

Vietnam courier

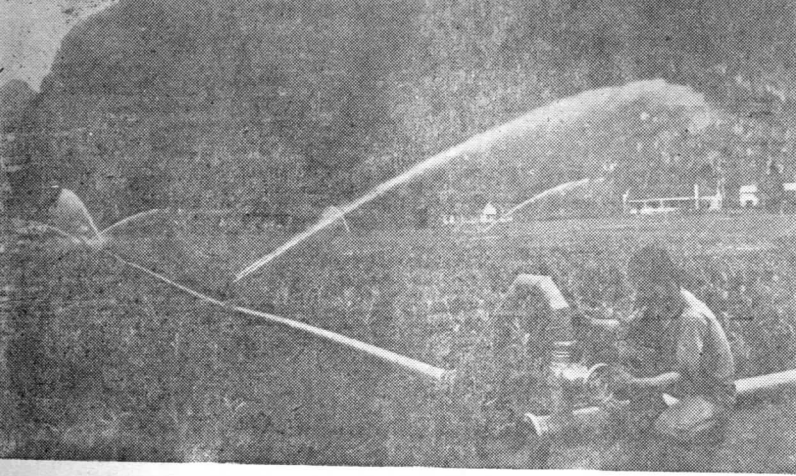


A MONTHLY REVIEW

Volume XVIII No.8



- EDITORIAL OFFICE: 46 Tran Hung Dao, Hanoi, SRV.
- DISTRIBUTED BY : Xunhasaba, 32 Hai Ba Trung, Hanoi, SRV.



Maize growing at the Boi river State farm in Ha Son Binh province.

Photo : THE THUAN

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN VIETNAM



Azolla pinnata to be used as fertilizer for rice plants.

Photo : LAN XUAN



Spraying insecticide in a co-operative of Ha Nam Ninh province.

Photo : HUU OAI

● Our Monthly Comment	1
● Communiqué of the Six Conference of Foreign Ministers of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam (July 6-7, 1982)	3
● International Law and Vietnam's Sovereignty Over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes	6
● Confessions of a CIA Agent — Vo Dai Ton and "Project Z"	8
● Hanoi's Viewpoint — To Defend Peace: An Essential Task of Our Time	11
— Support For the Palestinian and Lebanese People's Just Struggle	12

OUR MONTHLY COMMENT

Contents

● The Mechanical Engineering Industry in Vietnam	13
● Contractual Quota System in Rice Cultivation in Hai-phong	16
● A Bumper Crop in Hai Hau	21
● Vietnam Advances — Demographic Redistribution in Binh Tri Thien Province	22
— The Katy Settle for Sedentary Farming	
● A New Home	24
● Hán-Nôm Books in Vietnam Until the End of the Nguyễn Dynasty	26
● 31st Founding Anniversary of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party	30
● Their Home For A School	30
● Chronology	32

Front cover:

Intercropping of soya bean and sugar cane.

Photo: THANH TRONG

**Vietnam
courier**

/ 8 — 1982

Every six months during the last three years, the foreign ministers of the three Indochinese countries have met to co-ordinate their diplomatic efforts so as to preserve the common interests of their countries as well as peace and security in the area. Their recent Sixth Conference had a significance which observers soon noticed (See the full text of the Communiqué of the Conference in this issue).

It is the view of the three Indochinese countries that the tension in Southeast Asia stems from China's policy of hostility towards Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. To normalize the situation in the area, the three countries invite once again the People's Republic of China to sign bilateral or multilateral treaties of peaceful coexistence with Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam, and to resume the Vietnam-China talks to settle problems in the relations between the two countries. To this end, Vietnam is ready to contact China.

Regrettably, the Chinese side has not responded to the goodwill of Vietnam, as well as of Laos and Kampuchea. But the appeal to the Beijing authorities is still on the table for them to ponder over.

Perhaps they still hope to separate the Indochinese and the ASEAN countries. They have been moving heaven and earth to pit the ASEAN countries against the Indochinese countries at the same time as fostering Maoist armed groups within the ASEAN countries.

In connivance with the United States, they have raised a smokescreen about Vietnam's hegemonist ambitions towards Southeast Asia, and the immediate threat to Thailand posed by the Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea. Do the Bangkok authorities really feel threatened? With the support of Vietnam and Laos, the People's Republic of Kampuchea has declared its readiness to discuss with Thailand any measure purporting to enforce the respect for the security of the border between the two countries and prohibit the use of either territory against the other.

Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea also reiterate their readiness to contact Thailand to discuss and settle all problems of common concern.

An important manifestation of the goodwill of Kampuchea and Vietnam for Thailand's security — and also a manifestation of the growing stability in Kampuchea — is the unilateral decision to withdraw immediately a number of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, and the contemplation of further troop withdrawal should Thailand respond in a concrete way.

Of course, the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops hinges on China's ending its threat to the Indochinese countries by its signing peaceful co-existence treaties with these countries. This is precisely the correct application of the principle of national self-determination. Today any visitor to Kampuchea remarks that while the Kampucheans look forward to seeing no foreign troops in their country, at the moment they very much want Vietnamese troops to remain until the threat to their country's independence is removed. Is the demand, therefore, for the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops without any guarantee for Kampuchea an implementation of the latter's right of national self-determination?

Another proposal by the conference of the three Indochinese foreign ministers which forcefully shows Vietnam and Kampuchea's respect for Thailand's security is the proposal to withdraw Vietnamese troops from the part of Kampuchean territory in a safety zone to be set up along the border between Kampuchea and Thailand, this area to be put under international supervision. Inversely, Thailand has also to pledge that on its territory in this safety zone there will be no Pol Pot troops or other reactionary Khmer forces, as well as no refugee camps — meaning that Thailand also has to show its respect for Kampuchea's security. This proposal gives Thailand an option, if it does not agree to the former proposal of a demilitarised zone along its border with Kampuchea which, it says, would curtail its sovereignty over its territory. With such a safety zone Thailand's sovereignty would be unrestricted provided that it is not used for purposes harmful to Kampuchea.

To settle the problems in Southeast Asia, this time the three Indochinese foreign ministers stated their countries' readiness to convene an international conference on Southeast Asia with the participation not only of Southeast Asian countries (comprising the Indochinese and ASEAN countries, and Burma) but also of six important countries outside the region. As stated by the Indochinese foreign ministers (in Phnom Penh in June 1981), the Indochinese and ASEAN countries can reach agreement on the problems to be discussed at the conference, put forward in turn by the two sides, on the principle of equality.

This is a very great effort by the Indochinese countries to proceed to an international conference of the type proposed so far by the ASEAN and a number of Western countries. Public attention is being drawn to this. Those who want to delay the convening of the conference are raising the problem of Kampuchea's representation to obstruct it. But the Indochinese countries have suggested that it is only a matter of agreeing to the convening of an international conference, while the concrete problems, including that of participants, will be settled through consultations between the Indochinese and ASEAN countries.

Another proposal no less significant which shows the desire of the Indochinese countries to settle matters through mutual compromise is the statement by the People's Republic of Kampuchea that it is ready to allow Kampuchea's seat at the UN to be left vacant provided that the latter expels the Pol Pot clique or any disguised Pol Pot clique.

To temporarily leave vacant Kampuchea's seat is a measure which has already had an antecedent in the Non-Aligned Movement. It enjoys increasing favour within the UN. The People's Republic of Kampuchea has shown its goodwill by promoting this proposal.

Inversely, by the establishment of a Kampuchean "tripartite coalition government" using Sihanouk to conceal Pol Pot's hideous face with the short-term aim of filling Kampuchea's seat at the 37th session of the UN General Assembly, China and the United States have exerted desperate efforts, and they have drawn the ASEAN countries into their sway.

But the ASEAN countries should ask themselves whether this will bring them any benefit or only serve the aims of China, Pol Pot's protector? For everybody knows that the "coalition government" only brings grist to Pol Pot's mill, that is to China: the Pol Pot clique continues to control military and diplomatic affairs, and should there be a disagreement between the three factions, the Khmer Rouge's Democratic Kampuchea would re-appear to decide everything. Doubtless, this "government" will be short-lived and the proposal to leave vacant Kampuchea's seat will carry the day.

The proposals of the Conference of the Three Indochinese Foreign Ministers have been welcomed not only by the socialist countries, many non-aligned countries, but also by a number of important Western countries. Among the ASEAN countries, it is heartening to see that in many capitals not a few voices have been heard expressing a concern to study the "new points" in the proposals.

It is hoped that this study will help the ASEAN countries realise that the Indochinese countries seriously respect their security and interests, and only ask that like for like be returned.

25 July 1982

VIETNAM COURIER

COMMUNIQUE

OF THE SIXTH CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF LAOS, KAMPUCHEA AND VIETNAM (July 6-7, 1982)

The Sixth Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was held in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) on July 6 and 7, 1982.

1. The Conference reviewed the relations of friendship and co-operation between the three countries and the preparatory work for the Summit Conference of the three countries which they agreed would be held next December.

2. The Conference noted that the world was going through an extremely complex period. Imperialist forces headed by US imperialism, and with the connivance of reactionary elements in the Beijing ruling circles are endeavouring to drive mankind towards an exterminating nuclear war. They are inveigling regional reactionary forces to thwart the national liberation and independence movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. World peace, independence and the self-determination of many nations are seriously threatened. In such circumstances the Conference considered that the struggles for peace and national independence can by no means be dissociated from each other and indeed are of paramount importance. As far as they are concerned the Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples will con-

tinue to do their utmost to contribute to this common struggle. The Indochinese peoples wholly support the important initiatives taken by the Soviet Union, the socialist and non-aligned countries on disarmament, especially the recent declaration of President Leonid Brezhnev in which the Soviet Union pledged not to be the first country to use nuclear weapons. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam urge imperialist forces to put an end to the arms race and reduce tension in the world. The Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples severely condemn the United States and Israel and demand that they stop the war of aggression and genocide against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, and other Arab nations. The Lao, Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples are confident that the just struggle of the Palestinian and Arab peoples will triumph. The peoples of the three Indochinese countries once again reiterate their resolute support for the struggle of all the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America for peace, national independence and social progress.

3. The Conference proceeded to an analysis of the situation in Southeast Asia and the struggle of the Lao, Kampuchean and Viet-

namese peoples to build and defend their countries and to promote peace and stability in the region as well.

The Conference acknowledged that the situation in Southeast Asia, although still tense and complicated due to the policy of aggression and interference pursued by reactionary forces in the Beijing ruling circles, acting in collusion with US imperialism and other reactionary elements in the region to oppose Laos, Kampuchea, Vietnam and other countries in Southeast Asia, has developed in favour of the forces of peace and national independence. The manoeuvres of the reactionaries in the Beijing ruling circles aim at maintaining tension along the borders between the three Indochinese countries and China and Thailand, carrying out sabotage in many fields within each country and pitting the ASEAN countries against the Indochinese countries. They wish to weaken Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, sabotage the rebirth of the Kampuchean people, sow division among the three Indochinese peoples and discord between them and the Soviet Union and other countries in the socialist community, to isolate Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam in the international arena. However, their schemes have not had the expected results. On the contrary, the

situation in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, in spite of difficulties, continues to consolidate and develop satisfactorily. Realities in Southeast Asia over the past three years have clearly shown world opinion, including different strata of the population and a certain number of personalities in the ruling circles of the ASEAN countries, that the main cause of the tension and instability in Southeast Asia lies in the Beijing ruling circles' expansionist and hegemonist policy. Like other countries in Southeast Asia, Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam have always wished to live in peace, friendship and co-operation with all other countries, first of all with neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia and China. All people of common sense hail and highly appreciate the initiatives of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam aimed at restoring peace and stability in this part of the world.

4. The peoples of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam have always thought highly of the traditional friendship between the fraternal Chinese people and themselves. The present struggle of the peoples of the three countries against the policy of aggression and intervention of the reactionaries in the Beijing ruling circles aims precisely at restoring those relations which constitute an extremely important factor for peace and stability in Southeast Asia. In the common interest of the Indochinese peoples, of the Chinese and world peoples, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam once again call on the People's Republic of China to give a positive response to the proposal of January 28, 1981 made by Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam on the signing of bilateral or multilateral treaties of peaceful co-existence between Laos, Kampuchea, Vietnam and China. The Lao People's Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Kampuchea fully support the goodwill proposals made by the Socialist

Republic of Vietnam to resume the Vietnam - China talks to settle problems in bilateral relations. In the immediate future, it is necessary to arrange contacts between the two countries in preparation for the resumption of these talks.

The peoples of Laos and Kampuchea deeply appreciate the great and valuable contribution made by the Vietnam People's Army, together with the people's armies of Laos and Kampuchea, to the defence of peace and independence of the three countries. The People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam once again reaffirm that the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea responds to the request of the Kampuchean people and is in conformity with the terms of the Vietnam-Kampuchea Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation in order to deal with the threat from the Beijing ruling circles acting in collusion with American imperialists and other reactionary forces. The two countries will agree on a total withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea when that threat disappears.

5. The presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea in no way threatens Thailand's security. Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam have on several occasions proposed to sign with Thailand treaties of non-aggression and non-intervention in their respective internal affairs. At the same time, they are ready to negotiate with Thailand on all necessary measures to ensure security, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity for each country. The People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam reaffirm their standpoint regarding the partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea provided that the reactionaries in the Beijing ruling circles are no longer allowed to use Thai territory to help the Khmer reactionaries oppose the Kampuchean people, and that the Polpotists and other reactionary

Khmer forces are disarmed, not supplied with weapons and food nor allowed to use Thai territory to impede the revival of the Kampuchean people. As an act of goodwill, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam agreed to make the first steps; they decided to withdraw a number of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea in July, 1982. Depending on the state of security and stability at the Kampuchea - Thailand border and on Thailand's response to their initiative, Kampuchea and Vietnam might consider a further withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea in the near future.

