

Vietnam courier

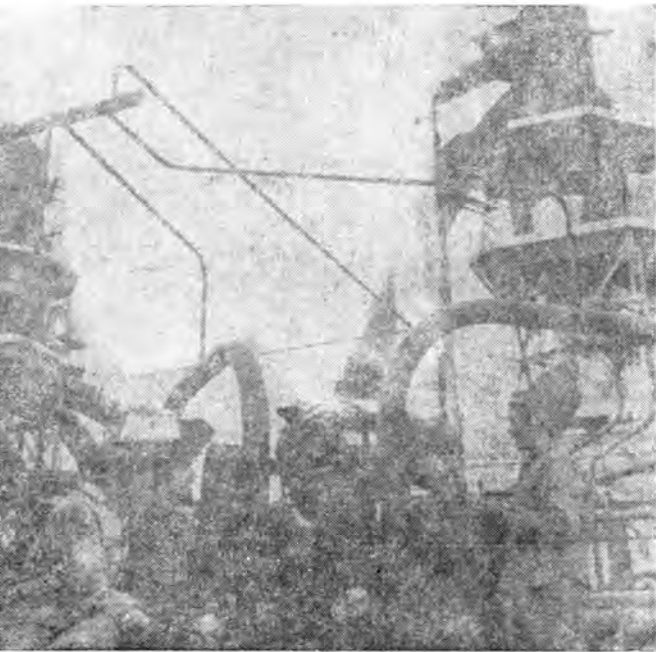


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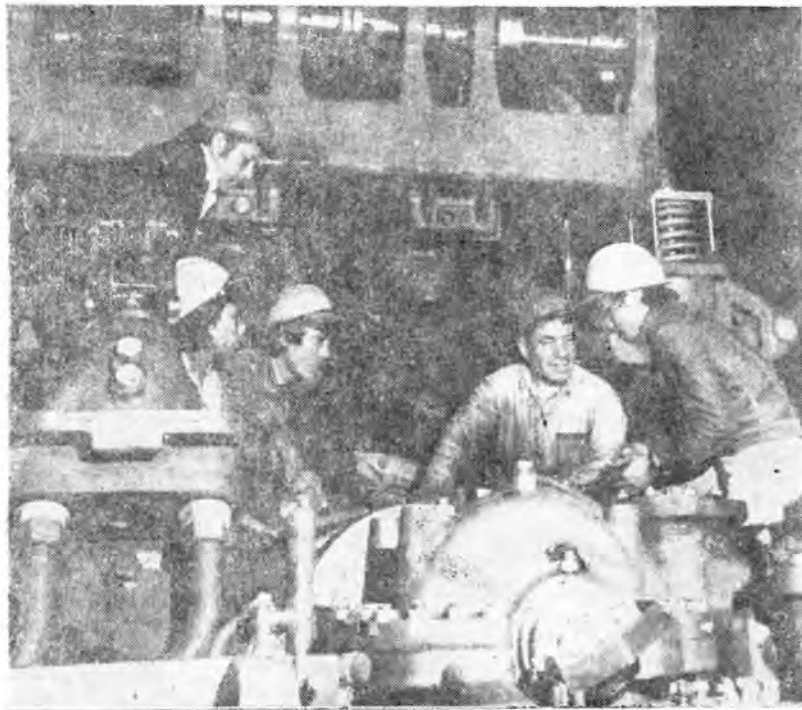
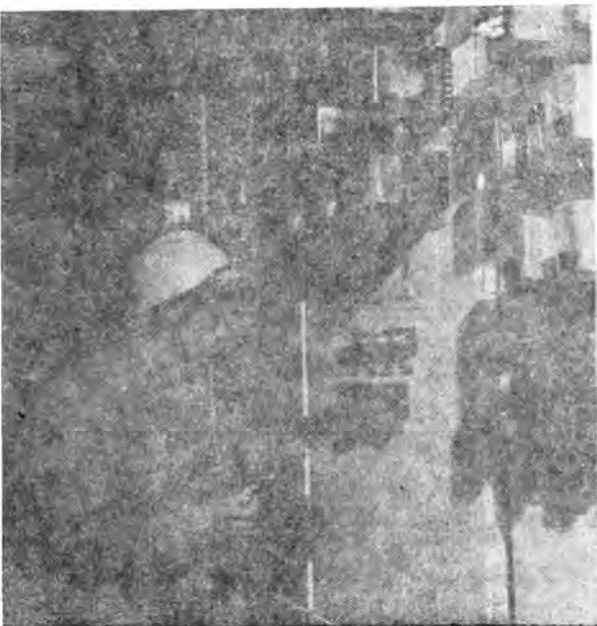
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**THE BIGGEST THERMO - POWER
PLANT IN VIETNAM (WITH GEN-
ERAL CAPACITY OF 640.000 KW)
IS BEING BUILT IN PHA LAI WITH
SOVIET ASSISTANCE.**

In the photos: Soviet experts and Vietnamese work-
ers are making the last steps in putting the No. 1
110,000 kW turbo-generator into operation.

(See article on page 21)



Photos: TRAN SON

THE VIETNAM - USSR FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION TREATY IS FIVE YEARS OLD

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Front Cover: Preparations are being made to put the Pha Lai power plant into operation.

Photo: VU HANH

**VIETNAM
COURIER**

11-1983

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Vietnam and the USSR was signed on the 3rd of November 1978 at a time when Vietnam embarked on post-war reconstruction in the face of a two-pronged threat from China. This treaty aims at helping Vietnam to accomplish two parallel tasks: building socialism and defending its people's socialist homeland.

Facts in the past five years have fully demonstrated the tremendous effect of this treaty.

First, it is a guarantee for the independence of Vietnam and for peace and security in the region. As stipulated in Article 7 of the Treaty, it "is not intended to oppose any third country".¹ Article 6, however, makes it clear that it will check all hostile forces attempting to infringe the sovereignty and security of Vietnam.² With Soviet assistance, the defence capabilities of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam have been increased several fold. Those who have failed bitterly in their attempt to "teach Vietnam a lesson" would have to think twice before they recklessly put into effect their threat to "teach Vietnam another lesson", a threat they still brandish from time to time.

In recent days, through its very dangerous schemes and acts, the United States is seriously threatening world peace. At the same time, Washington — Beijing collusion has been intensified.

Vietnam warmly welcomes and fully supports the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union, especially the statement of September 28, 1983 of Comrade Yu. V. Andropov. As has been rightly pointed out by Truong-Chinh, President of the Council of State, "these proposals and statements clearly reflect the Soviet people's consistent attachment to peace and the sense of responsibility of the Soviet Communist Party and State for the destiny of mankind. At the same time, they manifest the principled stance, the great might, the constructive attitude and active role of the Soviet Union in the struggle against the very wicked militarist policy of the present US

administration. They will encourage all persons of good will to do all in their power to limit the arms race, push back and avert the danger of nuclear war, defend and consolidate world peace." (Truong-Chinh's interview with the Mongolian National Radio, Television Commission on October 5, 1983.)

As is stipulated in the Treaty of November 3, 1978, Vietnam and the Soviet Union pledge to help ease international tension, promote peaceful coexistence and eliminate aggressions and wars of aggression from the life of nations, for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

The ruling circles in Beijing have rejected all constructive proposals and peace initiatives of Vietnam aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries. They are trying by all means to weaken and bleed Vietnam, divide the three Indochinese countries, divide Vietnam and the Soviet Union.

During their talks with the Soviet Union on Sino-Soviet relations, they want to link these relations to the question of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea. It is their traditional policy to try to settle issues of third countries at the latter's expense. In 1954 China negotiated settlement of the first Indochina war with France at the expense of the Vietnamese people. In the second Indochina war it again tried to negotiate with Nixon and Kissinger to the detriment of the Vietnamese. Now, it tried to repeat this trick, but the Soviet Union has categorically rejected its absurd demand.

Faced with the hostile policy of Beijing and its criminal collusion with US imperialism, the Vietnamese people have reaffirmed their ironlike determination to defend their national independence and freedom and the gains of their socialist construction.

In this fight, they benefit from the strength of the special solidarity between Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, the allround cooperation with the Soviet Union and the whole socialist community, and the support of progressive mankind. The Vietnamese-Soviet Friendship and Cooperation Treaty is playing a very important and positive role in the safeguarding of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

The treaty represents in all respects a new and very important development of the sentiments of friendship which have bound the Vietnamese people to the Soviet Union ever since the success of the October Socialist Revolution, and of the relations between the two states established as early as January 30, 1950. Through all the stages of socialist construction, first in the North then throughout reunified Vietnam, the cooperation and assistance accorded to Vietnam by the Soviet Union have not ceased to develop in scope and depth. With the conclusion of the November 3, 1978 Treaty this assistance and cooperation has broadened in all fields — political, cultural, scientific and technological, a cooperation which, as stipulated in Article 1, is based on respect for each other's national independence and sovereignty, equality, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

With the assistance of the Soviet Union, Vietnam has been provided with conditions to develop some basic branches of its economy such as energy, oil and gas, communications and transport... which are the key to the independent development of the country.

Many major thermal and hydro-power stations such as Pha Lai, Tri An, the Da river project, will be put into operation to serve agricultural production and to expand rice areas with high and stable yields. The four coal mines being built or expanded with Soviet assistance will supply another important source of energy and also of valuable exports. Of particular significance is the joint Vietnam-USSR offshore oil and gas venture.

Thanks to Soviet assistance, the Thang Long bridge is being speedily completed across the Red River north of Hanoi. Many coffee, tea, rubber, medicinal-plant and fruit-tree farms have taken or are taking shape.

Cooperation between the scientific and technological institutions of the two countries is becoming more and more diversified. More than 100,000 Vietnamese scientific and technical cadres have been trained either in the Soviet Union or in Vietnam with Soviet assistance. Thousands of Vietnamese students and graduate students have been sent to the Soviet Union each year and tens of thousands of Vietnamese trainees have also gone there to work and learn new skills.

Soviet experts working in different branches in Vietnam, from North to South, have all set bright examples of devotion.

Soviet assistance has had the great effect of helping Vietnam surmount immediate difficulties, maintain and develop production, and enhance its defence capabilities. It contributes in no small measure to increasing Vietnam's potentials and laying the most important material and technical foundations of socialism.

Each passing day has brought out still more clearly the impact of the Treaty signed five years ago. To preserve Vietnam-Soviet friendship against the divisive plots of enemies of all kinds and to make this cooperation more and more fruitful in the interest of the two countries and that of peace and security in Southeast Asia and the world — such is the cornerstone of our Party and Government's foreign policy.

October 15, 1983

1. Article 7: "The present Treaty does not affect the two Parties' rights and obligations stemming from the bilateral or multilateral agreements to which they are signatories and is not intended to oppose any third country".

2. Article 6: "... In case either Party is attacked or threatened with attack, the two Parties signatory to the Treaty shall immediately consult each other with a view to eliminating that threat and taking appropriate and effective measures to ensure the peace and the security of the two countries".

THE IMPACT OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION ON VIETNAMESE PATRIOTIC INTELLECTUALS IN THE 1920'S

The victory of the October Revolution and the birth of the Soviet Union were great historic events which had a deep influence on many Vietnamese patriotic scholars and intellectuals during the '20s of this century, even those who later did not join the Communist Party. Below are a few typical figures:

PHAN BOI CHAU (1867 - 1940)

He was a man of noble ideal and great integrity typical of the patriotic movement during the first twenty five years of this century. He was the leader of the *Duy Tan*¹ (Renovation) movement, the *Dong Du*² (Go East) movement and the *Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi*³ (Association for the Restoration of Vietnam). He was also a man who suffered repeated setbacks. However, when the Russian October Revolution triumphed, Phan Boi Chau exclaimed with deep emotion:

"This is like a sudden gust of spring wind in a cloudy sky; like a sudden sunray piercing the darkness of the night. This gust of spring wind, this sunray, is Socialism."⁴

Echoes of the October Revolution came to him at a time when he was looking for a road to national salvation. Obviously for a scholar the road to socialism was not an easy one. Phan Boi Chau found his way to the "Red Headquarters" of Russia in Beijing in late 1920. He met the Russian ambassador Karakhan and exchanged views with him on political affairs. Sticking to his old ideological guns, Phan Boi Chau did not change his mind. But the meeting with the Soviet ambassador left deep impressions on him. He wrote: "There is one thing I will never forget. During the talk, the Russian was very frank in his features as

well as his words. He was now forceful, now gentle."⁵

Phan Boi Chau continued to gather more information about the Soviet Union and Lenin. Early in 1921 he wrote an article in praise of Lenin, an excerpt of which reads as follows:

"In order to appreciate Lenin properly and in simple terms, let us call him a 'revolutionary strategist'. To be a military strategist requires a deep knowledge of military matters. It does not mean simply to talk or write about military matters, but to think out strategies and tactics, and to know how to apply one's knowledge to fighting in order to win victories. Only such a man can be called a military strategist. The same goes for a revolutionary strategist. Revolutionary knowledge does not come from books: there is no special course for teaching it. Such knowledge is acquired through theoretical and ideological studies. Let us call it 'Revolutionary Science' for want of a better term. All revolutionaries must have a deep knowledge of 'revolutionary science'. They must grasp both the theory and ideology of revolutionary science, they must have great abilities and know how to apply revolutionary knowledge to revolutionary practice. Only such men can be called revolutionary strategists. Lenin is a man who knows how to wield both weapons: theory and practice. He is a unique strategist. It is no exaggeration to call him such."⁶

Phan Boi Chau's deep feelings for the "saviour of the Russian toiling people" are really moving. He had undergone many progressive changes in his ideology and revolutionary line. Thus in his book *The Story of Pham Hong Thai*⁷ written late in 1924 on the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the Russian October Revolution and published by the Vietnamese branch of the League of Oppressed Peoples in East Asia in Canton, he spoke of the necessity of the socialist revolution:

"In our country if a revolution should break out, it must be a socialist revolution. Moreover, a social revolution cannot be successful if we do not rely on the majority of the population, on the lower classes, that is, the working class and the peasantry. In our country the workers and peasants account for over three quarters of the total population. They are more and more harshly oppressed and exploited by the rulers who rely on the use of force. But 'when a bird is cornered it pecks, and when an animal is cornered it bites'. The workers and peasants have been reduced to utter destitution. The keg of powder destined for the men in power is about to explode. When it does explode it will burn down all the palaces of the imperialists."⁸

In another passage, he described the workers' movement in other countries in the light of his newly-acquired knowledge. "The working people in those countries have become politically awakened. They know how to organize themselves into large unions. They demand political equality. The workers have joined the Party, the Party is a clandestine union. Once the Party launches an appeal for strike, millions will fight as a man to the bitter end."⁹

Phan Boi Chau's views regarding friends and allies in the world had also changed. He already spoke of the aid from "popular countries" and considered it as a factor leading the revolution to "ultimate victory". The popular countries referred to by Phan Boi Chau included, besides "our country's fellow-sufferers", Soviet Russia, a country which had set up a "worker-peasant government", and whose "worker-peasant political objective is to create a world never before known in history."

In late 1924, Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc, who had arrived in China from the Soviet Union to conduct political activities, got in touch with Phan Boi Chau. As a result

of this Phan Boi Chau was further enlightened. He planned to return to Canton in June 1925 to rally his comrades and reorganize his party following the line suggested by Nguyen Ai Quoc. Unfortunately he was kidnapped by the French and brought back to Vietnam.

In the last 15 years of his life, from 1926 to 1940, when he was under house arrest, the old man of Ben Ngu¹⁰ as he was then called still nurtured faith in socialism, in the great Soviet land. He continued to praise Lenin and admire Nguyen Ai Quoc, the nation's leader who was following the path charted by Lenin and the Russian October Socialist Revolution.

PHAN CHU TRINH (1872 - 1926)

He, too, came from a family of scholars, but he represented the tendency to save the country by means of moderate reforms at the beginning of the 20th century — as opposed to the line of revolutionary violence advocated by Phan Boi Chau. Living in exile in France during the years 1911 — 1925, Phan Chu Trinh also knew about the Russian October Revolution, Lenin, socialism and communism, but he consistently stood for bourgeois reformism. Therefore, he was not so readily receptive to socialist ideas, although he had had ample opportunity to get into contact with Nguyen Ai Quoc from 1917 to 1923. However, Phan Chu Trinh also paid attention to studying the revolutionary methods of proletarian leaders, namely Marx and Lenin. In 1922 in a letter sent to Nguyen Ai Quoc, he expressed the wish that the latter would return to Vietnam to conduct revolutionary propaganda following the example of Marx and Lenin. He wrote:

"Marx was born and brought up in Germany. He was hunted by the government for the revolutionary activities. He had to live in exile in England then returned to Germany to work. Moreover, since the centre of the world's democratic revolution was located in Germany, he had to go back there.

