

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

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New Year - New Successes

*Out on the Road we grow fully
aware of difficulties.
One peak hardly climbed,
another above us rises
But once we've struggled up
to the highest pass
Ten thousand Li* at one glance
our eyes encompass.*

HO CHI MINH

*Li - about 2 miles

NEWSLETTER

January 12, 1974

Jan. 27, 1974 will mark the first anniversary of the signing of the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam". The peace Agreement was a tremendous victory for the Vietnamese people. It represented everything they have been for: peace, independence, self-determination and the reunification of their country.

But the fighting is now at a higher level than any year of the war except for 1968 and 1972. More than 100,000 Vietnamese have been killed or wounded since the Agreement was signed last January.

U.S. Imperialism, in the disguise of the Nguyen Van Thieu regime, continues to pursue the same objectives as before the signing of the Peace Agreement: using the most brutal and destructive means to crush the Revolutionary Movement for freedom and independence in Vietnam, to turn South Vietnam into its colony, and to keep Vietnam permanently divided.

When questioned about the sharp decrease in antiwar activities in the U.S. and other countries, PRG spokesman, Nguyen Van Hieu, stated:

"If the anti-war movement is weaker in some countries, it is because people do not fully understand the U.S. scheme and intention in this area. Although the U.S. policy of direct intervention was defeated in Indochina, their basic policy of neocolonialism remains the same - this new form people have not fully grasped."

For 30 years the Vietnamese people have waged a long and heroic struggle for their freedom and independence. Many of us here in the U.S. actively supported their struggle because we realized that it was also our struggle and that the Vietnamese were fighting our common enemy U.S. Imperialism. The signing of the Peace Agreement was not only a victory for the Vietnamese, but a victory for our own struggle.

The first anniversary of the Agreement gives us an excellent opportunity to raise the level of understanding about the situation in Vietnam among the masses of American people, to expose the new face of U.S. aggression and to defend the gains of our common victory.

Viet Nam



Nearly one year after the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement and one month after H. Kissinger received the Nobel Peace Prize for bringing "peace to Vietnam", the war continues to rage and the fighting has reached an unprecedented level, with the U.S. threatening direct reintervention.

While the majority of the American people have been given the impression that the "war is over" and Nixon has brought us "peace with honor", quite the opposite is true. Although U.S. Ground Troops and B.52's are out of Vietnam, American advisors, planes, guns, bombs and dollars are still there, fueling a war that their puppet, Thieu won't stop, and could not wage without U.S. weapons, money and consent. And the Thieu regime has made no bones about it: "The Nixon Doctrine must continue to be put into effect just like during the fighting." (South Vietnam in Struggle, 11/26/73)

SAIGON CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS (in November and December)

Declaring that the "Third Indochina War had begun", Saigon has launched a massive air and ground war against the areas in South Vietnam governed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG):

- During the month of November and first week of December, Saigon planes in more than 1,000 sorties dropped 8,000 bombs and fired 50,000 shells in the Liberated zones. (Hsinhua News Agency, 12/10/73)
- On Nov. 7, 50 Saigon Planes carried out savage bombing attacks against the PRG provincial capital of Loc Ninh, and the town of Bo Duc. According to the PRG, the attack killed 32 civilians and wounded 70. The market place in the center of town, hospitals, pagodas, schools, churches and a sanitation station were hit, and hundreds of houses were destroyed. (South Vietnam in Struggle, 11/26/73)
- On Nov. 10 more than 100 bombs, including napalm, were dropped on the town of Lo Go in Tay Ninh Province; a convalescence station was hit, and many women and children were killed. (InterNews, 11/12/73)
- On Nov. 12 for the third time in 5 days a major PRG town was bombed. More than 600 bombs were dropped on Thien Nghon and Xa Mat (Tay Ninh Province) in the early hours of the morning, killing many civilians in their sleep. (InterNews, 11/19/73)
- On Nov. 17, Saigon fighter-bombers carried out 50 sorties against the towns of Bu Bong and Dac Song. (Vietnam News Agency, 11/22/73)
- On Nov. 23, more than 500 bombs were dropped on the towns of Thien Nghon and Ka Tum, in one of the most barbarous raids since the B.52's left. Hundreds of civilians were killed, wounded and left homeless.
- On Dec. 1, Saigon troops fired thousands of shells containing toxic chemicals Dac Song (Quang Duc Province). (InterNews, 12/11/73)
- On Dec. 3, the airport and several districts in the city of Loc Ninh were bombed once again. (Hsinhua News Agency, 12/9/73)
- On Dec. 10, the runways and central tower at Loc Ninh airport were hit again



Pagoda at Loc Ninh hit by Saigon bombs.

On Dec.12 & 13, Loc Ninh city was bombed for the 6th and 7th time, causing many more civilian casualties. (*Giai Phong Press Agency, 12/17/73*)

-- According to the *Associated Press*, thousands of Saigon troops have gone on the offensive in the Mekong Delta, in an attempt to seize the rice harvest. On Dec.28, Saigon bombers flew 40 missions against the Delta province of Chuong Thien, to protect Saigon troops that are in close combat with PRG. (*Internews, 12/28/73*)

While Saigon claims that all these military operations are in "self-defense", even U.S. reporters tell a different story:

"Saigon's air force has been flying up to 100 sorties daily, many of them against targets in those parts of Tay Ninh and Pleiku provinces that were accorded to the Communists [i.e.-the PRG] by the Ceasefire Agreement. In sections of Chuong Thien, deep in the Mekong Delta, the South Vietnamese army has systematically nibbled away at Viet Cong positions." (*Time Magazine, 11/19/73*)

"The South Vietnamese air force continues a steady stream of attacks on Communist positions... and Pres. Thieu has no interest in seeing the formation of a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, which was to include his Communist and non-communist opponents and was to organize national elections." (*NY Times, 12/9/73*)

"The essential problem is that the Saigon Government does not recognize what the Agreement accepted in principle: that two distinct political entities exist in South Vietnam." (*Time, 12/31/73*)

Of course the fact these sources seem to always leave out, is that the Saigon regime is simply carrying out the wishes of its master, the U.S. Government, being that Saigon is totally dependent on the U.S.

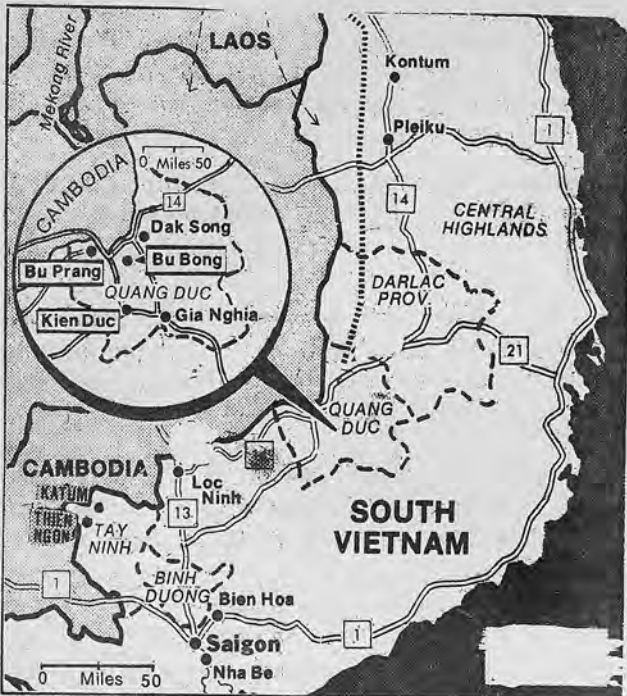
-- At the same time that it continues its military operations against the PRG zones, more than 100,000 "pacification" and police operations (with unheard of ferocity) have been carried out by Thieu in the zones he controls. According to one recent PRG report, 7 children in Pho Phong village, Quang Ngai province were publicly tied to trees, tortured and then hung or buried alive. (*Liberation News Service, 1/5/74*)

-- On Dec.30, Thieu cancelled all elections in South Vietnam and said "there will be no peace." This event (which is very similar to Diem's cancellation of national elections in 1956) could well close off any political struggle in the near future in South Vietnam, and leave the PRG with no other choice than to pursue a military solution. (*Washington Post, 12/30/73*)

SAIGON CONTINUES TO EXTERMINATE POLITICAL PRISONERS

Not only does the Thieu regime continue to detain and torture political prisoners, but for some time now, Saigon prison guards have made a practice of dropping the corpses of political prisoners into the Tien, Hau and Tan Duong rivers, where dozens of naked, headless, armless and legless corpses can be seen floating everyday. Strict orders have been given that under no circumstances can these bodies be fished out and buried. (*South Viet Nam in Struggle, 11/5/73*)

On Oct. 12,14,15 and 17, the people living in Tra Vinh province retrieved many bodies floating down the Hau River. Most of them had no clothing and several had knife wounds. Another had his throat cut, and a third had a long nail driven into his skull. (*South Vietnam in Struggle, 11/26/73*)



U.S. VIOLATIONS OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT

Over the past several months, U.S. violations have become overt, as well as and the Nixon administration has launched a series of "trial balloons", in order to gauge American public opinion and see what the response would be to direct U.S. reinterve

- On Nov. 8, 19 and from Dec. 3 up to the present the U.S. has flown reconnaissance planes over Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities of North Vietnam. When questioned about these illegal acts, they were not denied by U.S. spokesmen. (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 11/30/73)
- On Dec. 7, the U.S. aircraft carrier, Midway, moved into the coastal waters of the DRVN off the coast of Quang Binh province. Planes stationed on the warship began carrying out spying missions over the eastern coast of North Vietnam. (*NY Times*, 12/8/73)
- On Dec. 26, 27, 29, 31, and Jan. 2, the U.S. carried out reconnaissance missions with the SR-71 pilotless plane over Quang Tri province and other areas governed by the PRG. According to PRG spokesman, Maj. Ngo Thanh, the information gotten from the aerial reconnaissance by the U.S. was used by Saigon in its current bombing campaign. (*NY Times*, 1/6/74)
- There are now 24,000 U.S. military personnel disguised as civilians in South Vietnam, in all organs of defense ministry, in army branches and services and in police, intelligence and pacification organizations of the Saigon regime. (*Vietnam News Agency*, 12/1/73)
- Besides commanding the Saigon police force and directing attacks against the Liberated zones, U.S. advisors have secretly supplied the Saigon army and air force with 700 aircraft, 600 tanks and 300,000 tons of ammunition since the Ceasefire was signed. (*NY Times*, 10/28/73)
- The U.S. Government has recently announced that it will give Saigon 71 new F-5E aircraft this year, even though the Peace Agreement specifies that armaments can only be replaced on "the basis of piece for piece, of the same characteristics and properties". These new planes cost twice as much as the earlier model (the F-4E), and are far more advanced. In the words of one Saigon air force official, "they are just a little bit more powerful, a little bit more faster, and a little bit more modern." (*NY Times*, 11/30/73)
- The U.S. Congress recently voted to give 1.1 billion in military aid to the Thieu regime, more than twice the \$466 million allowed for procurement of "piece for piece" replacements permitted by the Peace Accords. (*Rep. Bella Abzug, Congressional Record*, 110339, 11/29/73) On Jan. 5, the U.S. announced that it was planning to ask Congress for another \$1 billion worth of war material, including "requests for new F-5E ground-support fighters, electronic equipment and a variety of tactical missiles." (*NY Times*, 1/6/74)
- Last Aug. 1, a Pentagon spokesman disclosed to the House of Representatives that it had set aside \$275 million for the direct use of U.S. airpower in Indochina including B-52's through June, 1974. According to Gabriel Kolko, professor of history at York University, "\$225 million [\$50 Million was used for the bombing of Cambodia in Aug.] will buy 120,000 bombs delivered by 3,800 B.52 and 16,700 fighter-bomber sorties- an amount far in excess of 1965 air munitions." (*NY Times*, 12/7)

U.S. THREATENS RENEWED BOMBING

"Now that we're not actually dropping bombs, we must maintain our capability to resume such action if we have to." (Gen. Jon Vogt, U.S. air force Commander)

General Vogt also added that if such an eventuality arose he would far prefer a bombing campaign similar to the massive raids Nixon ordered against the DRVN just before the Ceasefire, in December, 1972. According to Vogt, "It shortens things and brings them to the conference table very fast". (*Los Angeles Times*, 11/1/73)

ent Government statements such as this indicate that it feels free to resume the war in Vietnam at any time. On Nov. 30, DoD Secretary, Aurthur Schlesinger and Sec. of State Kissinger publicly announced that the State Dept. was studying the War Powers Act, just passed by Congress, to see if it could be interpreted to superced the Congressional ban of renewed American bombing in Indochina after Aug. 15. Certainly, the language of the law passed by Congress can not be misinterpreted:

"Notwithstanding any other provision or law, on or after August 15, no funds here in or heretofore appropriated may be obligated to finance directly or indirectly combat activities by U.S. military forces in or over or from off the shores of North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia."

Despite what is obvious, Nixon has somehow twisted the words around, and once again put himself above the law.

The reason given continuously over the past several months for the possible U.S. bombing resumption is *"the likelihood of a new North Vietnamese offensive"*. (NY Times, 11/30/73) It was also because of this alleged *"North Vietnamese offensive"* that Pres. Thieu, on Nov. 1, ordered his army and air force to *"stage pre-emptive attacks throughout the country"* (NY Times, 11/7/73), and on Jan. 4, 1974, *"called on his troops today to attack the Vietcong [i.e.-the PRG] in their own territory because the Vietnam war had begun again."* (NY Times, 1/5/74)

THE "PHANTOM OFFENSIVE"

Despite all the warnings, the *"North Vietnamese offensive"* has never materialized, and Govt. officials are seemingly contradicting themselves now:

"At a hearing yesterday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Robert S. Ingersoll, the nominee for Assistant Sec. of State for Far Eastern and Pacific Affairs, stating the prevailing view inside the administration, said the recent buildup of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam 'may presage a possible attack some time in the future, but there is no current evidence that a massive frontal assault is imminent.'" (Washington Post, 11/30/73)

"American Hanoi-watchers here note that North Vietnam now has the military capability to launch major attacks simultaneously across the South, but the concensus of opinion, which Washington spokesmen have noted, is that it will not do so... Instead, Americans see Hanoi emphasizing in the next year the rebuilding of its battered homeland." (Wash. Post, 12/24/73)

Of course it would be inaccurate to give the impression that the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF)- the PRG's army, has been inactive lately; they have been very busy defending the liberated zones. After Saigon began its massive bombing campaign on Oct. 3, on Oct. 15 the PRG ordered its troops to retaliate for the first time at the time and place of their own choosing, rather

than simply respond when attacked. On Nov. 6, the PLAF shelled Bien Hoa air base and destroyed 15 planes, in response to the massive bombing of Tay Ninh province; on Nov. 4, they seized 2 Saigon bases in Quang Duc province, Bu Bong and Bu Prang, established after the Ceasefire; On Dec. 5, the PLAF seized the District capital of Kien Duc, from which Saigon was launching military operations in the area; and on Dec. 3, they blew up the Nha Be. petroleum depot, destroying 35-50% of Saigon's oil supply. The PRG claimed that the fuel went to bombers that were carrying out massive raids against PRG cities, while the U.S. claimed it was civilian supply. In any case, Lt. Col. Le Trung Hien, chief Saigon military spokesman, *"acknowledged that the loss would seriously affect the Armed Forces."* (Wash. Post, 12/4)

The PRG has repeatedly made it clear that it has no intention of launching any offensive, and is only protecting



erated zones and the lives of the people. Under such savage bombings as have been carrying out lately, what does the U.S. expect it to do???

As for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN), "North Vietnam appears to a visitor to be less concerned with offensives than with putting itself together again after years of war. New signs and slogans have sprung up. Last year they demanded 'all for the military struggle'. Now they call for 'all for the production struggle'." (Christian Science Monitor, 12/12/73)

According to Don Luce, a former U.S. Gov't employee in Vietnam who recently visited the DRVN and the PRG Zones in South Vietnam:

"In terms of what I saw, if anyone has started a war, its been Saigon. From Thieu's point of view, the only way that he can stay in power is to maintain war, is to have a war, because he's got extremely difficult inflationary problems. He's got problems with the morale of his own troops. So he has to keep these troops continually on the offensive. Otherwise, he's going to have many desertions, and people are going to complain about the economic situation. He almost needs war, or the threat of war to keep up the massive amounts of aid he is getting from the U.S." (InterNews, 12/3/73)

There is an offensive going on in South Vietnam, but it has been launched by Saigon, not the PRG. "The major political conclusion that came out of my trip", said Don Luce, "is that the PRG would much prefer a political struggle to a military struggle". The PRG has always stated and considered the Peace Agreement a victory, while Saigon has considered it a defeat. Saigon is escalating the war because Thieu is afraid of Peace, and the accompanying political struggle that is outlined by the Peace Accords. "Pres. Thieu has never had any real interest in engaging in the highly complex, and risky political struggle that is outlined by the Peace Accords." (NY Times, 11/1/73)



THE SAIGON ECONOMY

Another reason for Saigon's recent upsurge in military activity is the rapidly deteriorating situation of its economy. Industry is closing down at a rapid rate, agriculture is on the verge of bankruptcy and the misery of the people increases with each passing day.

South Vietnam's piastre has been devalued 4 times in the past 2 months, chalking up a record high of 9 devaluations in 1973. As a result, its value against the U.S. dollar has dropped by more than 15%. The latest devaluation was from 535 piastres to 550 piastres to the U.S. dollar. (Wash. Post, 12/7/73)

According to recent reports from the Saigon press, "70% of the textile factories in Saigon are at a standstill. The sugar industry has almost stopped; 3 of 4 electric appliance corporations have closed down, and hundreds of small factories engaged in fish-processing, paper manufacture, straw-mat weaving, printing and dyeing have stopped operations. There are now 2 million unemployed people in the area controlled by the Saigon regime." (Hsinhua News Agency, 11/23/73)

The oil situation has also become critical. Fuel was already being rationed when the PLAF rocket attack at Nha Be wiped out 50% of Saigon's military supply. As a result, the dwindling civilian supply was diverted to keep the military machine going.

PEOPLE STARVING TO DEATH

With a severe shortage facing the Thieu regime, famine is running rampant, especially in the "Resettlement Centers" (a disguised name for concentration camps). People are

dropping dead in these concentration camps
the streets of the cities under Saigon Con-

In the Phuc Lam Concentration camp in Quang Nam
Province, 30 people have died of hunger since Septem-
ber. "The situation is so desperate that people have
been seen making roasted balls out of dirt and eating
them." (SVN in Struggle, 11/19/73)

According to another recent report, "in the coun-
tryside, many peasants say they are being forced to
eat the trunks of banana tree. Eating banana trees
is for the Vietnamese, roughly about what eating grass
would mean for an American." (Baltimore Sun, 12/31/73)

Suicide for fear of famine is becoming quite a
common occurrence. On one day in Saigon- Oct. 14, eleven
cases were reported. (Hsinhua, 11/23/73)



Refugees in Saigon, the world's most crowded city.

FLOODS AND TYPHOONS IN CENTRAL VIETNAM



The "Sarah" storm and some of the heaviest flooding in more than 10
years have covered the provinces of Khanh Hoa, Quang Tin, Quang Nam,
Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh. The water level reached nearly 9 feet in
many regions, and many crops were heavily damaged. 80 people were
killed, and 150,000 people lost their homes

To try and relieve the situation caused by the extensive flooding,
and to try and prevent starvation and epidemics, rice, clothing, medi-
cine and 400 million piastres was given by the PRG to flood victims in
Central Trung Bo. The DRVN sent 60,000 tons of rice, 8 million metres
of cloth and a large quantity of medicine and food to the flood vic-
tims in the south. (Le Monde, 11/22/73)

"According to the PRG, Saigon has taken advantage of the recent
storm and floods to grab land from the PRG...and Saigon troops have
seized the rice and property of victims of typhoon Sarah, who have been
forcibly relocated." (InterNews, 11/19/73)

In summary, the U.S. Government has not stopped its intervention in the internal af-
fairs of Vietnam, and there is ample evidence to back this assertion. Though we have doc-
umented some of the major U.S.-Saigon Ceasefire violations, we don't have anywhere near
the space necessary to print them all.

While most of us in the Movement are aware that the Peace Agreement is being serious-
ly violated by the U.S. and their Saigon puppets, the majority of the American people do
not, and most have not even heard of the essential provisions of the Agreement

When the American people began to understand U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the late
1960's, especially following the TET OFFENSIVE in 1968, they did not hesitate to act a-
gainst the war. And they will not hesitate to act again, when they understand this new
form of U.S. aggression. It has been a frequent mistake of the U.S. anti-war Movement to
underestimate the power of the American people .

It is up to us who are aware or have some understanding of the situation in Vietnam
and Indochina to draw the connections between the war, and problems and struggles of the
people here at home. For example, while we have our oil cut here at home, 23,500 barrels
(more than a million gallons) a day are shipped to a fascist dictatorship in South Viet-
nam. When the PRG destroyed the petroleum depot at Nha Be and 50% of Saigon's oil, to
try and slow down some of the bombing missions, it was only a matter of days before the
entire supply was replaced, straight from Texas! According to columnist, Jack Anderson,
"it will take bigger oil shipments, literally siphoned from the gas tanks of American
civilians to keep the South Vietnamese tanks, trucks, and planes going." (Washington
Post, 12/11/73)

The time has long been overdue for the American public to be made fully aware of
this new type of warfare the U.S. is waging in Vietnam, and other parts of the world:
proping up fascist police states with unlimited amounts of U.S. dollars, arms, electronic
surveillance and advisors.

The basic U.S. foreign policy of neo-colonialism and aggression in Vietnam did not
change after the Agreement was signed, only its strategy and tactics.

Laos



Full implementation of the Laos Peace Agreement, signed in February, 1973 is being delayed only by the continued manoeuvres of the U.S. and its allies in Vientiane. The major obstacle to the formation of the Provisional National Union Government and the National Consultative Council called for in the Agreement is the uncompleted "neutralization" of the capital cities of Luang Prabang and Vientiane. Although the majority of Pathet Lao forces have been airlifted into these cities, actions instigated by the US. have threatened the security and ability to function of the units. "At the present time, the Vientiane reactionaries do not miss an opportunity to conduct sabotage activities against the implementation of the Vientiane Agreement and its protocol. For example, they are engaged in daily provocations and encirclement against the patriotic forces stationed in the two cities." (China News Agency -HSinhua, Dec. 29, 1973) According to Prince Souvannavong, the leader of the Lao Patriotic Front, until these actions stop, progress will remain stalemated. (Washington Post, Dec. 28, 1973)

Though these are the most serious violations, they are not the only ones. The Sept. 14th Protocol called for the complete withdrawal of all military apparatus of all foreign countries (specifically naming the U.S.) . Yet, the U.S. has refused to order the withdrawal of Thai mercenaries, trained and paid for by the C.I.A. These "mercenaries have continued to conduct hibbling operations against the liberated zones." (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Dec. 3, 1973)



Months after the Agreement was signed, an American A.I.D. officer, John Williams, continues to order around Laotian peasants.

(Far Eastern Economic Review, Nov. 26, 1973).

In addition the R.L.A.F. conducted 9 bombing mission against the liberated zones governed by the L.P.F. in Xuang Khoang, Savannakhet and Saravane province in the Bolovens Plateau.

On November 30, 1973 the Vientiane puppets sent both its "31st Volunteer Battalion" and an infantry battalion on raids against the people of Muong Pong and villages of Savannakhet province, causing heavy damage and losses to lives and property. (Pathet Lao Radio, Dec. 10, 1973)

Politically the U.S. has not given up its hope of defeating the Pathet Lao. Although throughout all the years of the war the U.S. built only a few major highways, fewer schools and no hospitals, their new strategy is to lure the people away from the Pathet Lao's self-sufficient zones by developing services for the people. "There is no end in sight for American economic aid to Laos, and if American planners have their way, a resurrected method of using aid to defeat the Communists at the polls rather than on the battlefield will soon be in operation. U.S. officials have revealed that Washington is interested in forestalling any legal takeover of the Laotian government by

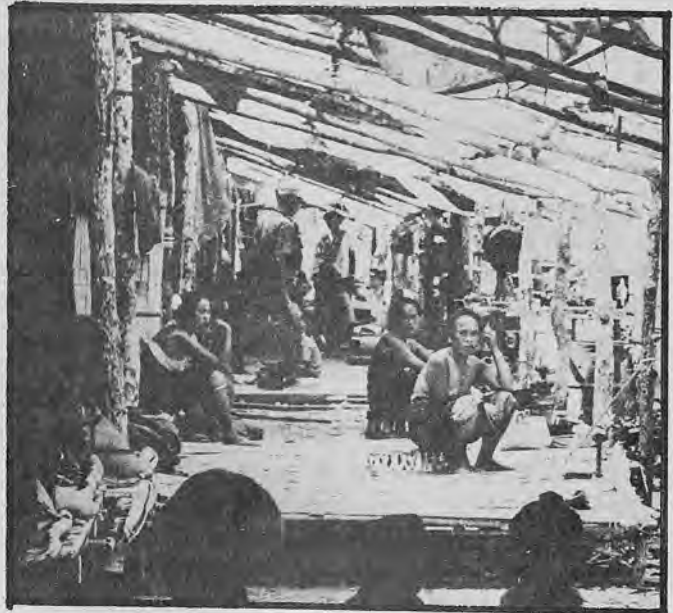
The L.P.F. has charged the U.S. and its Vientiane allies with 2,748 violations since Sept., with 188 alone in the week of Dec. 8, 1973. At least some of those included reconnaissance flights in U.S. planes with American pilots, belonging to Air America and Continental Air Services. Continental's contract has been renewed for 3-months to continue these illegal activities. (Far Eastern Economic Review, Nov. 26, 1973) F.E.E.R. also reported that L.P.F. radio has charged that Royal Laotian Air Force T-28 bombers had "been buzzing the Soviet transport planes (carrying supplies for the L.P.F.) as they came into land at Vientiane...and that rightists had put rocks on the runway in an attempt to halt the flights."

unists." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nov. 22, 1973)

Both the Protocol and Agreement call for and protect the right of the peasant refugees to return to their native villages. But most have not been allowed to return and the life and conditions of those still detained in the concentration camps has gotten worse.

Families have not been able to reap any rice for two seasons now, while others have had their produce seized by the puppet forces. In many regions there are no medical services and in Vientiane refugees have been refused treatment.

As refugees began moving about the city begging for food and money, the Vientiane puppets renewed their "pacification sweeps". But the people refuse to die of starvation of humiliation and are taking the situation into their own hands. Since the signing of the protocol some 200 families held at concentration camps in Luang Prabang Province have left for the liberated zones. 50 families in Savannakhet waged a successful struggle to get food supplies and other facilities so that they too could return to their native villages. (*Foreign Broadcast Information Services-Dec. 19, 1973*) "It has not been a good four years, In the first year they saw their weakest children die from disease and heat, and the old folk pass quickly from the strain, the heat and perhaps broken hearts." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nov. 12, 1973)



While the people look forward to returning to the Plain of Jars, their homes and their families, the presence of their Pathet Lao "cousins" in Vientiane and Luang Prabang has been warmly welcomed. And what's more, their effect on the two cities has been quite remarkable. "Morality has never been more lofty here (Vientiane) townspeople agree that the behavior of the Pathet Lao has been exemplary." (*L.A. Times*, Dec. 26, 1973)

As more and more of the troops arrive it has become common for the Pathet Lao soldiers to go out in the streets to talk and work with the people. The L.P.F. men and women helped bring in the rice harvest near the city's Wattay Airport and helped other people build new houses. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nov. 22, 1973)

"They are models of deportment. They have opened up a free medical dispensary complete with an accupuncturist which has very much impressed the local population. Medicine on the government side is not free nor plentiful. Interviews indicate that the Pathet Lao enjoy some sympathy among the population of Luang Prabang who are sick of corrupt government and military officials. On the road to Vientiane, there are literally dozens of crude checkpoints, their only purpose being to exort money from trucks bringing supplies and goods to Luang Prabang." (*Washington Post*, Dec. 17, 1973)

With this as a background, it is simple to understand the ease with which the "City people" have accepted the Pathet Lao troops help, and promise of a coalition government. Though the U.S. continues to try and maintain a hold on the situation, the strength of their grip is steadily weakened by the victories of a truly patriotic force - THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT.

Cambodia



In the past few months the U.S. Government and its friends in the press have been working overtime to create confusion about Sihanouk's role in the National United front of Cambodia (FUNK), and the overall situation in Cambodia. And though they may have concealed the truth, they cannot alter the facts; that the Cambodian people, under the leadership of the FUNK and its government, the Royal Gov't of National Union (GRUNC), continue to move forward towards stabilization, prosperity and complete victory, while the U.S. puppet forces in the image of Lon Nol and Phnom Penh continue to crumble.

MILITARY SITUATION CRITICAL FOR LON NOL

By the end of the rainy season this year (Nov, 1973), the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF)- the army of the FUNK, had seized many of Phnom Penh's strategic positions and communication lines, and has completely encircled and isolated Phnom Penh and the few provincial capitals still controlled by Lon Nol. The CPNLAF are now able to slip into the capital from all sides, and has gained control of all significant transportation lines going in and out of the capital, most importantly Routes 4 and 5, and the east bank of the Mekong River. As a result, nearly 60% of the supply convoys going from Saigon to Phnom Penh up the Mekong River were destroyed.

(Kampuchea Information Agency - AKI, 11/9/73) According to diplomatic sources in Phnom Penh, "by cutting the Mekong effectively and by cutting the 2 major roads into the city, the insurgents [i.e.-the CPNLAF] could bring on the economic collapse of Phnom Penh, the deterioration of law and order, and finally its political collapse." (NY Times, 11/25/73)

The city of Vihear Suor was liberated on Nov.30, marking the third strategic stronghold taken by the CPNLAF in that month. The first 2, Tram Khnar and Srang, were liberated on Nov.4 and 7 respectively. (Khmer Monthly News, Dec.1973) The fall of Vihear Suor now puts the capital, Phnom Penh, within range of artillery fire by the Liberation forces. As a result, between Dec. 22 and the beginning of January, 60 22-milimeter rockets struck selected targets in Phnom Penh, including the home of Sosothe, Fernandez, commander of the Lon Nol puppet army. American diplomatic sources now believe that the CPNLAF is capable of large barrages against the city. (NY Times, 1/4/74)



CPNLAF enters city they have just liberated.

U.S. MILITARY STILL OPERATING IN CAMBODIA

According to the 1970 Cooper-Church Amendment, U.S. Military advisors and troops are forbidden from operating in any military capacity inside Cambodia. But evidence continues to come in illustrating blatant violations of this Congressional law. For example, 2 months ago the U.S. Government Accounting Office released a detailed report charging that a 73-man U.S. equipment team was functioning in Cambodia as a Military Advisory Group. (NY Times, 10/30/73)

In December, the FUNK charged the U.S. with spraying toxic chemicals over Takeo Province. The rice supply from Takeo has been cut off from the Phnom Penh regime, since

operation forces control Highway 2. So the U.S. apparently decided that if the Lon Nol regime could not have rice, nobody could. The result of the spraying was devastation of this year's rice crop, and many deaths among the people and their livestock.

With this continuing direct U.S. military activity in Cambodia, some Americans have been wounded in battle. According to GRUNC spokesman, Thiounn Prasith, "on Oct. 27, 1973, at Wat Thiney, 15 kilometers from Phnom Penh, the American Commander, Vincent Gomez, was wounded by the CPNLA. And more recently another American was wounded at Phnom Basser, just west of Phnom Penh." ("Focal Point, Dec.15-31)

In another incident, a Cambodian navyman reported that a U.S. F-111 fighter-bomber had dropped 6 bombs on guerilla positions along the Mekong River. (*Christain Science Monitor*, 12/21/73) When confronted with this accusation, State Dept. spokesman, Arthur Rosens claimed that the Cambodians can't identify F-111's and had obviously been mistaken. "Col. Am Rong [chief spokesman for the Lon Nol army] wouldn't know an F-111 if one jumped up and bit him in the backside." (*InterNews*, 12/20/73)



Nixon: --The only Americans in Cambodia are "equipment delivery teams" in civilian clothes, like this!

LON NOL REGIME CRUMBLES

The situation in Phnom Penh, Takeo, Kompong Speu and other areas still controlled by Lon Nol has continued to deteriorate over the past several months. As on the military front, the Lon Nol regime has been greatly weakened economically and politically. Lon Nol's narrow escape at the U.N. (see below) has only postponed final defeat, but has certainly not prevented it. Even conservative publications such as *U.S. News and World Report* recognize the desperate reality of Lon Nol's 'Khmer Republic': "The country's economy is in shambles, kept afloat only by large amounts of U.S. aid. Outsiders wonder how Cambodia- rocked by military defeats and economic setbacks, can last another day!" (*U.S. News & World Report*, 1/7/74)

As food supplies and jobs continue to dwindle, the people of Phnom Penh are steadily slipping back to their native villages in the Liberated Zones. While Lon Nol and U.S. spokesmen say it is only "tradition" which leads the people back to the countryside, it should be obvious to anyone that it is the conditions within Phnom Penh that is forcing the people's decision. According to one U.S. correspondent, "Certainly the agony of city life here [in Phnom Penh] plays a major part in driving the refugees away. Food prices are soaring; housing is inadequate, forcing families to live in parks, freight cars, and ground floors of half-finished luxury hotels... In this society today, everybody who can exert any pressure on anybody to extract money does it." (*NY Times*, 12/7/73)

The roads leading out of Phnom Penh are filled both with people hurrying away from the decaying city life, and Lon Nol's officials collecting bribes as the people flee.

One of Lon Nol's biggest problems is his army. Without direct U.S. military support (the B.52 bombing), he has been forced to rely on his own troops and massive barrages of artillery. Although the U.S. press tries to paint them as "persistent...spirited troops", their actions have embarrassed Lon Nol and U.S. more than once lately.

On Nov. 20, a Phnom Penh air force pilot bombed the Presidential palace. The officer, Lim Kuon, had received orders to fly a mission on the front lines. Instead, he flew over the palace and dropped 4 bombs, partially destroying the building, and killing several palace personnel. In a statement given by Lim Kuon to Norodom Sihanouk, he said that the army was demoralized and its officers think only of money. And after months of careful reflection, he decided that Lon Nol "had to be killed to prevent Cambodia from being completely destroyed." (*Khmer Monthly News*, Dec, 1973)

According to Western sources, the bombing threw Lon Nol into a state of panic. The 'president' called for a complete reorganization of the puppet air force, dismissed many high ranking officers, and forced others to resign. "The bombing once again illustrates the the isolated and unpopular position of the Lon Nol regime; not only the people turned against it, but now they are joined by his officers and his own troops." (Hsinhua News Agency, 11/21/73)

Phnom Penh troops continue to desert en masse. A whole unit stationed at Kompong Cham refused to fight and crossed over to the side of the National United Front, taking all their weapons with them. (AKI, 12/10/73) Even though Phnom Penh continues to tell its troops they are fighting "North Vietnamese and Vietcong aggressors", the troops at the front line know from first hand experience that this is nonsense: "the voices that call from across the river are Khmer voices, the bodies are Khmer bodies." (NY Times, 11/25/73)

PREMIER IN TAM RESIGNS

Over the past 2 months In Tam has offered his resignation many times. Now, with the U.N. debate behind them, Lon Nol and the U.S. have accepted. The reason he gave was the "lack of cooperation on the part of some of his cabinet members", and because "of his inability to effect government policy, which despite the creation of the 'High Political Council', is still largely determined by Lon Nol." (AKI, 12/12/73) It should be remembered that the 'High Political Council' was created last May in order to broaden the gov-

U.S. & LON NOL DIRTY TRICKS AT THE U.N.

The debate on the U.N. proposal that would have ousted Lon Nol from the U.N. and replaced it with the GRUNC came to a surprising end in what the American press has termed "an ambush". As the representatives (mostly of Third World countries) one after another spoke in favor of the GRUNC, the U.S. and its 'allies' realized that if it came to a vote as scheduled, they would certainly lose. So with more than 20 speakers still to speak, in favor of the GRUNC, the Liberian representative, on orders from the U.S., offered scheduled, they would certainly lose. So with more than 20 speakers still scheduled to speak in favor of the GRUNC, the Liberian representative, on orders from the U.S., offered a timely "point of order" motion which called for a year's postponement of the vote on this question. Timely because at least 2 of the original 33 sponsors of the proposal - Togo and Gambia, were out of the room, along with many others, such as Morocco, who had established diplomatic relations with the GRUNC. The motion passed by 2 votes, 52-50. Once again, the clever manouverings of the U.S. Government has saved Lon Nol from impending disaster. Even to those who supported the Lon Nol regime, it was clear that the vote was unfair. "In a pitched diplomatic battle, Sihanouk's government- he calls it GRUNC- would have easily won." (New York Post, 12/5/73)

Long Beret, Phnom Penh's Foreign Minister, attributed the "victory" to the months of work he put in around the world seeking support for his unpopular boss. Part of this hard work included hiring a Madison Ave. public relations firm to give it assistance. (NY Times, 12/7/73)

While the Lon Nol regime "has difficulty persuading the rest of the world that it is a legitimate government" (NY Times, 12/10/73), international support for the GRUNC continues to grow.

In the weeks since the U.N. debate, 5 countries have recognized the GRUNC, bringing the total to 54. They are: the German Democratic Republic, The People's Republic of Mongolia, People's Republic of Poland, People's Republic of Hungary and Qatar (one of the the Persian Gulf States),

One of the arguments used by the U.S. during the U.N. debate was that a dangerous precedent would be set by voting support to an "ousted government" or "faction in exile". But in early November, nearly a month before the debate, the GRUNC announce that due to continuing successes on all fronts, the decision was made to move the government entirely on to Cambodian soil.

"Today nobody has the right to call the GRUNC a 'government in exile'. Before November, 1973, half of the members of GRUNC were abroad on missions of a political-diplomatic nature. But now, I have the honor to inform you that these members are ready to be turned into Ambassadors, and have already transferred their portfolios to the head of the internal resistance in Cambodia... Hence, almost all of the Ministers of the GRUNC will from now on be inside Cambodia; GRUNC is no longer a 'Goovernment in exile.'" (Norodom Sihanouk, Far Eastern Economic Review, 11/19/73)

DOES SIHANOUK STAND?

There has been an enormous amount of confusion generated recently, by articles in the Western press claiming the dissolution of Sihanouk's ties with the FUNK and GRUNC. The papers work hard at making Sihanouk look like a "gabby... westernized playboy" who is disliked by and unhappy with the 'Khmer Rouge rebels'. It is no coincidence that the heaviest charges of loss of faith between Sihanouk and the FUNK came at the time of the U.N. debate. The U.S. strategy was to discredit Sihanouk and the FUNK, thereby creating a more favorable situation for Lon Nol. Though the articles may have confused some people, their affect on the U.N. vote was certainly negligible. The 69 countries which voted to discuss and vote on the original proposal not only understand the unity between Sihanouk and the FUNK, but also understand the right of a nation to be free to determine its own destiny. And this is what they were to have voted on at the U.N.

In a recent trip to the People's Republic of China, Stanley Sheinbaum, former Pentagon Papers trial lawyer, met with Sihanouk. In an interview with "Indochina Focal Point", he was asked about these rumors. Sheinbaum reported that "Sihanouk never distinguished between himself and the 'Khmer Rouge' . Sihanouk remains confident of victory and hopes to be back in Phnom Penh 'in a very short time'."

In a letter to Sihanouk on his 51st birthday sent by Khieu Samphan, the undisputed leader of the GRUNC and FUNK inside Cambodia, he clarified their relationship:

"In close coordination with our military and political struggle in the interior part of the country, Samdech (Sihanouk) has always arduous and resolute struggle on the international scene... he has always mobilized the largest and most powerful international solidarity with our just struggle and obtained from the great majority of countries recognition of the GRUNC as the sole legitimate government of Cambodia... all these brilliant and numerous successes were scored thanks to the clear-sighted ability of Samdech, and constitute most important contributions to the total and rapid victory of our patriotic struggle..." (Kampuchea Information Agency)

In the words of both Sihanouk and the GRUNC leaders inside the country, their unity is growing, not dissolving, as the victories of the GRUNC bring the day closer for Sihanouk's return to Cambodia.

It is important to remember that it is only Lon Nol and the U.S. Imperialists who benefit from distorting Sihanouk's role and position. The question for us, is not whether there are disagreements between Sihanouk and the GRUNC, but how best to support the Cambodian people in their struggle against U.S. aggression and interference in their internal affairs. The sides are much clearer when the question reflects reality, and not fantasy.



Sihanouk with members of the FUNK and GRUNC in the Liberated zones of Cambodia (Mar,1973)

13

At this time, the tide has clearly turned in favor of the GRUNC and the people. Militarily and politically, they are stronger than ever. Their major problem now, is Lon Nol's life blood: U.S. AID. The U.S. Congress recently voted \$450 million in military aid to Lon Nol, more than twice as much as it originally asked for.

But the U.S. is rapidly finding out the "AID" is insufficient to stem the revolutionary tide that is sweeping Cambodia. As the possibilities of total victory for the FUNK and GRUNC draw closer, Nixon and his cohorts have to decide which road to take: the one that leads out of Cambodia, or the one that takes them back in to direct military intervention. Those of us who support the Cambodian people's struggle for peace and independence, must make the road back in, the hardest for the U.S. to travel.



NEWS ITEMS...

Puppeteer Cuts the Strings

When confronted with the fact that the recent Conference of Non-aligned Nations, representing 2/3's of the world's people and 40 governments had recognized the PRG, the Saigon acting Foreign Minister, Nguyen Phu Duc replied, "Our diplomacy is not so bad, but it is at a distinct disadvantage, because we are a U.S. ally... We have to face disadvantages and difficulties, because we have to lean on the U.S., and the anti-U.S. countries are all against us." A week later he was fired from his position and was sent to a small European country, as a Saigon envoy. There are beans one should not spill, aren't there! (South Vietnam in Struggle, 11/26/73)

Tho and Kissinger Meet in Paris

On Dec. 20, H. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho met for 4½ hours to discuss the deteriorating situation in Vietnam, and the nonimplementation of the Peace Agreement they both signed a year ago.

Tho said he had come to Paris "in a spirit of goodwill with serious intentions", adding that the U.S. was totally responsible for Saigon's refusal to implement the Peace Agreement. Tho also said that the DRVN fully supported the PRG "in taking all necessary measures to punish the acts of war" carried out by Saigon in violation of the ceasefire.

Kissinger, on the other hand, according to the French News Agency- AFP, "took to Paris a new map of North Vietnamese targets drawn up recently from the results of 25 U.S. reconnaissance flights made by SR-71 aircraft."

When questioned about the existence of such a map, a State Dept. spokesman stated "I've never heard of such a map, but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist." (InterNews, 12/20)

Prisoner Exchange to Resume

After a delay of more than 5 months, the PRG and Saigon agreed on Dec. 27 in principle to resume the exchange of prisoners, which had been unilaterally suspended by Saigon last July. The decision came, following last week's meeting in Paris between H. Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. Tho is believed to have raised the issue of the PRG's frustration with the political prisoner stalemate, and Saigon's refusal to return captured military and civilian personnel.

According to the PRG, there are more than 200,000 civilians and 15,000 military personnel who are still being held by the Saigon regime. (InterNews, 12/27/73)

Venceremos Brigades to North Vietnam

Three brigades totaling 400 workers will leave Cuba for the DRVN to help sow and harvest crops, fill in bomb craters, and build bridges, roads, housing and other facilities. According to Radio Havana, the move was part of a program to help in the reconstruction of that war-damaged country and an act of international solidarity with the Vietnamese struggle. (Radio Havana, 12/24/73)

Rebutals U.S. Charges on Helicopter Incident

The PRG responded to U.S. charges that they deliberately shot down a Joint Military Commission Helicopter near Saigon on Dec. 16, while it was on a mission to search for MIA's. The PRG Foreign Ministry said that the aircraft was not on an approved flight and that no agreement has ever been reached in the Joint Military Commission regarding the search for MIA's. "No agreement has been reached on the designation of a group to carry out any mission in South Vietnam."

The PRG statement also said that under the Peace Agreement, there are two zones of control in South Vietnam, and the U.S. does not have the right to make unilateral searches without consulting both sides- Saigon and the PRG- to decide under whose control the area of search belongs. "If the U.S. does not proceed in this way", the PRG stated, "but unilaterally carries out searches for the missing with the Saigon administration, then such an act is illegal, it is a violation of the Peace Agreement." (InterNews, 12/17/73)

The U.S. was told by the Saigon administration that the sight was "secure", although villagers and local militiamen said that the area had long been under control of the PRG. (New York Times, 12/17/73)

Un-Godley Acts

According to testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives' Gov't Operations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, at hearings held in Washington recently, former U.S. ambassador, Godley, had a \$15,000 swimming pool built in his garden with Gov't funds, without obtaining the necessary permission. At the hearings, an embassy document was produced ordering embassy personnel to refer to the pool as "a water-storage tank". When an embassy official was asked why Godley had this done, he replied, "to keep his wife off his back." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 11/26/73) Ironically, Godley's house- swimming pool and all, has been turned over to Pathet Lao troops that have recently entered the city for its neutralization under the terms of the Peace Agreement and Protocol.

A Message to American Women

I would like to transmit greetings to our American sisters. It is a long time since I have had the opportunity to talk to you or send you a message, as I did in past years, because now I am no longer in Paris. I have come back to the liberated zones of South Vietnam.

I'll take advantage of this opportunity to express the warmest greetings and to thank all our friends who have worked ceaselessly to contribute to our victory which we have just gained with the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement.

But as you know, while the accords have been signed, they are not yet applied. In order to have the accords strictly implemented, we must still fight. As you have seen for nine months, peace has not yet come to South Vietnam. The war in certain areas continues. There is still dying and wounded and suffering, especially for women.

We ask our American sisters who share our deep aspirations for peace to continue your activities, to continue to support us and we wish you all very good health and success and happiness.



MADAME NGUYEN THI BINH

"...together we shall overcome."

"...the true significance of the present resounding victories of the People's Armed Forces of National Liberation and the National United Front of Cambodia does not lie in the dramatic seizure of this or that provincial capital like Kompong Cham. It lies in the fact that several thousand enemy positions and large quantities of war material have been destroyed, and particularly the live forces of the enemy have been annihilated and the flow of population into the areas under their temporary control reduced to a trickle.

In a people's war the decisive factor is the population from which the live forces are recruited. This source is now running out on the enemy's side; in addition, they have no more rice and despair over a Cambodian saying: 'Rice is grown with water, and war is made with rice.' As there are no men, there are no soldiers. As there is no land, there is no rice. The khmerisation of the U.S. war of aggression in Cambodia has already failed basically. There is general agreement to say that the fascist regime of Phnom Penh is now living its last days..

The Cambodian people know and appreciate fully the valiant struggle of the American people. They have never forgotten that from the very first days of the invasion launched on Cambodia by the Nixon Administration, young American boys and girls fell under the bullets of the police at Kent State University and Jackson State College. They gave their young and precious life and blood so that the fighting solidarity between the Cambodian and American peoples against Nixon's war of aggression may live forever.

The American people have also brought an important contribution in compelling the Nixon Administration to announce the end of its bombings from 15 August 1973.

Together we stand, together we shall overcome."

Thiounn Prasith
Leader of F.U.N.C., R.G.U.N.C.
Delegation to International
Conference for Cambodia.
Paris, December 8-9, 1973.

Keep These Dates Open!

JANUARY 27 - ANNIVERSARY OF VIET NAM PEACE AGREEMENTS.
AT: SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE, 112th St. and
Amsterdam Avenue. 7:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 8 AND 9 - BENEFIT FILM SHOWING FOR I.S.C.!
At: Washington Sq. Church
135 W. 4th Street, N.Y.C.
FILMS: "Reefer Madness", Bogart in "African Queen",
and Charlie Chaplin in "Easy Street".

MARCH 15 AND 16 - FILM SHOWING!
At: Washington Sq. Church
FILMS - "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" and
"The 79 Springs of Ho Chi Minh".

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INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

BOX 'C', OLD CHELSEA STA., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011 · (212) 982-7162

(March 1974)



The Beautiful Land of Laos

The Land of Laos, the country of Laos
Built strong and prosperous
by the Laotian people
From long ago
The splendor, the beauty of
The mountains and great forests,
So gorgeous to gaze upon
It is our sustenance and
We Laotians love this Lao country
As if it were part of us

Beautiful land of Laos
Beautiful country of Laos
We are defending it
Against foreign invaders
The Lao people, together
In solid partnership
Helping each other bravely,
Are expressing their love of nation
They are guarding Laotian traditions
So as to have peace with independence
And be united all together.

NEWSLETTER

February 21 marks the First Anniversary of the signing of the "Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos." The Peace Agreement (and its accompanying Protocol that was signed in September) is a tremendous victory for the Lao people in their long struggle, under the leadership of the Lao Patriotic Front, for peace, independence, unity and self-determination. It also reflects the considerable strength of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF) and the gains they have made since the last Geneva Agreement on Laos was signed in 1962.

The Agreement recognizes that four-fifths of the country and half of Laos' 3 million people are under LPF control. According to the Agreement, the 800,000 refugees in Laos, almost all of whom are originally from LPF zones, are now free to return to their villages. Many have already done so, despite Vientiane interference.

In addition to administering its own territory, the LPF has won control of half of a new coalition government, and half of the city administrations, police force and military defense forces of the 2 largest population centres of the Vientiane-controlled zone: the cities of Vientiane and Luang Prabang.

The Peace Agreement was another giant step down the long road to freedom and independence in Laos, but it was not the final step. The struggle continues.

The Lao Patriotic Front has always characterized the fight in Laos as one against foreign invaders. The foreign invader for the past 20 years has been U.S. Imperialism.

The most decisive factor now, indetermining whether there will be peace or continued war in Laos will be the degree to which the U.S. is forced to honor the Peace Agreement and refrain from further aggression. Laos has long been a testing ground for U.S. secret warfare and the facts show that the U.S. is not yet willing to withdraw totally from Laos.

It is important, therefore, for the American people to remain aware of the situation in Laos and to demand that their government respect the Peace Agreement and allow the Lao people to determine their own affairs. Our continued solidarity with the Lao people can only strengthen their struggle, which is so close to final victory. As one brother in the Lao Liberated Zone stated:

"When the people of the Liberated Zones are told of the solidarity of the People of North America toward them, many were suprised; some didn't want to believe. But all appreciate and consider it as the best encouragement for their

struggle. American people who are supporting our struggle are doing their fighting while they are sitting inside the big hand of the Imperialists. Their sacrifices are and have to be very big; their duty is very hard. We are very thankful to them!"

LAOS



NEW AGREEMENTS REACHED IN LAOS

The Lao Patriotic Front (or Pathet Lao), and the U.S.-backed Vientiane government have signed a series of Agreements which will lead to the formation of a coalition government in Laos.

On Jan.17, an Agreement was signed on the organization of Joint Armed Forces in Vientiane, the administrative capital and Luang Prabang, the Royal capital. Each side is to have 1200 military personnel in Vientiane and 600 in Luang Prabang. The Pathet Lao has completed the placement of its troops, and all that remains undone is the removal of Vientiane troops in excess of this number. There have been reports that the Vientiane regime will demobilize 16,000 troops in stages by the end of June (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2/4/74).

On Feb. 6, the two sides signed Agreements on a mixed police force and joint administration for the 2 capitals. There will be 1,000 police stationed by each side in Vientiane and 500 in Luang Prabang. Because of their past experiences, the Pathet Lao insisted that the two cities be completely neutralized before the coalition government was formed. In 1957 and 1962 the Pathet Lao agreed to participate in coalition governments and both times the right-wing, with U.S. support, organized coup d'etats and assassinated or imprisoned Pathet Lao leaders.

This latest Agreement apparently resolved the last major dispute delaying the formation of the coalition government. One Pathet Lao spokesman has stated that "there no longer exist any obstacles to the formation of a new government." (*International Bulletin*, #6, 2/11/74)

In Vientiane, a Parliamentary Deputy quoted Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma as saying that he would resign if the new government was not formed within a month. Similar threats were used to pressure the right-wing in Vientiane to sign the Peace Agreement last February and the Protocol last September.



