

# Vietnam courier



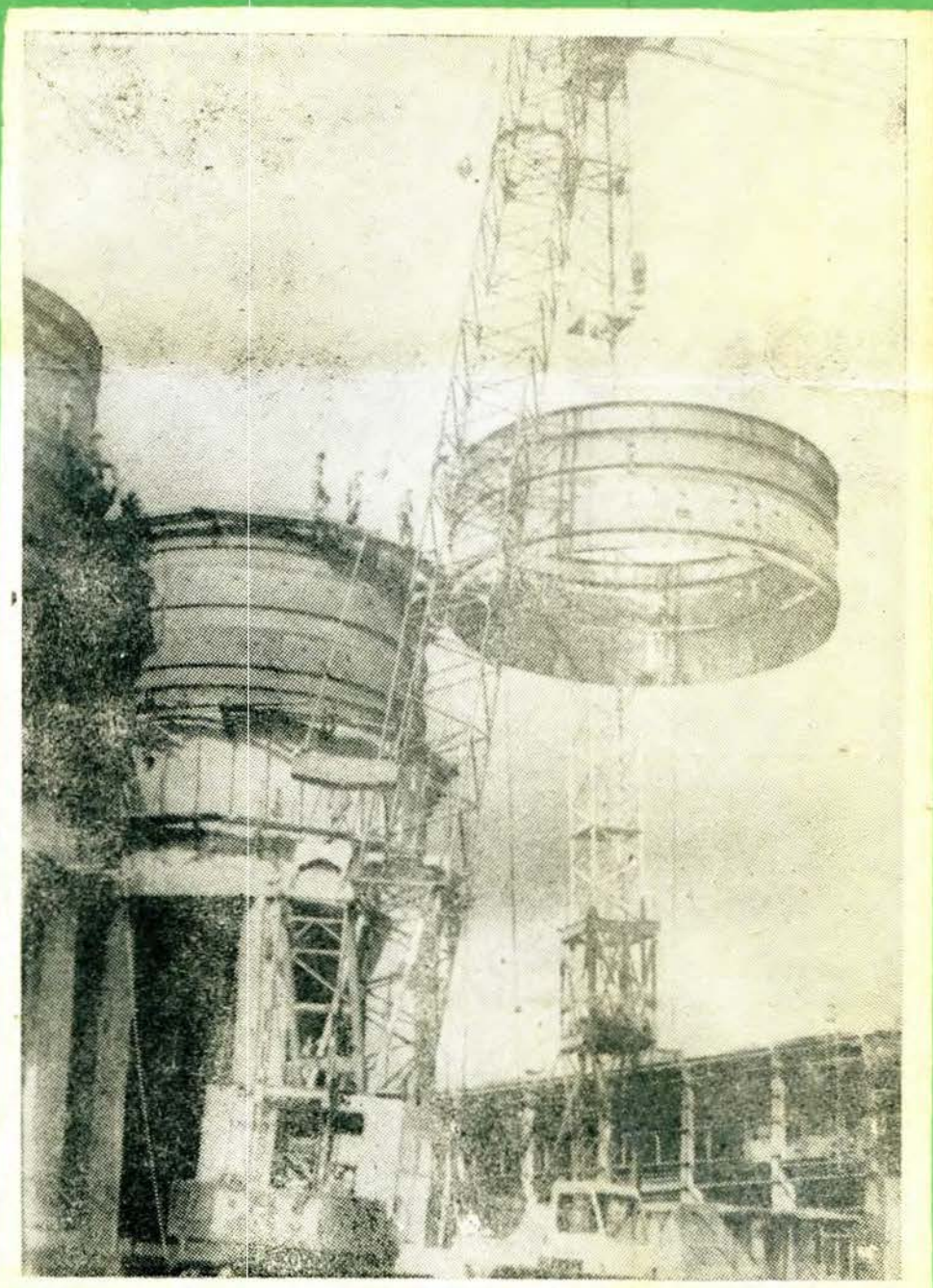
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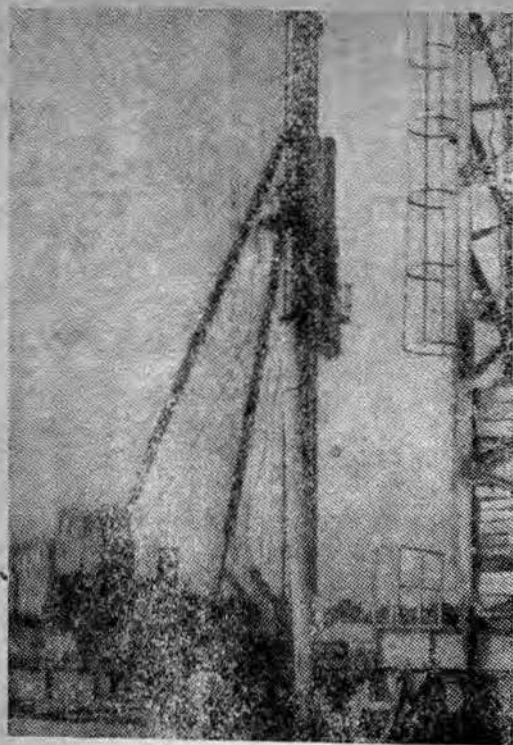


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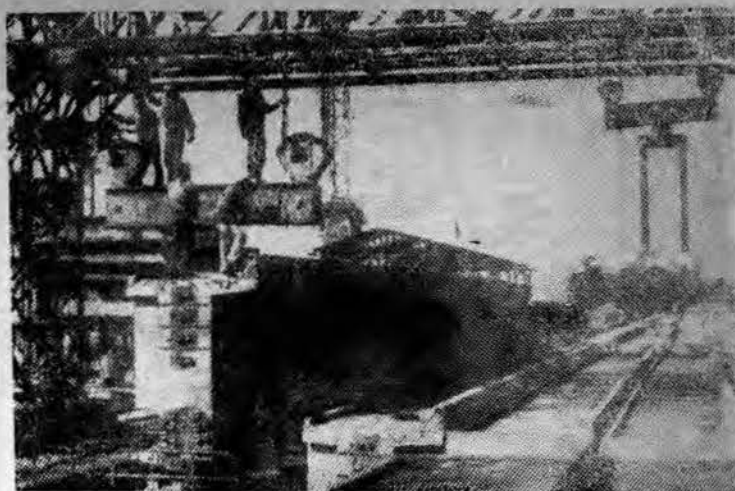
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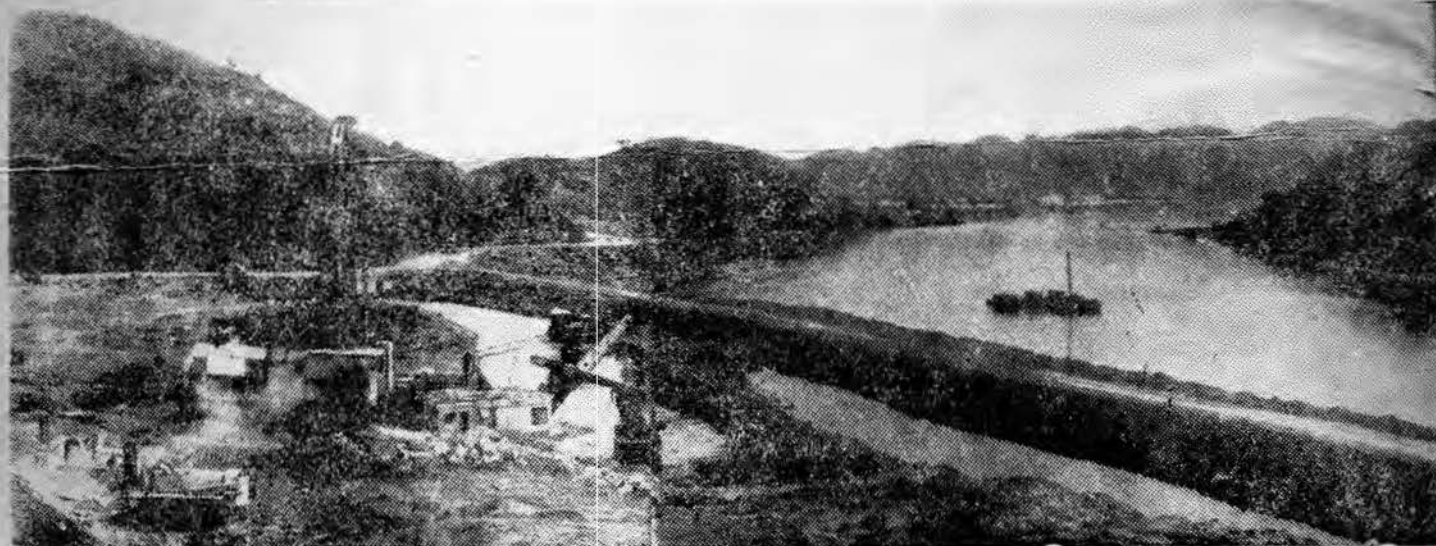


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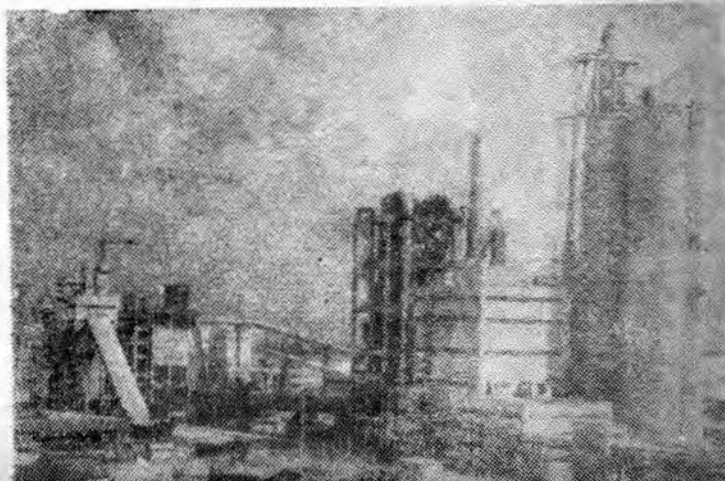
## MAJOR PROJECTS OF THE 1981 - 1985 STATE PLAN



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1. 2. Thang Long bridge over the Red river near Hanoi.
3. The construction site of the Hoa Binh hydro-electric plant on the Da river (Ha Son Binh province).
4. An overall view of the Hoang Thach cement factory (Hai Hung province).

*Photos: CAO PHONG*



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Front Cover:

*Partial view of the Bim Son cement factory (Thanh Hoa province) built with Soviet assistance.*

Photo: PHAM QUANG CAN

**Vietnam  
COURIER**

4 - 1981

*FROM Phnom Penh, reports are constantly coming in about the wonderful resurrection of a country full of talent and energy. After the 1.3 million-ton rice crop the signs are that numerous industries are returning to normal. An exhibition in Phnom Penh shows that 40 out of the 60 factories in the capital of Kampuchea have started supplying car and bicycle tires, wine and cigarettes, and other goods.*

*But the main point is that Kampuchea is in the process of establishing a democratic State. Kampuchea's draft constitution has just been published and is being publicly debated, and the whole country is eagerly preparing for the general elections to elect an Assembly truly representative of the entire people's will.*

*The enemies of Kampuchea's independence are obviously worried to see that time is not on their side. Those who claim adherence to the principle of non-interference in Kampuchean affairs, and parade their support for the Kampuchean people's right to self-determination have now taken the liberty of appointing the head of a government of "independent" Kampuchea. And all seem to pin their hopes on the latest act of a play whose stage manager, as admitted by the main actor Norodom Sihanouk to the Kyodo News Agency, on 11 March, is no other than the Beijing ruling clique.*

*Pol Pot's crimes are so appalling that even those who once resolutely backed him now realize that continued support for him would lose them any hopes of credibility with the Kampuchean people. Thus plans are afoot to set up an "alliance" of three or four Kampuchean reactionary forces in Pyongyang. So far, only Khieu Samphan, an open lackey of Pol Pot and Beijing, has obeyed his masters' order and joined Sihanouk. Son Sann has not yet agreed because of personal considerations.*

*Sihanouk did not conceal from Nayan Chanda, correspondent of the Far Eastern Economic Review (6 March, 1981), the fact that he knew for certain that the Kampuchean people would not support the "Front" which he intended to establish in conformity with Beijing's will, and that he was committing "political suicide".*

*No wonder that with such lack of conviction on Sihanouk's part and the scramble for power of all those who attended the Pyongyang meeting, the plot holds little hope for those who had pinned their expectations on it.*

*The contrast between the ever improving situation of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the plight of the forces opposing the young republic is all too obvious. It is a pity that the capitals of many ASEAN countries refuse to see where reason lies. They still seek to impose on the Kampuchean people a conference on the "Kampuchean problem", in accordance with an erroneous UN*

# THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA

ON 10 March 1981 the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea issued a communiqué saying that the Draft Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea had been completed after one year of intensive work in collaboration with various branches of activity, mass organizations and many intellectuals and scientists. After subjecting the Draft to nationwide discussion among cadres, soldiers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and all strata of the population, the Constitution Drafting Commission set up on 11 January 1980 will make necessary amendments and modifications before submitting it to the National Assembly for debate. Preparations are under way throughout the country for the general elections to the National Assembly scheduled for the first half of 1981.

In a recent statement from Phnom Penh, President Heng Samrin stressed that the People's Republic of Kampuchea needs a constitution to fix the direction, tasks, and policies for national reconstruction, to consolidate the independence and the revolutionary gains and gradually improve the material and cultural life of the people.

The Draft sets out the fundamental national rights of the Kampuchean people, i.e. independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and stresses that Kampuchea is advancing toward socialism.

The Constitution also affirms the position of the people as masters of the country, the function of the state as manager of all aspects of social life, and the leading role of the Party in Kampuchea's revolutionary cause. For the first time in their national history the people of Kampuchea, from an oppressed and exploited people, will become the master of their country and of their destiny.

The Draft stresses the unity and equality of the various nationalities within Kampuchea, the need to respect the freedom of belief and to care for the welfare and happiness of every family in the new society.

The Draft proclaims a foreign policy of independence, peace and non-alignment, as consistently pursued by the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

In the economic field, the Draft provides for developing agriculture, industry, trade, handicrafts and small industries in an appropriate manner. It also defines the role of the State economic sector, of the "solidarity production" groups in agriculture and of family production. It lays guidelines for the steady development of the State sector and the encouragement of "solidarity production" groups and family production to develop along the right lines, continually improving the life of the people and the prosperity of the country.

Concerning the cultural and social fields the Draft includes the policies of building a national and progressive culture; of developing education, science, technology, literature and the arts; of eradicating illiteracy and raising the cultural standards of the entire population; of caring for the health and improving the physical conditions of the entire people, with particular attention to the welfare of mothers and children; the policy of preferential treatment of veteran revolutionaries, war invalids and the families of fallen heroes; social insurance and social relief, to name but a few

*resolution. They refuse to carry out the resolution of the Foreign Ministers' Conference of the Three Indochinese Countries on the need to hold a dialogue between the Southeast Asian countries concerned with a view to promoting peace and stability in the area. This is the spirit of the resolution of the Foreign Ministers' Conference of the Three Indochinese Countries held in January 1981 which proposed to convene a conference of Indochinese and ASEAN countries on the problem. On their part, the Indochinese countries are prepared to discuss all concrete problems raised by ASEAN countries concerning the question.*

*Everyone knows, as in similar cases, that to meet one another does not imply mutual recognition. Moreover to hold a meeting of all Indochinese and ASEAN countries*

*is not necessarily the only solution. It is ludicrous to suggest that the proposal of the Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese countries is a trap to lure the ASEAN countries into recognizing Heng Samrin's Government. The latter, as a government set up by the Kampuchean people, will continue to exist and develop whether or not it receives universal foreign recognition.*

*The question is whether the governments of ASEAN countries are sincere in their wish to bring peace and stability to Southeast Asia and whether they really want to hold a dialogue or not. Trying to evade the proposal of the three Indochinese Foreign Ministers is an act of political myopia.*

25 March 1981

# V. THE CHINESE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

THE 1949 victory opened the way to the building of a "New China". The country had regained its independence after liberation from the imperialist yoke and power was in the hands of a great party of innovators with a prestigious leadership. Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Party and President of the Republic, held an exceptional position both as the head of the nation's highest bodies and the venerated savior of hundreds of millions of peasants aspiring to a bright future. Behind him were experienced veterans of the long years of war: Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Chen Yi, Lin Biao, He Long, Chen Yun... - companions of the early years who had rallied to the Maoist line since the Cunyi conference in 1935. Had they done so by conviction or opportunism? Probably both. With his prestigious aura, Mao was to be less the president of a collective leadership, *primus inter pares*, than the supreme leader, while the others, be they members of the Central Committee or the Political Bureau, were to remain his lieutenants.