It is hoped that this act of goodwill will meet with a positive response from Thailand leading to the re-establishment of peace and stability in the Kampuchea-Thailand border area. Should the reactionaries in the Beijing ruling circles, their henchmen and other reactionary forces take advantage of the withdrawal to step up hostile activities against the Kampuchean people, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam would consult each other, as stipulated in Article 2 of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation signed by the two countries on February 18, 1979, and decide on appropriate measures.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea reasserts its proposal of July 18, 1980 as to the establishment of a demilitarized zone along the border between Kampuchea and Thailand. If Thailand is not yet prepared to agree to that proposal, the People's Republic of Kampuchea proposes the setting up of a safety zone along the border between Kampuchea and Thailand. Only the armed forces of the People's Republic of Kampuchea will be present in that part of the safety zone situated in Kampuchea. The Vietnamese troops who are assuming internationalist obligations in Kampuchea will not be stationed in that area. Only the armed forces of the Kingdom of Thailand will be

present in the part of the safety zone located on Thai territory. The Pol Pot remnant troops and other reactionary Khmer forces must be expelled and refugee camps moved out of the safety zone. The status and the width of the zone will be agreed upon by the two parties.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea is prepared to discuss with the Kingdom of Thailand every measure to ensure the full respect of the border between the two countries and to prevent the utilization of one country's territory to nurture hostile activities against the other.

To ensure the implementation of the agreements on peace and security at the border between the two countries, the two sides will agree on an international supervision. If the United Nations gives up the recognition of the representation of the Pol Pot or disguised Pol Pot clique, the People's Republic of Kampuchea may consider a United Nations control.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam wholly support this initiative of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and call on Thailand to give a positive response thereto.

Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam reiterate their proposal of February 17, 1982 to open contacts with Thailand to discuss and settle all questions of common concern.

6. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam reaffirmed that they were prepared to organize meetings with the ASEAN countries to discuss and settle regional problems according to the principles of equality, mutual respect and non-enforcement of one party's views upon the other. The three countries are of the opinion that the two groups of Indochinese and ASEAN countries should reach an

agreement on a form of international conference on matters relating to Southeast Asia on the basis of the principle that regional problems should be discussed and resolved by the countries in the region without infringing upon the sovereignty or interfering in the internal affairs of each country, while all problems between Southeast Asian countries and countries situated outside the region will be settled by those two groups of countries. Accordingly, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam propose the convening of an international conference on Southeast Asia with the participation of the two groups of Indochinese and ASEAN countries, Burma, and the 5 countries which participated in the 1954, 1961-1962 and 1973 international conferences on Indochina i.e. the Soviet Union, China, the United States, France, and Great Britain. India, a neighbouring country which for a very long time has had relations of friendship with the Southeast Asian countries and greatly contributed to safeguarding peace in Indochina and in the region for the past twenty years, should also participate.

The UN Secretary-General will be invited to attend this conference in his personal capacity. In the event of the expulsion of the Pol Pot clique from the United Nations, the UN Secretary-General will take part in the conference in his capacity as UN official representative.

Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam are prepared to meet the ASEAN countries to discuss and reach agreement on all matters relating to this conference (e.g. date and place, attendance, agenda, procedures, etc).

7. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam hold that the

setting up of the so-called Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea is a farce aimed at concealing the evil nature of the Pol Pot clique, an attempt to reimpose the genocidal regime on the Kampuchean people (just saved from extermination) and a plot hatched by the reactionaries in the Chinese ruling circles, ASEAN and the US imperialists to interfere in Kampuchean internal affairs and continue creating tension in Southeast Asia. The three countries consider that the retention of the representation of the Pol Pot clique at the UN, under whatever name, is an illegal act which contravenes the UN Charter. For the sake of justice and the UN prestige, Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam resolutely demand that the organization expel the Pol Pot and disguised Pol Pot clique and restore the Kampuchean seat to the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the sole genuine and legal representative of the Kampuchean people. The People's Republic of Kampuchea declares that, in the immediate future, it does not require the UN to accept its representation if the UN expels the Pol Pot clique, but rather leave the Kampuchean seat vacant. The Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam totally approve of this constructive standpoint of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

8. The Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam proceeded in a spirit of close friendship and unanimity of views. The People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam highly appreciate the contribution by the Lao People's Democratic Republic as representative of the three countries at various international fora and in promoting dialogue with the ASEAN countries.

Ho Chi Minh City, July 7, 1982

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND VIETNAM'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE HOANG SA AND TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGOES

For more than half a century, since a number of countries, especially China, bared their ambitions towards our Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes, many authors in Vietnam and abroad have tackled this problem from different angles.

Here we present the viewpoints of some authors with regard to international law.

Le Thanh Khe dealt with this problem in a 300-page doctoral thesis presented in Paris in 1971, entitled "The Problem of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes before International law".

In the first part, Le Thanh Khe reviews the general theory of international law on the establishment of territorial sovereignty since the 15th century.

In the 14th century the European powers began exploring and discovering new lands outside Europe. In 1493 Pope Alexander the Sixth issued a decree settling the control by Spain and Portugal of the islands and lands already or to be found in the world. During this period, territorial sovereignty was established by papal decrees.

This period did not last long. From the 16th century until the 19th century right of discovery prevailed. It sufficed that a sailor planted a flag on an island, or even that a captain saw land through his binoculars to have a priority right of occupation. Later on, the discovery had to be completed with a nominal occupation, according to which the discoverer had to leave a trace on the land for the State he represented to have a territorial sovereignty.

Then came the time of occupation, following which the occupying country had to have an actual presence on the territory it occupied. In 1885, an Act passed by 13 European countries and the United States in Berlin stipulated that a valid occupation had to be actual and notified to other States. But this Act was only effective in Africa. The principle of actual occupation was corroborated by the recognition of the Lausanne Institute of International Law.

Later on, the Berlin Act was replaced by the Saint Germain Convention in 1919. But until now, in theory like in the decisions of international arbitrary courts on territorial disputes, jurists in the world still hold that the "principle of actual occupation is the basis of international law."

Therefore, the doctoral thesis relies upon this principle to examine the problem of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes while looking at it in other respects: geopolitical and geostrategical.

The author holds that under the light of this principle, the arguments of China and the Philippines cannot stand because when their ambitions were expressed the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa Archipelagoes had long since been under Vietnam's territorial sovereignty.

Only Vietnam has actually and continually exercised its sovereignty over the two archipelagoes.

The thesis concludes: "Vietnam's exercise of sovereignty over the two archipelagoes is clear for it is not only actual, peaceful and continual but it also answers the requirements of international law in each century". Thus "Vietnam's right over the two archipelagoes conform to the principles of international law and custom."

In 1972, jurist Charles Rousseau, a professor at the Paris Faculty of Law and a member of the Institute of International Law, wrote a study on the problem of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa carried by the review *International Public Law* as follows: "In fact, long-standing historical ties and close geographical position are two grounds that Vietnam can bring forward, which it has done. The argument on contiguity makes all its impact felt in this case. Naturally, China can also use this argument, at least with regard to Hoang Sa. But such grounds are only valid if they rely upon an actual and concrete character. Only Vietnam can exercise this."

After the Beijing expansionists occupied by force the entire Hoang Sa archipelago, jurist G.P. Ferie, an assistant lecturer at the Paris Faculty of Economic Laws and Social Sciences, synthesised, analysed and compared the arguments of Vietnam and China in the historical, geographical and juridical respects in a study entitled "The Conflict over the Hoang Sa Archipelago and the Problem of Sovereignty concerning Uninhabited Islands" carried by the French *Annals of International Law* in 1975.

Regarding the historical arguments, the author wrote: "China's arguments badly lack accuracy, while Vietnam's historical argu-

ments are fairly rich," "more accurate and more convincing". The author also adduced the French scientists' confirmation that Hoang Sa lies on Vietnam's continental shelf from Central Vietnam to the sea.

Examining the geographical content of the arguments of both sides, the author mentioned the affirmation that the Chinese continent extends "from Mongolia to Borneo including the islands situated on the continental shelf (in the meaning of international conventions) of Borneo and of course the Paracels". He commented: "the exaggerated nature of this pretension confirmed by the text surrounding the (Chinese) map makes it worthless". And to conclude: "Anyway, we must reject the exaggerated pretensions of China over the whole China Sea and consider with anxiety for the peace of this region, the position that all the islands in the South China Sea are under Chinese sovereignty."

However, the author thinks that according to classic rules on territorial sovereignty this is not a firm basis to determine territorial sovereignty.

According to the author, the decisions of the international arbitrary courts on the disputes over the Minquiers islands between France and Great Britain in 1953 and over Palma island between the United States and the Netherlands in 1928, over Chipperton island between France and Mexico in 1931 and over East Greenland between Denmark and Norway in 1933 have defined quite clearly the principles for settling the dispute over the Hoang Sa archipelago. Following the above-mentioned decisions and international law, the "principle of occupation is the key to a juridical

solution of this problem." On this score Vietnam's arguments are "both numerous and convincing".

The author remarks that "China's occupation of Hoang Sa by force is illegal in principle" and "regrets that the Security Council and the UN General Assembly had no real capacity to intervene in the face of such a violation of the rules forbidding the threat or use of force to occupy a territory."

Recently, in 1980, in a book entitled "China's Expansion toward the Sea," a Soviet author, E.D. Stepanov, also relies on international law to refute China's arguments with regard the archipelagoes in the Eastern Sea. He holds that according to international law one cannot rely upon vague evidence without juridical value such as the presence of fishermen or old coins to determine national sovereignty. Wrote Stepanov: "If in the time of great geographical discoveries it sufficed to hoist a flag or to lay an emblem for a nation to take possession of a territory without owner, contemporary international law considers it not enough. A government which states that a territory without owner belongs to it must have actual deeds to buttress statement".

And the author remarks: "Concerning all the problems of dispute on its sea border, China does not bring forward any serious argument for the simple reason that its arguments are products of an expansionist and hegemonist line by the Beijing rulers whose ambition is to conquer vast areas, rich sources of raw materials and advantageous strategic positions, enabling them to subjugate the peoples of Southeast Asia and Asia."

MINH NGHIA

VO DAI TON AND «PROJECT Z»

Editor's Note: A key CIA agent, Vo Dai Ton, spoke to the press at the International Club in Hanoi on July 13, 1982. Ton admitted to having returned to Vietnam for the purpose of spying and subversive activities, while stubbornly maintaining that his ties with foreigners had been of a purely personal nature. Cross-examination, however, revealed that Ton's infiltration had been planned by the American Central Intelligence Agency with the co-operation of a number of responsible personages in Asia. The following story, based on Ton's confessions, covers his entire counter-revolutionary career.

Long Acquaintance with Psychological Warfare

Vo Dai Ton, alias Hoang Phong Linh, alias Le Phuc Hung, was born in 1936 in Quang Nam - Da Nang. His father was a building contractor, who made a lot of fast money during the US war of aggression in Vietnam. Of his seven brothers several were officers of the former Saigon army. One was provincial governor, another cabinet minister, and yet another deputy to the "National Assembly". They all received re-education following liberation and are now leading a normal life in southern Vietnam.

As a little boy Ton studied at the Catholic Providence School and was converted to Catholicism. In 1958, after graduating from the Catholic Pellerin School, Saigon, with a B.A. in philosophy and having completed an English course, Ton got a job interpreting for the American Embassy. It was then that he joined the Dai Viet Party. Upon his induction, at the age of 24, Ton, with good references supplied by the US Embassy, was immediately given the rank of a captain and the post of director

of the psychological warfare office of the 22nd Division headquartered at Qui Nhon in the Second Tactical Zone. Ton was given a sound training in psychological warfare and intelligence by the Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) and, in 1964, got an assignment as political instructor to the commando forces which the United States was training to use in North Vietnam. In 1967 Ton became a major and was transferred to Saigon to help train the army and police in political warfare. It was there that Ton entered into contact with the local bureau of the CIA and "Phoenix", an intelligence group specifically set up for the pacification programme. In 1970 Ton became director of the Public Service Department of the Ministry of Information and Rallies.

In a word, Ton's career was closely linked to activities mounted by the United States and the Saigon regime against revolution in both South and North Vietnam, and in the course of it he became bitterly anti-communist.

So it was only natural for Ton to try to escape from Saigon hard upon the heels of the fleeing Americans. Unfortunately, the

plane which was scheduled to take him away on April 30, 1975 was unable to leave Tan Son Nhat Airport because of heavy shelling. Ton stayed on in Saigon for a fortnight and finally escaped to Malaysia by sea via Vung Tau, leaving behind his estranged wife and four children. During his stay of several weeks in Malaysia Ton was approached by the local authorities for assistance in training commandos for operation along the Malaysian - Thai border. Ton agreed to the request. Ton was also promised a colonelcy in the Malaysian army on condition that he gave up Catholicism for Islam, which he refused.

In Kuala Lumpur, Ton got into contact with the local CIA bureau, and arrangements were made for him to leave for Australia. In Sydney, Ton, encouraged by the CIA, started recruiting Vietnamese refugees who frequented the coffee shop run by his new wife, Nguyen Thi Tuyet Mai.

A Pole of Attraction

From Sydney Ton got in touch with friends who had served the Saigon regime and who were living in the West, especially the United States. One of them, Pham Truc Viet, who had also worked at the Ministry of Information and Rallies, sent word for Ton to come and join him in Los Angeles.

Now began a busy period of Ton's life in exile. Together with Pham Truc Viet and Viet Phuong Dinh, who had run the CIA-

financed paper "Trang Den" (Black and White) in Saigon and who were now putting out a new edition of the same paper, Ton set about rallying refugees for the "restoration" of Vietnam, making trips to Houston, Dallas, Oklahoma, San Francisco, talking to such has-beens as Nguyen Cao Ky, Tran Van Quang, Nguyen Ngoc Huy, Phan Quang Dan, etc. Ton also toured in France, Holland, Belgium, Thailand and Australia, staging hundreds of "patriotic" meetings and demonstrations.

As a result Ton's image improved rapidly among the reactionary refugees and, in 1980, he founded, on the basis of "Luc Luong Dan Quan Yem Tro Phuc Quoc Viet Nam" (Civilian and Military Forces for the Restoration of Vietnam) which he had set up in his first days in Australia, a military branch called "Chi Nguyen Doan Hai Ngoai Phuc Quoc" (Brigade of Overseas Volunteer Forces for National Restoration) with himself as commander-in-chief and Pham Truc Viet as political commissar. Ton toured refugee camps in the United States to advertise his latest offspring, boasting that he would have four army groups ready for the "Liberation" of the country,

while what he actually had was just a handful of men, as he later admitted.

