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ANSWERS
by

General Secretary of the CPVCC
NGUYEN VAN LINH

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In the renovation of the socialist revolution in Vietnam, the 6th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party held in December 1986 was a turning-point. At this Congress Comrade Nguyen Van Linh was elected General Secretary of the Party Central Committee.

As general secretary he has had many contacts with the press at home and abroad. In his interviews with the foreign press and television, he has explained the main features of Vietnam's internal and external policy at present. In the spirit of looking straight at facts, he has clearly expounded the great difficulties the Vietnamese people have been undergoing, while expressing their determination to overcome all trials so as to successfully build socialism in Vietnam.

His answers to various interviews with the foreign press and television from January 1987 up to now has been collected in this booklet.

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ANSWERS TO PROFESSOR BEN KIERNAN

(Australia)

Question 1: *Please explain the main problems confronting the Vietnamese economy in 1987 and how they can be solved.*

Answer: The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has mapped out the main socio-economic objectives for the coming years namely, to stabilize the socio-economic situation in all fields, to continue creating necessary premises for industrialization of the country in the next stage.

The year 1987 is of paramount importance as it is the first decisive year for the implementation of the Resolution adopted at the 6th Party Congress. In the field of production, we must concentrate ourselves on carrying out three major economic programmes: the production of foodgrain and foodstuffs; the production of consumer goods and the production of export goods. We must solve the greatest problems relating to the realization of these three programmes, policies regarding prices, salaries, finance and money; and the elimination of the mechanism of bureaucratic centralism based on State subsidies and switching over to socialist cost-accounting business.

In order to fulfil these tasks successfully, we should bring about complete and radical renovation, first of all renovation in the ways of thinking — especially economic thinking, renovation in socio-economic policies and affect profound changes in production structure and economic management mechanism.

Questions 2 and 3: *At the 6th Party Congress last month you said: "Over the past ten years, we have*

been through a great deal and paid a high price for the knowledge and experience we now have, and we have matured with this". Please explain what you meant.

At the 6th Party Congress, you also referred to the "decline in the working people's confidence" in the Party.

What do you mean by this?

Answer: The last ten years is a period fraught with ship and trials. Some foreigners predicted that we would collapse in three or five years. However, far from that, we continue to exist and develop. We could have done better. Yet we have made serious mistakes in economic policies and in thinking; subjectivism, voluntarism and negligence of objective laws.

It is true that these serious errors have led to a decline in the working people's confidence in the Party. Nonetheless, the 6th Party Congress has carried out severe self-criticism and charted correct economic directions and policies for the years to come. The whole Party and people are greatly encouraged by those resolutions and uniting closely around the Party in carrying out the resolutions adopted by the Congress. The results of the 6th Congress have shown our determination to renovate and to surmount difficulties encountered by the Party; the confidence and the strength in the unity of our entire Party and people in face of enormous difficulties and trials.

Question 4: How do you view the current military threat from China? How does it affect Vietnam's economic situation?

Answer: The threat lasting for eight years has not achieved its aim; that is to make Vietnam collapse and

to reverse the situation in Kampuchea. On the contrary, it has further united the Vietnamese people in the hour of difficulties, heightened the determination of the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea to defend their independence and freedom, strengthen the solidarity among the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and bound them together.

The situation at the Northern border is neither in keeping with the interests of the Vietnamese people, nor in the interests of the Chinese people, nor in the interests of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

Vietnam is determined to oppose the military threat and at the same time making constant endeavour for the normalization of relations between itself and China, yet at the same time prepared to deal with the worst military contingency.

Question 5: How do you view the military situation in Kampuchea? Are you encouraged by the development of the Kampuchean armed forces in recent years? Are you confident that Vietnam will be able to withdraw its personnel from Kampuchea by 1990?

Answer: From 1979 up to now, every passing year sees progress in the Kampuchean people's miraculous rebirth and extraordinary growth. We are specially encouraged by the energetic development of the Kampuchean revolutionary armed forces; the development has allowed the Kampuchean people to undertake, step by step, the defence of their young People's Republic. The situation in Kampuchea is clearly developing fairly well and cannot be reversed.

On that basis, Vietnam has carried out annual withdrawal of Vietnamese army volunteers from Kampuchea

since 1982 and will complete the process by 1990. Of course, if a political settlement to the Kampuchea problem and problems relating to peace and stability in Southeast Asia is reached, the withdrawal of Vietnamese army volunteers will be concluded even earlier.

Question 6: Would the Vietnamese Government be prepared to meet Norodom Sihanouk if he were to break off his alliance with the Khmer Rouge?

Answer: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam recognizes the People's Republic of Kampuchea as the only legitimate state in Kampuchea.

Kampuchea's national reconciliation is the internal affairs of the Kampucheans. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the P.R.K., Hun-Sen, has on many occasions, stated his readiness to meet Mr. Sihanouk as well as other Khmer opposition groups or individuals to discuss national reconciliation on the basis of the elimination of the genocidal Pol Pot clique. We fully support the above-mentioned generous policy of the P.R.K. and would welcome an arrangement between the P.R.K. and Sihanouk.

Question 7: Does Vietnam have any interests in joining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) if invited to do so?

Answer: We have an interest in setting up a zone of peace and co-operation in Southeast Asia. Vietnam and other Indochinese countries as well would consider the participation in ASEAN if it helps us to achieve that objective.

Question 8: Is it true that you visited Kampuchea in 1957 and 1967? If so, I would like to hear your impressions of Kampuchea at that time.

Answer: I have visited Kampuchea before. Kampuchea is a nation endowed with a glorious tradition and cherishes a love for peace and freedom. Although the enemy try their best to divide the peoples of Vietnam and Kampuchea, the interests of each nation and history have bound the peoples of the two countries together in the protracted struggle for the national independence and happiness of their respective country.

Hanoi, January 21, 1987

ANSWERS TO J. C LABBÉ

(France)

Question 1: *As a strong man in South Vietnam, you led modernist initiatives and carried out economic reforms which a number of your comrades viewed as too bold. Nevertheless judging from data analysis and assessment those reforms have brought about good achievements as the South has outgrown the North in economic fields. Does it mean Vietnam is giving priority to economic competence over political conformism?*

Answer: As far as economic development is concerned the Northern and the Southern zones of Vietnam have different social and natural conditions. The South is endowed with more favourable natural conditions than the North. The latter has borne the greater brunt of the forty years of war and made tremendous contributions in lives and property to the struggle of the people in South Vietnam and to that of the peoples of Laos and Kampuchea.

Over the past ten years, we have made a great mistake in carrying out economic management through State subsidy-based bureaucratic centralism. This system was compelling only on the economic branches of the Central level while daily activities at local level required dynamism. That was the overall picture of the situation. Our 6th Congress epitomized the firm determination of the entire Party and people to renovate our thinking, and work with a view to overcoming enormous economic difficulties. We are resolved to surmount them.

Question 2: *In the Political Report at the 6th Congress you made a violent attack against bureaucracy, lack of*

experience in economic management, voluntarism, the behaviour of a number of Party cadres and members, dogmatism, etc. You also dwelt on renovation of thinking of working style, of efficiency... You recognized the importance of private economic sector.

— *What did you mean by this and please explain your proposal?*

— *Does Vietnam recognize some positive aspects of the capitalist economic system? (Please be specific in speaking about orientation particularly on individual trade in which the West is interested and it will be appreciated if dealt with in your concise and lively style. Some anecdotes on economic mistakes by cadres as reported in Nhan Dan will be equally welcome).*

Answer: While affirming major achievements recorded in the past years, the Political Report has vehemently criticized voluntarism, bureaucracy in economic management, etc.

Our conception on socialism has been simplistic and unrealistic. We did not follow correctly the laws of building socialism from an under-developed economy and by passing the stage of capitalist development. We should now strictly observe the objective laws.

The 6th Congress recognized the five components of our country's economy, among them the private and individual sectors. In our present stage of growth, these sectors are to some extent playing a useful role. Previously, our hastiness in doing away with them proved unrealistic and harmful. Of course, non-socialist economic components should be submitted to socialist economic component's guidance. Lenin said one should learn from capitalist businessmen about management of enterprises

and trade, but it is absolutely necessary to do away with the capitalist system of exploitation of man by man.

Question 3: Do you intent to adopt "open-door" policies to the world as other socialist countries, including China, are doing? Your code of investment seems too stiff and unattractive to foreign business circles. They are afraid of slowness and pesterings. Do you plan to eliminate these problems. And how?

Answer: Our country has never carried out a closed-door policy vis-à-vis the world, but our enemies have left no stones unturned to encircle our country in the hope of bringing about our collapse. Some circles in the West abetting in these designs have closed their doors on us.

A new code of investment is being drafted. We welcome suggestions from foreign countries to improve it and are resolved to overcome slowness and obstacles stemming from redtape in dealing with foreign countries.

Question 4: For the first time in several months, Vietnam seems to encourage a campaign of criticisms in the press and in the population which is going on with a remarkable intensity. Does that mean a democratization of political life?

Answer: Recently, there has been a widespread movement of criticisms and suggestions to the 6th Congress. The movement has been an intellect-gathering event for the entire Party and people, and a great contribution to the enhancement of the one-mindedness in the Party and to the success of the Congress. Of course, this movement of criticisms and suggestions should be brought into play in its continuation. The process of bringing democracy into full play is a long-term and ever-growing one.

Question 5: The Soviet Union offers the most aid to Vietnam. Yet, many observers think that the Soviet Union is willing to accept Beijing's condition for normalization of relations with China, Moscow exerting pressure upon Vietnam to bring its troops out of Kampuchea. What do you think of that?

Answer: It is true that some people hope to exploit the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union to exert pressure on Vietnam. However, that is more illusion. The fact is that during the past forty years and more, in spite of many arduous and challenging trials, the USSR has always supported Vietnam's struggle for independence. The strength of the Soviet Union lies in the fact that it is the mainstay of the cause of independence and peace the world over and that the world forces of independence and peace are its friends. After nine rounds of Soviet-Chinese negotiations, Soviet-Chinese relations continue to develop in spite of the fact that Soviet assistance to Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea has increased manyfold.

Question 6: How do you intend to settle the military conflict with giant neighbouring China? If China pledges not to allow the Khmer Rouge to come back, would you be willing to to come to a negotiated settlement with Beijing on the Kampuchea issue?