However, in spite of the ferocious purges of 1942-45, the "internationalist" group had not been completely eliminated. Its most notorious representative, Mao's number-one opponent, Wang Ming, remained member of the Central Committee. Besides, both the internal and external situation urged the CCP to lean on the Soviet Union. In 1945, a powerful offensive by the Soviet forces had swept away the large Japanese army in Manchuria and given the Chinese communists an important industrial and manpower base, a decisive trump in their struggle against the Guomindang. As for the USA, it never forgave the Chinese communists their hold on mainland China and showed especial aggressiveness: the American fleet gave protection to the Guomindang regime installed in Taiwan; an American veto stood for long years in the way of People's China's entry to the United Nations; US troops intervened in

Korea; and substantial aid was granted to the French in Indochina. Foster Dulles, then Eisenhower himself, spoke of using atomic weapons against China.

In those conditions, China could rely for support only on the Soviet Union. It benefited first of all from the Soviet "umbrella" which protected it against imperialist armed attack. The struggle put up by the Korean and Vietnamese peoples warded off direct confrontation with imperialist forces on Chinese soil. Alliance with the Soviet Union and the revolutionary movements in Korea and Vietnam was vital for China. Thanks to the Soviet Union, China, whose economic backwardness was compounded by several decades of war, gained

access to modern technology and the initial capital it needed.

Defence of national independence and peace, establishment of a new government and new institutions, land reform giving land to several hundred million peasants, elimination of illiteracy: with a view to achieving those new tasks which were, it should be pointed out, relatively straight forward, it was not too difficult to unite the various tendencies - petty-bourgeois, "orthodox" Marxists, peasant rebels.

Under that regime of "New Democracy" the face of China changed rapidly. In spite of the burden of the Korean war, economic construction advanced apace, industrial production in particular

Production	1949	1952	1957
Steel (tons)	158,000	1,350,000	5,400,000
Coal (tons)	32 million	66 million	131 million
Electricity (kwh)	4 billion	7 billion	16 billion
Oil (tons)	121,000	436,000	1,500,000

Several hundred major industrial enterprises were built with the assistance of thousands of Soviet experts while tens of thousands of Chinese workers and technicians were sent to the Soviet Union for further training. Progressive and rapid development, on the Soviet pattern, could be expected

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Obviously, the above figures, though pointing to significant advances were still modest in regard of the needs of a population then estimated at 600 million. China experienced all the tribulations of an under-developed country: acute shortage of raw mate-

rials, food, commodities, capital, technicians, experienced managers, rapid population growth. Gone were the days in Yenan when there were only a few handicraft workshops and a backward, autarkic agrarian economy to run. The Yenan regime now had to integrate the whole of China, with its geographical, ethnic and social diversity. The men in power, who had been accustomed to leading peasants of traditional stock, now had to govern tens of millions of workers, technicians, intellectuals, the urban petty bourgeoisie and capitalist bourgeoisie, not to mention the millions of overseas Chinese, many of whom were influential businessmen in Southeast Asian countries. Problems cropped up at every step: socio-political and socio-economic structures,

cultural and ideological problems, conflicts and litigation between the various social strata and classes. The situation called for clear-sighted and patient leadership and absolute self-control. No miracles could be expected. The Soviet Union, decisive though its support was, was not in a position to give huge amounts of economic assistance owing to the immense war damage it had suffered.

The Chinese Party's inner composition also changed rapidly. Membership, from one million in 1945, reached 10 million in 1956. While the leadership was still composed of the Yen-an leaders, the base changed considerably. Between the new requirements of the country and the aspirations of the new strata of activists on the one hand, and the habits of thought and work of the leaders and cadres on the other, inevitable contradictions emerged, which were made even more acute by the difficulties the country was running into.

How to solve those contradictions? Throughout the 1950's successive political campaigns were launched, some to mobilize the peasants, others against bourgeois elements, corruption and intellectual trends deemed nefarious. Their outcomes were evaluated differently according to the stances from which they were viewed. It was then that Mao threw the whole weight of his "imperial" prestige into the balance.

In July 1955, at a conference of provincial party secretaries, he passed over the head of the Central Committee and ordered the stepping up of rural collectivization. By 1955 only 14% of the peasantry had joined the cooperatives and only 0.035% of the co-ops were of the advanced type. Mao vehemently denounced those who were "limping along like women with bound feet, groaning that we are advancing too fast." Following that reprimand, by June 1956 92%

of the peasants had joined the co-ops, 75% of which were of the advanced type. By the end of that year, the whole of rural China had been collectivized

In January 1956, Mao launched a new 15-year plan for agricultural development: after three five-year plans, farm production was to increase by 140%. Figures were juggled with, each echelon vowing to outstrip the targets assigned. The consequences weren't long in making themselves felt: bad harvests, famine in many areas, the 15-year plan shelved.

It was time to draw the first lessons in socialist construction, all the more so since the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had just denounced the dangers of the personality cult. The 8th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party opened in Beijing in September 1956, eleven years after the 7th was held in Yen-an.

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1949-1956: the achievements had been remarkable. China had become a great power with an ever stronger economy and a firmly established position in the international arena in spite of ostracism from the UN. However, within the CCP, conflict was still smouldering: political and ideological clarification had not been achieved. Accelerated agrarian collectivization had suffered an obvious failure but Mao had by no means admitted his errors, while his "realist" critics had no other reference than their own empiricism. The Maoist faction had none the less to fall back one step and the 8th Congress deleted from the Party statutes, the words which consecrated Mao Zedong's thought as the official doctrine of the CCP. But Mao kept his positions of Chairman of the Party and President of the Republic. The ideolo-

gical discussions among the leading circles did not yet affect Mao's prestige as saviour and supreme leader among the large peasant masses and the grassroots activists, especially those of rural stock. In one of its resolutions the 8th Congress also criticized great-power chauvinism which "remains a great danger if not checked in time". It was in a way the first official indication of an evil which would soon become one of the major problems of the CCP as national independence was consolidated and China's role as a great power became firmly established. Although the "internationalist" group had not been entirely eliminated, it had grown too weak to be able to resist effectively a trend which prevailed among the hard-line Maoists and the opportunists as well.

While the CCP was floundering in hesitations and uncertainty, grave events happened in Poland and Hungary and the Khrushchev report to the 20th Congress of the CPSU caused sharp repercussions in the world. The Soviet Union's international prestige suffered while that of China rose. Mao counter-attacked. In late 1957 he once again launched his agricultural development plan and criticized the resolution of the 8th Congress which gave priority to the development of productive forces. In January 1958, he asserted that the popular masses, roused by a great wave of enthusiasm, could cause China to advance so rapidly as to "overtake Great Britain in 15 years' time". In the provinces he had a large number of wavering cadres replaced by activists supporting rapid collectivization and the 1957 anti-rightist campaign (in which about 100,000 "counter-revolutionaries" had been arrested). China, he said, was a poor country and a blank sheet of paper on which anything could be written. The numberless difficulties which stood in the way of the still under-developed country were to be swept away, not through

planning and gradual growth—the Soviet model—but through the superhuman efforts of hundreds of millions of people.

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It was the Great Leap Forward with its strings of fabulous figures, the creation of people's communes, the building of back-yard furnaces, and finally, disaster. It would be unfair to put the blame on Mao alone: it was a socio-historical environment, a kind of collective intoxication which had captured a great nation with hundreds of millions of destitute people. Such circumstances called for leaders who completely mastered their methods of analysis and action—and the CCP had none.

Utopianism had prevailed over exacting Marxist-Leninist analysis. The *People's Daily* asserted: "The buds of communism are sprouting everywhere. China is going forward with the speed of a rocket. Octogenarians are convinced that they are already living the age of communism". Blast furnaces were being built everywhere by 90 million peasants; the food problem was solved, so it was claimed, and one could freely distribute rice and envisage the abolition of wages and salaries. Wasn't the 1958 harvest expected to double that of the preceding year, and the 1959 crop to do the same? The "wind of communism" was blowing with gale force in the minds of many leaders and cadres. A "Chinese road" to socialism had been found. On the heels of utopia came the chauvinism denounced at the 8th Congress: China, a great nation with a millenary culture, did not have to follow a foreign doctrine, an imported model. Surpassing the Soviet "elder brother", it could now set itself up as a guide for other poor, and oppressed countries. Anti-Sovietism showed in certain statements of Mao's.

Soviet technicians who criticized the methods of the Great Leap Forward and called for concrete measures suited to technical requirements were accused of sabotaging China's development.

Collective intoxication did not explain everything. One perceives in the Great Leap Forward one peculiar feature of former peasant movements, namely the organic link between utopianism and despotism. The charismatic leader, brought to power by the centuries-old aspirations of the masses over the head of the regular State and Party authorities, imposed his views on everybody, the other leaders included, as much through ideological pressure as by administrative and police measures, as much through personal power as through the channel of a bureaucratic apparatus under his control. Was Mao a visionary? Yes, in certain respects, but he was also a wily and cruel despot who mercilessly crushed his opponents, be they his former companions in struggle. Those acquainted with Chinese history easily recognize traits characteristic of earlier empire founders and great leaders of peasant revolts. The great mass movements which carried away hundreds of millions of peasants in the creation of people's communes, back-yard furnaces, and gigantic manual construction sites were the combined products of utopianism and despotism. It would be equally erroneous to ascribe them solely either to spontaneous enthusiasm or repressive coercion.

The disastrous consequences of the Great Leap Forward—famine and decline in industrial production—, quite visible by the end of the very first year, seriously worried the leading circles. Criticism of Mao reached its climax at the meeting of the Political Bureau in July 1959. Peng Dehuai, the Defence Minister, spoke of "petty-bourgeois fanaticism". He was dismissed and replaced by Lin Biao. Mao had to

give up the Presidency of the Republic, and was replaced in these duties by Liu Shaoqi, but retained very strong positions. Famine spread to many provinces peasants revolted in several places in the towns and cities, even stricter rationing was imposed Mao could no longer deny his personal responsibility. At least in the highest spheres of the Party, his role and position were called into question. Many leaders and cadres refused to be regarded as mere lieutenants and agents participating in leading the country to catastrophe. The struggle for power became acute within the Chinese Communist Party.

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This inner conflict was made even more acute by the nascent quarrel between the CCP and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Soviet experts could no longer work usefully in this utopian tidal wave and were recalled. Availing itself of some weaknesses of Khrushchev, the CCP attacked the Soviet Union as falling back in the face of imperialism and proclaimed a virulent anti-imperialist stand before the whole world, setting itself up in implicit fashion as defender of all colonial peoples fighting for national liberation. This banner was flaunted by the CCP in all international gatherings throughout the 1960's. Chinese theorists asserted, contrary to the resolutions adopted at the international conference of communist parties, that it is the national liberation movement, not the socialist countries, which constitutes the most decisive revolutionary factor of our time. It is true that the USA then maintained its aggressive stance towards China. Washington was turning a deaf ear to those emissaries of American secret services who had managed to establish direct contact with Mao and who held that it would

not be too difficult to get the man to play ball with the USA.

That noisy anti-imperialism ("imperialism is a paper tiger") was accompanied by rather dubious practical stands. When in 1954 the Vietnamese Party asked China for assistance to continue the war until the complete liberation of the country, Beijing refused. Later, at the Geneva Conference Zhou Enlai struck a deal with the French delegates in order to divide Vietnam and deny the Kampuchean resistance an area in which to regroup its forces. Tragic consequences ensued for the Indochinese peoples: US imperialism was able to intervene directly in Indochina and wage a long and appallingly destructive war. The Kampuchean Party was decapitated, which made it possible for adventurers of the Pol Pot and Ieng Sary type later to take hold of its leadership. In 1959, when the Vietnamese Party advocated the armed struggle in South Vietnam, the Chinese leaders advised it to "lie in wait for a long period of time". In 1964-65, when US aircraft began bombing North Vietnam, Mao Zedong declared in an interview with Edgar Snow that if the Americans refrained from infringing Chinese territory, China would not budge.

The upshot of the internal crisis resulting from the Great Leap Forward and the external crisis of the 1960's was the calling into question of Mao's personal power and China's international role. Mao tried to solve the problem through a flight forward. In 1962 he proclaimed, "Comrades, don't forget the class struggle"—a struggle to be conducted on two fronts: against revisionism within the Chinese Party and against the international revisionists, i.e., the CPSU. This twofold struggle would allow China to resolve all its internal difficulties and to set itself up as the leader of the world revolution in place of the "revisionist" Soviet Union. In 1963 the CCP proposed

the creation of a kind of new International—to be composed of eleven parties, most of them Asian. The leadership of this International hostile to the USSR and the European parties would naturally be assumed by Beijing. The Vietnamese Party refused to have anything to do with this scheme which would have divided the world revolutionary movement and which in any case proved abortive.

That struggle against "revisionism" was bolstered by more or less metaphysical theoretical analyses: one divides into two, inevitably and indefinitely, without any possible synthesis; struggle and conflict constitute the essence of the universe; man can undertake anything if his will is strong enough. More important still, the enemy was to be found, not in the bourgeoisie, but within the Party itself, and in the international arena, not in the imperialist camp but in the communist movement. Against these foes, one had to wage a class struggle which was to be as merciless as that directed at the bourgeoisie or imperialism. This was the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution".

The CCP's internal crisis in the period after the 8th Congress (1956), which started with the Great Leap Forward in 1958, was solved by the physical elimination of those opposed to the Maoist group. Of the 11 members of the Political Bureau, eight were swept away, among them Liu Shaoqi, the President of the Republic, who later succumbed to ill-treatment in prison. More than two-thirds of the full and candidate members of the Central Committee suffered the same fate. Mao scored an undisputed triumph, and in 1969, 13 years after the 8th Congress, he was able to convene the 9th. In the Party statutes, Mao's thought was again honoured as the only correct Marxist Leninist doctrine and a merciless struggle was advocated against the "renegades, secret agents, diehard capitalist-roaders and degenerate ele-

ments" within the Party. For many years this served as a basis for a struggle that was both tragic and ludicrous between various factions: Lin Biao's group, the Shanghai clique, which was later to be labelled the "Gang of Four", and Deng Xiaoping's—all of them vowing absolute loyalty to Mao. There were also excessive manifestations of the Mao cult. The Vietnamese were flabbergasted when seeing Chinese experts working in their country, or visiting Chinese football teams, reciting together a chapter from the Little Red Book before a meal or a match. (1)

There is no point in describing in detail the Cultural Revolution whose history is well known by now. For some Westerners looking at it from a distance it was the "great festival", the genuine revolution of our time. For the Chinese people it was the greatest tragedy of the century, perhaps of all centuries. Internecine warfare, purges, indictment meetings, dismissal of functionaries and leaders, exile of city-dwellers to the countryside, executions, suicides—the victims numbered 100 million according to some estimates. Despotism reached its climax, using strange methods, sowing chaos, unleashing masses of people in revolt, the Red Guards, against Party and State authorities

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It didn't take the Vietnamese long to become aware of the changes in China's international policy alongside the internal convulsions of the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese leaders began hampering the shipment of Soviet weapons to Vietnam and turned down the Japanese Communist Party's proposal for a united international front of struggle against US imperialism



and for Vietnam — all the while making loud anti-imperialist declarations. In 1968, the Paris negotiations between the Vietnamese and the Americans were viewed by Beijing with unconcealed disapproval. Direct Vietnam-USA talks deprived China of the privilege to use Vietnam as a bargaining chip, as had been the case with the Geneva Conference in 1954. An independent Vietnam tended to overshadow China:

Support to the Vietnamese resistance and struggle against imperialism were not matters of principle for the Beijing leaders but mere tactics that could be changed according to circumstances. In 1970, Mao, once again through an interview with Edgar Snow, made known his wish to receive US President Nixon. In 1971, Kissinger made a secret visit to China; then Zhou Enlai came to Vietnam to tell its leaders of China's intention to negotiate the Vietnam question with Washington. The Chinese Premier was told that Vietnam was mature enough to look after its own affairs. Nixon's visit to China in 1972 ending in the signing of a Mao-Nixon accord ushered in the era of Sino-American collusion to the detriment of national liberation movements

The break between Vietnam and China was to all intents and purposes complete for Beijing had forsaken the cause of Vietnamese independence in order to strike a deal with the USA.

In 1971, Beijing sided with Pakistan and the USA in the Bangladesh affair, then supported Pinochet in Chile in 1973. The Americans were given a free rein to send their B-52s for savage bombing raids on Vietnam while Beijing showed its disagreement with the Vietnamese Party over the continuation and intensification of armed struggle in South Vietnam. The Nixon-Mao talks had

delineated spheres of influence: Beijing undertook to pressure the Vietnamese Party into refraining from overthrowing the pro-American regime in South Vietnam while Washington would approve its effort to keep North Vietnam in the Chinese orbit (2). Beijing's support to Pol Pot, which turned the Kampuchean Party into the model Maoist Party, gave the CCP a foothold in the Indochinese peninsula.

Neither the US war efforts nor Beijing's pressure succeeded in lessening the determination of the Vietnamese people who stepped up the armed struggle and compelled Washington to sign the Paris Agreement in January 1973. The American troops were withdrawn from Vietnam. Without them, the Saigon regime was doomed. Beijing tried to anticipate events: with American agreement, Chinese forces occupied the Vietnamese islands of Hoang Sa (Paracels) where Saigon troops had been stationed.

