of the world.

While fighting for their own national independence, the Vietnamese people have also consistently stood in the front line of the resolute struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America for national independence and a new world economic order, against imperialism, colonialism, racism and zionism.

Vietnam is active in the non-aligned movement. We stand for non-participation of the non-aligned movement in any military bloc; but to stand outside the blocs is not the goal of the movement. The movement should struggle against colonialism, old and new, in order to win peace, national independence and socialism, and defend the nation's natural resources. We are of the view that the non-aligned movement should unite and cooperate with the socialist countries which are their most loyal and trustworthy friends, in order to consolidate national independence and build prosperous countries. We oppose the scheme of the Beijing reactionaries to steer the non-aligned movements away from its proper course of opposing imperialism and colonialism and to bring it within their orbit. We protest against their policy of opposing to two "superpowers" of their "three worlds" theory, which is essentially a policy of colluding with the imperialists to oppose the socialist countries and the world revolutionary movement.

For the last one hundred years or so the three Indochinese countries have been constant victims of foreign aggression. The French colonialists, the Japanese militarists, the US imperialists and now the Beijing expansionists have all

nurtured schemes to subjugate the three countries of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. Their traditional policy has always been to divide and rule, to use the people of this country to oppose the people of the two other countries, and to use one country as a base from which to annex the other countries. When faced with these common enemies, it is natural for the peoples of the Indochinese countries to unite closely, in order to fight and together win victory for the independence of each country. That is the law of the revolution of each country. This noble solidarity, a model of proletarian internationalism, has won international praise and is frowned upon only by the imperialists and reactionaries.

While fighting against French colonialism, US imperialism and Beijing hegemonism, our people have always attached great importance to friendship and solidarity with the French, American and Chinese peoples, because both our people and the peoples of these countries are direct victims of the aggressive and bellicose policy of the ruling circles in their countries.

The combined strength of our nation and of the era reached its peak in the anti-US war of resistance. The world people's front in support of the Vietnamese people in resisting US aggression played a significant role in forcing the United States to end the war and withdraw its troops from Vietnam. In order to reach its goal, this front was involved in a concerted struggle to defeat the plot of the Beijing reactionaries to divide the world revolutionary movement in an attempt to monopolize the fight of the Vietnamese people for the benefit of their collusion with the US imperialists.

The Vietnamese people's struggle covered a period during which the world revolutionary movement faced great difficulties and complexities and went through deep crises. In the 50's and 60's, the marvellous progress of science and technology was overshadowed by the nuclear power potential and

the bellicosity of US imperialism. This generated widespread fear of a third world war and serious doubts about the possibility of safeguarding world peace, and of repelling and defeating US imperialism. For its part, national liberation movements experienced a series of setbacks, such as the failure of the Congolese revolution, the reverses in Latin America following the death of Che Guevara, the failures of the Dominican and Indonesian revolution, and the defeats of the Arab countries in face of US-backed Israeli aggression. Meanwhile, the Beijing expansionists violated Indian territory, undermined the Asian-African solidarity, sabotaged the second Afro-Asian Conference and caused a serious split among the socialist countries and the international communist movement.

In this situation, the dauntless struggle of the Vietnamese people against US imperialism had major significance in the context of the destiny of the world and the world revolutionary movement. Never before had the destiny of a small nation been so closely linked to the destiny of the people of the world. The Vietnamese people's determination to fight to the end, whatever the hardships and sacrifices, was a great encouragement to the people of the world and strengthened their confidence in the ultimate victory of the struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism. In return for the Vietnamese people's contribution, the people of the world gave them unqualified, and most effective, deep and far-reaching support.

It is in this sense that the victory of the Vietnamese people and the defeat of US imperialism have made significant contributions to changing the world balance of forces and averting the danger of another world war.

Gradually fighting off and beating, and eventually defeating the enemy completely

All wars of national liberation, like that of the Vietnamese people to liberate themselves from foreign domination, have always begun with an unequal fight in which an empty-handed people was confronted with a much bigger and stronger enemy; and this fight has

always had to go through many stages of very arduous and protracted struggle in order to gradually change the balance of forces before achieving final victory. This was as true in the past as it is to day.

The ultimate goals put forward by the Communist Party of Vietnam for the national liberation struggle have been independence and unity. These are uncompromising principles. To achieve these goals we have had to conduct a stage-by-stage struggle to win victories, and we have had to be judicious in our choice of tactics so that they conform to the balance of forces and to the requirements and the slogans of struggle in each stage.

The signing on 6 March 1946 of the Modus Vivendi between our Government and the French Government forced the French to recognize the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a free, sovereign State, though not yet a fully independent and unified one. We agreed to let 15,000 French troops enter the North, for a period not exceeding five years, in order to get rid of 180,000 Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) troops and to sweep away their henchmen, the local reactionaries; we would thus win time to consolidate and strengthen our forces in preparation for the nation-wide resistance against the French colonialist aggressors which we knew was inevitable.

Following the Dien Bien Phu victory our people were in a position to win complete victory and liberate the whole country; but the Beijing ruling circles shamelessly betrayed them by preventing this possibility.

The signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements thus did not fully reflect our people's victory on the battlefield, but nevertheless marked another step forward by our people on the long road of struggle; France was forced to end its war of aggression in Vietnam and withdraw troops from Vietnam, recognize the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people, namely independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, something it had refused to accept eight years before in the March 6, 1946 Modus Vivendi. Northern Vietnam was

completely liberated and embarked on socialist construction. The achievements in economic development and national defence of the socialist North made it a stable base for the whole country in the anti-US resistance aimed at national democratic revolution and national reunification. It also made it possible for us to carry out our international duty toward the revolution of Laos and Kampuchea.

In 1960 a political programme was issued by the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation in which the aims of the Front were clearly to oust the US from South Vietnam and eventually reunify the country; this involved a tactical acceptance of a temporarily independent and neutral South Vietnam.

In 1968 the US had to adopt a policy of simultaneously fighting and negotiating with Vietnam, and was forced to end unconditionally the bombing of the North and to agree to sit at the conference table with the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation. This was another success of the Vietnamese revolution, marking a new step and a steady advance of the anti-US war of resistance. The tactics of holding a four-party conference on Vietnam protected the socialist North by providing it with conditions to restore the economy and increase its all-round potential and effective assistance to the revolution in the South as well as in Laos and Kampuchea. By accepting to negotiate with the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, the United States actually recognized the role of the Front in the settlement of the South Vietnam issue. This represented another retreat by the US in its scheme to place South Vietnam under its complete control.

The signing of the Paris Agreement in January 1973 greatly changed the balance of forces to the favour of the Vietnamese people. The United States had to commit itself to end its war of aggression, pull out all its troops and the troops of its satellites from South Vietnam, and thus irrevocably confirm its military withdrawal from Indochina in order to avoid another Vietnam. At the same time the United States had to accept the reality of a South Vietnam with two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces. This was a major step toward complete abo-

tion of the puppet administration in the South. For our part, we accepted the temporary existence of the puppet administration in the South in order to force the US to withdraw all its troops and cease its interference in the South. Thus, the puppet administration not only lost its prop — the US expeditionary corps — but also was denied status as the only legal administration in South Vietnam: now they were only one of three equally legal forces in the South. Meanwhile, the revolution firmly maintained its military and political strength and was provided with a firm legal basis on which to continue its advance. The signing of the Paris Agreement thus made possible the complete liberation of the South and contributed to the victory of the revolutionary cause of all the three countries in Indochina.

Events have shown that the method of fighting off the enemy step by step and beating them one sector at a time, and eventually completely defeating them is correct and accurate. From the Modus Vivendi of 6 March 1946 to the 1954 Geneva Agreements, then the 1973 Paris Agreement, the Communist Party of Vietnam has led the Vietnamese people, step by step, to steady victories and finally to the realisation of the ultimate goal of national independence and complete reunification of the country.

Consistently pursuing a policy of peace, friendship and all-round cooperation with other countries

Immediately after the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam President Ho Chi Minh pointed out (in the Declaration of Independence proclaimed on September 2nd, 1945) that "All the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live and to be happy and free." Our State has been loyal to this correct attitude to relations between the nations and countries of the world throughout the past 35 years, consistently following a policy of peace, friendship and many-sided cooperation with other countries. The Vietnamese people have been victims of successive aggression by the French colonialists and the US imperialists in the past, and the Beijing reactionaries at present, and they remain as determined to defend their independ-

ence, freedom and peace as to respect and support the independence, freedom and peace of other nations.

We have consistently pursued a policy of peace and friendship among countries with different social systems and a policy of solving disputes through negotiations. Even when avowed enemies have plotted to infringe their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Vietnamese people have persisted in their policy of negotiation to prevent conflicts and bloodshed, and have taken to arms to fight aggression only when forced to. This is borne out by the negotiations in 1946 and 1954, the implementation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, the five years of negotiation with the United States and the implementation of the 1973 Paris Agreement, and again by our consistent policy of negotiation with the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique from 1975 to 1978 and with the Chinese authorities at present all ample evidence of the correct policy of our State. Meanwhile, we are ready to establish normal relations even with countries which have sent troops to invade our country. We have established and since broadened our relations with France, and we are ready to normalize relations with the United States on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam.

With regard to our neighbours in Southeast Asia, we have consistently affirmed our desire to build long-term relations of friendship and cooperation according to the principles of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and political system, renunciation of the use of the threat of force, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations. This policy remains unchanged. For this reason, right after our country was completely liberated and reunified, we showed our readiness not only to forget their hostility toward our country during our people's war of resistance against US aggression but also to establish diplomatic relations with all countries in the region. We have proposed and stand ready to discuss and sign a non-aggression pact with the members of ASEAN, just as we are ready to discuss with them the establishment of a peaceful, independent free, neutral, stable and prosperous Southeast Asia.

Our country's policy of peace, friendship and cooperation with other countries has contributed positively to the safeguarding of peace in Southeast Asia and in the world. In 1950 we established diplomatic relations with the countries in the socialist camp. Today we have relations with 105 countries including the socialist countries, national independent countries as well as developed capitalist countries.

The past 35 years is the longest period of peace the people of the world have been able to maintain since the emergence of imperialism. But during these 35 years, it has been on Vietnam that the flame of war has raged most continuously and atrociously, but our people have overcome the worst difficulties and have recorded victories of historic and international significance.

At present, the collusion between Chinese great-nation expansionism and hegemonism and imperialism, and in particular US imperialism, and other reactionary forces, is posing a serious threat to the independence, sovereignty, peace and security of the nations in Indochina and the whole of Southeast Asia. The Beijing hegemonists have large-scale expansionist ambitions. But their capabilities are limited. They are still weak, and more important still, they are trying to carry out their plans in the post-Vietnam period, when the three revolutionary currents of the world have become stronger and are launching a much more impetuous offensive than in the period immediately following the Second World War. Whereas British and French imperialism were able to maintain their colonial rule over the world for many centuries, after World War Two, US imperialism, despite being the strongest of any imperialists ever, has only been able to rule the roost for a few decades. Beijing hegemonism can in no way match up to British, French and American imperialism; and cannot avoid the dismal fate that has befallen past aggressors.

(Condensed from an article by Phuc Cuong in Tap Chi Cong San (Review of Communism), June 1980)

(1) Resolution of the 8th Plenum of the Party Central Committee (1947)



VIETNAM'S AGRICULTURE



Pine-apples at the "26 March" State Farm in the northern border province of Ha Tuyen

Photo: NGUYEN TAN

IN a previous issue we outlined the various stages of development of Vietnam's agriculture over the past 35 years. Per hectare yield as well as total output of rice have doubled since 1945. Nevertheless, big difficulties remain in food production. What are these problems and how can we solve them?

1. Problems of productive force

We are privileged by a rich and diversified tropical agriculture and have abundant land and manpower resources. But these advantages have not been fully exploited.

