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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1980

In Vietnam's Gulag, The Captives Die A Slow Death

By DOAN VAN TOAI

One evening about five years ago I was at a concert in Saigon given by the National Concert Orchestra of North Vietnam. Suddenly, down the aisle marched Communist secret police, all carrying guns. They came up to me, and said: "Let's go outside."

They led me into an office of the theater. They said: "Are you Mr. Doan Van Toai?" and I answered: "Yes." They didn't say anything more but forced me to stand there for about an hour. Later they took me to police headquarters and said: "We are arresting you." I asked: "Why are you arresting me, what have I done?" but they only replied: "The best thing is for you to think and remember. It is for you to work out."

I was taken to a small cell. It was very dark—the only light coming from a small hole in the wall through which I could breathe fresh air. The first night I slept easily as I was still optimistic because I knew I hadn't done anything.

Each day I made a notch on the wall and soon I had been there for seven weeks. My only visitor was another prisoner—a girl who every morning would bring me a bowl of rice.

The first day she came I was very hungry and began to gulp the rice down but I soon realized they must have mixed some sand with it. It was impossible to eat. When they finally called me for questioning I asked the official why they had put sand in my rice. "So you remember what you have done wrong in the past," he said.

They made me write an account of my life and every morning would take me to their office where the air was very fresh. I wrote pages and pages so as to postpone the time when I would once more be shut up all day long.

I had first become involved in politics when I was a pharmacy student at Saigon University in the 1960s. At that time I believed Thieu was head of nothing but a puppet government in the hands of the Americans. I became interested in the struggle for peace at Saigon University and was elected vice president of the student union. When the student union president was arrested, I organized student demonstrations all over Vietnam against the Thieu government. For this as well as other activities, I was arrested and imprisoned many times by that government.

During these years the National Liberation Front had approached me to join

them. But I refused, preferring to support their goals independently through the student union. At the end of the war in May 1975, I was asked to join the finance committee of the provisional revolutionary government. I agreed, but in a split over policy I soon resigned. (Although the Communists never told me this, I believe that my resignation was the cause of my arrest.)

After I finished my account I was taken to Le Van Duyet prison in the center of Saigon where I stayed for over two years.

I was put in a small cell with 50 others. People died every day through lack of medical attention and in the evening you could hear the voices call out: "Warden, this is room number three, someone has just died."

I was worried about my French wife and three sons and was anxious for them to leave Vietnam. I knew there could be reprisals against them and through one of the prison wardens—a former friend—I sent a letter to my wife saying not to wait for my release but to take the children to France. And if she had to write a letter to the authorities denying my existence, then she must.

When she finally left for France in June 1977, I felt easier. Then I heard the news of my mother's death. She had been denied medical treatment because she had one son in prison and another who had left with the Americans. I was very sad and very angry and through my friend again sent a letter to the chief of the secret police in Saigon saying: "You are responsible for my mother's death. I have now been in prison for 27 months and I still don't know what I have done to oppose the Communists. If you find out nothing then you must release me." More important, I had my friend bribe an important official.

Later I was called to the prison commandant's office and was told I was released. He said that the government needed me to cooperate with them. "If we give you an exit visa you must tell the West how wonderful everything is here. And how well we treat our prisoners." I agreed with them, but only I knew what I would really tell the West.

I was given an exit visa but didn't leave Vietnam immediately. In prison I had given up hope for a free Vietnam. I had become very angry and very ashamed to have ever supported the NLF. I wanted to get rid of the Communist regime. But then I said to myself: "I think this because I have been in prison for over two years. Before I leave I must find out if the rest of the country feels the same way."

I discovered that everyone hated the regime because they were always hungry and were even less free than they had been under President Thieu. In Vietnam today there are over 800,000 people in prison and in so-called re-education camps. In Cambodia the political prisoners were exterminated

quickly but in Vietnam they die slowly.

When I was released my friends still in prison asked me to tell the world what is happening and, if no one will stand up to the Vietnamese Communists, to send them cyanide to put an end to their agony. "Help us to die quickly," they said.

In Vietnam nobody dares to protest for fear of arrest. Few people abroad speak because they fear for the safety of their families still in Vietnam.

But even if it means the death of myself and my family, I must do something for the thousands of prisoners who die each year and the millions of people who have to support the unsupportable and accept the unacceptable.

Doan Van Toai is doing research at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy on a book about Vietnam.

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The New York Times Magazine

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Doan Van Toai

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A former South Vietnamese dissenter tells of his disillusionment with the victorious Communists, his imprisonment at their hands, and of the new tyranny that North Vietnam has brought to his country since the war's end.

A LAMENT FOR VIETNAM

A former South Vietnamese dissenter tells in a personal memoir of his disillusionment with the victorious Communists, his imprisonment at their hands, and the new tyranny that North Vietnam has brought to his country.

By Doan Van Toai

When the Communists took over North Vietnam in 1954, a million refugees fled to the South. I personally heard stories of their incredible suffering. But, along with other South Vietnamese, I refused to believe them. A generation later, I could not believe Solzhenitsyn's book "The Gulag Archipelago," either. I dismissed it as anti-Communist propaganda. But by 1979, I had published my own book, "The Vietnamese Gulag." Can those who have suffered the horror of Communism ever convince those who have not experienced it?

Doan Van Toai is writing a book about Vietnam called "Neither Peace Nor Honor" at Tufts University.

From 1945, when I was born in the village of Caivon in Vinh Long province, 100 miles south of Saigon, until I left Vietnam in May 1978, I never enjoyed peace. My family's house was burned three times in the war against the French. To escape the fighting, my parents moved from one village to another throughout my youth. Like the majority of Vietnamese patriots, they joined the resistance forces fighting the French. As I grew up, I myself saw how the peasants were oppressed by the local officials of the successive Saigon regimes, how they were victimized by the French bombardments. I learned the history of my country's thousand-year struggle against Chinese occupation and its century-long effort against Western domination. With this background, my compatriots and I grew up with a hatred of foreign intervention.

When the students at Saigon University elected me vice

president of the Saigon Student Union in 1969 and 1970, I participated in the different peace efforts, leading student demonstrations against the Thieu regime and against American involvement. I published a magazine called Self-Determination, and traveled in January 1971 to California to give antiwar lectures at Berkeley and Stanford. For my activities, I was arrested and jailed many times by the Thieu Government.

During that period, I believed that I was fulfilling my commitment to peace and the independence of my country. I had faith, too, in the program of the National Liberation Front (N.L.F.), which led the revolutionary resistance in South Vietnam. I hated Saigon's rulers, men like Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, Gen. Nguyen Cao Ky, Gen. Dang Van Quang — former soldiers of the French colonial army. These were the men whom the French had recruited in the

1940's to help destroy the Vietnamese resistance. They had risen over the years to become leaders themselves, but they commanded no respect from the people. Because of their lack of popular support, they were predisposed to rely on foreign forces.

