

Vietnam courier



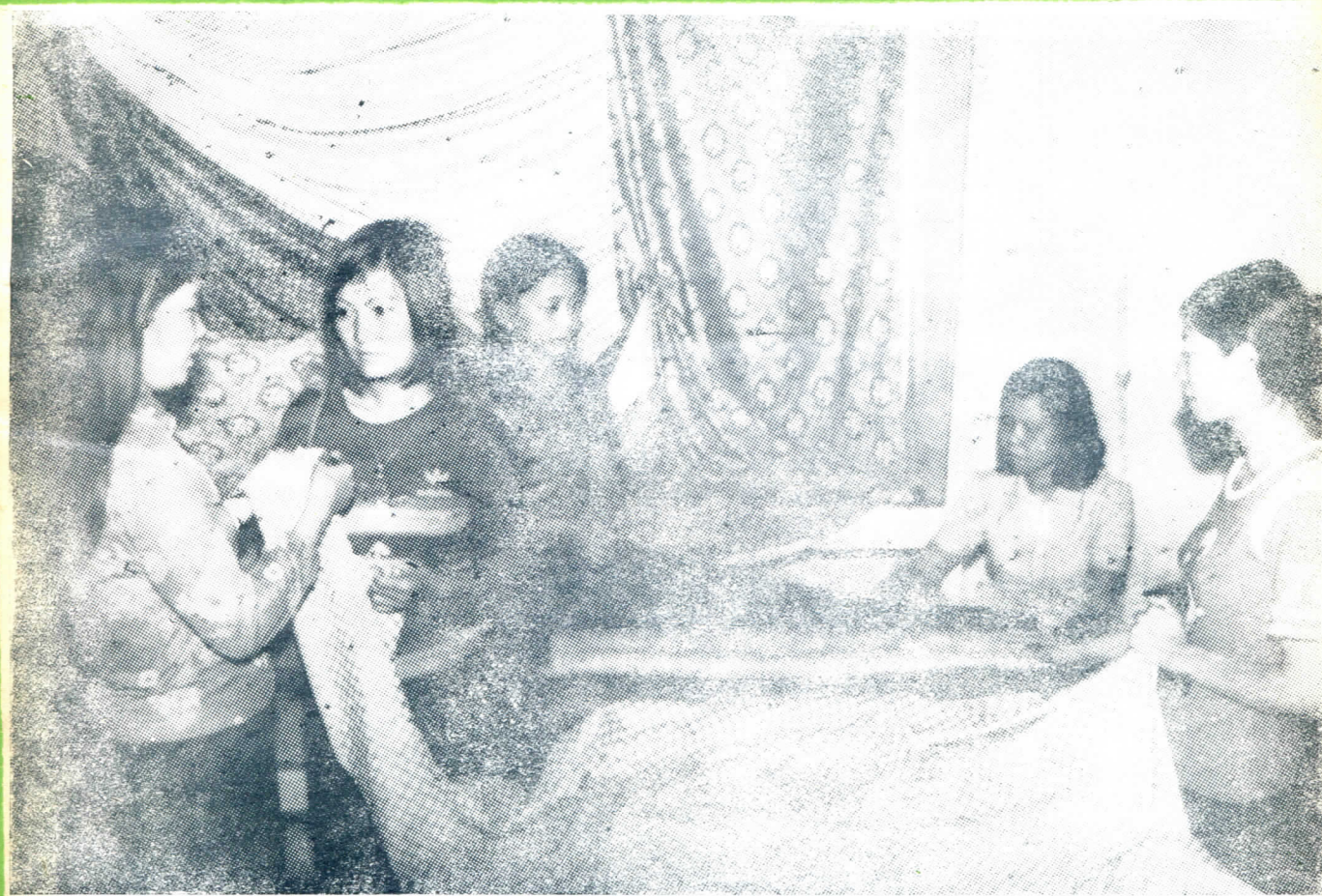
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A MONTHLY REVIEW

■ POLITICS

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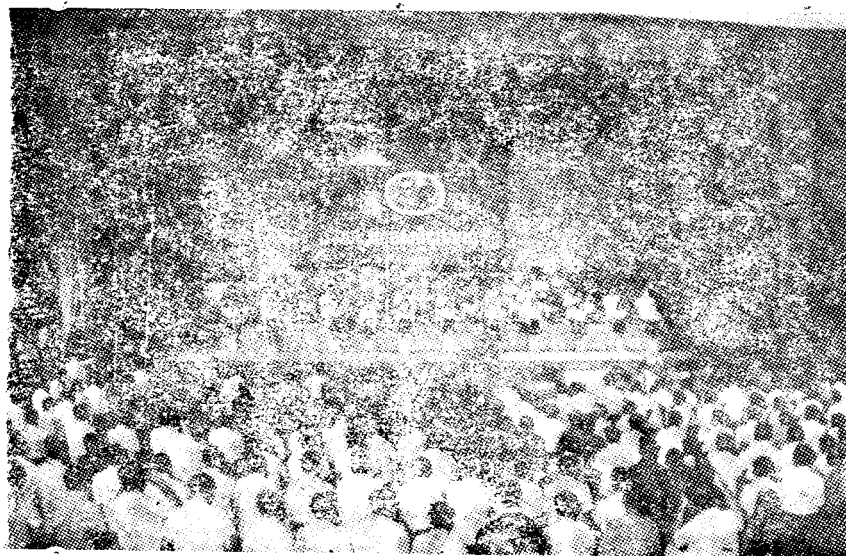
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THE FOURTH CONGRESS

OF THE PEOPLE'S

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

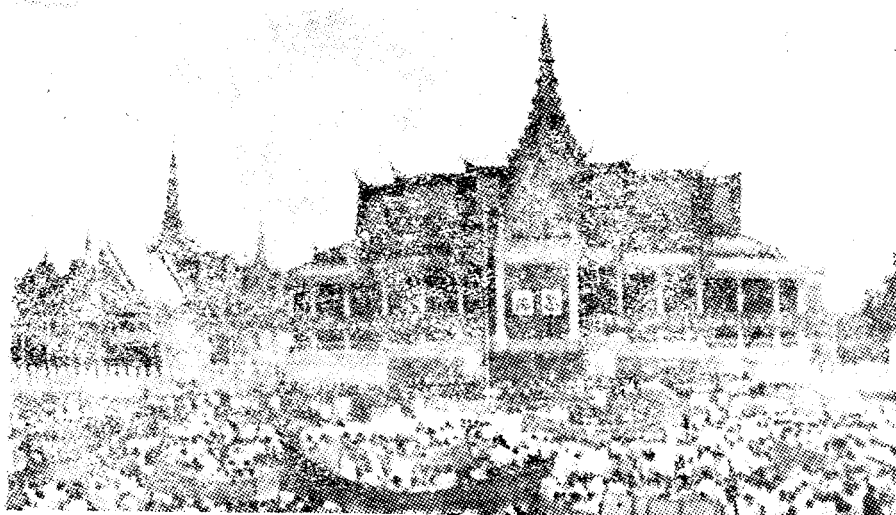
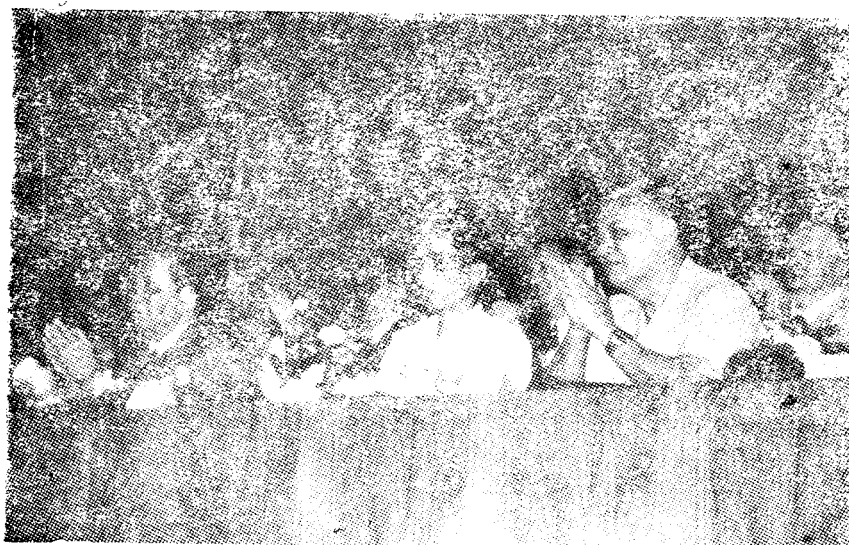
OF KAMPUCHEA



● At the Party's Congress.

● An image of solidarity of the three Indochinese countries (from left to right: Le Duan, Penn Sovan, Kaysone Phomvihane).

● The people of Phnom Penh hold a meeting to celebrate the Congress.



Photos: SPK

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Front Cover:

At a cloth counter of a State Store in Battambang province (Kampuchea).

Photo: SPK

**Vietnam
Courier**

7 — 1981

OUR MONTHLY COMMENT

JOHN Holdridge, US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, declared in Beijing that the US would put political, economic and even military pressure, if need be, on Vietnam. This statement conforms to the stand of the Chinese rulers whose attitude towards Vietnam was most clearly expressed, last June, when they flatly rejected Vietnam's 13 June proposal for a resumption of negotiations while continuing to create tension along the border between the two countries.

None of the ASEAN countries have expressed their views on the above-mentioned statement and actions. On the contrary, an anti-Indochina programme wholly to the taste of Beijing and Washington was drawn up in Manila by the conference of ASEAN Foreign Ministers with the participation of US Secretary of State Alexander Haig after a 2-day meeting (17 and 18 June).

ASEAN as well as China and the US have arrogated the power of deciding of Kampuchea's future over the heads of its people. Accordingly, they propose that the United Nations — which has so far recognized only the Pol Pot genocidal clique — send a peace-keeping force to Kampuchea to supervise the withdrawal of all foreign troops within a short time, and subsequently monitor general elections in the country.

Only in this way, so they say, will the security of ASEAN, and regional peace and stability no longer be directly threatened. This solution to the so-called "Kampuchean problem" is to be put forward at a conference where the main participants will be none other but themselves, China, and the US — under UN auspices. Meanwhile they cheerfully welcome the attempts to bring together Kampuchean reactionaries of all kinds in a "coalition government" of "Democratic Kampuchea" to take the place of the discredited Pol Pot clique, if possible before the coming session of the UN General Assembly.

Moreover, Thailand, one of ASEAN's most aggressive members, is planning to repeat what it did last year, when the rainy season returns: to send back to Kampuchea the remnants of the Khmer Rouge mixed up with the refugees, regardless of international law which requires that refugee repatriations be conducted on a completely voluntary basis and with the co-operation of the country of origin.

(Continued on page 3)

LE DUAN: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE 80'S AND IMMEDIATE TASKS

The National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (7th Legislature) elected in the general elections on 26 April 1981 following the adoption of the new Constitution, opened its first session in Hanoi on 25 June 1981.

This session will discuss some fundamental laws on organisation: the laws on the organisation of the National Assembly, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers, the People's Court and the People's Control Commission.

The session will also elect the leading officials of the said State organs.

At its opening, the National Assembly heard an important speech of Le Duan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

*

LE Duan's speech outlined the essentials of the nation's economic and social programme for the 80's. This programme aims at the following three main goals:

1. To stabilize and eventually to achieve a lasting improvement in the material and cultural life of the people, first of all to begin to solve the problem of food and meet the basic demands in clothing.

2. To overcome the most serious imbalances, to create a sizeable source of accumulation from within

the national economy, and to build in a selective way the material and technical foundation of socialism.

3. To adequately meet the needs of defence and security.

The Party General Secretary stressed: "The underdevelopment of agriculture, especially in food and foodstuffs production, in industrial crops and in the use of the workforce and the land, is the main obstacle to the realisation of the three goals mentioned. At the same time, it is actually in agriculture that lie the biggest potentials for economic development of our country... That is why, in the eighties the foremost task of our economy is to boost agriculture and take a major step in transforming it into a large-scale socialist agriculture within a rational agro-industrial structure."

Agriculture (including forestry and fisheries) must fulfil the following three fundamental tasks:

- Meeting society's needs in food and foodstuffs;
- Supplying raw materials for light industries;
- Producing abundant goods for export in order to lay a firm foundation for the country's industrialisation.

In agriculture, the district must be taken as basic unit around which to reorganise production and redistribute the workforce.

In the years ahead, the State will focus its efforts on the following major tasks:

1. To concentrate the resources of all branches and levels on agriculture in order to meet the minimum demands in food and foodstuffs and to strive to develop the production of consumer goods.

2. To make the utmost efforts to rapidly increase exports in order to expand imports and gradually overcome the present imbalances, and also to provide enough equipment and technical materials to satisfy the increasing demands of socialist industrialisation.

3. To build selectively a number of new plants while making good use of the existing heavy industries and communications and transport service with a view to stimulating the development of agriculture, light industry and exports and preparing for a long-term expansion of the national economy.

4. To promote socialist transformation in the South and further improve the socialist relations of production in the North.

5. To give full play to the important role of science and technology, and promote the best use of both the existing and the potential capacities of the economy.

6. To improve economic management and the distribution and circulation of goods. To resolutely eliminate bureaucratic management and boldly switch to socialist management. To stress economic efficiency, work productivity and the quality of products along with strict economizing.

7. To promote cultural, educational, medical and social activities, and place more stress on the fostering of new-type people and new-culture family.

OUR MONTHLY COMMENT

(Continued from page 1)

The further Kampuchea revives, the fiercer the reaction of the Beijing expansionists and the imperialist forces.

As a matter of fact there are many precedents of countries whose people, to break the oppressive yoke of foreign invaders or agents, have risen up in arms with the help of a friendly nation, to seize power and proceed from provisional revolutionary power to power elected by the people. If one aspect in Kampuchea differs from these precedents it is in the political regime chosen by the Kampucheans, which, like that of Laos and Vietnam, places the country on a socialist road. This indeed is the reason why an elementary principle of international law—the right to self-determination of all nations—is no longer respected by those forces

This is easy to understand if we consider the policies of Beijing or Washington—the sworn enemies of the peoples' most fundamental rights. But for the leaders of ASEAN countries to follow in the footsteps of China or the US is a blatant case of political myopia.

A calmer and deeper analysis would help them gain a proper understanding of the situation in Southeast Asia. They would recognize that the threat to peace and the instability in this region are caused by Beijing's expansionist and hegemonist ambitions (See the series entitled "The Road to Peace and Stability in Southeast Asia" beginning in this issue).

Peaceful co-existence is quite possible amongst South-east Asian countries provided the two groups of Indochinese countries and ASEAN countries get down to discussing issues of mutual concern.

The Fourth Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese Countries held on 13 and 14 June 1981 in Phnom Penh mapped out a plan for such a solution: to convene a regional conference between the two groups of countries with the participation, as observers, of the UN Secretary-General in his personal capacity and some other countries to be mutually agreed upon, and to continue regional consultations aimed at reaching general agreement on the problems of the region.

The agreements reached by the two sides would then be acknowledged and guaranteed by an international conference. The Indochinese countries would consider the possibility of the United Nations convening this international conference if the UN ceases to recognize Pol Pot and his ilk (See the full text of the Statement of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese Countries in this issue).