The CIA Was Worried

For quite a long time undercover agents in Vietnam had been lying low and there seemed to be no hope for many of the postwar plans the CIA had drawn up. Even the Chinese invasion in early 1979 failed to rouse domestic reactionaries into action. In 1980-1981 law and order was firmly maintained despite greater economic difficulties. Stability was more evident in the South as could be seen, among other things, from the disintegration of the "United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races" (FULRO) in the Central Highlands.

The CIA, anxious to change this situation, dispatched a number of spies to Vietnam in 1980. These, however, disappeared as soon as they arrived, and there was no way of ascertaining if they had been arrested or had simply lost heart and gone into hiding.

The CIA then turned to former big shots for better publicity. But most of these people were reluctant to get too involved, their chief

concern being their own comfort. They might make a lot of noise in public appearances, but that was about all. The rumour that ex-Marine General Bui The Lan would go home to head the "anti-communist resistance" never came to anything. Ex-Air Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky said he would go to Thailand and Yunnan, but what he actually did was trade in grains and build a farm for himself. In early 1979 Le Phuoc Sang repeatedly declared his intention to go home but was found, many months later, haunting opium joints in the United States. Another vociferous "patriot" was Nguyen Ngoc Huy, a "Dai Viet" man and later leader of "Phong Trao Quoc Gia Cap Tien" (National Radical Movement). Instead of going home to "fight communism" as he so often promised, Huy stayed on in Los Angeles.

The situation was saved by Vo Dai Ton, who volunteered for the job. So, on July 19, 1980 a public function, attended by some three thousand Vietnamese and Americans, was held in a theatre in downtown Los Angeles for Ton to take the oath. Drinking his own blood taken from a finger, Ton said he would "brave all hardships to return to the ancestral country as soon as possible".

New Assignment

An interview was arranged several weeks later by Le Thi Anh, a former CIA contact in Saigon, for Ton to meet William Carper, ex-Ranger Colonel. Carper, now 60, told Ton that the US Government was interested in Ton's organization. He said that Ton's return to Vietnam was necessary, that it would mark satisfactory progress towards the unification of Vietnam-



Vo Dai Ton at the press conference held on 13 July 1982 in Hanoi.

Photo: LE NHAT

ese (anti-communist — Ed.) forces. Carper added that Ton's undertaking would help unify anti-communist forces in all the three Indochinese countries. He told Ton that General Vang Pao had been requested by the Americans to give Ton every assistance.

Carper said he would see Ton again immediately after his return from Vietnam and that he would consider sympathetically any requests Ton might make for money, weapons and equipment, especially modern means of communication.

A few days later Ton had a meeting with another American, Lt.-Col. Edward Hayes, from CIA headquarters. Hayes, about 50, had been connected with "Project Phoenix" while working at the US Embassy in Saigon. The meeting took place in Vang Pao's office in the suburbs of Los Angeles. Vang Pao, on orders from the CIA, set up a "Lao Free Front" in mid-1970, and as president of the "Lao Family Community", he was making deals with American politicians. Also taking part in the meeting were Pham Truc Viet and Cao Minh Chau, a colonel in the former Saigon army who was acting as assistant to Hayes in Vietnamese affairs.

Hayes listened with interest to the project and advised Ton to make the most of the journey. He asked Ton to take a close look at the situation in Vietnam, establish contacts with undercover agents there, and plan for future deployment. He also spoke of a possible merger of anti-communist forces in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, and of support bases and supply and communication points to be set up in Thailand. The United States was ready to finance the whole venture, Hayes added.

"Project Z"

In the two months that followed Ton, Viet and Chau hammered into shape a top-secret plan called

"Project Z" whose different drafts were all submitted to the CIA for approval. It was carefully worked out, complete with strategic directions, covering many stages and involving different forces.

The project was also known as "Operation Z" or "Operation for Repatriates". It provided for the involvement of "professional politicians", "intellectuals of high academic achievements" and "high-ranking military leaders", by persuasion or pressure. Big shots would go first, small fry would follow, and men would precede materials.

"Project Z" also provided for co-operation with Beijing in pressuring young highlanders into joining FULRO. The recruits would be sent to China for training and would be smuggled back into Vietnam for sabotage.

CIA envisaged a large-scale deployment of the plan in 1981 to pave the way for a still more ambitious project.

The master scheme, as was revealed to Ton, would involve still greater efforts by both Washington and Beijing against the Indochinese countries. It was to reconquer the three countries in five years (1981 - 1985) by three stages. The first stage would start with the mobilization and unification of reactionary forces from each country, now living abroad, and then the formation of a type of united front for the three countries. It also provided for recruitment, training and infiltration on a large scale, the setting up of operation bases for a unified underground organization, the stockpiling of weapons, and conducting local rebellions.

The second stage would begin with the occupation of Laos in 1983 alongside the taking of Vietnam's Central Highlands and intensified guerilla warfare in Kampuchea in preparation for the final stage.

In the third stage, scheduled for 1985, reactionary forces, assisted by

the United States and China, would seize southern Vietnam and overthrow the revolutionary government in Kampuchea.

The Trap was Sprung

Armed with "Project Z" Ton arrived in Bangkok on February 26, 1981 on his way to Vietnam. He was received at the headquarters of the Thai Army by Gen. Saiyud Kerdpol, who said he had been apprised of Ton's journey more than three months before. Saiyud Kerdpol said he was pleased to meet Ton and was ready to help him in his assignment. The Thai general promised to discuss further co-operation with Ton when the latter returned from Vietnam. He also assured Ton that he had given orders to Col. Taleun Sathapit to see to his needs, and the Gen. Patvapong who was in charge of counter-insurgency, had received instructions to prepare for Ton's journey to Thailand's border. Ton was also assured that his requests concerning the recruitment of Vietnamese refugees in Thailand would be favourably considered.

Ton was introduced to Gen. Thanadit, Secretary-General of the National Security Council, at a working lunch the following day, and the Thai official said he was acting on orders of Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanond. Ton spoke about his organization, the objective of his assignment, and what he was expecting from the Thai government. He asked about the possibility of a "sanctuary" for Vietnamese forces in Thailand similar to that which Thailand had provided for the Khmer Rouge. Gen. Thanadit took note of the various requests and said arrangements would be made for Ton to visit refugee camps in the company of Col. Taleun Sathapit.

Ton made a tour of the camps and picked only two men — Nguyen Van Loc and Vu Dinh Khoa, both

ex-soldiers, fluent in the Lao language and different mountain dialects, good at mountaineering and skilled in weaponry. The two agreed to accompany Ton on condition that they be granted asylum in a third country later on.

Early in May 1981 Ton, Loc and Khoa, accompanied by Thai guides, arrived at a Vang Pao base near the Thai-Lao border. It was then planned that two officers and twelve soldiers of the Vang Pao force would take the group into Vietnam across Laos. The trip, however, was given up because of detection by Lao militia and discouragement on the part of some of the guides. Ton and his group returned to Bangkok two weeks later and from there he sent to "Trang Den" in the United States snapshots he had taken at the Vang Pao camp. The captions read, "Leader Vo Dai Ton making inspection tour of secret bases in mainland Vietnam", "Vo Dai Ton the hero, planning national salvation while taking a rest in his hammock by the side of a stream in a secret base north of Saigon," etc.

Three months later Ton and his men hit the road again, in mid-April. To avoid running into Lao patrols they gave a wide berth to frequented trails. However, they were spotted near the Lao-Vietnamese border, and Lao and Vietnamese guards hunted for them. The Vang Pao men got away, but Khoa was shot and Ton was captured together with Loc. Ton was found in possession of a copy of "Project Z", propaganda literature, recruitment papers, a camera, a number of spools of exposed film, a diary and an address book.

Ton was thus lost to people who were expecting him in Thailand and the United States. Beijing must have been equally disappointed: through a third party it had invited Ton to China for a visit after the completion of "Project Z".

After THANH TIN

Hanoi's Viewpoint

TO DEFEND PEACE: AN ESSENTIAL TASK OF OUR TIME

The whole of progressive mankind indignantly condemns the bellicose imperialist forces led by the US for their desperate efforts to accelerate the unprecedentedly dangerous and costly strategic and nuclear arms race which is seriously jeopardizing the peace and security of all nations. The Reagan Administration, in particular, is undertaking the largest ever program of military build-up in American history in an attempt to gain military supremacy over the Soviet Union and to use a foreign policy based on force to oppose the independence, sovereignty and the liberation movements of nations. It is essential to thwart all such designs. At this very moment, to fight against the danger of a nuclear war and defend peace, the survival of nations, and people's right to life should be the ardent aspiration and imperative demand of all mankind. As General Secretary Le Duan pointed out at the 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, "At present, no nation in the world wants another war which would destroy the lives of millions, waste the wealth and natural riches of many nations and devastate human civilisation. Peace, the common gain of the nations' struggle, must be preserved."

The Vietnamese people, who by tradition love peace, independence and freedom, have, with their own blood, made contribution to the defence of the common peace of mankind. In their fight against the aggressive wars of the United States and the Chinese ruling circles, they have made every sacrifice and accepted all hardships and trials, and this not only for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their own country, but also for peace in Southeast Asia and the world. They have always taken an active part in the movements and campaigns for peace, friendship and the security of nations.

In that spirit, on July 2, 1982 the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the Vietnam World Peace Committee issued an appeal calling on our people throughout the country to actively join a nation-wide campaign for peace and disarmament, against the war schemes of the US imperialists and international reaction. In this campaign, collections of signatures will be made in support of the November 1981 Resolution of the UN General Assembly.

Through this campaign, our people will express their determination to carry out the resolution of the 5th Party Congress and to fulfil the 1982 State plan to successfully build socialism and defend their socialist homeland, thus positively contributing to the common struggle of the world people for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism. At the same time, each of our signatures will be a firm demonstration of our will to defeat the war of sabotage waged by the Beijing reactionaries, and to thwart all sinister designs of the Chinese expansionists and hegemonists acting in collusion with the US imperialists who are bent on causing tension in Southeast Asia, pitting the ASEAN countries against the Indochinese countries and torpedoing peace and stability in Southeast Asia. Each of our signatures will be a firm support for the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community, for the national liberation movement and the movement for peace which are rising everywhere in the world.

Nhan Dan Editorial
(3 July 1982)

SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE PEOPLES' JUST STRUGGLE

The massive invasion of Lebanon by 120,000 Israeli troops continues. With utter arrogance and brutality the aggressors have granted themselves the right to shell, bomb and occupy any place in independent and sovereign Lebanon and to use the most sophisticated weapons in their US-supplied arsenal, including the fragmentation bombs which the United States once dropped indiscriminately on Vietnam. The aggressors have razed to the ground three major towns, 35 villages, 14 refugee camps, killing or maiming more than 30,000 civilians and rendering homeless one million Palestinians and Lebanese.

These acts of the Israeli aggressors have aroused world-wide indignation, and all honest people have pointed their accusing finger at the real perpetrator: US imperialism which is abetting and encouraging the aggressors. The US intention has always been to use force of arms to quench the resistance of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, grab more land from the Arab States, set up a pro-Israeli government in Beirut, destroy the fighting will of the Arab peoples to impose US-Israeli neo-colonialism on the Middle East.

The large-scale aggression by Israel has been made possible only with the enormous assistance of US imperialism militarily, economically, financially and diplomatically. The plan of aggression has been worked out in the framework of the "US-Israeli strategic co-operation". Those who took the humiliating course of compromise at Camp David also have to share the responsibility for the tragic events in Lebanon.

The aggressors and their accomplices are plotting a new escalation of their war and crimes, planning a bloodbath right in the capital city of Lebanon if the Palestinian fighters refuse to lay down arms, the Palestinian refugee camps refuse to accept their rule and the Syrian peace-keeping forces refuse to move out of Lebanon. The greed of the wolves has no limit. The PLO combatants and the patriotic forces of Lebanon together with the Syrian peace-keeping forces have flatly rejected the arrogant demands of the Zionist aggressors and dealt them fitting return blows. They have made it clear that no force on earth can make them lay down their arms, and the Palestinian people will carry their revolution through to complete victory. The Arab peoples will certainly defeat all schemes of the Zionists and US imperialists.

The brutal aggression of Lebanon and the genocide against the Palestinian people pose a serious threat to peace in the Middle East. It is at the same time a challenge to mankind's conscience. This situation requires the Arab and progressive people throughout the world to increase their solidarity with the fighters in Lebanon and check the bloody hands of the heartless Zionist aggressors.

The Vietnamese people consistently support the just cause of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. On behalf of the entire Vietnamese people, President of the Council of State Truong-Chinh has expressed militant solidarity with and firmest support for the courageous and surely victorious fight of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and all the Arab peoples against the US imperialists and the Israeli aggressors aimed at recovering the sacred national rights of the Palestinian people and safeguarding the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab countries.

The Israeli expansionist aggressors will have to pay dearly for their criminal venture in Lebanon.

Nhan Dan Editorial
(June 26, 1982)

A Poor Heritage

Mechanical engineering is the keystone of industry, and essential to various branches of the national economy. Perhaps that is why the French colonialists did not build up a mechanical engineering industry in Vietnam. Until after the August 1945 Revolution, Vietnam had no industry to speak of, its mechanical engineering branch dealt only with assembly and repair in railway depots and garages. The railway workshops in Hanoi and Vinh, the CARON mechanical workshop in Haiphong and the Ba Son shipyard in Saigon only produced common accessories. Most equipment which required a high degree of precision and good heat treatment like electric motors, steam-engines, machine-tools... had to be brought from the "metropolis". Bicycles in the big cities and even pliers, spanners, screw-drivers... were usually "made in France" with such brands as Peugeot, Terrot, Saint-Etienne. Electric fans and small engines or a wireless — a luxury at that time — had to be bought from France, Italy, the USA or Holland.

A turn was taken by Vietnam's mechanical engineering branch with the resistance war against French aggression after the French armed forces, under British cover, attacked Saigon on September 23, 1946. The arsenals of the National Defence Ministry set up in the resistance zones in northern, central and southern Vietnam gathered all the mechanical production means and workers to repair weapons recovered from the Japanese and French troops, mostly light arms and a small number of 75mm. and 105mm. guns. These workshops also turned out rudimentary weapons: bombs, mines, hand-grenades, light machine-guns, etc. Step by step, Vietnam's semi-handicraft arms industry developed along with the resistance war and managed to produce bazookas, recoilless guns, mortars and gasogene for military and civilian trucks. The appearance

THE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING INDUSTRY IN VIETNAM

of small furnaces in the jungle and caves (1) was a landmark in Vietnam's budding mechanical engineering.