As a student leader, I felt I had to pursue the aspiration of the Vietnamese people for democracy, freedom and peace. Naïvely, I believed that the Hanoi regime at least had the virtue of being Vietnamese, while the Americans were foreign invaders like the French before them. Like others in the South Vietnamese opposition movements, I believed that our Communist compatriots in the North would be more amenable to compromise and easier to work with than the Americans. Moreover, I was hypnotized by the personal sacrifices and devotion the Communist leaders had demonstrated. Ton Duc Thang, former President

of North Vietnam, for example, had been imprisoned for 17 years in a French jail. I was hypnotized also by the political programs advocated by the N.L.F., which included a domestic policy of national reconciliation, without risk of reprisal, and a foreign policy of nonalignment. Finally, I was influenced by progressive movements throughout the world and by the most

prestigious intellectuals in the West. My impression was that during the 1960's and early 70's the leaders of the American peace movement shared my convictions.

These convictions endured through the signing of the 1973 Paris peace accords and the subsequent collapse of the South Vietnamese Government two years later. When liberation was

imminent, I was the one who told friends and relatives not to flee. "Why do you want to leave?" I asked. "Why are you afraid of the Communists?" I accepted the prospect of enduring hardships to rebuild my country and I decided to stay in Vietnam and continue working as a branch manager at a Saigon bank, where I had been for more than four years, writing secret



Dejeon/Sygma

Boat people in 1978. Says the author: "The measure of popular hatred for the Communists is that thousands have left their land."

reports about the economic situation in South Vietnam for the N.L.F. (After leaving the university, I had not been drafted by the South Vietnamese Government because I was the only son in my family. And I had not joined the Vietcong because the N.L.F. felt I could serve a more useful role providing financial reports from the bank.)

ted a few months

Several days after Saigon fell, the Provisional Revolutionary Government, formed by the N.L.F., asked me to join the finance committee, a group of intellectuals whose job it was to advise the Government on matters of economic policy. I complied willingly, taking a pay cut of 90 percent. My first assignment was to help draw up a plan for confiscating all the private property in South Vietnam. Shocked, I proposed that we should

expropriate only the property of those who had cooperated with the former regime and those who had used the war to become rich, and that we distribute it in some fashion to the poor and to the victims of the war, Communist and non-Communist alike. My proposals, of course, were rejected. I was naïve enough to think that the local cadres were mistaken, that they misunderstood the good intentions of the Communist Party leaders. I had many fights with them, believing as I did Hanoi's previous statement that "the situation in the South is very special and different from that of North Vietnam." A few months before the liberation of Saigon, Le Duan, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, had said, "The South needs its own policy."

In the end, I could not obey the order

to help arrange the confiscation of all private property, a plan that was subsequently carried out. Such a scheme had nothing to do with fulfilling the aspirations of the South Vietnamese, and it went against my conscience. I decided to resign. But no one resigns in a Communist regime. The implication of nonconformity is intolerable to Communists. When I submitted my resignation, the chief of the finance committee warned me that my action "would only serve as propaganda to excite the people; here we never do it that way." Several days later, while I was attending a concert at the great National Theater (formerly the National Assembly Hall, which my fellow students and I had occupied so many times under the Thieu regime), I was arrested. No charges were made, no reasons were given.

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After the fall of Saigon, many progressive intellectuals and former antiwar-movement leaders believed that the new Vietnamese regime would bring internal democracy and freedom from foreign domination. They believed that the new regime would pursue the best interests of the people, honoring its promise to carry out a policy of national reconciliation without fear of reprisal. Far from adhering to their promises, the Vietnamese rulers have arrested hundreds of thousands of individuals — not only those who had cooperated with the Thieu regime but even those who had not, including religious leaders and former members of the N.L.F.

Vietnam today is a country without any law other than the arbitrary directives of those in power. There is no civil code. Individuals are imprisoned without charges and without trial. Once in jail, prisoners are taught that their behavior, attitude and "good will" are the key factors in determining when they may be released — whatever crimes they may have committed. As a consequence, prisoners often obey the guards blindly, hoping for an early release. In fact, they never know when they may be released — or when their sentences may be extended.

How many political prisoners are there in Vietnam today? And how many of them have died in prisons during the first six years of Communist rule? Nobody can know the exact numbers. The United States Department of State has said there are from 150,000 to 200,000 prisoners; Vietnamese refugees estimate about one million. Hoang Huu Quynh, an intellectual, a graduate of Moscow University, who served as a director of a technical school in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), recently defected to France during his Government-sponsored tour of European countries. He told the French press: "There are at least 700,000 prisoners in Vietnam today." Another witness, Nguyen Cong Hoan, a former member of the reunified National Assembly, which was elected in 1976, who escaped by boat in 1978, said that he himself knew "about 300 cases of executions" in his own province of Phu Yen. In 1977, officials in Hanoi insisted that only 50,000 people, who posed the greatest threat to national security, had been arrested. But Prime Minister Pham Van Dong said, in the French magazine *Paris Match*, on Sept. 22, 1978, "In over three years, I released more than one million

prisoners from the camps." One wonders how it is possible to release more than a million after having arrested only 50,000.

When I was arrested, I was thrown into a three-foot-by-six-foot cell with my left hand chained to my right foot and my right hand chained to my left foot. My food was rice mixed with sand. When I complained about the sand, the guards explained that sand is added to the rice to remind prisoners of their crimes. I discovered that pouring water in the rice bowl would make the sand separate from the rice and sink to the bottom. But the water ration was only one liter a day for drinking and bathing, and I had to husband it carefully.

After two months in solitary confinement, I was transferred to a collective cell, a room 15 feet wide and 25 feet long, where at different times anywhere from 40 to 100 prisoners were crushed together. Here we had to take turns lying down to sleep, and most of the younger, stronger prisoners slept sitting up. In the sweltering heat, we also took turns snatching a few breaths of fresh air in front of the narrow opening that was the cell's only window. Every day I watched my friends die at my feet.

In March 1976, when a group of Western reporters visited my prison, the Communist officials moved out all the prisoners and substituted North Vietnamese soldiers. In front of the prisons, one sees no barbed wire, no watchtowers, only a few policemen and a large sign above the entrance that proclaims Ho Chi Minh's best-known slogan: "Nothing Is More Precious Than Liberty and Independence." Only those detained inside and those who guard them know what kind of place is hidden behind that sign. And every prisoner knows that if he is suspected of planning to escape, his fellow inmates and relatives at home will be punished rather than he himself.