25 June 1981

STATEMENT OF THE FOUR MINISTERS OF VIETNAM

THE Fourth Conference of Foreign Ministers of Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos was held in Phnom Penh on 13 and 14 June 1981. Vietnamese Minister of Foreign Affairs Nguyen Co Thach, Kampuchean Foreign Minister Hun Sen and Lao Foreign Minister Phoune Sipaseuth exchanged views on the international and regional situation and discussed measures aimed at strengthening solidarity and all-round co-operation among the three countries.

A communiqué and a statement were published on 14 June 1981.

The communiqué notes the marvellous rebirth of the Kampuchean people and the successes of the Vietnamese and Lao peoples in national construction and defence, especially the success of the general elections in Kampuchea, the convening of the Kampuchean National Assembly and the establishment of the new organs of power of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

The communiqué notes the unceasing development both in scope and in depth of the solidarity and all-round co-operation, and the fruitful realization of the plans for co-operation in the economy, culture, education, science and technology among the three countries. All this contributes to increase the potential and combined strength of the three countries.

The communiqué once again lays bare and condemns the manoeuvres and bellicose acts of imperialism, headed by US imperialism, acting in collusion with the Chinese reactionaries, fomenting a tense situation in the world, preventing and undermining international détente. A concrete example of this is the stepping up of the arms race, the interference in the internal affairs of the Polish People's Republic, the increase in military aid to the reactionary dictatorships and the creating of crises in many parts of the world. The communiqué expresses full support for the Soviet Union's peace initiatives and the safeguarding of the revolutionary gains of the Polish and Afghan peoples, and the revolutionary cause of the Arab Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO and of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

The communiqué highly appreciates the role of India and warmly supports the peace proposals put forward by India and other non-aligned countries aimed at easing international tension and contributing to the preservation of peace and stability in the world.

We publish below the full text of the statement:

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1. Grudging the growth of the three Indochinese countries, especially the marvellous achievements of the Kampuchean people in their rebirth and in becoming masters of their destiny, and the developing trend of dialogue among the countries of the region, the Beijing reactionary ruling clique are plotting a new crisis in furtherance of their hegemonist and expansionist policy in Southeast Asia.

While continuing to threaten to teach Vietnam a second lesson, the reactionary clique in the Beijing ruling circles are provoking bloody clashes on the Vietnam-China and the Laos-China borders, stepping up psychological war, fomenting revolts and subversive activities, and attempting economic blockades and disruption against Vietnam and Laos. Particularly serious is the fact that in collusion with the US imperialists and with the complicity of some ruling circles in Southeast Asia, China is increasing the supply of arms and food to the remnant Pol Pot troops and the reactionary Khmer forces in exile, and pressing them to form a "united front" so as to cover up the continued use of the universally condemned genocidal Pol Pot clique to oppose the rebirth of the Kampuchean people, oppose the Indochinese countries, cause a confrontation between the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries and undermine the dialogue in the region. China continues to help and encourage the disruptive and subversive activities of the rebellious Maoist groups in Southeast Asian countries. At the same time, it has joined the US Administration

in an international campaign for an economic blockade to bring pressure to bear on Vietnam and the other Indochinese countries.

The present situation has once again clearly shown the world public that the cause of the threat to the security and independence of the Indochinese countries, and to the peace and stability of the Southeast Asian countries lies in the expansionist and hegemonist policy of the Chinese rulers acting in collusion with the US imperialists.

2. It is common knowledge that the peoples of Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos waged a protracted fight to regain independence for their respective homelands and the right to live in peace and friendship with the other peoples, first of all with their neighbours. In view of the persisting threat to their national independence, the three Indochinese countries have no other choice than to strengthen their solidarity and mutual assistance and fight together against aggression. That is the unalienable right of self-defence of all nations.

As has been repeatedly stated, the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea is to cope with the threat from China acting in collusion with the imperialists and other reactionaries and is not directed against any third country. When this threat no longer exists, Vietnam and Kampuchea will reach agreement on the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. Right now, if peace and stability on the Kampuchean-Thai border are secured Vietnam and Kampuchea will reach agreement on a partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic once again categorically reject the convening of the international conference on Kampuchea according to resolution 35/6 of the UN General Assembly. They will not participate in such a conference. Any

CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN KAMPUCHEA AND LAOS

UN resolution on Southeast Asia is illegal if it violates the sovereignty of the countries in the region and if the United Nations still recognizes the representation of the so-called "Democratic Kampuchea" of the genocidal Pol Pot clique already overthrown by the Kampuchean people and outlawed by the whole of mankind. So long as Pol Pot and his clique are maintained at the United Nations, the latter cannot contribute in the name of the UN Charter to peace and stability in Southeast Asia. The three Indochinese countries resolutely demand that the United Nations expel the Pol Pot gang who murdered millions of Kampucheans and are opposing the rebirth of the Kampuchean people, who have just escaped from the hell they created. They also demand that Kampuchea's seat at the United Nations be returned to the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea, the sole genuine and legal representative of the Kampuchean people.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic fully support the goodwill position taken by the People's Republic of Kampuchea regarding the problem of Kampuchean "refugees" in Thailand. Accordingly, the return of "refugees" must be conducted with the prior agreement between Kampuchea and Thailand, through the intermediary of a mutually acceptable country or international organization.

3. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic sternly condemn the Chinese authorities' policy of intervention and aggression against the three Indochinese peoples. China must put an immediate end to its armed attacks and provocations against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, immediately cease aiding, supporting, training and equipping Lao reac-

tionaries in exile to be sent back to oppose the Lao people, and stop supporting and sending arms and food supplies to the Pol Pot clique and other reactionary Khmer forces opposing the Kampuchean people.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic reassert the 28 January 1981 proposals on their willingness to sign with China bilateral treaties of non-aggression and peaceful co-existence. These reasonable and logical proposals have gained broad appreciation and support from world public opinion. In the interests of and for the sake of friendship between the peoples of Indochina and the Chinese people, the Chinese authorities should give a positive response thereto

(Continued on page 15)

MORE EVIDENCE OF BEIJING'S BETRAYAL

IN a past issue of Vietnam Courier (See No. 6 - 1979) we published an account of the following last-ditch manoeuvre on the morning of 30 April 1975 in Saigon: as Duong Van Minh's Government was meeting at the Independence Palace, a former French general, Vanuxem, suggested that Duong Van Minh continue the fight against the Liberation Armed Forces with the aid of the People's Republic of China. But Minh replied that it was too late.

This was not the first time that such a proposal was made to the Saigon puppets.

Stephen Young, a former US official who had worked in Saigon before the liberation of South Vietnam, told some Vietnamese guests visiting the United States in May 1981 the two following stories:

— Shortly after the signing of the 1973 Paris Agreement Nguyen Van Thieu received a note from the Chinese expressing their wish to establish relations with Saigon in some form. Nguyen Van Thieu was afraid and dared not answer. It is known that after the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, Zhou Enlai, the head of the Chinese delegation, at a dinner party in honour of the Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean delegations, proposed to Ngo Dinh Luyen - Ngo Dinh Diem's younger brother and a member of the Saigon delegation - to establish a legation of the Bao Dai Government in Beijing, but Diem did not agree (See François Joyaux: La Chine et le règlement du premier conflit indochinois, page 297, quoted in the article "China at the 1954 Geneva Conference" in Vietnam Courier No. 8 - 1979)

— Three weeks before the liberation of Saigon, Beijing asked a representative in Taipei to get in touch with Nguyen Van Thieu's younger brother, then Ambassador to Taipei. Beijing said that China would help the Thieu Government to fight against the National Liberation Front if Thieu stopped tailing after the US and followed China. But Thieu's brother thought it was too late.

FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF KAMPUCHEA



Penn Sovan delivering the political report.

THE 4th Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea was held from 26 to 29 May in Phnom Penh. The congress was attended by delegations from many fraternal parties including the delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam led by General Secretary Le Duan, the delegation of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party led by General Secretary Kaysone Phomvihane, the delegation of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union led by M. Gaparov, member of the Party Central Committee, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan.

Penn Sovan, on behalf of the presidium of the congress, delivered the political report. The report was in five parts: the long and hard struggle of the Kampuchean people for independ-

ence and freedom; the struggle to defend and rebuild the country during the past two years since the overthrow of the genocidal regime; the defence of independence and national construction along socialist lines; the immediate tasks and goals of the Kampuchean revolution; and the building of a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party.

The fourth part of the report sets out the following immediate tasks and goals of the Kampuchean revolution:

- To quickly restore production by developing the three economic sectors (State, collective and family) with the State sector playing the dominant role and focussing on agriculture in order to solve the problems of food, clothing and housing and prevent the recurrence of famine;

- To firmly defend the homeland;

- To consolidate the revolutionary power at all levels;

- To strengthen national unity, broaden the front of national unity and consolidate the mass organizations;

- To promote international solidarity.

A resolution in four parts was adopted:

- The historic victory of 7 January 1979 was the combined victory of national solidarity and international solidarity;

- The revolutionary tasks of the Party and people at the present stage;

- The present foreign policy;

- The building of a strong Party.

Concerning Kampuchea's external relations, the resolution points out: "The People's Republic of Kampuchea is an independent and sovereign country and a member of the great family of socialist countries. We will further develop our solidarity with the Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries. We will continue to unite with the international communist and workers' movements on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. Kampuchea will unceasingly strengthen its links of friendship and solidarity with Vietnam and Laos, regarding this as a strategic task of major importance with a direct bearing on the external policy and the future of the Party and the State of Kampuchea."

Concerning the Party, the resolution says: "The Party resolves to combat the narrow and reactionary chauvinism of the Pol Pot clique and to eliminate all vestiges of non-proletarian ideologies."

The congress elected a 21-member central committee headed by General Secretary Penn Sovan.

THE THREE PREVIOUS CONGRESSES OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF KAMPUCHEA

First Congress (1951)

IMPLEMENTING the decision of the 2nd Congress of the Indochinese Communist Party (1951), the First National Congress of the Kampuchean Party held on 28 June of the same year decided to found the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea and defined its role as continuing the Indochinese Communist Party in leading the Kampuchean revolution.

The congress elected a leading committee headed by Son Ngoc Minh and Tou Samut.

Under the leadership of the Party, the resistance of the Kampuchean people against the French aggressors won one success after another, contributing with the fight of the Vietnamese and Lao peoples to the 1954 victory.

Following the 1954 Geneva Agreements, in face of the new situation the Party decided to switch from armed struggle to political struggle. While the bulk of the Party went underground, some of the Party's leading cadres came out into the open, conducting legal activities under the name of "People's Group". At the same time, a number of Party cadres were sent to study abroad in preparation for future Party work.

Throughout this period the Party was further consolidated and its bases were broadened.

Second Congress (1960)

From 1954 to 1960 the revolutionary movement in Kampuchea was twice the target of large-scale persecution (1955 and 1958). Hundreds of Party members were either murdered or jailed. The Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique entered the Party and used every means in their power to further their factional interests.

The Second Congress was held on 30 September 1960 for the purpose of reorganising the Party. The congress adopted a political programme and a constitution, laid down a line of national democratic revolution. It elected a new central committee with Tou Samut as General Secretary. At the congress Pol Pot tried to change

the Party's name with a view to repudiating the line of the Party and its old-time leaders in the previous period of the Kampuchean revolution, but failed in this attempt since his faction was still a minority.

Following the congress, the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary group attempted to usurp the leadership of the Party. In July 1962 they murdered Tou Samut. In early 1963 Pol Pot convened a "congress" in Phnom Penh with only 20 delegates attending, most of them from his own faction.

Since then, the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary group gradually deviated from the Party's line and eventually openly embraced Maoism. In 1966, back from a visit to China, Pol Pot issued eleven documents purported to change the Party's political line, substituting Marxism-Leninism with Mao Zedong Thought and considering the Soviet Union and Vietnam no longer as friends and allies but as enemies. Since then they became a group of obedient henchmen of Beijing. They conducted a Chinese-type "cultural revolution" in Kampuchea, stepped up the internal purge, and turned the Party into a reactionary organisation.

After the coup d'etat staged by Lon Nol (18 March 1970) Vietnam helped Kampuchea build its armed forces and liberate five provinces in the northeastern part of the country. Later, Vietnam handed over these forces and withdrew its troops. But later, at the request of Kampuchea itself, Vietnamese troops re-entered Kampuchea to co-ordinate with the Kampuchean revolutionary armed forces in crushing Operation Chenla 1 (September - December 1970), wiping out 52 battalions of Lon Nol's army, and in breaking Operation Chenla 2 (August - December 1972), putting out of action the major part of the enemy forces. This, again, helped to reinforce the Kampuchean resistance.

Pol Pot then applied a double-faced policy: on the one hand, he had to rely on Vietnam, but on the other, used underhand means to oppose Vietnam. He raised obstacles to the first Summit Con-

ference of the three Indochinese countries (1970), and torpedoed the second Summit (1975), expelled Vietnamese residents in Kampuchea and murdered Kampuchean cadres returning from Vietnam. In particular, he provoked armed conflicts in Kompong Trach (Kampot province in 1973), murdering hundreds of Vietnamese cadres, combatants and wounded soldiers, destroying stores and capturing weapons from Vietnamese troops on Kampuchean soil, preventing Kampucheans from selling food to Vietnamese soldiers passing through Kampuchean territory. At the same time, Pol Pot launched a hysterical anti-Vietnamese propaganda campaign, fomenting racial hatred between the two nations.

From 1975 onwards, especially after 1977, implementing a long-premeditated plan of China's, Pol Pot launched a border war against Vietnam. Many Kampuchean patriots and members of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea firmly resisted these moves from as early as 1973. The uprisings, scattered and localised at first, soon took national proportions, drawing in many Party members, units of the revolutionary army and ordinary people, leading to the formation of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea on 2 December 1978, a precondition for the great victory of 7 January 1979 which saw the complete overthrow of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary-Khieu Samphan clique.

Third Congress (1979)

In the midst of the nationwide uprising against the genocidal Pol Pot regime, 66 delegates of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea held a national congress from 5 to 8 January 1979. The congress adopted a programme for national salvation and urgent measures to rebuild the Party. The congress marked a turning point and brought the Party back to a correct revolutionary path, opening up a new chapter in the history of the Kampuchean nation and in the history of the Party itself.

FORTY YEARS WITHOUT PEACE— FORTY YEARS OF DRAMATIC CHANGES

OVER the past forty years Southeast Asia was one of the most convulsed and war-torn regions of the world. Year after year wars and crises succeeded one another, leaving a trail of instability and dramatic changes. Here took place the bloodiest and longest wars the world has known since World War II.

The Second World War broke out in Southeast Asia almost at the same time as the war in Europe. Availing itself of the West European imperialist countries' defeat by the German fascists, Japan swooped down upon Southeast Asia, ousted France, Britain, the Netherlands and began to implement its Greater East Asia doctrine to turn Southeast Asia into a neo-colony. Japan's intrusion into Southeast Asia brought a crisis to the West European imperialist countries' old colonialism, and shattered the social basis of their domination. As the new Japanese neo-colonialism was not yet consolidated, many Southeast Asian peoples took the opportunity to rise up and struggle to liberate themselves in coordination with the democratic and anti-fascist forces in the world. The victory of the Soviet Army destroying German fascism and defeating Japan's crack troops greatly contributed to Japan's unconditional surrender and created most favourable historic circumstances for the world revolutionary movement, particularly for the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia, to rise up victoriously in a number of countries. This was

the case in the three Indochinese countries, Indonesia and Burma.