"Lenin was also hunted by the Russian rulers, and had to take

refuge in France, Germany, and then returned home to appeal to workers, peasants and soldiers to unite in order eventually to carry out successfully that revolution which was to be greatly admired by the peoples of Europe and America."¹¹

Back in Vietnam, in a speech at a conference hall in Saigon on the night of 19 November 1925 on "Eastern and Western Ethics", Phan Chu Trinh spoke of socialism. He drew a comparison between the cultural level of our people and that of the French people and said, "It is understandable that our people should not know how to behave towards the world, but they do not even know their duties towards their own compatriots..." Then he exclaimed: "Alas! how can revolutionary ideas grow in the minds of such people! That is why there is no socialism in our country! If there is to be a free and independent Vietnam in the future, the Vietnamese people must organize themselves into a party, and to organize a party the best way is to propagate socialism among them."¹²

That was Phan Chu Trinh's conception of socialism! All the same we treasure his contribution to getting the Vietnamese public acquainted with this ideal system — socialism.

TRAN KY PHONG (1872 - 1941)

A native of Nghia Binh, and a successful candidate at the provincial literary examinations, he took part in the patriotic movement at the beginning of the century and was sent to the Con Son prison island in 1908. French prisons were then places where our patriots got acquainted with various national democratic doctrines, from Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles, Gandhi's non-violence, to Marxist-Leninist Communism. Thus the scholar Tran Ky Phong had the opportunity to study socialism, Lenin's work, and learn about the Soviet Union. He later struggled for the realization of that ideal. Although he never joined the Communist Party, he composed a number of poems in which he praised the

land of the October Revolution. His poems were praised by public opinion. He wrote in 1928:

*Who waved the red banner?
The people of Russia — an
indomitable people.
After many years of hard struggle
They overthrew the monarchy
and opened the way to freedom.¹³*

In another long poem composed in 1927 about the USSR, he wrote:

*It was Marx who built up uni-
versal fraternity
It was Lenin who defended
world peace.¹⁴*

Tran Ky Phong was the symbol of the people's deep sympathy for the October Revolution and the Soviet Union. Not a few patriotic scholars in those days e.g. Nguyen Dinh Kien, Le Van Huan, Vo Liem Son, who took an active part in socialist-oriented patriotic organizations (such as Quan Hai Tung Thu in Hue, Duy Tan Thu Xa in Saigon), contributed to propagating the influence of the October Revolution and the Soviet State in our country in the years 1926 — 1929.

In the meantime a number of French-educated patriotic intellectuals, under the influence of the October Revolution, opted for socialism and communism. Most popular among them were Phan Thanh, Thai Van Lung, Nguyen An Ninh, Nguyen Van Luyen, Phan Van Truong. Here are the profiles of two typical figures.

PHAN VAN TRUONG (1873 - 1933)

A native of Dong Ngac, Hanoi, he went to Paris in 1910 and was for some time an instructor at the School of Oriental Languages. He was Doctor of Law and Bachelor of Arts. He knew many lawyers and statesmen who were members of the French Communist Party, and was interested in Marxist-Leninist theory. For quite a long time he was close to Nguyen Ai Quoc in Paris and was very active in the Association of Patriotic Vietnamese. He was subsequently a member of the Intercolonial Union and wrote for *Le Paria*, a newspaper founded by Nguyen Ai Quoc. That is why in his doctoral

thesis, he maintained that contemporary society was going through a crisis, that it was necessary to destroy it and build a new one. He wrote:

"That is revolution, that is social war or 'bolshivism'. It does not frighten people. Even if a war should break out for the sake of the revolution, that war will be a war for civil rights and justice. And if that war brings about the desired transformation, it will be a real victory for civilization over barbarity."¹⁵

In 1919, Phan Van Truong also discussed with Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc the 8-point petition to be sent by the latter to the Versailles Conference. Back in Vietnam in 1925 he collaborated with Nguyen An Ninh in publishing two newspapers in French, *La Cloche Fêlée* (The Cracked Bell) and *l'Annam*. He had the Manifesto of the Communist Party by Marx and Engels printed in his newspaper. He also wrote many articles praising Lenin, praising the Theses of the Comintern on the colonial question: he spoke very highly of the Russian Revolution and predicted the glorious triumph of Communism. He wrote:

"Everybody knows very well the theses of the Comintern on the colonial question which took precedence over all other problems in all conferences of the Comintern, of the World Federation of Trade Unions and the World Communist Youth Federation. Lenin was the first to understand and fully value the great importance of drawing the colonial peoples into the revolutionary movement. Lenin was the first to point out that without the participation of the colonial peoples there would be no socialist revolution.

"Lenin found the proper methods to carry out revolutionary activities in the colonies effectively, and stressed the need for launching movements of national revolution in these countries.

"...The way Lenin settled the most complicated national problem in Soviet Russia can be used as a powerful propaganda weapon in the colonies.

"In the painful history of their existence in inequality the peoples of the colonies see in Lenin a man who has created a new life, a beacon lighting the way for oppressed mankind in their march to liberation."¹⁶

On the Russian revolution he wrote:

"... One does not forget the people's insurrection in 1905, after the Russian-Japanese war. But one cannot imagine how the Slav people who were oppressed to such a degree could leap from the most backward regime into such an advanced and hardy society, so advanced and hardy that the reactionaries and conservatives have so far considered it as pure illusion.

"Whether a system is good or bad everyone is free to judge. One must respect other people's opinion if it is sincere. But there is no denying the fact that, despite the armed intervention and other kinds of intervention, despite natural calamities and the innumerable difficulties it is encountering, despite the heavy heritage left by the czarist regime, despite all that, bolshevism continues to exist, to consolidate its position and spread its influence all over the world. We should therefore deduce from the above that a vital principle contained in the essence of bolshevism has created a force that those who oppose it refuse to recognize. It is ridiculous that every time the capitalist press buried it alive, bolshevism was restored again to life the very next day, stronger and more active than ever.

"Since the establishment of the new system in Russia, the world has been divided into two opposite camps, one represented by the communist revolution, the other by reactionary capitalism. In other words, public opinion in the world is divided by two social doctrines, the Communist doctrine on the one hand and the capitalist doctrine on the other. There is a constant conflict between the two camps. At first it was an open conflict, but later, after repeated setbacks suffered by the capitalist camp, it has become a covert conflict... Despite the victories won at the beginning the capitalist camp will eventually have to take to flight to avoid total defeat, if its opponent is determined to prolong the fight."¹⁷

Through this articles written by Phan Van Truong, we can see that his knowledge of Marxism-Leninism was fairly advanced and that he had definitely sided with the socialist revolutionaries.

NGUYEN AN NINH (1900 - 1943)

He got his law degree in Paris. In 1923 he returned home in response to the appeal of Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc. At the end of that year, together with Phan Van Truong, he published *La Cloche Fêlée* in Saigon to conduct propaganda and demand democratic freedoms for the people. The "Eight-point Petition of the Vietnamese Nation" sent by Nguyen Ai Quoc to the 1919 Versailles Conference appeared in the first issue of the newspaper.

La Cloche Fêlée was banned by the colonialists after its seventh issue, for it not only called on our people, especially our youth, to rise up "to endeavour to embellish the Vietnamese culture", "to nurture the youth's lofty ideals", to struggle to become free citizens, to serve the nation, but also spoke about carrying out the socialist revolution, and acquainted the Vietnamese people with the Soviet Union, an admirable country. Nguyen An Ninh was subsequently jailed by the French colonial authorities. In prison, he persevered in his stand as a progressive patriotic intellectual, fighting for communist ideals. When he heard about the founding of the Communist Party of Indochina he was very happy. He said:

"That is our long-standing wish. That is Nguyen Ai Quoc's lofty cause. The Party is the pole star showing the way to all the patriots who are groping in the dark."¹⁸

Although he was not a member of the Communist Party Nguyen An Ninh came to socialism as a true patriot. He said on several occasions:

"As a non-Party member, I assume the task of winning over the intellectuals and people of the upper class. This will help the Party's work. I pledge to be an anonymous fighter of the Party. Although I am not a Party member my heart belongs to the Party."¹⁹

For the older generation "socialism, communism is only mankind's lofty dream...", now "it has become a social reality, whose huge power involves billions of people into revolutionary action, for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress."²⁰ That force includes large numbers of intellectuals who are acting upon the Russian example, as shown by Lenin:

"A number of fundamental features of our revolution... have not only a Russian character but an international character as well... Its historical necessity lies in the fact that it will repeat itself on an international scale."²¹

CHUONG THAU

1., 2., 3. *Patriotic Organizations at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.*

4. *Phan Boi Chau: Socialism*, Sinh Minh Publishing House, Vinh, 1946.

5. *Phan Boi Chau Nien Bieu*, translated by Pham Trong Diem and Ton Quang Phiet, Van Su Dia (Literature, History and Geography) Publishing House, Hanoi 1957.

6. *Phan Boi Chau: A Short Biographical Account of Lenin; a Great Man of Red Russia*, published in Binh Su Tap Chi (Military Review) No. 2, 1921.

7. *A Vietnamese patriot, who attempted to assassinate French Governor General Merlin at Shamen (Canton) on 19 June 1924.*

8., 9. *Phan Boi Chau: The Story of Pham Hong Thai—Translated by Chuong Thau*, Van Hoc (Literature) Publishing House, Hanoi 1967.

10. *Phan Boi Chau was put under house arrest in Hue, the capital of the Nguyen dynasty, near Ben Ngu on the bank of the Perfume River.*

11. *Thu Trang: Phan Chu Trinh's Activities in France, Imperie Thuc Nghiep*, Hanoi, 1926.

12. *Viet Nam Minh Tri Thu Xa: Selected Speeches by Phan Chu Trinh, Imperie Thuc Nghiep*, Hanoi, 1926.

13., 14. *Tong Tap Van Hoc Viet Nam (Vietnamese Literature) Volume 31, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi 1981.*

15., 16., 17. *Tran Van Giau: The Vietnamese Working Class, Su That (Truth) Publishing House, Hanoi 1958.*

18., 19. *Tung Nam: Nguyen An Ninh and the Communist Party, "My Heart Belongs to the Party", To Quoc Review No. 1, 1981.*

20. *Ho Chi Minh: Let Us Always Follow the Path Charted by the Great Lenin, Su That Publishing, House, Hanoi 1970.*

21. *Lenin: Leftism, an Infantile Disorder of the Communist Movement, in Institute of History: The October Revolution and the Vietnamese Revolution.*

A FAIR AND REASONABLE SOLUTION TO THE UNSTABLE SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

On October 7, 1983 Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach delivered an important speech at the plenary meeting of the 38th session of the UN General Assembly. He analysed the world situation, holding the United States fully responsible for the present tension. He then dealt with the unstable situation in Southeast Asia and put forward a solution to this situation. The following are excerpts from his speech concerning Southeast Asia:

"Southeast Asia is the only place on the earth which has been torn apart by successive wars in the last 40 years, the Vietnam war being the bloodiest. At present, it still enjoys no peace and stability. This situation stems from deep-rooted historical causes:

a) For 2,000 years now, Chinese rulers have considered Southeast Asia a part of their traditional sphere of influence, with Vietnam the main object of Chinese conquest.

b) In the 13th century, Thai people moved southward from Southern China and in the process invaded most of the Khmer Kingdom of the Angkor period and the Kingdom of Laos. They set up what is the present-day Kingdom of Thailand. For the last millennium, Thailand has always seen Kampuchea and Laos as its vassal states and has invaded Vietnam three times.

c) In the last 40 years, Thailand has acted as the principal ally of

militarism, colonialism and imperialism against the three Indochinese countries.

In the same period of time, China has persistently sought to subjugate the three countries. In so doing, it colluded with France and the United States against the independence and sovereignty of the Indochinese countries.

d) The three Indochinese countries are victims of aggression. As history shows, they have never invaded China, or Thailand, or any other country. Any problem which may exist between the three countries as a result of historical factors are trivial compared with the historical crimes committed by China and Thailand against them.

The last hundred years in particular show that the three peoples who shared the same fate of being colonized, being the object of aggression, and being the victims of Pol Pot, have united. They have assisted one another in regaining

their respective independence and have helped the Kampuchean people save themselves from genocide under Pol Pot.

The Vietnamese volunteer troops have come to Kampuchea on three occasions, fighting alongside the people there against the colonialists, the imperialists and the genocidal Pol Pot gang, China's henchmen. And they have twice withdrawn from Kampuchea. This time, Vietnam will withdraw all its volunteer troops once the security of the People's Republic of Kampuchea is assured.

The crux of the Kampuchean issue, as well as of the question of peace and stability in Southeast Asia, lies in China's use of Pol Pot and in its collusion with Thailand against the Indochinese countries. In the last war against Vietnam, American GI's led the aggression followed by Thai and South Korean troops. The US was thus clearly the aggressor. Now, however, China hides behind the scene. It uses Pol Pot, a henchman bred and nurtured by China. China is, at present, the

main obstacle to a peaceful solution in Southeast Asia.

.....
Any solution must lead to the termination of the state of affairs in which the Indochinese countries, for the last forty years, have always been the victims of aggression and intervention. It must be replaced by the assurance of a long-lasting peace, respect for the independence and sovereignty of the countries in Southeast Asia and an end to outside interference in their affairs. A solution that favours only one side will neither settle anything nor bring about peace and stability in the region. Such a solution is unacceptable.

The three Indochinese countries are of the view that:

a) The total withdrawal of the Vietnamese volunteer troops from Kampuchea will be carried out concurrently with the total elimination of the threat from China and Chinese use of Pol Pot to try to impede the recovery of the Kampuchean people, and an end to the use of Thai territory against

the Indochinese countries. It must also be accompanied by the disarming of the Polpotists and the punishment of the genocidal Pol Pot criminals. The People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam have decided on yearly partial withdrawals and will effect a total withdrawal once the peace and security of Kampuchea is assured.

b) The Indochinese countries and China shall sign a treaty of non-aggression and non-interference in each other's affairs. The two groups—the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries—shall agree on establishing a zone of peace and stability in Southeast Asia based as ASEAN's ZOPFAN proposal and the proposals of the Indochinese countries.

c) All countries must respect the sovereignty of the Kampuchean people and their right to run their own affairs.

d) The parties shall discuss an international guarantee for the agreements to be reached."

WATER CONSERVANCY: SITUATION AND TASKS

Water conservancy is a very hard battle of man against nature. Even in developed countries drought and flood are permanent threats.

Understandably, water conservancy will remain for a long time a very arduous and complicated task in Vietnam, an agricultural country.

One of the foremost economic targets set at the 5th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam is to build, within the framework of three five-year plans, enough irrigation and drainage facilities for at least 10 million

hectares of cultivated land bearing two crops a year.

Generally speaking, water conservancy must serve the development of agriculture and the fight against floods and storms. It must protect production, supply water for agriculture and the people's life, and regulate the use of hydraulic energy. However, in the conditions of Vietnam, in the eighties, along with "concentrating on boosting agriculture, considered to be the foremost front, and taking it one step forward toward large-scale socialist production", the

prevention and fight against floods and storms remain a crucial task calling for our special attention.

By 1980 we had built water conservancy works serving 2.2 million hectares of cropland. This was a major achievement of which we can be proud. However, they cover only 37% of our 6 million hectares of cultivated land.

Even the Red River delta, which leads the whole country in the field of irrigation, with almost 90% of its farmland served by irrigation works, is still handicapped by deficient drainage systems.

The Mekong River delta, the key food producing area of the country, has only 20% of its present cropland served by irrigation works. This percentage would be even lower if account is taken of potential agricultural land. More than 1.4 million hectares are submerged in the rainy season, and more than one million hectares seriously suffer from soil acidity. In the dry season, as much as 1.3 million hectares are affected by salt water.

In the mountain regions of northern Vietnam, the irrigation works can water only 28% of the tilled land and this proportion would be even lower if account is taken of potential agricultural land.

In the northern uplands the irrigated area accounts for 60% of the cultivated land but many fields still lack drainage facilities.

In the northern part of central Vietnam, the present irrigation systems can serve only 55% of the farmland. Most of the drainage systems have not yet been completed.

In the coastal areas of central Vietnam, irrigation has expanded quickly since liberation. Yet, the irrigated area occupies only 28% of the total cultivated land. Flood remains a permanent threat. In the Central Highlands which has millions of hectares of potentially cultivable land, the tilled area covers less than 300,000 hectares, of which only 30,000 hectares of the ricefields are irrigated since most of the existing irrigation and drainage facilities are for industrial crops such as coffee and tea.

In the eastern part of southern Vietnam, only 15% of the farmland is irrigated. The existing reservoirs have to reserve a large portion of their water for industrial production. Party General Secretary Le Duan once said: "The more industrialization is stepped up, the more we shall have to develop water conservancy and the better use we should make of our water resources in order to serve the various branches of our national economy."