Meanwhile the 10th Congress of the CCP was held. Lin Biao, the "dauphin" named by the 9th Congress, had been liquidated, and his errors and crimes criticized together with the offences committed by... Confucius. The Congress proclaimed the three worlds theory: casting aside Marxist class analysis, it put on the same footing — at least theoretically — the two "super-powers", the USSR and the USA. On the practical plane, the anti-Soviet campaigns against "social imperialism" grew in virulence while collusion with American imperialism became ever closer. In 1975, Beijing strove until the very last minute to save the Saigon regime by appealing to the Vietnamese, but to no avail. The total liberation of South Vietnam was regarded by Beijing as a serious setback.

What followed is common knowledge: intensive aid to Pol

Pot for his attack on Vietnam in the South, provocation against Vietnam through the Hoa affair (Vietnamese citizens of Chinese descent), and the armed aggression of February-March 1979 launched with 600,000 troops and ending in humiliating defeat. This defeat by no means prevents the present Beijing leaders from persisting in their plan to establish in Kampuchea a regime hostile to Vietnam with a view to crushing the latter in a vice with combined attacks from the North and the South.

Mao's death in 1976 did not put an end to the internal strife. The people's wish that order be restored following the violent convulsions of the Cultural Revolution favoured Deng Xiaoping's "pragmatic" group against Mao's heir, Hua Guofeng. In the economic field, Mao's adventurism was replaced by an empirical policy but utopianism was by no means eliminated. The "four modernisations" plan launched by Deng in 1976, which claimed to make China a world superpower by the year 2000, had to be revised following the defeat of the expedition against Vietnam. "Demaosization" was carried out in economics, with more difficulty in ideology, and not at all in foreign policy.

To a greater extent even than in Mao's days, collusion with American imperialism has grown tighter and spread to all fields — economic, military and political. Modernization of military equipment gets top priority, swallowing up the meager reserves of foreign exchange. Anti-Sovietism has grown even more exacerbated and support to the reactionary regimes of Pinochet, the Shah of Iran, Mobutu, is more open. Chinese foreign policy has become basically counter-revolutionary. Deng Xiaoping speaks openly of giving more lessons to Vietnam, just as Chinese emperors of yore directed threats at neighbouring kings who refused to pay tribute to the Celestial

Court. The Soviet Union is labeled as the main enemy of mankind while the USA has become the great friend of the Chinese people. In the Western hemisphere, Cuba is also considered a sworn enemy by the Chinese leaders.

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Under the pretext that the problem is too complex many authors balk at an analysis of the present Chinese world. Of course no one can claim to grasp the entire situation but one should and can clarify some perspectives.

China, in spite of some important achievements, remains today an under-developed country. It has atomic bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles but its people's standards of living are still very low and its weight in the international arena amounts to little in face of the great industrial powers. It is not China that holds the trumps in its competition or collaboration with the imperialist powers, the USA and Japan in particular. It can deal with them on an equal footing only on two conditions:

- a great stability of its own government, based on firm popular support; and

- solid international backing, based on revolutionary principles; not situational tactical considerations.

This double requirement is valid for all countries of the Third World fighting for their political and economic independence. China, in spite of its size, is no exception. When one does not have the major trumps at one's disposal (technology, finances, information) one cannot conduct in the face of imperialism a policy based on pragmatism.

The Government of present-day China is far from stable. Maoism is disintegrating, and if some leaders or cadres still cling to "Mao's thought" it is less because of ideological considerations than concern for their positions. A large part of the Chinese people live in ideological confusion, compounded by the uncontrolled introduction of films, magazines and other cultural commodities from the USA and Japan. By rejecting Marxism-Leninism and embarking on a "Chinese road" the leaders of the CCP have cast off the only compass that could help them find their bearing in the contemporary world. By rejecting cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and solidarity with the national liberation movements, the Beijing leaders have tied their hands and surrendered their country to the ambitions of the imperialists.

Political and ideological confusion, following the collapse of that complex dubbed Maoism and made up of a mixture of utopianism, despotism, moralism, egalitarianism and imperial chauvinism, disarms the masses in their struggle against a possible comeback of the bourgeoisie, all the more so since the latter still has social bases in China. The Chinese capitalists in Southeast Asia in particular, who possess considerable capital and have been called upon by the present Chinese Government to invest in China, could constitute a pole of attraction for petty traders and small producers and open the way for the restoration of a bourgeois class, at least in the coastal regions. Let us also not forget that the Chinese bourgeoisie has an important bastion in Taiwan, and this model could very well seduce some social strata in mainland China. In a disorganized and confused bureaucracy it would not be difficult for that bourgeoisie, and

for American and Japanese imperialists, to find allies. The various factions jockeying for power will seek the support of the imperialists and as in the 1930's and 1940's, pro-Japanese or pro-American groups could emerge within that bureaucracy. The abandonment of the anti-imperialist line and of internationalism could easily pave the way for the betrayal of national interests.

If the present policy is continued, what will emerge will not be a great China, the dream of the Beijing leaders, from Mao to Deng, but a neo-colonial China with a bourgeoisie closely collaborating with American and Japanese imperialism. State industry and what remains of the collectivized structures will be put at the service of a State capitalism in the hands of a more or less militarized bureaucracy, assisted by an intelligentsia who will diligently devote their efforts to the study of Western technology and the service of multinational companies. This will certainly not be patterned on the Soviet "model" but on that of many countries in Southeast Asia.

A China thus closely bound to imperialist forces would pose a serious threat to peace. For of Maoism the present Beijing leaders have preserved one major aspect: the will to revive imperial China which at one time dominated the world, at least the Asian world. To this end, the country's material power is not sufficient. The only chance for China to emerge as a superpower is to provoke an armed conflict between the USSR and the USA, as a result of which these two "tigers" would bleed to death and China would become the arbiter of the situation. An important tenet of present Chinese policy is to oppose détente and destabilize the world. For people unfamiliar with Chinese history,

this could seem a gratuitous guess. But not to bear in mind that dream which has always haunted Chinese statesmen would be to completely misunderstand China and forsake all possibilities of grasping and foreseeing the unfolding of events. For men who control the destinies of one billion people, the temptation to become the masters of the world is hard to resist. And as a start, to become the masters of Southeast Asia where 20 million Chinese already control the main-springs of the economy and where Maoist parties also are active. In Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, capitalists and Maoists of Chinese stock work hand in hand to create bases for Beijing's hegemonic leanings. In Vietnam this undertaking has come to grief: efforts to kindle a "cultural revolution" failed while capitalists of Chinese descent — along with those of Vietnamese origin — lost all power over the national economy. That is why Vietnam must be "given a lesson", so that the whole of Indochina can be integrated into a Southeast Asia subjected to Beijing's domination. This dream, which haunted the Ming emperors in the early 15th century, now pursues the men in power in Beijing. As in the 15th century, Vietnamese resistance frustrated it. It is high time the Beijing leaders gained a clearer view of the realities of our time.

One of the early leaders of the CCP, Chen Duxiu, gave this warning in 1919: "If we persist in dreaming of our past dynasties, our people will be kept out of the 20th century and be reduced to living like slaves or beasts."

This anachronistic dream could of course be realized, and many misfortunes would befall the Chinese people and the world at large. So long as the Beijing Government persists in its alliance with imperialist forces, its virulent anti-Sovietism, and its designs on Southeast Asia, its will to hegemony and expansion will remain a danger for the world. A China dependent on imperialism, yet aspiring to be the overlord of Asia and the whole world — this combination of two apparently contradictory aspects is none the less a reality. Dependence and hegemonic dreams can exist side by side (e.g. Brazil).

Yet China can perfectly well escape from these straits: for this it has many trumps. We are no longer in the 1920's. History will not repeat itself. New forces have been born: an industrial working class numbering tens of millions, an intelligentsia with a modern culture, hundreds of millions of peasants who are no longer illiterate. For those new strata, Marxism-Leninism remains the true guide, the Soviet Union and Vietnam the true companions in struggle, the imperialists the true enemy. It is not possible to erase from the minds of the Chinese people the memory of decades of imperialist domination and exploitation, and there is growing popular opposition to the alliance that some leaders dream of cementing with the USA, Japan and the NATO countries and to their clamouring for war and armaments to the detriment of the people's living standards.

Those opposition forces are not yet organized but their influence

upon the leaders is already perceptible. In our times it is impossible to eliminate those forces of progress completely even with a brutal and prolonged "cultural revolution". China is at present highly unstable. The factional struggles and the hesitations of those in power reflect the deep-seated opposition between two tendencies, two "lines": either to progress toward genuine socialism, the final goal being not national power but the people's happiness with the other socialist countries, not the imperialist forces, as companions and allies; or to persist with anachronistic dreams and eventually be driven into the imperialists' orbit.

The support that everyone should give the forces of progress in China must be accompanied by unequivocal denunciation of the present leaders' expansionist policies. This is no offence to the Chinese people but evidence on the contrary of our confidence and affection.

NGUYEN MINH KIEN

(1) A Vietnamese leader once asked Zhou Enlai: "What is this cultural revolution? We Vietnamese can't understand it." "Neither can I," replied Zhou, raising his hands to heaven.

(2) Following his talks with Nixon, Mao Zedong told visiting Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong: "Don't try to reach too far with a short-handled broom. The Chinese broom does not have a long enough handle to reach Taiwan. For their part the Vietnamese should not try to liberate South Vietnam." Pham Van Dong's reply: "The Vietnamese broom has got a long enough handle."

# HO CHI MINH CITY: A TURNING POINT

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR NGUYEN KHAC VIEN

*VIETNAM COURIER: You have just spent a few weeks in Ho Chi Minh City and several Southern provinces, did you notice any new developments there?*

ANSWER: Certainly. The atmosphere at Tet for instance was quite different to that of previous years. It was a beautiful Tet: lots of flowers, fire-crackers, sweets, singing and variety shows all over the place, in the clubs and parks. In Tao Dan park for instance, a flower exhibition was held with 2,000 species of flowers and dwarf trees from all the provinces of Vietnam, North and South, and in the space of two weeks a million people came to visit it. For days on end the streets were packed with people in their Sunday best, buying flowers, cakes, votive objects, and food... Traditionally, Tet has always been a great occasion for festivities, but this year they were far more extensive than in previous years.

*VIETNAM COURIER: What are the reasons for this, in your opinion?*

ANSWER: Firstly, there are what I would term the objective reasons. Since the great floods of 1978, the Mekong delta has brought in a succession of bumper crops. The price of rice has considerably dropped, and the State has been able to collect vast quantities

of rice to help the less favoured regions. Thanks to the favourable climate, all the efforts made since 1975 in irrigation, in improving the rice varieties and the cultivation techniques have begun to yield results. These good crops improved the living conditions of several million peasants, and have also influenced the life and psychology of the city-dwellers.

*VIETNAM COURIER: You spoke of psychology; these last years many people, in certain circles at least, have been voicing somewhat pessimistic opinions. What is the situation now? I specifically have in mind the middle strata and the intellectuals of Ho Chi Minh City, who have never hesitated to make their views felt. What are they thinking? You have many contacts in these circles, can you give us any ideas on this question?*

ANSWER: It can be said that many of these people — not all of them — have reached what may be termed a 3rd phase. Let me explain. First phase, 1975-76: the enthusiasm of liberation, with all its naïve illusions. Everybody believed that the bad days were gone forever, that the fruits of victory were simply waiting to be picked, and that life would carry on just as before, but with freedom and independence as an added bonus. Second phase, 1977-80: American aid (2 billion US dollars per year) stopped, a whole



In the Sincro sewing-machine factory (Ho Chi Minh City).

Photo: TU HAI

string of natural calamities, the war with Pol Pot, the Chinese aggression, bad economic management, shortages of everything, galloping prices, the corruption of a number of cadres, the exodus of some strata of the population—this all resulted in a veritable psychosis of pessimism and discouragement, at least in those who failed to understand the underlying realities of the country. Added to all this, the systematic campaigns of denigration by Western and Chinese media against Vietnam further influenced these strata who have always been particularly receptive to all things Western. Third phase: this one began in late 1980 and is still in progress. One could say that the last months of 1980 saw the beginning in Ho Chi Minh City of a new stage, and not simply on the psychological plane

*VIETNAM COURIER: What exactly do you mean?*

ANSWER: It began very concretely with a whole series of economic measures concerning the introduction of new methods of management in various enterprises, which led in the months preceding Tet to a boost in production, a substantial increase in wages and bonuses in many enterprises, and to the recognition and rewarding of many inventions and initiatives of workers, technicians and researchers. The changes in industry and the good harvest in the countryside have influenced the outlook not only of workers and peasants, but also of intellectuals and other strata. The various offices, hospitals, colleges, research institutes have also begun to introduce new principles of management, but naturally the material results in these areas are less perceptible than in production.

*VIETNAM COURIER: Could you give us a concrete idea of what these new management principles involve?*

ANSWER: Ho Chi Minh City inherited quite sizeable factories from the old regime, especially in light industry. These factories were paralysed when the foreign technicians left, and by the shortage of raw materials which until then had been imported and paid for by American aid. The regulations applied to these enterprises were very ill-conceived, which made it difficult for them to take off. They were wartime regulations, adopted in conditions where the country's finances largely depended upon foreign aid, and whose managers had little experience in running modern enterprises. Many of the regulations concerning pricing, wage levels, promotions hindered the normal functioning of these factories. To take one simple example: sugar cane, which is abundantly produced by the peasants, couldn't be bought by the sugar factories with all their modern equipment because the collecting price set by the administration was lower than the cost price. By eliminating anomalies of this kind, many factories and enterprises have been revitalised.

*VIETNAM COURIER: Does this mean that the main economic problems have been solved?*

ANSWER: Far from it. You know how complex any economic system is; a few months, a few specific measures aren't enough to create a socialist economy, especially when starting from a neo-colonialist economy grafted onto an under-developed society ruined by 35 years of war into the bargain. Tamper with a price, and it's the entire pricing system which is in question; tinker with a wage, and it's a whole hierarchy which needs to be re-defined. In those enterprises where changes have been made, it's been

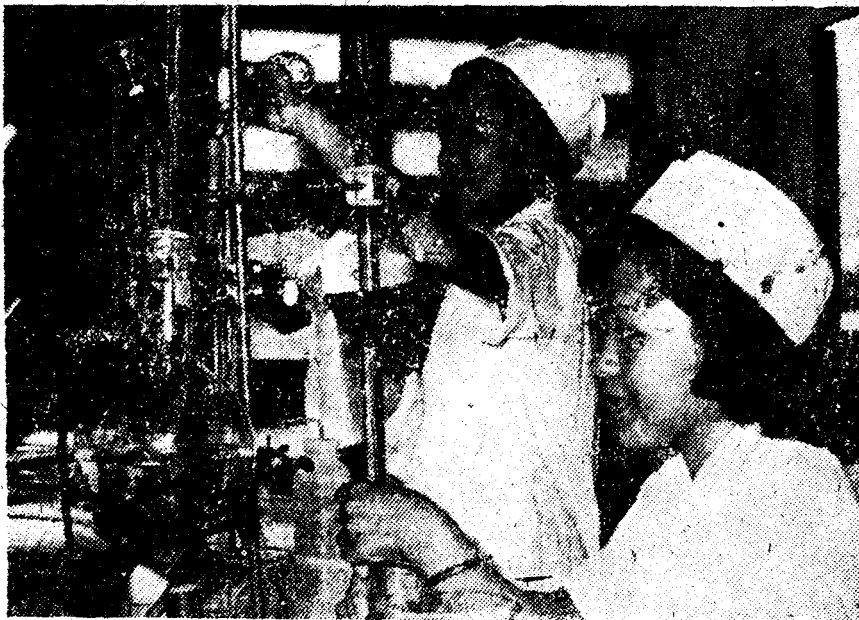
through a whole series of related measures which were thought up, discussed and applied in various ways, with varying degrees of audacity and prudence, depending on the circumstances and the temperament of the cadres in charge. These measures do not simply affect relations between the various departments within each enterprise, but also relations between the enterprises and society, the banks, the suppliers, the transport services, all of which are themselves subject to complex regulations. Either the system smothers any tendencies for change within the grassroots units, or else the green light is given, and like a rush of traffic until then kept halted by a red light, the enterprises will surge forward with determination. This is what is now happening in Ho Chi Minh City, and indeed throughout the country. But the most spectacular results were recorded in Ho Chi Minh City, which as we all know has a much more developed technical infrastructure than elsewhere, and numerous inventive workers and technicians. It is also an important university town and the centre of a complex web of international relations.

