

Vietnam courier



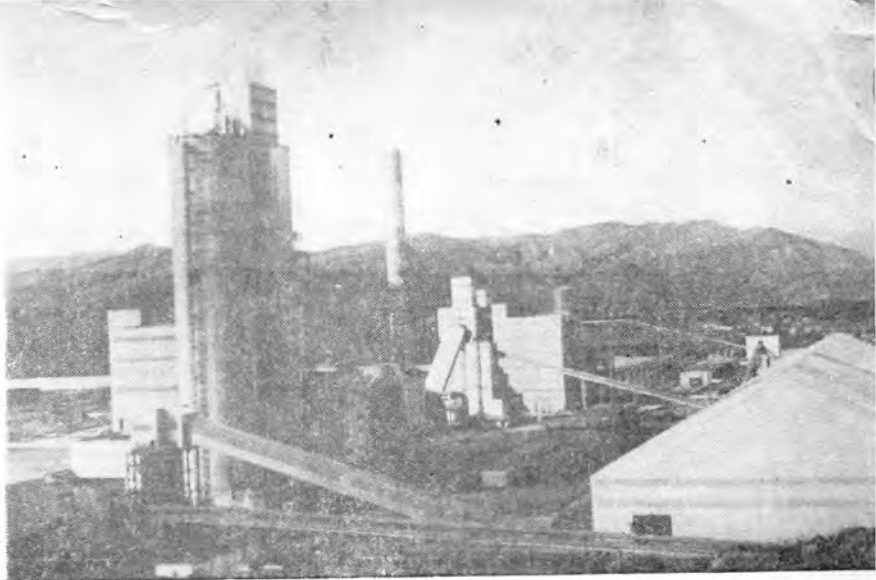
A MONTHLY REVIEW

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VIETNAM IN CONSTRUCTION



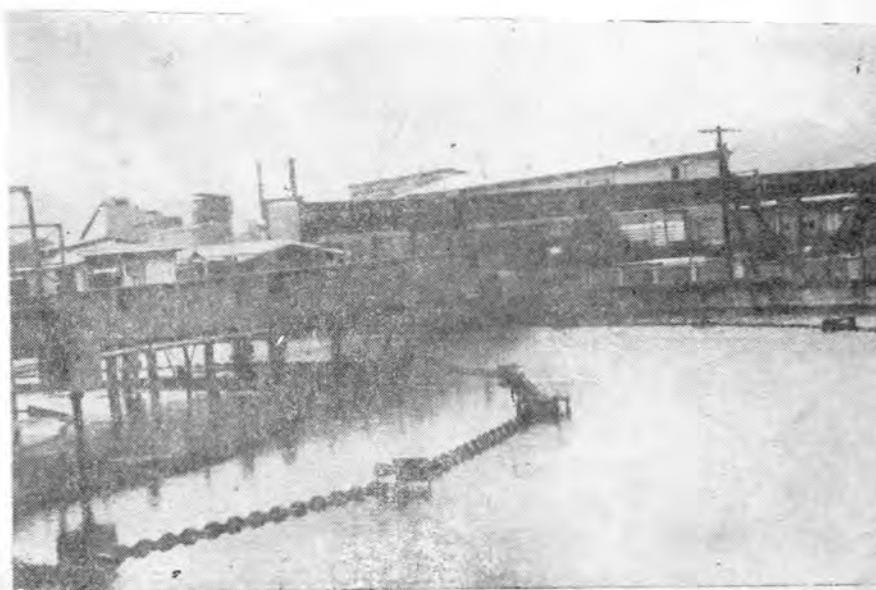
The Hoang Thach cement factory built with Danish assistance.

Photo: CAO PHONG



The first bags of cement from the Bim Son cement factory built with Soviet assistance.

Photo: CAO PHONG



An installation for the treatment of used water at the Vinh Phu Pulp and Paper Mill built with Swedish assistance.

Photo: NGUYEN TAN

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A CLOAK TO GENOCIDE

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Front Cover:

Young workers on construction sites in Hanoi

A troika harnessed by Beijing — this is the picture given by the world press when it refers to the so-called "Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea", a strange alliance between the Sihanouk and Son Sann factions and the Pol Pot genocidal clique.

Some years ago, when the plan for a "tripartite alliance" was worked out by Beijing and its followers, Sihanouk said that he would "dissociate himself from it". He even complained to an AFP correspondent: "Under the Pol Pot regime, five of my children and fourteen of my nephews and nieces were killed. I have no reason to like them or collaborate with them." But now he has had a change of heart and follows in the footsteps of the murderers of three million Kampuchians including his own relatives and has become the tool of the Beijing ruling circle. To vindicate this erroneous attitude, he reiterated Beijing's and Washington's allegations that "Vietnam invades Kampuchea", which forced him "to take up armed resistance".

With whom does Sihanouk ally himself, and against whom is he fighting? He allies himself with the Pol Pot genocidal clique manipulated by the Chinese expansionists and hegemonists, who are the dangerous enemy of the entire Kampuchean people, in order to oppose his nation's rebirth, his homeland and his

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people's genuine friends. He mistakes his friends for his enemies and vice versa. And he goes to the length of stooping to praise the Pol Pot genocidal gang and allowing them to use his name as a cloak to cover their bloody hands with a view to carrying out the schemes of their Beijing masters. Sihanouk once said: "Son Sann is a puppet manipulated and financed by China." Now he himself is playing this unpleasant role! Sihanouk has received 3,000 rifles from the Beijing authorities, although he is no stranger to their perfidious policy aimed at "using the Kampuchean to kill Kampuchean", restoring the Pol Pot genocidal regime and turning Kampuchea into a bridgehead for their expansion.

Sihanouk knows full well that when his country and people were in danger, when he himself was overthrown by Washington's henchmen and when the US imperialists sent hundreds of thousands of troops to rain thousands of bombs and shells on Kampuchea, the Vietnamese people were standing side by side with the Kampuchean to fight against their common enemy. At that time, Sihanouk said: "The Kampuchean people understand that to defend national independence and peace, they have to rely not only on the Khmer people's vigilance, unity and patriotism, but also on the indispensable solidarity with the fraternal Vietnamese people." When he and millions of Kampuchean were imprisoned by the Pol Pot butchers, what would have become of him, had it not been for the Kampuchean people's uprising, led by the National United Front for the Liberation of Kampuchea and with the wholehearted support of the Vietnamese people? Now, at the request of the legal Kampuchean Government and its people, the Vietnamese armed forces are present in Kampuchea in order to defend the Kampuchean people's independence, freedom and their rebirth, and fight against the schemes and acts of the Chinese rulers. When the Chinese threat no longer exists and with the agreement of the Kampuchean People's Republic Government, Vietnam

will withdraw its forces from Kampuchea as it did twice in the past, of which Sihanouk is fully aware. The Vietnamese people's attitude has been always consistent: to closely unite with the fraternal peoples of Kampuchea and Laos, to jointly struggle against the aggressive and subversive forces of imperialism and international reaction, to regain and preserve each nation's independence and freedom, thus achieving peace, stability, friendship and co-operation in Southeast Asia. This is a truth that cannot be distorted.

Sihanouk's present line and political attitude are completely erroneous. He has fallen into a trap set by the reactionary forces in the Beijing ruling circle, and has become a tool for them to commit more crimes. He has ruined himself and compromised himself into being once more a prisoner of Chinese hegemonist policy.

His collusion with the Pol Pot remnant forces and other reactionary groups is suffering defeats and is doomed to complete failure, for it runs counter to the genuine aspirations of the entire Kampuchean people, to the rebirth of the country, and to what he said: "The process of reconciliation and co-operation" among the peoples of Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam "is actually part of the historical trend, namely the process of liberation for the oppressed peoples". To abide by the laws of history means success, to run counter to them means failure!

The People's Republic of Kampuchea is steadily advancing towards stabilization and further development. The situation in Kampuchea is irreversible. The Beijing ruling clique has of late insisted on considering the Pol Pot genocidal clique as the main and most reliable horse in the troika, which should give the other partners food for thought.

It is no honour at all to offer oneself as a cloak to genocide.

Nhan Dan, December 4, 1982

THE RE-ADJUSTMENT OF LAND HOLDINGS IN NAM BO

Agricultural co-operation was undertaken right after the liberation of the South in 1975. In Central Vietnam, particularly in the provinces of Quang Nam—Da Nang, Nghia Binh, Phu Khanh and Thuan Hai (encompassing most of the coastal plains with 800,000 hectares of arable land equivalent to half the tillable land of the Red River delta), it was achieved in 1979-1980 with regard to 90% of peasant households. The co-operatives are mainly of the higher level and of a fairly big size, 200 hectares each on average. Generally speaking, the movement has proved to be stable and strong. That is because the communal lands and other collective lands averaging 2/3 of the arable land of each commune had already been redistributed to working peasants during the anti-French and anti-US resistance wars. The readjustment of this distribution has been systematically carried out since the first years of peace, in 1976 and 1977, thus radically solving the problem of land ownership—especially with regard to cadres and members of the Party—which generated the renting of land and the hiring of the workforce. Upon returning to their native village the peasants received their share of land and were organized into mutual-aid teams, then into production collectives.

It is also due to the application of the experiences of agricultural

co-operation in the North, together with the introduction, since the outset, of the quota system, the training of responsible cadres for production collectives, brigades and co-operatives, mostly 30—35 year-old people who have finished elementary education and followed a course from six months to one year in district or provincial vocational schools for training in management, agricultural techniques, etc.

In Nam Bo (*) the situation is considerably more complex.

Seven years after liberation the peasants are still engaged in individual enterprise.

The working peasants, who make up 81% of rural manpower and do 96.4% of the wage-earning manual work each year, have to hire out their labour as in the past. They till their land by hiring agricultural machines from the rich peasants at exorbitant prices. The lower-middle peasants account for half of the peasantry. Possessing many marketable agricultural products they have business dealings with the trading services while suffering the exploitation of the rich peasants and the urban and rural bourgeois elements.

The upper-middle peasants farm their land with hired manpower (25% of the necessary work-days) while hiring their hands (3.6% the wage-earning manual work each year) and their machines. They

speculate in agricultural products and grant loans with interest.

The rich peasants and rural bourgeois elements (mostly former feudal landlords having converted their agricultural activities—land lease—into industrial and commercial ones even before 1975) work their land themselves (37.5% of the necessary work-days) or with hired manpower (62.5%). Moreover, they hire out their agricultural machines and means of transport, speculate in agricultural products and lend money. On top of that, they indulge in illicit trafficking and compete with the State trading services in dealing with the peasants. Eventually their activities turn to processing agricultural products and growing dry crops, e.g. sugar-cane, perennial industrial plants, fruit-trees...

In 1976, measures were taken to re-adjust the distribution of land amongst the various peasant strata. Thus 300,000 hectares were distributed to working peasants, mainly to wage-earning and poor peasants. However, very great differences in land holdings, means of production and income still exist in the Southern countryside:

(See table on page 4)

This situation is common throughout Nam Bo in each province, district, commune and even hamlet. For instance: in the suburbs of Ho Chi Minh City 70% of peasant households till 80% of the land on their own, 28% have no or little

	Wage-earning and poor peasants	Lower-middle peasants	Upper-middle peasants	Rich peasants and bourgeois elements
Number of households(%) Appropriated area	24.5	56.2	12.0	2.4
— o/o	10.6	59.4	23.0	7.0
— sq.m. by head	654.0	2,081.0	3,623.0	5,688.0
Tractors upward of 15 HP(%)	—	5.6	38.5	58.3
Other agricultural machines	—	17.4	59.2	22.3
Husking mills (%)	—	—	37.9	50.2
Corn-shellers (%)	—	—	50.5	—
Sugar-cane presses (%)	—	10.0	38.0	52.0
Means of transport—land and water (%)	—	—	—	27.0
Annual income (indong per head)	440.0	1,240.0	2,638.0	7,506.0**

land, 3.3% possess on an average 6,000 s.qm. per head while 7.3% own 3,300 s.qm. per head. The same goes for certain provinces of the Mekong delta: in Hau Giang 10% and in Cuu Long 25.8% of households (5.5% of wage-earning and 20.3% of poor peasants) are landless; in Kien Giang 6.5% of households have no land and 20% own very little; in Tay Ninh 22.6% households have at their disposal 6.3% of the land or 570 s.qm. on average per head, as against 3% of rich peasant households with 10.4% of the land or 6,716 s.qm. on average per head.

Therefore, in Nam Bo the working peasants are still exploited by the upper-middle peasants, the rich peasants and the rural bourgeois elements in various ways (use of hired manpower, hire of agricultural machines and transport means, speculation in agricultural products, granting of loans with interest and even lease of land to extort rent...)

The differentiation of social classes in the countryside continues. Five years after liberation in five

communes of Song Be province 12 new households of rich peasants and 31 of upper-middle peasants have appeared. Inversely, in five communes of Tien Giang province 16% of (upper and lower) middle-peasant households have become poor ones.

This evolution which did not originate with liberation perpetuates the reality of the Nam Bo countryside before 1975. With French colonisation the Nam Bo peasants became acquainted with capitalist relations of production as they were integrated into a vast commercial network, from the sale of consumer goods and working means to the disposal of agricultural products, controlled by the predominantly Chinese comprador bourgeoisie. In fact, for several decades the Nam Bo countryside had already begun a process of capitalist development in the framework of the machinations of US neo-colonialism. Under the political and economic impact of the people's power and new measures of socialist transformation that process is partly curbed but

not checked, and constitutes a major obstacle to agricultural co-operation: by late 1981—seven years after liberation—only 9% of peasant households with 7% of the land were organised into production collectives.

