

This document was produced and distributed in New York City and around the U.S. during 1965 and after. Charlotte Polin had an unusual history. Eventually her compassion for Vietnam and the war became too much for her.

Paul Prenskey, was one of the activists helping the U.S. Committee to Aid The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

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WHY NORTH VIET-NAM IS BEING BOMBED

by

Charlotte Polin

IT IS ELEVEN YEARS SINCE THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED GUARANTEEING RE-UNIFICATION ELECTIONS AND THE INDEPENDENCE, UNITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE WHOLE OF VIET-NAM. IT IS ELEVEN YEARS SINCE THE BLOODY VIOLATION OF THESE AGREEMENTS BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BEGAN. FOR THE PEOPLE OF VIET-NAM AND FOR US, THIS IS THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

On February 7, 1965 the U.S. began its systematic air massacre of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (North Viet-Nam). Now the U.S. government is planning shortly to order the bombing of HAIPHONG, an industrial city of half a million people, which is Hanoi's seaport, and of HANOI itself--a beautiful capital with a population of over a million, with its precious industries, and cultural treasures dating back centuries. The U.S. also plans to bomb the system of dikes in the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (DRV) which keeps the North Viet-Nameese from drowning and starving.

IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY, LET US ACT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
SAVE HAIPHONG!
SAVE HANOI!
PREVENT THE BOMBING OF THE DIKES AND DAMS WHICH WOULD KILL
THREE MILLION NORTH VIET-NAMESE THROUGH DROWNING AND STARVATION!

WHY IS THE U.S. BOMBING NORTH VIET-NAM?

Because, for a small and poor Asian country (population 18 million), the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam has achieved economic miracles! During over eighty years of French colonialism, the Viet-Nameese lived like serfs, working 12 to 17 hour a day, seven days a week, rummaging in garbage heaps for food, never knowing what it was like to have either national independence or industry. In 1945 as a result of the anti-fascist victory and of the Viet-Nameese people's August Revolution, led by the Viet-Minh the Viet-Nameese forced out the French and Japanese oppressors and established the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. On January 6, 1946, nation-wide elections were held, in both the North and the South, which democratically elected the Ho Chi Minh government. That the elections were entirely free and fair was attested to by American observers, and many foreign experts on Viet-Nam such as the French historians Philippe Devillers and Jean Chesneaux.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was recognized internationally even by the French, but in March 1946 the latter decided to re-conquer their former prize colony, and the

Viet-Nameese were forced to fight the First Resistance War which ended only with the signing of the Geneva Accords in July of 1954. They are now fighting the Second Resistance War--against the U.S. aggressors who come from eight thousand miles away to bomb, blast and burn them.

North Viet-Nam is being bombed because it is the only industrialized economy in all of Southeast Asia. The economic miracles achieved by the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, the first former colonial country to take the Socialist path, were a most inspiring example to the peoples of South-East Asia (including South Viet-Nam, where the U.S. had never built any industry and where at least 80 per cent of U.S. aid money at all times went for openly-avowed military purposes) to all of Asia (particularly India) and to Africa and Latin America as well.

Under Socialism, North Viet-Nam solved every problem that its giant neighbor, India, had been unable to solve under Capitalism. In North Viet-Nam, famine and draught were omnipresent, and in 1945 two million North Viet-Nameese starved to death. Though the Red River Delta of North Viet-Nam is the most densely-populated region in the world, and though the DRV has a per capita land-holding of only a fifth of an acre (one third that of an Indian peasant) the DRV not only solved the famine problem but even began exporting rice!

Two other problems that plague India, housing and illiteracy, long ago were solved by the DRV. Under the French, tens of thousands of Viet-Nameese slept in the streets, as in Calcutta and Bombay now. Over 95 per cent of the people of the DRV are literate. Whereas when Viet-Nam was ruled by the French there were only 500 university students for the whole of Indo-China (i.e. North & South Viet-Nam, Laos & Cambodia) today Hanoi graduates over 27,000 a year!

Just as the U.S. is attempting to drown in blood the Liberation struggle of the South Viet-Nameese people because it is the model for liberation struggles everywhere, so North Viet-Nam is being bombed to bits because it shows all colonial and former colonial countries, it shows the so-called Third World of Asia, Africa and Latin America by living example that Socialism can solve their problems. According to the October 14, 1965 "Viet-Nam News Agency Bulletin" (issued daily in Rangoon, Burma) between February and October 1965 the U.S. bombed no less than 124 educational establishments in the DRV, killing a large number of teachers and students. This is done not only to terrorize the North Viet-Nameese people, but also because the U.S. did and does not want Socialist North Viet-Nam's impressive educational system to remain an example to the poor folk of the world.