We will never know precisely the number of dead prisoners, but we do know about the deaths of many well-known prisoners who, in the past, never cooperated with President Thieu or the Americans: for example, Thich Thien Minh, the strategist of all the Buddhist peace movements in Sai-

gon, an antiwar activist who was sentenced to 10 years in jail by the Thieu regime, then released after an outpouring of protest from Vietnamese and antiwar protesters around the world. Thien Minh died in Ham Tan prison after six

months of detention in 1979. Another silent death was that of the lawyer Tran Van Tuyen, a leader of the opposition bloc in the Saigon Assembly under President Thieu. This well-known activist died in Communist hands in 1976, although as late as April 1977, Prime Minister Pham Van Dong was telling French reporters that Tuyen was alive and well in a re-education camp. One of the greatest losses has been that of the famous Vietnamese philosopher Ho Huu Tuong. Tuong, a classmate of Jean-Paul Sartre's in Paris in the 1930's, was perhaps the leading intellectual in South Vietnam. He died in Ham Tan prison on June 26, 1980. These men were arrested, along with many others among the most prominent and respected South Vietnamese, in order to pre-empt any possible opposition to the Communists.

Some American supporters of Hanoi have ignored or rationalized these deaths, as they have the countless other tragedies that have befallen Vietnam since 1975. It is more than likely that they will continue to maintain their silence in order to avoid the profound disillusionment that accepting the truth about Vietnam means for them. Yet if liberty and democracy are worth struggling for in the Philippines, in Chile, in South Korea or in South Africa, they are no less worth defending in Communist countries like Vietnam. Everyone remembers the numerous demonstrations protesting United States involvement in Vietnam and the war crimes of the Thieu regime. But some of those people who were then so passionately committed to democratic principles and human rights have developed a strange indifference now that these same principles are under assault in Communist Vietnam. For example, one antiwar activist, William Kunstler, refused to sign a May 1979 open letter to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in which many former antiwar activists, including Joan Baez, protested Hanoi's violations of human rights. Kunstler said, "I don't believe in criticizing socialist governments publicly, even if there are human-rights violations," and, "The entire Baez campaign may be a C.I.A. plot." This statement reminds me of

the argument used by the Thieu regime to suppress opposition: "The peace movements and the opposition activists are all the Communists' lackeys."

There are other illusions about the current regime in Vietnam about which people should be disabused. Many people believed that Ho Chi Minh was primarily a nationalist and that the Vietnamese Communists were and are independent of the Soviet Union. I believed the same before they took over South Vietnam. But portraits of Soviet leaders now adorn public buildings, schools and administrative offices throughout "independent Vietnam." In contrast, one never saw pictures of American leaders even during the so-called puppet regime of President Thieu. The degree of subordination the present Government feels toward its Soviet patron is suggested by a famous poem by the well-known Vietnamese poet To Huu, a member of the Politburo and president of the Communist Party Committee of Culture. Here we have an opportunity to listen to a high-ranking Vietnamese weep on the occasion of Stalin's death:

*Oh, Stalin! Oh, Stalin!
The love I bear my father,
my mother, my wife,
myself
It's nothing beside the love
I bear you,
Oh, Stalin! Oh, Stalin!
What remains of the earth
and of the sky!
Now that you are dead.*

It may seem incredible that such a poem could have been written in Vietnam, which is known for the strength of its family traditions and its feeling for filial piety. Yet this poem occupied a prominent place in a major anthology of contemporary Vietnamese poetry recently published in Hanoi.

Moreover, Le Duan, First Secretary of the Communist Party, said in his political report to the reunified National Assembly in 1976: "The Vietnamese revolution is to fulfill the internationalist duty and the international obligation," and to do so, in the words of the 1971 party platform, "under the leadership of the Soviet

Union." The glorification of Soviet life is, in fact, a major goal of Communist Vietnam's censorship policy.

Immediately after the fall of Saigon, the Government closed all bookshops and theaters. All books published under the former regimes were confiscated or burned. Cultural

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VIETNAM

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literature was not exempt, including translations of Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Dale Carnegie. Margaret Mitchell's "Gone With the Wind" was on the list of decadent literature as well. The new regime replaced such books with literature designed to indoctrinate children and adults with the idea that the "Soviet Union is a paradise of the socialist world."

Another argument made at times by Western apologists has to do with freedom of religion in Vietnam. One article in the new Constitution of Vietnam, adopted this year, declares that "the regime respects the liberty of the believers and also the liberty of the nonbelievers." In regard to this article, Le Duan has repeatedly proclaimed: "Our present regime is a million times more democratic than any other in the world." The reality, though, is suggested by an incident involving the desecration of a Buddhist pagoda, in which a nude woman, on orders from the Government, entered the pagoda during a worship service. When Thich Man Giac, a prominent Buddhist leader, protested, the Government used the opportunity to try to discredit the Buddhists as enemies of democracy — specifically, of the freedom to disbelieve. Thich Man Giac, who had served as liaison between the Buddhists and the Communist Government, escaped Vietnam by boat in 1977 and is now living in Los Angeles.

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All of those who supported the N.L.F. in its struggle should be aware of how they were betrayed and deceived. When Harrison Salisbury of The New York Times visited Hanoi in December 1966, the leaders in Hanoi told him: "The direction of the struggle in the South is by the South and not by the North." Pham Van Dong, Prime Minister, said to Salisbury: "No one in the North had this stupid, criminal idea in mind" that the North wanted to annex the South.

Yet in a victory-day celebration speech made on May 19, 1975, Le Duan said, "Our party is the unique and single leader that organized, controlled and governed the entire struggle of the Vietnamese people from the first day of the revolution." In his political report to the reunified National Assembly in Hanoi on June 26, 1976, Le Duan said: "The strategic task of the revolution in our country in the new stage is to achieve the reunification of our homeland and to take the whole country rapidly, vigorously and steadily to socialism, and Communism."

In 1976, the Provisional Revolutionary Government formed by the N.L.F. was abolished, and South and North Vietnam were reunified under Communist rule. Today, among 17 members of the Politburo and 134 members of the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Communist Party, not a single one is from the N.L.F. (there are several members who had been North Vietnam Communist Party representatives with the N.L.F.). Even Nguyen Huu Tho, former chairman of the N.L.F., holds only the post of acting President of State, a ceremonial position that involves greeting visitors and participating in festivals. But his position will be abolished under the new Constitution.

Listen to Truong Nhu Tang, 57 years old, a founder of the N.L.F., former Justice Minister of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, more recently one of the boat people. Tang escaped in November 1979 and is now living in Paris. He told reporters of his experience in a news conference in Paris in June 1980. Twelve years earlier, he said, when he had been jailed by the Thieu regime for his Communist activities, his father came to visit. "Why," he asked Tang, "have you abandoned everything — a good job, a rich family — to join the Communists? Don't you know that the Communists will betray you and persecute you, and when you finally understand, it will be too late to wake up?" Tang, an intellectual, answered his father: "You would do bet-

ter to keep quiet and accept the sacrifice of one of your sons for democracy and our country's independence. . . ."