Shortly after Japan's surrender, however, the West European colonial powers staged a comeback in the region, causing bloody colonial wars: the Netherlands in Indonesia, Britain in Malaysia and Singapore, France in Indochina... Apart from the Indochinese, most of the colonial wars in Southeast Asia soon ended in a political compromise between the West European colonialists and the local bourgeoisie. After 1950 only the French persisted in trying to prevent the regaining of independence by the peoples of Indochina. It did not end until the French expeditionary force was routed at Dien Bien Phu, compelling France to sign the 1954 Geneva Agreements recognizing the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea.

The weakness and crisis of the West European imperialist countries' old colonialism paved the way for the United States, the leading imperialist power, to strengthen its role as an international gendarme in this part of the world. While wresting back the territory it had lost to Japan, US imperialism sought to oust the West European countries from their colonies in Southeast Asia, in which Indochina was regarded as a choice target. Simultaneously with the war it was waging in Korea, US imperialism strove to help the French in order to exert some control over the command of the war in Indochina, thus serving US strate-

gy. The French defeat in Indochina accelerated the direct intervention by the US in Southeast Asia with the setting up of the SEATO aggressive bloc in September 1954 and the complete ousting of France from South Vietnam. The intervention of the US imperialists into Southeast Asia gave a hitherto unprecedented dimension and character to the crisis in the region. To serve the war of aggression against Vietnam and the other countries in the Indochinese peninsula—the greatest US aggression so far—US imperialism mobilized a huge war machine, setting up bases in Asia, the Pacific, Western Europe and other areas, winning the commitment of many of its allies and puppets. The crisis was all the more serious as it was fuelled by the greatest neo-colonialist power, and ended not only with a crisis for US imperialism but also in the bankruptcy of neo-colonialism throughout the world. Thus the US defeat in Vietnam was the greatest crisis of imperialism since World War II. The victory of the struggle for self-liberation of the Southeast Asian peoples, the apex of which was the victory of the Vietnamese and other Indochinese countries in the war of resistance against the US aggressors for national salvation, put an end to the longest and fiercest crisis in Southeast Asia.

No account of the complex and convulsive character of the situation in Southeast Asia in the recent past would be complete without mentioning the manoeuvres of the Chinese rulers against the

Southeast Asian peoples over the past thirty years since Maoism gained the upper hand in China. The campaign launched by the Beijing authorities was a covert and proxy war but no less destructive for all that. It constituted a latent threat to the independence of each nation and sowed discord and conflict between them. Before 1973, China plans were implemented mainly through civil wars waged by Maoist forces nurtured and instigated by Beijing in Southeast Asian countries. These wars waxed and waned to serve Beijing's expansionist and hegemonist ambitions following the strategic requirements of each period. Since 1973, when US imperialism, defeated in Vietnam, had to withdraw its troops from Indochina and the Southeast Asian mainland, Beijing bared its reactionary face, blatantly opposing the independence of the Southeast Asian peoples and going to the length of launching more than 600,000 troops in an invasion against Vietnam in February 1979. Having suffered severe blows at the hands of our army and people, the Beijing rulers were compelled to withdraw their troops, but the reactionary forces in the Maoist ruling circles in China carried on their undeclared war against the Vietnamese, Lao, Kampuchean and other peoples in Southeast Asia. This took on a new form, with combined measures, coordinating military provocations and threats of aggression with psychological war, infiltration, sabotage and subversion, and economic sabotage. At the same time, Beijing boosted its diplomatic campaign to isolate Vietnam in the international arena and divide the Southeast Asian peoples, primarily by inciting confrontation between the Indochinese countries and the ASEAN countries.

The situation in Southeast Asia over the past forty years shows that the state of war and protracted crisis in this region was due to the aggressive and interventionist

policies of the colonialist and imperialist powers, and the expansionist and hegemonist policies of Beijing. Nevertheless, the region was also affected by most profound and radical changes

The first change was that the national liberation movements of the Southeast Asian countries successively ended three centuries of domination by West European old colonialism in Southeast Asia. The victory of the Vietnamese people's war of resistance against French colonialism spread beyond Vietnam's national borders, helped crush the age-old French colonial system, and ushered in the complete collapse of old colonialism on a world scale. With the collapse of old colonialism, the trend for peace, national independence, and non-alignment grew in the young nations. The Asian-African Conference held in Bandung (Indonesia) in 1955 marked a new development of the national liberation movement and greatly helped the birth of the non-aligned movement six years later.

The second change was the victory of the Vietnamese and other peoples in Indochina in their patriotic wars of resistance against US aggression. This was a victory of epochal and international significance. After the US defeat in Vietnam the Southeast Asian mainland was rid of foreign aggressors for the first time in thirty years. The trend for peace, neutrality and national independence developed with every passing day in the Southeast Asian countries, even in those which sided with US imperialism in its aggression against Vietnam. This change bears further international significance as it opened a new era in international relations: the post-Vietnam era, the main characteristic of which being the weakening of US imperialism, the crisis of the entire imperialist system and the prodigious growth of the three revolutionary currents of our time

The third change was the heavy setback suffered by Beijing's expansionism and hegemonism, particularly over the past five years. With the collapse of the Pol Pot genocidal regime—a zealous prop of Maoism in Southeast Asia—in Kampuchea, Chinese influence was swept out of the Indochinese countries and dwindled in Southeast Asia.

The fourth change was the shaping of two systems of States with differing social, political and economic regimes since 1979 in Southeast Asia following the overthrow of the Pol Pot genocidal regime by the Kampuchean people. After the ousting of the French twenty-five years ago, socialism only began to be built in half of Vietnam, but today all three Indochinese peoples have taken the socialist path of development.

The fifth change was that the dramatic shift in the balance of forces in Southeast Asia gave the region a new face and tipped the world balance of forces in favour of peace and revolution. For forty years imperialism held sway in Southeast Asia, and the reactionary forces were more powerful than the progressive ones. Today the influence of imperialism and Chinese expansionism has been completely swept out of Indochina and is weakening in other Southeast Asian countries. The imperialist and international reactionary forces have failed in using military force to impose their will upon the Indochinese peoples and suppress the forces for peace and national independence in Southeast Asia. Today they are compelled to resort to other tactics. They are using political and economic measures to maintain their interests in Southeast Asia and change the situation in Indochina. In particular, they are colluding with one another and are striving to divide the ASEAN countries and the Indochinese countries. This has complicated international relations

in the region but the trend for peace, national independence and non-alignment in Southeast Asia has become irreversible.

The situation in Southeast Asia over the past forty years shows that this is one of the regions of the world where the struggle between the two opposing forces of the time is fiercest. But why is it in Southeast Asia—a region strategically and economically important, but not as important as the Middle East, Europe and a number of other regions of the world—that the struggle is fiercest and the changes in the region over the past forty years are so profound and radical? There are no doubt many reasons for this. First of all, Southeast Asia is the only region in the world that falls prey to the four greatest imperialist and expansionist powers of the time: Japan, the USA, China and Western Europe. The conflict therefore has broken out between the old-style imperialists and the “young” ones, between old colonialism and neo-colonialism, between Western imperialism and Chinese expansionism. The struggle between the reactionary forces is all the fiercer as it unfolds while the revolutionary movement in the world and in Southeast Asia has entered a period of new development.

The second reason is the most determining factor of the changes in Southeast Asia over the past forty years. Among the countries oppressed and exploited by imperialism, Southeast Asia was the region earliest awakened to revolution. The influence of the Russian October Revolution was felt there very early. As far back as the twenties a number of communist parties had already been set up in Southeast Asia. This is the only region in the world where all

countries had a communist party, many actually leading the revolution right from their founding. Under the guidance of true revolutionaries the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia bore a most thorough revolutionary character. This was vividly expressed in the revolutionary movement of the Indochinese peoples. The Indochinese revolution did not stop at the stage of national-democratic revolution but advanced to socialism bypassing the stage of capitalist development and thoroughly opposing opportunism of all kinds, particularly Maoism. The Indochinese revolutionary movement linked national independence to socialism, finding in this an invincible source of strength and a factor determining the development of the situation in Southeast Asia over the past four decades. Indeed, in the past forty years the imperialist and international reactionary forces mustered huge military forces and employed most perfidious tricks to boost their struggle against us, but nonetheless failed hopelessly. SEATO, one of the greatest military alliances rigged up by US imperialism after World War II, disintegrated under the blows of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia. This region is also the only one in the world where US imperialism for the first time in history was compelled to close down a number of military bases and withdraw its aggressive troops. The growth and victory of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia has turned the region in the post-Vietnam era into one of the weakest links of the world imperialist system.

Thirdly, the thorough and victorious struggle of the three Indochinese peoples not only challenged the interests of colonialism, imperialism and expansionism in

Southeast Asia but also threatened their interests in the world. French colonialism regarded the Indochinese war as a decisive gamble for the future of its other colonies and therefore threw all its forces into the war. As a matter of fact, the victory of Dien Bien Phu not only heralded the collapse of French colonialism but also helped shatter old colonialism in the world. For US imperialism, South Vietnam was a perfect testing-ground for its brand of neo-colonialism. A defeat in the Vietnam war spelled the complete bankruptcy of US neo-colonialism and threatened US domination in the capitalist world itself. This explains why Vietnam's victory and America's defeat in Vietnam opened a post-Vietnam era in the world. The Beijing reactionaries regard Southeast Asia as their main area of expansion and the most important tool of their hegemonist strategy in the world and in their relations with other big powers. For Beijing, a defeat in Southeast Asia portends the bankruptcy of its counter-revolutionary strategy in a region where circumstances are most favourable for it, while the triumph of the Indochinese revolution has demonstrated the bankruptcy of Maoism in Southeast Asia.

It is for these reasons that the events in Southeast Asia over the past forty years, particularly the victories of the revolutionary forces in Indochina, had so many repercussions beyond the region and turned Southeast Asia into a region of major strategic importance in the world.

PHUC CUONG

Next issue:

MAOISM AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

VIETNAM COURIER

VIETNAM: FACING AN INTERNATIONAL SMEAR CAMPAIGN

(A Journalist's Notes)

I first met these French, Japanese, American and West German journalists in the unforgettable days of the liberation of Saigon. Having witnessed those historical events we could not refrain from evoking the past and discussing the present and the future. Six years have elapsed since then. Today, in Hanoi, in Ho Chi Minh City and in Phnom Penh, I have had the chance to meet these journalists again. The conversations I had with them were endless: there were so many things to talk about.

Six years ago, our friends could not foresee that Vietnam would have to cope with so many great and terrible events: two murderous wars at both ends of the country, a prolonged wave of migration, the hostility of the governments of some countries in Southeast Asia and above all the slander campaign against Vietnam.

A devilish alliance

Our foreign friends were well aware which forces had opposed Vietnam in the past six years.

First of all, the American imperialists. They have never forgotten their defeat. Vietnam thwarted all their plans, split their ruling circles and their society, and tarnished the reputation of the US Army; Vietnam had set a "bad example" for other peoples, who were beginning to question US might. Now was the time or ever to punish and discredit Vietnam and destroy its image in the world.

The British, French, Japanese and German governments and America's ex-allies in the Vietnam adventure, Australia and New Zealand, also joined the fray.

The alliance between the US and China also served to oppose Vietnam. After their collusion in 1972, Vietnam became first a bargaining counter, then a target of their expansionist aspirations.

Beijing has never forgiven Vietnam for its refusal to bow before China — the "hub of the universe" as they call themselves — and for daring to stand in the way of Chinese hegemony over Southeast Asia. The Chinese authorities are enraged by Vietnam's indomitable spirit in the face of imperialism, its faithfulness to friends in distress; its refusal to give in to the imperialists like Mao's successors have done, betraying old friends in the process. When Vietnam fulfilled its internationalist duty and saved a close neighbour from extermination it also smashed the attacks on its south-western border, a knife thrust by Beijing, into Vietnam's flank. Beijing's hopes of implementing a Maoist model in Kampuchea were dashed. Not long ago they called themselves "comrades" and "trustworthy allies," forming a "dependable rear" for the Vietnamese people; now they thrust their dagger straight at us. Never has history witnessed such a change of loyalties and such a chameleon behaviour!

A vast campaign against Vietnam, monitored by the US, began in Europe and spread to other countries by hundreds of broadcasting stations, television stations and newspapers, including some published in Vietnamese by Vietnamese emigrants. This campaign is served by television programmes depicting the sad plight of the Vietnamese refugees adrift at sea, fighting for their lives, or attacked and raped by bandits who then throw their bodies into the sea. This campaign is livened up by

all kinds of writings: long and short stories, novels, plays, poems, interviews. This literature creates and strengthens the impression that Vietnam is cruel and inhuman, synonym of suffering and tears, by playing on sensationalism and manipulating people's emotions.

Meetings and demonstrations are held in which important politicians take the floor to condemn Vietnam for violating human rights. Vietnam is also stigmatized in many international forums and at the U.N.

The imperialists, reactionaries and renegades work hand in glove in this campaign. They blur the limits between revolution and counter-revolution, good and evil, light and darkness, virtue and crime.

Of the Pol Pot clique a Japanese friend told us: "World politics is turned upside down. Pol Pot is free to vindicate his fascist acts, and is even praised by politicians in many countries. It's just as if Hitler, sentenced at Nuremberg, were allowed to go scot-free."

One year ago, when the People's Revolutionary Tribunal set up in Phnom Penh sentenced Pol Pot and Ieng Sary to death under the prevailing law and on the strength of a huge amount of evidence, thousands of denunciations and accusations, hundreds of figures and facts gathered from all corners of the country, it was widely held that their political life had come to an end. But no. They continue to visit various capitals in the world with diplomatic immunity, and attend international conferences in New York and Geneva; they are given red-carpet receptions and stay at official guest-houses, they parade

in front of guards of honour. They are invited to deliver speeches at banquets and hold press conferences, though they are criminals outlawed by the civilized world. They are free to carry out political activities, and are represented at the U.N. Some heads of State of Asian and African countries have received Ieng Sary with the honours due to a vice prime-minister. Khieu Samphan is welcomed as a prime minister. And strangely enough, some communist leaders also stoop to confer with them, praising them as if they were genuine revolutionaries.

The slander campaign launched in the West has had a widespread impact. We have spoken to American colleagues about old friends of Vietnam who have been "hit" by this campaign. There are many of them indeed. Some once daringly broke into the Pentagon and the White House shouting: "Stop bombing Vietnam!". Others once hoisted the NLF flag on the Statue of Liberty in New York, or donned black pyjamas and chequered neckerchiefs (the traditional dress of the South Vietnamese) to show their sympathy with the Vietnamese resistance; there are those who once sailed from Tokyo to Haiphong on small boats amidst the bombs and mines released by American forces to manifest their solidarity with the Vietnamese people; who perseveringly collected thousands upon thousands of signatures condemning the escalation of the war and raised funds to buy medicines to send to the victims of American bombings. Today many have been fooled by the propaganda campaigns in the US to the point of becoming disillusioned and opposing Vietnam.

Worldwide support

When talking to the French, Japanese, British, American and West German journalists, I usually ask them: "What was your impression of our country during this trip? How do your readers understand the Vietnam, Indochina, and Southeast Asia question?"