First of all, the average rice yield per hectare throughout the country remains low: about 3 metric tons even though some outstanding units have reaped from 5 to 7 tons and these include not only cooperatives, villages and hamlets but also larger localities like provinces and districts. In fact, the productivity of most of the land under cultivation is still low. The causes are diverse: in some localities the land has not been sufficiently improved, in others it is due to a lack of material and technical facilities, and in other localities it is due to bad production management. In quite a few cases, it results from the failure to arouse the working masses' sense of collective mastery.

Whereas in many regions cooperatives have grown three crops on the same land each year, most of the country grows only slightly more than one crop per year. Vast capabilities remain for increasing the number of crops on the same land because the con-

ditions of climate, weather, temperature and daylight in our country are very favourable for growing many plants throughout the year. The achievements of agricultural science and technology, especially those concerning crop structure, have made it possible for almost all the cultivated land in different regions of our country to grow two or three crops per year with high yield. In fact, many localities and cooperatives have obtained remarkable results in this area, bringing the coefficient of land utilisation to almost three, such as the Binh Minh co-op in Ha Son Binh, Thang Long co-op in Hai Hung, and Quynh Bao in Thai Binh. However, in the country as a whole this coefficient is still very low, standing at 1.35 (1.6 in the North and 1.1 in the South). Worthy of note is that 2.3 million hectares in the whole country still grow only one rice crop a year, nearly two million of which are in the South. In many areas most land growing two rice crops can grow an additional crop in winter. But this possibility remains unexploited.

Throughout the country almost five million hectares more can be put to cultivation. There are at present only a little more than five million hectares of cultivated land in the whole country, or one hectare for every ten or more people. This situation imposes very strict limitations to the development of agriculture and requires urgent consideration. This small per capita land area prevents the development of a multi-product agriculture capable of ensuring the basic needs of society in food and clothing as well as the need for accumula-

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

NGUYEN NGOC TRIU

Minister of Agriculture

tion. Such an agriculture cannot serve either as a basis for the development of other branches of the economy. Therefore, we are left with no other alternative than to step up land reclamation in order to bring the total cultivated area in the whole country to about 11 million hectares after two or three five-year plans. Furthermore, only through land reclamation can we constitute, step by step, areas of concentrated, specialized and intensive cultivation along the lines of large-scale socialist production.

To exploit our great capabilities in intensive and multi-crop cultivation on the existing land and quickly expand our cultivated area through land reclamation we have to solve simultaneously the following series of questions:

Firstly, we must understand that agricultural production involves not one but many branches. It must solve not only questions arising from its own needs but also requires help from and coordination with many other branches during the whole process of production (engineering, metallurgy, electricity, chemicals, communications and transport) and in distribution work with the ministries of foreign and home trade. Most important of all is the building of the main material and technical bases of agriculture.

We must solve the question of irrigation at all costs. Over the past 35 years, especially since the restoration of peace in the North (1954), the Party, Government and people have built quite a comprehensive system of irrigation and drainage capable of servicing 50% of the rice area and reducing the area subjected to annual flooding to only 300,000 hectares. But this is far from meeting the requirements of production especially those of intensive farming, multi-cropping and productivity increases. The present systems of irrigation and drainage still lack uniformity and are not yet capable of limiting the damage caused by natural disasters (such as the loss of millions of hectares of rice during the 1978 floods, or the serious damage to more than 500,000 hectares caused by a prolonged drought in Winter and Spring 1979). Another difficulty comes from the inadequate and erratic electricity supply for the pumping stations. The present power plants can ensure normally 40% of the electricity needed. Moreover, most of the existing irrigation and drainage works still operate below capacity.

Inadequate irrigation and drainage is observed mainly in the areas of large-scale agriculture where big possibilities exist for crop multiplication, intensive farming and higher per hectare yield, such as the eastern part of South Vietnam, the Central Highlands and the Mekong River delta. In the whole country there remain 2.3 million hectares grown to only one crop a year. To turn this area into double-crop land much remains to be done with regard to irrigation in order to dam up salty water, wash out alkali, drain surplus water and bring in fresh water. The growing of perennial industrial crops in the eastern part of South Vietnam and the Central Highlands requires good irrigation. All this is greatly reducing our capacity to take advantage of the favourable natural conditions in each region. Over the question of ferti-

lizer, in the next few years we cannot rapidly increase the supply of chemical fertilizers like nitrogenous, phosphate and potash fertilizers. What is more, we cannot draw an accurate plan for the supply of these fertilizers since the bulk of them are to be imported. Meanwhile, both the area under cultivation and the need for more intensive farming are continually expanding. Our solution to the problem is to step up the production, processing and use of organic manure (litter, green manure, silt, alluvium and other sources) combined with a rational use of chemical fertilizers. The recent decision of the government to devote 10-15% of cultivated land for the development of stockbreeding, especially pig breeding, is actually intended to increase the supply of meat as well as fertilizer.

But it is clear that all these questions cannot be solved overnight. Especially in the southern provinces where the use of organic fertilizer was unknown to the farmers who entirely depended on imports for their fertilizers, it will take some time to transform these habits and traditions.

Furthermore, it is not easy to supply enough organic fertilizer for the newly cultivated lands, especially in the Mekong River delta, and all the more so when the multiplication of crops and intensive farming demand ever increasing amounts of fertilizers. Accordingly, chemical fertilizers remain an important necessity in these regions.

As for mechanisation, while ploughing in the past relied mainly on animal power and manual implements, today over 30% of the cultivated area are ploughed and harrowed by machines. Almost all districts throughout the country already have either a State-run station or team of tractors supplemented by the small tractors of the cooperatives (in the North), or the tractors owned by collectives or individuals (in the South). Some jobs in agricultural production like pumping, transport, rice thrashing and husking, have been partly mechanized.

Big problems remain to be solved in the supply of machine parts and accessories in view of the limited capacity of the engineering industry and also of the disparity of the farming machines coming from different countries. On the other hand, the fuel supply for the tractors and pumping stations is both inadequate and erratic.

In the coming years, a primary task in the mechanisation of agriculture is to ensure enough traction power for new large tracts of land to be opened in the eastern part of South Vietnam, the Central Highlands and in the Mekong River delta, land which is capable of supporting several crops in each year, especially the winter crop areas in the northern provinces. Besides, a sizable amount of machines and equipment must be devoted to land reclamation.

Thus, it can be said that intensive farming, multiplication of crops and expansion of the land under cultivation is a strategic and fundamental orientation for Vietnamese agriculture, and a correct one at that. In recent years we have striven in that orientation and have recorded notable achievements in spite of



Maize harvest in newly reclaimed land in the Southern province of Thuan Hai.

Photo VNA

numerous difficulties. Great efforts are required in the next few years for multiple reasons; the harsh natural conditions which we are not yet in a position to overcome, the already backward material and technical bases of agriculture which have moreover been devastated by two protracted and fierce wars, and the ever-present threat of a new war.

The labour force in agriculture has been diverted to the needs of national defence and other branches of the economy, so that the labour force in the countryside is mainly constituted by women and elderly people. In the present conditions where tools are still in the main manual implements we are obviously not in a position to cope with the increasing volume of work demanded by the multiplication of crops and intensive farming.

2. Problems relating to the relations of production and agricultural policies

At present, there still exists three economic sectors in Vietnam's agriculture: State-run, cooperative and private. The heterogenous relations of production, especially in the South where private farming remains predominant, are creating obstacles in many respects to the building of the material and technical foundations for agriculture, to the application of new technical measures as well as to the guidance and planning of production...

In the North where we had the merit of having basically completed agricultural cooperation we made the mistake of leaving unresolved over a long period the scope of the cooperatives, some co-ops being too

large to suit our present managerial capacity. Not enough attention has been paid to building up the material and technical foundations of the co-ops or to raising cadres' managerial capacity. Little improvement has been made in managerial questions within co-ops; more specifically, there has been no attempt to link the responsibility of the working people to the goods they produce, the system of distribution in the co-ops does not stimulate the working zeal of the producers.

In the South, during the campaign for setting up new, socialist relations of production, many localities set up agricultural cooperatives or collectives in order to guide step by step the individual peasants onto the collective path. However, in quite a few localities the principle of voluntariness has not been strictly observed, too much stress has been laid on quantity at the expense of quality, preparations have been inadequate especially in propaganda work and in the training of managerial cadres for the co-ops and collectives, the movement for agricultural cooperation has been divorced from the building and consolidation of the Party and mass organisations, etc. As a result we still fail to demonstrate the superiority of the new relations of production. At some point in time and in some places this situation has adversely affected agricultural production.

Some policies relating to the prices of agricultural products and other policies which were issued in specific circumstances in the past have proved obsolete and no longer suit the new conditions. Yet, we have been late in modifying or correcting them.

All these shortcomings are being gradually overcome. Recently, the 6th plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (1979) made a critical review of the situation and worked out orientation to redress it. The resolution adopted at the session calls for "promotion of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, the production of consumer goods and exports", concentrated investments in water conservancy, fertilizers, insecticides and tractive power for agriculture, "consolidation of the cooperatives in the North in conjunction with the building of the district level, training of more managerial and technical cadres, improvement of managerial work, popularisation of the experiences of the advanced co-ops, increasing the economic efficiency of labour, land and the existing means of production" in order to develop production. In the South, the resolution calls for the "steady consolidation of the existing cooperatives and production collectives and active preparations of the necessary conditions especially the training of managerial cadres at the grassroots in order to guide the farmers from the present low forms of cooperation such as the mutual aid teams and solidarity teams to higher forms such as production collectives and cooperatives."

In particular, the resolution stresses the role of the policies aimed at stimulating agricultural production. To implement the resolution, the government has

promulgated a series of new policies such as the policy to stabilize the duty of food contribution of the peasants over a period of five years, the policy to lease lands to individual peasants for the planting of the winter crops, the policy to distribute proceeds according to labour within the cooperatives, the policy on pig and cattle breeding, etc. These new policies are generating a wave of enthusiasm among the peasants and encouraging them to produce more products. They are not only stimulating the peasants but also providing a firmer basis to ensure the interests of the State, the collectives as well as the individual farmers.

3. Other problems

To solve the question of agriculture in Vietnam in general, and the food problem in particular, the first thing is to step up intensive farming and multiplication of crops. This requires a proper solution to the question of the productive forces and the relations of production as well as the related policies.

The question of land reclamation is also being posed urgently. This is a strategic and at the same time an urgent task. However, it is not a simple task because it requires big investments.

There are great possibilities for land reclamation in the hilly and mountainous areas of South Vietnam in the Central Highlands and in some areas of the Mekong River delta which are salty and alkaline in the dry season and flooded in the rainy season. The opening up of these regions requires a series of measures: reclamation of land and shaping of fields, water conservancy (irrigation of the hilly areas), driving back salty waters, draining alkali, draining any surplus water, conserving water in the plain, building production projects and welfare projects to receive settlers coming from other areas. All this demands a concentration of materials, equipment and investments of the State, which is a major difficulty in the present conditions

Land reclamation is being carried out under the slogan "Begin where conditions are most favourable, cooperation between the State and the people, put the land under cultivation wherever it is reclaimed, combine short-term with long-term interests, combine the economy with national defence". It is also recommended that preparations must be careful and all-embracing and technical norms must be strictly observed throughout the process of land reclamation and cultivation in order to ensure high productivity right from the beginning. These questions are being successfully tackled in the Mekong River delta.

Alongside land reclamation we must redistribute the labour force and the population, first of all in the provinces and localities with too high population densities and too little cultivated land, especially in the Red River delta and the towns and cities in the South. The transfer of millions of working people from the congested areas to the newly reclaimed lands will be a difficult revolutionary task which we must accomplish at all costs.