However, as the machines collected were old and had to be repaired or adapted to meet new requirements, these industrial bases only suited the conditions of the resistance war, that is of encirclement by the enemy without any possibility of re-equipment. With the triumph of the resistance war, these bases had fulfilled their historic task and were no longer of great use in the new conditions. The building of a mechanical engineering branch had thus to start virtually from scratch.

The Birth of Vietnam's Mechanical Engineering Industry

Soon after the end of the resistance war against French aggression, the Soviet Union helped Vietnam set up its first mechanical engineering base: the Hanoi Engineering Plant, now called Machine-tool Plant No. 1, is of medium size by Soviet standards but there hundreds of relatively modern machine-tools turn out nearly one thousand pieces each year. Lathes, drills, milling, broaching, planing and grinding machines... to equip other machine-tool plants, including the local engineering plants which were then busy making equipment for agriculture and land reclamation.

The Tran Hung Dao Diesel Motor Plant, which moved from the resistance zone to Hanoi, each year put out some thousand small- and medium-size motors for agricultural machines and boats... as well as spare parts for repair.

Each year the Ha Dong Agricultural Engineering Plant, originally a handicraft engineering co-operative in Ha Son Binh province, makes thousands of agricultural implements for five main jobs: tilling, planting, tending, harvesting and processing. Gradually, the plant has managed to produce 7-H.P. Worker-Peasant tractors, then 12-H.P. Lotus tractors with trailer implements to plough and till the soil, root up weeds, open furrows, spread fertilizer and sow seeds. Thousands of these tractors are operating in the fields of the agricultural co-operatives both in the plains and in the uplands. Also produced are machines and tools for land reclamation like bulldozer blades, root-pullers, rice and maize husking mills, machines to process animal feed, shoulder-strapped insecticide sprayers... A small combine harvester is being studied for possible production.

The plants making pumps, electric motors and transformers have supplied many implements to agricultural co-operatives, State farms and local engineering plants. Using bauxite exploited on the spot and an electric furnace of its own design, the plant producing whetstones catered for about 80% of the needs of the whole mechanical engineering branch, thus contributing

in no small part to increasing the degree of precision of machine elements.

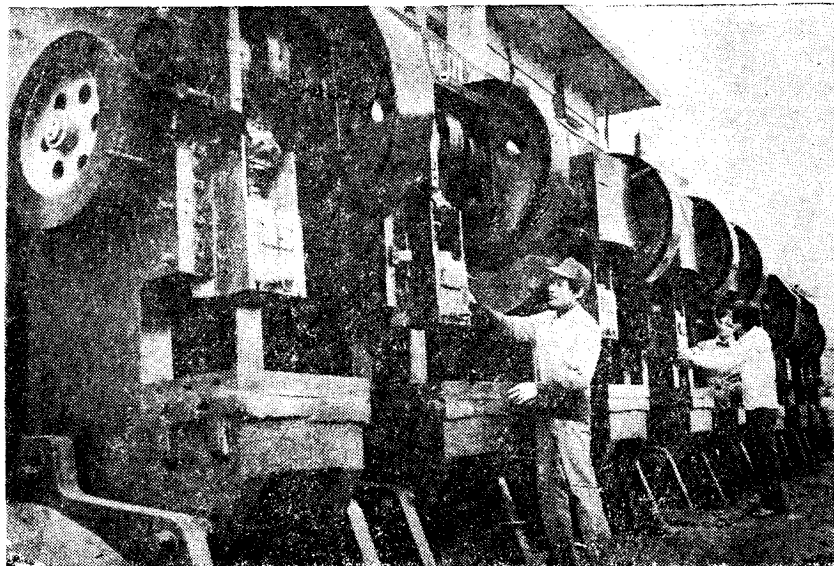
Those basic plants did play an active, albeit small, part in shaping the relatively comprehensive network of Vietnam's engineering branch in its first steps of socialist construction.

Helping them are a host of satellite factories making car accessories, gears, ball-bearings, electrical appliances, bicycles, conventional parts (bolts, nuts, screws...) according to international standards.

The Hanoi Medical Appliances Factory has turned out a whole series of common medical instruments, semi-automatic ampoule makers, autoclaves, pill-rounders, refrigerators, and vacuum pumps... The Haiphong Duyen Hai Engineering Factory has put out semi-automatic brick and tile makers, cement mixers, self-propelled barges, fishing boats and small dredgers. Many dockyards of the Ministry of Communications and Transport have put into commission passenger-boats and cargo-boats for river and coast transport. Besides machine-tools, the Hanoi Engineering Plant also processes railway wheels, excavator chassis, bridge drills and elements of other big machines for the transport and building branches.

Most of those achievements were made in the ten years of peace between the two resistance wars

(1) See Van Ngoc: *Blast Furnace in a Cave*, Vietnam Courier, No. 5, 1980.



Presses produced by the Mai Dong Engineering Plant for local engineering enterprises.

Photo : MINH DAO

against French and US aggression (1955 — 1964). Early in 1965 the war of destruction launched by the USA against North Vietnam compelled the budding mechanical engineering industry to move from the big towns. Many production bases were destroyed, but on the whole the branch continued to serve the resistance war and help provincial and district engineering factories develop their production in both volume and quality.

Machine-tools were streamlined while their precision increased. During the war the branch supplied agriculture with 1,000 — 4,000 cu.m./h pumps; mining with pumps down to 250 metres and blowers; oil pipeline transport with high-pressure pumps; provincial and district engineering and agriculture with 0.6 — 75 kW electric motors; port handling with suction machines for paddy, rice, maize, beans, salt... Along with the centrally-run mechanical engineering plants hun-

dreds of local engineering factories and workshops turned out major products to serve agriculture and other branches. The Mai Dong Engineering Plant in Hanoi managed to make 60 — 100-ton stamping machines, 40-ton presses; the Gai Phong Engineering Plant turned out many mobile K 525 A bridge drills. Helping these factories were a bevy of research and designing institutes: the Institute of Industrial Machinery, the Institute of Engineering Technology, the Polytechnics of Hanoi, the Agricultural College, the Communications College, the Institute subdivisions of machine-tools, lifting and handling equipment, the Tractor research and designing team, etc.

In Reunified Vietnam

Before its complete collapse in South Vietnam, US neo-colonialism paid no more attention to the

native engineering branch than French classical colonialism, condemning it to assembly and repair dependent for spare parts and components upon foreign countries, particularly the USA and Japan. The massive import of consumer goods smothered the need and capacity to build a comprehensive mechanical engineering branch. However, after liberation, the engineering branch in the South with its few workshops, small equipment, and not abundant but fairly skilled work force made no small contribution to the relatively comprehensive Northern mechanical engineering branch to make a national engineering industry. From private enterprise the engineering workshops in Ho Chi Minh City and other Southern provinces have gradually shifted through socialist transformation to State-run enterprise and followed a uniform system of making machines and accessories, assigned by the State Planning Committee and under the technical guidance of the State Committee for Sciences and Technology.

Like the Northern engineering bases, the Southern engineering factories have produced a lot of Dai Thang, Binh Gia small tractors, ploughs, disc-harrows, motor accessories, electrical equipment and appliances, fodder mills, pumps, barges and dredgers. The electronic and transistor assembly workshops which used imported components have reorganised themselves in a union and managed to turn out some kinds of condensers. They are preparing to co-operate with foreign enterprises to put out components, which they hope not to have to import one day.

The first task of the mechanical engineering industry at present is still to produce agricultural and industrial machines, equipment for

communications and transport and other equipment and consumer appliances. Not to mention national defence which accounts for a fairly large part of the whole branch. In line with this task Vietnam's mechanical engineering branch has made progress since 1975. The countryside has been equipped with tens of thousands of electric motors, 12-H.P. and 20-H.P. diesel motors, tens of thousands of 80-100 cu.m/h pumps, thousands of Lotus 12 and Dai Thang tractors with tens of thousands of mobile structures for use in wet paddy (e.g. special wheels), machines for land reclamation, digging machines (bulldozers, root-cutters, ditching and embanking machines...), earth-working machines (ploughing machines for dry and wet paddies), threshers, combine harvesters, husking mills, slicing machines, grinding machines, etc. Having improved their initial imperfections (resulting from technical difficulties and insufficient materials) those machines have become familiar features of agricultural co-operatives and production collectives.

Many kinds of equipment for mining and metallurgy have also been made: 120-mm. drills, grinding machines, ore-sifters, electric furnaces for iron alloys, furnaces for acetylene, even shafts of steel-rollers (weighing 14 tons when rough-cast and 9 tons when processed) to replace imported ones. Whole sets of equipment have been turned out with the efforts of the entire branch: engineering and metallurgical equipment for the Thai Nguyen non-ferrous metallurgical plant; silicate brick-making factory with a capacity of 20 million pieces a year; vertical furnace cement factory; melt phosphate fertiliser factory; powder metallurgy workshop to produce titanium and wolfram hard alloys; paper mill... The automatic system of rotary table bringing the metal to the rolling-

mill has increased the productivity of the Gia Sang rolling-mill 1.3 times while improving labour safety. The draw-plates for steel wire, copper wire, aluminium wire, tyre wire, geological drill-point, slicer... made of hard alloy following the method of powder metallurgy with accurate processing and finishing have reduced imports. The cutting-tools plant has supplied the engineering plants with these products and exported a considerable amount of such common tools as pincers, spanners and drills of various kinds. Apart from tens of thousands of bicycles turned out each year, the bicycle factory has begun to put out sewing machines. The engineering plants have mass-produced many kinds of machine-tools and household appliances like plastic presses, weaving mills, desk fans, ceiling fans, boosters, transformers, amplifiers, aluminium household-ware...

The great capacities of Vietnam's engineering branch have been shown through its wide range of machine-tools and cutting tools. Besides lathes which are traditional products, there are M 130 multipurpose rotary whetting machines (hydraulic-powered) with a high precision. Multipurpose milling machines, screw presses, cutting tools like screw-taps, toothed knives, accessories for trucks in mines, injectors, high-pressure pumps, vacuum pumps...

Some machine-tools have drawn the attention of foreign markets and won awards, like the agricultural machines at the 1978 Bombay Fair, the 12-H.P. diesel motor at the 1981 Plovdiv Fair.

These achievements are due in an important part to the contribution of the Institute for Engineering Research and Design and various colleges including, after national reunification, the Polytechnics of Ho Chi Minh City and the Can Tho

University. These bases have developed with a young contingent of scientific and technical cadres who are beginning to acquire experience. The contingent of engineering and electrical workers has increased in number and skill and has been replenished by thousands of workers who have studied in the fraternal socialist countries or in scores of schools set up in industrial centres. Mention should also be made of the considerable help, both material and technical, of the fraternal socialist countries in the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance, the Soviet Union in particular.

At present, Vietnam's mechanical engineering industry is still faced with many difficulties.

First and foremost are the difficulties in raw materials. The country has some steel from electric furnaces for the engineering branch, but has to import steel with chromium, nickel and titanium.

Second come the difficulties in technology. Poor heat treatment tells upon the life of the machine elements, the durability and the efficiency of the machines. The precision of a number of accessories like injectors, high-pressure pumps, segments, elements of measuring instruments... still falls short of technical standards. The technological process, standardization, unity and integration need to be improved for mass production.

Third, the equipment and technique of the engineering plants should be complemented and consolidated and rendered homogeneous for smooth co-operation in production.

Those weaknesses are being overcome. Springing from a backward agricultural society they cannot disappear overnight.

VAN NGOC

Editor's Note: In three consecutive articles in Vietnam Courier Nos. 2 and 3, 1981, we acquainted our readers with a new form of management in the agricultural co-operatives: whereas in the past the co-op members were assigned a certain amount of work-points on a given cultivated area, they are now asked to produce a given amount of paddy on the same area. And they receive all the paddy they produce in excess of the quotas, as well as having to compensate the co-op for any loss incurred.

The process of rice growing comprises eight kinds of jobs:

- Soil preparation (ploughing and harrowing by tractors or draught animals of the co-op),
- irrigation and drainage by motor-pumps or hand scoops,
- selection of seeds,
- preparation of fertilizers,
- supply of insecticides,

(These five jobs are assumed by the co-op.)

- transplanting of rice seedlings,
- tending,
- harvesting,

(These jobs are done by the co-op members and their families on a contractual quota basis.)

We also pointed out how the new mode of management has stimulated agricultural production.

The following is an inquiry into the results of this system of management in Haiphong after two years of application. Our reporters also raise some questions which need further study in order to make the system work more efficiently.

*
* *

This summer rice crop is the fourth since the contractual quota system was introduced to Haiphong's outskirts. 42,104 hectares of rice were transplanted at the most opportune moment, most of them with new rice strains. 55% of the area was planted with the "424" strain which is a high-yield strain suited to the alkaline and aluminous soil of Haiphong, 20% with the "Nong Nghiep 8" and the

with rats but an effective fight was under way.

A Look Back at the Past Three Rice Crops

A widespread fear in the first days of the application of the new system of management was that it would cause structural problems to the crops in each locality. But through our investigations we can

CONTRACTUAL QUOTA CULTIVATION

rest with some local species with a long reputation for tastiness.

The tilled area is larger than planned. Topping the list are An Hai, 7.8%, and Vinh Bao, 3%, above target. The weather has also been favourable. After a few cloudy days came the early summer rains accompanied by thunder and followed by bright sunny days. We rode along Highways 10 and 5 from Haiphong to Kien An and from there to Tien Lang. The rice paddies were in the earing stage and very luxuriant.

The rice plants were better supplied with water and fertilizer compared with previous years. There had also been fewer rice pests. Some ricefields were infested

assert that far from being disturbed, this structure has become more rational, with the crops complementing one another to make the most of the soil. Specialisation of cultivation along the traditional lines continues. In the villages, the sideline occupations have been preserved. Some new lines have been added, such as the building materials industry. The drop in the output of some traditional handicrafts was due not to the system of contractual quotas but rather to the shortage of raw materials and fuel, and inadequate pricing policies.