My American friends tell us that the information supplied by Vietnam is most important for the large numbers of friends Vietnam made during the war and who act following their own conscience and believe in a new America in which justice will prevail and the oppressed peoples, Vietnam included, will at last receive the sympathy they deserve. They are raising money to build a hospital in Son My, and an engineering workshop in Dong Da district (Hanoi) where lies Kham Thien Street, destroyed in 1972 by B.52 bombers; they have also opened a fund to help Vietnam in rehabilitating ex-prostitutes, and are collecting wheat for the victims of flood-stricken areas. While the US Government refuses to pay war reparations and does its best to create more problems for Vietnam, they courageously work in the cause of a new America.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a progressive Latin American journalist and writer, visited Vietnam to see for himself the true situation here. He scoured the country, talking to people and jotting down in his note-book everything he saw and heard. He returned to his country convinced that Vietnam was being slandered and must be defended. But he was also worried that the US were now seeking revenge in a psychological war, waged by the mass media. By their propaganda campaign against Vietnam, Washington and Beijing are contaminating the international atmosphere and spreading false information.

Our conversations with foreign journalists always ended with the Kampuchean question. Ogura Sadao, correspondent for Yomiuri Shimbun, spent much time enquiring about this question, from Pol Pot's regime to the military situation in Western Kampuchea. Oishi Yoshino, another Japanese journalist, made a thorough investigation of the activities of the Chinese in Kampuchea, of their plan to use Pol Pot as a dagger to thrust at

Vietnam's side. At Samakhi Hotel in Phnom Penh, I met Taro Miamoto, a sharp pen of Japanese journalism for the past thirty years. He was then delighted to have laid his hands on a list of deliveries of Chinese weapons to Pol Pot in 1977 and 1978. It was by chance that we met again on an "Air Vietnam" flight. He liked to recall the memory of Takano, the Japanese journalist killed when reporting the Chinese aggression against Vietnam and exchanged views with me on the unbelievable policies implemented by Pol Pot.

After a careful study, our friends recognized that the assistance given by Vietnam to the Kampuchean people to liberate their country, to defeat Pol Pot and Ieng Sary had been systematically distorted by the enemy.

Our friends were very impressed at the way Vietnam patiently tried to cool the situation from mid-1975 to the end of 1978 all along its southwestern frontier. They were pleased to find that our decision to build a fortified line in 1978 along the border was to avoid contact with Pol Pot's forces and to defend ourselves. At present the vestiges of this line still remain; at that time Pol Pot believed that the building of these defences was a sign of weakness; he grew more aggressive and sent his troops across the border to carry out sabotage activities and provocations. Thousands of Vietnamese at Bay Nui, along the Vinh Te canal, near Chau Doc town, at Sa Mac and Tay Ninh, were savagely killed. This mass murder was confirmed by many foreign journalists.

The sending of the Vietnamese troops to Kampuchea was no easy decision. More than any others we understand the principle of respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our neighbours and have fought for many decades precisely to defend this principle.

But any rule has its exceptions. So which cases are exceptions? The U.N. should take the opportunity of the genocide in Kampuchea to discuss this problem in order to protect the security of the people on this planet. Naturally, genocide cannot be freely interpreted as one chooses. But the facts are clear in Kampuchea: people robbed of their livelihood; three million city dwellers evicted overnight and later massacred; markets, schools, churches, post-offices closed down; intellectuals hunted down and killed; works of art and scientific centres destroyed. And tens of thousands of terrified people fleeing at the risk of their lives to seek refuge from the massacre in neighbouring countries. Under such circumstances, who could be so heartless as to leave their neighbours in the lurch on the grounds of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a country in distress?

I had the opportunity of accompanying a Vietnam People's Army unit carrying out a mission in Kampuchea, and to witness the end of the horror there and the return to normal life at the arrival of Vietnamese troops. Human happiness is so indispensable and yet so simple: a house for a family to live in, the joy of sitting around a table for a meal, a school for the children, a hospital for when you fall ill, a village market, the chance to visit friends and relatives. Millions eagerly returned to a peaceful, happy life under the protection of the revolutionary army, a life they had not known for four long years. Whenever the revolutionary troops have set foot, peace has been restored, the murderers have disappeared, and the friendship between the two peoples relives at last amidst laughter and tears of joy. Only after two days in Phnom Penh did Nayan Chanda, a correspondent of the Far Eastern Economic Review, conclude that Vietnam had acted rightly in saving a neighbour from a disaster never experienced by any other people.

John Pilger, a British journalist and film director, and other American journalists told me of the "anti-Vietnam information industry" operating in Great Britain and the US. In the US, they said, information means disinformation. The American mass media have the sole aim of spreading distorted

images and telling all kinds of tales, anything except the truth, about Vietnam.

Recently, I met a well-known American historian returning to Vietnam to study in more detail the causes of the US defeat in the Vietnam war. He has kept intact his sympathy for our cause. About our presence in Kampuchea, he observed that though living in want, we still shared our food and other goods with the Kampuchean people; and he told us frankly that because of his defence of Vietnam, he has lost sight of his friends.

Scouring the streets of Phnom Penh early in 1979, Jean Emile Vidal, correspondent of L'Humanité, and I visited a pagoda north of Pochengtong airport filled with boxes of Chinese-made shells, Tuol Sleng prison, a collective kitchen in Muk Kampen district, Kandal province. Vidal always ended an on-the-spot investigation with a curt remark: "Nobody can vindicate them." He was very pleased with having been able to see with his own eyes the incredible society rigged up in the past four years by Pol Pot. He observed sarcastically: "Only insanity can explain these awful policies. But they were not insane. What is terrifying is that they are sound minded but acted as if they were insane: they indulged in wanton destruction and killings."

Last year Oishi Yoshino stayed forty days in Kampuchea. Returning to Japan, she wrote in the space of one month a 252-page book — "Kampuchea, the Land of Widows" — which has been translated into English. In April 1980 she returned to Vietnam and Kampuchea to make further investigations as she said, there are many topics that Japanese and Western readers want to know about. She added that in Japan, the Vietnamese Government is maligned as being ruthless towards its people, invading a neighbouring country and pursuing a foreign and domestic policy flouting human rights.

She also said that while we have done much to restore normality in Kampuchea, we speak too little of it.

Our friends from the West have told us that in their countries, individual and State acts are largely motivated by selfish interests; and so Westerners cannot understand why Vietnam, having committed its troops and aid to Kampuchea, has no axe to grind there. It is a huge sacrifice on our part to contribute to the recovery of a brother country, and our only aims are keen friendship and cooperation, common happiness in freedom, independence and prosperity for both countries.

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Conversations with foreign journalists have always left me with a good impression, giving me more confidence and enthusiasm. They spoke of the trends in thinking and feeling in their countries towards Vietnam and suggested many interesting ideas.

In the fierce struggle against the American imperialists, we never regarded the victory we won as our own; we regard it as a victory won by progressive humanity.

The same goes with the new struggle in Vietnam and Indochina. We are facing a campaign of imperialist and reactionary forces, who seek to weaken us in all respects and knock us down. They are waging a campaign of slander and distortion to vilify the reality in Vietnam and Indochina. The enemy is making use of a worldwide propaganda machine to win what they failed to obtain by war.

Once again, we are forced to take up the challenge of another confrontation.

Our weapon is truth. We were victorious on 30 April 1975, because truth was on our side. We will surely carry the day once more as we have many friends throughout the world, even in the US and China. This new confrontation is long and difficult and requires from us much patience and intelligence. Our strength is truth. Our support comes from those who have accepted to struggle to defend the truth.

Our friends have confidence in us. We must do all we can to deserve their confidence.

THANH TIN

STAY THE HANDS OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES TO DEFEND SOCIALISM IN POLAND

TOGETHER with the peoples of other socialist countries, our people is following the developments in socialist Poland with great concern. The complex events which are taking place there cause us great anxiety. In a recent resolution, the Congress of Katowice of the Polish United Workers' Party pointed to the acuteness of the situation in Poland which has become a centre of intense activity of the reactionary forces supported by imperialism: in fact the Polish Party, State and people are facing a dangerous counter-revolutionary situation. Many Party and State leaders have asserted that socialism in the Polish People's Republic is in jeopardy.

Where does this crisis come from and why is it increasingly critical? The development in the last ten months is sufficient to demonstrate that the underlying cause of this crisis does not derive from economic difficulties but from the activities of enemies of socialism. There is no denying the fact that the reactionaries both within and outside Poland are plotting to launch an all-out attack on the socialist system in order to suppress the achievements of the revolution and to weaken the socialist community so as to tip the balance of forces in their favour.

The enemies are perfidious. They are conducting this counter-attack with careful calculation and close backing of their overseas

headquarters. First, capitalizing on the predicament of the country, they put forth economic demands with sophisticated slogans to deceive the working people. Then, under the label of "democratization" and championing the interests of the workers, they set up organisations which they mastermind and direct against the control of the Polish United Workers' Party and State, such as the "Solidarity Trade Union" of workers, peasants and students, or organisations camouflaged as "Workers' Defence Groups". Using these organisations as tools and shields behind which to manipulate the masses, the reactionary forces have spread their onslaught to other fields and the administrative apparatus. They have turned these organisations into a dual administration to compete with the people's power. They claim to have an independent voice and try to gain control of the mass media to propagate their reactionary viewpoints and incite the masses to rebellion. They strive to neutralize the administration, smear the officials and blatantly attack the security services. They create conditions for the war criminals to return to the country and leading counter-revolutionaries to get out of prison. They spearhead their perfidious attacks against the Polish United Workers' Party, do their best to cut it from the people, smear good cadres and Party members, incite revisionist

and opportunist tendencies inside the Party, scheme to change its character and to turn it into a reformist organisation. Of late, they have fanned hatred for the Soviet Union, whipped up bourgeois nationalist extremist psychology in an attempt to change the policy of alliance of the Polish People's Republic. Throughout their present counter-revolutionary campaign, the reactionaries in Poland have received constant moral and material support from anti-communist centres in the world, first and foremost from the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries as well as the Beijing expansionists and hegemonists.

The reactionaries use piecemeal tactics to lead Poland to a dangerous situation. They have shown their cloven hoof which is not to "modernize socialism" but to seize power, annul the fruits of the revolution and change the political regime of the Polish People's Republic. Their counter-attack poses a serious threat to socialism, to the position of Poland as an independent country and member of the Warsaw Treaty and of CMEA (COMECON). It also threatens the interests of the whole socialist community, particularly the solidarity and security of the member countries. The anti-socialist forces do not conceal their intention to alter the balance of forces in Europe and the world. Their counter-attack in Poland also jeopardizes the peace and security of other nations.

With comradely concern the Vietnamese people express their sympathy with the Polish people, undergoing serious trials. We approve and welcome the opinions of the genuine communists and patriots in Poland who are resolutely unmasking the class enemy and demanding that the Polish Party and State maintain proletarian dictatorship, deal a stunning blow to the counter-revolutionaries to safeguard the fruits of the

revolution reaped at the cost of so much sacrifices, defend the friendship and invaluable co-operation between Poland and the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In their discussion, the Polish Party members and cadres have pointed to the fact that no more concessions will be made to the enemy whom, if given an inch will take an ell and seek to step up their manoeuvres. Our Polish comrades emphasize the need for an energetic attitude towards the enemies and to defend the Marxist-Leninist character of the Polish United Workers' Party, an issue of prime importance.

We are confident that the Polish patriotic forces and genuine communists will successfully wage this complex struggle in the vital interests of Poland and socialism and for the sake of Marxism-Leninism. The great majority of the Polish people support the great cause of the Polish United Workers' Party and socialism. Most of the members of the "Solidarity Trade Union" fooled by this organisation will take part in the struggle and will sever their links with the reactionary forces who have been trying to pit them against the people's power.

We wholeheartedly support the genuine revolutionary forces in Poland in their struggle to thwart the scheme of the counter-revolutionaries and to defend the fruits of the revolution. This struggle is also waged in the interest of the socialist community. Together with the peoples of the Soviet Union and other fraternal socialist countries, we reaffirm our solidarity with the Polish people. As comrade L.I. Brezhnev pointed out at the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, we are resolved not to leave socialist Poland in the lurch.

Nhan Dan
9 June 1981

STATEMENT OF...

(Continued from page 5)

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam holds that in the present situation, the restoration of peace and stability on the Sino-Vietnamese border is of great importance. In this spirit, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam proposes that the Chinese side reach an early agreement with the Vietnamese side on urgent measures to restore peace and stability on the border between the two countries and resume at an early date the third round of Vietnam-China talks at the level of vice-foreign minister to discuss matters of mutual concern so as to re-establish normal relations between the two countries. Urgent measures to restore peace and stability on the border between the two countries should include cessation of hostilities, separation of troops of the two countries and establishment of a demilitarized zone. The timing and venue of the talks would be agreed upon through diplomatic channels (1).

The People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Lao People's Democratic Republic fully support the correct stand and reasonable and logical proposals mentioned above of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and demand that China give a positive response thereto.

4. The three ministers note with satisfaction that in spite of existing differences on a number of regional issues, the dialogue between the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries over the past period has brought about initial results in strengthening mutual understanding and comprehension, creating favourable conditions for further discussions and mutual agreement on regional matters without external imposition. The Foreign Ministers of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea highly appreciate the visit made by the Foreign Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to a number of Southeast Asian countries and consider it a positive contribution to the process of regional consultations among the countries in the region.

With the desire to bring the process of dialogue to early positive results in the interests of peace and stability, friendship and co-operation in Southeast Asia, the three Indochinese countries make the following proposals:

a) To hold a regional conference between the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries on regional matters of mutual concern with the participation, as observers, of the UN Secretary-General in his personal capacity and representatives of some other countries to be mutually agreed upon. The agenda would be drawn up in turn by the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries on an alternate and equal basis. The Indochinese countries propose that the conference be held in mid-July 1981 in Rangoon or another Asian capital to be mutually agreed upon.

b) In case the ASEAN countries are not yet prepared to participate in a regional conference as described above, the three Indochinese countries propose a continuation of regional consultations as proposed by some ASEAN countries between countries in the region on a bilateral or multilateral basis, to discuss and reach agreement on regional issues of mutual concern.

c) An international conference with a broader participation to be agreed upon by both sides would be convened to acknowledge and guarantee the agreements reached in the regional conference or regional consultations. If the United Nations stops recognizing Pol Pot and his clique, the Indochinese countries would consider the possibility of this international conference being convened by the United Nations.

The three Indochinese countries hope that for the sake of peace and stability in the region and in the interests of each nation, the ASEAN countries will give a positive response to the above goodwill proposals.

Phnom Penh
14 June 1981

(1) On 13 June 1981, the SRV Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a note concerning this problem to its Chinese counterpart proposing July or August 1981 as a possible date, the proposed venue being either Hanoi or Beijing.

IN March 1960, at the invitation of the State Commission for Sciences of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR sent a delegation led by Academician Kotelnikov (now Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences and President of the Soviet Intercosmos Space Research Council) on a visit to Vietnam. The delegation discussed the question of developing scientific research in Vietnam. In May 1961 the State Commission for Sciences of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam sent a delegation of scientific workers from many scientific branches to visit various scientific research establishments in the Soviet Union. On May 26, 1961 the delegation signed an agreement with the Presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences on scientific co-operation between the two bodies.