Answer: Vietnam is a small country which has always desired to live in friendship with China. Throughout its many-thousand-year-old history, Vietnam has never once provoked China. On the contrary, it's China which has on many occasions sent its armies to aggress against us, and has thus met with severe defeats. The people of both Vietnam and China have an interest to live in peace.

That interest is a decisive factor leading to peace between the two countries. We are striving with our utmost effort, for an early peace.

If China stops supporting the Khmer Rouge to come back, Vietnam will withdraw all its troops immediately. At present, the only obstacle is that China refuses to end its support to the genocidal Pol Pot clique. Once China end its support to the Pol Pot clique, the Kampuchea issue will be solved right away by the Kampuchean people themselves.

Question 7: *What do you think as necessary conditions for both Vietnam and the United States to normalize relations? Are you ready to go along a new direction in relations between the two countries? What is the present state of the MIA question?*

Answer: The normalization of relations between Vietnam and the United States is in the interests of both sides and of peace and stability in this region. The war ended more than ten years ago; yet, normal relations between the two countries have not been established. That is an abnormal situation. The Vietnamese side is ready to look forward to and does not pose any condition for normalization. However, the United States which has sown destruction and death in Vietnam, lays down conditions for normalization of relations with this country. That is obviously preposterous.

Vietnam considers the MIA question a humanitarian issue which should be solved in the humanitarian spirit, with efforts of both sides. In that spirit, though there are hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese MIA's still unaccounted for, we are ready to propose that a two-year programme for settling the question of American MIA's be carried out if the United States expresses its willingness

to co-operate. However, so far the United States has not made an official commitment as promised. The responsibility rests with the United States.

Question 8: *Are you satisfied with your economic and cultural relations with France? What is the status of French as a language in Vietnam? In a few decades, there will probably be only a few French-speaking Vietnamese left. Is that something regrettable for both countries?*

Answer: It is regrettable that the relations between Vietnam and France remain at a modest level, not equal to the potentialities of the two countries and the friendship between the two nations. This is beyond our will.

Vietnam is interested in the French language. However, French-speaking in Vietnam can only develop with the development of the relations between the two countries. This should be a problem of common interest for both countries.

February 8, 1987

ANSWERS TO AN INTERVIEW BY NIHON DENPA NEWS

Question 1: Would you mind telling us about the changes in Vietnam since the 6th Party Congress, especially those in the economy and the personnel.

Answer: The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam manifested the strong determination of our entire Party and people to achieve renovation and their united will to overcome all difficulties and bring about a change in the situation.

However, the Resolution adopted at the Congress is not "a magic wand" which can bring about changes overnight. Its implementation is a fierce struggle between the old and the new. The new can arise and develop only on the basis of the defeat of the old. We have made a step in resolving the question of personnel at the central leadership and partially at the provincial level. In the economic field, the plenums of the Central Committee this year will step by step make decisions on major policies. For the immediate future, concrete measures are being taken to promote the autonomy of the State enterprises, unknotted unreasonable binds so that the State enterprises gain in strength in order to assume the leading role in the economy and to encourage the private and individual sectors of the economy.

Question 2: At the present juncture, what do you think about Vietnam's plan to withdraw troops from Kampuchea? I think the year 1987 will bring about important developments in the settlement to the Kam-

puchea issue. How do you feel about it? I have always held the view that the withdrawal will be completed by 1990. Is it correct?

Answer: From 1982 up to now, Vietnam has carried out five partial withdrawals from Kampuchea. Indeed, the withdrawal of all Vietnamese army volunteers will be completed in 1990.

Emerging from a hell on earth, the Kampuchean people have, over the past eight years, achieved the wonders of building a normal life. There is not much time left from now to 1990. Vietnam and many other countries want an early solution to the Kampuchea issue. If such a solution is reached, the withdrawal of all Vietnamese volunteers from Kampuchea will be completed even earlier.

While we are completing the withdrawal of all Vietnamese army volunteers from Kampuchea, just and impartial opinion in the world should demand that an end be put to foreign interference into Kampuchea and all foreign military and financial aid to Khmer reactionary forces so that the Kampuchean people will not be forced to suffer a second genocide and our Vietnamese people will not suffer enormous destruction and violations of their sovereignty in the Southwest region like the years 1976, 1977, and 1978.

Question 3: Would you mind telling us about Vietnam's relations with other countries, especially its relations with China, the United States of America and ASEAN?

Answer: We have been pursuing a consistent foreign policy of peace and friendship among nations. Proceeding from the principle of peaceful co-existence between

countries with different political and social systems, we want to broaden our relations with all countries on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.

China is our big neighbour to the North. The two peoples have had long-standing relations of friendship, we have repeatedly expressed our goodwill and desire to hold talks with a view to settling differences, normalizing the relations between the two countries, and restoring the friendship between the two peoples. Our two peoples share similar fundamental and long-term interests, the current differences are only temporary and can definitely be ironed out. To our deep regret, China has so far not responded to our goodwill.

As a Southeast Asian country, we want to establish good-neighbour relations with all other countries in the region, and are ready to enter into dialogues with the ASEAN countries in order to find out a satisfactory solution to the problems of peace and stability in Southeast Asia, including the Kampuchea issue. An encouraging fact is that in spite of existing difference, the bilateral relations between Vietnam and a number of ASEAN countries, first and foremost Indonesia, have made headway in many fields. These are good bases contributing to increase mutual understanding, and to create favourable conditions for turning Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability, friendship and co-operation.

The war has ended for more than ten years now, but the relations between the United States of America and Vietnam have not yet been established. That is an abnormal situation. We are of the view that the normalization of relations is in the interests of both countries, and of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. We do not impose any conditions on normalization of relations. But the

United States of America, which has sown death and destruction in Vietnam, still tries to do so, that is an obstacle to the normalization of the relations between the two countries.

Question 4: Would you mind giving us some ideas on Vietnam's foreign policy toward Japan. Will the Japanese Government change its attitude toward Vietnam? Discussions are reported to have taken place on the export of crude oil (from Vietnam to Japan). Please, tell us more about it?

Answer: Vietnam and Japan are two close Asian countries with favourable conditions to develop relation of friendship and co-operation with each other, in the interests of the two peoples, and for the sake of peace and stability in the region. Regrettably, the relations between the two countries could not develop over the past period as a result of the Japanese Government's policy of supporting confrontation in Southeast Asia, and backing the hostile policy of certain countries against Vietnam and the other Indochinese countries. Such a policy runs counter not only to the interests of the Japanese people, but also to those of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

We are prepared to develop relations with Japan in the long-term interests of the two peoples and of the region. The present obstacle is due to Japan's policy. We hope that the Japanese Government will adopt a more realistic approach.

Some Japanese companies and the Import-Export Corporation of Vietnam are now having talks on the purchase of Vietnam's crude oil.

Question 5: There have been speculations that a summit of the three Indochinese countries will be held soon. Are they correct? In addition, there will be a conference

of the three foreign ministers. I think that the solidarity among the three Indochinese countries will be strengthened. Is that so?

Answer: The three Indochinese countries have agreed to hold their second summit later this year. This will be a very important event in the relations among the three peoples. The summit is going to be held at a time when the situation in the world, in the region and in the three countries is undergoing new, very favourable changes. It will greatly contribute to increasing the forces of each and of all the three countries, and strengthening the special relationship and all-sided cooperation among the three peoples in the new situation.

History has demonstrated that the growth and close unity of the three Indochinese countries constitute an important factor guaranteeing the independence of each and of all the three countries, and contributing to the defence of peace and stability in Southeast Asia and the Asian-Pacific region.

Hanoi, March 23, 1987

ANSWERS TO L. MIRONOV (NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY)

Question 1: In view of the coming 70th commemoration of the October Revolution, would you please assess the international significance of the October Revolution from today's standpoint?

Answer: This year, together with the Soviet people, the peoples of the other socialist countries and the entire mankind are solemnly commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. President Ho Chi Minh said, "The October Revolution is a great historic event which opens a way to the liberation of peoples and the whole mankind, and ushers in a new era in history, that of transition from capitalism to socialism."

Today, 70 years after that great event, the Soviet Union has become a powerful socialist country in all fields, a firm mainstay of world peace, a reliable prop of all nations struggling against imperialists and reactionaries. The Soviet Union is carrying out a reshuffle of deep revolutionary significance following the spirit of the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the land of the October Revolution is continuing to perform its vanguard role in the path toward socialism and communism. Seventy years after that Revolution, the face of our planet has undergone considerable changes. Socialism has become a worldwide system. The sphere of domination and influence by imperialism has been rapidly narrowed. In the capitalist countries, the working class and toiling people have strengthened their union and boosted their struggle. The movement of the world

people against the danger of a nuclear war, for peace and welfare has become a great political force of our time.

The October Revolution is the greatest event in this century as it has ushered in the era of socialism.

Question 2: The late President Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the Vietnamese people, had many times said about the ideological influence of the October Revolution on the process of the Vietnamese revolution. Would you please let us know how this has been materialized in Vietnam? What are the main tasks being solved in Vietnam to build socialism?

Answer: Following the path of the October Revolution and creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam's conditions, the Communist Party of Vietnam, founded and trained by the late President has led the entire nation to tide over countless difficulties and hardships, achieve national liberation and the reunification of the country, to take the Vietnamese revolution to a new stage: that of building socialism throughout the country and firmly defending their socialist homeland.

The Vietnamese people are implementing the resolution of the 6th Congress of the Communist Party, of Vietnam carrying out a process of renovation in all fields so as to gradually stabilize the socio-economic situation and the people's life, push ahead the Vietnamese revolution.

The successes of the Vietnamese revolution over the past half century are linked to the ideas of the October Revolution, to Lenin's immortal doctrine, to the great and efficacious support and assistance of the CPSV, Gov-

ernment and people of the Soviet Union and of the other fraternal socialist countries and of friends all over the world.

Question 3: The 6th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam spoke out the difficulties met by the country. What is Vietnam doing to tide them over?

Answer: In furtherance of the resolution by the 6th Congress, Vietnam is concentrating on three big economic programmes: production of food and foodstuffs, consumer goods and export goods, solving the urgent problems on repartition and circulation, renovating the mechanism of economic management, cleaning the Party organizations and the State machinery, making social relations wholesome, raising the toiling people's right to collective mastery in all fields.

