

Aug 1980 *

EMBASSY OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
PRESS AND INFORMATION SECTION

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No.12

August 1980.

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
35 YEARS OF FIGHTING AND CONSTRUCTION
(1945 - 1980)

PART I
GENERALITIES

1- Name of the country : THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

Following the victory of the August Revolution in 1945, on September 2, 1945 the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam came into being. After the victory of the anti-U.S. resistance war, on July 2, 1976, the National Assembly (6th legislature) of unified Viet Nam decided to change the country's name into THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM .

2- National Day : SEPTEMBER 2, 1945.

(The day President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence in Hanoi, and declared the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam).

3- Capital : HANOI.

4- Land area :

329,566 square kilometres consisting of the mainland and a series of archipelagoes stretching from the Gulf of Tonkin to the Eastern Sea adjacent to the Gulf of Siam and a large continental shelf.

5- Geography :

Viet Nam is bordered on the North by The People's Republic of China, on the West by The Lao People's Democratic Republic and The People's Republic of Kampuchea, and on the East and the South by the Eastern Sea.

Land border : 3,730 kilometres.

Coastline : 3,060 kilometres.

6- Population : 52,741,766 (according to the October 1, 1979 census).

1945 : 20 million

1975 : 47.6 million

1976 : 49.2 million

1977 : 50.4 million

1978 : 51.7 million

1/10/1979: 52,741,766.

7- Demography :

The Vietnamese nation consists of more than 60 nationalities.

8- Administrative units : 40, composed of :

- three cities directly under the Central Government, namely : The Capital Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Hai Phong.

- 36 provinces

- 1 special zone : Vung Tau - Con Dao.

9- State Organization :

- National Assembly : The National Assembly first legislature was elected by a general election on January 1946. The present National Assembly (fourth legislature) was elected on April 25, 1976.

- President and Vice-Presidents of the State.

- The Council of Ministers consists of the Premier, Vice-Premiers, Ministers and Heads of bodies of Ministerial Status.

- Constitution : A draft of the new constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam was made public in June 1979 so that it could be amended after popular discussion, pending official approval by the National Assembly, at present, the 1959 constitution of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is still in effect.

10- The Leadership of the Vietnamese Revolution :

For the last 50 years, the Vietnamese Revolution has been led by the Communist Party of Viet Nam - the Party of the Vietnamese working class. It was founded on February 3, 1930 by President HO CHI MINH. The Fourth National Congress of the Party in December 1976 adopted a programme for socialist revolution throughout the country. The Party Central Committee headed by its General Secretary LE DUAN now has 133 members, including 32 alternates.

PART II

VARIOUS STAGES OF NATIONAL
STRUGGLE AND CONSTRUCTION

In the last 35 years, the Revolutionary State of Viet Nam had to concentrate its efforts on the struggle to liberate and defend the country against four wars of aggression launched by international imperialism and other reactionary forces.

1- WAR OF RESISTANCE AGAINST FRENCH AGGRESSION
(September 23, 1945 - July 21, 1954)

Right after the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (1945), the young Revolutionary Administration had to cope with counter revolutionary activities at home and attempts to re-establish the colonial domination of the imperialists. The United States attempted, through the disarmament of the Japanese fascists by the Chinese (Nationalist) army, to set up a pro-U.S. administration in North Viet Nam (from the 16th

parallel Northward). The French, backed by the British army, attempted to restore their domination in the Southern provinces then gradually annex the rest of the country, the Government and people of Viet Nam temporarily foiled the U.S. scheme but they had to wage a prolonged war of resistance against the French from September 23, 1945 to July 20, 1954.

The anti-French war of resistance ended with the DIEN BIEN PHU victory (May 7, 1954). But this was not a total victory because only half of the country was liberated while the whole country had to fight a new war unleashed by a new enemy - U.S. imperialism.

2- FROM JULY 21, 1954 TO APRIL, 30, 1975.

Following the French defeat, the U.S. directly organized all the reactionary forces in South Viet Nam and set up a military alliance in Southeast Asia in an attempt to impose its neo-colonialist domination on the three Indochinese countries and turn this region in military use. The Vietnamese people fought for 21 consecutive years, defeating several successive U.S. war strategies one after another.