Vietnam's young science has made important progress during the twenty years since this agreement was signed. Vietnamese scientists have greatly contributed to the anti-US resistance and to socialist construction. The scientific potential of the country was also strengthened. Alongside the ministries' scientific and technological institutions and the university system, a network of specialized institutions has taken shape to carry out research on the fundamental scientific questions facing the country. Numerous natural science institutes have been founded and placed under the direct management of the State Commission for Science and Technology.

Since 1975 they have been integrated within the Vietnam Institute of Sciences. At present, the Institute has ten research centres, a branch in Ho Chi Minh City and some autonomous research establishments. The Vietnam Commission for Social Sciences was founded in 1965. It now has ten institutes. The Vietnam Institute of Sciences and the Commission for Social Sciences are staffed

TWENTY YEARS OF VIETNAM — USSR SCIENTIFIC CO-OPERATION

*Professor TRAN DAI NGHIA
Director of the Vietnam Institute
of Sciences*



At the Hoa Sen (Lotus) Satellite Earth Station Built with Soviet aid.

Photo: CAO PHONG

by about 4,000 research and technical workers including nearly 500 post-graduates.

All the advances achieved by Vietnam's fledgling science over the last 20 years are closely associated with the co-operation and assistance of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the academies of other socialist countries. In fact, scientific co-operation between the two countries was never interrupted over the past twenty years,

not even during the hard years of the resistance against US aggression. Co-operation agreements, first for one-year, then two-year periods, were signed alternately in Hanoi and Moscow between the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the various Vietnamese scientific bodies. In January 1980 the first long-term agreement on co-operation covering the period 1980-1985 was signed between the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Institute of

Sciences and the Commission for Social Sciences of Vietnam. The agreement covers 27 points and 58 topics for scientific research.

This co-operation has brought Vietnam a treasure of valuable experiences in the elaboration of scientific policies, in organising and developing scientific research, in planning and managing scientific work...

A primary objective of the co-operation between the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the scientific institutions of Vietnam is to train qualified scientific researchers for Vietnam.

During the past twenty years, through their practice and study courses, the research institutions of the Soviet Academy of Sciences have trained hundreds of Vietnamese scientists with post-graduate qualifications. Most of the candidate, doctors and doctors now working at the Vietnam Institute of Sciences and the Commission for Social Sciences have been trained at the Soviet Academy of Sciences. In recent years, the Soviet Academy of Sciences has also trained a number of Vietnamese scientists for the bodies directly servicing scientific research such as the scientific information institute and the scientific libraries. Several research institutes under the Soviet Academy of Sciences have invited Vietnamese collaborators to join their staff as a way of helping Vietnam acquire scientific workers of high standards and experience in research organisation.

The Soviet Academy of Sciences has helped Vietnam design and build its first scientific centre at Nghia Do in Hanoi, inaugurated in early 1977. Other research centres will be built both in the North and in the South with Soviet assistance. In recent years, as part of joint research projects with Vietnam, various institutes of the Soviet Academy of Sciences have sent us a large quantity of scien-

tific equipment and instruments to provide very essential material conditions for Vietnam to undertake many important scientific projects.

Today, as throughout the hard years of the US war of aggression, Vietnam continues to enjoy the devoted assistance of the Soviet Union which has decided to write off all expenses of Vietnamese scientists and students throughout their stays in the Soviet Union for the purpose of exchanging experiences, training and attending seminars and conferences.

Vietnamese-Soviet scientific co-operation has become increasingly diversified. It ranges from the exchange of scientific workers for refresher courses, exchange of experiences, joint research on definite topics, sending Vietnamese students and post-graduates to train, specialize or work at various research institutes in the Soviet Union, to exchanges of information between the scientific bodies of the two countries, exchanges of scientific journals and papers between scientific libraries, and exchanges of samples and models.

In recent years, joint research has been conducted on a number of scientific subjects of common interest to both countries. In 1974 the first programme of research subjects to be jointly undertaken by the two countries was signed in Hanoi and in early 1980 the two sides signed a long-term plan concerning research in both the natural and the social sciences to be jointly conducted by the two countries in the period 1980-1985.

In furtherance of this plan of co-operation, Vietnamese and Soviet biologists have organised joint teams to study the ecology and zoological distribution of the Central Highlands and other areas in Vietnam; botanists of both countries have launched a joint

programme to complete the elaboration of a botanical encyclopedia for the whole of Vietnam, a major project started many years ago. Soviet and Vietnamese experts in marine biology and oceanography have formed joint survey teams and the first Vietnamese oceanographic teams are provided with modern Soviet equipment to study the biology of Vietnam's seas; geologists of the two countries are also working on a project to draw up a set of national Vietnamese maps; Vietnamese and Soviet scientists are joining efforts in the study of the basic geology and principles of Vietnamese biomineralogy. Joint research is also under way in a series of other fields of the natural sciences such as mathematics, computation, physics, chemistry, physiology, biochemistry, genetics, geophysics... For many years now, social science workers of the two countries have collaborated on many questions of philosophy, history, ethnology, archaeology, linguistics, economics, jurisdiction, etc. In recent years, the two countries have organised joint research teams to study the languages of various ethnic groups in Vietnam. The first outcome of co-operation in research is the joint publication of scientific works in the form of papers, books, brochures and collections.

Since 1979 some of Vietnam's scientific institutes have joined multilateral co-operation programmes with the academies of sciences of the socialist countries.

Vietnamese scientific workers are determined to further enhance such co-operation in order to quickly and steadily develop the country's science, improve the standards of Vietnamese scientists, and build a material and technical foundation for scientific work, thus helping to solve the country's immediate problems and the cause of socialist construction in Vietnam.

SOYA:

A COMPLEMENTARY CROP

FORMERLY Vietnam had an agriculture of small production in which the producers catered for their own needs rather than for those of society. They grew soya-beans in a quantity sufficient to prepare "tuong" sauce and to make soya cheese. The soya-bean processing industry was non-existent; these beans were ignored as a raw material for industry; as a result they were never intensively cultivated, or used in animal husbandry and as export goods. Furthermore conditions for large-scale production did not exist and there was little research into the matter. All this hampered the large-scale cultivation of soya-beans.

The daily food ration of most Vietnamese is badly lacking in protein. The production of starchy substances meets the food requirement of 13 kilogrammes per capita per month, which can be regarded as sufficient, but protein remains a difficult problem to solve. Vietnamese agronomists consider rice to be the main crop with which to solve the food problem with a secondary soya-bean crop to solve the problem of starch protein. These two products are the main factors affecting the balance between starch and protein and the nutritional value of human and animal food intake, and in improving the fertility of the soil. In the long term it will be necessary to grow at least 1.2-1.5 hectares of soya for every 7 hectares of food crops. Soya will be grown extensively as a main crop or in rotation or intercalated with other crops.

In Vietnam at present, leguminous plants are widely grown, but varieties with low protein content

(18-25%) occupy a high ratio, such as green beans, black beans and white beans. With a protein content of 50-53%, soya-beans will become the main element in solving the problems of protein shortage, because compared to other sources, soya supplies its protein more rapidly, in large quantities and at low cost. Soya protein is of high quality, inferior to animal protein only in that it is less tasty and less easily digested. Soya is widely cultivated throughout the world to offset protein shortages. In 1980, the world produced about 80 million tonnes of soya (yielding 32 million tonnes of protein).

To produce the 500,000 tonnes of protein necessary for its annual requirements, Vietnam must produce 1,250,000 tonnes of soya (grown on 4 million hectares of land with a yield of 1.25 tonnes per hectare - this yield is within reach), while in the case of other food crops, it would be necessary to produce an extra 10 million tonnes of rice, or an extra 3.6 million tonnes of fish, or an extra 3 million tonnes of meat. Clearly, soya is the only means of rapidly solving the problem of protein shortages in our country.

After rice, soya ranks second in large-scale crops best suited to Vietnam's land and climatic conditions, and can be introduced without having to affect the present area under cultivation. Most regions enjoy favourable ecological conditions for growing high-yield soya (over one tonne per ha). In particular our country is in a position to grow two kinds of varieties (tropical and semi-tropical) in one or several crops

according to soil and irrigation conditions. The Central Highlands are favourable for growing temperate strains of soya, while the northern uplands, the Red River delta, the coastal regions, Eastern and Western Nam Bo are ideal for soya strains accustomed to a hot climate. Soya strains of temperate countries grow perfectly in spring, autumn and winter in the North, and at the beginning of the rainy season in the South. Those accustomed to the hot climate are grown in summer and autumn in the North and in the dry season and at the end of the rainy season in the South. The soya harvest is always guaranteed despite frequent disasters such as drought, flood, heat, cold, protracted rain, strong wind and pests. However, these difficulties are not fundamental and can be overcome by farming methods, chemicals and improved material conditions.

At present soya is grown in almost all provinces of Vietnam. The total area under soya is 40,000 hectares and the average yield is 0.5-0.6 tonne per hectare (0.4 tonne in the North, and over 0.7 tonne in the South). The yearly output is about 20,000 tonnes of beans. Thanks to the policies promoting soya cultivation (supplying materials for the production of seeds, raising the price of soya collected by the State, directives encouraging large-scale production throughout the country) in 1980, 48,000 hectares of soya were planted, yielding 0.65 tonne per hectare. Ten thousand tonnes of beans were collected as against 3,000 or 4,000 in previous years.

Though planning soya cultivation on a nationwide scale is

hard job, in the last few years, many specialized regions have appeared producing high-yield soya. Topping the list is Dong Nai province which grows 15,000 hectares, one-third of the country's soya area, and has obtained one tonne of beans per hectare many years running. In 1980 it delivered 6,000 tonnes of soya-beans to the State, 60% of the total quantity sold. In two years, Hau Giang province increased its soya-growing areas from several hundred hectares to 2,000 hectares and in 1980 sold 1,200 tonnes. From seeing its soya production seriously reduced as a consequence of the war on the borderland, Cao Bang province has restored its soya cultivation and obtained high yields. The provinces of Hai Hung, Ha Bac, Vinh Phu, Dong Nai are now expanding their soya-growing areas. Starting from scratch, Dong Thang and Vinh Phuc co-operatives (Hai Hung province) and Tan Moc co-operative (Ha Bac province) have planted 100 hectares

of soya and obtained 1.2-1.5 tonnes of beans per hectare

Many regions which once failed in their soya-growing experiments because of the climate can now grow this crop successfully. In the Northwest, soya was formerly planted in April and reaped at the end of the rainy season, which caused soya to sprout too early. Now guided by agronomists, the peasants have changed the planting period to the middle of the rainy season, and are applying the method of sowing beans in wet soil and harvesting at the end of the dry season. This process has proved to be successful. In Eastern Nam Bo and in the Central Highlands, the farmers met with the same difficulties, and have begun to grow soya according to the same method and timetable as in the Northwest. In the Red River delta and the Mekong River delta, many new methods are being applied to popularize soya cultivation

Many crop combinations have been used on various kinds of soil. The "spring rice—short-growth soya—late 10th lunar month rice" combination used on double rice crop fields in the northern uplands has proved very effective. The "10th lunar month floating rice—short-growth soya" combination allows a crop of spring-summer soya to be grown in 10th lunar month floating rice fields. The formula "spring rice—early 10th lunar month rice—early soya" enables the farmers to grow a crop of autumn-winter soya in double rice crop fields in the Red River delta. On the high-yield double rice crop fields in the Mekong delta, the growers have taken the initiative in applying the crop combination of "winter-spring rice—short-growth spring-summer soya—10th lunar month rice". The peasants now grow an additional crop of soya in single rice crop fields in the highlands and uplands in the North and a soya crop on the land reserved for "seed beds" in the Red River delta with the crop rotation formulas of "early soya—10th lunar month rice" and "early winter soya—10th lunar month rice—spring rice".

Besides the existing soya varieties, many new varieties have been introduced in Vietnam. The method of growing soya in straight lines on prepared wet soil in almost all regions and on unprepared soil in floating rice fields has been applied extensively.

At present, the Government continues to develop the material conditions for the production of seeds and research on soya. Its technical and financial assistance will help step up soya cultivation in the period from 1981 to 1985.



In a soya-bean field of the Tan Moc co-operative, Ha Bac province.

Photo: TRAN THANH CANH

PHAM NGUYEN DIEN

FAMILY PLANNING IN VIETNAM

VIETNAM'S population has increased by nearly 3 times since 1936. The growth rate has remained high even during the war years, 2.23 times within the 36 years since independence in 1945.

This can be attributed to the following two main reasons:

- A high birth rate;
- The development of health care which has resulted in a marked decrease in mortality and a parallel increase in life expectancy.

If things are allowed to continue their natural course, one and a half million babies will be born every year in Vietnam, putting a strong brake on economic development and on improving living standards.

The socialist State in the North began a family planning campaign as early as 1963, long before the country was reunified. Committees for mother and child welfare have been set up at all levels to direct the movement.

The campaign came up against numerous hurdles in the first years: poor equipment, but especially the lack of popular support. Psychologically and socially, the movement contravened widely held convictions, firmly rooted in both town and country, that a big family, especially one with many sons, was the surest guarantee of family happiness. This is borne out by the many popular sayings and proverbs which were widely adopted as rules of conduct or moral criteria: "If Heaven creates an elephant, it will create grass for it", "Impiety involves three crimes of which being childless

is the worst". "To have one son is to have, to have ten girls is not to have"... So, it was common to see many families living under constant economic hardship but continuing to bear children simply because they needed a son to carry on the lineage.

After many years of unrelenting efforts to intensify the propaganda campaign among the population, combined with the application of various birth control measures, the birth rate was brought from 4.6% in 1960 down to 3.4% in 1968.

By 1971 the campaign had become widespread in 13 key and densely populated provinces in the North.

A survey conducted in a number of localities showed that even if only 5% of the total of women (or about 25% of women in child-bearing age) could be persuaded to use an I.U.D., the most widely used contraceptive device in Vietnam, the population growth rate could be reduced by 1-1.25% after from one to two years. Based on this observation, a movement was launched throughout the North in 1971 aimed at getting 5% of the women to use an I.U.D.

This target was reached in early 1978 by three districts and 170 communes in the North.

In factories and public offices, higher targets were set:

- 30% of the women in child-bearing age to use an I.U.D.
- 70% of the couples to use some contraceptive method,
- The number of child-bearing women not to exceed 12% of the total of women in the factories or public offices. By 1974, 80% of the factories and public offices had achieved these targets.

In early 1975 the family planning programme was placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Health in order to concentrate all the manpower and

technical means of the health service on this task. The health service subsequently improved its organisation, strengthened the mother and child welfare institutions and birth control centres, expanded its I.U.D. fitting teams, set up technical sections at the obstetrics departments of the provincial and district hospitals to assist in the family planning programme, opened courses to train specialist workers for the provinces, organised seminars and intensified its coordination with the other services and with the mass organisations to broaden the scale of the movement. The target set in 1971 for 5% of the child-bearing age women to use an I.U.D. was maintained but with more concrete guidelines: the persuasion campaign should first aim at young married women in the 20-30 age bracket already having one or two children; the use of the I.U.D.s should be combined with other measures suitable to each category of women, and legal abortions facilitated whenever the planning breaks down.

After the liberation of the South, in February 1977 the medical service convened a conference of 38 provinces and cities to discuss the extension of the family planning movement to the whole country. The campaign aims to reduce the overall population growth rate throughout the country to a little over 2%. In the North where the campaign has been conducted for many years the plan calls for 6% of women to use an I.U.D. and to reduce the population growth rate to 1.5%. In the South, the plan calls for 5% of women to use an I.U.D. and to reduce the population growth rate to 2.5%.