Furthermore, the food problem cannot be solved without checking the present rate of natural population growth. Compared with 1945 our food output has doubled but the population growth has been even higher. If this rate is allowed to continue it will surely outstrip the rate of food increase.

Nor can we solve the food problem through growing rice alone, but we must also grow more subsidiary crops. With our rich agricultural potential and the advantages of our natural conditions, we must expand stock-breeding and fisheries; in short we must step by step build a rich and diversified agriculture.

Big and difficult problems confront us but with our still unexploited potentials in land and manpower, with our experiences gained during the past years and the correct policies and measures newly worked out, we are confident our goal is attainable.

Dairy cows at the Ba Vi State Farm, Ha Son Binh province.

Photo: NGUYEN TAN



THE FIGHT AGAINST FLOODING IN THE RED RIVER DELTA

ONCE again the peasants of North Vietnam have been challenged by a serious natural disaster. Before the floods caused by continuous rainstorms during 20 and 21 July had been overcome the tropical typhoon "JOE" brought heavy rains for two consecutive days on 23 and 24 July. Rainfall in Phu Tho area of Vinh Phu province was measured at 755 millimetres. The rains considerably swelled the Red river, Thai Binh river and Day river which were already in spate. First degree alert was quickly changed to third degree alert all along these rivers (the flood crest at Pha Lai on Thai Binh river was only two centimetres below danger level). The situation was compounded by the rising tide in the Tonkin Gulf. All these factors concurred to cause flooding in the greater part of the area of wet rice crops, more than half of which were newly transplanted or sown fields in the plains and uplands of Bac Bo and Thanh Hoa province. According to preliminary estimates of the Central Committee for Combating Floods and Storms, 469,000 hectares were seriously flooded of which 201,500 hectares were completely ruined.

A campaign was launched urgently to save the flooded fields and ensure the planting of all the planned area with winter rice. Time is running out since the planting season is drawing to its end.

In some areas the water is receding by itself along with the sea tide but in many others gigantic efforts are being deployed to scoop water out of the fields by every possible means, mechanical as well as manual, such as scoops and waterwheels. The immediate goal is to save the rice seedlings and sow new seeds before it is too late. In some places people had to spread mud on drying yards for sowing. Wherever conditions permit people are resorting to the direct sowing method in order to shorten the growth period of the rice plants.

Thanks to all these efforts, by early August half of the flooded area had been saved and thousands of hectares had been sown with new seeds. Nevertheless, due to the seriousness and the scale of the floods, and also to the scarcity of available means for combating it (pumps, fuel, electricity) transplanting will be too late in many areas and this will undoubtedly affect the output of this winter's rice crop. To make up for this loss, all flooded localities are concentrating efforts on tending the unaffected or only slightly affected area in order to increase their output.

However, also according to preliminary estimates of the Central Committee for Combating Floods and Storms, about 5,120,000 people of the total 6,460,000 in the flooded areas will suffer from food shortages.

OUR MONTHLY...

(Continued from page 1)

is against our will as we long for peace to rebuild our war-torn country. We wish to live in peace with all our neighbours, be they great or small.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is very glad to have on its western borders two friendly countries, Laos and Kampuchea, which have for one hundred years shared weal and woe with us and fought by our side, and which now work together with us for the same goal—that of securing a happy life under socialism for the people of each country with strict respect for our mutual independence and sovereignty.

Our three countries have on many occasions reaffirmed their desire to live in peace and friendship with all countries in Southeast Asia and to respect their right to choose their own political and social regimes. We are aware of the profound ideological rift between the Chinese rulers and

ourselves when they betray socialist ideals in the name of socialism. But, why, in relations between States, cannot there be peaceful coexistence and settlement of disputes through negotiations? That is why, while not slackening our vigilance, we outstretch our hands in peace to our northern neighbours and put forward proposals for the normalization of relations with them. To the same end, we wish to establish and develop normal relations and mutual co-operation with all countries in the world including the US according to the principle of peaceful coexistence.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is proud of its 35 years of development which constitute a fitting continuation of the national history of Vietnam, and which have inspired people of conscience throughout the world. Aware of the difficulties confronting us, we wish for peaceful co-operation with the world community so as to rapidly bring our country up to the level we had hoped for.

On the threshold of our 36th year we send this message of peace and co-operation, which at the same time reflects our determination to preserve the independence we have won back at such a price, with the hope that it will be heard by all countries concerned.

15 August 1980

VIETNAM COURIER

KAMPUCHEA AND...

(Continued from page 5)

But as time passed the world has seen where the truth lies. Kampuchea has received many journalists and observers of various international bodies as well as relief organisations of western countries. Most of them have acknowledged that the situation is improving in Kampuchea. In Phnom Penh and most of the rest of Kampuchean territory almost complete security has returned. Fame exists only in the imagination of the enemies of the Kampuchean people. They also noted that if Kampuchea remains a "problem" that is because the remnants of the Pol Pot clique and some other Khmer reactionary groups, fed and equipped (with weapons supplied by China) by the rightist ruling circles in Thailand, continue their harassing activities against the Phnom Penh administration. That military forces, in providing support to Pol Pot clique, have occasionally violated the territory and sovereignty of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

Together with the Kampuchea revolutionary administration, Vietnam has many times asserted that the situation in Kampuchea is irreversible. This means that no foreign power can force the Kampuchean people to abandon the path they have chosen. But this does not mean that the Vietnamese forces will stay in Kampuchea indefinitely. Once the threat of the Beijing expansionists against Kampuchea and Vietnam has been removed, then at the request of the Kampuchean Government, the Vietnamese units

will withdraw to their country just as they did following the success of the anti-French and anti-US wars of resistance.

On the other hand, together with the authorities in Phnom Penh and Vientiane we reiterate the desire of the countries on the Indochinese peninsula to maintain good relations of neighbourhood and cooperation with Thailand, their readiness to coexist peacefully with Thailand, and join forces with it for the happiness of the peoples of all countries concerned, for instance to cooperate in the Mekong river project. We will strictly respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Thailand. Of course, Thailand must fulfil the same obligations toward its eastern neighbours.

Vietnam has also proposed the signing of a treaty of non-aggression with Thailand, but this still awaits an answer. In this respect, Vietnam supports Kampuchea's proposal for the setting up of a demilitarized zone between Kampuchea and Thailand. This demonstrates that right now the Vietnamese armed units stationed in Kampuchea together with the revolutionary armed forces of Kampuchea commit themselves to fully respect Thailand's sovereignty and territorial integrity, unlike the slanderous claim that Vietnam is harbouring aggressive designs against Thailand. Those who are concerned with peace and security in this region as well as with the security of Thailand cannot but acknowledge that the Kampuchean proposal is the only reasonable one in the present situation.

The ruling circles in Bangkok argue that there is no need to set up a demilitarized zone between Kampuchea

and Thailand but only inside Kampuchean territory because, they contend, there is no conflict between Kampuchea and Thailand and the existence of a demilitarized zone on Thai territory signifies a loss of sovereignty for Thailand, etc. Everyone can see that this argument cannot hold water when confronted with facts and is just another proof of their lack of goodwill.

Another cause for concern is that Bangkok has also rejected Kampuchea's proposal to move the Kampuchean refugee camps far from the border between the two countries. This cannot be explained by any other motive than that Bangkok wants to maintain sanctuaries close to Kampuchea so that the remnants of Pol Pot's troops and other Khmer reactionary groups who are allowed to mingle with the "refugees" may continue their sabotage activities against the Kampuchean revolutionary forces.

Bangkok's attitude has caused world-wide indignation. It has been disapproved of even by a growing section of Thai political circles. Only Beijing is encouraging Bangkok to persist in this preposterous attitude.

It is our most fervent wish that the Bangkok authorities will soon realize that tailing after Beijing is not in the interests of Thailand. Their interests, on the contrary, lie in Thailand's cooperating in peace with Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea in order to build a peaceful and stable Southeast Asia, one which really belongs to its own peoples.

HLN

JUST PUBLISHED

US CHEMICAL WARFARE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES - DOSSIER

A collection of studies and documents on the use of toxic chemicals and gases by the US in their war of aggression against Vietnam. The collection sheds some light on Agent Orange which world public opinion has become concerned about.

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A GLIMPSE AT MODERN

MODERN medicine was founded 35 years ago with the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

In a poor and backward agrarian country like ours just freed from the yoke of colonialism, our health service met with virtually insuperable difficulties. In 1945, epidemics of cholera and small-pox slaughtered hundreds of thousands of people. Five million of malaria-stricken persons were recorded in mountainous and swampy regions together with 10 million of trachoma affected patients of whom 100,000 became blind. The overall death rate was 3.2%. Infantile mortality reached the alarming proportion of 35-40%. The hospital personnel in the whole of Indochina (Laos and Kampuchea included) totalled 50 doctors of medicine and 20 first-class pharmacists (one physician for 180,000 inhabitants in 1939). The number of hospitals was one per province.

A revolutionary line was adopted by the people's power and was later reaffirmed. Conceived in an offensive spirit, it laid stress on prophylaxis without neglecting therapeutics. Traditional medicine was revalued in a light of science and combined with modern medicine to create a truly scientific and national medicine. On the organizational level, this line called for a broad mass movement of which the medical staff was to be the technical core.

First put to trial in the war of resistance from 1946 to 1954, it enabled us to efficiently protect the health of our combatants and of the inhabitants in the resistance bases by dealing in the first place with epidemics. While these were raging in the enemy-held regions—a small-pox epidemic in 1954 carried off 5,000 persons in Hanoi alone—there were none in the liberated zones. Even in the midst of the war, vaccines were available and the population was regularly vaccinated.

In the period between the two wars (1954-1964) a medical network was set up in North Vietnam, and spread to the remotest villages in mountainous regions. Following the system of administrative organization it had four echelons—central, provincial, district and communal—and was strengthened from top to bottom by the Association of Traditional Medicine with branches in both towns and countryside. In 1970 there was one doctor of medicine for 5,454 inhabitants and one assistant-doctor for 1,093 inhabitants.

This infrastructure was effective to cope with the US air and naval war of systematic destruction (from end of 1964 to end of 1972). The call to "teach surgery to the whole medical body" was a great help. During the heaviest bombardments, no wounded people, no patients, no women giving birth, were left uncared for, even in the hardest hit regions.

The achievements recorded up to the reunification of the country in 1976 are worth mentioning.

Decisive success was won chiefly in the fight against epidemics (thanks to a regular and active immunisation of the masses. Vaccination campaigns were launched every year; 80% of the population were vaccinated against cholera and small-pox; 95% of children against poliomyelitis. All newborn babies were vaccinated using dead BCG serum.

The main tropical epidemics, chiefly cholera, small-pox and typhoid fever, have been eliminated since 1957, and poliomyelitis since 1961. The Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology supplied vaccines corresponding to international standards in sufficient quantities against cholera, small-pox, typhoid and paratyphoid fever, tetanus, rabies, whooping cough, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, T.B., Japanese B encephalitis, etc.

The four widely prevalent social diseases were eradicated. Malaria, eliminated in the main since 1965, is no longer endemic. (The death rate was 3.47‰ in 1979). Trachoma is now a thing of the past. The fight against tuberculosis and leprosy, greatly hampered by the US air war of destruction against the North—let us recall US heavy raids on Quynh Lap leprosarium—was most efficient.

Rural hygiene contributed to changing the face of the countryside. The three main targets of rural hygiene were stressed—double septic tanks, curbed well and washroom. This type of septic tank, which allows the composting on the spot of human faeces, ended the danger of infection. The curbed well and public or private washroom enabled us to solve the problem of waste water and personal hygiene.

A nascent pharmaceutical industry with ramifications throughout the provinces and the growing of medicinal plants made it possible to partially meet the demand for drugs while at the same time setting up a local distribution network, so useful during the war years.