In the present social conditions of the Nam Bo countryside, a complete re-adjustment of land holdings among the various peasant strata constitutes, if not the prelude, at least the premise of agricultural co-operation. For the unequal land ownership makes impossible the organisation of peasants first into various forms of mutual-aid teams then into production collectives. Following are the reasons:

— In the mutual-aid teams the work bears a somewhat socialised character. But the fruits of the collective work belong wholly to the land owners. As the work-days are remunerated at stable prices but lower than at the free labour market, the members with much land have more advantage than those having no or little land.

— In the production collectives the fruits of the collective work, allowing for production costs, are divided in two parts to remunerate the work-days and the material contributions. The share of the members depends upon the number of work-days, land and working implements they contribute. Hence "the haves" are privileged to the detriment of "the have nots".

These sharp contradictions of interest between members of mutual-aid teams and production collectives unavoidably bring about their breaking-up—a process unfolding over these last years in nearly all the provinces of Nam Bo.

Therefore, a re-adjustment of land holdings among the various peasant strata is imperative.

It aims at meeting the immediate requirements of the co-operative movement for collectivising land and other production means. This is co-ordinated with the re-organisation of production and the strengthening of productive forces so as to create the necessary conditions for raising labour productivity and developing marketable agricultural production.

This re-adjustment must be carried out according to appropriate forms and stages for each region and involved the *land rented or tilled, with hired manpower*, following adequate measures for each peasant stratum:

— The main beneficiaries are the peasants with little or no land, that is the agricultural workers and poor peasants, who should *moreover receive help in the form of working implements*. In the regions where little land remains to be distributed there is no problem of re-adjustment and this category of peasants has to be employed in handicraft activities to be organised or in State economic outfits, in order to avoid a forced re-adjustment or egalitarianism which breeds dissension within the peasantry. This re-adjustment to the advantage of agricultural workers and poor peasants aims at completing the tasks of national-democratic revolution. However, in the present conditions when the land is already the property of the entire people, this re-adjustment also bears a socialist content as defined in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The goal does not consist in "giving land (as an individual property) to the tiller"; but essentially, in providing them with means of production—as an "initial fund" enabling them to participate in the collective economy. As a result,

this re-adjustment must go along with the organisation of peasants after appropriate forms of collective work, from mutual-aid team to production collective and co-operative. Credit co-operatives as well as buying and selling co-operatives will be set up to restrict exploitation by rich peasants and rural and urban bourgeois elements.

— Regarding the middle peasants (including the upper-middle ones): they were poor peasants for the most part and thus attached to the revolutionary cause. But they also provide most of the marketable agricultural products and therefore rely on profit in production as well as in marketing. Hence the need to adopt flexible forms and stages which take into consideration their state of mind and aspirations.

Vis-à-vis the rich peasants and rural bourgeois elements, it is appropriate to apply the resolutions of the 6th Plenum of the Communist Party of Vietnam (June 1979): "As far as the socialist transformation of private industry and commerce in the South is concerned, to judiciously apply the Party's policy related to the five economic components for good use of their working capacities, technical and managerial competence so as to develop production." In principle, the question is to abolish the bases for the exploitation of peasants by the rich peasants and the rural and urban bourgeois elements. However, this abolition will be done, not immediately and completely but on the basis of appropriate measures:

1. to apply the measures for re-adjusting land holdings while leaving to those concerned a part of their land enabling them to live like other working peasants;
2. for the commercial outfits, to apply the measures related to

private urban commerce, on the basis of establishing vast networks of buying and selling co-operatives in close liaison with State commerce;

3. gradually to curtail usurious loans by building a network of credit co-operatives mobilising the funds of various peasant strata including rich peasants and bourgeois elements;

4. for agricultural machines (tractors, pumps, machines for the processing of agricultural products..) and the various means of transport which constitute the most important sector and an important productive force greatly useful to the State and co-operative sectors, to apply judicious measures for their use while restricting the owners' profit by adequate management of the supply of fuel and spare parts, and setting of rational hiring prices to the mutual advantage of users and owners.

The re-adjustment of land holdings also implies a re-organisation and consolidation of the State brigades of machines and tractors, of the collectives of agricultural machines, of the outfits to process agricultural products and of the State and collective transport units in order to efficaciously help the peasants develop production. Only in this way can the co-operative movement in Nam Bo proceed with firm steps and reach its goal in the main by late 1985.

N. X. L.

(*) *Southern provinces of South Vietnam, formerly called Cochinchina.*

(**) *Of which: 40% come from land farming, 29.5% from the hiring of agricultural machines, 21.7% from the processing of agricultural products... Not to mention the unknown income up to 30% of their annual net income accruing from illicit trafficking and speculative activities.*

THE DISTRICT AND LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION ALONG SOCIALIST LINES

The execution of production plans, waging of the scientific and technological revolution, and perfecting the new relations of production are carried out mainly at district level. For this reason the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam held that it is necessary to take the district as the base from which agriculture will advance to large-scale socialist production.

The district plays a very important role for it is there that production is reorganized and the efforts of the State and the population combined to implement the Party's economic policy in the countryside. But we must not separate the district from the province and the agricultural department. It must be included in the planning work of the province and viewed in its economic and technical relation with agriculture as a branch of activity. Production units in the district relate to both the district administration and the agricultural department.

The latter provides the district with new techniques, which the district applies according to its own conditions. Thus a strong agriculture department will create favourable conditions for the district and vice versa. Building up the district while strengthening the department of agriculture is a good way to take agriculture step by step to large-scale socialist production in

the absence of a comprehensive industry.

The Fifth Party Congress pointed out:

"The economic structure of each district takes shape on the basis of its economic conditions, its specialized production and other activities, the requirements and possibilities of its agricultural co-operatives and production collectives; at the same time it must be linked to the provincial and national programmes of economic development."¹

This structure includes different economic branches such as:

— Agricultural, forestry and fishing co-operatives and State farms (if any);

— Agriculture and forestry technical bases: seed-selection and animal-breeding farms, irrigation systems, tractor stations, repair shops;

— Small industry and handicraft bases and State enterprises (if any);

— Building services and teams of the district and agricultural co-operatives;

— Transport units (of the district and agricultural co-operatives), road maintenance teams, information and postal services;

— Materials and equipment supply companies, agricultural products purchasing units, retail shops, service units, and buying and selling co-operatives.

These economic organizations are production and trading units placed under the guidance of different economic and technical branches. That is why the district is the geographical base from which to reorganize production, not a production and trading complex. It represents the central administration and the province and is closely linked to the production units. As an echelon of State power, it controls the production units under its authority and co-ordinates the activities of economic units of the province and the central administration operating on its territory, the aim being to serve the people's life and production, first and foremost agricultural production.

In the years to come, the orientation of economic development of the district is as follows: regard agriculture as a central task; develop it not in isolation but in combination with industry right from the beginning and from the grassroots upwards; reorganize agricultural production in the district by readjusting farmland and redeploying manpower in order to expand production; gradually form areas for crop specialization; promote intensive farming of some major crops and raising animals;

1. Political report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam at its Fifth National Congress.

begin establishing the material and technical bases of the district and link them to the co-operatives.

We must set great store by industry, first of all small industry and handicrafts, relying on local raw materials and manpower. Each district will try to obtain a small-industry output value upward of 10 million *dong*.

The district must endeavour to balance its economic relations, cause out-going goods to be equal or superior in value to in-coming goods, and contribute to stepping up our exports. It must also strive to supply enough food and clothing to its population, produce food grain and other foods in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of its inhabitants without having to call for assistance from the higher echelons.

The economic development of the district is based on this principle: "Let the people and the State pool their efforts" in which the district plays the main role while the province and the central administration supply technical assistance and part of the materials. The higher authorities should no longer concentrate on helping certain pilot districts. This will lead to dependence on their part and the unlikelihood of gaining useful experience.

Parallel to its economic development, the district must pay attention to promoting cultural, educational and health-care activities, organizing the material and cultural life of its population and building a new socialist countryside. Meanwhile, it must co-ordinate its economic activities with national-defence requirements by building itself into a strong fortress for the defence of the socialist homeland.

DONG THAO

With 15,172 hectares of agricultural land, 13,438 of them cultivable, a big workforce, and a wealth of experience, especially in intensive farming and crop multiplication, the district of Tho Xuan in Thanh Hoa province has every possibility to develop both cultivation and animal husbandry, food and industrial crops, rice and subsidiary food plants.

Even so, until 1975, agriculture was making no headway and had even tended to stagnate. Output was low and annual food production never went beyond 45,000 tons.

farms were fixed. This resulted in specialised areas for rice, subsidiary food crops, fodder plants, industrial crops, and seed production, each with a distinctive production pattern based on local conditions, and with sufficient financial inputs for further intensive farming and for the expansion of winter cropping.

Thanks to land reclamation, the settlement of new economic zones, the modification of cooperatives in mountain areas, and the regrouping of the 175 population points into 115, which resulted in the availability of 121 hectares, the number

UTILIZATION OF LAND AND LABOUR IN A DISTRICT

Things began to change in 1975 when the district, determined to put to use all its potential, set about reorganising production, improving management, reshaping the workforce at both cooperative and district levels.

On the basis of their natural characteristics and economic conditions, three economic regions were formed, each with a definite planting and stockbreeding pattern and adequate investments.

This economic regionalisation made it possible for different branches to plan their own reorganisation. It also enabled cooperatives to plan their development, conduct pedological and labour surveys, reorganise their production gradually, and determine their size.

Eight hundred hectares of cultivable land, formerly shared between a number of cooperatives, were turned over to one single holder, and boundaries between cooperatives and between these and State

of cooperatives has increased to 43 by 1980, each working from 250 to 300 hectares. Specialisation has also been effected in each cooperative, with the setting up of labour brigades for irrigation, seed selection, plant protection, and other jobs with clearly defined quotas and economic-technical norms. Thus, surplus labour could be channeled into animal husbandry, small industries and handicrafts, transport and construction.

Great efforts have been made to strengthen the material and technical bases, especially for food production. For the time being, investments are concentrated on fighting water-logging and drought, on seed and stock selection, and on equipment including improving traditional implements. From 1976 to 1980, investments totalled 25 million *dong*, 11 million of which were spent on new electric pumping stations on the left bank of the Chu River (there are 16 such stations now), two new dams, 12 low-voltage

power stations, which increased apparent power from 3,660 kVA to 5,470 kVA. Moreover, 40 tractors were acquired, a district-scale mechanical engineering network was set up, and a whole system of stations built for seed and stock selection, for plant and animal diseases, and for other aspects of production.

Water-control capacity has increased from 16,150 c.m./hour to 42,000 c.m./hour. Irrigation of 3,555 hectares and drainage of 1,515 others are ensured, and complete control has been achieved over a total of 9,200 hectares, or 70 per cent of the whole area, against 4,000 hectares in the past. The district owns a fleet of 83 big tractors and 118 small ones (0.38 HP). Each co-operative is provided with a small mechanical workshop for the manufacture and repair of implements, and each of the economic-technical groups is equipped with machine tools and fodder machines.

The rational use of land and labour, the reorganisation of production, the strengthening of the material and technical bases have enabled the district to advance by leaps and bounds, despite great difficulties encountered all through the 1976-1980 five-year plan, such as the dry spells in 1979-1980 which destroyed 5,000 hectares of rice and dry crops, the big flood in 1980 which caused great damage to 3,200 hectares of rice (1,700 of them completely ruined), the 50-per cent cut in chemical fertilizer supply in the same year, and so on.

Cultivated area increased from 21,858 hectares in 1976 to 28,326 hectares in 1980. In 1980, food production reached 58,223 tons (13,000 tons of subsidiary food) as against 45,796 tons (6,156 tons of subsidiary food) in 1976, and per capita food output went up from 250 kg to 306 kg. In the same period, the cattle herd increased from 21,488 to 24,488 head, and the pig population rose from 46,476 to 51,932.

Further progress was recorded in 1981 with the introduction of the contractual system. 30,200 hectares were put under crops, or an increase of 1,874 hectares. Food output totalled 69,000 tons, 10,777 tons more than in the previous year. Also, there were 55,000 pigs, or 3,068 more than the figure for 1980.

STUDIES ON THE DISTRICT BY THE COLLEGE OF ECONOMICS AND PLANNING

For many years teams of teachers and students from the College have been sent to various regions in order to help organize production and economic management in the district. In 1973, a master plan was drawn up for an area devoted to maize in Cam Thuy district, Thanh Hoa province. In 1974, the College organized a group of more than one hundred people to study a master plan for six districts which were to provide foodstuffs for Quang Ninh province. This project, along with other scientifically-grounded proposals, was accepted by the provincial Party Committee. In 1977, teachers were sent to study the organisation of production and management in Nam Ninh district, Ha Nam Ninh province. The result was twelve monographs on the agro-industrial structure, organisation of management and planning, the distribution of the labour force

as well as finances and budgeting in the district. Some of this study was reported to a meeting of the Ha Nam Ninh Party Committee and part of the content was accepted. In 1978, the College assisted Vinh Phu province in the elaboration of a master plan for the districts of Song Lo, Song Thao, Tam Thanh, Tam Dao, Phong Chau and Vinh Lac. The plan for Song Lo and Vinh Lac districts have already been ratified by the Standing Commission of the Provincial Party Committee and put into execution — they were also commended by the College Board of Directors. The plans for the remaining districts have already been passed at the district level. Also in 1978, the College aided Dong Anh district, near Hanoi, to make a master plan. Sixteen monographs were compiled, and the plan was finally ratified by the Hanoi People's Committee

and put into execution—it also drew a commendation from the College Board of Directors. In 1979-1980, activities of similar side, level and efficiency were carried out in many other districts of the Red River delta and Bac Bo uplands.

Thus, from 1973 to 1980, in trying to deal with the reality of our present situation, the College sent in all 183 teachers and 781 students from its various faculties to 23 districts in the plains, uplands and mountains of five Northern provinces. Tens of master plans were drawn up, along with over one hundred monographs on the districts' economic problems.