Question 4: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam is an official member of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance. What are, in your opinion, the most efficacious forms of cooperation with the European CMEA member countries to rapidly boost Vietnam's economic potentialities?

Answer: To obtain a high result in the cooperation with the European CMEA member countries we assume that it is necessary to change the previous cooperation way, by carrying out a 3-level cooperation: government, branch and enterprise, broadening the direct relations between branches and enterprises, setting up joint enterprises, linking responsibility to the interests of both sides.

Question 5: Vietnam lies in an unstable region in which conflicts are unfolding due to unsettled problems. What proposals does Vietnam have to settle them?

Answer : Stemming from its standpoint of building peace and security in Asia and the Pacific, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, together with the Democratic People's Republic of Laos and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, has advocated to solve the present conflicts by a fair political settlement, make the political atmosphere in Southeast Asia healthy, develop friendly relations with the ASEAN countries and other countries in the region.

Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea are determined to solve the Kampuchea problem by political measures with due respect for the realities in the area.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam wishes to normalize and improve its relations with the People's Republic of China, considering it a positive and great factor to consolidate peace in Asia in particular and international relations in general.

Moscow, May 20, 1987

ANSWERS TO PETER SCHOLL LATOUR

(FRIEDEN. West Germany)

Question 1 : Is there any change in the Party's economic policy after the resolution of the 6th Congress? Is there a new orientation in industry and trade? Is there in Vietnam a pattern like perestroika in the Soviet Union?

Answer : In the past ten years, our economic line was affected with subjectivism and voluntarism, irrespective of the real situation and objective law. Now our economic policy must be based on Vietnam's actual potentialities. In the years ahead, we try to stabilize the economic and social situation in every aspect, built the necessary prerequisites for the industrialization in the following stages. The resolution of the 6th Congress has pointed out that we have to abolish the bureaucratic managerial mechanism based on State subsidies and shift to socialist cost accounting business. We shall rearrange the economic structure in a rational way so as to concentrate manpower and wealth on implementing three big economic programmes: food-foodstuffs, consumer goods and export goods. The recent Second Plenum of the Party's Central Committee has begun to solve the problem of repartition and circulation which is a burning problem at present. The coming plenum will do away step by step with the bureaucratic mechanism of concentration based on State subsidies and shift immediately to cost accounting business. The National Assembly session by the end of this year will pass the

law on economic co-operation with the socialist countries and the law on foreign investment.

Question 2: *What concrete measure has been taken to promote the economic and cultural relations between Vietnam and the Federal Republic of Germany and the Common Market in general?*

Question 5: *What is the state of the relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Vietnam?*

Answers to Questions 2 and 5: What is important is that each side has its own interests and the determination to develop its relations or not. At present, the relations between Vietnam and the Federal Republic of Germany have left much to be desired but they are better than before. Between the Federal Republic of Germany and Vietnam there is not any historical burden or direct contending interests. So there are a lot of advantages for our co-operations. I think that Bonn is very imaginative and knows what it should do. For its part, after nearly one century of colonial domination and four decades of atrocious war, Vietnam is trying to solve most intricate socio-economic problems. To this effect, our consistent line is to rely on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries while broadening our relations with all other countries on the basis of mutual interests, mutual respect for each other, with no political conditions attached.

Today, when all countries are interdependent, the development of economic and cultural relations is beneficial to everybody.

Question 3: *What should be in your opinion a solution to the Kampuchea problem? Would you please let us know when all Vietnamese troops shall be withdrawn?*

Answer: A solution to the Kampuchea problem should take into account the standpoint of the related sides, and respect the Kampucheans' right to decide their own affairs without any foreign interference. The standpoint of the Indochinese countries is to discard the genocidal Pol Pot clique. The standpoint of the other side is to demand the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, exclusive of the elimination of the genocidal Pol Pot clique. This is the only obstacle to the settlement to the Kampuchea problem.

As agreed between the governments of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, we have withdrawn our troops five times since 1982 and shall withdraw them all by 1990. However, should there be a political solution to the Kampuchea problem, the Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn following the agreement between the related sides.

Question 4: *What effect does the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and China have for Vietnam?*

Answer: We hail the improvement of relations between China and the Soviet Union and think that it will contribute to peace the world over. Since 1982, China has set as a condition for Sino-Soviet normalization of relation, the solution to the Kampuchea problem-one of the three obstacles. Since then, the Soviet Union has doubled its aid to Vietnam and the relations between the Soviet Union and China have kept on developing.

Hanoi, July 30, 1987

ANSWERS TO DEAN BRELIS

(TIME)

Question 1: *What has brought about the changes made at the CPV's 6th National Congress?*

How do you expect Vietnam to change under your leadership?

Answer: The changes at the 6th Party Congress originated from a serious attitude in assessing the situation, the spirits of "facing the truth, evaluating the fact correctly and telling the truth. They are also the result of straightforward and heartfelt suggestions of our entire Party, people including many Vietnamese living abroad. The resolutions adopted by the Congress reflect the aspiration of our entire Party and people.

Only with a high sense of responsibility for the destiny of our nation, a sincere and bold attitude and full democracy, could the Congress correctly assess the situation, reaffirm the successes and achievements recorded so as to overcome difficulties due to the ravage of forty years of war. Yet it is more important to see the mistakes and shortcomings and work out practical measures to overcome them so that we can fulfil our two basic tasks: building and defending our country.

I believe that the policies mapped out by the Congress will step by step bring about changes to make our country advance forward steadily.

Question 2: *What do you advocate for the future of Vietnam, and how is this view different? How will you go about changing the economy, what is your first priority?*

Answer: At present it is our earnest hope to have an independent, unified, peaceful and socialist country. For more than half a century, many successive Vietnamese generations have made every sacrifice so as to make that dream come true.

More than ever before, at the 6th Congress, we realized that building socialism from a small-scale production without going through a period of capitalist development was a difficult and complicated process, there should be no hastiness, simplification, subjectivism, voluntarism, violation of economic and social laws. We are now paying dear for those mistakes.

Our first priority is for the time being to stabilize our socio-economic situation in all aspects and continue to create necessary premises for industrialization in the next phase. For that aim, we are now carrying out a profound and thorough renovation, taking homogeneous steps toward solving problems relating to distribution and circulation which is a sources of concern for the whole society, eradicating centralized bureaucracy based on State subsidies, switching over to socialist cost-accounting business; realizing three major economic programmes of the production of food and foodstuffs, consumer goods and goods for export; at the same time, launching a campaign to purify the contingent of cadres, enhancing the management of the State machinery, doing away with negative phenomena so that social relations may become sounder and fairer.

Question 3: How do you see yourself and your key people as different from your predecessors? Does the new leadership mean more flexibility and vigour or is there a more fundamental difference today from what was?

Answer: Each stage of our revolution has its own tasks suitable to its historical conditions. In the past, our primary task was to liberate the whole country, regain independence and reunify the country; at present, our prime tasks as mapped out at the 6th Congress are to build socialism and defend the Homeland. As tasks changed, the leadership style should also be changed, too. However, the cause of a nation is a long process with successive stages, the preceding creating conditions for the next. Therefore, the leadership at each stage should bear the characters of inheritance and development.

Question 4: What role will the Soviet Union play; are they encouraging reform?

Answer: In the Soviet Union, there has been a profound and nationwide restructuring. In our country, there has been a thorough renovation in all fields. The causes leading to the restructuring in the Soviet Union and the renovation in Vietnam are not one and the same, and the levels of development of the two countries are different, and yet they are both aimed at heightening labour power and accelerating development. The Soviet Union strongly supports Vietnam's renovation and Vietnam wholeheartedly supports Soviet restructuring. During my visit to the Soviet Union last May, the two sides held the same view that the Soviet Union should be powerful and Vietnam should be strong, too.

Question 5: Will your government regiment life more carefully? If so, how? If not, what will be form of openness? How about freedom of religion?

Answer: The nature of our revolution is democracy, as it aims at national liberation, abolition of exploitation of man by man, eradication of social inequality and injustice. It is this nature that gave us strength to defeat huge and modern war apparatuses. Since the 6th Party Congress, democratic rights have come into fuller play. The people's most basic democratic right is that of being masters of their land, factories; the rights to being masters in production and consumption are gradually exercised through the eradication of bureaucratic centralized mechanism based on State subsidies. The working principle of openness, "let the people know, let the people discuss and let the people control" is fast becoming a way of life in our society. The recent elections of the National Assembly and the People's Council at various levels were carried out in a new manner, ensuring democratic rights of our electorate. The right to open criticism in the media has been respected. It should be emphasized that our people's right to being masters have been codified; authority and interests should always be accompanied by responsibility and obligation.

In our society, the freedom to profess any religion or none is thoroughly respected and guaranteed by the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Question 6: Are there still camps for rehabilitation of people formerly part of the Thieu regime? How do

you view the Vietnamese who have left (the so-called boat people). Was their loss serious? Can they return?

Answer: After the Second World War, nearly a million Hitlerite collaborators were executed and forty years later the hunt for war criminals is still going on in the world. After the Vietnam war some people in the United States predicted the occurrence of a « bloodbath » as it was in Europe. Nonetheless, this did not take place. The more than one million people serving the administration and army of the Thieu regime enjoyed clemency and a reliving a normal life as ordinary citizens. A very small number of those who committed serious war crimes are still being detained in re-education camps. Many have been released because they had sincerely repented. In hope that they would show repentance and thus be allowed to return to their family life.

Postwar exodus is a common phenomenon all over the world. Vietnamese leave their country for various reasons, the majority for economic one: they could not adapt themselves to a hard life after war and nurtured a hope to lead an easy life in foreign countries. Prompted by humanitarian concern, we have allowed and created conditions for those people who wish to rejoin their families to go in a legal and safe manner. But a number of Western countries have been carrying out policies of receiving only a limited number of people while encouraging illegal departures; their ships are picking up refugees on the high seas and their immigration regulation is more favourable for them than for those leaving legally. For those people who left the country because of economic difficulties and now wish to return, we will consider them case by case.

Question 7: Do you perceive a lessening of tensions with the West in the spirit of Gorbachev? Has Deng's attitude toward the West had any influence upon Vietnam?

