

Vietnam courier



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The delegation being welcomed at Moscow airport on October 4, 1982.

STATE COUNCIL PRESIDENT TRUONG-CHINH'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION

A Vietnamese Party and State delegation, headed by Truong-Chinh, Political Bureau member of the CPV, President of the Council of State of the SRV, paid an official visit to the Soviet Union.



Holding talks with the Soviet Party and State delegation headed by President L.I. Brezhnev (October 5, 1982).

Visiting Kiev (October 6, 1982).

Photos: VNA



OUR MONTHLY COMMENT

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Front cover: "Peace—the will of all nations!" by Quach Kim Phe, 2nd prize at the International Competition of Posters on "Peace, Security and Co-operation" (Moscow, Spring 1982).

**Vietnam
courier**

11-1982

The huge propaganda machinery of Western countries, aided and abetted by the no less powerful propaganda machinery from Beijing, has continuously sought to distort the image of Vietnam, which has won the sympathy and admiration of honest people all over the world through its successful struggle for independence and freedom.

But the truth will be brought to light sooner or later, despite all attempts at distortion.

On 22 September, US Defense Secretary Caspar Weinburger concocted the story of the Soviet Union making use of forced labour, including Vietnamese labour, in building the Siberia—Western Europe gas pipeline. On the same day the US Secretary of State said that the US had received reports according to which "hundreds of Vietnamese might be doing forced labour in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe". Immediately after this the US Senate hurriedly passed a resolution asking the State Department to investigate the above-mentioned allegations and make a full report on the matter by 1 January 1983.

The US is obviously seeking to kill two birds with one stone. First, it wants to slanderously accuse the Soviet Union and Vietnam of "violating human rights" and misrepresent the relationship between the two countries. The truth is that the Vietnamese workers who are now living and working in the Soviet Union are being well treated by the Soviet Party and Government which are wholeheartedly helping them to improve their skills. Second, through this campaign the US wants to bring more pressure to bear on its West European allies and to compel them to stop supplying the Soviet Union with equipment related to the construction of the Siberia—Western Europe gas pipeline. The US Senate resolution revealed this scheme when it said that if the news about forced labour was true "the co-operation of the West in the Soviet gas pipeline project would be tantamount to co-operation with the greatest violations of human rights in history".

To support his contention, Caspar Weinburger said that the news had been supplied by the West Germany-based organization on human rights.

Unfortunately for the US Defense Secretary and the US slander machinery, the Frankfurt-based office monitoring human rights violations in the world

denied at once having received any information whatsoever on Vietnamese allegedly being forced to work on the Siberia—Western Europe gas pipeline construction site.

Another fact is connected with the so-called "Kampuchean tripartite coalition government". This coalition government was born of a compromise between Beijing, Washington and the ASEAN capitals and was aimed at denying the genuine representative of the Kampuchean people—the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea—the Kampuchea seat at the UNO. To this end the sponsors of this coalition must first of all strive to keep the Pol Pot genocidal clique, so-called "Democratic Kampuchea", from being ousted from the UNO as it would inevitably be in the world these recent years.

As a matter of fact, that coalition government is, as we have time and again pointed out, only a screen for the Khmer Rouge. After it was rigged up, the Pol Pot apparatus, first of all its military machinery, was kept intact, and the Foreign Ministry of the so-called coalition government was officially entrusted to its present incumbents, all Pol Pot men. And yet the sponsors persist in trying to fool public opinion by pretending that the "coalition government has put a new face on the anti-Vietnam administration in Kampuchea". A witness, Japanese correspondent Isao Ogiso, published a story in the Mainichi Shimbun on 27 September: this correspondent visited the Kampuchean reactionaries' hide-outs in the forest; he reported that he had not seen any organ of the "coalition government" anywhere, and that it therefore only exists on paper. According to him there is no connection between the forces of Sihanouk, Son Sann and Pol Pot. The vice-chairman of the "administration council" of the Sihanouk forces said that nothing like a coalition government existed in Kampuchea, and that the only thing in store for the followers of Pol Pot was hostility and hatred. And the chairman of the "administration council" of the Son Sann forces said that he received instructions only from Son Sann, not from the coalition government.

Just as SRV Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach said, this coalition government is only a farce, a kind of cheap cosmetics. It cannot cover up the true face of the Khmer Rouge genocidal clique. Why did they have to create it? This is because, for all their professed disgust of the Pol Pot clique, the sponsors of this "coalition" simply must maintain it and use it in order to oppose the legitimate aspirations of the Kampuchean people.

Similarly, they are putting forward conflicting allegations to cope with the acts of goodwill from Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

First they claimed that Vietnam refused to withdraw its troops from Kampuchea. But then Vietnam has withdrawn part of its troops and says it will withdraw even more if Thailand shows some response. Whereupon the other side's propaganda machinery, and even certain US Department of State leading officials, pretended that the recent Vietnamese

troop withdrawals had not been real ones (sic!). The remnants of Pol Pot troops and other Kampuchean reactionary forces have continued to be protected and assisted in "sanctuaries" on the other side of the Kampuchean border.

It is known to everybody that over the past years, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea have time and again reiterated their proposals for re-establishing traditional friendly relations between the Indochinese peoples and the Chinese people. At a conference held last July in Ho Chi Minh City, the foreign ministers of the three Indochinese countries once again proposed to sign with China either bilateral or multilateral treaties of peaceful co-existence. Regrettably, Beijing has ignored those proposals and has kept on misrepresenting the policies of the Indochinese countries towards China. To facilitate the resumption of bilateral talks on the normalization of relations between the two countries, Vietnam took the initiative of proposing to China that armed and hostile actions in the border areas between the two countries be stopped from August 27 to October 8, 1982 on the occasion of their national days so that people on both sides of the border could peacefully celebrate them. China not only refused to accept the proposal, but even concocted a story of armed provocations and encroachments by Vietnam on Chinese territory. On October 13, it sent a note to Vietnam concerning this matter but its brazen fabrication was firmly rejected by Vietnam.

No less significant is the continuation by the Beijing propaganda machinery of the slander campaign about "Vietnam's encroachments on Thai territory". The Chinese intention is quite obvious: to deepen the gap between the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries. It is nonetheless heartening to see that the trend toward dialogue between these two groups of countries has not been interrupted; this will enable them to better understand each other's position and interests and will gradually reduce the gap between them.

The highest form of dialogue, which the present dialogues may lead to, is to sit down together at a conference on Southeast Asia with the participation not only of the Southeast Asian countries, but also of a number of other countries. Lao Foreign Minister Phoune Sipaseuth, in the name of the three Indochinese foreign ministers, has elaborated on the proposals put forward in Ho Chi Minh City, which contain guidelines for solving any difficulties which may arise in the convening of an international conference on Southeast Asia, a conference which will help find a solution to the problems of mutual concern by taking into consideration the legitimate interests of all parties to the conference.

The goodwill for peace of the Indochinese countries has been clearly shown in their proposals, including that on an international conference on Southeast Asia. This is a fact. That fact, like many others, cannot be long distorted by any slanderous propaganda whatsoever.

20 October 1982

VIETNAM COURIER

TIME-TESTED FRIENDSHIP

A delegation of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam led by Truong-Chinh, Political Bureau member of the Party Central Committee and President of the State Council, paid an official friendship visit to the Soviet Union from 4 to 10 October, 1982.

A joint Vietnam-Soviet communiqué published at the end of the visit said that the Vietnamese delegation had held talks with a delegation of the Soviet Party and State headed by L. I. Brezhnev.

The joint communiqué says: "Comrade Truong-Chinh and Comrade L. I. Brezhnev noted with deep satisfaction that the relations between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is strongly developing and serving the fundamental interests of the two peoples, peace, socialism and progress. The two countries have faithfully implemented the line charted by the great revolutionary leaders, V.I. Lenin in Russia and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam. The two sides laid particular stress on the role and significance of the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the signing of which has vigorously enhanced relations in all fields between the two fraternal countries and made these relations ever deeper and more wide-ranging. Economic co-operation has grown closer, the coordination of the national economic plans of the two countries has gone deeper, new forms of co-operation are developing

and the effectiveness of this co-operation has been constantly enhanced. Relations in the domains of science, culture and public health are being strengthened and contacts through mass organisations are being broadened.

"The two sides stressed that the meetings between Comrade Le Duan, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, have played a major role in the development and strengthening of Vietnam—Soviet friendship and in the working out of fundamental orientations for cooperation and a common position in international issues.

"While highly appreciating what has been achieved the two sides expressed their firm determination to continue strengthening their time-tested fraternal friendship, develop comprehensive Vietnam—Soviet co-operation and make fuller use of the potentials in this respect."

The joint communiqué further says that the two delegations discussed topical questions of the present international situation. It reads:

"During their talks, the two delegations showed special concern for the situation in Southeast Asia. The two sides declared their readiness to actively contribute to the cause of peace and stability in this region. They held that the continued tension in the region is due to the

policy of the hegemonist and imperialist forces acting against Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. The Soviet Union fully supports the struggle of the three Indochinese countries aimed at defeating all schemes of these forces, it fully supports the proposal of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea for the signing of bilateral or multilateral treaties on peaceful co-existence between these countries and China.

"The two sides held that in order to normalize the situation in Southeast Asia it is necessary to put an end to outside interference in the affairs of this region and to the policy of inciting confrontation between the two groups of countries there. A solution to the problems of Southeast Asia can be found only through the promotion of dialogue between the countries in the region on the basis of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other, respect for each other's legitimate interests, and renunciation of all schemes to impose one side's will on the other.

"The three Indochinese countries sincerely desire to improve their relations with neighbouring countries. The withdrawal of part of the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea was an important demonstration of the goodwill of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

"The Soviet Union fully supports the peace initiatives of the Indochinese countries put forward at the recent conference of the three Indochinese foreign ministers in Ho

Chi Minh City. These proposals, including the proposal for an international conference on problems in Southeast Asia, provide a good basis on which to normalise the situation in Southeast Asia and turn this region into one of peace and stability.

"The Soviet Union welcomes the constant strengthening of friendship and fraternal solidarity between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea. The unity and close solidarity between the peoples of the Indochinese countries is an important factor of peace in this region of Asia.

"Vietnam and the Soviet Union have done and will do their utmost to support the Kampuchean people in the building of the new life. The two sides condemn the provocative propaganda campaign around the 'coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea' rigged up by the Pol Pot clique and their supporters. This campaign unleashed by the imperialist and hegemonist circles constitutes a brazen interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. The presence at the United Nations of the representative of the Pol Pot clique runs counter to the principles of this organisation and cannot be tolerated.

"The two sides reaffirm their unwavering position that only the Kampuchean people and the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea can solve the questions relating to Kampuchea. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics emphatically declare that the Government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea which has been elected by the Kampuchean people and is exercising its control on the whole national territory is the only legal representative of Kampuchea at the United Nations and all other international organisations and forum."

MARKING THE 65th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT RUSSIAN ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST

INTERNATIONAL

At the foot of the Ala-Too mountain range with its glowing peaks covered with perpetual snow, there lies a city as modern as the modern cities of Europe yet bearing the lines and colours of Central Asia—a garden city well protected from the sun by shade trees and brilliantly lit at night. Along the lanes of straight and wide boulevards motor traffic flows smoothly with neither noise nor dust while pedestrians walk on the pavements in calm and serenity. There is no sign of back-breaking toil, fatigue and despair. Nor is there any hint of luxury. The half million people living in the city work in the relaxed atmosphere of a friendly society and enjoy the comforts of an industrialized civilization which knows how to be the master of nature while showing it full respect. A city of free labour and harmony.

This city is Frunze, the capital of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, born together with Soviet power and growing in a remote area of borderland which only yesterday was plunged in the night of Czarist colonialism and prolonged Asiatic Middle Ages. It is the product of 60 years' construction by Kirghiz, Uzbek, Kazakh, Tartar, Dungan, Russian, Ukrainian and other people who make up the population of this multi-national land, with the assistance of all Soviet nationalities.

DESCENDANTS OF YESTERDAY'S SHEPHERDS

Kirghizia is one of the fifteen republics which make up the Union

of Soviet Socialist Republics. Its area is about two-thirds of that of Vietnam and it is peopled by four million members of 80 different nationalities. The Kirghiz, the majority people, are of the Mogoloid type of southern Siberia and linguistically belong to the Turkic group of the Northwest. In days long gone by, they were herdsmen tending sheep and horses on the mountains that cover most of the country's area, except for a small number of farmers in the valleys. They lived in yurts, domed tents of felt stretched over a collapsible wooden framework, and were constantly on the move looking for new pastures. Before the setting up of Soviet power they formed clans led by *manaps*—powerful feudal chieftains who owned large herds of cattle and vast tracts of grassland and were at the same time slave-owners, military commanders, and judges. Ordinary shepherds were subjected to exploitation and oppression at the hands of the *manaps* and their agents. Hunger, disease and ignorance were their lot, not to mention incessant warfare among the various clans. Even more destitute was the fate of the women. They were bought and sold, did all the hard work in the house, and were ill-treated by their husbands, who could beat them to death with impunity.

"Such was the miserable life of my parents," Mr Adjemedin Kerimov told me. "Before joining a kol-khoz, they were nomadic pastors. A saying ran like this: 'My home is

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where I kindle my campfire, my pasture where I tether my horse.' The Soviet administration promulgated all necessary measures to help the Kirghiz people settle to a sedentary life and completely liquidate feudal exploitation, poverty, and backwardness. Gradually advancing from lower-level organizations to more advanced ones, they set up *artels* (associations for common work) for crop cultivation and animal husbandry. Industrialization was stepped up and led to revolutionary changes in the rural areas. Within a lifetime, our society has undergone complete metamorphosis."

Mr Adjemedin Kerimov held the degree of candidate doctor of agricultural sciences. He looked about 50 and was the manager of a State farm specialized in experimental growing of sugar-beets about 50 kilometres from Frunze. Of medium stature, with thick black hair, almond-shaped eyes and high cheekbones, he had a suntanned complexion with a shimmer of yellow. The 900 people working under him belonged to 24 different nationalities and comprised highly-skilled Russian and Ukrainian experts. All work in his farm was mechanized. The laboratory was fitted with modern equipment and many high-yield and disease-resistant strains of sugar-beets had been bred and were being grown extensively in the Kirghiz and Kazakh republics.

"Most of our machinery and equipment," Mr Kerimov continued,

"are the products of our country, and so are most of our experts. I was trained in Frunze, and so was my medical-doctor wife. Of course a number of our youth have gone away to study. My son, for instance, is studying in an air-pilots' school in the Ukraine."

Mr Kerimov took me on a tour of the village. It had a health-care station with a consulting room, an operating room, a gynecology ward, an odonto-stomatology ward, and an ophthalmology ward. At the day nursery, 140 children were being cared for by 33 nurses and employees. The secondary school had modern equipment and furnishings. There were special classrooms for teaching various subject-matters, audio-visual aids, several laboratories, an engineering shop and a garment-making shop in which to teach the students to work with their hands. At the village cultural house, there were daily projections of films, and at the library about 10,000 books in Kirghiz, Russian, German and English. The village boasted a stadium, a swimming-pool for children, a department store, a coffee-house and restaurant, a park of fair size with a memorial dedicated to villagers who had laid down their lives in the Great Patriotic War. I saw rows of houses in which each family enjoyed the use of an apartment.