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Studies on the reorganisation of production, the improvement of management, the building of the district into an industrial-agricultural economic unit pose many theoretical and practical problems. Both teachers and students of the College have tried to tackle them constructively in their studies.

From the abundant proposals made within the study there are many which have a direct impact on production. For the master plans drawn up by the College study teams were ratified by the districts which will use them to elaborate specific plans.

The district is an appropriate unit for the reorganisation of production and development into an agricultural-industrial economic unit. The adequate size of a district depends on its natural and economic

conditions and on its layout—for this there is no general formula. The district is not a basic production unit but an economic-administrative unit directly guiding production bases. It can combine agriculture with industry, central economy with regional economy and sectoral management with territorial management. No district is an integrated circuit, an "oasis", but a part of the provincial and central economy. In building up the district, one has to take the agricultural-industrial economic structure as the core, with the agricultural structure as the base. Agricultural structure must rely on production specialisation and all-round development. Industry must first and foremost serve agricultural development, together with the production of consumer and export goods. The combination between agriculture and industry takes place at the district level, and also in each agricultural producers' co-operative where attention must be paid to combining agriculture with handicrafts. Each district must set up specialized agricultural areas, with a set of appropriate patterns and basic units. Each district should have a network of agricultural technique stations for the district to guide the co-operatives directly. Beside such State stations for tractors, pumps, veterinary services, plant protection, depending on the concrete conditions of each district, the nursery stations for plants and animals can be State-owned or collective. These stations

must be put under the guidance of the district and of their respective branches at provincial level. As for district planning, we must proceed from the master plan of the district to the plans of various branches, production areas and enterprises, and there must be concrete designs. District planning must be done by the district itself with the co-operation of various provincial branches, with stress being laid on the district's own forces.

Moreover, the monographs put forward other conclusions and rational policies on collection-purchase, prices, food distribution, reward and forfeits, investment for intensive farming, improvement of the mechanism of management of materials, organisation of financial management, division of responsibility and planning of the trade network...

As regards cadre-training, the studies on the district help the College for its part to improve the target, content, methods, etc., of its field of work. They also help the College better realize the Party's educational principle of combining study with practice, education with production, school with society and assert the correctness of the College's orientation of scientific study to help build the district.

Such studies have enabled cadres from various faculties and disciplines to work together in broad co-operation for the collective good of the districts and are a clear example of scientific study serving production.

NGUYEN TIEN LOC

DIEN BAN DISTRICT:

MORE THAN 10 TONS PER HECTARE FOR FOUR YEARS IN SUCCESSION

Early in 1976, after experimental growing of a third rice crop on more than 600 hectares, the district of Dien Ban (Quang Nam — Da Nang province) has guided all its communes to grow three rice crops a year on the strength of these measures: the use of new rice strains, strict control of the planting time, increased supply of fertilizer, and an active fight against pests and diseases. Of the total area of nearly 6,000 hectares of farmland which until then gave only two rice crops a year, from 1979 onwards 4,300 hectares have been put under a third rice crop. The rest has been planted with two crops of rice and one of groundnuts. This necessitated a good system of irrigation and drainage. In late 1978, when 36 cooperatives were organized in the 16 communes and township of the district, Dien Ban started building 12 electric pumping stations, bought more than 100 mechanical pumps and completed the system of irrigation canals.

Besides the district's seed-breeding station specializing in the research and multiplication of new seeds, Dien Ban also organizes for each cooperative a seed-breeding team so that, in every production brigade, a specialized seed-breeding group has been set up. The district

worked out plans for each cooperative to grow three rice crops a year. It decided on the selection of seeds and how to use them, and on a time-table for the preparation and transplanting of rice seedlings, and the care given to the rice plants during the various periods of growth.

In addition to 2,400 buffaloes, the 16 cooperatives specializing in rice growing were equipped with MTZ tractors. A time-table was fixed for ploughing either by buffaloes or by tractors, and co-op members were also mobilized to hoe their fields. As a result, during the past 4 years the norms for soil preparation have been overfulfilled. Also from 1979, animal husbandry has developed markedly. The total number of oxen and cows rose to 11,000 and the pig herd to 97,000. A mass movement to make organic fertilizer was launched, aiming to give each hectare of farmland 10 tons of stable manure. However, many cooperatives along river banks such as Thu Bon cooperative managed to put in 12 or even 14 tons. Beside the nitrogenous fertilizer provided by the State, the district produced lime and used an average of 400 kg of lime per hectare per crop for soil improvement. With the support of the Department for Plant

Protection, a programme on pest control was devised. In every cooperative, a specialized team for plant protection was set up. On this basis, pest and plant diseases can be controlled in combination with the peasants' traditional experiences in this field. Over the last 4 years none of the cooperatives in this district has lost more than 20% of the rice yield, either by pests or by diseases.

Together with better agricultural techniques, Dien Ban paid great attention to improving cooperative management. From the 1980-1981 winter — spring crop, the contractual quota system was applied to both groups and individual farmers.

The district has selected special kinds of seeds, and a certain kind of short-term and high-yield seeds. A rule was fixed: no new kind of seeds could be transplanted for three successive crops in the same area, nor to plant three rice crops for three years running in that same area. These measures will maintain the new seed varieties' quality. Food production (equivalent to paddy) in Dien Ban district has increased from 36,400 tons in 1976 to 73,800 in 1982. The average per capita food output rose from 236 kg in 1976 to 470 kg in 1982.

MINH HUNG

PINEAPPLES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Pineapples were introduced into Vietnam in the last century but its large-scale cultivation only began in the nineteen thirties. In the North, this fruit began to be grown widely in the early sixties, chiefly at the State farms in the provinces of Lang Son, Hoang Lien Son, Vinh Phu, Ha Tuyen, Ha Son Binh, Ha Nam Ninh, Thanh Hoa and Nghe Tinh. In the South, it had a long tradition in Minh Hai, Kien Giang, An Giang and Long An provinces. Following the liberation of the South, some other localities such as Ho Chi Minh City and the provinces of Tien Giang and Lam Dong also made it an important cash crop. On the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City State farms specializing in pineapple growing were set up during 1977—1978. By now, large pineapple plantations have been formed at the Pham Van Hai and Le Minh Xuan State farms, and the area has been expanded year after year.

Pineapple is averse to a cold climate and the colder it is, the slower the growth of the plant becomes. Accordingly, the area suited for this plant cannot extend north beyond the tropic of Capricorn, and even in this area the plant can grow well only on low land where the climate is warmer. Throughout the period of its growth and nutrition (from planting to tilling) it needs a fairly high mean temperature of around 30 degrees Celsius, strong sunlight, high humidity and a degree of precipitation not exceeding 80 millimetres per month. The pineapple is not selective as far as soil is concerned. It can grow even on aluminous soil with a pH degree varying from 4.5 to 6 degrees.

These conditions can be met easily and even at an optimum level in the districts around Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong River delta in general. From planting to harvesting the pineapple plant takes from 12 to 18 months, thus ranking third after papaya and banana which take 6 to 12 months respectively to bear fruit.

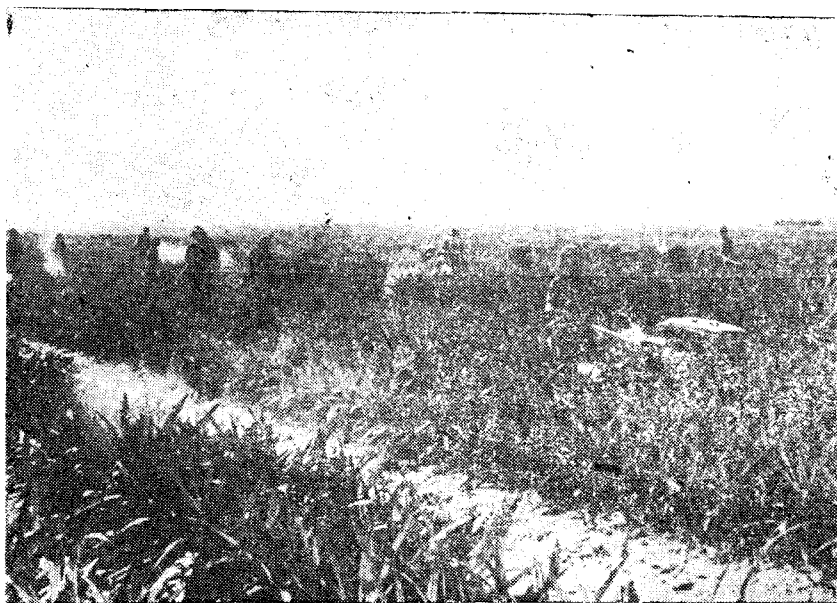
Pineapple is highly valued as an export item, the highest among all the fruit trees in South Vietnam at present in terms of value per unit of cultivated land.

According to plan, the pineapple areas of the provinces of Minh Hai, Kien Giang, Hau Giang, Tien Giang, Long An, Ho Chi Minh City,

Lam Dong, Phu Khanh, Nghia Binh will expand to 15,000—20,000 hectares. Ho Chi Minh City plans to expand the area for export pineapples from 1,000 in 1980 to 16,000 hectares in 1985, and pineapple exports are expected to reach 30,000-40,000 tons a year.

The potential of the Southern provinces for fruit-tree growing remain largely untapped, chiefly for the following reasons:

— The growing of pineapples in particular and vegetables and fruit trees in general is still chiefly in the hands of private farmers and as such it cannot become a firm basis for the planned development



The Le Minh Xuan State farm on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City specializing in pineapple growing.

Photo: NHAT NAM

of socialist industry. In addition, the zoning of raw material areas is still at the primitive stage.

— The tax and price policies regarding the purchase of fruit and vegetables remain irrational and do not stimulate production.

— The system of purchase remains deficient in many respects since it still has to go through too many intermediaries (farmer, owner of garden, merchant, local export service and processing factories). As a result, the price is artificially high, from 30—40% higher than the purchase price.

— The system of transportation of pineapples from the farm to the processing factory still has many inadequacies and deficiencies generating much waste in the process. There are also too many purchase stations.

Nevertheless, the State farms specializing in pineapple growing have constantly been expanded and are playing an increasingly dominant role in the production and export of pineapples.

Following is a table on the expansion of pineapple areas on the State farms in southern Vietnam until 1980:

Names of the farms	Reclaimed areas	Areas grown with pineapples
Dong Khoi (Dong Nai)	1,500 hectares	50 hectares
Duc Trong (Lam Dong)	2,000 —	100 —
Phu My (Nghia Binh)	2,000 —	400 —
Le Minh Xuan (Ho Chi Minh City)	3,000 —	50 —
Pham Van Hai (Ho Chi Minh City).	2,000 —	1,200 —
Long Hai 1, 2, 3, (Long An)	6,000 —	200 —
Nuoc Muc (Long An)	1,000 —	50 —
Tan Lap 1, 3 (Tien Giang)		100 —
Binh Son 2,3 (Hon Dat, Kien Giang)	5,000 —	700 —
Total:	22,500 hectares	2,850 hectares

Overall, the cultivation and processing of pineapples have progressed continuously over the past years though still at a slow pace. The quantity of both fresh and processed pineapples for export is still low. Per hectare yield remains low, we still lack good strains and production cost remains high. Due to the frequent shortage of raw materials the processing factories have all been operating below

capacity. Meanwhile, the demands for fresh as well as processed pineapples for export remain very great.

In the ten or fifteen years ahead we have to make more investments of funds and labour in order to quickly expand the pineapple-growing area and the processing industry so as to make pineapple a major export line.

LE NGOC SAU

THE BIRTH OF A STATE FARM

Chien Dan is an arid hilly region in Quang Nam — Da Nang province. In summer the hot wind literally sears almost all its vegetation. Only four years ago nothing could grow there except wild grass. Before the American war of aggression, Chien Dan used to be known as a region of pineapples, but all the pineapple plots had to be grown beneath the foliage of big trees to avoid the scorching heat of summer. The local administration decided to make Chien Dan green again, but for any tree to survive this inclement climate is no easy task. To make matters worse, thousands of hectares of hilly land had been ploughed up by bombs, shells and the caerpursars of US and puppet tanks. Because Chien Dan lay only 4-5 kilometres from Tam Ky in the defence perimeter of this town, and under the American rule, no vegetation was allowed to grow there.

In the middle of 1978 when the first survey team of the Ministry of State Farms came to prepare for the setting up of a pineapple farm, it caused no small surprise among the local farmers. "Well, how could they plant pineapples without the shade trees?" Another big worry was where to find enough water for the plants. The few existing wells could supply only a minimal proportion of the water needed, and what is more, it is not easy to sink wells in this rocky area. All hopes were placed in the irrigation canals of the Phu Ninh water conservancy project which was then under construction.

In January 1979 the farm was formally established. There were yet neither offices nor houses but

only makeshift dwelling places for the land clearers. The workers started a campaign of land clearing and soon hundreds of hectares were cleared and planted with pineapples.

After three and a half years, the former desolate hilly area has a completely new complexion. The Chien Dan State farm has come into being. Its main task is to grow pineapples for export. One after another the former bare hills were covered with millions of verdant pineapple plants. A system of reservoirs totalling nine hectares provides fresh water for the farm and also serves as an excellent place for fish rearing. A main canal of the Phu Ninh water conservancy project crossing the farm supplies plenty of water for both cultivation and stockbreeding.

At present the farm has planted nearly 400 hectares of pineapples, of which 155 are already yielding fruit averaging 15 tons of fruit per hectare. The farm workers are striving to raise productivity to 20 tons per hectare. They are also growing rice and other subsidiary food crops to cater for themselves with part of the food needed so as to alleviate food supply by the State.

The farm is a model for the local farmers in terms of organisation, production techniques and productivity. About 400 workers or 80% of the workforce were recruited from among local farmers. The farm has been giving devoted assistance to the neighbouring agricultural co-ops in the building of material bases and also in cultural and artistic activities. The success of the farm has been a magnet of socialism for the cooperatives and private farmers in the whole region.