Traditional medicine has been reinstated with the scientific study of ancient theories and recipes. Combined with modern medicine, it has given rise to new therapeutic methods where phytotherapy and acupuncture are widely applied. An extensive campaign for the cultivation of medicinal plants and manufacture of drugs from local ingredients derived from plants and animals has been launched, contributing to overcoming the shortage of medicines. Some of these drugs prove to be most effective against dysentery, obliterating arteritis, wounds in soft parts, gastritis, stomach ulcers, heart-diseases, etc.

While revaluing the national heritage our medical and research workers have remained responsive to the latest achievements of world medicine. Modern techniques are being applied in our central and regional hospitals: use of radiosotopes, of artificial lungs, hearts and kidneys, of chromatography, electrophoruses, etc. Our gynaecologists and obstetricians

MEDICINE IN VIETNAM (1945-1980)

are thoroughly acquainted with modern techniques. Caesarean operations are practised even in district hospitals. The death rate of newborn children has been reduced to one per cent; that of women in childbirth is 20 times less than before the revolution. Our physicians have made a modest contribution to world medicine by such work as hepatectomy of the liver and research on cancer by Prof. Ton That Tung.

The partition of the country from 1954 to 1975 has resulted in a time lag between the North and the South. While in the North, medicine is of a socialist nature and is managed by the State, in the enemy-held regions of the South, it essentially served private customers and was geared to therapeutics rather than prophylaxis and research.

US neo-colonialism has left in the South a devastated natural surrounding, hot-beds of epidemics and social diseases: V.D., toxicomania, T.B. and leprosy. The health conditions of the toiling masses left much to be desired because of the lack of a medical apparatus serving the people and bound to the people.

In reunified Vietnam, medicine is still facing problems related to a state of under-development. This task is all the greater because the aftermath of the war has been aggravated by the consequences of US neo-colonialism in the South. Its main task is

to fight infectious, contagious and even epidemic diseases in that part of the country.

Together with the socialist transformation of a medical system serving essentially private customers in the South, a streamlined medical service is being set up throughout the country.

We can now boast of 1,650 State-run hospitals and medical establishments and 10,500 rural health stations run by the people, totalling 175,000 beds. The medical staff comprises in particular 10,000 graduates and post-graduates, 20% of which are trained in higher institutes of medicine and pharmacology, in research institutes and in health centres.

After generalizing medical allowances, Vietnamese medicine must embark on the road of scientific and technical progress. New pathological cases so far unknown or little known in Vietnam must be studied: occupational diseases in industry, those of nutrition, of old age, cardiovascular and mental diseases for instance. The shortage of material and technical means caused by a low level of industrialization complicates this already difficult task.

But modern Vietnamese medicine has provided the proof of its vitality. With the gradual industrialization of the country, it will receive adequate support. Doubtless, it will develop into a national scientific medical system responsive to the progress of medical science in the world.

Q.V

Diagnosis by ultrasound techniques at the cardiovascular section of the Bach Mat Hospital, Hanoi.

Photo: THU HOAI





The main building of the Quynh Giang health station

Photo: HUU TAM

RURAL MEDICINE AT QUYNH GIANG

AN interesting model for rural health work has been created by Quynh Giang commune in Quynh Luu district, Nghe Tinh province. Almost three thousand delegations, among them many foreigners, have come to see it since 1975. Bit by bit the commune has become one of the best rural units, with a fully qualified staff and adequate facilities. A judicious combination of western medicine and traditional methods has helped solve in a comprehensive way many of the present problems — prophylaxis, treatment, social diseases, and family planning — and has enabled treatment to be given at home. And Quynh Giang is in no way different from other places, socially or economically.

Breaking the vicious circle of poverty, ignorance and illness

Quynh Giang is made up by three former villages, Cao Hau Dong, Luyen Dong and Yen Luu. Most of the land was owned by a few families protected by the parish church. The biggest landlord was Bang Binh, who owned hundreds of *mau* (1) for himself alone. Peasants had to sharecrop, and yield was poor — just one or one and a half tons per hectare — due to water shortage. Even so, not all could be share-croppers because things were steadily going from bad to worse. Non-Catholics had to get converted before they were allowed to work the church's lands.

“Being landless is the greatest indignity for a peasant,” confided

Mr Tran Luoc. He recalled that during a dispute with a neighbouring village, the inhabitants of Luyen Dong had to kill one of their number and blame it on their opponents. “I was nine years old at the time,” Mr Luoc continued. “The victim was a spinster widow, who preferred dying in this way so that her village might win the suit. Even so we did not fare any better than other people in the region. In lean months people would comb the mountains for edible roots. Others would visit remote hamlets to barter their belongings for food, or join road gangs in Laos. The road to Xieng Khoang can be said to have been built with the corpses of Nghe Tinh natives.”

Mr Luoc, almost a century old, remembers many things about

Quynh Giang. He took part in the Nghe Tinh Soviet Movement, and remained an active member of the Party until he turned ninety.

"My family worked a plot we reclaimed at the edge of the jungle, half a day's journey away," recalled the old man. "Like other folk we lived in a hut which was a fire risk in the dry season. We could afford just one set of clothes a year, and that was only when things were going well. The clothes were of the cheapest material and we had to dye them brown for them to last longer. The only 'educated' people in the whole village were three primary-school graduates, among them my son. The rest were illiterate. Most of the villagers were afflicted with eye diseases. Mr Lai The Phu, when he was a child, was deliberately left to lose one of his eyes. His superstitious parents believed that the loss would keep their son safe from evil spirits. People who made frequent trips to the mountains often got malaria, and a cholera or small-pox epidemic would break out every three or four years. Sometimes people died in such numbers that even physicians were too scared to come, and witch doctors had to be sent for instead. Until my father's generation few people had lived beyond fifty. Now life expectancy has become longer. I have four younger brothers, the youngest, seventy years old, all of them still fit and well. My seven children are either in their sixties or early seventies. All my great-grandchildren are healthy. Life is no longer what it used to be."

Quynh Giang has an agricultural cooperative with 360 hectares of cultivated land, 12 hectares of fishponds, and many sideline trades including brick-and-lime-making. Thanks to good irrigation most of the fields can grow three or more crops a year. A record was set in rice growing in 1976, with an output of 6.9 tons per hectare. Much labour has been saved by a mechanical unit comprising an electric generator, mechanical pumps and

milling and grinding machines. Most of the houses are made of brick, and each family owns at least one bicycle. Twice a year, at Tet and on National Day, fish, meat and sugar are distributed free. The commune, which has a population of 4,800, boasts of six crèches for 300 infants, and a first- and second-level general education school for 900 pupils. A technical staff has taken shape with some 60 secondary-level cadres specializing in planting, stock breeding, irrigation, education, and public health. The seventh form has been made compulsory for young people and local cadres, and dozens of Quynh Giang natives have graduated from universities and are working elsewhere.

The vicious circle formed by poverty, ignorance and disease has thus been broken, thanks to a large extent to the expansion of the medical network.

Public health by the people and for the people

The 40-room medical station is surrounded by a herb-and-flower garden. The herbs number over two hundred species. The garden looks out over a field where some forty kinds of medicinal herbs are grown on a large scale. The station is provided with a general consultation room, a specialized consultation room, a small surgery theatre, a gynaecology room, a nine-place emergency ward, a five-bed maternity ward, a pharmaceutical workshop, a medicine counter, and a filing department. Carefully updated charts show the number of sick people in the whole commune and in each production team, the number of patients receiving treatment at home, at the station, or in other hospitals.

"Visitors are all impressed by the station," said Tran Huu On, deputy secretary of the Party Committee and Chairman of the People's Committee. "It is not only

a curing centre, but also the nerve centre of the health movement in the commune. For ten years now the Party Committee and the People's Committee have been trying to make public health the concern of the entire village."

The station was built in 1974, with 10,000 voluntary work-days put in by villagers, namely seven days by every worker. Bricks and tiles were made on the spot, and money was spent only to paying professional masons. When completed the station was valued at 130,000 *dong*. Then, to raise money for the operation and maintenance of the station, each co-op member also contributes four work-days a year. This, however, is only a token gesture, since the main sources of income are the medicinal herbs and the products of the pharmaceutical workshop. The station has been enlarged and re-equipped, and investments have totalled 380,000 *dong*.

"We owe a great part of our success," the village chairman continued, "to the medical staff which act not only as our advisors but also as the executors of our public health policy. The medical workers have boosted the health movement while creating the material means to sustain it. Without such competent workers no amount of material investments would be sufficient."

The staff officially consists of three assistant-doctors, one secondary-level pharmacist, two midwives, and two aids. They are assisted by eight nurses attached to production teams and an 800-member Red Cross organization which will shortly be increased to 920 to cover all 920 households.

Following the Party policy, treatment is regarded as the first step to prevention, and prophylaxis is regarded as a primary task. A movement for the "three rural hygiene projects"—septic tanks, curbed well and washroom—has been launched and successfully completed. Three other major sanitary problems—excrements,

garbage and water—have been solved in the main. Every year different age groups are inoculated against infectious diseases, cholera, malaria, smallpox, paralysis, diphtheria, whooping cough and measles. Prevalent diseases such as malaria, trachoma, tuberculosis and intestinal parasites have either been eliminated or effectively curbed. Pregnant women are given three periodic checks, and all of them are delivered at the maternity ward, where all newborn babies are inoculated against TB. Great progress has also been made in family planning. Population growth has been maintained at 1.76 per cent since 1975, almost as low as the 1.5 per cent rate required for the whole country.

Since an eighteen-day drive in mid-1977 to give general checks to all inhabitants and to establish personal medical records, health work has entered a new phase in which emphasis is laid on treatment at home. Each household has

established its own medical record. Should a member fall sick he or she will be visited by the nurse attached to the production group to which he or she belongs, or by a physician from the station, the principle being that "healers should come to patients and treat them at their homes". More serious cases will be referred to district or provincial hospitals, or to specialized hospitals in Hanoi

"We know that we are talking sense when we say that medicine must be in service of the working people and production," the Chairman continued. "According to the latest health census, 69 per cent of the population were rated A, 22 per cent B, and the rest C. Greater efforts will be exerted whenever the workload increases. Co-operative members working on the fields will be provided with hot water and, in winters, with menthol balm and mentholated sweets. This has brought about a drastic

reduction in diarrhoea, dysentery, common colds, the flu, coughs and sore throats. The station has also made a kind of grass balm to cure skin rash, which is very common among people engaged in transplanting rice seedlings. Two or three applications will be sufficient."

Pharmaceutical production as a boost to medicine

A movement for planting medicinal herbs was launched by the Public Health Ministry during the US bombings to encourage local pharmaceutical production. Each commune was required to grow between 25 and 35 varieties of the most common herbs. Quynh Giang, however, started a bit too late, in 1972, and quite a few people were discouraged by initial difficulties. The health station was given two hectares for this purpose, but the value of the work-days for the planting of medicinal herbs was

Trần Chu (left), head of the station, introducing a medicinal herb.

Photo: NGOC QUAN



only one third of those for the cultivation of rice in the production teams. At the request of the station, however, the area kept increasing in 1973, until it was found out that the five hectares under *sinh dia* (*Rehmannia Glutinosa* Gaertn Libosh) were a complete failure. There was talk of a possible lawsuit against the head of the station, and the agricultural cooperative took back the five hectares it had loaned. The station, as a result, had to clear a plot for its own use.