Viktor Mikhailovitch Turcs, a truck-driver whose wife was working at the day nursery, invited me home. His apartment was in the second storey and had been designed

for a couple with two children. It comprised three rooms, not counting the kitchen and sanitary facilities. There was pleasant-looking furniture in the house, a red woollen carpet with multi-coloured designs in the living-room, which also contained a radio and a television set. I was treated to home-grown apples—big, red, juicy fruit.

I stayed one day as guest of my Kirghiz friends, long enough to get an idea of life in one of today's Kirghiz villages. Actually, this was not a rich village. Only 80 households owned a car and 100 others a motorcycle. Contrary to my guess, I was told that the wealthiest communities do not live in the plains but in the highlands, where the grassland is. There, families still live in traditional tents, although some may own as many as two cars. But even for families living on mountain-slope pasture land all kinds of amenities are made available by State-run services: mobile goods counters, libraries, cinema projection teams, song and dance ensembles, etc., visit them at regular intervals, not to mention an airmobile medical team for emergencies.

"There are in Vietnam 54 ethnic groups," I told my Kirghiz friends. "Some were on the verge of extinction when the Revolution broke out and brought them back to life. Many practised itinerant crop growing and lived a semi-nomadic life, on the mountain ranges of the North and the Centre. The State has helped them settle to a seden-

tary life. They now live in villages and hamlets, work in farming co-operatives, send their children to kindergartens and schools, are looked after in infirmaries and maternity homes, have cultural houses... They are treading in your footsteps and what you have today will be theirs, too, to-morrow."

SCALING THE HEIGHTS OF SCIENCE AND CULTURE

In contrast to the nightmarish "cultural revolution" carried out in neighbouring China, here in Kirghizia the aura of cultural revolution has been kept intact: within a lifetime, it has taken this land from the darkness of ignorance to the light of civilization.

In Kirghizia, the cultural revolution began with the eradication of illiteracy. In the remote past, there had been a Kirghiz script but it had been lost as a result of repeated social upheavals and had been replaced by the Arabic script. Before the October Revolution, the proportion of literate people had not been more than 1%. Soviet power immediately set about devising a script for the Kirghiz language, based on the Russian, or to be more accurate, the Cyrillic alphabet. The latter, itself based on the Greek alphabet, has been used for ten centuries now for writing the Russian, Bulgarian, Serbian and recently other languages in the Soviet Union, and Mongolian as well. The next step was a campaign to liquidate illiteracy, waged in extremely difficult conditions: mobile classes had to be organized for herdsmen, boarding schools had to be set up, and armed protection had to be given both teachers and students against terrorist actions by counter-revolutionaries. Then a general-education system was organized, followed by colleges, universities, and technical schools. The educational system of the worker-peasant State has been gradually consolidated and perfected. By now its benefits have spread to

half the population of the republic: each year 7,000 students graduate from higher-education establishments and 10,000 other from secondary vocational schools.

At the peak stands the Academy of Sciences of Kirghizia, which I had occasion to visit. It is housed in a magnificent architectural complex. Set up in 1954, it comprises dozens of research institutes in both the natural and social sciences: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, mechanics, geology, medicine, physiology, literature, philology, linguistics, history, law, economics, philosophy, etc. The Academy is staffed by 3,000 scientists, among them 26 full members, 34 corresponding members, 570 doctors and candidate doctors of science, and gives training to 100 research fellows each year.

Salmorbec Tabychaliev, deputy chairman of the Academy, told me: "Kirghiz scholars have tackled the most diverse subjects of research. Without neglecting purely theoretical matters, we have devoted much effort to practical problems. Our physiologists and pathologists, for instance, have studied the possibilities for the human body to adapt itself to high-altitude living conditions—a problem related to the life led by herdsmen. Our zoologists, botanists, and geneticists have contributed much useful knowledge to the breeding of sheep, milch-cows, fish, and to the protection of wildlife. Our Automation and Remote-Control Institute has worked out a structural diagram for a combined system of remote control, which transmits information to and controls the operation of 300 water-conservation projects located some 150 kilometres from the dispatching centre. The History of Kirghizia, the result of collective endeavour of Kirghiz historians, has attracted much attention for the wealth of information it provides and the scientific character it evinces. It helps us Kirghiz people understand who we are. These are only a few examples. In spite of

its youth, Kirghiz science has made worthy contribution to Soviet science."

In its effort to build a socialist culture for new Kirghizia, Soviet power has shown an all-round concern and has neglected no branch, the aim being to ensure maximum progress for each individual and each national communality.

This is evident when one visits the Frunze Fine-Arts Museum. After admiring original exhibits of decorative folk art, the visitor is amazed by the wealth of modern plastic arts: portraits, landscapes; scenes of labour, combat and daily life; epic scenes, still lifes, statues and busts, bas-reliefs representing social activities—all are full of realism and vividness, and painting is characterized by bold colouring. Most important, however, is the fact that artistic representation is focused on man and human life—something never seen in pre-revolutionary Kirghizia and in other Muslim countries, for the Muslim Church forbids the portrayal of man in painting and sculpture and authorizes only decorative art using geometrical patterns, in a word, inhumanistic art.

Also starting from scratch, Soviet Kirghizia has built a national cinematographic art and a national theatre which includes spoken drama, opera, ballet, etc. In order to provide a basis for language-related arts, a written literature comprising both prose and poetry has come into being. Its development has been assisted by progress in publishing. Of the 134 newspapers and periodicals printed in the country and the 1,000 books or so published every year, nearly half are in Kirghiz. The reputation of many a Kirghiz writer or poet has spread to the whole of the Soviet Union and even abroad.

During my stay in Frunze, I had wished to pay a visit to writer Aimatov, holder of a State Prize

and a Lenin Prize, but he was away in Moscow. I am sorry I had missed an opportunity to express my admiration for him and tell him how much we Vietnamese had liked his book *The Mountains and the Steppes*, translated into Vietnamese and published in Hanoi during the war of resistance against American aggression.

When one comes into contact with Kirghiz culture, one gets the impression of watching a garden in full bloom—a bright prospect held out to ethnic minorities in Vietnam. In implementation of the Communist Party's Leninist nationality policy the Vietnamese revolutionary State is doing what the Soviet State has done in regions inhabited by minority nationalities: devising national scripts and eradicating illiteracy; organizing systems of general education, higher education and vocational training; building a multi-branch culture imbued with national characteristics. In Vietnam there have also appeared ever larger numbers of teachers, medical doctors, agronomists, engineers, research scientists, writers, poets, journalists, painters, filmmakers, dramatists, stage directors, musicians, choreographers, actors and actresses... sprung from the national minorities. Today, Vietnamese culture does not mean the culture of the Viet majority group but is a multinational culture in which the modern is combined with the traditional and diversity is found in unity.

THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONALISM

The emblem of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic features a hammer and sickle, a red star a snowy mountain range and the sun, a branch of cotton, an ear of wheat. It was adopted in 1937, at a time when the national economy relied mainly on crop growing and animal husbandry, and is now but a historic symbol. The situation has changed so rapidly: in the period

of the first five-year plans alone, from 1928 to 1940, 140 industrial enterprises were built, serving as a basis for large-scale industry. By 1940, in comparison with 1913, the peak year in Czarist times, industrial output had increased 10 times (153 times in heavy industry). At present, Kirghizia has become a developed industrial country. Indeed, heavy industry has grown nearly 700-fold compared with pre-revolutionary times.

Speaking of the building of developed socialism in Kirghizia, Comrade Kerech Nuramatovitch Kulmatov, member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Kirghiz Communist Party, painted for me an exhilarating picture during the interview I had with him at the Party's headquarters.

"Kirghiz industry," he said, "now includes 104 branches, from light industry and food industry to metallurgy, engineering, chemicals, precision instruments, electronics, etc. We are producing tractors, automobile engines, instruments used in space exploration. Our products are exported to 50 countries, including Vietnam. In the first days after the Revolution, Frunze, then bearing the name of Pichpek, had a population of 18,000 and about 20 handicraft shops operated by 400 people. Now, Frunze has a thermopower plant of 400,000 kw capacity and eight universities and colleges, out of a total of eleven for the whole of Kirghizia."

From him I again heard this often-expressed observation: "All within a human lifespan!" It exudes not only pride but also amazement. Both feelings are easily understandable on the part of the people involved in this tremendous endeavour: their native land, only yesterday dying a slow death in darkness, has become one of the most advanced states on the human plane, in which a visitor will find no destitute hungry populace, no unemployment, no illiteracy, no prostitution, no racial, national or religious discrimination, no exploit-

ers and no exploited... The Western press has highlighted "economic miracle" in this or that capitalist country, before the general crisis of the capitalist world will reach the breaking point. But either unwittingly or deliberately, it has neglected the social miracle which has happened in countries such as Kirghizia, a miracle which is all-encompassing, goes deep, and is there to stay.

"We live in harmony and concord." Comrade Kulmatov continued, "like a well-off, cultured, and united family. We receive wholehearted assistance from the central administration, from the Russian working class in particular. We have set up Soviet power, built a large-scale industry, and devised a script which helps preserve our national language and culture. Far from showing narrow-mindedness, egoism and short-sightedness and concentrating its initial effort on the central regions, the Soviet State paid early and adequate attention to the development of the border areas and gave assistance to backward nationalities to allow them to catch up with the more advanced ones. This is the reason of our deep gratitude to Lenin for his nationality policy. When the German Nazis invaded the Soviet land, Kirghiz people fought like lions at the front. Many laid down their lives during the war; 40,000 people were awarded USSR medals and badges; 70 were honoured with the title of Hero or Heroine of the Soviet Union. Lenin's nationality policy has greatly contributed to the invincible strength of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

Comrade Kulmatov spoke in Russian, his words being relayed to me by an interpreter. His speech showed the same fluency and naturalness as if he were speaking in his mother tongue. All Kirghiz now, besides their national language, are fluent in Russian, the common language of the 130 nationalities making up the Soviet Union. On

the Kirghiz national emblem, one may see, besides the name of the country written in Kirghiz, two lines, one in Kirghiz, the other in Russian, which read: "Proletarians in all countries, unite!"

The Kirghiz leader identified Lenin's nationality policy with internationalism. Later, in September 1982, President Leonid I. Brezhnev was to write in his letter to the International Conference of Journalists held in Frunze: "Sixty years ago, for the first time in the long history of mankind, there were affirmed essentially new relationships between national communities and ethnic groups, relationships which were imbued with the spirit of friendship, good-neighbourliness, and mutual assistance. Internationalism has become a decisive feature in the life of all the fraternal nationalities in our land."

"At present," Comrade Kulmatov continued, "fraternal nationalities in the Union have been sending experts and workers to help Kirghizia tap its vast hydropower potential on the Naryne river. Once the major projects on the Naryne are completed, Kirghizia will send its own experts and manpower to the newly-opened construction sites in Siberia. Internationalism within the Soviet motherland means that all the brother nationalities will work for the prosperity and strength of each of them, which will in turn contribute to the prosperity and strength of all. And because world revolution is indivisible, this internal internationalism has expanded outwards. Our Vietnamese friends and other developing countries have had occasion to experience it. In early 1979, when Beijing sent its invading troops into Vietnam, all the nationalities in the Soviet Union immediately took your side. We Kirghiz were especially sensitive to the difficulties encountered by Vietnam for we have 1,000 kilometres of common border with China and on maps drawn by the Beijing expansionists both our countries are included in Chinese territory. The timely and effective fulfilment by the Soviet State of its internationalist duty toward Vietnam is also an embodi-

ment of the will of the Kirghiz people. We greeted the news of Vietnam's victory over the invaders with elation. We have happily contributed to the assistance given by the Soviet Union as a whole to Vietnam with a view to building the material and technical infrastructure of socialism. Like all Soviet people, we Kirghiz look forward to a prosperous, happy and strong Vietnam."

In Kirghizia, I had occasion to observe a fundamental and evident truth: internationalism has a fatherland, the land of Lenin, and this homeland has developed with history to become the world socialist system.

It is thanks to internationalism that at the foot of the Ala-Too mountain range a city named Frunze has appeared, as beautiful as a legend, that the people of Kirghizia have regained their national identity and changed their condition, that the Soviet and Vietnamese peoples have stood in the same combat trench and are heading for the same horizon. Acting upon the principles of internationalism the Soviets have granted immense, systematic, persevering and very effective assistance to their Vietnamese brothers in their struggle for national independence and the building of socialism, and to all oppressed peoples of the world fighting for their political and economic emancipation — this help covering all fields. The Soviet Union has set an example. The same red thread has clearly run through the decision of the Soviet State to vigorously develop regions inhabited by backward nationalities, the decision of the Vietnamese State to solve all nationality problems in accordance with the motto "Equality, Solidarity, and Mutual Assistance", and the decision of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance to reserve especial solicitude for Mongolia, Cuba and Vietnam in order to help them develop rapidly and catch up with the advanced countries in the world socialist community.

VU CAN

Of late, an atmosphere of dialogue and detente has set in in the relations between our countries owing to the efforts of the countries in the region and many peace-loving nations in the world. The peace proposals put forward by the Conference of the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese Foreign Ministers on 7 July 1982 and the withdrawal of a part of the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea are welcomed by world opinion. What is heartening for us is that the ASEAN countries also find new elements in these proposals and express their intention to continue studying these proposals.

With the desire to boost conciliation and co-operation between the two groups of countries, I wish to expatiate on the recent proposals of the three Indochinese countries.

1. China's policy of hegemony is the major threat to the three Indochinese countries, and at the same time the major threat to peace and stability in Southeast Asia. The realities of the past three years have shown that China strives to oppose dialogue and conciliation between the ASEAN and Indochinese countries. It is determined to resort to military means, through the Pol Pot clique, to oppose the revival of the Kampuchean people and, at the same time, it is mustering its troops along its border with Vietnam and Laos to put pressure to bear on these countries. It is fostering Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean reactionary elements for interventionist and subversive activities with a view to overthrowing the legal governments of these three countries. It is urging other countries to encircle and isolate them and striving to maintain tension in Southeast Asia.

The presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea is aimed at counteracting this threat by China. A number of ASEAN countries also realise that the Kampuchean problem is essentially one between China and the Indochinese countries, not one between the ASEAN and Indochinese countries.

The three Indochinese countries clearly understand the concern of the ASEAN countries and their wish for the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE PEACE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD AT THE CONFERENCE OF INDOCHINESE FOREIGN MINISTERS

On 15. September 1982, Phoun Sipaseuth, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on behalf of the foreign ministers of the three Indochinese countries, sent a note to the foreign ministers of ASEAN countries and other countries concerned, expounding the position of the three Indochinese countries concerning the proposals put forward by the Conference of the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese Foreign Ministers held on 7 July 1982 on the situation in Southeast Asia. The note says:

The concern of the three Indochinese countries is to end China's threat to them. We hold that the three Indochinese and the five ASEAN countries should heed the concern and legitimate interests of each other. In the past three years the ASEAN countries, while asking for the unilateral withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, did not heed the security interests of the three Indochinese countries. We are ready to meet the wish of the ASEAN countries for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea if the interests of the three Indochinese countries in ending China's threat are met. The three Indochinese countries have proposed to China to sign treaties of non-aggression and non-intervention. Regrettably, there has been no positive response on the part of China so far.

2. The Thai side regards the presence of units of the Vietnamese army near the Kampuchea-Thai border as a threat to Thailand's security. For their part, Kampuchea, Vietnam and Laos consider the use of Thai territory by China and the Pol Pot clique together with other reactionary Khmer forces against the revival of the Kampuchean people to be a constant threat to the security of Kampuchea and the other Indochinese countries.