The anti - U.S. war ended with the total victory of the "SPRING 1975 CAMPAIGN" which culminated in the "HO CHI MINH CAMPAIGN" victoriously concluding 30 years of national liberation war starting with the August Revolution (1945) and putting an end to more than a century of imperialist domination of our country, thus bringing about the reunification of the homeland and ushering in the era of independence, freedom and socialism for the whole country.

3- FROM APRIL 30, 1975 TO THE PRESENT.

After the total victory of the anti-U.S. war, the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Viet Nam, held on December 14-18, 1976 in Hanoi adopted a programme for building Viet Nam into a strong and prosperous socialist country with "a modern industry and agriculture, advanced culture and science, strong national defence, and a civilized and happy life". The reactionaries in the Chinese ruling circles consider the Socialist

Republic of Viet Nam as the biggest obstacle to their national expansionist and hegemonist ambitions in Southeast Asia. They joined with the imperialists and used the Pol Pot - Ieng Sary clique to hurriedly launch a war of aggression at the South-western border of Viet Nam and in February 1979 sent over 600,000 troops to invade the whole frontier line in the Northern part of our country. We promptly smashed these two Chinese wars of aggression. With this resounding victory, we succeeded in defending our homeland and fulfilling our international obligation toward the peoples of Kampuchea and Laos, thus creating conditions for the three Indochinese countries to enhance solidarity and advance together to socialism, and blunting the Chinese policy of expansion and hegemony.

PART III

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

A/ SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS.

1- BACKWARD, POOR INFRASTRUCTURE :

Our country was kept in a state of backwardness for almost a century under French colonialist domination. Before the August Revolution in 1945, about two thirds of the arable land was in the hands of the French colonialists and the indigenous feudalists, in the North, the landlords who accounted for only 3.5 per cent of the households in the countryside, occupied a quarter of the cultivated land. In 1944, 59.2 per cent of peasant families had no land to cultivate. The landlords and colonialists took an average of two million tonnes of rice annually (in addition to other forms of exploitation of the peasant masses through taxes, usury, etc.).

The French colonialists in Viet Nam exported 1.5 million tonnes of rice per year yet the peasants were left to starve. In 1945, two million people died of famine and tens of millions of others suffered from physical exhaustion a consequent inability to work.

In the North during the period 1939-1943, there were about 100 factories with 85,000 workers. In the period 1913

to 1939, 44 per cent of capital industrial investments in the whole of Indochina was in the mining industry which accounted for 60 per cent of the total industrial force.

- Before the August Revolution in 1945, 90 per cent of the population was illiterate. In 1939, out of every 100 persons only 3 attended infant classes or primary schools, and there was only one university student for every 30,000 people. The whole of Viet Nam had only 4,017 schools mostly primary schools, and four libraries. The whole of Indochina had only three institutes of higher education.

- The whole of Viet Nam had 26 hospitals, 61 maternity homes and 507 consulting-rooms with 0.4 physicians for every 100,000 people.

2- CONSEQUENCES OF WAR :

Thirty years of successive wars of aggression have had serious repercussions.

+ In the North :

In its war of destruction against North Viet Nam, the U.S. dropped 2,530,000 tonnes of bombs (100 kgs of bombs per head of population), fired 200,000 cannon shells, and dropped 20,000 mines.

- Six cities were bombed, three of which were completely razed - and two of which were from 40 to 45 per cent destroyed.

- 29 provincial towns were bombed, 12 of which were completely destroyed.

- 96 of the 116 district towns were attacked, 51 of which were destroyed.

- 4,000 of the 5,780 villages were bombed, 300 of which were destroyed.

- 350 hospitals were attacked, 10 of which were reduced to rubble, 1,500 dispensaries and maternity homes were destroyed or damaged.

- 2,923 schools including 15 colleges were bombed.
- 465 pagodas, 484 churches and 808 cultural establishments were bombed.
- 100 historical sites, 1,000 vital sections of dykes, 1,600 irrigation systems were bombed.
- 68 state farms were bombed, 10 of which were completely ruined.
- 12 million square metres of housing and hundreds of thousands of thatch houses were demolished.
- All the 1,509 bridges, hundreds of locomotives and 4,000 train carriages, 4,500 trucks, 400 factories and 200 transformer stations were damaged. All industrial centres, power plants, railway lines, railway stations, ware houses, ports, and roads were bombed repeatedly.