"We spent four years learning from other localities," said Mrs Nguyen Thi Xanh, secondary-level pharmacist and deputy-head of the station. "In 1976 we planted two hectares with medicinal herbs, and set up a pharmaceutical workshop. That year we produced 55 per cent of the amount required, whereas the rate set by the Public Health Ministry was only 35 per cent. What is more, we contributed 50,000 *dong* to public funds in return for the 25,000 *dong* spent on health work. In 1979 the herb area was extended to six hectares, placed under the charge of 30 village elders. Besides the 35 prescribed varieties, we also grow *duong quy*, *sinh dia*, *bach truat*, *nguu lat*, which can fetch high prices on the market. The workshop, employing 10 people, is making over 30 different products, seven of which are given free to patients like drugs against common colds, the "flu, coughs, diarrhoea, dysentery, rheumatism and irregular menstruation and vegetal antibiotics. High-grade medicines, especially tonics, are sold at State prices, and the surplus goes to public funds."

Quynh Giang earned 100,000 *dong* from pharmaceutical products in 1979, and is expected to get 200,000 in 1980, or one-tenth of the total income of the agricultural cooperative. Thanks to this the medical workers at the station are paid at the same rate as State employees, and regular investments can be made for equipment. Moreover, each inhabitant is given 13 *dong* a year for medicines.

Sufficient material means makes possible other economic incentives and benefits. A nurse will be credited one work-day for every 100 inoculation shots given. Placing an IUD will automatically earn the recipient five *dong*'s worth of tonics, 15 kilograms of paddy, and 30 days' leave. Workers at the station have also made a considerable amount of money by growing vegetables and raising fish and pigs. For five years now the station has charged a patient only six *dong* for food every month, paying the balance out of its own funds. Also a new system has been in operation since July 1980: free meals for all the staff and a set of clothes given free to each person every year. Those who attend complementary or specialized courses are provided with stationery and travel expenses. Tet gifts will include three or four kilograms of meat and some fish. People who retire early will receive allowances according to services rendered.

The use of pharmaceuticals as a boost for medicine, and the practice of material incentives in Quynh Giang have been proved success-

ful, to the satisfaction of both the individual and the collective.

"In a near future," Mrs Xanh went on, "we shall extend the herb gardens to 10 hectares, and will market *duong quy* (*Angonica achyman* Yabe) liquor, a much sought after tonic. With the assistance of an experienced agronomist we have successfully acclimatized rare varieties from China and Korea. We hope to make pharmaceutical materials an important line of the agricultural cooperative."

A methane tank as an environmental purifying complex

Tran Chu, an assistant-doctor and a Party member for 33 years, has worked tirelessly for better health in Quynh Giang and in the countryside as a whole. He has a knack of combining Western medicine with traditional one, and is a good organizer and an inventor. He is known as a new Le Huu Trac (2) by the local population. During the US war he headed a medical station at Cau Giat, which was subject to 370 air raids. It was there that he performed 400 operations, most of them emergency cases.

Tran Chu is the chief proponent of the idea of boosting medicine by pharmaceuticals and of acclimatizing temperate climate herbs. He has become famous for a promising project, a methane tank or, more correctly, a combination of a gas tank, a self-purifying lavatory, and an animal pen.

He said: "Like the rest of the countryside our village used to live in filth. The 'Clean Villages, Good Fields' movement launched many years ago was only a temporary measure. To help dispose of human excrement ordinary lavatories were built, but these created pockets of pollution which, moreover, were quite close to habitations. People, therefore, reverted to the bad habit of relieving themselves in the open. The sixties saw the emergence of the double septic tanks, which had the merit of quickening the decomposing of faeces. As soon as one tank was full it was sealed off. The excrement, mixed with ash which acted as an adsorbent, would theoretically be turned by anaerobes into clean compost within a month or more.

"So lavatories of this type was built everywhere. But there was a drawback. Since straw was no longer used for fuel but only as animal feed, there was a shortage of ash. Added to this was the wet climate which made dry decomposition almost impossible. Moreover, as the population grew, crops had to be multiplied, hence a greater need for compost, and the negligence of sanitary rules."

"Just as we were stuck with this problem," Tran Chu continued, "a visiting journalist suggested a combination of self-purifying lavatories and gas tanks. He arranged for our visit to a Chinese-type experimental gas tank built in Hanoi. Later I saw another gas tank, also built in Hanoi, after an Indian model and sponsored by the FAO. Finding both models costly and unsuitable, I began working on a new one."

Tran Chu lighted a gas ring in his office, on which he boiled water and brewed tea for us. Then he led us outside, to a half-sunk concrete tank placed between the lavatories and a pig pen.

"The tank contains droppings from the pen, excrement and urine from the lavatories, and garbage

collected outside," he explained. "Since it was built, flies have become very scarce. This is really an environmental purifying complex, as my friend the journalist put it. The gas derived from this tank has been much admired by the villagers and visitors, and has been used for cooking, lighting and refrigerating. It means a great deal in the current fuel shortage in the countryside."

"But that's not all," Tran Chu said. He turned to the agronomist who was acting as an advisor to the cooperative, and continued: "We have also obtained a kind of liquid compost which is a great stimulant to plant growth. Seven-month-old *duong qui* sprayed with it produces beets as large as nine-month or one-year-old beets obtained in Sapa where the climate is more suitable. Certain seasonal loofa, treated with it, can bear fruit a second crop. A well-known scientist, who represents our province at the National Assembly, has suggested that we use this CH₄-rich compost to feed a protein-rich alga for use as animal feed. The success of this experiment would complete the cycle from animal droppings (not mentioning excrement and garbage) to energy and compost and finally to animal feed."

Tran Chu's invention was awarded First Prize by the Nghe Tinh Provincial Committee of Science and Technics in 1979. As far as its effect on the environment is concerned, it may lead to a second revolution in rural sanitation in Vietnam, the first being the emergence of double septic tanks, curbed well and washroom. According to a number of scientists it can be developed into a national project.

* * *

A crossroads is formed by the intersection of Highway One and a gravel road for hand carts and tractors which passes through Quynh Giang from the coast to the foothills. Narrow, rugged village

lanes have been replaced by broad, tree-lined paths. The three former villages - Cao Hau Dong, Luyen Dong and Yen Luu - have been integrated to form 12 habitation groups, or production groups. Instead of the hungry, ragged, filthy, servile peasants of the old days one meets dignified, healthy, educated, self-confident working people. A new life has begun.

To this new life considerable contributions have been made by the medical staff who have done everything in their power to look after the health of the population from womb to tomb. It is they who have suggested that the hills be turned into pastures to raise goats and Murrahs so that the diet at the crèches may be complemented with fresh milk. The medical station is also cooperating with the educational and cultural services in promoting physical education and sport in the whole village.

According to Tran Chu, Quynh Giang has benefited from the experiences of other localities - herb culture in Tan Ly commune in Ha Nam Ninh province, and at-home treatment by the hospital at Van Dinh district town, Ha Son Binh. The gas tank, Tran Chu said, has been inspired by models in Hanoi, and the ideas of raising milch buffaloes and combining physical education with medical treatment have originated respectively from Thanh Chuong, a neighbouring district, and from Nam Chinh commune, Hai Hung province.

Tran Chu was too modest to admit that Quynh Giang itself will very likely become a model for other rural areas as well.

VU CAN

(1) One mau in Central Vietnam equals 5,000 sq.m. and one mau in Northern Vietnam, 3,600 sq.m. Nghe Tinh is in Central Vietnam.

(2) Well-known Vietnamese physician (1720 - 1791).



Preparation of medicines at the station's pharmaceutical workshop.

Photo: NGOC QUAN

A COMPARISON OF...

(Continued from page 4)

recognize the People's Republic of Kampuchea. However, we should here recall that over the past 20 years, the United States and Vietnam have conducted negotiations and signed agreements three times, but have still not recognized each other (the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina, the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, and the 1973 Paris Agreement on Vietnam). Furthermore, in 1955, although Vietnam and Thailand had not recognized each other, their Red Cross Societies conducted negotiations in Rangoon and reached an agreement on the repatriation of Vietnamese residents in Thailand. In international relations, there are many examples of countries entering into negotiations to settle disputes even though they have not recognized each other.

The Thai side also holds that the proposals of the three Indochinese countries are designed to make it recognize the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. But the latter has made it clear that it does not wish to link the question of recognition with the negotiations. As a matter of

fact, various U.N. organizations have negotiated with the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea to organize humanitarian relief work even though the Council has not yet recovered its rightful seat at the United Nations.

The only possible conclusion which can be drawn is that the reason put forward by the Thai side is sheer fabrication and sophistry. As a matter of fact, some people in Bangkok ruling circles, under Beijing's pressure, do not want negotiations in any form whatsoever: they only want to impose unilateral measures tantamount to crude violations of Kampuchea's sovereignty.

In short, the measures proposed by the Thai side are aimed not at easing tension and preserving peace and stability in Southeast Asia, but only at colluding with the bellicose elements in Beijing in order to interfere in the internal affairs of Kampuchea, encroach upon its sovereignty and oppose the three Indochinese countries. Together with China, Thailand has created tension along the Thailand-Kampuchea border, and has used the Kampuchean refugee problem and the humanitarian relief issue in Kampuchea in an attempt to bring about a situation in which there are two forces and two zones in

Kampuchea. It has also demanded a political solution to the so-called Kampuchean problem in keeping with the interests of Chinese expansionism and hegemonism and the Thai reactionaries' "Great-Thai-ism". This is a short-sighted and dangerous policy at variance with the true interests of the Thai people, detrimental to Thailand itself and to peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

The 4-point proposal put forward at the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in Vientiane is a reasonable, logical and fair one which respects the legitimate interests of Kampuchea and Thailand. This is the correct path to peace and stability along the Kampuchea-Thailand border, and it safeguards the sovereignty and security of both countries. The serious stand and the goodwill of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea, and of the three Indochinese countries, are winning wider and wider approval from world public opinion, which regards them as a positive factor for easing tension and contributing to peace, stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia and to world peace.

Hanoi, 26 August 1980



THE SOVIET-VIETNAMESE SPACE FLIGHT

THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME OF THE FLIGHT

Professor Doctor NGUYEN VAN HIEU

DURING the joint Soviet-Vietnamese space flight which has just been successfully concluded, Vietnamese cosmonaut Pham Tuan and his Soviet colleagues conducted a series of scientific experiments under the Intercosmos programme of the socialist countries. These involved five major scientific problems: study of the atmosphere, bio-medical studies, exploration of the earth's natural resources and industrial manufacture in cosmic conditions.

The research and experiments on the atmosphere prepared by scientists of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries aimed to study physical phenomena, particularly the phenomenon of sunlight polarisation in the upper atmosphere, the law governing the behaviour of light when it traverses the atmosphere, and the effects of geographical landscapes on sunlight polarisation on the earth's surface. These experiments require a human presence to operate the on-board systems.

The bio-medical experiments prepared by Soviet and other scientists from socialist countries aimed to study the effects of cosmic conditions on human psychology and physiology. They involved the use of modern equipment jointly designed by member countries of the Intercosmos Programme. Vietnamese scientists had made their own suggestions in this respect but due to lack of time for preparation these suggestions could not be put into practice during this flight.

Among the biological experiments suggested by Vietnamese doctors, the Soviet scientists paid particular attention to the experiment on *azolla pinnata*. *Azolla* is a high-form plant with a great capacity for reproduction, with very high nitrogen-fixing properties and which contains many non-replaceable amino-acids and many vitamins including B₁₂ and some mineral salts. The experiment aimed to probe the possibility of using *azolla* as an important factor in the creation of a closed cycle ecosystem in outer space, in order to regenerate matter to support human life in flights of long duration. It was actually due to these special properties of *azolla* that Soviet scientists used very up-to-date equipment and methods for its study. *Azolla* specimens were supplied by the Vietnam Institute of Sciences. Soviet scientists decided to experiment with *azolla* in outer space after completing a series of experiments on the ground. Vietnamese scientists will participate in the ensuing experiments on the ground. This will enable Vietnam to continue its studies on *azolla* with modern methods and equipment, and hence to find suitable measures to develop this resource for agriculture.