The realities of the past three years have shown that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea does not threaten in any way Thai-

land's security. Many a time the Thai side has stated that there is no need to sign non-aggression treaties between Thailand and the three Indochinese countries since there is no danger of aggression by Vietnam against Thailand. On the other hand, the activities of the Pol Pot clique and other Khmer reactionaries based in Thailand have seriously threatened Kampuchea's security, causing a continually explosive situation on the Thai-Kampuchean border. The recent founding of a so-called tripartite coalition government is aimed at helping the Pol Pot clique and other Khmer reactionaries step up activities against the People's Republic of Kampuchea, undermining the revival of the Kampuchean people, and aggravating the tension on the Kampuchean-Thai border.

By maintaining their support and assistance to this "coalition government" the ASEAN countries cannot but run further counter to their declared objective of "finding a political solution".

This will create a dangerous precedent for foreign intervention against independent and sovereign nations and violate the principles of the UN Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement.

We deem it necessary to heed the security interests of Thailand, and at the same time to heed the security interests of Kampuchea. To this end, there should be effective measures to check the use of the

territory of one country against the other. Proceeding from this basic stand, the People's Republic of Kampuchea proposed in July 1980 to establish a demilitarised zone along the Kampuchean-Thai border, but the Thai side did not agree, saying that it could not withdraw its troops from a part of its own territory.

At the recent Conference of the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese Foreign Ministers, the three Indochinese countries took notice of Thailand's stand on a demilitarised zone, and put forward a new proposal to set up a safety zone along the Kampuchean-Thai border. This proposal takes into account Thailand's stand that troops of the Thai Kingdom could not be withdrawn from a part of its territory. The new proposal only asks for the withdrawal of forces which do not belong to Thailand or the People's Republic of Kampuchea from the safety zone. The three Indochinese countries voice their readiness to discuss and reach agreement with the Thai side on such concrete matters as the width of the safety zone, the scope of Vietnamese troops withdrawal from the Kampuchean-Thai border, as well as the removal of the Pol Potist and other Khmer reactionaries and refugee camps away from this border. The three Indochinese countries deem it necessary that an agreement be reached on a form of international supervision of the safety zone.

To show their goodwill, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and Vietnam have of late taken the initiative in unilaterally withdrawing some units of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. If the Thai side gives a positive response to this goodwill act, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam will withdraw more Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

In case Thailand refuses to establish the safety zone, the three Indochinese countries are ready to discuss and reach agreement with the Thai side on any measure likely to ensure strict respect of the Kampuchean-Thai border, as well as any measure, including a form of international supervision, to ensure peace and stability there.

Many a time the People's Republic of Kampuchea has stated that an agreement on this question bears no relation to a *de jure* recognition of each other by the two sides. The People's Republic of Kampuchea will not let the question of mutual recognition hinder the discussion and agreement on the safety zone. The realities of the past 30 years have shown that the United States and Thailand signed with Vietnam and China the 1961-1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos, and the United States and Vietnam signed the Paris Agreement on Vietnam in 1973 without subsequent mutual recognition.

3. The ASEAN countries have stood for the convening of an international conference within the UN framework to settle the Kampuchean problem. They unilaterally convened this conference in disregard of the three Indochinese countries' protest. This is imposition from one side. The three Indochinese countries have put forward a proposal to convene a regional conference between the two groups: the ASEAN and the Indochinese countries. This has not been accepted by the ASEAN countries, and so such a regional conference has not been convened.

The realities of the past three years have shown that an international conference can only be fruitful if it is agreed upon and attended by the parties directly concerned.

The international conference convened by the UN in July 1981 only resulted in creating an impasse. With the goodwill to find a way out of this abnormal situation and taking into consideration both the ASEAN countries' proposal for an international conference and the three Indochinese countries' proposal for a regional conference, the recent Conference of the Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean Foreign Ministers put forward a proposal for an international conference on Southeast Asia with the participation of nine countries inside and six others outside the region. (The former are the three Indochinese countries, the five ASEAN countries, and Burma; the latter are the Soviet Union, the United States, China, France, Britain, and India).

This conference will be convened only when agreement is reached between the countries directly concerned i.e. the ASEAN and the Indochinese countries, on its composition, agenda, place and time.

Regarding the composition of the conference, there may be disagreement on what countries are to take part, particularly on the representation of Kampuchea. We think that this matter can be discussed and a formula acceptable to all can be found. It should not hinder the convening of the conference. The three Indochinese countries welcome the UNO's contribution to peace and stability in Southeast Asia. But the UNO's maintenance of the Pol Pot genocidal clique has hampered its positive role.

Concerning the agenda, there may also be disagreement. We think that the conference can discuss all problems in the region which may be raised by each side on the principle of complete equality. For us there are many ways: an agreed agenda, an open agenda, or an agenda with both agreed-upon questions and open questions.

About the place, we think that the conference can meet in a Southeast Asian country or neutral country in Asia or Europe, perhaps Rangoon, New Delhi, Paris, Stockholm or Vienna,... to be agreed upon by the two groups of countries.

As for the time of the conference, we think that the problems of peace and stability in Southeast Asia are most urgent and must be settled the sooner the better. Therefore, we think that it should be convened sometime in the last quarter of this year or early next year.

4. The realities of the past three years have shown that the ASEAN and Indochinese countries have a great common interest in maintaining peace, stability and co-operation in the region. Any disagreement between the two groups of countries can perfectly be settled through dialogue and negotiations on the following principles:

- Mutual respect for each other's legitimate interests;

- Equality and mutual agreement, without any unilateral imposition whatsoever and without interference from outside.

We are very glad that dialogue has now taken place between the two groups of countries in Southeast Asia. We hope that the two sides will further strive to maintain and promote the present atmosphere of detente and dialogue, at least refrain from doing anything likely to worsen the situation. We also hope that all countries outside the region which wish to see peace and stability in Southeast Asia will do likewise so as to create favourable conditions for the exchange of views in a spirit of conciliation and co-operation, and step by step settle all problems in the relations between the two groups of countries and other regional issues. It is also our hope that the UNO will make a positive contribution to the cause of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

In this spirit we sincerely hope for further understanding with regard to the proposals of the three Indochinese countries. We suggest that a meeting be arranged for an exchange of views between the countries in this region, or between representatives of the two groups of countries on the occasion of the 37th session of the UN General Assembly.

SUCCESS OF THE «PRECEPT OF THE CAT»

Beijing's propaganda machinery, effectively aided by Western mass media, has begun giving noisy publicity to the alleged "success of the (CCP) historic (12th) congress".

Few of the recent official documents of the Chinese Communist Party have been adorned with so much Marxist-Leninist terminology as the documents of its 12th congress. Obviously, the Chinese leadership have painstakingly compiled these documents in order to give them the appearance of a "new bottle". Their aim is to deceive the Chinese people and persuade credulous souls in the world that they are returning to the right path—a path they had forsaken.

But a light scratch would be enough to peel off the thin Marxist-Leninist veneer and reveal the Maoism underneath, a Maoism which has been modernised to fit Deng Xiaoping's "precept of the cat"*. The ideological basis of this precept is selfish national interests. In fact, on more than one occasion Deng has made it plain that national interests are his highest principle and that any doctrine or theory will suit him provided it serves China's national interests as he sees them. But how can Deng associate Maoism with Marxism for they are two irreconcilably antagonistic doctrines? Scientific socialism is the ideology of the international working class and is distinct from and opposed to all political tendencies of the petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie. Deng's political line began to gain ground at the 3rd plenum of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in December 1978 and was consolidated at the 6th plenum in June 1981. It is a pragmatic line which advocates complete reliance on imperialism to get the necessary capital and technology for carrying out the "four modernisations" and

laying the material foundation for Chinese expansionism and hegemonism.

Deng's congress set forth three objectives for his party, namely to carry out the "four modernisations" aimed at making China one of the biggest powers in the world by the turn of the century, to liberate Taiwan, and to oppose hegemonism. By the force of circumstances, Deng had also to talk about struggling against imperialism and colonialism but at the same time he declared readiness to co-operate in all fields with the United States and the whole imperialist camp, and to oppose the world socialist system. Without doubt, Deng may be credited with having dished up a brand of communism which imperialism can accept and assist and with which it can enter into strategic co-operation, a communism that can set the imperialists' mind at ease and convince them that China's destiny is bound up with their own. The American delegate who had arrived in Beijing to cast his vote for Deng's group was none other than Richard Nixon.

There has also been a shrewd attempt on the part of Deng's group to present a sinicized, Maoist and nationalist "Marxism" as a third road, a type of socialism that is opposed to the existing system of socialist countries, a system which has stood the test of time and constitutes the only material and spiritual force determining world developments and the evolution of human society. In our era, of which the main characteristic and content is the transition from capitalism to socialism, the only path of development of the nations that is conformable to the law of history is authentic socialism. The core of the political line advocated by Deng and his associates is chauvinistic hegemonism. That is

the motive force behind their domestic and foreign policies. Again they have put forward a fantastic plan to double China's economic output every five years, thereby eventually turning it into a new U.S.A., both economically and militarily.

The 12th CCP congress legalised Deng's line and confirmed his leading role. Deng has declared he would retreat to the second line but in reality he continues to hold the reins of power and has forced the leaders of other groups back to the second and even third lines.

So, Deng has basically achieved his "palace revolution" but he is still far from having won complete victory. Infighting continues among the top rulers. This will take place in the form of a three-year campaign for "rectification" and the "re-registration" of the 39 million CCP members, half of whom were admitted during Mao Zedong's cultural revolution". It can be safely predicted that the major purge planned by Deng Xiaoping will not be smooth sailing.

Deng likes to quote the Marxist principle that practice is the criterion of truth. He will be judged by his deeds, not by his words. He may exhaust his Marxist-Leninist vocabulary quoting famous principles of scientific socialism, but the fact remains that his heart is beating in unison with imperialism and that he is fighting tooth and nail against world socialism. Indeed, he is even more cunning and wicked than the imperialists themselves because he is holding high this big signboard: "socialism".

Nhan Dan Editorial
(September 12, 1982)

* A favourite "precept" of Deng's: "It doesn't matter whether the cat is black or white, so long as it catches mice." (Ed).

NEW RULES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF STATE ENTERPRISES

Editor's Note: An article in Vietnam Courier (No. 6, June 1982) reported how Decision 25-CP of the Council of Ministers, dated 21 January 1981 and dealing with the renovation of State-enterprise management, contributed to an increase in industrial production in 1981. The article also mentioned some of the shortcomings which came to light in the course of the implementation of that decision. Important amendments have been adopted with regard to Decision 25-CP. They were published in Hanoi newspapers on 18 September 1982.

The new decision puts State enterprises in three categories: those which are of prime importance for the national economy are to receive State-supplied materials and equipment in priority and in sufficient amount to ensure stable production; those with little economic efficiency or unable to operate under the present circumstances are to be temporarily closed or are to be converted to other uses; those operating normally but which cannot get enough materials and equipment from the State, can look for other sources of supply, including imports obtained with foreign exchange borrowed from the State Bank. Enterprises of the first category may also do the same with a view to stepping up production.

With regard to products turned out above the planned targets or with materials and equipment procured by the enterprise itself, the prices applied in the selling and buying of those materials and equipment should conform to the following:

- State wholesale prices (plus storage and transport costs) for those ceded by other State enterprises which no longer need them;

- Prices to be determined by competent State organs (and varying in time and space) for raw materials: farm, forest and marine products under State management;

- Mutually agreed upon prices concerning raw materials not under State management;

- It is absolutely forbidden to buy on the free market materials and equipment whose distribution is a State monopoly.

Applications for foreign-exchange loans must be accompanied by production and marketing plans, including export plans and listing of foreign-exchange profits, and must be approved by the Cabinet minister or Provincial Committee president concerned.

State enterprises may turn out three kinds of products: those from State-supplied materials and equipment; those from materials and equipment not supplied by the State, but conforming to the line of the enterprise; and lastly, secondary products, turned out from scrap or from materials procured by the enterprise itself, and besides not being part of its production line.

Products of all three categories must be delivered to the State. However, in the case of products of the 3rd category which are current consumer goods and which State services refuse to buy up, the enterprise may market them at prices which had been declared before production began and had been approved by the competent authorities. With regard to products of both the 2nd and 3rd categories, the enterprise may exchange part of them for materials to be used in continued production, but not before having obtained authorization from higher level. The superior authorities may also grant a permit in cases not anticipated by the enterprise. The latter is not authorized

to retain part of the secondary (3rd-category) products and distribute them to the workers. However, the minister or Provincial Committee president concerned may determine a certain percentage of such products which the enterprise may buy at wholesale prices in order to give them to the workers as bonuses. The minister or Provincial Committee president concerned should watch out for any excessive discrepancy between bonuses distributed to workers of the same branch or locality.

The same cautiousness governs the determination of the prices of various products and the distribution of profits.

Generally speaking, part of the profits may go to an enterprise having fulfilled or overfulfilled its planned targets. This will feed one or more of its various funds:

- Bonuses and rewards;
- Social welfare;
- Enlarged reproduction.

There is a ceiling to such appropriations, beyond which all profits must go to the State. There are also ceilings to the various funds, depending on the kind of enterprise. Thus in heavy industry, building industry, transport, forest exploitation and marine fisheries, there are higher ceilings for the first two funds than in the case of light industry and food industry. Ceilings are higher if the products have been obtained from materials and equipment not supplied by the State, and even higher in the case of secondary products (maximum: 70%).

To build the district into an agro-industrial unit is an important part of the line of socialist construction in our country.

Since the Party's Fourth National Congress, seeking to implement the Party's educational principle of combining theory with practice, the school with society, and study with work, many colleges have studied specific economic and technical aspects of work in a district, according to the specialities of each teacher, department and college.

In July 1978 the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Vocational Education was entrusted with working out a programme of "Study and application of scientific and technical achievements to the reorganization of production and life in a district".

Late in 1978, the Ministry set up a management board and a staff to this end, with the participation of various colleges and the help of central and regional (provincial and district) government organs. The study has given initial encouraging results.

After one year of activity, the management board convened a scientific meeting, the first, in Vinh Phu province in October 1979, at which the achievements of one year of study were reviewed in 97 reports. Meanwhile, the "programmers" helped a number of regions draw up master plans and specific plans for districts, studied some problems of production organisation and management, suggested several scientific and technical measures on farming, animal husbandry, engineering, land improvement, capital construction and communications for districts.

Thanks to the experience gathered and results achieved in 1979 and in spite of many difficulties, in 1980 the colleges carried on their work with zeal and laid firm bases for their study. Thus in the second year of the programme 12 colleges with 28 departments conducted studies in 21 districts (10 in the plains, 9 in the uplands, 2 in city suburbs) involving 91 subjects

Activities of Universities and Colleges

THREE YEARS' STUDY PROGRAMME FOR DISTRICTS

among them 33 about production organisation, 20 about management, 20 about agricultural technique, 9 about biology, 9 about capital construction and communications. The second meeting was convened in Hai Hau district (Ha Nam Ninh province). It took note that the "programmers had been assisting a number of districts in elaborating and revising their master plans; made proposals about production organisation, management and application of scientific and technical achievement; drew several conclusions with practical significance for planning, organisation of production, management and technique.

1981, the third year of the study programme, opened a new stage: the study now ranged broader and went deeper and concentrated on more fundamental matters.