S.-VIENTIANE CONTINUE TO VIOLATE PEACE AGREEMENT

While the Vientiane regime is signing papers that are supposed to bring peace and unity to Laos, they continue their violations and acts of war, and the U.S. continues its intervention in the internal affairs of the Lao people.

In a 3 week period (from Jan. 21- Feb. 10) the U.S. and Vientiane flew 413 reconnaissance flights over the zones controlled by the Pathet Lao. (*Hsinhua News Agency, 2/14/74*) Special agents and CIA commandos are still being dropped behind Pathet Lao lines to engage in assassination, espionage and sabotage activities. On Jan. 7, *Pathet Lao Radio* charged that right-wing generals in Vientiane had met to discuss a new coup. Many times in the past the Pathet Lao has provided excellent intelligence on right-wing activities. One example was their prediction of the Aug. 6 coup attempt a week before it happened, with details on meetings and the individuals involved.



American pilot, Emmett Kay and 6 CIA-paid commandos, captured by PL in May. A stark reminder that the U.S. is still intervening in Laos.

And on Jan. 11, Saigon planes flew 14 miles into southern Laos and bombed areas in the Pathet Lao zones. It was the first such incident to be reported since the Vietnam Cease-fire a year ago. Strangely enough, this bombing coincided with a visit to the Lao Liberated Zones by a PRG delegation, headed by Nguyen Huu Tho. (*Far Eastern Economic Review, 2/4/74*)

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE

On Jan. 22 and Feb. 3, more than 5,000 students held demonstrations and boycotted classes in the cities of Vientiane, Saravene, Pakse and Attopeu to protest corruption and rising prices.

According to one report from the city of Pakse, by the end of the first day of demonstrations "The students had closed the town's only bridge to motor traffic, and had cut the air link to Vientiane because the airline was unable to transport cargo across the bridge to the airport for fear that the students would become violent." (*Far Eastern Economic Review, 2/11/74*)

CAMBODIA



The Dry-season offensive by the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF), anticipated for so long by the U.S., Phnom Penh and world press, got into full swing during January and early February as the Liberation Forces tightened the noose around Phnom Penh, throwing the city into chaos.

WHAT IS THE STRATEGY OF THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT?

After spending the rainy season (June- Nov.) securing their hold on the countryside and cutting the highways leading into Phnom Penh, the National United Front of Cambodia (FUNK) has now directed its attention to Phnom Penh itself, where the U.S.-supported Lon Nol regime is attempting to make its last stand.

Though the details of the FUNK's military strategy are secret, the objectives and general direction of the offensive are both quite obvious: to lay siege to the capital and bring about the political and economic collapse of the teetering Lon Nol regime inside. While the 1973 encirclement of Phnom Penh had a radius of 5-10 miles, the Liberation Forces of the FUNK have now tightened their grip and moved to within 1-2 miles on all sides of the city.

According to the Liberation radio station, *Voice of FUNK*, the CPNLAF is now in the second phase of an overall operation to take Phnom Penh. These reports have stated that the CPNLAF has around 20,000 troops in the vicinity of Phnom Penh, and have no intentions of retreating or pulling back. The Liberation Forces will continue to bombard the capital with U.S. artillery captured from Lon Nol. Besides making sure that the major highways leading out of Phnom Penh (1, 4 and 5) remain cut, the CPNLAF will continue its siege of Phnom Penh's Pochentung airport and in the very near future will begin attacking the Mekong river convoys. These 2 are the last transportation and communication links between Phnom Penh and the outside world. When Phnom Penh is completely isolated, the Liberation Forces will then enter the city itself and supported by coordinated uprisings of the local population, will seize power and kick out the U.S.-supported Lon Nol regime.



When questioned about the possibility of a last-ditch B-52 bombing campaign by the U.S. on Phnom Penh, "in order to save the city" and prevent a final victory by the National United Front, one official at the GRUNC and FUNK mission in Paris had this to say:

"The only effective defense against air attack is dispersing. This has been quite effective, even against the massive B-52 bombing carried out from January to August, 1973. Since dispersion cannot be used in cities, the GRUNC has refrained from taking cities, lest they be destroyed from the air. Even a prolonged fight in Phnom Penh is to be avoided since that would run the risk of giving the U.S. air force enough time to react and destroy the city.

"the major cities will be taken last, and very quickly-- within 48 or 24 hours. There won't be enough time for them to be destroyed. The Cambodians will wait until the situation is very ripe and then make coordinated internal and external attacks. It may happen this Dry-season, or it may not; but it is inevitable." (Indochina Focal Point, Feb. 1-15, 1974)

THE MILITARY SITUATION



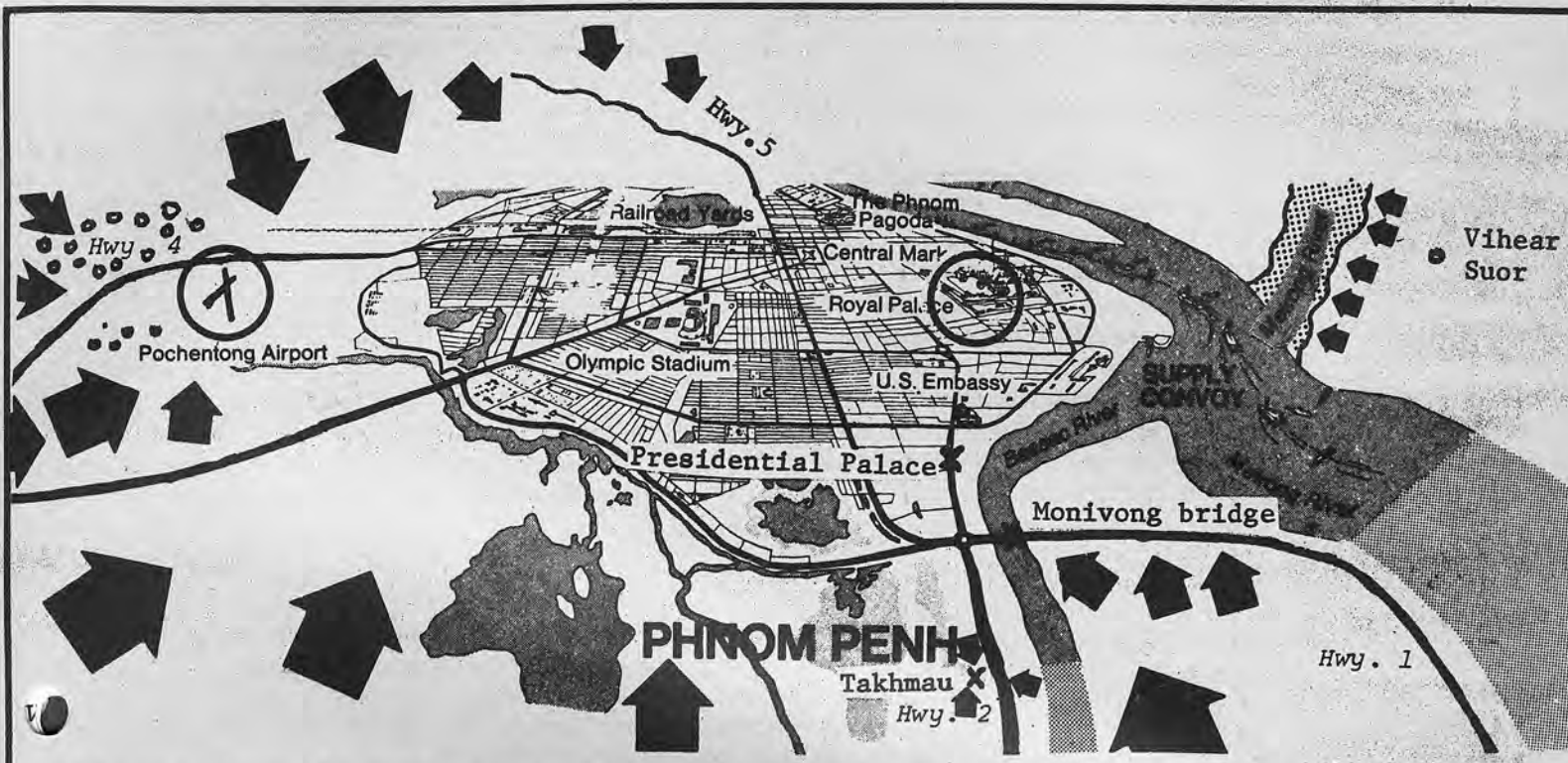
Over the past several months the military situation in Cambodia has developed almost exactly as the FUNK reports predicted. From the middle of December to early January, the CPNLAF mounted fierce attacks on Phnom Penh positions along highway's 4 and 5 and the Mekong river. Thousands of Lon Nol's troops were killed, wounded or captured and hundreds of U.S. weapons - including the 105 mm artillery pieces that are presently bombarding the city - were seized by the Liberation Forces. By the beginning of this year, the entire eastern bank (see map) of the Mekong River was taken by the CPNLAF. On Jan. 6, a new front was opened up northwest of Phnom Penh and in a lightning attack that lasted 3 days, 11 villages were liberated just outside the city near the Pochentung airport. On Jan. 7, CPNLAF rockets began ripping into the airport. Even though Phnom Penh counter-attacked with 3,000 troops, napalm and fragmentation bombs, by Jan. 14 the CPNLAF had damaged many parts of the runway, destroyed the central control tower and had moved to within one mile of the airport. (*InterNews* 1/14/74)

On Jan. 21, without abandoning any of its positions to the north and northwest of the city the Liberation Forces broke through Phnom Penh's defense lines south and southwest of the city and within 3 days had moved to within one mile of Phnom Penh. Lon Nol counter-attacked with 10,000 of his best troops, but failed to dislodge the Liberation Forces from their newly entrenched positions. On Jan. 24, the CPNLAF resumed their shelling of Phnom Penh, this time from south of the city.

The U.S. press has responded to the shelling with a barrage of articles accusing the FUNK "terrorizing the civilian population" and saying there are no military targets in the areas where the shells and rockets are falling. Obviously there is confusion over the definition of a "military target".

On Jan. 6, CPNLAF guerrillas attacked the home of Sosthene Fernandez, Commander-in-chief of the Phnom Penh army, with rockets and grenades (*Washington Post*, 1/6/74). On Jan. 16, Liberation Forces shelled the main office of the Phnom Penh army's general staff and a police station in the middle of the city. More than 30 policemen were killed and a dozen officers killed or wounded. (*Hsinhua News Agency*, 1/23/74) On Jan. 24 and 25, 185 rounds of U.S.-made 105mm shells smashed into the U.S. embassy, Lon Nol's residence and Chamcar Monn, the Presidential Palace, killing 40 of the palace guards.

After a lull of several days, the shelling and artillery attacks resumed on the capital. On Feb. 4, 120 rockets were fired into army posts and defense camps, the government radio station and Lon Nol's residence again. Fifty rockets fell on Pochentung airport, hitting a hangar and setting fire to 5 planes (*InterNews*, 2/4/74). On Feb. 11, the U.S. embassy was once again shelled and a direct hit was scored on the compound where Lon Nol has his villa (*Washington Post*, 2/12/74). Despite the massive counter-offensive by Lon Nol's army, the Liberation Forces have now reached the Monivong bridge, where Highway 1 crosses the Bassac river just south of the city (see map). On Feb. 10, the CPNLF opened another front to the west at Sam Rong, completing the encirclement of the city (*Hsinhua*, 2/10/74)



This map shows the current seige of Phnom Penh, and the major areas of conflict. Small circles indicate villages and towns recently Liberated. X's indicate locations presently under heavy attack. Black arrows indicate positions of the Liberation Forces .

Though the shelling of Phnom Penh has been labeled an attempt by the FUNK to mount a "terror campaign against the civilian population," the facts show otherwise:

"Nightly Khmer Communist [i.e.- FUNK] radio broadcasts urge the civilian population to leave the city, which is described as a 'battleground', and to join the insurgents in the brush." (*Washington Post*, 2/14/74)

"Khmer Rouge leaflets daily warn residents of the Cambodian capital that more artillery rounds and rockets would pour into the city from all directions." (*Washington Post*, 2/16/74)

FUNK leaflets and radio broadcasts have continually warned the civilian population exactly where the shells and artillery would fall. According to *Hsinhua News Agency* and other reliable sources, they have even organized evacuation teams to remove the people from areas around military targets such as army posts, the U.S. embassy and the Presidential Palace, many of which have been hit frequently in the past month.

THE STRUGGLE IN PHNOM PENH

If the National United Front was engaged in "terrorizing" and "murdering" the civilian population, one would think that the people of Phnom Penh would be more than willing to join Lon Nol's newly organized "self-defense forces" and take up arms to fight the FUNK. But the only fighting and anger on the part of the civilian population in Phnom Penh has been against the Lon Nol regime. According to one American reporter, "Anti-government sentiments touched off by the Communist terror attack is very real, and measuring it provides one gauge of what the future may hold." (*Washington Post*, 2/14/74)

In the middle of December, more than 1200 teachers went on strike in Phnom Penh. Since the end of January, thousands of people in Phnom Penh and its vicinity, mostly students and workers, have held demonstrations demanding that Lon Nol step down (AKI, 2/12/74). On Jan. 12, a former prime-minister of Cambodia, Son Sann, told Phnom Penh students that he had sent Lon Nol 3 letters "urging him to go to the United States for medical treatment." In one letter he also said, "I am probably the first one to express such wishes to you openly by letter, but you can easily determine that a very great majority of our compatriots think as I do. If need be, a referendum will confirm my affirmation." (New York Times, 1/13/74)



Students demonstrate in the very centre of Phnom-Penh) against the Lon Nol regime.

But the students in Phnom Penh, thinking that the statement didn't go far enough, issued their own communique which stated, "If one wishes the people to gain... one ought not to demand the departure of a minor and insignificant individual. What is necessary is the departure of the fistful of men who caused the misery of the people... the departure of the entire institutional arsenal and the suffocating political administration which stands by the grace and aid of ignoble strangers." (U.S. Congressional Records, 1/28/74)

In an effort to put down the internal uprisings in Phnom Penh, Lon Nol announced at the end of January new emergency laws to tighten censorship and restrict public meetings. These new measures prohibit "All private publications, including newspapers and books; all meetings, public or private, of 5 persons or more. Even Buddhist and other religious ceremonies and funerals are 'only permitted with the consent of the government'." (Hsinhua, 2/1/74) These new laws also authorize the censorship of private mail, and give the police the freedom to carry out daytime searches in private homes without a search warrant. (InterNews, 1/30/74)

On Jan. 26 and 27, the Lon Nol regime arrested 4 patriotic student leaders and barbarously tortured them. On Feb. 1, they were found hanging in their cells. Though the Lon Nol regime insists they were not tortured and that they committed suicide, even Western reporters tell different story: "Evidence now exists that the students may have been tortured. One of them, Kim Savath, 18, had round black-burn marks across his body, a sign that electro-shock treatment may have been administered by amateur torture artists. Another one of them, Kry Leng, 18, had cuts under his arms and all around his genitals." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 2/11)

During the first 2 weeks in February, the Lon Nol regime continued to arrest thousands of students and workers who had protested the misery and fascist rule the people of Phnom Penh have been forced to endure.

U.S. PLEDGES TOTAL SUPPORT TO LON NOL

Though his own army and the people in Phnom Penh have refused to support him, President Dick Nixon has pledged "total support" to the corrupt Lon Nol regime. Despite all the evidence that the insurgency in Cambodia is Cambodian, Nixon continues to blame the war on "North Vietnamese aggressors" and stated that "the United States remains fully determined to provide maximum support to the Cambodian government [i.e.- Lon Nol] and will continue to stand side by side with it." (NY Times, 1/30/74)

In the past several weeks, at least 3 high-ranking U.S. officials have been dispatched to Phnom Penh to discuss the deteriorating situation. First came Gen. Jon Vogt, Commander of all U.S. forces in the Pacific and an advocator of renewed use of U.S. air power in Indochina. Then on Jan. 29, U.S. assist. Sec. for Asian Affairs, Dennis Doolin came for a two-day visit. On Feb. 4, U.S. assist. Sec. of State, Robert Ingersoll arrived. Though no public statements were issued after these visits, "it is speculated in Phnom Penh that the U.S. emissaries are coming to discuss the question of further U.S. aid to the beleaguered Lon Nol gov't, particularly to Lon Nol's air force." (InterNews, 2/4/74)



THE NEW "U.S. SOLDIER" IN CAMBODIA

U.S. aid to the Lon Nol regime in 1974 is more than twice that of the previous year (more than \$600 million), most of which is going to the military. While article 20 of the Paris Peace Agreement calls on all foreign countries to "refrain from introducing into Cambodia troops, military advisors and personnel, armaments, munitions and war material," with the exception of U.S. aid to the Saigon regime, the level of U.S. aid to Lon Nol is without precedent in the history of aid grants of great powers to small countries. In fact, this massive aid, munitions and war material has replaced the U.S. foot soldier and B-52, and continued U.S. aggression and intervention in the internal affairs of the Cambodian and Indochinese people.

PHNOM PENH IN CHAOS

With external pressure coming from the powerful offensive launched by the CPNLF, the internal struggle of the workers and students and the worsening economic situation, life in the city of Phnom Penh has become chaotic and the Lon Nol regime is on the verge of total disintegration.

Since the 1970 coup, the cost of basic foods in Phnom Penh such as rice and eggs has gone up 20 fold, while pay increases are only 3 times as high as they were. The price of gasoline has gone up 108% in the past 2 months alone. According to one recent report, "Inflation has been a way of life in Phnom Penh for nearly 4 years. The problem is so acute that the Government is often too embarrassed to release statistical data on economic issues, sometimes not even bothering to gather the information in the first place." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 1/21/74)

The masses of starving people continue to loot rice graneries, and Lon Nol's troops refuse to fight because they aren't being payed. According to one Phnom Penh soldier, "My salary isn't even enough to feed my goddamn family. I haven't been payed in 2 months, and I have to buy my own uniform and equipment. The goddamn rich people have all kinds of money to build their villas, to have 2 cars. But what about us?" (Washington Post, 2/13/74)

Foreigners and personnel at foreign embassies are hurrying out of the city. France, Britain and Australia have all withdrawn their diplomatic personnel and dependents. By Jan. 20, 200 French residents had left Phnom Penh. (Hsinhua News Agency, 2/4/74)

The situation for the Lon Nol regime was best summed up by the FUNK and GRUNC representative, Thiounn Prasith, who stated at the recent International Conference on Cambodia held in Paris, December 8-9:

"The fascist regime of the Phnom Penh traitors can be compared to a ship in distress, leaking water everywhere in the middle of a sea stirred up by a storm. On board this ship, there is general panic on all decks. The crew and the lower ranks of officers have already abandoned it. Nobody, not even its owner, the Nixon administration, can save it for it is about to sink irremediably into the deep sea of shamefulness under the strong, irresistible blows of the popular hurricane." (Khmer Monthly News, January, 1974)

SOUTH VIETNAM

ONE YEAR AFTER THE PARIS AGREEMENT



One year has passed since the signing of the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam. Facts from many sources clearly show that the U.S. government always opposed the implementation of the Peace Agreement and has encouraged and designed the violations carried out by the Saigon Regime. Although the Agreement forced a change in tactics (the withdrawal of U.S. ground and air forces) it did not change the U.S. strategy and goals. In fact, the U.S. continues its efforts to keep Viet Nam permanently divided and to turn South Vietnam into a neo-colony. Towards this end it continues to deny the very principle upon which the Agreement was based, "that there exists two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces in South Vietnam." The U.S. daily attempts to destroy the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) and the "Third Force" as it bolsters and develops the fascist reime of Nguyen Van Thieu.

In November 1969 Nixon announced a new policy for the war - "VIETNAMIZATION". This meant that with Americans beginning to be phased out, the war would be fought by the Vietnamese with American bombs, weapons and dollars. Yet, it remained clear that one of the cornerstones of this policy was the ability of the United States to bring to bear the heavy destruction of its B-52's and the rest of its military arsenal.

Today, Vietnamization remains in effect. U.S. ground and air forces are no longer in Vietnam en masse but there are 25,000 "civilian advisors" remaining, carrying out military functions (see section later on). The American government continues to supply ALL the military equipment and 80% of Thieu's total budget which pays for his soldiers and police force. And, the U.S. maintains its threat to reintervene with its bombers stationed in Thailand. What has changed is that while in 1969 people throughout the world saw "Vietnamization" as the policy to oppose in Vietnam and it was the focus of anti-war activity, today it has become a policy which removes the war from the people's consciousness hides the continuing intervention and allows the government to lull the people into silence. It is essential for all those opposed to the war to recognize that it is through this policy that the U.S. is capable of continuing the war and that real peace through the implementation of the Agreement is threatened.

U.S. VIOLATES THE AGREEMENT

The Paris Agreement stated that the U.S. is to "stop all military involvement and intervention in South Vietnam." To this end, the U.S. was supposed to dismantle all military bases, bring home all its troops and military advisors, and cease supplying ammunition and other war materials to the Thieu regime except on a "piece for piece" replacement basis. With the exception of withdrawing its troops, the U.S. has seriously violated all these provisions.

Nixon has now secured an 813 million dollar military appropriation from Congress, to provide enough equipment and funds for Saigon to continue its offensive against the P.R.G.-governed areas. "Official American figures show that since the ceasefire Agreements were signed a year ago, the U.S. has provided South Vietnam with approximately 284.7 million dollars worth of weapons and ammunitions...This figure is roughly 75% of the level at which armaments were supplied to the South Vietnamese in 1972, a year that saw extremely heavy fighting...American officials say that they make no effort to differentiate between weapons lost and ammunition used in offensive actions against defensive actions...the result is that the South Vietnamese generally get what they ask for with few exceptions." (N.Y. Times 1/28/74)

The U.S. knows that the Saigon armed forces are incapable of running the show alone. So, in a direct violation of the Agreement, a force of Military Advisors claiming to be civilians, remain in South Vietnam. According to an article in *Christian Science Monitor*, Jan. 28, 1974, American 'civilian technicians' "maintain former U.S. military bases turned over to the Thieu regime and keep the heavily engaged South Vietnamese Air Force in the air." It recently became unavoidable fact when former Green Beret, Gerald Emil Kosh, was captured by the Chinese during a battle with Saigon armed forces over the Paracel Islands. Though the U.S. tried to deny his military function, its clear he was there advising the Saigon military officers. Conflicting press reports indicate that in their efforts to cover up this embarrassment the government never came to a single explanation:

"Vietnamese military officials said the American was stationed with a four man Saigon meteorological team on Robert Island..." (Chicago Daily News News 1/22/74)

"Diplomatic sources said today the American... had gone there last week with the ostensible purpose of looking at the weather station on Pattle Island...." (Reuters 1/22/74)

"(he) was aboard a South Vietnamese ship making a routine inspection voyage in the Paracels..." (UPI 1/23/74)



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"You're out of uniform soldier!"

A less obvious but critical violation is the U.S. Department of Defense is granting contracts to war related corporations. Their employees form a new army of technicians who are responsible for the maintenance of former U.S. military bases and are involved directly with maintenance of South Vietnamese Air Force planes and helicopters, thus freeing ARVN soldiers for overt military operations. Lear-Siegler is the company with the largest number of employees. Other firms with large contracts are Pacific Architect and Engineers, primarily involved in training maintenance workers; Page Communications Engineers, Inc., involved in the "training, advising, and assisting of the Navy and Air Force and Military Communications Management Agency"; Dynalectron Corp. which maintains highway construction equipment. (Christian Science Monitor 1/30/74)

An American civilian in Da Nang told one member of the Saigon Inquiry Committee, "Don't be fooled for a minute, there are Americans here flying gunships." Ransom, an IBM corporate council, said at a Press Conference in N.Y.C. that there are dozens of American cargo planes and helicopters bearing Red Cross emblems at Da Nang. "We were told the choppers were really gunships." and the crosses were there to fool the Vietnamese people. (Boston Globe 1/22/74) Throughout the month of January, the U.S. sent reconnaissance flight out over the territory governed by the P.R.G. The purpose of these flights is to gather information used by the Saigon military command in planning its attacks against the liberated zones. In statements released by its Foreign Ministry the P.R.G. condemned the U.S. for reconnaissance flights on: Jan 12, 15, and 30 over Dong Ha, Lao Bao and Highways 9 and 14 in Quang Tri Province; Jan. 22 and 24 over areas West of Quang Tri and East of Li Ton and Lao Bao; and Jan. 18 over Loc Ninh, Binh Long Province. (Hsinhua 2/28 and 2/3/74)

SAIGON MILITARY VIOLATIONS

Articles 2 and 3 of the Paris Agreement called for an in place ceasefire to go into effect immediately throughout all of South Vietnam. However, the ceasefire has never been implemented by the U.S. and Thieu. In fact, a day after the Agreement was announced Nguyen Van Thieu said, "The ceasefire does not mean the end of the war...the ceasefire does not mean real peace.." (N.Y. Times 1/28/73) As the statistics show, he has followed his words well. Over the past year more than 300,000 land grabbing operations and pacification raids have been launched against the P.R.G. governed areas, with more than 100,000 people killed. Since October 3, 1973 the Saigon Regime has been carrying out massive bombing raids against the city of Loc Ninh and other major population areas governed by the P.R.G. On Jan. 4th Thieu ordered his troops to attack the P.R.G. in their own territory proclaiming, "As far as the Armed Forces are concerned...the war has restarted." (Washington Post 1/5/74) Accounts from the Western press indicate a general recognition that the provocations of war are coming from the Thieu regime. "President Thieu has acted from the start as if the Peace Agreement did not exist." (Christian Science Monitor 1/28/74)

In the past month the offensive actions of the Saigon Armed Forces have increased not only in frequency but in intensity. "Daily and nightly Saigon troops shell civilian areas, fighter bombers often strafe and bomb...there have been times when it has been much worse than the worst time of the war.." (N.Y. Times 2/19/74) On Jan. 10, 1974, the Saigon Regime announced that it was systematically bombing P.R.G. territory. "Although the Saigon government had admitted bombing 'Viet Cong' strongholds previously, it was the first open admission of systematic bombing across South Vietnam." (Wash. Star News 1/10/74)

Much of the fighting over the past month has been concentrated in the Central Highlands. The P.R.G. Military Spokesman, Colonel Vo Dung Giang, said that Saigon warplanes bombed the Central Highlands town of Duc Co, 215 miles north of Saigon for 4½ hours on Jan. 11th although, "Saigon knew very well that there is an ICCS team there." The ICCS Headquarters was completely destroyed. (Internews 1/13/74) On Jan. 14th, 27 battalions of Saigon troops under air and artillery support attempted to occupy Chu Nghe. They were attacked as soon as they landed. 200 troops were killed and 11 vehicles were destroyed. On the same day, Saigon forces attacked the P.R.G. airport at Tay Ninh. (Giai Phong News Agency 2/4/74) In two other attacks, Saigon tried to stall the release of political prisoners recently negotiated by the two sides by bombing exchange points in Tay Ninh Province. On Jan. 11th, Saigon bombed Duc Nghiep, and on Jan. 15th, 86 planes bombed

Thien Ngon. Saigon soldiers were flown in after one of "the most intense bombing raids since the ceasefire." The P.R.G. charges that the airfield was damaged and that many buildings used in the prisoner exchange were destroyed. (Reuters 1/15/74)

The U.S. tries to cover up its responsibility for Saigon's violations, but if it were not supplying the means of war, these military actions would be curtailed. As long as U.S. support continues and Thieu's actions are well suited to U.S. policy, Thieu can simply continue to act as though the Agreement does not exist.

On the other hand, the forces of the Provisional Revolutionary Government continue to see the Peace Agreement as a means of reaching a political settlement in accordance with the desires of the Vietnamese people. "The attitude towards them [the Agreements] is in sharp contrast to that on the Saigon side where they are rarely mentioned in public." (N.Y. Times 2/18/74) The P.R.G. has called upon its regular and guerrilla forces to respond to the provocations of the Saigon and U.S. maneuvers, "At the same time the P.R.G. has not yet repudiated the ceasefire nor has it yet expanded its military actions beyond defensive measures needed to hold territory." (The Nation 1/12/74)



DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES TRAMPLED UPON

The Paris Peace Agreement contained many provisions to safeguard the people's democratic liberties. It guaranteed the right of people to work, travel, live, speak and write freely. It provided for a scheduled release of all prisoners and freedom from reprisals for political views held during the war.

In the months since the signing of the Agreement, the world has been made to see that the strength of the Thieu regime has been maintained at the expense of the people under his control. Instead of democratic liberties, the people in the Saigon controlled zones have witnessed the establishment of a brutal fascist regime. "America is using our tax dollars to support a police state in South Vietnam." (John Boone, former Commissioner of Corrections for the state of Massachusetts, L.N.S. 1/23/74)

POLITICAL PRISONERS



Although it is still imprisoning some 200,000 Vietnamese in over 1,000 prisons throughout South Vietnam, the Thieu regime continues to deny that it has any political prisoners. In a letter to Pope Paul, April 1973, Thieu states "There are no political prisoners in South Vietnam. There are only two kinds of prisoners: 21,000 common law convicts and 5,081 communist prisoners." In January, 1974 U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin in Saigon was asked by John Boone whether there were any political prisoners in South Vietnam. "Martin assured me there are no political prisoners...I have had similar assurances from American correctional administrators ...but my more than 20 years experience in the prison business leads me to believe that they are lying or they don't know what a political prisoner is." (L.N.S. 1/23/74)

THIEU'S DEMOCRACY

One day after the Agreement was signed Thieu stated, "that as for all our affairs, laws, administration we'll do exactly as in the past, nothing has changed." (N.Y. Times 1/28/73) After the Joint Communique was signed Thieu reiterated, "the government reserves its right to maintain restrictions on democratic liberties." (N.Y. Times 6/15/73) Everything from the courts to journals is under Thieu's direct control. Pacification operations have been accelerated to the point that over 3 million people have been forcibly removed to relocation centers, 36,000 people have been arrested, tortured or killed; hundreds of thousands of head of cattle have been taken away from the people along with tons of rice. Some 920,000 people have been herded into concentration camps of one form or another. (White Book, One Year of Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, D.R.V.N., 1974)

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As Deborah Wiley, another member of the Saigon Inquiry Committee, pointed out in an interview with *Liberation News Service* "The Paris Accords guaranteed freedom of movement...almost no peasants from Saigon have been allowed to return to their home villages. Instead they are kept either in resettlement camps or in 'return to village camps'. Both these programs, promoted by U.S. A.I.D. funds, hold the people in with barbed wire and under strict surveillance...we saw people starving since rations are absurdly low, and the American money promised for goods has disappeared into the pockets of various officials."



More than 3 million people languish in Saigon resettlement camps in violation of Peace Agreement

Thieu's prisons and concentration camps are used to control the population, to settle people in contested areas and to create an atmosphere where political solutions proposed by the Agreements are impossible. "Thieu's control over South Vietnam rests on his ability to maintain American aid at a level at which he can keep the majority of the population in the army, jails, the cities and refugee camps." (N.Y. Times 1/28/74)

In other developments this month, Thieu submitted a three part proposal to amend the Constitution to a special session of the National Assembly. The changes permit him to run for a third term, to be extended from 4 to 5 years; to appoint rather than elect province chiefs; and to have Supreme Court judges chosen by the National Assembly rather than by a panel of lawyers, judges and public prosecutors. The proposal passed by a vote of 153-52. Immediately following the vote, anti-Thieu senators held a demonstration in downtown Saigon. Banners read: "To amend the constitution is to serve Nguyen Van Thieu and to betray the people."; "No concern for the starving people, only concern for power."; "As long as Nguyen Van Thieu is still in office, dictatorship, corruption and war will remain." (N.Y. Times, 1/20/74)

SAIGON'S ECONOMY CONTINUES TO CRUMBLE

The economic situation in the Thieu controlled zones grows worse: "As it is the country already suffers from galloping inflation that last year sent the prices soaring 65%, doubling the cost of rice and tripling that of sugar. For the second consecutive year, the living standard fell by more than 5%." (Time, 2/4/74)

Right now the government is fearful that its soldiers and civil servant, who live on fixed salaries and cannot make ends meet, will grow even less reliable and "shirk their duties, look for second and third jobs and dabble in corruption whenever they can." (The Economist, 1/12/74)

Even Thieu's "Land to the Tillar" program created in 1970 to break the ties between the peasants and the P.R.G., is now being reversed. Landlords and foreigners are returning to "secure" areas to reclaim land from the peasants now working it. (N.Y. Times 1/14/74) According to an Associated Press release A.R.V.N. soldiers are being paid by landlords and government officials "to terrorize refugees and drive them away from resettlement homesites wanted by land speculators." (A.P. 2/19/74) This only serves to encourage peasants to move to lands protected by the P.R.G.

Underlying all these problems, of course, is the lack of an independent economy, "South Vietnam is a wholly owned American subsidiary... utterly dependent on American aid." (N.Y. Times, 1/27/74) American aid programs do nothing to make South Vietnam self-sufficient. They do not provide jobs for the people in the cities, or agricultural programs to meet the needs of the peasants. "76% of U.S. aid last year went to Saigon's armed forces. Medical supplies got one half of one percent. In a country of more prisons than schools, education got just over one tenth of 1 percent of U.S. aid." (International Bulletin, 2/11/74)

MORE IMPERIALIST GENEROSITY

"At the Pentagon the other day an Air Force general, with straight face, declared that the thousands of craters caused by B-52 bombing had a positive effect, 'We have helped to create a fish farming industry in the watered holes for the Vietnamese peasants,' he said." (N.Y. Times 1/15/74)

VIETNAM: A View From Western Reporters




Since the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement on Vietnam in January, 1973, the 'Free World' press has done everything it could to obfuscate the development and reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) and the PRG Liberated Zones in South Vietnam. They have repeatedly accused the PRG and DRVN of scrapping the Peace Agreement and escalating the war.

But one of the best sources for finding out what is happening in these areas is the people who have actually been there. The following are excerpts from eyewitness accounts reported by Americans and Western journalists, many of whom are not sympathetic to the PRG or DRVN; they are overwhelming proof that "all for production and reconstruction" are the new watchwords, and the Peace Agreement is the new banner under which the struggle will continue.

THE ECONOMY OF THE D.R.V.N.

In a report carried in the N.Y. Post, January 23, 1974, Nguyen Duy Trinh explained that "during the present phase, the essential tasks of the Vietnamese people consist of safeguarding peace" and of reconstructing war-torn Vietnam. Cora Weiss who co-chaired the Committee of Liaison with the families of Prisoners Detained in North Vietnam reported on her recent trip to Vietnam in LNS (Liberation News Service) 12/8/73, and University Review 1/74:



"The children are back on the streets, the holes in the sidewalks are filled with dirt and the covers are gone... The biggest single change is reflected on the billboards throughout the country. In '69 and '72, the billboards said, 'Produce for the front, Produce for the war effort.' Now they say, 'the fatherland calls you to the new front -- Production,' or they exhort the population to increase the rice yield, to increase the production of crops, to increase whatever they do, whether it's forestry, or animal husbandry, cotton production, vegetable planting, embroidery or weaving... There's a big push for industrialization... the population is being prepared for shifting from a war economy, a war production, and a war psychology, to a peace economy, a peace production, and a peace psychology..."

"Times are hard. But there's no shortage of rice, fish, vegetables, gas, shoes, or clothes. despite reasonable rationing ... No distended bellies, People are poor, but there's no poverty. Mosquitoes are rampant after rains, but there's little or no malaria in the North. People are crowded into living spaces, but there is little T.B. Schools, evacuated and closed during the bombing, are beginning to re-open on a full-time basis. And there is total literacy."

"The national tasks were listed as accelerating agricultural production, vigorously improving animal husbandry and fish breeding, restoring and developing the production of consumer goods and a number of key heavy industrial branches with a view to realistically

erving agricultural production and the production of consumer goods. The list then went on to include the development of communications and improvement of the management system." In spite of both war and calamities, "Total output for the year was estimated as the third highest in fifteen years. Cultivated acreage increased by 12% over the previous year. With spring rice becoming a major crop, bright prospects were held out for a three-crop-a-year pattern. The acreage under 1973 winter crop was to be double that attempted at any time before, it was reported in 1972 the winter crop covered 110,000 hectares." (Asia Yearbook, 1974 Far Eastern Economic Review)

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE PRG LIBERATED ZONES

Ron Noreau reported in Newsweek, 5/21/73, of his trip deep into the Mekong Delta:

"The further I went into Viet Cong territory, the more livestock I saw and the more prosperous looking were the houses. It was obvious that the P.R.G. was making special efforts in health and education..." James M. Markham of the N.Y. Times (2/17/74) more recently visited Binh Dinh Province in the Northern part of South Vietnam and found the peasants in the P.R.G. zones to be "at least as prosperous as the rural inhabitants of the parts of Binh Dinh that are under Saigon's control." He visited a large hamlet which "looks prosperous despite the fact that almost all of its concrete buildings are destroyed... We passed several bicycle-repair shops, a soft drink and general store and a place that advertised itself as a tape-recorder repair shop." In Hoai Nhan he was: "surprised by the appearance of general well-being. In Saigon, the Communist-held areas are often painted in drab colors as impoverished places devoid of people. Here in Hoai Nhan there appear to be many people.. They are decently dressed - in varying colors and kinds of cloth - and they look adequately fed, or certainly not malnourished. A number have transistor radios over their shoulders..."

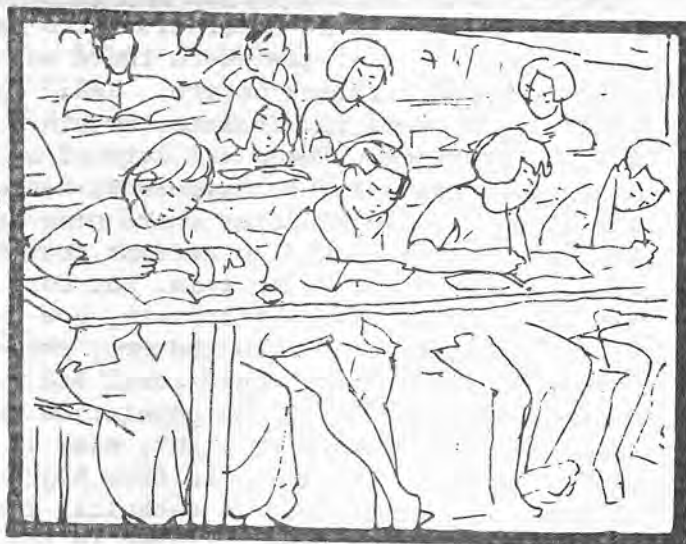
How were the Vietnamese able to organize the rebuilding of their devastated land?

"Some of the remotest villages we visited confirmed what the leading cadres had said; There was not a village in the liberated area without a primary school and a doctor. Some of the schools were primitive, but they were doing their job of spreading literacy. The N.L.F. leadership was of the people, for the people. They had to be, for they were entirely dependent on the people for vital information, for protection, even for food. The policies they followed in an area once it was liberated reinforced their identification with the common people.

"The first thing in a liberated area was to set up a village administrative council and leave it fully in charge. Like North Vietnam, the P.R.G. has perfected the art of decentralising political power as well as administration. The village councils' primary tasks are to rehabilitate agriculture and set up schools and clinics." (T.O.S. George, 7/73, Far Eastern Economic Review)

Gabriel Kolko reported after his trip to Quang Tri:

"Liberated Quang Tri gives one an astonishing mixture of impressions. First, there is the unimaginably vast scenes of destruction the U.S. Imperialists created: craters everywhere, Dong Ha city razed, and endless sights of unparalleled barbarism. Next, at the same time, at every turn, there is reconstruction, new buildings land being farmed again, and a dynamism which fills me with unbounded admiration for the people of Quang Tri who are successfully reimposing a new life on the death the Americans and puppets left behind. Lastly, we saw the heroic people, ranging from the smallest most isolated villages to the leadership of the NLF and PRG who with both great courage and skill had led the victorious liberation struggle and were now building a new South Viet Nam.



Reconstruction appeared to be so rapid largely because of the determination of all people and leaders to heal the wounds of war with their own dedication and labour, but there are also large amounts of new machines, motors, and equipment to be seen everywhere. Tractors are helping the farmers to cultivate 10,000 hectares of land and raise output. Well-equipped saw mills and machine repair shops are speeding the process. Confidence in the economy is general, the markets are full, and optimism is based on accomplishments as well as certainty of victory over Saigon puppets." (*South Vietnam in Struggle, 1/7/74*)

Special efforts to create the necessary medical and educational systems to meet the needs of the Vietnamese people were noted by:



Tracy Woods of UPI who reported in early July, 1973 that:

"There are plans for a 300 bed hospital at Dong Ha and a 'cultural complex' with a theatre, library, museum, sports stadium and movie theatre. There are also plans to build a university someday...Bricks that can be salvaged for construction are neatly stacked away in a vacant lot. Surveyors, sheltered from the heat by umbrellas, are working on the roads. Electric poles are being raised across the fields to hamlets on the outskirts of Dong Ha, replacing lines now tied to fences. Before the poles can go up fields must be cleared of unexploded bombs, artillery shells and mines."

Cora Weiss said in *Liberation News Service 12/12/73*: "They have village clinics, there are schools in villages where there were no schools, and the population is literate where there was 65% literacy before. Yes. There is excitement about the school, the 500 students were in absolute seventh heaven. This is the first formal secondary school for the province. There are lots of students and lots of buildings--that the kids put up themselves." And in *University Review #34, 1/74*, she continues: "There are new clinics popping up in villages where none had been before. The free medical care is a lure for Saigon-area people to attempt travel across the forbidden border. People are shot by ARVN troops for doing this, but both the free medical care and educational facilities available in liberated territory, now reputed to be 80% of all of South Vietnam, are virtually irresistible to the many peasants suffering from inflation, limited rice supplies, and inadequate educational and medical facilities."

Not only has 65% of the population been made literate since the Paris Agreement but supplementary classes at night, some of which we attended, provided a way for teenagers and young adults to graduate from high school, learn mathematics, foreign languages, sciences and prepare for a technical future.

Textbooks are being published in the liberated zones, ranging from elementary, beautifully illustrated reading books to complicated math texts. The books for children show pictures of older children helping younger ones and men and women doing common tasks. Familiar signs of placing girls into sexist roles do not exist; it's not only a woman in the kitchen, and certainly not a man behind the plow."

The Vietnamese in the liberated zones are obviously aware of the many differences between life in their areas and those controlled by Saigon. It is not just the obvious familiar ones: James Markham in the *New York Times 2/18 and 19/74*, notes that the P.R.G.: "Taxes are levied 'periodically' and 'according to ability to pay.' Farmers are expected to give a portion of their rice crop to the People's Liberation Armed Forces" The Saigon troops way of collecting taxes for their own pockets is well known. "They are very rough with us. We do not wear jewelry or they take it from us." (*N.Y.Times 2/19/74*)

Markham also gave a simplified explanation of the P.R.G.'s land policy (*N.Y.Times 2/18/74*): "There is no collectivization, we are told: that will come only after the 'liberation' of the South and the unification of Vietnam. But there are three categories of land: public land, a traditional category that antedates Marx, private lands, and lands owned by 'wicked elements in exile', who fled the area after the Communists' big offensive.

"According to our hosts, farmers work their own plots, which range in size from as little as half an acre to as much as 10 acres. Though each decides what he wants to plant, rice appears to be the crop of choice.

If a farmer has too little land to support his family, the Communist authorities give him a tract of public land or the land of 'wicked elements' so that he has enough. If he has too much land, landless or unemployed people are sent to work on it since labor is in short supply.

While there is no collectivization, village and hamlet officials do arrange for the sharing of such things as water pumps and buffalo, which are also apparently in short supply. If a farmer lends his buffalo to plow a neighbor's field, we are told, the neighbor will in turn help the buffalo's owner to harvest his crop."

Saigon's corruption has affected all of Vietnam and the liberation forces are determined to regain the good aspects of Vietnamese culture: Francois Thanon in Le Monde Diplomatique explains:

"To them, no doubt, their struggle is a just nationalistic struggle; like-wise it is one of purity against corruption. They have a sacred mission: to restore culture to Viet Nam while eliminating the depraved Saigonese art methodically contaminated by the Americans...They claim that they, and not the people of Saigon who indulge in concubinage and prostitution are the ones who respect family traditions...Taking music as an example, the maudlin and sappy songs of Saigon especially disgust them. They will eliminate prostitution, theft, corruption, they will restore the Vietnamese economy in the interest of Viet Nam, not to create an American base."

Cora Weiss quoted Madame Binh's summation (U.R. 1/74):

"The destruction of the war is indescribable. If only our people could enjoy permanent peace, we believe we could rebuild our country rapidly. But real peace has not yet come to South Vietnam, though there are many favorable conditions and foundations on which to restore peace.

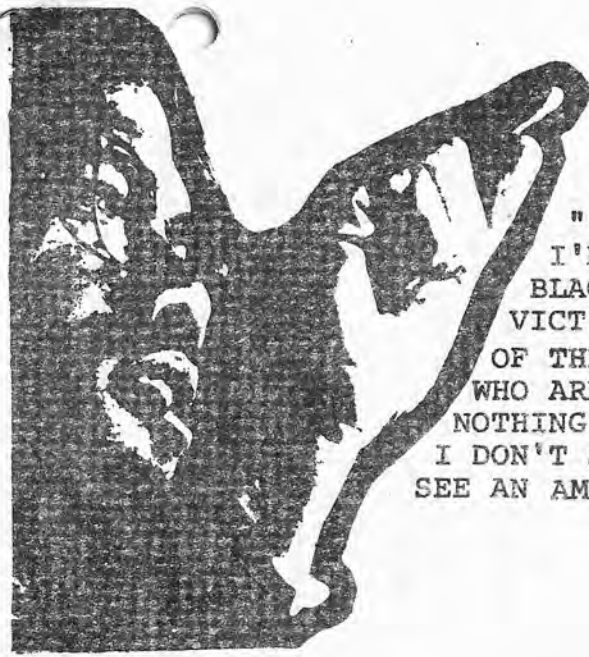
The situation in South Vietnam is tense...There are numerous violations on the part of the Saigon government which are aided and abetted by the U.S. We can not sit still as the Saigon administration violates the lives and property of the people in the liberated zones which are protected by the Paris Agreement. We are resolved to punish these violations, but the PRG will not start a new war."

The INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE is a small anti-imperialist group, working to distribute information about the struggles of the people in Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam. We have many resources: films, slide shows, books, magazines, and newspapers from Indochina. All materials are available to people doing work around the continuing war. Film and literature catalogues can be obtained by writing to us.

In addition, we publish a monthly newsletter summarizing the current situation in Indochina, as well as activities in the New York area. There is no subscription rate, however since we are self supporting, contributions from our friends are always needed and helpful.

For more info, write to us!





MALCOLM X

MAY 19 - FEB. 21, 1965

" NO, I'M NOT AN AMERICAN.
I'M ONE OF THE 22 MILLION
BLACK PEOPLE WHO ARE THE
VICTIMS. OF AMERICANISM. ONE
OF THE 22 MILLION BLACK PEOPLE
WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF DEMOCRACY
NOTHING BUT DISGUISED HYPOCRISY..
I DON'T SEE ANY AMERICAN DREAM; I
SEE AN AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. 2/3/64

films
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HO CHI MINH

MAY 19, 1920-SEPT. 3, 1969

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TIME: 7:30 and 10:00 PM

PLACE: Washington Sq. Church
135 W.4th St., N.Y.C.

CONTRIBUTION: \$1.50

for info: 777-2528, 982-7162

A BENEFIT FOR THE INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

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NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1, 1974



IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 4th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT OF CAMBODIA - MARCH 23, 1974

*Our village has been liberated
Everything new is springing up
State power is in our hands,
and we have the full right to
decide our own destiny*

*We work hard and fast
during the night and day
to help feed our Armed Forces,
and make our lives better
by increasing production*

*We grow rice, corn & potatoes
We grow bananas, yams and coconuts
We have increased our agricultural
production to meet our own needs,
and to ship to our fighters on the
front lines*

*We help our brothers and sisters,
who have escaped the enemy's tyranny
to live in peace in the Liberated Zone
We are united to fight the enemy
on all fronts, till final victory*

*With our weapons and rice,
we will take state power
For the unity of the workers &
and peasants is powerful
And together, we will build
a new Cambodia!*

(A Cambodian song broadcast over
"Voice of FUNK", the radio station
of the National United Front.)

Cambodia



Despite massive counter-attacks by the U.S.-supported Lon Nol army, the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF) increased their pressure on Phnom Penh and the handful of provincial capitals still held by the Lon Nol regime. The Liberation Forces continued to penetrate Phnom Penh's defense perimeter and attack military installations inside the city. All major highways leading from the capital- 1, 4 and 5- are under the complete control of the CPNLAF and Pochentung airport remains surrounded and isolated. Nearly 60% of the ships carrying fuel, munitions and other materials up the Mekong River to Phnom Penh have been destroyed. (Hsinhua News Agency, 3/23/74)

OU Dong LIBERATED



Brilliant victories have been scored by the Liberation Forces throughout the rest of Cambodia. On March 18, the Liberation army of the National United Front of Cambodia (FUNK) swept through the town of Oudong, 23 miles northwest of Phnom Penh on Highway 5. Although Oudong does not have strategic military value, it was the former royal capital of Cambodia, and was liberated on the 4th Anniversary of the CIA-backed coup d'etat that ousted Sihanouk and brought Lon Nol to power. It was, therefore, a severe psychological blow to the already crumbling Lon Nol army. Though Lon Nol has sworn to recapture the city 'at all costs', and has been systematically destroying the city with his air force and artillery, "all efforts have been stalled by heavy insurgent [i.e.-CPNLAF] fire." (NY Times, 3/22/74)

Lon Nol's army felt further humiliation from the fact that the CPNLAF force of 2,000 which captured Oudong were mostly women fighters.



In southern Cambodia, the CPNLAF "has moved to within 1 to 4 miles of Kampot, capturing the city's main water supply and the country's only cement factory. They regularly shell the town with 75 mm recoilless rifles and 81 mm mortars." (Washington Post, 3/13/74) With the tightening of the encirclement, the coastal city's airport, used for airlifts of troops and supplies, has come under assault resulting in the destruction of numerous aircraft and supplies. "Running out of food, water and ammunition, LonNolite troops in Kampot have been thrown into a panic." (Hsinhua News Agency, 3/18/74)

U.S. PRESS CONTINUES ITS OFFENSIVE

The U.S. press continues to hurl slanders at the Liberation Forces in an attempt to cover up their defeats and turn public opinion against the FUNK. Dozens of articles have appeared in newspapers throughout the country on the "horrors" of life in the Liberated zones. Torture, slave-labor, brutality and the press-gang of women and children into the army are among the charges made in the press. But facts from many sources paint a different picture.

According to Kampuchea Information Agency (AKI)-news agency of the FUNK, an average of 15,000 people a month have left the cities for the Liberated Zones. On March 14, 400 families from Oknha Tei Island (3 miles from Phnom Penh) moved to safer areas in the Liberated zones as Lon Nol troops began offensive operations against the island. (Hsinhua, 3/25/74) Thousands of civilians from the besieged city of Kampot have left for the Front-controlled zones. It was noted that the population there has "dropped from 50,000 to less than 20,000 in a month." (Wash. Post, 3/13/74) As for Lon Nol's army, scores of puppet soldiers have cut the strings and gone over to the side of the FUNK. During the seige of Oudong, 1500 Lon Nol troops deserted en masse, weapons and all.

Meanwhile, "four prominent Cambodians, all of them former or present Government officials have defected" to the FUNK in Paris during the last week in February while on official business (*Wash. Post*, 3/13/74). In separate statements released by the GRUNC (Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia) mission in Paris the four, Ing Kieth, Khek Sysoda, Sean Hac and Sieuv Saphon, called on their friends in the areas controlled by the Lon Nol regime to cross over and join the FUNK as soon as possible (*Hsinhua*, 3/1/74). One wonders why all these people would want to go to a place where there is only "slave-labor, torture and brutality!"