*VIETNAM COURIER: Who gave the go-ahead?*

ANSWER: You may recall that in mid-1979, the 6th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party recognized that errors had been committed in economic policy, and that changes were necessary. The movement of agricultural co-operativization were no longer to be rushed as it was in 1977-78, and we must take the time to convince the peasants, to train cadres, to readjust the pricing system, to provide fertilizers and equipment to the peasants; the pricing and wage systems, which had become impossibly rigid, were to be rehailed; more flexible measures were to be taken concerning foreign trade; we were no longer to seek to eliminate small-scale family agricultural, industrial, handicraft production, but on the contrary to encourage it while recognizing as an objective necessity the existence of a private sector alongside the State and co-operative sectors, of a free market alongside the socialist market organized and planned by the State. The Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, on the basis of the 6th Plenum resolution, has greatly encouraged a whole movement of study and discussion in all circles, which led especially in late 1980 to a wide blossoming of initiative to regenerate production, and reform the retribution system on the basis of the "three interests": the worker's interest, the collective interest (factory, office, co-operative), and State interest

*VIETNAM COURIER: You said that we were far from having solved the main economic problems. How then do you account for the new atmosphere in many circles not concerned by these new economic measures?*

ANSWER: I spoke of discouragement, pessimism. The idea was spreading that communists were good fighters but hopeless economists; with the Party at the helm, there were no worries about safeguarding our national independence, but what about the economy? Those who remained confident were waiting for the green light; and the green light has been given. After the 6th Plenum resolution on economic problems came the Political Bureau resolution announcing a reorganisation of Party and State bodies; the Government decree on technical and scientific initiatives and inventions; and of course the new



Checking the protein concentration of fish-sauce in the Phan Thiet State-private enterprise (Thuan Hai province).

Photo: VAN THINH

Constitution recently promulgated by the National Assembly, which opens the way for many new administrative and legislative measures. Throughout the country there is a feeling that the Party leadership is committed to correcting past errors, to encouraging new initiatives to stimulate the discovery and implementation of concrete solutions by the grassroots. And this is what is most crucial: the will to face facts, the courage to recognise one's errors. Marxism-Leninism is an indispensable compass which indicates the general direction, but can never be a substitute for the hard slog to find the right path.

*VIETNAM COURIER: Have all strata of the population regained confidence? What about the intellectuals, in particular?*

ANSWER: One may distinguish three categories. In the first are those who never lost hope, because immediately after liberation they got involved in new activities, the revolution having opened new and challenging perspectives for them. Take for instance the example of the intellectuals of Can Tho university. Can Tho is known as the capital of the Western part of the Mekong delta, and lies in the centre of a vast plain whose development constitutes one of the main objectives for the area. These intellectuals, although trained under the old regime, immediately set to work, breeding new pest-resistant rice strains and developing new cultivation techniques adapted to local pedological conditions. They spent these last few years working, living, sleeping in the villages, and getting to know the peasants. To the other extreme are those who always held the revolutionary movement in complete and "congenital" distrust. They complain all the year round, and regret the "good old days" of abundance and ease. In the middle, so to speak, is the majority of intellectuals who feel a slightly condescending admiration for the revolutionaries, and are waiting for the new regime to prove its worth in the economic and cultural domains. I believe that for these circles 1981 is a turning point. After years of discouragement and pessimism, many of them have regained confidence. The whole of Vietnam, from

the economic and cultural points of view, has become a vast laboratory. Every factory, every office, every agricultural or handicraft co-operative is offering anyone with any capacity for initiative important possibilities for action and involvement.

*VIETNAM COURIER: What are the problems remaining?*

ANSWER: There are many, and many big ones. You can't in a few years erase the legacy of over a century of colonialism and war. Vietnam, faced with powerful enemies in Washington and Beijing, has to make considerable efforts to reinforce its national defences. The rapidly increasing population means that every year 1.3 million more children have to be fed. On the economic level, the principal obstacle is the consumer mentality inherited from twenty years of US domination. In the West the consumer society grew out of scientific and technological development; here it was created *ex nihilo* by US aid. This aid was interrupted 5 years ago, but the habit remains, of consuming imported goods, and of maintaining at all costs a standard of living far above the country's possibilities. This has engendered a constant outflow of foreign currency and gold, and hindered the primitive accumulation without which no economic take-off is possible. On the social plane, this consumer mentality has given rise to the proliferation of a strata of merchants and traffickers who have caused prices to rocket and who have been getting scandalously rich, even tending towards recreating a bourgeoisie ready to call in foreign imperialists to help them establish their influence. These traffickers have joined up with declassed elements and corrupt cadres. Thus gradually a line-up for further class confrontation may be appearing: imperialists, traffickers, declassed elements, corrupt cadres, all joining in an alliance against the rest of the population and the revolutionary power. While recognizing as an objective necessity the coexistence for a long period of time of a private sector and a State sector, this also implies the need to conduct a prolonged class struggle which will only end with socialist construction.

This problem is not specific to Vietnam, it is shared by all Third World countries. In the era of multinationals, the national bourgeoisies of Third World countries have no option but to become compradore bourgeoisies and base their support on declassed and corrupt elements and strata. The commerce and trafficking practised by these bourgeoisies deal wholly with luxury and consumer goods from the developed capitalist countries, which are far more profitable for this class than to industrialize their own country.

*VIETNAM COURIER: How does this relate to Ho Chi Minh City?*

**ANSWER:** On its own, Saigon attracted 80% of American aid and at liberation had 300,000 families registered as dealers. A few tens of thousands of the larger commercial, banking and insurance companies were nationalized, but most of the middle and small-scale enterprises still continue their activities, some legal, others illegal. The foundation of the State commercial services and the people's buying and selling co-operatives are gradually curbing their activities, but in any case this is a long and difficult struggle combining economic, legal and educational levers. This task requires great patience. The 6th Plenum resolution opened a new phase in this struggle, by strengthening the State apparatus, especially its economic efficiency. Thanks to this impulse, Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City), the old neo-colonial capital, and centre of consumption, is slowly becoming a centre for the whole country's development. In this respect as well the year 1981 also constitutes a turning point.

*VIETNAM COURIER: What do you mean by a centre for the country's development?*

**ANSWER:** Firstly, the city is the country's most developed industrial centre, especially as concerns light industry: textiles, bicycles, motorbikes, electrical appliances, art crafts, and small-scale engineering. One should also mention the town of Bien Hoa which, although it is administratively part of Dong Nai province, nevertheless constitutes a unified economic complex with Ho Chi Minh City. Ho Chi Minh City is also a major cultural and university centre. The city has a university with 3,000 students, a polytechnic institute with 2,000 students, a school of agronomy with 2,500 students, a school of medicine and pharmaceuticals, a school of economic studies, numerous research institutes in agriculture, medicine, science and technology, and a centre of computer studies. Over the past years, the city's scientific and technical workers have helped to solve many problems of great significance for the country's economic and social life: creation of new rice, maize, soya varieties; geological prospecting; new agricultural techniques on aluminous or saline soils; problems connected with hevea plantations, fish breeding, preventing epidemics; and the treatment and reeducation of drug addicts. The city also has a major river port and airport; once readjusted, foreign trade and international relations will develop more actively. Although prostitutes and beggars are still to be seen in the streets, on the other hand a thousand choir and dance groups have sprung up in the factories and localities. Ho Chi Minh City now has half a million youths, children and students in crèches, kindergartens and schools. Nevertheless a sharp struggle is still taking place between the new orientation, which aims to turn the city into a centre for the country's development, and the economic and social tendencies towards neo-colonialism inherited from the old regime. What is taking place in these first months of 1981 can be likened to the first swallows which appear in the cold and still wintry air, but which announce the coming of spring.

# CHANGES

## IN

# NHA TRANG

*Changes have occurred in many economic branches throughout Vietnam following the implementation of the 6th Plenum Resolution of the Vietnam Communist Party Central Committee. This is an account by a young woman Journalist of the transformation of a Southern town.*

**A**UTUMN is a fleeting season in Nha Trang. Winter comes with water-laden clouds, low on the horizon. It may drizzle for a while on couples out for a stroll, labourers returning from work, children running out to play... Otherwise the town basks in the sun, and a light wind strokes the trees rustle.

Day and night the waves wash upon the sea shore and leave a white foam. In the daytime you can hear the noise of motor boats and watch sails bob up and down. At night, if you leave Nha Trang for Cau Da or Vinh Tuong, another town appears on the sea, or so it seems owing to the lights of the fishing and shrimping boats in the bay. People here catch shrimps, fish, and cuttle-fish, and dive sixteen metres down for lobsters, the most valuable export article at present. This is a different Nha Trang with its fishermen and their sinewy arms, the smell of gasoline mixed with that of shrimps and fish, and the tang of the sea. Here the people live with the sea and work without rest to extract its riches.

A path of soft sand leads me to a fishing village. A heavy smell of fish, smoke and nets left to dry in the wind pervades the atmosphere around the small houses decorated with ornamental plants and surrounded by coconut trees. Every yard is full of jars of fish and fish-sauce. Jars are lined up along the rows of low and spacious houses with roofs of tiles or corrugated iron. Plump matrons in uniforms move back and forth filling up the jars and bottles with the sauce. Women with rosy cheeks stand in the yard boiling water to add to the sauce. Children hang around their mothers or sisters, now and then asking for a little money to buy ice-creams or cakes when they hear the bells or the cries of the street sellers in the village lanes...

Suddenly a man rushes out from a café:

"Hai, Hai, come in, please come in!"

I follow him, all the while racking my brains to place him. The man shows me the way, his hair tucked behind his ears and his trousers flapping about his knees.

Finally, I remember having met him two years ago. He had given me a furious look and had said to the local cadre: "I have nothing to say. Tell her to find someone else to provide her with the material she needs." His wife had kept silent while lulling her baby to sleep. His eldest daughter had invited me to drink a cup of water. "We have nothing but water," the father had added, deliberately ignoring a few dozen coconut trees laden with fruit by the house. "Are you preparing to go to sea this year, uncle Nam?" The answer to the cadre's embarrassed question had been abrupt: "What is the use? I will sell my fishing boat and find something else to do. My kids can sell ice-creams..." Then he had sat down and looked away.

Recollecting this meeting I could not help laughing. So when we got to his house I ventured:

"Have you sold your boat and set up an ice-cream stall?"

Nam laughed heartily and shook his head:

"You have an ingrained prejudice against me, Hai..."

He drew a couple of chairs to the table, and shouted to his wife: "Tell the kids to prepare two big glasses of coconut milk with sugar, please..."

Turning to me, he went on:

"This year things are going well; we have produced more fish-sauce than planned, and have decided to form an association to buy larger fishing boats..."

I smiled and said:

"So you have given up despairing like two years ago?"

"That is all in the past now. This year we sell fish and fish-sauce to the State at a good price. We've taken in quite an amazing catch. It is a pity you were not here to see it..."

Upon that, Nam briskly stood up and led me to his fish-sauce "workshop". There his wife and his ten children were busy pouring water into filtering basins and filling up barrels with fish-sauce. From the filtering basins the sauce flowed into the containers with a gurgling noise, producing a white foam and a strong smell characteristic of fishing villages.

I spent a whole day visiting the basins and the kitchens where the sauce is made and stored, the cooperatives and individuals making fish paste, dried shrimps... I met up with old and new acquaintances among the villagers and chatted with them in their homes or at work, attended wedding parties and artistic performances... Two years ago, after a similar trip I had not been able to write a single line. Their as yet unravelled difficulties then worried me, and indeed had weighed heavily upon my mind ever since.

In Southern towns like Saigon, Nha Trang, Da Lat, Da Nang, I know that some people live on their gold and don't care a whit for socialism. They pack up their belongings and wait for a plane ticket. But they are a minority compared to the working people who have turned to socialism in the hope of seeing it bring them a better life. But this was the rub. Following the publication of the Resolution of the 6th Plenum changes in economic management have taken place in various localities. Conservative forces, however, still hold sway in many places, the leadership swings from one extreme to the other. In Nha Trang I found an attempt to make a new start. With bold yet calculated changes the local Party Committee has brought a new life to the area.

When I left the fishing village for the town the last lambrettas were carrying their passengers away and the fish smell soon disappeared. Nha Trang was lit up, and so was the sea. Nets dangled along the shore, glistening with fish which reflected the torch-light like scattered glass fragments. The dull sound of the club accompanied the fishermen's songs while curious children looked on. A few men drank beer on the pavements lined with drying cuttle-fish. Prosperity has come to Nha Trang, I thought with relief. A good beginning. And everything needs a beginning.

DUONG THU HUONG

VIETNAM COURIER



## A SCHOOL... A FAMILY

A few kilometres from Ho Chi Minh City, our car leaves the motorway and follows a road, lined with gardens and small houses, leading to "the School". The atmosphere of the countryside can already be felt.

"The School": a few buildings looking out onto a yard where trees are growing, a few benches on which to sit down for a chat, and the old chicken grubbing about.

"The Rehabilitation School". One can't help smiling at the moralistic associations with Confucianism and Catholicism suggested by the name.

### Patience and Affection

"There still are problems, as anywhere else..." Sister Lucy tells us. "Prostitution is a scourge of any war, but American occupation made it much worse here."

She looks at us with calm eyes from behind her huge glasses:

"There are three schools of this type: this is No. 2, No. 1, in Binh Loi, receives urgent cases and contagious diseases.

"They were given various names to avoid the rather direct term "rehabilitation". Finally we've decided on "New Women's School..."

But the name is of little importance; What really counts is the goal to be reached through mutual understanding, patience... and affection."

"How many boarders do you have?"

"On average, six hundred."

"What ages are they?"

"At present, the majority are from 17 to 35 years old. 15 per cent under 17. Very few over 36."

"And how long do they stay here?"

"From six to twelve months."

"Any diseases?"

"54 per cent still suffer from gonorrhoea, even from syphilis. But medical examinations are frequent. Once they are cured, they are sent back to their families, or to State farms and handicraft centres (50%). At their own request, some remain here as employees (7-8%). Some join the Army."

"How do they live?"

"They are provided with accommodation, food, and may go out with their parents if they can be trusted."

"Are there any rebels?"

"Oh yes! How couldn't there be, but things are getting more stable."

"Do you have any relapses?"

"Of course! But very few. About 5 per cent."

"And how do you manage?"

"With kindness and affection. Under the former regime, they were despised and rejected. Here, it is like a family..."

"What do they learn?"

"Above all, different branches of handicrafts: embroidery, wicker-work, rush or jute carpet-making, mat-weaving.

"At five-thirty a.m., they get up and have 20 minutes for morning exercises. At six, to the canteen. They can order extra food, there is a market nearby. They receive 13 kilogrammes of rice a month like everyone else. At six-thirty, they start work. They get a half-hour break for lunch."

"Do you have difficulties with food supplies?"

"The same as everybody. However we have certain shopping privileges. Not much meat, of course: only once a week, with the same amount of fish. And also fruit when it is not too expensive."

"From one-thirty to four they are again at work. Dinner is at five. From six to six-thirty, they meet to review their day's work. They have the evening to themselves until nine. A library, the T.V., some musical instruments.

"Are any of them illiterate?"

"Yes, and there are literacy classes three times a week."

"And "ideological" courses?"

"Certainly, but..."

Did Sister Lucy get the point? She smiles.

"We so run them that they are not too tedious. They deal with Vietnamese and world geography, basic history, peace, crimes against peace, social evils, human rights and duties, the role of work in life. There are also gatherings for information so that those young women are not totally cut off from the outside world.

"In short," continued Sister Lucy, "We have tried to create a school, a kind of large family in this centre. Can we ever succeed?"

### Rustling Cages

Next we visit the workshops. We feel ill at ease, and an undefinable feeling creeps over us as we pass these youths, who look up while carrying on with their work. We are free; they are caged...

Even when the cage is humanized, it still remains a cage. We smile at them, and those who return our smiles cheer us up, those who look away grieve us.

A rustling noise comes from the first room. Under the nimble hands baskets were taking shape. These women look very young. Can they really be?

Here young women are busy working sewing-machines. They seem indifferent. Not hostile but unwilling to make contact.

In the carpet-making room, we find more goodwill, they work in groups.

We finish our visit as the sun is setting and the shadows blurr. Chickens are still grubbing about. A heavy black sow crosses the yard in a dignified manner.

The young women take a walk in small groups before the evening meal.

"Are there any Catholics?"

"About half are. There are also Buddhists and Cao daists from Tay Ninh."

This did not seem to be Sister Lucy's main worry. Before leaving, we sit down on the esplanade as the day's work is being reviewed.

We get the impression of being among our own students. These little prostitutes are both kind and friendly. The naive looks of some of these kids are not to be found on many faces.

We sing together, hand in hand.

Communication is established at last. In the afternoon on the following day we return

The weather is fine and the young women are lingering on the benches. Leaning against one another, two girls are talking, their lips moving but no muscles stirring on their faces.

What are they talking about?

What memories are they recalling?

### The River

Ha comes to sit with us. Ha: River. Just 21. We don't put questions to her. She begins to talk. Born in Vinh Binh, she attended the elementary classes of the Evangelical School. Her father was a builder. Her mother sold vegetables. Her only brother was in the puppet army.

She left school at the age of 10. Her family was poor. She helped her father carry bricks and prepare mortar. Ha was only 14 when her parents were divorced. Her mother left with an American. Her father married another woman and two more children were born to add to those of the first marriage. In 1975, work was slack. No more private construction. A woman neighbour advised her to go to Saigon to work in a textile workshop. It was not textiles but something else... The landlady was 45. The staff: some twenty girls. After one month, Ha received a little money and she brought it home to her father.