In the coming years Chien Dan plans to expand its pineapple area to 2,600 hectares and its rice and subsidiary food crop areas to 360 and 300 hectares respectively. Hundreds of other local farmers will be recruited. Chien Dan is steadily progressing to becoming a model and prosperous State farm.

DANG MINH PHUONG

Vietnam Advances

THE PHU NINH IRRIGATION PROJECT

"A few sweet potatoes before going to bed and a few wild tubers before a new working day". This saying typifies the wretched existence of the peasants in Tam Ky and Thang Binh districts, Quang Nam—Da Nang province, under the old regime. Located in an area scorched by the sun all the year round the fields yielded crops that were too meagre to support the population even for a few months each year. There were not even enough sweet potatoes to go round, especially during the pre-harvest days or in disaster years. The modest centuries-old dream of the Tam Ky peasants was to have enough water for their fields so as to boost yields, practise double cropping, and put a definitive end to their anguish whenever rain was late in coming.

There was some hope when in 1927 project for a reservoir was drawn up by French engineers that would provide water for 20,000 hectares of cultivated land. By 1936 the blueprint was completed. But the whole thing remained on paper. And, when the last French colonialist left Vietnam the Phu

Ninh reservoir project disappeared once and for all or so it seemed.

In 1975 South Vietnam was liberated. In the economic reconstruction and development plan of Quang Nam—Da Nang the Phu Ninh water conservancy project was high on the list of priorities. Under the guidance of the Ministry of Water Conservancy, within less than two years the survey and design were completed.

Construction started on March 29, 1977 on the occasion of the second anniversary of the liberation of Quang Nam—Da Nang.

The slogan "All for Phu Ninh" was launched. Manpower and materials began to pour. From the towns of Da Nang, Hoi An and Tam Ky and districts in both the plain and the mountain regions, young men and women converged on Phu Ninh. They were joined by soldiers and personnel from various public services and mass organisations. The Ministry of Water Conservancy sent to Phu Ninh its best technicians and most experienced building workers who had taken part in the construction of many water conservancy projects in North Vietnam.

The age-old silence over a vast mountain area in the southern part of the province was suddenly broken by the noise of axes felling trees, and the rumbling of bulldozers hacking whole chunks of mountain slopes away. Convoys of trucks loaded with building materials and food converged on the construction site. At night, electricity lit up the wooded hills.

On the fields to be crossed by the irrigation canals, armies of builders worked day and night to meet the deadline. Phu Ninh gave jobs to hundreds of thousands of unemployed men and women and thousands of delinquent youths left over from the US-puppet regime.

Besides the great battle being fought on the site of the future dam, a silent battle of no less magnitude took place in the villages. It was about the evacuation of thousands of local people who had returned to their home villages only a few years before following the liberation of South Vietnam. Now, of their own accord and to serve the common interest, they departed to settle elsewhere leaving behind 1,500 hectares which were to be entirely submerged by the waters of the reservoir.

Today, four years after construction started, many big installations have emerged at Phu Ninh. The main dam—561 metres long, 37 metres high and 303 metres wide at the base has been erected across the Tam Ky river, connecting two mountain slopes. Together with the auxiliary dams at Long Son (940 metres) and Duong Lam (110 metres), it will block the waters of the Tam Ky river at the junc-

tion of Tam Son and Tam Thai villages to form a reservoir covering 32 square kilometres and with a capacity of 346 million cubic metres. More than 50 kilometres of concrete pipes will connect the reservoir with the main canal in the northern sector, crossing 15 rivers and streams. There will also be other structures such as the spill-way and hundreds of kilometres of canals crisscrossing an area of thousands of square kilometres.

The Phu Ninh project has made its effect felt as soon as each installation has been completed. The completion of the whole work is planned for the middle of 1983 and will water 23,000 hectares of ricefields, control the floods at the lower reaches of the Tam Ky river and turn many ricefields which used to support only one rice crop with unstable yields a year into double- or even treble-cropped fields with sure yields.

As well as being an irrigation reservoir Phu Ninh will also supply a sizable quantity of freshwater fish. In 1980 it already yielded 500 tons of fish. The site will also be a major tourist attraction. Plans have been drawn up for the construction of several sanatoria and rest homes. The water gushing from the northern gate will provide energy for a hydro-electric power station to be erected soon with a projected capacity of 2,000 kilowatts.

Thus, the Phu Ninh irrigation project will bring about significant changes in agricultural production and technology in the southern part of Quang Nam—Da Nang province.

DANG MINH PHUONG

The artisans were engrossed in their work when we entered the workshop. There were artists of long-standing and also young men and women newly recruited after the liberation of South Vietnam. Lacquer is an ancient art in Vietnam but there are few skilled artisans due to its complicated technique. Therefore, it is mainly a family tradition. Truong Binh Hiep on the outskirts of Thu Dau Mot town is actually one of the cradles of pumice lacquer art in South Vietnam. Here the number of real artisans can be counted on one hand.

The art can be best appreciated in the gold fish painting, which won a gold medal at the Munich Fair. Here is a tentative description of the process of its making. Firstly, the artists must prepare the wooden surface on which to paint the fish. They have to paint and repaint, pumice and repumice a dozen times, and each time the paint must be so laid and the rubbing must be so done as not to leave the least irregularity on the wooden surface. Most time-consuming and meticulous is no doubt the pumicing which at a certain stage of the process requires the artists to work with their hands submerged in cold water for eight hours running. After tracing the general outline of the fish on the wooden surface the artists begin drawing the details of the parts such as the fins, tail and scales, each demanding minuteness of execution. The scales must be so painted as to make them appear as part of the living fish in the act of undulating its body in water. Then, after the paint has dried, the artists encrust very thin leaves of almost pure gold and silver on the half protruding parts. With a pointed piece

of wood they remove the silver at the mouth and eyes of the fish to reveal the black paint. As for the pupils of the eyes they apply a transparent paint to give them a completely life-like look. After that they use a small piece of bamboo and a metal pen to paint each leaf of the algae and moss, the coral and the sand band. This is followed by the shading process to give the fish a still more life-like appearance as if it is moving behind a mass of water.

beauty where all sharp contrasts of light, angles and colours are carefully avoided.

The technique described above is called coated pumice. However, it is not the only technique of the pumice lacquer art. According to the existing methods of execution, pumice lacquer art may be divided into the following six categories: flat, coated, varnished, carved, eggshell encrusted and mother-of-pearl inlaid. The secrets of the techniques can be acquired only

not overlap, but must form separate parts and be executed in a very careful manner so as to leave no trace of pumicing or drawing on the surface. Even without weighing them, the artists, through sheer experience, can mix the paints exactly for the required tone and make the details appear in the most distinct manner. Thus, the visitor is fascinated by the picture of a Vietnamese girl sitting on a bamboo bed looking out of a window at the banana groves in the garden, their green leaves of different shades adorned by a purple flower. The girl has shining eyes, beneath long curved eyebrows, rosy lips and velvet cheeks, a light complexion and undulating glossy dark hair cascading over a robe which is so delicately painted that the visitor has the impression it is actually moving in a light breeze. The picture can be regarded as the peak of pumice art. In fact, as far as the description of light is concerned, this technique is unsurpassed, even compared with oil and silk painting.

The visitor may be interested in the work of a young artisan pumicing the lacquer indefatigably. If he wished to inquire more deeply into her trade and ask to see her hands she would show her callous hands caused by long years of pumicing in cold water. She has sacrificed the beauty of her hands to get the glitter for the gold fish and the exquisite complexion for the girl in the picture. Her industrious labour has bestowed high qualities on the Vietnamese pumice lacquer paintings. Their colours are resistant to abrupt changes of temperature and humidity and acquire even more lustre with the passing of time.

THANH GIAO

AT THE SONG BE LACQUER WORKSHOP

The whole painting is covered with a coat of paint. Then the real process of pumicing begins, chiefly with the palm of the hand. After the pumicing all the colours will appear in a new light, silver white becomes rosy gold, dark blue becomes black or bluish black, crimson becomes purple and white becomes glossy gold with a tint of mahogany. When the picture is hung on the wall the viewer faces a shoal of gold fish swimming happily in water, eyes glowing; mouths open as if to catch water bubbles. The background consists of rocks, coral, algae and moss, the latter seeming to shake gently among the water lilies. The whole picture is one of ethereal, discreet

through long practice. They range from the art of mixing paints so as to get the most translucent and vivid colours, to the most meticulous ways of executing a detail. The artisans have their own experience and the techniques vary from one to another. It is generally accepted that flat painting is the most difficult technique. It requires that the artists lay the paint and apply the colours in such a way that after a dozen or so layers of paint and pumice the object has already acquired the desired affect. By contrast, in the technique called varnish pumice, the artists use the palm of their hands to prepare the background for the painting. When this has dried, the painting begins. The colours must

THE CHILDREN'S CULTURAL HOUSE AND EXTRACURRICULAR EDUCATION

Besides the five or six hours at school and time for homework, help in the family, rest and recreation, there remain daily from three to five unoccupied hours for children. How to help them make use of this time in the most profitable manner has been a concern not only for their parents but also for the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union and the Council in Charge of the Young Pioneers and the other mass organisations responsible for the extracurricular education of children.

To carry out this task, the Council in charge of the Young Pioneers has taken the system of children's cultural houses as the basis for its activities. These houses are places for guiding children to use their free time in the most profitable manner in order to coordinate with the school to train them as working people of a new type and encourage their abilities in all fields. Through studies and organised activities the children develop their aptitude and creative power. They are also helped to develop their vocational skills while being provided with entertainment and recreation, and in this way stimulating their social contacts and moulding their behaviour in conformity with new socialist ethics. These are also places to complement the school curriculum. Unlike at school where the children are under obligation to study all the subjects listed in

the curriculum of the Ministry of Education, here they are guided to choose such subjects and disciplines as best suit their abilities and interest.

The main responsibility in this work rests with the Council in charge of the Young Pioneers attached to the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union Central Committee. But the Council is assisted in its work by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the General Department for Physical Culture and Sports, the Federation of Trade Unions and other bodies. In each province or city these branches and organisations coordinate their work under the direct guidance of the local administration. It follows that these activities depend to a large

extent on the concern shown by the local authorities.

The biggest difficulty at present remains the serious shortage of building, funds, equipment and cadres with a sufficient pedagogic knowledge to look after the children's activities. Take the town of Da Nang for instance. This is a major town in South Vietnam which used to be a big trading centre with a flourishing service industry to cater for the Americans and the officers of the Saigon Command for the First Tactical Zone. That is why Da Nang had little in the way of cultural establishments of any sort, much less cultural establishments for children. It is no exaggeration to say



At the Nam Dinh Children's Cultural House.

Photo: TRAN PHAC

that the whole town had not an inch of public park while bars and restaurants were to be found at every corner. Today, any visitor who lived in Da Nang prior to liberation would find a completely different town. All unoccupied space in the town has been planted with shady trees or reconditioned into public parks which, though still small, have proved invaluable for the children during the break between classes. The town authorities have transformed a big building into a children's cultural house. Besides, the Command of the 5th Military Sector headquartered in Da Nang is also building a recreation centre for the town's children.

Similar initiatives are to be found in other towns and cities in the South, where the local authorities, even in the present economic difficulty of the country, have earmarked sizable funds for building places for children's studies and recreation.

The oldest of all children's cultural houses is the Hanoi Children's Club set up as early as 1957. It has now been enlarged with funds supplied by Czechoslovakia. Since then 60 children's cultural houses have been set up in 24 provinces and cities, to say nothing of hundreds of smaller houses established at the city ward and commune level. In Ho Chi Minh City, apart from the City Children's Cultural House there are 15 district houses in the 18 districts of the city. In Ha Nam Ninh, a campaign is underway to get the pupils' parents to contribute workdays and money to the building of a children's town. Many other localities such as Hai Phong, Hai Hung and Dong Nai have invested big sums in building children's cultural houses. These efforts, though still at the initial stage, have met to some extent the press-

ing demand of tens of millions of children throughout the country.

As a standard-bearer, the Hanoi Children's Cultural House has for many years now played an important role in fostering the aptitude of the children and in discovering young talent. Many noted singers such as Thanh Huyen and Ai Van grew up and matured in the Hoa Mi (Nightingale) choir of the House. From 1975 to 1980, 50 children from two artistic and sports courses run by the House were admitted to the various art schools or troupes or sports teams. The art department of the House alone has had 160 students admitted to the art and architectural schools, many of whom have matured and returned to teach the younger generations. Many pupils in the engineering, tailoring and embroidery groups have become engineers or technicians in various factories.

Among the five members of the Vietnamese team to the Russian language Olympiad in Moscow in 1981 three were members of the International Friendship Group studying Russian at the House. From 1972 to 1979, 60 children of the Hai Phong Children's Cultural House were admitted to various artistic and sports schools or teams. In 1977, 11 children from the Nam Dinh Children's Cultural House were admitted to the music school, seven to the art school and four to the local sports team. In Ho Chi Minh City, in 1979, 18 children of the City Children's Cultural House were admitted to art and sports schools. A dozen children from the recently founded Children's Cultural House of Hue City have been

accepted into artistic, music and sports schools.

At the Children's Cultural Houses, drawing and painting is a favourite hobby. The latter have sent their paintings to art competitions in the Soviet Union, India, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Britain, France, Romania, Japan and other countries and have won 58 gold medals, 32 silver medals, 29 bronze medals and 216 merit certificates. In the first chess tournament in Vietnam organised in 1981 five among the six winners of the first, second and third prizes are members of the chess teams of various children's cultural houses. Besides, some houses have organized such activities as communications, parachuting, shooting, aeronautics, fire fighting, etc. Such things have helped children broaden their knowledge of their country and enhance their friendship with children of other countries.