As is the rule with any development program, small and easy-to-build works are erected first. The water conservancy projects to

be built in the years ahead will be more complicated technically and will require bigger investments than those already in existence.

Even the areas already equipped with irrigation and drainage facilities are facing problems. We must improve our managerial work in order to make better use of them, upgrade and consolidate them, and maintain them in good repair. We must also increase our investments in order to upgrade the existing projects, expand their capacity and step by step increase their efficiency. Water conservancy must be closely associated with production, with the economy as a whole, hence the building of water conservancy works must always proceed from both the needs of economic development and our own construction capabilities.

On the other hand, technico-economic norms which meet the requirements of a given period may become obsolete when the economy has reached a higher level: new techniques are then required together with bigger investments. Not surprisingly, the capacity of a number of irrigation and drainage projects no longer meet the growing needs of new crops and new plant species.

Neither should we neglect the newly opened lands and the lands newly formed by the alluvium of the Red and Mekong rivers. We must build new irrigation works if we want to put new lands under crops, such as the long-standing experience of our people.

At the same time, effective protection against floods remains a primary concern. The systems of dykes in the North and the northern part of central Vietnam, built centuries ago, remain our main assets in this domain. However, the dykes in the North can withstand only floods of less than 13.3 metres in Hanoi and 6.5 metres at Pha Lai, whereas big floods of the Red and Thai Binh rivers have been known to surpass these levels, and flood diversion measures have had to be taken on many occasions. Many areas of the country are still annually submerged by flood waters.

In future, the fight against floods will be less difficult after the completion of the Hoa Binh hydroelectric project on the Da river. But this does not mean the definite elimination of all threats of inundation of the delta area in the North. Besides nobody can be certain that flood levels will not be higher than have been recorded so far. This is because of the continued indiscriminate deforestation and the building of new works along the main rivers, which may constitute obstacles to the flow of water. To lessen this threat, we shall have to build more flood-control projects on the Red, Lo, Da, and other major rivers, along with actively applying support measures such as afforestation, regulation of the river flow, continued consolidation and protection of the dyke systems.

Our sea dyke systems are, on the whole, weak and cannot withstand sea waves caused by storms with wind velocity upwards of 100 kilometres per hour.

We will strive to extend the irrigated area to 4.5 million hectares of food crops and 530,000 hectares of subsidiary and industrial crops by 1985.

In the immediate future, we shall have to concentrate on consolidating and improving the management and use of the existing irrigation projects while stepping up the building of those already started in order to complete them at an early date and in a well-coordinated way. As regards the existing systems we must pay constant attention to the consolidation and rational exploitation of both the main and auxiliary projects and their ramifications. In the field of management, we must quickly shift from the subsidy-based bureaucratic system to economic accounting.

As regards the new projects, we must rely on basic surveys conducted in different economic zones, and on careful economic and technical calculations in order to take optimum options. Once the plans are adopted, we must combine the efforts of the State and the population, especially in building medium and small-sized projects with

WATER CONSERVATION AND CONTROL IN THE MEKONG DELTA

Recently a conference on water conservation and control was convened in Dong Thap by the Council of Ministers, at which a review was made of past achievements and plans worked out for 1984—85 and 1986—90.

Following the liberation of the South, the Ministry of Water Conservancy has been working jointly with the provincial administrations to establish an overall plan for irrigation and drainage in connection with the six zones of development envisaged by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Mekong delta was divided into 18 major regions, 32 minor ones and 119 sectors, for the purpose of water conservation and control. Fourteen projects for the irrigation and drainage of 550,000 hectares have been worked out by the Ministry, five of them will be completed by the end of this year.

the prime objective of serving high-yield rice areas, increasing the number of crops planted in a year, and expanding the cultivated areas wherever possible. At the same time, we must give due consideration to supplying water to important industrial projects.

With regard to protection against floods and storms under the 1981—1985 plan, we must pay due attention to the flood regime and take into account our economic potentials in each region as well as our technical capabilities.

In the five years from 1976 to 1980, the following work was done by the Ministry in cooperation with the regional authorities: digging of 75 large channels and hundreds of small ones for irrigation, drainage and washing of aluminous soil; building and consolidation of 14 protective systems against invasion by salt water and 5 flood-prevention ones; construction of 85 electric-powered medium and small-sized pumping stations, whose action is reinforced by 2,500 diesel-powered pumps and 300 boat-based pumps. In the three years from 1981 to 1983, the State invested 523.5 million *dong* for water conservation and control: digging and dredging of channels, building of large-sized sluices against the action of salt water... The aim was to wash acid and saline soil and bring fresh water to Dong Thap Muoi and other regions in Tien Giang and Long An, and to prevent damage by salt water to regions in Ben Tre and Hau Giang.

Acting upon the motto "Parallel efforts by the State and the people" the populations in nine provinces of the Mekong delta over the same period devoted 34 million work-days to water conservation and control.

Fresh water has been brought to 600,000 hectares of land; 330,000 hectares of acid and saline soil have been washed; damage by early floods has been checked for 150,000 hectares planted with summer—autumn rice; salt water has been kept away from 660,000 hectares; 130,000 hectares have been watered by electric-powered pumping stations, and another 450,000 hectares by diesel-powered pumps

In the northern Vietnam delta and the northern part of central Vietnam, it is essential to consolidate the existing river and sea dykes. We must constantly strengthen the dykes, dredge the river beds, and protect the river ports and landing stages. We must have a well-organized flood-fighting force to cope with all contingencies.

In the mountain areas in central Vietnam and in the eastern part of southern Vietnam our main concern shall remain how to effectively protect the people's life and

and small irrigation projects. This year in spite of prolonged spells of drought resulting in the water level in the Tien (Mekong) and Hau (Bassac) rivers being kept very low, it has been possible thanks to the irrigation facilities so far built to ensure enough water for 357,000 hectares planted with winter-spring rice and 438,000 hectares sown with summer-autumn rice.

In 1984—85 and the years from 1986 to 1990, investments will be concentrated on medium- and small-sized water conservation projects, especially those on the surface of the fields and the network of channels, with a view to crop multiplication and intensive cultivation. The network of electric- and diesel-powered pumps will be extended while the most will be made of irrigation by gravity. In the rainy season, water will be stored in reservoirs for use in the dry season. With regard to the larger projects now under way, investments will be continued so that by the beginning of the 1986—90 Five-Year Plan, 150,000 more hectares of land can be planted with winter—spring rice, 90,000 more with summer—autumn rice and 150,000 more with high-yield autumn rice, leading to a sharp increase in food grain production in the Mekong delta in subsequent years.

Besides rice, other crops will receive full attention: half a million more hectares will be planted with pineapple; 100,000 hectares with sugar cane and other cash crops: pulse, sesame, tobacco, banana, chili. Animal husbandry will also be promoted along with fishing and fish breeding.

adapt to the flood regime of the rivers. Meanwhile, we must plant more trees and take good care of the head-water forests.

In the Mekong delta, in the immediate future, we must pay greater attention to the protection of summer-autumn rice against early floods, and organize production activities and life suitably while yearly inundation still affects large parts of the region.

NGUYEN CANH DINH
Minister of Water Conservancy

Sandwiched between the Ba Lai and Ham Luong rivers¹, Ba Tri — a coastal district of Ben Tre province — is crisscrossed by a large number of canals. With a total length of 19 km, these canals serve as a drainage and irrigation network for 5,000 hectares of rice-fields.

However, these rivers and canals can only provide enough fresh water for four or six months during the year. Besides, this dense network of canals allows the tide to penetrate deep into the hinterland, rendering two-thirds of the cultivable land aluminous and saline, especially in the coastal communes and those lying along the Ba Lai river. In the past, Ba Tri grew only one crop a year, its yield being very precarious and low, and in some years reaching only 1.2 tonnes per hectare.

After liberation, Ba Tri quickly defined its economic structure, which was to comprise agriculture-fishery-small industry and handicrafts. From then on, the district directed all branches of activity and all administrative echelons to concentrate their efforts on developing agriculture. In this endeavour water-conservation was given top priority along with the expansion of the tilled areas, the promotion of intensive farming and crop multiplication. In order to fulfill the agricultural target for 1983 with a total area of cultivable land of 17,714 hectares the district has decided to achieve an aggregate sown area of 25,194 hectares for two crops each year, producing 54,000 tonnes of food grain (paddy and equivalent). Ba Tri is facing many difficulties: there are few technical cadres; teams specialized in irrigation are not yet organized, and water conservation is still a novelty to the local population.

Relying on the people, the local authorities put forward this motto: "Let the State and the people pool their efforts" in building irrigation works. In a short period tens of thousands of persons were mustered for building irrigation projects with investments of 500,000 *dong* and upward such as the Chinh A canal which is 18 km long and waters 8,000 hectares of cropland in the western part of the district. Two electric pumping stations at Phu Ngai and Giong Trom have also been built.

In the past two years (1981 — 1982), 5 canals for irrigation and

two for drainage were dug; two medium-sized regulatory sluiceways and two large ones for drainage, 51 small-sized ones and 8 concrete bridges were built... costing more than 2.2 million *dong*, of which 1.1 million *dong* were contributed by the people together with 855,277 work-days to move 729,842 cubic metres of earth.

Along with building medium-sized irrigation works, the district also guided people in all the communes to build small-sized ones to water their own fields without having to rely on larger projects of the district. They were encouraged to dig and dredge canals, re-arrange their fields and build embankments to facilitate drainage and irrigation, and the prevention of salt water penetration. A plan was worked out for the commune to help one another to build a homogeneous irrigation system. As a result, 166 new canals were dug, 190 old ones totalling 9,698 metres dredged, and 79,732 metres of embankments

water and water-logging for 330 hectares of cropland of the three hamlets of Vinh Hoi, Duc Dong and Bao Hoa, making it possible for them to grow two crops a year with an average yield of 2.8 tonnes per hectare per crop. In eight consecutive years, Vinh Hoa has fulfilled its food-delivery obligations to the State. The collective farmers' living conditions have been improved and they feel more closely attached to the collective. Thank to its achievements in irrigation work Vinh Hoa has become a prosperous commune held up as model in Ba Tri district.

The water-conservation movement has brought about encouraging successes. Famine and food shortage are now things of the past. Gone are the days when people had to leave their villages by boat to U Minh for a living.

Total rice output in 1982 increased by 5,544 tonnes over 1980, and the average rice-yield increase in 1982 was 8.7 quintals per hectare of cultivated land over 1980.

WATER CONSERVANCY IN BA TRI DISTRICT

built to stop salt water with 1.9 million work-days contributed by the people and 1.9 million cubic metres of earth moved.

Vinh Hoa commune, for example, has 865 hectares of aluminous and saline land. Before liberation it could grow only one crop a year with very low yield. After agricultural reform was completed, 17 production collectives including 1,325 families (92.9% of the peasants) were set up. Land and other means of production were collectivized. In 1981 and 1982, the people of Vinh Hoa contributed more than 151,747 *dong*, built 12 large and small-sized sluiceways and four bridges, dug 20 irrigation canals (8,040 metres) and four drainage canals (5,470 metres), and built 2,254 metres of dykes against salt

In the 1983 summer-autumn crop, Ba Tri grew 6,000 hectares of rice with an average yield of 35 quintals per hectare. Early this year, 547,286 farmers from the 17 communes and townships of the district were mobilized for irrigation work.

The whole district has concentrated on this task. 45 new canals have been dug: 158,569 work-days have been contributed to move 162,518 cubic metres of earth; and 122 old canals have been dredged... Ba Tri has overfulfilled its 1983 targets for irrigation work by 15% in the first six months of this year. It is the standard bearer of Ben Tre province in water-conservation work.

1. Two branches of the Mekong river.

VAN THINH

MINH HAI PROVINCE: PROSPECTS FOR 1990

(Excerpts from an address by Vo Van Kiet, CPV Political Bureau member and President of the State Planning Commission, to the 3rd Congress, 2nd round, of the Minh Hai provincial Party branch).

A look at a map will give an idea of the economic assets of Minh Hai. No other province in Vietnam enjoys such favourable geographical conditions. This province lies in a plain bordered on three sides by the sea, its soil is enriched year after year by alluvial deposits. Compared with only a few dozen years ago, incredibly swift changes have happened. Rach Tau hamlet no longer lies at the southern tip of our country. An hour's travel by boat is now needed to reach the new southernmost settlement, which our compatriots usually call Ap Mui (Tip Hamlet). Each new Ap Mui will in turn be left behind to become part of the hinterland as new strips of foreshore are formed.

By its geographical position, Minh Hai enjoys generally stable climatic conditions, favourable to crop cultivation, animal husbandry and exploitation of sea products. According to preliminary investigations, Minh Hai has 470,000 hectares of arable land, occupying two-thirds of its natural area. The rest is composed of forest land, ponds, canals and ditches. It is bordered on 307 kilometres by the sea, thus making inshore fishing possible on 200,000 hectares. It has large potentialities for the development of its agriculture, fish-farming and forest exploitation. This is the

basis from which to boost its industry to the advantage of its agricultural production and sea fishing and of the processing industry as well, chiefly food processing.

Agriculture — One Tonne of Rice Per Capita

Minh Hai farms only 390,000 hectares of land. The remaining 180,000 hectares are waiting to be exploited. Hence the necessity to clear new land for growing those crops and rearing those animals that are judged best suited to each region and that do not require large material and financial investments. In 1982 the province planted 308,000 hectares of land with food crops (287,000 hectares with rice). According to our studies, the acreage of ricefields can be brought up to 300,000 hectares. In the next two years, if Minh Hai maintains its rice-producing area at this level, if it practises intensive culture for the 10th-month rice crop while enlarging the acreage of its summer-autumn crop (only 20,000 hectares at present) and arranging high-yield rice-fields, its rice production may reach 1.8—2 million tonnes a year (with yields of 5 tonnes/hectare). At present, in some regions, yields of 7 tonnes/hectare are got for the 10th-month crop and up to 12 tonnes for the summer-

autumn crop. Compared with the rate of progress in other provinces of the Mekong delta in the last few years, this is a performance within the reach of Minh Hai if it devotes its efforts to the building of small irrigation works, improvement of farming methods, introduction of appropriate strains, renovation of the irrigation network (chiefly the canal system bringing fresh water from the Hau river), intensification of the use of fertilizers and draught force... With a population reckoned at 1.5 million in 1985 (1.8 million in 1990), with a stable rice production, Minh Hai bids fair to become the first province in the country to obtain annually one tonne of rice per head of population.

Pig Bearing

At present, Minh Hai has over 300,000 pigs, or about one pig per hectare of ricefield. The province plans to raise this number to 600,000 by 1985 and one million by 1990. Pig rearing is now practised by 210,000 peasant households. By 1985 Minh Hai will have 1.5 million ducks or 5 ducks per hectare of ricefield. From 50,000 buffaloes at present (35,000 draught buffaloes to till 100,000 hectares of ricefields) by 1990 this herd will have grown to 100,000 head (part of which obtained by cross-breeding with Indian milch buffaloes). Its target is to have one buffalo per hectare of cropland. This herd will give a considerable quantity of by-products (leather, horn, manure).

Industrial Crops

Minh Hai cannot expect to make swift progress if it practises rice monocultivation and no change is wrought in the structure of its crops. It has now 1.2 million coconut palms. By considering this tree as a main industrial crop and reserving for it all available land along the seaside (for concentrated plantation) near dwelling houses, and along the banks of rivers and canals, by 1984 Minh Hai will have grown 10 million coconut palms, (covering an area of 60,000 hectares, the target set by Ben Tre province for 1985). This tree brings unequalled economic returns. Everything in it is usable: pulp, shell and coir of its fruit; trunk; leaves, which are used in the making of many kinds of articles. A young coconut palm starts bearing fruit when it is four years old. After ten years it will produce fifty fruits a year. The ten million coconut palms to be grown in Minh Hai will give annually 500 million fruit, valued at 2.5 million dong (at present-day prices and without any preliminary processing). This is equivalent to half a million tonnes of rice (it is estimated that a coconut equals a kilogram of rice in value). It must be pointed out that the production of half a million tonnes of rice would require the exploitation of 100,000 hectares of ricefields involving money and labour expenditures superior to those needed for the growing of 60,000 hectares of coconut palms.

Jute and Chinese nettle are the next industrial crops worthy of our attention. They are only newcomers to the province but they are favoured by soil conditions and may become important crops. At present we spend big amounts of foreign currency for the import of gunny bags. In future, if Minh Hai can grow 10,000 hectares of jute and nettle with an annual production of 1—1.5 tonnes of dry fibre

per hectare, it will have a source of raw materials sufficient for making over 10 million bags valued at 15 million dollars (an imported gunny bag costs 1.5 dollars, including freight charges). Minh Hai will thus contribute to the satisfaction of its requirement in grain sacks. Jute and Chinese nettle can also be used in the making of rugs for export. One of the immediate as well as long-term tasks of the province is to produce sugar for local consumption and for the making of sweets, cakes, alcohol and paper pulp. In order to provide each inhabitant with 10 kilograms of powdered sugar per year it will be necessary for Minh Hai to grow 10,000 hectares of sugar cane, a figure not beyond its reach.