Her house was very close to Go Vap station.

"I could go out only if one of the landlady's girls came with me. This woman was very harsh. One year later I ran away and rented a room but..."

Ha fell silent, and then went on, looking away.

"I was infected, you see... I had to be treated."

"Why didn't you return to your village?"

"I had to bring money home. My father was alone with the children; his second wife had left. However, I returned after one year. I got some money, and I wanted to take up my mother's trade. But my father fell ill and all the money evaporated."

"At this time I met up with a fellow. He worked in the docks. We lived together. We were happy but one day he left without saying where he was going. This was in 1978."

"My father wanted me to marry a young orphaned man... Only he was a drug-addict and my money found its way into drugs."

"Then I returned to Saigon and I 'did it again'. I was arrested and transferred here"

She fell silent.

A lizard creeps along the wall. The sun has gone down.

"You have never wanted to run away?"

"Oh yes! We all dream of escaping at first."

Ha goes on. Now she has joined several organizations in the school.

She sings, she has a job, but perhaps she will remain here a little longer... Life is so hard outside!

### My Trung

Her father gave her this name in memory of the Trung sisters, who defeated the Chinese at the beginning of the Christian era.

She was born in 1954. Her mother was Chinese, her father in Thieu's Army.

The fifth daughter of a family of eight children, with one sister paralysed.

She was 16 in 1971. She got married. Her husband was 24. He was a civil servant and lived in Soc Trang. They lived two years together. They loved each other, but there was the mother-in-law.

"She reproached me for being poor. I was too young."

"In 1974, we were divorced and I returned to my father's with my two children. My father was living with another woman."

To support her two children and younger brothers, Trung tried to open a refreshment bar, to sell fruits, but it did not work.

A friend dragged her to Saigon. This was in 1978. Trung returned home every week with some money.

She was arrested. She stole clothes and ran away. She was taken again in April 1980 and had been here since September.

Trung does needlework.

Five days earlier, her mother had come with her two children.

"What would you like to do?"

She answered:

"No one likes to live far from their families but..."

"But what?"

"I don't feel confident enough. I am afraid of doing it again."

"Doing it again," is one of these women's main worries.

"Doing it again," because of the high cost of living, unemployment, the women who entice you, the men who watch you and, above all, alas! the habit".

With the evening, a silence perfumed with the smell of leaves and grass falls over the school. The plaintive sounds of a guitar reach us like a budding hope.

\*  
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"From the heart of Spring

"I shall return to you, Ma.

"I shall raise high the spade.

"Egg-plants, vegetables and fruits,

"There will be everything!

"And fish in the pond,

"Chrysanthemums are awaiting me, Ma.

"On New Year's Eve, don't cry,

"If you think of me, just smile

"Now I know the value of my hands."

Even if amongst the failures only those verses from the wall-bulletin of the school remain, isn't that already something?

Aren't they enough to justify this remark by a foreign social worker:

"...We also receive aid from the Vietnamese. Not in money but new ideas drawn from their experience, their ingenuity, their human sense. For instance in the rehabilitation of drug-addicts or prostitutes, the Vietnamese have obtained encouraging results." (Menotti Battazi - *Et Germe l'Espoir* - Cerf - Paris 1980).

FRANÇOISE CORRÈZE and HUU NGOC

## A RESISTANCE BASE REVISITED

ON my arrival at My Thuy I was put up by Thuong, to make my work easier. Thuong's house is in the centre of the commune, within easy reach of the offices of both the People's Committee and the Co-operative Management Committee.

I quickly adjusted to the new environment. My host, his wife and their three little children live quietly, perhaps too quietly for a peasant family, in a three-room brick house. Thuong is a leading member of a production team, and his wife is also a co-operative member. The children all go to school, and both husband and wife are busy all day long. I rarely saw them, except at meals.

"Life is still difficult," Thuong told me, "and unless we work hard we can't raise the children properly. Before the revolution my father and I used to roam other villages looking for odd jobs to do. Back in our own village we did all sorts of chores—carrying water, for instance—whenever there was a public celebration of some sort. We acquired this plot of land after the revolution. It had been left unused for years and years. Then, hardly had we built a home for ourselves when the French arrived. They stayed at Gia Le and threatened to burn down our hut. Under the US our house was threatened with destruction again and again. So we left it as it was. Only after liberation in 1975 did we begin to improve it. Working mainly at night, my wife and I rebuilt the walls and improved the roof."

Actually I am not a stranger to this commune, and although it is now called Thuy Phuong, I will stick to its old name, My Thuy. I came to know it during the war against the French, when I was operating in enemy-occupied areas in Thua Thien province. My Thuy guerrillas distinguished in their daring hit-and-run attacks. Disguised as peasants going to work they would approach a patrol and attack it all of a sudden, capturing men and weapons. At times the

enemy stayed put, and in moonlit nights we were able to operate not far from their outpost.

Under the US-puppet regime the movement reached a much higher level. Our presence at the village was a thorn in the side of the provincial governor, a lieutenant colonel, who made a vow to wipe out the guerrillas "once for all". That a resistance movement could exist in such a place was hard to understand indeed. My Thuy straddles Highway One, midway between Hue and Da Nang. Seven kilometres to the north, at Hue, was based the Saigon First Division. Phu Bai to the south was then garrisoned by a US Marine division. Just west of the village was the base of the notorious US First Air Cavalry Division. Covering a hill of several hectares, it included an airstrip, an artillery base, an ammo dump, and innumerable bunkers. Enemy strength in the village, including the US 101st Airborne Brigade, puppet militia and agents, totalled sixteen thousand, as compared to a population of eight thousand. Against such overwhelming odds one could hardly hope to survive let alone fight back.

And one should not think that the Americans only relied on brute force in Vietnam. In a book by a French author, Bertolino, I found several pages on the way the GIs acted in this village. They maintained good "public relations", at least with Saigon troops, at Gia Le hamlet, at the entrance to the village. Bertolino describes the life of twenty-four US Marines and forty-eight civil guards in an old outpost built by the French. "In a room with dirty walls a few GIs and Civil Guards, back from a patrol, were sleeping in their mud-spattered combat fatigues and boots, on plain wooden planks. Some others, in a gloomy lean-to, were cooking something in a smoke-blackened canteen. Such a lack of comfort was rarely seen among Americans." These Marines were volunteers of "Joint-Action Teams", a new gimmick devised by US brasshats

"to keep in touch with the people," as they put it. "Our boys," they claimed, "live like Vietnamese soldiers. They eat the same food, help people with farm work, learn to speak Vietnamese, and teach English." "The mixed patrols," it was claimed, "operate day and night, and have made it increasingly easy to detect, hunt down and wipe out the Vietcong."

Was this only a boast? Not entirely. "We lost four party secretaries within a year," sadly recalled Phuong, the fifth in line. "The methods used by the Americans here, smacked of the CIA. They were quite formidable."

"Of course," Phuong continued after a while, "we had to find a way to cope with the enemy. Since they were trying to win popular support it was only natural that we should rely all the more heavily on the people to fight back. So, with information supplied by the inhabitants we kept a close watch on the enemy and bade our time. After all we were among our own people and on our own land," Phuong added with a grave smile.

One afternoon, as we were chatting in the office of the People's Committee, formerly the headquarters of the US-puppet garrison, it occurred to me that Carter, the US sergeant at the head of the "Joint-Action Team" at Gia Le, must have often occupied the very red plastic seat in which I was sitting. And I imagined him and his Saigonese counterpart, Hoang Bao, drawing up plans to eliminate the same cadres who were talking with me this very moment. The verdict of history is irrevocable.

Sitting in what not so long ago had been the enemy's seat, I was filled by a deep emotion at the sight of all my comrades around me, and at the memory of all those I had lost. There was Phuong, who had been the secretary of the village party committee during the most difficult period

from 1964 to 1969, when wave after wave of US troops descended upon us. Now, as an executive member of the district committee, he was assigned to My Thuy to help with the reconstruction. There was Huy, the youthful chairman of the People's Committee. He walked with a pronounced limp, the result of an old wound. Lam, alias Ai, was killed a long time ago, in a courageous fight against a US heliborne patrol. His memory, however, was jealously preserved by the people, who recalled with admiration his great courage and perseverance in rebuilding the movement from scratch in the midst of Ngo Dinh Diem's anti-communist fury. The women were also a tough lot. Ha lived in underground shelters for six long years but never faltered in her work. Other people, like Dien, Vit, Lon, Bich, Sy, were engaged in less spectacular, but equally dangerous activities sheltering cadres or carrying messages and supplies. Cuc, Cac and Ly were guerrillas. And there were Dinh, Mau and others who were our insiders among the Civil Guards.

I was returning home late one night when I saw Thuong hurrying out. Dressed in a long black robe and holding a bunch of burning joss-sticks, he was headed for the shrine at the crossroads a short distance from the house. I was a little puzzled: it was neither the full moon nor the first day of the lunar month, the usual occasions to make offerings.

I kept close to the hedge on one side of the road so that he would not see me. But, coming in through the gate I saw an altar set up in the courtyard. On a small table were laid out an incense burner, a kerosene lamp, a bunch of bananas, a small bottle of alcohol, and four little cups placed on saucers. Thuong's wife was sitting on the doorstep, lost in thought.

"It's the death anniversary of my son," she said, anticipating my question.

"Which one?" I asked, surprised.

"The eldest, Binh."

"When did it happen?"

"In 1974."

"What happened?"

"He died fighting an enemy raid. He was in the special force operating in the city."

Thuong had returned by this time, looking very odd in the black robe worn over his customary khaki trousers. He went into the house, took off the robe, came out again, and sat down beside his wife.

"I haven't told you about our son yet. He studied in Hue and took part in the students' movement. Worried about his safety I told him, 'Watch your steps. You don't have any protection, like the children of rich families. Moreover, you're from an area reputed for its militancy. If you're arrested, there'll be no way out for you.' 'Have no fear, father', he replied. 'I'm not alone'. He joined the special force not long afterwards."

"How long was he in the force?"

"A little over two years," replied Thuong's wife. "And not once did he visit us, although he was around these areas all the time. Of course, he was right not to call, because the enemy were prowling all over our place. In one ambush they planted a mine just next to our house. The mine was triggered by some nocturnal beast and the explosion gave us a bad scare. In the day time there were frequent house searches, and the enemy would pester us with questions about the boy. 'If you don't teach him to behave we'll pull down your house,' they threatened."

"We were not too worried, though, knowing that our son was a capable boy," Thuong continued, lost in his reminiscences. "I particularly remember one late evening, when he was thirteen. The children had all gone to bed and my wife was cooking a big pot of rice for the cadres. She had to be careful even with the children, because they might talk. Besides, a big pot of rice could draw the attention of the enemy. Somehow, the village chief had got wind of it. Flanked by two guards he made a sudden appearance, catching us completely unawares. Fortunately Binh intervened. 'Mum,' he wailed and entered the kitchen. 'Are you ready soon? We're all very hungry.' Getting the cue my wife said, 'I'm sorry, son. I've been to grandma's. That's why I'm late. Stop crying, or these gentlemen will laugh at you. You're almost a young man now.' That saved us, and we later learned that the boy had known all along about his mother's activities, without letting on."

"And what did you do with the pot of rice that night? The village chief must have been watching you closely."

"I brought it to the cadres without his knowing it. They were living in two shelters in the bamboo grove over there. We kept the shelters till peace was restored."

"And you continued to provide assistance to the cadres despite enemy harassment?"

"Knowing the enemy's ways," Thuong replied, "we were able to work in relative safety. Of course we had to take risks. Still, as an emergency measure, I built a cache in the house, right where you have your desk now, and it's still there. It's lined with cement, and the entrance is so well concealed it was never detected. I'm good at carpentry and masonry, you know. Take a look at it tomorrow, and see for yourself." Thuong laughed softly, visibly amused at having fooled the enemy.

"Did the enemy suspect you of giving assistance to the cadres?" I asked.

"They suspected everybody. Perhaps that's why they couldn't concentrate on us."

"But, knowing that your son was fighting them, they must have kept a closer watch over you," I suggested.

"That's right. They even suspected me of being a communist. They summoned me to the post many times for interrogation. I'll tell you what they did to me here once. I was standing right above the cache. 'I know for certain you're a communist,' the leader of the search party said. 'And that you're harbouring your comrades. I also know there's a cache in this house. But I want you to confess and open the cache yourself?' As I did not say anything, they started hitting me. I told them there was no cache, trying to keep my voice level to show my comrades—the two cadres from the district executive who were staying with us at the time—that I was not shaken. I was beaten till I collapsed, but they pulled me up and carried on hitting me. Then, in a daze I saw red splashes on the ground which grew and grew

until they formed a large puddle. 'All right, keep beating me,' I told my torturers mentally. 'You may kill me, but I won't speak.' I told myself that if I were to die I would prefer it to happen in my own house. Because the enemy had threatened to set fire to it. I didn't care if it was burned down, I could go without it. What I cared for were the comrades down there in the cache. They would be shot down mercilessly if they ran out, or would be roasted alive if they stayed where they were. I remember thinking this at the time, and haven't told anyone since. Still, whenever I recall the occasion I can't help being surprised at how I held out."

I heard a stir where Thuong's wife was sitting.

"You kept to your bed for three months, do you remember?" She asked with a deep sigh.

"It was a good thing, in a way," Thuong observed. "The enemy became less suspicious. As for our comrades, they believed they should not cause us any further trouble. But I sent word for them to come all the same. This lack of attention on the part of the enemy was just what we needed to step up our activities."

Thuong stood up slowly and went up to the altar. The moon, which was rising above the top of the bamboo grove at one side of the courtyard, lit up his lean, open, resolute face. He remained there for some time. Then, picking up the bottle and two cups, he returned to where we sat.

"I'm sorry we can't commemorate our son in a more fitting manner, as we are busy with the harvest. Please, have a drink before turning in for the night."

In silence we sat side by side, sipping our drinks, lost in thought. The moon was rising higher every moment, as if borne by the breeze blowing in from the sea. I looked up at the sky, which seemed to be expanding; but my thoughts kept returning to the confined space of the underground cache, dark and small, but as unfathomable and noble as a human heart.

BUI HIEN

## Changes in Economic Management

# IMPROVEMENT OF THE REMUNERATION AND BONUS SYSTEMS IN ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES

THE resolutions adopted at the 6th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, especially Resolutions 6 and 9, amended by Resolution 26 of the Political Bureau, regarding industrial management, have fostered from South to North a new movement, to introduce material incentives while instilling socialist consciousness into the labouring masses. This is an effort to distribute profit according to the work done, a socialist principle of prime im-

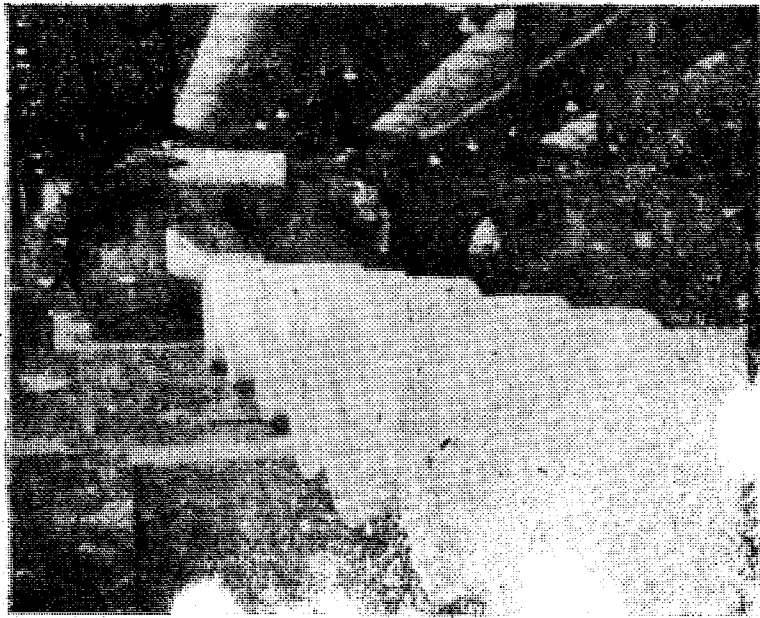
portance stipulated in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. According to this principle, the worker should receive payment according to his or her effort and ability as expressed in the volume and quality of the work done.

A fundamental shortcoming of the former remuneration system is that the worker was not bound to the final outcome of his work. The



At the Hoang Thach cement factory: Lining a kiln with fire-resistant bricks.

Photo: NGUYEN DAN



The paper cutting workshop at the Bai Bang paper mill.

Photo: HA MUI.

Thus in the State sector, the production and business enterprises are freed from the shackles of the old system of management. These measures will enhance the development of the national economy according to economic laws, no longer trammelled by red tape or bearing the stamp of voluntarism.