Answer: Vietnam always wants friendship and cooperation with all other countries. There has been a tendency of detente in the relations between Vietnam and Western countries. And this is beneficial to all parties and in the interests of peace in Southeast Asia.

Relations between any two countries are dependent first of all on the interests of the two countries, and on the tendency of peace and cooperation or tension and confrontation among countries all over the world.

Question 8: Do you expect to develop export deals for convertible currency with say the Japanese?

Answer: While extending full cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, we are broadening cooperation, especially economic and commercial, with other countries on the basis of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefits and free from any political condition.

Development of relations with Western countries including Japan is beneficial to both Vietnam and those countries. Many private companies from Japan, ASEAN and other Western countries, have had economic relations with Vietnam. Broadening international trade is the trend of our time.

Question 9: Did Vessey's trip here accomplish anything? And what anticipation do you have for restoring diplomatic relations with the USA?

Answer: The trip was productive. With realistic objectives in mind, the two sides are satisfied. At a time

when relations between our two countries are not established it is a good thing to maintain contacts aimed at solving humanitarian problems left behind by war. In the implementation of the agreements reached so far, we have been and shall be making efforts to solve American humanitarian problems. The US side will do the same for Vietnamese humanitarian problems.

Normalization of relations between Vietnam and the US is in the interests of the two sides and those of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. When the US is ready, Vietnam will establish diplomatic relations with it.

Question 10: What have been the most determining influences upon your thinking? Your personal tastes in reading, music, art? How do you relax? The most poignant and formative personal experiences for you in the struggle?

Answer: When I have some leisure time. I read literature and history of Vietnam and other countries, including America. I could say the same for music and arts. This enables me to love not only my people but also other peoples and to form the dream that Vietnamese will live in solidarity and friendship with other peoples in a peaceful world free from internecine wars, especially nuclear ones that would exterminate the whole mankind.

Hanoi, September 11, 1987

ANSWERS TO MADELEINE RIFFAUD AND
MYRIAM BARBERA
(L'HUMANITÉ)

Question 1: Nearly one year ago, the 6th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party decided to change the mode of economic management to build socialism. How has this work unfolded and how do you intend to cope with the problems still unsolved?

Answer: The 6th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party correctly assessed the important achievements in the past ten years while sternly pointed out the errors in these ten years. To build socialism from a small production devastated by forty years of war bypassing the period of capitalist development is an extremely difficult and intricate undertaking, which excludes haste, simplification, subjectiveness, voluntarism, and especially violation of socio-economic laws.

The 6th Congress sets as priority task the stabilization of the socio-economic situation in all aspects and further creating necessary prerequisites for the industrialization in the next period. To this effect, we have to carry out a deep and thorough renovation so as to free existing production capacities and tap all potentialities of the country.

Of late the Second and Third Plenums of the Party Central Committee have passed concrete resolutions to this aim so as to solve the problem of repartition and circulation and abolish the bureaucratic mechanism of concentration based on State subsidies, shift to socialist business accounting, implement three big economic

programmes: production of food and foodstuffs, consumer goods and export goods. To fulfil these major tasks, we have to launch a drive to purify the Party, uphold the responsibility and quality of the contingent of cadres, do away with negative and gradually build more healthy and equitable social relations.

The deep and thorough renovation is a revolutionary process, a hard and complex struggle between the new and the old unfolding in the whole society and in each individual. Therefore it must be done resolutely and radically but at the same time patiently and firmly, step by step.

Question 2: Many Vietnamese have left their country and a number of them are living in France. Would you please let us know about Vietnam's policy with regard to this problem?

Answer: With regard to those who leave their country Vietnam's policy is a humane one. We give permission and create conditions for those wanting to leave in a legal and safe way. However, some Western countries, while restricting the immigration of those leaving in a legal way, encourage those wanting to leave in an illegal way — by sending boats to receive them in the open sea, giving them easier immigration facilities, etc.

Many Vietnamese leave their country for various reasons, but mostly because of an economy devastated by forty years of war. A number of them have gone to live in France. We wish they soon stabilize their family life and acquaint themselves with the French people's life. With regard to those who leave, we regard them as our fellow countrymen and are ready to welcome them should they want to return and see their family.

Question 3: Would you please let us know about Vietnam's stand regarding the Kampuchea problem especially in regard to a major withdrawal of Vietnamese volunteers from Kampuchea?

Answer: The stand of the three Indochinese countries is to discard the genocidal Pol Pot clique. The stand of the other side is to withdraw all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. The three Indochinese countries have agreed to the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops but the other side still demands that the genocidal Pol Pot clique return to Kampuchea. They use military pressure, political and economic blockade, impose their stand against the three Indochinese countries and against the Kampuchean people's aspiration. This is the cause of the deadlock about Kampuchea in the past eight years. At present, most of the Kampuchean parties, like most of the related countries, wish to end this deadlock and to have a dialogue to peacefully solve the Kampuchean problem and other problems in Southeast Asia. The agreement reached in Ho Chi Minh City July 29, 1987 between Vietnam representing the Indochinese countries, and Indonesia, representing many ASEAN countries, has reflected this trend and may bring about a solution to the present deadlock. The Kampuchean parties also want to meet one another and should they sit to solve the Kampuchea problem nobody can prevent them. The policy of national concord like the Statement of the People's Republic of Kampuchea on September 28, 1987 hailing Mr Sihanouk's initiative for a meeting between the Kampuchean parties is a good basis for the Kampuchean people to speak with one another for the interests of the Kampuchean people.

This favourable development is due mainly to the fact that the People's Republic of Kampuchea has revived from the Pol Pot clique's hell on earth, is developing and step by step taking its affairs into its hand. It is this fine development of the Kampuchean situation which has enabled Vietnam since 1982 to withdraw each year part of its volunteers from Kampuchea and this year to withdraw an important part. Together with the preceding withdrawals, this one will reduce the amount of Vietnamese volunteers in Kampuchea by half. We resolutely implement the agreement between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea setting the withdrawal of all Vietnamese volunteers by 1990. This will be a major success of both the Vietnamese and the Kampuchean peoples.

Question 4: Do you hope that the solution to the humanitarian problems between the USA and Vietnam will lead to the abolition of the ban on trading between the USA and Vietnam?

Answer: The improvement of relations between Vietnam and the USA are beneficial to both countries, to peace and stabilization in Southeast Asia. We think that one should turn to the future.

The recent visit to Vietnam by General Vessey, as a special envoy of the US President, has got initial results. The two sides asserted and pledged to solve the humanitarian problems between Vietnam and the USA left by the war. These commitments are being prepared for execution. In itself the solution to the humanitarian problems between the two countries does not lead to the normalization of relation between them but it will better the atmosphere between the two countries.

In the increasing internationalization of the world economy and interdependence between countries, such policies as ban on trading, economic blockade, etc., are detrimental to both sides.

Question 5: Vietnam has proposed to have a representation within the European Economic Council and the recent Quebec Conference has taken note of Vietnam's concern for the French language. Are you pleased with the degree of cooperation between Vietnam and France? Is there any field in which the cooperation between the two countries can be improved?

Answer: The Vietnamese people and the French people have a traditional friendship characterized by their mutual understanding, esteem and support. This is a precious patrimony of the two nations fostered by the Communist Party of Vietnam and the French Communist Party.

It is most regrettable that the relations between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the French Republic are not yet abreast with the historic relations between the two peoples, many potentialities having not yet tapped like in the realm of technico-scientific cooperation and cultural exchange. This is beyond Vietnam's wish. We hope that with the efforts of both sides, the relations between Vietnam and France will develop in the interests of the peoples of both countries.

Hanoi, October 8, 1987

ANSWERS TO THE SOVIET TELEVISION

Question 1: *Today the peoples in the world are commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. Would you please assess the significance of the victory of the October Revolution with regard to Vietnam?*

Answer: The Socialist October Revolution is a landmark in the history of mankind, ushering in a new era, that of transition from the regime of oppression and exploitation to socialism on a worldwide scale. The October Revolution awakened the oppressed classes and peoples and blazed the way for self-liberation. The momentous changes in the world over the past seventy years have eloquently proved the extremely great significance of that Revolution.

With regard to Vietnam if there had not been Lenin and the October Revolution there would not have appeared the Communist Party of Vietnam; if there had not been the Soviet Union's triumph over fascism there would not have been the August Revolution; if there was not the Soviet Union's devoted, great and efficacious help there would not be an independent and reunified Vietnam advancing to socialism bypassing the stage of capitalist development. This truth has been tested by practice.

From generation to generation the Vietnamese communists and people are determined to preserve the Vietnamese-Soviet friendship fostered by Comrade Ho Chi Minh and tighten the pure relationship between the two fraternal socialist countries.

Question 2: *Like other socialist countries, Vietnam has begun renovating all aspects of its socio-economic life. What is in your opinion the main purport of this renovation?*

Answer: The resolution of the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has pointed out that a deep and thorough socio-economic renovation is a pressing requirement of the socialist revolution in Vietnam. Only by renovation can we reach the target put forth by our 6th Congress, namely to stabilize the socio-economic situation, free all production capacities and tap all the potentialities of the country. Only in this way can we build the prerequisites needed by the socialist industrialization in the next stage.

Renovation is an eager aspiration of our people. It conforms to the trend of reshuffle in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. However, renovation is a revolutionary process, a hard and intricate struggle between the new and the old, unfolding in the entire society and in each individual.

Question 3: *What is in your opinion the main lever to stabilize and improve Vietnam's national economy?*

Answer: We have to abolish the bureaucratic mechanism of State subsidies and shift the whole economy to socialist cost accounting business. The 6th Congress has pointed out our errors, that is voluntarism and violation of economic laws.

The 2nd and 3rd Plenums of our Central Committee have taken the following measures as main levers to stabilize and develop the economy: set up an autonomous mechanism for production and business bases stabilize prices, wages, finance and currency.

Moscow, November 4, 1987

ANSWERS TO JEAN CLAUDE POMONTI

(LE MONDE)

Question 1: Kampuchea: What are you looking forward to from the coming Sihanouk-Hun Sen talks? Do you think a political solution can be reached before the Vietnamese troops withdraw from Kampuchea? Is there in your opinion some flexibility in China's policy toward Kampuchea in the past months?