At the request of the Party Committee and the People's Committee of Gia Lam district (Hanoi outskirts), the management board entrusted a number of teachers and students of the Colleges of Economy and Planning, Agriculture, Construction and of the Hanoi Polytechnic, with drawing up a master plan for this district and studying various problems of management.

Of late, a third meeting was held in Hanoi to review the situation after three years of study and define the orientations and tasks for the coming period.

Many papers stressed that in order to build the district efficiently one had to divide the more than 400 districts of the country into

separate groups according to their production activities, level of economic development and economic significance, and natural economic zone so as to adopt a proper orientation for investment and a method of guidance suitable to our limited capacities in capital, technical means, managerial capacity and scientific and technical skills, in this initial stage of the transitional period to socialism. The meeting put forward proposals covering ten major questions about the role, position and structure of planning, production organisation, management of agriculture, industry, trade, finances, capital construction, communications, transport, and agricultural technique.

Over the past three years, apart from the above-mentioned problems, the "programmers" began applying a number of study results to organisation of production and management, farming and animal husbandry, engineering, land improvement, capital construction, communications and transport in various districts. Besides, they helped draw up master plans for 11 districts and specific plans for 18 districts. After three years of study of problems in the district, the teachers and students involved in the programme have better grasped the Party's educational principle, and contributed to improving the objectives, curricula, contents and methods of cadre-training for socialist construction in our country in general and the building of districts in particular.

FURTHER DEVELOP AGRICULTURE IN THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA

Working out programmes for the district is a new subject and no perfect model exists as yet. Moreover, the range of study is most complex, covering many fields of the social sciences, natural sciences and applied sciences... As regards methodology, the study cannot limit itself to a few districts, but has to cover many so as to look beyond the specific aspects, and discover laws of a universal character.

Besides, advancing from study to application, the programme must solve fundamental problems related to economic policies, organisation of management, and technical aspects of various branches and levels. One has also to co-ordinate, from the start, the activities of scientific bodies with organs in charge of leadership and guidance of production.

Only by keeping in mind the above-mentioned characteristics of programming work and the extremely difficult conditions in which this study has been conducted can one fully appreciate the notable results recorded by the colleges involved after three years of study. At the same time, one will also realise that these are but initial results of a study of fundamental problems of content and method related to the building of a model district. In the coming years, basing ourselves on these fundamental results we shall study their application to different kinds of districts: districts specialised in growing cereals and other food crops, those devoted to industrial crops, districts having various levels of development (high, medium, low), districts in the plains, uplands, mountains and city suburbs.

NGUYEN DINH NAM
Programme Director

The Council of Ministers recently issued a directive on policies and measures aimed at further developing agriculture in the Mekong River delta for the coming years.

The directive points out: the Mekong River delta is our largest food-growing area. After one and a half years of agricultural production following Resolution 148 — CP of April 1, 1981 by the Council of Ministers on agricultural development, many achievements have been recorded: the rice-growing area, productivity and output have increased, the area for high-yield rice has been expanded, the building of a material and technical base and the application of technical progress have scored initial results; land re-adjustment and the transformation of the relations of production in agriculture have received more attention, deliveries to the State of food grain and other crops have shown commendable efforts.

However, these results have fallen short of our capacities and requirements. Crop multiplication, intensive cultivation and rice productivity have not received due attention, the output of subsidiary food crops has decreased, the development of industrial crops and stock breeding has obtained but insufficient results; the exploitation of aquatic products has lagged behind the pre-war level; forests have been wantonly destroyed; the pace of re-adjustment of farmland and agricultural co-operativization has

been slow, while the transformation of agriculture has not been associated with that of industry and commerce.

In the remaining three years of the 1981-1985 plan the localities and related branches must achieve the following major tasks:

1. *Speed up basic research, zoning, planning and production reorganization.* In particular, the zoning of regions devoted to high-yield rice and those specialized in raising plants and animals for export must be rapidly completed so as to work out plans for investment and implementation early in 1983. General and concrete planning, measurement, registration, inventory and re-adjustment of farmland must be completed by 1983.

Our plan must clearly show the orientation for production in the Mekong River delta: rapidly increase rice production mainly through intensive cultivation and crop multiplication, expand the area for maize and sweet potato, vigorously develop the growing of soya, pea-nuts and beans, extend the area for sugarcane; vigorously develop the planting of jute, rush, mulberry, coco-nut palms, fruit trees, speed up the rearing of pigs, buffaloes, oxen and poultry.

For aquatic products: Use every area of water to rear aquatic products, especially shrimps for export. Develop fishing with rudimentary and semi-mechanized means... This branch is to expand its export and import activities so as to meet its

own needs in fuel and lubricants, spare parts, fishing gear...

For forestry: There must be drastic measures to combat wanton destruction of forests, *manage and protect our forests*. Between 1982 and 1985, speed up afforestation and tree-planting among the population so as to have enough small-sized timber and firewood.

2. Intensify the building of a material and technical base and apply technical achievements.

For water conservancy: Try to meet our immediate needs while preparing for long-term plans; in the immediate future develop small and medium-sized irrigation projects. Concentrate on exploiting the works already built; build a number of projects in co-operation with international organizations.

For fertilizer: Launch a mass movement to make organic fertilizer, give each hectare of farmland three or four tons of stable manure and green compost and even more in the case of high-yield rice. Get enough chemical fertilizer through State supply or imports financed by local export earnings.

For draught power and work tools: Build and consolidate State tractor stations, sell tractors to co-operatives and production collectives on an experimental basis; rapidly increase the herd of draught buffaloes and oxen, encourage their rearing by individual households, try to fully meet the requirements in hand-tools.

For seeds: Associate efforts by the State, the collectives and the people so as to have good seeds and breeders for various kinds of plants and domestic animals. Build a vast network of seed-breeding stations run by districts, co-operatives and production collectives, with the co-operation of families of co-op members.

Intensify the protection of plants and veterinary service, particularly by helping the people to prevent and combat epidemics, supplying the necessary equipment and medicines, working in a comprehen-

sive and active way and trying to restrict damage to a minimum.

For electricity: Get enough fuel and lubricants, spare parts and make the best use of the Tra Noc power plant, Diesel-powered stations and existing power-transmission lines; at the same time further develop the power-transmission lines and power grid, build more Diesel-powered stations for the Mekong River delta; combat waste and theft in the use of electricity.

For engineering: Build and rearrange the system of workshops from the level of the province to those of the district, commune, co-operative and production collective; devise a clear repartition of work so as to best serve agriculture; stress repair work concerning agricultural machines and implements, the making of hand-tools and improved implements. Develop smithies and carpentries in hamlets, communes, co-operatives and production collectives so as to repair and make current farming tools.

For communications and transport: In the first place bring into full play water transport, build sea and river ports; continue dredging rivers, canals and ports...

Mobilize local manpower and capital to develop rural roads; quickly repair National Highway 4, interprovincial roads 30 and 80.

For building materials: Rapidly develop the making and supply of building materials and pre-fab structures to build more houses and the new countryside. The Ministry of Building must adopt measures to manage stone quarrying so as to have enough stone for building, water conservancy, and other branches; help the provinces, districts and communes build factories to make bricks, tiles and roofing materials.

Promote the mass movement to apply scientific-technical achievements to production and life. Research institutes, colleges and secondary vocational schools must effectively participate in research

and the application of science and technique to production.

For the supply of materials: It must be carried out according to plan and serve production in time. The management and repartition of agricultural materials must be unified in a rational and convenient way for production bases.

Develop facilities for processing food, agricultural and aquatic products, animal feed... Link them to production, transport, consumption and export according to the specific conditions of each locality.

3. Activate the distribution of manpower.

4. Re-adjust circulation and distribution.

5. Develop the export potential of the Mekong River delta.

6. Speed up the re-adjustment of farmland and the transformation of the relations of production.

7. Promote educational, health-care and cultural work, and the building of the countryside.

8. Build and strengthen the district echelon while consolidating the commune.

9. Speed up the training of cadres.

For the guidance of execution: The directive clearly says: The various branches of activity and localities must actively co-operate with one another. The branches concerned must include in their plans activities in support of agriculture in the Mekong River delta, while adopting the necessary measures for the smooth implementation of those plans so as to solve problems efficaciously and in a timely way (with repartition of work among the leading cadres and specialized cadres...)

The localities in the Mekong River delta are especially responsible for the fulfilment of the plan in their area.

The Council of Ministers will strengthen its collective leadership of the development of agriculture in the Mekong River delta.

DEVELOPMENT OF PHU KHANH FISHERIES

After liberation, the aquatic-product branch in Phu Khanh, a coastal province in southern Central Vietnam, was faced with difficulties. Lacking experience in management and with only small investments for new equipment, the total number of fishing boats and engine capacity in late 1980 was reduced by 30% in comparison with 1976. That of sea-going boats, 250 in 1975, was reduced to 80 in 1973. Organisation also suffered from lack of experience, and output in 1978 was only a little over 50% that of 1976.

In early 1979, the Party and People's Committees of the province decided to quickly restore the fisheries by reorganizing production, with the State sector as the core, and by developing the collectivized forces of production such as co-operatives and production groups.

Over the past three years, while raising the capacity of the State enterprises, this branch has

organised 10 co-operatives and 120 production groups. At present, 3,340 men, and more than 1,300 motorboats with a total engine power of more than 7,400 h.p., serve production.

Boat repairing and building were pushed forward, too. By late 1981, Phu Khanh had 1 State enterprise, 4 co-operatives and 5 production groups for repairing and building fishing boats. These workshops can build 150 new boats of from 10 to 140 h.p. per year. The province has encouraged them to restore old machines and provided them with timber for boat building. Thanks to this, over the past three years, 70 more fishing boats have been put into operation.

For the raising of marine plants and animals, the province has organised 4 co-operatives and 10 production groups which manage more than 300 hectares of ponds and lagoons.

Output is increasing. In 1979, in the whole province, 28,400 tons of marine products were obtained i.e. 105% of the plan. In 1980, it

increased to 29,750 tons, surpassing by 18% the target of the plan — an increase of 4.1% over the previous year.

In 1981, when fuel provided by the State was halved and materials were reduced by 30% compared with the previous year, Phu Khanh still obtained 34,280 tons of marine products, an increase of 15% over 1980.

Applying the new policies of the State and the Party, Phu Khanh follows adequate rules in buying marine products from fishermen: fixed prices, procurement of goods, mutually agreed upon prices, buying also processed products. So, 8,850 tons of marine products of various kinds were obtained in 1979, 9,370 tons in 1980 (20% over and above the plan) 10,170 tons in 1981 (50.6% over and above the plan, an increase of 8.5% in comparison with the previous year).

Besides enlarging the State-run processing facilities, this branch has encouraged co-operatives, production groups and individuals to process their catches: salting, drying, or preliminary processing before transferring to the State enterprises. Advanced techniques are applied. In 1981, shrimps were frozen on board the boats, so that the value of the catch doubled in comparison with processing them on land. Good overall successes have been obtained: 30% over and above the plan in 1979, 45% in 1980, 120% in 1981.

In 1982, the aquatic-products branch in Phu Khanh plans to obtain 35,000 tons of products and buy another 15,000 tons from fishermen, an increase of 47.5% in comparison with 1981. The raising of marine animals and plants will involve 5,242 hectares and result in 550 tons of products.

«APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY» IN A RESEARCH INSTITUTE

During its 26 years of existence, the Communications Technology Institute of the Ministry of Communications and Transport, set up in 1956, has solved many important problems. It has a staff of 350 technicians including 18 candidate doctors of science, 200 engineers, 132 skilled workers and laboratory assistants, divided into three groups:

- The scientific and technical group, studying basic technical problems with the aim of determining orientations.

- The project group, studying communications works such as bridges, roads and wharves.

- The engineering group, studying problems relating to the use of the means of communications.

The goal of the Institute is to seek to apply scientific and technical achievements to communications and transport.

During the war against the Americans, it actively contributed to the maintenance of communications by studying various types of pontoon bridges and cable suspension bridges, the methods for assembling and disassembling them rapidly to avoid detection by enemy planes; combined ways of transport; and

devices helping vehicles to move on muddy and slippery roads; quick repair of roads after bombings.

After the reunification of the country the Institute has devoted its efforts to solving problems regarding rural communications and application of technical progress made in the world to the conditions of Vietnam.

Under French rule, the Vietnamese countryside, occupying 90% of the territory, did not have any road network. In many regions, the villages were isolated from each other like lonely islands. Any roads that existed were mere potholed tracks, dusty in the dry season and swampy in the rainy part of the year.

To build a road network in keeping with economic development, the Institute has studied the construction of roads with local materials and the application of building technique suited to the materials available in each region: clay mixed with sand or laterite gravel, strengthened with slag from brick-kilns and broken bricks.

The Vietnamese countryside is in many places crisscrossed by irrigation ditches and canals and the con-

struction of bridges is also an important subject of study at the Institute. Many suspension bridges have been built over these canals. In order to alleviate the need for imported materials, the Institute has studied the construction of suspension bridges with bamboo and rattan which are plentiful in many regions. It has designed a model of bridge made of bamboo-reinforced concrete which can stand the weight of lorries and tractors. Bridges built ten years ago with these materials are still in good condition.

Thanks to the construction of roads and bridges with local materials, villages in both the plains and mountain regions are now linked together by an extensive communications network.

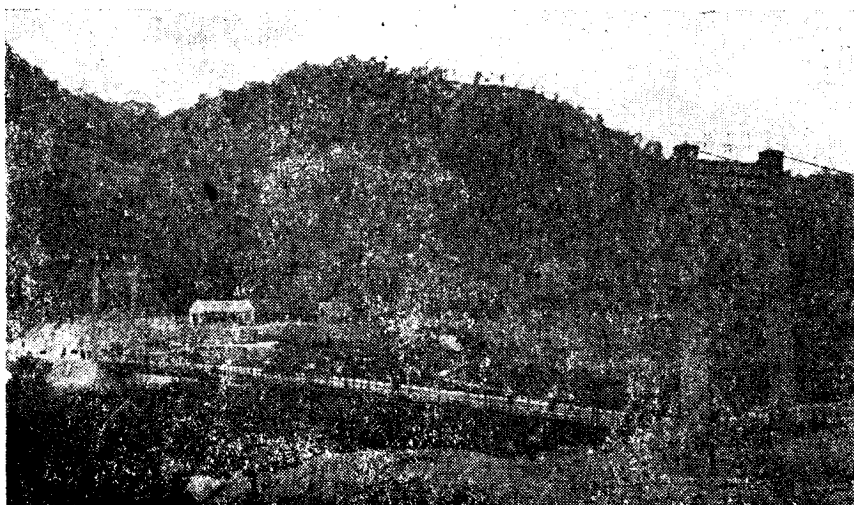
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In the application of world technology to our communications system, the Institute attaches great importance to the construction of suspension bridges as it suits conditions in Vietnam and cuts expenses. Over ten such bridges have been built in Nam Dinh City, Phung (near Hanoi), Bao Nhai (Hoang Lien Son province), Ha Giang and Ben Hai.