The Government decree stresses three fundamental principles, namely:

1. Raising labour efficiency, improving the quality of products and saving raw materials, equipment and fuel;
2. Strengthening the socialist relations of production, developing the role of State plans as the centre of the system of management, abiding by labour regulations and instilling socialist ethics among workers and employees;
3. Guaranteeing the identity of interests—interests of the State, interests of the enterprises and personal interests of the workers and employees.

The Government Council requests that the ministries concerned and the provincial and municipal People's Committees base themselves on these principles and on the specific conditions of each branch and region, to apply economic and technical norms, labour norms and the system of contracted products and incentive schemes.

As it is not possible to apply a rigid form of remuneration, the ministries and provincial and municipal committees are allowed to base themselves on the concrete conditions of the production units to introduce different forms of remuneration: payment after completion of a contract, of a semi-finished product, or of a finished product; payment direct to the worker once he has finished his

economic enterprises paid their workers according to hours worked and the grades of the workers on an egalitarian basis. This did nothing to promote initiative and enthusiasm at work. The practice of shirking responsibility was widespread. Early on, many measures were taken to make up for these shortcomings, such as working under contract, rewarding efficiency, initiative, etc. But these improvements were not radical enough.

Encouraged by the Party and State, another system of remuneration responding to the workers requirements has made its appearance: remuneration by contracted work, by contracted products accompanied with a graduated scale of incentives to increase production. This new method links the worker to his work: he can reckon his wages on the basis of the volume and quality of his work, and the managing committee bases

itself on what he has produced in order to remunerate him. Fairness in income distribution is thus guaranteed, and the worker realizes that high wages can be achieved only with high labour efficiency.

The Con Dao fishing company in the South and the Pho Yen ball-bearing factory in the North have taken the lead in this most important improvement of industrial management. The application of this new system has yielded satisfactory results, the positive aspects outweighing the negative ones. In the light of the experience gathered, the Government Council on 21 January 1981 issued Decree 26-CP to "extend payment by contracted work and contracted products and apply the contractual incentives system to State production units"; the green light was given to this system as it corresponds to the present period of economic development in Vietnam.

work; payment according to an incentive scheme; payment for indirect work... These new forms of remuneration may be applied to an entire production chain with an eye to the interests of the workers and employees who indirectly contribute to the job (personnel of such sections as management, supply, technology, and other services: health, crèche, catering).

The Government Council suggested the following forms of contracts:

- Production enterprises can apply the system of "collectively contracted products". On the basis of the value of the products manufactured, after deduction of expenses, payment of taxes, contributions to various funds, the remaining sum is paid partly to the State and partly to the workers in a fair proportion fixed by the ministries if the enterprises are run-

centrally, and by the provincial People's Committees if the enterprises are run locally.

- Processing enterprises are entitled to stable production conditions, to reorganize their production chains and to remunerate the workers collectively or individually on the basis of contracted products.

- Building enterprises can sign contracts for complete or partial projects and sign subcontracts with each production team or each worker or with each production chain.

- Transport enterprises can remunerate their workers according to contracts signed for each ton/kilometre or passenger/kilometre, after deduction of the expenses incurred for fuel, maintenance, for each lorry, bus, train or ship and for each trip.

- In the supply, trading, and service enterprises, remuneration can be based on revenue (reckoned in kind or in value) coupled with incentives for the quality of the work done.

A most important point in the new system is that remuneration is not on a fixed basis as before, but depends on the volume of production: wages increase when the volume produced is greater than the fixed norm, and inversely, it decreases if the volume of work fails to meet the norm.

Bonuses amount to 10% of the wages and are included in the remuneration system per month or per quarter, while annual bonuses are paid out from the general income of the enterprise. Particular attention is paid to reward the saving of equipment, raw materials, especially electricity, fuel and imported materials. Part of the sum derived from these savings (from 50% to 70%) is reserved to reward the workers for outstanding initiatives. Workers who discover cases of theft, embezzlement or waste will receive rewards amounting to 10-20% of the value of the materials recovered.

The new remuneration and incentive system concretizes the resolutions of the Party Central Committee and Political Bureau, and helps to improve the management of industrial enterprises and other branches including agriculture; the most conspicuous result is that a movement to increase production, labour efficiency and savings is mounting in all economic enterprises, and is beginning to halt the downward trend of the economy caused by the aftermath of the war and the errors committed in the organization and guidance of the economy. Parallel to this upturn, we are also witnessing the blossoming of technical innovations encouraged by the State.



At the Bim Son cement factory: A Russian specialist helps to assemble the equipment.

Photo: PHAM QUANG CAN

LE VIET

# NEW METHODS OF MANAGEMENT AT PHO YEN FACTORY

THE Pho Yen ball-bearing factory near the town of Thai Nguyen is a small enterprise catering mainly for agricultural mechanisation. For many years now, the factory has failed to meet its annual target, partly due to shortages of electricity and materials but mainly through irrational methods of management. In spite of this because of increased demand, in 1980 the factory was assigned an annual target fifty per cent higher than 1979. It also had to produce nine new kinds of ball-bearings. A way had to be found to improve management methods and take the factory out of its stagnation. Production was reorganised and management improved in order to meet the "three interests": of the worker, the factory and society. Production has since markedly increased and substantial savings in materials have been made. Pho Yen has now become a model of the new management methods for all the industrial enterprises in the country.

## A New Mould

In the past, the factory was incapable of producing its own moulds for making ball-bearing jackets, but had to purchase them from Haiphong. This increased production costs and caused delays in delivering the moulds. The factory decided to manufacture its own. The factory manager sent for the best workman, gave him full responsibility for the job, and authorised him to choose his own associates. A contract was signed between the factory director and the group in charge of moulds clearly specifying norms for quality and production time. Instead of monthly wages the workers were paid in proportion to the number of moulds completed. The workers enthusiastically set to work, overcoming all the difficulties arising in the process in order to meet the deadline set in the contract. In less than one month, the first set of moulds was finished.

## Reorganising Production

The new moulds were transferred to the jacket-making team. A new problem arose: the newly made bearings, though having passed the technical checks, broke after a short period in operation. The mould and jacket sections blamed each other for the failure.

How could the mould and jacket-making teams be made to share in their common responsibility? The mould section was merged with the jacket section to form a team producing finished bearings. The skilled workman who had been in charge of manufacturing the moulds was made head of the new team. As previously, he was authorised to recruit his own personnel. The jacket section was allocated a fixed quota of finished jackets and the workers were paid according to the quantity of jackets produced. Whereas in the past the moulds needed repairs after 500 bearings were made, they now lasted for 5,000. The workers involved now took care of their machines and their handiwork, and the various jobs were carefully coordinated to improve work productivity and quality. The jacket section became the best section of the factory.

Drawing upon the experiences of the jacket-making section the factory reorganised the production process towards greater production specialisation. Thus, the tool and production departments which formerly were two separate departments have now been merged into one, and have been streamlined.

Production specialisation and piece work have succeeded in combining the interests of the workers with those of the factory and the whole society. But the problems remain of what exactly is considered to be a finished product, and how to set wage rates. If only a complete set of ball-bearings is regarded as a finished product then a dozen work days must pass before the worker knows the result of his work, hence his lack of enthusiasm in production. The factory eventually decided to settle for the product at the end of each industrial process, so that the workers may easily recognise the fruits of their labour. For instance, at the ball producing



section, the finished product is no longer the balls themselves but also the extent to which the balls are polished. Thus, after each work-shift, the worker has only to measure the extent of his day's work to know how much he will receive for it.

However, if payment were made on a strictly individual basis, this would lead to a situation in which each worker would care only for his own work and only take responsibility for his own daily quota. Thus the factory decided to allocate the quota to the whole section which in its turn pays each worker according to his work.

Now that their work is duly rewarded, the workers no longer play down their normal work productivity during sample checks as in the past, and the factory can work out reasonable productivity quotas while economising materials to reduce production costs to a minimum. The factory has also readjusted wage rates. All the workers have willingly adopted the quotas set by the factory. A proper assignment of jobs and the correct determination of the number of workers needed in each department has stimulated the workers to continually improve their work. The workers who have become redundant either because of their low skills or because of overstaffing, are now employed in auxiliary works and paid appropriately, also according to the piece-work system. The factory has also introduced a system of bonuses for overfulfilling the plan in all departments, both in the main production lines as well and in the auxiliary workshops. This has enhanced the team spirit of the

workforce and made everyone care for both the quantity and the quality of their final products.

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The result is that production at the Pho Yen ball-bearing factory in the second half of 1980 shot up to unprecedented levels. Compared with the first four months of 1980 when production was at its lowest ever, the following four months saw the out put of ball-bearings leap by 547 per cent. Production continued to grow in the following months and at the end of 1980 the factory topped its annual plan by 14.1 per cent, up by 57.1 per cent over 1979. No less important is the factory's success in producing nine more kinds of ball-bearings which some people said would have taken from three to four months with the old system of management. In addition, the percentage of substandard products dropped from 3.58 per cent in 1979 to 1.51 per cent in 1980. Work productivity rose by 19.3 per cent and the average wage by 17.7 per cent. In 1980 the factory contributed to the State budget 10.7 per cent more profits than planned, an 82-per cent increase over 1979.

The Pho Yen ball-bearing factory has provided a valuable lesson: even before conditions for re-equipment and technical innovations are available, it is possible, by rationalising production and improving management, to combine the three interests of the worker, the factory and society, to raise productivity, expand production, cut costs and economize raw materials.

VU HONG

JUST PUBLISHED

KAMPUCHEA '81

(Eye-witness Reports)

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## A CO-OP FOR THE DISABLED IN HAIPHONG

**W**HEN the Department of War Invalids and Social Affairs of Haiphong asked the managing committee of Nam Hai Glassware Co-operative to take on more disabled persons, many members balked at the idea. But not the co-op president, Nguyen Huu Vong. Having lost his sight and his left hand during a battle in South Vietnam in 1953 he could understand the problems and aspirations of the disabled. More than anyone else he wanted to avoid being a burden on his family and society.

At times Vong would feel depressed and lose all hope. But he fought against self-pity. He refused to spend the rest of his life in a home for war invalids on a government pension. Together with some other disabled soldiers, he tried a variety of jobs: making detergent, raising cattle, carpentry... "How can we refuse to take in a few more disabled persons, despite the problems this would pose to the co-op?" he reasoned.

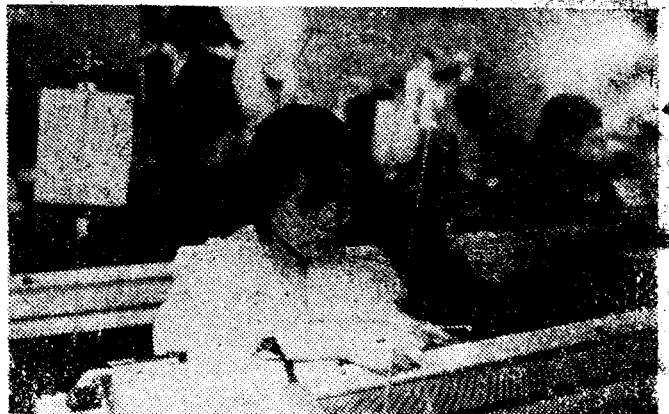
Nam Hai co-op was founded in 1963 by a three-man team making ampoule boxes for Kien An pharmaceutical factory. Their initial assets consisted just of 50 *dong* from Nguyen Huu Vong's war invalid allowance.

"At first," Vong said, "I only intended to found a production team to improve my own lot and that of a few other families whose husbands or sons were away fighting at the front. But as the demand of the pharmaceutical factory grew, we switched to blowing glass bottles and ampoules. More and more disabled persons asked to join and before long our group became a co-operative with more than 100 members. Membership is still growing."

Blowing glass is a fairly complicated job but some parts can be

Tran Kim Oanh, a pupil of the Deaf-Mute School in Haiphong learns how to knit.

Photo: HO HAI



done by the disabled. For instance, the bamboo baskets which in the past were purchased at the rate of 300-500 per month are now made by the co-op members themselves, especially the blind. Others who have lost their legs or their arms work the bellows, make plastic bottle stoppers, stick on the labels, grind broken glass, etc. Jobs are allotted in accordance with the nature of the infirmities. The co-op plans to accept all the disabled recommended by the City's Service of War Invalids and Social Affairs with priority given to the most needy. The co-op managing committee is confident that there will be enough jobs for all of them now that the co-op's production is expanding steadily.

Ms. Tang Thi Thao was born blind. Having lost both parents she lived with her two sisters and earned her living selling vegetables at the market place. Accepted into the co-op eight years ago she has done different jobs, from work-

ing the bellows to making bottle stoppers and bamboo baskets. Her basket-making team now has 14 blind persons, each making ten baskets a day and receiving an average of 0.21 *dong* per basket. In 1972 Thao was sent by the co-op to follow a Braille course, and now attends a 4th form complementary education class. An active member of the Haiphong Association for the Blind, she spends her leisure time visiting the blind in the city.

"Is life any better than before you joined the co-op?" I ventured.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she replied rather crossly.

I immediately regretted my blunder, especially towards someone who spent years isolated in total darkness. How could her past ever compare with the present? For a long time now Thao has considered the co-op as her own family. She lives in a small house built by the co-op for its

disabled workers, close to their place of work. She has found a source of happiness in her work and her social activities-

Nguyen Xuan Khanh, 31, lost his sight while still a child. His family arranged for him to follow a music course in Haiphong. Back in his home village in the suburbs he played for the village art groups and helped with the household chores. Hearing that the glassware co-op was accepting disabled persons, Khanh applied for a job and was assigned to the basket-making team. He began taking an active part in the co-op's artistic life and was often invited to play at concerts arranged by the municipal authorities. It was at one of these concerts that he met Hai, a girl crippled of one leg and working at a co-operative producing clothes for export. They fell in love and were soon married. Later Hai moved to her husband's co-op. She works only four hours a day, devoting the rest of her time to caring for their two kids. But she continues to recite poems at public functions to the accompaniment of her husband's guitar.

Sitting before the glass bulbs were very young girls, 16 to 20 years old. I could not tell which among them were disabled and which were not. Apart from their legs which were crippled mainly through polio in their childhood, all of them looked quite normal. And they produced as many ampoules as any healthy worker.

An atmosphere of mutual affection and trust pervades the workshop, its disabled members never feeling discriminated against in any way. Of the 280 co-op members 7 are war invalids and 18 are handicapped. Since 1970 the co-op has been building up its own social welfare fund. This fund provides co-op members with fringe benefits as in any State-owned factory, such as pensions, child allowances, medical care. The co-op is going ahead with its plans to provide free lunches for all its members. The disabled get preference in the allocation of these benefits.

Nam Hai co-op has become an important production establishm-

ent in Haiphong. In addition to medical appliances, it also produces consumer glassware articles for daily use. This year, a vacuum flask workshop will be built. From initial assets of 50 *dong* at the time of its founding, the co-op achieved a total output value of half a million *dong* in 1970 and nearly four million *dong* in 1980.

Commenting on the activities of Nam Hai co-op, the director of Haiphong's Service of War Invalids and Social Affairs said:

"The co-op has provided us with a good example of how to organize the life of the disabled in the city. Normally we rely on three sources: State help, the people's assistance and the efforts of the disabled themselves—at least those who are still able to work. But assistance from both the State and the people has its limits.

"Nam Hai co-op has succeeded in rationally organizing the work of the disabled and making the best of the collective spirit of mutual aid. No one can deny that the disabled at Nam Hai have returned to a normal life in the full sense. We will popularize its experience to other handicraft co-ops and establishments in the city."

As one of the areas of northern Vietnam which suffered most from the war, Haiphong now has more than twenty thousand disabled citizens, 75 per cent of whom are war invalids, military and civilian. Each inner or suburban district of Haiphong has its own handicraft establishment for war invalids and the disabled, in such trades as tailoring, knitting, art crafts... Even with its present scanty means and funds, the city has organized alphabet and job training courses for deaf-mute children and the blind.

While in Haiphong I also met two blind children, Nguyen Thi Tam, 15, and her brother Nguyen Huu Thang, 13, both of whom were following a Braille course organized by the City's Association for the Blind. During a US

bombing raid on the night of April 16, 1972, their father, a teacher, was killed along with one of his children. The eldest daughter lost one leg while Tam and Thang lost their sight. Here the children are taught Braille, knitting and music. When Nguyen Thi Tam played a folk song on her mandolin, her blank eyes were wide open as if penetrated by an invisible light.

The teacher, Tran Thi Tam, lost an arm during a bombing raid in 1968. After completing her 10th form of general education she followed a Braille course. She has been teaching this class for the blind for the past four years.

"Is your work very tiring?" I asked.

"As you can see, I am very busy, but to see these children so engrossed in their study I know that I must work even harder. We still have little teaching equipment and material. Also, the class is too large and many of the children have to walk very long distances to school. Every day, Tam and Thang are taken to the bus stop by their neighbours. But many others are not so fortunate because they live too far from the school and there is no one to help them."

Much remains to be done. Over recent years, assistance has come from many countries, including teaching equipment for the deaf-mute sent by organizations in France and Holland. Standing beside a Dutch-made knitting machine, the director of the City's Service of War Invalids and Social Affairs told us:

"We have received many foreign delegations which have brought us valuable aid from our friends throughout the world. I take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to them all."