After the Tet offensive in 1968, Tang was exchanged for three American colonels who had been prisoners of war held by the Vietcong; then he vanished into the jungle with the N.L.F. He had visited many Communist and third-world countries on behalf of the N.L.F. during the war. Tang said in his news conference: "I was well aware that the N.L.F. was a Communist-dominated national united front and I was naïve enough to believe that Ho Chi Minh and his party would place national interests above ideology and would place the interest of the Vietnamese people above the party's. But the people and I were wrong."

Truong Nhu Tang told of his own knowledge of the way Communist ruling circles operate: "The Communists are expert in the arts of seduction and will go to any length to woo you over to their side, as long as they don't control the Government. But once they are in power they suddenly become harsh, ungrateful, cynical and brutal." Tang summarized current conditions in Vietnam: "The family is divided, society is divided, even the party is divided."

Looking back now on the Vietnam war, I feel nothing but sorrow for my own naïveté in believing that the Communists were revolutionaries worthy of support. In fact, they betrayed the Vietnamese people and deceived progressives throughout the world. The responsibility for the tragedies that have engulfed my compatriots is mine. And now I can only bear witness to this truth so that all former supporters of the Vietcong may share their responsibility with me.

While I was in jail, Mai Chi Tho, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, addressed a selected group of political prisoners. He told us: "Ho Chi Minh may have been an evil man; Nixon may have been a great man. The Americans may have had the just cause; we may not have had the just cause. But we won and the Americans were defeated because we convinced the people that Ho Chi Minh is the great man, that Nixon is a murderer and the Americans are the invaders." He concluded that "the key factor is how to control people and their opinions. Only Marxism-Leninism can do that. None of you ever see resistance to the Communist regime, so don't think about it. Forget it. Between you — the bright intellectuals — and me, I tell you the truth."

And he did tell us the truth. Since 1978, the Vietnamese Communists have occupied Laos, invaded Cambodia and attacked Thailand, while the Soviet

Union has invaded Afghanistan. In each of these depredations, the Communists have portrayed themselves, incredibly, as liberators, saviors and bulwarks against foreign aggression. And each time, world opinion has remained relatively quiescent.

But in Vietnam, people often remark: "Don't believe what the Communists say, look instead at what they have done." One South Vietnamese Communist, Nguyen Van Tang, who was detained 15 years by the French, eight years by Diem, six years by Thieu, and who is still in jail today, this time in a Communist prison, told me: "In order to understand the Communists, one must first live under a Communist regime." One rainy evening in Saigon's Le Van Duyet prison, he told me: "My dream now is not to be released; it is not to see my family. My dream is that

I could be back in a French prison 30 years ago." This is the one wish of a 60-year-old man who has spent his entire adult life in and out of prison fighting for the freedom and the independence of his country. At this moment, he may already have died in his cell or have been executed by the new rulers.

The Vietnamese people wish to achieve the real revolution; they do not want Communism. The measure of popular hatred for the Communists is that thousands of Vietnamese have abandoned their historical attachment to the land. Under French colonial domination, throughout the long war years, even during the catastrophic famine of 1945 when two million starved to death, Vietnamese simply did not willingly leave their homeland — the land of their ancestors' graves. The recent outpouring of refugees is a direct result of the terror of the present regime. Listen to another refugee, Nguyen Cong Hoan, former N.L.F. agent and member of the new unified Assembly elected in 1976: "This current regime is the most inhuman and oppressive [Vietnam] has ever known." Hoan escaped by boat in 1977, after abandoning his position in the Communist Assembly. "The Assembly," he declared, "is a puppet, the members know only how to say yes, never how to say no."

Among the boat people who survived, including those who were raped by pirates and those who suffered in the refugee camps, nobody regrets his escape from the present regime. I am confident that the truth about Vietnam will eventually emerge. It is already available to those who wish to know it. As Solzhenitsyn has said, "Truth weighs as heavy as the world." And Vietnam is a lesson in truth. ■

Name	Date
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Boston Sunday Globe

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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1979

Telephone 929-2000

Refugee decries life in Vietnam

By Clive Smith
Globe Correspondent

"Life under the Communists in Vietnam is even worse now than it was under President Nguyen Van Thieu. It is more repressive, more corrupt, more of a dictatorship," says Doan Van Toai, a former Saigon student leader who was twice jailed by the Thieu regime for his National Liberation Front (NFL) sympathies, only to be jailed in turn by the Communists after the fall of Saigon.

Toai, 32, who as the then vice president of the Saigon Students Union spoke on many US campuses in the early 1970s against "the sword of American imperialism which threatened Vietnamese self-determination," was in Boston again recently as part of a worldwide speaking tour to draw attention to conditions in Vietnamese prisons.

"Everyone who is not a Communist Party official, even former Viet Cong fighters and South Vietnamese NFL members, are liable for arrest and imprisonment. The prison system has become a Vietnamese Gulag, but the world does not know or believe how terrible conditions are, or how many hundreds of thousands are in jail," said Toai.

After the fall of Saigon in April 1975, Toai, then a manager of the Nam Do Bank of Saigon, initially worked under the new government and prepared a plan for the reorganization of his bank. He said he became increasingly disillusioned with the Communists when, despite previctory promises that the private property of small traders and farmers would be left intact, he was asked to participate in preparing detailed plans for its confiscation as a member of the Finance Committee of the NFL.

According to Toai, confiscation involves the "voluntary" signing over of substantial items of private property, such as houses, land or cars, to the Vietnamese gov-



Doan Van Toai making a point at MIT.

(Globe photo by John Blanding)

ernment under threat of imprisonment of oneself or one's family. Initially, it was applied only to the old supporters of the Thieu regime, the "comprador capitalists," he said. But, as secretly planned by the Finance Committee, it was extended in March 1978 to the "national capitalists" who had opposed Thieu, and in April, to all property owners, no matter how small and whatever their political record, he said.

After rejecting participation on the NFL's Finance Committee, Toai said he was jailed, without charge or trial, with 40 other prisoners in a 12-by-30-foot cell. Frequently chained hand and foot, the prisoners had to take

turns sleeping down, and got air from a single vent, he said. Almost every day, someone would die from starvation, suffocation, torture or suicide in the Saigon jail, he said.

Toai estimates that today there are about 800,000 persons in prisons and "re-education" camps, about half of them former Thieu supporters and officials, the rest mainly "third force" people who opposed both Thieu and the Communists. Between 10 and 15 percent of the prisoners are women, he said.

