

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

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NEWSLETTER

July, 1975



INDOCHINA: RECONSTRUCTION MOVES AHEAD

Teams of young people working together, building bridges or schools, factories or farms, are a common thing in South Vietnam today. Instead of facing unemployment, the army or prison, as they did during the war, young workers are part of building a new society, capable of meeting the needs of the people. Now decisions on work to be done are made to benefit the vast majority of the Vietnamese people, not to put money into the pockets of the rich. The

curtain has been drawn on the misery of the old South Vietnam. With the victory over U.S. Imperialist aggression, a new day has begun.

That's not to say the tasks ahead are easy ones. Thirty years of war has left tremendous destruction and deep wounds to be healed. With the end of the war and the government in the hands of the workers and peasants, reconstruction will move ahead rapidly.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

July 1, 1975

Dear Friends and Subscribers:

Due to a mail dispute over our Post Office Box with two former members of ISC we have temporarily changed our mailing address. We hope this dispute is settled soon,

until then please address all correspondence to: ISC c/o Mike Stout
126 MacDougal Street # 1D
New York, N.Y. 10012

Other change of address notices have been sent out by the two former ISC members, please ignore them. Any further changes or developments will be published in the next Newsletter only.

We also have a new telephone number: (212) 924-9102. Please call or write for any further information.

In Solidarity,

Indochina Solidarity Committee

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MAJOR SOURCES OF INFORMATION

AFRICA Asia
 Agency France-Press
 Asia Pacific
 Christian Science Monitor
 Congressional Record
 Far Eastern Economic Review
 World Post (SNC National Paper)
 Foreign Broadcast Information Service
 Los Angeles (Liberal) News Agency
 Guardian (U.K.)
 National News Agency (Hanoi)
 International Bulletin (Washington)
 Singapore Information Agency (SING)
 Through South Sea (SFP News Agency)
 Asia News - LRP Publication
 Liberation News Service (LNS)
 New York Times (NYT)
 New York Post (NYP)
 Pacific Asian Star
 South Vietnam in Struggle (SVP)
 The New York (Vietnam Resource Center)
 Vietnam Information Bulletin (VIB)
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LAOS Completely Liberated!

After 30 years of fierce and protracted struggle, the Laotian people, under the leadership of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF)-Pathet Lao*, have risen up like a twisting tornado to rip out the last vestiges of U.S. Imperialism from their country.

Mammoth demonstrations, U.S. personnel being taken captive; U.S. AID (Agency for International Development) buildings being seized, ransacked and looted; rightists and pro-U.S. reactionaries being forced to confess their crimes publicly before the people; CIA agents and other U.S. "personnel" being forced to leave the country and being searched by students and workers as they leave; Pathet Lao troops being showered with flowers— such are the winds emanating from the eye of the revolutionary storm that is sweeping the 'Land of a million elephants'.

Peace Agreement- Path To Victory

In order to understand recent events in Laos over the past two months, it is important to trace the developing situation over the past several years leading up to the current upheavels.

On February 21, 1973, the AGREEMENT ON RESTORING PEACE AND ACHIEVING NATIONAL CONCORD IN LAOS was signed. The Agreement reflected the tremendous gains and overwhelming military superiority of the Liberation Forces (Pathet Lao). The Agreement not only recognized the Pathet Lao as the legitimate government in the Liberated Zones (over 80% of the country), but also called for the setting up of a coalition government in the Vientiane-controlled zones and gave the Pathet Lao control of half the city administrations, the Police Forces and military Defense Forces in Vientiane and Luang Prabang, the two largest cities in Laos. The reason for these stipulations was that on two previous occasions— in 1957 and 1962— coalition governments were established in Laos only to be overthrown by U.S.-instigated right-wing coup d'etats, in which Pathet Lao and neutralist representatives were jailed or assassinated. The U.S. would have a difficult time repeating their past performances when faced with the military might of the Liberation Forces.

Other provisions of the Peace Agreement called for the dismantling of all foreign bases and the withdrawal of all foreign troops, naming specifically the U.S. and Thailand. It also called for the return of all refugees to their native villages in the Liberated Zones. Out of a population of 3 million people, at least one million were made refugees by the massive U.S. war of destruction.



Pathet Lao leaders celebrating the signing of the Peace Accords .

★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."

On April 5, 1974, another coalition government was formed, after Pathet Lao troops were in place in Vientiane and Luang Prabang and the two cities were neutralized. When Prince Souphanouvong, leader of the Lao Patriotic Front, entered Vientiane, he was met at the airport by tens of thousands of people, cheering and joyfully welcoming him as their new leader.

Although the coalition government had to function by consensus, an obstacle which allowed the Right-wing initially to retain much power, the Pathet Lao forces in the new government quickly won the support of broad sections of the population, as they began to clean up the filth and decadence brought over by the U.S. imperialists. Prostitution and dope-dealing were outlawed; opium dens, gambling houses and brothels were raided and shut down by Pathet Lao police; CIA agents were exposed and kicked out of the country.