The experiments concerning remote sensing of the environment and natural resources of Vietnam were suggested by various scientific and technical institutions in the country. To coordinate the research programme, the Vietnam Commission for Space Research convened a scientific conference in Hanoi in April 1980 with the participation of scientists from the Soviet-Union, the German Democratic Republic and Bulgaria. Apart from photographing the territory

of Vietnam by the MKF-6M multispectral photcamera co-produced by the German Democratic Republic and the USSR, and conducting spectrometric and photographic observations of natural objects by the "Spektr-15" spectrometer devised by Bulgaria the cosmonauts also carried out visual observations and took photographs with hand cameras. These experiments are not yet finished and will be carried out by the Soviet cosmonauts Leonid Popov and Valery Ryumin during their long duration flight in space on board the "Salyut 6" orbital station. As well as photographing and observing the territory of Vietnam from outer space the Vietnam Commission for Space Research is also organizing the photographing by the MKF-6M installed on board AN-30 planes to conduct measurements and observations of certain typical regions in Vietnam. The photographs taken from outer space and AN-30 planes will be processed by modern equipment including special computers in the cosmic photo processing rooms of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. A plan has been worked out to build such rooms in Vietnam in the future. The results of the research on the environment and natural resources will supply important data for basic research and provide a basis for the working out of economic development programmes in Vietnam.

The experiments on industrial processes in outer space codenamed "Ha Long" suggested by Vietnamese scientists were aimed at studying the effect of gravity on the process of crystallisation of some special semi-conducting components. The results obtained during the flight will help find the appropriate method to manufacture high-quality monocrystals in earth-based laboratories in the service of technological development. In view of the inadequacy of conditions in the country for the experiment, the Vietnam Commission for Space Research asked the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic to provide facilities for the conduct of these experiments in some research institutes of those countries in cooperation with Soviet and GDR scientists.

The preparations for the experiment were completed before schedule. It was originally planned to carry out two experiments, but six experiments were ready before the flight. In addition, during the preparation for the "Ha Long" experiments, scientists of the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and Vietnam had worked out a new method to determine the distribution of heat in the equipment "Crystal" installed on the "Salyut-6" orbital station for growing monocrystals. They had also cooperated in manufacturing a digital electronic device for carrying out this experiment. This is actually two experiments on cosmic technology processes called "The Imitator". The results of this experiment will be available to all countries members of the Intercosmos Programme. Under the common plan of the Programme the analysis and study of the materials in cosmic conditions will be conducted in the laboratories of the three above-

THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF COSMONAUT PHAM TUAN

QUOC TUAN commune in Kien Xuong district, Thai Binh province, the native land of the first Vietnamese cosmonaut, Pham Tuan, lies on the banks of Tra Ly river. It is a quiet, peaceful village like any other in the Red River Delta. It offers the same familiar Vietnamese country scene: verdant bamboo groves, rows of areca trees with their crests swaying in the sky, discreet banana gardens and green rice paddies surrounding the village. On windy evenings the mellow music of the bamboo kites enhances this sense of peace and tranquility. Pham Tuan himself likes to recall that in his childhood kite flying was one of his hobbies after a day of strained study or hard work.

Seeing the happy life of the village today one could hardly imagine that the famine in 1945 took a toll of over one-third of its population. Whole families died and there were no able-bodied persons left to bury the dead. This tragedy has left its mark on the joyless faces of the aged people there today. Pham Tuan was born to Pham Cat by his second wife, Vu Thi Nhon, both having lost many of their loved ones during the great famine. Tuan has a sister, Pham Thi Suu, and a brother, Pham Niet.

His native village lies in one of the lowest areas of Kien Xuong district where only one crop in summer could be grown. In the rainy season starting

mentioned countries over a period of one year before a general conclusion is reached.

After one week of work in outer space, the Soviet-Vietnamese international crew had successfully completed the scientific research programme of the flight. The successful completion of preparations for the experiments in outer space during the recent flight marks another step forward in scientific research in Vietnam. This is also a fine result of the assistance provided by scientists from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries for the development of science in Vietnam.

The flight has finished but the programme of scientific experiments will continue. It requires many more efforts from Vietnamese scientific and technical workers. After all, Vietnam's participation in the scientific programme of the Soviet-Vietnamese space flight is only the beginning of a new scientific programme, that of applying the results of space research to the development of the national economy, and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes in Vietnam.

from July or August the fields were several feet under water. Words alone cannot describe the plight of the local population, expressed in this local saying: "Living, our skin is immersed, dead, our bones are under water." Understandably enough, the more miserable their life was, the more the peasants of Thai Binh supported the revolution. During the anti-French war of resistance the French erected a post right in the village to tighten their control, and still did not succeed in stamping out the revolutionary movement. The self-sacrificing example of Tran Duoc, one-time leader of the resistance and administrative committee chairman of the commune, who had rather let the enemy burn him alive than give away the cadres of the resistance, further aroused the patriotic flame of the villagers. Support for the resistance grew stronger and stronger. People gave their support and their savings, accepting any sacrifice and hardship, resolved never again to return to slavery. This spirit of insubordination has been a proud tradition of Quoc Tuan commune, and one to which Pham Tuan's family made a worthy contribution. Pham Kien, Tuan's half-brother, joined the army during the hardest days of the resistance and died a hero while defending his sacred homeland. After burying his beloved son, the father slipped through the enemy encirclement and returned to the village where he kept up a calm appearance. Asked by the villagers about Pham Kien, he replied: "He has recovered from an illness and now his unit has moved elsewhere." He feared that to tell the truth would scare the villagers and adversely affect the movement of voluntary enrolment in the army. His courage and devotion to the revolution has had deep influence on his other sons, Pham Tuan in particular.

Following the victory of the anti-French resistance, life in Quoc Tuan remained hard due to the poverty of the soil. But things began to improve with the founding of the first agricultural cooperative together with the digging of irrigation canals which made it possible to introduce new strains of rice and to apply methods of intensive farming. The face of the commune changed year after year: no more flooding in the rainy season and the fields were covered with crops all the year round. Apart from two rice crops, some of the fields are grown to an additional subsidiary crop in winter. With the constant increase in rice production the life of the farmers also improved markedly. From being a food deficient co-op Quoc Tuan has become self-sufficient in food and has been able even to sell some surplus rice to the State after fulfilling its food contribution quota.

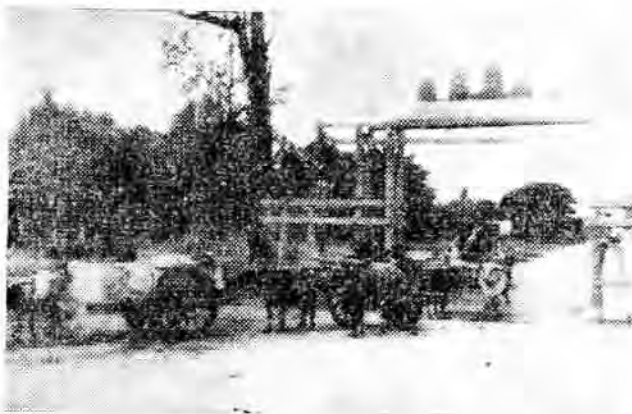
Before, in the Vietnamese countryside, a brick house and a jackfruit tree were symbols of wealth which were usually the privilege of the landlord class. But in Quoc Tuan in those days even the landlords did not have brick houses. Today, almost 80% of the families already have brick houses, tea beds, orange groves and fish ponds. In Dac Chung village in particular where Pham Tuan was born, virtually every house is now brick-walled and hardly a mud or bamboo house can be found.

Whereas in the past the whole commune had not a single hospital nurse or classroom, today Quoc Tuan has a health station staffed with a doctor, two assistant-doctors and many nurses, twelve crèches, four kindergartens with twelve classrooms for children of three different age groups: three, four and five year-olds. The commune also has a first- and second-level general education school large enough to accommodate all children of school-going age.

THAO LAM

Kampuchea

A year later



Transport of rice seed to the villages

AFTER completing a tour of Kampuchea during which I met with many people, I am now convinced that the country is no longer what it was last year.

Services and trade

Each day begins early for the 100,000 inhabitants of Phnom Penh and hundreds of thousands of other people on the outskirts.

Children go to school on foot or by bicycle. Schools have been opened in all parts of the city. Workers head for the power station, the textile mill, the printers', the waterworks, the rice mill, the mechanical engineering factory, the soft drink plant, or the tobacco factory. The main streets are lined with State or private stores, restaurants, barbers', hairdressers' and tailors' and shops repairing bicycles, motorbikes, watches and electrical appliances.

Cinemas ran three or four shows for children on June 1, the International Children's Day. Shoppers go to the old market north of the Royal Palace, or to

new ones near the former Chinese Embassy and at Monivong Bridge, where are sold dry goods, vegetables, fish, palm sugar, salt, bread and sweets. There is a great number of shops specializing in the famous "Phnom Penh noodles", but they are outnumbered by roadside refreshment counters set up under tamarind or flame trees, which sell iced fruit juices.

The new *riel* issued in April has become a familiar feature. A kilogram of rice is sold at one *riel*; a kilogram of fish costs 2.5 *riels*. A *riel* also buys five bundles of green vegetables or two glasses of sweetened seaweed jelly.

The new currency has been readily accepted at western border areas, at markets in Battambang, in shops along Highway 5, in the countryside.

Customers can find a wide range of goods in Phnom Penh or in provincial townships - cloth, ready-made clothes, toys, China, detergent, towels, mirrors, leather goods, vacuum flasks, stationery, and so on.

At the Phnom Penh University of Medicine and Pharmacology

People are eager to study, and classes are held at all government offices. More and more functionaries of the old regime have enrolled for the Political School run by the National United Front, and there is enthusiastic participation in discussions on current events, on State policies, or on the role of intellectuals in the new society. There are courses on foreign service, trade, financing and statistics. On June 18, a course on foreign trade was opened. The Education Ministry is busy compiling textbooks for the schools.

At the Public Health Ministry we were told about the good results of the first year of the University of Medicine and Pharmacology. The 726 students, who still had five more years to go, had begun their studies before April 1975. Now they were revising what they had already learnt while continuing with the syllabus. They are expected to be fully qualified in both theory and practice by any world standard.

Late in June eight doctors graduated after the required examinations. Professor Mi Samadi, the director, headed the jury which included professors of cardiology, pediatrics, external diseases, radiology, ear-nose-throat diseases, epidemiology and pharmacology. We congratulated Ich Sunnara on the excellent marks he had obtained for his entry exams to the sixth year. We first met Sunnara when he was returning with his father, Ich Kim Seng, M.D., from Takeo where, for three years, they had slaved, tending cattle. They were but two living skeletons then, and the black pyjamas they wore were in rags. Dr. Ich Kim Seng, now nursed back to health, was working at the

Health Ministry. Sunnara had put on ten kilograms to his wasting body and was working hard for his graduation next year, reading specialized journals from foreign countries.

At the university library housed in the biggest hall on the second floor, we were received by Mrs Kim Phuon and Miss Sara. Mrs Kim Phuon worked there from 1963 to 1975 before she was deported to the mountains in Kompong Thom province. Her husband, a teacher, was beaten to death at the camp. Miss Sara, a former law student, was helping Mrs Kim Phuon acquire books for the library which, in five months, had over 3,200 titles in addition to more than 200 specialized books and journals received from Hanoi, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, London and Bern.

The library was well frequented by the students who mostly were boarders, living on a monthly State allowance of 45 *riels*, a sum sufficient for their meals, clothes and other necessities.

A research project completed

I was received by Vandy Kaonn at his office at the Social Science Committee under the Front's Central Commission of Propaganda and Training. Frangipanis filled the air with their fragrance in the first-floor room in which we talked for a whole morning.