Spokesmen for both Amnesty International and the State Department, suggest, on admittedly fragmentary

Vietnamese war protester changes tune

By STEPHEN MAGAGNINI
Staff Writer

When Vietnamese political prisoner Doan Van Taoui speaks at Berkeley today, there will be more than a trace of irony in his message.

Nine years ago, Taoui, then a South Vietnamese student leader opposing the Thieu regime, spoke at various American campuses, among them, Berkeley. Taoui praised the communist-controlled National Liberation Front and told the Americans to get their soldiers out of the country.

Yesterday, Taoui, 33, was in Sacramento, where he spoke to more than 200 Vietnamese-Americans about life in their native land since the fall of Saigon in May 1975.

After a taste of communist rule—including 28 months in Saigon's Bien Hoa prison—Taoui is singing a different tune than he sang nine years ago.

To this day, Taoui does not know why he was arrested or why he was released. "There was no trial, no investigation, no lawyers—in Vietnam today, there are no law schools!"

Taoui, who comes from a small village 100 miles south of Saigon, was the son of a French teacher and guerilla fighter who fought the French. He went to pharmacy school but soon emerged as a student leader who did his share of jail time for opposing the American-supported government of Nguyen Van Thieu.

When Saigon fell, Taoui welcomed the end of the corrupt Thieu regime—"When Thieu appointed a general or a chief of a province, he'd have to pay Thieu."

"Now the corruption in Vietnam has a wider breadth," said Nguyen Huu Hieu, a Buddhist monk who also opposed Thieu and met Taoui in prison. "There's a greater bureaucracy. They don't have enough money to pay everyone—these men must be corrupted. Corruption is not considered a crime. The only crime is not supporting the government."

Hieu, 35, was taken from his pagoda and imprisoned for 10 months, while the monks 60 years of age and older were allowed to stay. "They (the communists) arrested most religious leaders because these people are influential people. They trained young secret police and made them undercover monks to control all the old priests. They monopolized all means of production, culture and religion.

"They wanted to transform Marxism and Leninism into a state religion."

Hieu, who hails from North Vietnam, said, "In the words of Lenin, colonialism is the final step of capitalism."

Taoui wryly added, "If the French were colonialists, and the Americans were neo-colonialists, then the Vietnamese communists are neo-neo-colonialists," referring to the recent takeover of Cambodia.

When the communists took over Vietnam, "We believed the Vietnamese communists, at least, were Vietnamese before they were communists," said Hieu, who has translated Henry Miller and Ernest Hemingway into Vietnamese.

But the message was, "Those who love the country love the party," Taoui said. "Those who blindly uphold the government will get rice rations."

Taoui bribed his way out of Vietnam. Hieu escaped in a fishing boat. "We drifted for eight days and 52 boats passed us, but they ignored us," he said. "The 53rd, a Japanese tanker, rescued us."

They favor a social democracy, but they have learned an important lesson. "I think all doctrines are good—even communism—but the most important thing is the leader, not the doctrine," Hieu said.

Of the refugees he addressed, Taoui said, "They would like to return to their country. They've received very good treatment from the Americans, but they don't like to stay here. There's a lack of mental spirit because Americans don't understand their way of life."

Taoui, who thinks the communists will ultimately be destroyed, says the American presence in Vietnam helped to fuel communist propaganda.

Nevertheless, he urges Americans not to forget their responsibility to the Vietnamese people for our role in the conflict, and admits he made a mistake nine years ago. "I was wrong. I think the best way to understand about communism is to live under communist domination."

Recently Baez, poet Allen Ginsberg and Roger Baldwin, founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, were among signers of a petition presented to the permanent Vietnamese observer to the United Nations, charging the Communists with "grave and systematic violations of human rights."

"The progressive international community which support us in our efforts to be free of American imperialism must support us now in our efforts to have an imperial Gulag prison system," said Taoui. He has been given a trial and independent investigation of the Vietnamese

After 28 months in jail, Taoui said, he was suddenly released for reasons that are still unknown to him, though prison officials told him he was "well-re-educated." After "voluntarily" signing over his house to the authorities, and selling all his personal belongings for \$1000, Taoui said, he bribed officials to get a visa to leave the country and join his wife and two children, who already were in France. He left Saigon last May on a ticket provided by friends and family outside the country.

Commenting on the lack of resistance to the "Vietnamese Gulag," Taoui said that most former university students and intellectuals who were not imprisoned had been "relocated" in rural settlement areas, where almost two million of Saigon's three million inhabitants have been moved since the city's fall. Taoui said that women, whom the Communists claim to have liberated from traditional handicaps, joke bitterly that the only way they have been "liberated" into an equal position with men is that they do hard labor too.

Access to the schools, universities and hospitals is also determined by obtaining the necessary security clearance from the Communist Party official on one's street. Taoui said that his mother died while he was imprisoned because, as a relative of someone who was in jail she could not gain access to a hospital.

"No one knows how it is decided who goes to prison and who goes to the camps and who gets executed, because there seems to be no connection between the size of the crime and the punishment," said Taoui. Contrary to the Communists' headline but honest image, Taoui said, bribery and corruption are still endemic, and even more widespread than under the Thieu regime.

"The Communists have a very large bureaucracy to police the repression, which they cannot afford to pay, so bribery is more or less accepted as part of their pay," said Taoui. "Because all the non-Communist periodicals and newspapers were closed down three days after the fall of Saigon, there is no way of publicly exposing corruption, and anyway, bribery is considered a minor crime compared to a major crime like ideological opposition."

Independent reports support Taoui's claim that the prison population has grown so large that hospitals, schools and even orphanages have been converted into prisons. Conditions in the prisons are so severe, said Taoui, that everyone dreams of "graduation" to the hard labor of the "re-education" camps. He added that since there is no sentence there is no release date, however distant, to wait for.

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FROM TOAI, DOAN V

DOCDATE 30 MAR 81

TOAI, DOAN V

30 MAR 81

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KEYWORDS: VIETNAM NORTH

TANG, TRUONG N

SUBJECT: WRITES RE DEFECTION OF TANG - FORMER JUSTICE MINISTER OF NATL

LIBERATION FRONT & FORMATION OF NATL SALVATION COUNCIL

ACTION: PREPARE REPLY FOR MEESE SIG DUE: 16 APR 81 STATUS S FILES

FOR ACTION

FOR COMMENT

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LILLEY

GREGG

COMMENTS 4/16 also wrote m. deane. to France was requested by mike

REF# LOG NSCIFID (C /)

ACTION OFFICER (S)	ASSIGNED	ACTION REQUIRED	DUE	COPIES TO
Lilley	S 4/9	Prepare reply for Allen sig	4/16	
Allen	IX 4/14	For information		
Lilley	S 4/16	for revision of memo	4/17	
Allen	X 4/17	for signature		