Let's mention among other industrial crops suited to conditions in Minh Hai: pineapple which may be grown in many regions in the province (Hong Dan, Phuoc Long, Thai Binh); rush for mat making in regions of brackish water such as Tan Duyet, Tan Thanh, Thoi Binh; cashew, castor oil plant, soya grown on over 3,000 hectares, in rotation with rice, and finally fruit trees, closely linked to the development of the family economy.

Sea Products

Next to crop cultivation and animal husbandry, the second asset of Minh Hai is its sea products. It enjoys more favourable conditions than any other provinces for fish rearing. But exploitation still depends essentially on the whims of nature. It is now time for Minh Hai to seek to turn to account its water resources. A good start is the rearing of fresh-water fish (in submerged fields, ponds, canals and ditches), an important source of animal protein. It is necessary to develop the rearing of fish, eels, tortoises and snakes; to introduce

scientific and technical methods; to apply strict regulations to fishing (in order to protect fish particularly in the spawning season) and to forbid poaching; to launch a mass movement for the digging of fish ponds by individual families. Fish rearing and well-regulated fishing in ricefields will supply large quantities of food and enable Minh Hai to improve the diet of its inhabitants and develop its export trade. For the raising of shrimps it will reserve 40,000 hectares in 1985 and 60,000 hectares in 1990 in areas of brackish and salt water (not including rivers, ditches and mangroves). Shrimp rearing does not require big investments. With an average yield of 0.4—0.5 tonne per hectare (0.6—0.7 tonne in some regions), production of shrimps in the province will attain 18,000—20,000 tonnes by 1985 and 25,000—30,000 tonnes by 1990, and bring 20 million dollars' profit a year.

Simultaneously, river fishing of shrimps must be developed. Minh Hai will be thus in a position to obtain 100,000 tonnes of shrimps by 1985 and 150,000 tonnes by 1990. Also in this respect, it is necessary to take adequate measures to prevent poaching chiefly in the spawning period.

The setting up of companies or consortia for the rearing of shrimps (provided with experimental plots for fishing and fish processing with a view to exploitation on a large scale) is being studied.

The catch of sea fish and fresh-water fish in Minh Hai is estimated at 120,000 tonnes a year. Formerly Bac Lieu was well known for its salt marshes. The supply of kitchen salt to the population in the Mekong delta and that of salt to the fish and shrimp and fish sauce processing enterprises will require a yearly production of 150,000 tonnes, that is the output of 5,000 hectares

of salt marshes. At present Minh Hai has only 1,000 hectares.

Forest Resources

The third trumpcard of Minh Hai is its forests. The U Minh forest, the mangroves and forest land cover nearly 200,000 hectares, or more than one-quarter of the total area of the province. The forests of cajuputs, from which a medicinal oil is extracted (in these submerged forests brackish and freshwater fish can be reared), the mangroves which are suitable for fish and shrimp breeding, and the mam forests — all these supply timber, charcoal and raw materials for the making of paper and plywood. In the cajuput forests bees can also be raised for honey. It is imperative to take efficient measures to protect these forests and to prevent forest fires. It is necessary to study the implementation of the Party Central Committee resolution on handing over the management of forests to the local authorities and population, and the sharing of responsibilities between the communes, districts and forestry services. Only in this way can we check the destruction of forests and restore them so that in the eighties, we may have 80,000 hectares of cajuput forests and 100,000 hectares of mangroves. For this purpose a mass mobilization movement is needed.

Industrialization

Of all the provinces in Nam Bo, only Kien Giang can match Minh Hai for economic potentialities. The exploitation of these potentialities will not require big financial and scientific-technical investments even when taking into account its low level of water resource management. As in all provinces in the Mekong delta, in Minh Hai the average figure of workdays per farmer is low, about 100 days a year. Thus

the main problem for it is not to call for additional manpower from other localities but to work out a plan for a rational use of the labour of its 569,000 working-age people.

How, in the present conditions of the province, to carry out socialist industrialization, the central task in the period of transition to socialism? The first steps must be made with due regard to the economic particularities of the province and full use of its abundant resources in agriculture, pisciculture and silviculture.

Minh Hai has since long reached the level of commercialized agricultural production, chiefly with regard to rice, and shrimp. However, up to the present time, it cannot be considered as truly prosperous because the aggregate value of its products is based on their value as food and because those agricultural products are consumed as such, without any preliminary processing.

At present, Minh Hai is one of the provinces that lag far behind the others in the industrial field. The total value of its industrial output in 1982 was only 148 million dong, a paltry figure. Of this value, State industry accounted for only 29 million dong; group A industries 23.6 million; construction industry 9 million. Even the part of the food-processing industry was only 109 million (the largest portion in total value of industrial output of the province).

Apart from some obsolete power generators, rice-mills, cold-storage depots, small mechanical repair workshops, soap works and saw-mills, the material and technical bases of the province are insignificant. Thus, to gradually equip this province so as to enable it to satisfy the requirements of its industrialization is an essential step in the establishment of its material bases. Without industry, agricul-

ture cannot make headway. That is why from the outset it is necessary to build an agricultural-industrial structure. The goal of industry is to serve agricultural production, the most important task being to supply it with technical equipment, the key to high productivity. Industry (including cottage industry and handicrafts) must first solve the problem of equipment and tools: hand tools, improved tools of all kinds, semi-mechanized and mechanized implements. Then by observing selected priorities, it must see to the mechanization of some links in the chain of agricultural production — preparation of the soil, harvesting — so as to keep pace with the cultivation calendar and free the farmers from backbreaking toil. This is an important factor leading to increased productivity.

Besides, industry in Minh Hai must aim at serving fishing (fresh water and sea fishing). Agriculture and fishing cannot develop in the absence of a proper processing industry, in which cold-storage techniques play an important role. Fishery will strive to meet the needs of both home consumption and export.

In the formation of an agricultural-industrial structure, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the establishment of relations of cooperation in the production and supply of materials and to include Minh Hai in a network of inter-relation between various regions, particularly with Ho Chi Minh City. What industrial line should it develop? With what branches should it cooperate? What products should it consume in the long run and what are the regions with which it should cooperate? Such are the questions over which we must ponder. At present what matters is to elaborate an economic-technical plan for

each crop, each animal and the processing branches concerned, and a yearly plan of investment as well. One must keep an equilibrium between the supply of raw materials and the possibilities of production; avoid the building of factories which have to close their doors almost immediately after their construction; see to the combination of small, medium and large sized units, and that of industry with cottage industry and handicrafts.

One must apply the principle of pooling the efforts of the State and the population, with a view to increasing the participation of the State and securing high economic efficiency.

Minh Hai is a province which lags far behind others in land transport and communications. The length of its metalled roads does not exceed 100 kilometres, many sections are in bad repair; the bridges on the national roads must be repaired or replaced. To go from Ca Mau to the southern part of the province, from Bac Lieu to the western districts one cannot use the roads. About ten districts are linked to the provincial capital only by waterways. To go from this capital to Nam Can or Song Doc, one has to travel by boat. Communication between the districts and communes is a ticklish problem. Means of transport, both land and water, are lacking or too slow. This is a great handicap for the development of Minh Hai with regard to the circulation of goods and people, maintenance of public order, cultural exchanges, redistribution of population in the province.

Apart from the future construction of a prolongation of National Road 1 as far as Nam Can, the State cannot spend more money on Minh Hai's other requirements. But why should the province stay idle and merely wait for the State to give it the materials it needs to build roads linking its isolated region? Why can't it build these roads by itself? At the last provincial congress, a resolution was adopted entrusting its administration with the task of building roads to join districts to communes and communes to hamlets. Why has this building work not been done, even partly? This proves that the province does not know how to work out a plan to solve this vital problem and how to rely on the masses to execute it.

Improvement of Living Conditions

From the figures on average per capita consumption of rice, meat, fish... one would deduce that the inhabitants of Minh Hai enjoy quite high living standards. Yet, poverty and backwardness still prevail in many regions. Many families are short of rice or have only a diet of fish brine and salt besides rice all the year round. Here and there one would see ramshackle huts and people clothed in rags. In the countryside houses are only lit by paraffin lamps. Exploitation of farm-hands and usury are rampant. A great number of peasants have no land and many people are jobless or have no adequate means of living. In urban centres, many public servants and workers are reduced to low living standards. This is an abnormal situation as

Minh Hai is in its eighth year after liberation. Frankly speaking, this situation is unacceptable.

At present Minh Hai is one of the most backward provinces in the cultural field. A visit to its two main towns will give an idea of this state of things. Disorder prevails in the streets and the houses. In the countryside the norms of collective hygiene are not observed. Public utility works are insignificant. Illiteracy has not been eliminated. The number of secondary-school pupils in the province is only half that of Cai Be district (Tien Giang province). The artistic and cultural movement as well as sports activities leave much room for improvement. The number of cadres working in the scientific, literary and artistic fields and those with a post-graduate education are insignificant; no policy encourages scientific workers to remain in the province and work, and no attention is paid to using them rationally and training new college graduates. This gap is not to be bridged before long in the present social and economic situation of Minh Hai.

All communists feel anxious about this sluggishness, which can only be attributed to a lack of consciousness and sense of responsibility, the more so since Minh Hai was a solid resistance base in the last two wars. The overwhelming majority of the population live in the countryside where there is plenty of land, but many people have no land even to build their houses; some of them are reduced to being vagrants.

In the near future, each family must have a plot of land, a garden and a fish pond. The people must

abide by the zoning plan and avoid the anarchic building of dwelling houses. Minh Hai is known for the immensity of its territory but the urban centres are narrow, crowded and look like clusters of small traders. Changes should be wrought in the very conception of living. Besides the needs for food, clothing and housing, there are other requirements such as travel, study, health care, recreation, which should also be attended to. Sending all school-age children to school calls for the solution of many problems such as getting enough classrooms, furniture, school requisites, teaching personnel. The state of bad repair of the roads is an obstacle for tens of thousands of children to go to school. The key to this problem is to adopt measures reflecting our concern for the welfare of the masses. In this respect, why don't we launch, say, a movement for the planting of shade trees in urban centres, or a campaign in favour of hygiene, physical education and sports, cultural and artistic activities, in short a healthy way of life?

Besides the fulfilment of its task of delivering food grain to the State (which it discharges satisfactorily), little improvement is observed in Minh Hai in the circulation and distribution of goods, due to the inaction of the branches concerned, chiefly the State trade services. These services have withdrawn from the battlefield, which is the market, and neglected their duty to the consumers, first of all the toiling masses. Recently there has appeared a new negative phenomenon: instead of fighting against the shady transactions of

the small traders, our trade service and other economic branches have simply taken advantage of the law of supply and demand and sought to earn profits, showing intolerable short-sightedness. This has resulted in such incredible acts as the selling of State-owned goods through the agency of private traders. To boost production and improve the people's life, the new Party committee of Minh Hai province should study the situation in the circulation and distribution of goods and take adequate measures to improve it.

Prospects for 1990

The targets for 1990 are: 2 million tonnes of food grain, 1 million pigs, 100,000 buffaloes, 1.5 million ducks, 150,000 tonnes of shrimps (reared or caught), over 10 million coconut palms, 10,000 hectares of jute, 10,000 hectares of pineapple, 10,000 hectares of sugar cane, 150,000 tonnes of salt, 200,000 hectares of forests. Is this an over optimistic forecast? Have we underrated the difficulties which the province will face, considering the present weakness of its material and technical bases, the great dependence of its agriculture on natural conditions, the inefficiency of our managerial system, from the central to the grassroots level, the obstacles raised by anachronistic regulations and policies? No, and we say this without claiming that Minh Hai may change overnight. In this respect we can quote these words of Fidel Castro: "He who is not a bit romantic is not a communist, provided that this romanticism does not go beyond the limits set by realities."

We must point out that Minh Hai is better placed than any other

province in finding a solution to the food problem for its population. It can even help solve this problem for the whole country, by striving to raise the people's living standards, achieve enlarged agricultural reproduction, step up the exploitation of sea products, develop other trades and crafts, and chiefly accumulate funds for industrialization.

Socialist Transformations

The development of Minh Hai depends largely on the transformation of its economy. In the present conditions, waste is appalling. Hence the efforts by parasitic and exploiter forces to maintain themselves in existence. It is easy to understand that they are engendering forces opposed to our regime.

In Minh Hai, the transformation of agriculture, industry and trade is slow. By the end of 1982, only 10% of the farmland had been collectivized. A large number of cottage industry and handicraft units, rice mills, mechanical repair workshops, service trades and small businesses belong to private owners. The same with the sea-product sector, a strategically important line of activity in the province: in fact, of the 34,000 tonnes of sea products caught in the first half of 1983, the State was able to collect only 16,000 tonnes. Individual traders hold control over the totality of vegetables, fruit and fresh-water fish. In the countryside, social differentiation is more and more visible. If this situation were allowed to go, soon the rich peasants would seize control of agricultural production with the assistance of the capitalist traders who would lay hands on many

sectors of the national economy. This is a burning question.

It is not the necessity but the ways of carrying out the transformation of industry, trade and agriculture that is subject to discussion, as they have an influence on production. We must settle a problem which has since long become a kind of fatality: as soon as it is put under State management, a branch will prove to be less efficiently than when it was managed by a collective; while other branches, managed by collectives, prove to be inferior to those under private management. In trade, the personnel of State shops are less dynamic and less courteous to customers than private traders. The sale of goods is complicated by many regulations which compel customers to stand in queue and waste their time. We must take ourselves to task for such a style of work. When we forbid private traders to engage in a business which relates to the welfare of the people, we must be prepared to replace them and do it better than they can do. In the past, it was the doings of some branches of the State economic sector that brought discredit on this sector.

Security and National Defence

Bordered by the sea, Minh Hai occupies an important strategic position which requires constant vigilance against the attempts at sabotage and infiltration by the enemy. What matters first is the integrity of the provincial administration, the correctness of our directives and their implementation, the establishment of close contact with the masses, including the

minority people and religious sects in the province. Order and security can be maintained in Minh Hai only with the help of widespread mass mobilization. In this respect we must not resort to "noisy" propaganda but carry out effective measures. Our attitude is not to hold the enemy responsible for any manifestation of popular discontent, as this means to overestimate him and lead him to believe that he can do anything he likes —, but to analyse the causes of this discontent and try to find and correct our part of responsibility in it.

If the provincial Party committee, the administration, police, army and mass organizations work well, and the people's material and cultural life is improved, we should be able to check all harmful actions of the enemy. We should be able to crack down hard on the reactionaries, saboteurs and ruffians. Nothing will contribute better to restoring confidence of the 1.3 million people of the province (including the 200,000 new settlers from Ha Nam Ninh) than the initiative of the new provincial Party committee to courageously admit and analyse its shortcomings in public. The success of this congress will not depend on the resounding reports of the delegates or on the resolutions taken... Those who will turn the spirit of this congress into reality are our cadres and Party members, who will have occasion to show whether the preoccupations of the congress are their own, or whether they are only "for show". The rectification of errors should not be an abstract concept but concrete action. The masses can easily see if the Party

committee has really improved. Today all activities of our Party — a party in power — should not be carried out in secret, without the knowledge of the masses. We must act in such a way as to demonstrate that our words are matched by our deeds, that Party resolutions are translated into action, that Party policies are strictly implemented.

Mostly sprung from the peasantry and steeled in the crucible of the national democratic revolution and the armed struggle, the members of the provincial Party committee have only recently begun to deal with economic questions and social management. That is why though encouragement is given to the spirit of self-reliance and innovation (dare to think and dare to act), we must guard against voluntarism. We must take into consideration the objective conditions, the laws of economic and social development in a region where non-collectivized agricultural production still predominates; we must apply science and technology, meet the requirements of cultural life and enforce socialist democracy. Many of our comrades will easily fall into empiricism; they equate the ability to wage armed struggle with the capacity to solve social problems, and many easily yield to complacency and self-satisfaction. The Party committee must particularly stress the necessity of study, seek to raise the cultural standards of its cadres, give them a vision that extends far beyond the boundaries of this province and teach them an industrial style of work made up of such factors as diligence, accuracy and reflection.

LAND REFORMS UNDER BAO DAI AND NGO DINH DIEM

The August Revolution and the Agrarian Question in Nam Bo

In the early fifties, the French colonialists already realized that no puppet regime could last long without the support of peasants, that if the Vietnamese people, the majority of whom were peasants, gave their support to the Communist Party, and were determined to fight for national salvation, it was because they wanted not only independence and freedom, but also land to till—a very deep aspiration. In Nam Bo where the peasants owned only 15 per cent of the land, to own land was also an urgent necessity, despite a developed mercantile economy.