Answer: The internal affairs of Kampuchea should be settled by the Kampucheans themselves. We support the meeting between Prime Minister Hun Sen and Prince Sihanouk. It conforms to the policy of national concord and the 5-point solution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, and to the joint communiqué between Vietnam and Indonesia on July 29. The result of the talks between the Kampuchean sides will open the way to the peaceful settlement to the Kampuchea problem for the sake of the Kampuchean people's interests, meet the aspiration of progressive mankind, especially the South-east Asian peoples, and contribute to peace and stability in the area and in the world.

With the goodwill of the parties a political solution can be reached before all the Vietnamese troops withdraw by 1990.

Vietnam hails all realistic acts by China contributing to the settlement of the Kampuchea problem through peaceful means.

Question 2: Relations with the USA: There is a progress in the relations between the USA and Vietnam, isn't it?

Is the USA ready for a rapprochement with Vietnam before a political solution is reached for the Kampuchea problem?

Answer: The agreement between Vietnam and the USA to share responsibility in the settlement to Vietnam's and US humanitarian problems through the visit of General Vessey, special envoy of President Reagan, and the efforts of both sides will contribute to bettering the atmosphere between the two countries.

Question 3: Renovation in Vietnam: Are you pleased with the tempo of the economic and political reforms unfolding in Vietnam since the 6th Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party? What are in your opinion the main obstacles to and the main trumpcards for the renovation?

Question 4: General situation: Over the past year Vietnam has undergone a lot of changes. How do you view the future? Do you think the changes will be carried on but it takes time? Or do you think they should be put off temporarily?

Answers to Questions 3 and 4: The target set by the 6th Congress is to rapidly stabilize all the aspects of the socio-economic situation, build the necessary prerequisites for the industrialization in the following stage. Over the past year we have done some work: the 2nd Plenum put forward measures to curb the inflation, price-hiking and the difficulties in the people's life. We have obtained a number of initial results in this field. The 3rd Plenum mapped out the orientation to renovate the mechanism of economic management, abolish the

bureaucratic mechanism of State subsidies, and shift to socialist cost accounting business. We are concentrating on three big economic programmes—production of food and foodstuffs, consumer goods and export goods. The cooperation with the Soviet Union is being renovated. The Law on Foreign Investment will be passed by the National Assembly this December. In the social field, we have taken measures to broaden social democracy, purify the Party's ranks, raise the managerial efficiency of the State machinery,[†] and make social relations wholesome.

One year is too short a time—the achievements are not small but still a far cry from our wishes. However, renovation is a great constant and long revolutionary cause which excludes haste and simplification. The biggest obstacle on the way to renovation is the old thinking and working style in each individual. The problem is that each has to remove this hindrance within himself.

The renovation we are carrying out is consonant to the objective requirement of the situation. The most important thing is that it meets the people's aspiration. This is the surest guarantee for its continuation and success.

Hanoi, December 5, 1987

ANSWERS TO INTERVIEWS AT THE ASIAN-PACIFIC JOURNALISTS' ROUND TABLE *

Suzuki of "Akahata":

Comrade General Secretary, would you mind speaking about renovation? How do you assess its results one year after the 6th Congress? What has been the role of the C.P.V.? Has the Party been able to promote its leadership in the movement for renovation?

Would you care to give your assessment of the situation in culture, literature and art. Since you are in close touch with the literary and art circles in Vietnam, what do you think of the cultural problems?

We're very interested in the "Things To Do Now" series by N.V.L. Our Party has translated some of the articles for the benefit of Japanese readers. How was the reaction of the Vietnamese people to N.V.L.'s articles? I haven't seen anything by N.V.L. for some time now. Why?

Nguyen Van Linh:

Friend Suzuki, you've posed three questions. I'll answer the first. A year, or precisely speaking, one year and one month, has gone since the 6th Congress, which laid great stress on renovation of thinking, especially economic thinking, and renovation of working style, of organization, which is cumbersome with too many overlapping links and layers. More than that, we need to

* Held in Ho Chi Minh City, Jan. 19-21, 1988

renovate our personnel. A policy, however well conceived, will be pigeon-holed if those who are responsible for its implementation continue to think and act in the old way. Economically, we've do a great deal since the liberation of Southern Vietnam and the reunification of our country. That was thanks to our own efforts and to the assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. With what we took over from the old regime in the South, especially in Ho Chi Minh City, we've been able to develop agriculture and industry gradually. Under the rule of the United States and its puppets, South Vietnam used to import about one million tonnes of rice a year. The same thing happened in North Vietnam. Now, thanks to a gradual increase in production, we've been able to reduce the import volume. In 1984, for instance, we were able to do without imported rice. In the years that followed, however, crops were very bad in half of our country, the Northern half, because of bad weather. Consequently, we don't have enough food now. In other productive activities, in industry and handicrafts, production has increased year after year because private producers can act with greater freedom in keeping with socialist legality. So, we have more goods not only for domestic consumption but also for export. We also supply other countries with finished or semi-finished products made from materials provided by them. Even so, efficiency remains low because of an irrational, anachronistic mode of doing business which is a product of the war. Supplies to our factories are insufficient because we don't have enough the right kind of money to buy them, and buy them in time. So factories can operate only at 60% or 70% of their

capacity at the most, and in most cases, at 30% or 40% only. In agriculture, despite an increase in gross output, we have difficulty in attaining higher yield through intensive farming because of lack of fertilizer and insecticide. Another problem, which we do not try to hide, is that food production in our country cannot keep pace with the growth of the population which now stands at more than 60 million, with many seven-or eight-child, even nine-or ten-child families. Of course, family planning is enforced, but results remain poor. Consequently we're faced with great difficulties in supplying our people with consumer goods and food and in coping with galloping prices. In the last months of 1987 we tried to make prices more stable, and in fact the rise has slowed down regarding some commodities. Many people in our country have asked the leadership of our Party and State, me in particular, why things have changed so slowly and unnoticeably although more than a year has gone since the 6th Congress of our Party. The same question was put to me, when I was running for the National Assembly in Hanoi, by voters and foreign correspondents alike. I said the situation was so bad that we could not hope to change it overnight. So, one year is too short a time. We'll try, in the next three years, until 1990, to make the situation more or less stable by giving full scope to our revolutionary zeal so as to carry out with success all policies of the Party and the State, while cooperating better with the Soviet Union and other countries, socialist or otherwise. Then, on the basis of this relative stability, we'll move forward.

In a word, I can say that economically and socially our country is so ill that no panacea can bring it back to its feet in a short period.

Now I'll answer your question about the cultural life in Vietnam. It's a fact that society always finds its expression in its culture and art. Throughout the war against the French and the Americans, culture and art, and the press in particular, had for their watchword President Ho Chi Minh's teachings that "Death Rather Than Slavery" and "Unity, Great Unity; Victory, Great Victory". Many art and cultural workers died while accompanying soldiers at the front or taking part in demonstrations against the enemy. Art and culture, dedicated to a clear ideal and motivated by the determination to join the army and the people in the victorious fight for peace, independence and national reunification, acted as a catalyst, and works of great merits were created. Many songs, paintings and books of that time are still exerting a compelling influence on us. In the past decade, however, art and culture fared no better than our economy. They were in a stagnant state because of many reasons. Difficulties in the economic life had a dampening effect. Spirits were not as high as they had been during the war and artistic creation was also on the decline. Moreover there were bad influences exerted on the young people by the decadent culture left by the old regime. So, while the majority of the working people and the intelligentsia were devoting themselves to national reconstruction, a number of people, working on the assumption that as the war was over there was no need for further self-abnegation, indulged themselves in pleasure. Self-indulgence without the necessary economic conditions

naturally led to malpractice, and such a situation made it imperative for writers and artists to explore new horizons and come up with creations that inspire people rather than discourage them. I just spent two days talking to our writers and poets, and we agreed that their pecuniary situation left much to be desired. Many complained about low royalties and said they could not write well because the penury of their families was a drag on their minds.

It's obvious that for novelists and poets to write well, conditions must be made available which enable them to live better to travel about, keep in touch with people and sympathize with them. Moreover, democracy was not often observed in literature, and writers were often imposed upon to write against their will.

About the "Things To Do Now" series. Difficulties in economic life have adversely affected social life. In Vietnam although the construction of socialism is underway, social evils still exist in great numbers. That's a fact and we don't hide it. There are people who fought the aggressors heroically but who have gone bad. Certain aspects of life have deteriorated, and a stop must be put to that. The first thing to do is to improve the economy and help everyone make a living legally. I say "legally" because there are people who make their living illegally, speculators and smugglers, for instance. Such people exist even within Party and State apparatuses. They steal from public funds. Goods are handled by many people at many intermediary levels before they can reach consumers, each time priced a little higher. Great profits are made this way by people who have nothing to do with the production of goods while

people who make the goods are paid low wages and consumers have to pay exorbitant prices. In such a situation we've made it a point to purify all Party and State apparatuses and make social life wholesome. We know that it's impossible to step up economic construction without removing the many people who are exerting a negative effect on our effort. As long as they remain, we cannot have a new thinking, a new style of work, a new way of doing business. With such people there can be no profit, no efficiency. So, decisions and steps have been taken in this regard. As for the column "Things To Do Now", it's only the intention of the author, N.V.L., to remind the people of what the Party is doing and help them better understand Party policy. For years, our people have known who were harming their interests and were very angry about that. The only problem was that they did not know where and how to address their grievances. N.V.L. just made himself useful to them by writing a few short articles. Ever since people of all walks of life have spoken out. People who were victims to injustice, people who dared not speak although they knew their superiors were stealing from public funds, have written to the press, taking this opportunity to exercise their right as citizens, to promote democracy. So, N.V.L. has done no more than write a few lines to remind people of what they can do, and many papers have responded to him by encouraging people to speak their minds. As a result, many cases have been brought to light, and culprits have been dealt with severely by both the administration and the Party. One case, as you may have learnt from the papers, involved a brigadier general. The man, despite a very good record in the past, was tried for

smuggling and for corrupting friends. He was sentenced to prison and was expelled from the army and the Party as well. I cited just one case, a typical one. There are many others. We must go on with our work, for many more years, in a continuous manner, knowing that a ruling party is apt to become bureaucratic and tend to lose touch with the masses, that power and corruption often go hand in hand. This work, as I just said, must be carried on. And why has N.V.L. not been seen in various papers for some time now? Because what he did was to start the motor and put the car in motion. To drive that car is the job of professional journalists and newspaper readers. N.V.L. will write again, from time to time, just to step on the gas pedal.