DAO HUNG



## THE STORY OF A BLINDMAN

I come from a family of intellectuals from Nghe Tinh. My father, who belonged to the last generation of traditional scholars, was lucky enough to take part in both the last of the old mandarin competitions in 1910, and in the first courses of *Quoc ngu*, the romanised Vietnamese script introduced by the French colonial administration. In those days the scholars, to avoid collaborating with the colonists, refused to study French. But my father had understood that in order to fight colonialism: it was necessary to educate the masses, even if that meant studying the French civilisation. Thus for many years my father was a school teacher.

Right from my childhood I expressed the intention of becoming a teacher or a doctor. My brothers and I grew up during the First Resistance, and my eldest brother, who had joined the revolutionary army right from the start, fell in 1946. In 1950, my younger brother and I left home to join the Resistance, and I was made an officer

I was wounded during the fighting in Saigon in 1968, and was sent to a military hospital. Only in 1970 in Hanoi did the truth dawn upon me: I was blind for life, condemned to eternal darkness. Thanks to the State pensions my material life was assured. My wife and my two children gave me all their care and affection. But I just couldn't

resign myself to a parasitic existence.

Thanks to the Association for the Blind I was able to make contact with others who suffered the same plight. The causes of their infirmity varied, but they all voiced one desire: not to be a burden on their families and society; not to attract contempt or pity... Life isn't just eating and getting dressed. We wanted to live fully, and above all communicate with others and be useful.

Most of us had hardly gone to school, especially those blind from birth. Some were even illiterate. I began to learn Braille in hospital. At present I am trying to organize general education courses for the others. Due to the lack of books I myself translate French and English books and textbooks into Braille. Thanks to the help and encouragement of the Association for the Blind, some 50 first- and second-level textbooks have been produced. In 1972, I was elected as President of the Hanoi Association for the Blind.

In the past there were problems concerning the participation of blind people in working activities. Discussions took place between representatives of the Association and of the City's Department of War Invalids and Social Affairs. The issue was moral rather than material. Only work could bring equality and the love of a creative life to the blind

Beforehand, the blind never worked, not even in production groups involving other invalids. It was difficult to gain acceptance for the idea of creating special workshops for the blind, and existing enterprises were reluctant to employ blind people because of the effect they thought this would have on their production levels.

Many, believed that invalids were only capable of producing

toothpicks chopsticks, and the odd handicraft. Even some leaders were unconvinced. On the contrary we argued that the execution of more complex tasks required the use of all the senses, not simply sight, and that consequently the blind could be initiated as well.

We thus created a production group making rubber parts for cars, good quality oil and heat-resistant parts... We needed to feel confident in our abilities, and had to convince the higher-level officials. We knew that the Department of War Invalids and Social Affairs was not yet convinced, but we were determined to prove our case. Our group was finally founded on 28 October 1973.

At first there were only 8 of us, 6 of whom were blind. Dang Van Tich, an ex-soldier who had some knowledge of the matter, showed us the ropes and helped us technically. A cadre from the Department of War Invalids and Social Affairs helped us in our dealings with the various production departments. To start us off we were granted a capital of 2,500 *dong* as "social aid". The country was still at war, and the State Departments were unable to provide us with equipment. We had to obtain it all on the free market. The rubber we bought came from rejects of State enterprises and hardware shops.

We managed to get hold of three rubber presses, which we set up in my kitchen and the rooms of two other members. That was to be our workshop! In the first day my house was as crowded as a market, some people had come to work and other just to hang around. The place was full of noise all day and night. Our family life was completely disrupted. My wife and children had to keep sweeping the floor.

which was covered in rubber dust. They never complained. With the devoted help of Tich we did our best to learn the job and quite soon had mastered the technique.

Yet one problem remained: how to sell what we produced. We needed people who could see to take charge of the orders. But we had to make sure of the quality of our products, and furthermore we had to worry about the competition from already existing enterprises.

Officials from the Department of War Invalids and Social Affairs, from the Municipal Department of Industry, and some potential clients were invited to inspect the first products. Later we learnt that the heads of various car-repair firms, who doubted our abilities, had sent technicians to examine our products. But we won everybody's confidence. Today we have orders from more and more firms, especially from the Army.

At first the returns were very low, due to lack of experience and low productivity. During the first six months each one of us only received a monthly wage of 22 dong. But we didn't lose courage, and the wage gradually rose to 30 or 40 dong per month.

Our group grew from 8 to 33, 26 of which were blind. It soon became impossible to work in our kitchens. After two years we had saved enough money to purchase a bamboo hut within a cluster of workshops. In 1976 we bought the brick building we are occupying at present, with 60 sq.m. of floorspace and which is used both as a workshop and as a meeting place for the Association for the Blind. We bought it with 12,000 dong from our funds and 17,000 dong we borrowed from the bank.

We now have ten rubber presses, a capital of 70,000 dong and a monthly turnover of 20,000 dong. Our debt to the bank is only 5,000 dong. The average monthly wage is 70 dong, but more importantly, we are in a position to work.

Our productive capacity depends upon the professional ability of our workers. Only Nguyen Vinh Huong has reached the top level; most follow 5th- or 6th-form complementary evening classes, and we encourage them to study

to improve their technical capacities. Many are interested in learning Braille. Some live a fair distance away, but regularly attend the courses nevertheless. We supplement Braille teaching with suitable general courses and discussions.

For blind people, handling and testing materials depends upon tactile sensations. Some experienced workers can immediately judge the quality of an object in this way. Various quality control methods are employed. For instance, by placing the synthetic rubber in a pressure mould and compressing it, its toughness, and hence its quality, can be evaluated. Or by rubbing petrol over vulcanized rubber, one can tell its quality by whether the surface is smooth or not... Once such tests have been conducted we place the object in a mould to gauge its heat resistance. We cannot measure and weigh as in a factory, so we rely on tactile sensations to carry out our tests: the hardness of the rubber tells us the intensity of the heat, as it is impossible to use watches or other such instruments. Water is used to test felts and forks. We dip them in water and if we hear bubbles, it's overdone and the outer layer is vulcanized but not the inside, if we hear a sizzling noise but no bubbles, it's just right.

Every year we hold a meeting with our customers to hear their comments. Some of our products, such as supports for Volga machinery, and oil conducts, are the best in the country for quality and toughness. So far, we have been getting many orders, even from distant southern provinces such as Minh Hai, Da Nang, etc.

We still have to confront many difficulties, especially the irregularity of raw material supplies and prices. The goods tax was cut by 15% by the State which understood our problems, without however having adopted a comprehensive policy regarding this question. For instance we have to pay 11,000 dong in taxes, from which only 5,000 dong are deducted. Our suggestions are being examined by the relevant departments. Furthermore, we realize the health hazards presented by rubber, but at present we are not yet in a position to improve our workers' protection beyond issuing them with masks and gloves.

Nevertheless thanks to production, our standards of living are improving. Our workers earn sufficient wages to cater for their families' needs and reduce their dependence on State aid. We often hold cultural evenings, the blind learn to sing and play the guitar. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the Association for the Blind, our cultural group organized a performance which greatly impressed the audience. We also organize monthly political discussions where we discuss problems of interest to blind people, and their position in society.

Working unites us. Those who in the past gave in to pessimism are now thinking of the future. Six couples have got married. Our own experience proves that blind people are capable of assuming technical tasks: for instance, manufacturing transformers and repairing electrical installations, with special designed equipment.

We still have huge problems, it is true. Our workers are dispersed and sometimes must travel long distances. The lack of means of transport and the distances between us are a real nuisance. Then there are young couples who love each other but cannot get married because of the housing shortage. Our country is terribly poor, but still we do not lose hope.

Working for the Association took too much of my time, so another invalid comrade replaced me.

Our lack of equipment does not make it possible to employ all the blind people who apply. Of the city's two thousand blind, half are young people. So far we have only been able to find work for 200 of them. The rest remain jobless.

Lately we have been receiving calls from parents of blind-born children. They would like to enrol them in a specialized school. This is a real headache: such a school is indispensable, but would require costly equipment far beyond the capacities of our Association or the State. But in this respect as in others we keep our hopes up and work to realise them.

LE HONG THUY  
(Association for the Blind)



## THE ONE-ARMED CO-OP MEMBER

**T**ANG has lost one arm. It happened when he was tinkering with a US mine he had found. The mine exploded and he was left with only one arm. In a way that was good for him: He was exempted from military service. But it also prevented him from making a living. He lost his job.

Tang used to have a house in Tra Kieu, a predominantly Catholic village in the Da Nang diocese. It is a big village, with a population of almost twenty thousand. The parish church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was built some two hundred years ago. In the old days it attracted pilgrims from all corners of Indochina. The village is also known for several martyrs, and both Saigon presidents Diem and Thieu frequently called at the village to talk to the Catholic Civil Guards.

Tang did not stay long in the village. His childhood ended with the influx of American troops.

In 1956, a travelling guillotine was sent by Diem to Duy Xuyen, a village less than two kilometres away. In Tra Kieu a fortified post was erected behind the church. Under it a cellar was built to detain revolutionaries. The market, already a crowded place, literally burst at the seams with the beer stalls and the soldiers crowding around them. The land went to waste, and bad times were beginning for Tang: people no longer hired him to weed their fields or graze their cattle. Starvation was staring him in the face. He had to find a way of making a living. So Tang went to Da

Nang where, so he was told, jobs were not so scarce. He would make a try although he had only one arm.

I came to know Tang during a visit to Tra Kieu last year. He had become a collective farmer in his village. He told me of the uncertain years he had spent in Da Nang, of his short-lived jobs, his failure to run a bicycle repair shop. In 1975 Tang was at a loss what to do when the Saigon army began to evacuate the city and flee towards Son Tra peninsula. He thought of going too, but seeing how the routed army was abandoning even its own men Tang gave up the idea. But what would he gain by staying in the city, which was now full of wounded soldiers, orphans and unemployed? He would starve along with everybody else.

"A man needs a home as much as a bird needs a nest," Tang said. "So I thought of my village. Things might have changed now that it was liberated. I could go there and make a try. There was nothing to lose anyway."

Indeed things had changed by the time he returned. The land of people who had collaborated with the enemy and had fled, and public land, had been distributed to the tillers. Mutual-aid teams had been formed, and now a village-size co-operative was being set up. Tang had a talk with Chi, his neighbour, and was told to go and see Ban, the chairman of the co-operative.

"The chairman is a bit hard of hearing," Chi reminded him.

"Well, the Americans at Hon Bang post pierced his eardrums with a nail. That's why. They even buried him alive, but somehow he did not die. I've never seen a tougher man. Or a fairer one. No prejudice against the Catholics. He treats us in the same way as he does everybody else, his only concern being the welfare of the whole village. To understand the revolution it's enough to look at the way revolutionary cadres act."

The chairman received Tang at the new administrative centre built on a barren hill. It housed the office of the co-operative, a meeting hall, a school-room, and a cultural centre.

"I'm at the end of my tether," Tang explained. "So it's back to the fields for me. But I'm afraid I've nothing to offer. Will you accept me as I am?"

"You need not worry, sonny. We care for everybody, the old, the orphans, even rejects from the Saigon army. There will be work for everyone. You've lost one arm, but I don't see why you can't do some light job like keeping watch over the fields, the cattle, or the barns. You'll get your share of the harvest."

That was how the former itinerant bicycle repairer became a collective farmer. He received his share of several rice crops in his home village. When I last saw him he looked a great deal better.

"How's life now?" I asked over a cup of tea. "What about the recent storms and floods?"

"They caused some damage, but we're doing well now. I can say we're better off than ever."

Tang's bright eyes were shining, and I recalled to mind what I knew of the grim past of the village. Tra Kieu was then a regular armed camp. Crops were raised only once a year, and even so people were reluctant to go out into the fields, fearing stray bullets. They lived in constant fear. Even the rich, the parish priest and the nuns at the convent felt threatened.

With the exception of a few who worked for the enemy, the majority of the population sided with the revolution. They believed that liberation would come sooner or later. Then they would be able to work and worship in peace. Their wish finally came true: the fields, after thirty years of neglect, gave their first bumper rice crop at the end of 1975.

Tang told me that thanks to water brought from the mountains by a new canal the fields at Dong Ca could now grow two crops a year instead of one, and that annual output averaged eight tons per hectare. People who had never done a proper job in Da Nang, and who once were scared to death at the sight of a leech, were now good at ploughing and planting. Villagers can also supplement their incomes by making bricks, bamboo blinds, gravel, or raising cattle.

"The dirt path leading into the village has been turned into a wide road," Tang continued. "We've even built a school and a kindergarten, and a vast drying-yard and an office for the cooperative. Do you remember the barren hill on the other side of the rail tracks? It's now a cultural centre, built with materials contributed by the villagers. I must also mention the jack-fruit trees. We've planted them everywhere, on mountain slopes, in orchards right in the village. There must be tens of thousands of them, all grown to a good size now. That can give you an idea of how we're living. Personally I'm very happy. Sometimes I even forget I've lost an arm."

LU GIANG

## Vietnam Advances

### VINH PHU PROVINCE: USING TRICHOGRAMMA IN PEST CONTROL

**T**RICHOGRAMMA, with dozens of different species, have one characteristic of special significance: the female lays its eggs on those of insect pests. The larvae live off the substances nourishing the pests' eggs, which are thus aborted. After seven to ten days, a new generation of trichogramma are born and go off in search of other eggs. Trichogramma larvae can feed upon the eggs of over 200 species of host pests.

Several countries in the world such as the Soviet Union, Poland, Mexico... have been using trichogramma against pests on cotton, jute, rice, wheat, corn and maize. The Soviet Union produces trichogramma to protect 9 million hectares of cultivated land each year.

Since 1978, Vinh Phu province has been one among the five provinces which have been assigned the task of studying the use of trichogramma in pest control. The Plant Protection Centre in Vinh Phu has been conducting the research.

It was shown that trichogramma larvae can live parasitically off the eggs of cassava leaf-eating caterpillars. For technical reasons, the Plant Protection Centre decided to choose the rice-flour caterpillar (*Corcy cephalonica* Stain) as the main host species to work with.

From 1978 to 1980, the Station conducted experiments on the effects of trichogramma on more than ten species of pests. The best destruction rates were obtained against rice-leaf rollers: 60-90%. The rate was 40-60% against cabbage-leaf feeders, bean-leaf rollers and grey worms; 30-40% against rice-stem borers and maize-leaf rollers. In comparison, the insecticide Wophatox (in a solution of 0.2%) destroys only 40-60% of the pests.

The Plant Protection Centre has begun to use trichogramma in some typical cooperatives on various food crops. In Tam Hong cooperative, in close collaboration with the local phytosanitary group, the Centre used trichogramma against rice-leaf rollers on 50 hectares of tenth-lunar month rice.

Rice yield in the area using trichogramma is 20-40% higher than in areas sprayed with chemical insecticides. Thus, against rice-leaf roller, trichogramma can advantageously replace insecticides.

Experiments have shown that the costs involved in the use of trichogramma is 6.8 *dong* and 4 workdays for one hectare of cultivated land as against 14-18 *dong* and 3 to 7 workdays to spray insecticides.

Between now and 1985, Vinh Phu plans to build a research centre and to breed various species of trichogramma under the guidance of the Plant Protection Centre. A district station and five other breeding centres in the cooperatives will be established capable of covering 1,000 - 2,000 ha. Research will be pursued on the breeding and use of trichogramma on rice, vegetables or subsidiary crops, and to assess the economic and technical effectiveness of trichogramma.

As a start, a course will be organized for some 100 cadres of district phytosanitary groups to ground them in the techniques involved in the use of trichogramma.

NGUYEN UYEN

## CHANGES IN A HIGHLAND DISTRICT

**F**ROM Yen Bai, travelling along Highway No. 73 A to Nghia Lo province, our car was swallowed by the endless planted forests of *mo* (*Mangletia glauca* Blume), bodhi, tea-plants, alternating with maize and cassava fields. Returning to these parts after a ten-year absence, I was dumbfounded by the changes. The old dirt track had given way to an asphalted road, and a new economic infrastructure of State enterprises and co-operatives was apparent.

The Viet Hung forestry centre was founded with the aim of exploiting forest products and achieving the rapid afforestation of the area for the paper and fibre industries. For more than ten years now, the centre has been supplying tens of thousands of cubic metres of timber to the State. The hills are now covered with saplings, which will prevent floods and erosion, by fixing the soil and the fields.

The Au Lac tea plantation is another indication of the area's development. It is steadily growing and supplies 13 tonnes of tea per year to the Yen Bai tea processing works. More than 2,000 ha of tea have been planted in Tran Yen district, connecting the Van Tran and Van Yen areas in this province with the well-known Van Hung tea area (Vinh Phu province), creating a continuous zone of industrial crops of high economic value.

Further, along the Highway, we saw rows of red tiled buildings emerging from the green forest. They house the technical centre of Hung Khanh. The centre serves both Tran Yen district and Hoang Lien Son province. With its hydro-electric station, its crop processing plant, its hospital, restaurant, shops and stores, its bus station, its market, its open-air cinemas, and its third-level school, it is used by the 12,000 inhabitants of 3 communes in Hung Khanh.