The existing material and technical bases have been used rationally and effectively. In some respects, they have been considerably

strengthened, especially as far as draught power is concerned. Working implements such as ploughs and harrows, insecticide sprayers and hand tools, as well as the irrigation facilities, have been improved or better utilized.

On the district scale, the water conservation works continue to be broadened. Since 1981 the slogan "Let the government and people

crèches or handicraft establishments¹.

Some pig farms of the co-ops which in the past operated at a loss have been demolished or converted into other uses such as storehouses for bricks and tiles produced by the co-ops themselves².

Most of the electric or diesel threshing machines have been put away for maintenance due to the

buffalo-drawn carts and wheelbarrows.

Along with the reinforcement of the technical-material bases Haiphong has considerably expanded the tilled area along the coast, in Gia Minh, Trang Cat and Vinh Quang. In two years 3,300 hectares of newly claimed lands have been put to double-cropped cultivation.

Almost all the co-ops have cut down their managerial staff and other non-productive jobs. Likewise, the size of each co-op and production team has also been reduced to a more rational and manageable level. In the new system, the farmers really have a voice in the affairs of the co-op, in production, in management and in the distribution of the products, and their sense of responsibility has manifestly increased. Everywhere we went we observed a better use of the work force and better mobilisation of the co-op members' potentials for the production of material wealth.

We also observed ardour in the application of intensive farming methods by all the production teams in each co-op as well as in all the suburban districts of Haiphong.

1. Whereas in the past the paddy was dried on a common drying yard, it is now looked after by individual families in their own yards.

2. In the past pig raising was a collective venture. Now only the sows are raised in collective farms, porkers are raised by private families which are dutybound to remit a given amount of meat to the co-operative.

A SYSTEM IN RICE IN HAIPHONG

work together" has been applied in the building of small-and medium-sized irrigation works. The Cong Ro irrigation system in Tien Lang district built at the cost of 12 million *dong* was completed four months ahead of schedule and is capable of watering the whole spring-summer rice area of the district. The Trung Trang pumping station in Kien An district with a capacity of 24,000 cubic metres of water per hour was also commissioned earlier than schedule. It is capable of watering 20,000 hectares of rice in Kien An and Do Son districts.

In many co-ops the paddy stores and drying yards of the production teams have been turned into

shortage of electricity and oil. The Truong Son co-op in Kien An has, since the autumn crop of 1981, added 150,000 *dong* worth of equipment and materials to its fixed assets, compared with 30,000 *dong* of fixed assets not yet put to the service of production.

Also in the two years of 1981 and 1982 the city supplied the co-ops with more than 300 motorized insecticide sprayers and more than 300 assorted pumps, and installed more than 30 kilometres of transmission lines and 21 small pumping stations. The co-ops, for their part, have purchased another 1,000-odd draught cattle and many transport means such as boats,

At present, 240 households are working their fields under the contractual quota system. A breakdown shows that about 39% of them have surpassed their quotas, 50% have achieved their quotas, and only 10-11% have fallen behind. Of the latter, 5-6% paid inadequate or no attention to intensive farming methods. Some families used no fertilizer and even consumed the seed rice allotted them.

In the six rice crops planted during the years 1979-81, three were grown under the contractual quota system with yields ranging from 20.86 quintals to 24.55 quintals per hectare, up by 3.69 quintals compared with the previous crops. Total paddy output rose by 57,696 tons. The reasons are many but the role of the contractual quota system is undeniable.

In addition to rice, Haiphong's outskirts are also major vegetable growers. In 1980 and 1981 they supplied 25,000 — 32,000 tons of assorted vegetables to the city. In the first three months of 1982 alone, Haiphong exported thousands of tons of cabbages, kohlrabi and cauliflowers. The area of subsidiary winter crops has not been noticeably affected by the new system of management except for a dramatic drop in the area of potatoes (60-70%) which, however, have been replaced by sweet potatoes and other dry starch crops.

Contractual quotas have also been assigned to individual farmers in some co-operatives with regard to pig raising, especially the raising of sows at the collective sties of the co-ops. As for porkers, they are raised in private families also under the system of contractual quotas. True, the total of pigs of Haiphong has not increased during the past crops, but their combined weight has. The crossbred species accounted for 50% of the

total, up by 22.3% over 1979. The average weight of porkers at the time of their delivery to the State increased from 47 kilos to 56 kilos. Live pigs delivered to the State rose from 4,500 tons in 1980 to 5,900 tons in 1981.

On the whole, the production relations in the countryside have been strengthened. This is especially manifest at the formerly lagging co-ops. But progress is also noticeable at the front-rank co-ops both in the matters of production and management. Most of the co-ops have correctly handled the relationship between the three interests: of the State, of the collective and of the individual farmer. Hoang Manh Thanh, head of the Agriculture Committee of the Haiphong Party Committee, said: "So far we have held three conferences on the contractual quota system. Some errors and deviations were corrected in time. It is true that some co-operatives are still grappling hard with the problems posed by the new system but we can say that the positive aspects remain the dominant ones. Otherwise, Haiphong would not have been able to fulfil its obligations toward the State with regard to food procurement, export quotas, the enlistment of young men for military service, etc. The life of the more than 800,000 inhabitants in the suburbs has also improved markedly compared with previous years."

Some Shortcomings To Be Overcome

As always, a new policy poses new problems which need time and experience to solve. After three rice crops under the new system of management, Haiphong has made encouraging achievements. But shortcomings are still many, especially in the guidance of its application.

First, psychologically speaking, there has been a marked difference between the co-op cadres who assign the quotas and the farmers who accept the quotas.

The farmers have long been accustomed to traditional primitive methods of farming. By accepting a quota they take upon themselves the responsibility of remitting a given amount of products to the co-operatives, and consequently, also the risk of failure, excepting, of course, failures due to objective reasons.

This prompts them to carry out intensive cultivation to overfulfil the assigned quotas. But in the present conditions in which the co-operative cannot yet ensure smooth operation of many jobs assumed by collective work, the farmer is inclined to encroach upon these areas of the co-op for their own benefit.

The jobs assumed by collective work are those directly related to the material and technical bases of the co-op and are financed one way or another by the State. However, as things stand now, the State supplies in materials and equipment to the co-ops are often late in coming, deficient in quantity and low in quality. Consequently, the farming process remains erratic in several jobs which generally comes under the responsibility of the co-op.

On the other hand, in quite a few co-ops the managing committees and the responsible cadres of the production teams still keep their old working style, lack dynamism and creativeness, and often care for their families more than for the co-operatives. In the new system of management, they are called upon to discharge three tasks at the same time: to give precise orders, to supervise their execution and check the results of all work of the production teams as well as

individual farmers. But in most cases, they only know how to give orders and assign quotas. Little has been done with regard to supervising the execution and checking on the results. In some places we visited, there was practically no supervision and as a result, many co-op members suggested further cutting down on the managerial staff of the co-ops.

Allotment of Rice Fields and Production Quotas

In the places we visited there is a great disparity in the ways the fields are allotted and about who are to be allotted quotas. In some places, the land is distributed on a per capita basis, in others, on the basis of the number of work-hands. The fields farmed by a family comprise both near and far, fertile and barren fields. The Truong Thanh co-op, for instance, divides its fields into three categories: high-, medium- and low-lying. In some co-ops in Tien Lang, Kien An and Vinh Bao districts the allotment of ricefields is combined with the principle of food distribution. This results in a parcelling out of the fields. In some cases, a family was allotted 1.2 *mau* (about 3,800 square metres) of ricefields divided into 17 plots. In this crop, each family is allotted 7-8 plots at most and 3-4 at least. Those who are employed in side occupations and in managerial jobs are allotted half the average for the ploughhands.

The output increased crop after crop in all co-operatives. But the share from the collective sector has not, and in some cases, has even decreased. This is because while the co-op population increased year after year, the contributions of the co-op members under the new system remained almost static. Under this system, the procurement of co-op members to the co-op would remain

unchanged during from three to five years. This policy known as "stabilisation of field allotment and production quotas" aims to stimulate the farmer to practise intensive cultivation through the selection of better seeds, the use of more fertilizer and improvement of the irrigation ditches leading to the rice-fields. This, in return, would create conditions for the co-ops to increase its overall output and accordingly, to increase the share of its members from the collective economy and invest more in development programs. But the situation in many co-ops in Haiphong has shown a certain dwindling of the collective economy due to the fact that the quotas allotted to the co-op families have not changed for too long a time while in practice, conditions for increasing the quotas assigned to the farmers have emerged. These are problems which need study by the co-ops in Haiphong in the allocation of quotas to the co-op members.

Plants and Animals in the New System of Management

Rice strains and pig breeds are quite complicated problems arising from the new system of management. In the areas we visited the slogan "joint seed selection by the co-op and its members" has been raised but in practice the only thing the co-ops had done was to work out a program for the use of the right rice strains for each kind of soil and for each crop. The co-op members selected the seeds for themselves, stored them, treated them in warm water and sowed them. In other words, the farmers entirely look after the seed question.

For the time being, this has proved more profitable than the method used in the past. However, it also has a drawback. Some families are not well acquainted with

technical problems and made the wrong choice of seeds.

In some places the co-op farmers exchanged seeds among themselves or sowed seeds other than those prescribed in the plan, which resulted in the failure to conform with the co-op's planting scheme. For instance, at the Truong Son co-op the plan was to sow the fields mainly with the "424" and "Nong Nghiep 8" rice strains. But some families preferred the Dong Hung, Hung Hai, Thai Binh or "836" which are not on the list of prescribed strains. These families often name their rice strains after the localities where they are purchased.

The selection of seeds in the present system of management poses some problems which need attention. First, some strains give quite high yields but degenerate very quickly. Secondly, the intermingling of strains in the same ricefield is still a very common phenomenon. Hence the need to form a well-equipped seed selection establishment at each co-op to produce thoroughbred strains and to reintroduce traditional strains that give stable yields and have proved most suitable to the local conditions. Each co-op should form its own seed selection and curing group or may entrust this work to some families with long-standing experience in intensive cultivation and give them the best plots as sowing grounds. There also must be an appropriate investment policy regarding the management of seeds. Each district should have a seed farm. Only in this way can we preserve the quality of the good rice strains and fit them more and more to the specific conditions of each locality.

The relationship between the rice plant and the pig is essentially one between food grain and foodstuffs, between the need in fertilizer and

the potentiality in intensive farming. In many districts such as Kien An and Tien Lang, the price of breeding pigs is high because of the shortage of sows. The number of sows in Haiphong dropped from 32,905 in 1980 to 26,878 in 1981. Except for a few co-ops which still raise sows in collective sties most co-ops have abandoned collective pig breeding, causing quite a problem in the supply of breeding pigs. In 1981, Haiphong sold to the State 5,700 tons of pork in excess of plan, but the deliveries often fell behind schedule. When delivery dates were approaching, the co-op usually had to increase the ratio of paddy in the barter for the amount of pork from the farmers, from four to six kilos of paddy for a kilo of live pig. This is because the co-op has no porkers in its sties while those in the private sties come under the complete disposal of the families. At present, some co-ops have redressed the situation by restoring collective pig raising, especially sow raising by allotting a fixed quota in weight of live pigs to the families of co-op farmers.

The Buffalo and Regulations Concerning Its Use

Draught power, which in this case means the number of buffaloes and oxen, is a topic of intense debate in the new system of management. During the recent crops, especially the last summer crop, there was an above-normal death rate of buffaloes, which many people ascribed to their overwork. What is the truth? Facts demonstrated that in Haiphong during the winter-spring crop of 1979-1980, 1,209 buffaloes out of a total of 269,000 died. But from the autumn crop of 1980 to the end of October 1981 when 75-100% of the co-ops adopted the new system of management 1,000-1,200 buffaloes died. Meanwhile, the number of baby buffaloes rose by 1,200-1,300. In 1981 Haiphong had

26,078 draught buffaloes compared with 25,600 in 1980. At the Truong Thanh, Truong Son, Minh Duc, Duong Quan and other co-ops throughout the city the death rate of buffaloes is relatively low. For instance, at the Khoi Nghia co-op in Tien Lang district, 42 buffaloes out of a total 189, or 22%, died in the 1980-81 winter-spring crop. In the years from 1980 to 1982 this co-op purchased an additional 71 buffaloes, but 59 died, of which 39 from overwork.

In general, all co-ops lack draught power. The workload for each animal therefore tends to increase as a result of the rapid narrowing of the machine-ploughed area due to the shortage of fuel and materials and a higher pay for the tractor teams. In 1980 when the new system of management was first applied, because of bad management, the death rate among the buffaloes was very high. But in the recent spring cultivation, in spite of a severe and prolonged cold spell, the number of deaths has decreased markedly, totalling only 500 for the whole city. This is because the co-ops have worked out a regulation on the use of draught animals which comprises three major points: a work quota for each animal, a time-limit for its use, and the value of each category of buffaloes and oxen. In addition, the co-ops have set out a regime of responsibility of the ploughperson and of the raiser of the animal before the production team.

Remittance of Products

The remittance of paddy to the co-op is another problem. In many co-ops we visited quite a few farmers still owed paddy. In Kien An district, Tan Dan commune which has the smallest amount of paddy in arrears, the farmers owed 700 tons or 3.4% of the total paddy output of the commune. In Tien Lang district, the figure was

630 tons or 1.8% of the amount the farmers had to procure for the co-ops under the contractual quota system. In Khoi Nghia co-op, Tien Lang district, the arrears stood at 47 tons at the end of 1981, or 1% of the quotas assigned, which was almost equal to the amount of seeds destined for the whole crop. Of the 47 tons mentioned above, 24 tons were debts contracted in the previous crops. Said the head of the planning committee of the co-op: "As a matter of fact, the farmers owe the co-op only just over 9 tons. The rest represents the debt contracted by those who accepted quotas in pig raising but who failed to pay their remittances in live pigs and their arrears were converted into paddy equivalent."

A breakdown produced by the Agricultural Co-operatives Management Department of the Agricultural Service of Haiphong shows that out of the unpaid paddy remittances in 1981, 20% are debts accumulated over the years, 60% through the farmers' failure to meet their quotas in live pigs and the rest are pure agricultural debts.