INSIDE PHNOM PENH

Supporters of the Phnom Penh regime have repeatedly stated they are in firm control of the capital and that the tide is in their favor. Yet their own actions continually contradict these statements. On March 2, Lon Nol officially ventured out of his palace for the first time in over 2 months. (*Wash. Post*, 3/3/74) While U.S. Charge d'Affairs in Phnom Penh was boasting that "the enemy is failing", bulletproof glass was being installed at the U.S. embassy. Other western embassies have sandbagged their front entrances and half of the city's 5,000 French residents have fled. (*Time Magazine*, 3/4/74)

Corruption and repression are rampant in the areas controlled by Lon Nol. They have become so much a part of daily life that "no one really tries to deny the existence of corruption anymore, not the Americans, whose increasing amounts of aid have fueled it, and not even the government of President Lon Nol." (*NY Times*, 2/20/74) In a recent interview, Te Sun Hoa (former director of the Agriculture Dept. of the Lon Nol regime) noted that "50% of the money in circulation is in the hands of big army officers... Distrusting the banks, they pile up money in their own homes, which they have guarded by an army battalion, transforming the house into a private bank." (*Afrique Asie*, #49, February, 1974)



Lon Nol troops terrorize civilian population in a village on Highway 4

The press-ganging of civilians continues at an unprecedented rate. According to one recent report, those forcibly conscripted include "men age 50-60 years old, and 6,000 orphans and boy scouts, age 12-14." (*AKI*, 3/21/74)

But the more repression there is, the more the people of Phnom Penh resist. The teachers strike continues, and work stoppages are now a common occurrence in the capital. Thousands of patriotic students and workers have been arrested and fill the prisons of Phnom Penh, as a result of recent demonstrations.

For the first time in the 4 year old war, Buddhist monks in Phnom Penh have broken all ties with Lon Nol. They have given their total support to a 5 point neutralist peace plan, issued by Son Sann last month (see last Newsletter), which calls for the resignation of Lon Nol, a Ceasefire, and negotiations with the FUNK. More than 100 monks held a hunger strike to protest the bombing and destruction of Buddhist temples and other buildings at Oudong, by Lon Nol's air force,

In order to protect their wealth and power, Lon Nol and his friends must resort to mass repression of the population. Universities and schools have now been turned into military training centres for students and teachers, so they can be sent to the front lines. New refugee (concentration) camps have been built around Phnom Penh and strategic military installations, so that the people in them can act as a cushion for future FUNK rocket and mortar attacks. Buddhist temples have been turned into 'self defense camps' where the people are forced to go. Once there, the people are forced to join Lon Nol's new 'self-defense forces'. (*Hsinhua News Agency*, 3/25/74)



Lon Nol's newest recruit from an orphanage

Martial law and the new emergency laws remain in effect, and there is nothing even resembling democracy in Phnom Penh. Police continue to carry out house to house searches, and the only newspapers in circulation are run by Lon Nol. In one incident last month, they confiscated copies of a book which was even printed "under the auspices of the Lon Nol Government". The book, Regrets of the Khmer Soul, was banned because "it showed the Communists [FUNK] as too honest in comparison to the Lon Nol regime." The author wrote, "I paid attention to the great help the Khmer Rouge gave to the people, building dikes, harvesting crops, building houses and digging bunkers." In the book, one villager was quoted as saying, "he preferred life with the Communists because he could farm his land and live comfortably." (Wash. Post, 3/10/74)



As well as fighting, the Liberation Forces help the people harvest crops

U.S. ESCALATES MILITARY INTERVENTION

With the latest victories of the CPNLF, and the city of Phnom Penh about to fall like ripe fruit from a tree, the U.S. has escalated the war, and is now directly intervening in Cambodia.

According to an urgent communique issued by AKI on March 20, the U.S. strategy consists of:

1. Dispatching thousands of U.S. advisors and personnel to Cambodia. According to AKI, there are now 3500 U.S. advisors there, and 10,000 more will be sent.
2. U.S. personnel will now take charge of all military operations, including communications (radio stations, etc) and logistics.
3. U.S. officers will begin training and instructing Lon Nol troops inside Cambodia.

U.S. ADVISORS DISCOVERED IN CAMBODIA



Nixon: --The only Americans in Cambodia are "equipment delivery teams" in civilian clothes, like this!

The U.S. Government has continuously stated that it has not violated any laws or agreements in respect to Cambodia. But events over the past several months have caught the government with its foot in its mouth.

While covering the battle of Kampot, U.S. reporter, Elizabeth Becker discovered a U.S. army major directing Lon Nol troops. The following are some of the things she saw and heard:

"Inside [the Command Post at Kampot] U.S. Major Lawrence W. Ondecker was showing the Cambodian officers how to mount a counter-attack.

"I want you to respond very quickly, he said. 'If even one mortar falls in your zone, you must answer back with fire immediately.'

... "The American Major was pouring over maps with the Cambodian staff officers. Major Ondecker was flown down Sunday. 'He was

loaned to us from the 3rd Infantry Brigade,' Lt. Col. Choey Yeun said. 'He is attached to the Third and normally works in the field with them, but he is needed here. I am surprised that you did not know him.'

"A member of the U.S. military attache's staff in Phnom Penh, Ondecker is in Kampot officially to gather information. Chuck Bernard, known as Monsieur Jacques, is the other U.S. representative in town. He has approximately the same official duties as Ondecker except that his area is civilian matters.

"While junior Cambodian officers say Americans advise in the field around Phnom Penh, it has never been confirmed. In Kampot, however, it is difficult to hide. Ondecker was in and out of the Command post, openly recommending military manoeuvres. Sometimes he prefaced his proposals with 'I suggest and the general also suggests that you fire in this direction.'" (Washington Post, 3/13/74)

Although the U.S. embassy in Phnom Penh called the article "unjustified", they did not deny its accuracy. (NY Times, 3/14/74) 39 Congressmen have demanded that the Armed Services Committee make a full investigation of the reports.

Meanwhile, a former intelligence coordinator in Saigon, Steven M. Davis, of Carmichael, California, has charged that hundreds of U.S. advisors and Special Forces were operating in Cambodia. According to Davis, "109 U.S. Military Advisors and an unspecified number of Special Forces members were advising the Cambodian army in 1973, when Davis worked at the message center. In addition, more than 100 Americans served as mercenaries, at pay of \$5,000 a week.



U.S. adviser (center) to Lon Nol's army on an inspection trip of fighting near Phnom Penh in August, 1973.

'The advisors give operational orders. They are actually with the Cambodian army, giving advise on logistic movements, military movements, and Special forces teams carry arms and fight under cover with the Cambodian army'. According to Davis, 'American mercenaries are recruited by the CIA and they man gunboats running the Mekong River to supply the beseiged capital of Phnom Penh-- hazardous duty shunned by the Cambodians.'" (Pacific News Service, 3/17/74)

As if this wasn't enough proof of U.S. intentions, the weekly, conservative, *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported that "U.S. Marines have taken up positions off the coast of Cambodia. A total of 1,200 men of the 2nd battalion of the 4th Marine Regiment, plus supporting units, are waiting off shore on the ships of the 7th Fleet... If necessary, the troops are understood to have orders to enter the country in a show of force." (3/25/74)

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The American people, and in particular the U.S. anti-war and anti-imperialist movements should be outraged by these blatant violations of the Vietnam Peace Agreement, Congressional law, and the rights of the Cambodian people to determine their own affairs. It is overwhelming proof that the U.S. has no intention of 'deescalating' their war of aggression in Cambodia. In May, 1970, hundreds of thousands of us took to the streets because U.S. ground troops 'officially' invaded Cambodia. Well, U.S. ground troops are there again, so why aren't we out in the streets again? Do we have to wait until the level reaches 100,000?

Except for a few articles in the Wash. Post, NY Times and other major newspapers, there has been hardly any coverage of these recent developments on radio and television, and other newspapers. IT IS URGENT that we get this information to the American people, so they can understand how they are being lied to and deceived about foreign, as well as domestic policies.

There will be an impeachment Demonstration in Wash. D.C. on April 27. Watergate, a phony energy crisis, inflation, tax evasion and other such issues will be raised as reasons for getting rid of the bum, Tricky Dick Nixon. Many of us will be going to the Demo to form an INDOCHINA CONTINGENT TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE ROOT CAUSE OF HIS PROBLEMS, THE FAILURE OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN INDOCHINA will be raised.

Also, on May 4, there will be a demo at Kent, Ohio to demand: Implementation of the Vietnam Peace Agreement; an end to U.S. intervention in Cambodia; no more Watergate governments and to demand a full investigation of the Kent and Jackson State massacres in 1970.

It is time to turn our outrage into energy. U.S. intervention in Cambodia gives us the golden opportunity to expose the U.S. Government for what it is: IMPERIALISM and naked aggression.

NO MORE U.S. INTERVENTION IN CAMBODIA!
NO MORE AID TO THE LON NOL REGIME!
SUPPORT THE GRUNC AND THE FUNK!

37



LAOS: A New Coalition Gov't Formed

For the third time since 1958, a coalition government, with representatives of the Lao Patriotic Front, Neutralists and the pro-U.S. rightwing, has been formed in Laos.

The Coalition government was called for in the February, 1973 Agreement. Its formation is a tremendous victory for those who favor peace, national concord and independence in Laos.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, dissolving his rightwing government in Vientiane, will head the new coalition government. Prince Souphanouvong, the leader of the L.P.F., will head the National Political Council which, according to the Agreement's Protocol is to serve to "advise and activate the cabinet on the great problems touching the internal

and external politics of the country." Although it was assumed that Souphanouvong would be named Deputy Prime Minister, his decision to head the National Council reflects an attempt to place the L.P.F. on equal footing politically with Souvanna Phouma. Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit, the L.P.F.'s negotiator, will be the Deputy Premier. Among the cabinet positions the L.P.F. holds are, Public Works, Economy, Planning and Information, and Religion.

The beginning of the new government was marked with official ceremonies in the royal capital of Luang Prabang. Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong (who are half brothers) greeted each other and in turn received the King's (Savang Vatthana) royal decree for the coalition government.



Prince Souphanouvong, arms raised, at Vientiane Airport.

Souphanouvong's return, for the first time in 10 years, to Vientiane and Luang Prabang, was met with great enthusiasm. At one rally, thousands of students cheered him and waved L.P.F. flags. It is no wonder, since "the Pathet Lao has established a free clinic, which is very popular. It has also been selling rice - for Pathet Lao, not Vientiane, currency - at about one fourth the official price."

(New York Times, 4/6/74)

Although the U.S. immediately offered its recognition and continued aid to the new Laotian government, the U.S.'s real attitude will reveal itself in the next few months. Though the position of the L.P.F. is markedly stronger than at any other time in the history of the struggle against the U.S., its ability to continue to develop independence, self-sufficiency and democracy inside Laos, will depend on the support of people throughout the world. By remaining vigilant and conscious of all attempts by the U.S. to reintervene, overtly and covertly, we can thereby aid in the protection of the new victory won by the Laotian people.

LAOS:

Who is the LPF?



U.S. intervention in Laos began in 1950 when the Truman administration subsidized nearly 80% of France's efforts to regain Laos as a colony. Immediately following the defeat of the French and the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1954, the U.S. moved directly into Laos. As Pres. Eisenhower explained, "To lose Laos is to lose all of Indochina, and the strategic products of South East Asia." (N.Y. Times 8/17/59)

The forces now leading the fight against U.S. Imperialism in Laos, also has its origins in the period of French colonialism. After Laos' independence had been confirmed by the Geneva Accords, the resistance forces broadened into the *LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT (L.P.F.) - Pathet Lao*, in January 1956. Mobilized behind the L.P.F. were people from all sections of the population. In fact, for the first time in Laotian history some 60 national minorities were united as one. The aims of the L.P.F. were to heal the wounds of the war, build a free, independent and prosperous Laos with equality and democratic rights for all people. To accomplish these goals, the L.P.F. called for the strict implementation of the Geneva Accords, which included the formation of a coalition government.

In 1957 the government was formed with Souvanna Phouma, then a neutralist, and Souphanouvong, the leader to the Lao Patriotic Front, at its head. In the elections of 1958, the L.P.F. and their neutralist allies gained 13 of 21 contested seats in the National Assembly. In reaction to the L.P.F.'s progress, the U.S. instigated a coup, created a right-wing government and declared the L.P.F. illegal. Souphanouvong and 15 other L.P.F. leaders were arrested and jailed in Vientiane, the Laotian capital. In July, 1959 Souphanouvong and the others escaped to the Liberated Zones of Northern Laos. There they reorganized the resistance, this time with wide support from many former Vientiane officers and civil servants.



PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG

Later, American plans were upset by a coup led by a neutralist Army Captain in 1960. The political unity between the neutralist forces and the L.P.F., along with the military victories of the Liberation army forced the U.S. to agree to a ceasefire and to participate in a new Geneva Conference on Laos. These new accords were signed in 1962 and a new National Union Government was set up. The position of the L.P.F. was greatly strengthened, as they now controlled two thirds of the territory and one third of the population of Laos, and also had a large regular army.

But for the second time, the U.S. disregarded the provisions of the Accords. Within a year the L.P.F. representatives were forced out of the government and the coalition was dissolved. Because the U.S. could not rely on Laotians to fight Laotians, they organized, trained and equipped a large mercenary army to carry on the ground war. In May, 1964, the U.S. Air Force began full scale bombing of the liberated zones. All of this happened without the awareness or approval of the American people or Congress. When Nixon came into office, U.S. aid to the Vientiane regime increased fourfold to \$400 million a year. The number of U.S. advisors increased from a few thousand to

12,000 advisors and C.I.A. personnel. At this time, the U.S. began round - the - clock B-52 bombing of the Liberated Zones.

Instead of cowering the people into slavery, the bombing increased their determination to fight. "As the bombing increased, the Pathet Lao forces began receiving more volunteers whose attitude was, 'better to die a soldier than to stay at home and wait for the airplanes to come and kill you.'" (Christian Science Monitor, 3/17/71)





A college inside a cave in the Lao Liberated zones.

major offensives to "end the war" in Laos. Instead of victory, the U.S. and their puppets suffered perhaps the biggest military defeats of the Indochina war. Finally, the U.S. agreed to negotiate again. There were two reasons: one, the L.P.F. had defeated Nixon's "Special War", and two, the L.P.F. now governed 4/5ths of the territory and 1/2 of the population.

The "Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos" was signed on February 21, 1973. The Peace Agreement and its accompanying Protocol, is a tremendous victory for the Lao people in their long struggle for peace, independence, unity and self-determination. It also reflects the considerable strength of the Lao Patriotic Front and the gains they have made since the last Geneva Agreement on Laos.

The Agreement recognizes the L.P.F. as the legitimate government of the liberated zones. In addition to administering its own territory, the L.P.F. has won control of half of a new coalition government, and half of the city administrations, police force and military Defense Forces of the 2 largest population centers of the Vientiane-controlled zone; the cities of Vientiane and Luang Prabang.

Great progress has been made toward the implementation of the Agreement, despite U.S. efforts to prevent it. The new coalition government has been formed, and the year 1974 may well see the arrival of peace and national concord in Laos. With the support of people around the world, nothing will stop the Laotian people from achieving their goal of a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic, prosperous and UNITED Laos.

With each new attack the people discovered new ways of defending their homes, land and culture. In the liberated areas a new society was built with the houses, schools, factories and hospitals transferred underground. The L.P.F. not only defended itself against the B-52's but built a society which cared for, protected and advanced the lives of the Lao people.

During 1970 and 1971, with the help of Thai and Saigon mercenaries, the U.S. launched two



THE PATHET LAO

The U.S. press has always referred to the resistance forces in Laos as the "Pathet Lao." Unlike the terms "Viet Cong" and "Khmer Rouge", the use of Pathet Lao has been accepted by the L.P.F. As Souphanouvong explains; "At the Geneva Conference we marked our documents with "Pathet Lao", which means 'Land of Laos', to distinguish them from the documents of Viet Nam and Cambodia. The French began calling us Pathet Lao. We let the name stick."



THE "OTHER SIDE" IN CAMBODIA: WHO IS THE G.R.U.N.K. AND THE F.U.N.K.?

BACKGROUND

From 1953, when it gained its independence from the French colonialists, until 1970, Cambodia was an "island of peace" in the midst of a war that was sweeping the Indochina peninsula. Despite constant threats, sabotage, terror bombings and even occasional invasions by the U.S. and its Saigon and Bangkok allies, Cambodia managed to remain independent, thanks to the skillful diplomatic manouvering of its leader, Prince Norodom Sihanouk. The real force behind Sihanouk's diplomacy was the same force that waged armed resistance against the French: the CAMBODIAN PEOPLE, especially the peasants who make up 90% of the population.

By 1970, Cambodia's neutrality had become a serious obstacle to the U.S.'s foreign policy of containment and counter-revolution in Southeast Asia. Cambodia remained a missing link in the chain of anti-communist states the U.S. was attempting to forge across the Southeast Asian mainland.

On March 18, 1970, Prince Sihanouk was overthrown by Lon Nol and Sirik Matak in a coup d'etat engineered by the CIA. Supporting the coup was a small group of elite businessmen, military and government officials- all of whom hoped to enrich themselves with the generous amounts of U.S. "aid" (340 million a year) that was forthcoming. Opposing the coup were the masses of Cambodian people.

FORMATION OF THE F.U.N.K.

Lon Nol and the U.S. believed that the Cambodian people would passively accept the coup, and that Sihanouk would simply retire to the French Riviera. But within a few days there were massive demonstrations against the coup in 17 of 20 provinces in Cambodia.

Meanwhile, Sihanouk set up headquarters in Peking, and on March 23, 1970, issued his 5 Points and Solemn Declaration, calling on the Cambodian people to rise up against the U.S. and their puppets, and join together to form the *NATIONAL UNITED FRONT OF CAMBODIA* (also called the "FUNK", taken from the French acronym).

The Cambodian people's response to Sihanouk's call was immediate. Entire administrations of large sections of Cambodia immediately became part of the liberated zones, under the *FUNK*, with hardly a shot being fired. The Communists and their Pracheachon Party (derogatorily referred to in the U.S. and Free World Press as the "*Khmer Rouge*") pledged total support to the *FUNK*. The Cambodian Communists had been driven underground by Lon Nol and right-wing elements of the government in 1967, and had been waging guerrilla warfare in the countryside. This guerrilla army was to become the core of the new National Liberation Army, called for in Sihanouk's 5 Point Declaration.



FORMATION OF THE G.R.U.N.C.

On May 3, 1970, shortly after the massive U.S.-Saigon invasion of Cambodia, Sihanouk announced the formation of the *Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia* (*GRUNC*). The *GRUNC* was organized with an internal branch in the Liberated zones of Cambodia, and an external branch in Peking, to coordinate the diplomatic struggle.

A *Consultative Assembly* was elected in the Liberated zones, with representatives of the Buddhist clergy, the army, the police, peasants, workers, women, students, intellectuals and all other patriotic people. The *CAMBODIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMED FORCES* (*CPNLAF*) was created to wage the armed struggle.

The *GRUNC*, the *Consultative Assembly*, and the *Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces* (*CPNLAF*), united with other sectors of the Cambodian people, make up the *National United Front of Cambodia*.

PROGRAM OF THE F.U.N.K.

The Political Program of the FUNK is a guide to the day to day action of the Cambodian people in the liberated zones. It guarantees to all people (except Known traitors) civil liberties, and democratic freedoms. Equality of the sexes is guaranteed, and the people are striving to eliminate backward traditions discriminating against women.

Complete medical facilities have been established, including a pharmaceutical industry. Educational programs have been set up at every level.

Buddhism has been maintained as the State religion, and the FUNK has maintained a foreign policy of independence and neutrality. An independent economy is developing, as the people rely on their own resources and productive forces.

In short, the Liberated zone is the authentic new Cambodia- it acts as an irresistible magnet that attracts people away from the Phnom Penh and the few provincial capitals still controlled by Lon Nol and the U.S. A new life has sunk its roots deep in Cambodian soil, as the ideas embodied in the Political Program of the FUNK have become living reality. This is the explanation for the enthusiasm with which the peasants have hurled themselves into the struggle, and the victories won by the CPNLAF, despite the most intensive bombing in history.

While the FUNK has consolidated its administration and developed its armed forces, the international prestige of the GRUNC has increased significantly. At the Conference of 76 non-aligned Nations held in Algiers on Sept. 5-8, 1973, the GRUNC was recognized as the sole legal Government of the Cambodian people. Presently, 55 countries and National Liberation Fronts recognize the GRUNC, and more than 90% of Cambodia and 5½ of Cambodia's 7 million people are governed by the GRUNC.

THE FUTURE OF CAMBODIA

Throughout the war, the U.S. government has claimed that it was fighting "outside invaders" in Cambodia. But the Pentagon Papers have confirmed that this is a lie invented for the American people. The U.S. has always known that it was up against local resistance in the countries of Indochina. Even the U.S. ambassador admitted that the fighting is carried out by the CPNLAF. The only outside invaders are the U.S. and its allies.

The enemy in Cambodia is U.S. imperialism. The Phnom Penh regime could not exist without U.S. backing. An end to the war and a complete victory for the Cambodian people will only come when the strings are cut between the U.S. and its puppets.

The best support the anti-war and anti-imperialist forces can give towards recognition of the GRUNC and the Cambodian struggle for independence and self-determination, is by forcing the U.S. government to cut all aid to their clients in Phnom Penh (headed by Lon Nol).

The unity, determination and future of the Cambodian people is represented by the National United Front of Cambodia. It is on the basis of the Political Program of the FUNK that the struggle will be waged until final victory. The unity, patriotism and determination of the Cambodian people in the face of U.S. imperialist aggression is necessary for the survival of Cambodia. In this war of national liberation, the people are determined to resist or die as a nation.

SUPPORT THE G.R.U.N.C.!
VICTORY TO THE F.U.N.K.!

Indochina Solidarity Comm.
Box C, Old Chelsea Station
NY, NY 10011 (tel) 982-7162



SOUTH VIET NAM ...
SOUTH VIET NAM ...
SOUTH VIET NAM ...



ESCALATION
THREATENS !

The U.S. administration has been pressuring Congress to approve hundreds of millions of dollars in "emergency aid" for Thieu this year - and is projecting the need for three billion just for economic aid to Saigon by 1980. Meanwhile, in increasing disregard of the Peace Accords, the U.S. is stepping up its direct and indirect interference in the affairs of South Viet Nam. This not only prolongs the suffering of the South Vietnamese people, but threatens to escalate the war in Indochina.

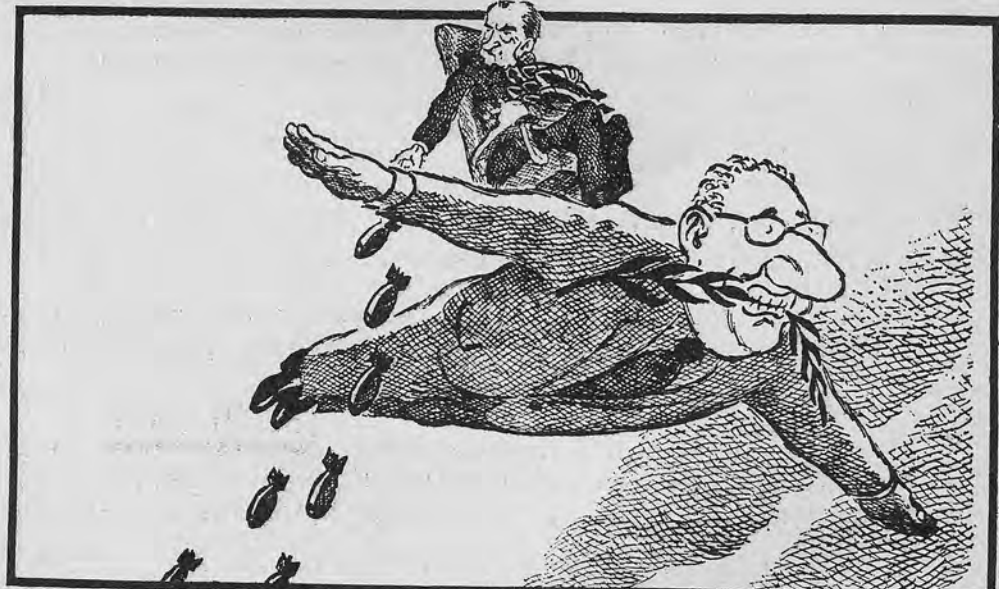
The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam (PRG) and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (DRVN) are still making every effort to obtain a real peace in South Viet Nam. In a new initiative, the PRG offered on March 22nd, an expanded 6 Point Peace Plan which outlines the essential steps to peace and selfdetermination and suggests a definite time-table for "real and democratic elections" so the South Vietnamese people may finally reach a just peace.

But the Nixon administration's strategy and recent actions make it clear that it still is trying to prevent a peaceful, political settlement for South Viet Nam; as is outlined in the Paris Peace Accords.

Secretary of State Kissinger has explained that the U. S. interpreted the Peace Accords to mean that the U. S. must give the Saigon regime whatever it needs to survive....

Originally set up by the U. S., this regime's main purpose now is to prevent democracy from coming about through the Peace Accords!

It is a CRIME to even publish the text of the agreements in Saigon:



(LETTER FROM HEAD OF SPECIAL OFFICE OF MINISTRY OF GENERAL INFORMATION IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST TO HAVE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT REPRINTED:)

"Republic of Viet Nam
Presidential Palace
Ministry of General Information
No. 17-GBTUDV/PHBCNT/KSAL

Sai Gon, June 9, 1973
Head Special Office of Ministry of Gen. Info.
To: Mr.

-Sai Gon-

Dear Mr.

Respectfully we would like to inform you:

"We are very sorry we cannot give you permission to publish the pamphlet: AGREEMENT ON ENDING THE WAR AND RESTORING PEACE IN VIET NAM although the Ministry of General Information has perused this pamphlet with the ut open spirit.

Respectfully we invite you to come to the National Censorship of Publications Office, Publications Censorship Division of the Ministry of General Information at 170 Phan dinh Phung, Sai Gon in order to get back your manuscript.

Respectfully,
Chu Ba Tuoc"

(Indochina Resource Center, Feb., 1974)

U. S. AID WAR...

President Nixon claimed in his Vietnam Veterans Day speech that;

"We ended the war" gave "the people in South Vietnam ... a right to choose for the future ... to choose their own was, a chance to remain free!"

After these lofty phrases, he predicted that;

"Our part will, in the future, be under the Nixon Doctrine, not to furnish troops, but to furnish within our capacities and depending upon their ability to use it, to furnish the economic and military supplies so that they can have what they need to defend themselves." (Pres. Documents, 2/26/74)

Nixon's definition of "South Vietnamese people" has been shown to mean the Thieu regime and obviously does not include the PRG nor those South Vietnamese opposed to Thieu.

Nixon's Doctrine is therefore taking the form of vastly increasing financial and material aid to a regime that would otherwise collapse. While Kissinger, Ambassador Martin and others try to justify this strategy, "Billions in aid for Thieu" is fast becoming a "cause the people (and the congress) no longer support." (Sen. Kennedy, 4/2/74)

U.S. AID TO S. V. N. (Saigon) *

S. V. N. GOVERNMENT (Saigon) BUDGET *

	Authorized 7/73-6/74	Appropriated 7/73-6/74	Requested 7/74-6/75	%Increase 75 vs 74		1965	1968	1972
Mil. :	1,000.	813.	1,600.	60%	Total Gov:	634.8	2,350.0	2,899.7
Econ.:	375.	300.	600.	60%	Saigon % :	13%	14%	7%
Total:	1,375	1,113.	2,200.	60%	U. S. % :	84%	85%	92%
					Total U.S:	1,134.7	2,009.3	2,669.8

* In millions of dollars. Does NOT include some hidden amounts such as: Food For Peace etc. (New York Post, 3/12 - Viet Nam Courier 11/74 - NARMIC 2/28 - C.S.F.W. 3/8)

Both Saigon and Washington recognize that the Thieu regime will collapse if it does not get 11 Billion in economic aid alone in the next 16 years! (LNS 4/3)

SECRET ARMY

This aid is being overseen by a SECRET ARMY in civilian clothes. In addition to 25,000 agents of the Defense Attache Office and the U. S. Embassy, there are 8,000 more "civilians" employed by U. S. corporations under contract to the Saigon government.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF DISGUISED U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. As diplomatic personnel in the U.S. Embassy and Consulates	2,000
2. Military personnel working in the Saigon Armed Forces	15,000
-In the Saigon Defense Ministry	3,500
-In the Saigon Armed Forces	9,000
-As technical military advisors	1,500
-As engineers for building military bases	300
-For intelligence	300
-Personnel of the Air America	300
-Teams for technical supplies	100

3. military personnel as advisors for the Saigon Police	2,300
-Police advisors	1,500
-Advisors in the "Phoenix Operation"	800
4. Military personnel working in civilian institutions	5,300
-As advisors in "Pacification Program" activities	300
-As advisors in social and economic activities	2,900
-As advisors in political activities	2,100
TOTAL	24,600

(Union of Vietnamese In the U. S. newsletter, 1-2

These "replacement troops" who are advising and maintaining the Saigon war machine now that the U. S. troops were removed, are being recruited not only from Vietnam War Veterans. Lately "the older and more stable (docile?) veterans of Korea and World War II are being given one last 'fling' in the Orient." (I.S.C. Interview with ex-Liaison Officer)

F5E'S - DESTROYERS - SMART BOMBS

In direct violation of the "one-for-one" replacement stipulation of the Paris Peace Agreements, the U. S. is bringing in huge amounts of ammunition and bombs, "far more than could be used in 10 years at the present rate." "My job was to organize parties for the I.C.C.S. teams so they would be out of the way when the merchant marine was unloading..."

(I.S.C. Interview with ex-Liaison Officer)

The U. S. is also introducing new, improved weapons. The first new F5E fighter planes, described as "faster, more maneuverable and more sophisticated" than the older F5A's they are replacing, arrived in South Viet Nam. The four jets - of 150 that will be supplied over the next two years - were immediately turned over to the South Vietnamese Air Force at Bien Hoa airbase.

(New York Times 3/14)

In February United Press international reported that four additional warships would be sent to Saigon and articles on new and improved weaponry designed for Viet Nam continue to appear in the Press. If the U. S. invades North Viet Nam again, it will undoubtedly be with "revolutionary" new "smart Bombs." The first historic use of this new weapon was in "an attack on the Long Bien bridge in Central Hanoi." After "Air Force and Navy planes had aimed thousands of conventional bombs at the bridge" (missing the bridge and landing among the civilians of the city) "the bridge was finally knocked out ... with smart bombs." The great success of the North Vietnamese defences against the Xmas, 1972 raids on Hanoi, has undoubtedly caused the "Defense Dept. (to begin) developing guidance systems ... with longer range so that the attacking planes can stand outside the defence of the target." This "revolution" will cost the American taxpayer over "\$3,000. per plane" just to allow them to carry these new bombs!

(New York Times 3/18)

(SOME) POLITICAL PRISONERS EXCHANGED ...

The latest exchange of political and military prisoners which under the Peace Accords was supposed to have been completed by April, 1973, took place from Feb., 8 to March 6. Saigon released 3,500 civilian and military prisoners and now claims that they have no more political prisoners!

THE THIRD POLITICAL TENDENCY

On Feb. 21, Huynh Tan Mam, the well known Saigon student leader and supporter of the 3rd political tendency was forceably taken to Loc Ninh where he was to be released to the PRG. He said that he would rather remain in a Saigon jail if he was not allowed to return to his home where he could work with other opponents of Thieu, in Saigon. In spite of protests by the PRG representatives that the Agreements "guaranteed respect for th wishes of prisoners to return to any area controlled by either side," Mam was forceably returned to a Saigon prison.

(Wash. Star News 2/8, Liberation Radio 2/22)



Doug Hostetter

According to the most recent reports from Viet Nam, Huynh Tan Mam is back in Chi Hoa prison

Others have also refused to be forceably sent to PRG areas and thereby be labeled as "communists" and lose their legitimate rights to legally oppose the Thieu regime in Saigon. Thieu takes the position that since the 3rd tendency members have benefited the communists, the prisoners should be treated officially as "communists."

(Wash. Post 3/12)

How is it that at the brink of freedom, someone can choose to return to Thieu prisons?

SURVIVORS FROM SAIGON JAILS

"Collective support has the power to transform people. Even when someone was brought in alone to the torture room or the tiger cages, he was sustained by our universal clamor. Information and encouragement kept reaching him..."

"One time, when they (the guards) did not give up after a long hunger strike, one of our women, with everyone's agreement, took a knife and disemboweled her-

self. They tried to take her away but all comrades stood close around her. She took her entrails with her hands and drew them out with the guards and prison director standing around. They turned away not daring to look at the scene. She died a few minutes later, but they had given up. Confusion clearly showed in their eyes."

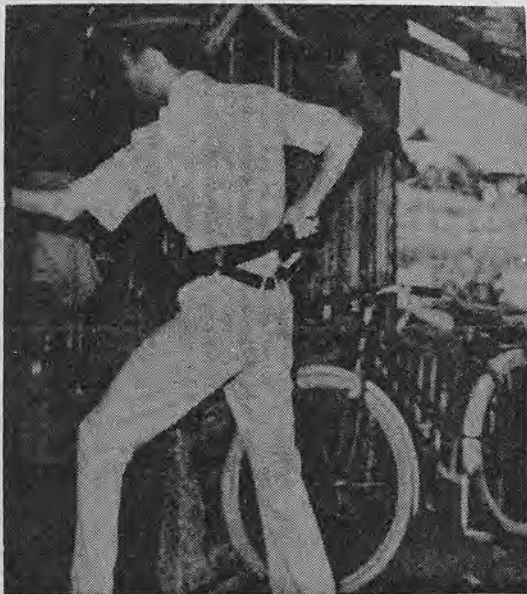
(from interview with released prisoners, LNS 2/23)

IN SAIGON ...

Several hundred Buddhist Monks, jailed for refusing to fight in Thieu's army, started a hunger strike on March 1st in Saigon's Chi Hoa prison. *(Wash. Post 3/12-21)*

Conditions outside of the Chi Hoa prison are fast approaching those inside: "Saigon police have been reorganized to keep a closer watch on a house-to-house basis throughout the city. Under the new system, a policeman will be assigned responsibility for 25 or 30 houses and will be responsible for knowing everything important about the people living in them." *(Wash. Post 3/16)*

Yet on the same day this news



In a Saigon zone, Thieu's police make a raid.

U. S. / SAIGON VIOLATIONS:

The pattern of violations has accelerated in the months of Feb. and March with continued U. S. reconassance flights, shellings of villages, forcable relocations of refugees, land grabbing attacks by Saigon troops and police.terror. The Saigon Army is mobilized in a major offensive in three important areas of South Viet Nam.

Yet on the same day this news reached the U. S, leaflets were passed out in Saigon which said:"The government must release student Mam and other prisoners belonging to the third force with no conditions and right away. The government must immediately stop its action of terrorising and threatening the third force."

(Wash. Post 3/16)

Some 3rd tendency prisoners have accepted release to the PRG, for health and other reasons. However, since their homes and associates are in Saigon controlled areas they still wish to be allowed to return to work for the implementation of a real, truly representative, coalition government as is their right under the Peace Agreements.

Saigon Marchers Ask to Aid Refugees in Vietcong Area

SAIGON, South Vietnam, April 1 (Reuters)—A group of Buddhists and other anti-communists opponents of the Government marched through Saigon today to the National Assembly building in the first demonstration there in two years.

They petitioned the Speaker for permission to go to the Communist-held town of Loc Ninh to give aid to a group of students and intellectuals there.

The students and intellectuals, self-proclaimed members of the third force, which supports neither Saigon nor the Vietcong chose political exile in Loc Ninh rather than return to Saigon during prisoner exchanges between South Vietnam and the Vietcong earlier this year.

A THREE PRONGED OFFENSIVE:

The "systematic attacks" on the PRG liberated areas which were announced by Pres. Thieu on Jan. 4th, have continued and intensified thru March and are now being stepped up with three main areas of concentration. They are the Highland area, the areas near and west of Saigon and the Mekong Delta regions south and south-west of Saigon.

The Thieu divisions sent into the PRG areas in the Central Highlands suffered severe setbacks in Feb., but the fighting in the areas near Saigon and in the delta regions resulted in the heaviest casualties.

(Hsin Hua News Agency 3/17)



A total of 12,400 ARVN were put-out-of-action (killed, wounded, captured or deserted). In an attempt to seize the rice crop, Saigon launched hundreds of land-grabbing raids. In one example, the ARVN seized "70 tons of rice" in an attack 70 miles south west of Saigon. (New York Times 2/28)

The people in the PRG zones in the delta struggled to protect their food supply and stopped whole divisions of Saigon troops. They forced out over 150 bases and posts that had been illegally established in their liberated territories. Not only did they save the bulk of the crop, but were able to liberate over 30,000 peasants from Saigon.

Saigon's attempt to deprive the PRG of the delta rice not only met the determined resistance of the peasants, but who ARVN units assigned to this unpleasant task, either went over to the PRG with their weapons or forced their commanders to withdraw. Mutinies were staged by the "popular defense" forces at the Lang Lay post, Tra Vinh province on Feb. 16. The soldiers stationed at Rach Ranh post of My Loc village, Linh Long province on Feb. 22nd and others in Ba Xuyen (Soc Tran) and An Xuyen (Ca Mau) provinces.

(Hsin Hua News Agency 3/3)



By March, the American press began to notice this growing offensive and admitted that the Saigon Army and Air Force had followed thru on Thieu's threats; "In recent months South Vietnamese ground and air forces have been conducting a minor offensive themselves..." (New York Times 3/4) Saigon "Headquarters officers" admitted that "more troops... were being committed in areas of contested Vietcong and Government control." (New York Times 3/10)

IN KON TUM

In March, the heavy fighting continued in "two fronts in the Mekong Delta", but the major battles took place near Kon Tum in the Central Highlands where the PRG has been rebuilding the society devastated by so many years of warfare. (Wash. Post 3/12)

**Kontum
after one year of
production labour**

SINCE the signing of the Paris Agreement, Kontum has been one of the targets of Saigon encroachment operation. However, under the leadership of the revolutionary administration, its people have been able to push forward the emulation campaign for production and building of a new life. All branches of activity in the province have experienced a new upsurge.

In 1973, the acreage of cropland grew by 30%, rice and maize production 40%, and the number of domestic animals 20%. The per capita food ration rose from 634 to 666.5 kilograms of paddy per year. With regard to health work, in 1973 Kontum was able to train a big number of nurses, midwives and herbalists, to build 42 first-aid stations, 50 maternity-homes and to attend to more than 25,000 patients. District hospitals and rural infirmaries used local pharmaceutical products in disease treatment and made them available to the masses.

Up to now almost all the villages in the province boast a primary school, all hamlets continuation classes for grown-ups. Hundreds of new teachers were trained for primary and complementary education.

Most of roads in the province have been repaired and new ones built and opened to traffic. (South Viet Nam In Struggle 3/4)

In an attempt to destroy the gains the PRG is making and divide the liberated zones, Saigon launched battalion sized raids in Kon Tum, Plei Ku, Quang Ngai and other provinces. A specific purpose of the Kon Tum and Plei Ku raids was to "prevent the communists from building a transport and communications system" among the liberated areas. In this manner the "Saigon government counts on its armed forces and economic pressures to impose a settlement on the insurgents."

(Far East Economic Review 3/11)

KON TUM DEFEAT

Saigons' military Headquarters in the Highlands admitted that after committing at least 1,500 troops and 64 airstrikes to the battle northwest of Kon Tum City on March 16 and 17th, its offensive had been defeated "in some of the heaviest fighting since the cease fire." (Wash. Post 3/25, New York Times 3/19) Saigon admitted that hundreds of troops were lost and reinforcements were unable to get through, with half a 66 truck, supply convoy being disabled! (New York Times 3/20, 3/28)

On April 3rd, Saigon lost three more military posts it had set up on route 5B northeast of Kon Tum, with hundreds of troops again unaccounted for. (New York Times 4/4)

THE PRG REPLIES...

Following their victory at Kon Tum, the PRG announced on March 20th and appeal to its armed forces to "firmly repulse the 'pacification' and (land grabbing) attacks launched by Saigon administration on the liberated areas." and at the same time to "implement the Paris Agreement and get ready at all times to smash all enemy military adventures."

(Hsin Hua News Agency 3/21)

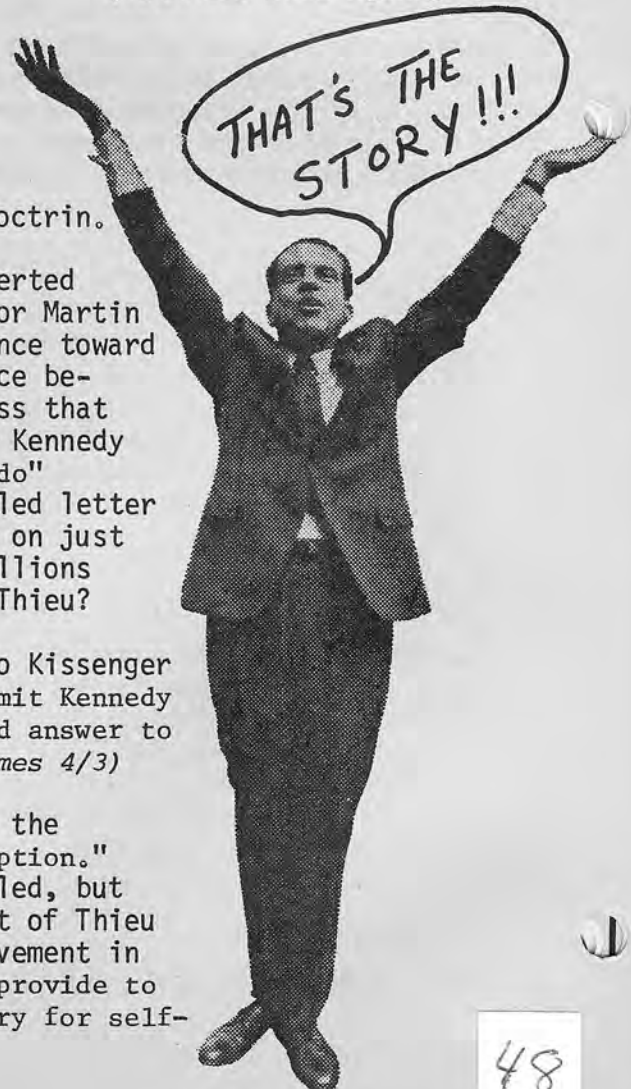
THE BATTLE OF DECEPTION - - - - -

The failure of the latest U. S./Thieu military offensive is not the only defeat of the new Nixon Doctrin.

On Feb. 25th, Shipler in the *New York Times* asserted that the U. S. aid was prolonging the war. Abassador Martin in Saigon, a devout Thieu supporter, broke his silence toward the press with the accusation that it was an alliance between Hanoi, the Peace Movement and doves in Congress that threatened the peace. (New York Times 3/9) Senator Kennedy in turn accused Martin of "the worst kind of innuendo" (New York Times 3/9) and on March 13th sent a detailed letter to Kissenger. He asked Kissenger for clarification on just what democracy we were supposed to save with the billions of tax dollars Congress was being asked to give to Thieu?

Ambassador Martin then sent a secret telegram to Kissenger urging that "it would be the height of folly to permit Kennedy ... the tactical advantage of an honest and detailed answer to questions of substance raised in his letter." (NYTimes 4/3)

When this telegram was exposed, Kennedy accused the American Ambassador to Saigon of "cover up and deception." Perhaps Kissinger knew the telegram would be revealed, but in any event he chose to defend the the U.S. support of Thieu by again arguing the Nixon Doctrine, that our involvement in the Paris Peace Agreements committed the U. S. "to provide to the Republic of Viet Nam (Saigon) the means necessary for self-



defense and for its economic viability."

(New York Times 4/2)

And yet the Agreements state in Article 9, para. C, that "Foreign countries shall not impose any political tendency or personality on the South Vietnamese people." !!!

GENEVA CONFERENCE

The U. S. further revealed its contempt for international law by voting to force the PRG representatives out of the opening of the Geneva Conference on Feb. 20th. (Wash. Post 3/1) In a statement issued on Feb. 20th, the PRG declared;

"In preventing the participation in the Geneva Conference of the PRG delegation representing a population victim of war and neo-colonialist atrocities, the U. S. obviously wanted to avert the denunciation of its past and present war crimes and to hinder the application and upholding of humanitarian law in South Viet Nam."

(South Viet Nam In Struggle 3/4)



AMERICAN SECURITY COUNCIL

As the American people and Congress grow less willing to support a police state in Saigon, the administration has had to dig deeper to find "objective" support for its military policy.

Joining Kissinger and Martin on the list of sudden peace-lovers, is the American Security Council, a Wash. D. C. based lobby to expand military spending. It is chaired by Generals and presidents of arms manufacturing corporations. Its "Nat. Strategy Committee" includes Gen's Wheeler and Twining, the Hon. Clair Booth Luce, Dr. (nuclear) Teller, Vice Admiral Lee of the National War College, chairman of the board of Stuart-Warner Corp. and the former commander of the U. S. Military Assistance Command, Viet Nam!

In an April 1 letter against disarmament, the ASC urged that the military be kept out of the hands of politicians and that "only by regaining military superiority can we have peace." This is the group that went to Saigon Jan. 12 to 22 and after meeting with Martin and the notorious heads of the Viet Nam National Police and Con Son Prison Island, declared that there are no more political prisoners in South Viet Nam!

Carrying out Nixon's anti anti-war strategy, they also accused "remnants of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, articulate (anti-war) propagandists" and "Hanoi" of conspiring in an "all out campaign" to cut aid to Thieu. (NYTimes 2/27 Focal Point 3/16-31)

CONGRESS ACTS !

Earlier this month, the House and Senate committees rejected Nixon's emergency "save Saigon" request for \$525 million. Whether the anti-war "remnants" can claim any credit or not, on April 4th, the House voted to reject any boost in U. S. military aid to South Viet Nam. This House action appears to bar any further aid increases except for \$266 million that the Pentagon says it can produce through "revised accounting."

(New York Post 4/5)

While we know the Pentagon will continue to find ways to supply its client in Saigon, "the vote (was) a victory for Vietnam critics, reflecting congressional unwillingness to spend additional funds in the face of inflation and possible recession at home."

(Wash. Post 4/5)

So once again we have only the illusion of peace. A situation that will remain untill the U. S. is forced to give up the Nixon Doctrin in Viet Nam and accept the Peace Agreements as something more than paper.

THE PRG SHOWS THE WAY TO PEACE

The PRG's newest 6 Point Peace Proposal is the best way out of the Viet Nam War yet offered to the U. S. Write to I.S.C. for the complete text of the March 22nd document.

IT IS UP TO ALL OF US TO KEEP THE PRESSURE UP UNTILL THE U. S. ENDS ITS AGGRESSION IN INDO-CHINA.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

FILM
SHOWING

"WOMEN OF VIETNAM"

A new color film from the German Democratic Republic. Interviews with women fighters of the People's Liberation Armed Forces. 45 minutes.

AT: Washington Sq. Church
135 West 4th Street

WHEN: April 19 & 20

TIME: 7PM & 10PM

\$1.50

"SALT OF THE EARTH"

Relates the true story of a year long strike of Mexican-American zinc miners in the South West, focusing on the key role that women play in forcing the company to meet the strikers demands. 94 minutes.

HELP

For a year the Indochina Solidarity Committee has been putting out a Newsletter on the current situation in Indochina.

We produce and pay for the Newsletter out of our own individual earnings. We are not funded by anyone and have no special postage rates. It costs us approximately 35¢ a copy to produce and send out 1500 each issue. It will soon be impossible to continue unless we get help from YOU!

Putting out the Newsletter is the most important thing, and we don't want to start a subscription rate. So, we are asking

Putting out the Newsletter is the most important thing. We don't want to start a subscription fee. So we are asking those of you who can, to send contributions, so we can continue to send out the Newsletter FREE!!

U.S. Imperialism is persuing the same objectives as before the signing of the Paris Agreement. That is to keep Vietnam divided, turn South Vietnam into a neo-colony, and crush the revolutionary movement for liberation. We see the Newsletter as one important way to help educate people in the U.S. about this continuing war, and to move people to act against it.

SO...SEND WHAT YOU CAN TO HELP....Thanks, I.S.C. Collective.



INDICT NIXON FOR HIS FOREIGN POLICY

SAT. APRIL 27th

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NEWSLETTER

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HO CHI MINH

(MAY 19, 1890 - SEPTEMBER 3, 1969)

*The wheels of nature turn without pause
After the rain, good weather
In the wink of an eye
The universe throws off its muddy clothes
For ten thousand miles
The landscape spreads out
like a beautiful brocade*

*Light breezes, smiling flowers
High in the trees
Amidst the sparkling leaves
All the birds sing at once
People and animals rise up reborn
What could be more natural?
After sorrow, comes joy.*

FINE WEATHER
by HO CHI MINH



The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

After 4,000 years of struggling for its independence and self-determination, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was founded on Sept. 2, 1945.

"All men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

"This immortal statement appeared in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776. In a broader sense, it means: all the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live and to be happy and free..."

"The French have fled, the Japanese have capitulated, Emperor Bao Dai has abdicated. Our people have broken the chains which have fettered them for nearly a century and have won independence for Vietnam." (from the Declaration of Independence, delivered by Ho Chi Minh on Sept. 2, 1945)

But it took another 9 years of fierce fighting to convince the French colonialists to sign the Geneva Agreement, which recognized that Viet Nam was independent and one country. Though the Viet Minh controlled most of the country, they agreed to regroup in the north, until general elections were held, no later than July, 1956.



Viet Minh raise DRVN flag over Dien Bien Phu after French defeat.

The French did leave, but were replaced in the southern half of Viet Nam by the U.S. which installed Ngo Dinh Diem, and began direct military aid to its puppet regime. They also saw to it that elections were never held.

Throughout the 50's and early 60's, the northern half of Viet Nam was transformed from a backward feudal state to an increasingly industrial and self-sufficient socialist country. In the south, with the mounting resistance of the people to the Diem regime, the U.S. introduced "Special" and then "Limited" warfare with more than 500,000 troops in order to maintain its hold.



Under French colonialism, Vietnamese peasants were forced to pull the ploughs because they were too poor to afford buffaloes. But with the founding of the DRVN, mechanization has replaced human beings and mals in carrying the work load. On the right, is a home-made tractor in the north.

In order to destroy the gains being made by socialism in the north, and to try and save the deteriorating situation in the south, the U.S. began in 1964 and increasingly from 1965 on to conduct the most massive bombing raids in history against the 20 million people of the DRVN.

By 1972, *UPI* reported that the U.S. had dropped over 7 times as many bombs on Viet Nam as were used by the U.S. in Europe during World War II. This was followed by the infamous B-52 raids in Dec. 1972 over the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong,

But the bombings failed to break the will of the Vietnamese people. During these final raids, the defenses of the DRVN shot down 81 planes, including 34 B-52's, bringing the total to well over 4,000 U.S. planes lost over north Viet Nam alone.

On Jan. 27, after more than 4 years of negotiations, the U.S. was forced to sign the Paris Peace Agreement. The Agreement reaffirmed the Geneva Accords, but went much further specifically calling for the removal of all U.S. forces, while recognizing the right of the Liberation Forces to remain in the south. Further, it called on the U.S. to end all interference in the internal affairs of the South Vietnamese people.

The struggle of the Vietnamese people (north and south) has been closely connected with the life of Ho Chi Minh:



"A great revolutionary, President Ho Chi Minh was the first Vietnamese to become acquainted with Marxism-Leninism and to propagate it to Viet Nam. The Party was founded, organized and trained by him.

"A great patriot, he led an untiring struggle during more than a half a century for independence and freedom. He founded the DRVN, the National United Front and Viet Nam People's Army. He united the Vietnamese people and caused their traditions of bravery, undauntedness and humanity to blossom. Besides, he implanted in them profound sentiments of internationalism. He led the resistance against the French colonialists and was the soul of the resistance against U.S. aggression." (VIET NAM- a Sketch, Hanoi, 1971)

Today, the President of the DRVN is Ton Duc Thang, who the U.S. press has tried to paint as an unknown and unimportant figurehead. But his revolutionary past goes back to the earliest days of resistance to French colonialism. He organized Viet Nam's first mutual aid society for Saigon workers in 1910; in a 1918 Black Sea mutiny he raised a red flag over a French warship sent to attack the Bolshevik Revolution, and in 1925 he led a Saigon dock strike to prevent French naval intervention in the Chinese revolution. He later became vice-president and after the death of Ho Chi Minh in September, 1969, became President of the DRVN.