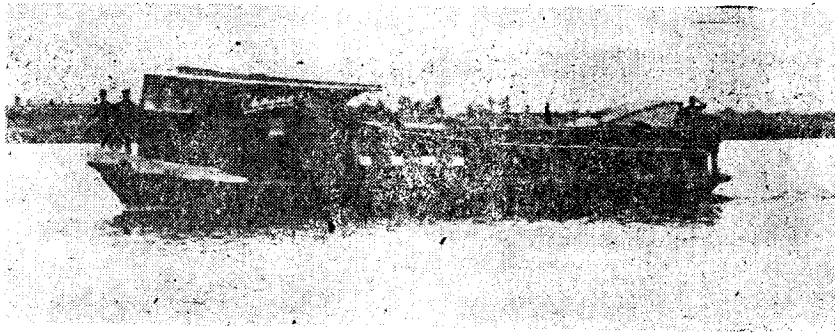
The average span of suspension bridges in Vietnam is usually only about 200 metres, compared with 1,000 metres in developed countries. It is worth noting, however, that the Institute has successfully solved the problem of bridge stability, a most important one in a country which is frequently visited by typhoons.

With regard to the construction of prestressed concrete bridges, in the 1970's, Vietnam built twenty bridges of this kind with spans of from 60 to 100 metres. Actual practice proves that Vietnam is fully capable of building all kinds of prestressed concrete bridges.

Another outstanding achievement of the Institute is its successful study of the technique of reinforcing concrete with wire netting and bamboo lattice. Using this method we can build sea-going vessels bigger than the 30-ton wooden junks made with the traditional technique. The Institute has



A 100-metre suspension bridge in Bao Nhai (Hoang Lien Son province).



An 80-place boat built with wire, netting-reinforced concrete.

Photos: Courtesy The Communications Technology Institute.

designed 30-ton bamboo-reinforced concrete boats which have been operating normally since 1977. For this, it received a prize at the Vietnam National Exhibition of Innovation and the Moscow Exhibition of Innovation by the Youth in 1981. At present, the Institute is studying the use of bamboo-reinforced concrete for building 50-ton boats and wide-spanned vaulted roofs for conference halls, and wire netting-reinforced concrete for petrol storage tanks: These tanks are built with two walls, leaving a space in between which is filled with water whose pressure helps prevent petrol leakage.

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During the successive wars, roads in Vietnam were either destroyed to prevent their use by the enemy or quickly enlarged for our own military purposes. Generally speaking they are in bad repair. Of a total of 35,000 kilometres of roads, only 5,000 kilometres are tar-macadamized. At present, even high-grade roads in the South have declined in quality.

Speaking of the application of technical progress to road building in the conditions of Vietnam, Nguyen Xuan Dao, candidate doctor of science and head of the Roadway Department at the Institute, told us that his department has successfully solved two major problems.

The first is to surface roads with an inorganic binding substance made of pazzolana found in great quantity in Vietnam (Red River delta, Bim Son, Nghe Tinh, Hue, Nghia Binh, Ba Ria, Central High-

lands...) or of slag and ash from thermo-power plants (Uong Bi, Ninh Binh, Pha Lai...). While the surfacing of every square metre of roadway requires 10 kilograms of tar, the use of an inorganic binding substance would reduce this quantity to 2.5—3 kilograms per square metre. The road running along the To Lich river on the outskirts of Hanoi, built with financial help from UNESCO and covered with pazzolana, is still in good repair after four years.

The second subject is to cover the road surface with bituminous mortar. The Roadway Department has produced a tar grout from an acid clay emulsion which helps save much tar (only 1.5 kilogram of tar used per square metre of roadway). In the conditions of Vietnam, this technique is most appropriate as the materials used can be found on the spot, and the solidity of the road foundation is assured. This tar grout is used in combination with tar concrete in road building.

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As in other developing countries, motor traffic has increased rapidly in Vietnam and the road network can hardly catch up with it. To solve this contradiction, it is necessary, either to expand the road system or to bring traffic under control. For the time being, the latter work is urgent. For this purpose, we must gather data from various sources and forward them to a control centre. This is the work of the Electronic Research Department. Engineer Nguyen Phuc

Cuong, the head of this office, let us know that in the past few years, his department has solved many important problems: setting up an information network to control and regulate river traffic; installing a radio network to control rail traffic; equipping sea-going vessels with tele-communication devices. As some Vietnamese sea-going ships are equipped with ground apparatuses, the department has to solve such problems as broadcasting on the surface of the sea, fighting against corrosion by sea water and vibration caused by sea waves.

The Electronic Research Department also built an experimental industrial television circuit at Haiphong port.

Its prime concern is the application of progress in electronics to control and regulation work, first and foremost the building of a data collecting, analysing and forwarding system.

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To study the application of technology suited to Vietnam's conditions is the reason behind the successful work of the Communications Technology Institute. It has established close relationships with its foreign counterparts.

Associate Professor and Candidate Doctor of Science Pham Huu Phuoc, head of the Institute, informs us that his office has regular contacts with the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and many Western countries. It is co-operating with its Soviet counterparts in many studies, including those relating to the building of the Thang Long bridge in Hanoi.

It is also co-operating with French institutes in the treatment of weak earth foundations in the Mekong River delta and in the building of the road linking Ho Chi Minh City to Can Gio.

It has received equipment from many countries, particularly a deflectograph given by the Association of Vietnamese Residents in France.

The achievements recorded by the Institute are partly due to these friendly relations and this co-operation and assistance.

VU HUNG

NOTES ON ETHNIC GROUPS IN TAY NGUYEN

Tay Nguyen (the Central Highlands) includes the three provinces of Gialai—Kontum, Dac Lac and Lam Dong: it has a great strategic importance, faces a bright economic future and presents a great interest for ethnographers.

The ethnic groups who have been living for a long time in the Central Highlands present almost the same economic, social and cultural characteristics. They can be classed into three ethnolinguistic communities occupying three historico-ethnological areas.

The North Bahnar community composed of the Bahnar, Sedang, Jehtrieng and Romam ethnic groups living on the Plateaux of Pleiku and Kontum, now forming Gialai — Kontum province;

The Malayo-Polynesian group (Giarai, Ede, Chura and Raglai) living on Dac Lac Plateau, now Dac Lac province;

The South Bahnar group, including the Kohor, Ma, M'ngong and S'rieng, living on Lam Vien and Djiring plateaux, now Lam Dong province.

Below is a brief description of the traditional societies of the ethnic minorities living in the Central Highlands and their fundamental features.

Brief History

Although from the geographical point of view, the Central Highlands is quite isolated from the surrounding regions, it has not only been the scene of local

upheavals, but has also been torn by conflicts between alien forces.

Basing ourselves on archaeological and folkloric data we can presume that the first inhabitants of the Central Highlands are no longer in existence. They were short and dark-complexioned men, often referred to in the legends of the autochthons and could have the same origin as the Adaman, Senoi, Semang now living on the coasts of Malaysia and southern Thailand.

The ancestors of the ethnic groups now living in the Central Highlands presumably came from the coastal plains and the North under pressure of feudal Champa. Those belonging to the Mon-Khmer linguistic group were akin to the people of the Viet-Muong linguistic group and lived in the Central Highlands as early as the Stone and Bronze Ages (some millennia ago). People of the Malayo-Polynesian linguistic group separated the Mon-Khmer linguistic group into the North Bahnar and South Bahnar groups by occupying the Dac Lac Plateau and part of the Pleiku Plateau. The ethnic groups living in the Central Highlands were caught in endless territorial disputes among themselves and also in larger conflicts between Phu Nam and Lam Ap states, then between Chan Lap and Champa.

In the 12th century, the war between Chan Lap and Champa was getting particularly fierce. At first, Champa was defeated. In

1149 King Jaya Harivarman, also known as Che Berebut, drove Chan Lap troops out of Champa and in the wake of his victory occupied the Central Highlands. This occupation was to last 300 years. Basing ourselves on existing vestiges, we can affirm that almost all the northeastern part of Gialai—Kontum province and part of Lam Dong province were under Cham domination, while Dac Lac Plateau and Pleiku Plateau of the Ede and Giarai, under the authority of King Water (Mtao Pui) and King Fire (Mtao Ta), were considered vassals of Champa. At that time the Khmer did their best to broaden their influence to the Stieng area and wrangled with the Cham over the Ma region. In the 16th century when Champa began to decline, the Khmer re-established their relations with King Water and King Fire while the Lao occupied the northeastern part of Kontum and advanced into the basin of the Serepok river. After threatening the Central Highlands for many centuries, at the beginning of the 19th century, the Siamese empire occupied it, committed bloody mass massacres and caused extensive population movements. They carried out merciless plunder and like the Cham, their predecessors, compelled the Central Highlanders to pay exorbitant taxes and tributes such as elephant tusks, rhinoceros horns, amber, sandalwood... They confiscated elephants, horses, and obliged each placer miner to deliver each year 5—8 grains of gold (the size of a paddy grain).

This Siamese occupation resulted in a massive migration from the Central Highlanders, particularly by the Bahnar and Ba Lang (part of the Bahnar group). The very existence of the Ede and Giarai was also in jeopardy.

Disastrous for the Central Highlanders was the establishment of a slave-market in Bangkok. The Siamese captured slaves from the Central Highlands and brought them back to their country via Attopeu and Phnom Penh, while slave-hunting gangs were very active in the three-frontier region. This created great disturbances on the life of the people in the Central Highlands, stimulated

military organization in their primitive societies and prolonged the internecine feuds between the various tribes.

The influence of the Viet community in the Central Highlands came much later reaching its climax with the uprising of the Tay Son peasants led by the Viet national hero, Nguyen Hue. In the second half of the 18th century, the Tay Son leaders persuaded the chieftains of the Bahnar, Sedang and Giarai tribes to join in the war against the Siamese aggressors in the South and against the Chinese invaders in the North. But the Tay Son rule was a very short one and brought no notable

reform to the life of the Central Highland tribes who had supported it. However, they left profound memories which are recorded in folk tales, particularly among the Bahnar. After overthrowing the Tay Son, the Nguyen Kings set up their Court at Hue, imposed their rule on the Central Highlands and King Water and King Fire became their vassals. In the middle of the 19th century, both the Ede and Giarai Kingdoms broke up.

In 1849, ten years before invading Vietnam, the French colonialists began the occupation of the Central Highlands and gradually extended their domination. They grabbed land to set up plantations and build urban centres, preached Catholicism and kindled tribal wars among the various ethnic minorities. Uprisings by Central Highlanders against French rule broke out repeatedly, the most famous of which being the No Trang Long and Xam Bram movements. As late as 1945, there were still regions which had remained outside French control, such as the tri-border area and the region around Mount Ngoc Linh inhabited by the Jehtrieng and Sedang.

The wars of resistance, against the French from 1945 to 1954, then against the Americans from 1955 to 1975, again caused great turmoil in the Central Highlands: almost all the inhabitants of enemy-occupied zones were penned up in "strategic hamlets" or forcibly taken to urban centres. In the anti-American war in particular, bombings and sprayings of toxic chemicals by the Americans seriously aggravated the situation.

Only after the complete liberation of southern Vietnam has life in the Central Highlands been gradually stabilized.



A village festival in Kontum.

Photo: NHU KHUE

New Distribution of Population

In 1977 and 1978, there was an important demographic movement in the Central Highlands: the people who had been penned up in concentration camps under the US-puppet regime all at once returned to their native villages. This led to a return to the population distribution of the forties, except for the urban centres and industrial bases.

There are two forms of population settlement in the Central Highlands: concentration and interspersion.

The first form can be seen in regions inhabited by the major ethnic groups: Bahnar, Ede, Giarai, Sedang and Ma. They were deeply conscious of the existence of their territories and were prone to encroach upon the land of other peoples. Today in Gialai—Kontum province the Bahnar live in an area stretching from Kom Plong district, southeast of Kontum town, to Mang Giang and An Khe districts in the north and northeast and extending to the western districts of Nghia Binh and Phu Khanh provinces. In their expansion to the north and southwest the Giarai people living south of Pleiku Plateau and north of Dac Lac Plateau have created such sub-groups as the Arap, Chon, Hbau, Tbuon... The Ede who emigrated to the west and southwest tended to assimilate groups close to the Mnong such as Bih, and the Giarai such as Mthur, Blo, Krung, Chru... Though their territory has shrunk a great deal, the Ma still occupy the whole Blao region on Di Linh Plateau.

The second form of settlement is met in borderland and regions difficult of access. Here, villages (*play* or *buon*) of different ethnic groups or sub-groups live near each other, sometimes linked by

alliance and matrimonial ties. No village, however, has a mixed population as in the mountainous regions of Viet Bac, Tay Bac, Thanh Hoa and Nghe Tinh. But one may see interspersed communities belonging to two or three groups or sub-groups, such as the Mthur (Jorai) and Hroi (Cham) in Krong Pa district, Gialai—Kontum province, the Giarai and Bahnar in Mang Giang district, Gialai—Kontum province, the Kohor and Mnong in Lam Dong province... A mingling of races is taking place in many regions between such ethnic groups as the Jehtrieng and Sedang, Ma and Kohor, Ede and Giarai, Hre and Bahnar, Giarai and Cham. Here appear intermediary elements who can be classified in one ethnic group or another. For instance, the Chic sub-group, belonging to the Mnong group, in some places identifies itself with the Kohor group; the Bih sub-group in the Ede ethnic group shows many Mnong features; the Tatrech sub-group, which considers itself as belonging to the Jehtrieng, can also be classified in the Sedang group; the Mthur sub-group is classified, depending on the localities, either in the Ede group or Giarai group. The Arap sub-group, near Kontum town, belongs to the Giarai group, but has definitely been under the influence of the Bahnar group unless it has had Bahnar origin. At present the Churu comprises two sub-groups, one speaking a Mon-Khmer language, the other, a Malayo-Polynesian language. Clearly it was subjected to a division in the course of its history.

Formerly, this differentiation was generalized and affected even the most powerful groups such as the Bahnar, Jehtrieng, Sedang, Ede, Giarai, Mnong, Ma. Take the Sedang group for example. Owing

to pressure from many sides and in many periods, the Sedang were compelled to live on mountain peaks between Dakto district and Kon Plong district in Gialai—Kontum province, and were divided into many sub-groups, each having its own characteristics: the Mnam were adept at growing wet rice, the Todrah at working metals, the Seteng in combat and hunting, the Halang were experienced placer miners. The Ka Dong sub-group was split into smaller groups under the cultural influence of neighbouring ethnic groups.

We must also mention the Viet community which is becoming an important group in the Central Highlands. The first Vietnamese came here in the second half of the 18th century and settled in present An Khe district. They were followed by another group who lived in Krong Pa. In the middle of the 19th century, the first French missionaries set foot in what was to become Kontum town and attracted Viet Catholics fleeing persecution by the Nguyen Court. At the beginning of the 20th century Viet people came to the Central Highlands in ever greater numbers. They settled in urban centres and along the main roads, worked as farmers, traders, public servants, and cleared virgin land. Between World War I and World War II, their number increased rapidly, accounting for nearly half the population of the Central Highlands. After the reunification of Vietnam in 1975-76 and following the new distribution of population which was planned to meet the requirements of socialist construction, Viet people have been encouraged to come and settle there. They exert a positive influence on the development of this strategically important region in all fields—economic, political,

cultural and social. The Viet language, the common language of the whole country, serves as medium in relations among the various ethnic groups, who also keep their own languages.

Traditional Economic Features

Agriculture is the principal economic activity of the peoples living in the Central Highlands. Due to lack of superficial water and the impossibility for them to draw water from great depths, the local population cannot build irrigation works; they grow crops in dry fields, burnt-out clearings, and gardens. In the regions where the inhabitants (Giarai, Ede, Bahnar and Ma) have been able to use seasonal rain water to grow rice, farming is more stable and they have acquired some skill in their use of hand-tools and pre-industrial farming techniques.