ACTION OFFICER (S)	ASSIGNED	ACTION REQUIRED	DUE	COPIES TO
C	4/21	allen sq memo to Meese		
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TO ALLEN

FROM TOAI, DOAN VAN

DOCDATE 04 JUL 81

TOAI, DOAN VAN

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KEYWORDS: VIETNAM

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TANG, TRUONG NHU

(0172)

SUBJECT: LTRS TO ALLEN & MEESE FORWARDING POSITION PAPERS OF VIETNAM NATL
SALVATION COM

ACTION: PREPARE REPLY FOR ALLEN SIG DUE: 28 JUL 81 STATUS S FILES

FOR ACTION

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LILLEY

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<i>Jc</i>	<i>x 7/24</i>	<i>For Review</i>	<i>7/27</i>	<i>20+</i>
	<i>- 7/27</i>	<i>Colson apnd recom</i>		
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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

July 24, 1981

Dear Mr. Toai:

Messrs. Meese and Allen have asked me to thank you for your letters of July 4th.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding your letter and the enclosed position paper to the Department of State, and suggest that you contact them in the future for any exchange of views you may wish to have with the Administration. To remind you, the Vietnamese Desk Officer at the State Department can be reached at 202/632-3132.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

James Lilley

James Lilley

Mr. Doan Van Toai
Research Associate
The Fletcher School
of Law and Diplomacy
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

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Enclosures filed in
Oversize Attachments # 18H

VIETNAM NATIONAL SALVATION COMMITTEE

WAR OR PEACE IN INDOCHINA

POSITION PAPER

The Vietnam National Salvation Committee was founded on 27th december 1980 as a timely response to a most critical situation in Vietnam characterised by the total bankruptcy of the Hanoi communist regime.

The Committee regroups patriots from every political opinion except members of the Vietnamese Communist Party and seeks to realise the basic objectives as below :

- 1) To mobilise the population at home and abroad with a view to overthrowing the totalitarian communist regime and to replacing it with a new regime founded on Freedom, Justice and Human Dignity and a New Society consistent with Vietnamese traditions and aspirations.
- 2) To combat Hanoi's regional expansionism and to promote for Indochina a new structure of stability and peace based on the absolute respect of the fundamental national rights of the peoples of Cambodia and Laos, i.e. national independence and territorial integrity as recognised by Geneva. Agreements of 1954 on Indochina, of 1962 on Laos, and Paris Agreements of 1973 on Vietnam.
- 3) To mobilise support of world public opinion and of peace, freedom and justice loving governments in order to combat soviet expansionism in South East Asia.

The Committee stands for national independence in Vietnam and everywhere in the world.

At the present time, it is essentially an action committee, temporarily based abroad but as soon as conditions permit it will open a home front inside Vietnam to carry out both psywar and armed operations, combined with diplomatic and policital actions abroad.

The Committee maintains continued and close contacts with inside as well as with various Vietnamese organisations outside. It will propose in due course a comprehensive political Programme with a view to creating a UNITED FRONT FOR NATIONAL SALVATION.



The current spokesman of the Committee is His Excellency TRUONG NHU TANG, former attorney general (Justice Minister) of the Ex. Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam liquidated by the Hanoi Regime in 1976.

The Committee has friendly relations with various Khmer and Lao Resistance Movements.

September 1980, H.E. TRUONG NHU TANG was invited by the government of the Republic of China to visit Peking where he met Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang and had several discussions with the Chinese leaders and Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

At the very moment where U.N. diplomatic activity is busy with the organisation of an international conference on Cambodia and in order to clarify the current debate on the Indochinese issue, the Vietnam National Salvation Committee deems it useful to make public its 10 points Position :

- 1) The Moscow-Hanoi axis is a constant threat to peace and security in South East Asia.
- 2) Hanoi's war communism is a permanent danger for peace in South East Asia.
- 3) Any compromise with Hanoi is illusory.
- 4) China has time on her side.
- 5) New options are open for the U.S. in South East Asia.
- 6) The ill of Indochina and South East Asia must be cured at its very source: Hanoi.
- 7) The internal situation is extremely critical for the Hanoi regime.
- 8) For a United Front of National Salvation for Vietnam.
- 9) For a large anti-Hanoi regional front.
- 10) For a new structure of Stability and Peace in Indochina.

After being for more than three decades, one of the most terrifying battlefields in the world, Indochina is again torn apart by a new cycle of conflicts. In every aspect the Indochinese crisis preoccupies the entire world. It is a serious threat to Peace, Security, Freedom of the nations and the Human Rights in South East Asia.

1 - The Moscow-Hanoi axis is a permanent threat to Peace and Security in South East Asia :

For a very long time, soviet hegemonistic objectives and Hanoi's regional ambitions have been converging in South East Asia. Hanoi and Moscow signed their « Friendship and Cooperation » Treaty in November 1978, preceding just one month Hanoi's invasion of Cambodia! This « Pact » represents a very important *strategic break-through* for Moscow in this area and may serve as a *springboard* for Moscow's future destabilisation actions in the area.

This push of Moscow in South East Asia together with its advance toward the Persian gulf amplify the soviet southward thrust, a pincer movement in the direction of the Indian ocean which is upsetting the global strategic balance of power. The soviet have now important naval bases in Indochina, completing thus the missing link of their naval strategy in the Asia pacific area. In the long run the traffic of western war and merchant fleets is in danger. In this new situation, Japan who depends desperately from the outside for 90% of her raw materials, is the vulnerable link of the West.

On the other hand, South East Asia and particularly Thailand is permanently threatened by Hanoi-soviet expansionism. Since a quite long time, the soviet has had at their disposal the local communist parties as instruments of their actions in this area. Recently, Moscow started using — through Lybia — the moslem minorities in South East Asia with a view to undermining the very fragile equilibrium existing between the different nationalities in South East Asia. From now on, the soviet has, through Hanoi, a new «Cuba» in South East Asia for their strategy of «controlled advance through destabilisation».

2 - Hanoi's war communism is a permanent threat for Peace in South East Asia :

It is impossible to understand the current Indochina crisis and the preceding conflicts without referring to Hanoi's ideological and political options which are those of war communism. Vietnamese communism has maintained, through its historic affiliation to the Komintern, its original nature i.e. *Indo-chinese and internationalist*.

On the regional level, Vietnamese communism is a full participant to the world revolution and particularly to the expansion of the soviet system. Under the influence of surviving Komintern ideology, Hanoi's leaders remain hard believers in war communism dialectics. And from its long clandestine resistance experience the Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) has become a military society more at home in war time than in peace.

The realisation of Ho Chi Minh Grand Design i.e. the unification of Indochina under communism was only possible through and by warfare. Thus, the VCP's regional strategy from 1945 on aimed spreading the revolution alongside the Mekong river through, first the reunification of Vietnam under communist regime, next the absorption of Laos and Cambodia.