At present, every year more than 100,000 children attend special courses at the various children's cultural houses and nearly three million take part in the activities organised by these houses. These figures, though still modest compared to many countries, bespeak the efforts of the educators who are in charge of extracurricular activities in execution of President Ho Chi Minh's last recommendations made in his Testament: "The training and education of future revolutionary generations is of great importance and necessity."

HOANG NHU and DUC LAN

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN HANOI

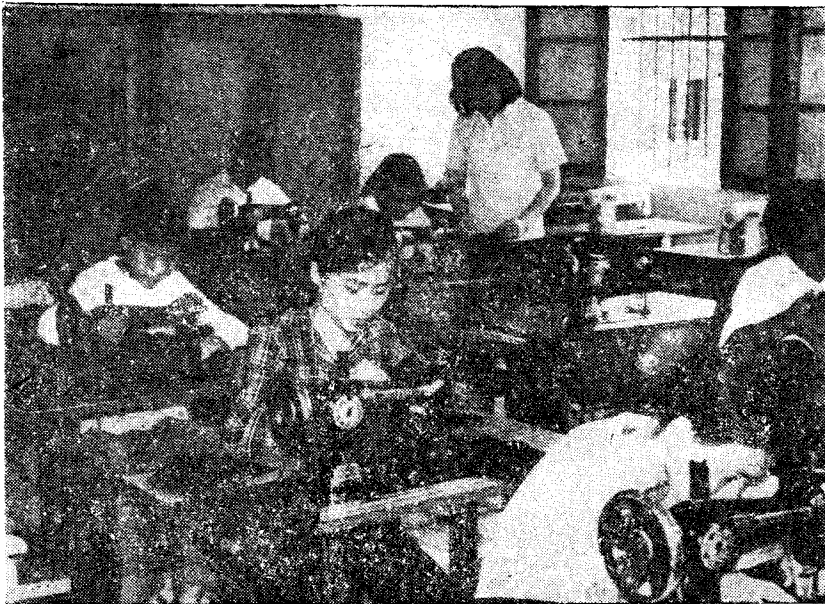
In recent years, in the light of a Party resolution, the Hanoi educational service has effected a major change in its development program based on the realisation that the young generation of builders of socialism cannot be equipped with scholastic knowledge alone but must also be armed with technical know-how, a deep understanding of the realities of the country and a strong will to defend the independence of the homeland. Acting along these guidelines, the service has encouraged the schools to organize productive activities for the students at various industrial,

agricultural and handicraft establishments. For instance, the Cao Ba Quat secondary school, one of the model schools in the country, has for many years now sent its students to work at the Huu Nghi Vegetable Farm or to practise techniques and learn new skills at factories such as the Garment Factory No. 10, or the tile-brick-ceramics-porcelain works at Bat Trang. The Nguyen Hue secondary school has established relations with the Hoa Binh Automobile Repair Factory. For their part, the Ba Dinh, Ly Tu Trong, Bach Mai and Quynh Mai general education schools and

the Ba Vi study-and-work school, have twinned with the Thong Nhat Electro-Mechanical Factory, the "March 8" Textile Mill, the Minh Khai Lock-making Factory and the Dong Giao and Ba Vi State farms. These production establishments have not only provided practice centres for the pupils but some have also sent machines and implements to equip the school workshops. For instance, the packing material factory No.2 for export goods has built for the Phan Dinh Phung secondary school a carpentry workshop valued at 120,000 *dong* and sent technicians and workers to guide the students in the handling of the equipment. It has also given some technical equipment to the schools to help the pupils in their practice. The postal equipment factory has installed an engineering workshop valued at 10,000 *dong* for the Yen Vien secondary school.

The municipal industrial service has agreed to accept pupils for practice at 64 factories under its management and debited part of its training fund for this vocational education. The labour service and the Union of Handicraft and Small Industry Cooperatives of the city have worked out plans to train 28,000 handicraft workers for various branches. They are also ready to give job training to and take in all the graduates of general schools who wish to join the cooperatives. The agricultural service has adopted plans to provide technical guidance for the schools in crop cultivation, gardening and other sectors of the family economy. It has assigned to the various schools a number of jobs in agricultural production which require a certain technical level such as tending seed beds, growing azolla pinnata and fish rearing.

The campaign for combining the three educational ambiances: the school, the street quarter and the family, has yielded encouraging results. The campaign has received



At the sewing workshop of the Cao Ba Quat secondary school, Gia Lam district, Hanoi.

Photo: NGUYEN TAN

(Continued on page 31)

Set up in 1902, the Hanoi Faculty of Medicine has passed through two very different phases:

1902-1945: Using the French language exclusively as well as French teachers, this was in effect a copy of French faculties. Its achievements were modest indeed: in 43 years only 51 doctors and 200 medical auxiliaries were trained.

1945: The Faculty undertakes to train a medical corps sufficiently large to cater for the entire nation. Vietnamese becomes the medium of teaching.

Having just started its new task at the end of 1946 the Faculty had to be evacuated to the resistance base in the mountainous region of Viet Bac. Deep in the forest, teachers and students set up huts as classrooms and dormitories which often had to be moved because of frequent incursions by enemy troops.

Training was done according to a strictly defined plan:

— first level: serve the war of resistance, follow fighting troops on operations, ensure necessary treatment for military campaigns.

— second level: between two campaigns gather information and learn the rudiments of medical science.

— third level: set off for another campaign with greater knowledge and improved techniques.

From this experience, Ho Dac Di, dean and founder of the Faculty, learnt the guiding principle: start from practice and return to it, using experimental science as the link.

Reinstalled in Hanoi in 1955 the Faculty found itself short of space but the country's economic conditions did not permit the construction of big modern premises so they had to be content with very rudimentary conditions even though their tasks proved onerous. What's more, in 1964 the American bombs began to fall, necessitating a return to the forest. That didn't prevent, however, the training of 500 doctors on average for each

recent years people from the Faculty have been as far afield as Africa to work in solidarity with the people of Algeria, Mozambique and Angola.

Dean Ho Dac Di, a lively octagenarian, celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Faculty with the following balance sheet: in 37 years more than 10,000 doctors and 1,000 specialists trained not to mention the medical auxiliaries trained in secondary medical

80th ANNIVERSARY OF THE HANOI FACULTY OF MEDICINE

year during the war between 1965 and 1975 — enough to supply sufficient devoted and capable medical personnel to guarantee the functioning of the medico-sanitary network in the North and to cover the needs of armed struggle in the South.

The "third resistance" against the 1979 Chinese aggression once again mobilised teachers and students just as natural calamities such as floods and typhoons have done. Emergency aid was required for the Kampuchean medical corps, decimated by Pol Pot's killers, to build up their medico-sanitary network from scratch. In

schools. It should not be forgotten that the beginning was just a small cell of doctors grouped around Ho Dac Di — Ton That Tung, Nguyen Xuan Nguyen, Dang Van Ngu, Do Xuan Hop, to name but the most famous — who created the "Jungle Faculty" from whence issued the thousands of doctors and researchers of today. The Index Medicus, published specially for the occasion, which lists nearly 3,000 publications by 900 authors, gives an idea of the effort which has gone into scientific work.

Neither should it be forgotten that this training was carried out

in the most precarious material conditions and that even today the Faculty does not have premises, labs, a library, refectory or dormitories which meet its requirements. Teachers and students are now only too well aware that the heroic period has passed and that the major task of modernising teaching requires a certain material and technical base. This is easier said than done in an underdeveloped country ravaged by 30 years of war. No less important are the tasks of improved training for medical personnel; the organisation of post-graduate teaching which has been recently established; reform of the basic programmes; bridging the shortfall of doctors to certain southern provinces; international exchanges; improved co-operation with Laos and Kampuchea; scientific research and close study of traditional medicine: all these problems were mentioned at the celebration of the Faculty's 80th birthday.

In fact this is the beginning of a new era; previously the Faculty was devoted to the war effort for national liberation—a heroic time when medicine was practised on the battlefield, carrying a rucksack, in makeshift buildings. Today the essential task is to ensure a certain quality. The Faculty must have suitable buildings, laboratories and libraries—and we must recognize that we have to start almost from scratch. Continuing the tradition teachers and students have done their best to improve buildings while the State and twin faculties in the Soviet Union and the GDR have also lent a hand.

The capital, Hanoi, with its factories, offices, artisans' co-operatives, as well as the surrounding villages constitute the terrain for the students' practical work. The tradition of the resistance lives on in a Faculty which does not content itself with a study of medicine in the hospitals but wherever human and social needs require.

P.V.

THE FIGHT AGAINST TRACHOMA IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY PAST—PRESENT—FUTURE

Surveys into trachoma made from 1955 to 1958 showed a morbidity rate of 70—85% with a 5—7% level of trichiasis-entropion (T/E) which affected people regardless of age, sex, race or habitat.

At that time there were approximately 20 million sufferers of trachoma in the North of the country alone, mainly small children of 1 year and upwards, and almost 1 million T/E sufferers, between the ages of 18 and 55 who needed to be operated on.

We began by reorganising the old Hanoi Ophthalmology Institute (the only centre for the treatment of eye diseases in the whole of North Vietnam) into firstly a Trachoma Institute and then, later an Ophthalmological Institute which would be the driving force behind the organised fight against trachoma and other common eye diseases as well as being able to treat eye infections, train undergraduate and post-graduate cadres, undertake research work and give technical guidance to provincial centres right down to the lower levels.

At the beginning, with no more than ten specialists for the whole of North Vietnam we quickly trained cadres (some university-trained but especially medical auxiliaries) to carry out mass surveys on morbidity, epidemiology of trachoma, its common features and peculiarities according to each region of the country.

In Vietnam as in all developing countries where health care was neglected under the colonialists and where life in the countryside is still precarious, trachoma is closely associated with bacterial conjunctivitis which makes it spread easily and turns trachoma into a serious and blinding disease. It is a classic example of a social disease requiring the aid of all administrative bodies and particularly the organisation of grassroots health care in the fight against it. We have carried out research not only on the epidemiology but also on the clinical aspects, diagnosis, treatment and trachomatic carriers. We studied the diagnostic criteria put forward by the WHO Experts Committee from 1962—1974 but we found these criteria needed to

be re-examined for areas with poor electricity supply and a lack of examining apparatus which is difficult to transport. Since 1967—1968 we put forward our own criteria and we took great pleasure in seeing that the present modifications proposed by WHO (Tarizzo Collier Dawson 1981) correspond entirely to our point of view.

As far as treatment is concerned we still maintain the mechanical procedure for trachoma II Florides where antibiotics alone—even specific ones—can never reach all the mass of follicles. But whenever possible we replace the old method of extirpation using forceps by cryotherapy using however an appropriate and simplified technique which is much more manageable and at the level of grassroots health workers. We solidify carbonic foam in the form of a pencil and then touch the trachoma follicles with it. We have developed laboratory methods for diagnosing trachoma (cytology-aerology, experimental trachoma in monkeys) and for some years with the collaboration of virology experts from the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology (under Professor Hoang Thuy Nguyen) we have studied the ultrastructure of Chlamydis trachomatis and trachomatic lesions of the conjunctiva and cornea.

For trachomatic complications we originally proposed a practical classification of T/E to be able to suggest therapeutic measures and suitable surgical techniques for each case of T/E. At first we organised mobile brigades to go and operate in each district and commune but we quickly abandoned this system: for the

last 15 years or so T/E operations have been done on the spot by the commune's health worker who can give daily treatment and long-term post-operative care to the patients in their own commune. By such a process of "democratisation" thousands of health workers can operate at the same time (in colonialist times this operation was done only by doctors in a few provincial hospitals). Up till now we have carried out over 500,000 interventions and in the 9 Northern provinces there is hardly any trichiasis-entropion among workers.

In the fight against trachoma we consider organisation quintessential, not forgetting the difficult task which falls to everyone to improve the standard of living through increased production, improved environmental and housing conditions, collective and personal hygiene. Mass education for better and cleaner living is essential and is not only based on propaganda through posters, newspapers, films, television, etc, but also on the spectacular results of surgical interventions which have restored the sight of blind and partially-sighted people (glaucoma, cataracts, keratoplasmic, etc.)

The most difficult task is the setting up of an organisation for administering daily eyedrops and ointments from 3 to 8 months for each patient in each family—this is the role of grassroots health workers, nursery and primary school teachers and even health workers in each of the production brigades of the agricultural cooperatives. Grassroots health workers work outside production hours and each night before bedtime visit each family for this purpose.

It is by starting from a correct overall strategy:

a) priority to the fight against secondary infections

b) eradicate T/E

c) mass treatment at district and provincial level and appropriate guiding principles:

a) the fight against trachoma must serve the working people and production

b) the adoption of the simplest and easiest means to operate on the spot

c) forceful curative and prophylactic campaigns

d) a fight based on the material and social contributions of the whole people

that we have been able to arrive today at encouraging results—the reduction of the morbidity rate to less than 40%, disappearance of T/E from the 9 Northern provinces, virtual disappearance of serious clinical forms amongst young people, etc.

Much still remains to be done but we hope and we are convinced that by the efforts of the entire nation together with the help of socialist countries, progressive people and WHO in the form of medicines, instruments, information and scientific exchange, in 15 years' time trachoma will no longer be a social problem in Vietnam.

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PHAN HUY CHU,

A SCHOLAR AND MAN OF CULTURE

(1782 — 1840)

In December Vietnam commemorated Phan Huy Chu's bicentenary. Born in the winter of the year of Nham Dan (1782) in Thay village, Yen Son canton, Quoc Oai district, Son Tay province (now Ha Son Binh province), Phan Huy Chu deserves to be called a national scholar although he had only two degrees to his credit. He was made rector at the Hue Academy by King Minh Menh in 1821, sent on mission to China in 1825, made vice-head of Thua Thien district in 1828, and governor of Quang Nam province in 1829. He again went on mission to China in 1831. On his return he, like the other envoys, was charged by the feudal Court with abuse of power and dismissed. The next year he was sent to an island, now part of Indonesia, on a mission for maritime trade between the Nguyen Court and that island. After his return he was assigned to the Ministry of Public affairs but on the pretext of ill-health he retired to Thanh Mai village, Tien Phong district, Son Tay province where he taught until he died at the age of 58.