In each co-op, from 5 to 7 families failed to meet their quotas in paddy and they are also the ones who owed most paddy to the co-op. There are also other reasons for the failure to meet the contractual quotas such as bad crops due to unfavourable weather or pest ravage, the tendency of farmers to retain their grain to secure against poor crops, or to meet emergency expenditures...

In any case, the failure of the farmers to make their due procurements to the co-ops remains a question which needs special attention, especially in difficult years. In quite a few co-ops, due to the large amount of paddy owed by the farmers, the co-op paddy inventories are only on paper. This has caused many difficulties to the co-ops in the planning of future operations.

HOANG HIEN and TRAN HUNG

A BUMPER CROP IN HAI HAU

Editor's Note: This Winter-Spring crop is a good harvest. In the whole country, the average rice yield reached 2.78 tons per hectare, an increase of 0.233 ton per hectare as compared with the 1981 Winter-Spring crop.

Although area dropped by 24,000 hectares over last year, an increase of 304,900 tons in rice output was recorded; 228,900 for the North and 76,000 tons for the South. However, total output was only 5,504,000 tons (production of subsidiary crops has dropped), a far cry from meeting the target of the State plan, so in order to reach the 1982 State target we must make great efforts in the Autumn and tenth lunar-month crops.

The achievements of the Winter-Spring crop were helped by favourable weather, but the most important reason is the contractual quota system that encourages co-op members in intensive cultivation, particularly in supplying fertilizer for the soil.

In the North, the provinces that reached the highest rice yield per hectare are: Thai Binh 3.74 tons, Hai Hung 3.44 tons, Ha Nam Ninh 3 tons, Hai Phong 2.88 tons.

Following is a short report on the result of the Winter-Spring crop in a district of Ha Nam Ninh.

*
*
*

We visited Hai Hau district, the key rice-growing district of Ha Nam Ninh province. It was the middle of June, and although the rice harvest here hadn't all been brought in, everyone was sure that this crop would be the best one for the last two decades. According to initial figures, average per hectare paddy yield is 41 tons, no co-op in the district reached less than 3 tons. 25 out of 47 co-ops had from 4 to 5.9 tons, especially Hai Van and Hai Bac co-ops which reached 6 tons. 97 per cent of households surpassed their contractual quotas from 0.5 to 2 tons, while only a few failed to reach their accepted quotas. Hai Loc, once a deficient co-op, managed to produce in this crop as much as the whole of last year's crop put together. Never before had rice baskets sold so well in Cau Doi, Dong Bien and Con markets! Even war martyrs' families, and short-handed families have surpassed their assignments... The total district output reached 50,000 tons, an increase of from 15,000 to 20,000 tons as compared with the assigned quotas; although when working out the assigned quotas, productivity of the district rose by 4 per cent over the 1976-1980 spring crops.

Rice yield of this crop is high compared with past bumper crops: 4.1 tons per hectare, as against 4.047 in 1974, 3.97 in 1976 and 3.24 in 1981.

According to leaders in the district, the three main causes leading to the success of this harvest are: contract system was improved, new species of seeds were used and new technical measures were applied. In this third contracted harvest following directive No. 100 of the



Carrying paddy to the store at Hai Dong co-op in Hai Hau district.

Photo: THE THUAN

DEMOGRAPHIC REDISTRIBUTION IN BINH TRI THIEN PROVINCE

Binh Tri Thien is a major province in Central Vietnam with a land area of 18,340 square kilometres and a population of 3,174,000. Hue, its capital, was the imperial city of the Nguyen kings, the last monarchy of Vietnam.

The province has three distinctive economic regions: the coastal plain, the hilly area and the mountainous area. The plain is a long, narrow strip of land with a 350-kilometre coastline. Most of the population live in the plain where population density averages 330 inhabitants to a square kilometre and even 800 in some areas. On the contrary, in the mountainous area there are only ten or so inhabitants to each square kilometre and even three or four in some places.

To resettle the population, especially those in the plain in new economic zones inside and outside the province, and to campaign for sedentary farming among the nomadic ethnic minorities has been a major policy aimed at redistributing the work force and population in order to make better use of land resources. During the past five years, more than 96,000 people have settled in new economic zones inside the province and more than 60,000 others in areas

outside the province. At the same time, nearly 20,000 people of ethnic minorities have settled for sedentary farming. The new settlers have opened 2,275 hectares, of which 324 hectares have been put under wet rice. They have also built 31 irrigation works and other public utility projects.

In the five-year plan period (1981-1985), on the strength of past experiences and combining the efforts of the government and people, Binh Tri Thien plans to get 200,000-300,000 people in the province to move to new economic zones outside the province. This will be done in three forms: recruitment of workers by State farms, locally organized large-scale resettlement and voluntary departures of separate families with assistance from the government. This resettlement program will be undertaken in close coordination with the plan of demographic redistribution in order to bring the population density in the plain from 74.6% of the total population in the province down to 60%, and to raise the density in the mountainous and hilly areas from the present 12.4% to 23% and that in the coastal areas from the present 13% to 17%. At the same time, efforts will continue to mobilize

the more than 60,000 members of the four ethnic groups in the province: Katu, Ta Oi, Van Kieu and Chuc who live scattered in 380 hamlets and 70 communes in the mountainous districts at the foot of the Truong Son range to settle for sedentary farming.

A mass campaign is under way throughout the province aimed at getting the population to bear 50% of the cost involved in the transportation of the settlers and their families and the building of the material bases at the places of their arrival on a voluntary basis. Apart from peasants the new settlers also include people of other trades such as bricklayers, carpenters, tailors and barbers... so that life in the new places can carry on as normal.

Alongside co-operative and community work, the new arrivals are helped to plant trees, rear fish and raise domestic animals. In this difficult and complicated task of redistributing the population and settling the nomadic ethnic tribes, the transport, education, medical and cultural services in the province are also making significant contributions.

VO HAP

Party Central Committee, people in Hai Hau used their experiences of the two previous harvests. Discussions were held democratically among the co-operatives to overcome the remaining difficulties and successfully apply the managerial mechanism. The quality of the whole chain of production improved, land was better prepared and azolla was spread in a thicker quantity on the surface. As for technical measures, most important was the seeding and the creation of appropriate species for the winter-spring crop. From them, VN 10, NN 8 (pure), 314 and 424 which give a high yield were used in all

co-operatives. The pig herd reached its highest number in 1981: 91,000 pigs and the average pig sent to the slaughter house is 50 kg. Thanks to this increase in number the co-operative is able to use a surplus of 1.5 tons of manure per hectare (the average hectare needs 12 tons). In particular the drive to put more fertilizer on the young rice was realized in almost all the co-operatives and all the rice ears stayed yellow-green until they ripened. It is thanks to the fertilizer that all the embryo plants became rice ears, with full round paddy.

In the previous harvests, the areas of Phu Thai and An Giang (which include 11 communes and occupy nearly 50% of the total area of the district) were affected by drought and sea water. But now, thanks to the help of the hydraulic station in opening and shutting sluices for drainage and irrigation, enough water was supplied for the whole harvest.

The district's role in directing the contracted work in this winter-spring crop has been clearly effective. All the district's branches were well "linked" to the contracted movements of the bases.

THE KATU SETTLE FOR SEDENTARY FARMING

Somewhere beyond Hue, off Highway No. 1 and along a mountain road crossing a succession of hills, the traveller would see Huong Huu commune nestling in a valley of luxuriant rice. Most of the people here are of the Katu ethnic minority who until recently still led a nomadic life. Any ill omen seen in a nightmare by a single person might alarm the whole commune and everyone would hurriedly leave their newly opened fields still soaked with the sweat of their labour. Their only working tools were a few old hoes, pickaxes and knives.

The nomadic life had woven a thick web of superstitions around the life of the Katu people. Invoking benevolent spirits was their only recourse in case of sickness. The mortality rate was exceptionally high, especially among children. Allied with superstitions were backward and financially ruinous practices. Weddings and funerals often cost the fruit of many years of labour. Many young men could not marry simply because they had no money to pay the innumerable expenses involved in the wedding. The Katu knew nothing of boiled water. Women in childbirth were secluded in a corner of the forest and men were forbidden to approach. All children were illiterate.

They have made acquaintance with the plough and harrow only since their definitive settlement at the foot of the Truong Son range. The new settlers have built four small dams to have water for their double-cropped fields. They have also built a brick kiln, a smithy and a carpentry shop. Rows of neat little houses have sprung up.

The first job the Katu buckled down to after settling was to increase crop production along with building a new cultural life. A series of cultural projects have been set up including a large general school and health station made up of small but well-aerated rooms.

Nearly ten cement curbed wells together with another ten stone wells have been dug. The two crèches have admitted hundreds of children. The road into the commune is always kept clean. Collective workdays have been held regularly to clean the lanes and roads in the commune. Superstitions are fighting a losing battle against the advent of science. The young are free to love and marry according to the new law on marriage and the family and with assistance from the Commune People's Committee. The co-operative is setting aside part of the rice yield for the aged and invalids. Funerals are held economically and according to hygienic rules, saving the families of the dead from the onerous rituals of the past. All the sick and women in childbirth are looked after at the health station. All children of school age go to school. An evening course is organized for those who had not the benefit of learning in the past. Eating well-cooked food and drinking boiled water has become the rule in every home.

The new life and collective work have fostered new sentiments among the population. Formerly, only a few people were lucky enough to find fertile plots of land while the majority of the tribe eked out a bare living on unproductive soil. Some could build comfortable houses while others fell dead beside the trees on the road in quest of new land. Today all members of the community, from birth to death, are cared for by the co-operative. The weal and woe of each family are shared by all and bickerings and disputes are very rare.

Huong Huu at night no longer wears the sinister and deserted look of a remote mountain area. Viewed from a high mountain slope it looks like a myriad of stars behind the dark foliage. From its "information station" comes the voice of the announcer reporting the latest news in the country and the world, as well as the final breakdown results of a day's work in the different production teams of the co-op and the new achievements of exemplary co-op members. This is followed by a song sung by an amateur artiste of the commune art group mingled with the merry gurgle of water flowing from the irrigation pipes into the ricefields.

PHAM MY

The agricultural committee sent many technicians to the co-operatives, helping them to control the growth and development of each rice species in the most appropriate way. In the beginning, 25% of the fields were under-utilized. The district held discussions with the communes which were in charge of these fields, directly helped them to right this problem, and after two months of transplanting, the whole area was planted with good quality rice. Despite the unfavourable climatic conditions the harvest came to fruition thanks to meteorological

forecasts which prevented pests from ravaging the crop. Only 100 scattered hectares out of a total of 12,500 hectares were attacked by pests. So, we can say that in this harvest, all the economic-technical measures were well applied in Hai Hau.

With such a bumper crop, many families will have a reserve of paddy until the end of 1983, with a ration of 30 to 40 kg per person per month. The district encouraged the co-op members to fulfill their rice duty, pay off their debts and sell their surplus paddy to the State at an agreed price.

One week after the harvest, many co-operatives held a "festival of crop delivery to the State". Almost all the cooperatives had registered to fulfill 70% to 80% of the duty for the whole year to the State already. As for Hai Loc co-operative, after paying 16 tons of paddy of the 1981 debt, they delivered 300 tons of paddy to the State (80% of the fixed norms) before July 20, the first in the whole district. And this co-operative volunteered to fulfill their duty for the whole year in this harvest alone.

VAN NAM

A NEW HOME

The motor boat revved up and shot ahead and we were on our way along the Song Binh Hung Canal on a tour of Phu Tan district which would soon receive settlers from Ha Nam Ninh province in the Red River Delta.

At this southern tip of the country the dry season had come to stay but the sun was still strong at midday. The canal was alive with motorboats, row boats and sampans.

Houses flitted by on either bank — houses built on stilts with roofs and walls made of coconut fronds and with wares displayed on balconies facing the busy waterway.

Scattered among houses of the native style forming right angles with the canal were three-compartment houses laid out lengthwise in the northern style. The latter dwellings, freshly completed or still under construction, were

destined for the people from northern regions.

According to the chairperson of the district economic committee 150 such houses had been built with money from public funds and private contributions each, in addition to materials, requiring 236 workdays: 60 for wood cutting, 160 for the foundations, and 16 for the roof.

To the district authorities accommodation for the new inhabitants is as important as the fulfilment of quotas for food deliveries to the State and recruitment for the army. The first contingent, I was told, would consist of 40 families from Kim Son district and 57 others from Y Yen district, a total of 453 persons including 119 working adults. An accommodation plan had been drawn up months ahead and preparations were being made to receive another group twice as large to strengthen the work force in fishing and to form

two agricultural co-operatives at Phu Hiep and Tan Hung Tay communes.

The boat made way for a sampan and swerved into a smaller waterway. A sign painted in red and yellow in front of a house told me that I had arrived at the office of the People's Committee of Tan Nghiep.

In this commune, which consists of four hamlets with a population of 4,850, eight dwellings had been completed and two others were being built for ten new families each of whose members would receive three hectares of cultivated land to till in the coming season. The first group had arrived the day before and had been received with open arms.

Output remains very low at Tan Nghiep, a mere two tons per hectare. This was accounted for partly by the growing of only one crop a year on the existing 1,421 hectares. The main reason,

however, was the casual manner with which rice-planting was generally practised. The fields would be cleared at the beginning of the rainy season and weeds left to rot for two weeks. Then rice would be planted nine or ten clusters on a square metre, and left to grow all by itself without tending or manuring. Moreover, the soil was heavily saline, and no effort whatsoever had ever been made towards water control.

"We know that the settlers will be of great help in improving the local economy," said one commune official. "On the other hand we know we are responsible for their

welfare. Life will be hard for them, especially in water supply and transportation."

Boats, in fact, constitute the principal means of transport at Tan Nghiep. Children go to school by boat, and boats are used to fetch water and firewood or to take produce to the market. It is by boat that people go to meetings or to the pictures. I was also told that most of the motorboats, which made up 70 per cent of the total number, had been converted into row boats because of the scarcity of fuel.

The afternoon was wearing on when we left for Tan Hai and the

heat was less intense now. On the canal traffic became heavier and the boats were moving sluggishly under heavy loads. Ripening rice could be seen on either bank.