Hanoi's task is certainly not completed after the invasion of Cambodia in 1979. Moscow has charged the VCP with the mission of training local communists in Thailand, Malaysia and surely other countries in South East Asia. Proof: Brejnev and Le Duan agree that Indochina represents nowadays a *solid outpost base of communism in South East Asia*.

Since its entry into the Comecon in June 1978, communist Vietnam has become an integral part of the expanding soviet system in South East Asia, both on the military and economic planes. The friendship and assistance treaties imposed by Hanoi on Laos and Cambodia under the pressure of war tie these two countries to Vietnam in the same way as the Warsaw Pact has done to East European satellites of the Soviet Union.

At the present time, Hanoi receives manifold aid from the soviet camp and operates as an instrument of the soviet's world hegemony system.

3 - Any compromise with Hanoi is illuoriy.

South East Asian current diplomacy is dominated by the initiatives taken by the governments of the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) group to organise an international conference on Cambodia, in accordance with the october 22, 1980 U.N. resolution. However, are the conditions sufficient for such a conference? and is a compromise possible with Hanoi ?

The latter's position remains unchanged despite some adroit manoeuvres and dressings. This position confirms Hanoi's determination to make «irreversible» the situation in Cambodia and to obtain international recognition for the puppet regime of Heng Samrin. Kurt Waldheim's good offices, his special envoy's mediation mission and the initiatives of the moderate members of ASEAN such as Indonesia have all failed face to the bad faith of Hanoi who are supported in their stubbornness by their soviet bloc allies.

On the other hand, it is unrealistic and inopportune to seek a compromise with Hanoi's fanatic leaders, particularly in the current balance of power in Indochina. However serious may be Hanoi's difficulties in Cambodia, the VCP leaders still feel strong enough to dictate their law to the populations of Indochina. They only know and respect the language of the armed force. And they are encouraged in this attitude by Moscow for whom *the war in Cambodia is a chain with which the soviet union intends to tie enslaved Vietnam to the soviet galley.*

4 - China has adopted a protracted strategy

When ASEAN governments make initiatives towards a modus vivendi with Hanoi, they underestimate the influence of China who actually has quasi veto power on any solution of the Indochinese conflict. And China never hides her determination to counter soviet-Hanoi's grip on Indochina. After the «armed lesson» of february 1979, Pekin has adopted a strategy much more costly for Hanoi but less risky vis-à-vis Moscow. China now has chosen to destabilise pro-soviet Indochina by arming all anti-Hanoi resistance movements, communist and anticommunist alike, and also separatist ethnic minority groups.

Time is thus on China's side and the latter has chosen to exploit Hanoi's difficulties in Cambodia to warn world public opinion against the threat of the Moscow-Hanoi axis. She does not want to operate alone and unilaterally and insists on *the need for a concerted response.* China expects much from the converging interests between the countries of the Asia Pacific area face to Russian expansionism, China's most dangerous ennemy: she seeks a strategic entente with the United States and Japon and a lasting rapprochement with the countries members of the ASEAN group.

Thus, China has drastically modified her policy regarding these countries. She has promised to respect, the Zone of Peace, Neutrality and Freedom, as promoted by the ASEAN group. China is doubtless willing *to tolerate the emergence of non-communist regime in Indochina*, provided these maintain good neighbourhood relations with her and keep out of soviet sphere of influence.

5 - New options are open for the United States.

From 1975 to 1978, despite numerous difficulties, the United States government was tempted to normalise relations with Hanoi, believing wrongly that this would help transform communist Vietnam into an asiatic Yugoslavia. However, the American government realised soon that the reality was that Hanoi was not in any case tempted by Titism and preferred on the contrary unconditional alignment with the soviet camp in order to complete her own regional ambitions. The invasion of Cambodia by Hanoi's troops happened at an opportune time to cause a *salutary impact* on American diplomacy. The current Indochinese crisis open new options for the U.S.

Indeed, with the Sino-American rapprochement, the traditional policy of containment is under going a real strategic change. In this respect, Thailand, because of her forefront situation, is found to play a more important role in the Sino-American concerted policy of containment of soviet-Hanoi expansionism. Concretely, following beefed up military aid to Thailand, the Reagan Administration decided in may 1981 to support the effort displayed by China and the ASEAN countries with a view to encouraging the creation of an anti-Hanoi United Khmer Front.

This decision aims primarily at the presence of Hanoi's troops in Cambodia. But it may as well concern the whole pro-soviet Indochina, because Washington desires that the independence of Cambodia and Laos should be respected and the influence of the Soviet Union on the peninsula should be reduced. It is no more the traditional policy of containment, but rather, *in the long range, the strategy of roll-back*. It is, in accordance with this new options, that President Reagan decided last february 1981 to send arms to the Afghanistan resistance.

It is obvious that the United States can no longer stick to the traditional policy of containment, whereas the frontline now passes in Latin America, in Salvador i.e. at the doorsteps of the United States. Washington has chosen *a resolutely offensive strategy in order to solve the dilemmas of the policy of containment*. The roll-back strategy applies above all to the areas which are not covert by the Yalta Pact.

6 - The ill of Indochina and South East Asia must be cured at its very source : the Hanoi regime.

The unification of the Khmer resistance movement represents surely the first step toward *the creation of the new balance of power in Indochina*.

Nevertheless, the settlement of the Indochinese crisis could not in any case be concluded at an international conference on Cambodia, because the existing balance of power is such that it is illusive to expect Hanoi to withdraw her troops from Cambodia. As long as war-communism continues its role as tool of soviet world hegemony ambitions, there could be no settlement in Indochina.

Therefore, the solution must be founded at its very source, i.e. the Hanoi regime. *The mecanism of war communism must be broken*, and in order to do this all of Hanoi's weaknesses and internal difficulties must be exploited. The large potential resistance forces inside Vietnam should be mobilised in any action against Hanoi regional hegemony, otherwise this would not be efficient and successfull. Only a collapse of the Vietnamese communist system by implosion or a popular uprising is susceptible to bring about a final solution to the Indochina crisis.

The VCP is the «*enfant terrible*» of Asia and as long as its forces remain intact, its revolutionary and expansionist course continues. Therefore, should be exploited all internal, regional and international factors to cause continued pressure on the Hanoi regime till the collapse from inside of war communism. In other words, the popular uprising inside Vietnam should be organised carefully.

7 - The internal situation is extremely critical for the Hanoi regime.

The conditions for a complete change in Indochina do exist, and do not depend only on the international situation and Hanoi diplomatic isolation. The agressiveness of the Hanoi regime outside Vietnam frontiers should not hide from us the regimes's weaknesses. War communism is leading the Hanoi regime to mortal stalemate while the party is exhausted and *the system itself incurable*, if not hopeless.