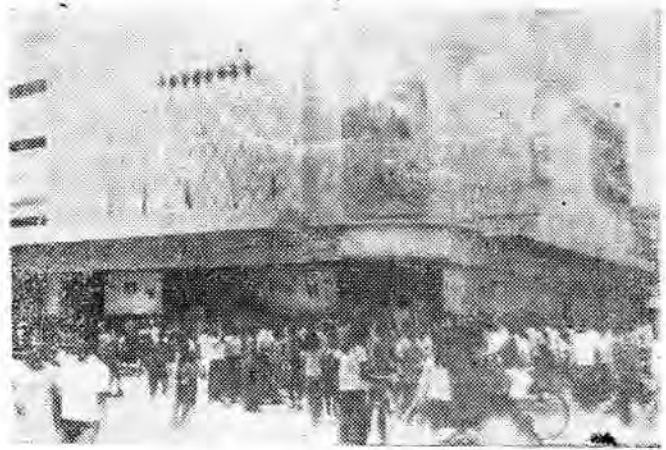
"It's wonderful," our host exclaimed. "The way things have taken place is so unexpected. It surpasses one's imagination. Only a year and a half have gone by, and our country has changed so much."

During our first meeting last year Vandy Kaonn had won our hearts with his warm personality and openness. He had obtained a degree in Social Sciences from the Sorbonne and is a leading intellectual in his country.

"It's true that my hands are full," he admitted with pride. "I give lectures, talk to intellectuals, help the Constitution Drafting Committee, and recruit for the Social Sciences Committee. Recently I stopped over in Vietnam and the Soviet Union on my way to an international conference in Budapest. The trip was very instructive, but it was too short because I was in a hurry to get back to my work here."

"What's your main job for the moment?" I asked.

"We have three projects on hand," Vandy Kaonn replied. "I'm seconded by four other intellectuals, in addition to more than 30 others on our staff. The



At the "Capital" cinema

number is too small, and I intend to have some 200 experts on philosophy, history, literature, political economics and statistics."

"The first and most important project," he continued, "concerns genocide, its nature, its political, ideological and philosophical basis, its effects and origin, its international supporters. Its political and legal aspects were already dealt with during the Phnom Penh Trial last year. Now we must take upon ourselves the task of explaining this historic phenomenon to the civilized world. This is a scientific project, an in-depth study with serious and objective analysis. For this we work 12, even 14 hours a day. I read a lot, take notes, talk with people, discuss and especially do a lot of thinking. My four young assistants are a great help, and we strictly observe our schedule. We expect to complete our work in another two months and the result will be some two hundred typewritten pages."

Then Vandy Kaonn talked about the characteristics of genocide, about the nature and destructiveness of Maoism, about Khieu Samphan's sickly philosophy of man, about Pol Pot's megalomania, and about Ieng Sary's craftiness.

Expanding greenness

A welcome sight in Kampuchea that summer was the expanding greenness of the paddy fields. Officials at the Ministry of Agriculture said the sown

area would have reached almost one million hectares by the end of July and would further increase, since planting would continue into late August.

Fields around Tonle Sap Lake had been sown with rice seedlings of the floating variety supplied by the Vietnamese provinces of An Giang and Cuu Long, and special attention was being paid by the Government and the Ministry of Agriculture to Prey Veng and Battambang, the fertile eastern and western regions. We had a very instructive conversation with Koong Yat, an agricultural technician and head of the agricultural office of Sang Ke, the largest district in Battambang. He received us in his office next door to the district's seed depot where 200 tons of seed were stored with good ventilation. From where we were we could see long lines of ox-drawn carts coming from other areas to collect the seed. Koong Yat said the main rice crop the previous year had been a complete failure because of drought, the most serious in 20 years, which lasted a whole month. The loss covered as much as 4,000 hectares. This year, he said, the district was striving for 43,700 hectares, and what was encouraging was that by the end of June peasants had already tilled almost 30,000 hectares including 3,000 hectares for floating rice. Rain had come a little late, but then it had poured for weeks. So there was enough water for transplanting, and the crop was expected to be a good one. The district, however, still needed 50,000 kilograms of seed, which would be supplied in good time by the province.

Koong Yat showed us the seed supplied by Vietnam, the FAO and UNICEF. The Vietnamese variety IR26, we were told, suited Battambang. The Thai-grown varieties ED1 and ED9 were supplied by the FAO and UNICEF.

Another improvement in the general situation was that law and order had been strengthened. Disbanded Pol Pot troops were being tracked down relentlessly by the army and militia, and so the peasants, even those in the mountains, could work their fields in safety.

Koong Yat also told us that industrial crops would become another of Battambang's assets. Thousands of hectares, he said, used to be grown with cotton, coffee, orange trees and beans, and there used to be



Mrs Kim Phoun and Miss Sara in the library of the University of Medicine and Pharmacology of Phnom Penh

vast mulberry fields on either side of the Sang Ke River devoted to silkworm-breeding. Mat-making used to be another source of income, Koong Yat added.

Tonle Sap Lake — inexhaustible fishing grounds

Having planned our visit to Tonle Sap Lake to coincide with the fishing season, we made a detour to Boribo, a district in the province of Kompong Chhnang. Boribo means "plentiful" in the Khmer language. The area, indeed, is a rich and beautiful one. Kampuchea is a country of sugar palms, and Kompong Chhnang leads all other provinces in this kind of crop. Sugar palm juice is sold on stalls strung along Highway 5. Fresh, it has a sweet flavour. Fermented for a few days it becomes slightly intoxicating. Foreigners used to call it "Poehentong beer" instead of the local name "toithet". A kind of brown sugar is derived from the juice and is sold in cakes wrapped in palm leaves. A reporter of the

paper "Revolutionary Army" told us that there were as many as three millions sugar palm trees in the whole country. In Kompong Chhnang a tree can give up to 20 kilograms of sugar a year. The previous year, we were told, had been very good for sugar. Palm sugar and fish from Tonle Sap Lake have done a great deal in nursing back to health a nation exhausted by Pol Pot's genocide.

Snok Tru, or "Fish Village", pop. 1,300, consists of hundreds of floating houses. It is one of the largest fishing community on Tonle Sap Lake. Some houses are quite big, with plank floors and corrugated iron roofs, separate compartments for living quarters, fish storage, and tool sheds. It is impossible to get an idea of the vast resources of this lake without seeing it for oneself. We were told that a good fisherman could catch from 150 to 200 kilograms of fresh fish a day, and that some fish could weigh up to 15 or 20 kilograms. One, caught in 1979, weighed almost 200 kilograms.

The fish is left to dry on the shore for four or five days. It is then packed into bags, loaded onto ox-drawn carts and transported to Pon Lay, where it will be sent on trucks to Phnom Penh. There are fish markets all along Highway 5, from Kompong Chhnang to Pursat. Fresh fish and shrimps are kept in big oil drums. Some shrimp species, like the white and pink ones, can be very big. Only five or seven such shrimps can add up to a kilogram.

We learned that fishing on Tonle Sap Lake was being restored. More boats, nets, electric generators, and outboard motors had been supplied, and boat-building was being developed. Fish, shrimps and crabs were being exchanged for rice, textile goods, salt, tobacco, bread, ice, soft drinks, and medicines from the State or private traders.

Public security had been guaranteed. The year before, Pol Pot troops would roam the lake at night and rob the population of whatever they could. Then they had been put to flight, cornered and wiped out. Snok Tru was now guarded by a militia force of more than 30 well-trained members armed by the regular army.

In a western border area

We arrived at the western border in the midst of great tension caused by Thailand.

Bangkok was saying that it was neutral, that it had nothing to do with the Pol Pot clique, and that it respected Kampuchea's sovereignty. But what it was doing belied its claims.

Pol Pot troops captured by the revolutionary army in Battambang and Siem Reap all said that their sanctuaries were on the other side of the border. They said there were a dozen Pol Pot camps in Thailand, that they had received assistance from the Thai administration at both provincial and district levels. They said Thailand was their "close friend", that food, medicines and weapons were being sent them by China via Thailand. Hospitals, training camps and munition depots had been built along the Thai-Kampuchean border for use by the Pol Pot army.

In Phnom Penh in early June, we attended the trial of 16 leading Sreika men arrested by the security forces with the help of the population. They



At the Monivong Bridge market place.

Photos: THANH TIN

had formed a "cabinet" complete with a "prime-minister", a "deputy prime-minister", many "ministers", and a flag—a triple-dome temple in gold on a white and green background. The "prime-minister", Hem Krisna, was a sergeant in the Lon Nol military police and later worked as an army reporter. He told the court that he had had direct or indirect contacts with the Bangkok authorities through his liaison officers—Phiep, Muon and Pa; that his group had been recognized as the internal section of the Sreika by the external section headed by Son Sann and Dien Del and based in Thailand; and that Bangkok had promised immediate "recognition" as soon as they were officially set up.

The "deputy prime-minister" Ma U Bon Phon, a bullnecked man with shifty eyes, had been a professional footballer before becoming a police sergeant. He said that among the ASEAN nations, Thailand was the "friendliest". He said China, the United States and Japan had promised them uniforms, weapons and money, but Thailand had allowed them to use its territory as basecamp, springboard and contact point, and had helped them recruit troops among Kampuchean refugees.

We had a meeting with Koi Bien, commander of the revolutionary forces in Battambang. He showed us a map on which were marked a series of Thai-based Khmer Rouge camps. "Whatever they may say," Koi Bien told us, "the Bangkok authorities are encouraging crimes. They are partly responsible for the murders and robberies committed by Pol Pot men on either side of the Kampuchean-Thai border." He said that Pol Pot troops were in better

shape now because they had been fed, trained and equipped in Thailand, but morally they were on the decline. Those forced to return to Kampuchea for sabotage would avoid contacts with the revolutionary forces. The only thing they did was to ambush traders, even Thai citizens, and rob them of their goods, money and gold. Koi Bien also said that a great many bandits had been captured by the revolutionary forces.

*

Road communication has vastly improved. Most of the bridges have been repaired to accommodate trucks and lorries. It takes only two hours and forty minutes to go by car from Phnom Penh to the port of Kompong Som on the 235-km long Highway 4, on which between several dozen and one hundred vehicles run a day, singly or in convoys. On Highways 5 and 6 there is a constant flow of ox-drawn carts, bicycles, motorbikes, trucks and small cars. On either side one can see peasants busily planting and ploughing, young volunteers rebuilding irrigation canals, and militia training in the shade of luxuriant orchards.

Traffic on the Tonle Sap River has trebled. A train is run to Battambang every other day, instead of the weekly trip previously run. Soon the train service will become daily.

Kampuchea is reviving despite a genocide of a kind which no other country has ever experienced.

THANH TIN

CONSTITUTION DRAFTING COMMITTEE SET UP

The People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea has decided to set up a committee for the drafting of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, headed by President Heng Samrin and Vice-President Penn Sovann. The committee includes 14 members, representatives of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea, the People's Revolutionary Council, Trade Union, Youth and Women's Organizations and other social strata of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

VIETNAM WOOD PRINTS

WIN INTERNATIONAL PRIZE

WOOD prints hold quite an important place in the modern graphic and painting arts of Vietnam. Vietnamese wood prints have long been highly appreciated by world art circles. The exact date of their appearance cannot yet be determined but oral tradition puts their birth at approximately the same time as wood printings in Vietnam (10th-14th century). Ancient wood prints came from two principal sources: the colour paintings of Ho village (in former Bac Ninh province) printed on 20 (Rhamnoncuron balansae Gilg) paper coated with oyster shell powder, and the Hang Trong paintings in Hanoi. The latter are characterized by a black background and very original colours: black from the ash of bamboo leaves or rice straw, white of oyster shell, yellow of the sophora flower, green of copper rust... Ancient wood prints have left a rich legacy: Hens and Pigs, Coconut Picking, Jealousy, Village Market, Mice Wedding, Wrestling, The Carp and the Moon... They hold a prominent place in the national art heritage and some have even found their way into major art museums of the world.