Presently, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is not only keeping its vigilance against any renewed intervention by the U.S., but is concentrating on rebuilding its war-torn economy. Despite continued U.S. violations of the Peace Agreement, the social and technological revolutions continue to advance; the Vietnamese people (north and south) continue their reconstruction and their resistance; and in the spirit of their Uncle Ho, they continue to work for a Viet Nam that is free, independent and UNITED.

"They may bring in 500,000 troops, one million or even more to step up the war of aggression in South Viet Nam. They may use thousands of aircraft for intensified attacks against North Viet Nam. But never will they be able to break the iron will of the heroic Vietnamese people to fight against U.S. aggression. The more truculent they are, the graver their crime. The war might last another 5, 10, 20 years or longer. Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities and enterprises may be destroyed, but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom! Once victory is won, our people will rebuild our country and endow it with bigger and more beautiful constructions." (Ho Chi Minh's July 17, 1966 Appeal)



Mean Streets and Clean Streets, Saigon and Hanoi

by Jayne Werner

The overpowering noise, congestion, rolls of barbed wire, piles of abandoned garbage, rows of hovels along the railroad tracks through the center of town stunned me as I entered Saigon, just after spending 10 days in Hanoi. In Hanoi, whose 700,000 inhabitants have resumed their normal routines only a year after the halt of the bombing, traffic moves at a rapid pace --for bicycles-- up to 12 kilometers an hour, I was told. I rarely saw motor bikes, and cars are reserved for those with important tasks or for foreign guests.

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Saigon, on the other hand, is probably the most congested city in the Orient. It is hard to decide whether the noisome black emission from Hondas, taxis, jeeps and cars is worse than the din of horns, screeching brakes and mufflerless motors. Traffic moves much more slowly in Saigon. There are so many Hondas that they have reached the point of inefficiency.

A building down the street from my hotel in Hanoi, I finally realized, was a military office. There was a soldier in an unobtrusive guardtower outside a thick wall with two strands of barbed wire running on top, the most barbed wire I ever saw in Hanoi or in the entire country.



A typical Saigon street

In Saigon, barbed wire is almost an architectural feature, integrated with the city landscape. Every street corner has a policeman who checks the ID cards of passerbys, or an Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) rifleman behind a sandbagged fortification. I rarely saw police in Hanoi. Although there are many military men in both cities, soldiers in Hanoi do not carry weapons in public and seem to blend in with the general populace -- whereas in Saigon the pervasive presence of armed soldiers, and especially police, give the strong impression that they serve as an instrument to awe and repress the population.



A typical street in Hanoi

One large sign in downtown Hanoi is the Tet (Lunar New Year holidays) greeting from President Ton Duc Thanh: "The whole country with an eager heart joins together/To carry out with all its strength the tasks of the new stage/New Year, New Victories." Ho Chi Minh slogan "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" is written in large red letters on a building opposite a large department store; the slogan is probably the most widely displayed in Hanoi.

In contrast, the political signs adorning almost every block in downtown Saigon are mainly negative and threatening, The "Three don'ts" signs are typical: "Don't sell rice to the Communists; Don't furnish sugar to the lower level Communist Organizations; Don't let a Communist invasion happen again."

A visitor has the impression that Hanoi is a city very much insulated from the Western world. The abundance of technical, plastic and gaily colored commodities on sale on the streets of Saigon and Hong Kong are absent in Hanoi as are the glitter of neon lights, provocative shop displays and billboards exhibiting nubile models.

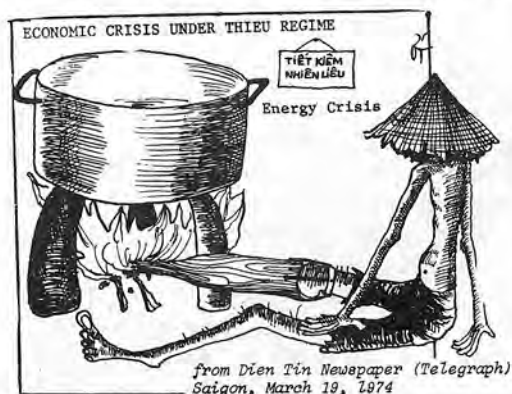
There are no sex-kittens decked out in mini skirts and the latest shimmering hose; the women in Hanoi look healthy and attractive in their plain clothing. There is a lack of frenzy, a feeling of a well-ordered society. People are poor only by the standards of contemporary Western consumer society.

The cleanliness of Hanoi and its well-fed and well-clothed inhabitants (though their clothing is worn and patched), contrast vividly with the predominantly dirty and unhealthy Saigon. Despite a show of abundance in Saigon, there is a poverty of essentials -- not enough to eat for all the population, no adequate shelter, clothing or employment (a Saigon newspaper recently reported that 2 million of 18 million Saigon controlled South Vietnamese are out of work.)

Shacks line the railroad tracks and pools of water between the tracks are open cesspools -- latrines for the impoverished inhabitants. Although Hanoi is very poor after a long and costly war, I never once saw any hovels.

learned that an average worker in Hanoi earns about \$20 a month. Our interpreter told us that his wife, an elementary school teacher, with a few years experience, earns about \$24 a month. Although a factory worker in Saigon, according to a recent *York Times* article, earns about \$22 a month, living expenses are greater and daily existence much more precarious.

For example, rice in Saigon now costs about 15¢ a pound, which means that one-fourth to one-third of a wage-earner's salary is used to supply a family with rice. In contrast, rice costs about 7¢ a pound in Hanoi. Rationing throughout the country assures an adequate monthly allotment for each family.



In Hanoi housing costs 1% of a person's income, whereas it costs at least 10% and sometimes much more in Saigon. Although taxes are steep in both cities, Hanoi's inhabitants enjoy free medical care and education, both very costly in Saigon.

While I was in Saigon the piaster was devalued for the eighth time in the space of a year. Inflation during 1973 had risen to 65%. People remarked that this year's Tet shoppers were much less numerous than last year's. When I was there, rice cost twice as much as it had the year before. In Hanoi, a kilogram of rice today costs what it did in 1965, and inflation is unknown.

While economic difficulties are present in Hanoi, huge disparities in income and life do not exist as in Saigon. Plush villas surrounded by barbed wire and the sheltered rich in their chauffeured limousines simply are not seen in the North.

Saigon, not surprisingly, is plagued with a high crime rate. I never once feared robbery or attack in Hanoi whereas personal safety was a chief concern in Saigon. Its streets are filled with beggars and homeless children, some crippled and disfigured, roaming around selling newspapers or shining shoes. Pathetic beggars hang on to your arm if you're in a store or eating in a restaurant until you can't bear it any longer and give them a few piasters. No beggars or homeless children are seen in Hanoi.

The feeling in Saigon is one of despair mixed with panic. Recent journalist's reports confirm that poor Vietnamese in Saigon are on the brink of starvation. During Tet someone threw a grenade into the central market for no apparent reason, killing three persons. Shortly afterwards, in the middle of a demonstration of Vietnamese employees at the U.S. commissary, the wife of an American Embassy official lost control of herself and her car and killed two people.

Everybody I talked to agreed that the deteriorating situation could not continue much longer without something drastic happening - what that would be depended upon whom I talked to. A student who had been jailed and tortured for translating an American book critical of the Thieu regime felt there would be a student revolt. An American missionary thought there would be a food riot. A wealthy upper class Vietnamese said a street vendor told him that if he could no longer feed his family he was going to get a gun and start shooting the rich.



Children on a Hanoi street



The situation grew more serious in South Vietnam during the past month, as the U.S. and Saigon continued to escalate the war and violate the Peace Agreement.

THE TONG LE CHAN INCIDENT

On the night of April 12, the Tong Le Chan Ranger base, 55 miles northwest of Saigon, fell to the Liberation Forces of the PRG. According to the Saigon High Command, "Four to five thousand North Vietnamese troops stormed the base," backed by tanks and artillery, killing or wounding most of its 259 defenders. According to PRG military spokesman, Maj. Phuong Nam, "Our forces encircled the camp and fired mortars, but there were no tank or infantry assaults.

"When our troops entered the camp, they found it deserted. We have taken no prisoners and do not yet know in which direction the Saigon troops retreated." (Reuters, 4/13)

Many Western reports confirmed the PRG version:

"More than 200 of the 259 men at the camp made their way to An Loc, Government [Saigon] sources reported. The sources also discounted the command's report that several thousand North Vietnamese with tanks attacked the base." (Associated Press, 4/15/74)

"Some sources in Saigon believe that the base was given up as the result of an arrangement worked out between the PRG forces and the weary government defenders of the base, and not as a result of a determined Communist assault." (Christain Science Monitor, 4/24/74)

All sources agreed that Saigon dramatized the loss of the base to create the impression of an "imminent North Vietnamese offensive" while they continued to escalate the war, at a time when a bill asking for \$474 million in increased military aid for Thieu was before Congress.

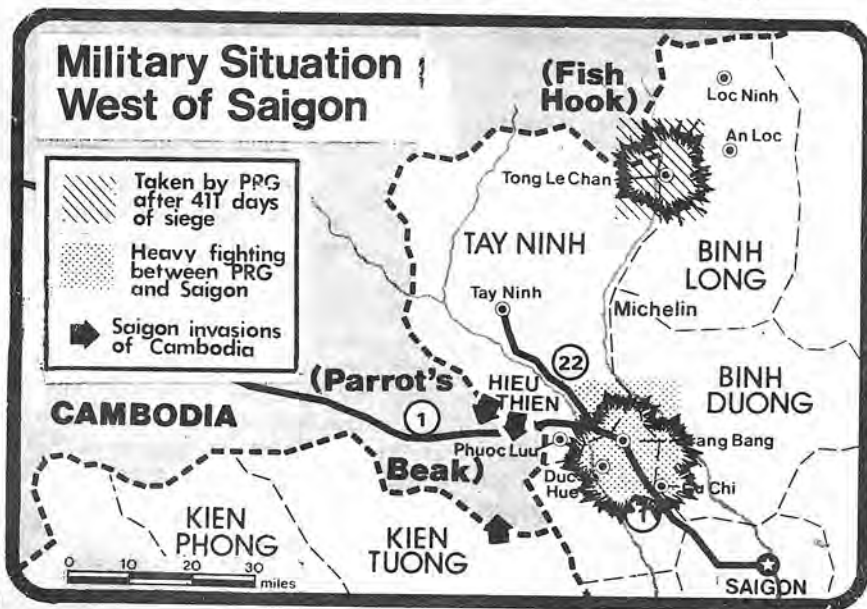
LOC NINH BOMBED

In retaliation for the tank assault that never happened, Saigon carried out massive bombing raids against the major PRG city of Loc Ninh, from April 12-15. According to the PRG, "Saigon planes bombed the downtown area, completely destroying the city's school, the An Quang pagoda, hit homes and orchards and killed dozens of people including the buddhist monk, Thich Hue Pho." (International Bulletin, 4/22/74)

Meanwhile, Saigon unilaterally cut off the Two Party talks in Paris, and the PRG delegation at Tan Son Nhut air base in Saigon was virtually sealed off from the world by Thieu. PRG weekly press conferences have been cancelled, their telephones cut, and they have even been denied access to ICCS members. Liaison flights between Saigon and Loc Ninh have been cancelled indefinitely. (Hsinhua News Agency, 4/21/74)

SAIGON INVADES CAMBODIA

On May 2, in blatant violation of article 20 of the Peace Agreement, Saigon tanks, planes and infantry invaded Cambodia at 2 points west of Saigon near Highway One. Strangely enough, their excuse was the same used



Top: Church in Loc Ninh bombed by Saigon
Bottom: PRG headquarters at Loc Ninh sealed off from the outside.



People's theater group performing in the DRVN

vidualistic values previously unacceptable in Vietnamese culture.

In many ways Hanoi represented to me, a feeling of being truly Vietnamese, untroubled by the problems the West has brought to so many Asian countries. No observers, I believe, can say the same of Saigon. The spirit and self-sacrifice of the people of Hanoi during an arduous but equally-shared war appear to be products of an admirable culture strengthened by Marxism.

The contrasting achievement of economic and social order in Hanoi seems all the more remarkable considering the destruction of the carpet bombing and the immense dislocations they caused. That the city has managed to avoid an epidemic or severe food shortage is little less than a miracle.

Hanoi--with its quiet streets full of busy people--seems to offer the visitor much more of a vision of hope for the future of Vietnam than Saigon. In Hanoi I felt a sense of spirit, a sense of moving forward, an appealing life based on thrift and simplicity. The atmosphere of stability pervaded economic life, family and social relationships and even religious and cultural traditions such as Tet.

Communism in Hanoi does not strike the visitor as being "atheistic," "totalitarian," "rigidly disciplined," and "regimented." Rather, Vietnamese traditions seem to have been strengthened by the new ideology.

In Saigon, however, pervasive Western influence and dependence on American dollars have tended to undermine strong family relationships, contributed to social decadence and established competitive, greedy and indi-



Jayne Werner returned in February from 10 days in Hanoi and a month in Saigon. She is writing a doctoral dissertation on Viet Nam for Cornell University.

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by the U.S. 4 years ago: "to cut North Vietnamese supply lines" and infiltration routs. (NY Times, 5/2/74) The Saigon Command has denied the invasion altogether. But according to one low-ranking officer, "they didn't tell us we were going into Cambodia, I only knew because suddenly the signs were written in Cambodian, and the highway markers said how far it was to Phnom Penh." (UPI, 5/6/74)

But as in past Saigon incursions into Cambodia, they met stiff resistance. After reaching the village of Bavet, 4 miles inside the border, they ran into Liberation Forces and despite the use of tanks, artillery and planes, were forced to retreat.



U.S. CONTINUES ITS OFFENSIVE

WHILE Thieu was escalating the fighting U.S. ambassador to Saigon, Graham Martin continued his own offensive, in support of continued U.S. intervention. After 'laying low' for several years, Martin came out of hiding to viciously attack a NY Times article by D. Shipler that detailed U.S. violations of the Peace Agreement and concluded that the U.S. was responsible for the continuing war. Then on April 3, he attacked Sen. E. Kennedy and other anti-war members of Congress, accusing them of "aiding Hanoi". Martin strongly advised the State Dept. not to give Congress "an honest and detailed answer" about U.S. intentions in Indochina. After intercepting the secret memo, Kennedy stated, "The cable raises the most profound questions about which country and in whose interests Amb. Martin is truly representing." (Wash. Post, 4/13/74)

Later in the month Martin opened up a new front, this time against the clergy. He accused the Rev. George C. Weber, Pres. of the NY Theological Seminary of being responsible for the deaths of the 32 Vietnamese children killed in a rocket attack at Cai Lay. With 4 other Americans, Weber spent 2 weeks touring Saigon controlled areas last January. Members of the group had several meetings with Martin during their visit. On its return, they condemned the policies of the Thieu regime, and their violations of the Peace Agreement.

In a letter to Weber, Martin "accused him of refusing to use his 'great influence in Hanoi'" to persuade them to put down their weapons. In a letter responding to Martin, Weber stated:

"The fact that you at once assume that we who cry out for peace are agents of Hanoi is a source of shock and distress. We do not support Thieu and we do not support Hanoi; as citizens our primary task is to address the evil wrought by our government.

"You ask me to talk with the PRG. I have no influence with them, but you and our government provide over 80% of the support for the Thieu regime and thus have massive and decisive influence where it counts the most." (American Report, 4/15/74)

After attacking the press, Congress and Clergy, Martin has been called back to the U.S. by Congress, to find out 'whose interests he is truly representing'.

CONGRESS REJECTS FURTHER AID TO SAIGON

In an unprecedented show of force, Congress defeated 3 separate attempts by the Nixon administration to increase military aid to Saigon over the next several months. Though U.S. munitions and weapons continue to pour into Saigon, it was considered "a major foreign policy defeat for Pres. Nixon," and will "substantially weaken the South Vietnamese Armed Forces" efforts to continue offensive military operations. (Wash. Post, 5/7/74)

It began last January with an urgent cable from Martin requesting an increase of \$525 million over the \$1.1 billion ceiling imposed by Congress in December. But the Senate Judiciary Committee, refused, and instead offered them a compromise of \$265 million. The Nixon administration argued that, "To walk away from it just at this moment, would be disastrous. The U.S. would pay an enormous cost, a cost in its own self-respect, a cost in turning toward a new kind of isolationism which provides an enormous danger for the U.S. and the people of the world..." And so on and so on. (Wash. Post, 4/13)

But the 'doves' in Congress would not fall for this same line again.

"As long as Pres. Thieu is assured of any amount of aid he wants, there is no incentive to reach an accord with Hanoi... Nothing we can do there is going to affect the final outcome; we can only delay it, and break our banks in the process. If we help them do it, they can keep this war going for 100 years, by which time we'll be ready to be on the receiving end of somebody's foreign aid program." (Sen. Ledgett- Dem., Indiana, Christain Science Monitor, 4/25/74)

Even the old 'hawks' in Congress have grown weary with giving aid to the Thieu regime. According to one of their old bulwarks, Sen. Barry Goldwater, "We can scratch South Vietnam. It is imminent that it is going to fall into the hands of the North Vietnamese." (*The U.S. and Indochina*, #5, April, 1974)

With tremendous pressure applied by local anti-war groups in the Wash. D.C. area, the bill was defeated in the House by a vote of 177-154. But while Congress was still rejoicing over their victory, the Defense Dept. mysteriously discovered an "accounting error" in their books, in which they had \$266 million in arms aid for Saigon left over from the 1972-73 fiscal year. Realizing the importance of this request, the Defense Dept. sent an urgent message to Congress warning of "grave consequences to South Vietnam" if the bill was not voted through. Indicative of the importance the Nixon administration attached to the bill "was the presence of Vice President Ford in the Senate Chamber, ready to cast the deciding vote in case of a tie." (*NY Times*, 5/7/74)

But Congress wouldn't be swayed, and the bill was defeated in the traditionally conservative Senate by a vote of 43-38. Though Congress didn't vote down these aid bills out of any solidarity with the Vietnamese, as Senate Majority Leader, Mike Mansfield stated, "We've had Southeast Asia up to our necks; with our men out, we want all the way out." (*Associated Press*, 4/7/74)

In Saigon... REPRESSION

While stepping up its attacks on the PRG in the countryside, Thieu continues his repressive and fascist policies in the cities, especially against those who cry out for peace, and implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Recently, Thieu has announced that every 20-30 families in Saigon would be under the control of a policeman who would record every 'overt and covert' action taken by the members of each family.

"According to the plan, every open or secret action, personal activity or language of a citizen would be reported daily to a special Committee." (*Tien Tuyen*, a pro-Saigon newspaper, 3/6/74)

The Thieu regime has not only refused to release the hundreds of thousands of political prisoners it already holds, but is making more arrests. In Can Giãuc, 12 miles south of Saigon, 142 Buddhist monks were arrested for demanding the release of Buddhist political prisoners and the implementation of the Peace Agreement. (*Phil. Inquirer*, 3/13/74)



Despite the freedom of movement called for in the Agreement, the sign reads, "Those returning to Communist zones will be shot on sight."

Despite the Peace Agreement, Thieu refuses to allow the people under his control even the most basic democratic freedoms. According to Thieu, "The Communists are demanding democratic freedoms, freedom of the press and freedom of speech in order to propagandize Communist ideology among the ranks of the government of the Republic of Vietnam." (*Thoi Bao, Ga*, Feb., 1974)

RESISTANCE

Despite the fact that the city of Saigon has become something similar to an armed camp with police, under cover agents and barbed wire on every corner, the people continue to resist and the Third Political Force called for in the Paris Agreement continues to consolidate itself.

On March 28, the Comm. to Demand and Receive Prisoners of the Third Force was formed in Saigon. The Declaration, signed by 43 people including lawyers, journalists, religious people and Senate representatives, stated that it will work for "peace, independence, and for the right of national self-determination and democratic liberty." It pointed out that the "Third Force" was a political reality, and had to be independent of the other 2 South Vietnamese parties.

Among the signatures were Mrs. Ngo Ba Thanh, and Father Chan Tin, head of the Comm. to Reform the Prison System in South Vietnam.

What is the Third Force?

"Knocking down the idea of neutralization wherever it rears its ugly head and on this point I think nothing is more important than to stop neutralist talk wherever we can by whatever means we can." (Directive given by Pres. Johnson to Amb. Henry C. Lodge on March 20, 1964, Pentagon Papers, Bantam books, page 285)

Article 12 of the Paris Peace Agreement on Vietnam calls for the formation of a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord with 3 equal segments on an equal footing. Together, these three segments- the PRG, Saigon and neutralists independent of the other two- are to ensure the ceasefire, the release of all political prisoners, democratic freedoms, general elections and the formation of a coalition government.

While the PRG has continually demanded full recognition of this Third Segment, the U.S. and Saigon have continuously denounced them as *"traitors and lackeys of Hanoi"*. (NY Times, 4/17/74) Despite the Peace Agreement, the U.S. and Saigon have refused to recognize their existence as an independent force in the south. Who is this Third Segment? Where does it come from? What is its future?

ORIGINS

Whenever Vietnam has been invaded, there is a tendency for some social classes to unite and resist the foreign aggression; likewise, there are some classes who collaborate with the invaders. Besides these two groups, *"there is always a fringe group of more or less uncommitted people whose number may vary according to the development of the national and international situation."* (Vietnam Courier, #16, Sept, 1973)

With the signing of the 1954 Geneva Accords, the French left and the Americans moved in. U.S. colonialism was different from the French type, it was better camouflaged. There were no more Western administrators or troops, but a Vietnamese was now ruling with Vietnamese administrators. Vietnamese generals and colonels paraded through the streets with a well equipped Vietnamese army. Vietnamese ambassadors represented the country at ceremonies abroad. Instead of draining the country of its resources like the French did, the U.S. poured in an inexhaustible source of dollars and luxury goods. American propaganda, which utilized the most modern resources of the mass media, swarmed through the country in an attempt to impose upon the Vietnamese the *"American way of thinking"*. All of this material affluence gave birth to a new privileged class and new habits of consumption among many people in the cities, and brought about a tremendous restructuring of South Vietnamese society.

As a result, since 1954 a whole generation has grown up without knowing anything about the French colonial period, and the struggles that marked it. For years, many people who were benefiting from the relative abundance of consumer goods in the cities, had only a vague idea of the bloody repression that was going on in the countryside. The extensive police and military network built, payed for and directed by the U.S.- worked in such a way that a large portion of the population in the cities had only sporadic contact with the revolutionary forces led by the NLF that were fighting the U.S. and their puppets in the countryside.

U.S. WAR CRIMES REMOVE BLINDFOLD

But with the introduction of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops, American aggression reached a level of violence and barbarity that directly affected all social classes. The sight of millions of refugees only able to survive by stealing and begging, of hundreds of orphans and abandoned children roaming the streets, of hundreds of thousands of women forced to sell themselves, of the racist behavior of the U.S. military to who all Vietnamese even their allies were *"gooks"* and *"slant-eyes"*, all of this awakened the consciousness of many individuals and social groups.



Saigon prostitute, a product of U.S. cultural Imperialism.

tudents, intellectuals, Catholics, Buddhists and even civil servants and women raised their voices against the destruction of their country. Many organizations were founded, some defending certain freedoms, and others defending morality or certain aspects of the national culture. Even army officers and high-ranking officials who profited from the war saw their sons drafted into the army, and their daughters become prostitutes for the Americans.

The 1968 Tet offensive shattered the smokescreen which had been put between the Liberation forces in the countryside and the urban population. The resistance of the NLF to the "invincible" U.S. war machine helped the people in the cities to see that the struggle was not primarily one for this or that political tendency, but for the survival of their nation, threatened with extinction by American aggression.

By the time of Thieu's second one-man election in 1971, thousands were taking to the streets demanding the ouster of the Saigon puppet, and his U.S. bosses. With the launching of the PRG military offensive in the spring of 1972, Thieu used this as an excuse to launch an unprecedented wave of terror, torture and imprisonment, in an attempt to crush the urban opposition. But despite this repression, Thieu was unable to destroy the movement.



Demonstrations in urban centers of S. Viet Nam



The signing of the Peace Agreement in January, 1973, officially recognized the Third Segment as a legitimate political force, and helped them to define their program more clearly. In the past year, 33 organizations of neutralist have united and formed a "People's Organization for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement". The coalition actively works for the restoration of democratic liberties and for the release of political prisoners still held by the Thieu regime. Their activities further develop their organization, and the struggle for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement will produce its true leaders, as opposed to the ones that will undoubtedly be planted by the CIA.

Since the Third Force has no military, its survival is dependent on the Implementation of the Peace Agreement, and its future is closely linked to the realization of national reconciliation and concord.

Because of its history, the Third Force will continue to work independent of the PRG. But by the fact that it is a national and democratic movement, it cannot work against the PRG, for their goals are the same: peace, independence and the eventual reunification of the country.

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Laos

WHAT CHANCE FOR PEACE ?

It is a month since the formation of the National Union Government in Laos; the deployment of troops is completed; government appointees are beginning their new jobs; and work towards the holding of general elections continues. Reports from Laos claim that *"It is the only country in Indochina beginning to be at peace with itself."* (N.Y. Times April 8, 1974)

Throughout Laos there is a growing acceptance of the Pathet Lao and the new government. *"For a start the Pathet Lao have a million people in their own zone of the country (they actually govern 1½) which they will continue to control.. And in the Lowlands of Laos they already have many supporters among the country's other 2 million population...In the urban areas the corruption and inefficiencies of Souvanna's government will prompt many to vote for the Neo Lao Haksat, the Pathet Lao political party. Prince Souvannouvong.... surely looks like an advertisement for clean government."* (Washington Post, April 14, 1974)



Despite the indications that all is going well, the full implementation of the Vientiane Agreement has not yet occurred. The real test of peace in Laos will most likely come in June. By that time all U.S. and Thai troops and military personnel are required by the Agreements to have left Laos. Both Thailand and the Lao right-wing, but most certainly the U.S., have reasons to oppose the new coalition government since it is the result of a successful struggle against them all. The U.S. and Thailand organized and aided right-wing coup d'etats responsible for the overthrow of the 2 progressive governments in Laos that were formed following similar peace agreements in 1954 and 1962. Each coup was preceded by a propaganda campaign accusing North Vietnam of *"Communist aggression"* against the people of Laos. Perhaps with this as a background it seems more than coincidence that last month U.S. press charged "hanoi" with refusing to withdraw its troops and with several military operations within Laos. Neither the North Vietnamese nor the Laotians have anything to gain by continuing land operations. Judging from the U.S. government's past practice, these charges are most likely an attempt to cover up its own plans for continued aggression in Laos.

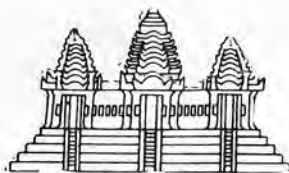
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?



At least part of the reason U.S. Imperialism was able to move so easily into Laos in the first place was that the American people were kept totally unaware of what was happening there. Even throughout the 60's when the anti-war movement in the U.S. was at its height, very few people supported or even knew about the Laotian resistance. It wasn't until the 1971 Saigon incursion that people began demanding an end to the war in Laos too. It is therefore crucial that we now aid the Laotian people in safeguarding their new victory by remaining vigilant and prepared to respond to any manouvers of the U.S. and its right-wing puppets.

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Cambodia



Each passing week the situation in Cambodia looks brighter for the liberation forces of the National United Front. The U.S. backed Lon Nol regime in Phnom Penh is facing daily military defeats; a quickening of the disintegration of their military and political apparatus; and deminishing of the population and territory under its control.



Heavy defeats suffered by Lon Nol throughout Cambodia, Tonle Sap River is now liberated

In the past month, according to reports in the U.S. press, at least a dozen of Lon Nol's positions on the defense perimeter of Phnom Penh City have fallen to the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF). A news correspondent in Cambodia reported that "It is now but a 15 minute drive South from the center of Phnom Penh to heavy fighting on the banks of the Bassak River where (Lon Nol troops) have been steadily losing ground to the insurgents over the past few weeks." (N.Y. Times, 4/28/74) In some areas the CPNLAF are "as close as 3 miles from the city." (Guardian, 5/7/74) From these positions the liberation forces are able to shell strategic targets (i.e. Presidential Palace, U.S. Embassy) in the capital.

One question that is often asked is; If the liberation forces are so close the capital why don't they just take it?

"To launch a frontal assault against a city like Phnom Penh which is swollen with refugees (Phnom Penh is now twice its normal size) would result in very heavy casualties. So they're trying to get the population away to the liberated areas. They cut an escape valve while large parts of the civilian population move out. When they attack with artillery and rocket barrages there's two-way traffic; the civilian people move out and a nucleus of liberation forces move in to prepare for the taking of the cities from within. The easiest way to take a fortress is always from within and not by assaulting the walls from without." (From an interview with Wilfred Burchett, Focal Point, 4/15/74)

The liberation of Phnom Penh cannot occur until the Mekong River is totally shutdown. Khieu Samphan, speaking in Peking on the first leg of a world wide diplomatic tour, said: "If we cannot win the war now it is because of the Mekong River. Only by the means of the Mekong can Lon Nol get the supplies--the fuel, the food, the arms and ammunition--he needs to continue the war." (Wash. Post, 4/4/74)

Another river, the Tonle Sap (which branches off the Mekong at Phnom Penh and moves northwest--see map) is now completely controlled by the liberation forces. (Hsinhua 4/27/74) To insure that they maintain full control, the CPNLAF has "strung wire and mines across the Tonle Sap." (Wash. Post, 4/22/74) As a result Lon Nol is no longer able to send supplies and reinforcements (except by air) to his troops located in the northwest. On April 21, the CPNLAF forced the remainder of Lon Nol's troops to retreat from their beachhead near Oudong (the former royal capital which was liberated on March 18th) to a besieged puppet garrison at Longvek, 3 miles to the northeast. Lon Nol's orders to retake Oudong "at all costs" only "resulted in... a demoralizing route of more than 2,000 elite [Lon Nol] troops." (N.Y. Times 4/28/74) A week later the liberation forces captured the provincial capital of Sala Lek Pram (5 miles northwest of Oudong.) The puppet troops stationed at Sala Lek Pram also fled to the Longvek garrison. (Wash. Post, 4/29/74) A European diplomat stated that "the Longvek situation does not look good, I think it will fall." (N.Y. Times 5/5/74)

In the first three weeks of April alone the CPNLAF sank over 123 Lon Nol ships on the waterways of Cambodia. (Hsinhua, 4/27/74) The latest battlefield reports indicate the liberation forces may soon have the Mekong river in their hands. (Guardian, 4/24/74)

Lon Nol forces are not holding any better elsewhere in Cambodia. On April 4 the liberation forces entered the northern sectors of the coastal city of Kampot and engaged in 'house to house' fighting with Phnom Penh troops. After cutting all telephone lines and destroying Kampot's power station the CPNLAF withdrew to the outskirts of the city.

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(N.Y. Times, 4/5/74) In the battle Phnom Penh lost "some of its best fighting units and Kampot is still threatened." (N.Y. Times 4/28/74) Lon Nol's army has lost several outposts at the Phnom Penh suburb of Takhmao. According to field reports the puppet troops there "were composed mostly of old men and young boys." (N.Y. Post 4/15/74) Along the Mekong north of the capital, it was reported that "elite Cambodian paratroopers are building makeshift rafts so they can escape." in case of CPNLAF attacks. (Wash. Post, 4/14)

The deep water port of Sihanoukville (called Kompong Som by the Lon Nol regime) is expected to come under CPNLAF attack in the near future. Over 400 puppet troops were "routed from two coastal positions" east of Sihanoukville on May 5. (Newsday, 5/6/74)



Heavy fighting is also reported at the provincial capitals of Prey Veng and Takeo, which have been encircled by the liberation forces for over two years. Lon Nol's forces have steadily lost ground at both cities and all supplies must be airlifted in. In Phnom Penh a foreign economist said;

"Looking at a large glossy map showing nothing but severed roads, If that were a patient, he would be dead." (N.Y. Times 4/28/74)

IN THE PHNOM PENH ZONE

The situation in the areas still under the Lon Nol's control is chaotic. On March 31, a long and bitter struggle among the leaders of the Phnom Penh government came out into the open. Lon Nol declared the dissolution of the ruling 'High Council'. "The council was established primarily to meet American demands...it gave the appearance of a united political front even though it did not work in practice." (Wash. Post, 3/31/74) The High Political Council is being replaced by a four man 'High Executive Council' made up of Premier Long Boret, Sosthene Fernandez, Sirik Matak, with Lon Nol as it's boss. (Hsinhua, 4/3/74) Still the power struggle continues, according to a report in the Washington Post, "Top ranking (Phnom Penh) officials privately blame current losses on President Lon Nol."

During 1973 prices rose about 275 percent, and in the first three months of 1974 prices rose about another 40%. "Prices go up every day--even every hour." (N.Y. Times, 4/28/74) "Buddhist peasants now must sell their statue (and other religious objects) to make enough money to survive." "The beautiful death pieces...were never sold to tourists before 1970;" the year of the fascist coup. "recently a journalist visiting Phnom Penh bought up all the death cloths he could find on the advise of a New York antique dealer... they are cut into smaller squares and stuffed as pillows in an American boutique." A Khmer said in disgust "we are a Buddhist country, don't foreigners feel guilty?" (Wash. Post, 4/12/74)

In order to overcome a 50 billion riel (about 150 million \$U.S.) budget deficit, Phnom Penh's Prime Minister, Long Boret, ordered that 60 billion riels in new banknotes be printed. This was done in spite of the fact that the total revenues of the Lon Nol regime "amount to only 20 billion riels" and that it will hit the citizens and refugees in the capital the hardest. (Focal Point, 4/1-15/74)

Fed up with increasing inflation and repression, the people in the Phnom Penh zones, are uniting against Lon Nol and his gang. At the end of March 5,000 workers at Phnom Penh's electric power plant went on strike, "Demanding a pay increase and an end to pressganging civilians into the army." (Guardian 4/17/74) On April 6 they were joined by 2,000 workers from the capital's "running water" company who pledged to carry on their struggle to the end. (Hsinhua 4/7/74) War widows have been demonstrating outside the Presidential Palace for benefits they were promised by the Phnom Penh regime. Lon Nol's response was that he would "pay them each 2,000 riels" (about \$5.00) (Wash. Post, 5/6/74)

In recent months, over 74,000 people moved to the Liberated Zones of the National United Front of Cambodia (FUNK). (Hsinhua, 4/2/74) Among the defectors are important personalities and officials of the Phnom Penh regime. (Guardian, 5/1/74)

While the Lon Nol regime becomes increasingly isolated in the world, the prestige of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNK). To date 60 nations have recognized the GRUNK as the sole legal government of Cambodia. It's Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, Khieu Samphan, is currently on a diplomatic tour of Asia, Europe, and Africa. Lon Nol is worrying about losing his seat at the United Nations this fall when the Cambodian question is raised at the General Assembly. His foreign Minister,

Keuky Lim, is already in New York trying to line up votes for the Phnom Penh regime, even though the vote is about five months away. An "experienced official observer at the U.N. predicted that the GRUNK would be recognized as the legitimate government of Cambodia" no matter what Lon Nol does. (N.Y. Post 5/6/74)

U.S. GIVES \$1.6 MILLION A DAY TO LON NOL

The people in the U.S. face continuous cut backs in education, health and housing, and increases in taxes, public utilities costs, food and clothing prices. Yet, the Nixon administration has given over 600 million dollars in aid for fiscal year 1974 in order to maintain a fascist dictatorship in Phnom Penh. This amounts to over 1.6 million dollars a day in aid. The puppets in Phnom Penh depend "almost entirely on American subsidized goods that come up the Mekong...or into Pochentong airport, which is cluttered with planes sitting wingtip to wingtip." (Wash. Post, 4/15/74)

In addition to this, the U.S. "is directly commanding this war more actively than ever. Today in the city of Phnom Penh and on all battlefields...there are as many as 3,500 U.S. military advisors" disguised as civilians, and plans to increase the number are already drawn up. (Khieu Samphan, speech in Hsinhua 4/2/74)

An article on some of the tactics used by the U.S. in Cambodia reported that: "Despite congressional restrictions on U.S. activities in Cambodia, the American diplomats, aid people and military men who wear civilian clothing are experts in the manipulating arts most of them practiced in Vietnam and Laos.

"From lessons learned in Laos, the U.S. establishment here knows how to do without Americans. They used foreigners such as Filipinos, Koreans, and Thais in some slots. The foreigners are paid well and also are usually veterans of Laos and Viet Nam.

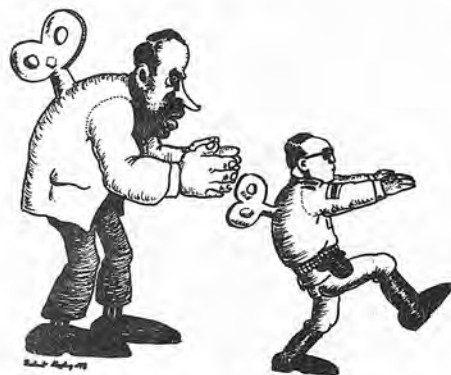
"Another involvement...is the use of 'day-time temporary assignment' people. Air America (the CIA airlines) and other contractors fly in from Thailand bases to do their daily chores. They don't count on the roll of officially paid Americans in Cambodia." (Wash. Post, 4/15/74) The reporter said, "the difference between that and advising is zero."

Prince Sihanouk, the GRUNK Head of State, speaking at a rally in Korea said:

Prince Sihanouk, the GRUNK Head of State, speaking at a rally in Korea said: "We have not sent a single Cambodian to America to menace the lives Americans; we are only defending the sacred soil of our fatherland and our inalienable right to national self-determination and independence and national unity.

"As to the U.S.A., we resolutely demand that it unconditionally and totally dismantle without delay its neo-colonial military system established in Phnom Penh and in the area one-tenth of our national territory and let the Cambodians solve their own problems by themselves without any outside interference.

"Otherwise, we are prepared to continue to fight successful battles with arms in our hands til we win final victory, which is inevitable." (Pyongyang Times, 4/20/74)



COMMENTARY:

Why Should Americans Remain Active Around the War in Indochina?

Despite the U.S. Gov't and media attempts to convince us that the continuing war in Indochina is a "civil war", U.S. involvement has far from ended.

U.S. objectives remain the same: to keep Vietnam permanently divided, and to use South Vietnam and Cambodia as military bases for controlling the whole of Southeast Asia. In this period, (since the signing of the Peace Agreement), only their tactics have changed for achieving these objectives.

SINCE THE VIETNAM CEASE-FIRE:



122,000 SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS KILLED OR WOUNDED.



MILLION NEW REFUGEES.



OVER 100,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS.



BUT NONE OF THEM OURS.



Los Angeles Times Calendar, Sunday, March 2, 1971

What is happening in South Vietnam & Cambodia is one of the

clearest examples of the new type of warfare being waged by U.S. Imperialism around the world. It involves giving unlimited amounts of dollars and war material to prop up fascist dictatorships, rather than having to contend with the problem of the high visibility of U.S. troops and bombers. As Nixon stated in his March 29 Veteran's Day speech, "Our part will in the future be, under the Nixon Doctrine, not to furnish troops, but to furnish the economic and military supplies so that they can defend themselves."

According to their own statistics just released, the Nixon administration will give more aid to its puppets in Indochina (\$3.7 billion) than to all the other countries in the world combined (\$3.5 billion). Only a people conscious of this new type of warfare can oppose it and defeat it; only by cutting all U.S. aid to Thieu and Lon Nol can the war really be ended in Indochina.

At this point, our work in the Indochina Solidarity Comm. is directed towards making people aware of the current situation in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. To aid people and organizations we would like to make our resources available for educational and cultural programs on Indochina. They include: Literature, speakers, films, slide shows and cultural displays. We, in turn, wish to express our solidarity with other progressive struggles going on in the U.S., and will give our support in the form of participation in demonstrations, meetings and other activities. We urge people to draw the connections between Indochina and the political struggles you are involved in. But the linking up of struggles must occur in practice, and it is on that basis that we can build a meaningful unity.

Indochina IS NOT A SINGLE ISSUE separate from other political struggles within the U.S., or from those in other parts of the world. People around the world who are oppressed, exploited or under direct attack share a common enemy: U.S. IMPERIALISM.

Our Movement grew, to a large extent, out of the war. Because of the consciousness that was developed through the sixties, U.S. Imperialism will not be able to fight Limited Wars with thousands of GI's as readily as it once did. We were all part of the process that defeated that warfare, and there is no reason why we can't be part of the process that will make this new type of warfare impossible.

The Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian people fighting against U.S. aggression have helped many of us in the United States to understand the real nature of the system of Imperialism. They have also provided us with a heroic example and inspired us to feel that victory, even against such a powerful enemy, is possible. We need to continue the work we began. The struggle against U.S. Imperialism in Indochina is a part of OUR history, a part we should not and cannot deny.

IT IS TIME TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE!
DEFEND THE VIETNAM AND LAOS PEACE AGREEMENTS!
CUT ALL AID TO THIEU AND LON NOL!

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CONFERENCE ON VIETNAM

Organized by the Association of Vietnamese Patriots in Canada
In Montréal, from June 7 to 9, 1974

1 - FRIDAY NIGHT, JUNE 7, 1974

-Opening session: speakers from antiwar organizations and members of the AVPC. Time and place to be determined.

2- SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1974

During the day, main workshops on VN focusing on these following topics:

- a-The Paris Agreement on VN: its legal aspects—Canada and the diplomatic recognition of the PRG:
- b-The present strategy of the US in Viet Nam.
- c-The third force in South Viet Nam and the question of political prisoners.
- d-The present situation in Viet Nam.
- e-The Peoples's National Democratic Revolution and the building of the liberated zones in South Viet Nam.

On Saturday night, a cultural night in Solidarity with the participation of North American artists together with the artistic troupes of the AVPC.

3-SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 1974: Closing sessions—resolution—Discussions and friendship meetings.

CORRECTION!!!

The caption under the picture on page 7, bottom left should read PRG HEADQUARTER'S AT TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT, NOT LOC NINH.

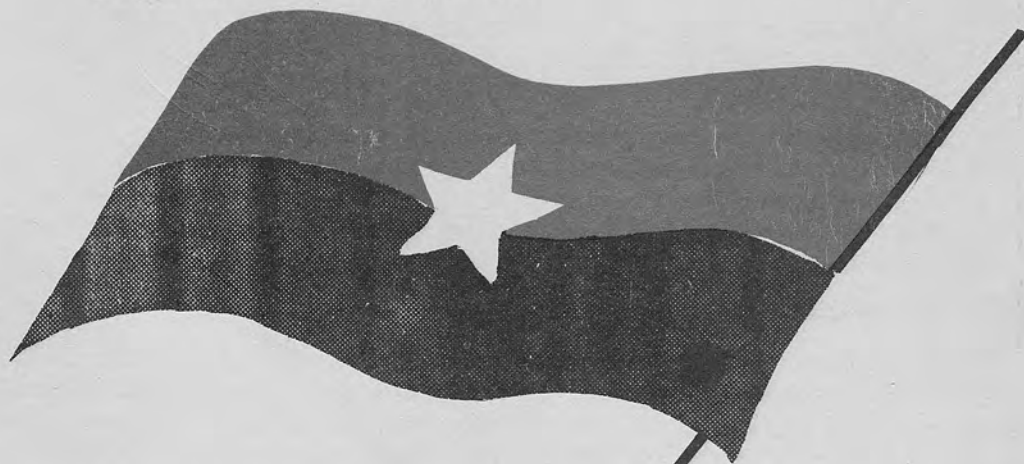
INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

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Vol. II, No. 2

NEWSLETTER

June 24, 1974



5th ANNIVERSARY OF THE

PRG

JUNE 6-8, 1969

PROVISIONAL
REVOLUTIONARY
GOVERNMENT
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF
SOUTH VIETNAM



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WHO IS THE PRG?

During the past decade, many Americans opposed U.S. involvement in Indochina. But with the signing of the Peace Agreement and the return of U.S. troops and POW's, the American people have been lulled by Nixon and Kissinger into believing that the war in Vietnam is over.

Yet the war-- and the Vietnamese struggle for freedom and independence-- continues. The U.S. still funds and arms its puppet, Thieu; Saigon jails hold 200,000 political prisoners; and both the U.S. and Thieu flagrantly violate the Paris Peace Agreement.

Under these circumstances, we must continue to oppose U.S. intervention, and continue to show our support and solidarity with the people of Vietnam. In particular, we must learn more about the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG)-- the leading force of the South Vietnamese people in their resistance against U.S. neo-colonialism.

BACKGROUND

In 1954 the French attempt to regain control of their Indochina colonies was defeated by the nationalist movement in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and the Geneva Accords were signed. In Vietnam, the Viet Minh forces were to regroup north of the 17th parallel, and the French south of this line, which was designated "temporary" and "provisional" by the Accords. National elections to settle the issue of reunification were scheduled for July, 1956; all foreign interference in Vietnamese affairs was prohibited.

But the French withdrew before insuring the implementation of the Geneva Accords. The United States (which had promised not violate the Agreements) moved directly into South Vietnam, installing a puppet regime under Ngo Dinh Diem, a catholic protege of Cardinal Spellman, and refused to hold general elections to reunify the country.

To guarantee a regime friendly to U.S. aims and business interests, the U.S. knew it was necessary to prevent free elections and back Diem. As President Eisenhower observed in his memoirs, at least 80% of the Vietnamese people would have voted for Ho Chi Minh in a free election. Diem had little support, and in order to stay in power he had to resort to widespread terrorism, repression, and execution of his political opponents.



Diem with one of his U.S. masters, Cardinal Spellman.

FROM THE NLF TO THE PRG

By 1960, the struggle of the South Vietnamese people against the U.S. and Diem regime had developed to the point where a national resistance organization was both imperative and politically feasible. On December 20, the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation (NLF) was formed, uniting the many opposition resistance groups. Among these were former resistance fighters, religious groups, worker and peasant associations, national minority groups, and student and intellectual groups.

The NLF did not call itself a government, but it did carry out governmental functions in the territory it controlled, called the *Liberated Zones*. The Front put forth a program to defeat the U.S.'s political, economic and cultural domination over Vietnam, to restore the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, and to reunify the country. Their program also included revolutionary social changes such as land reform, the establishment of democratic liberties, equality for women, and provisions of medical care and literacy classes for the people. In addition, the NLF developed formal contacts in the international diplomatic community.

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Under the leadership of the NLF, the Vietnamese people fought off the largest and most sophisticated military machine ever assembled. The defeat of the American and ARVN (Saigon's army) forces was made clear to the whole world by the NLF's Tet offensive in early 1968. Attacks were launched in every province and in over 70 cities, penetrating the heart of Saigon itself.

By 1969, the U.S. had been forced into a totally defensive position: trying to maintain a foothold, while gradually withdrawing its troops. At the same time, American planes intensified the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN)- North Vietnam. Nevertheless, the U.S. was forced to begin negotiations with both the NLF and the DRVN in January, 1969.



Scene from 1968 Tet Offensive

During the Tet Offensive, the Alliance of National Democratic and Peace Forces (ANDPF) was formed in the cities of the south. It brought together people who had not joined the NLF, but were opposed to the U.S. and Saigon regime. Due to the combined victories of the NLF and ANDPF, many new areas were liberated and people's self-governing committees were established. This created the need for a revolutionary government which could better represent the interests and fulfill the needs of the people.

THE PRG-RSVN

On June 9, 1969, a nation-wide Congress of People's Representatives, called by the NLF and ANDPF, formed the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG). From its beginning, the PRG was intended as a transitional form. It was not put forward as the "sole" government in the South, but rather as a "provisional" step toward a coalition government capable of reconciling the contending forces.

In governing the Liberated Zones, the PRG established programs for health, education, culture, and agricultural and industrial development. It continued to lead and unify the military and political struggle against U.S. Imperialism and the Saigon regime. At the same time, it was represented at the Paris Peace Negotiations and established diplomatic relations with other countries.

STRUCTURE OF THE PRG

In order to accomplish its goals, a decentralized form of governing was established by the PRG. Administrative Councils were set up at the village level. Their primary task was to rehabilitate agriculture, and set up schools and hospital clinics. At the province, district and village level, People's Revolutionary Committees are elected by the people. These Committees represented peasants, women, Buddhists, Catholics, youth, workers, small traders and other local groups.



"The PRG leadership was of the people, for the people. They had to be, for they were entirely dependent on the people for vital information, for protection, even for food. The policies they followed in an area once it was liberated reinforced their identification with the common people." (T.S. George, regional Editor of the conservative, Far Eastern Economic Review, after a visit to the Liberated Zones in July, 1973)

PROGRAM OF THE PRG

Vietnam is an agrarian society with a 90% peasant population. Throughout the war, the U.S. and Saigon forced hundreds of thousands of peasants off their land and into concentration camps in and around cities controlled by the Saigon regime. But U.S. efforts to destroy the ties between the people and their land, and create an urban and Americanized culture in Vietnam failed. The Vietnamese revolution- led by the NLF and later the PRG- continued to be mainly an effort to give control of the land to the peasantry.

In the rural areas governed by the PRG, they have continued to carry out agrarian reform based on the NLF's "Land to the Tiller" program. It means that the land belongs to those who work it, and not to those who live in far off countries, or to Landlords who live in the big cities.

Unlike Thieu, who continues to destroy and steal the people's land, the PRG has defended the people's right to their land. Up to the present, nearly 5 million acres of land have been distributed to the people by the PRG. It is precisely programs such as "Land to the Tiller" which have won the widespread support of the people .

The PRG continues to give the greatest attention to the well-being of the people and improvement of living conditions in the Liberated Zones. A delegation from the Swedish Committee for Vietnam which visited the Liberated Zones in January, 1974, reported:

"The delegation saw a well organized administration functioning with popular support. There are no traces of famine. Children look healthy and full of vitality, the food distribution system seems efficient.

"They have established shops and markets and there is a large number of small traders so that every village, even remote ones, is supplied. Along the roads one can see many small traders selling fruits, vegetables, chickens, piglets, etc."

The PRG guarantees the human and democratic rights of the people, and elections are held on a regular basis. Unity and equality among the national minorities is guaranteed, and well as freedom of belief and religion. National minorities have retained the use of their language, culture and money, as well as the right to maintain their customs and habits.



FARMERS AND SOLDIERS dredge an irrigation ditch in Quang Tri province in October, 1973. (photo: Ngoc Dan, Giai Phong Agency)

The PRG also guarantees the equality of the sexes. Women work the land, are village chiefs, electrical engineers, mechanics, teachers and mothers; they also serve in the armed forces. The following statistics show the development of women in the South:

- 30% of the high ranking officials in the PRG are women
- Two-thirds of the production forces in the Liberated Zones are women.
- The Deputy Commander of the People's Liberation Armed Forces is a woman, Nguyen Thi Dinh
- The PRG is the only gov't in the world with a women as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. She is Nguyen Thi Binh.

THE PRG AND THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT

With the PRG's 1972 offensive, Nixon's "Vietnamization" of the war was defeated, and the U.S. was forced to sign the Peace Agreement.

The PRG sees the signing of the Paris Agreement as a tremendous victory and the fruit of a long and difficult struggle. The Agreement embodies the very essence of the PRG program and is an important step towards the realization of its goals: to allow the South Vietnamese people to determine their own future and to reunify Vietnam as one country.. In fact, the (original) NLF ten-point program of 1960 has remained completely intact within the Agreement; and the wording is almost verbatim from the PRG Seven Point Peace plan of 1971 and selected sections of the Geneva Accords.

The Paris Peace Agreement forced the U.S. and Thieu to officially recognize the PRG as an equal political force in the south. It summarizes the current reality in the south: that there are two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces. These three tendencies (the PRG, Saigon and the neutralists or Third Force) are to form a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, which will lead to general elections and the formation of a coalition government.