In carrying out the people's democratic revolution, our Party has solved in a creative manner the two closely linked questions. According to old documents, especially Yves Henry's *The Agrarian Economy of Indochina*, the agrarian situation in Nam Bo before the August Revolution can be outlined as follows:

Public land constituted only 3 per cent of the total area. As much as 82 per cent of the total area belonged to landlords and rich peasants. Land-owners with 50 hectares or more made up only one-thousandth of the population, but owned nearly one-half of the cultivated area. In Central Nam Bo, some landlords owned as much as 15,000 hectares, and in Western Nam Bo, even more—

20,000 hectares. These landlords also owned ponds and lakes. Some got one hundred thousand piastres a year from fish sales—a sum equivalent to 2,000 tonnes of rice. A number of them also had rice mills and salt-marshes.

In his report on the situation in Nam Bo from 1946, when the resistance war against the French colonialists broke out, to early 1952, comrade Le Duan made a searching analysis of the process of land grabbing in Nam Bo under the colonial regime.

Land was secured in three different ways: grabbing by the bureaucratic landlords in the service of the French colonialists, chiefly through outright dispossession of the peasants; or with the support of capitalist trading monopolies; or that of the financiers, namely the Land Bank.

Land grabbing by a handful of people meant seizing land owned by peasants in various ways, depriving them of their means of production, and forcing them to work for others. In order to intensify exploitation, make more profit, the exploiter class and their colonial masters not only sought to deprive the majority of peasants of their land, but also prevented them from engaging in handicraft production. In this way, peasants became completely dependent on the landlords and capitalists.

Before the August Revolution, agricultural production in the Mekong delta already had a mer-

cantile character and the rural economy had the features of a trading economy.

The greater part of the rice produced by middle and poor peasants as well as by big land-owners, was for sale. After each harvest, the peasants sold the rice they had produced to pay debts, land rent to the land-owners, and money due to merchants for goods bought on credit. Afterwards, they had to toil again, again ran into debt and bought goods on credit. Only the well-to-do families could keep part of the rice they produced for their own use.

An important part of stockbreeding products was also exported. The fish and shrimps in the ponds and canals—a monopoly of the landlords—were also merchandise controlled by them. Even the fruit grown in the orchards of middle and rich peasants were for sale.

Peasants normally work both for themselves and for others, in a natural process, and a large part of their produce is used to satisfy their own needs. But the peasants of Nam Bo worked either independently or in the service of others, to produce goods. They had to buy almost everything they needed in their daily life. Imperialism and capitalist trade flooded the countryside with goods, creating new needs. Peasants in many places lived like urban people, although their income was very low. This further impoverished them.

Party Secretary-General Le Duan said that this was "a peculiar aspect of rural life in Nam Bo". Peasants were subjected to a triple exploitation: by landlords who monopolized the land, by capitalist trading monopolies, and by financial capitalists who monopolized the loans. This led to the ruin of small farmers and a number of land-owners of lesser influence. And although a most generous nature yielded food in abundance, most peasants in Nam Bo were living in poverty.

Like the rest of the population, peasants saw their life transformed by the August Revolution of 1945, that great event brought to our entire people great enthusiasm and tremendous moral force. But after that reconquest of national independence if we had not carried out a democratic revolution, we would not have created the material conditions, the economic structure needed to sustain and enhance revolutionary enthusiasm, and eventually make further steps ahead. In our country which was threatened by imperialist aggression right after the revolution, the national and democratic revolutionary tasks must be closely linked, in order to ensure complete victory for the revolution.

In Nam Bo, because of the particular situation of the first resistance war, that against the French (1945 — 1954), the agrarian question was resolved earlier than in other parts of the country. After the August Revolution, Saigon and other towns were soon reoccupied by the French, but in the countryside, living conditions were improving. In January 1948, the enlarged conference of the Party Central Committee held in Viet Bac laid down the agrarian policy to be implemented during the resistance. The principal points were those concerning a 25-per cent reduction of land rent, the temporary distribution of land to poor peasants, and equitable sharing of communal lands.

Also during that year, the National Congress of Cadres, convened by the Party Central Committee, discussed the line of anti-feudal struggle during the resistance. Developing the Party's political theses of 1930, and on the basis of a scientific analysis of the situation in the country, the congress set forth the two great tasks of the Vietnamese revolution: the anti-imperialist struggle and the anti-feudal struggle. The resolution adopted at the Congress said:

"In order to eliminate the vestiges of feudalism, develop

agriculture, we must carry out a land reform". But, taking into account the particular situation of our revolution, "the agrarian revolution was to be carried out through reforms. We must gradually reduce exploitation by the native feudal land-owners, without harming the united front against the French colonialist aggressors."

In the light of the above-mentioned resolutions, in July 1949, the resistance government issued decrees on land rent reduction and temporary distribution of land owned by traitors collaborating with the French to poor peasants, and later, decrees on the use of waste land¹ and communal land².

These policies were to be enforced in the whole country, but the particular conditions in each region regarding land ownership, the class structure and the general situation were taken into account.

The revolutionary authorities in Nam Bo received the order to temporarily distribute land in early 1950. In accordance with the spirit of the Party directives and after consulting a congress of peasant representatives in Western Nam Bo, the South Vietnam Party Committee ordered the extension of temporary land distribution to the whole of Nam Bo.

A year later, important results had been obtained. In June 1951, in eleven provinces, except Long Chau Ha from where reports had not been received, 277,000 hectares had been distributed to 341,000 persons. The area allocated to each person varied according to the quality of the soil.

The authorities also declared all debts contracted before the revolution to be annulled. Peasants of Hoa Hao or Cao Dai religion who had been deceived into joining the puppet army also had land reserved for them, so that they might have a means of living when they left enemy ranks to return home.

This humane policy had a great effect. In his report to the Party Central Committee on the situa-

tion in Nam Bo in early 1952, Comrade Le Duan said: "The temporary distribution of land has strongly stimulated the revolutionary movement among peasants, particularly in the provinces of Rach Gia, Bac Lieu, Gia Dinh. The peasants' revolutionary zeal has been enhanced, as seen in the increased production, the building of combat villages, the support given to local armed forces. Members of peasants' associations now attend meetings more regularly, and take part more actively in discussions. At Trung Quan and many other places, the occupation troops, in face of the peasants' determined struggle, must let them work on the fields allocated to them by the revolution, even in places close to French military posts. Even in areas studded with French military posts along roads 15 and 16 the peasants have also asked the revolutionary authorities to give them land to till. Peasant groups, work-exchange groups are developing steadily. In Gia Dinh province, each village has at least two peasant group."

When the resistance war against the French came to an end with the great Dien Bien Phu victory in July 1954, according to still incomplete statistics, 56,500 hectares of land had been distributed to peasants in Nam Bo. This area, together with the land owned by working peasants before the revolution, constituted more than one-half of the total cultivated area in Nam Bo. This greatly strengthened the position of the revolution, and later when new puppets replaced old ones and neo-colonialism replaced old colonialism, the peasants of Nam Bo remained strongly attached to the revolution. All policies of the puppet regime enforced from 1955 onwards with the cooperation and under the guidance of renowned American land reform experts, were only aimed at distorting facts and disparaging this great achievement of

the revolution in the countryside of South Vietnam.

"Decrees on Land Reform" of Bao Dai and Ngo Dinh Diem

When Bao Dai was Chief of State, and Nguyen Van Tam, Prime Minister, under the protective umbrella of the French expeditionary corps, a series of "decrees on land reform" was issued. A few years later, American land reform expert Lajinsky wrote:

"When Prime Minister Nguyen Van Tam goes to the countryside and promises lower land rent, he is doing something desperate, not anything practicable... It is a useless propaganda trick.

"...The real difficulties do not lie in the half-measures too hastily decided upon and never carried out... The most important fact is that the government has no influence in the countryside. Its authority is nominal, even in the areas claimed to be under its control".

Lajinsky had been sent by Michigan University to South Vietnam to help Ngo Dinh Diem carry out a land reform, in an attempt to win the peasants' support.

An interesting thing is that both the French and the Americans had to acknowledge the success of our land reform, which was carried out not only in the liberated areas, but also in the disputed or even enemy-occupied areas. Lajinsky wrote:

"...The awakening of peasants is an inseparable part of the revolutionary ferment which penetrated post-war Asia. No wonder the communists have found in the villages (of Vietnam) the place to realize their political objectives... They control the countryside and have the peasants' support, not only because they call on the people to drive out the French — a deep aspiration of the peasants — but also because they have tackled the agrarian question."

The enemy had to do something in face of the correct revolutionary line." The communists' particular attention to the agrarian question and the peasants' favourable reaction at least contributed to making the government (of Bao Dai) realize that there was a land question, and that it was necessary to do something in this matter".¹

Bao Dai and Nguyen Van Tam did something and failed. Their task was taken over by Ngo Dinh Diem and Lajinsky with some modifications, but they, too, failed.

In 1955 and 1956, Ngo Dinh Diem issued a series of "decrees" pompously called "national land policy". In the fundamental points this policy went no further than that of the French and Bao Dai. There were amendments only regarding details.⁴

In fact, there was a difference. The French and Bao Dai issued their land policy at a moment when the exhausted colonialists could no longer carry it out seriously. The Americans and Ngo Dinh Diem carried out their land policy simultaneously with a most ruthless repression of the people — "campaigns to denounce communists", "to wipe out communists" setting up of "strategic hamlets", "new-life hamlets"... This further exposed the US — Diem scheme to snatch back the fruits of the revolution enjoyed by peasants during nine years of war of resistance against the French. By violent means, Diem took back nearly all the lands that had been distributed to peasants. This further exposed the real nature of the puppet regime, and deepened the peasants' hatred of the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys. And this was also one of the reasons leading to the concerted uprisings in the early sixties.

The contradictions in South Vietnam society under the US — Diem regime became still more acute. The peasants' struggle for independence and freedom and the

safeguarding of their land was intensified, and took varied forms. At the 3rd National Congress of the Party in September 1960, Comrade Le Duan, on behalf of the Central Committee, reported: "In the countryside, the peasant masses have tenaciously struggled against seizure of land during the so-called agrarian reform conducted by the US — Diem regime, against increased land rent and high taxes, against "denunciation of communists", terrorism, military conscription, forced labour to build military bases and "reclaim" land, against the establishment of "prosperity zones". In Western Nam Bo, in the first half of 1959, more than three thousand demonstrations against land seizure took place, many of them gathering from 500 to 700 persons. As a result, tens of thousands of hectares of land have been retained by the peasants, and in some places, they have become owners of the land they till and no longer have to pay rent."

A number of foreign journalists saw the real situation in the Mekong delta in those days. Georges Chaffard, a French author, wrote:

"During the war, in the regions under their control, the Viet Minh applied a policy which was both wise and moderate and won them the support of the peasants without antagonizing land-owners. The land of absentee owners was distributed to peasants. The land-owners who remained and collaborated with the resistance kept their right of ownership, provided that the land rent was noticeably reduced.

"The Diem regime, with many big landlords in its ranks, did not recognize the land reform by the Viet Minh. The absentee owners' land which had been distributed to peasants was taken back and returned to them.

"In case the land-owners had disappeared, the peasants had to go to the village administrative council to sign a new contract of

tenancy, while the area owned by any one person could not exceed 100 hectares.

"But, on the one hand, the peasants opposed what they regarded as a confiscation, and refused to return land to the former owners or to sign new tenancy contracts with the village council, and on the other hand, these landlords who had recovered their land did not comply with the new regulations on fixing rent, and demanded high rent, as in former days.

"For this reason, the countryside saw frequent clashes between the landlords coming to collect rent and the peasants who resisted them with sticks or guns.

"Relying on the influence held by themselves or their acquaintances, the landlords were able to

secure support from the police, and even the army. They returned to the countryside by force.

"This led to uprisings by whole villages against government forces. In their struggle against the regime, the peasants allied themselves with opposition groups of all origins who had taken to the maquis."⁵

This struggle prevented Diem from carrying out his agrarian policy. By discarding the multitude of statistics publicized by the former regime and all the fine labels used to camouflage the realities, we can sum up the facts as follows: The real purpose of the US—Diem regime was to make a survey of the land, to force peasants to return the land distributed to them by the revolu-

tion, to restore the system of land ownership and the privileges of the landlords, fundamentally as in the pre-revolutionary days.

PHAN QUANG

In Our Next Issue:
The Mekong River Delta
Nguyen Van Thieu's
Program of Agricultural
Development and the
Present Situation in
Agriculture

1. *In May 1950.*
2. *In March 1952.*
3. *W. Lajinsky: Land Reform in the Republic of Vietnam.*
4. *Tran Phuong: Agrarian Revolution in Vietnam.*
5. *Georges Chaffard: Indochina, Ten Years of Independence.*

OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Green turtles IN VIETNAM

One genus of large sea turtles, named *Vich* in Vietnamese, is found in large numbers on Vietnamese off-shore islands. Some of these green turtles weigh nearly 100 kg and measure 1.2 metre across. *Vich* is a reptile of great economic value. Its meat tastes like beef, is nutritive and rich in protein, and contains little fat. It has for a long time been used in the making of delicacies. European gourmets greatly appreciate turtle soup. The skin on its limbs gives precious leather; its head is an ingredient of spices. Its carapace—like mollusc shell, mother of pearl, and the shell of hawksbill turtles—is a source of valuable material to be inlaid in wood for the making of ornaments and art objects.

Green turtles lay their eggs on land, but look for their food in the water. Fish, crayfish and small sea creatures and plants, including algae and seaweeds, make up the bulk of their food. Green turtles, having to look for food and escape enemies (various kinds of fishes) while under water, are good swimmers. They can move within a radius of 700-800 nautical miles, some can cover tens of nautical miles

per hour. But like many other species of sea turtles, green turtles live and lay eggs only in certain definite areas. Tropical coral atolls with sand beaches are their preferred places for laying eggs. In spring, summer and early autumn, inhabitants of Vietnamese islands often see many female turtles coming to lay eggs in the sand, while swarms of male turtles look for food in the waters nearby. Turtle eggs are hidden in the sand and hatched in the heat of the sun. The struggle for life has engendered hereditary characters in green turtles as in other species of sea turtles. The eggs hatch in temperatures of about 25-28°C, in summer nights or when the sky is overcast thus hiding them from the view of the turtles' enemies. After coming out of the eggs, the newly-hatched turtles emerge from under the sand. They are then attracted by the sounds of the waves to the sea, or hide in crevices in the rocks. This is the time when birds of prey like sea eagles, hawks and other predatory animals scour the beaches looking for turtle eggs uncovered by strong winds or wa-

ves, and for small turtles hidden in shallow chinks. That is why no more than 0.5% of the small turtles survive despite the turtle's great fecundity (200-400 eggs are laid on the average in a season). Moreover, owing to the development of international tourism, many tropical islands and archipelagoes have rapidly been developed and many large bathing resorts or resting places have been built on formerly deserted islands. As a result, the living and nesting areas of the turtles have quickly shrunk. The ever-increasing demand in the world market for products made from sea turtles also leads to intensive search for turtles. As a result, in many tropical coastal regions the turtle population tends to be reduced.

The coasts of Vietnam provide fairly favourable conditions for green turtles to breed and multiply. Protein-rich marine products such as fish, molluscs, algae, etc. are good food for them. Besides, the Vietnamese sea is not very deep and here the sea turtles, which are not good at self-protection, are not threatened by large predatory fishes like sperm-whales and sharks.

Vietnamese economists, with the help of other scientists, are conducting thorough surveys on green turtles and helping to work out plans for preserving and exploiting this precious product of the sea.

BEFORE THE COMMISSIONING OF AN ELECTRIC POWER STATION

Flowing in parallel lines from the north, the Thuong and Cau rivers join and mingle their waters at the boundary of Ha Bac and Hai Hung provinces, forming the Thai Binh river. Six kilometres downstream, the Thai Binh meets the Duong at a junction called Pha Lai, 60 kilometres from Hanoi as the crow flies. It is there that the construction of a large electric power station is now in full swing, attracting the attention of the whole country.

A Turning Point in the Electrification Program

No electric power station has been built in Vietnam since 1975. The imbalance between the development of energy and the national economy is obvious. The Communist Party and Government of Vietnam have worked out a program for the development of energy in the eighties. Parallel to oil exploration at Vung Tau, the installation of a grid to distribute electric current on a nation wide scale is under way, with the wholehearted assistance of the

Soviet Union. This program includes the construction of the hydro-electric power plants at Hoa Binh in the North, Tri An in the South, and the thermo-electric power plant at Pha Lai.

Tang Van Phuc, Vice-Minister of Electrical Energy, is constantly present at Pha Lai to direct the construction work.