+ In the South :

The U.S. and puppets used twelve million tonnes of bombs and ammunition and 100,000 tonnes of toxic chemicals including 72 million litres of defoliants, half of the ten million hectares of forests were carpet-bombed by B.52 strategic bombers. Some 70 per cent of the acreage of *rhizophora conjugata*, eucalyptus and mangrove forests, over ⁶⁰ per cent of the rubber plantations and 50,000 hectares of forests were destroyed.

- The new type of colonialist war of U.S. imperialism left an enormous legacy in South Viet Nam including three million people unemployed and millions of victims of social evils and diseases.

- The economy of the South was made completely dependent on foreign countries (the U.S. provided billions of dollars worth of commodities each year) and was mostly controlled by the compradores. The latter controlled 80 per cent of industry, 100 per cent of wholesale trade, 50 per cent of retail trade and 100 per cent of exports.

According to statistics kept by the old regime, in 1973, 7.2 per cent of the national income was derived from secondary industry, 39 per cent from agriculture and 53 per cent from service industries.

While the Vietnamese people were exerting all efforts to heal the wounds of war, the Chinese reactionaries created more disasters by launching two aggressive wars at Viet Nam's Southwestern and Northern borders. In the Northern frontier, three towns together with hundreds of economic and cultural projects were completely destroyed and hundreds of thousands of hectares of crop land were ruined. The Chinese reactionaries' policy of economic sabotage, war threats, hostile propaganda and psychological warfare has exacerbated the difficulties of our people.

B/ ACHIEVEMENTS IN SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION AND CONSTRUCTION.

1- SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION :

- Abolition of feudalism and capitalist exploitation and establishment of socialist economic relations.

In the North : following the land reform of 1955-1956, 93.7 per cent of cultivated land was returned to the tillers. In 1960, Northern Viet Nam basically accomplished agricultural collectivization with 85.8 per cent of the peasant households joining cooperatives and 68.1 per cent of the cultivated area becoming collective property. The number of state farms rose from 56 in 1960 to 105 in 1975.

- In 1960, 81 per cent of the traditional handicraftsmen joined cooperatives. In 1975, there were 2,378 cooperatives in handicraft and small industrial sector with a gross product value six times that of 1965,

- By late 1960, all 729 industrial capitalist households had undergone socialist transformation and 1,189 (about 91.4 per cent) commercial capitalist households joined joint state-private ventures.

- The state-owned economic sector has broadened constantly. In 1957, it accounted for 15.6 per cent of the national income,

25.2 per cent of the gross industrial product value, 0.4 per cent of the gross agricultural product value and 52.5 per cent of the internal trade. In 1975, it accounted for 84.1 per cent of the national income, 95.5 per cent of the gross industrial product value, 97.1 per cent of the gross agricultural product value and 100 per cent of the internal trade. By 1975, 99.7 per cent of the fixed capital in secondary industry was socialist property.

In the South : After liberation, half of the peasant families and 32 per cent of land were collectivized at different levels.

The capitalist economy and the bourgeoisie as a class have been basically abolished in industry, trade and transport, 34 per cent of the 3,500 capitalist industrial establishments including the key sectors such as electricity, metals, engineering, chemicals and food processing, have been transferred to state ownership ; another 14.5 per cent have become joint state-private enterprises ; the rest including medium size and small workshops have been gradually organized into cooperative establishments with a number of small ones allowed to continue their private businesses under state control and supervision.

The national economy has thus been reorganized into a unified structure on a national scale.

2- BUILDING THE MATERIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPING THE ECONOMY.

From 1955 to 1975, about 82 per cent of capital construction investments were devoted to productive establishments. The fixed capital of these industries in 1975 had increased by 4.5 times in industry and six times in agriculture since 1960. Secondary industry accounted for one third of the total fixed capital in the productive sector of the economy.

a) In agriculture :

- The total area of cultivable land in 1978 was 6,953,000

hectares of which 6,006,000 hectares were under cultivation (about 86.4 per cent).

In the period 1975-1979, gross agricultural product value increased by 12 per cent (10 per cent for cultivation and 1.5 per cent for livestock breeding).

- Average rice output was 2,133 kilos per hectare per crop in 1975 and 1,959 kilos in 1979.

- Food production (including rice and subsidiary food crops) totalled 11,591,800 tonnes in 1975 and 13,711,000 tonnes in 1979. Compared with 1939, average annual rice production in the period 1961-1975 almost doubled. Rice output on double crop fields rose from 2.65 tonnes per hectare in 1939 to 5.17 tonnes in 1975, the number of buffaloes increased by 2.3 times, cows 1.2 times, horses three times and pigs three times, over 1938.