A Huge Scientific Work

On the cultural plane Phan Huy Chu made a very great contribution by leaving to the nation an encyclopaedic work—the *Lich trieu hien chuong loai chi* (Chronology of Dynasties)¹ compiled between 1809 and 1819.

Phan Huy Chu wrote in the introduction to the Chronology of Dynasties: "Since the Dinh, Le,

Ly, Tran dynasties our Viet country had prospered, each dynasty having its own regime. With the Le dynasty the regime was consolidated, its institutions complemented, the renown of the country as well as the culture and talent of the people thrived no less than China...

"With knowledge acquired at school and gathered in the books left by former dynasties as well as my family's education I had a smattering of the country's institutions. Since retiring, I have been able to devote my time to compiling and commenting on what I read. After ten years of this work I now make up this Chronology of Dynasties with ten topics: geography, historic personages, officialdom, rites, education, national resources, legislation, military affairs, literature, and external relations. Each topic has an introduction giving its outlines and several parts dealing with various subjects, 49 volumes in all."

G. P. Muraseva, a Soviet Vietnamologist, wrote: "The Chronology of Dynasties deserves to be called an encyclopedia of Vietnamese life. It has no parallel in feudal Vietnamese history as regards the scope of matters it deals with."²

The ten topics in the Chronology of Dynasties represent ten branches of science. To study one branch is difficult but Phan Huy Chu managed to grasp all of them, systematically and thoroughly. He was therefore a historian, a geographer, a student of law, economics, education, military affairs, a

bibliographer and literary critic. In every branch he had profound and pertinent views. Moreover, with this systematic classification he brought the country's scientific level in the early 19th century a step forward.

A National Consciousness, a Progressive Viewpoint

As we know, the Nguyen dynasty, from Gia Long to Minh Menh, Thieu Tri and Tu Duc, advocated building a State after the Chinese feudal model of the Qing dynasty, not only in legislation and officialdom but also in culture and ideology. In general, Phan Huy Chu lived in an atmosphere of a cult of China, but as an intellectual with a national spirit he reverted to the country's cultural origins and national civilisation. Thus he went deep into national history and asserted the fine traditions of the country. With the Chronology of Dynasties he set in relief the originality and ability of the Vietnamese nation, tried and tested throughout thousands of years.

Phan Huy Chu's national spirit and patriotism went along with progressive political views. For instance, he considered the State as a harmonious whole: it was to have well-defined borders, an officialdom from top to bottom to perform national duties, order, rites, an education to train people, an abundant economy with set currency, taxes and expenses, legislation, army, and external

activities. Such a State structure was unknown before him. Even Le Quy Don, the greatest Vietnamese scholar of the late 18th century, wrote his *Dai Viet Thông Su* (General History of Dai Viet) from a backward Confucian viewpoint, regarding the country's history as that of kings and lords. With Phan Huy Chu, for the first time under feudalism our country's history was presented through a new conception — the history of a concrete geographical unit, of a political institution with its administrative apparatus, of a legislation, economy, national defence, culture, education...

An Encyclopaedic Mind Dealing with Economy

Writing the country's history with these social aspects, Phan Huy Chu realized the great role of the economy. With the acute vision of an economist he laid particular stress upon currency and goods circulation. He also dealt with the country's economic potentiality and the management of the economy, resources and wealth in general.

From a correct perception of economy Phan Huy Chu acquitted a materialist viewpoint when asserting that economy conditioned the relation between economy and legislation, ethics, culture... Thus he said: "With the means to improve their lives the people will exert themselves to till the land, the villages will live in happiness, promote education and customs..." (*National resources*). In our country's concrete historical environment early in the 19th century when the conservative and backward Confucian doctrine still preyed upon our people's minds, Phan Huy Chu's views, albeit tinged with an utopian socialism born of a feudal agricultural Asia, were like hitherto unseen gems. Not only did he realize the relation be-

tween economy and ethics but also the relation between the working people's interests and the economic regime. On this, score he was a humanist, siding with the exploited poor peasants and condemning the unjust and brutal appropriation of land.

Phan Huy Chu paid special attention to legislation which was for him essential. His concept of a State with legislation went further than bye-laws, injunctions and criminal law... He was concerned that the regulations and institutions in social life be observed and maintained at all times.

In the section on *literature*, poetry and prose are most interesting. Not only did Phan Huy Chu give us a full bibliography of past works, but he also discovered several previously unknown works. Moreover, he made perspicacious

and significant comments upon originalities in the content and artistic style of many authors and works in the Ly, Tran and Le dynasties.

In this valuable although incomplete sketch Phan Huy Chu summed up the history of Vietnam's old literature.

In fact, Phan Huy Chu summed up not only the history of literature but with the Chronology of Dynasties he presented the history of a millenary civilisation.

NGOC LIEN

1. *Phan Huy Chu also wrote a geography book, many poems and a reportage of his mission to Indonesia.*

2. *Vietnam-China relations in the 17th — 19th centuries, Sciences Publishing House, Moscow, 1973.*

NEW IDEAS IN AN OLD MAN

— *Land is the most precious treasure of a country: from it come people and wealth.*

— *Man is the root of a country.*

— *The problem of wealth is the greatest political problem in a country. Our Viet country started with Kweilin Yaoshi. Now our wealth is abundant. Like our increasing people the products of our forest and our sea are endless. These natural resources are sufficient for our people to use for our State. Nature provides wealth but the authorities have to manage it. Without a methodical arrangement how can wealth be sufficient for use?*

— *Currency is a means for the people to exchange goods, bringing them to where they are needed. Therefore, it must circulate continually.*

— *Justice helps the administration of a country. Although it is not the prime concern in political affairs legislation is necessary at all times to prevent wrong-doing.*

PHAN HUY CHU

A REMARKABLE CENTURY

In reviewing the great events in Vietnam's history, the 10th century stands out as a period of tremendous activity. In 905, Khuc Thua Du rose up to take the authority of *tiết độ su* (governor in the pay of the Chinese occupiers). In 931, Duong Dinh Nghe repelled the invasion of the Southern Han. In 938, Ngo Quyen stemmed the revolt of the traitors, repulsed an attack by the Southern Han fleet on the Bach Dang river and completely liberated the country. In 969 Dinh Bo Linh (later to become king Dinh Tien Hoang) stamped out an insurrection by secessionists and reunified the country; in 981, Le Hoan routed an aggression of the Chinese Song Court and in 982 and 983 defeated an invasion from Champa in the South.

Except for the 20th century, there is no period in our national history in which great events have taken place in such rapid succession, not to mention national construction.

We can divide the 10th century into two stages: 905—938: armed struggle to wrest back independence; 939 onwards: building and consolidation of the country with the victory of Ngo Quyen over the Southern Han as a landmark.

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The 10th century was a period of continual uprising by the people to free themselves from the millenary domination of the Chinese feudalist rulers and win back national independence.

Some individuals are now national heroines and heroes: the Trung sisters, Lady Trieu, Ly Bi, Trieu Quang Phuc, Mai Thuc Loan, Duong Thanh. Long or short, these uprisings paved the way for the struggle for national salvation led by Khuc Thua Du, Duong Dinh Nghe and Ngo Quyen in the first forty years of the 10th century.

This struggle spanning almost one thousand years was a test of strength between China which wanted to assimilate Vietnam and turn it into a Chinese district, and the Vietnamese people who fought to safeguard their independence and sovereignty.

In spite of using perfidious military, political, cultural and economic tactics, cruel proconsuls like Su Ding and Ma Yuan and artful ones like Shi Nie and Gao Bian, did not succeed in breaking the will of our people. The deltas of the Red River, the Ma and Lam rivers, despite the frequent changes of name¹ by the Chinese occupiers, have long been inhabited by Vietnamese people.

In the second half of the 9th century, China was in turmoil. Weakened by peasants' uprisings and the secession movement, the Tang dynasty was overthrown in 907.

Taking advantage of this situation, from Hong Chau, Khuc Thua Du went to Tong Binh to take power as *tiết độ su*. Cuong Muc² records this event as follows: "Profiting from the chaos prevailing in China, in his capacity as provincial governor Khuc Thua Du

called himself *tiết độ su* and sent a letter presenting his credentials to the Tang Court. The Chinese emperor had to agree to a fait accompli." This was at the end of 905, one year before Zhou Wen usurped the throne of the Tang, and founded the Later Liang dynasty. To defend his authority, Khuc Thua Du negotiated with the Liang and the Southern Han who ruled only a part of China during this period. On the pretext that Khuc Thua Du had agreed to be a vassal of the Later Liang, the Southern Han invaded our country and took Khuc Thua My, Khuc Thua Du's nephew as hostage to China.

Thanks to a stubborn resistance, the Southern Han resorted to the routine method of exercising only a loose control and ennobled Duong Dinh Nghe, one of Khuc Hao's generals who enjoyed high prestige as governor of Ai Chau, this regime lasted seven years when in 931, Duong Dinh Nghe, from Ai Chau, sent his troops to liberate Tong Binh and took the post of *tiết độ su*. Six years later, in 937, Kieu Cong Tien, a renegade, killed Duong Dinh Nghe and sent for Southern Han troops to help him fight his opponents. At the end of 938, Ngo Quyen rose up in Ai Chau, defeated the southern Han fleet on the Bach Dang river and entirely liberated the country.

In the spring of 939, Ngo Quyen relinquished his title of *tiết độ su*, mounted the throne, set up his capital at Co Loa (in the suburbs of present-day Hanoi), ushering in a new era of national independ-

ence in our history. After him, Dinh Bo Linh declared himself king in 967 and emperor in 968 under the name of Thai Binh, and called the country Dai Co Viet.

Since that time the country became equal de jure and de facto to our neighbours, China in the north and Champa in the south. But this was not to the liking of the Chinese rulers who nursed the ambition of expanding to the south.

However, after the defeat at Bach Dang, China took a long time to re-establish order. Having defeated the Later Zhou, Zhao Kuangyin founded the Song dynasty but it was only in 979 that he managed to reunify China. In that same year problems struck the court of Dai Co Viet: Dinh Tien Hoang and his son Nam Viet Vuong Lien were murdered by Do Thich. Dinh Tien Hoang's younger son, Ve Vuong Toan, acceded to the throne but he was only a child king. Capitalizing on this opportunity, the Song sent an army to invade Dai Co Viet.

With the support of his soldiers, Le Hoan, a general, mounted the throne and offered a stiff resistance to the Song aggressors. Then in 982-983 he defeated Champa which invaded Dai Co Viet from the south.

The events of the 10th century in our country show that whether China was divided (as in the rule of the Southern Han) or unified in a big country (as under the Song dynasty) it never gave up its ambition of annexing our country. But history also shows that our people were capable of defending national independence but that they realised that force of arms was not enough to ensure a complete victory—a political and diplomatic struggle was also necessary to secure peace and independence.

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After winning back independence, the feudalist leaders faced great difficulties in the organisation and management of the State. Khuc Thua Du and Duong Dinh Nghe administered the country only in their capacity as *tiêt dô su*. Historical records speak of national construction only briefly: "Relying on his power, Khuc Hao continued to defend La Thanh (now Hanoi, Ed.), declared himself *tiêt dô su*, appointed *chanh lênh truong* and *ta lênh truong*, collected ricefield taxes on an egalitarian basis, suppressed corvées, set up a family declaration book in which family members clearly declared their names and place of origin, and he entrusted this to the care of a *giap truong*. Cuong Muc also wrote that: "According to *An Nam Ky Yeu*, Khuc Hao changed *huong* of districts into *giap*, placed under the authority of a *quan giap* assisted by a *photri giap*, to take care of taxation." This short passage is enough to give us an idea. Khuc Hao may not have carried out any reforms at central level, but at regional level, he put things in order. In particular, at the grass-roots he changed *huong* into *giap* and appointed an official to take charge of each of them. By taking a census, suppressing corvées and reducing taxes, he tried to give his people a life which they could not find under foreign rule, and give them control over *huong* and *giap*. Though Khuc Hao failed to completely liberate the people, what he did surely gave them new strength and encouraged them to fight more stubbornly under the banner of Duong Dinh Nghe and Ngo Quyen in the following years (931—938). In fact, in this struggle for national independence, they made great sacrifices.

History also speaks little of what Ngo Quyen did for the country after his Bach Dang victory apart

from the fact that he declared himself king, set up his capital at Co Loa, "appointed one hundred mandarins to attend to the rites at his court and fixed the uniforms to be worn by them." This laconic information at least tell us that Ngo Quyen began to build a monarchic State. With regard to the Dinh and Early Le dynasties, the documents are also few but give more precise details: After mounting the throne, Dinh Tien Hoang set up an hierarchy for his civil and military mandarins. In administration he divided the country into ten *dao*."

From Co Loa, Dinh Tien Hoang moved his capital to Hoa Lu (in present-day Ha Nam Ninh province) which Le Hoan turned into the capital of Dai Co Viet.

Considering that they started from scratch, the organisation of an integral administrative apparatus was a great achievement in the 10th century. At that time, social order, rites and customs were not yet too influenced by Confucianism though this doctrine had been introduced by the Chinese occupiers long before. This shows that in their long existence (twenty or thirty centuries) our people had set up for themselves a solid cultural basis which could not be easily eradicated. We also see more clearly the role played by Buddhism in the social, spiritual and political life of our people at that time. We can say that in the 10th century, even without Confucianism, the Dai Co Viet State could fulfil its fundamental task of maintaining independence and reunification. Many times, the fate of the country hung in the balance because of foreign aggression or the danger of secession, but each time the reactionary forces were crushed.