A Malaysian journalist:

Mr General Secretary, would you make clear what prompted you to adopt the new Investment Law? What about ownership? What are you going to do about taxes?

After a long war, which you won, do you think you know enough how to reorganize your country economically?

After liberation in 1975, you had to re-educate people who had served the Saigon regime. Now, after adopting the Investment Law, are you going to re-educate the people in Hanoi to make them know how to do business?

Nguyen Van Linh:

Mr Vo Dong Giang, who's in charge of external economic affairs, will speak to you in great detail about the Investment Law this afternoon. So I'll just say a

few words only. A few years ago, when I was Party Secretary of this city, I met businessmen from many capitalist countries. We wanted to do business with them, and they wanted to do the same with us. Yet, they had many questions to ask. Here are a few: "If we invest in an enterprise in your country we must know exactly when you will nationalize it?" "Can we get part of our profits in foreign currency out of your country?" "How many months will it take to get a visa to your country each time we want to come and see how business is going on?" "Our experts have a fifteen-day paid leave each year, and they may want to spend it in other countries or in your country. Will permission be granted them promptly? If it takes three months to get the permission, their leave may have expired by then".

I had no difficulty answering these questions. Well, I said, policies will be adopted (that was before the 6th Congress of our Party) to make it possible for you to deal with our own businessmen as long as you wish and as long as it is profitable to you. You can get your money back any time. Also, we will see to it that you can come any time you like. You can take a flight in the morning and leave in the afternoon. Then, you can leave all your profits for reinvestment, or get part of them out. That's your right. About permission for your experts to spend their leaves in our country or abroad, just apply for it and we'll respond favourably.

"That very good", said my interlocutors. "But what you said would be applicable to your city only and there's nothing to confirm it yet. Your central government may decree to the contrary."

My interlocutors had every reason to fear that because we were working at a local level only. Any disagree-

ment on the part of the central government would queer their position and discredit us. Now, it's different. The 6th Congress of our Party made it clear that our economy consists of five sectors, one of them private, or capitalist. It may sound strange for a socialist country to have a capitalist sector in its economy but that's true. We're still at the initial stage of socialist construction and, therefore, still poor. There are native capitalists who are patriotic although their country is a socialist one. Those people, moreover, have great managerial skills and are excellent businessmen. They can produce a lot for the benefit of the people provided that they abide by socialist legality. So, to some extent, they are exploitative—they hire workers, and hiring workers implies exploitation—but they must act in conformity with our labour law. I once told them a joke by calling them "socialist capitalists". Now, we're only doing what Lenin told us to. In his New Economic Policy (NEP) Lenin saw the usefulness of native capitalists. He even sought investments by foreign capitalists. The only trouble was that the Soviet Union was then under siege and nobody wanted to risk his money there. Lenin actually advised the proletariat to pay foreign capitalists a big fee if they would teach it how to do business. In Vietnam today we must do the same, because it is very difficult for such a backward agricultural country as ours to advance to socialism bypassing capitalist development. So we must develop industry and must allow native capitalists to develop in line with the law of the socialist State. At the same time we must rely on the Soviet Union and other fraternal socialist countries to build our industry, to build socialism. Moreover, we're ready to do business with foreign capitalists honestly on

mutually advantageous terms, without any political strings. Although we belong to a different political system, there's nothing to stop foreign capitalists to do business with us. So much for the investment law. For more details, there's the text of the law to study. Besides, Mr Vo Dong Giang, our man in charge of external economic affairs, will tell you more about it this afternoon.

Now, you want to know if we're going to re-educate the people in the North in the spirit of renovation. Well, Vietnam is a single country, but economic conditions are not the same everywhere. Under French occupation, a very backward agricultural economy existed in the North where peasants produced individually for their own use. They grew rice for food, groundnut for oil with which to burn at night, and cotton to make cloth with. It was a self-sufficient economy, maintained at family or village size. In the South, the economy was mainly agricultural while industry was still a long way off development. Yet, that was a commodity economy. Peasants, after paying rents to landowners, had enough to spare. They would sell surplus produces in exchange for industrial goods. So, there was a great difference between Northern peasants and their Southern compatriots. The former were operating in a self-sufficient economy, the latter in a commodity economy. Politically, there existed two different systems. French rule was direct in the South. In the North, it was exercised through the medium of a feudal state. As a result, habits and manners were different. Southerners were more liberal than their Northerners.

When the U.S. neo-colonialists came they also, while waging a war against us, invested in industry in the service

of their own army and the million-strong native army. As a result, industry was fairly developed, especially in this city and at Bien Hoa. So, different economic and social conditions gave rise to different ways of thinking and different styles of work. Over the past years, industrial enterprises in Ho Chi Minh City have managed to get around bureaucratic practices and move ahead in their own way. And it was that experience that prompted the 6th Congress of our Party to allow grassroots enterprises to operate on a cost-accounting-business basis and to pay attention to goods production. It's now clear that commodity economy exists even in a socialist society and that all the laws governing such an economy must be respected. It's equally clear that in economic activity, neither prices nor modes of operation can be imposed. That would be unrealistic or, as we're fond of saying now, voluntaristic.

As the whole of our country is working in a new style, I think re-education and a change in the way of thinking and working is necessary, not only for the North, but also for the South. Poor performance exists in the South, too, though to a lesser degree. So, all our cadres, all our working people must be re-educated in the new way of thinking.

Sadhan Mukherjee of "Central News Service" and "New Age"

Comrade General Secretary, you said at the beginning that it was time for the countries in Asia and the Pacific to move in the direction of dialogue for the settlement to regional problems. I want to know what you have negotiated and discussed with other countries about this.

About the renovation taking place in your country. Is the CPV faced with any opposition to renovation?

My third question, or rather a suggestion: "You've given quite interesting answers. Will a written English translation be available?"

Nguyen Van Linh:

Yes, we've taken initial steps contributive to the creation of a zone of peace and cooperation in Southeast Asia. Our foreign minister has several times proposed the establishment of relations between Vietnam and the ASEAN countries. Last year, Indonesia's foreign minister paid a visit to Vietnam and met his Vietnamese counterpart, Nguyen Co Thach, in Ho Chi Minh City. The two men discussed ways to help settle the Kampuchea question along the line of national reconciliation.

Indonesia has also discussed with us cooperation in many economic activities and will soon send its representatives for more detailed discussions. Vice-Premier Vo Van Kiet, who is in charge of planning, has been invited to Indonesia for a feasibility study of economic cooperation. From Thailand, we've received signals that people will come to see what is suitable for economic cooperation. But what is most important is that the ASEAN countries and Vietnam, without consulting each other, both support the recent meeting between Chairman Hun Sen and Prince Sihanouk. After his first meeting with Chairman Hun Sen, Prince Sihanouk made an appointment for a second meeting in Paris in January 1988. A few days later, however, he said the second meeting would not take place at all. It was obvious that he made the denial under some sort of pressure the

source of which, I suppose, is known to you. But there was another pressure, that of the recent summit of the ASEAN countries, which supported contact between the two leaders. So Sihanouk changed his mind and promised to meet Hun Sen again in Paris in January. That meeting took place yesterday. We haven't learned anything concrete about that meeting. Maybe you've learned something yourselves because you've better means. Anyway, it's a great thing that the ASEAN countries, like Vietnam and Laos, want to see the Kampuchea question settled and peace restored in Kampuchea along the path of national concord. That's very heart-rending.

You wanted to know if there was opposition within the Party to renovation. As far as I can learn from the history of many countries and the world as well, when it comes to change things, there are supporters of changes as well as fence-sitters. At the same time, obstacles will be put up by a minority that doesn't advocate changes. As for opposition within the country, I can't see any. Everybody is speaking about "renovation", and "renovation" is a household word now. There are many enthusiasts, but even the most enthusiastic are groping in the dark. They are working by trial and with error in the absence of all formulas. There are no ready-made answers. We must find our own way. Yet, during discussions on renovation in economic activities, in education and other fields we could see who really wanted renovation and who were sticking to the old way of thinking and were seeking to maintain anachronistic policies. There's no outright opposition, but there are people who want to move fast and people who want to process cautiously. Still there are people who want to keep old things.

An American journalist:

Mr General Secretary, the 6th CPV Congress concentrated on reviewing and reevaluating economic planning and economic management. I would like to know if there would be a similar evaluation in the time to come, of the role of the CPV in the Vietnamese society, especially of the role of the Party in the on-going renovation and economic reorganization of this society.

Nguyen Van Linh:

I must say it's our Party that has initiated economic renovation. It's common knowledge that ours is a Party in office which had made political leadership a monopoly for a long time before independence was regained. Before it, there had been royalist parties, but their members were old and they realized that they could not swim with the tide. There had been the Nationalist Party founded by the petty bourgeoisie, but it was suppressed and disintegrated. Our Party as the representative of the proletariat, provided political leadership to the whole country in the struggle for independence. Now, in socialist construction, it's our Party that's responsible for policy-making in economic activities and all other spheres. If a policy is not working, it's the fault of the Party. It was by our fault that bureaucratic centralism and State subsidy came into being and were maintained for a long time. Now that we see how wrong, how harmful that managerial mechanism was, we try to change it. Our whole Party is unanimous on this point, and its 6th Congress made a resolution about it. As I've just told the Indian friend, no one opposes renovation. But it's natural that there are people who want

things to change quickly and others that want to move cautiously or to keep to the old way of thinking. That's the whole picture. Is my answer satisfactory?

Clayton Jones of "Christian Science Monitor":

I've three questions. One, do you support Gorbachov's call for a Sino-Soviet summit, particularly where it concerns Kampuchea? Two, what about a release of inmates from education camps in Vietnam on the occasion of Tet? Three, do you envisage any change in the composition of the government following the 5th meeting of the Party Central Committee?