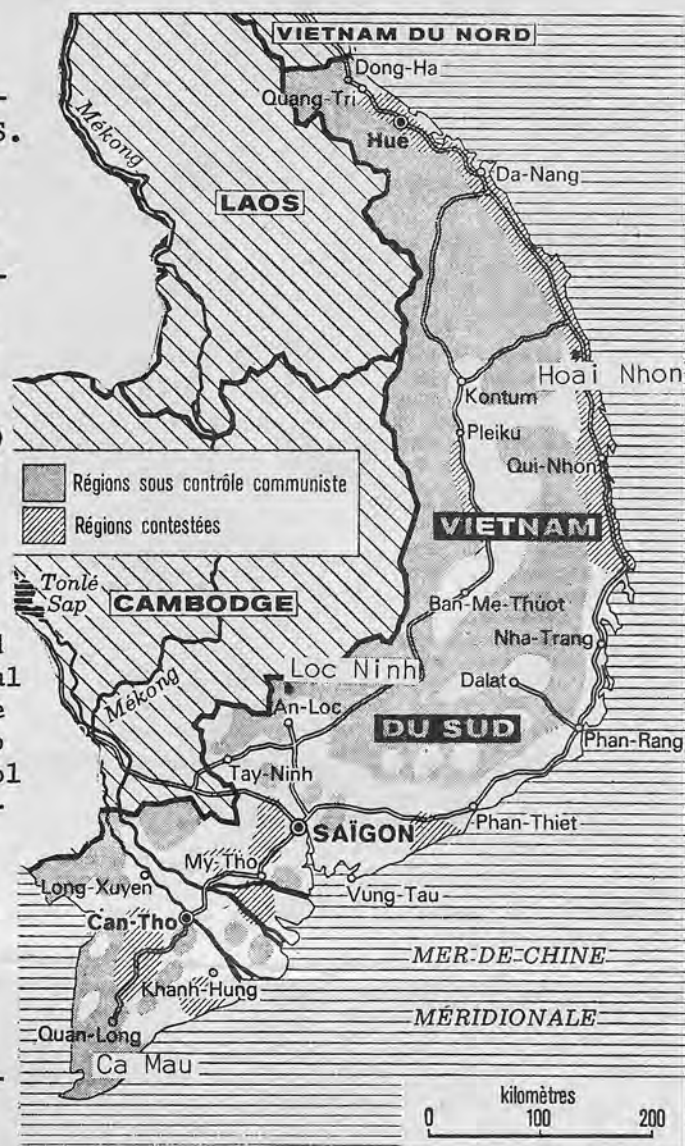
If implemented, the Agreement would have brought Peace to South Vietnam. But the U.S. and Thieu never accepted the terms of the Agreement, and they continue to pursue a military policy bent on destroying the PRG. As the NY Times reported, "*President Thieu has never had any real interest in engaging in the complex, high risk 'political struggle' suggested by the Paris Agreement.*" (J. Markham, 11/1/73)

Despite increasing attacks against them, the PRG has advanced on all fronts- military, political and diplomatic. The PRG has successfully consolidated and defended the areas under its control, while life in the Liberated Zones improves with each passing day.

Internationally, diplomatic corps from 11 countries have presented their credentials to the PRG in the Liberated Zones. It is recognized by nearly 40 countries, and was unanimously voted as the sole representative of the South Vietnamese people at the Conference of 76 Non-aligned Nations held in Algiers, on Sept. 5-9, 1973

In a period when wars of national liberation are the major force fighting imperialism and neo-colonialism, it is vitally important for people to understand and support those leading the struggle. It is in this context that the PRG takes on an even broader significance.

The Vietnamese people, behind the PRG, have shown the world that a small and 'under-developed' nation can fight against U.S. Imperialism and win! Their understanding of the struggle as a step by step process, which carefully combines military with political struggle, is a model for others fighting for their freedom and independence; their courage, patience and determination a source of inspiration; and their victory a victory for progressive people throughout the world.



THIS MAP from *Le Monde*, Jan. 30, 1974, shows the approximate areas of administration of the P.R.G. (grey) and the Thieu government (white). Contested areas are indicated by the cross-hatches.

An interview with



**President
Nguyen Huu Tho**

On April 6, 1974 President Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the NFL and Chairman of the Advisory Council of the PRG granted an interview to a correspondent of the Italian newspaper UNITA. Following is a large excerpt of the interview.

FROM VIETNAM REPORT

Question : *The situation in South Viet Nam remains grave and complex due to the continual violation of the Paris Agreement by the Thieu administration, abetted by the U.S. What is the exact situation at present and what are the prospects for a solution to the South Viet Nam issue?*

Answer : The present situation in South Viet Nam is characterized by the following:

- intense armed conflicts are going on in many places,

- hundreds of thousands of civilian and military detainees continue to be kept in prison by the Saigon administration which refuses to return them to us,

- all democratic liberties are trampled underfoot in the towns. This situation amply proves that the Paris Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam has been seriously sabotaged by Saigon in a systematic and overall manner. It also shows that the US has interfered more and more deeply in our internal affairs. This involvement can be seen not only in the maintenance and massive introduction of tens of thousands of military advisors, by the maintenance of a military command of the US called S.A.A.F.O. (Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Field Operations) and D.A.O. (Defense Attaché Office), by the surreptitious introduction of large quantities of munitions, aircraft, war vessels and other war materials of the US into South Viet Nam; but also by the continuation of the US scheme to prolong the partition of our country

and perpetuate neo-colonialism under the US occupationist yoke. That is the root cause of the present grave situation in our country.

Once again, to resolve this situation, the Provisional Revolutionary Government has proved its good faith by putting forward in its statement of March 22, 1974 six measures aimed at restoring peace, achieving reconciliation and national concord in South Viet Nam. These are:

- 1-to immediately effect the ceasefire and strictly observe it throughout South Viet Nam,

- 2-to return all civilian and military personnel captured and put in jail before and after January 28, 1973, not later than June 30, 1974,

- 3-to immediately and fully ensure the democratic liberties of the people,

- 4-to form a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, not later than three months after the ceasefire becomes effective,

- 5-to organize general elections not later than one year after the formation of the Council,

- 6-to resolve the question of the armed forces in South Viet Nam in the spirit of reconciliation and national concord, on the basis of equality and mutual respect, without foreign interference and in conformity with the post-war situation.

Of these six points, the first three are particularly imperative.

The fundamental condition for achieving peace, reconciliation and national concord in South Viet Nam is that the US end all its military involvement and all its intervention in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam, and stop using the Saigon administration to carry out its neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. The Saigon administration must renounce its policy of war and its acts of sabotage against the agreement and against peace. It must seriously and positively respond to the constructive proposals of the PRG contained in the March 22, 1974 statement.

If Washington and Saigon stubbornly pursue their policy of sabotaging the Paris Agreement and peace, they must bear the entire responsibility for the consequences of their acts and schemes.

Question : *How long has the liberated zone existed under the control of the PRG? How is the life there? What are the economic and social problems? How do you resolve these problems?*

Answer : For many years, the NFL and the PRG have controlled a vast liberated zone stretching from the Ben Hai River in the North to the Ca Mau Cape in the South. In this zone, people are masters of their own destiny and have elected their own representatives in different levels of the revolutionary power.

Following the line charted by the political program of the NFL and the 12 Point Program of Action of the PRG, the people of South Viet Nam devote all their strength and energy to the building of the liberated zone in all fields in order to improve, step by step, the living standard of the people and to carry out their revolutionary cause.

The US war of aggression has left grave consequences in all aspects: economic, cultural and social. However, after only one year of devoted efforts to heal the wounds of war, while at the same time opposing Saigon's "nibbling" and pacification operations, we have achieved radical

changes in the zone under the control of the PRG. Production has been intensified, especially in agriculture, handicrafts and small industry. At the same time, great attention has been paid to health, education and culture which have been developed continually. These are only initial successes. However, they have made a noteworthy change in the way of life in the PRG-controlled zone, especially when compared to the miserable life to which the Saigon regime has condemned the population under its control, where there are many social problems caused by the "Americanization" process carried out by the neo-colonialist regime.

In order to improve the living conditions of the people still further and to consolidate the liberated zone in all aspects, the people, the NFL and the PRG now devote themselves to the following tasks:

- to build a truly rational and democratic political regime, free from foreign domination, and to ensure the implementation of the people's right to self-determination,

- to proceed quickly to the restoration and development of production by receiving material aid and support from fraternal countries in order to heal the wounds of war, to stabilize and improve the living conditions of the people and strive to build an independent and prosperous country,

- to promote a national, democratic and progressive education and culture; to develop science and technology; to develop the medical sector in order to provide the people with the medical care they need,

- to establish normal relations between South and North Viet Nam, as a step toward the peaceful reunification of the country.

The building and consolidation of the liberated zone constitute a strategic task not only during the war but also during the present stage of the revolution. This will serve to quickly change the balance of forces in South Viet Nam and to force Washington and Saigon to strictly observe the Paris Accord on Viet Nam. It will lay out the basis for a new truly national and democratic regime and will help to advance the revolutionary cause.

Question : What are the political and social groups associated with the NFL? What is the relationship between different components and those between the NFL, the Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces, and the third force?

Answer : The NFL encompasses numerous political and social parties and organizations as well as numerous religious and ethnic groups such as:

- The People's Revolutionary Party, of Marxists,
- The Democratic Party of South Viet Nam, which is the party of the petty-bourgeoisie, intellectuals and the national bourgeoisie,
- The Radical Socialist Party, which is made up of intellectuals,
- Association of Peasants for Liberation,
- Women's Union for Liberation,
- Youth Federation for Liberation,
- Association of Writers and Artists for Liberation,
- Association of Patriotic and Democratic Journalists,
- Association of Patriotic School Teachers,
- Movement for the Autonomy of the Tay Nguyen Nationality (Central Highlands),
- Representatives of Buddhism, Catholicism, Cao-daiism and of the Hoa Hao Sect, etc.

The relationships existing among the different members of the NFL are those of equality, fraternal unity and close cooperation. They discuss, in a democratic way, all problems resulting from the resistance against the US war of aggression, for national salvation, just as they now discuss the problems met in the struggle for strict implementation of the Paris Agreement. They undertake common actions and work together for the realization of the common goals of the South Vietnamese revolution.

The NFL led the common action together with the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces (ANDPF), which is a political organization gathering together a great number of people from the ranks of organizations and movements in the cities of South Viet Nam. On the basis of a common political watchword--to struggle for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, for the realization of national reconciliation and concord, for the achievement of independence and democracy and for the improvement of the living conditions of the population--the NFL has made contacts which lead step by step to united actions with organizations and persons of the Third Force in the cities of South Viet Nam and abroad.

We greatly value the role of the Third Force. Our fundamental political line is to be ready for unity of action with this force and to establish a long term cooperation with it in order to struggle together for a strict and scrupulous implementation of the Paris Agreement, for the realization of peace, national reconciliation and concord, for the achievement of independence and democracy, for the improvement of the living conditions of the people and for the building of a happy and prosperous life for all. This is the deep aspiration of all strata of the South Vietnamese population ▲





In recent months efforts mounted in the U.S. to cut all aid to the Thieu regime, so too did Thieu's efforts to win the "hearts and minds" of the U.S. Congress. This has meant everything from an "anti-corruption" campaign to create the impression that the regime was cleaning itself up, to raising the level of fighting to create a sense of military emergency.

The March 28th Dien Tin (Saigon Daily), quoted an authoritative official source as saying that in order to achieve its objective of "everything goes for seeking aid" the regime was going to have the heads of at least two field-grade officers involved in the gigantic smuggling ring uncovered in Long An province. This, the same source claimed, "will create a beautiful picture for Vietnam abroad, especially during the period in which the U.S. Congress will discuss the aid budget." (Thoi Bao Ga, May-June, 1974)

In addition, 19 officers were sentenced to prison terms of one to eight years for accepting bribes from "Flower soldiers". These are men who pay money to senior officers in exchange for being listed as present while they were off working at other jobs for more money. "There are estimates that 15% of South Vietnam's claimed military strength...consists of "Flower soldiers" or phantom soldiers. The latter are false names maintained on unit rosters so that the commanders can pad their payrolls." (Chicago Daily News, 6/6/74)

Over the past few months U.S. papers have been filled with reports of "Imminent communist offensives" which never seem to materialize. However, an explanation of the high level of fighting in the South has been attributed to U.S. Ambassador Graham Martin. "The current upsurge in fighting is widely thought in South Vietnam to have been ordered by Martin to justify the administration's demands for increased military assistance. It is even claimed that Martin advised President Thieu to yield up one of Saigon's isolated bases within territory held by the P.R.G. every week to convince the U.S. Congress and the public that the North Vietnamese had launched an offensive." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 5/12/74) Behind this smokescreen the bombing of the P.R.G. zones continues at a rate of over 100 sorties a day. Major aggressive manoeuvres are being carried out in the Mekong Delta west of Saigon and in the Central Highlands near Kontum. (see map) (Focal Point, June 1-15)



The People An Official Tham Nhung: Corruption

Dai Dan Toc, 5.17.74

CYT

Having failed to desuade Congress from cutting its aid budget, Thieu and his U.S. directors changed tactics. In an about face manoeuver, designed to gain the sympathy of Congress, President Thieu restored the "privileges and immunities" of the P.R.G. Joint Military Commission delegates, who had been held "prisoners" at their Tan Son Nhut airport compound. For the first time since April 16th, PRG telephones, Saturday Press Conferences, and bi-weekly flights to Loc Ninh (PRG Capitol) are happening. As a result the P.R.G. has agreed to resume the Joint Military Commission discussions in Saigon and possibly the 4 party discussions in Paris. In a statement released May 13th the PRG explained that it was "compelled to suspend sine die the Consultative Conference between the 2 parties... until the Saigon administration puts an end to all its acts of sabotage

and adopts a serious attitude in the talks so as to settle the negotiations on the basis of the Paris Agreement and the March 22nd, 6 point proposal of the P.R.G." (V.N.A., May 13, 1974) Saigon boycotted the Consultative Conference shortly after the P.R.G. presented the 6 point proposal and began massive attacks on P.R.G. Territory. Though Thieu's actions were aimed at convincing the world that it was the P.R.G. who caused the breakdown of the talks, his strategy backfired. Instead he convinced "too many diplomats that it was Saigon who was not interested in the talks." (N.Y. Times, 6/8) In addition, Thieu's treatment of the P.R.G. served to increase the people's movement for the implementation of the Agreements.

On June 6th, Thieu temporarily released from prison Tran Ngoc Chau, a "neutralist" politician. Chau was one of the many anti-Thieu forces jailed in 1970 on phony treason charges. Chau's friendly relations with Americans in Vietnam made him one of Thieu's most famous political prisoners. According to Vietnamese sources, "To release him now... when only one half of his ten year sentence has been served, might improve Thieu's image in the U.S. ... Chau's release appears to be just one of a number of orchestrated moves made recently by the Thieu government to 'create a suitable atmosphere for the aid struggle on Capitol Hill' " (Wash. Post, 6/12/74)

While Thieu concentrates his efforts on wooing U.S. Congressmen, he engages nearly 90% of the workforce in the military, and forbids the peasant refugees their right to return home to cultivate their land. As a result, the economic depression crippling Saigon reaches critical proportions. There are reports of widespread starvation and malnutrition, especially in the Central Highlands. Unemployment and inflation are rampant as prices increased another 65% last year alone. "for the first time, South Vietnam - granary of Indochina, long time exporter, rich in vegetables and fish, knows hunger. (Even) the leisure classes, principal beneficiaries of the American presence, are beginning to feel the consequences of the economic crisis." (de Beer-Le Monde, May 8-10, 1974)

, According to the Indochina Resource Center in Wash. D.C., the main cause of starvation is not a rice shortage, but rice hoarding and black marketeering by Saigon officials. Tran Van Tuyen, an opposition deputy to the Hue City council, introduced a resolution denouncing "the artificial scarcity caused by collusion between merchants and dishonest local officials." (International Bulletin, June 2, 1974)

In addition gasoline prices cost 8 times what it did last year. As a result, boats remain tied to the docks, increasing the ranks of the unemployed. The situation is further complicated by the fact that one of the major sources of currency for the Saigon government was the export of shrimp. With the fishermen unable to go out to fish, exports have dropped tremendously, nearly ten times.

As the situation becomes more desperate, so do the people. Suicide and thievery are on the rise. Among the slim ranks of Thieu supporters, demoralization is increasing. The Le Monde article quotes a Saigon resident: "They tell us that communism means hunger and dictatorship. But today, the Communists are in their forests, while we are starving and the prisons are full."

It is a safe bet that the people in the cities will not bend much further without snapping. Already some 600,000 people, mostly in Saigon, have filed applications to return to the countryside. (Wash. Post, June 3, 1974)



Children in Saigon pull bark from the trees to use as firewood because the price of gas and wood is so high.

LIFE IMPROVES IN PRG ZONE



Reaping full harvest of sugar cane in liberated South Vietnam.

In sharp contrast, the year of the fifth anniversary of the Provisional Revolutionary Government has brought prosperity and security to the liberated zones. The PRG now controls territory from Quang Tri in the North to Ca Mau in the South. To date, the cultivated land has increased to one million hectares, thousands of which are on

reclaimed land. Almost all the rubber plantations have resumed production. In fact, the liberated zones are now completely self-sufficient in rice and sugar cane, this despite the "blockade" imposed by the U.S.-Thieu regime, and despite the attacks against rice producing areas under the PRG.

"The farther I went into the Liberated zones, the more prosperity I saw." wrote an American journalist.

Unlike Thieu, the PRG has learned well that it must rely on the people to defend themselves and their land. Each advance in the liberated zone increases the potential for defending

the people's victories and moving the country towards total liberation. Health services are plentiful, efficient and free. As a result people are strong and capable of working. With more and more schools available, people are preparing to take control of their own political institutions. As one French journalist wrote, *"the people gave me the impression that they took a reasonable pride in being able to take their destiny in their own hands, in successfully resisting an enemy whose strength is universally recognized. They show calmness and kindness, individually and collectively, and also an iron-like determination ... This is a well organized society, in which politicians, civilians, and soldiers are closely united. Their life is itself a political attitude."* (Vietnam Report, June 1974)

FLASH BULLETIN *as we go to press.....*

According to a Dispatch News release, the PRG and DRVN delegations have once again cancelled the Joint Military talks in Saigon. This action was taken after a DRVN boat was sunk by the U.S.-Thieu regime, and the diplomatic "immunities and privileges" which were to have been restored the PRG delegation, continued to be suspended. The PRG delegate said that until the Saigon regime and the United States ceased "their arrogant acts of war", the talks would remain suspended.

On May 22nd, the French Government accorded the Provisional Revolutionary Government status as a Mission. This is the first such mission in a Western nation. According to Pham Van Ba, the head of the Mission, this is a positive indication that countries around the world are beginning to recognize the PRG as one of two parties in the South, as specified by the Paris Peace Agreement. (Internews, May 23, 1974)



More Aid for Indochina Than the Rest of the World Combined

ADMINISTRATION-PROPOSED FY 1975 EXPENDITURES, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE:

Indochina - \$3.7 Billion

Rest of the World - \$3.542 Billion

1. IND. POSTWAR RECONST. \$ 917 MILLION	1	1. ASIA (EXCEPT INDOCHINA) \$1.67 BILLION	1
2. FOOD FOR PEACE \$ 237.8 MILLION	1	2. MIDDLE EAST \$ 969 MILLION	1
3. MIL. ASST. SERV. FDED. \$1.6 BILLION	2	3. LATIN AMERICA \$ 592.3 MILLION	1
4. MIL. ASST. PROG. & CREDIT SALES \$ 449.8 MILLION	1	4. AFRICA \$ 293.8 MILLION	1
5. IND.-RELATED U.S. FORCES \$ 463 MILLION	3	5. EUROPE \$ 15 MILLION	1
TOTALS		\$3.668 BILLION	\$3.542 BILLION

SOURCES

- 1 - AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT - FISCAL YEAR 1975 SUBMISSION TO THE CONGRESS - SUMMARY - APRIL, 1974. Chart entitled "Bilateral U.S. Economic Assistance, Military Assistance and Credit Sales - Programs Proposed for FY 1975", pp. 7,8,9.
- 2 - Letter from Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Senator Kennedy, Congressional Record, S 4884, April 1, 1974. Of this \$1.6 billion, \$1.45 billion is in new obligational authority, \$150 million in pipeline.
- 3 - This figure was supplied to the Indochina Resource Center from the DOD comptroller's office on April 29, 1974, and defined as "incremental Southeast Asia costs for the support of U.S. forces related to the phase down of the Indochina conflict."

Note - Administration Chart shows:

Indochina: 46.6% of Total U.S. Aid

Only 0.8% of World Population

The official Administration chart for FY 75 world-wide military and economic aid expenditures, referred to in Source 1 above, shows Indochina as consuming 46.6% of the Administration's proposed expenditures as designated per region. This is because the \$3,090,819,000 figure for Indochina does not include the \$463 in incremental costs for U.S. forces, and only gives \$1.45 billion - the new obligational authority - as the cost for MASF, instead of the proposed \$1.6 billion ceiling. Using this particular chart, we may make the following breakdown:

	(INDOCHINA)-ASIA.	M.EAST	LAT.AM.	AFRICA	EUROPE	TOTAL	WORLD-TOTAL
(1000s OF \$)	(3,090,819)-4,762,069	969,050	592,360	293,753	15,053	\$6,632,231	\$7,459,599*
% OF TOTAL	(46.6%) 71.8%	14.6%	8.9%	4.4%	0.2%	100%	
POPULATION**	(28.7 M.)***2 billion	102.1 M.	195 M.	354 M.	466 M.	3.12 Billion	3,706,000,000
% OF WORLD	(0.8%) 54%	2.8%	5.3%	10%	13%	85.1%	

*This \$7,459,599,000 figure for total proposed economic and military aid includes \$827,368,000 for "other" world-wide expenses, including AID and State Dept. admin costs, ocean freight, etc.

** Source for these population figures is the Information Please Almanac, 1974, pp.319-320,371

*** "Indochina" Population figures include only South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the only areas in Indochina to which the Administration proposes giving aid.

War Expenditures 88% of Total by Administration's Own Admission -- Only 5% for "Humanitarian" Goals

FY 1975 INDOCHINA AID PROPOSED: \$3.668 BILLION TOTAL

(Programs in quotation marks below as given by Administration)

I. MILITARY EXPENDITURES	\$2.513 BILLION	69%
1. South Vietnam: "Military Assistance Service Funded"	\$1.6 billion	
2. Cambodia: "Military Assistance Program"	\$ 363.75 million	
3. Laos: "Military Assistance Program"	\$ 86.1 million	
4. "Incremental cost of U.S. Forces"	\$ 463 million	
II. WAR-RELATED "ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE"	\$714.9 MILLION	19%
1. South Vietnam		
a. "Food For Peace"	\$160.6 million	
b. "Food and Nutrition"	\$185 million	
c. "Industrial Production"	\$155 million	
d. "Transportation and Misc."	\$ 47.3 million	
2. Cambodia		
a. "Food for Peace"	\$ 77 million	
b. "Commodity Import Program"	\$ 71 million	
c. "Multilateral Stabilization"	\$ 17.5 million	
d. "Technical Support"	\$ 1.5 million	
III. RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT	\$267.6 MILLION	7%
1. South Vietnam - "Reconstruction and Development"	\$227.2 million	
2. Cambodia - "Reconstruction and Development"	\$0	
3. Laos		
a. "Reconstruction and Development"	\$ 22.4 million	
b. "Stabilization"	\$ 17.5 million	
IV. HUMANITARIAN	\$172.4 MILLION	5%
1. South Vietnam - "Humanitarian Assistance"	\$136 million	
2. Cambodia - "Humanitarian Aid"	\$ 20 million	
3. Laos		
a. "Humanitarian Aid"	\$ 16.2 million	
b. "Food for Peace"	\$253,000	

SOURCES

- All program titles in quotation marks are taken from the official Agency For International Development Fiscal Year 1975 submission to Congress for Indochina, see pages 5 (Vietnam), 51 (Cambodia), and 59 (Laos) for program breakdown.
- Military Assistance and Food For Peace figures taken from the Agency for International Development FY 1975 submission to Congress - Summary - April 1974, pages 7,8, and 9.

NOTE: IN REALITY ONLY 2% OF ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSAL FOR "HUMANITARIAN" OR "RECONSTRUCTION" NEEDS

1. "Reconstruction and Development" - Covertly war-related

Since fierce war rages in South Vietnam, the Indochina Resource Center does not believe that any of the funds designated as "reconstruction and development" for South Vietnam will actually go for that purpose. We would only consider the \$39.9 million designated for Laos as fitting this description.

2. "Humanitarian" - Covertly War-related

Most of the "humanitarian" funds designated for South Vietnam and Laos are meant to aid in a war-related program designed to keep refugees away from the other side. This includes \$116.5 million out of \$135 million in South Vietnam (\$30 m. for "City to Farm", \$86.5 for "Refugee Relief", and all \$20 million in Cambodia. Therefore, the only truly humanitarian aid we consider is \$33.8 million, (\$15.3 million for Laos, \$10.3 million for Health Care in South Vietnam, and \$8.2 million for Child Care in South Vietnam.)

CAMBODIA



Strikes and demonstrations rocked the capital city of Phnom Penh, as the Cambodian people inside the cities continued to mount fierce resistance to the U.S.-supported Lon Nol regime.

Because of the massive strikes and demonstrations by workers, students and teachers during the months of March and April (see last 2 Newsletters), on May 14 Lon Nol passed a new law prohibiting meetings or gatherings of 5 or more people. Outraged by this new fascist measure, more than 50,000 students and teachers held demonstrations on the next day, and occupied 27 high schools and universities in Phnom Penh and some of the provincial capitals, declaring their determination to overthrow the Lon Nol government. (*Hsinhua*, 6/9/74) The demonstrators demanded a return to democracy, the distribution of rice to the people, an end to government corruption, rising prices and forced conscription. They also demanded an end to U.S. intervention in Cambodia. "As the marchers passed the villa occupied by the former U.S. charge d'affaires, students with loud speakers shouted 'American Imperialists are responsible for everything that is going on in Cambodia.'" (*Washington Post*, 6/1/74)

Panic-stricken, on May 26 Lon Nol arrested hundreds of students and teachers, many of whom he said would be brought to trial before "military courts". But the demonstrations continued to grow. On June 1, the protestors were joined by 400 officers and soldiers of the Phnom Penh army, who demanded the release of the arrested students.

STUDENTS FIGHT BACK

On June 4, 1,500 students marched to the office of the Minister of Education, Keo Sanghim, and forced him and his deputy, Thach Chia, to go back to one of the local high schools with them. The protestors demanded the release of 15 students and 4 teachers in return for the 2 Phnom Penh officials. When specially-trained riot police attempted to storm the school, they were driven back with rocks, bottles and sticks. A few minutes later, they attacked again, this time with M-16's blazing. When the shooting stopped, both Phnom Penh officials and 2 students lay dead. More than 50 students were wounded. Wielding rocks and clubs, the students broke through police lines and into the street. Hundreds of students were arrested, as riot police and troops scoured the area, searching homes and shooting wildly into buildings. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3/10/74) All schools were closed down indefinitely.



There were conflicting reports as to who killed Keo Sanghim and his deputy, Thach Chia. Lon Nol officials claimed that it was the work of "Communist infiltrators"; an American teacher, Steve Heder, said it was the work of a lone gunman dressed in black, who shot them with a .45 at short range. (*Wash. Post*, 6/10/74) But 4 other Western witnesses, along with 20 Cambodian students were on the balcony where the hostages were being held and saw no such gunman. Like Attica, and other such massacres, it is not difficult to figure out who did the killing, and what their reasons were. The ruling circles have never hesitated to sacrifice a few of their own in order to preserve the 'status quo'.

While the demonstrations have stopped for the time being, according to one protestor, "If they do not release the jailed students, there will be more demonstrations." (*Washington Post*, 6/9/74)

'MUSICAL CHAIRS'

On June 4, the same day as the shootings, 4 Ministers of the 16-member Cabinet in Phnom Penh resigned. Three days later, 4 more resigned, and 41 members of the National Assembly issued a resolution asking Prime Minister, Long Boret, why he could not solve the problem of inflation, corruption, the military setbacks, and to explain his mishandling of the crisis with the discontented students. When he could not give them any answers, they asked him to resign, and he did. But he was immediately ordered back to his post by his boss, Lon Nol, and told to 'reshuffle' his cabinet. This common occurrence in Phnom Penh has been referred to by Foreign diplomats as "musical chairs". (NY Times, 6/12/74)

PHNOM PENH IN CHAOS

The current wave of protests is indicative of the deepening economic and military crisis in the Phnom Penh zones. Inflation sent prices up by nearly 300% last year, and 123% more in the first 4 months of this year. (Kampuchea Information Agency-Aki, 5/13/74) While price rises are breaking world records, the personal income of working people has dropped 50% in the past year. (NY Times, 6/9/74)

Even though the U.S. sent Lon Nol 225,000 tons of rice so far this year (Lon Nol has a little more than 2 million people under his control), people are literally starving to death because of rice hoarding by businessmen and officers in the Lon Nol army. According to one U.S. official, "If the U.S. sent as much rice to India, that country's famine problem would be over." (Wash. Post, 6/9/74)

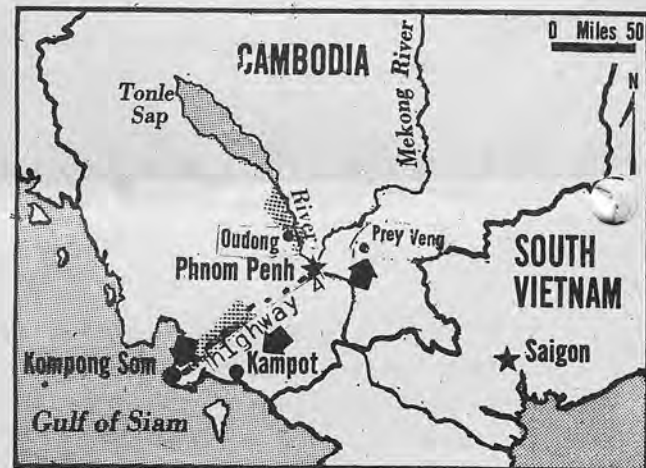
One of the major reasons for the deteriorating economy is the worsening military situation. During the first 3 years of the war, The Cambodian People's Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLF) had only sporadically cut or controlled the major highways leading into Phnom Penh. "The insurgents [CPNLF] have now severed thoroughly, and some believe permanently, Phnom Penh's highway links to the ports and agricultural areas; few military men think they will ever be opened." (NY Times, 6/19/74)

After cutting the highways and periodically shelling the capital, the CPNLF switched their attacks to the provincial capitals, dispersing Lon Nol's forces and causing severe casualties. In May, the Liberation Forces began a concerted drive on the country's only deepwater seaport, Kompong Som (Sihanoukville). The FUNK forces have now moved to within 1 mile of the city, and the city's airport has been shut down. The U.S. has been rushing tons of supplies and ammunition to the town's defenders. But to avoid losing planes, the drops are made from 5,000 feet. As a result, at least 50% of the supplies are falling into the hands of the CPNLF. (NY Times, 6/19/74) According to one Phnom Penh officer, "The enemy is better equipped with American material than we are!" (International Bulletin, 6/14/74)

U.S. RUNNING THE SHOW

As the overall situation in Cambodia deteriorates, direct U.S. intervention escalates. With the loss of Oudong, the Tonle Sap river, Highway's 1,4 and 5 and the growing threat to the provincial capitals, "U.S. Officers have been sent to take direct command of the puppet troops and U.S. air officers to fly planes in field operations." (Hsinhua, 5/17/74)

To direct the U.S. effort, John Gunther Dean, a former U.S. 'diplomat' in Laos, was



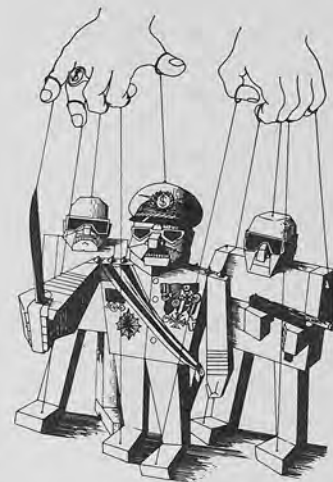
- ◆ Provincial capitals under siege
- ▨ Recently Liberated by CPNLF

sent in as the new American Ambassador. "John Gunther Dean, has in two months made it absolutely clear to Cambodians and foreigners alike in Phnom Penh that he is, in effect, running the country.

"The government of Lon Nol and Prime Minister Long Boret make no major decisions without consulting Dean." (Washington Post, 6/6/74)

Besides pulling the strings of Lon Nol and the other U.S. puppets in Phnom Penh, "he has been known to fly to besieged government enclaves where he prods military commanders into starting attacks that had not occurred to them... This may not fit the image of a United States disengaged from Indochina, but then the image does not fit the reality." (NY Times, 6/17)

While the war in Cambodia is continuously described as a "Civil war" in newspapers and on the six o'clock evening news, we cannot fall into the trap of thinking that the U.S. is only playing a secondary or supportive role. As progressive people inside the U.S., we cannot shirk our responsibility to expose this different type of warfare the U.S. is using to pursue the same old objectives: a Cambodia that is part of the 'free world orbit'; a U.S. neo-colony and military base in Southeast Asia. As anti-imperialists, we must continue to demonstrate our solidarity and support the right of the Cambodian people and nation to be free and independent.



Laos



Since the formation of the coalition government in Laos on April 5, the Lao Patriotic Front (Pathet Lao) have shown increasing popularity and political strength.

"The Patriotic Front appeals to many Laotians as a pure and uncorrupted force while breathtaking corruption on the Vientiane side has thoroughly discredited it." (Washington Post, 6/3/74)

Another correspondent noted:

"The Pathet Lao is already running the country. All the initiative is coming from their side." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 6/3/74)

Several proposals put forth by the Pathet Lao either before the new Provisional Government of National Union (PGNU) or the National Political Consultative Council (NPCC) have already been adopted. One of the recommendations adopted by the NPCC, which is headed by Pathet Lao leader, Prince Souphannouvong, calls for the U.S. to pay for all the war damages it caused; another calls for support to all National Liberation movements in Indochina, Southeast Asia and around the world.

The right-wing, seeing their power wither away, attempted to open Vientiane's 'National Assembly'. But the coalition government voted against it. This was an important victory for the Pathet Lao and the new government, as the present members of the 'national assembly' represent only the rich and right-wing in the Vientiane-controlled zones. The vote also eliminated the 'national assembly' as a policy-making institution, and reaffirmed the authority of the PGNU and NPCC.

Economically, Laos faces the huge tasks of rebuilding their war-torn country, and building a national economy free of foreign domination and corruption.

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Plans are currently being proposed to build a railway (the nation's first) from Thakhek connecting with railways in North Vietnam leading to the port city of Vinh. Another plan is to build a road from Thakhek to Danang in South Vietnam. Both of these routes would give land-locked Laos a shorter access to the sea, and break Thailand's virtual monopoly over Laos' foreign trade. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/10/74)

Corruption is another major problem facing Laos. But since the formation of the coalition government, "the Vientiane cop on the beat feels shy these days about picking up his usual bribes with a scowling Pathet Lao looking over his shoulder." (*Wash. Post*, 6/3/74) "It can well be said that the days are gone when a general on-the-make could dip into the dollars kindly [sic] provided by the U.S. to buy a Mercedes." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/3/74)

Despite the initial successes, many important provisions of the Vientiane Peace Agreement have yet to be implemented. There have been rumors throughout Laos that "the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency is conspiring with Laotian rightists to sabotage the new coalition government." (*Wash. Post*, 6/17/74) This same *Washington Post* correspondent reported from Thailand that T-28's piloted by Laotians and Cambodians were practising bombing raids, and that these servicemen were being trained by U.S. advisors. (It should be remembered that the rightists who attempted the coup in Laos last August used T-28's to bomb the Vientiane airport)



Even though the June 4 deadline for the removal of all foreign troops from Laos has passed, a spokesman for the Pathet Lao has reported that U.S. and Thai military personnel "had simply been camouflaged and not withdrawn", and that they had been integrated into the Vientiane army. (*NY Times*, 6/14/74) In addition, the U.S. has continued its reconnaissance flights over Pathet Lao territory (*Lao News*, 5/22/74)



Even though the chances of a successful right-wing coup are slim because of the relative strength of the Patriotic Forces, the U.S. has no intention of abandoning its interests and intervention in Laos. We must continue to demand that the U.S. implement the Peace Agreement, get out of Laos completely, and allow the Laotian people to determine their own future without foreign interference.

IN DEFENCE OF PEACE - A LAOTIAN POEM

Shoulder to shoulder,
In a common effort,
Our people fight unflinchingly
To safeguard peace,
To reunify the Fatherland,
To achieve complete independence
and freedom,
And to bring enchantment and fervor
To the whole country.

Fearing no difficulties and hardships,
We are resolved
To carry out anti-U.S. fight
Through to the end.
Laos belongs to the Laotian people
No aggressor can invade it unpunished.
To earn their right to live
Our people are resolved
To fight and defeat their enemy.

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Dear Friends,

Would you please fill out the questionnaire below. We are very interested in finding out how useful the Newsletter is to you. In addition, because of skyrocketing costs, our ability to continue subsidizing the Newsletter entirely, is rapidly diminishing. We have sent out urgent pleas for money, but only a few people responded, and that isn't enough. Though we thank those of you who did.

This Newsletter alone cost us about \$300. Roughly that comes down to about 25¢ a piece. If we were to pass the cost on to you on a yearly basis it would be around \$2.50. That's not much for someone interested in Indochina, but it is an unbearable burden for us. We are not asking for a subscription rate now, but rather for a contribution.

If you wish to continue (or start) receiving the Newsletter fill out the form and mail it to us immediately.

Thanks, ISC

[Please PRINT Clearly]

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE() _____

1. WHY DO YOU RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER?

- Because I am interested in the current situation in Indochina.
 Because I am interested in your film showings.
 Because I am interested in other events listed in the Newsletter.
Other- please explain

2. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER?

- Continuously over the past year. The last 5-8 months.
 The last 2-4 months. This is my first Newsletter

3. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE NEWSLETTER?

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Other, please explain.

4. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEWSLETTER THAT ISN'T THERE ALREADY?

5. DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS AS TO FORM, AND READABILITY OF THE NEWSLETTER?

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7. IF YOU FIND THE NEWSLETTER HELPFUL, PLEASE LET US KNOW THAT TOO, A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT WON'T HURT A BIT.

We will be having a fund-raising Rummage Sale the first week in Sept. If you have anything you'd like to contribute to help us raise money, bring it to the Wash. Sq. Church at 135 W. 4th St. in New York. For more information call us - (212) 982-7162.



INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

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NEWSLETTER

August 10, 1974



FREE THE 200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM!

From the beginning of its involvement in South Vietnam, the cornerstone of U.S. policy has been control of the population. Their aim was to halt the resistance by wiping out members of the NLF and PRG, jailing all political opponents- real or supposed, terrorizing the population and forcing the Saigon regime upon the people. To this end, a whole apparatus of repression, a whole network of prisons and concentration camps, a whole system of physical torture has been set up and modernized by American Advisors and massive financial and technical aid (an estimated \$20.4 million will be spent this year alone to maintain the Police and Prison systems in South Vietnam). In short, the United States Government is directly responsible for both the creation and maintenance of this system of repression.

Background

One of the earliest efforts to eliminate opposition to the U.S. regimes in Saigon was the *Strategic Hamlet program*. It attempted to force 12 million Vietnamese from their homes in the countryside into military-controlled compounds called 'New Life Settlements'. When these efforts were defeated by the peasants and the NLF, the U.S. resorted to massive bombings, defoliation and terror campaigns. These campaigns compelled many people to move to the settlements and occupied territory, where they were subjected to a regime of terror.

Another notorious attempt to eliminate the opposition was the Phoenix. Designed in the mid-1960's by the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA organized, recruited, supplied and directly paid "teams of men whose sole function was to use assassination, kidnapping and intimidation" against the people of the South who they considered members of the NLF, or sympathetic with it. A minimum of 50,000 persons have been assassinated under the Phoenix Program since 1968. The more "fortunate" victims of this program, who were not killed or tortured to death before being turned over to the regular police, are now among the more than 200,000 political prisoners held by the U.S.-Thieu regime.

But even with this incredible apparatus, the fate of the Saigon regime continued to look bleak. By the spring of 1972, the "Vietnamization Policy" was suffering heavy defeats. Thieu's police, accompanied by U.S. advisors, began rounding up thousands of suspected "Communist sympathizers". In May and June of 1972, at least 50,000 people were arrested throughout South Vietnam (*Far Eastern Economic Review*). Again in October when the cease-fire seemed imminent, Thieu put his police force to work. 50,000 more people were arrested, and hundreds more killed in a drive which continues today in the Saigon-controlled zones. An estimated 200,000 political prisoners were in jails in the south by January, 1973, when the Paris Peace Agreement was signed.



A victim of Operation Phoenix.

POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THE PEACE AGREEMENT

If the U.S. and Saigon had implemented the articles of the Peace Agreement on Democratic liberties- freedom of speech and political activity, there would be no political prisoners in Saigon's jails. Furthermore, the Peace Agreement requires Saigon and the PRG to release all civilians who have contributed to the "political and armed struggle between the 2 parties." To avoid releasing the political prisoners, Thieu began reclassifying them as common criminals, to remove them from the protection of the Paris Agreement.

The Agreement states that "Foreign countries shall not impose any political tendency or personality on the South Vietnamese people." In spite of the fact that the U.S. signed this Agreement and is therefore legally bound by it, it continues to be the sole financial supporter for the Saigon police apparatus and to support and oversee the criminal repression of the South Vietnamese people, in blatant violation of the Paris Agreement.

As long as the U.S. Government makes it possible for Thieu to repress all his political opposition, in order to remain in power, there will be no democratic freedoms, no free elections, no release of political prisoners and, certainly, no peace.



The following are excerpts of an article taken from an interview between Dr. Nguyen Mac Vien, editor of "Vietnam Courier" and Vietnamese Studies, and several patriots recently freed from Saigon prisons. It is testimony to the incredible determination of the Vietnamese people to struggle, against the most brutal repression, for peace and their country's independence.

Repression & Resistance in Saigon's Prisons 1973

They are there, some 20 escapees from the prisons of Saigon to tell their experiences: a former partisan, a merchant with crutches, a young woman who had been a teacher in Saigon, an old man of 68, a former Cao Dai priest from My Tho, a young student from Hue.

I hear all the accents of the southern provinces; they have the voice, the expression of all walks of life, all ages. There are even children among them, this one here, two years old, born in prison; that one there, seven years old, imprisoned at the age of 5 in place of his mother whom the Saigon police were not able to arrest.

I listen, I slip in several questions, then little by little, I no longer distinguish the faces; I no longer remember the names; I mix up the stories. Before me these are not this man, this woman, it is the South. I see thousands of jails and prison camps, like Poulo Condor, Tan Hiep, Phu Quoc, Chi Hoa which stud the land of the south like so many wounds, with their barbed wire and their American advisors who instruct the Saigon torturers.

They all recount the same experience, or almost all. "They beat us full force on the legs, on the head, on the thighs, as soon as we disembarked. They beat us without discrimination- for a little detail, because we did not salute them in passing, because we asked for a cup of water, because we coughed, because we sang...

"They have an art to beating us, making us suffer as much as possible without making us die. What they want is not our death, but our transformation, the militant and honest people into mercenaries. They want us to cross over to their side; they want us to become police, agents, torturers...

"Do not believe they can beat, torture at will. It is a daily occurrence, but so is our struggle, it goes on every moment."

DR. VIEN: "With what weapons do you fight?"

"We have neither sticks nor guns, not even a nail. We have our voices, our songs, our arms; we can oppose them with resistance...

"We present our demands: medication for the sick, care for the wounded. They ask us to designate delegates to speak for us, thinking in this way to expose the ringleaders. Hundreds of hands are raised, asking to speak. They no longer know who to punish

"Imagine hundreds, sometimes as many as a thousand prisoners crying from every cell, 'stop the torturers! Stop the torture of the wounded! Give us rice that is not rotten, medication!', for hours at a time. The blows have no more effect. Of course, we have our organization, our leaders, our liaison network to launch a campaign, perfect our slogans and our strategy. It is always necessary to know just how far to push the offensive, to stop the movement when some of the demands have been met.



Women in Tiger Cages at Con Son. Five women are confined in a single cell, 5'x 8'.

"We never carry out a hunger strike alone. But by dozens, hundreds, sometimes an entire prison. This is what frightens them. This obstinate determination not of one, but an entire body which is ready, if necessary to die in order to force through a demand.



Handcuffs used in Saigon prisons are made by Smith & Wesson Co. Springfield, Mass.

We managed little by little to convince even the non-political, those condemned under common law, and especially the ordinary people who were taken en masse during round ups. The example of the cadres, the collective support, the education they received of the moment, the reaction of all normal people before the inhuman procedures, resulted in many becoming courageous and experienced militants in the end. The feeling of participation in a decided collective transforms you. Even when one is taken alone to the torture room, the tiger cages, the clamor of all the others accompanies you, supports you; the news reaches you and you are encouraged.

"One time they took away several comrades suspected of being leaders of our organization. The next day when the guards came into the cells, they were seized, tied up by several rows of detainees. We sent our spokespeople with the demand: 'Give us back our comrades and the guards' lives will be saved; otherwise, they will die together with all of us.'

"Always this obstinate determination of an entire collectivity ready to die to the last person if necessary, this is what gives the real blow to their morale. This is what spelled the total defeat of their strategy to 'convert' people. They have the force... and they can do nothing; this demoralizes them! At these times when all the collectivity confronts them in resolute struggle, they are obliged to mobilize all their forces...

A Liberated Zone in Prison

"Do you know there is a Liberated Zone at Poulo Condor? Of course, we were always behind wall, barbed wire, but the torturers didn't dare to come into this sector. The rule of the prison, we hardly paid any attention to them, we held our meetings; we publicly organized our cultural and political education courses. Ragged and torn men and women-crippled, in pain from being beaten ferociously, no sticks in our hands- forced an army of brutes to pull back. Many died in the struggle, but others, how did they manage to survive? The mystery of the human who resists anything when the fire of freedom smolders in them..."

DR. VIEN: These prisoners came back as victors. But 200,000 others continue the struggle, in hundreds of thousands of jails and prisons which stud the land in the South. A struggle of each day, of each moment. More than ever Thieu and Nixon are determined to liquidate all those who oppose them.

MANKIND BE VIGILANT!



Tradition and Revolution in Vietnam.

Nguyen Khac Vien. Selected essays of a major North Vietnamese writer; an intimate portrait of a revolution. "A welcome and refreshing contribution towards offsetting the heavy dependency of Americans on Western perceptions of Vietnam" -- George McT. Kahin. 192 pages. 1974. Publisher's discount price \$2.45. Ten or more copies @\$1.60 plus postage. Available from I.S.C in New York City and Indochina Resource Center: P.O. Box 4000D, Berkeley, California 94704 (415) 548 - 2546

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In the latest political manoeuvring, Nguyen Van Thieu, under orders from "the American Embassy to bring an end to at least the appearance of his one man, one-party rule", Began the "systematic stripping of the growing powers of his own Democratic Party." (Washington Post, 7/15/74) On July 14, in the Saigon-controlled zones, 'elections' were held for 478 city and provincial council seats (despite the fact that they are illegal under Article 12 of the Peace Agreement). In line with the U.S. policy of trying to maintain the appearance of a 'democracy', all candidates were ordered to run as "independents, without Party backing". Meanwhile, people labeled "Communist" or "pro-communist neutralist" were barred from participation in the elections. "But Thieu's backers made sure that in every province and city a slate of candidates loyal to the [Democracy] Party was nominated and presented as such to the voters." Expectantly, candidates belonging to Thieu's Party gained 75 seats in the 'election' for a total of 315 of the 475 seats. Barring the full implementation of the Paris Agreement, Thieu is now virtually assured of re-election in next year's "Presidential election." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 7/22/74)



In another move, Thieu's cabinet Ministers were forced to appear before Saigon's "House of Representatives" to discuss major controversial issues. The session, which has long been demanded by opposition deputies, lasted 15 hours, focusing on the Paris Agreement, the economy and corruption. But Thieu's Ministers, led by Premier Tran Thien Khiem, failed in their attempt to quell dissent from the opposition deputies. "If this session is a cardboard cake of democracy to get American aid," resposed Nguyen Van Kim, "then you are successful. But if you want to understand the situation of the country, the aspirations of the people, then you have failed- since I have seen no sign of good will from the Cabinet." (NY Times, 7/27)



The deputies demanded to know why political freedoms have not been granted, why Thieu refuses to accept the Third Force as a reality, and why political prisoners have not been released (all called for by the Agreement). Khiem responded with such statements as "there are no political prisoners in the South" (Wash. Post, 7/27/74), and "the Agreement was a victory (?) because the Communists did not obtain their aim of a coalition government in the South." (NY Times, 7/27)

Summing up the opposition's stance, another deputy expounded, "Is he [Thieu] a man of war or a man of peace! He said the Paris Agreement was a victory, then why didn't he carry out a single article of the Agreement? I think President Thieu has completely lost the credibility of the people." (NY Times, 7/28/74) The next day, despite "guarantees" of no censorship, Saigon's newspapers didn't include the numerous attacks on Thieu. And several newspapers had blank spaces where type had been removed at the last moment. (NY Times, 7/28/74)

Thieu's idea of 'democratic freedom'

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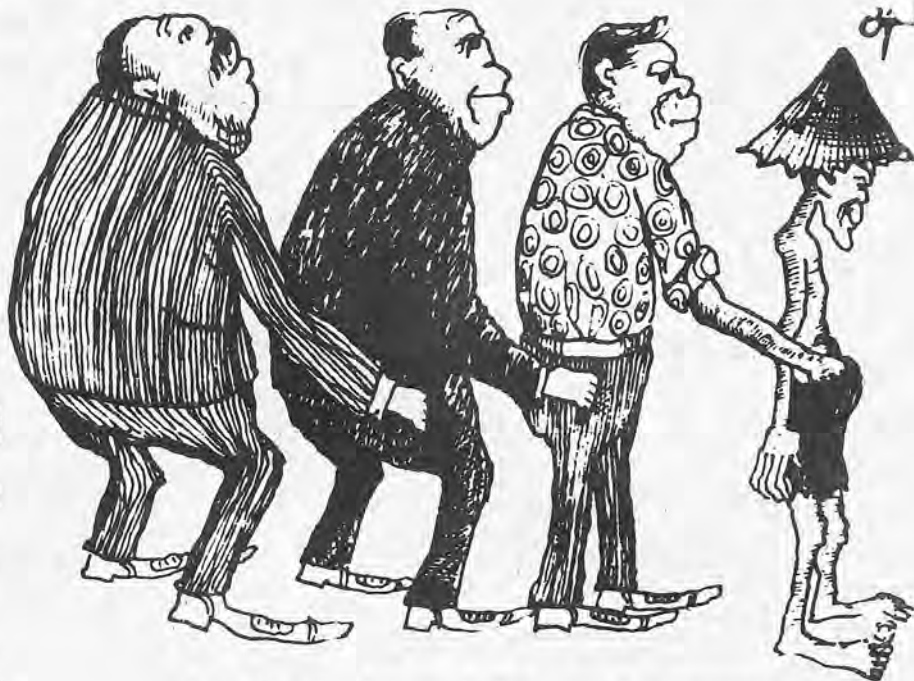
ECONOMIC DECLINE IN THE SAIGON-CONTROLLED ZONE

One of the reasons for the pessimism of the opposition deputies was the continuing decline of the Saigon economy: "All observers agree that South Vietnam enjoys the most favorable conditions for an economic upstart- plenty of natural resources, an abundant labor force, a capability to produce enough food for home consumption and export, etc. If the Paris Agreement had been scrupulously implemented, the war would have completely ended and there would have prevailed a climate of security required for economic development.

"But such was not the case in South Vietnam last year. The Thieu sabotage of the January, 1973 Peace Agreement landed the ailing economy of Saigon in an impasse." (South Vietnam in Struggle, 6/10/74)

Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, the cost of living in Saigon has risen at least 100% (*Wash. Post*, 7/3/74) Over 50% of the factories in the Saigon-controlled zones have been shut down. Those that remain open have been forced to reduce their production by 30-50%. As a result, the unemployment rate has risen to 40% (*Hsinhua*, 7/7/74).

Another major problem contributing to the misery of the people is corruption. At the higher levels, where officials need not worry about the next day's meal, "profiteering and corruption are a prerogative of office which has come to be taken for granted." (*American Report*, 7/22) "In South Vietnam," Jack Anderson reports, "hundreds of American-made millionaires are still stuffing greenbacks in their secret Swiss bank accounts." (*Wash. Post*, 6/9/74)



From Dien-Tin, Saigon's leading opposition newspaper.