The promotion of agriculture by Le Dai Hanh, development of transport and communications and irrigation work by the Early Le dynasty, which contributed to the expansion of the cultivable land, are some of the things we learn from the archives. This agricultural development, made possible by the use of iron farm tools and draught animals, not only supplied enough food to the population but enabled the State to keep a powerful army, which twice repelled the Southern Han, once routed a powerful Song army and once defeated an invasion by Champa from the south. With food stocks, Dinh Bo Linh could maintain an army which, in coordination with Lord Tran Lam, defended Dai Hoang—Cua Bo (in present-day Ha Nam Ninh and Thai Binh provinces) and from this hilly region, marched on the delta and repulsed the aggressors to reunify the country.

Handicrafts also made headway, contributing to the development of the national economy. The State ran a mint and issued "Thai Binh" coins (Dinh dynasty) and "Thiên Phúc" coins (Early Le dynasty). It also operated a boat-building yard and a workshop for the manufacture of weapons and military equipment "Tu phuong binh dinh" hats in the Dinh dynasty, "dau mau" hats in the Le dynasty and built war junks. Fortifications and palaces were built at Hoa Lu. History also records that "the palaces on Mount Dai Van were decorated with gold and silver. Phong Luu palace in the east, Tu Hoa palace in the west, Bong Lai palace on the left and Cuc Lac palace on the right; Dai Van

belvedere and Truong Xuân palace were built for the King to rest. Long Lôc palace erected near Truong Xuân palace had its roof covered with silvery tiles."

The cottage industry did not only meet the requirements of an autarkic economy, but its products served for barter. Though the artisans' guilds and big trading centres had not made their appearance, the exchange of goods developed to such an extent that it required regular transactions and circulation between the various markets. Trade relations with foreign countries also developed. From 967 onwards, foreign merchant boats laden with goods regularly called at our ports. At the end of the Le dynasty, the King sent a note to the Song Court proposing trade relations at Ung Chau, but limited commercial transactions at Kham Chau and Nhu Hong.

The events of this era paved the way for an unprecedented period of prosperity for Vietnam and heralded new developments in many fields. The 10th century is therefore a very important one in our history.

NGUYEN DANH THIET

1. *Giao Chau, which included three quân (districts): Giao Chi, Cua Chan, Nhat Nam, in the Han dynasty or An Nam, which composed of 12 châu (provinces): Giao Chau, Phong Chau, Trung Chau, Ai Chau, Dien Chau, Hoan Chau, Phuc Loc Chau, Thang Chau, Chi Chng, Vo An Chau, Vo Nga Chau, Luc Chau, and many Kim Chau, in the Tang dynasty.*

2. *Khâm dinh Việt su thông giam cuong muc (Texts and commentaries forming the complete history of Vietnam made by imperial order) edited under the Nguyen dynasty by the Quốc su quan (National Institute of History).*

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN SOME VIETNAMESE?

The Voice of Vietnam is launching a new series of programmes which will introduce the customs and culture of the country through spoken Vietnamese.

Why not tune in to "Let's Speak Vietnamese" which will be broadcast on Tuesday and Thursday every week as from January 11th, 1983.

These programmes can be heard at 10.00, 11.00, 13.30, 16.00, 18.00, 19.00, 20.30 and 23.30 hours GMT on the frequencies of 10.040, 12.020 and 15.012 KHz.

TWO SOLDIERS

This story was awarded third prize in a short story competition sponsored by Tap Chi Van Nghe Quan Doi (Army Literature and Art Review) 1981.

Tu was sitting in a café waiting for Lien.

On the other side of the road, Lien's fruit-juice shop was crowded with customers. Tu had already finished two cups of black coffee and had ordered a fresh pot of tea. The packet of cigarettes on the table was half empty.

Highway 4 seemed to be larger than usual and looked forlorn in the waning light. East-bound buses lumbered past the provincial town in a hurry to reach Saigon, or rather Ho Chi Minh City, before nightfall. Tu had not got used to the new name yet: it was less than eleven months—only ten months and twenty-two days to be exact—since he had returned from re-education.

It would be dark soon, and Tu did not know where to spend the night. He knew no one here, and cursed himself for his lack of foresight.

From where he was, Tu could see Lien busy serving customers. He saw her clearly but could not make up his mind to approach her. Something was holding him back. So, he settled once more on his seat, stretching his stiff legs.

What was troubling him anyway? After coolly putting an end to the quick, pleasant romance with Lien, he had never for a moment thought of returning to her. What had made him do so now? Reason? No. Love? Decidedly not. Even in her best years, Lien could not have been described as pretty, with her sallow skin and short nose. But her eyes had something. They were gentle and warm, and people liked her for her good manners and small-town inno-

cence. Even so, Tu's friends had made no attempt to flirt with her. "She's only a kid and I don't want to break her heart," Ba Rang had told him. "There're more exciting broads to play around with." Ba Rang was dead now. Like Tu, he had started from scratch, but unlike him, he owed his commission to sheer brutality. Tu, for his part, had failed in his university entry exams, had applied to the officers' school at Thu Duc, and had graduated as a second lieutenant. Tu had not taken Ba Rang at his word and he had a good reason for that. One evening, during a drinking bout, Ba Rang caught sight of Lien pushing her fruit-juice cart home. He left the party in a hurry and ran after her. Tu got up and followed him. The cart was laying athwart the alley way, and Ba Rang was struggling with the girl. "Leave her alone," Tu shouted. "It's none of your business, kid," Ba Rang snarled. But before he could make another move, Tu had twisted his arm behind his back and forced him back to his drinking partners.

*
* *

"Anything else?"

Tu looked up. The patronne, a big, fat woman, was smiling coquettishly down at him.

"Another coffee, please."

The woman shrugged and padded away. It was odd for a person to drink three cups of black coffee at one sitting. But Tu was past caring. He needed another cup to while away the time and to brace himself for a long night ahead.

At Lien's shop, the last customers were about to go, and yet Tu was undecided. Lien was highly strung and he was afraid that his sudden appearance might give her a great shock.

To tell the truth, Tu had felt some remorse when he decided to cut the ties. But he was too wise to hitch himself to a penniless, plain girl. He had had many girl friends, and his steady, Kim Oanh, was the daughter of a rich constructor who had made a lot of money with the Americans. On several occasions, driving with his wife in the brand-new Cadillac, a wedding present from his father-in-law, Tu had looked for Lien, but had never seen her again. "A bastard seduced her and has abandoned her," Ba Rang later told him. Tu had felt a pang of consciences, but it passed quickly.

In the re-education camp, Tu had searched his heart and had blamed himself for Lien's unhappiness, and now he wanted to heal both the wounds he had inflicted and those he had received. Such was life! Take Kim Oanh, beautiful, rich. Only after he had married her did he learn that her father had offered her to an American officer in exchange for several lucrative contracts. The day he was taken to re-education, she shed a lot of tears, but about a month later she went off with a rich widower. Tu did not feel any sorrow, only bitterness, which had worn off with time. It was just in a way, and there was no point in bearing a grudge against anybody. Take the lonely days he had lived in the camp. That was justice, too. Now he wanted to start with a clean slate.

Lien had visited him once at the camp. "I've learned of Kim Oanh's whereabouts," she told him. "She deserves your pity rather than your hatred. Young and beautiful, she could not wait for you for ever."

Lien brought along a little boy. "Is this gentleman your friend, Mom?" the boy asked.

"Yes... or rather he was my friend. That was a long time ago," Lien replied with some confusion.

"If it was so long ago we shouldn't have come, then."

Tu bit his lip. He was a fine boy with a delicate nose, high forehead and thick black hair. His own son.

Impulsively Tu reached out for the boy, but the latter backed away with a sharp cry, "Don't touch me!" Lien put her arms around the boy to soothe him, "Have no fear, little darling. He didn't mean any harm. Let's go now." She put a bag down on the seat beside Tu and took out a couple of ripe durians.

"Don't go yet," Tu said, trying to suppress a sense of bitterness. "Where do you live now? I'll see you when I'm out." The words came out in a rush, and Tu clutched desperately at the faint hope Lien had brought him. "Forgive me!" he entreated.

"It's all over between us. I came to see you just for old time's sake. We should not meet again..." Lien hurried away with her son.

Tu had kept the bag and was using it now to carry a couple of ripe durians intended for Lien and her son.

Seeing that Lien was closing up shop, Tu got to his feet.

"Seven fifty," the patronne said. "Wonder if you're Lien's husband."

Tu was taken aback. "What Lien? I don't know anyone around here."

"It's only a guess." The patronne was still suspicious. "You look very much like her son, that little boy over there." "Hey, Pet!" she called for the boy.

"You sent for me, Auntie?" Pet asked breathlessly when he came into the shop.

"No, I didn't," the patronne lied, and Pet turned away in disappointment.

"Poor girl!" The patronne commented, casting a sly look at Tu. "So young and already a widow. Her husband was killed during the war."

"How do you know that?"

"She told me herself. But she's got over it. Now, there's an assiduous visitor. Ba is his name. A teacher. Used to be a soldier, too, but on the other side."

How Tu hated the big, fat woman and her mealy mouth. He wanted to smash her teeth in. And to keep himself from doing this he picked up the bag and hurried out.

Tu stood undecided by the side of the road. Where to go now? Should I go over and see Lien? What about the other man? What was his name now? Ba or something like that. Serves you right.

Tu's anger kept rising, and he was annoyed by the bag and the durians. Furious, he dashed them all to the ground.

"Are you mad?" It was the patronne of the café. She picked up the bag with the smashed fruit while curious on-lookers were forming a compact ring around him.

"Tu!" Tu turned round sharply and gazed at the woman who had appeared from nowhere. Bare feet. Light grey pyjamas. Hands pressed against a flat chest. A familiar chin.

Above it, Tu knew for certain, would be the sad, black eyes which had shed so many tears on his chest.

"I placed you immediately." It was the owner of the café again. "Pet's a chip from the old block. You must be very happy, Lien."

Lien burst into tears and ran away. Tu, roughly pushing the spectators aside, made after her.

"What else do you want from me now?" Lien asked in the safety of the inner room.

"I want to see my son," Tu lied. He was standing at the front door.

"He isn't your child."

"Whose child is he, then? Speak up. I want the truth."

"It's none of your business. Go away! Go, or I'll call for help."

Tu made a step forward. "I know," he said with a grunt. "So, it's Ba. The bastard."

"Watch your language!" Lien warned and stepped out to face him. She was white with indignation. "Ba is a good man."

"A very good man, indeed!" Tu said with venom. "It's only natural that you should take his side. A good man, isn't he? Who can help being good to a young woman in the absence of her husband?"

Tu was laughing harshly now.

"Don't you laugh. He knew I was a soldier's wife."

"How did he know?" Tu shouted.

"I told him everything."

"You told him? Stupid!"

"It was necessary, and it was the truth. You were heartless and he was so good to me."

"So you slept with him? Tell me and I'll go. There's justice in life." Tu was laughing hysterically now, his body swaying, his hands raised chest-high, his fingers clawing forward. "Tell me and I'll go," he repeated while inching forward on his long legs.

"Mom," Pet cried out from behind Tu. "I've got Uncle Ba with me here."

A man in dark green trousers and shirt was entering. Tu recalled what the owner of the café had told him—"A soldier on the other side"—and felt a chill down his spine.

"This is Tu, my husband's brother," Lien said to the other man, and Tu was astounded by the way he was introduced.

"Glad to meet you," Ba said warmly. "How long have you been here? Please have a cigarette."

Just an ordinary man. But very cool. And try as he did, Tu could not find anything even tolerably attractive in the severe, angular face with its heavily furrowed cheeks. The man looked vaguely familiar, and Tu tried to recall where he had seen him.

The conversation was half-hearted, insipid. But thanks to it, Tu regained his composure. Tu also realised the absurdity of his presence in this house at this moment. A defeated man had nothing to do here.

"Don't go," said the man, seeing Tu about to go. "It's dark now."

Tu could not stand the man's searching look. "... a soldier, too". He had interrogated many soldiers on the other side. This man must have been among them. It couldn't be... He just looked like someone Tu had seen, that was all.

"I came from the West... Just wanted to see my...er...sister-in-law. Must catch a bus now."

"Why don't you stay for a few days?"

Tu shook his head and put out a hand. "... a soldier, too". He shuddered inwardly when he shook the other man's hand.

* * *

"Still waiting?"

Tu looked up and met the compassionate eyes of the man he had run into a little while ago.

"The bastards just ignored me," Tu replied and swore. He had waved to several buses but they had not heeded him. So, yawning resignedly, he had sat down against a lamp-post, closed his eyes, and indulged in memories of past exploits and regrets, of brief romances, of Lien and Kim Oanh, of his rich father-in-law. And now there were his son and the teacher.

"Come to my place and have a drink," Ba suggested. "You can take the 4 a.m. bus tomorrow. There's plenty of time."

"Thanks. But I'm too tired to move from here," Tu replied wearily.

"Don't stand on ceremony. Aren't we already acquainted? It's not shameful to be caught on the road by night"

All right. All Tu wanted now was a place to sleep. Nothing else mattered.

They walked several blocks, made a turn, and entered a small school building. A small room with a desk and chairs, a green uniform on one of the hooks. Again Tu felt a chill down his spine. Glasses tinkled. The rich smell of dried cuttle-fish being roasted on the electric ring made his mouth water.

"Help yourself, Tu."

"After you, please."

"All right. Here's to you." And Ba refilled the glasses.