Nguyen Van Linh:

We support Comrade Gorbachev's call for a Sino-Soviet summit. About the Kampuchea question, we want to arrive at a solution. That desire is shared by Laos and by Kampuchea themselves. But the problem is that China persists in making such a solution conditional, as it has made normal relations with Vietnam conditional to the immediate, total withdrawal of our forces from their internationalist mission in Kampuchea. We have many times said that we would certainly bring all our troops home by 1990. We will have completed the withdrawal in 1990 whether or not the Kampuchean parties reach an agreement by that time. Despite our clear intention China insists that we withdraw at once while through Thailand, it continues to give weapons and money to the Pol Pot clique for a return to Kampuchea. That's quite unjust, quite unreasonable. Now at this meeting with many journalists from Asia-Pacific and from other countries, we wish to make clear again

that having suffered so much in forty years of war, we want peace more than anything else for national reconstruction. We can't afford to spend a great part of our budget on maintaining an army of this size, but we have to do that because we have to defend our northern territory from daily violations, by China. As far as Kampuchea is concerned, in 1975, some Chinese leaders, not the Chinese people, instigated Pol Pot to encroach on our territory, alongside his genocide at home. Pol Pot troops crossed our southwestern border, penetrating, at some places, more than thirty kilometres into our territory.

Inside Vietnam from 1976 to 1978, Pol Pot's army killed civilians — old people and children alike. It can be said that those attacks by Pol Pot's troops by far exceeded in ferocity and barbarity all mop-up operations by the United States during the Vietnam war. The sending of our troops to Kampuchea, therefore, was in response to the wish of the people and revolutionaries of Kampuchea to liberate their country from the bloody hands of the Pol Pot clique of murderers. It was also an act of self-defence. The presence of our troops in Kampuchea continues to be a drain on our purse. Moreover, our men continue to die there. That's against our will. We want to bring our troops home so that we may concentrate on national construction. Large regions in our country like the Western Highlands remain unreclaimed. We want to put them to use in the service of our country. That's why we are for a Sino-Soviet meeting. Yet, we don't agree with the Chinese approach where it concerns Kampuchea.

About the people in re-education camps. We're going to release all of them. It should be recalled that just

before our victory in 1945, the Americans and their henchmen tried to sow panic among the population. They said there would be a bloodbath in Saigon and other urban centres in South Vietnam after the U.S. withdrawal and the defeat of the Saigon army. Anyone that was related one way or another to the Americans and the Saigon army was worried and frightened. There were other rumours, too. It was predicted, for instance, that the Vietcong would pull off women's fingernails with pliers and would marry them off to disabled communist soldiers. But, as you can see for yourselves, no retaliation, nor bloodbath has taken place. To the majority of the people in the Saigon administration and army, there was only a brief period, a few days, of re-education. Regarding a number of high-ranking officers who had contracted blood debts, they should have been sentenced to death many times over. They deserved that. But we did not shoot any of them. The only thing we did was to send them to re-education camps so that they might realize that killing their own people was a crime. We've set free those who have repented and will continue to do so. Of course there is the fact that the living conditions in the camps are not good. That's because we are very poor. Life is very hard outside let alone in camps. Yet, inmates are allowed to produce food to supplement their diet. So, with our assistance, many inmates have repented and have been released, and recently we have decided to set free all the rest. You can be assured that we will keep our word. Among those who are going to get their freedom, some may want to go abroad, to the United States for instance. We'll give them the permission. Anyone that wishes to go openly will be allowed to go. The only hitch is that the United

States does not accept them. So far, permission has been given to some 20,000 people, but the other countries, the United States in particular, do not want them. So, it's our wish that public opinion will speak up in favour of their departure. We don't want to keep those who want to leave.

My next answer is to your question about a possible reshuffle of the cabinet. Yes, it's a certainty that we're going to effect many changes, not only in the government, but also in the Party. Since the 6th Congress, we've removed a number of people — some deputy premiers and ministers who, in their backward thinking, have caused damage, especially to the economy. Again, we're going to remove other people who cannot change. People who do not change in their way of thinking and their style of work, and who are thus in the way to the new style, will be replaced. Even so, we hope such people will soon realize their mistakes and will cease to do damage to the country. There's also the question of personnel streamlining. The government, for instance, will have to ask itself if it's necessary to have so many vice-premiers and so many ministries. Each ministry may have to cut down the number of departments. The present set-up is cumbersome. It's not only unproductive. It's even harmful. It's "budgetivore," if I may use the French word. Something like "budgetvorous." Yet, we must change in that direction.

Keith Rechburg of "Washington Post"

Would Mr General Secretary predict some trouble in Kampuchea following the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops in 1990? Would that affect the withdrawal in any way?

Would a complete Vietnamese withdrawal depend on a peaceful solution to Kampuchea and to non-interference from outside?

How would you evaluate the relations between the United States and Vietnam? It seems some of our congressmen, during their visits to Vietnam, have made some assessments and have arrived at some agreement regarding such relations, for instance the question of Amerasians. Yesterday, the Foreign Minister referred to questions being raised in the relations between the United States and Vietnam. Is there any hope that a settlement can be found at the government level?

Would Mr General Secretary say what you were doing twenty years ago during the Tet Offensive and what effect the offensive had in the course of the war?

Nguyen Van Linh

I'll try to predict what may happen in Kampuchea after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese army. Well, looking back on the past ten years, we can see that the People's Republic of Kampuchea has grown in strength. But just after the genocide by Pol Pot, there was virtually nothing. Towns were deserted. There was no trade. What was produced by agriculture was not enough to feed the population. Many people had nothing but porridge. Yet, in less than ten years, the PRK has formed a relatively strong army, with our assistance, of course. It has set up a central government and a local administration that cover all levels — provinces, districts, communes and hamlets. The Kampuchean party has also set up the bases which, though not quite strong, have provided leadership to both economic and political revivals. Famine has become a thing of the past, and the country can produce enough food

grain not only for consumption but also for export. Of course the Kampucheans are afraid of a possible return of the Pol Pot clique following the withdrawal of Vietnamese volunteer fighters. Each time we effected a partial withdrawal, they were reluctant to let our troops go. Many cried openly, especially old people who had witnessed massacres by Pol Pot's men. We tried to reassure them. We said they should be sure of themselves, making it clear that Pol Pot could do nothing against the present regime in Kampuchea although he was still operating from Thailand with the assistance of other reactionary forces. It's true that Pol Pot's troops have raided certain villages and hamlets to rob the inhabitants of their food. In some cases they have forced some of them to join them. But it's also true that many of them have turned over a new leaf by rejoining their families. I think it would be a good point if a treaty between the Kampuchean parties, even without a clear-cut provision on the disbanding of Pol Pot's army, would provide for the granting of citizenship to unarmed returnees. Then, despite the withdrawal of our troops, the situation would not get out of control. It is not only our wish, but it is that of all forces of peace and humanity to see a peaceful Kampuchea without fighting and where democracy will prevail and human lives will be taken into account. If public opinion in the world and in this region in particular takes this stand, the complexity in the situation, if any, will not be unmanageable. So, I take this opportunity to ask all of you to speak up to prevent Pol Pot forces from making a comeback and to ensure democracy and respect for human lives after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese force and the signing of a treaty of national concord between the Kampuchean parties, and possibly the return of Prince Sihanouk for an important

post in national leadership in Kampuchea. Such a pressure by public opinion will help a lot in keeping the situation from worsening.

As for the relations between the United States and Vietnam, I once dealt with them during an interview by a Bangkok-based American correspondent. Now I'll say about it again. Vietnam is ready to let bygones be bygones. We wanted to forget about the unhappy past when half a million U.S. troops were helping one million Saigon troops in a scheme to send Vietnam back to the Stone Ages. Almost every Vietnamese family lost some of its members during that war, and many of the deaths are still unaccounted for. We suffer a lot from that past, but we'll manage somehow. As far as the American people are concerned, we always think well of them. During the war, people in the United States raised their voices for an end to the killing of Vietnamese, Laotians and Kampucheans, as they are now protesting against U.S. support for reactionaries in killing people in Nicaragua and in many other countries in the world. We're indebted to the American people, among them many intellectuals and artistes. Regarding the U.S. authorities, we want them to join us in getting rid of that unhappy past, in looking ahead toward good relations between the two countries. We're trying our best in resolving humanitarian problems at the call of the United States, especially in the search for the remains of the American servicemen killed in action in Vietnam and for information about Americans missing in action. We're trying to look for the remains of American servicemen and to return them to their families although we cannot yet find all the remains of our own soldiers to return to their families. Yet, we don't have the time and the means to search the whole country. Fighting took place every-

where. We fought the Americans in the jungle, on the plains, even in the town. A complete search would, therefore, be impossible. Even so, we're searching and will continue the search. As regards those Amerasians, we hope they may all go to the United States. Many of them are left alone now because their mothers have remarried. Charity groups have been set up by people in this city to take care of these children and to give them some education. I know of one woman, a small trader, who has formed a little group to raise forty orphans including two Amerasians. Once I called at a night school and talked to two Vietnamese-born Americans a white boy and a black girl. They could not speak English at all. I asked them if they wanted to go to the United States. They said, with some hesitation, that if the U.S. Government and their fathers accepted them they would go. We hope that these children can go although we love them because their blood is partly Vietnamese. We've tried to raise them properly but they can't be happy because we're poor. In the United States they will live better. So, there's no reason for us to keep them.

We're going to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Tet Offensive, which was mounted by the Liberation Army on almost all urban areas, including Saigon, and some bases of the U.S. forces and the Saigon administration, then headed by Nguyen Van Thieu. In Saigon we attacked even the General Staff of the Saigon army and the U.S. Embassy. The offensive shook the White House with the realization that the United States, despite its great economic and military power, despite the presence of its best military units, the use of huge amounts of explosives and the introduction of the most sophisticated weapons, with the sole exception of nuclear weapons, had

failed to get the better of Vietnam but was being attacked right in its bases. It dawned on the United States that it would be impossible both to beat Vietnam and to prolong the war, without sustaining more economic and military setbacks and losing face further. The United States thus began to think of withdrawing from Vietnam. They agreed to negotiate in Paris to the great worry of the Saigon administration. Yet, while planning its withdrawal the United States sought to beef up the Saigon army for the purpose of a war fought by Vietnamese against Vietnamese. It was the intention of the U.S. leadership to just "change the colour of the corpses". For our part, we wanted to seek through the Paris talks an end to the war, not to fight a senseless war after the American withdrawal. So we called for national concord and promised forgiveness to the people of long records of crime. Nevertheless the war went on for several more years. The Paris talks dragged on for a long time, much longer than the time we had taken to negotiate with the French in Geneva for an end to the Indochina war. So the Tet Offensive was not intended as the final blow to the United States or for the occupation of urban areas. It was launched to show that the United States could not win in Vietnam, that the Vietnamese forces, with people's war tactics, could attack any place, even the most heavily guarded positions. The Tet Offensive was significant in that it persuaded the United States to talk with Vietnam in Paris and to plan for gradual withdrawals of its forces. Militarily it was successful although it cost many lives — lives of American soldiers, Saigon soldiers and our own men. In this sense, it was a painful experience, but it was necessary for the advent of peace.