The use of the hoe is generalized: the tool show many improved versions, clods of earth are upturned and exposed to the sun during the winter, fields are weeded—all this has made it possible for the people to obtain relatively high productivity and to live in concentrated patterns in *buon* (village) and *play*. The use of ploughshare and buffalo has only been recently introduced, perhaps because in the old society, the buffalo was only used in ritual sacrifices and as a unit for reckoning in barter. In the regions where rice is grown on hill slope burnt-out clearings, the inhabitants can now lead a sedentary or semi-sedentary life thanks to crop rotation. Both dry and wet rice was formerly threshed by hand. Rotation of crops is intensively practised. The revenue from gardens is an important source of income for satisfying many requirement of daily life.

Animal husbandry (poultry and pigs) is not separated from crop cultivation. Cattle raising, formerly

most developed, was seriously affected by thirty years of war and has only begun to be restored. Horses and elephants, formerly used extensively in transport, have almost disappeared. Hunting is most developed, both for protecting crops and as a martial art. Fishing is insignificant. Gathering of forest products is not so developed a practice as in the regions north of the Truong Son range. There is evidence that the first division of social labour (the separation between crop growing and animal husbandry) has not been thoroughly carried out. Handicrafts have since long been side-occupations in this agrarian region. They turn out articles needed by an autarkic economy and the surplus can be used for barter. Worthy of note are metal working, weaving and pottery. But their technical level is lower than in the highland regions of the North. *The second division of labour, in which handicrafts were separated from agriculture, has proceeded very slowly.*

The goods produced by handicrafts and other economic activities are exchanged among the various villages and between the Central Highlands and other regions. As each community cannot be fully autarkic, exchange of products is of prime importance. The goods encompass a relative wide range and may come from as far as the plains of Central Vietnam and even from neighbouring countries—Burma, Thailand, Laos and Kampuchea, but in not very large quantities. Barter usually takes place over a period of two or three months after the winter harvest. Traditional societies in the Central Highlands have left no trace of money, even cowrie shells (*causis moneta*) so widely used in ancient Southeast Asia. Some articles were used as tender in barter, such as gong, jar, copper pot, textile, elephant, buffalo, pig... All transactions were conducted through middlemen coming from other

regions. *The third division of labour resulting in the appearance of traders did not take place.* The class of local traders was born only under French rule and developed under the US-puppet regime. It included also peasants who had left their rural communities to settle in urban centres.

The tribal economy in the Central Highlands bore a natural and autarkic character; in all villages the family was the economic unit. The family members strictly observed the natural division of labour according to sex and age. Non-specialization led to waste of manpower and materials and stagnation in production.

Organization of Society and Family

By the end of the 19th century, the people living in the Central Highlands were still in the period of transition from the primitive commune to a class society, which Engels called "The period of military democracy". Some tribes set up a primitive form of State, the most remarkable of which were the Hoa Xa and Thuy Xa Kingdoms in the region inhabited by the Ede and Giarai peoples and recorded in history as having existed from the 16th century to the middle of the 19th century. At the end of the 19th century, in the regions peopled by the Ede, Giarai, Bahnar and Mnong, there still existed powerful chieftains who ruled over 5—7 villages, and in some regions like Ayan Pa, there were alliances of Giarai villages with a rudimentary administrative apparatus. However, by the beginning of the 20th century there was no longer any regular administrative organization bigger than a village, which became the only socio-political organization for all the ethnic groups. Villages existed separately, and consciousness of being member of an ethnic group or sub-group mainly came

as a result of identity of culture. The villages were no more kinship communities. Villagers were not bound by kinship ties but belonged to the same group or sub-group and lived together on a territory having no definite boundaries, a village being ordinarily separated from another by a stretch of ownerless forest which Engels called "neutral protective forest" (Schutzwald)¹. Villages of the same region, either inhabited by the same or different tribes, were ordinarily bound by alliances (matrimonial ties, exchange of goods, organization of common festivals), for defence as well as in plunder. Each village had an elders' council to look after village affairs according to a democratic spirit and a long-standing customary law. It had a common source of water, a common cemetery, a common hunting ground, a common area of land which community members had the right to clear for farming, and a common meeting-place—the "*nha rong*" (communal house) or the reception room in the house of the village head—in which to discuss village affairs, perform religious ceremonies, hold festivals and muster single male villagers into fighting units.

All the villagers were conscious of ownership of the land by the community or individual families. Each family's right of ownership over a piece of farmland was the confirmation of the right of the first land reclaimer within the framework of communal ownership; it was not yet complete private ownership as the families were not allowed to sell or purchase land, or they could only sell to or buy from other members of the commune. When they left the commune they lost even this right. Members of the same family worked and lived together. There were three forms of family organization: dualism (as seen among the Ede, Giarai, Kohor, Chru), semi-matriarchy (as with the Sedang

and Jehtrieng groups) and patriarchy (as among the Bahnar, Ma, Stieng). The families did not have the same size; there were families with a hundred members and those with only a few members. Between the families in the same commune, there was mutual assistance in all respects though they were not all bound by kinship ties. Nobody was left to starve so long as there remained grain in the granaries of others. The right of private ownership was fully asserted only on private belongings and household articles.

In society there was not yet class differentiation but only differences of fortune in the form of non-productive property like gongs, jars, copper pots, buffaloes. Exploitation was only nascent: hiring manpower (paying high wages), lending (at low interest rates), renting animals, having house servants (regarding them as family members), selling slaves (but treating bought slaves as family members). In some regions customs had taken shape, according to which inhabitants of the village or of dependent villages had to do unpaid work for influential men, building houses or farming land, or insolvent debtors had to work as slaves to their creditors.

The *mdrong* and *mtao* — chieftains, who had authority over many villages, possessed great wealth, and commanded hundreds of warriors whose exploits were extolled in long epics — could not yet be regarded as slave-owners or feudal lords; they sought to raise their prestige and power more by political or military means than by exploiting the labour of others. With regard to the *kra play* or *khua bon*, or village chiefs, they directly took part in production and gained prestige first and foremost through the services they rendered to their villages, their familiarity with local customs and habits, great experience in farming. They had only a

few privileges, mostly in the spiritual field, and administered their villages by relying on customary law based on consensus. The Central Highlands being torn by conflicting alien powers, the military organization characteristic of the disintegrating primitive commune was consolidated and prolonged. Constantly threatened by religious wars ("blood hunting" in north Gialai-Kontum) and by plunder of property and seizure of slaves, the villages were defended by hedges, traps, and spikes, and their few gates were carefully guarded. Young warriors gathered at night in the *nha rong* (communal house) and all male villagers stood ready for combat as well as for production. Warriors were held in great esteem and their exploits sung in legends. Hard living conditions and continual killings threatened the smaller and weaker communities with extermination.

Cultural Features

Students of the Central Highlands unanimously agree that the cultures of the ethnic groups living there present many features that are typical of the ancient civilization of mainland Southeast Asia. However, the name of "South Asian Culture" they have given it may create confusion with the Indian Culture. This culture is that of a primitive agrarian population living in a nascent class society with characteristics derived from its existence in a tropical monsoon region. This culture as seen in the Central Highlands is different from that observed in other regions of Vietnam, but presents close similarities to the customs and habits of the ancestors of the Viet people as shown in studies of the Dong Son Culture, although of course with some difference: in the Central Highlands, hunting is more prevalent than fishing and wet rice is not grown extensively as in the

delta. With regard to the common features, let us mention: the T-shaped loin-cloth, the open skirt (made of a piece of cloth not joined at the ends), the poncho and the blanket wrapped across the chest, the house on stilts with carved roof, the tall *nha rong* (communal house), the habits of betel chewing and tooth-filing, the buffalo-sticking ceremony, the legends about the origin of the people, about Mtao Pui's and Mtao Ea's swords, about the *yang* (deities); the "thunder", "new rice" ceremonies, the belief in the "soul of rice", the agricultural calendar, the worship of various *yang*: the spirits of the "thunder-bolt", the banyan tree, the kapok tree, etc., the use of various common musical instruments. All these characteristics common to the Central Highlanders suggest that this part of our country is a repository of vestiges of the ancient indigenous culture of the peoples living on the Indochinese peninsula.

This common culture presents nevertheless many aspects which make it possible to divide the Central Highlands into three cultural regions: the north, centre and south. The northern part contains the greatest number of elements of the ancient culture which is akin to that of the ancient Viet. In the southern region the people, although having the same Mon-Khmer origin as those living in the northern region, have been greatly influenced by Khmer and Cham cultures. In the central part, the population of Malayo-Polynesian origin, though living in dense settlements, was subjected to heavy influence of

the continental culture, and the original "sea" elements subsist only in the boat-shaped houses in epics depicting naval battles, and in vestiges of totemism and the matriarchal regime. The differences are not great because in ancient times, Southeast Asia had a common civilization. Those minor particularities, however, assume great importance as they help fixing the ethnic identity of each group and even of each village.

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The August 1945 Revolution brought about a turning point in the development of the ethnic groups living in the Central Highlands, aroused their national consciousness, and at the same time instilled into them the awareness of belonging to the Vietnamese nation. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, they have actively taken part in the war of resistance against the French, then against the Americans, while gradually building a new life for themselves. For the first time in history perpetual feuding between the various villages came to an end and broad unity welded them together in the fight against the common enemy. At present Party organizations have been set up in the remotest villages, and are leading the people in building local administrations which operate in close coordination with State power in the whole country in which minority ethnic groups are represented at all levels. The villages in the Central Highlands

no longer live in isolation from one another and from the rest of the country. The traditional societies there, disrupted by the French and the US-puppet administrations, are now being restored along socialist lines. Work-exchange teams and agricultural co-operatives have taken ethnic minorities to the collective path, and made it possible for them to use new farming techniques: building water reservoirs, and irrigation works; expanding the area of wet rice, tilling their fields using ploughs and buffaloes (instead of hoes) and even tractors; replacing old rice varieties by high-yield strains, using fertilizers, developing animal husbandry and fish rearing... Schools, hospitals, cultural houses are mushrooming. Intellectuals and workers of ethnic minority origin are being trained and educated. The triple revolution — revolution in the relations of production, cultural and ideological revolution, and scientific and technological revolution, the last-named being the kingpin — is taking place in the Central Highlands. Here the most backward ethnic groups in the country are progressing from the disintegrating primitive commune to socialism while being encouraged to preserve their ethnic identity and cultural characteristics.

DANG NGHIEM VAN

1. F. Engels: *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*; Editions Sociales, Paris 1954, p. 146.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS⁽¹⁾ AND PRINCIPAL LOCAL GROUPS⁽²⁾

(This table is based on the nomenclature of Vietnamese ethnic groups issued by the General Department of Statistics according to Decision No. 121 TCTK/PPCL of June 2, 1979)

Order	Name of ethnic group	Other names of the group	Principal local groups	Area of settlement in the Central Highlands	Area of settlement outside the Central Highlands
I. SOUTH ASIA (MON-KHMER GROUPS)					
1	Bahnar	Bahnar (Roh, Konkde, Alakong, Kpangkong Bonam)	Golar, To To, Grolong, (Ylang), Krem, Rongao, Van Canh	Gialai-Kontum	Nghia Binh, Phu Khanh
2	Sedang	Sedang (Conlan, Kmrang, Brila Katang (3))	Xoteng, Totrah, Monam, Hailang, Kadong	Gialai-Kontum	Quang Nam — Da Nang
3	Kohor	Koho	Sre, Nop (Tulop), Chil (4), Kadon (Codon), Lat Trang	Lam Dong	Thuan Hai, East Kampuchea
4	Mnong	Monong	Gar, Kil (Chil) (5) Prah, Rlam, Di Pri, Bunor, Mong, Lat (5), Biat, Bu Dang, Kuenh	Dac Lac, Lam Dong	Song Be, East Kampuchea
5	Jehtrieng	Giang Ray, Treng, Ta Rieng, Katung (3)	Gie Trieng (Tarieng) Vo, Lave, Banoong	Gia Lai-Kontum	Quang Nam — Da Nang, Laos
6	Ma	Cho Ma (Chau Ma)	Ngan, Xop, To, Krung	Lam Dong	Dong Nai
7	Stieng			Lam Dong	Song Be, East Kampuchea
8	Rmam			Gialai-Kontum	East Kampuchea
II. SOUTH ASIAN LINGUISTIC BRANCH (MALAYO-POLYNESIAN GROUP)					
9	Giarai	Jorai, Giorai, Jarai	Chor (Phun), Hdrung, Arap, Hdrung, Arap, Mdhur (Mthur) (6) Thuan, Hbau	Dac Lac	
10	Ede	De, hade (Rahde)	Kpa, Adham, Krung, Mdhur (6) Ktul, Dliehue, Bih, Hah. Blo, Krao, Dong Kay, Dong Mak, Ening, Arul, Hwingl, Kmun, Ktle, Kdung, Epan, Ktu	Dac Lac	Phu Khanh

Notes

1. The Central Highlands comprise three provinces: Gialai — Kontum, Dac Lac and Lam Dong.
2. Not counting Vietnamese and other minority people having recently moved in from the North.
3. Katang: Vague denomination for several ethnic groups living along the Vietnam — Laos frontier, in the provinces of Binh Tri Thien, Quang Nam — Da Nang and Gialai — Kontum.
4. Chil: Members of a Mnong Chil group in Dac Lac who have migrated to the South, where they now live among and identify themselves with the Kohor.
5. Lat: Intermediary group between the Mnong and Kohor, calling themselves Mnong when living in a Mnong region, and Kohor when living in a Kohor region.
6. Mdhur or Mthur: Intermediary group between the Ede and Giarai, closer to the former than to the latter. The Mdhur in Gialai — Kontum now call themselves Jarai.

THE PROBLEM OF MEDICAMENTS IN VIETNAM

After thirty years of war devastation, one of the major concerns of the Vietnamese health service is how to meet the people's demands in preventive and curative medicaments. Difficulties abound in the production and distribution of medicaments. Before a developed chemical industry can be set up, supply of antibiotics and other medicines would fall considerably behind demand if we were to rely solely on the existing pharmaceutical factories. As in most developing countries, Vietnam still imports a large quantity of medicaments but even so, it cannot meet the needs of the whole country both in terms of quantity and variety in view of the limited foreign exchange available. In such conditions, the medical resources of the country itself should provide the most realistic answer to the medicaments problem.

For many years now wild medicinal plants have accounted for 55-60% of the purchases made by the State-run pharmacies in the country. But the question remains how to make regeneration and conservation of resources keep pace with exploitation. In most cases, the yields have remained low and widespread waste threatens exhaustion of many medicinal resources. Plans are afoot for a

better coordination between the health and forestry services, e.g. in the working out of concrete steps ranging from zoning to the adoption of a plan for the rational exploitation and effective protection of such medicinal herbs as *sa nhan* (*Amomum xanthioides* Wall), *kim anh* (*Rosa laevigata* Michx), *kim ngan* (*Lonicera japonica* Thunb), *su quan* (*Quisqualis indica* Linn), *dang sam* (*Campanumoea javanica* Blume), *vang dang* (*Fibraurea tinctoria* Lour), *chieu lien* (*Terminalia chebula* Retz). This plan also calls for combining afforestation with the planting of such medicinal plants as *que* (*Cinnamomum cassia* Bl.), *hoang ba* (*Pterocarpus flavus* Lour), *do trong* (*Euonymus cochinchinensis* Pierre), quinine, *ha thu o* (*Polygonum multiflorum* Thunb).