We went ashore to meet a group of farmers. "I've three hectares of choice rice," said one woman. She said that despite a dry spell earlier in the season she would get several tons of paddy after taxes had been paid. "That's plenty for us," she added.

Like in Tan Nghiep, people in Tan Hai were eagerly looking forward to meeting the settlers from the North and had marked off 80 hectares for their use. The new-comers could also try their hand at sea-fishing, which is a thriving trade, especially at Go Cong and Cat Doi Vam hamlets where a family could net several hundred thousand *dong* a year.

Even with the arrival of the settlers expected for this year Phu Tan will still need much manpower to use all the land which has not yet been reclaimed — some 4,000 hectares of it and to exploit in earnest the huge resources of the sea.

Illustration by DUC BAO



VU KIEM

HÁN-NÔM BOOKS IN VIETNAM UNTIL THE END OF THE NGUYỄN DYNASTY

Our forebears bequeathed us an extremely rich and valuable heritage of Han-Nom¹ books. Even in the Ly dynasty they were already numerous. A compendium of legislative texts was compiled in 1097 and on the basis of this one can surmise there were many other books. Thus the "Thien uyen tap anh" (Anthology of the Dhyana Garden) affirms: "The ancestors of the bonze Tin Hoc practised engraving and printing." (The bonze Tin Hoc looked after a pagoda on Mount Khổng Lo and died in 1190). The existence of Dai Hung library under the Ly dynasty shows there were many books at that time rather than the few "Hoang trieu ngoc diep" (Genealogy of the Sovereign Dynasty), "Ba thu" (The 100 books), "Hinh thu" (Penal Code), "Hoi dien" (Compendium of Legislative Texts), "Nam Bac phien gioi dia do" (Atlas of Southern and Northern Frontiers) mentioned in the "Thien uyen tap anh" (Anthology of the Dhyana Garden) and "Lich trieu hien chuong loai chi" (Rulings of Successive Dynasties). Recent discoveries have shown that in 973 Dinh Lien had Buddhist canons carved on stone pillars. Books might have then appeared which did not go on record.

The Tran dynasty saw an apogee of Dai Viet civilisation. Along with Buddhist and Taoist canons appeared literary works. According to the preface of "Trich dien thi tap" (A Selection of Fine Verse) by Hoang Duc Luong, publication was then under strict control, each work requiring permission from the King. The encyclopedist of the 18th century, Le Quy Đôn, testified that within nearly 300 years the Ly and Tran dynasties enacted no end of royal edicts, rules, institutions, letters of presentation and reports (Preface of Chapter "Nghe van chi" (Biographies) in "Le trieu thong su" (Outline History of the Le Dynasty).

Developing the Tran dynasty's fine literary tradition, the Le dynasty set up a paper-making

office and a depot for printing boards. Twice King Le Thanh Tong issued decrees to buy unofficial histories past and present and stories from private houses and keep them in official stores. He also offered rewards to people bringing valuable and rare books. Many unknown and esoteric books were thus proffered.

However, owing to aggressive wars, historic upheavals and natural destruction, our cultural heritage was heavily damaged. When Che Bong Nga troops (Champa) overran the Vietnamese capital at the end of the 14th century, royal palaces and libraries were all burnt down. Then came the havoc played by the Ming aggressors early in the 15th century related by Ngo Si Lien when he presented his "Dai Viet su ky toan thu" (Complete History of Dai Viet) to the King in 1470: "Everywhere one saw spears and scimitars, everywhere the Ming invaders pillaged. Books throughout the country were turned into ashes"! Civil wars also took their toll of books each time the capital was sacked. During the 16th century the capital fell three times within 75 years and people assaulted the royal palaces to plunder gold, silver, silk and other valuable things. The streets were littered with books.

For the conservation of the ancient Han-Nom manuscripts, the invasion of the Ming army (1307-1427) was a real catastrophe. The Ming Emperor ordered his army to systematically destroy all the country's cultural works, thus facilitating the integration of Vietnam into the Chinese empire. Almost all the manuscripts from before the 15th century were lost, one can only find excerpts in the anthologies or references made by some authors in later works.

Today we know the number of books our forebears had in the 18th century through two tables

of contents, one by Le Quy Don in Chapter "Nghe Van chi" (Biographies) in "Le trieu thong su" (Outline History of the Le Dynasty) comprising 115 titles, and another by Phan Huy Chu in Chapter "Van tich chi" (Biographies) in "Lich trieu hien chuong loai chi" (Rulings of Successive Dynasties) with 214 Han-Nom titles. These numbers may not reflect all the books and materials, as they were collected by one man in the difficult conditions at that time and as the lost books may include other tables of contents.

After Le Quy Don and Phan Huy Chu the number of books increased. From Le Quy Don to the August Revolution, within about 200 years, "Luoc truyen cac tac gia Viet Nam" (A Summary of Vietnamese Authors) recorded more than 400 Han-Nom authors, some among them with 10-20 works such as Le Huu Trac, Phan Huy Chu, Nguyen Thu, Mien Tham, Cao Xuan Duc...

Under the Nguyen dynasty there were more Han-Nom authors than at any other time. The collection of Han-Nom books and materials was also better carried out. People were sent down to the villages to look for old books which would be copied and kept in such offices as the Library of the Cabinet, the Department of History, and the royal libraries to serve the cultural endeavours of the Trung Ky administration. With the help of those books and materials talented men working in the Department of History compiled such valuable books as "Kham Dinh Viet su thong giam cuong muc" (Texts and Commentaries on Vietnam's History Collected on Imperial Order), "Dai Nam thuc luc" (True Chronicle of Dai Nam), "Dai Nam Chinh bien liet truyen" (Main Biography of Dai Nam)... Then in 1933 Han-Nom books and materials were kept in a relatively organised and large place, the Bao Dai library. Here were

kept books and materials from the Le dynasty upward, together with the creations and compilations of the Nguyen dynasty's Department of History and of authors down to the villages in a historical period full of important events.

In the history of preservation of Han-Nom books the Nguyen dynasty did fairly well, and Hue was the biggest centre to conserve Han-Nom books with a special system of storage. However, with the collapse of the Nguyen administration, part of our cultural heritage was unredeemably and irresponsibly lost to posterity. The number of books collected from the libraries in Hue to serve the Cultural Institute in 1945 already amounted to 100,000. No trace was left of such valuable materials as letters of credentials, royal books, royal documents of the Nguyen dynasty and materials about King Duy Tan's insurrection. The books printed on gold-leaf and silver-leaf are lost, as are the manuscripts of the authors under the Le and Nguyen dynasties kept in Hue.

When Hue was the imperial capital it had places in the royal palace reserved for only a few readers from the royal family. Even Frenchmen like Cadière, Pelliot, Gaspardone with all their power and diplomacy could not set foot there, so their research works on Han-Nom books albeit laborious and scientific could not be thorough. Those esoteric books were unfortunately lost. We could perhaps ask foreign organisations and individuals what happened to them. The fact is that many of our Han-Nom books are now present in different big libraries of the world. Apart from the Paris National Library and the Asian Society in France which had Han-Nom books since before the August Revolution, Han-Nom books have appeared in Japan in the Toyo Bunko (Indo-

china archives) and the Institute of Linguistics of Koio University in Tokyo where they have been brought in recent years. Han-Nom books have also appeared in Harvard and Cornell Universities in the USA. In Hong Kong, there are some in the New Asia Research Institute belonging to the China University. Han-Nom books are said to be kept in a museum in Great Britain, and here and there by organisations or individuals in the world.

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Han-Nom Heritage

Dynasty after dynasty, the number of books increased but they unavoidably decreased owing to natural calamities and enemy destruction. After each historical event, the feudal dynasties in their prosperous periods always tried to recover books, but came a war and they were lost. However, our people did manage to preserve some of their forebears' works. A proof of this is the Han-Nom library at the Institute of Information on Social Sciences.

Originally it was a part of the library of the French Far East School collecting books from the villages and copies of the Hue Court libraries in the first half of this century to serve French domination. After the take-over in 1958, the Central Library for Sciences (now the library of the Institute of Information on Social Sciences) was replenished with gifts from the Department of Museums, the Hanoi University and private families, and its books increased in both number and quality.

Now the enriched Han-Nom library in Hanoi has become a centre for Han-Nom books of the North.

Aware of its importance the government has constantly given this question great attention. During the fierce air war of destruction carried out by the US imperialists against the North, it created every facility to move Han-Nom books to safety and preserve them in the best way. Thus, despite the difficulty of transporting books which are centuries old and decaying (they should be conserved in glass cases) the Han-Nom library was saved.

In the Hanoi Han-Nom library, the books marked A, AB, AC, are Han-Nom books bequeathed by our forebears and reprinted Chinese books with notes and explanations. Those books have been handed down by the Far East School. Most of the books copied from the libraries in former Hue have clear handwriting with pen-brush and stick of Chinese ink on rice-paper, they have a cover with a varnish-lacquered back about 21 by 31 centimetres. Besides, there are quite a few books collected from the people, of various sizes and a cursive script. Most of them have a rice-paper cover, printed in black, and are bound as usual with rolled rice-paper. These are family books serving their members' study as well as works compiled by authors in the countryside. In general, Nom books are stories and poems of six-and-eight-feet verses, mostly from the Hemp Street shops (Hanoi) and printed in the early years of this century. Owing to their thinness, they have been bound two or three together by the Central Library for Sciences.

As for the books marked VH, VN, HV, they have been replenished after 1958. (These marks are similar to A, AB, AC of the French Far East School). Apart from the books, there are more than 20,000 reproductions of stela inscriptions (registered with Arab numbers) in temples, pagodas, communal houses,

bridges, culverts, markets, stations... of various provinces, mainly from Nghe Tinh and further north. The reproductions were made in the forties. The library also holds an ample record of genii's genealogies.

A considerable amount of work has been done professionally by the former Central Library for Sciences as well as the present Institute of Information on Social Sciences to serve the research into Han-Nom books through the drawing up of bibliographies, beside the work of preservation, maintenance and microreproduction. At first, the bibliographies of Han-Nom books only helped the reader find his way among those many books. The bibliography compiled in December 1958 introduces 4,939 Han-Nom books of the French Far East School after the take-over. The second compiled in 1959 introduces 125 Han-Nom books and 1,368 Han books newly added after the take-over.

These bibliographies only have an enumerative character, listing the basic data about a book: author, title, number of pages, library marks. The more elaborate "Han-Nom bibliography" compiled and published from 1969 to 1972 lists more than 5,500 Han-Nom titles on the shelves of the Library for Social Sciences at that time. Apart from the summary introduction of the content of each book, this bibliography gathers the books with the same title to provide the reader with an outline of the content before reading and with the number of copies existing in the library regarding this title. This bibliography is fairly well done but not flawless owing to the compilers' limited abilities. Once revised it will have a greater impact upon scientific research.

Recently, the Han-Nom Commission attached to the Committee for Social Sciences has complemented this bibliography with a "Bibli-

ography of Authors". This constitutes a new contribution to the study of the national cultural heritage. The "Bibliography of Authors" introduces all the authors listed in the "Han-Nom Bibliography", namely 1,450 authors. Compared with "A Summary of Vietnamese Authors" by Tran Van Giap in the past, the number of authors in the "Han-Nom Bibliography" has nearly doubled, although the latter still has errors and falls short of "A Summary of Vietnamese Authors" in some respects.

As for the reproductions of stela inscriptions, besides the selective introduction of the Institute of History and the Central Library for Sciences, the Han-Nom Commission has compiled a "Bibliography of Stelae Inscriptions" comprising 21 volumes with 20,797 reproductions kept in the Institute of Information on Social Sciences. The content of each inscription is summarised together with its form, year of erection, author, ornamentation, etc.

The collection of genii's genealogies also requires a bibliography. They are well preserved, revised, registered and will soon be put at the reader's disposal.

A work of foremost importance for the heritage of Han-Nom books is to look for, detect and gather it to enrich the national cultural heritage, and to unify their management.

It is extremely urgent to save our cultural heritage which is being kept by those people who have no way to preserve it from destruction due to heat and humidity. The Han-Nom documents stored until now are for a small part copies made by the French Far East School and recently by our Library. But the most part have been collected from the people (including printed books)

because there were no archives before the twenties. Our people traditionally conserve with care what their ancestors bequeath. Some families manage to keep books handed down from generation to generation and consider them sacred things. However, in general, when the owner of a book passes away, the offspring who do not understand its value neglect to preserve it and let it rot with time. Today the number of people who know Han or Nom is growing smaller. Therefore, Han-Nom books are easily destroyed unwittingly.

In some places, thanks to the joint efforts of specialised services and local cultural services, or by mere chance, very valuable documents have been found in recent years.

The Minh Do Su (History of the Country of Lights) by Le Trong Ham and the group Nam Viet Dong Thien Hoi in Nam Dinh which the Institute of History detected recently as well as the Nam Coc Tap lam (Tales of the Southern Valley) discovered by the Library for Social Sciences and the Thai Binh cultural service constitute important contributions to the national cultural heritage. The old copy of Lam Son thuc luc (True Chronicle of Lam Son) which disappeared for a very long time has just been found again by the basic general school of Dinh Hai commune, Yen Dinh district, Thanh Hoa province.

The two Nom stories of Duong Tu and Ha Mau hit upon after the liberation of the South testify to the people's concern for their cultural heritage. The Nom story Song tinh bat da (The Eight Nights of Two Stars) regarded as lost in 1943 was presented by a Vietnamese resident abroad.

The search for Han-Nom books and materials requires a cautious and careful approach. Family registers, contracts, village regulations, diplomas, population registers, land registers are materials with which researchers delve into the past. A fairly rich and valuable source is constituted by the inscriptions on stelae, incense burners, gongs, bells, or wood. As regards the inscriptions on wood, apart from the horizontal boards, parallel sentences and carvings to commemorate an event, mention has to be made of printing boards of former Han-Nom books which now replenish the Han-Nom heritage.

A very important place to search is the habitat of the Tay minority people who have a Nom script of their own, but the Han-Nom library of the Institute of Information on Social Sciences has no books in this script.

Concerning the Han-Nom books and materials in foreign countries, bibliographers and scientific researchers should look for and report to the authorities so as to get them photocopied or micro-filmed.