From 1955 to 1975, the percentage of livestock in the gross agricultural product value increased from 13.3 to 23.1.

b) In industry :

By 1975, the fixed capital in the material production sector was 3.1 times that of 1960, and the number of industrial factories, by 16.5 times that of 1955. The gross industrial product value in 1975 was five times that of 1939. Between 1955 and 1975 power-generation increased 22.3 times, engineering production 59.8 times and chemicals 79.1 times. Industrial production in general registered a 16.2 fold increase.

c) Communications and transport :

From 1955-1975 hundreds of kilometres of 1.435-metre gauge railway lines were laid and the length of motor-roads multiplied tenfold. In particular, the number of transport vehicles, mainly trucks, increased 9.3 fold in the same period.

d) Training of workers and technicians :

In the period 1955-1975 the number of industrial workers increased 10.4 times, from 2.7 per cent to 20 per cent of the

social work force. The material production sector accounted for 65.5 per cent of the social work force. Compared with 1960, the number of university and post-graduate level cadres increased by more than 19 times, that of secondary education level by 84 times and that of technical workers by six times. Statistics gathered in 1975 showed that secondary industry had 8,000 cadres with university graduate and post-graduate qualifications, more than 20,000 cadres with secondary education and about 210,000 technical workers. In agriculture and forestry there were more than 3,000 cadres with university graduate and post-graduate degrees and nearly 22,000 secondary educated cadres.

3- MATERIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

Thank to a developing agriculture the face of Northern Viet Nam's countryside has been radically changed. Per capita income of agricultural cooperative members in 1975 had increased 1.7 times since 1960.

- Cultural life : book publication in 1979 totalled 2,564 titles with 91 million copies compared with 825 titles and 1.57 million copies in 1939, the highest annual figure under French domination. Viet Nam now has 331 public libraries not including thousands of smaller libraries in factories, public offices, schools and cooperatives.

- Broadcasting : there were 23,989 kilometers of transmission lines and 439,100 loudspeakers in 1975.

- Films : 353 films were produced in the year 1972-1975 compared to 111 films in the period 1945-1954.

A total of 2,990 films with 3,879 copies were produced in the period 1955 - 1975.

- Education child care and education creches :

Figures for 1979, 44,445 creches with 1,180,000 children and 158,000 baby sisters, compared to 33,894 creches, 564,000 children and 80,000 baby sisters in 1975. In the same period, the number of kindergartens classrooms rose from 21,500 to

48,500, the number of teachers rose from 22,300 to 56,600 and that of children from 784,400 to 1,477,000.

- General education : Total enrolment in the 1979-1980 school year : 14,165,000 enrolment at junior and senior high schools : 11,804,000.

- Enrolment at complementary schools : 2,032,000.

- University enrolment : 159,000

- Secondary school classes, 302,100 with 356,700 teachers.

- Medical care : Figures for 1979 : 2,375 hospitals and dispensaries, 8,751 village infirmaries and maternity homes.

The general mortality rate dropped from 1.12 per cent in 1957 to 0.7 per cent in 1975. Life expectancy which was 40 years in colonial days has risen to 59 years at present.

4- DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has established diplomatic relations with 105 countries including 26 countries in Asia, 36 in Africa, 28 in Europe, 13 in America and 2 in Oceania.

Viet Nam has established economic relations with more than 60 countries and set up commercial offices in 25 countries. The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam joined the council for mutual economic assistance (COMECON) in June 1978 and the Intercosmos program of the Socialist countries in 1979.

5- PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS - AT THE STATE LEVEL :

The United Nations Organisations (UNO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United International Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), The World Food Program (WFP), The World Food Council, The International Monetary Fund (IMF), The Asian Development Bank (ABD), The Economic and Social Committee for Asia and

The Pacific (ESCAP), The Non-Aligned Movement, The Group of 77- etc...

- Participation in other Organisations :

The World Peace Council, The World Federation of Trade Unions, The Women's International Democratic Federation, The International Federation of Democratic Youth, The International Students Union, Esperanto for Peace, The Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation, The Afro-Asian-Latin American Peoples Solidarity Organisation, The International Organisation of Journalists, The Afro-Asian Writers Union, and many other international bodies.