In an attempt to boost the economy, the Saigon regime signed 11 new contracts with oil companies in late June for offshore drilling. Shell oil will attempt to start the drilling in the first week of August, followed by Exxon and Mobil in September (*NY Post*, 8/1/74) However, PRG President, Huynh Tan Phat warned, "We strongly protest against the Nguyen Van Thieu administration which, for its own selfish reasons, has tried to give away the natural resources of South Vietnam. We now declare completely invalid any agreements made by that administration or, any that will be made in the future, with any foreign countries on the use of South Vietnam's natural resources." (*South Vietnam in Struggle*, 6/17/74)

RESISTANCE TO THIEU

In an attempt to hold back the rising tide of dissatisfaction with his regime, Thieu relies on his police-state apparatus. In Saigon-controlled zones there are now:

- one soldier for every 17 inhabitants;
- one policeman for every 100 inhabitants.

But Thieu has yet to learn that terror only brings more resistance. Despite the Police-State, demonstrations are becoming more and more frequent. In the cities of Hue, Long Xuyen and Bien Hoa, thousands demonstrated and signed petitions against the fraudulent elections recently held. Strikes and protests against the soaring cost of living and rising unemployment are now commonplace (*Hsinhua News Agency*, 7/26).

Because of the rice shortage caused by the graft and corruption of high officials in the Thieu regime, whole villages in the countryside are reported to be defecting to the PRG (*Ramparts Magazine*, July, 1974). The Thieu regime cannot even count on the loyalty of its armed forces. It was recently reported that over 60,000 Saigon troops deserted in the first 6 months of this year. (*Giai Phong News Agency*)

MILITARY SITUATION



U.S. Television and Newspapers have devoted little time or space to the current fighting in South Vietnam. When they do cover it, they use language such as "Communist assaults" and "North Vietnamese and Vietcong attacks", attempting to convince us that the PRG and DRVN (North Vietnam) are responsible for the current upsurge in fighting. But quite the opposite is true.

Since the signing of the Paris Agreement, the Thieu regime has set up 10,000 illegal bases and command posts in territory controlled by the PRG (Nguyen Van Hieu, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, June, 1974) From these bases, Saigon has been launching thousands of sweeps, shelling attacks and pacification raids. In response to the intensification of these attacks in the areas of Ben Cat and Da Nang, the PRG has counter-attacked, and is removing these bases from their territory. At Ben Cat, 25 miles north of Saigon, the PRG's People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF) have inflicted severe casualties on attacking Saigon troops: Three major bases have been overrun, 34 planes shot down, and over 6,000 ARVN troops have been killed, wounded or captured (*Hsinhua News Agency*, 7/25/74). Though tens of thousands of Saigon troops have been sent to the area, "the Communists [i.e.-PLAF] have been too strong for Saigon's forces", and PLAF units "reported to be hard hit have reappeared to fight again." Responding to the PRG's decision to strike back, one Western diplomat stated, "In some ways I don't blame them (the PRG), at some point they have to say, 'enough's enough.'" (*NY Times*, 7/30)



The New York Times/July 28, 1974

The most recent outbreak in heavy fighting has been in the region of Da Nang. The battle there erupted "after a three-pronged Saigon force traveling northwest from Que Son encountered Communist [PLAF] troops a few miles southeast of Duc Duc." (*NY Times*, 7/27/74)



The New York Times/July 30, 1974

Battlefield is in rubber-plantation country (cross-hatching) west of Ben Cat and north of Saigon.

Puppet troops were removed from a dozen villages and positions in the area, including several district capitals. Infuriated by these latest defeats, Thieu swore that he would "rip up the Peace Agreement into little pieces" if the PRG took another population centre. (*WNEW-FM radio*, 8/3/74)

"U.S. AID- A DANGEROUS DRUG"

In the next few months the 'Aid offensive' of the Nixon administration will be in full swing. Graham Martin, U.S. ambassador to Saigon, is now in Washington D.C. trying to rally support for increased aid to Saigon. Faced with Thieu's continuing deterioration, Martin is literally begging for another transfusion. His argument is that an increase in aid would "provide a catalyst so that the economy of South Vietnam could take off, and insure Saigon's ability to defend itself." (*NY Times*, 7/26/74)

But the history of U.S. Aid to South Vietnam tells a different story:

"Twenty years have gone by since 1954. During all that time, billions of U.S. dollars have been poured into this land in the form of assistance. In what way have these huge sums of money helped the Vietnamese people? By modernizing the agriculture? By developing the industry? By raising the standard of living of the population?

"Some Americans often take on elders' manners, boasting that U.S. assistance has helped this country in many ways, especially in the economic field. I want to tell them flatly to their faces that either they are pitifully mistaken, or they are deliberately lying...

"...In plain words, I resent and blame the American assistance for having pushed the economy of this country into a state of inconsistency...

"I think it is necessary to point out that U.S. assistance is only a kind of narcotic, no more or no less. The economy of this country resembles the body of a drug addict, 'appearing' healthy when it receives enough of the drug, but weakening immediately as the amount of drug given is reduced and facing inestimable consequences if the drug injections are suddenly stopped altogether." (taken from the Saigon Newspaper, "Trang Don", November, 4, 1973)

CUT ALL AID!

Aid to the Thieu regime (and Lon Nol) is meeting opposition by many people and organizations in the U.S. Many groups in the *United Campaign to End the War* are focusing on amendments soon to be before the House that would cut Military aid to South Vietnam from \$1.6 billion to \$750 million, which would substantially cripple the Thieu regime's ability to continue to launch war. The sponsors of the bill, Congressmen Giaino and Flynt, explained that "U.S. aid to Thieu is primarily responsible for the continued killing and destruction in South Vietnam today." (Action Agenda, Coalition to stop funding the war-7/19/74)



On July 1-4, in a major anti-imperialist demonstration, Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization (VVAW/WSO) led thousands of people in a show of strength in Washington D.C. Among the five demands raised by VVAW/WSO were UNIVERSAL UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY for all war resisters and IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT - END ALL AID TO THIEU AND LON NOL! Several actions were held in the four days, including a mass rally on the 4th where messages of solidarity and support from both the PRG and DRVN were read.

We must continue to make our voices heard, to let Nixon and the U.S. Congress know that we will not let the war continue under the guise of 'aid', the most recent strategy U.S. Imperialism is using to defeat the Vietnamese people. We must continue to educate people, and make them aware of this 'new form of aggression. So when the time comes to strike the decisive blow, we are ready.

CUT ALL AID TO THIEU AND LON NOL- IMPLEMENT THE PEACE AGREEMENT!

"WE FIGHT YANKEES,
THEREFORE WE EXIST!"



"... We defeat Yankees
It's for a thousand years to come
For our younger generations
Who might ask "how come
Not so long ago,
before the year 2000
People kill each other at will
And human life worth no more than
a pebble?"

From today, thus, we can begin to write:
"We beat Yankees
So that you -- children -- might fly
among the stars!"

AN INTERVIEW

WITH

Nguyen Van Hieu



FROM:

Far Eastern Economic Review

"In the course of our struggle, we have dealt and negotiated with many people. The going was often rough, but never did we encounter people as devious, as false and as unreliable as the American negotiators. During the Paris talks (for the 1973 Vietnam ceasefire), one day the Americans would make a proposal, and the next day they would deny even having made it. It came to the point where Le Duc Tho (North Vietnamese chief negotiator) told Dr Henry Kissinger to his face: 'Please stop trying to double cross us'."

The comments were made by Nguyen Van Hieu, who in 1973 took over for the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam the negotiations with Saigon following the Paris Agreements worked out by Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. In an interview, Hieu was assessing the PRG's gains from the settlement.

Hieu, who has been a foreign representative of the National Liberation Front (NLF) and a State minister in the PRG said: "In 1965, when the American forces landed in Vietnam, many of our cadres, after seeing the might of the US engagement, started wondering whether we could win the war against such an overwhelmingly powerful enemy. In order to find the moral strength to face this new ordeal, we decided to look back into our history and endeavoured to find in our past the moral strength to face the present. In Vietnamese, Fatherland is called *Dat Nuoc* - that is 'earth and water.' For 4,000 years, we Vietnamese had to fight to protect our crops and our land against invasion by both nature, symbolised by water, and by foreign intrusion. For 1,000 years, we fought against the Chinese. Then, in the 13th century, 200,000 Mongols invaded Vietnam.

"At that time, there were only 5 million Vietnamese. To face the invaders, our King called a national congress to unite the nation against the Mongols. After we repulsed them, the King burned the list of those Vietnamese who had collaborated with the enemy.

"The Mongol wars taught us three

things: First, that resistance against an invader should involve the whole nation and not only the regular army. Secondly, that after victory there should be national reconciliation and that old hatreds should be forgiven and forgotten. Thirdly, that weapons alone will not necessarily lead to victory and that a people's war must involve both military and political weapons. Thus, while we won many local victories against the Mongols, we never really defeated them in the military sense. They were too powerful for that. What we did, however, was to defeat their motivation and make the occupation of our country too costly for them. When this was achieved, the King offered them an honourable retreat. We learned a lot from that episode of our history.

"Most people," Hieu continued, "just do not realise how much we gained through the (Paris) Agreements. To understand the extent of our victory, you must look at the overall picture. In the

parties like the Congress party or the Kuomintang. In Vietnam, however, the French controlled the economy and this prevented the bourgeoisie from acquiring any solid economic basis. As a result, there never was a strong bourgeois party in Vietnam, and the conservative forces in our society had to depend on foreign support and on foreign invaders to stay in power.

"Thus in order to survive, the Vietnamese right wing first had to lean on the French and then on the Americans. Indeed, Vietnam is the only example in Southeast Asia of a country where the Left also represented the forces of nationalism and where the Right could survive only with foreign support.

"Our resistance was thus essentially based on the peasantry, representing about 80% of the population and supported, to a small but tangible extent, by some members of the petit-bourgeois intelligentsia and of the bourgeoisie itself. Overall, what the Paris Agreements



Kissinger and Le Duc Tho in Paris: Gains for the PRG.

1930s, Ho Chi Minh created the Communist Party. At that time, all those who fought for independence against the French were labelled communists. They were not communists, but they had joined the communists because they were the main force fighting for national independence. Therefore, when a true Vietnamese patriot looks at Ho Chi Minh, he sees the national hero rather than the communist. This attitude explains why, when Ho Chi Minh died, a member of the Saigon Parliament proposed to send a delegation to Hanoi to attend the funeral. Obviously, the Saigon representative was not a communist. His purpose was to render homage to Nguyen Ai Quoc, that is, Nguyen the Patriot, which was Ho's former name.

"You might wonder how it came about that the communists were the only ones to fight for Vietnamese nationalism. The explanation is simple. In China, Indonesia and India, there was a strong urban bourgeoisie; there were bourgeois

achieved was to seriously weaken the foreign support on which the Right depended for its survival. The Right, I should add, has a very limited social backing. It is composed of those who profit from US aid, of the new class of rural landowners and of some elements of the bourgeoisie who are anti-communist without necessarily actively backing Nguyen Van Thieu.

"In other words, the Paris Agreements have brought about the withdrawal of foreign troops, and we are now in the process of completing the elimination of all foreign interference."

Asked how he would define the substance of the Paris Agreements, Hieu replied: "First, as I said, the Agreements provided for the withdrawal of foreign troops. They also provide for the existence of several political forces. These should compete peacefully rather than through violent means. Basically, the Agreements reflect our wish and the wish of the Vietnamese people to have

several political parties and not just one. As for ourselves, we do not deny that Thieu has a right to exist. All we demand is that he does not try to deny, by leaning on a foreign invader, either our right, or the right of other political forces, to exist. But of course, Thieu does not want a free and open political confrontation, and therefore refuses to implement the Paris Agreements."

Did this surprise Hieu? "Of course not. We knew perfectly well before signing the Agreements that neither Thieu nor the Americans would abide by them. We had no illusions in this respect. But we also knew that the people wanted the war to end, that they wanted an agreement. Now we will have to put pressure on Thieu to force him to progressively apply the agreements. Ultimately, there are only two possibilities — either Thieu will agree to apply the agreements or the war will resume."

"The resumption of the war does not depend on us but on the other side. We warned Thieu that we will retaliate each time he launches an attack on us. But we still feel there is a chance the Agreements will be applied."

"If one considers the situation in the United States and the Watergate affair, it is clear that Washington is in no condition to launch a new major war. If, however, Washington lets itself be drawn into another Vietnam war, the consequences would be very serious for the United States. As for the rulers in Saigon, they would be well advised to think carefully before launching a new war without US participation. Moreover, the events in Thailand showed that even a strong American presence does not ensure the indefinite continuation of a military dictatorship. Thus, I think that there is a fair chance that the Paris Agreements will be applied one day."

"Thieu, of course, is doing everything he can to get the US to openly intervene in Vietnam again. Thus, Saigon recently suspended the talks with us at La Celle St Cloud, arguing that our forces had overrun and destroyed the Saigon Ranger camp at Tong Le Chan. This argument is facetious for two reasons: First, it was Saigon that launched raids against our areas from the Tong Le Chan base; secondly, we never conquered Tong Le Chan for the simple reason that when our forces threatened to take reprisals, the Tong Le Chan garrison abandoned the base without even putting up a fight. But now Saigon is making a big fuss over this incident in order to impress the US Senate and attempt to obtain US assistance."

On the US position in Vietnam, Hieu

said: "I think the case of the Pueblo is a good illustration of how little the Americans value their word. They accepted responsibility for the Pueblo affair, but after the US prisoners were released, the Americans went back on their word."

"In Vietnam, Kissinger wanted two things: to obtain the release of the American prisoners and to secure the pull-out of the American forces. To this end, the US signed an agreement which they had no intention of applying. Politically, the US wants to go back to the situation that prevailed in the early 1960s. Then, they fought by using Diem; today, they are fighting by using Thieu. We knew this was going to happen, just as we know that to sign an agreement is one thing and that to apply it is another. First we had to fight to force the US into signing the Paris Agreements. Now we are fighting to force Thieu and the US to implement those agreements. The agreements are therefore the legal basis on which our struggle rests."

Asked if he felt the South was now divided into two autonomous areas, Hieu said: "The Paris Agreements provide for two administrations, two armies and two areas of control. So, in terms of political control, there are indeed two zones. However, we are in favour of free movement between the zones and of free trade. It is for this reason that we still use the Saigon piastre, although we have taken measures to control prices and avoid inflation. We don't want to cut the South in two. This is what Thieu is trying to do by blockading our zone. There is and will always be one — and only one — Vietnamese state, but there are at present three Vietnamese governments, two of which are in the South."

On the question of Vietnamese membership of the United Nations, he said: "According to the Paris Agreements, there are two equal governments in the South. However, Saigon has an observer status at the United Nations and the PRG has not. This is unacceptable. Hanoi will never agree to join the UN as long as only Saigon is represented and not the PRG."

Turning to the future, Hieu continued: "We want a peaceful, open and free political competition which will aim at bringing about a political solution to the military problems. The formula of such a solution can be found. Thieu and the Americans want a military confrontation because Thieu can stay in power only by using force and by repressing all opposition. The conclusion is thus obvious: The enforcement of the Paris Agreements implies the fall of Thieu. The main obstacle to peace, however, is

in Washington. Essentially, the Americans have not yet reconciled themselves to this idea that they should let the Vietnamese run their own country."

"You see, first the Americans supported the French, and that did not work. Then they supported Diem, and that did not work either. Then they had to send in their own troops. That was also a failure. Today, within the limits of 'special warfare,' the US continues to intervene in Vietnam. It provides Thieu with weapons, advisers, etcetera for a total amount of about US\$2,000 million a year. Ultimately, Washington has really only two alternatives left: Either it will continue to maintain in South Vietnam a pro-US government, run by this Thieu or another "Thieu," or it will accept the creation of an authentic Vietnamese government which will be independent of the US and from any other country. This, by the way, will inevitably happen, but it will just take more time for the Americans to recognise that they are fighting not only a lost, but also a totally useless, battle."



Cambodia



OFFENSIVE CONTINUES— DESPITE RAINY SEASON

As the monsoon rains swell the rivers of Cambodia (the rainy season runs from June to November), the offensive of the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF) continues in full force.

Every major highway leading into the capital, Phnom Penh, has been severed, the Tonle Sap River has been mined, and Pochentung airport has been constantly shelled by the Liberation Forces of the National United Front (FUNK). And now, the Mekong River, Phnom Penh's last lifeline, is coming under increasing attack.

In the most daring attack yet, on June 22 a Panamanian freighter carrying 2,000 tons of American rice was sunk, and 2 others seriously damaged, right in front of the Phnom Penh waterfront where they were to be unloaded (*Associated Press- AP, 6/23/74*)

On July 12, 3 transport ships and 1 gun boat were sunk and 2 fuel tankers set on fire near the ferry town of Neak Luong. More than 50 Lon Nol troops were killed or wounded.



While Phnom Penh's last artery is slowly being cut, the city itself continues to come under frequent attack. On the night of June 21, the government radio station was hit with grenades by guerrillas, temporarily forcing it to shut down. On June 24 & 25, the CPNLAF shelled Lon Nol's residence, killing and wounding 60 guards (*Kampuchea Information Agency- AKI, 7/15/74*). Because of the frequent shelling of Pochentung airport, both Air France and UTA (another French airline) have suspended all flights indefinitely.

The few provincial capitals still controlled by Lon Nol, such as Kompong Cham, Kampot, Takeo, Kompong Speu, and Kompong Chnang, are completely encircled by the Liberation Forces and isolated from each other. All are presently under heavy attack.

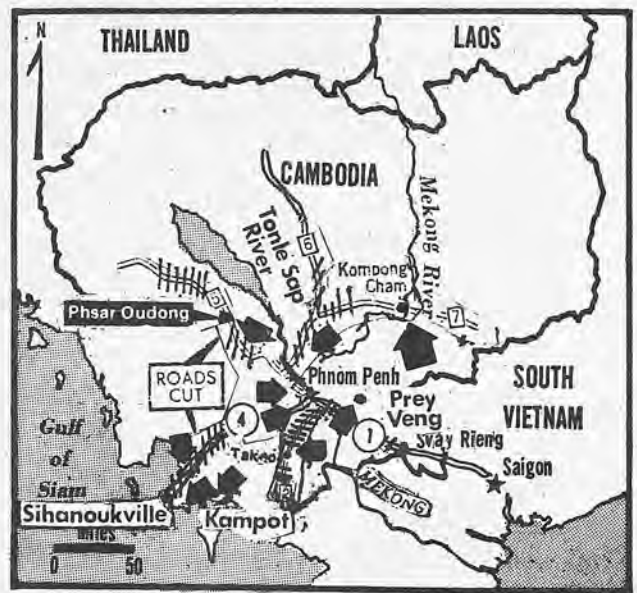
OU Dong 'RETAKEN'

After 900 troops were killed and thousands more wounded, Phnom Penh forces finally recaptured the provincial capital of Oudong, 23 miles northwest of Phnom Penh on Highway 5. The ancient Royal Capital was captured by the CPNLAF on March 18, the 4th anniversary of Sihanouk's overthrow.

While Lon Nol claimed that the retaking of Oudong was an 'important victory', he must have pushed out of his mind the fact that the town's entire population of 30,000 people had gone to the Liberated Zone with the retreating Liberation Forces. All that greeted Lon Nol's troops was a ghost town and a mass of rubble, caused by 3 months of relentless bombing. Meanwhile, "For all the carnage, little has changed, politically or strategically. Route 5 remains cut by the insurgents, and Peace negotiations... are still not in sight." (*NY Times, 7/28/74*)

LON NOL OFFERS 'PHONY PEACE'

For the first time since the war began, the Lon Nol regime publicly declared that it was



◆ UNDER HEAVY ATTACK FROM C.P.N.L.A.F.

"prepared to hold negotiations with the Insurgents [i.e.-the GRUNC and FUNK] without any prior conditions." (NY Post, 7/9/74)

For most of the war, the U.S. and Lon Nol have refused to even acknowledge that there was a resistance in Cambodia, always claiming that they were fighting "North Vietnamese and Vietcong" troops. But with the stunning victories of the CPNLAF offensive during 1973, and numerous Western reports of "Cambodians fighting Cambodians", Lon Nol was forced to

admit by the end of the year that there was a Cambodian resistance. But he still insisted they were "puppets of the North Vietnamese" and said he would not negotiate with them until "the North Vietnamese and Vietcong left the country."



Planes destroyed recently at Pochentung airport by CPNLAF shelling.

Realizing that Lon Nol's days are numbered, "The Nixon administration has stated that it is prepared to accept a Laotian-style coalition government in Cambodia", in an attempt to at least keep some small foothold for Imperialism in Cambodia. (NY Times, 7/10/74)

SIHANOUK'S STATEMENT

In response to Lon Nol's 'peace offer', Norodom Sihanouk, Chief of State of the GRUNC, and President of the FUNK, issued the following statement:

"Recently the Gov't of the United States, led by Mr. Richard M. Nixon, ordered the so-called government of the so-called Khmer Republic to put forth a proposal for 'negotiation and reconciliation'.

"The GRUNC and FUNK are not making war for the sake of war. We are carrying out an armed struggle against the super-rich and super-powerful United States who, with no provocation from the people or the Kingdom of Cambodia, committed aggression, invaded and colonized them after organizing the coup d'etat of March 18, 1970.

"U.S. Imperialism is the sole culprit of the war in Cambodia. After engineering the reactionary coup, it dispatched 110,000 U.S. and Saigon troops to invade Cambodia. Afterwards, it gave all out support to the traitorous Lon Nol's war with air and naval forces, and huge sums of money. Since August 16, 1973, the U.S. continues to command and take part directly in the Cambodian war. Therefore, this war is not a 'civil war', but a war of aggression against Cambodia by U.S. Imperialism.

"The key to war and peace in Cambodia is in the hands of the U.S., aggressor to our country. It would be insane to accuse the GRUNC and FUNK and their armed forces of refusing peace.

"Peace? We demand no other than this, and immediately! But we shall always categorically refuse an 'American peace', which imposes the partition of our country, or a coalition government with traitors.

"The return of peace to Cambodia does not need to go through 'negotiations' or by an 'international conference'. Peace can be realized immediately if the United States ceases to interfere in Cambodia's affairs and ceases to give military aid to the Lon Nol regime; this will be sufficient for the Cambodian problem to be solved ipso facto."

IN THE PHNOM PENH ZONE

CORRUPTION RUNS RAMPANT

As the final demise of the Lon Nol regime grows closer, the puppets are grabbing everything they can. "Generals, politicians and merchants allied to Lon Nol are making

millions of dollars by illegally controlling commercial traffic and diverting U.S. aid for their personal use." (Washington Post, 7/21/74)

Since the provincial capitals are isolated and nearly all transportation routes into Phnom Penh are cut, air lines are beginning to play a new role in Cambodia. This may explain why the number of commercial airlines have increased from 6 to 36 just since January of this year. These private airlines are charging exorbitant rates and making excessive profits, at the tune of \$21,000 a month, tax free. "The people who own these airlines are well hidden behind a maze of frontmen, but it is reliably rumored that a number of Cambodia's 76 active generals have interests in these companies. The connection with the military is particularly fortuitous, because it has enabled the airlines to get round the fuel problem. One diplomat says that something like half the fuel imported for the Cambodian air force was finding its way to the new commercial airlines." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 7/1/74)

The supplies brought in by the aircraft- mostly foodstuffs, are then hoarded by local merchants and sold on the black market at a 300% profit. "Merchants who are brand new to the food business are reported making profits of \$10,000 a day simply by flying the scarce staples from the country's agricultural area (Battambang province along the Thai border) over Insurgent-held territory and into Phnom Penh, where many families spend their entire incomes just to feed themselves.

"the prospect of fast money is so intoxicating, and the poverty of most working Cambodians so acute, that suffering and greed have been blended into a corrosive mixture that produces ingenious systems of cheating and corruption." (NY Times, 7/24/74)

RESISTANCE

But the people in the cities are fighting back.

On May 31, many starving people stormed rice graneries in Phnom Penh. On June 10, in broad daylight, a truck carrying rice through Phnom Penh was hijacked, and the rice distributed to the people who lived in the area. On June 27, dock workers attacked policemen guarding rice supplies at the docks, and carried away dozens of sacks of rice. (AKI, 7/13/74)

in many cases, instead of guarding the rice, Lon Nol's police join in on the looting. In fact, because of the lack of pay and the deteriorating situation on the battlefield, more and more of Lon Nol's troops are refusing to fight. Early in July, a whole battalion (about 500 men) stationed in Phnom Penh refused to go to the front lines at Longvek. According to one officer, "Nobody wants to die fighting for a fool." (Hsinhua News Agency, 7/19/74)

Another frequent occurrence in Phnom Penh is attacks on Lon Nol's police while they are trying to round up youth and press gang people into the army. In one incident on Pochentung highway (running from the city to the airport), police were stopping and arresting passers-by. All of a sudden, cab-drivers, motorcyclists and people in cars got out and began hurling bricks, stones and sticks at the police, holding them off long enough for the prisoners to escape. (Hsinhua News Agency, 7/6/74)

On July 7, a large demonstration of more than 500 people was held at a market place in the northwestern section of Phnom Penh. Local merchants, residents, and workers



Hundreds of thousands of refugees are forced to live in the most squalid conditions in Phnom Penh, many without food or shelter. Young beggars and orphans roaming the streets have become a major problem

condemned Lon Nol for making people go hungry, conducting forced conscription, and denying the people of all democratic rights. The demonstrators warned that the homes of military officers, and police stations would be burned to the ground if rice wasn't distributed among the people immediately. (AKI, 7/18/74)

Though student demonstrations have subsided temporarily, and schools are still shut down, "they are draped with angry banners such as: 'Defeat the Government traitors', and 'Corruptors with full pockets, people with empty stomachs.'" (NY Times, 7/28/74)

Even members of Phnom Penh's Military and business elite are now unwilling to have anything to do with Lon Nol. According to one diplomat, "If the U.S. continues to support Lon Nol, Cambodia will surely become a Communist State." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 7/8/74) Aware of the discontent among his 'friends', Lon Nol has just created a new division in the Phnom Penh army whose sole purpose is to guard him. These troops, along with dozens of armoured cars, are stationed around the presidential palace 24 hours a day. Also, "Generals in the field are being watched very closely to prevent any coup attempts. But according to one officer, 'everyone is afraid to plot a coup, without the agreement of the Americans.'" (Washington Post, 6/21/74)

News Items



ANOTHER U.S. 'ADVISOR' DISCOVERED

Western reporters have uncovered another U.S. military advisor in Cambodia. This one is no other than John Gunther Dean, U.S. ambassador to Phnom Penh. According to a report released by the House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee, John G. Dean, "by his own admission does not hesitate to give strategic military advice to Lon Nol or tactical advice to subordinate military officers," violating 5 separate acts of Congress which prohibit the U.S. from "acting in a military advisory capacity in Cambodia." (NY Times, 8/4/74)

RUBBER PLANTATIONS SEIZED

According to a press communique just released by AKI, the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNC) has decided to nationalize all foreign-owned rubber plantations in the Liberated Zone, without giving any compensation. The reason given was the fact that the owners have continually sided with Phnom Penh during the war, and the U.S. and Phnom Penh had done everything they could to destroy the plantations, through the use of chemical defoliation and bombing.

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Laos

On July 13th Premier Souvanna Phouma, Neutralist leader of the 3 month old coalition government in Laos, suffered a disabling heart attack. This has set the right-wing in Vientiane, and the U.S. administration in a turmoil about who in Phouma's absence would head the coalition.

According to the Vientiane Agreement on Laos, the deputy Premier would replace Souvanna Phouma if he is incapacitated. The vice-Premier of the Provisional Government is Phouma Vongvichit, the secretary General of the Lao Patriotic Front. It is also reported that P. Vongvichit is sharing governmental tasks with Souvanna Phouma until the Premier is fully recovered.



Associated Press
Prince Souvanna Phouma

Although Western press has indicated that the coalition government will remain on shaky footing until the Prince recovers, the L.P.F. continues to strengthen the new government. In fact, the week before Souvanna's heart attack, the L.P.F. won a major victory concerning the future of the 59-member Lao National Assembly. At one point in the debate, "Souvanna picked up his briefcase and prepared to walk out of the meeting. One Cabinet Minister reportedly told the Premier, "You cannot leave the meeting while the boat is in the rapids." (Wash. Post, 7/17/74) This right-wing dominated assembly was "elected" before the Agreements were signed and has continued in existence even though the Agreements call for the formation of a newly elected Assembly. On July 12, the Assembly was dissolved.



On July 13, an 18 point program submitted by the Joint National Political Council (JNPC) headed by Souphanouvong (the Lao Patriotic Front leader) was unanimously adopted by a special meeting of the cabinet. "After a long term exchange of views, the special Cabinet meeting unanimously decided to accept the Political Program for building a peaceful, independant, neutral, democratic unified and prosperous Kingdom of Laos and the temporary regulation on the organization and activities of the National Coalition Political Council." (Hsinhua 7/13/74)

The Pathet Lao's gains have been well noted by the U.S. A Far Eastern Economic Review Correspondant stated: "For the rightists... time is clearly running out. Within the next two or three months the Communists will have achieved so much that there will be no going back. By October 1st, if things continue this way for the L.P.F. (Pathet Lao), the Rightists have had it. In one, maybe two years the Pathet Lao will have the entire country."

The U.S., however, will continue to try to prevent this from occurring. The Pathet Lao News Agency cited these two violations of the Agreements:

--U.S. continued to maintain thousands of military advisors in various disguises

--The U.S. continues to use it's aircraft to conduct reconnaissance flights over Lao territory, thus violating the sovereignty of Laos." (P.L.N.A. 6/6/74)

U.S. SABOTAGE ATTEMPTS

The Lao Patriots pointed out on July 12, that "At many secret meetings held recently, which were attended by military advisors of the U.S. and the Saigon administration, the Vientiane ultra-rightists made every effort to cook up the criminal schemes for a coup d'etat and the partitioning of Laos, with a view to sabotaging peace and national concord of Laos and opposing the Provisional National Union Government and National Political Consultative Council." (Hsinhua 7/12/74)

More reason for concern about possible U.S. attempts to disrupt the Coalition Government were evidenced by the recent release of an official document from the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO). It reported on financial aid progress in Laos. The Nixon administration has been trying to hide the fact that "Economic aid was (is) going only to refugees in villages in areas contained by the former Royal Lao Government." (New York Times, 6/24/74)

In violation of the Paris Agreement the U.S. has continued to ignore or sabotage the coalition government and "there has been no fundamental changes yet in the direction of the U.S. aid programs which continue to support a military focus and the geographical areas which are still contained by the Royal Lao faction." (N.Y. Times 6/24/74)

Each Newsletter we urge people to stay aware of the situation in Laos, to prepare for the potential re-intervention of the U.S. It becomes clearer all the time that our urging is justified. The situation throughout Indochina requires active vigilance on the part of all of us who understand that to support the right of the people of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam to self-determination means opposing all overt and "covert" schemes of U.S. Imperialism.



Laos

Ailing Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma, has officially named Pathet Lao leader and Vice-Premier, Phoumi Vongvichit, as acting Premier. This represents another severe defeat for the right-wing, who attempted to have the rightist Vice-Premier (there are two according to the Agreement), Leum Insixiengmay, named as acting Premier. Phoumi Vongvichit will lead the Coalition Government until Souvanna Phouma is completely recovered from the heart attack he suffered. (New York Times, 8/7/74)

CORRECTION: Both Joint National Political Council and National Coalition Political Council should read; NATIONAL POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, in the Laos section of the Newsletter.



SOUTH VIET NAM...



In a major victory, the House of Representatives voted by 233 to 157 to reduce military aid to Saigon to \$700 million. The vote cut by more than half the Administration's request of \$1.6 billion in military aid for Saigon and by \$380 million the ceiling set by the House of \$1 billion. The favorable vote increased the speculation that new attempts to cut aid even further would be made in the coming weeks. (New York Times, 8/7/74)

In a report issued by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the U.S. embassy in South Vietnam was accused of following Saigon's official line very closely and "to play down or ignore obvious cease-fire violations by (Saigon's) Armed Forces." The report also stated that the embassy is omitting parts of, or not filing at all reports that are adverse to the official line pushed by the U.S.-Thieu regime.

It's criticism continued, "It is difficult to reach any other conclusion than that the Fiscal year 1975 program is, in reality, a continuation of the post-aid strategy of supporting the [Saigon] economy with massive flows of outside resources in order to fill fiscal and trade deficits." (NY Times, 8/6/74)

Keep These Dates Open!

INTERNATIONAL WEEK OF CONCERN- SEPT. 29- OCTOBER 6

Tiger Cage actions... DEMONSTRATION- Sept. 28, Saturday, 3:00 pm, at Duffy Square, 45th & Broadway (near Times Square) Demands: AMNESTY FOR ALL WAR RESISTERS! IMPLEMENT THE PEACE AGREEMENT! END ALL AID TO THIEU & LON NOL! March to a War Corporation for direction action. For more information, please call- ISC, at 982-7162.

RUMMAGE SALE!

Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 7-8, 12-7 pm. AT Wash. Square Church, 135 West 4th St. Fundraiser for NYC-IPC and ISC. Anti-inflationary bargains in clothes, books, records, machines (such as typewriters, mimeos, etc). Please bring by any valuable things you can spare.

*** THANKS- THANKS- To all you who have returned your questionnaires and especially to those who have thought the Newsletter important enough to send us a contribution. Unfortunately, many people, including close friends, have not returned the questionnaire. We are sending this Newsletter to all our subscribers, but this will be the last time: YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE ANOTHER NEWSLETTER UNTIL YOU RETURN THE SLIP (in last month's Newsletter). If you did not get the questionnaire, or just began receiving the Newsletter, drop us a note and let us know.



INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

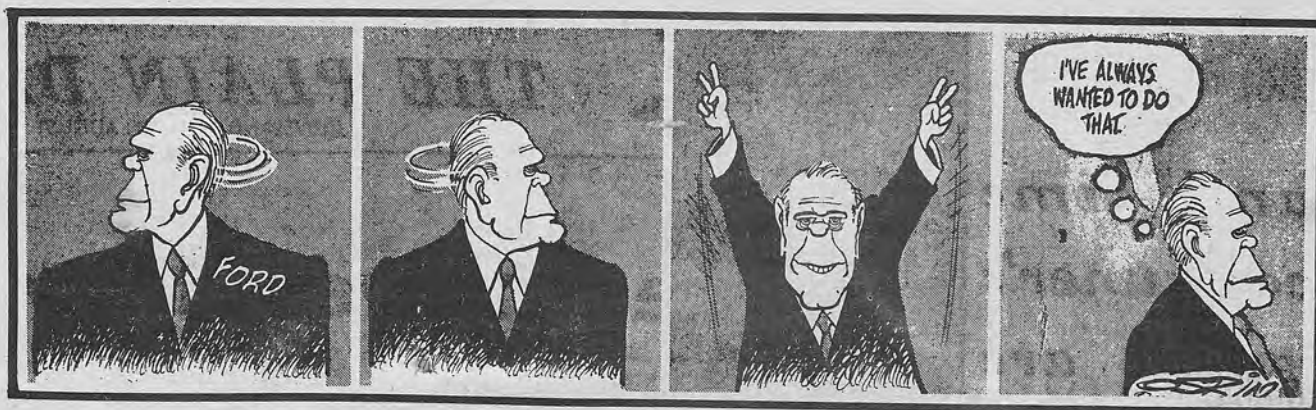
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VOL. II, No. 4

NEWSLETTER

September 20, 1974

Ford: The Same Idea!



End All Aid to Thieu and Lon Nol!

With Nixon out and Ford in, questions about the continuation of the war in Indochina are once again being asked. To date, there is no reason to believe that the Ford administration will effect any significant change in U.S. policy towards Indochina. "There has been and will be a continuity of American policy. Its basic objective does not alter whe there is a change in the White House. There will be a difference in style, certainly, and in eloquence, depending on the literary gimmicks of the speech writers. But the aspirations and the fundamentals are the constants that cannot be abandoned." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8/23/74)

Within hours of Ford's inaguration, statements of support and reassurance were sent out to the puppet regimes in Indochina. Wolfgang Lehmann, the U.S. Charge D'Affairs in Saigon, met with Saigon's Prime Mininster and Foreign Minister the very next day to deliver the following message: "The United States will continue its policy of close friendship with and support of the Republic of Vietnam [Saigon] including economic and military assistance to Vietnam." (*New York Times*, 8/10/74)

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Even U.S. Ambassador to Saigon, Graham Martin, has been detained despite recent disclosures of his role in altering reports to Washington by deleting mention of Saigon violations of the Peace Agreement. Martin is commonly referred to in the U.S. Press as "Saigon's ambassador to Saigon."

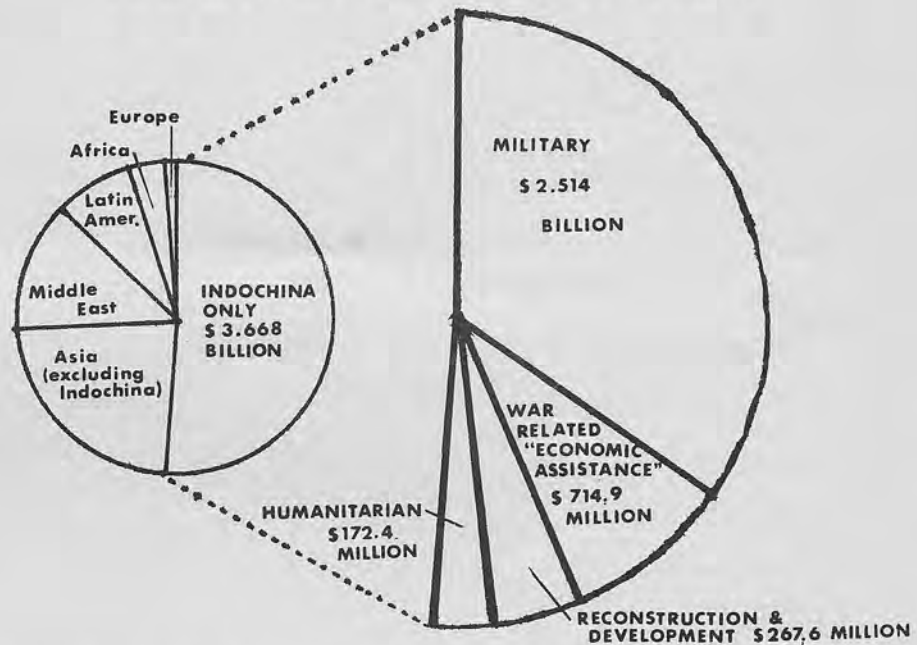
A quick look at Ford's record reveals his consistent support of Nixon's foreign policy. On 28 legislative moves to reduce military spending from 1971-73, Ford voted against 25 and was absent from 3; on 15 amendments to legislate an end to or limit of the U.S. combat role in Indochina, Ford voted against 14 and was absent on one. (*Syracuse Peace Council Newsletter, Sept, 1974*)

In recent weeks Ford has signaled a consolidation and retrenchment of U.S. policy in Indochina. On Sept. 11, Ford made a personal appeal to Congressional leaders to restore foreign aid cuts, in particular Military and economic aid to Indochina.

AMERICAN AID- FUEL FOR THE CONTINUING WAR

From the beginning of its involvement in Indochina, aid has been a major weapon in the U.S. arsenal. It began in 1950 when the U.S. started footing 80% of France's war to recolonize Indochina, and continues today as U.S. aid makes up over 90% of Saigon's budget and at least 95% of Phnom Penh's budget. The cost just in dollars to the American people has been enormous. From 1946 to 1971, foreign aid to South Vietnam cost over \$15 billion. Aid has increased from \$2.36 billion in 1971- a war year, to \$3.2 billion in 1974- a year of Peace! AND THEY SAY THE WAR IS OVER!

FY 1975 PROPOSED U.S. AID BY PRES. FORD.



The introduction of the Nixon Doctrine on Asia, and specifically the Vietnamization of the war, brought about enormous increases in aid allotments. No longer able to fight the war in traditional ways with ground troops, the U.S. had to foot the bill for building, supplying and advising the puppet armies in Indochina who were now going to "fight the war themselves". As the mercenary and puppet armies suffered one defeat after another, more and more money was poured in to increase their warmaking capabilities.

When the U.S. was forced to sign the Peace Agreement in 1973, Nixon did not accept defeat, he merely found new methods to carry on old schemes: to continue its neo-colonialist policy of permanently dividing Vietnam, and turning the South into a colony and military base, enabling the U.S. to maintain hegemony in the area.

Today both the Thieu and Lon Nol regimes are hooked to a continuous U.S. blood transfusion without which they would totally collapse. Two of the most widely used rationalizations for the continuance of aid to Indochina have been to stabilize the military situation to provide a basis for a political solution along the lines of the Paris Agreement, and to build a self-sufficient economy for South Vietnam and Cambodia. In Vietnam, contrary to their public position, the U.S. is well aware that its military and economic aid plays the key role in determining Thieu's policies. "In the popular drive for American disengagement from Indochina, the military aid program has been controversial especially because it has appeared to provide President Thieu with the power to re-

sist political compromise with the Communists as prescribed by the Paris Agreement." (New York Times, 8/9/74)

According to a report prepared by the Indochina Resource Center and NARMIC (National Action/Research of the Military Industrial Complex), "The Pentagon continues to finance all of Saigon's ammunition requirements and hires U.S. corporations to provide logistic support to run military bases and keep Saigon's planes tuned for battle. Without this backbone of American aid Thieu could neither continue fighting nor resist pressure to abide by the Agreement." (Military & Economic Aid to Indochina, Summer, 1974)

The virtually complete 'Americanization' of the economies of the Thieu and Lon Nol regimes--symbolized by airdrops of Hondas and whiskey to Phnom Penh and the replacement of labor-intensive rice cultivation in South Vietnam with technology-intensive "miracle rice", means the prevention of collapse and the maintenance of a "junkie-pusher" relationship. This is the goal of U.S. aid, not self-sufficiency. "To speak about American aid spawning economic development under existing conditions in South Vietnam ignores a basic economic principle. South Vietnam has a million men under arms. That nation's resources--human, monetary and productive--are military oriented. The inflation engendered thereby precludes any lasting development." (Whaler, Repb-Ohio, NY Times, 8/24)

It is a well-known fact that monies ear-marked for economic aid to Indochina are not used to benefit the people or build up the economy, but to pay soldiers and police in the employment of fascist dictatorships.

IS THE NIGHTMARE OVER?

"Assuming the U.S. presidency, Gerald Ford declared, 'Thank god our long nightmare is over.' Don't be optimistic too soon, Mr. Ford. Nixon has left, but his shadow still stretches over the United States and the traces of his sordid acts still remains in many countries..."

"Gerald Ford was right when he said that the wounds of Watergate are painful and poisonous to the United States. He was wrong when he said that these wounds are more painful and poisonous than those of foreign wars. Ford has completely forgotten the root cause of the present problems in the United States. It is not because of the Watergate



THE NIGHTMARE GOES ON

affair that hundreds of billions of dollars were wasted in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia and other places in the world where U.S. neo-colonialism has been bogged down. It was not because of the Watergate affair that hundreds of thousands of American youths were forced to die in Indochina. Before disclosures of the Watergate scandal, the U.S. economy was already in a critical situation: the dollar had been devalued twice, the rate of inflation was increasing at an alarming rate, and prices shot up at an annual rate of 44%.

"Although Ford has declared that the Nightmare is over, these realities still exist. Only when we find the root cause of an illness can we cure it. The Watergate affair is not the cause of the serious economic, political, financial and social crisis. The Watergate affair is not the cause of the heavy setbacks for U.S. neo-colonialism in Vietnam and other parts of the world. The Watergate affair is not the cause of the hatred of millions of people around the world for U.S. Imperialism." (PRG's- Liberation Radio, 8/12) The nightmare is still here for both the American people and the people of Indochina.

The Ford administration represents a change in spokesperson, not a change in the system of U.S. Imperialism. He has vowed to continue along 'the path to peace' begun by the Nixon administration. We know that means more war for Indochina and the rest of the Third World, and more repression for the American people. He says that if everyone unites and makes sacrifices, all "our" (?) problems will be solved. But the people did not cause the current problems, and they will not be solved by sacrifices we make. The war in Indochina was supposedly a "sacrifice" we had to make to protect "democracy". But the war was never in the people's interest, not during the Johnson or Nixon administrations and not now under Ford.

How can a government that puts people in jails like Attica and Con Son and pardons a criminal the likes of Nixon act in our interest. How can a government (the U.S.) whose economy suffers a 44% rate of inflation find it in the people's interest to send \$3.2 billion to a tin-horn, fascist dictator like Nguyen Van Thieu?

How can there be unity between the makers of these policies and the people who suffer under them? There won't be and there can't be because we have no interest in common.

We must make it clear that when Ford call for "National Unity", our unity is with the people of the world who are fighting against U.S. Imperialism and not those who perpetuate oppression and exploitation. When the people of Indochina are victorious, we share that victory, because they have defeated our common enemy: U.S. Imperialism.

We must not allow the "new image" at the White House to fool people into thinking the war is over and "peace at hand". We must continue to fight for an end to all aid for the Thieu and Lon Nol dictatorships and the complete implementation of the Paris Peace Agreement.



South Viet Nam



PRG RETALIATES FOR SAIGON LAND-GRABBING

In the heaviest fighting since the 1972 offensive, the People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF) has continued to launch major counter-attacks against Saigon violations of the Vietnam Peace Agreement.

The heaviest fighting is taking place near Ben Cat on highway 13 and just south of Da Nang:

"The Thieu regime has deployed large forces in the Ben Cat area and in Quang Nam, Quang Ngai and Quang Da provinces. Thieu's troops have swept and bulldozed millions of acres of ricelands and orchards, and devastated a great number of villages and hamlets. U.S. MILITARY ADVISORS were directly engaged in drafting plans and directing these acts of war carried out by the Thieu regime." (PRG's Liberation Radio, 8/8/74)

While Thieu and his immediate boss, U.S. Ambassador to Saigon, Graham Martin, continue to clamor about a "North Vietnamese and Viet Cong offensive" that has never materialized, numerous Western sources have confirmed PRG statements that Saigon is responsible for the upsurge in fighting:

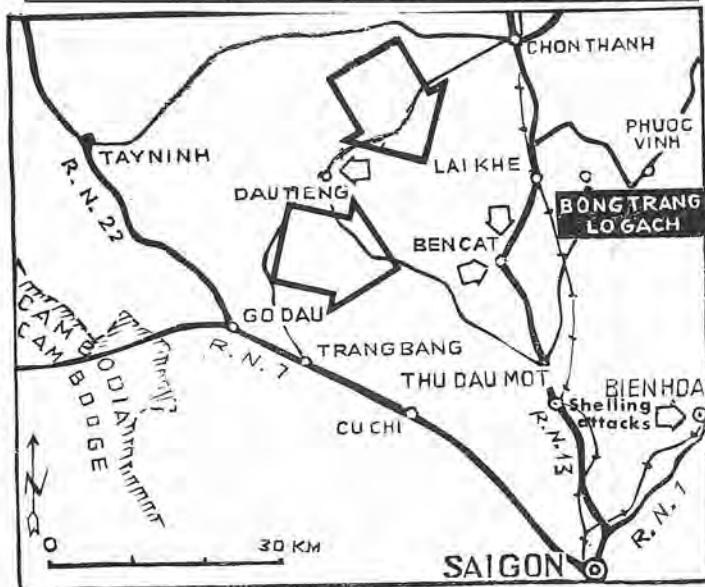
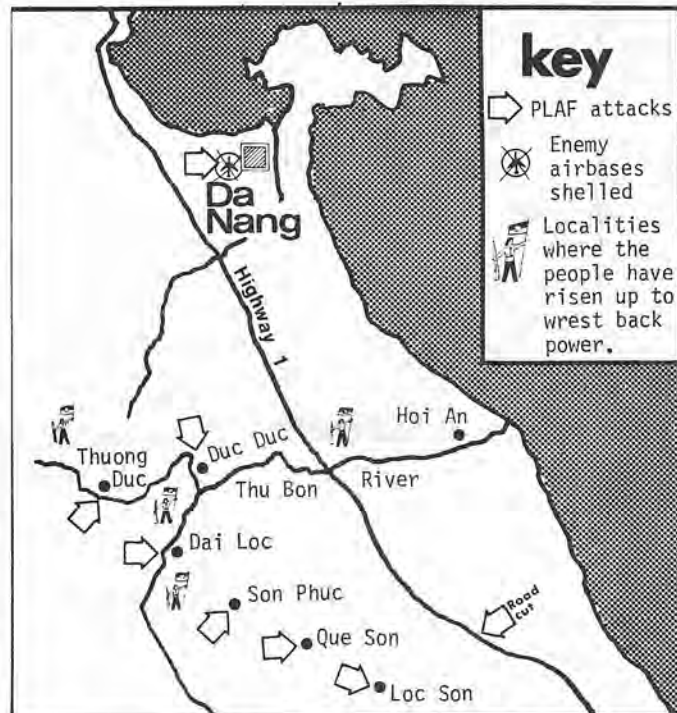
"...the [Saigon] government did, in fact, set up hilltop outposts after the ceasefire went into effect, and this was a military measure intended to disrupt Communist [PRG] efforts to gather the important rice crop in the Queson valley area, 20 miles south of Da Nang." (Washington Post, 8/6/74)

"The Saigon government, not wanting to return refugees to Vietcong territory, sent its forces on sweeps, known as pacification, through Vietcong zones. But Communist [PLAF] forces have recently pushed back, overrunning numerous government outposts, and reasserting control over much of the land." (NY Times, 8/23/74)

"Said one Saigon Analyst, 'What we are seeing is first an attempt to roll back pacification...They [the PRG] are attempting to regain the territory which they claim was theirs or which in fact was theirs at the time of the signing of the Peace Agreement.'" (Christain Science Monitor, 9/4/74)

In our last Newsletter, we mentioned that Saigon had set up 10,000 illegal bases and outposts in the Liberated Zone since the Peace Agreement was signed. It was from these outposts that 'pacification' and 'land-grabbing' operations were launched.

Fed up with Thieu's violations and escalations of the war, PRG forces retaliated with full strength. On August 6, the district capital of Thuong Duc (Quang Nam province) fell



to the PLAF. In retaliation Thieu ordered savage bombing raids against the Liberated Zone. On the 6th and 7th of August, 40 Saigon fighter-bombers hit the PRG city of Loc Ninh. Napalm and anti-personnel pellet bombs were used in the raids. Schools, churches, pagodas, hospitals and a large number of houses were hit, killing and wounding more than 300 people. New F-5E planes (recently sent over by the U.S. in violation of the Peace Agreement) took part in the raids, and WERE FLOWN BY AMERICAN PILOTS. (*Vietnam News Agency, 8/7/74*) At the same time, the U.S. sent the aircraft carrier, Ranger, into Vietnam's territorial waters just off the coast of Dinh Binh province.

But despite these war provocations and Thieu's idol threat to "tear up the Peace Agreement" if any other population centers fell, the PLAF continued their counter-offensive. In response to the Loc Ninh bombing, the PLAF shelled Bien Hoa air base (from where the raids were flown) for three consecutive weeks, seriously hampering air operations in the area (*Wash. Post, 9/5/74*) On August 19, another District capital, Minh Long, fell and the next day the town of Mang Buk in the Central Highlands was captured, and Highway One, 100 miles south of Da Nang, was cut by the Liberation Forces.

According to the PRG, since the beginning of July 1450 Saigon military outposts and bases and scores of villages and hamlets have been overrun by the PLAF; many more- including 500 in the Mekong Delta- have simply been abandoned by Saigon. Over 200,000 people have been freed from Thieu's concentration camps and 'Strategic Hamlets' and nearly all the land lost to Saigon since the Peace Agreement was signed, has been recovered. (*Hsinhua, 9/7/74*)

WHY THIEU CONTINUES THE WAR

The Thieu regime with U.S. backing continues to violate the Peace Agreement and escalate the war, in an attempt to wipe out the basic reality recognized by the Agreement: *the existence in South Vietnam of two armies, two administrations, and two zones of control.* Through its land-grabbing operations and terror (pacification) raids on PRG villages, Saigon is attempting to steal as much PRG land as possible, and to force people under PRG control into concentration camps near the highways and major towns.