In the medical field, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam is the only nation in Southeast Asia to have completely wiped out cholera, plague, and small-pox. Between February 1965 and July 11, 1965 alone, the U.S. bombed no less than fifteen hospitals and medical establishments, some of them, like the Quynh Lap Leper Sanatorium (where U.S. pilots killed 180 patients in 14 bombing raids) and the Tuberculosis Hospital No. 71 (over 40 patients and five doctors killed) the finest treatment centers of their kind in all of Asia.

The Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam is being bombed because it built "an independent national economy" with economic and technical aid

from the Socialist Camp, but largely by its own labor--and hand labor at that! On the ruins of a debilitating war, and with bare and bleeding hands, the North Viet-Namense built an impressive infant industry that became the Showplace for Socialism in Southeast Asia. North Viet-Nam has been called "the Ruhr of Southeast Asia." Experts on South-East Asia have highly praised the DRV's accomplishments, such as Alex Josey, South-east Asian correspondent for "Reynolds News" and a member of the British Labor Party for over twenty-five years. Josey says that North Viet-Nam is the most advanced country in south-East Asia and has already solved many of the problems that remain unsolved in the rest of this area. "North Viet-Nam is making material progress unequalled by any country in South-East Asia," he also wrote. "While living standards in Malaya, Thailand, Ceylon and elsewhere in the region remain static or get worse, North Viet-Nam is marching forward."

By bombing the DRV, the U.S. seeks to dissuade all countries from taking the Socialist path by showing that through its preponderant military power it can negate every benefit a Socialist State can bring to its people. One of the main appeals that Socialism has for the masses of the world is its promise of Security, and the U.S. power structure seeks to make a mockery of Socialism by subjecting the North Viet-Namense to Insecurity--fear of the bombings, which would cause insecurity on the job; insecurity over food, due to the bombings hampering transportation and supply; fear of illness, injury and death, and of their dwelling places being destroyed. Thus, by bombing the DRV, the U.S. seeks to prove that even though a country may adopt Socialism, it will not be able to give its people the benefits of Socialism: economic, political, social and psychological security. For always, over it will hang the sword of Damocles--destruction by the U.S.

This is the "message" the U.S. is transmitting to all of Asia, Africa, and Latin America: Even though Socialism brings about much more rapid industrialization than capitalism, better stick with Capitalism. Because if you adopt Socialism, your economic development will still be set back decades--by bombings! This is the real reason for the clamor in Washington, led by General Curtis LeMay, to "bomb North Viet-Nam back into the Stone Age"!

FOR THE SAKE OF THE MARTYRED AND SUFFERING PEOPLE OF THE DRV, WHO TILL THE WINNING OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE FRENCH NEVER HAD A GOOD DAY IN THEIR LIVES, AND FOR THE SAKE OF ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLES EVERYWHERE WHO HAVE STRUGGLED AGAINST POVERTY, OR WHO WOULD LIKE TO, LET US VOCIPEROUSLY CONDEMN GENERAL CURTIS LEMAY'S SUBHUMAN SLOGAN "BOMB NORTH VIET-NAM BACK INTO THE STONE AGE"! DEMAND THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CEASE TO IMPLEMENT THIS BARBARIC POLICY. DEMAND AN END TO ALL BOMBINGS OF NORTH VIET-NAM!

According to the "New York Times" of December 3, 1965, the bombing of North Viet-Nam is "so widespread that Hanoi and its port, Haiphong--the major population and industrial centers--are left as mere 'islands.'" The industrial center of Nam Dinh, third largest city in the DRV, has already been bombed, and its textile factories destroyed or badly damaged. According to "Newsweek" magazine of October 11, 1965 (p.44) and Bernard Fall writing in the December issue of "Ramparts," the U.S. has almost completely

leveled the new and important industrial city of Vinh, capital of the Province of Nghe An, surrounded by glorious tradition, where President Ho Chi Minh was born.

Senator Stennis, Chairman of the Armed Service Preparedness Sub-Committee, Richard Nixon, Mendel Rivers, Sen. Richard Russell and others making speeches calling for the bombing of Haiphong and Hanoi are ordered by the White House to put out these "trial balloons" to test American public opinion regarding the bombing of Haiphong and Hanoi. WE MUST PUNCTURE THESE TRIAL BALLOONS BY LETTING LYNDON JOHNSON AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT KNOW THAT WE ARE VEHEMENTLY OPPOSED TO THE BOMBING OF HAIPHONG! Before it is too late, we must do all we can to prevent further escalation in the air war of destruction against North Viet-Nam.