He said: "The Pha Lai thermo-electric power plant will play a decisive role in the formation of a powerful electric grid in the North. The main task in this plan is to build such large-scale works as the hydro-electric power plant at Hoa Binh and the thermo-electric power plant at Pha Lai to increase the capacity of the existing electrical system to install over 1,000 kilometres of high voltage carrier lines and to build a network of local transformers. This program has been successfully carried out up to the present time. We have completed half the work of installing the carrier lines and transformers, and have blocked the flow of the Da river (in the construction of the Hoa Binh hydro-electric power plant). At Pha Lai

we are busily preparing for the commissioning of the first 110,000 kW turbo-generator which is at present the biggest of its kind in Vietnam being equal to one-fourth of the combined capacity of all the electrical installations in the North (with its three turbo-generators totalling a capacity of 150,000 kW, Uong Bi is at present the biggest thermo-electric power plant in the North). The operation of the first turbo-generator at Pha Lai will not only offset the shortage of electric current but help build other electrical installations. As planned, Pha Lai has four 110,000 kW turbo-generators which will successively be put into operation between now and the end of 1986. Then the nationwide electric grid will be strengthened thanks to the construction of the Hoa Binh hydro-electric power plant, which will operate its first turbine early in 1988."

Difficulties and Advantages

Early in 1976, the first Soviet technical experts came to Pha Lai and, with the Vietnamese techni-

ctions, made preliminary investigations of the physical relief of the area. A plan of construction was adopted in Hanoi in July 1977. The Pha Lai electrical installation has a vantage situation as it lies at only some dozen kilometres from the mines of Quang Ninh province and is easily accessible for the transport of coal by rail and waterway; in addition its situation allows easy transmission of electric current to the main industrial centres in the North. Nevertheless, its construction faces great difficulties. The complicated natural features of the land call for careful survey before laying the foundations of the boiler and other buildings; auxiliary industrial bases are lacking in the region and all materials have to be carried from afar. While data were still collected for the blueprint of the project, working against time the Vietnamese workers flattened the hills and removed the small town of Pha Lai to make way for the electrical installation, which occupies 128 hectares.

One of the pioneers at the construction site is Nguyen Ton, who is now Director of Building Company No. 18.

He said: "This hilly region, watered by calm rivers, was then desolate. Nature, though beautiful, was not tamed. The construction of this plant was far beyond our abilities. We have not previously been faced with such a huge task. The operation began on May 17, 1980. Building materials were lacking. Many of them had not yet arrived from the Soviet Union. The order was signed while the blueprint of the plan was not yet

completed. The materials were not supplied in their correct order. But we had to start work, otherwise everything would have to be postponed to the end of 1982. We made slow progress in 1980 and the foundation of the main building was finished only at the end of that year."

The Pha Lai construction site is bustling with over 10,000 workers. The unit tackling the main work is Building Company No. 18 of the Ministry of Civil Construction. The assemblage of equipment and installation of the high voltage line linking Pha Lai to the national grid are in the charge of the Ministry of Electrical Energy. The Ministry of Communications is responsible for the building of a railway line 10 kilometres long and a wharf to unload materials coming from Hai Phong. The slag depot and canal draining waste water were built by the Ministry of Water Conservancy. The army is also taking an active part in this construction; it is building the railway-line linking the coal mines, fifty bridges and thirty big culverts. Twenty-three teams from five Ministries are working at Pha Lai. Independent work units are joined together by economic contracts. This is a new working method used for large construction projects. Over 100 managers and deputy managers of enterprises work at the site, each assuming his own responsibility.

The erection of a 200-metre high chimney was one of the most important works. It was cast with 4,548 cubic metres of iron concrete. Without helicopters, a platform and a 13-tonne iron beam were

raised to the top of the chimney by rudimentary means.

Victor Gratchev, head of the Soviet experts working at Pha Lai, made the following remark:

"This chimney is a splendid achievement, built by Vietnamese workers under the guidance of Vietnamese engineers and with the assistance of Soviet engineers. With its height of 200 metres, it is not simple to construct even according to developed countries' technology, and was seldom seen anywhere fifteen years ago. Its erection at Pha Lai has been completed in five months and eleven days, while in the Soviet Union, a similar construction would require six months."

Thanks to the devoted assistance of the Soviet technicians, the Vietnamese workers have grown in number and maturity. Pha Lai is in fact an important testing ground for them.

Our Address : Pha Lai

Soviet assistance is playing a decisive role in the construction of the Pha Lai electrical installation. All the main building materials are being shipped from Odessa (Soviet Union) to Hai Phong. At Odessa, a dock and a depot have been specially built to receive goods for Pha Lai. All the packages bear the address: "Socialist Republic of Vietnam : Pha Lai."

This is also the address of 310 Soviet experts, workers and technicians, working from dawn to dusk at this construction site at

the side of Vietnamese workers and engineers even in the hottest days of the year.

All problems are solved and all decisions are taken in complete agreement between the responsible cadres. One of their meetings was held on July 27, 1983 with the attendance of representatives of the Ministry of Civil Construction and the Ministry of Electrical Energy from Hanoi, the head of the Soviet experts, Victor Gratchev, and the chief engineers and heads of departments concerned. The meeting reviewed the preparation for the testing of the auxiliary furnace — an important event at the construction site — on the result of which will depend the generating of electricity by the Pha Lai installation. Great joy prevailed among the workers as the furnace began to work. It was an occasion to check the technical data and the work entrusted to each responsible cadre :

"The pumping station had been given a final check is ready to start working."

"The safety valve has been put in order. A check is needed of the transformer switch-board."

"It is necessary to finish the installation of the fire control system; without this measure, no test is possible."

* Many important resolutions were adopted. The meeting finished at 10 p.m.

On the afternoon of July 29, the whole construction site was eagerly awaiting the whirring of engines. Over ten thousand workers and soldiers hurriedly finished working and waited impatiently for the momentous event.

It was then I met Alexander Guminik. In charge of the supply of materials, he is the best-known Soviet worker at Pha Lai and is affectionately nicknamed Sasha. He is secretary of the Komsomol Youth Union.

He said: "It is very difficult to know who are the best Vietnamese workers as all of them have done their utmost to fulfil their duty. Their main concern is to finish their work ahead of time for turbo-generator No. 1 to operate on November 3, 1983 as scheduled. This feat is to greet the fifth anniversary of the 'signing of the Vietnam — Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, and the 68th anniversary of the October Revolution. We are driven forward by the slogan 'Light for Vietnam'."

And he smiled, his suntanned face brightened. His Ukrainian voice reminded me of his native land, known for its well-watered fields and enough electricity everywhere to village level. Of course, there is still plenty of work to do in his country, but he has been sent here to help us in our difficult days.

He spoke to me confidentially: "Why am I well-known among the Vietnamese here? Perhaps because I am a youth representative and responsible for the organization of friendly matches between the Soviet and Vietnamese workers. The favourite sports here are football and volleyball. I must add that our chess players' team will compete with students from Hanoi Polytechnic. There are many shock youth here, as in my country. One of the famous

Soviet songs is: 'My address — the Soviet Union.' It says that 'Our address is not the name of a street nor the number of a house, it is the Soviet Union'. We are ready to go anywhere duty calls. Now our address is Pha Lai".

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At exactly 4.30 p.m. on July 29, 1983, Kieu Quan Bao, foreman in charge of the furnace, trembling with emotion, phoned the Director of the Construction Company: "We're ready!"

General Director Nguyen Ton looked at his watch. The man standing by him was Victor Gratchev. During a dozen years of service, he had witnessed many important events, but on that day he could not conceal his joy.

Nguyen Ton gave the order to stoke up the furnace.

After a few minutes on tenterhooks, people shouted: "Smoke!" The cheer spread all over the construction yard mingling with the noise of firecrackers, sirens and the whirr of machines. Gratchev hugged Ton, their faces brightening, and the workers shook hands with one another amidst a thunder of "Hurrahs" mixed with "Bravo"!

Thin white smoke rose into the limpid sky in the glow of sunset. Gratchev took off his hat as if to greet the smoke. Standing beside him I saw in his eyes all the affection he has for my country.

Pha Lai, August 1983
DUC THANG

PRESENT PROBLEMS OF VIETNAMESE SOCIALIST LITERATURE

The Vietnam Writers' Union held its 3rd National Congress from 26 to 28 September 1983 in Hanoi. The congress was attended by 150 delegates representing 217 full members and 53 candidate members of the Union. It reviewed the growth of the ranks of Vietnamese writers since the previous congress (held in 1963), laid down the orientation for future work and elected a new 44-member Executive Committee with writer Nguyen Dinh Thi as General Secretary. Basing ourselves on the main report and speeches delivered at the congress, we examine a number of major problems of Vietnamese literature at present.

Close Contact with Life

An outstanding feature of Vietnamese literature over the past 20 years has been its combative character. During the war of resistance to US aggression, Vietnamese writers and poets were present in almost all battlefields, from areas in the South where the two sides fought for every inch of land to localities in the North where the people and the armed forces had to cope with US destructive bombings.

Even in southern cities and towns occupied by the former Saigon administration, many writers and poets heroically used their pens to oppose the dictatorial and corrupt puppet regime and resist enslavement by US neo-colonialism. After the end of the war hardly had the country been reunified, and the wounds of war begun to heal when the Vietnamese people had once more to take up arms, this time to counter the attacks by the Pol Pot gang on the country's south-western border, then to resist the massive invasion by 600,000 Chinese expansionist troops on its northern frontier. Once again Vietnamese writers

and poets were present at the frontlines. As in the past when many Vietnamese writers and poets had fallen under US bombs and shells, in recent years not a few of them have been killed while performing their duties at the front.

Writers and poets are also present in almost all post-war reconstruction projects, which include large rural areas ravaged by the war; cities and towns which are being transformed along socialist lines in order to create there a new, socialist life; factories and mines being restored with the help of fraternal and friendly countries. In this respect, writers, both men and women, not only play the role of observers, but directly take part in the fight against poverty and underdevelopment to bring a happy life to the people.

It is noteworthy that over the past years literature has attracted many young writers and poets, professional and non-professional, coming from industrial and agricultural production bases, scientific, technical and cultural branches, the armed forces... This continuous replenishment has made it possible for Vietnamese literature to keep

in close touch with life, and consequently give rise to promising talents among them many women writers and poets, and members of ethnic minorities.

A Certain Perplexity

In the past few years, with the whole country swinging into a new revolutionary stage—the stage of nation-wide socialist construction and of struggle to defend the Homeland—a number of writers have shown some confusion owing to complex developments in the social struggle. In the face of difficulties being experienced by the country, mistakes committed in economic management, of attacks by international reaction, a number of writers and poets have gone from bewilderment to doubt even with regard to the gains already recorded. A number of literary researchers and critics have painted a wrong picture of the overall situation of Vietnamese literature, sometimes indulging in remarks inconsistent with the present revolutionary tasks.

In war-time, there was only one way out—to defeat the enemy. In contrast, in peace time, there seems to be more than one way to earn a comfortable life. No people would accept the customary "gifts" of an aggressor army—bombs, shells and prisons. But the same people might be confused when the aggressors come with money, luxury goods and "friendly greetings." In war-time, a writer or poet feels like marching amidst a fire storm. In the present socialist revolution, there is no fire storm,

yet some people may feel the earth shaking under their feet. Precisely because they have failed to unravel the skein of their perplexities, many writers are flagging and at times they fail to join the action and stand at their post in literature. A number of literary essays, short stories and even poems have shown signs of staying aloof from revolutionary reality.

However, while reviewing literary works over the past period, we still see in spite of weak points clear evidence of continuous advance. The trend is toward an ever deeper, more judicious, knowledge of the land and the people of Vietnam, of the phases of the revolution, the changes in society and people through the multi-sided struggles against imperialism, over the past decades and in the present socialist construction.

That knowledge has given literary works greater depth and helped writers and poets to tackle thorny problems born of life itself, and to produce works that appeal to readers. In everyday life as well as in their works, writers and poets should not seek to avoid the dark spots, they can write at length about them, but only to bring out the bright spots; they can write on the wrong, the bad, the backward, but only to bring out the right, the good, the progressive.

Over the past years, literary theorists and critics have collaborated with writers and poets in raising the appreciation level of the readers and improving the quality and the principled character of their own works. Firmly grasping the method of socialist realism, critics must respect and encourage the writers' and poets' variety of style since diversity in literature reflects the richness of life itself, and the richness of socialist revolution.

To encourage good works, to foster gifted and promising authors, to severely criticize all erroneous tendencies, especially laxness, self-centered individualism, the catering

to vulgar tastes, stereotypes, sketchiness and artificiality, — such are the tasks of theoreticians and critics. The ultimate judge, however, is not the critic, but the reader.

Themes and Tasks

The political report delivered at the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1982 speaks of literary and artistic work in the present period as follows:

"The Party trusts the writers and artists, highly appreciates their contributions, and always looks forward to seeing the emergence of new creative talents and literary and artistic works of high ideological and artistic value, worthy of a country with an age-old culture and of a heroic people. The Party encourages every research and creative endeavour and the development of artistic styles and talents. At the same time, it requires writers and artists to firmly grasp the method of socialist realism, evince Party spirit and the sense of responsibility of fighters on the cultural and ideological front in the new stage of the revolution, to serve more effectively the interests of the people and make worthy contributions to the cause of socialist construction and national defence."

The time and the conditions have come for us to build a comprehensive and great literature, a new literature of the nation in the socialist era. This is a practical objective set to writers and poets. Experience over the past decades has proved that they must live in the new battlefields of the socialist revolution, the great undertakings of the people, first of all, they must acquaint themselves thoroughly with the labour and production activities of the people in all domains, observe them and write about them. Writers must study hard in order to acquire the necessary knowledge about problems of economic construction and cultural development, to get a judi-

cious, far-sighted view of things. They must not only be sensitive to topical problems of each revolutionary stage but also perceive the long-term trend of history. Although numerous difficulties and hardships still lie ahead — they must be fully aware of them — yet the overall picture of our people's revolutionary endeavour is bright.

Vietnamese writers and poets have realized ever more clearly that creative labour is the central theme of socialist literature. The emancipation of labour and the labouring people, the reorganization of the whole social workforce, the emergence of the new man and woman in free and collective labour, the full development of the labour potential and creativeness of millions of people, these are major problems arising daily on the agricultural front and in the socialist industrialization which has just begun.

Here, on the labour front, thousands of initiatives born of human intelligence are springing up alongside moral qualities that give man and woman dignity and altruism. Here the working people's collective mastery of society is taking shape. Here we see concrete manifestations of proletarian internationalism. The labour front is also the scene of daily struggle against sluggishness, slackening of discipline, theft and waste, ignorance and inertia. It is a big school where people gradually learn how to master the scientific-technological revolution, how to take forward our still backward manpower and to turn it into highly efficient workforce for modern large-scale production.

At the same time, writers cannot overlook themes and subject-matters relating to our readiness to defend our Homeland. In this connection, literary works must sharply expose the multi-faceted, wicked schemes of the Chinese expansionists who are ganging up with the US imperialists and other international reactionary forces. Literary works must help the people see

clearly the real face of their cruel enemies, and further heighten vigilance in order to thwart all their attempts at sabotage. Works written on the two previous wars of resistance—to the French colonialists, then to the US imperialists—have laid the groundwork for Vietnamese literature over the past decades. However, in view of the urgent need for works that serve immediate objectives, it is not surprising that a number of those writings were hasty and sketchy. Readers now demand greater works worthy of the epic battles fought by our nation. War themes still inspire writers and poets and with the passing of time, their vision has further widened now that things can be seen in their true perspective.

With regard to poetry, in view of its sensitiveness and the greater possibility to popularize it, it has been written everywhere and at all moments of the wars of resistance. At present, however, poets want poetry to go deeper into one's soul, to express more profound feelings, at the same time a number of young poets tend to favour long epics, seeking to paint a comprehensive picture of past battles.

The evolution of human life from societies with class exploitation to a society completely freed from such an evil is the greatest change in human history. Here ruthless struggles are being urged to sweep away the trash left by US neo-colonialism in southern Vietnam years ago, and which today the imperialists and expansionists are trying to smuggle into our country to serve their psychological war aimed at undermining our people's spirit and poisoning our youth. Here we also witness a struggle against the short-sighted egoism and the narrow-minded, anarchic way of life of small producers. Literary works can contribute effectively to the extremely wide and deep ideological and cultural revolution aimed at fostering a new morality—"each for all, and all for each"—and making it a faith,

a new habit. This is the socialist way of life, the life-style of collective masters of society.