I was then among the people who were providing leadership to the war in the South. Together with a detachment I went to an area close to Saigon to plan for the attack on the city. We met in a hut and left at three in the morning. An hour later, the area was obliterated by a saturation bombing. After that close shave and many others I had before, I became a confirmed war-hater and an ardent peace-lover. I'm on the wrong side of seventy now and don't have much longer to live. I don't want young people in the world to have narrow escapes from death, let alone to die, and to suffer from broken families, all because of war.

Thank you.

ANSWERS TO (CORRIERE DELLA SERA, ITALIA)

Question 1: At your election as General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, you intended to carry out a sweeping renovation in the Party, especially to eradicate bureaucracy and overcome the Party's aloofness from the masses. Would you please let us know the initial results?

Answer: We are carrying out a movement to purify the Party's ranks linked to the movement to raise the managerial efficiency of the State machinery and gradually do away with the bureaucratic mechanism of State subsidies. This movement is a struggle between the new and the old. It takes time, so we cannot be hasty. Initial results are encouraging.

Questions 2 and 3: In the West, people are speaking of a "Vietnam-style renovation". What is in your opinion the meaning of this "renovation" in Vietnam and can it be materialized in Vietnamese society?

Renovation means admitting errors in the postwar time. In what fields have you changed your orientation?

Answers: We advocate far-reaching renovation in all fields: thinking — first of all economic one, style of leadership, organization and personnel. Over the past ten years we have made serious mistakes: voluntarism and violation of objective laws.

Our renovation is a process of hard and long struggle for it unfolds in the whole society and within each individual.

Nevertheless, it will certainly triumph as it meets the requirement of the situation and the aspiration of the entire people.

Question 4 : What guarantee is there for democracy and individual freedom in Vietnam at present ?

Answer : The policy of "taking the people as the basis" ensuring for the people "to know, to discuss, to do and to control" things being implemented far and wide is aimed at further broadening social democracy in Vietnam. Only by making the people masters can we renovate the whole society.

Question 5 : Would you please let us know about the situation in the re-education camps for the collaborators with the former regime and the number of political prisoners in Vietnam (if any) ?

Answer : In Europe, after the Second World War tens of thousands of collaborators with fascism were killed, and after forty years war criminals have still been hunted all the world over. In this spirit, I believe that you understand the feeling of millions of Vietnamese families with regard to the barbarous crimes committed by the aggressors and their agents. When the South was liberated people in the West waited for a "bloodbath" which in fact did not take place.

After 1975, among one million and a half puppet army and administration members nobody had a death sentence. Only some hundred thousand were concentrated for re-education. Most of them have returned home except for a very small number.

Question 6 : It is obvious that the North and the South of your country are clearly different, especially the political and economic life in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Are you removing this difference ?

Answer : Geographical features and historical background create differences between them. We deem it necessary to promote the forte of each zone so that they complement each other to make a harmonious and balanced economy.

Question 7 : What is the present situation of the relations between Vietnam and the USA ? When will there be normal diplomatic relations between the two countries ?

Answer : The recent contacts between Vietnam and the USA have contributed to bettering the atmosphere between the two countries. So long as the relations between them have not been normalized the moral wounds of war have still kept bleeding. It is the USA that is laying down conditions for this normalization. Normal relations between Vietnam and the USA are beneficial to both countries and at the same time to peace and stability in South East Asia as well.

Question 8 : Can there be good neighbourhood relations between China and Vietnam ? Should there be a solution to the Kampuchea problem ?

Answer : What matters is the basic and long-term interests of the two countries, while the disagreement over the Kampuchea problem is temporary and not a direct contest between the national interests of the two countries. Sooner or later, Vietnam and China will have good neighbour relations.

Question 9: *Why are there still many Vietnamese wanting to leave their country despite reforms and new policies?*

Answer: The Vietnamese leave their country for many reasons but mostly for economic troubles. There can be no miracle to remove the aftermaths of the forty years of atrocious war overnight.

Hanoi, January 25, 1988

ANSWERS TO AN INTERVIEW BY NATIONAL HERALD

(India)

Question 1: *How do you assess the programme of economic reform in Vietnam and the opportunity for cooperation with other countries.*

Answer: The 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has undertaken profound renovation in every aspect of our socio-economic life in order to resolve the problems for development in the country.

Our economic problems are many. These are the aftermaths of a century of colonialist domination, nearly four decades of devastating wars and repeated natural disasters, which have been compounded by our own mistakes in economic management such as voluntarism and disregard of objective economic laws. We need time to get over all this.

Now, in the economic field, we have taken the first step in renovating the mechanism of economic management, step by step abolishing the mechanism of bureaucratic centralism based on State subsidy, moving to a new system of self-management in State enterprises and contract in agriculture. We would observe the laws of value and supply and demand, encourage five economic components including the private and capitalist ones in order to free and develop production forces, carry out three major economic programmes: the production of food and foodstuffs consumer goods and export products.

We would expand economic ties with all other countries on the basis of mutual benefit. We have issued the Law on Foreign Investment and its By-laws. Many private companies have come to Vietnam for market research and contracts for more than fifty investment projects have been concluded. Among them, the Indo-Vietnamese joint venture project for oil and gas development is of significance for us. In the coming years, prospects for our economic cooperation with other countries in the world would still be greater.

Although the achievements of renovation during the past two years are modest, they are encouraging signs. It is our perception that renovation in itself is a revolutionary process which must undergo many challenges. However, we will certainly succeed, for this process responds to popular inspirations and conforms to the objective rules and current trends in the world.

Question 2: What is the position of your country in regard to taking the help of the U.S. and other Western countries in economic development.

Answer: Over the past four decades, Vietnam has been victim to wars of aggression and policies of economic and political isolation undertaken by the U.S. and other Western powers. In the most difficult years of that period, Vietnam was supported by its major friends, the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and India. It would be best if the U.S. and the West end their hostile policy and begin economic cooperation and trading with us.

In the world today, all countries, no matter big or small, need to expand trade and economic cooperation for their development. We would welcome and appreciate every form of equal cooperation for mutual benefits.

Question 3: In what way is Vietnam affected by the new mood of detente in the world today?

Answer: Vietnam has been victim to forty years of long and devastating wars of aggression. Those wars of aggression against our independence were all started under the imperialist pretext of "fight against communist expansion" in the cold war era. Now, the relations among the great powers in the world are changing from cold war confrontation to a period of both struggle and cooperation in peaceful co-existence. This will benefit world peace and development. After forty years of war destruction, we badly need peace for our development.

This is a good opportunity for development in every country. At the same time, every country is faced with the danger of falling behind if it misses that opportunity.

Question 4: There are reports about informal contacts between Vietnam and China in the recent past. Are these reports correct and do you see any change in the attitude of China towards your country?

Answer: In recent years, the Sino-Vietnamese relations have not been normal though the two countries maintained diplomatic relations and contacts through their ambassadors. It is our consistent policy to negotiate in order to solve differences between the two countries. These differences are temporary and insignificant in comparison with fundamental, long-term interests of the two nations as well as of the rest of Asia-Pacific region, that is peace and development.

We consider it a gesture of goodwill that Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen has recently reiterated the statement of March 1, 1983 by the Chinese Government that it was prepared to resume negotiations with Vietnam.

Question 5: *Chinese Premier Li Peng has told Indian journalists recently that only a tripartite coalition with Prince Sihanouk as the head would be acceptable to his country. What is the position of Vietnam on this?*

Answer: The establishment of a government in Kampuchea is their internal affairs, which should be decided by the Kampuchean people themselves through free general elections. Foreign countries cannot force them to set up a government contrary to their aspiration. We support the sensible and reasonable 7-point proposal of the P.R.K. put forth by Chairman Hun Sen in Paris in November 1988. Vietnam respects all the agreements reached by the Kampuchean parties on the internal aspect of the Kampuchea problem.

Question 6: *How bright are the prospects of the Jakarta process on Kampuchea and when do you think the next meeting will be held?*

Answer: JIM 1 has created a breakthrough in the 9-year-old Kampuchea problem. The internal aspect of the problem must be settled by the Kampuchean parties themselves. The international aspect which directly concerns the countries in Southeast Asia should be solved within a regional framework.

Vietnam will cooperate closely with all countries concerned to render JIM 2 to be held in Feb. 1989 successful.

Question 7: *What role do you envisage for India in solving the Kampuchea problem and in ensuring peace and stability in that country?*

Answer: Over the past two thousand years of history, India has been the only country whose great cultural influence reached Southeast Asia by means of peace.

Over the past four decades, India has had an important role to play in ending the wars, restoring peace in Indochina in 1954, in Laos 1962 and in Vietnam 1973. India was one of the first nations to condemn the genocidal Pol Pot regime and recognize the People's Republic of Kampuchea, strongly support the revival of the Kampuchean people.

The 7th Non-Aligned Summit presided over by India in New Delhi in 1983 adopted a resolution on the Southeast Asian questions and the Kampuchea problem which constitutes the best basis for a solution to the problem. This resolution has been reaffirmed by the 8th Non-Aligned Summit. India has ever since actively contributed its part in promoting dialogue, thus seeking a political settlement for the Kampuchea problem and the question of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. India will definitely have an important role to play in solving the Kampuchea problem and in building a zone of peace, stability and cooperation in Southeast Asia.

Question 8: *How do you assess the Indo-Vietnamese relations in political and economic fields?*

Answer: The Indo-Vietnamese relations in the political, economic, scientific-technological and cultural fields have successfully developed in the interests of each country as well as those of peace, stability and cooperation in Asia and in the world as a whole. The relations between our two countries are an example for South-South cooperation and that among the non-aligned nations.

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noi, January 11, 1989

Republic of Vietnam