*
* *

The time has come to make an inventory of the entire patrimony handed down by our ancestors to see what is left after so many natural and historical upheavals. We cannot replace what is irretrievably lost but what is scattered here and there must be retrieved to enrich the national cultural treasure. That is the task of Vietnamese bibliographers and of everybody.

CAO HUU LANG

1. Han: classical Chinese.
Nom: demotic script in Chinese characters.

31st FOUNDING ANNIVERSARY OF THE KAMPUCHEAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

On 28 June 1982, the 31st founding anniversary of the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party was observed in Phnom Penh. The Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party was set up on 28 June 1951 following the decision of the Second Congress of the Indochinese Communist Party to organize three separate parties for Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. So the then Kampuchean communists held their First Party Congress and named their Party the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party, with Son Ngoc Minh as its head. Carrying on the revolutionary cause and tradition of the Indochinese Communist Party, it led the Kampuchean people to chase out the French colonialists, then the US imperialists and their henchmen.

But, after its Second Congress, held in September 1960, the Pol Pot—Ieng Sary—Khieu Samphan clique seized the Party's leadership, and changed its name to the Communist Party of Kampuchea. They gradually followed a chauvinistic policy, betrayed Marxism-Leninism, opposed the Party's

political programme, broke off relations with Vietnam, and committed genocidal crimes against their own people.

In December 1978, a number of genuine Kampuchean communists mobilized various patriotic forces and founded the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea, urging the people to rise up to overthrow the Pol Pot regime.

The Third Party Congress, held in early January 1979, condemned the Pol Pot clique's betrayal as well as their reactionary policies. It also adopted a programme for national salvation and decided to rebuild the Party.

The Fourth Party Congress, convened in May 1981, reviewed the achievements, and worked out the line and tasks of the Kampuchean revolution in the present stage. It has decided to give a strong push to Party building work and change the Party's name to the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (as the word Khmer only represents the main ethnic group in Kampuchea).

Their

home

for

a school

Françoise Corrèze, French ethnologist and writer, was a teacher in Phnom Penh at the time of Sihanouk. She revisited Kampuchea in 1979 and 1980 and here recounts a conversation held during her most recent visit in April 1982.

*
* *

To find one of my old students from the Arts Faculty after fifteen years would be moving in itself, but to find him alive and now Minister of Education in this devastated country! Hope lives on.

Pen Navouth has the same look as ever: serious but smiling, with that smile which is so typical of Kampuchea. We talk and I confess that I am deeply moved. Pen

Navouth speaks calmly but he cannot prevent his enthusiasm and emotion from showing now and then.

A people thirsting to learn :

"One of the most striking phenomena since liberation has been the people's desire for education. The government is also concerned about this and the question of teaching made up one of the 11 points of the Front's programme. Even before the first school intake all those who could read and write had undertaken to teach children how to read.

"You will remember the state of our schools at the time of liberation. Empty, pillaged buildings, often used as stables or pigsties. Nothing was left, only the walls and a few people.

"But even those who had just a little knowledge offered their help and right from the first intake in September 1979 we had 950,000 pupils."

He repeats the figure and looks at me, his eyes twinkling.

"There were only 900,000 under the old regime of Sihanouk."

"And now?"

"Now it's shot up to one and a half million."

"Are your policies based on people's participation?"

"Of course."

"And have the people responded?"

"With enthusiasm. Support committees have been set up everywhere and now 4,000 schools have parent associations. It was with the people's help that many school buildings were restored. We were also helped by international organisations, particularly UNICEF."

"As Minister do you often visit the provinces to see for yourself how things are going?"

"Of course, it's no good us staying in our offices. We have to get out and about."

"You know in Kandal province one family offered their own home so that the wood could be used to rebuild the school. Now they're living in a thatched hut."

"Production units are also helping with rebuilding. If you could see how they work! Peasants, teachers, even the children themselves. The women prepare the food and everyone eats together."

"Yes, I saw that in Pursat and other places."

"It's very encouraging. With the help of the people we shall be able to reestablish our education system right from infant schools to higher education. We have two categories

of teachers: those supported by the 'Samakhi' groups and those who receive their salary from the State.

"So far we have set up the infant schools but the secondary schools are still rather weak."

"And higher education?"

"Little by little it's getting underway. The Faculty of Medicine has been open since 1979. The Technical Institute — Soviet-Kampuchean Friendship Institute — opened this year and has 220 students who will become engineers and technicians. We have set up a college for the teaching of Russian, Vietnamese and German."

The French language is to play a minor role in this country where part of the urban population still expresses itself in French and the minister himself speaks fluently. I may be wrong but France's refusal to recognise the new regime may have something to do with it.

Pen Navouth's calm voice continues.

"There is also a training centre for qualified workers set up with Soviet help. And the Teacher-Training College for primary and secondary teachers. An intake of former students who followed a four-month intensive course has just graduated and we plan another intake which will divide into courses of one year for primary schools and two years for secondary schools."

"We were hoping for 500 but so far only 200 have enrolled..."

Pen Navouth falls silent and then adds with a smile. "What can we do, our sources are exhausted."

It is impossible to make a distinction between the Kampuchean smile of happiness and smile

of sorrow which maintains their dignity and in some way protects them.

"And how are you managing at the moment with the problem of cadres?"

"We have 5,000 former teachers altogether — very few are qualified and at the Teacher-Training College courses are still given by Vietnamese teachers."

"For primary teaching the College got underway in May 1979 and we found 63 old teachers — 34 men and 29 women. We began to retrain them but we had to use accelerated courses of two or three months only. We hope to set up residential centres in the provinces for such courses."

"How do you manage for books?"

"International organisations, especially UNICEF, are helping us, but there is a shortage of paper."

"And the curricula?"

"Our main principle is the link between study and production, between school and society. This is rather difficult in the towns although some schools have a garden which teachers and pupils cultivate. In the provinces, however, many schools have one or even two hectares. We want to train a generation of workers who have at least received a basic education."

"Teach well, study well, administer well — That's our ambition, but progress is slow since we had to start from scratch. We are beginning with courses on school management. Given the state of our economy we have to be more or less self-running."

"With all these difficulties do you think you will make it?"

"Having survived the worst, now everything seems possible with the people's help."

CHRONOLOGY

(June 16 — July 15)

JUNE

18. Signing in Ho Chi Minh City of an agreement on irrigation co-operation in 1982 between Vietnam and Kampuchea.

19. Hamid Alwan, Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Relations, special envoy of the President of the Republic of Iraq, leaves Hanoi.

21. Vietnam returns to China 34 Chinese nationals captured while illegally entering Vietnamese territory.

24. The governments of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and of the Republic of Sierra Leone decide to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries at ambassadorial level.

— VNA rejects the news reported by a US State Department spokesman that a group of US destroyers had been attacked by Vietnamese fishing boats near Vietnam's Con Son Island during the night of June 20.

— The Vietnamese representative at the annual session of the UN Information Committee calls for a prompt establishment of a new world information order.

26. The Chairman of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam sends a message to the second special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament, expressing the Vietnamese people's strong support for the Soviet Union's important initiatives on disarmament.

27. Closing of the fourth session of the National Mekong Committees of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea held in Phnom Penh from June 25 to 27.

— The finals of the National Table-Tennis Championship are held in Hanoi from June 21 to 27.

28. Closing of the third session of the Seventh National Assembly held in Hanoi from June 23 to 28. During the session the National Assembly:

— heard the report on the preparation of the Draft Penal Code;

— heard the report on and adopted the draft State budget for 1982;

— elected additional new members to the Council of State and a number of chairpersons of the various National Assembly Committees.

29. Mahdi Al Khisaly, Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, head of the Iraqi economic delegation, pays a visit to Vietnam. A minute of the second session of the Vietnamese-Iraqi Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Co-operation is signed in Hanoi.

JULY

1. The Selection Board for the composition of the new national anthem has chosen 17 songs to be presented to the public for approval.

— Signing in Vientiane of a plan on cultural co-operation between Vietnam and Laos for 1982-1983.

2. The Presidium of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee and the Presidium of the Vietnam Peace Committee launch a national movement for peace and disarmament, against the war schemes of US imperialism and other reactionary forces.

— The Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions issues a statement expressing full support for the struggle of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

4. The Council of Ministers calls a meeting to discuss the implementation of the Law on Military Service.

6. Establishment of the Vietnam Committee for Solidarity and Friendship with the Palestinian People.

7. The Sixth Conference of the Three Indochinese Foreign Ministers is held in Ho Chi Minh City. A communiqué is published which contains new proposals aimed at solving problems of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

— At the press conference given on the occasion of the Sixth Ministerial Conference, Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach announces a partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and says that the setting up of the tripartite coalition government of Kampuchea is only staged by Chinese reactionaries, US imperialists and the ASEAN countries.

— Signing in Ho Chi Minh City of an agreement on historical waters between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

— The Vietnamese Council of State confers the Golden Star Order on Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal, General Secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee.

10. A law was passed by the Council of State on June 30, 1982 concerning the crimes of speculation, smuggling, counterfeiting and blackmarketeering.

12. Signing in Hanoi of a protocol on the transfer of the French Institute of Culture in Ho Chi Minh City to Vietnam.

13. The Information Department of the Ministry of Culture and Information holds a press conference in Hanoi on the counter-revolutionary activities of the espionage group headed by CIA agent Vo Dai Ton.

— Laos confers the Gold Order of the Nation on President of the Council of State Truong-Chinh and Chairman of the Council of Ministers Pham Van Dong.

14. Willibald Pahr, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, visits Vietnam.



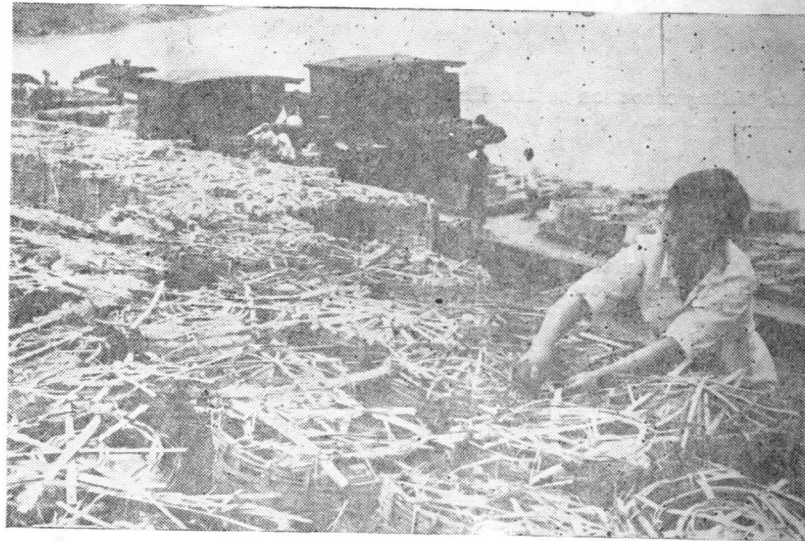
Peasants from Vinh Hoi district, Minh Hai province sell paddy to the State.

Photo : TRAN THIEM

Packing cabbages for export in the Phu Dong co-op in the suburbs of Hanoi.

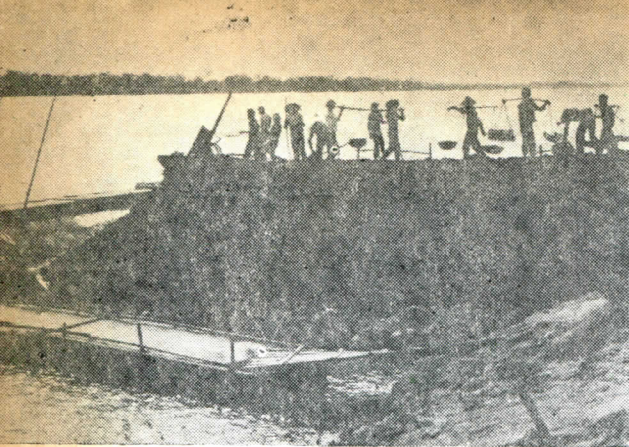
Photo : MINH TRONG

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN VIETNAM



A bumper crop in Hai Hau district, Ha Nam Ninh province.

Photo : THE THUAN



HYDRAULIC PROJECTS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION



The Nghi Xuyen dam in Nghe Tinh province.

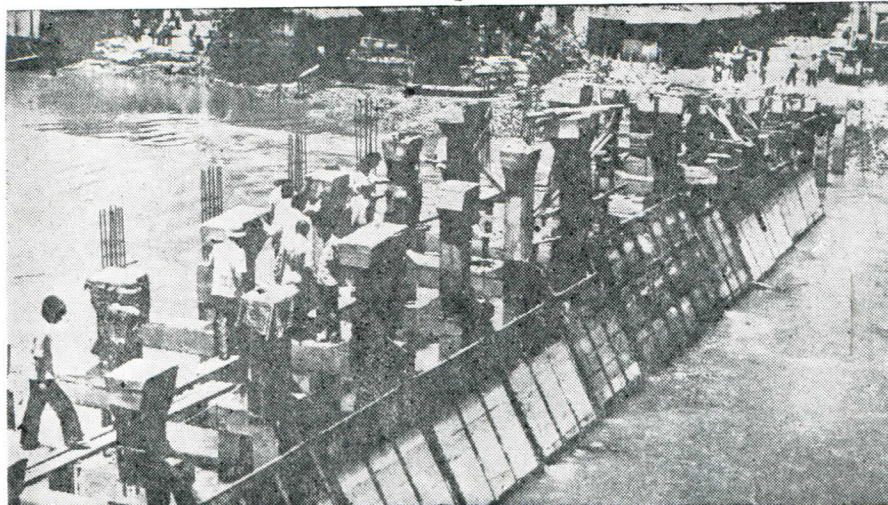
Photo: NGUYEN KHUE

Repairing a section of the Red River dyke before the flood season.

Photo: DINH NA

Building a culvert to stop sea-water in Phu My (Tien Giang province).

Photo: QUOC THAI



Vietnam
COURIER

HOBOCTBI
ВЬЕТНАМА

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

Tòa soạn: 46 TRẦN HƯNG ĐẠO, HÀ NỘI

DÂY NÓI: 53998

In tại Hà Nội

Chi số: 12462