The party itself had lost its unity and its aura of infallibility. Every level in the party structure is sick with corruption and the party has now become a refuge for degenerated members whose sole interest is now gold. The revolution is decomposed. For the last six years, the national economy has not been able to satisfy the people's need in food. And the population is now facing disette. Military expanses swallow up 60 % of the budget and ruin the economy. The current reshuffle at the head of the party indicates the political and economic failures of the regime. This change has caused a series of purges within the party, the unity of which is beeing seriously damaged.

The situation in South Vietnam is more critical for the party and its mainly northern officials find it almost impossible to control the administrative apparatus, the economy and the party-controlled mass organisations. Face to *the degeneration of revolutionary process* and the systematic elimination of South Vietnam's true representatives, the majority of the population reject any cooperation with the regime. However no legally organised opposition as such exists in the country because of the totalitarian character of the communist system. But does exist a deep rooted popular resistance, imaginative, manyfold and adapted to the local conditions.

A certain number of armed resistance groups operate in many areas throughout the country, and the freedom fighters look forward to receiving outside aid and to the unification of the political leadership. In the final analysis, the factor which undermines the Hanoi regime down to its grass roots is the generalised opposition of the Southern population to the oppressive tyranny that the collectivist north has tried to impose. Thus, *South Vietnam is now Hanoi's soft belly*. The bulk of the population in the north are also morally divorced from the communist regime which does not keep its wartime promises for peace, higher standard of living and freedom. They refuse to participate indefinitely to the war efforts.

8 - For a United Front of National Salvation.

Confronted with an endless war and an unprecedented disaster which may lead the country to a mortal impasse, a Committee for National Salvation was created on the december 27th 1980. This Committee aims at regrouping within a broad front patriots of all political opinions with a view to mobilising the Vietnamese population inside and outside the country for a common goal, i.e. the overthrow of Hanoi tyranny. The Committee operate in *a fundamentally new approach*, towards the total collapse of the communist regime which has entirely failed. It intends to promote the edification of a new society in Vietnam, i.e. peaceful, pluralistic and free. It rejects the goulag system, because this is alien to Vietnamese civilisation.

The Committee is convinced that *the Vietnamese communist party has now lost its historical legitimacy for good*. The population in the south as well as in the north has had a very bitter experience of communism. *For the first time in its history, the Vietnamese communist party is no longer identified with nationalism from which it has always drawn its force*. This is an unprecedented situation.

The Committee for National Salvation intends to mobilise the entire population against the Hanoi regime on the basis of a new popular and national legitimacy. Vast popular forces are in moral secession and passive resistance against the communist rule. Many freedom fighters inside and overseas are ready to join an United Resistance Front. All of the potential forces are waiting for an unified political leadership. The Committee is determined to satisfy this population will. It will propose in due time a *most comprehensive political platform in order to unify all the resistance forces*.

9 - For a large regional front against Hanoi's hegemony.

A regional concerted strategy is most necessary face to soviet-Hanoi expansionism in South East Asia and the Committee views its action as part of this global strategy. This is the reason why it is seeking first and above all moral support, political and material help from all the countries in the Asia Pacific area concerned with the Hanoi-soviet hegemonistic threat.

First of all, the Committee supports the legitimate struggle of the peoples of Cambodia and Laos with a view to driving out of their fatherlands Hanoi's occupation forces and to reestablishing the national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their countries.

The Committee is willing to establish a continued concertation with the Khmer and Laos resistance movements in order to define a common programme of action against the Hanoi regime on the diplomatic, political and military fronts.

The Committee proposes *a tripartite alliance Laos-Cambodia-Vietnam for peace, independence and freedom*. This alliance, upon its creation, will lay the foundations of a lasting regional cooperation on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence: self determination, absolute respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country of the peninsula.

The Committee also seeks the moral support and manyfold aid of the ASEAN countries whose stability and security are threatened by soviet-Hanoi expansionism.

The Committee is willing to contribute to their current efforts to arrive at a lasting peace in Indochina. At the present time, the main question is to isolate Hanoi on the diplomatic front.

The Committee looks forward naturally to moral support and material assistance from the great powers of the Asia Pacific area namely China, the U.S., Japan and the ASEAN group, who are all directly concerned with the threat of soviet hegemony. It is convinced that *a solid sino-amirican entente in Asia constitutes a decisive strategic factor to undo soviet-Hanoi grip on Indochina*.

10 - For a new structure of stability and peace in Indochina.

It is of almost urgency that the Indochinese situation must be fundamentally revised. It is essential for the peoples of this peninsula and of South East Asia, to have a right view of the changing balance of power in this area and to understand the factors which determine international politics vis-à-vis this region. Because of the will and drive for power of the Hanoi regime, the Indochinese crisis has created an inextricable knot of national, regional and international contradictions.

It is imperative that the nations of Indochina adopt a strict policy of national independence. And it is urgent that Vietnam should renounce to her role of an «outpost for socialism in South East Asia» and the three countries of Indochina should seek with the ASEAN group a new formula of integrated regional cooperation.

... basically Hanoi's hegemonistic policy which has caused war and destruction. Therefore, Vietnam's place and role in Indochina should be fundamentally revised, Laos and Cambodia should cease to be considered as just buffer zones for Vietnamese colonialism.

Finally, lasting peace in Indochina requires that the internal policy of each of the three countries of the peninsula should be founded on a *vast popular consensus*. National concord must rest on the active coexistence of all the components of the nation and should not result from civil war which as has been demonstrated throughout history, can only cause the unavoidable disintegration of the vital forces of the Indochinese peoples. The elimination of any important section of the population could but create favourable conditions for foreign intervention, directly or indirectly. Non-alignment is above all alignment on the entire people and supreme national interests.

Peace and war being indivisible in Indochina, it is most imperative that a *global plan* should be proposed in order to arrive at a final and lasting solution to the current crisis. The 1954 Geneva Agreements have fixed *the fundamental principles for peace and stability in Indochina*. These very principles have been reiterated in the 1962 Geneva Accords on Laos and the 1973 Paris Agreements on Vietnam. Every effort should now be deployed in order to create the propitious conditions for *the strict respect of these principles*.

After the overthrow of the Hanoi regime, in order to establish and consolidate peace in Indochina, the future leaders of the governments of the three countries should make their choice of the following alternatives :

- 1) On the international level, independence or bloc politics.
- 2) On the regional level, good neighbourhood policy or hegemonistic ambitions.
- 3) On the national level, national concord or permanent civil war.

In other words, they should decide on these two ways: power politics in the service of expansionism or *active cooperation* to serve the cause of the freedom of the nations.

The second way is the only one that is susceptible to break off the cycle of confrontation and war.

JULY 1981

V.N.N.S.C.
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