Young Poets and Writers

The presence of a large number of young writers—besides writers who have been tempered in the fire of war, others are still very young in age and experience—is a precious asset for the development of literature in the years ahead. Young writers are boldly tackling burning and difficult problems of the present struggle, and a number of promising writers have drawn public attention. Over the past few years, however, some precocious talent has gradually withered, or fallen into limbo. This is a matter of concern the main cause of which is that young writers have been too soon severed from their production bases and have become professionals. Aloofness from life, from productive labour and from the struggle of the masses at the grassroots level which are the main sources of inspiration of the fresh and truthful first works of those authors, has dried up their experience of life. The Writers' Union and other responsible bodies must take concrete measures to help young writers who are living and working at the grassroots level to study and to write. This does not mean that they should just go and interview people and take notes, but that they must choose a suitable job in which they can shoulder part of the responsibility for the successes and failures, the joys and sorrows of their units and their fellow-workers.

A writer's work is a combat which requires a full sense of responsibility. That is why a writer should not allow his or her pen to run after the vulgar demands of a certain kind of readers, in order to produce "best-sellers". In literary and artistic life there have recently appeared some unhealthy manifestations, a tendency to "commercialize" literary and artistic works and even

writers and artists. In literature, this tendency is not widespread, but even so we should not tolerate it, and never for a moment should we comply with it. Although their material life is still beset with difficulties, most writers and poets have preserved their moral purity, and have attended to their creative work with honour and dignity.

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For thousands of years the Vietnamese nation has led a life full of hard trials. However, for our people, history has been a dear and loyal companion, and revolution for them means continuous fighting and repeated victories. On this long road, the Vietnamese nation has created its own spiritual values: love of country, mutual help, respect for human beings, intelligence and courage which give rise to thousands of creative works. These spiritual values have come to us from the immortal writings of Nguyen Trai (15th century), Nguyen Du (18th century), Nguyen Dinh Chieu (19th century)... they have continued to develop in works by writers of the older generation such as Ngo Tat To, Nguyen Cong Hoan, Tu Mo, Nguyen Hong, Nam Cao, Nguyen Huy Tuong... And the examples of self-sacrifice set by Tran Dang, Nguyen Vu, Duong Thi Xuan Quy, to cite but a few..., still inspire writers and poets of the present generation.

In the building of a new life, the spiritual values of the nation will blossom. Writers and poets, who are assuming work in the literature full of vitality created by our people, should continue to enrich it so as to turn it into a socialist literature of the people that is worthy of the nation and of the sacrifices and efforts of so many generations.

DAO HUNG

VIETNAMESE RESIDENTS IN KAMPUCHEA

puchea -- barely 10% of the number of Vietnamese residents living in Kampuchea in days prior to Lon Nol-instigated massacres and Pol Pot's genocide. As for Chinese residents or ethnic Chinese who have been authorized by the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea to return to their former places of residence, in only five provinces and cities they had numbered 61,400 by November 1982 -- 40,000 in Phnom Penh alone. So their number is greater than that of Vietnamese survivors of Pol Pot's genocide who have been allowed to return to Kampuchea.

Policy of the People's Republic of Kampuchea with Regard to Vietnamese Residents

At the birth of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea, its Declaration pointed out: "The Front carries out a correct policy vis-à-vis foreign residents in Kampuchea." (Article 6, Declaration of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea, 2 December 1978). This policy fully conforms to international law as recorded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which was approved by the UN General Assembly in 1948.

On 7 May 1982, the Central Committee of the Kampuchean Revolutionary People's Party issued Directive 142 on ensuring adequate living conditions and providing jobs to Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea, and on 13 September 1982, the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee issued a circular giving guidelines for the implementation of that directive. The Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Kampuchea issued Directive 38 of 9 October 1982 on the organization and administration of Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea.

In that directive, the Council of Ministers pointed out: "With regard to former Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea who were the victims of pogroms and massacres under the former regimes and who, thanks to popular protection, were able to survive or escape to Vietnam and who have now returned to Kampuchea, the local authorities and populations shall give them assistance and create conditions for

The Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea has made public a document on "Policy of the People's Republic of Kampuchea with Regard to Vietnamese Residents".

We give below large excerpts of the document.

The Situation of Vietnamese Residents in the Kampuchean Community

Before 1969 there was a time when the number of Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea was more than half a million, most of them were sent there by the French colonialists to work as labourers in French rubber plantations. Side by side with the Kampuchean people, they worked in plantations, in the fields, in factories and on rivers and the Tonle Sap, as farmers, fishermen, stock-breeders, salt-makers, craftsmen, etc. They actively contributed to the development of the Kampuchean economy. In the days of domination by the feudalists, colonialists and imperialists, Vietnamese residents united with all of Kampuchea's ethnic groups in their struggle for national independence, freedom, and for the construction and defence of their homeland.

In 1970, while stepping up their war of aggression in Vietnam, the American imperialists provoked a reactionary coup d'Etat in Kampuchea (18 March 1970). The Lon Nol -- Sirik Matak gang, those reactionary Khmers who acted as agents of the American imperialists, launched an insane anti-Vietnam campaign. Tens of thousands of Vietnamese residents were killed. About 200,000 others were forcibly repatriated and handed over to the

Saigon puppet administration. Later many of them were either pressed into its army to be used as cannon fodder, clapped in prison, or murdered.

In April 1975, the reactionary Pol Pot gang, the agents of the Beijing reactionary clique, carried out, on orders from their masters, a horrifying genocidal policy which ended in the death of more than three million Kampucheans. Hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese residents shared the latter's fate. They were either massacred, or robbed of all their possession, penned up in concentration camps and forced to do hard labour, suffering from torture, hunger, disease and doomed to slow death. A large number escaped and fled to Vietnam.

Following the liberation of Kampuchea, like Kampuchean and other survivors of Khmer Rouge genocide, Vietnamese residents having survived in concentration camps or having fled to Vietnam were authorized by the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea to return to their former places of residence. The Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea also authorized Vietnamese people with relatives in Kampuchea to join them and live and work here in accordance with Kampuchean law. By mid-1983 about 56,000 Vietnamese have returned to their former places or residence in Kam-

them to quickly settle down to a normal life." (Article 1).

"With regard to Vietnamese people who have come to Kampuchea since liberation and are engaged in occupations which contribute to the rehabilitation and development of the economy such as farming, fishing, salt-making, handicrafts... and who maintain good relations with the people, the local authorities shall create conditions for them to stay in the country and work." (Article 2).

"With regard to Vietnamese people who with the assistance of friends or relatives wish to move to Kampuchea to live and work or to be reunited with their families, they shall have to request authorization from the competent Kampuchean and Vietnamese organs." (Article 4).

In order to safeguard the principle of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, the 1981 Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea stipulated: "Foreign residents in Kampuchea must abide by the laws of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and shall enjoy protection from the State of the People's Republic of Kampuchea." (Article 44).

In that spirit, Directive 38 of the Kampuchean Council of Ministers ordered "the strengthening of control measures, good supervision of points of entry and strict prohibition of illegal frontier crossings." (Article 6).

Frontier crossings by people living in the border areas of either country are dealt with in the Protocol on Frontier Statutes between the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, signed on 20 July 1983:

"People living in border areas of one country cannot cross into border areas of the other country for residence, farming, gathering of forest products, hunting, cattle grazing, poultry raising, fishing, shrimp catching, etc., unless they have obtained the authorization of administrative authorities of both countries, of district level or higher." (Article 6).

"People together with their luggage, goods and means of transport crossing the frontier between the two countries must be accompanied

by all documents mentioned in Article 13 of this Protocol; they must cross the frontier at the point of entry indicated in the documents; they must show these documents to the guards at the border checkpoint and submit to all necessary control.

"If the people and their luggage, goods, and means of transport are not accompanied by all the necessary documents, they will not be allowed to cross the frontier." (Article 15).

With regard to bad elements who may take advantage of loopholes in the border control to sneak into Kampuchean territory and there engage in illegal activities harmful to the economy and social order in Kampuchea, the competent organs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea will deal with them according to the law and, with cooperation and assistance from the Vietnamese side, will force those elements to leave Kampuchea and return to Vietnam.

The Campaign Aimed at Distorting the Situation in the People's Republic of Kampuchea and Slandering Vietnam Is Bound to Fail

The reactionary clique in power in China, the American imperialists and the reactionary forces in Thailand are responsible for many crimes against the Kampuchean people and are stubbornly opposing Kampuchea's revival: yet they feign to be concerned about Kampuchean independence and sovereignty. They have ceaselessly sought to distort the situation and blacken Kampuchea, and to divide it from Vietnam in the hope of covering up their dark designs.

Having failed in all their manoeuvres of distortion and slander against Kampuchea and Vietnam, especially on the question of Vietnamese volunteer troops in Kampuchea, China, the American imperialists and the reactionaries in Thai ruling circles, starting in early 1983, have engaged in a new slander campaign: they falsely accuse Vietnam of bringing "settlers" into Kampuchea in order to "Vietnamize" this country. Their aim is to persist in their efforts to

divide Vietnam from Kampuchea, wreck the unity of the three Indo-Chinese countries, and divert world public attention from the 20 million overseas Chinese, among these many billionaire businessmen who are holding sway over the bulk of economic, commercial and financial activities in Southeast Asia and are engaged in subversive activities in the countries of this region.

However, public opinion throughout the world, including in the USA, has been quick to detect the mendacious, deceitful and slanderous character of those accusations. The American journal **The Militant** in its issue of 22 April 1983 pointed out that they are part of the "propaganda line" of the US State Department which seeks to draw a "dark picture of the situation in Kampuchea" in order to "oppose Vietnam and the present Government in Kampuchea". According to Paul Quinn Judge writing in the **Far Eastern Economic Review** of 26 May 1983, the present campaign of slander against Vietnam was launched as soon as the Kampuchean Revolutionary People's Party and the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea promulgated their directives on policies vis-à-vis Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea. The American Embassy in Bangkok, in an effort to distort the meaning of those documents, had them translated and circulated, accompanied by a cable for American and foreign journalists and diplomats about to visit Kampuchea. The cable of the American Embassy said that there were "possibilities for creating political capital from them" and suggested that "this question may be a suitable one for an appropriate action by a UN commission".

Foreign visitors to Kampuchea, including Americans, have rejected those allegations out of hand. Emory C. Swank, former American ambassador to Kampuchea (1970—1973) and now Chairman of the Council of World Affairs in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, was a member of a fact-finding team of retired American diplomats which visited Kampuchea, Vietnam and Thailand from 22 January to 12 March 1983. He wrote in the American bulletin **Indochina Issues**, No. 36 of March 1983: "Accusations that Vietnam is colonizing Kampuchea appear to be groundless. In Thailand we were

told that Vietnamese farmers have settled in various regions of Kampuchea, but no evidence supporting such accusations can be found from any source in Kampuchea".

The American journalist Daniel Snider, writing in the *Executive Intelligence Review* of 9 August 1983, said: "Nonetheless I investigated the charges and found that State Department statements about Vietnam and Kampuchea bear the same relation to the evidence of first-hand observations as they did during the Vietnam war." He added: "The ethnic Vietnamese population of Kampuchea before 1975 was estimated at 500,000. Some of these were killed and many fled to Vietnam during the Pol Pot period. Charges of Viet's colonization ignore the previous history of intermingling of peoples of this region. This writer encountered many Vietnamese, particularly fishermen, but all of them spoke Khmer fairly well—a conclusive evidence of their earlier residence in the country. In provinces bordering Vietnam that I visited—Svay Rieng and Takeo—peasants could not confirm US reports of recent settlement of newly-arrived Vietnamese."

Another American journalist, Abe Weisburd, following an 18-day visit to Kampuchea in early May 1983, wrote in the American journal *The Guardian* of 10 August 1983: "We traveled into the country's provinces and had a chance to speak with peasants, school children, leaders of cooperatives and with fishing people. We interviewed people in the streets and in stores in the capital of Phnom Penh and spoke with government officials. It was clear everywhere we went that nobody in Kampuchea believes the charges of Vietnamese aggression and colonization." He concluded: "From our investigations it is clear that Kampucheans don't believe Vietnamese residents to be a threat."

On 28 June 1983, Australian Foreign Minister Bill Hayden remarked: "Following news about Vietnamese coming to Kampuchea I understand that they are returners to Kampuchea since they lived there before the Pol Pot era. Kampuchea and Vietnam have reached an agreement on this question. The number of Vietnamese in Kampuchea, including Vietnamese troops, is now still far smaller than that in the pre-Pol Pot era."

To visit Phnom Penh at present is to get a close look at the revival of a hypothetical capital city which had been hit by a neutron bomb. Most of the city people are not the original occupants of their present dwellings: those are dead, or had disappeared under the Pol Pot regime. The social fabric and the urban lifestyle have suffered irreparable damage, even among the surviving city folk who have returned from their forced exile in the countryside. Everywhere are the signs of general squatting.

On those remains of urban structures, which had gone to ruin rather than been destroyed, there has been grafted an improvised, essentially peasant, lifestyle. Hammocks are strung in houses, water jars crowd the pavements, for there is running water for only a few buildings, and pigs raised by individual households rummage in refuse heaps piling up in vacant lots.

Following the post-liberation enthusiasm of 1979, the euphoria in face of a fast resurrection that could not, at the beginning, be

normal life. Particularly, of an organized will to put things back in order. In a building facing the post-office, last year the billet of a unit of young Vietnamese soldiers who never failed in late afternoon to spill out into the adjacent square to play soccer, clad in shorts and stripped to the waist, now Kampucheans are busy installing desks and chairs. Vietnamese military presence in the capital has been much less visible, especially since the partial withdrawal of May 1983, replaced by more and more olive-green uniforms of the young people's army. The mounds of debris from the former national bank, blown up by the Khmer Rouge, have been removed. Before a Chinese temple, in place of the mountain of rusting motor-car carcasses which I saw in 1982, there is now a lifting ramp on which a Peugeot 404 under repair stands. On the site of the cathedral, razed to the ground, one may drink fresh milk or contraband Saigon export beer in a stylish wood-and-wickerwork restaurant-refreshment bar, as late

PHNOM PENH 1983:

Impressions

taken for granted, there has been a more realistic awareness that the country is now starting on an uphill climb that promises to be long and arduous. Meanwhile the assistance coming from Western international organizations is dwindling: their representatives living at the Samaki or Monorom, numbering about 50 last year, are now only thirty or so.

Here and there, however, one sees the signs of a resumption of

as 10 at night. Television is functioning as best it could in spite of erratic electrical supply: over the whole week, I've been able to watch several episodes of the French film *Jacquot le Croquant* relayed from the Can Tho station in south Vietnam. The show is as successful here as it is in Vietnam judging from the crowds of people in rooms with a telly. A feeble echo from France via Vietnam.

For a French visitor, Kampuchea remains privileged ground in this sense that the country's French-speaking past, in spite of the devastations by Pol Pot, is a favourable factor in communication and contact with the local population. A pedicab driver would ask you repeatedly: "*Monsieur vouloir cyclo?*"; people in the streets would address you or show you the way in French. And all those French-speaking intellectuals who have stayed on, but of whom so little has been said. Yet, don't they constitute an important component of what, in the stereotyped language of the Western press, has become "the Heng Samrin regime"? They are employed in all ministries. Not all of them are Party members—a bloodless Party which is slowly and cautiously rebuilding up (there seem to be no more than 4,000 members and candidate members at present), but which does not hesitate—indeed it has no choice—to call on all people with skills in the country.

It seems to me that the message from those French-speaking intellectuals deserves to be heard. For the very reason that in spite of unbelievable difficulties they have remained to rebuild the true Kampuchea with which we must resume the dialogue some day. And let no one doubt their testimony. Does their voice carry less weight than that of their uprooted compatriots who have spent years in the psychological conditioning of Thai refugee camps or in their gilded exile in France or elsewhere?

Dr Sausokkhom, director of the present "January 7" hospital¹ is one of those intellectuals. To listen to his account of his experiences is to make a long journey back into the terrible past, which is always present, the "3 years, 8 months and 20 days" of the calvary under Pol Pot. A journey one cannot skip, one without which, insists the doctor in his flawless French, "one cannot understand the present, especially the presence of Vietnamese troops".

"Driven to Takeo following the Khmer Rouge's entry into Phnom Penh," he told me, "I saw with my own eyes on the road to Pochentong a patient undergoing

perfusion lying on a wheeled bed pushed along by members of his family. Like many other people, I was soon separated from my wife and children. We were to meet only once every two or three months. I was sent to the mountains and that was my luck, because if I had been kept in a village it would have been difficult for me to hide my identity (as an intellectual) for a close watch was kept on us.

"We were called the 'April 17' people² and looked upon as slaves, as real POWs by village headmen who were in many cases illiterate and ignorant. Several times a year the Khmer Rouge would want to know your life story. If you were not smart to hide your true identity, or if you failed to remember what you had written before, you were done for. In 1975 there were 500 Kampuchean physicians; only about thirty survived...