The campaign has since continued to grow vigorously. Many provinces and cities have integrated family planning within their overall plans and in the work schedules of the various branches and services. Many steps have been taken to stimulate the campaign, in particular with material incentives.

The medical service has constantly improved its technical standards to ensure absolute safety for the women during the fitting of I.U.D.s and abortions. This has increased the popular support for the movement. Many factories or offices with satisfactory results in family planning have been publicly commended.

In the North, An Thi district in Hai Hung province is the first district in the country to have achieved both targets: 6% of the women in child-bearing age using an I.U.D. and population growth rate reduced to 1.5%. By the end of 1980, 14 communes in the district (70% of the total) had overfulfilled the plan with 8.5% of the women using an I.U.D. and the population growth rate being cut to 1.36%. An Thi's example is now being followed by all the other districts in the province.

By now, of the total of 422 communes in Hai Hung, 405 have attained both targets. 160 communes have reduced the population growth rate to 0.6 - 1%.

Hoan Kiem district in Hanoi is another model unit. It has 170,000 inhabitants, 47% of them public employees, 35 factories, 150 public offices and 80 small industry and handicraft co-operatives.

So far, in 45 out of the 46 wards in the district, (including 55 public offices and factories) 30% of women of child-bearing age are using an I.U.D. In other public offices and factories, although the rate is lower (15-20%), thanks to other contraceptive methods the annual birth rate has dropped substantially. Since 1977 the population growth rate in the district has remained under 1.45% (See an article on Hoan Kiem district in this issue).

In the South, the campaign has made steady headway since it was launched in 1976.

In Ho Chi Minh City with a population of about 3.5 million, almost 96,000 women today use

an I.U.D. (2.75% of the total population). There have been about 47,000 legal abortions each year (1.34%). About 5,000 women decided to have no more children (0.15%) and 12,000 others (0.34%) effectively used other methods of contraception. Regular users of contraception represent 4.65% of the population. Thanks to this, the population growth rate in the city dropped from 2.5% in 1976 to 1.7% in 1979 and 1.66% in 1980.

Many districts in the city such as Phu Nhuan and District 4 and some wards such as the 12th ward have succeeded in persuading 5% of the women to use an I.U.D. In the 12th ward of Phu Nhuan district, the population growth rate dropped to 0.8% by the end of 1979. In many other wards in the city, the rate also dropped below 1.5%.

In Long An province, thanks to a good coordination of the various branches, services and mass organisations, and a successful persuasion campaign among the various strata of the population and religious sects, 5% of the women in the provincial capital, Tan An, are now regularly using the coil and the population growth rate in the town dropped to 1.94% in 1980.

Likewise, the population growth rate target of approximately 2.5% set for the South as a whole has been attained in many other provinces:

- Quang Nam-Da Nang province (population: 1,433,000) has brought its population growth rate from 2.8% in 1976 down to 2.2% in 1980.

- In Tien Giang, a densely populated province in the Mekong River delta, the rate has dropped from 2.86% to 2.3%.

Thus, after 18 years of campaigning, it can be said that the target of reducing the population growth rate in the country as a

whole to little over 2 per cent has been in the main achieved. Since the liberation of the South, the birth rate in the country as a whole has dropped by one per cent (in spite of a fall of 0.5 per cent in the mortality rate), which brought about a 0.97% decrease in the population growth rate.

The present situation concerning Vietnam's population growth is as follows:

- In the northern provinces from Binh Tri Thien province northwards: 2.13%

- In the southern provinces: 2.35%

- In the whole country: 2.23%

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Right from the beginning, the Communist Party of Vietnam has pointed out that family planning in Vietnam is both a revolutionary and scientific campaign. The Party and administrative authorities at all levels have mobilised all branches and services with the health service as the guiding force and nucleus to wage a constant and persevering campaign.

So far the campaign has brought about satisfactory results. It has been clearly demonstrated that wherever the campaign has reached its targets, the people are living better off and family life has also become more stable. The women's health also improves and they can devote more time and energy to studies and work.

The campaign owes its success first of all to a persistent persuasive campaign to make the broad masses of the population realise the urgency of the question and its direct impact on the national economy, the national income and their own standards of living.

Most of the women of child-bearing age and newly wed couples have had the harm caused by many, frequent and early confinements clearly explained to them. They were told of the advantages of having only two children, of spacing them out (4 or 5 years apart) and of bearing children only after they have fully developed physiologically (from 20 years of age on).

Nor has the persuasion campaign overlooked the husbands, the

parents of married couples and other elderly persons who still exert a great amount of influence in family and social life, especially in the countryside.

Special methods of persuasion are used with religious people, emphasizing the humanitarian aspect of the campaign. To these people, it is essential to campaign for pregnancy prevention and little or nothing is said about abortion. In some places, the Buddhist or Catholic clergy has been won over to the family planning policy so that they themselves lend a hand in explaining this policy to the faithful.

Another important contributing factor has been the efforts of the doctors and other medical personnel to ensure safety, thus inspiring confidence among the women and encouraging them to respond positively to the movement.

The most widely used methods of contraception are the I.U.D., the condom and the pill. These have proved safe and effective and are readily accepted by women of all professions and social strata. In particular, the I.U.D. is preferred by rural women and newly married women.

Besides contraception, other measures have been taken to reduce the birth rate, especially legal abortion, especially in the towns. The medical service has constantly expanded the centres for the practice of legal and safe abortions while ensuring the best conditions for those who choose to

have them. In Ho Chi Minh City, thanks to 47,725 abortions on demand, the birth rate in 1979 dropped by 1.36%, making no small contribution to reducing the population growth rate of the city.

In carrying out its family planning programme, Vietnam has enjoyed effective assistance from international organisations and friendly countries, mostly in technical equipment.

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In practice, the family planning programme has shown during the past years, especially in the period 1977-1980, that there are clear possibilities for further reducing the population growth rate. However, the campaign must still be carried on perseveringly for many years to come before it enters the habits of the population and yields lasting results.

In the five years ahead (1981-1985) the campaign is aimed at lowering the population growth rate throughout the country to 1.7% and even lower:

- 1.3%-1.5% in the provinces and towns of the northern plain.

- 1.5%-1.7% in the southern provinces.

- 1.7% in the mountainous provinces.

The following is a plan of population growth rate in the period 1981-1985:

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Population growth rate (per cent)	2.1	1.95	1.85	1.75	1.7
Estimated population (millions)	54.928	55.990	57.020	58.020	58.920

The overall population growth rate throughout the country for the five years ahead is projected to be 95%.

To this end, each year the rate should be reduced by 0.1-0.2%. The medical centres will strive to provide the necessary technical means and equipment for the cam-

paign and will improve their coordination with the various branches and services in order to ensure that each couple has only two children and that no one gives birth to a fourth child.

HOANG MAI

VIETNAM COURIER

FAMILY PLANNING IN A CITY DISTRICT

HOAN KIEM, pop. 170,000, is the largest of the four urban districts of Hanoi. Its streets — Hang Dao, Hang Ngang, Hang Duong, Hang Be, Hang Bac, Hang Muoi, Hang Buom, Hang Chieu, etc. — with their old houses wedge between one another and their crowded pavements, are a permanent reminder of the demographic problem all developing countries face.

Population growth in Hoan Kiem, however, has been kept down in the past five years thanks to a successful movement for family planning. The rate of 1.6% in 1976, was down to 1.4% in 1980. In the city as a whole the rate was reduced from 3.20% to 2.23%.

A Mass movement

The district's Centre for Mother and Child Welfare and Family Planning is located in Hang Bong, one of the main streets. Staffed by three doctors specializing in obstetrics and gynaecology, and by 15 medical assistants, nurses and aides, it treats women's diseases, provides intra-uterine devices (I.U.D.), carries out abortions, and gives advice on family planning. It has the charge of 48 city wards and 200 public offices and production units.

When I called one morning the centre had just opened, and already some 20 women, mostly in their twenties, had filled the waiting room. They had come either for routine check-ups, which are given between 7:30 and 9:30, or for

the coil, as the I.U.D. is commonly referred to, which is fitted from 9:30 to the midday recess. The afternoon is for visits by the staff.

Doctor Tran Thi Tam drew my attention to the posters on the walls. Some advertised contraceptive methods and devices. The biggest one, framed in a prominent position, showed a young couple and two cute children. The caption reads: "Family Planning — Happy Family Life." Doctor Tam led me to a glass case in which were displayed different types of I.U.Ds and contraceptive pills. In the office, from the many charts and graphs on the walls, I could form an idea of the demographic situation in the district.

"Family planning was initiated in Vietnam way back in the 60's," said Doctor Tam. She went on: "This centre was set up as soon as the movement was launched. The charts and graphs you see here are not merely the results of data collecting. They show the progress we've made in our persistent efforts to motivate the population. In 20 years our staff has grown in both size and quality, and people have come to understand the benefits of family planning. Now we are in a position to set suitable rates for population growth in our area."

I studied the charts for 1980, and realized how good education standards could influence the campaign. Birth rates at Hospital C and the Municipal Service of Education, which are staffed by many uni-

versity or college graduates, were respectively 4% and 4.8%, whereas those at the Cu Doanh Knitwear Factory and the district Food Company were 9.4% and 9.6%. Special attention, therefore, has been given to fitting I.U.D.s at those factories and units which have a high proportion of female workers with little education. One chart showed that three women had I.U.D.s out of every 10 women working at the Dong Xuan Vegetables Store. The ratio was 38% at Construction Site 11, and 57% at the Foodstuffs Store.

"It was only thanks to constant motivation that these achievements were possible," said Doctor Tam. "We gave talks and screened documentary films to explain the relationship between population growth and economic development, and the benefits of family planning in terms of living conditions and home life. We have to combat prejudices amongst both men and women towards contraception. Medical records of 'Top Priority Cases' — mothers of four and women who frequently give birth (once a year or every 18 months) — are kept apart for special attention. Newly-weds are approached to persuade them that the ages of 22 to 28 are the best for child-bearing, and that pregnancies should be strictly avoided before and afterwards."

I wondered how the centre managed, with a staff of 18, to cover as many as 48 wards and 200 offices and production units.

"Of course, we're not alone," Doctor Tam explained. "We closely co-operate with the medical stations at these places which, like us, keep a close watch on the movement. We compare notes frequently, and work out a new plan every year. We provide technical knowledge to local medical stations which, as a result, can now fit I.U.D.s on their own."

"Do people have any option as to which method they use?" I asked.

"There was a time when we preferred the coil," Doctor Tam said. "That was when means were scarce. Now, thanks to the assistance of the socialist countries and international organisations, contraceptive pills are widely used. Yet, women workers have a preference for I.U.D.s, regarding the taking of pills too complicated a matter. People of better education, however, prefer pills or condoms, and some have even opted for sterilization. For our part we try not to impose any particular method on them, and give them a free choice after telling them what means are available."

Family Planning in a Factory

The Cu Doanh Knitwear Factory is one of the units commended for good achievements in family planning. With its 866 women out of a total of 1,115 workers the factory has set up a Family Planning Committee headed by one of the deputy-directors. Committee members include representatives of the Trade Union and the Women's Union and Communist Youth Union. A well-equipped gynaecology section has been added to the medical station to give regular check-ups for pregnant workers and advise on contraception. It opens all weekdays and is always working full out.

"Since more than two-thirds of the workforce are women," said Doctor Tran Thi Minh An, the head of the medical station, "the gynaecology section plays a very important role." She continued: "Like health care in general, family planning is a long-term matter, but it can have a direct bearing on productivity."

Since family planning benefits both the collective and the individual the factory has instituted a bonus system to encourage good

planning. I met a worker after she had had the coil fitted. She presented her medical records to an administrative nurse for a stamp to be placed on the signature of the doctor who had performed the fitting. Next she went to the pharmacy counter to receive her quota of tonics, and headed for the pay office to get a bonus of 10 *dong*. Women with one four-year-old child or two children of two and seven, and who did not conceive in 1980, were also awarded money or household utensils. People who break the guidelines, of course, are automatically barred from the system, and although no criticism is ever made, they are regarded as rather "backward."

Two thousand *dong* were spent on bonuses in family planning in 1980. Some encouraging signs have appeared: only 67 children were born to the 602 women of child-bearing age, 41.7 % of the children were first-borns, and there were only nine third confinements (barely 13%). No fourth confinements were recorded. Since all the births had been planned in the previous year, and duly filed they did not inconvenience the factory in any way.

Doctor An introduced me to Tran Thi Nham, the Trade Union secretary, a staunch militant who chose to use contraception at the age of 30 and stuck to it throughout the past 12 years.

The men, however, constitute a great obstacle. Doctor An mentioned the case of Luu, the deputy-secretary of the Trade Union, whose wife had just given birth to another child, the fourth one. "Luu's wife works at another factory, and we, at the moment, influence the wives rather than the husbands. Men are more conservative. Perhaps they lack understanding because they don't know the pains of birth. Quite a number of wives



Doctors and assistant-doctors of the Mother and Child Welfare and Family Planning Centre in Hoan Kiem district.

Photo: VAN TAM

have to take contraceptive measures on the sly, and when discovered they have to bow to their husband's will. Family relationships in our country is still coloured by feudal prejudices, and male supremacy is still prevalent. Of course we've tried to convince the husbands, too, but not enough has been done. Two had responded to our call for sterilization after fathering two children. But one has given up, the other has asked for a suspension. Anyway, persuasion must continue, and patience is the only recourse."

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Not all the obstacles on the way of family planning have been removed in Hoan Kiem district, but great headway has been made. All the main targets for the two major groups — factory workers and office employees — have been attained. This year, attention is being concentrated on handicraft workers and individual producers who, because of a lower level of education, are expected to cause more difficulties.

The Municipal Health Service has also assigned new targets for all districts: a growth rate of 1.5%, an I.U.D. rate of 30% among women factory workers and office employees of child-bearing age (with other methods applied to the rest of the workforce) and of 6% for handicrafts workers and the individual sector, a rate of 10% for third confinements and no fourth confinements among State-employed workers and office personnel.

MAI THI TU

Vietnam Advances

NEW PALEOLITHIC DISCOVERIES IN VIETNAM

V IETNAMESE archaeologists have made new discoveries concerning the paleolithic stage on Quan Yen and Nuong hills, about 3.5 kilometres from Do Hill, Thanh Hoa province. Do Hill is known to archaeologists all over the world for its basaltic bifaces dating back some 300,000 years. Vestiges of a later period have also been found on Quan Yen Hill to the south.

Quan Yen and Nuong, both of basaltic rock, rise to an altitude of 200 metres. They are less than two kilometres apart, close to the Ma and Cau Chay rivers, within the boundaries of Cong Thanh commune in Thien Yen district. As on Do Hill, finds were made all over the slopes, whose inclinations vary between 15° and 30°, and at a height of 5 to 30 metres above the fields.

The collection of stone implements found on Quan Yen and Nuong is a rich one. With the exception of some big, heavy, crudely made tools, most are of medium size. There are some fairly typical Clactonian stone splinters. The bifaces and pseudo-bifaces are somewhat similar to those discovered on Do Hill, and characteristically Acheulean. Spearheads of a fairly uniform shape were also discovered on Quan Yen. They are either medium or small in size, and weigh between 0.4 and 0.6 kilogram. As on Do Hill, the vestiges found on Quan Yen and Nuong are of local basaltic rock, which, together with other indications noted during further investigations of the sites, leads one to conclude to the existence of two lower paleolithic workshop sites dating back to the same period as the Do vestiges, namely the Acheulean culture several hundred thousand years ago.