Illustration by THANH CHUONG

"Wonderful. This stuff must have come from Long An. And the fish. You said it was from Nha Trang? Oh, thanks. Thank you very much. So you were a soldier, too? And now you're Pet's teacher? Excellent. Pet's father was also a soldier, you know? But he fought against you. Me? No. I didn't fight. Ain't a teacher, either. How can I teach anybody anything? I'm fed up with everything."

Tu was all in now, and what little he had drunk was taking effect. He rose shakily on his feet. Ba got up to assist him. "No, it's all right," he said, but Ba ignored his protest and led him to the only cot in the room. Tu dropped onto it and passed out.

When he opened his eyes, Tu found that Ba was working at the desk.

"Correcting your pupils' papers?" he asked. He was thirsty and desperately needed a glass of water.

"Yes," Ba said. "I've a class in the morning."

"How's Pet doing, by the way? He seems to be a bright boy."

"Not very well. His mother spoils him. He has a quick temper, too. Has injured his friend with a knife and even swore at one of the teachers. Certain people have demanded his expulsion. but I managed to soothe them. We must be patient with children."

"Lien must be very grateful to you," Tu commented through clenched teeth.

"There's nothing to be grateful for," Ba said with a good-natured laugh. "I try to be fair to all my pupils."

"You must be a very good father, too. How many children have you, by the way?"

"My son, if he were still alive, would be four years older than Pet. He and his mother were killed during a raid on My Thach Dong."

Ba stood up and went to the window, where he stood with his

back turned to Tu, his hands clutching at the bars, his shoulders slumped forward, his head bowed. The room was chilly with the morning breeze blowing in through the window. From the garden at the back came the dry rustle of coconut fronds.

Tu remembered My Thach Dong only too well. In fact his participation in a bloody raid on that village had earned him a first lieutenantcy and a long furlough.

"It was war," Tu said.

"No. You can't say that," Ba shouted. "It was irresponsible. Hundreds of unarmed people were killed in a single day. It was criminal!"

Tu tried to keep still and avoid causing the slightest noise with his movements. The man at the window squared his shoulders and swore. Tu was startled and became suspicious again.

Where had Tu seen Ba? In a shop, in the streets, or during one of the many interrogations? Or did Ba look like the boy Tu had killed during that bloody raid beside the crumpled body of his mother? Tu felt feverish.

He ventured a question. "May I have some fruit juice?"

"I don't have any. But there's a couple of mangosteens. You can have them if you like."

"No. A glass of water will do. There's a bottle right on your desk." By the time Tu had got up from the bed Ba was returning with a ripe mangosteen and an American bowie knife with a dented edge.

"Help yourself." Tu picked up a slice of the fruit and put it into his mouth. It was delicious. But, to his annoyance, Tu detected a faintly unpleasant flavour, a slight salty taste, like the taste of rust or blood.

"Hundreds of unarmed people were killed in a single day." Tu shivered.

"You don't seem to like it," Ba observed. "It must be sour."

"No. It's very sweet," Tu protested weakly and shivered again with a sniff.

"It's a present from Lien," Ba continued. "The other fruit is better. I'll give it to Pet as a reward for his original solution of a difficult problem."

Tu decided to try a long shot. "Lien seems to like you a lot," he asked.

"To me she's only an unhappy woman, a mother with a problem child."

"But... her husband... my brother.. .he fought against you."

"That's the past. Now we have different duties. You seem to have a complex about your past, too."

"No," Tu denied hurriedly. "And you're right about the past. Those terrible days have gone for ever. Oh, it'll be light soon."

"Not yet. No, I wonder if I should give Pet ten for his maths. That would encourage him but might also make his mates envious."

"You're the teacher. You can do what you like."

"It's not that simple," Ba corrected with a broad smile.

Tu was overcome with a sudden feeling of relief. He got up and went out of the room. He looked to the east, where dawn was breaking, towards what he had known as Saigon, his former paradise. It was such a brief span of time, and yet he had been through all sorts of things. Now a man he hardly knew had caused him to think of his future.

Tu went back into the room and got a packet of cigarettes from his pocket. Ba, with his red pen, was drawing a circle around the number ten on the upper left corner of Pet's paper. Tu looked at the hand holding the pen and thought: "That same hand held a gun for many years."

"Have a smoke," Tu said.

Ba shook his head. "Look," he said, showing Tu another paper.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT...

(Continued from page 18)

"This boy's handwriting is very good. His father died in action late in 1974. His mother has a small fruit stand at the market. I'm planning to sit him next to Pet."

Tu took the cigarette from his mouth. He wanted to tell Ba that Pet was his child, but did not have the courage to make the revelation.

"Why don't you lie down again?" Ba said. "It's not light yet."

Tu tiptoed to the cot and lay down, but sat up again. He lit a new cigarette, took a deep drag, went to the desk and sat down on the spare chair.

"Listen..." he began awkwardly.

Ba was putting the papers into his briefcase. He looked at Tu questioningly with tired eyes.

"You can't sleep again?"

"No. Tell me, please, if you have ever got tired of living?"

"Why, yes." Ba laughed easily.

"What did you think, then? Did you think of suicide? Oh, don't look at me like that. What would you do if your wife denied you?"

Ba was serious now. "No decent wife will deny her husband," he said, "however odiously he has wronged her, provided that there's still some love left."

"Well, I don't know. I once contemplated suicide. But then I decided to live on as an indifferent spectator to the comedy of life... But even that was no consolation..." Tu broke off. He averted his face from Ba's searching gaze, but then his eyes ran into the old uniform on the hook.

Ba put the top back on his pen and put it into the briefcase. "I understand you perfectly," he said slowly, rubbing his hands together. "But let me correct you on one point. Life isn't a comedy. It's a reality. Only our approaches to it are different."

"Yes. That's why I..."

CHU HONG HAI
Long An — 1981

an especially warm welcome from the Party Executives and People's Committees, the parents' associations and more particularly from the retired workers and public employees. Good examples in this respect can be found at the city wards of Kim Lien, Cua Nam, Chuong Duong, Dong Xuan, Dong Nhan, Ngoc Ha, Thanh Cong, Le Loi and many communes such as Hoi Xa, Phu Thi, Me Linh, Kim No, Phu Linh, Dich Vong, Hiep Thuan, Duong Lam, Phu Kim, Yen So... to name only a few. In these places the pupils are organised into groups or teams operating on a self-management and extracurricular basis.

At the ward level, more attention has been paid to the education of children. In Kim Lien ward for instance, the Party organisation assigned all members of its committee to take charge of an apartment house each. They supervise the activities of the children in the families using the same staircase in four- or five-storeyed houses, and educate their children according to the new method. Some have even made deductions from their modest salaries to buy gifts for the children. They regularly visit the families to help them arrange the necessary time for their studies. The parents' associations at the district and city levels have been operating continuously and effectively. They usually consist of experienced teachers or social activists and people of goodwill and dedication to the education of the future generation. In recent years, especially in the 1981-82 school year, these associations have adopted programs of action along a common line for the whole city and new methods and measures compatible with the realities in each district or township. They have not only contributed to the building and repair of the schools and to the

organisation of extracurricular activities for the children but have also achieved real cooperation with the schools in the education of the children.

The associations have disseminated new methods of educating children and closely combined education at home and at school. Groups of parents' associations have taken turns in supervising pupils' home-work. They have paid special attention to cooperating with the parents of mischievous or truanting pupils to help them change their behaviour.

In 1981 the educational service launched a major campaign entitled "the school and people join efforts in looking after, repairing and building the material bases of the schools". Within only one academic year more than 3,500 classrooms and nearly 1,500 staffrooms and nearly 300 community toilets were built or repaired. School fences, gates and playing grounds were set up or repaired. The electricity and water supply systems at many schools were reconditioned and tens of thousands of benches, desks and wardrobes valued at 29 million *dong* were made or repaired. The campaign has helped heighten the sense of responsibility of the Party committees as well as the administration and people toward the education of the young generation. Almost all the localities in the city regard the school as common property and have adopted effective management technique. As a result, many schools such as the basic general education schools of To Vinh Dien and Cat Linh or the Truong Dinh secondary general education school have been cited as good examples for the whole city.

VU MANH KHA
Deputy Director of the
Hanoi Educational Service

CHRONOLOGY

(November 16 — December 15)

NOVEMBER

18. A delegation of the National Assembly of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, headed by Chea Sim, Political Bureau member of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party, President of the National Assembly and of the National Council of the Front for the Building and Defence of Kampuchea, pays a friendship visit to Vietnam.

— Vietnam participates in the 1982 ASIAD Olympic Games held in New Delhi, in four events: shooting, table-tennis, swimming, and athletics.

19. Founding of the Vietnam Committee for Solidarity and Friendship with El Salvador.

— Signing in Hanoi of an agreement on energy co-operation between Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

22. Signing in Vientiane of a minute on forestry co-operation between Vietnam and Laos.

23. A delegation of the Vietnam Radio and TV Commission ends its visit to Nicaragua begun on November 16.

24. Signing in Hanoi of a protocol on goods exchanges and payments for 1983 between Vietnam and Hungary.

25. Signing in Hanoi of a minute on economic co-operation between Vietnam and Sweden for 1983 — 1984 and 1984 — 1985.

— A delegation of the French National Scientific Research Centre, led by Prof. Claude Freijacque, President of the Centre, pays a friendship visit to Vietnam.

26. Inauguration of the Vinh Phu Pulp and Paper Mill built with the assistance of the Swedish Government. The mill has an annual capacity of 55,000 tons of writing and printing paper and 48,000 tons of pulp.

— A seminar on economic and trade co-operation between Vietnam and the Far-Eastern Region of the Soviet Union is held in Ho Chi Minh City.

— Signing in Hanoi of an agreement on long-term credit between Vietnam and India.

27. A conference on the International Year of the Aged of Vietnam is held in Ho Chi Minh City.

28. Opening in Hanoi of the sixth session of the Vietnam — Cuba Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation.

29. Launching in Hanoi of a month of Vietnamese-Soviet Friendship in anticipation of the USSR's 60th anniversary.

30. The working group for international help in the preservation of Hue's historical buildings ends its first session in Hanoi begun on November 29.

DECEMBER

1. Opening in Hanoi of the eighth session of the Vietnam-USSR Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation.

— *Hanoi*: Holding of a national seminar of Vietnam INFOTERRA 1982.

— Signing in Hanoi of a plan for co-operation between the Vietnam Committee for Solidarity and Friendship with the Palestinian People and the Palestine — Vietnam Committee.

2. Signing in Hanoi of an agreement on co-operation in veterinary care between Vietnam and Bulgaria.

5. Signing in Hanoi of a document on banking co-operation between Vietnam and Czechoslovakia.

9. UNICEF holds a seminar with Vietnamese organisations on co-operation programmes for the coming years.

11. Publication of decrees on the preservation of national documents.

— Founding of a council for research on young women under the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union Central Committee.

— Signing in New Delhi of a protocol on commerce for 1983 between Vietnam and India.

13. A delegation of the Cuban Chamber of Commerce ends its visit to Vietnam begun on December 5.

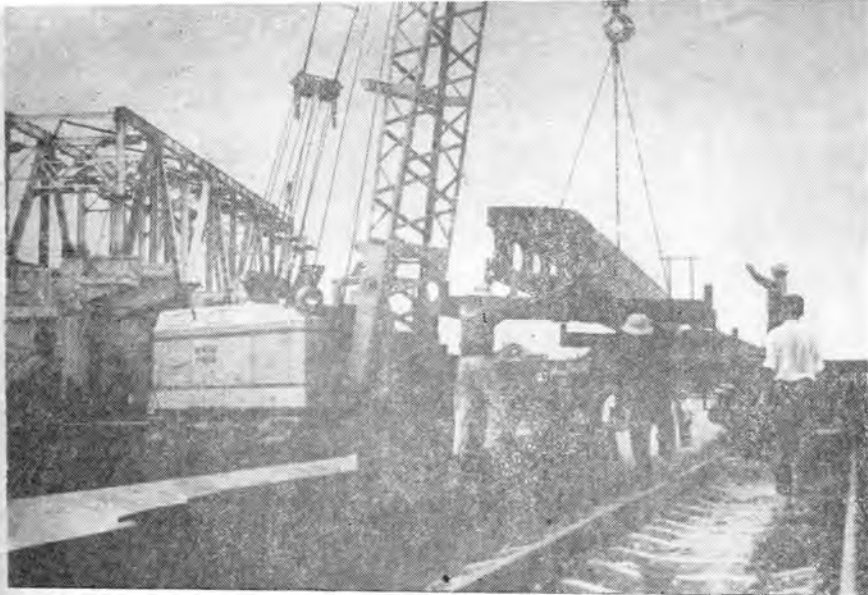
14. Bulgarian Vice-Foreign Minister Petko Iliev ends his visit to Vietnam begun on December 11.

15. Signing of a protocol on goods exchanges and payments for 1983 between Vietnam and Albania.

CORRECTION

In the article "The Aerial Dien Bien Phu Battle Against the US Air Force" in our last issue (No. 12 — 1982), line 16, column 3 on page 15 should read... *including 30 B.52...* instead of... *including 23 B.52...*

VIETNAM IN CONSTRUCTION



The Thang Long bridge being built with Soviet assistance.

Photo: NGUYEN TAN

Welding a water pipe at the Pha Lai thermo-power plant built with Soviet assistance.

Photo: CAO PHONG



Building a reservoir in Cao Ngan district, Quang Nam — Da Nang province.

Photo: HA MUI



AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN 1982

Total food output: 16.2 million tons (paddy equivalent): up 200,000 tons compared with the State plan target and an increase of 1,200,000 tons over 1981.

Peasants in Vinh Loi district, Cuc Long province selling paddy to the State.

Photo: TRAN THIEM

Peasants in Tien Hai district, Thai Binh province delivering paddy to the State.

Photo: XUAN CAU



Harvesting rice in a production collective in My An district, Dong Thap province.

Photo: VAN HUONG



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DÂY NÓI: 53998

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