Haiphong is not only Hanoi's seaport, but the life-line of the whole DRV. The DRV cannot live without foreign trade! It buys its industrial base (i.e. purchase of heavy industrial equipment) through the exporting of its agricultural surplus! If Haiphong Harbor is dynamited and its port facilities destroyed, it will cause severe food and material shortages, and wreck the economy of the DRV. Now, the Republican Party has passed a Resolution calling for the blocading of North Viet-Nam. By imposing a complete "Cordon Sanitaire" and "Cordon Militaire," the U.S. hopes to completely strangle the DRV.

The precious industries and factories in the Hanoi-Haiphong area mean the world to the North Viet-Nameese, who since the winning of national independence lovingly and laboriously built them up. The hypocritical Lyndon Johnson defended the bombing of North Viet-Nam at one of his press conferences by saying, "There is no blood in a steel bridge." We must let him know that we know very well that there is blood in every bridge, road, highway, dam, power plant, etc. that the U.S. is destroying--the blood, sweat and tears of the North Viet-Nameese who sacrificed everything to work day in, day out, to build them. Haiphong is a city of strong working-class tradition, proud of the industries it has built. That city has led the whole country in emulation drives! And attacks on Haiphong and Hanoi would massacre the civilians of these densely-populated metropolitan cities!

Not only are the U.S. aggressors planning to bomb Haiphong and Hanoi, and the whole economic-industrial complex of the DRV. Splashed all over the U.S. and world press are their monstrous plans to bomb North Viet-Nam's system of dikes and dams! This genocidal act would drown and starve three million North-Viet-Nameese--at least one million of them would die outright, and the other several millions from starvation and disease--including horrible plagues--over a period of a year. "U.S. News & World Report" in its December 6, 1965 issue contains a horrifying admission: "U.S. bombers have already crippled part of the irrigation system in North Viet-Nam. In the months ahead, the U.S. may strike at the high dikes protecting the Red River Delta--North Viet-Nam's "rice bowl"--from flooding. Breaching the dikes would knock out agricultural production for at least a year."

The French press has demanded that the U.S. government openly renounce any intention to bomb the dikes. Of course, the U.S. refused.

BUT IT IS OUR DUTY AS CITIZENS OF THE NATION WHICH IS CARRYING OUT AND PLANNING THESE DIABOLICAL ACTS, TO DO ALL IN OUR POWER TO MAKE LYNDON JOHNSON REVERSE HIS POLICY, AND PUBLICLY DECLARE THAT HE WILL NOT BOMB THE DIKES. We must make it clear that, negotiations or no negotiations, we demand that the U.S. stop all bombings against North Viet-Nam because it is a Hitlerian crime against humanity to bomb and destroy the precious accomplishments and economic livelihood of a poor, helpless little country which has nothing to fight back with and is defenceless under U.S. air attack.

Right now, the bombing of Haiphong has first priority on the Pentagon's list. In addition, the Washington strategists have other "projects" high on the priority list which would strike at the life and welfare of millions of civilians in North Viet-Nam. As "U.S. News & World Report" puts it in its December 6, 1965 issue:

"There are other important targets in North Viet-Nam that have not been touched by American bombs. Public utilities are one. Also on the list are cement and fertilizer factories, and two Chinese-built blast furnaces."

On December 15 and again on December 21, the U.S. did indeed attack the DRV's public utilities--by destroying the Uong Bi Thermal Power Plant! That power station was one of the Viet-Nameese people's brightest and most beloved achievements. It supplied most of the electricity to the Hanoi-Haiphong area, and by knocking it out, the U.S. caused a massive power blackout, and brought industry to a virtual standstill. 550 workers were employed at Uong Bi. The U.S. dropped 3,000-pound bombs--the biggest used in any war--to destroy them and their economic achievements. Nearby coal mines, textile factories and other economic establishments were also heavily bombed, as well as heavily-populated civilian areas in the suburbs of Haiphong!

LET US EXERT OUR ENERGIES TO PREVENT A REPETITION OF SUCH HEARTLESS AND HORRENDOUS ACTS OF AGGRESSION! LET US MOVE HEAVEN AND EARTH TO PREVENT THE BOMBING OF HAIPHONG! LET US MAKE A HERCULEAN EFFORT, WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME, TO PREVENT THE BOMBING OF HANOI, AND THE DIKES, AND THE WHOLE ECONOMIC-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX OF THE DRV!

LET US DEMAND AN END TO THE MASSACRE AND MUTILATION OF A POOR DEFENCELESS LITTLE NATION! A NATION WHOSE ONLY "CRIME" IS THAT IT CHERISHES ITS NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND ITS OWN FORM OF GOVERNMENT. LET US DEMAND AND ACT NOW FOR AN END TO THE BOMBING OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM!

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