In 1974, after completing a basic survey, Tran Yen district worked out an overall programme which was approved by the Government Council as an agro-forestry new economic zone. Concrete norms were set. For food, the cultivable area is to be 8,700 ha, with a total output of 35,000 tonnes a year, and a monthly food ration of 25 kg per head of population. Once the food problem is settled, 3,000 ha of tea and 700 ha of *trau* (*Aleurites montana* Wils) are to be planted. As for animal husbandry, the target is 8,000 buffaloes and oxen (the target was reached by the end of 1979), 40,000 pigs, and 280 ha of fish ponds. Up to 1985, 12,500 ha of forest for paper pulp and fibre are to be planted; with a planned output of 130,000 cubic metres of timber and 400 tonnes of paper pulp.

Specialized areas were formed: 18 rice-growing communes, 15 tea communes, three for *trau*, and five specializing in forestry.

To exploit the fertile but uncultivated land, from 1973 to 1975, 155,300 people from Ha Nam Ninh province were sent to Tran Yen. Some worked with the 18 existing communes, the others helping to set up 20 new cooperatives. Several specialized tea-planting cooperatives were founded. Nearly all the peasants in Tran Yen joined the cooperatives. Of the 59 cooperatives in the whole district, 15 are of commune size.

In the past few years, the State has invested 7.5 million *dong* into exploiting and reclaiming cultivable land for food and industrial crops, for irrigation, communications, and 300 km of roads linking the new economic zone to the villages were opened.

To visit the villages of the Hung Khanh technical centre, we no longer have to climb hills and cross valleys from dawn till dusk as in the past. Now we can go there by car: stone roads, 6 metres wide now link one cooperative to another.

We visited Dong An cooperative, all of whose members come from the plain. The cooperative comprises 620 families, totalling 3,180 persons with 1,000 farmhands. One of these families is Luu Van Tha's, which came here in 1975 from Ha Nam Ninh. They were quite poor there, although they have two farmhands in a family of six. But now for each crop, they get 400-500 kg of rice from the cooperative, and have just built a three-room wooden house with high pillars. Around the house grow banana and papaya trees, and some two thousand cassava plants. They also raise three pigs and a dozen chicken. Tha's family is not unique: most other families live in similar conditions. Some have a fish pond in addition to a cow or a horse. Many families now have bicycles, transistor radios and clocks.

The district has a first, second, and third-level general education school. All children of school age go to school.

So far, the cooperatives have planted 900 ha of tea and 600 ha of bodhi trees (a total 3,000 ha if the areas planted by the State farms are included). In 1978, the cooperatives in the new economic zone sold 400 tonnes of fresh tea leaves and 500 cubic metres of timber to the State.

Aiming for self-sufficiency in food, this new economic zone has gradually reduced the food supplied to it by the State. Several of the cooperatives have already become self-sufficient.

After only 10 years, this once deserted land has begun to yield material wealth. Every year Tran Yen district fulfils its quotas to the State: 2,000 tonnes of foodstuff, 15,000 cubic metres of timber, 1,500 tonnes of paper pulp and several other agricultural and forestry products.

NGUYEN OANH



# CHRONOLOGY

(Continued from page 32)

## March

1. Signing in Phnom Penh of a trilateral agreement on economic cooperation by Vietnam, the Soviet Union and Kampuchea.

2. Deputy Prime Minister Vo Nguyen Giap receives a Czechoslovak scientific and technical delegation and signs a cooperation agreement in this field between the two countries for the period 1981-1985.

— Greetings are exchanged between the President of the Vietnamese section of the Vietnam-GDR Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation and his GDR counterpart on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of economic and trade relations between the two countries. On this occasion, a plan of cultural, educational and scientific cooperation between the two countries for 1981-1985 is signed.

— A cooperation agreement is signed between the *Vietnam News Agency* and the *Press Trust of India* by *VNA* Director general Dao Tung and *PTI* General Manager N. R. Chandran.

3. A message of congratulations to Leonid Brezhnev on his re-election as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is sent by Le Duan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee

— The film "Such Is Vietnam" produced in Vietnam by a Mexican film team is screened in Mexico. The film retraces the Vietnamese people's history of struggle for national liberation and defence, and affirms that no reactionary force can subjugate Vietnam.

*VNA*: A UNICEF-funded crèche is being built in Ho Chi Minh City.

4. At a plenum of the 35th session of the UN General Assembly, Vietnamese Ambassador Ha Van Lau strongly condemns the South African Apartheid regime for refusing to withdraw its troops from Namibia and reasserts the Vietnamese people's resolute support for the Namibian people's rights.

— In an article entitled "New Act, Old Script" the daily *Nhan Dan* criticizes China's intention to use Sihanouk to form a "National Coalition Front" against the Kampuchean Revolution for its expansionist policy.

5. Donation of 500 US dollars from a French nun, Françoise Vandermeersch, to the Vietnam Red Cross to assist victims of the 1980 floods and storms in Vietnam

— *Nhan Dan*: A book entitled "Vietnam in Struggle" is published by the *Moscow Scientific Publishing House* depicting the Vietnamese people's struggle against French colonialism, US imperialism and Chinese expansionism.

— The CC of the Vietnam Communist Party sends a message of greetings to the CC of the Portuguese Communist Party, on the occasion of its 60th founding anniversary.

9. Signing of a protocol on goods exchange and payment for 1981 between Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

10. The Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Council makes public the Kampuchean draft constitution.

— A meeting is held in Hanoi to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the first issue of *Nhan Dan* (11-3-1951-11-3-1981). Truong Chinh, Political Bureau member of the Communist Party of Vietnam, is present at the meeting.

12. Inauguration in Hanoi of the "International Unity with Vietnam" School, built with aid from the World Federation of Trade Unions.

— Vietnam receives a gift of hundreds of tonnes of steel, equipment, consumer goods, medicines, and stationery, worth 3.5 million marks from the GDR.

— *Nhan Dan*: A Vietnamese delegation attends the 10th UN session on the law of the sea.

13. Signing in Hanoi of a minute on labour cooperation in 1981 and of a protocol for job training cooperation in 1982 between Vietnam and Czechoslovakia.

— Ending of the visit of the "March For World Peace" delegation of Japanese Buddhists. The "March For World Peace" organization has supported Vietnam for many years in the struggle for national construction and defence and against Beijing's schemes.

14. A Government delegation of the Kingdom of Sweden led by Mrs. Karin Soder, Minister of Social Affairs, arrives in Hanoi for a friendship visit and the inauguration of two hospitals built with Swedish aid.

15. A Vietnam-Nicaragua joint communiqué is signed on the occasion of the official visit to Vietnam by a high-level delegation of the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the Government for National Reconstruction of the Republic of Nicaragua led by Humberto Ortega, Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Sandinista People's Army and member of the Political Committee of the National Leadership of the Front.

— *VNA*: A delegation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Education, headed by Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, leaves Hanoi for a visit to Czechoslovakia.

— Vietnam attends the Leipzig international fair. Its pavilion is visited by Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the GDR State Council.

— Arrival of a delegation of the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture, led by Vice-Minister Anibal Enriquez Barrios

# CHRONOLOGY

(16 February - 15 March)

## February

16. The Commission of Inquiry into Chinese War Crimes issues a communiqué on Chinese crimes against Vietnam and peace in Southeast Asia during the past two years.

- VNA: Ho Chi Minh City will help Phnom Penh restoring its economy, training technical cadres and skilled workers and providing farm tools, medicines for animals, and seeds.

17. In a commentary, SPK denounces Sihanouk as a henchman of the Chinese expansionists in opposing the Kampuchean people.

19. The SRV National Assembly Standing Committee sets up the Central Electoral Council (to organize the National Assembly election to be held on 26 April 1981).

20. A delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam, led by its General Secretary Le Duan, leaves Hanoi for Moscow to attend the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. On this occasion, the CC of CPV sends a message of greetings to the Congress.

21. The Government of Finland grants non-refundable aid worth 29 million *markka* to Vietnam for 1981.

- A delegation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Culture and Information led by Vice Minister Cu Huy Can, concludes its 12-day friendship visit to Kampuchea. A treaty of cultural cooperation was signed between the two countries.

- A delegation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Education, headed by Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, arrives in Laos on a friendship visit. A protocol on educational cooperation for 1981-1985 is signed on 27 February.

- Under the title "Luanda, A Strong Indictment" the daily *Nhan Dan* welcomes the final document of the Commission of inquiry into the crimes of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and supports the peoples of Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia and other frontline countries.

- The Government Council issues directives on State enterprises' deliveries and cash payments to the State.

- Inauguration of a diesel-electric plant in Dong

Hoi (Binh Tri Thien province) built with Soviet assistance.

- The industry-commerce branch of Oudomsay province (Laos) receives large quantities of spare parts for textile machinery sent by the industrial branch of Ha Nam Ninh province (Vietnam).

- A spokesman of the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry makes a statement rejecting the allegations by the Reagan Administration that "certain socialist countries including Vietnam have provided weapons and money to the guerillas in El Salvador".

25. VNA: All ten paintings by Vietnamese children were awarded prizes at the XIth International Competition of Children's Paintings organized in Japan in late January 1981 (one special price, 3 gold medals, 3 silver medals and bronze medals).

26. *Nhan Dan*: The Standing Committee of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) issues a statement strongly condemning the policy of aggression and intervention of the imperialist countries against the Southeast Asian peoples, especially the three Indochinese countries, and highly appreciates the Indochinese countries' initiatives for peace, stability, solidarity and cooperation in this region.

27. A delegation of pupils from a school in the GDR calls at the SRV Embassy to hand over a cheque for 10,000 *marks*.

- The Vietnam Red Cross receives gifts of cloth, tinned food, and medicines worth 1.8 million *forints* presented by the Hungarian Red Cross.

- A delegation of the Vietnamese Government, headed by Minister of Culture and Information Nguyen Van Hieu, arrives in the Democratic Sarawi Republic to attend its 5th National Day.

28. VNA: The Vietnam Rubber Combine receives 4,270 tonnes of equipment from the Soviet Union, including more than 100 large tractors and lorries.

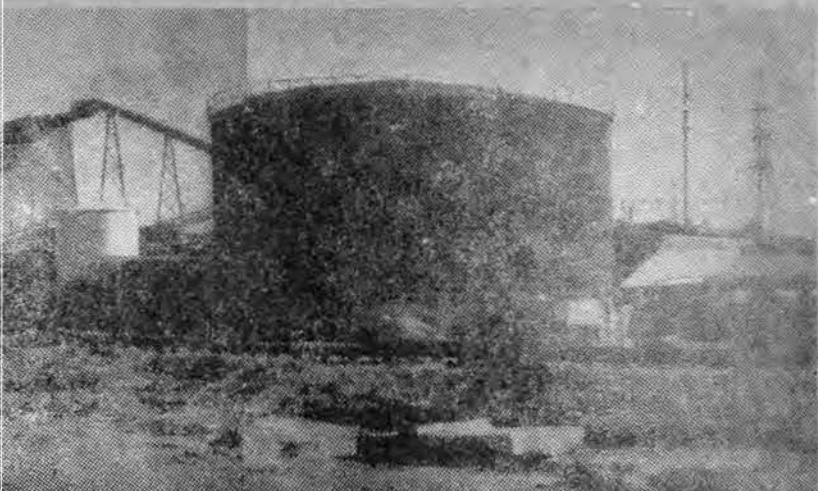
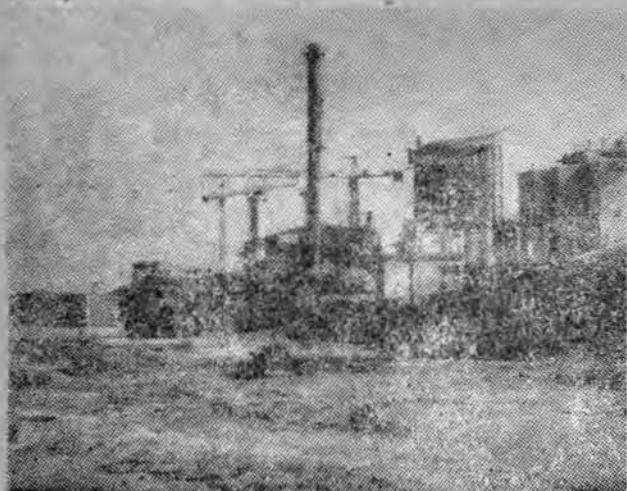
- Signing of a cultural and scientific cooperation plan for 1981-1985 between Vietnam and Bulgaria in Hanoi.

- *Nhan Dan*: Signing of an agreement on cooperation in publishing for 1981-1982 between Vietnam and Cuba in Hanoi.

- The CC of the CPV sends a message of greetings to the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in honour of its 60th founding anniversary.

- On the occasion of his 75th birthday, Premier Pham Van Dong is awarded the Lenin Order by the Soviet Union for his active role in the revolutionary movement and his great contribution to the friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

(Continued on page 31)



## MAJOR PROJECTS OF THE 1981-1985 STATE PLAN

1. An overall view of the Bai Bang paper mill (Vinh Phu province).

*Photo: HA MUI*

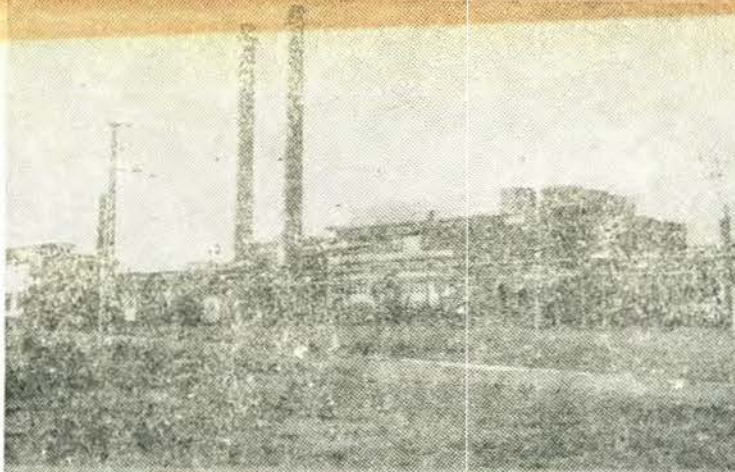
2. The construction site of the Phu Lai thermo-electric plant (Hai Hung province).

*Photo: NGUYEN THU*

3. A production team of the Pho Yen ball-bearing factory (Bac Thai province).

*Photo: NGUYEN DAN*





## EXPANSION OF EXISTING PROJECTS

1

1. The Luu Xa metallurgical centre in Thai Nguyen City.

*Photo: VU HANH*



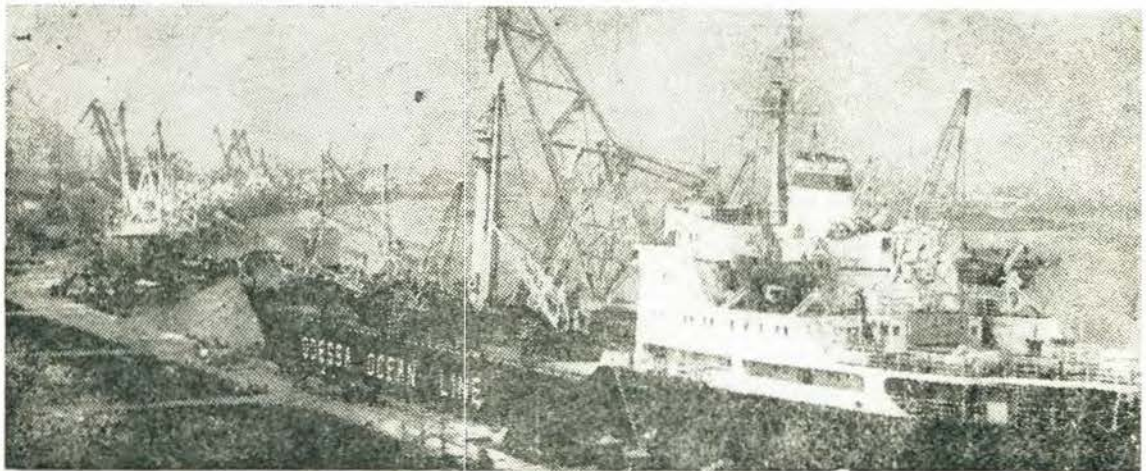
2. An engineering workshop in No. 1 Machine-Tool Plant (Hanoi).

*Photo: PHAM QUANG CAN*

3. Haiphong Harbour.

*Photo: VNA*

2



3

**Vietnam  
COURIER**

**СОВЕЩА  
ВЬЕТНАМ**

**Le Courrier  
du Vietnam**

**El Correo  
de Vietnam**

Báo đối ngoại

**TIN VIỆT NAM**

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

Tòa soạn 46 TRẦN HƯNG ĐẠO, HÀ NỘI

**DÂY NÓI: 53998**

In tại Hà Nội

Chỉ số: 12462