Another reason for the land-grabbing is to resettle the millions of refugees, living off U.S. aid handouts in Thieu's concentration camps. Though Article 11 of the Peace Agreement calls for "*freedom of movement between the two zones in South Vietnam*", Thieu has vowed to 'shoot to death any refugees attempting to go home to their native villages in the Liberated Zone. Thieu will only let the peasants back on the land if he controls it. His current 'Land Reclamation Policy' is nothing more than an attempt to steal PRG land and forcibly relocate refugees. This plan has backfired as Thieu suffers one military defeat after another and the PRG continues to control most of the countryside.



ECONOMY DETERIORATES...

With movement restricted and the cities cut off from the rice-growing countryside, the masses of people under Thieu's control are forced to live in increasing misery. Production continues to break down; taxes, prices and the cost of living soar sky high. In the cities, 40% of all commercial and industrial enterprises have gone bankrupt. The textile industry has decreased production by 50-60%. Because so many peasants were

forced off the land, one of the richest rice-growing areas in the world will import more than 400,000 tons of rice from the U.S. this year. (*Hsinhua*, 8/29/74) As a result of all this, the unemployment rate in the Saigon-controlled zone has risen to more than 40% with one million workers unemployed.

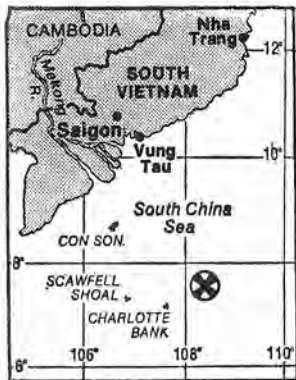
Since the beginning of the year, the piastre (Saigon currency) has been devalued a record eight times and Saigon newspapers report that the price of many essential items has increased as much as 200%. In the past year, the cost of living in Saigon went up 110%.

Because of these soaring prices and inflation more than 40% of the students have had to quit school. Some 60-70% of the people are going hungry or literally starving to death. (*Statement by 301 South Vietnamese priests sent to the Vatican on August 17, 1974*) It is estimated that over 500,000 children in the cities are forced to live on the streets or in parks, begging and stealing for their food. Because of this pervasive malnutrition, typhoid fever, malaria, scarlet fever, diphtheria and pneumonia are widespread. In the first half of this year, 400 children were treated for typhoid fever in the city of Saigon alone.

(*Hsinhua News Agency*, 8/12/74)



Faced with this deteriorating economic situation, Thieu is grasping for any straw in the wind, such as his hope that the recent oil discovery far offshore will lure foreign investment and prove to be the economic salvation for his regime. But American oil executives have stressed that "...months of further drilling and testing will be required before they can tell whether the oil reserves would prove large enough to have commercial value. 'We haven't even reached the stage where we know whether we've found anything or not,' he said." (*NY Times*, 8/29/74)



The New York Times/Aug. 29, 1974
Cross marks area where oil traces were found.

...REPRESSION...

Another way Thieu is attempting to overcome his economic problems is by increasing taxes ten-fold and bleeding the people of every penny they have. Recently Thieu passed a new law called 'Compensation for Encroachment on Roadways' (?) and ordered anyone with a house, shop or building facing a street to pay an extra 40,000-50,000 piastres in back taxes. (*Giai Phong News Agency*, 7/31/74)

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Despite the fact that Ambassador Martin told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on August 16 that there were absolutely "no political prisoners in South Vietnam", the *New York Times* carried a three-part series two days later with vivid description of the Saigon prison system as told by former political prisoners and their relatives, and the friends and families of current political prisoners. The author of the article, David Shipler, describes how people in the cities are randomly swept off the street, processed through the courts without a lawyer, witnesses or even cross-examination, and then sent off to jail indefinitely to face torture and brutality by police and prison guards. While claiming that many of the prisoners are 'communist infiltrators' and 'subversives', the article also points out that many "...peasants...union leaders...poets and writers... student activists...journalists...politicians...Roman Catholic priests and Buddhist monks who have simply opposed U.S. policy and called for peace" are also imprisoned. (*New York Times*, 8/18/74)

When Shipler asked a high-ranking officer of the Special Branch of the Saigon National Police if there were any opponents of Thieu who were not Communists but simply neutralist the official replied with an emphatic no, and said that neutralism "was just a cover" for Communist subversion. At the end, Shipler is forced to conclude that "To Saigon, all dissenters are foes, all foes are Reds." (*New York Times*, 8/20/74)

CORRUPTION RAMPANT

Corruption has been a 'fact of life' in Saigon since U.S. intervention began in the early 1950's, creating a whole class of Vietnamese completely dependent on the U.S. dollar.

With the withdrawal of U.S. troops, Congressional aid cuts, the energy crisis and massive inflation, the amount of U.S. dollars in South Vietnam has dropped drastically, and a dog-eat-dog situation now prevails in the cities.

In the past month, our (ISC's) office has been flooded with reports and documents of the rampant corruption that has accompanied the deteriorating economic situation in the Saigon-controlled zones. Though we have neither the space nor time to put all of them in this Newsletter, we can cite a few examples:

**In one case, two Saigon newspapers reported that new A-37 jet-fighters recently sent by the U.S. to Saigon are being dismantled and sold for scrap metal on the black market. According to *Dan Chu*, Thieu's official party paper, a police raid uncovered an illegal scrap metal depot filled with military equipment. Among the items found were the wings of at least 15 A-37 aircraft (worth \$500,000 each). (*Liberation News Service*, 8/10/74) According to U.S. Congressman, Les Aspin (Dem.-Wis), "As soon as we send them something, they tear it apart and sell it on the black market for scrap. The South Vietnamese generals are getting rich and we're being played for patsies." (*Washington Post*, 8/11/74)

**Thieu officials and members of the National Assembly were caught syphoning off no less than 150,000 tons of fertilizer from normal distribution channels. Bags of fertilizer sold on the black market were often three times as expensive as bags of rice. (*Indochina Resource Report*, 8/28/74)

**Foreign agencies are going into orphanages and even private homes and, with money provided by the U.S. Congress, are buying babies and sending them to distant shores. According to the Saigon paper, *Dien Tin*, a wholesale "baby market" has been established, and babies are actually being kidnapped out of maternity wards for sale overseas. (6/21/74)

...RESISTANCE

Despite the repression and constant fear of arrest and imprisonment, the people in the cities are taking to the streets and fighting back.

Worker demonstrations continue to mount. More than 12,000 building workers, 5,000 transport workers and 6,000 rice mill workers held demonstrations and protests recently, demanding an end to job lay-offs, harassment and repression by the Thieu regime. (*Hsin-hua News Agency*, 9/10/74)

On August 17, 301 Roman Catholic priests issued a manifesto called *Public Indictment Number One*, accusing the Thieu regime of total corruption, and demanding full implementation of the Peace Agreement. Said one priest, "The Buddhists overthrew Diem in 1963, now it's time for the Catholics to do something about Thieu." (*Wash. Post*, 9/15/74)

On Sept. 8, the Catholic priests- most of whom are extremely conservative and former supporters of Thieu- organized a mass demonstration in the city of Hue, bringing thousands of people out into the streets. The demonstrators were attacked by teargas throwing-club swinging police and many were injured, including an opposition Senator and the leader of the anti-corruption movement, Fr. Tran Huu Thanh.

Several days later, An Quang Buddhists bitterly attacked Thieu, charging him with 9 personal corruption and deliberate failure to move towards a real peace. They announced the formation of an organization called *The Forces for National Reconciliation*, and demanded that Thieu form immediately the National Council of Reconciliation and Concord as called for by the Peace Agreement.

On Sept. 14, another demonstration was called by the Catholic priests and was supported by Buddhists and all sections of the population. More than 5,000 people attended. The same day, a committee of politicians, publishers and journalists began a campaign for freedom of the press. At a seminar organized by the committee, one editor "defiantly burned copies of South Vietnam's press laws" to protest Thieu's censorship policies. (*New York Times*, 9/15/74) The publisher of the Catholic opposition newspaper, *Hoa Binh*, threatened to burn himself alive to protest censorship. In a meeting on Sept. 14, 300 journalists, politicians and writers declared, "To have freedom of press we've got to overthrow the regime, and not just the press code." (*Washington Post*, 9/15/74)

It is becoming increasingly clear that the U.S. regards Thieu as a liability rather than an asset in the current situation, and that his days as dictator and No. 1 U.S. henchman are numbered. The whole scenario looks strikingly familiar to the days just before the fall of the Diem regime. For the first time since the signing of the Peace Agreement, *Radio Hanoi* is calling for Thieu's ouster, and his replacement by a Saigon regime that will respect the Peace Agreement, signaling a reassessment of the DRV and PRG's decision.



The growing internal opposition, economic strife and military losses, coupled with world condemnation point to the inevitable downfall of the Thieu regime in the very near future, and spell a severe setback for U.S. neocolonialism.

STATEMENT AGAINST A CORRUPT, UNJUST AND DEGENERATE SOCIETY

The following statement was sent to Cardinal Rossi in August by 30 Catholic priests, some of whom are members of the Anti-Corruption Committee to save the Country and Re build Peace, the Thanh Hoa area Churches, the Dong Chau Cuu Monastery and the Pen-Club.

In unison with religious leaders, peoples of all classes and organizations concerned about the decline of South Vietnamese society due to corruption and injustice:

As persons spiritually responsible for the faithful of the Church as well as their rights as citizens:

We the priests who have signed our names, believe:

1. The degeneration of South Vietnamese society today, especially in the form of corruption perpetrated by persons in responsible positions, has caused a great decline in our country. Selfishness and indifference to the common good has caused the Bishops' Committee of Current Affairs in Vietnam to raise its voice to the state. "Corruption is beneficial to a limited number of persons. At the same time the majority suffers in anger. This corruption will prevent the development of the nation, betray the sacrifices of persons who sincerely serve the country, and undermine the confidence of the people in the authorities. During war in an underdeveloped country, one has to accept the hard life, but nobody will accept it when the majority are poor while a few high-ranking persons accumulate wealth through dishonesty."

2. "Political corruption and selfishness" causes powerful persons to accept their positions as legitimate means for making money in any way possible. As in a shoddy business society, if the base of its leaders is founded on corruption then the entire society becomes corrupted.

This situation of buying and selling power in the administration and the military has caused "society to become a battlefield without truce or love" and "the expansion of evil into the art of acquiring money."

Under the protection of the powerful, drug traffic, gambling, prostitution and smuggling abound as never before in Vietnam. Mugging, robbing, and raping are such that no citizen feels secure. Using the force of political bias the Government causes Nationalist forces to become passive, indifferent and surrendering of their opposition. Thus, trust between the people and government is lost and replaced by dishonest bartering. In this situation the institution of law becomes a mere decoration and members of the Assembly and Constitutional Government become tools of the system.

Using the institution of law, the Government disregards citizen's rights, continually increases taxes, prints more money to cover inflation which increases a hundred billion piastres per year because the Government wastes too much money, continually increases the cost of living, devalue the piastre and corrupts the national economy.

3. Rice, fertilizer, sterilizers, gas, and medicine have been controlled by the "Mafia" within the Government who collaborate with dishonest businesspersons to store these items in warehouses for speculation. This exacerbates the situation for the poor by causing higher prices in the market. Thus, the rich become richer and the poor, poorer.

This policy of "surround the enemy's economy" forces citizens to pay extremely high prices for rice which is sold at the same time to the other side. The result is the people who are losing billions of piasters into the hands of corrupt officers, especially thousands of persons in the Central Vietnam are forced to eat banana stuff, and cactus which causes poisoning in many families.

The increase in tax gas has greatly increased the price of gas. This in turn has decreased and paralyzed the agriculture and fishing industries. The people's daily life which is already bad becomes worse. More persons are unemployed, unaided by the Government. Even persons employed dread the coming of each new day. The majority of people live in misery due to increasing prices and irresponsibility on the part of the Government. Famine threatens everyone.

4. The corrupt system of power brands persons as "Communists" or "Communist-sympathizers" in order to suppress dissent. Other persons who expose the true face of the Government are accused of hurting the military struggle. Corruption destroys the love between the people and the army and brotherhood within the army.

One cause of corruption is too much power invested in one person and power issuing from central headquarters out to the local areas is always controlled by the military. The anti-communist dependant on the gun and the grenade has not succeeded for 20 years and will never succeed, on the contrary it will continue the death and the suffering of the people.

Peace, the only wish of our people, will never occur in this corrupt and unjust situation, as the Pope said on World Peace Day January 1, 1974: "Peace will never exist if there is a lack of the real desire for peace and it will take much effort to make peace, protect the witness, help the poor..."

In our country the situation of corruption not only ignores principles for true peace, as defined by the Pope, but the government uses the military, special police, and civil servants to destroy the people's lives; that is one of the dangers causing the loss of a country, as pointed out by the Pope.

WE, IN UNISON REQUEST

- 1) No acceptance of present corruption, injustice and degeneracy in society.
- 2) Invite all the faithful to make a REVOLUTION for a healthy society, which our honorable Bishop has called for, and to realize a new society with JUSTICE and FREEDOM, to bring together and protect the happiness of persons of all classes of life in any circumstance of life.
- 3) To build the REVOLUTION many honest persons, patriots, persons with a spirit of sacrifice, and a Government honest with the people are needed. Severity and justice must stem from the Government. If one is not severe he is not feared; if one is not just he is not respected.

We pray and request that God will make us strong to change ourselves and then society for the purpose of reform, reconciliation, and concord for our country.

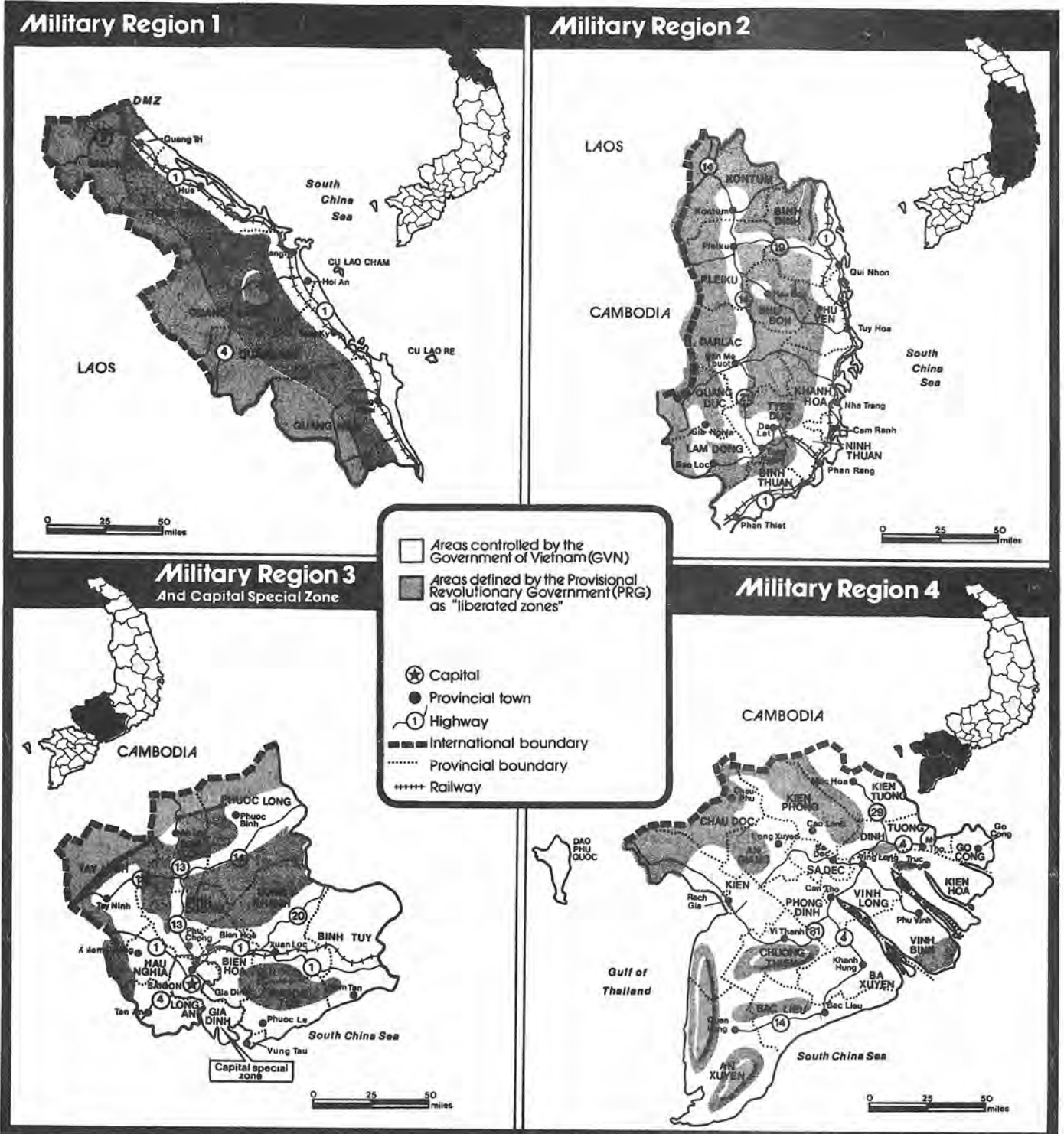
PEACE AND UNIFICATION FOR OUR COUNTRY, HAPPINESS AND ENRICHMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE.

Saigon, June, 1974

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South Vietnam, 1974

The following is a map taken from *Far Eastern Economic Review*, delineating the two zones of control in the Four Military Regions of South Vietnam. Though there may be a few minor differences with PRG maps, on the whole it is precise and accurate. It clearly shows the strength of the PRG, and the reality recognized by the Paris Peace Agreement: that there are, in fact, *two zones of control in South Vietnam*.



During the opening session of this year's UN General Assembly in late September, Phoumi Vongvichit, Lao Patriotic Front (LPF) leader and acting prime minister of Laos, addressed the assembly as the legitimate Laotian representative. Vongvichit's official diplomatic presence at the UN is a great victory for the patriotic forces of Laos, and a blow against US imperialism in Indochina.

Vongvichit has held his position as acting prime minister and thus head of the Provisional Government of National Union (PGNU) for almost seven weeks. He was appointed by Souvanna Phouma on August 8 before the prime minister left for France to recuperate from his recent heart attack.



Phoumi Vongvichit on his arrival in the Liberated Zone after signing the Protocol on Sept. 14, 1973

The PGNU and the National Political Consultative Council (NPCC) are Laos' two co-equal governing bodies. Their formation was stipulated in the Lao Peace Agreement. The PGNU is responsible for carrying out Laos' political program. The NPCC, headed by LPF chairman, prince Souphanouvong, recommends the political program.

According to an August 23 article in *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)*, the US-backed right-wing in Laos initially opposed the appointment of an LPF member to the country's leading governmental position. But within a few days, one Western diplomat told FEER that "however odd it might seem, the Right may be happier with Phoumi in the chair than they would be with Leuam (the right-wing education minister). They might prefer a fairly active Phoumi to a fairly incompetent Leuam."



Laos

With the strength of the people forcing the rightists to implement some of the Agreement, Laos has increased diplomatic activities and reconstruction aid talks. As part of an Indochina tour, a Swedish delegation led by secretary of state of the ministry for foreign affairs, Lenart Klackenborg, paid an official visit to Laos on August 21 and 22, at the invitation of the PGNU.

Phoumi Vongvichit met the delegation and held a banquet in its honor, (*Hsinhua* 8/27/74). Talks were also held with the Lao minister of economy and planning, reportedly on economic cooperation between the two countries.

Earlier, Laos received a complete printing plant from the People's Republic of China. (*Laos News* 8/14/74)

Throughout the summer, LPF members in the coalition government have been struggling to bring about diplomatic recognition of the PRG of SVN by Laos. In a July interview with UPI, Vongvichit commented on the significance of this struggle, "...the PRG has proposed to the Lao Government that the two sides would extend mutual recognition and establish diplomatic relations.

"The ministers of the LPF in the government and myself favor the recognition of the PRG and the establishment of diplomatic relations with it in accordance with the PGNU's policy of neutrality and non-interference..." (*Lao News*, 7/17/74)

A SELF-RELIANT ECONOMY

A major concern confronting the Provisional Government in Laos, has been the development and reconstruction of the economy damaged by the US war of aggression.

In an August 27 editorial, the Pathet Lao newspaper stated that Laos must develop its national economy independently and through self-reliance.

The editorial went on to point out that the present economic difficulties will only

be solved by carrying out this line of independence as formulated in the political program adopted by the NPCC.

Self-reliance was defined as first relying on Laos' own strength and capacity to exploit the country's rich natural resources and then to develop step by step the national economy, consequently seeking economic and technical aid from friendly countries without attached conditions. Further, the political program stipulates that Laos should in no way depend on the foreign aid, because such dependence would turn the national economy into a colonialist one.



Women digging irrigation canal in the Liberated Zone.

In an August 23 interview with *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Phoumi Vongvichit stated "the struggle of the Lao people has brought independence to Laos. But," Vongvichit added, "Laos' independence remains to be consolidated because it is not yet independent economically but still depends on foreign countries..." (*Hsinhua*, 8/27/74)

RECENT SABOTAGE ATTEMPTS

The Lao people have shown wide support for the recommendations of the NPCC. Tens of thousands of people recently demonstrated in support of the political program of the NPCC, demanding that it be implemented by the PGNU. According to LPF radio, the thousands of army personnel, and people in the liberated areas in Sam Neua, Xieng Khoang, Udomsay, Savannakhet, Tavenok, Attopeu, and Siphandong provinces also condemned the US-backed ultra-rightists for plotting to sabotage the PGNU and NPCC.

One of the most widely exposed attempts to sabotage the coalition government was reported by LPF radio, *Khosan Pathet Lao (KPL)* and *FEER*. The minister of education, Leuam Insisiengmay, a US-supported reactionary, attempted in mid-summer to rally rightists and pro-rightist elements into a Vientiane Side Front. But the ultra-rightists' maneuvers were defeated by the support of the people for the coalition government. The Vientiane Side Front was never formed.

Thailand remains a base for US operations against Laos. In late July, 120 Thai mercenaries were brought into Laos by the US to bolster the troops of the Vientiane rightists. (*Lao News*, 8/14/74). Both the *Washington Post* (8/31/74) and the *Viet Nam News Agency* charge that the US-CIA has smuggled 3,000 of General Vang Pao's "special forces" into Thailand for military training.



120 Thai mercenaries to be released by Pathet Lao this month

Specific sabotage attempts would make a lengthy list. But to name a few, refugees are still forced to remain in the US concentration camps in Laos and not allowed to return to their ancestral homes in direct violation of the Agreement (*Lao News* 7/24/74); and reconnaissance flights - spy missions have not yet ceased.

Clearly as we said in past newsletters, we must not forget Laos. The US has not given up its objectives of turning Laos into a neo-colony and military base from which it can dominate that part of the world. Rather, the recent gains of the coalition government are an example of the victories

Lao people (and all progressive people) have won - the US has been forced to reconcile with these gains. As long as the US government continues its systematic sabotage and violations of the agreements, we must continue our struggle to force full implementation of the agreements.

FLASH BULLETIN...

LAST US POW RELEASED FROM LAOS

As we go to press, Emmet Kay, the last US POW was released by the LPF, on September 19, after 16 months as a prisoner. Kay was forced to land in northern Laos, in 1973, while he was a pilot for the CIA airlines Air America and Air Continental. Kay was quoted by the British pilot who picked him up at Sam Neua as now being against the war in Indochina. Kay said he was "treated very, very well," and that he would



Emmet Kay just before his departure for Vientiane.

"work toward peace in Indochina," as he was now opposed to US intervention there and fully supported the Indochinese people in "their struggle for peace." (*New York Times*, 9/19/74)

News from Cambodia

LIBERATION FORCES GAIN, MOVE TOWARD FINAL VICTORY



Despite the heavy monsoon rains, the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF) have continued their offensive against the U.S.-supported Lon Nol regime. During the summer Phnom Penh troops attempted several counter-offensives, trying to reopen the highways and waterways that have been cut for more than a year. But all ended in total disaster. In the month of August alone, over 7,000 puppet soldiers were killed, wounded or captured. (*Hsinhua News Agency*, 9/7/74)

The capital's (Phnom Penh's) defense perimeter has shrunk to only a few miles in every direction. Heavy fighting is taking place to the west and northwest of the capital. According to reports from Phnom Penh, this "places Pochentung Airport, 7 miles west of the heart of the capital, in danger from either shelling or direct attack." (*Far Eastern Economic Review- FEER*, 9/6/74)

Strategic targets in the capital itself have been under continuous shelling by the CPNLAF. Rockets have scored direct hits on the homes and offices of leading Phnom Penh officials. On August 15, the Liberation Forces pounded Chamcar Mon, the Presidential palace, killing and wounding 60 elite palace guards. Fearing for his life, Lon Nol has mobilized many of his troops in an effort to force the CPNLAF out of shelling range of the capital. But so far, Phnom Penh troops have not even been able to find the location of the CPNLAF artillery bases. (*AKI*, 8/31/74)



CPNLAF gunners aiming at targets in the Capital.

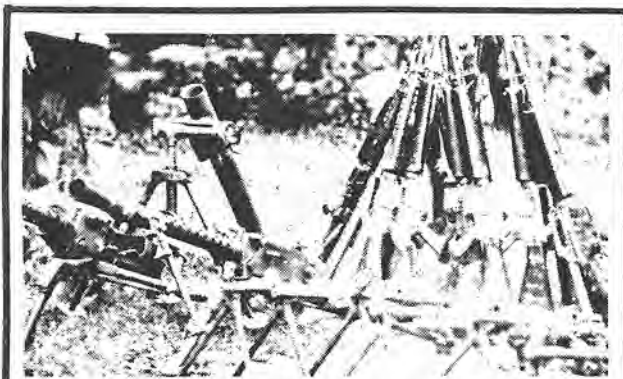
RIVER CONVOYS ATTACKED

Some of the most important battles are currently being fought for control of Cambodia's waterways. The Tonle Sap river has been cut by the CPNLAF since March. The Bassac and especially the Mekong River, Phnom Penh's last major supply artery, have come under increasing attack. From early July to mid-August, the CPNLAF sunk or heavily damaged 116 ships attempting to resupply Phnom Penh. Tens of thousands of tons of war materials and other supplies have either been captured or destroyed by the Liberation Forces. (AKI, 8/24/74) On August 10, a convoy of 14 vessels was attacked by the CPNLAF; several ships were damaged and a large Danish freighter was sunk. On August 20, two ships carrying a large supply of fuel, rice, tractors and ammunition up the Mekong was seized, and 40 Lon Nol soldiers were taken prisoner. (Hsinhua News Agency, 9/1/74)

There have also been reports that the CPNLAF is massing troops along the Mekong, and preparing for decisive attacks to totally shut down the river within the year. If this happens, there will be no other way for Phnom Penh to adequately supply itself, and Lon Nol's regime would crumble in a matter of days.



The handful of cities still controlled by Lon Nol remain encircled and isolated from each other, accessible only by air. A striking example of the battlefield situation is the CPNLAF siege of the town of Kompong Seila, on Highway 4: "No one has been able to leave the town since May. They [the Liberation Forces] bombard the town daily with mortar, rocket and cannon fire. Sometimes it is as little as ten or twenty shells, but more often the figure runs to several hundred." According to the report, U.S. air drops of supplies take place every day, "...but most are made from too great a height for accuracy due to heavy ground fire. As much as 50% of all medical supplies, food and ammunition have been falling outside the perimeter into Khmer Rouge [CPNLAF] hands." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 9/13/74) When the siege began, there were over 2,000 Phnom Penh troops in Kompong Seila. There are now less than 800 able-bodied soldiers left. (NY Times, 8/16/74)



U.S. made weapons captured by the CPNLAF. According to Sihanouk, "The U.S. Government is the No. 1 supplier of arms to the FUNK."

Vast tracks of land are now liberated, and the Liberation Forces have moved to within 3 miles of the town of Mongkol Borei, and are closing in on Battambang city. (AKI, 8/22/74)

IN THE PHNOM PENH-CONTROLLED ZONE

The Phnom Penh economy increasingly resembles a junkie searching desperately for some source of revenue so it can get a fix and get itself back together.

Since the CIA-engineered coup in March, 1970 that put Lon Nol in power, inflation has averaged 300% yearly. The exchange rate for the riel (Cambodian currency) was 35 to a dollar in 1970. In only four years, the riel has been devalued repeatedly to an exchange

rate of 1400 riels to a dollar. (AKI, 8/31/74) For the same period rice, Cambodia's staple food, has rocketed from 400 to 25,000 riels for 100 kilos. The cost of living has gone from 60 to 3,000 riels a day. Even people with the more "prestigious" jobs such as teachers make only 15,000 a month. (Hsinhua, 8/17/74)

The only thing that keeps Lon Nol in power is the huge dosages of U.S. aid that keeps pouring in. According to a U.N. report, the Gross National Product of Lon Nol's regime is less than \$1 billion. Foreign aid- almost all from the U.S.- accounts for more than \$700 million.. This illustrates the total bankruptcy and dependency of the Phnom Penh regime on the U.S.

LON NOL STEPS UP TERROR AND REPRESSION

As Phnom Penh's military situation disintegrates, its attacks on the people under its control grow more and more desperate.

The press-ganging of civilians into the army has increased to over 400 a week. (Wash. Post, 8/16/74) On August 25, a new law was passed by Phnom Penh's National Assembly legalizing the bounty-hunting of children and youth. According to the law, the government will pay people to round up youth and turn them in to the police, to be drafted into the army. (AKI, 9/3/74)

As in Saigon, corruption has become a major problem. As doomsday for Lon Nol comes closer, Phnom Penh generals have begun looting many national monuments of their treasures and selling them to foreigners at prices infinitesimal to their worth.

Extorting bribes is as old as the war itself. *"On all Cambodian roads, soldiers and military police at checkpoints extort bribes from people carrying goods to market, a practice so common (in Phnom Penh zones) that it has almost become a national custom."* (New York Times, 8/8/74)

THE PEOPLE FIGHT BACK

The people in Phnom Penh have come to realize more and more that the source of their poverty and misery is the Lon Nol clique and their bosses, U.S. Imperialism. Workers in Phnom Penh have held demonstrations and strikes recently to denounce the closing down of factories, rice hoarding and the forcible conscription of layed-off workers into the puppet army. Factory workers in Sihanoukville and Battambang city walked off their jobs and held demonstrations when Phnom Penh's Minister of Industry came through for inspection visits. The workers demanded an increase in their wages, the lowering of prices and a reduction in working hours. (Hsinhua, 9/13/74)

Yukonthor high school, a center of anti-Lon Nol activities and scene of the death of two Phnom Penh officials this past summer (see June Newsletter), has been transformed by Lon Nol into military barracks for puppet troops. In response, students from nine high schools in Phnom Penh held a demonstration and vowed to prevent the takeover of any of their schools by the army. In addition the teacher's strike and student boycotts of classes continued in protest against the illegal arrests and detention of students involved in demonstrations against the Lon Nol regime over the summer. These demonstrations are expected to intensify with the death and prison sentences given to 12 students by a military tribunal for the death of the Phnom Penh Education Minister and his deputy last June.



Recent student demonstrations in Phnom Penh against Lon Nol regime

U.S. 'QUIETLY' CONTINUES INTERVENTION

It is a well known fact that Lon Nol couldn't last a week without U.S. support. A recent staff report released by the House Foreign Affairs Committee admitted that "*Beset militarily, riven by internal political divisions, and lacking a firm sense of purpose, the Lon Nol Government in Phnom Penh is fully dependent on the military and economic assistance from the United States...If that aid were removed, the present government would fall and the Khmer Communists [i.e.- FUNK] could well prevail in a short time.*" (*Guardian*, 8/21/74)

The report also cited that U.S. planes stationed in Thailand are an integral part of airdrops to the surrounded and isolated cities still controlled by the Lon Nol regime. On August 17, a U.S. C-130 cargo plane flying over Angkor Wat on its way to drop supplies to puppet troops in a nearby Provincial capital was shot down by CPNLF artillery. (*NY Times*, 8/18/74)



According to the *Michigan Free Press*, people in contact with families of U.S. servicemen stationed in Thailand have learned that the U.S. has secretly resumed the illegal bombing of Cambodia. "*According to these sources, the bombing runs, carried out from U.S. bases in Thailand, are concealed in official records as 'reconnaissance missions', but they are actually full-scale aggressive military operations.*" The same article also carried a report on an "*Operation Eagle Pull*", which involves a force of 5,000 marines that has been maintained at full alert all summer long aboard aircraft carriers off the coast of Cambodia. (*MFP*, 9/1/74) All these actions are clear indications that no matter what 'laws' are passed, U.S. Imperialism has no intention of abandoning its neo-colonialist designs for Cambodia.

BATTLE AT THE U.N.

Major U.S. diplomatic efforts are under way in an attempt to retain Lon Nol's seat at the United Nations. The question of who is the legitimate representative of Cambodia will be voted on in the U.N. General Assembly this fall. Last year, the U.S. was able to delay the vote on this question when it pulled a 'sneak' vote to postpone the debate till this year, while many of the GRUNK's supporters were out of the Assembly attending other meetings. According to a former representative of the Lon Nol regime to the U.N., the puppets were only able to keep their seat last year through bribery by buying votes of unscrupulous representatives of some nations to the U.N. at \$5,000 a head. Following these disclosures, the same diplomat defected to the FUNK (National United Front of Cambodia) in June this year.

Many people, including some supporters of the GRUNK and FUNK have continued to call it 'a Government-in-exile' or 'Sihanouk's Peking-based Government'. This is a serious error. Since November, 1973, all Ministers of the GRUNK have operated from within Cambodia. The only exception to this is the Foreign Ministry, which still operates from Peking due to better and faster communications it is able to have with other nations.

It is also incorrect to say, as do the supporters of Lon Nol, that Lon Nol's regime holds Cambodia's capital and therefore has the 'right' to represent the entire nation. This is a complete distortion of the situation. The Liberated areas governed by the Royal Government of National Union now comprise 90% of Cambodia's territory and 60-70% of the population, with at least half of the people in the Phnom Penh Zone either members of the FUNK, or supporters.

Already the GRUNK is recognized by 62 countries, while only 50 recognize Lon Nol's regime. Phnom Penh officials have been scurrying back and forth around the world trying to round up support for their discredited regime. But the tide is clearly against them. Last month Malaysia and Singapore, two of Lon Nol's staunchest supporters in the past, refused to allow puppet Premier, Long Boret, into their countries to discuss the U.S. situation. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9/6/74) Even U.S. officials lobbying for Phnom Penh are forecasting that Lon Nol will be ousted from the U.N. and the GRUNK seated in its place.

Norodom Sihanouk, Chief of State of the GRUNK, and Chairman of the GRUNK stated "If this happens, with our government universally recognized as the legitimate government of Cambodia, will it be possible for the U.S. Congress to go on spending more than \$700 million a year to support the Lon Nol puppets?" According to Sihanouk, if the U.S. chooses to continue the war "It is like putting a tiger and a dog in the same cage. Things will be settled only when one animal eats the other. And that is how it will be in Cambodia. We are the tiger, and Lon Nol and his henchmen are the running dogs." (New York Times, 8/25/74)



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Progressive people in the United States must demand an end of all aid to the Lon Nol puppet regime, and demand that the United Nations recognize the GRUNK, and throw out the traitors.

DEMONSTRATION PLANNED.

On monday, October 21 at 4:30 pm, there will be a demonstration at the United Nations (First Ave. & 45th St.), called by the Group of Khmer Residents in America. The major demands will be: THE U.N. MUST RECOGNIZE THE GRUNK, and END ALL AID TO LON NOL!

We urge all friends and progressive people to join us in this demonstration to show our support and solidarity with the Cambodian people in their just struggle against U.S. Imperialism.

THEIR STRUGGLE IS OUR STRUGGLE!
 SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE CAMBODIAN NATION!
 SUPPORT THE GRUNK! VICTORY TO THE FUNK!



News from the U.S.

Vietnamese Students Fight Deportation

Seven South Vietnamese students who came to the U.S. five years ago on AID scholarships are now facing the threat of deportation. All seven have been outspoken critics of the war and the repressive policies of the Thieu administration in South Vietnam.

They say that if they are forced to return to Saigon now, they will be in serious danger because of their antiwar activities in this country. "The Thieu administration is very repressive," Cao thi My Loc told Internews. "Anyone in South Vietnam who does what we are doing—that is, asking for peace and demanding an end to political repression in South Vietnam—is arrested and then tortured and brutally mistreated."

"In June 1972, we were among 21 Vietnamese students who went to the Saigon Consulate General in San Francisco and presented a statement demanding an end to political repression and the release of political prisoners. We asked the consulate general to send the letter to Mr. Thieu in Saigon."

The seven students—two women and

five men—have requested political asylum in the U.S. Their request was turned down on the advice of the State Department which said that they faced no danger if they returned to Saigon.

Their lawyer, Frank Pestana, says he will prove the opposite. "We're going to establish that in those areas of South Vietnam controlled by the Thieu regime, people are summarily jailed because of their opposition to the policies and activities of the Thieu administration vis-a-vis the Paris peace accords. We are going to produce witnesses who have over a considerable period of time—and quite recently—experienced some of this themselves."

The key to the government's case is the State Department's assertion that there are no political prisoners in South Vietnam. This has been a consistent claim despite figures from international organizations showing 100,000 to 200,000 political prisoners in Saigon jails. The Committee to Improve the Prison System in South Vietnam, headed by a Catholic priest, Father Chan Tin, now says there

are 202,000.

However, as recently as July 25, U.S. ambassador to Saigon Graham Martin told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that his embassy "found no one in prison" who could be regarded as a political prisoner.

The credibility of the State Department's position was undermined last week when the *New York Times* ran a major series of articles on political prisoners and torture in South Vietnam—the first of its kind to appear in a leading U.S. paper. The articles gave names, places and extensive details that will be difficult for the State Department to refute.

The seven Vietnamese students had their first hearing on August 15 at the Federal Building in Los Angeles. About 200 people picketed outside. The hearing was scheduled to be held in a room too small to seat all the defendants, but because of the number of people wishing to attend, the judge agreed to make it a public hearing in a large room. The hearing was adjourned until September 13.

VIETNAM VETERENS ATTACKED ON "VETEREN'S NIGHT"

On Monday, August 19, during "Honor Vietnam Vet" night at Shea stadium, six members of Vietnam Veterens Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization (VVAW/WSO) were viciously attacked by Shea stadium Security Guards. "Vets Night" was sponsored by the Mahor's office of Veteren's Action (MOVA) and an open invitation was extended to all Veterens. VVAW/WSO has every right to be in the stadium and went to show its concern for the serious problems confronting Vietnam-era Vets. But when they raised the banner of the NYC Chapter, they were attacked by the cops. Six of the members were then taken to a locker room and beaten severely with clubs. Two had to go to the hospital and all six spent "Veteren's Night" in jail. As is typical, the cops said they were the victims of an 'unprovoked attack', and the six were charged with second degree assault (a felony). Anyone wishing to help the brothers or wanting to show support, contact them at: VVAW/WSO, 135 W. 4th St., NYC, phone: 473-3636.



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TIGER CAGE "ARRESTED"

Two members of the NYC-IPC and ISC were arrested and carted off to jail for blocking traffic and having an "unlicensed vehicle" on the street on Sept. 12. the "unlicensed vehicle" was a 5'x8' replica of a Tiger Cage. We were taking it out through the neighborhood to publicize the political prisoner situation in South Vietnam, and also to tell people about the Demonstration on Sept. 14 in support of the Attica brothers. But before we got 2 blocks, the cops "pulled us over" and told us to turn around and go back to where we came from. When we refused, and one sister inside the cage refused to get out, they called for reinforcements and about four more squad cars showed up and a tow truck to take the Tiger Cage away to the police station. By this time a big crowd had gathered, and when they started putting the handcuffs on the brother and sister who were arrested, several people in the crowd yelled out, "Why don't you just stick 'em in the cage!"

UPCOMING EVENTS

***DEMONSTRATION: Sept. 28, Saturday, 2 pm. at West 14th St. Armory (between 6th & 7th Ave.)- March to Wash. Square Park. The Demands NO MORE AID TO THIEU & LON NOL! UNIVERSAL AND UN-CONDITIONAL AMNESTY!

***VIETNAMESE CULTURAL PRESENTATION- Friday, Oct. 4, 7:30 pm at Columbia University. Vietnamese songs, dance, poetry

***DEMONSTRATION- Monday, October 21, 4:30 pm at the United Nations (1st Ave. & 45 St.) Demands: THE U.N. MUST RECOGNIZE THE GRUNK! END ALL AID TO LON NOL!

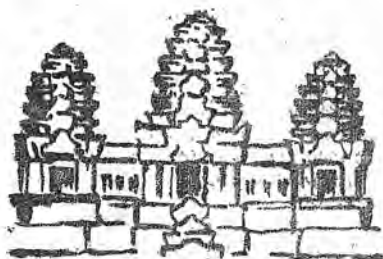
For more information on these activities, please contact ISC at: 982-7162. Thank you.

"Reading Nguyen Khac Vien is seeing, feeling and understanding the logic, the unrelenting determination and the simple humanism of revolutionary Vietnam." --- Franz Schurmann, author of The Politics of Escalation.

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Lawful Rights of the G.R.U.N.C.
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RALLY

MONDAY - OCTOBER 21

4:30pm

45th St. & 1st Avenue

CALLED BY THE GROUP OF KHMER RESIDENTS IN THE U.S.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 982-7162



Vietnamese Cultural Presentation

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4 - 8pm

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
100 CLAIRMONT AVE (122 st)

Planned as part of the International Week of Concern
For more information contact ISC - 982-7162
Tickets - \$2.50 general admissions, \$1.50 students

Thanks to *INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN*, August 23, for the article, "Vietnamese Students Fight Deportation," which appears on page 18.

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

BOX 'C', OLD CHELSEA STA., NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011 · (212) 982-7162

VOL II, NO 5

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 28, 1974



Laos: October 12, 1945 - October 12, 1974 29 Years of Struggle and Independence

This issue commemorates 29 years of Lao independence and struggle against Imperialist domination. As the Lao Patriotic Front recently wrote: "The Lao people's victorious struggle of nearly 30 years indisputably demonstrates that the Lao people have a brilliant tradition of valiant and unflinching struggle. They would rather sacrifice themselves than suffer national subjugation; would rather endure hardships and difficulties than live under the enslavement of Imperialism and foreign aggressors."

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Laos

A GEOGRAPHICAL SKETCH



Laos is situated on the Indochinese peninsula, bordered by Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, China and Viet Nam.

Laos is a country of high mountains, forests, fertile plains and many rivers. Lying in the monsoon zone of Asia, it is a tropical country with a hot climate. Tin, gold, silver, lead, sulphur, coal, iron ore, and rock salt deposits make Laos a country rich in natural resources. All are virtually untouched. Forests cover 2/3 of the country and contain many valuable products, such as teak wood, bamboo and indigo.

Laos is essentially an agricultural country with 95% of its population living on the rice it grows. Cotton, tobacco, coffee, quinine, vegetables, and fruit are also grown. Cattle breeding flourishes in the plateaux and plains bordering the Mekong River. The many elephants have earned Laos the nickname "Land of a Thousand Elephants."

Laos has a population of 3 million with over 60 nationalities. By their ethnic origin and lifestyles, they can be classified into 3 main groupings:

LAO LOUM (Thai-Lao in origin) - the Lao, Lu and Thai people are the national majority. They came from southern China in the 6th Century driving the Kha to the mountains and then settled in the plains.

LAO THEUNG (Indonesian in origin) - descendants of the Kha race, they now live mostly in the mountain tops and the high plateau regions.

LAO SOUNG (Chinese in origin) - They entered Laos in the late 18th Century. The main groupings are the Meo, Yao, Ho, Lolo, Mouseu and Lanten people. They now live in the forests, mountain slopes and hilltops.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1893 with the signing of the "Treaty of Bangkok" Laos became the last of the three Indochinese countries to fall under French colonial domination. Because of strong traditions of struggle and resistance to foreign invaders, there were continuous uprisings against the French, beginning with the Lao Luom peasant uprising in southern Laos in 1901. The longest and best organized of these uprisings came from the "Kha slaves" (Lao Theung), hill tribespeople in southern Laos. It lasted from 1910 to 1937, when it was finally crushed by fighter bombers, 5,000 French troops with 200 elephants and wild Alsatian (police trained) dogs.

The most important lesson learned by the survivors from these bloody defeats was best stated by the Meo chieftain, Faydang: "We had no program; we united the Lao Suong, but never thought of the other peoples in Laos." (Cash and Violence, Anna Louise Strong, Mainstream Pub., 1962)

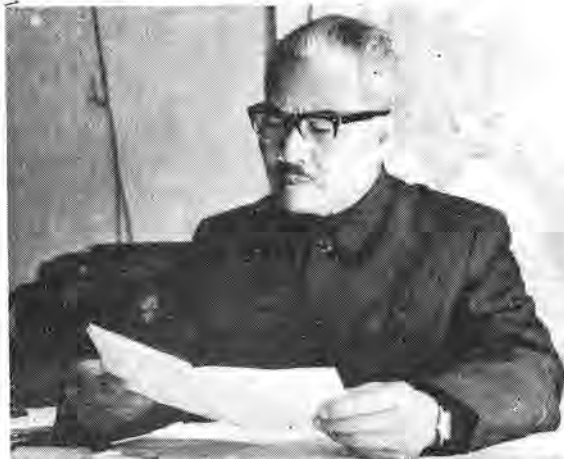
During the Second World War, the French let the Japanese fascists take over Indochina without a fight. When Japan's defeat became clear, the peoples of Indochina rose up against the Japanese and established their own nationalist governments.

On October 12, 1945, a provisional government was set up in Laos, which declared complete independence from all foreign invaders. Among the leaders of this new government were two half-brothers, Prince Souvanna Phouma and Prince Souphanouvong.

In March, 1946, the French began the First Indochina war, in order to recolonize Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia. Cornering Souphanouvong's army at the city of Thakhek, a strategic junction on the Mekong River, the French massacred the entire population

of the city in one of the most glaring examples of colonial savagery ever recorded. Souphanouvong himself was seriously injured and narrowly escaped. The Provisional Government fled into Thailand as a government-in-exile where it gradually fell apart. Most of its members, including Souvanna Phouma, were bought off by the French and returned to Vientiane to be part of a newly organized French puppet government.

Here Prince Souphanouvong's path diverged from his brother. As he lay recovering from his wounds, he analyzed the reasons for his defeat in the light of the victories Ho Chi Minh was winning in Viet Nam. Souphanouvong had based his strategy on the cities, where the superior weapons of the French were most effective. He had ignored the peasants and hilltribes people.



Prince Souphanouvong, President of the Central Committee of the LPF.

When his wounds healed, Souphanouvong returned to Laos, not to the towns but to the mountains and forests. He found the remnants of his scattered forces still resisting from jungle bases; and he found new allies-



Members of the Resistance government led by Prince Souphanouvong (center), 1950.

the leaders of hill tribes people and veterans of past revolts. In August, 1950, a secret Congress was held with representatives from every section of the population. The *Neo Lao Itsala* (Liberation Front of Laos) was formed and a resistance government was set up, with Souphanouvong as chairman. For the first time in Laotian history, all nationalities had met as equals and were united in a common struggle.

In March of 1951, the resistance movements of Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam formed an alliance to coordinate the struggle against French colonialism. By the end of 1953 the newly-formed *Lao People's Liberation Army* had driven the French from all their bases in northern Laos. These battles left the main French forces isolated in northern Viet Nam at a place called Dien Bien Phu, where Viet Minh forces led by Ho

Chi Minh dealt the French colonialists their final blow .

FROM COLONIALISM TO NEO-COLONIALISM: THE U.S. MOVES IN

For most Americans, awareness of the war in Laos came in 1970, when the U.S. Government openly admitted to having bombed Laos. But the Laotian people had long known the sounds of American planes, guns and bullets, the words of American advisors and the power of the American dollar.



U.S. military involvement in Laos dates back to 1950, when the U.S. contributed \$25 million toward the French effort to reconquer Laos. Immediately following the French defeat and the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1954, the U.S. moved in directly.

Although the liberation forces led by the Neo Lao Itsala controlled nearly half the country at the time of Geneva, they agreed to regroup in the two northern most provinces of Phong Saly and Sam Neua until general elections could be held as called for by the Accords.

In order to strengthen their unity, the resistance held its second

National Congress in January, 1956 and broadened into the *Lao Patriotic Front (L.P.F.)* or *Pathet Lao**. The aims of the LPF were to heal the wounds of war, build a free, independent and prosperous Laos with equality and democratic rights for all people.

In 1957 the Lao Patriotic Front was integrated into the National Assembly, forming a coalition government as called for by the Accords. Souvanna Phouma, then a neutralist was made Premier and Souphanouvong was made Minister of Economic Planning. In the national elections that followed, the LPF and their neutralist allies gained 13 of 21 seats in the National Assembly. Angered by these gains, the U.S. set their wheels of bribery, inflation and sabotage in motion. In May, 1958, the U.S. instigated a coup d'etat, creating a right-wing government in Vientiane and declaring the LPF illegal. Souphanouvong and 15 other LPF leaders were arrested and jailed in Vientiane, the Laotian capital. In July, 1959, Souphanouvong and the others escaped to the Liberated Zones of Northern Laos. There they reorganized the resistance, this time with wide support from many former Vientiane officers and civil servants.

American plans were upset by a coup led by a neutralist Army Captain in 1960. The political unity between the neutralist forces and the LPF, along with the military victories of the Liberation army over the next two years forced the U.S. to agree to a ceasefire and to participate in a new Geneva Conference on Laos. These new accords were signed in 1962 and a new National Union Government was set up. The position of the LPF was greatly strengthened, as they now controlled two-thirds of the territory and one-third of the population of Laos, and also had a large regular army.

For the second time (1954), the U.S. disregarded the provisions of the Accords. Within a year the LPF representatives were forced out of the government and the coalition was dissolved. Because the U.S. could not rely on Laotians to fight Laotians, they organized, trained and equipped a large mercenary army to carry on the ground war. In May, 1964, the U.S. Air Force began full scale bombing of the liberated zones. All of this happened without the awareness or approval of the American people or Congress. When Nixon came into office, U.S. aid to the Vientiane regime increased fourfold to \$400 million a year. The number of U.S. advisors increased from a few thousand to 12,000 advisors and C.I.A. personnel. At this time, the U.S. began round - the - clock B-52 bombing of the liberated zones. Instead of cowing the people into slavery, the bombing increased their determination to fight, "As the bombing increased, the Pathet Lao forces began receiving more volunteers whose attitude was, 'better to die a soldier than to stay at home and wait for the airplanes to come and kill you.'" (*Christian Science Monitor*, 3/17/71)

With each new attack the people discovered ways of defending their homes, land and culture. In the liberated areas a new society was built with the houses, schools, factories and hospitals transferred underground. The LPF not only defended itself against the B-52's but built a society which cared for, protected and advanced the lives of the Lao people.

During 1970 and 1971, with the help of Thai and Saigon mercenaries, the U.S. launched two major offensives to "end the war" in Laos. Instead of victory, the U.S. and their puppets suffered perhaps the biggest military defeats of the Indochina war. Finally, the U.S. agreed to negotiate again. There were two reasons: the LPF had defeated Nixon's "Special War" and the LPF now governed 4/5ths of the territory and 1/2 the population.



★THE PATHET LAO

The U.S. press has always referred to the resistance forces in Laos as the "Pathet Lao." Unlike the terms "Viet Cong" and "Khmer Rouge", the use of *Pathet Lao* has been accepted by the L.P.F. As Souphanouvong explains; "At the Geneva Conference we marked our documents with "Pathet Lao", which means 'Land of Laos', to distinguish them from the documents of Viet Nam and Cambodia. The French began calling us Pathet Lao. We let the name stick."



The "Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos" was signed on February 21, 1973. The Peace Agreement and its accompanying Protocol, is a tremendous victory for the Lao people in their long struggle for peace, independence, unity and self-determination. It also reflects the considerable strength of the Lao Patriotic Front and the gains they have made since the last Geneva Agreement on Laos.

The Agreement recognizes the LPF as the legitimate government of the liberated zones. In addition to administering its own territory, the LPF has won control of half of the city administrations, police force and military Defense Forces of the 2 largest population centers of the Vientiane and Luang Prabang.