Over the past five years (1976-1981) the area planted with medicinal herbs has increased threefold and so has the value of medicinal substances purchased by the State. The health service has listed 25 kinds of medicinal herbs to be grown on agricultural land and 10 others for forest land. Some are among the main items of Vietnamese pharmacopoeia: *bach chi* (*Angelica dahurica* Benth et Hook), *ruyen khung* (*Ligusticum wallichii* Franch), *bac ha* (peppermint), *que* (*Cinnamomum cassia* Bl.), *dia hoang*

(*Rehmannia glutinosa* (Gaertn), *quy* (*Peucedanum decursivum* Maxim) *bach truat* (*Atractylis macrocephala*), *ich mau* (*Leonurus heterophyllus* Sweet), *hoang ba* (*Pterocarpus flavus* Lour). However, the area of medicinal plants is now only 6,000 hectares, which is obviously too small a proportion of total cultivated area. In the yearly as well as long-term plans we must make medicinal plants part of the district agricultural program. To grow medicinal plants and raise animals yielding medicinal substances must become a branch of the agricultural-industrial economy at district level.

To speedily overcome the shortage of medicaments, the health service has launched a nation-wide campaign for growing and using traditional medicinal plants right at the commune and city ward level and in each family.

The Health Ministry has drawn up a list of 35 main kinds of medicinal plants, prepared formulae for their preparation and prescriptions for their use in the treatment of common ailments. At present, complaints such as the common cold, cough, diarrhoea, allergy, scabies, rheumatism, menstrual disorder...account for 70-80% of the cases attended to at the grassroots health stations. In the majority of cases they can be treated with medicines prepared from herbs obtainable almost anywhere in the country. If each communal health station could set aside one or two hectares for the growing of medicinal plants and each rural family could plant a small patch with such plants with technical guidance from the local medical personnel or experienced practitioners of traditional medicine, there would be enough medicines available for the treatment of common diseases in the commune or ward. The campaign for growing and using medicinal herbs has received warm response from the population in many provinces. Some localities such as Chan Ly and Dai Cuong communes in Ha Nam Ninh province, Quang An commune in Hanoi, Quynh Giang in Nghe Tinh province, have not only produced enough traditional medicines for their own use but also have had some surplus to sell to other localities.

The preparation of medicines from locally available materials has also been given great attention. To date, Vietnam already has 11 pharmaceutical plants at the central level and 47 others at the provincial and city level producing medicaments from materials either

A plot planted with medicinal plants at the Secondary School of Medicine in Phu Khanh province.

Photo: VNA



obtainable in the country or imported, with an annual output comprising 400 million injectable phials, four billion pills or tablets, 500 tons of granulated or powdered medicines and millions of bottles of liquid medicine for the prevention and treatment of common diseases in the country. In the 1981—1985 plan these factories have decided to bring the proportion of medicaments from local materials up to 35-40% at the centrally-run factories and 80-90% at the local factories. Even now the pharmaceutical factories in Hai Hung, Nghia Binh, Thanh Hoa and Vinh Phu provinces are using local materials in the proportion of 80-90% in the production of medicines. To expand the medicinal resources, many districts have set up their own pharmaceutical workshops processing materials supplied by the communes. The products are sold in priority to these communes in convenient forms such as pills, tablets or liquid in bottles. It has been demonstrated that the production of medicaments by the district pharmacies is more economical than by the communal health stations.

But even with the increasing procurement of medicines from locally obtainable materials, the total quantity of drugs available, including imports, still falls far short of demand. That is why, priority in the supply of medicaments still goes to patients under treatment at hospitals, then to outpatients with prescriptions issued by hospitals. The second principle is to supply indispensable medicaments in priority to workers and cadres in the mining areas and industrial centres. The third principle is to ensure adequate supply of medicines for common illnesses among the population. The medical service has also set aside the necessary amount of medicaments for the prevention of epidemics, for the army, and for areas stricken by natural disasters. A comprehensive network for medicament distribution has been formed throughout the country including district pharmacies, dispensaries attached to the consulting rooms, and counters in convenient places. In addition, there are the medicine chests of the communal and ward health stations, funded by the population themselves.

With regard to medicaments used in the treatment of social diseases such as tuberculosis, leprosy and malaria and mental illness, and in the birth control program, they are supplied through the specialised health stations or teams.

NGUYEN VAN DAN

Vietnam Advances

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS

The 17th annual information of Vietnamese archaeologists, held in Hanoi in September last, was attended by over 200 professors, associate-professors, researchers and instructors of archaeology, history, geology, ethnology and museology. One hundred and forty-two papers were presented concerning three periods: the Stone Age, Metal Age and feudal period in Vietnam. This is an eloquent proof of archaeological activities in our country.

Many concern the Paleolithic. Let us point out in particular the excavations made in Nguon cave (Than Sa commune, Vo Nhai district, Bac Thai province). The stone artifacts are very important: nearly ten thousand implements, particularly those made of stone fragments. There are also bones and teeth of fossil animals, among them a jaw bone of the Pongo found nearly intact; they are all useful for the study of the Paleolithic and the "pebble" tradition in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. The cultural layer comprises three strata, the upper one, dubbed Hoa Binh, marking the transition to the Meso and Neolithic.

The Son Vi group has been enriched by new sites, chiefly around the town of Yen Bai (Duy Loc, Gioi Phien, Hong Ha) and in Ba Vi district (Hanoi).

A series of sites belonging to the Neolithic have been excavated along

the coastline, from Quang Ninh to Binh Tri Thien: Vuon Hoa (Quang Ninh), Ang Giua and Cai Beo caves (Hai Phong), Bao Thanh (Nghe Tinh), Con Nen (Binh Tri Thien). They give a more precise idea of the "littoral" Neolithic in Vietnam.

The Metal Age continues to attract the attention of our archaeologists. New sites have been probed (Yen Viet in Ha Bac province; the sepulchre at Go Bun, in Vinh Phu province); others thoroughly excavated (Dong Khoi, Hoa Loc, in Thanh Hoa province; Xuan La in Ha Son Binh province). The fairly abundant artifacts, found at Dong Khoi and Hoa Loc, yield information about the beginnings of the Bronze Age in the valley of the Ma river, many elements of which contributed to the formation of the Dong Son Culture. Keen attention was paid to the Xuan La necropolis located near that of Chau Can which was excavated and made known over ten years ago. Seven dugout-coffins were unearthed, containing a large number of funeral articles, socket axes, scimitars, spades, bronze situlae, double-handle wooden cups and chiefly coins of quite recent date. A well-preserved skull, found in one of the coffins, gives anthropological indication on the local population early in our era.

In the coastal provinces of Central Vietnam, three new sites belonging to the Sa Huynh Culture were found

and excavated. A necropolis was found at Thung Xa, Nghia Binh province. The stone artifacts include hoes and bracelets dating back to the late period of the Sa Huynh Culture. In the Tien Ha and Doi Vang necropolises (in the mountain region of Quang Nam — Da Nang province), recently discovered, there are big funeral urns containing, among other things, terra-cotta vases, irons tools, ornaments made of precious stones.

In the valley of the Dong Nai river, excavations were made at Go Me in Bien Hoa. The stone artifacts are the same as those found at other sites in the province, and include an important finding, the vestiges of a lithophone which recalls that found in Binh Da and well known in scientific circles. This new discovery makes it possible to determine more accurately the date of this original musical instrument.

The collection of bronze drums has been enriched with many specimens of the Heger II type, commonly called "muong drums" and of the Heger I, Dong Son proper, type. Among the latter, let's cite particularly the Co Loa drum (Hanoi) which recalls by its size and beauty that of Ngoc Lu, the best-known specimen to date. The side of the Co Loa drum is also decorated with scenes of life: houses on stilts, men pounding rice, dancers; and its torus, with boats loaded with warriors. Worthy of note is the fact that the drum was used as a container and contains 88 ploughshares, 32 axes, 16 spearheads, many arrowheads, daggers, bronze situlae and particularly, implements made of bronze and iron. This is the richest collection of Dong Son artifacts so far discovered on the site of the ancient capital of King An Duong.

IMPORTANT STATEMENT by Foreign Minister HUN SEN of the People's Republic of Kampuchea

In an interview granted to SPK, the Kampuchean news agency, on Sept., 18, 1982, Hun Sen, Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, declared:

"There are day after day more and more people who have become disillusioned being misled into following the Pol Pot — Ieng Sary — Khieu Samphan clique, and who, having grasped the policy of leniency of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, have returned to the nation and are now enjoying full rights of citizenship.

I wish to reaffirm the policy of the People's Republic of Kampuchea: with regard to those Kampucheans who are still in the ranks of the Pol Pot — Ieng Sary — Khieu Samphan clique, or are collaborating, either directly or indirectly, with them in opposing the revival of the Kampuchean people and in serving the schemes of the Chinese hegemonists, if they now leave the ranks of the Pol Pot — Ieng Sary — Khieu Samphan clique, cease collaborating with them, and respect the Constitution of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, they will be entitled to enjoy their right of citizenship, the right to vote and stand for election in the free general elections as stipulated by the Constitution. Foreign observers will be invited to come and watch the general elections in Kampuchea."

Regarding the feudal period, research has been carried out mainly on the Ly and Tran dynasties (11th-14th centuries). Among the findings are stone thrones in the shape of lotus flowers of the Tran period found at Tra Lam, Hoang Long in Ha Nam Ninh province; a four-storeyed stupa of terra-cotta and a sea-green plate found at Duong Xa (Hanoi); many Vietnamese and Chinese coins of the Tang and Song periods, and even some Japanese coins. These objects are of great interest for the study of the civiliza-

tion of Dai Viet and relations between this country and its neighbours.

In Nam Bo, after many preliminary investigations, we have begun excavations at the famous Oc Eo site in Kien Giang province. Though carried out on a still modest scale, the excavation has yielded many architectural vestiges made of brick and wood, and many sepulchres. The study of these objects makes it possible to better understand the life of the population in the basin of the Mekong River at the beginning of our era.

D.H.

RENAISSANCE IN THE VILLAGE

Much has been said about the Kampuchean peasant's joy of living, a spontaneous, carefree, and expansive feeling shown by people rather pampered by nature and not at all concerned about what may happen to them tomorrow. It was the charm of the traditional society before it was dealt a hard blow by American aggression and then the coup de grâce by the Khmer Rouge. Now, in the communes that have come back to life, one should speak of the joy of revival. The past nightmare is still very much on the minds of the survivors of genocide as they face, not without anguish, the thorny problems of the future.

We left Phnom Penh by way of Pochentong. After passing the airport with its modern and elegant buildings, we entered a desolate region which, according to our guide, used to be quite prosperous. In a landscape of horizontal lines, bristling here and there with a few sugar palms, one could only guess that villages had existed where now clusters of makeshift structures stood, cramped low-roofed huts whose design depended on the kind of materials their owners had been able to collect. In drought-cracked fields, rice seedlings which had been transplanted rather belatedly wilted under the sun. I remembered the no-man's-land left around Hanoi by the French troops after their withdrawal from the North in 1954, or by the Americans in areas close to Saigon in 1975. Here it was made to appear even worse by the inclement weather.

But at Koktrop, some forty kilometres from Phnom Penh, the drought seemed to be less severe. One saw a light-green carpet of young rice crisscrossed by irrigation

canals glittering in the sun. The plumes of sugar palms were seen against an intensely blue sky and in the austere foliage of mangroves the reassuring cooing of turtle-doves could be heard. Along village lanes leading to two pagodas, joyful crowds went to celebrate Prachum Ben, the "Fortnight of the Dead", a traditional festival which for two weeks would turn pagodas throughout the country into scenes of great animation before winding up in each household with a banquet offered to the manes of the ancestors. This year, it falls on the last days of September and is all the more merrily celebrated as it marks the Third Year of the People's Republic.

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Koktrop is only one Kampuchean commune among many, and its population is made up of farmers not in any way distinguishable from millions of others. They are neither pampered by nature like those living on the banks of the Mekong, the Tonle Sap or the Bassac rivers nor weighed down with toil and misery like the inhabitants of certain arid regions of Kompong Speu, Takeo, or Kampot, which we had just driven through.

The head of the commune, Mr Koy Hak, looked the classical Khmer type although rather short of stature and slight of build. The vague smile on his lips was also quite Khmer and shone discreetly on his chocolate-brown face. His glossy black hair was naturally wavy and his forehead was that of an intellectual. This 33-year-old farmer could easily be taken for a village

school-teacher, the more so since he was able to express himself in correct, albeit hesitant, French whenever our interpreter was not there.

"I passed the first part of the *baccalauréat*," he explained, "and so had a smattering of French, but couldn't keep my hand in under Khmer Rouge terror. I survived their genocide but my wife and child didn't."

Immediately after his return to his terribly wrecked native village, Mr Koy Hak together with his fellow-villagers set about rebuilding it. He wanted, in his words, to help bring into existence a new society. He was head of a *krom samaki*, or solidarity team, collectively working the fields, then of a *phum*, or village, before becoming the leader of the *khum*, the commune.

"Our *khum*," he said, "is composed of nine *phum*, consisting of 814 households with a total of 3,234 members. Before Pol Pot came, it comprised 1,008 households with a total of 6,188 members. Since liberation in 1979 there have been 260 births, 25 deaths and a little over 200 weddings. A bit of reckoning will show that the Pol Pot regime killed almost half of the commune's population. I can't yet reckon all the material damage. All houses made of timber or bricks were destroyed. Just providing a temporary shelter, a mere hut, to each of our 814 families called for tremendous efforts, but this has been done."

The head of the *khum* liked precision. He spoke slowly, often stopping to look at his notebook or one of his registers, or to consult,

in a low voice, Mr Ou Cheng, the man in charge of statistics.

Mutual assistance among the peasants, he went on, quickly put the commune back on its feet and particularly made it possible to ward off famine which had loomed large in the first days. Agricultural production was reorganized. Solidarity teams were formed, now 65 in number, with an average membership of forty. They now till a total of 563 hectares of land, about ten hectares each. Draught animals consist of 145 oxen, which is far from enough.

"We have tentatively," said Mr Koy Hak, "grown a second rice crop each year on ten hectares of land. It was a success, but we need a good irrigation network if the experiment is to be generalized. We are trying to build a small network for the commune with the help of specialists sent by the province. But we also need a lot of fertilizer, and this preoccupies us a great deal for, as the saying runs, 'If you impoverish the soil, the god of the soil will cause your ruin'."

Rice and fish being the staple food of Kampucheans, rice-growing has always held pride of place in the country's economic activities. "It's rice that gives strength, even to the king," a saying runs. To promote it, the Angkor kings, the builders of the famous temples, strove to develop water conservation, and the scope and perfection of their works are still a subject for wonder. Since their days, however, Kampuchean agriculture has marked time. Farming implements have remained the same as a thousand years ago. Ploughing is done with a primitive plough with no wheels. The ploughshare is the only part made of metal and although the instrument is drawn by a pair of oxen or buffaloes, it barely scratches the surface of the soil. At harvest time, the peasant uses a sickle with a short blade and brings the rice in on wooden ox-carts with wheels as big as norias. Fertilizer is little used, and even

not at all in certain regions. Average paddy yields stand between 1,000 and 1,200 kilograms per hectare, and were not so long ago among the lowest in the world.

According to estimates made under former regimes, one hectare of land could only feed a family of five. Now, the people in Koktrop till 550 hectares of ricefields in order to feed more than 3,000 mouths. The least that can be said is that agriculture has reached its limits, unless a second rice crop is grown yearly, as has been attempted.