Inheriting a great legacy of ancient art, modern Vietnamese wood prints have a marked national character which combines simplicity, vigour and purity, closely reflects the life of the labouring masses and depicts penetrating themes of contemporary society. The exquisite art of hand printing which is both smooth and distinct has high artistic value.

The wood prints depicting scenes of Vietnamese life sent to the international art exhibition INTERGRAPHIC held in Berlin in early 1980 aroused keen attention in many art circles. The exhibition displayed 1,296 paintings by 674 artists from 54 countries. The jury of the exhibition was composed of 15 painters of world renown including a



Insurrection of the Two Trung sisters against the Han invaders (40-43 A.D.)

*Wood print by Pham Van Don
Photo: LUONG QUY*

Vietnamese, Tran Van Can. It unanimously decided to award 10 grand prix named "Struggle for Peace and Social Progress" to 10 countries including Vietnam as represented by the paintings of Pham Van Don.

LUONG QUY

CHRONOLOGY...

(Continued from page 32)

- SPK (Kampuchean News Agency): The delegation of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council led by Foreign Minister Hun Sen concluded its visits to several countries in Western Asia, Latin America and Africa. During the visits, many countries expressed strong support for the Kampuchean people in national defence and construction.

- Arrival of a delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of Kampuchea led by its Minister Men Chhan.

- The SRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs hands a note to the Ambassador of the Philippines in Vietnam protesting against the Philippines' seizing of Comodore Reef in the Vietnamese archipelago of Trung Sa.

- An economic delegation of the SRV Government, led by Deputy Prime Minister Do Muoi, leaves Hanoi for Bucharest to attend the 6th session of the Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation between Vietnam and Rumania.

- Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach leaves Hanoi for an official visit to the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

13. The spokesman of the SRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues a statement rejecting the US slander that Vietnam is using toxic chemical in Laos and Kampuchea.

14. FNA: Twenty solidarity organizations of the United States, Canada and the American Friends' Service demand the ousting of the Pol Pot clique from the United Nations.

- Acting President Nguyen Huu Tho sends a reply to Madagascar's President: "Vietnam is ready to attend a Summit Conference of all countries concerned with peace in the Indian Ocean."

- A delegation of the Swedish Workers' Communist Party led by its Chairman Rolf Hagel, arrives in Vietnam on a friendship visit.

- Inauguration of the first Lao film processing workshop built with the help of the Vietnamese film industry.

CHRONOLOGY

(16 July - 15 August 1980)

July

16. Prime Minister Pham Van Dong receives a Soviet Party and Government delegation led by N.V. Talydin, member of the CC of the CPSU and Minister of Communications.

- Inauguration of the Hoa Sen (Lotus) satellite ground station built with Soviet assistance.

17. According to the Vietnam Commission of Inquiry into Crimes Committed by the Chinese Expansionists and Hegemonists during their War of Aggression in the first 6 months of 1980, the Chinese side were responsible for 1,120 armed provocations including 500 raids and ambushes on Vietnam's territory; more than 300 flights of jet fighters violating Vietnam's air space to a depth of 15-20 km; 350 armed vessels violating the territorial waters of Vietnam from Quang Ninh to Quang Nam - Da Nang provinces. The Chinese aggressors killed and wounded 100 Vietnamese civilians and caused great losses of life and production.

- A large meeting in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the agreement on economic co-operation between Vietnam and the USSR is held in Hanoi.

18. The conference of Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam held in Vientiane on 17 August is successfully concluded, adopting a statement on problems concerning the three countries and a resolution on international problems.

19. Opening of the Moscow 1980 Olympics. Vietnam attends the games for the first time.

22. At the 26th international geological conference held recently in Paris, the Vietnamese delegation confirmed that Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes are Vietnamese territory.

- Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach receives Robert Jackson, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the co-ordination of aid to Kampuchea.

23. The Soviet Union launches the "Soyuz-37" spaceship from Baikonur Cosmodrome. The international crew includes the commander of the ship, the Soviet pilot-cosmonaut V.V. Gorbatko and the Vietnamese cosmonaut Pham Tuan. Vietnamese Party and Government delegation led by General Vo Nguyen Giap attends the launching of the spaceship.

24. The spokesman of the Foreign Ministry issues a statement rejecting arrogant allegations by a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman on 21 July concerning Vietnam - Soviet co-operation in oil and gas exploration and exploitation on Vietnam's southern continental shelf.

25. Signing in Berlin of the minutes on the exchange of instruments of the ratification of the consular agreement between Vietnam and the GDR.

30. Deputy Prime Minister To Huu receives a delegation of the UN International Children Funds (UNICEF) led by its Director General James P. Grant.

31. After 8 days in space, the Vietnamese and Soviet cosmonauts return safely to earth. The Vietnamese State decides to bestow on them the titles of Hero of Labour and the Ho Chi Minh Order. The Soviet State decides to award the Order of Lenin to V.V. Gorbatko and the title of Soviet Hero, the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star Medal to Pham Tuan.

- Prime Minister Pham Van Dong sends a message of greetings to Indian Prime Minister I. Gandhi on India's success in launching the Rohini satellite.

- The SRV decides to recognize the Republic of Vanuatu.

August

1. *Nhan Dan* publishes the full text of the memorandum issued by the Kampuchean Foreign Ministry on the present tension along the Kampuchean-Thai border.

- The spokesman of the Kampuchean Foreign Ministry issues a statement protesting against continued Thai violations of Kampuchea's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

3. Prime Minister Pham Van Dong receives Kurt Waldheim, UN Secretary-General.

- Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach holds talks with UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.

5. *SPK* (Kampuchean News Agency): Long An province (Vietnam) has donated to Svay Rieng province 355 tons of seeds and helped it train hundreds of tractor drivers and plant protection workers. Ben Tre province has helped Kandal province build two pumping stations with a total capacity of 4,300 cubic metres per hour.

6. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry issues a statement strongly condemning Israel's decision to make Jerusalem its national capital and demanding it to rescind this decision and fully respect the various UN resolutions on the status of Jerusalem.

- The spokesman of the Kampuchean Foreign Ministry issues a statement to the effect that "ASEAN's 12-point proposal" only causes a tense situation along the Thai-Kampuchean border.

- Acting President Nguyen Huu Tho issues an appeal on the occasion of the International Year of the Disabled.

8. *AFP*: A UNICEF representative in Geneva states that all international aid to Kampuchea has reached the population.

9. A large meeting in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of economic and trade relations between Vietnam and Czechoslovakia is held in Hanoi.

10. *SPK* (Kampuchea New Agency) denounces Bangkok for using the question of refugees as a pretext to serve Beijing's and Washington's dark schemes.

11. *VNA*: On the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the August Revolution and the National Day, Su That (Truth) Publishing House publishes Prime Minister Pham Van Dong's works entitled: "Some Problems of the State."

(Continued on page 31)

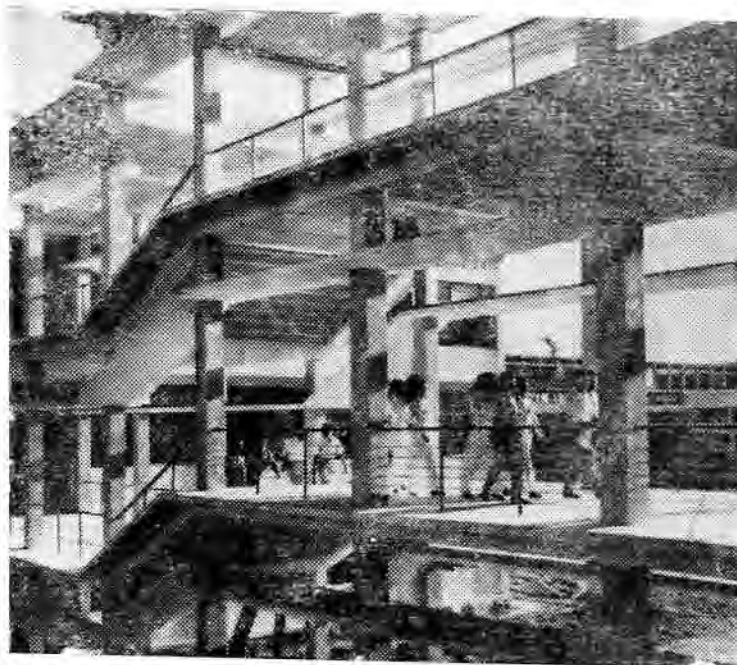
THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERATED NORTH VIETNAM



CLOCK WISE

- 10 October 1954: Soldiers of the People's Army entering Hanoi.
- The Hanoi engineering plant—now the No.1 Machine-Tool Plant—built with Soviet assistance, the beginnings of the Vietnamese engineering industry.
- A partial view of the Hanoi Polytechnic College—one of the centres for the training of scientific and technological cadres.
- During the agricultural cooperative movement: small and scattered plots of land gave way to large ricefields.

Photos: VNA



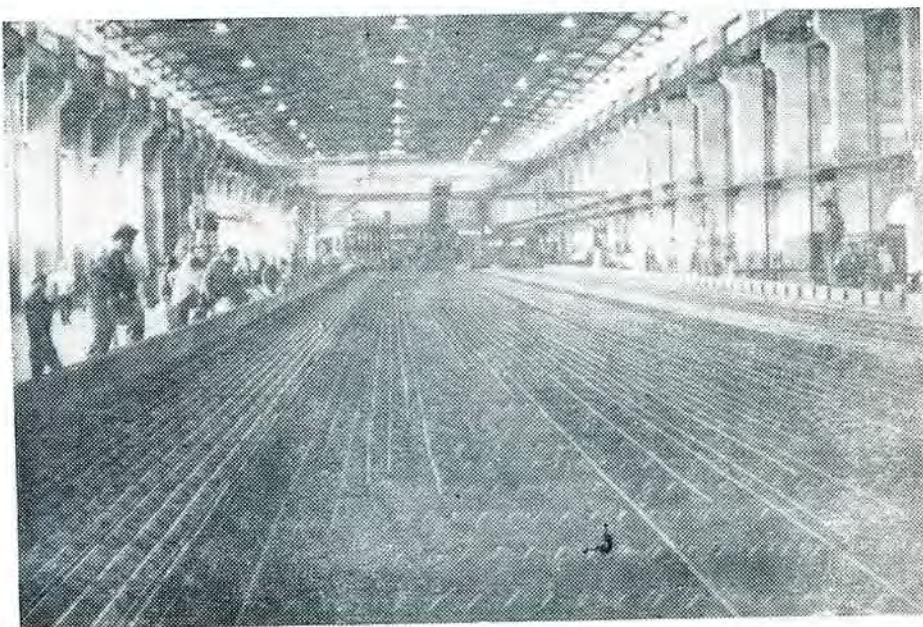


VIETNAM 1975-1980

CLOCKWISE

- 30 April 1975: Liberation of Saigon.
- The National Assembly of reunified Vietnam in session after the national general elections on 25 April 1976.
- A corner of the Gia Sang roll-steel mill of the Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Complex.
- Chinese POWs captured by the Vietnamese forces in February-March 1979. Another Chinese aggression would meet with the same failure.

Photos: VNA



Vietnam
courier

VIỆT NAM
BETHANA

Le Courrier
du Vietnam

VIỆT NAM
de Vietnam

Báo đối ngoại

TIN VIỆT NAM

Ra hàng tháng bằng các ngữ Anh, Pháp, Nga, Tây ban nha

Tòa soạn 16 TRẦN HƯNG ĐẠO, HÀ NỘI

ĐÂY NỘI: 53998

In tại Hà Nội

Chi số: 12462