Great progress has been made toward the implementation of the Agreement, despite U.S. efforts to prevent it. The new coalition government has been formed and the year 1974 may well see the arrival of peace and national concord in Laos. However peace and justice loving people around the world must be vigilant in supporting the Lao struggle against all attacks and manoeuvres of U.S. Imperialism. Since the day the Agreement was signed, the U.S. imperialists have not ceased their sabotage efforts.

In the following interview 2 Lao comrades expose how the U.S. and Vientiane have not yet fully implemented the Agreement but continue their neo-colonial schemes. □

INTERVIEW WITH LAO PATRIOTS IN CANADA:

The Implementation of the Peace Agreement

ISC: *What is the function of the National Political Consultative Council?*

LAO STUDENTS: The NPCC and the Provisional Government of National Union are the two supreme state bodies, independent and equal. Both are comprised of equal representation from the LPF and the Vientiane side and include a number of neutralists chosen by the two sides.

The NPCC functions as an advisory body to the Provisional Government. It formulates domestic and foreign policy which the PGNU must approve and then implement.

According to the Agreement and its protocol: the NPCC should join the PGNU in organizing general elections to set up the National Assembly and a definitive national union government as soon as possible by examining and adopting the laws and regulations for elections or by proposing amendments to these laws or modalities for elections.

The Consultative Joint Council has also been set up for the neutralization of Vientiane and Luang Prabang. One recent example of the CJC's responsibilities has been the overseeing of troop deployments throughout the 2 neutralized cities. The CJC has also set up mobile Joint Teams to plant ceasefire marks at various points aimed at ensuring a durable peace.



ISC: *What effect has the CIA-organized right-wing United Front Side had on the new government? How will it effect the upcoming elections?*

LAO STUDENTS: The CIA constantly tries all means to sabotage the peace and national concord in Laos.

Two months ago the Vientiane ultra-rightists united under a front, self-defined as "an organization for the implementation of the Peace Agreement and its protocol." But in reality this front was set up to delay and sabotage the implementation of the Agreement. The fact is that the main leaders, organizers and promoters of this front are Sisouk Nachampassak, Ngon Sananikone and Leum Insixiengmay. These war-like ultra-reactionaries cooperated with the CIA in sabotaging the coalition government in 1957 under an organization called the Committee for the Defense of the National Interest (CDIN).

The rightists called on all political parties, organizations, associations and mass organizations to rally in this united front. But the people from all sectors of the population are opposed to the creation of this front. As this "united" front doesn't have the support of the masses, it is obviously only for the personalities of the Vientiane side who belong to the PGNU, NPCC, and CJC.

The CIA has helped the ultra-rightists set up the United Front because if the right-wing wins the election the U.S. government will be able to maintain neo-colonialism in Laos...if the right-wing loses the election, surely the CIA will look for all means to sabotage peace and the National Union Government.

ISC: *Have the U.S. and Thailand withdrawn from Laos as called for by the Peace Agreement?*

In what ways are they still intervening?

LAO STUDENTS: The withdrawal has not been fully carried out although the U.S. and Thailand publicly announced that it has. In fact there has only been an "intermediate" troop withdrawal of civilian-disguised military operatives. Troops and military advisors of the U.S. and Thailand are dispersing themselves to many places in Vientiane-controlled areas under various guises, particularly in the military zones, and even in the two neutralized cities. In U.S. establishments such as the U.S. embassy, U.S.-AID, U.S.I consulate and other organs, there still remain hundreds of U.S. officers.

These organs are still the conductors and managers of all activities of the reactionary armed forces in Laos. They continue to give military aid and secretly plan activities with the reactionaries.

Many highranking Thai officers also remain secretly in Laos, commanding a Thai mercenary army and military bases. Some of the Thai mercenary troops have been integrated into the Vientiane armed forces and some disguise themselves as civilians operating in the cities to create disorder.

The U.S. still flies reconnaissance missions over Lao territory in blatant violation of our sovereignty and with the Thai government threatens peace and security by maintaining military bases in Thailand along the Thai-Lao border.

ISC: *What truth is there to the U.S.-Vientiane charges that "North Vietnamese" troops have remained in Laos beyond the June 4 deadline?*

LAO STUDENTS: The Lao patriots have repeatedly protested against these U.S.-Vientiane slanders. They are just a pretext for conducting air attacks and continuing to invade Laos.

The CJC assumes the duty of supervising and verifying the withdrawal of U.S., Thai and other foreign troops and military personnel. The question of North Vietnamese troops still in Laos must be declared by the CJC and not by the U.S. and the Vientiane ultra-rightists.

ISC: *Why did the LPF sign the Peace Agreement and form the coalition government as opposed to continuing the struggle militarily?*

LAO STUDENTS: The LPF has always upheld peace and national concord. The liberation of 80% of Lao territory is not the only reason that the LPF negotiated with the Vientiane government.

As you will probably remember, the LPF consistently demanded that the Vientiane side solve Laos' internal affairs through negotiations and political means and not by military means: first, in 1954, when the LPF had liberated only two provinces of the country; then in 1962, when half of the country had been liberated and again in 1973, when the LPF had liberated 4/5ths of the country.

The struggle of the LPF as well as the entire Lao people, is to liberate the country from the yoke of imperialist neo-colonialism and to build a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic and prosperous kingdom of Laos. A military victory would mean a great loss in human life for Laos' small population of 3 million.

ISC: *What has been the effect of detente on the Laotian National Liberation struggle?*

LAOTIAN STUDENTS: For sure the detente of the great powers has a good effect on the Laotian National Liberation struggle. It gives the Lao people an opportunity to promptly solve their national struggle for the neutrality and independence of the country.

ISC: *How will the new Coalition government solve the refugee problem? Will this problem be resolved before the national election?*

LAOTIAN STUDENTS: The PGNU upholds people's democratic freedoms and encourages those who have been forced to live in concentration camps to return to their native villages.

The return of the 800,000 refugees to their native homes as stipulated in the Vientiane Agreement and its protocol comes under the responsibility of the CJC. When this committee has effectively guaranteed the ceasefire and completed the delineation of the zones and bases of one side in the areas controlled by the other; when the withdrawal of the foreign military personnel and the return of the prisoners are completed; when people's democratic freedoms are fully guaranteed-then refugees will be able to return to their native villages. They will receive help in rebuilding or repairing their homes, destroyed by the U.S. war of aggression and will be supplied the necessary farm tools to cultivate their fields in order to gradually improve their living standard.

Unless every clause of the Vientiane Agreement and its protocol are strictly implemented, there will be no new elections.

ISC: *What can the American people do at this time to help bring a real peace and self-determination for the Laotian people?*

LAOTIAN STUDENTS: The Lao people are very happy and grateful knowing that they are not alone in their struggle for national salvation against the most powerful imperialists in the world - we have the support of the peace and justice loving people all over the world and particularly of peace loving Americans.

At this stage of restoring and consolidating peace and national concord the Lao people urge the American people to further strengthen their unity and solidarity with us. Now we ask the American people to strongly urge the U.S. government and Thailand to respect the 1962 Geneva Agreement on the neutrality of Laos and the Vientiane Peace Agreement,

- to prevent the U.S. and Thailand from sabotaging peace in Laos,
- to force the U.S. and Thailand to withdraw their troops and military personnel, and advisors from Laos,
- to dismantle the "special forces" and military bases,
- to cut aid to the Vientiane reactionaries,
- to force the U.S. to aid in healing the wounds of war,
- and to denounce the dark schemes of the U.S. government which aims at sabotaging peace in Laos.

People all over the world know that Laos has been devastated by the long war. The Lao people demand that all peace and justice loving American people continue the struggle in order to force the U.S. and Thai governments to strictly and fully implement the peace agreement in Laos, bring a real peace in Laos and let the Lao people solve their internal affairs without foreign interference.

Surely the victory of the Lao people is also the victory of the American people! □

LPF LEADER VISITS U.N.

On September 25, Phoumi Vongvichit, acting Prime Minister of Laos and Secretary General of the Lao Patriotic Front became the first Indochinese revolutionary to address the United Nations General Assembly. He said that "The Lao people express solidarity with all struggles for national liberation against imperialism. We hail the heroic struggle of our brothers to free themselves from slavery to the colonialists and neo-colonialists and to conquer and defend their independence and freedom. This just struggle for national liberation has a sacred significance for all people conscious of their dignity, and we wholly and wholeheartedly endorse it."

In his speech he stated that the Laotian people were determined not to allow a repetition of the events which had led to the breaking up of the preceding coalition government in his country, expressing hope that U.N. members would support the Vientiane Accord on peace in Laos.

The Coalition Government of Laos has not disclosed what its vote will be on the question of seating the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia. Laos may abstain, unable to build the required unanimity around the LPF's support of the GRUNC. In his address Vongvichit expressed solidarity with the Cambodian people. "The Government of National Union of Laos firmly supports the struggle of the Khmer people against the policy of aggression and imperialist intervention and for an independent, peaceful, neutral, sovereign, democratic and prosperous Cambodia secure in its territorial integrity."



Phoumi Vongvichit in New York

CIA, Phoumi said that it was under U.S. control. Fully aware of the true nature of the CIA, Phoumi asked all progressive Americans to let the CIA know that it had better keep its promises not to intervene in the internal affairs of Laos.

IN THE NEWS

In mid-September the first prisoner exchange of LPF for Vientiane troops was carried out at Phon Savan airport. On September 29, a Thai daily, *The Nation*, reported that \$3 million had been deposited in the Udon-Thai Bank in Thailand to be given to the 600 CIA-trained Thai mercenaries released the same day by the Pathet Lao. (*Agence France Presse*, 9/30/74) It is not clear whether this money is to be used as a reward or whether it will be used for more training of Thai mercenaries.



Thai mercenary troops

Soth Petrasi, LPF leader and Minister of Economy and Planning in the Coalition Government, led a delegation to the People's Republic of China, Hanoi, Algeria and the Democratic Republic of Korea, seeking aid. Pathet Lao radio said that the D.R.V.N. agreed to give Laos 5,000 tons of rice, 3,000 tons of salt; 200 tons of food; medicine and movies. Agreements were signed to build a road from the city of Thakhek in Laos to Vinh in North Vietnam.

THE VIENTIANE ECONOMY: CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF NEO-COLONIALISM

During the interview (see pages 3-6) the Laotian students spoke about the economic problems facing Laos and the coalition government. They said that the aspirations of the PGNU now are to improve the people's living standard and move the country forward to self-sufficiency and away from depending on foreign aid. *"The economic problems whcih face the PGNU are numerous because Laos has been ravaged by the brutal war of U.S. aggression which destroyed the economy, houses, soil, animals, plants, roads...And because the bombing forced people to move, their production was affected and consequently the national economy suffered."*

IN THE VIENTIANE CONTROLLED ZONES

Development in the Vientiane controlled zones faces an additional problem because the two economic ministers can not work together. The Planning and Economy Minister is from the LPF, and pursues the policy of developing self-sufficiency, while the Finance Minister is part of the Vientiane side, promoting the subordination of the Lao economy to U.S. Imperialism.

"Economic problems and commerce are hard to solve because the economy is in the hands of Vientiane high officers and ministers who cooperate with (Taiwanese and Thai) foreign capitalists.

Together these capitalists hoard merchandise to increase the cost of living, to create inflation and speculation."

One such incident occurred during this past summer when Vientiane ultra-rightists bought unusually large quantities of U.S. dollars at the official rate of 845 Lao Kip to the dollar. They then kept the dollars out of the market, hoarding them so that their relative scarcity forced their price up. Then the Vientiane capitalists released small amounts of dollars back on this inflated market with two consequences; the exchange rate of the Kip had been forced from 845 to 1,200 to the dollar and the rightists were able to make an alomst 50% profit on each exchange.

With dollars going for 1200 Kips on the black market (which is the most frequent exchange market) the U.S. dominated International Monetary Fund seized this opportunity to recommend that the Lao government "officially" devalue the kip. But the LPF threatened to hold political education lectures throughout Vientiane and expose the manipulations of the Vientiane capitalists as the source of this so-called necessary devaluation. Consequently the PGNU voted against devaluation. (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8/9/74)

Before the formation of the coalition government, there was an apparent 33 month stability period when the Kip hardly changed exchange rates. The LPF pointed out, however, that this was actually the result of the Vientiane-controlled area's economy being completely subsidized by U.S. Imperialist aid. This situation means that because the Kip is not an internationally recognized exchange, and the Vientiane regime was dependent on dollars, The absence of any production in the Vientiane controlled areas additionally created a large deficit since the government could only import and not export goods.

While the U.S. Imperialists dominated Laos they were willing to carry this deficit becoming a creditor nation for Laos and continuing to send aid and imports. Since the formation of the coalition government the situation has changed; the U.S. has refused to send aid and now that dollars and imports aren't flowing into the country



U.S. bomb damage.

so easily, dependency on foreign aid has come to light and a recession has been troubling the coalition government. This U.S. Vientiane manipulation of the Kip was a blatant attempt to wreck economic havoc in Laos and thus force a political crisis on the coalition government.

In another attack on the government, the U.S.-backed rightwing Sananikone family tried to blackmail the PGNU into allowing a 100% increase in the price of rice. The rightists initiated their economic disturbance by closing five of the 12 iceworks in Vientiane, charging that the coalition government, in allowing the construction of new plants, would lower the price of ice and thus capitalist profits. The traitors threatened to stop selling ice, then began hoarding food and other daily necessities while circulating rumors of an impending devaluation. In one week the price of consumer goods was forced up 50%. (*LPF Radio, monitored by FBIS, 9/10/74*) The coalition government, however, ordered the ice-producers not to increase prices and smashed the rightist economic sabotage.



A mass rally in liberated Sam Neua province hailing the signing of the Vientiane Agreement.

It is difficult for most of us to understand the meaning of a "Liberated Zone", of a resistance which is also a government, of a people capable of defeating U.S. military technology and at the same time able to build a society which meets the needs of the people. Yet all of these things have been necessary for the people of Indochina in their struggle against U.S. Imperialism. Wars of National Liberation had to be more than winning military battles, as their enemy was not simply B-52's and GI's.

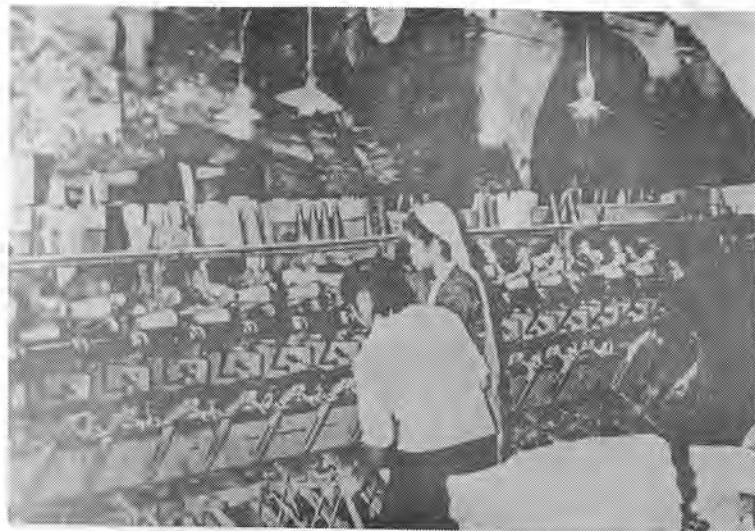
In Laos, years of French colonialism and U.S. neo-colonialism and aggression has left the economy, education and medical services in a very backward state. By the end of the 1960's, in the areas under the control of the American puppets, there were "No railroads, two doctors, three engineers, 700 telephones, one junior high school and 6 primary schools 95% of the people were illiterate... Laos had virtually no indigenous medical capability and there were only a dozen foreign-trained Lao doctors in the country." (*Symington Senate Sub-Committee Hearings, October, 1969*)

Throughout the war and since the signing of the Peace Agreement and formation of the coalition Government, the Lao Patriotic Front has actively been constructing, recovering and building the Liberated Zone to protect and provide for the needs of the Laotian people.

The existence of a stable, independent and developing economy in the Liberated zones has provided an example for the coalition government to learn from in moving forward the economy of all Laos. Many sectors of the population as well as LPF officials in the coalition government have been urging the PGNU to carry out a policy of developing the national economy while safeguarding the natural resources and utilizing them for good of the Lao people.



A vast medical and health network has been established, reversing the former situation of no doctors or medics. Statistics show that the number of doctors is 16 times that of 1966.



Industry and handicrafts continue to develop in the Liberated Zone. For the first time in Laos, there are factories producing textiles, sewing machines, candy and auto-repairs.



By the end of 1974, there will be nearly 90,000 students attending primary schools in the Liberated Zone; 3 times the number in 1962 and eight times the number in 1954.



There is not a village, town or hamlet without a daycare center in the Liberated Zone.



Tens of thousands of bomb craters have been filled in since the signing of the Peace Agreement.



Hundreds of new irrigation systems and water-conservancy projects have been built. As a result, the total rice and grain output in the Liberated Zone more than doubled this year.



The People's Liberation Army Art Troupe performed for tens of thousands of Pathet Lao cadre and people. On numerous occasions they performed on the front lines under heavy U.S. bombing.



Elections are held regularly throughout the Liberated Zone down to the hamlet level.

Cambodia

In early November, the question of who represents Cambodia will be voted on in the United Nations. As Lon Nol's situation continues to deteriorate inside Cambodia, the chances grow slimmer that he will retain his seat.

LIBERATION FORCES CONTINUE RAINY SEASON OFFENSIVE

The situation in Cambodia is very clear. It can be summed up that the U.S. puppet Lon Nol and his henchmen are corpses, phantoms-- men already dead militarily, politically and economically. Since the start of the Rainy Season (June through November), the Phnom Penh has suffered nearly 30,000 casualties, 8,370 in September alone (AKI, 10/12/74).

For the first time the Liberation Forces have continued their offensive throughout the entire rainy season. The Lon Nol army is physically and psychologically devastated-- reduced from just under 200,000 men in April, 1973 to about 70,000 today. Despite the ruthless press-ganging of young and old men into the army, no more than 20% of Phnom Penh's losses in 1974 have been replaced.

Speaking on the current situation, Khieu Samphan, Vice-Premier and Minister of Defense of the GRUNC stated, "Compared to the Liberated Areas, the localities under the temporary control of the Lon Nol traitors are not even equivalent to one of our communes." (AKI, 10/1/74) The capital, Phnom Penh and the handful of provincial capitals still controlled by Lon Nol are encircled, besieged and completely isolated from each other except for air drops of supplies. No longer are highways and rivers connecting urban areas merely interdicted for periods of time; today they are integral parts of the Liberated Zone. The Mekong River northeast of Phnom Penh is a cemetery of ships because of desperate attempts to resupply Kompong Cham. In southwest Cambodia less than 100 km (of 33,200 total area) is still in the hands of the Phnom Penh regime. Highway 4, running from Phnom Penh to the Port of Sihanoukville has been completely shut down, with a 121 km section south of Kompong Speu under the control of the Liberation Forces.



A U.S. armored car captured near Highway 4 by the Liberation Forces.



U.S. Cargo helicopter dropping supplies to beleaguered Lon Nol troops at Kompong Chhnang.

Every attempt by Lon Nol to expand his zones of control around besieged cities has met with heavy defeat. Through October 3, out of 3,000 Phnom Penh troops attempting such a sweep east of Siem Reap (in the northwest), nearly 2,000 have been killed, wounded or captured. (AKI, 10/10/74) Four separate operations in the suburbs of Phnom Penh since mid-August have cost Lon Nol more than 4,000 casualties and have left the defense perimeter significantly reduced, in some parts only 6 miles from the heart of the capital.

The Liberation Forces have undertaken numerous offensives in many areas in the past several months. The most important has led to the complete isolation of Kompong Chhnang, a district capital and vital commercial center 50 miles northwest of Phnom Penh on Highway 5. Kompong Chhnang was a vital port ensuring rice shipments from Battambang Province to the capital by river convoy on the Tonle Sap. In a 35 day campaign starting September 6, the CPNLF has overrun 54 outposts and closed down the city's airport, moving to within two miles of the city. (Washington Post, 9/29/74)

Both banks of the Tonle Sap have been seized by the Liberation Forces, and the River has been shut down completely.

Another reason for the heavy attacks on Kompong Chhnang is because the city has been the center of "pacification" operations by Lon Nol troops in the area, who have attempted to round up the population into 'refugee' camps around the city. This program has been under the direct control of U.S. advisors and the destruction of these concentration camps has been a particular target of the current offensive. (Hsinhua News Agency, 10/5/74)

Increasing numbers of Phnom Penh troops are surrendering to the CPNLAF or simply abandoning their units. On October 6, troops being rushed to the front at Kompong Chhnang seized the opportunity when their trucks stopped to disperse into the countryside, shouting as they went: "We will not die at the front and leave our families to their fate of no money and no rice! We are beaten by the FUNK." (AKI, 10/10/74)

ECONOMIC CRISIS GRIPS PHNOM PENH ZONES

According to a Cambodian economist in Phnom Penh, "This country today does not have much use for economists simply because there is not an economy worth the name." (FEER, 9/20/74) With the area under Lon Nol's control reduced to less than 10% of the country, domestic production outside the Liberated Areas has come to a halt. 80% of the factories in the Phnom Penh Zone have shut down for lack of raw materials; all basic resources, including rice and charcoal have to be imported. The single economic activity of the dictatorship is the acquiring of foreign aid. 96% of the gross national product of the Phnom Penh Regime in 1974 came from two artificial sources-- \$700 million in U.S. aid and the printing of worthless currency. The total currency in circulation has been inflated from 5,900 million riels in December, 1969 before the coup, to 47,200 million riels in June this year. Official inflation was 275% in 1973 and 472% between 1972 and 1974.



Panic buying of rice in Phnom Penh.

This multiplicity of exchange rates is an attempt to facilitate and legitimize the corruption that is already rampant. The small group of Phnom Penh officials who handle U.S. Aid monies and commodities now have the LEGAL opportunity to turn a quick 50% profit by buying dollars and U.S. Aid materials (like Food for Peace rice) at 950:1 and selling them at 1400:1.



The military superiority of the CPNLAF is demonstrated by continuous attacks throughout the rainy season.

Accompanying the 300% devaluation of the riel was a doubling of rice prices, a 250% increase in diesel fuel and a 350% increase in gasoline prices. Despite a 90% salary increase for civil servants and a 100% increase for soldiers, the net effect was a 50% reduction in buying power. (*Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, 9/16/74*)

The remainder of Lon Nol's "New Economic Measures" seek to legitimize the piracy and exploitation of Cambodia by a handful of collaborators with U.S. Imperialism. There is no longer any attempt to collect import duties on luxury items, and imports can be sold at whatever price can be gotten. The sale and transportation of gold has been completely de-controlled. The net effect of the decree on gold is to legalize the looting of Cambodian temples, the only source of gold in the country. In summary, the entire communique simply maximizes profits for a few high officials at the cost of deprivation and starvation for the masses of poor and working people living under Lon Nol's control.

Rice is rationed in Phnom Penh, officially 250 grams per person a week. In the beginning of October, Phnom Penh had only about 5 weeks' stockpile of rice on hand. The urban areas are completely dependent on U.S. imports of rice, 285,000 in 1974. The next shipment of U.S. rice, the first 50,000 tons in FY 1975, is due to begin arriving in Phnom Penh the first week of November. At that time Phnom Penh will have less than one week's supply of rice. (*FEER, 9/20*)

With all access to the rice-growing area of Battambang Province cut by the Liberation Forces, the only transportation avenue for rice and other necessary bulk supplies is up the Mekong and Bassac Rivers from Saigon. In September, 38 ships were sunk or set ablaze on the Mekong. With the banks of both Rivers firmly controlled by the CPNLF, the last battle to close the economic noose on Lon Nol is in sight.



Hundreds of children roam the streets of Phnom Penh in search of food.

LON NON RETURNS

On Sept. 21, Brig. General Lon Non, former Interior Minister and the hated younger brother of Lon Nol, returned to Cambodia after a forced 16 month exile abroad. In 1972 and 1973 Lon Non crushed two student protest movements with particular ferocity. Widespread criticism of these fascist, strong-arm tactics prompted his U.S.-suggested departure.

Lon Non's return coincides with rumors of Lon Nol's bad health and coup d'etat plots. As has happened every five or six months realignment in the top echelons of Lon Nol's regime can be expected. Already several former members of the Phnom Penh regime, including former Prime-Minister In Tam, have left the country as "Ambassadors" and an assassination attempt of Lon Non has been linked to Sosthene Fernandez, Commander-in-Chief of the Lon Nol army.

RESISTANCE IN THE CITIES

The announcement of 'new economic measures' on Sept. 15 immediately led to angry public denunciations and protests over increased food and fuel prices. On Sept. 21 mass demonstrations were held in front of the Presidential Palace and throughout Phnom Penh. These demonstrations have been accompanied by frequent attacks on rice storage areas and widespread looting. (*Hsinhua, 9/30/74*)

Soldiers are playing an increasingly important role in the urban resistance to the Lon Nol Regime. Despite the bribery of a 100% salary increase, numerous soldiers participated

in the Sept. 21 demonstrations and led the ransacking of rice storages in Sihanoukville and Kompong Speu. (*Wash. Post*, 9/22/74) Three days later over 400 soldiers in Kompong Speu, demanding lower rice prices and payment of back salaries, began a march on Phnom Penh, 30 miles away. Lon Nol declared the demonstration a mutiny and stationed emergency troops, tanks and armoured cars throughout the capital. The rebel column was stopped with tanks a few miles south of Phnom Penh. Commented one of the dissident soldiers, "Maybe it would be better to fight for the Khmer Rouge, at least their Commanders are at the front with the troops." (*AFP*, 9/24/74)



Students converge on the Presidential Palace.

In his latest attempt to crush the growing opposition, on Sept. 25 Lon Nol announced the dissolution of the militant Teachers' Association of Cambodia and arrested five of its leaders. The student/teacher movement has played a leading role in organizing against Lon Nol in the cities, culminating in mass demonstrations and insurrection last June. Despite this repression, the Teachers' Association continues to function clandestinely, with the full support of the people. In a recent communique the Association declared, "A handful of persons who call themselves revolutionary leaders, have nothing to show for the past several years except their incapability and unpopularity in the eyes of the people... The state machinery is at a standstill. The people are in a constant state of fear, insecurity and starvation. On the contrary, our leaders are boasting happily and lunatically as though they live in paradise, with no war in sight. Our heritage has been almost wiped out and replaced by systematic corruption... their only outstanding work." (*FEER*, 10/11/74)

In view of the ripening situation in the urban centers, Khieu Samphan has called on all sections of the population to use every means possible, including revolutionary violence to bring down the Lon Nol regime, or to come over to the Liberated Zone if there is no possibility for struggle in the cities, emphasizing "To struggle is to live, not to struggle is to die."

FORD CONTINUES THE "NIXON DOCTRINE"

The Ford administration is going all out in a vain attempt to save the Lon Nol regime from collapse. Ford has succeeded in postponing Congressional action on foreign aid until after the November election break. The Senate Foreign Aid Authorization bill set a \$200 million ceiling on military assistance to Cambodia (\$347 million total aid ceiling) but the House bill, still in committee, has no restriction on military aid. Both bills face revision under strong presidential pressure after the November elections. Until 1975 allocations are finalized, aid will continue to Lon Nol at last year's level- \$750 million.



Ford has clearly exposed his arrogance and contempt toward the American and Cambodian people. He calls on us to unite behind him and make sacrifices to solve "our" economic crisis, while taking our tax dollars to prop up a fascist dictatorship in Phnom Penh. While the American people are given the impression that U.S. involvement in Cambodia has ended, 4000 illegal U.S. advisors, under the command of U.S. Ambassador, John G. Dean, daily direct Phnom Penh troops in their defense of the cities and attempts to reopen the highways. According to a recent *Washington Post* article, the possibility of overt U.S. military intervention in Cambodia was left open in the Congress-

sional testimony of two top Defense Dept. officials just back from Indochina. Over 600 sorties per month are flown from U.S. Air Force bases in Thailand to airdrop supplies to the isolated towns under Lon Nol's control. As of October 14, this airlift has been transferred to a CIA airline, "Bird Air", based in Washington. (Wash. Post, 10/5/74) Ford's continued deceit clearly does not represent the interests of either the Cambodian or the American people.

BATTLE AT THE U.N. NEARS END

Sometime in early November, the question of seating the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia (GRUNC) in the United Nations and throwing out the U.S.-supported dictator, Lon Nol will be coming to a vote. This vote will have tremendous impact on the internal situation in Cambodia, as it will be extremely difficult from the U.S. to maintain its puppet regime with the GRUNC seated in the U.N., universally recognized as the sole legal government of the Cambodian people.

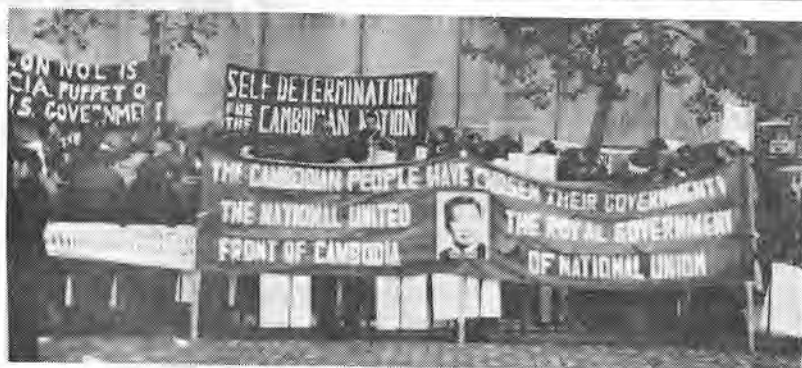
For over 20 years the U.S. has used the U.N. as a tool to legitimize its imperialist maneuvers and attack the peoples' struggles for national liberation and self-determination throughout the world. The tide has now turned. At present, the non-aligned countries struggling for freedom and independence constitute an important and growing revolutionary force. This year, the admittance of Guinea-Bissau to the U.N., the four to one vote to refuse the credentials of the racist South African Regime, the inclusion on the current agenda of the Palestinian question by a vote of 125 to 4, and the election of Algerian Foreign Minister, Boutaflika, as President of the 29th Session of the General Assembly demonstrate the growing strength of this force.

But like last year, the U.S. Imperialists are resorting to all sorts of tricks and maneuvers to keep the GRUNC out of the U.N. According to recent reports and conversations with U.N. delegates:

* The U.S. is blackmailing Third World countries it send economic and military aid to, threatening to cut the aid if they don't tow the line and vote for Lon Nol. This could cause serious problems, since the U.S. has used this tactic successfully in the past. About a month ago, Bangladesh stopped trading with Cuba after the U.S. threatened to cut off much needed food aid.

* During the debate, the U.S. may argue that the vote is so important that it should be transferred from the General Assembly to the Security Council, where the U.S. has veto power. But to do this the U.S. needs a 2/3's majority, which it will not be able to muster.

* If all other attempts fail, the U.S. will make a counter-proposal to have the Cambodian seat at the U.N. declared "vacant", claiming that neither side represents the Cambodian people.



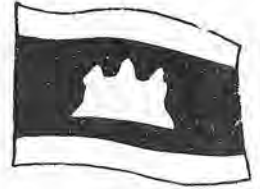
On Monday, Oct. 21 nearly 200 people demonstrated in front of the U.N. to demand the seating of the GRUNC and the ouster of Lon Nol. Some of the slogans chanted were, "Kick Lon Nol out of the U.N.- the Cambodian people want the GRUNC in!", "Lon Nol, Long Borete- running dogs of the CIA" and "US Aid pays his way- Lon Nol get out today". Later we marched to the Cambodian Mission and served an eviction notice on the Lon Nol rep.



All these tactics are designed to enable the U.S. Imperialists to continue their support for the unpopular and dictatorial Lon Nol regime and continue their war of aggression in Cambodia.

But indications are that the GRUNC will be seated in the U.N. this year. On October 9, 65 countries walked out or boycotted puppet Premier, Lon Boret's speech at the General Assembly. As stated in a recent AKI article, "The era when the U.S. Imperialists could intimidate the Cambodian people and other peoples of the world is over."

It is urgent that anti-imperialists and progressive people in the U.S. continue their opposition to the war and support for the just struggle of the Cambodian people. We must demand that the GRUNC be seated in the U.N. and that the U.S. end all aid to Lon Nol and allow the Cambodian people to determine their own affairs. The seating of the GRUNC will be a victory of historic significance for both the Cambodian and American peoples, and deal a severe blow to our common enemy, U.S. Imperialism. □



South Vietnam

Can Thieu Survive Saigon Protests?

By David Marr, Indochina Resource Center-West

Most people have experienced the startling sensation of watching something happen, then swearing that the exact same thing occurred at some earlier point in time. Yet they also know that it could not possibly have been.

Developments in South Vietnam today resemble one of those stunning mental flashes. Eleven years ago, in 1963, it was so much alike. A corpulent, U.S.-manipulated dictator named Ngo Dinh Diem sat in "Independence Palace" in Saigon surrounded by sycophants and self-seeking family advisors, threatening everyone with his American-trained police and special forces units. Yet he was himself increasingly threatened by popular Vietnamese wrath, a combination of National Liberation Front (NLF) successes in the countryside and Buddhist-led demonstrations in the cities. Eventually his U.S. sponsors decided he was a bad bet and dumped him like a worn out TV set.

Now, in late 1974, after years of unbelievable bloodshed and turmoil, there is another pudgy U.S.-manipulated dictator named Nguyen Van Thieu sitting in a modernized version of the same Palace, surrounded by sycophants, relatives, police and paratroop commanders, and subject to the same legitimate fears about his future.

The NLF, which expanded into the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) in 1969, has

managed to endure everything the U.S. government and Saigon clients could throw at it. And the Buddhists, after a long period of forced quiescence, are now organizing publicly to demand the ouster of Thieu and formation of the tripartite National Council specified in the Paris Agreement, both acts aimed at finally bringing peace to South Vietnam. To complete the image of repetition, there is even talk that the U.S. in order to defuse the developing crisis may again switch horses and sup-



Buddhist monk immolates himself, in protest against the Diem regime in 1963

port a CIA and AFL-CIO protegee by the name of Tran Quoc Buu.

Nevertheless, history never really repeats itself. Fascination with similarities can often obscure the more significant differences. For one thing, consider the rampant corruption that now affects every person living in the Saigon-held areas of South Vietnam. Diem had some venal underlings without doubt, but their actions were penny ante compared with the present, completely institutionalized corruption—a product of wartime profiteering and the emergence of a whole new class of slick English-speaking opportunists. And millions of poorer urbanites have been, contrary to their own desires or interests, influenced by the money-grubbing, dog-eat-dog mentality of their self-appointed peers.

However, this hierarchy of profiteering has its Achilles' heel. It is completely dependent on massive injections of outside money, material and weapons. Cuts in U.S. foreign aid and the prospect of further cuts have put the fear of the devil into Saigon's *nouveaux riches*. At the moment they are attempting an end-run around the U.S. Congress by asking the World Bank to organize a multilateral consortium on their behalf, a matter that will come to a head at a meeting in Paris on October 17. Meanwhile, the urban poor scrawl bitterly among themselves for a few bowls of rice and some living space, increasingly considering the desperate idea of turning on their oppressors

contrast to 1963, however, there is the perception now among tens of thousands of urban Vietnamese that a mere dumping of Thieu and a few of his most hated colleagues will accomplish nothing. They were misled in 1963 into thinking that the Saigon generals who organized the *coup* against Diem were legitimate national leaders. Although by 1966 most people had learned the seriousness of their error, the U.S. had already flooded the country with GI's, bombers, road graders and cowboy flicks, not to mention crafting the most elaborate, ruthless system of police repression known to man. Nguyen Van Thieu, who commanded a key infantry division in the 1963 *coup*, now sits as a poignant reminder of just how wrong some people were to continue harkening to the anticommunist siren, instead of demanding immediate discussions with their Vietnamese brothers and sisters in the NLF.

Nothing illustrates this shift in attitude better than the growth in recent months of an energetic Catholic movement to expose Thieu's venal involvements, to organize local anti-corruption leagues, and tentatively to preach national reconciliation and concord according to terms set forth in the Paris Agreement. These are not the minority "left Catholics" who aligned with the Buddhists in earlier years, but rather moderate and conservative parish priests who considered Diem their protector, who even supported

Thieu until a year or two ago. They have finally come to the conclusion (apparently not without some prodding from the Vatican) that the Catholic Church in South Vietnam is doomed unless it dissociates itself from the existing parasitical regime, joins with the Buddhists in advancing an alternative life ethic, and abandons point-of-bayonet anticommunism in favor of some sort of *modus vivendi* with Vietnamese compatriots of Marxist-Leninist inclination.

Not surprisingly, the U.S. Embassy is deeply disturbed by such changes. Frantic efforts are being made to limit the Catholic movement solely to the mom-and-apple pie issue of anticorruption. Some province chiefs have been sacked. Cabinet officials will probably follow. A few hapless Chinese businessmen may get arrested and shot as scapegoats. Most interesting of all, friends of the Embassy like Tran Quoc Buu are trying to syphon off discontent by organizing a "Loyal opposition" to Thieu, mouthing social reform but avoiding the root cause of the problem which is, of course, the ongoing, foreign-supported war.

Which brings us to the last and perhaps most important difference between 1963 and 1974—the superior military capabilities of the Liberation Army. Neither the Democratic Republic of Vietnam nor the PRG desires the breaking out again of massive countryside combat. They have made this clear by their restrained actions as well

as their words. Nevertheless, if the U.S. and Saigon continue to treat the Paris Agreement with ill-disguised contempt there will be a day of reckoning.

No longer is the Liberation Army limited to small arms and guerilla tactics, as the U.S. and Saigon found out together in spring, 1972. Henry Kissinger's "decent interval" has been negated by squalid U.S. efforts to build Thieu into the Francisco Franco of Southeast Asia. Although the Pentagon clings to the option of resumed terror bombing, the chances of President Ford pushing that proposal through Congress recede with every passing month with every mounting problem somewhere else in the world.

Buddhist and Catholic demonstrations in Hue, Saigon, Nha Trang and other cities of the South are a reflection of acute Vietnamese understanding of 1974 realities. On the other hand, facing riot guns, tear gas, billy clubs, imprisonment, torture and even death is not the coy game that some American correspondents would have TV audiences believe. These Vietnamese men and women out on the street know they may fail. They also know, however, that other Vietnamese are prepared to take their places, a process that will continue until peace and independence finally come to Vietnam. □

OPPOSITION IN THE CITIES CONTINUES TO MOUNT

The months of September and October brought into full play the new "legal opposition" force in the urban centers under Thieu's control. Composed initially of Catholics politically conservative and formerly loyal to Thieu, *"the influential An Quang Buddhist faction, the largest veteran's organization, the outspoken Saigon press, the Saigon and Hue bar associations, and a dozen minor fronts and committees—some against hunger, some in favor of the working-class have joined the attack on Thieu."* (NY Times, 10/23/74)

The fight against censorship and confiscation of newspapers has triggered many demonstrations over the past month. On Sept. 19 the staff of the daily *Song Than* burned 10,000 copies of that day's issue before Thieu could confiscate them. The action represented the policy outlined by the Committee For the Freedom of the Press & Publication: to come to the scene and burn any paper on the spot which is threatened with confiscation, rather than surrender it to the police. (InterNews, 9/23) Two days later government orders to confiscate 3 dailies which had printed "Public Indictment No. I" triggered one of the largest anti-Thieu demonstrations since the signing of the Peace Agreement. *"Today the mask has fallen off and we have seen the real face of the dictatorial Nguyen Van Thieu Regime. By not permitting the publication*



Protesting for press freedom: Newspapers are burned before they can be confiscated.

of the accusations, President Thieu has confessed to the six crimes." (Nguyen Van Binh, leader of the Anti-Corruption Committee, N.Y. Times, 9/21/74)



Some of Thieu's crimes included in the indictment are- building houses and acquiring land with government money, halting an investigation of a fertilizer company run by his brother-in-law, profiting from the illegal distribution of scarce rice supplies and masterminding the heroin traffic. (Wash. Post 10/7/74) This indictment, prepared by Father Thanh of the Anti-Corruption Committee has become the rallying point of the resistance. Literally tens of thousands of people rally each week at churches and public buildings to listen to the reading of the indictment.

By the end of September all the major organizations had demanded that Thieu respond publicly to the charges.

On October 1, in a two-hour televised address, Pres. Thieu told the nation that it was "Only the communists or people working for the communists...who say that confidence in me is falling." He criticized the press for aiding in a plot to demoralize the army and claimed that he had limited the number of parties to one - his Democracy Party - because additional ones would "be confusing and destructive." As for the charges, Thieu had nothing to say. At the end of the speech he asked "if the whole people have lost confidence in me as the communist propaganda says, please let me know." Response to the speech was unanimous-"Nonsense!" "If Mr. Thieu wants the people to let him know their confidence in him, we'll let him know all right, with a few demonstrations." said Phu Xuan Huyen an An Quang Buddhist and lower house deputy. Wash. Post 10/2/74)

Within a week new demonstrations were held. On October 7th, Buddhist monks marched for the release of political prisoners, (NY Post, 10/7/74) and on October 10th the largest anti-government (Saigon) demonstration in seven years took place in the streets of Saigon, once again triggered by the confiscation of a newspaper. As 200 journalists began marching through the streets of Saigon their ranks swelled with students, striking workers, a delegation of Buddhist nuns, members of the newly formed People's Front Against Famine and for National Salvation, members of the NRF and anti-corruption campaigns as well as 20 "Parliamentary member" of the opposition party. The one mile march culminated in a rally of 5000 people. (Hsinhua, 10/12)



Students break through police lines during recent Saigon demonstration.

A further boost came when Arch-Bishop Binh of the Roman Catholic Church in South Vietnam, reflecting the Vatican's view, came out in support of the anti-Thieu movement. "The statement is considered potentially more dangerous than anything the opposition has done so far." (F.E.E.R., 10/18/74)

STUDENTS JOIN THE OPPOSITION

By October 22nd, the hands-off policy towards demonstrations ended. Prompted by their fear of students mobilizing in support of the growing protests, police moved in against a demonstration at the National Assembly building. Police cars equipped with bullhorns to drown out speeches were overturned and set afire while windows were broken. A number of the 1500 demonstrators were beaten and 14 students were arrested. A Saigon official said, "It is all a continued effort on the part of the government to stop the student movement." (NY Times, 10/23/74)

As the atmosphere of protest spreads to the army, soldiers are more openly expressing their dissatisfaction with the Thieu regime. "There is no talk of a military coup right now, but there's more direct criticism of Thieu in the army than there ever has been before." The desertion rate is up to 4 or 5000 per week. (Wash. Post 10/12, 13)



CBS News reporter Haney Howell grimaces after being kicked in stomach by Saigon police Oct. 10. He was filming the largest antigovernment demonstration in seven years.

Worried about the possibilities of a coup, and in an effort to put up a facade of fighting corruption, Thieu has ordered several changes in his General's assignments. He has relocated his strongest supporters to Saigon. But his move fools no one as the names of these generals have been published by the Anti-Corruption Committee in a list demanding their resignation. (*Guardian, USA, 10/23/74*)

THE THIRD FORCE ORGANIZES

With the demonstrations in Saigon further setting the stage for the collapse of the Thieu regime, members of the Third Force living in Vietnam and abroad are organizing to enter into the political struggle outlined in the Paris Agreement. During a recent conference in Stockholm, Sweden, Nguyen Long, a Saigon lawyer and former political prisoner of the Thieu regime, has announced his plans to "unify these forces. Although these forces have existed for a long time- they were scattered in the past. But at present they are moving towards a common ideal: the application of the Paris Agreement, establishing peace in Vietnam, the realization of national reconciliation and union and the end of the 25 year war. The Vietnamese people want peace, and only a handful of people who are profiting from the war want it to continue...Peace can be achieved only if the Paris Agreement is applied correctly. I believe President Thieu is the major obstacle to peace in South Vietnam. His departure would give Saigon politicians and even members of the government the opportunity to enter into serious negotiations with the PRG to implement the Paris Accords." (*FEER, 10/18/74*)

Long is working towards a conference of Third Force people from which an official organization will emerge and representatives to the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord will be chosen.

U.S. MANEUVERS TO PRESERVE NEO-COLONIALISM IN SOUTH VIETNAM*

As the day of Thieu's ouster moves nearer, U.S. maneuvers to stay on top of the situation in Saigon multiply. PRG representative Col Vo Dong Giang stated on September 14 that CIA agents were financing "political saboteurs who are attempting to deflect the movement of anger of the masses in a way that would be favorable to the U.S." (*Guardian, 10/2/74*) During the visits of such high ranking U.S. 'dignitaries' as former Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge and General Edward Lansdale further evidence of these plans came to light. While in Saigon, it is reported that they had discussions with leaders of the anti-corruption movement favorable to a strategy directed only at the crimes of the Thieu regime and not against the continuation of the U.S. funded war in South Vietnam.

At the same time, Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Clements, the highest ranking American official to visit Saigon since the signing of the Peace Agreement, was on a fact finding tour of Indochina. Predictably, upon his return he asked Congress for additional military aid and threatened that the possibility "of a return of United States air and naval forces would have to be considered." (*NY Times, 10/9/74*) As a reflection of the intense situation, Clements chose to refer to the Saigon rather than the Thieu regime, a significant change in "official" language.



"We've Agreed to Operate ...
Now We're Discussing the Method"¹¹⁹

A NEW BENEFACTOR FOR SAIGON?

Knowing that Congress is less than eager to allocate additional funds for the war, the U.S. ruling circle has sought new "financial backing" for its tottering regime. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger engineered a plan through which an international consortium would supervise and coordinate efforts to funnel aid to the Saigon regime. The World Bank is currently deliberating on a proposal to send 50 million dollars to Saigon this year through the International Development Association, one of its affiliates. Simply, this represents a blatant violation of the Paris Agreement and just one more effort by the US Imperialists to by-pass Congressional aid cuts and continue to fund the war in South Vietnam. (*Focal Point, 10/1-31/74*)

AS NIXON WENT, SO WILL THIEU

It is clear that U.S. plans include the willing sacrifice of their "loyal" puppet for larger gains - the maintenance of neo-colonialism in South Vietnam. Just as Nixon was thrown out to "preserve the integrity of our democratic system", so will go Thieu. And the comparison goes even deeper. As the people, both in Saigon and the U.S. move closer to an understanding of the real nature of the system of Imperialism, the ruling class' representatives become more of a liability than an asset. It is this threat, and not a desire to meet the needs of the people, that determines their actions.

THE PRG CALLS FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THIEU



In a move reflective of the current balance of forces in the south, the PRG has called off all further negotiations with representatives of the Thieu regime. An official statement released on October 8th outlined the prerequisites for the resolution of problems confronting the people of South Vietnam. They are: *"The complete cessation by the U.S. government of all military activity and intervention in the internal affairs of Vietnam and the withdrawal of all American military personnel disguised as civilians and the overthrow of the Nguyen Van Thieu regime...It is necessary to form an administration in Saigon that supports peace, national concord and the strict application of the Paris Agreement on Vietnam."* (*Official Statement of the PRG-RSVN, Oct. 8, 1974*)

It must be understood that this is not a change in strategy, but a change in tactics. The PRG has never limited their attacks to Thieu, realizing that U.S. Imperialism was the cause of the war in Vietnam. But the current situation provides an excellent opportunity to force the hand of the U.S. government. It is reasonable to assume that as the struggle continues greater unity will be forged between the PRG and the urban opposition. Ultimately, it will be these two forces that will determine the future of this regime, or any other U.S. imposed regime in South Vietnam. □



In Commemoration of NGUYEN VAN TROI (October 15, 1964)

Nguyen Van Troi was sentenced to death for his attempt to kill U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara.

He tore the blindfold from his eyes before the execution and shouted, *"Let me look at our beloved land. Long live Vietnam! Long live Ho Chi Minh!"*



DRVN - update



The "Long Bien" Tractor team helping the agro-coops in the Gia Lam district on Hanoi outskirts prepare the fields for the next Winter-Spring cultivation.



The An Lac transformer station in Haiphong heavily damaged by U.S. aircraft during the air war of destruction in 1972 has been repaired and is enlarging.

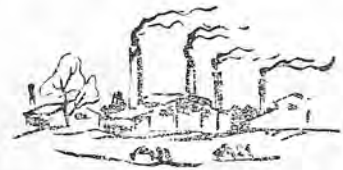
This section will initiate a regular coverage of the DRVN in our newsletter. Its emphasis will be the advance to a socialist society in the North, the popular move for reunification of all Viet Nam following the implementation of the Peace Agreement in the South and the role played in Asia and throughout the world by the DRVN as a socialist state. This first article presents statements on the current situation in the North drawn from DRVN sources.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

"What we have learned after one year (is that) the struggle for peace and for the implementation of the Paris Agreement is precisely a struggle to foil the U.S. scheme to apply the Nixon doctrine and impose U.S. neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam. It is part of the revolutionary struggle of our people in the new stage. It is the best way to carry out our revolutionary task." (DRVN Foreign minister Nguyen Duy Trinh in the official theoretical journal Hoc Tap)

ON THE 29TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DRVN

On September 1 a mass meeting was held in Hanoi to commemorate the 29th anniversary of the founding of the DRVN. Speaking at that meeting, Premier Pham Van Dong said: *"Comrades and Friends, over the last 19 months... the northern people... have busied themselves in healing the wounds of war, rehabilitating and developing the economy, developing culture, continuing to build the material and technical bases of socialism and consolidating socialist production. Thus it is possible that by late 1974 the total social product in North Viet Nam will reach or even surpass prewar levels."* He pointed out that the amount of goods handled at the rebuilt ports was 50% greater than in 1965; that all railways, roads and waterways are operating smoothly again and that all sectors of industry are producing at or near prewar levels. He described in detail the great efforts to expand and rationalize agricultural production being made by the peasants of the collective farms. *"Comparing the building industry with 1965, investment... has increased eightfold. Hospitals and schools have been rapidly rehabilitated and tens of thousands of classrooms have been built... To cause the situation to develop strongly in 1974-75, all branches of government must maintain a clear picture... of the implementation of plans... promptly detect and solve problems... improve management of grain, labor and materials... reorganize and simplify managerial apparatus... accelerate agricultural production... build new economic zones... improve distribution... and motivate the masses to participate in the revolutionary movement to build socialism."*



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THREE REVOLUTIONS

In Vietnam Courier #23 Le Duan, First Secretary of the Viet Nam Workers Party analyzed the problem of "an essentially agrarian economy having a limited productive force and facing great difficulties due to a prolonged war" which because it is a socialist system "could still satisfy, even in wartime, the needs of the population... Viet Nam is bypassing the stage of capitalist development, embarking on building socialism... This means in our country it is not the capitalist system, but precisely the socialist system which has to bring small production to large production... There are difficulties to be overcome... We have not yet created the material and technical basis for socialism... (We are) making a technical revolution and turning manual labor into mechanized labor... This definitely requires the initial harmonious development of agriculture and industry... (We must) carry out simultaneously three revolutions: revolution in the relations of production, technical revolution and ideological and cultural revolution."



Emphasising the need for education he pointed out that "in order to build socialism, one must not only have a correct ideology, seething revolutionary enthusiasm and a correct attitude toward socialist labor, but must also possess high standards of education and knowledge... primarily knowledge of the methods of production and management..." This, he concluded calls for "the alliance between the working class, the collective farmers and the socialist intellectuals."

IT IS A MATTER OF POLITICS!

Although total production figures for 1974 are not available, the DRVN National Assembly in February agreed on specific and detailed economic plans for 1974-75. As a basis for organizing socialist development, the DRVN conducted a national census in early 1974, which showed that the total population in North Viet Nam increased from the last census in 1960 from 15,900,000 to over 23,787,000 today. (*New York Times* 9/5/74) The new economic plan calls for the training of technical cadre and skilled workers, the introduction of socialist forms of production, increased political and ideological education of the masses and mobilization of a large scale "revolutionary movement." The plan aims at the following increases over 1973:

Gross National Product	21%
National Income	14%
Industrial Production	42%
Agricultural Products	16%
Transportation of Freight	81%
Retail Sales	94%
Exports	31%



The emphasis on capital construction, such as industrial plants and electrical power facilities (84% of new investments) represents an increase in capital investment over 1973 of 240%.

Pham Van Dong concluded on September 1st, we must rely "primarily on our own strength... Only the socialist system is truly a system of the people, by the people and for the people."

(We will report the results of these efforts in later articles -ed.)