"Do the people eat their fill now?" I asked. "How do they meet their other needs?"

"We are doing our best," said my interlocutor. "We take three meals a day, mainly rice, vegetables and *prahok* (fermented fish). In fact we eat not boiled rice, but a thick gruel, for the purpose of economy. International assistance helped us ward off famine in 1979, and the 1980 harvest, which was very good, allowed us to buy clothes and other necessities. Now the poorest among us have a change of clothes; others may possess two or even three. Many a young man now sports a wrist-watch and quite a few girls wear rings. There are now in the commune 62 ox-carts and nearly 200 bicycles. Our sugar palms have proved a great asset. Of the 2,400 trees we have here, 1,500 provide us with a source of revenue. Palm sugar is either consumed or sold, and the timber and leaves are used in the building of our huts."

The sugar palm, *thnot* in Khmer, is the "national tree" in Kampuchea, like bamboo in Vietnam. It is a familiar element of Kampuchean landscapes, its proud fronds breaking their monotony. Sugar palms bound the fields, tower over hamlets, frame the gilded roofs of pagodas. The Kampuchean peasant's ingenuity turns them into a veritable green treasure which renders great service to man. Sap is drawn from their inflorescences: fermentation gives palm wine, and concentration yields palm sugar. The

pulp of the fruit is used in the preparation of various dishes, and the roots in that of traditional medications. The trunk supplies timber, and the branches fiber for rope making. The leaves are good material for roofs, partitions, mats, handbags, baskets and other objects of current use. The main economic value of the palms, however, lies in the sap. Each season, each palm yields 400-500 litres of sap, from which about 30 kilograms of sugar can be had.

"Sap-tapping," said Mr Koy Hak, "is a simple operation but is not devoid of danger for it's done at a height of about twenty metres. Some agility is required of the tapper for he has to climb about thirty palms twice a day. Each solidarity team is entrusted with a certain number of palms, which are re-distributed among sub-groups of two or three members. It's a kind of family exploitation."

Other sources of revenue are the kitchen garden, the piggery, the poultry yard and the fish-pond of individual families.

"We encourage the development of the family economy," said the head of the *khum*. "It completes the collective economy, whose main responsibility is to grow food. No individual peasant, left to himself, can hope to combat drought. On the other hand our solidarity teams, operating the big pumps supplied by the State, have proved their effectiveness. By now we have completed seedling transplanting on almost all our ricefields. All farm work will have been fulfilled after the Festival of the Dead."

Together with some communal cadres, we toured the hamlets. In front of tidy huts, children were playing. They looked quite healthy and paid no attention to us. Villagers returned our greetings by joining their hands in front of their faces. Some invited us in. The huts were quite clean but empty of furniture. People sleep on a frame of bamboo wattle covered with a palm-leaf mat, and hang their

clothes on pegs or a length of liana strung between two pillars. "We're now living again the primitive life of our ancestors," said Mr Koy Hak with a tinge of humour. "But it's not that bad, for we've come back from an inferno. At any rate, a great deal has been achieved in our commune rescued from Khmer Rouge genocide. You can see for yourself by having a look at some of our educational and health-care achievements. We've built a communal school with 18 classes, 20 teachers and 968 pupils; an infant school with four classrooms and four teachers and 200 pupils. If account is taken of adult literacy classes, one may say that one-third of the population is going to school. The communal infirmary-maternity home has twelve beds. In 1980 alone, about ten thousand medical examinations were performed and about a hundred patients treated. This was unthinkable under former regimes."

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The traditional house, another major element of the Kampuchean rural landscape, is a wooden structure on stilts covered with palm leaves or tiles. Ethnologists will class it among components of the Austroasiatic material culture. Its simple and elegant appearance reminds one of a colonial bungalow. By its design it's well suited to the prevailing natural conditions. Good ventilation provides freshness and protection against

damp during the rainy season which lasts seven months each year, from May to November.

However, in the nine *phum* of the Koktrop commune, no such typically Kampuchean dwelling remained at the time of our visit. In this respect the damage done by Khmer Rouge vandalism cannot be easily repaired for the building of a traditional house requires a considerable amount of timber and work. Will the local people try to restore this type of house or will they work out a new type of dwelling, cheaper and better suited to modern life? It seems that they are still too busy coping with present problems to think the matter over.

A problem of greater scope and urgency faces them on the economic plane. So long as a subsistence economy is practised by the peasant, the autarkic background and the primitive technology inherited from his ancestors could help him meet his needs on condition that he limits the number of his offspring, rejects the benefits of civilization and resigns himself to austerity. But this is not the case in Koktrop. The villagers wish to be better fed, better clothed and better housed; to own bikes or mopeds; to go to town to watch shows, etc., in short they want an ever better life. The communal school of which our hosts are so legitimately proud needs to be enlarged and better equipped, to have more and better teachers, more and better classrooms, and higher-level classes. There have

arisen acute conflicts between the ever-increasing needs of society and the means available to satisfy them.

The time has come to lift the Kampuchean countryside out of the rut, break up village autarky, renovate farming tools and techniques, build a modern economic infrastructure, by means of a gradual industrialization of agriculture. The dream of an agrarian socialism rigged up with makeshift-means and inspired by a small-peasant mentality held captive by feudal ideology, either on a communal or national scale, is pure utopia unless it is bluff, as was the case with Polpotism and, more generally, with Maoism. In practice, given the force of circumstances, it's but a step from utopia to bluff.

Our planet is witnessing the passage from capitalism to socialism. Under-developed countries which have opted for socialism with the resolve to bypass the capitalist stage enjoy the support and assistance of advanced socialist countries with their highly developed industry and technology. The alliance between these two categories of countries, one industrial, the other agrarian, is an expression, on another plane, of the worker-peasant alliance which alone can guarantee the victory of the socialist revolution.

Many of our Kampuchean friends share those views. It is in that perspective that they envision the future of Kampuchea.

V.C.

Just published

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CHRONOLOGY

(16 September — 15 October)

SEPTEMBER

16. Signing in Kabul of an agreement on postal and telegraphic relations between Vietnam and Afghanistan.

— A seminar on the 10th century in Vietnam (a century of prime importance in the history of Vietnam) is held at Hoa Lu in Ha Nam Ninh province. 50 papers are presented at the seminar.

18. Publication of amendments to Decision 25-CP of the Council of Ministers on the management of State enterprises.

— Opening in Hanoi of the second traditional friendly sports tournament between the three Indo-Chinese countries.

— Signing of a protocol on scientific and technological co-operation between Vietnam and Albania.

19. Ending of a conference on the development of Ho Chi Minh City held by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPV (10-19 September).

20. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry issues a statement condemning the Israeli occupation of West Beirut and the massacre of Palestinian civilians by Israeli troops.

21. The Presidium of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the Vietnam Peace Committee hold a conference reviewing the nation-wide campaign for peace and disarmament, and against the war schemes of US imperialism and other reactionary forces. A statement is adopted and sent to the UN Secretary-General.

22. State Council President Truong-Chinh sends a letter to Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee Yasser Arafat affirming the unswerving militant solidarity with and strong support for the Palestinian people's struggle from the Vietnamese Government and people.

— Pham Binh, special envoy of the Chairman of the Vietnamese Council of Ministers, ends his visit to the Republic of Mauritius begun on September 20.

23. Vietnamese singer Le Quyen won third prize at the 11th International Light Music Contest organized in Dresden (GDR).

— The Council of Ministers orders an increase in the interest rate for bank savings.

24. Professor Doctor Nguyen Van Hieu is elected member of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

25. Founding of the State Award Committee with Chairman of the Council of Ministers Pham Van Dong as its chairman.

26. Pham Binh, special envoy of the President of Vietnamese State Council, ends his visit to the Malagasy Democratic Republic begun on September 22.

27. World Tourism Day is marked in Vietnam for the first time.

28. Founding of the Vietnam — Bulgaria Friendship Association.

29. Pham Binh, special envoy of the President of the Vietnamese State Council, ends his visit to the Republic of Seychelles begun on September 27.

30. A delegation of the French Communist Youth Movement ends its visit to Vietnam begun on September 23.

OCTOBER

2. The Council of Ministers gives further instructions on the development of agriculture in the Mekong delta.

— Establishment of a Cuban Consulate-General in Ho Chi Minh City.

5. The Council of Ministers issues a decision on the regime of reserve officers of the Vietnam People's Army.

6. Signing in Budapest of an agreement on juridical assistance between Vietnam and Hungary.

7. A delegation of the France-Vietnam Friendship group of the French National Assembly pays a visit to Vietnam.

— Establishment of the Vietnam-Yemen Friendship Association.

8. A delegation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Vietnamese State Council, led by Truong-Chinh, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of the State Council, ends its official friendship visit to the Soviet Union begun on October 4. A joint communiqué is signed on this occasion.

9. Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach ends his visit to Finland begun on October 8.

11. Founding of the Vietnamese Forestry Technology Association and the Vietnam Geologists' Association.

12. A delegation of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Vietnamese State Council, led by Truong-Chinh, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President of the State Council, ends its official friendship visit to Cuba. The Vietnamese State Council President is awarded the José Martí Order by the Cuban Government; and on behalf of the Vietnamese Party and Government confers the Gold Star Order on Cuban President Fidel Castro. A treaty of friendship and co-operation between Vietnam and Cuba is signed on this occasion.

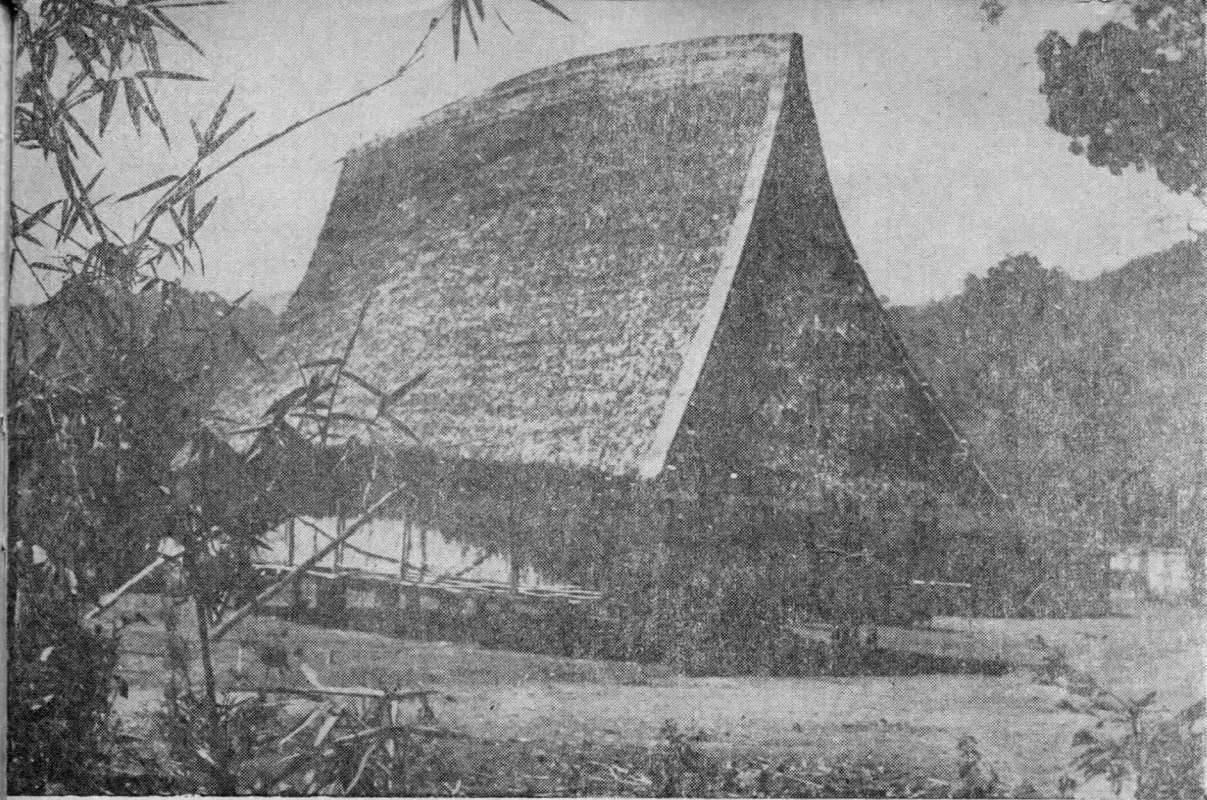
— For the first time a doctoral thesis on mathematics is presented in Vietnam.

— A delegation of the Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, led by Minister Phan Hien, visits Czechoslovakia.

13. The Belgian humanitarian-aid organization OXFAM donates to Vietnam a shipment of insecticide worth 2.5 million Belgian francs.

— Closing of a conference of heads of vocational training in socialist countries, held from October 6 to 13, 1982 in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

14. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry sends a note to its Chinese counterpart rejecting China's slanderous allegation that Vietnam conducted armed provocations in the border area on the occasion of the national days of the two countries.



SOME IMAGES OF TAY NGUYEN

Nha rong (communal house) where meetings and festivals are held.

Photo: NHU KHUE



◀ Prospecting for underground water.

Photo: VU KHANH

Collecting latex at Phuoc An State farm (Buon Me Thuot).

Photo: THANH PHUONG



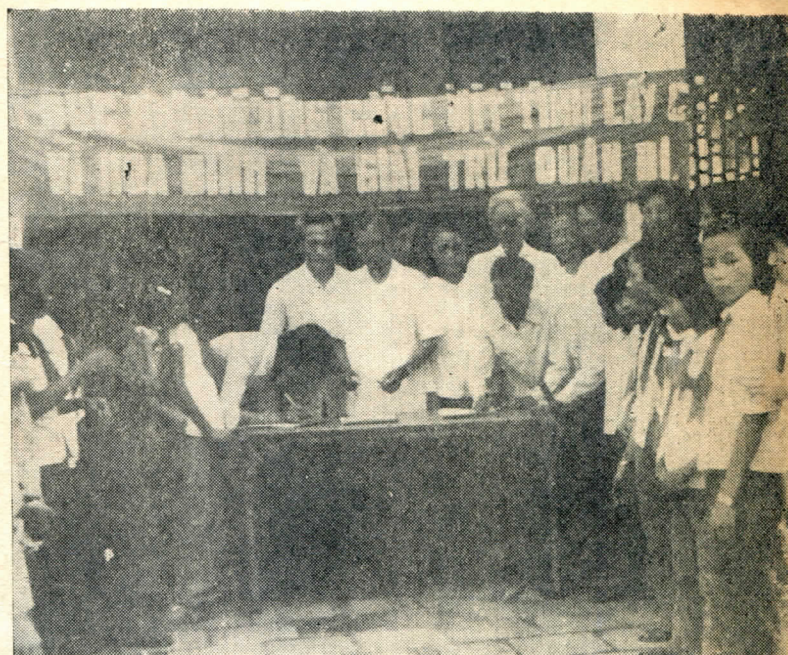
THE CAMPAIGN FOR PEACE AND DISARMAMENT IN HANOI

Collecting signatures at the Hanoi railway station.

Photo: MINH DIEN

Collecting signatures in Quan Su Pagoda.

Photo: VNA



A meeting for collecting signatures in a city ward.

Photo: QUANG DUONG

**Vietnam
courier**

**HOBOCTH
BETHANA**

**Le courrier
du Vietnam**

**El Correo
de Vietnam**

Báo đối ngoại **TIN VIỆT NAM**

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

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