"Those summoned by Angkar (the Organization) to be 'educated' never returned. I didn't believe my life could be saved. I lived in the expectation of being taken away for 'final reeducation'. Kept in a prison without walls, such was our fate.

"When Vietnamese troops arrived, the thirty or so families remaining in the village where I was exiled had to follow the Khmer Rouge into the mountains. Only a few weeks later, around February, did we dare to return to the village, then occupied by Vietnamese troops. In the beginning, let me say it frankly, I was afraid, too. Pol Pot had said that he was socialist. After liberation, there was also talk of socialism. What kind of socialism, one may ask? In fact, quite soon it was possible to make the distinction. Yet it took me half a year to overcome my original fears. The most convincing factor for me was the fact that I was quickly recalled to Phnom Penh and given a job in my competence".

"Haven't you ever thought of asking for permission to go to France?" I asked. "It must not be very easy for you to live here".

"Some friends of mine didn't want to stay. It's just the same kind of socialism, they said. But I've thought the matter over. The present socialism has nothing to do with the Pol Pot-style Maoist version of socialism.

Another thing: I have my job, I am a physician. Even if I should leave my country and go abroad to work, I think I'd have difficulties earning my living. I lived in Lausanne in 1959—1960 in my student days and I know the kind of problems facing people coming from Asia, like me, in the West. Under the former regime in the old days, it is true that with my practice I was able to earn my living easily. The difficulty now comes from the fact that under Pol Pot all social structures were destroyed. It's a serious problem for us. Together with the social inequalities stemming from the reemergence of a stratum of traffickers. But I've day after day become better adapted to the new situation in the country. The new regime has shown much consideration for the intellectuals. I am very hopeful that the situation in Kampuchea will not remain unchanged. Matters are in progress... My life finally is neither too difficult nor too easy..."

Although not present diplomatically in Kampuchea, France remains in many heads. This had led to some incredulity: obviously, many of my French-speaking interlocutors, imbued with humanistic ideas that often came to them from France and expecting so much from her, can hardly understand why this country which presents so much affinity with their own seems to "exclude herself".

On the road to Pochentong airport, my guide pointed to the front of the Polytechnic which still keeps, as if transferred on it by humidity, traces of the arms of Prince Sihanouk which had been knocked down by Pol Pot men in 1975. A truly flimsy reminiscence of a man in whom some Western, and especially French, circles still wish to see the incarnation of the Kampuchean people.

J. P. DEBRIS

1. The former "Chinese hospital". Now it has 500 beds, 16 Khmer physicians (3 veterans and 13 newly-trained), about ten Cubans, one Vietnamese pediatrician and two French doctors (one pediatrician, the other dentist).

2. People "liberated" only on 17 April 1975 by the entry of Khmer Rouge forces into Phnom Penh.

NO POISON BUT POLLEN ?

Of late, in Washington, Beijing and a number of other capitals, a clamour has been raised about so-called "Vietnamese and Soviet use of toxic chemicals in Kampuchea and Laos". To help our readers form their judgments about this allegation, we reproduce below an article by Stephen Budiansky, published in *Nature*, International Weekly Journal of Science, Vol. 302, No. 5905, 17 — 23 March 1983.

An Australian analysis of "yellow rain" samples on leaves obtained in Thailand has concluded that the yellow spots were "faked and deliberately applied by a brush or spraying device" and that they consisted primarily of pollen from a rain-forest tree. The analysis, performed by Australian government scientists at the Materials Research Laboratory (MRL), failed to detect any toxins in the samples, but did identify the presence of a *Fusarium* mould, apparently growing on wet packaging that the samples had been placed in.

The US State Department has maintained that yellow rain is a toxin weapon, produced and used under Soviet supervision, that contains trichothecene mycotoxins, which are produced by *Fusarium* fungi.

The new Australian findings appear in an unpublished MRL report, **Examination of Yellow Rain Specimens Received at MRL April 1982**. Although the report is unclassified, it is marked "not for distribution to members of the press", and has not been made generally available. A knowledge of its contents has, however, been gleaned from a former American Friends Service Committee fieldworker, Jacqui Chagnon, who was allowed to read the report at the Australian Embassy in Bangkok and take notes, and from an American scientist who has a copy of the report.

The samples analysed were from a border region of Thailand that had allegedly been the site of a yellow-rain attack from Kampuchea in February 1982. A Canadian me-

dical team in the area examined villagers and reported finding symptoms such as vomiting and abdominal pains. Laboratories in Thailand, Canada, Australia, Britain, France and the United States all obtained samples of yellow spots that appeared on the vegetation around the time of the alleged attack. As reported by the State Department in November, both US and Thai scientists detected mycotoxins in these samples, which consisted of an unidentified "yellow powder".

In the September issue of an obscure Thai medical journal (*Siriraj Hospital Gazette* 34, pp. 643-647), a report on microscopic examination of the samples appears; the powder was found to be largely pollen and, in 22 of the specimens, the fungus *Fusarium tricinctum*, which produces the mycotoxin T-2. The State Department now says that it, too, has found pollen in many of its samples. But, said Gary Crocker of the State Department, "It's not wind-blown pollen, it's commercially-collected pollen". The State Department's theory is now that pollen is added to the yellow rain mixture to provide a delivery vehicle for the toxin. Crocker says that all the pollen is in the 10-20-micron range, "the perfect size to be retained in the body". Crocker said that pollen analyses at the Smithsonian Institution identified the pollen as daisy, chrysanthemum, and several other species.

But Dr Joan Nowicke of the Smithsonian Natural History Museum, who was consulted by scien-

tists from the Army's Chemical Systems Laboratory (which has done much of the yellow rain analyses for the State Department), said she did not actually perform any analyses for them. She said three people from the Army laboratory came for a one-day crash course in pollen analysis and "then a couple of times I had calls from people who wanted to become palynologist over the phone." She added, "I don't see how they could say it's commercially-collected," since widely varying species have similar pollen that is difficult if not impossible to distinguish.

Crocker of the State Department argues that the Australians' conclusions do not detract from the large body of evidence that suggests use of toxin weapons in Southeast Asia. "What is really bothering me is that this one weird example is being used to make a supposition that all samples are fakes," he said. And, referring to the first press report on the Australian analyses, which appeared in the *London Observer* of 6 March, Crocker said, "I tend to think that the *Observer* piece is a fairly deliberate plant to discredit our work."

Professor Matthew Meselson of Harvard University, a critic of the State Department's views on yellow rain, agreed that it was unlikely that all yellow rain samples were deliberate fakes. But he offered a third explanation. Meselson claims that if all the samples are indeed made up of pollen, it opens up the possibility that it's a natural phenomenon. If the pollen turns out to be from local species, and matches the seasonal variation in species, Meselson said, then it is "extraordinarily improbable" that yellow rain is a weapon. Meselson suggests that the known habit of *Fusarium* fungi feeding on pollen could explain the presence of mycotoxins in conjunction with the pollen spots.

STEPHEN BUDIANSKY

CHRONOLOGY

(16 September — 15 October)

SEPTEMBER

17. A spokesman for the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry issues a statement condemning US military intervention in Lebanon.

21. A delegation of the Organization Commission of the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia pays a visit to Vietnam, from 21 to 28 September 1983.

22. The Vietnam State Commission for Science and Technology opens a three-day conference in Hanoi on the organization and management of basic surveys.

— A delegation of the MPLA — Party of Labour of Angola pays a friendship visit to Vietnam, from 22 to 28 September 1983.

23. Signing in Prague of a protocol on goods exchange between Vietnam and Czechoslovakia.

— Opening in Hanoi of the 7th Congress of the Vietnam Eastern Medicine Association.

26. Setting up of the State Commission for Energy headed by Do Muoi, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

— Holding in Hanoi of the Third Congress of the Vietnam Writers' Union. Nguyen Dinh Thi, writer and poet, is re-elected its General Secretary.

28. Opening at the Giang Vo Exposition Centre in Hanoi of a handicrafts exhibition with over 3,000 items on display.

29. Signing in Berlin of a protocol on goods exchange and payment for 1984 between Vietnam and the GDR.

— A high-ranking delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam headed by Vo Chi Cong, member of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, begins a visit to France at the invitation of the French Communist Party. The visit is to last until 8 October 1983.

OCTOBER

1. Nguyen Dinh Thi, General Secretary of the Vietnam Writers' Union, is awarded the Lotus prize for 1982 — 1983 of the Association of Asian and African Writers.

4. A delegation of the Ministry of Transport of Cuba visits Vietnam from 4 to 10 October 1983.

5. The Second Congress of the Fine Arts Association of Vietnam is held in Hanoi. Painter Tran Van Can is elected its Chairman, and Duong Vien its General Secretary. The Congress is held from 5 to 7 October 1983.

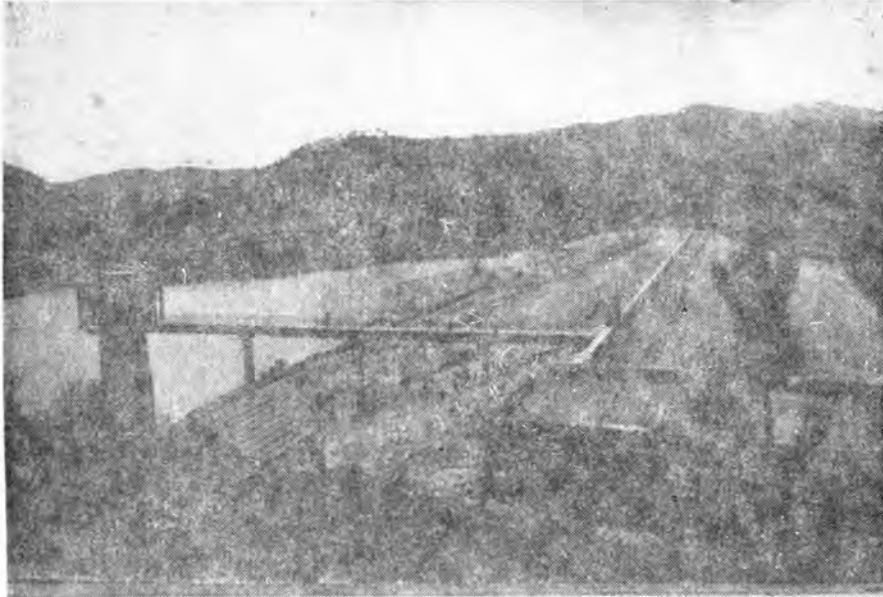
6. Signing in Moscow of a cooperation agreement between the Vietnam Lawyers' Association and its Soviet counterpart.

8. Nguyen Duy Gia, General Director of the Vietnam State Bank, visits Cuba from 8 to 14 October 1983.

9. The first Phu Dong National Sports Festival for school pupils opens in Hanoi. The festival lasts from 9 to 17 October 1983.

12. Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach pays a friendship visit to France.

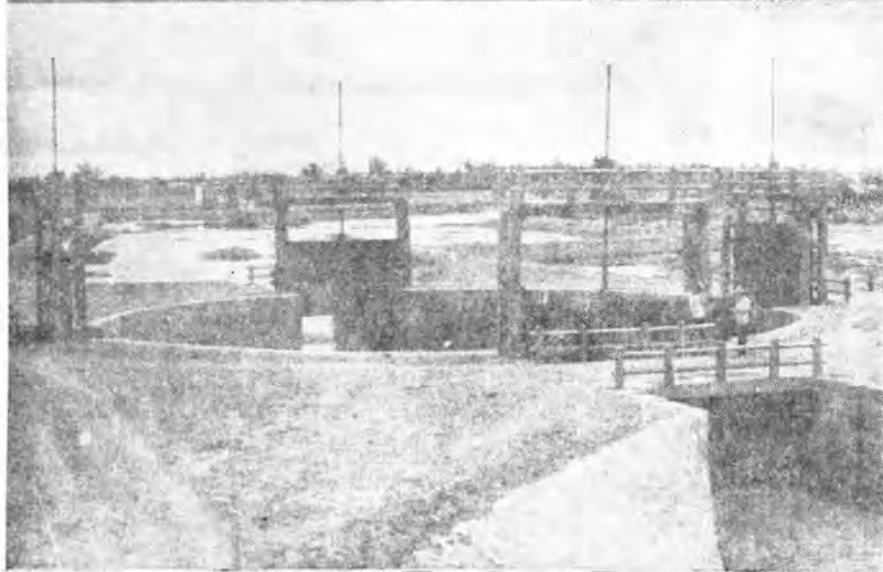
13. An economic delegation of the People's Socialist Arab Libya Jamahiriya pays a visit to Vietnam.



The Yen Lap 140,000,000-cubic metre reservoir provides water for 10,000 ha. of riceland in Quang Ninh province.

Photo: THE THUAN

NEW IRRIGATION PROJECTS



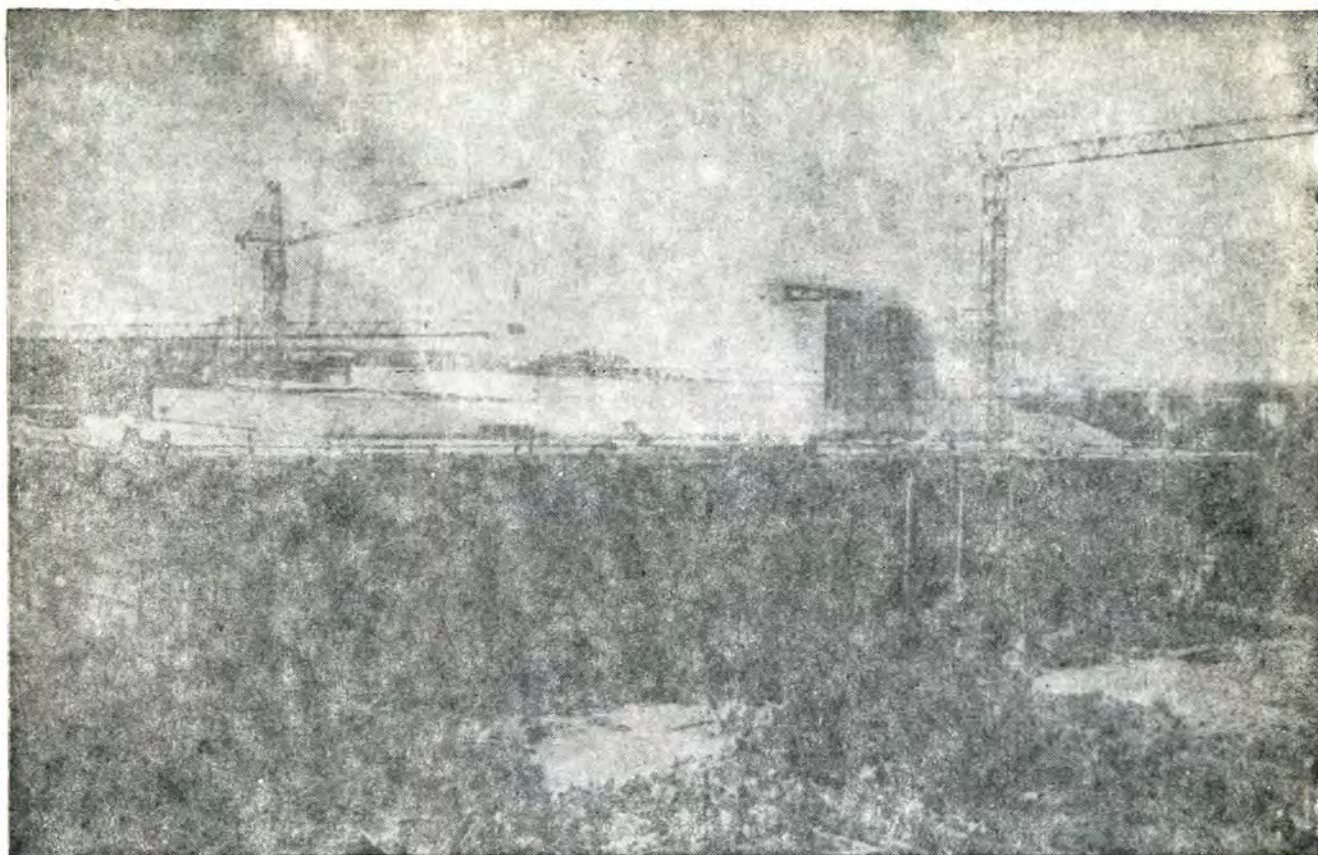
The irrigation network in Tien Hai, Thai Binh province, supplies water for 1,000 ha. of riceland.

Photo: XUAN CAU



The Phu Ninh irrigation project in Quang Nam — Da Nang province waters 180,000 ha. of cultivated land.

Photo: THANH TUNG



The Workers' Palace of Culture built with Soviet aid is nearly completed.

SOME OF THE PROJECTS BEING BUILT IN HANOI

A block of flats in Thanh Xuan, in the south-western part of Hanoi.

Photos: VU HANH



Vietnam
courier

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de Vietnam

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