Should this lead us to speak about a lower paleolithic culture in Vietnam, a Do culture, based on the evidence of these three archaeological sites so close to one another in space and time and so culturally alike?

Mention should be made of the remains found on the southern slope of Quan Yen. Also basaltic and medium to small in size, they are worked on both faces, and their edges are carefully recut, which indicates a technique much more developed than that employed at the other sites.

Archaeologists now believe they have discovered a continuous local development from the lower to the upper paleolithic stage in Vietnam. This tentative conclusion, however, must now be followed by further investigation.

N. HAI

Popular Literature

Popular Literature and National Identity

In Vietnam, systematic research into popular culture, in particular the collection and study of literary works created by the masses, is closely bound up with the 1945 August Revolution.

This movement, born out of the need to affirm national identity, thus shares the same patriotic motivation as that which moved the philologist Jacob Grimm, the father of folkloric science, and his brother Wilhelm to lay the foundation of that new discipline (1). With a wide circle of scholars and poets, German romanticism then returned to folk tales and *Volkslieder* in order to awaken the national consciousness, at a time when the ancient Germanic community faced dismemberment and foreign occupation.

The numerous reasons for the growth of folklore included the need for escapism, the nostalgia of the past, a taste in exotism, the impact of scientific curiosity, the development of literary and art criticism and even colonization—often linked with evangelization.

Yet one key factor standing out beyond all doubt is that the revalorization of the cultural heritage was interwoven with the emergence of nationalism and self-determination. One need only cite the examples of the Balkan countries and above all of Ireland, where the cultural and linguistic revival resulted from political changes following the First World War.

Since the Second World War and decolonization on a world

scale, research into folklore of the Third World has flourished thanks to the contributions of indigenous researchers who have gradually set themselves free from Eurocentric conceptions.

Thus African elites have returned to traditional cultural sources and above all to oral literature. As for Asian countries, the richness and quality of their contributions to various regional conferences organised under the auspices of UNESCO (2) have won general acclaim.

In Vietnam, the collection and study of popular literature serve a dual function: to help define our specific identity, and to develop a national and socialist culture.

The search for this identity has proved particularly necessary after the centuries of foreign domination spanning Vietnamese history.

Situated in the heart of Southeast Asia, in the tropical zone marked by regular monsoons, Vietnam turned out to be a crossroads of migrations and ancient civilizations. Remains have testified to the presence of man in this part of the world as early as the Paleolithic Era (300,000–500,000 years ago). Neolithic cultures particularly blossomed in Bac Son and Hoa Binh. The brilliant Dong Son Civilization in the Bronze Age (1st millennium B.C.) is famous chiefly for its drums. From the Red River delta, its main cradle, the Vietnamese nation gradually spread southwards.

Vietnam had existed as a national entity with its own way of

life and culture—contemporary to ancient Greece and Persia—long before it experienced Chinese and Hindu influences.

While Vietnam succeeded in assimilating foreign cultures, its personality was none the less affected by ten centuries of Chinese rule (the main occupation lasting from 179 B.C. to 939 A.D.), nearly a century of French occupation (1858–1945), five years of Japanese invasion (1940–1945) and twenty years of American aggression in the South (1954–1975).

Moreover these influences persisted even in the periods of independence, because of the infatuation of the former ruling classes with all things foreign and, at the present time, of the Western mirage still holding sway over certain social groups.

Take the two longest dominations—by the Chinese and the French for example.

The Ming effort to assimilate Vietnam in the 15th century was typical. For twenty years, they sought to erase all traces of the past and to turn Vietnam into a Chinese province by means of violence, exactions, exploitation, and radical obscurantism. They forced Chinese customs and habits upon us, burnt our best books, and carried away our works of art and our treasures.

“Once in Vietnam, burn all the books, xylographical blocks, documents... including classical textbooks; burn every shred of paper bearing characters except only the canonical works and blocks for printing Buddhist and

Taoist books," says one imperial edict to the expeditionary army.

Under French rule, while the methods of cultural elimination were somewhat less brutal, illiteracy and obscurantism reigned all over the country; Vietnamese children were taught at school that their forefathers were blue-eyed Gauls... Some young men from the privileged elite were filled with a real inferiority complex at being "Annamites" after their studies in France.

A comedy of the 1930's — "The French Annamite" — provides the best example of this. It ridicules one of those "*retours de Paris*" who speaks to his father in French through an interpreter: "I can't bear being looked upon as a dirty native. I can't bear seeing only natives around me. I can't bear calling 'Dad' a man who smells native miles away."

Rare though they were, the cases of ultra Francization — as later those of ultra Americanization — the example amply proves the need to renew our ties with national traditions. This should go hand in hand with the need for a new ethics.

"Building socialism needs socialist-minded people," said President Ho Chi Minh.

These "new people" must assimilate the achievements of modern society and carry on the time-honoured traditions, adapting them to new concepts.

As a new culture emerges, its socialist content grafted on the national backdrop, the contribution made by the study of popular literature should be of fundamental significance.

Along with scholarly literature, popular literature developed and reflected the life of labour and struggle of peasants who constituted the vast majority of the people.

Popular literature reveals the true Vietnamese soul, far more than that created by the feudal class which was imbued with mandarin and Confucian conceptions, or than the nascent and weak bourgeoisie.

In spite of the profound social changes due to socialism, in spite of the impact of the mass media, popular literature, in its collective anonymity, continues to blossom on the Vietnamese soil.

Authoritative circles are still divided about the value and prospects of this current. However, one conclusion can certainly be drawn: it was the 1945 August Revolution which restored popular literature to the place it deserves in the national cultural heritage, which rehabilitated it and freed it from the dilemma of two conflicting conceptions, *Volkskunde* on the one hand and its identification of the people with the nation, and folklore on the other where the people are set in contrast with the elite.

The Collection and Study of Popular Literature in Vietnam

Three periods, which differ in both length and achievements, may be distinguished:

1. *From the dawn of the Vietnamese State to the French conquest (1858)*

The first Viet kingdom of Van Lang — Au Lac (1st millennium B.C.), emerging from the mythology, and still shrouded in legend, was annexed by China for more than one thousand years.

Only few works remain from this period of occupation. Written by mandarins and administrators coming from the Celestial Empire, they provide very little information on the vassal State. Let us only mention two texts: *Giao Chi Ky* (Chronicles of Giao Chi) and *Giao Chau Ky* (Chronicles of Giao Chau).

Throughout the period of independence, lasting from the 10th to

the first half of the 19th century, folk tales and legends were collected by only a handful of scholars. Moved by a legitimate national pride and under constant threat of invasion by the immense Northern Empire, they sought to emphasize the original features of their homeland in their collections. Dai Viet, as Vietnam was then called, had its own "sacred rivers and mountains", its heroes, gentes, traditions and its indomitable people.

This accounts for the high proportion of historical and legendary tales dealing with the struggle against Chinese aggression.

Besides patriotic reasons, this effort was also motivated by a desire to enrich the official history, namely that of the legitimate dynasties, with a popular element

The 15th-century historian Ngo Si Lien brought to light proclamation in which King Le Thanh Tong demanded that historiographers should search for unofficial historical manuscripts in family libraries for reference purposes.

Moreover, authors tended to adulterate myths and legends in order to preach loyalty to the King, regarded as the Son of Heaven and the incarnation of the Nation.

His Majesty had even the right to consecrate the genies for whose worship temples were built by the people and the Court. Besides, supernatural beings and spirits were involved in the struggles to defeat aggressors and natural calamities. Tutelary genies were expected to maintain peace and security in the villages.

It goes without saying that the scholars steeped their folklore collections in Confucian ethics, thus contributing to defend the feudal class, the family heads and men at the expense of women. The realist element inspired by the Master's doctrine prevailed in the

periods of national prosperity, notably from the 10th to the 15th century.

On the contrary, in periods of acute feudal crises, works were filled with fantastic, fabulous, and supernatural elements, which sprang from Buddhism and popular Taoism and expressed both escapism and despair. Such was the situation in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The earliest collection, *Viet Dien U Linh* (Invisible Forces of the Viet Country) in *Han* (3) by Ly Te Xuyen dates back to the 14th century. It gathers tales of genies, national heroes, and deified loyal vassals. *Linh Nam Chich Quoi* (Strange Tales of Linh Nam) in *Han*, from the 15th century by Vu Quynh and Kieu Que, is of greater literary value than the former. Its twenty-three legends and folk tales, later enriched by others, are derived from documents preserved in the temples and also from oral tradition. *Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu* (The Complete History of Dai Viet) in *Han*, completed around 1459, is still considered as the essential work on ancient Vietnam. In fact, for the first time in history, it incorporated not only the written annals but also popular oral literature, in particular in dealing with the origins of the people and of the first national Viet dynasty.

Other works, in which literary adaptation and creation sometimes

prevail over simple collection, are also worth listing: *Truyen Ky Man Luc* (Vast Collection of Marvellous Legends) in *Han*, 16th century, by Nguyen Du, *Thanh Tong Di Cao* (Posthumous Texts by Thanh Tong) in *Han*, 15th century, by King Le Thanh Tong, *Vu Trung Tuv But* (Wanderings of the Pen in Time of Rain) in *Han*, 18th century, by Pham Dinh Ho, *Tang Thuong Ngau Luc* (Notes Taken According to the Vicissitudes of this World) in *Han*, 18th century, by Nguyen An and Pham Dinh Ho.

Collecting tales and legends was encouraged in the 17th century and especially at the beginning of the 18th century by the development of popular literature in *nom* (4). Special mention should be made of *Thien Nam Ngu Luc* (Annals of the Southern Country), our first historical narrative on an epic scale and written in verse (8,136 *nom* verses of 6+8 feet).

Imbued with great patriotism and popular traditions, this anonymous 17th century work mirrors the historical conceptions which were often different from those enshrined in the official dynastic histories of the common people. It is all the more precious in that it is sprinkled with proverbs and *ca dao* (popular poems-songs).

Whereas people started to collect tales and legends quite early on the collection of proverbs and *ca dao* began much later. Since it was impossible to transcribe pro-

verbs and *ca dao* into *Han*, the first collection of *ca dao* had to wait till *nom* literature had taken on to appear: this was *Nam Phong Giat Trao* (late 18th century and early 19th century), not to mention *Thien Nam Ngu Luc* previously referred to.

Nam Phong Giat Trao is the work of two mandarins, Tran Danh An (alias Lieu Am) and Ngo Dinh Thai, who, disappointed in their political convictions, collected *ca dao* as a means of escaping from the frustrations of life.

2. The Period of French Colonization (1858 - 1945)

Three trends can be distinguished, depending on the period and especially on the character of those involved.

a) For political, religious, even scientific reasons, some French researchers studied popular literature. They were administrators, Catholic priests following in the steps of the 17th- and 18th-century missionaries, officers, and even doctors.

They applied a more rigorous methodology in their research and produced a number of interesting documents.

Generally speaking, their works, even the most honest and sympathetic, are to some extent imbued with Eurocentric conceptions, not to mention those authors who held

On 20 May 1981, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Vietnam issued a resolution on its policy regarding scientific and technological work. In the next issue we shall publish the main content of this important resolution along with a series of articles on scientific and technological work in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

colonial, reactionary and even feudal viewpoints. This is best seen in their interpretations of texts and facts.

We are not dealing here with those who cruelly and deliberately distort the very essence of popular literature. Thus patriotic songs were systematically ignored.

Several scholarly societies were interested in studying popular literature: the *Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*, the *Société des Etudes Indochinoises*, the *Société des Amis du Vieux Hué*, the *Institut Indochinois pour l'Etude de l'Homme...*

Many authors were devoted to folk literature, especially Abel des Michels, V. Barbier, L. Cadière, F. Cesbron, A. Chéon, G. Cordier, G. Dumoutier, A. Landes...

Some Vietnamese intellectuals, French-educated and employed in the colonial administration, also participated in this research. The administration encouraged them to build up a "national colonial" culture under French influence: a kind of non-culture at the expense of the genuinely national culture.

b) Corresponding to the work of the ancient scholars, the second trend extended into the late 19th and early 20th century.

Still imbued with Confucianism, these scholars continued to study popular literature in *nom* just as their predecessors had done.

One should mention their efforts to collect *ca dao*, which had a double motivation.

On the one hand, they wanted to save the national soul in the face of repeated attacks by Western culture.

"If you do not read Vietnamese history, you run the risk of forgetting your ancestors. If you are ignorant of *ca dao*, you will seem ridiculous. *Ca dao* and the customs they describe are necessary in order to identify the characteristics of our national history. Thus, it is

important to sow national history with the trees and flowers of *ca dao*." (Nguyen Van Mai, *Viet Nam Phong Su*). This was taking national stance in contrast to the Chinese *ca dao*.

On the other hand, influenced by their inferiority complex, the Confucian scholars thought that Vietnamese *ca dao* lacked the polish which Confucius had so skilfully given to the Chinese folk songs in his Book of Odes.

In their efforts to imitate the Master, they distorted the spirit of *ca dao* by their deprecatory comments, or more seriously, by seeking to recast *ca dao* in an alien Confucian mould, and even using them to express their own personal feelings.

c) The third trend involved progressive intellectuals and was more open to Western-style research. In the first place, we should cite the "modernistic" scholars. They used *quoc ngu*, the romanized Vietnamese script, in their work. Among them were Pham Quang San, Nguyen Huu Tien, Nguyen Trong Thuat, Nguyen Can Mong, Nguyen Van To, Tran Van Giap, Duong Quang Ham and Nguyen Van Ngoc.

Their position may be summed up as follows:

"Proverbs and *ca dao* are a solid foundation of our national literature. If we are to assimilate all the types of culture of the world so that a cultural monument as complete and beautiful as is possible might be built up, we must in the first place base ourselves on the strength of this foundation" (Nguyen Huu Tien and Nguyen Trong Thuat: *Viet Nam To Quoc Tuy Ngon* - 1932)

Nguyen Van Ngoc compiled and published two works of great value: *Tuc Ngu va Phong Dao* (Proverbs and Folk Songs) and *Truyen Co Nuoc Nam* (Old Stories of Vietnam).

Researchers of the journals *Tri Tan* and *Thanh Nghi* also produced

competent studies. Finally, we should mention Nguyen Van Huyen. Writing most of his works in French, he was one of the first scholars to deal with popular literature in close relation to history, ethnography, literature and music. He left such remarkable studies as "Alternate Songs for Young Men and Women in Annam" (1934) and "Annamese Civilization" (1944).

3. Since the 1945 Revolution

Since the re-conquest of national independence, the number of Vietnamese researchers has constantly increased. They have cast off Sinocentric and Eurocentric approaches and have begun using new scientific sources.

Although Vietnam experienced deep social, political and economic upheavals and confronted the two greatest imperialist powers, it nevertheless benefited from factors favourable to research into folklore.

Quoc ngu became the teaching medium at all levels of education and in scientific and literary circles.

The literacy movement, which was completed in 1958 in the North and in 1978 in the South, helped involve the masses in literary collection.

In the course of the First Resistance War (1946 - 1954), several conferences and theoretical discussions were held to study the value of popular literature, its rehabilitation and the prospects for a modern popular culture. A vast wave of creative enthusiasm spread among the masses: poems and songs, *ca dao* and proverbs, wall-papers and recitals flourished.

During this period, "parallel sentences" were to be seen painted on trees; poems were pasted on the butts of rifles and on pots of rice destined for the front.

A special place in the press was reserved for publishing these

works, for they helped to heighten spirits and energies.

By 1953, the movement to reduce land tax and the land reform gave a new impetus to the collection of *ca dao* and folk dances in the localities.

However, this work could not fully develop in the conditions of guerilla warfare: urban centres and populous plains were still in enemy hands; resistance bases were set up in the mountains and half-deserted regions.

The complete liberation of the North in 1954, together with the return of people's power to the delta and cities, created favourable conditions for folklore research.

Ever since 1954, the development of a genuine science of folklore, of which popular literature constitutes an essential component, has been encouraged.

In early 1955, a National Congress of Song and Dance Ensembles was organised in Hanoi. It reviewed progress since 1945 and laid the theoretical foundation for the revalorization and modernization of popular culture under socialism.

The late 50's and early 60's witnessed the appearance of important works: *Truyen Co Viet Nam* (Ancient Tales of Vietnam, 1955) and *Tuc Ngu va Dan Ca Viet Nam* (Proverbs and Popular Songs of Vietnam, 1956) by Vu Ngoc Phan were followed by *Kho Tang Truyen Co Tich Viet Nam* (The Treasure of Tales and Legends of Vietnam, 1958) by Nguyen Dong Chi, the collections of folk songs from Nghe Tinh, Bac Ninh, Thanh Hoa, Binh Tri Thien...

A whole series of epics and novels in verse of the Muong, Thai minorities and ethnic groups from the Central Highlands were published. Schools, offices, army units all participated in the work.

Ancient collections in *Han* and *nom* were also translated and annotated.

Efforts were made to popularize new research procedures. In 1961, Cao Huy Dinh, Nguyen Dong Chi and Dang Nghiem Van introduced a new method for collecting popular literature in the countryside.

Cultural exchanges with other countries and the training of specialists at home and abroad increased the number of competent researchers.

In 1964, folklore specialists, professional and amateur, met for the first time in Hanoi, at a seminar on the collection of popular literature in northern Vietnam.

In 1966, a meeting was held to found the Association of Vietnamese Folklore. Competitions in folklore research yielded remarkable results.

During the 1969-1970 period alone, the Association collected 94 texts, some totalling more than 500 pages each. The provincial section of Ha Nam Ninh province alone amassed more than one thousand items of useful information.

Hidden treasures have been brought to light, and important information gathered. In *So Bo Tim Hieu Nhung Van De Ve Truyen Co Tich Qua Truyen Tam Cam* (Some Ideas on Legends through the Study of the Story of Tam Cam, 1968) Dinh Gia Khanh studied questions concerning the national universal character of legends, the significance and content of social struggles, the aesthetic and moral conception of the people, the generalization and individualization of personalities, the influence of the predominant ideology and religion.

In *Nguoi Anh Hung Lang Giong* (The Hero of Giong Village, 1969) Cao Huy Dinh, basing himself upon a painstaking analysis of

collected material, attempts to identify the origins and to retrace the development of the struggle against the Northern invaders. The national consciousness, symbolized by this hero, sprang from the tribal alliance in the formative process of the nation.

Musicians have made serious studies of folk songs in the plains and also of popular theatre.

The resistance to American aggression gave rise to a widespread movement of popular creation, just as during the first war of resistance for liberation.

The Army Publishing House and other cultural institutions have so far published dozens of collections of songs from that period.

Research into popular literature has contributed to stimulating the morale of the masses. It also helps to revive the traditions of resistance to foreign aggression and throws a new light on the first Vietnamese dynasty - that of the Hung Kings.

After the liberation of southern Vietnam in 1975, good conditions were created for nationwide research.

The Institute of Folklore was founded in 1980 in order to unify research in the North and in the South and to expand its field of activity.

HUU NGOC

Member of UNESCO Advisory Committee for the Study of Southeast Asian Cultures

1. With the publication of *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835)
2. Asian Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), Advisory Committee for the Study of Southeast Asian Cultures.
3. Chinese characters.
4. Demotic script used to transcribe the Vietnamese language.

Just published:

VIETNAM COURIER INDEX (1975-1980)

A list of all articles published in VIETNAM COURIER from 1975 to 1980, and classified according to subjects.

Distributed by XUNHASABA
32 Hai Ba Trung Street, Hanoi, SRV.

CHRONOLOGY...

(Continued from page 32)

of Sciences for the 1981-1985 period is signed in Berlin.

- Le Duan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, sends a message of greetings to Y. Tsedenbal on the occasion of his re-election as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

- A protocol on co-operation for 1981 and a five-year (1981-85) co-operation agreement between the Vietnam News Agency and the Lao News Agency is signed.

June

1. Inauguration of the "Doan Ket" basic general education school built with AAPSO assistance in the town of Ha Dong (Southwest of Hanoi).

- Prague: Signing of an agreement to open an air line service between Prague and Hanoi.

2. The Government Council issues instructions on price control.

3. Closing of the 5th session of the Vietnam-Laos Commission for Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technological Co-operation. Representatives of the two governments and of the two sub-commissions sign a protocol and an agreement for the next five years (1981-1985).

- At the invitation of the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions, a delegation of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union of Australia paid a visit to Vietnam from 20 May to 3 June 1981.

- The Socialist Republic of Vietnam decides to accede to the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" and the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid".

- The Central Committee of the Vietnam Women's Union holds a ceremony to receive the first consignment of gifts donated by GDR pioneers to Vietnamese pioneers: 17,000 out of a total of 70,000 uniforms collected between November 1980 and March 1981.

- A joint press communiqué is published on the meeting between Vo Dong Giang, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, and his Thai counterpart Arun Panupong, in Rangoon on 3 and 4 June: "Both sides had a frank discussion and expressed their respective views of problems of mutual concern. They considered the meeting as useful to narrow down their differences and agreed to continue the dialogue at a mutually convenient date to be agreed upon by both sides."

- Hanoi: Signing of a trade and payment protocol between Vietnam and Romania.

5. Founding of the Vietnam Association of Apiculturists.

7. The Finnish Government decides to grant emergency aid worth 500,000 Finnish marks to Vietnam through the World Food Programme.

8. SRV Acting President Nguyen Huu Tho signs a decree conferring Labour Orders on 292 units and 11 individuals for their achievements in fulfilling the State plan and other tasks in 1980.

- A delegation of the People's National Bank of Kampuchea, headed by Chan Phin, member of the Secretariat of the CC of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, Minister, and Director-General of the bank, pays a friendship visit to Vietnam.

9. At the invitation of the Cuban Government, an economic delegation of the Vietnamese Government, led by Nghiem Xuan Yem, Minister and Vice-President of the Vietnam sub-commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation, leaves Hanoi to pay a visit to Cuba and attend the 5th session of the Vietnam-Cuba Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technological Co-operation.

10. Signing of an agreement on cultural and scientific Co-operation between Vietnam and Poland for 1981-1985.

12. Signing of a plan of co-operation between the Vietnam State Bank and the People's National Bank of Kampuchea for 1981-1982.

13. The Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs sends a note to China demanding "an immediate end to Chinese armed provocations and all other activities causing tension in the border areas between the two countries, and the resumption of the Vietnam-China talks in the shortest possible time.

14. The Fourth Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese Countries, held in Phnom Penh on 13 and 14 June, issues a communiqué and a statement proposing new initiatives for peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

CHRONOLOGY

(16 May - 15 June)

May

17. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry sends a note to its Chinese counterpart denouncing Chinese armed provocations and intrusion into Vietnam in late April and early May, perpetrating many crimes against the Vietnamese people in the border provinces.

18. Signing at the Vietnam Institute of Sciences of a draft project on the use of artificial satellites aided by the UN Development Programme.

- Ms Psichari, a French citizen and professor of music at the Scola Cantorum, left the whole of her property worth about 500,000 francs to Vietnam. This donation, she stated in her will, is to help develop Vietnam's education and culture, which were seriously impaired by long and unjust wars.

19. An exhibition opens with some 200 paintings and sculptures by over 90 women artists, organized by the Vietnam Association of Fine Arts.

- In a letter to the UN Secretary-General, the Foreign Ministers of Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea stress that holding an international conference on Kampuchea as provided for in UN Resolution 35/6 could only yield negative results for peace and stability in the region. The three ministers welcome the UN Secretary-General's efforts in promoting dialogue between the Indochinese countries and the ASEAN countries.

- Inauguration in Tra Noc (Hau Giang province) of a tractor-repair factory built with aid from the Republic of Austria.

20. The Vietnam News Agency rejects allegations by the Chinese News Agency *Xinhua* and the Thai paper "Bangkok Post" claiming that "Vietnamese soldiers landed by fishing boats in Thailand's Trat province".

- Prime Minister Pham Van Dong sends a message to the International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa, held in Paris, expressing that the Vietnamese people and Government "warmly welcome the convening of the conference" and "totally support the resolute and effective measures to be taken by it".

- The Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam issues a resolution on science and technology.

21. The Friendship Order of Vietnam is conferred upon the Mongolian Women's Federation.

- The "Voice of the Kampuchean People" Radio of the People's Republic of Kampuchea is admitted as a full member of the International Radio and Television Organization (OIRT) meeting in Balaton (Hungary).

22. The Vietnamese pavilion at the Plovdiv International Fair in Bulgaria wins three gold medals and four diplomas.

- Donation of 800 tonnes of rice by the International Committee of the Red Cross to the Vietnam Red Cross to help Vietnam tide over the shortages caused by the typhoons of 1980.

- The Lao Foreign Ministry hands a memorandum to the Chinese chargé d'affaires in Laos protesting against Chinese incursions into Oudomsay province (4 km inside Lao territory).

24. To Lan Phuong, a woman singer of the "Bong Sen" (Lotus) Art Ensemble of Ho Chi Minh City, wins a special prize at the 16th International Light Music Competition "Bratislavská Lyra 81" held in Czechoslovakia.

25. A delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam, led by General Secretary Lê Duan, leaves Hanoi for the 4th Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea.

- An agreement on the provision of material aid by the German Democratic Republic to Vietnam in 1981 is signed in the GDR.

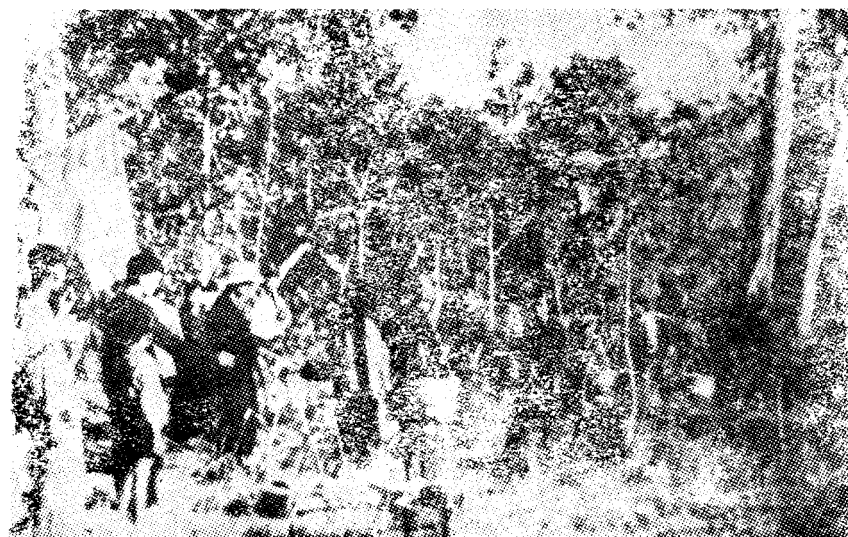
26. Opening of the Fourth Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea.

- Signing in New Delhi of an agreement on an Indian Government loan of 100 million rupees to Vietnam for goods import.

28. A delegation of the Vietnam Women's Union, headed by its President Nguyen Thi Dinh, pays a friendship visit to Laos from 23 to 28 May. On this occasion, the Friendship Order and the "For the Cause of Women's Liberation" medal of Vietnam are conferred upon the Lao Patriotic Women's Union.

29. A plan of scientific co-operation between the Vietnam Institute of Sciences and the GDR Academy.

(Continued on page 31)



THIRTY YEARS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF KAMPUCHEA

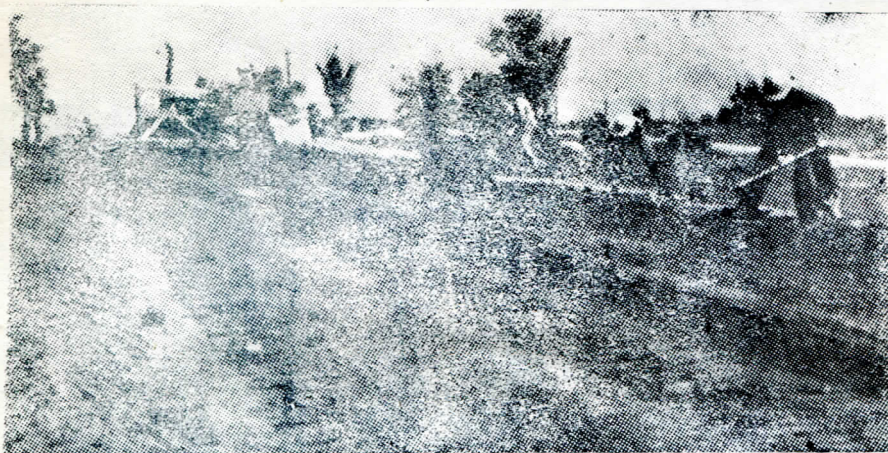
● Kampuchean people providing food for the armed forces during the resistance war against the French colonialists.

● Officers of the well-known Po-Kamhor regiment.

● A meeting of the armed forces to welcome the 4th Congress of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (29 May 1981).



Photos SPK



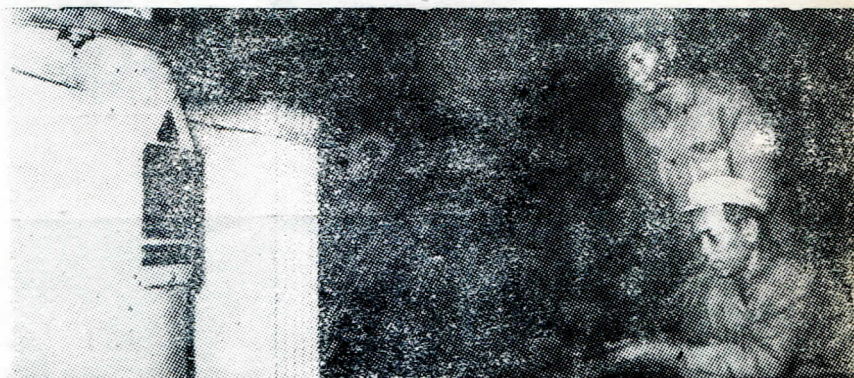
KAMPUCHEA'S REBIRTH

● In a maize field at Kampong Cham province.

● Repairing a section of Highway No.1 from Pray Keng to Svay Rieng.

● Restoring the electric power station in Siem Reap province.

Photos: SPK



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