Serve the People

The language spoken in grammar and high schools was changed from French to Laotian. Lao culture, a powerful weapon for uniting the people against foreign aggression, was reintroduced to the city people for the first time in decades. Pathet Lao films showing the U.S. war of destruction, the heroic resistance of the people, and life in the Liberated Zones were shown free every week. While medical care had been a luxury reserved for the rich in the past, Pathet Lao doctors began giving free medical services to workers and peasants. Numerous strikes and walkouts by teachers, municipal employees and other workers for higher wages and better working conditions were approved of and supported by the Pathet Lao representatives in the coalition government.

Though inflation continued to rise because of the fact that the right-wing still controlled the economy, the Pathet Lao finally put a halt to the devaluation of the kip (Lao currency). In July, 1974, the right-wing Vientiane National Assembly was shut down and in May, 1975 officially disbanded. In January, 1975, the new government adopted the 18 Point Political program recommended by the Political Consultative Council, which was in essence the program of the Lao Patriotic Front.

Rightists Grow Desperate

Enraged by the people's support for the Pathet Lao and their progressive policies, the U.S. Imperialists and their right-wing servants carried out continuous attacks against the Liberated Zones and attempted to stir up trouble in the cities. On August 20, 1974, an attempted right-wing coup d'etat was smashed before it even got off the ground.

By the beginning of this year, the rightists and their U.S. backers were barely hanging on. Discontent was building in the cities. Whole regiments and battalions of the Vientiane army were refusing to attack the Liberated Zones. On two occasions in January, CIA-trained 'Special Forces' mutinied and seized entire towns in north-west Laos, demanding that the towns be neutralized, and that Pathet Lao troops be allowed to enter. With the liberation of Cambodia and the thunderous uprisings and offensives sweeping away the Thieu regime in South Vietnam, the U.S. Imperialists and their puppets decided to make one last ditch attempt to keep a foothold in Laos.



A national culture stressing self-reliance and national unity, has replaced the decadent culture of imperialism forced on the people.

The plan was to attack the Liberation Forces and seize control of the key Sala Phou Khoun road junction, 92 miles north of Vientiane where highway's 7 and 13 meet. This junction controls the only land route to the Royal capital, Luang Prabang, and to the strategic plain of Jars. Control of this junction by the rightists would put a stop to the refugees returning home to the Plain of Jars and other areas in northern Laos controlled by the Pathet Lao. To accomplish this task, on April 14 the U.S. brought in its strongman, General Vang Pao, and his elite, CIA-trained 'Secret Army', mercenary troops maintained separate from the Royal Vientiane army as a more reliable U.S. puppet force.

At the same time, rightist troops would attack just outside Vientiane, in order to draw Pathet Lao troops out of the capital, paving the way for a right-wing coup d'etat.



But like 'picking up a heavy rock only to drop it on one's foot', every phase of the plan completely backfired. At Sala Phou Khoun, the Royal army refused to fight and Vang Pao's 'Special Forces' were heavily defeated. The town, a strategic military airport, the entire road junction and 10 positions along Highway 13 were captured by the Pathet Lao. Rightist troops were driven back 50 miles towards Vientiane, at which point Vang Pao kept going- straight into Thailand.



At Dane and Na Nhang, 14 miles outside Vientiane, the puppet troops were completely smashed. Inside the capital, 160 cadet officers and trainees who the U.S. had solicited to take part in the attempted coup, mutined and locked themselves in their compound, where they gave out leaflets to passers-by denouncing the rightist plot, and pledging total support to the PGNU (Provisional Government of National Union), the coalition government.

The Spark That Lit the Prairie Fire

Meanwhile, the situation in the cities exploded. On May 1st and 9th, tens of thousands of workers and students marched through the streets of Vientiane, carrying signs that read, "Yankee, go home!", and "cut the throats of the rightists!" At the May 9th demonstration, students marched to the U.S. embassy, stoned it, and began to haul down 'old glory' before they were chased away by U.S. marines. (*New York Times*, 5/10/75)



Students demonstrate in Savannakhet.

Shaken by their military defeats and afraid that the masses might just get ahold of them and 'cut their throats', 5 right-wing members of the coalition government, including the top U.S. stooges, Sisouk Champassak (Minister of Defense) and Ngon Sananikone (Minister of Finance), packed their bags and U.S. dollars, and took a ferry ride across the Mekong river to Thailand.

The demonstrations in Vientiane and subsequent resignation by the top U.S. puppets spread like a prairie fire to the other cities under rightist control, as demonstrations broke out everywhere. On May 11-12, troops and officers infantry and armoured battalions of the Vientiane army rebelled.

They announced that they would no longer take orders from the rightists, and placed themselves under the direct command of the PGNU. Within a week, more than 2,000 businessmen, landlords, rightist generals, gangsters and other pro-U.S. elements had split the country, including all 364 members of the ruling Champassak and Sananikone families. (*Washington Post*, 5/12/75)

Protests Spread

On May 13, thousands of students and workers demonstrated in Savannakhet city, seizing the offices of the local government and those of the U.S. AID, taking 12 Americans hostage. They demanded that Savannakhet be placed under the control of the PGNU and invited Pathet Lao troops to enter the city.

On May 14, demonstrators in Luang Prabang occupied the radio station, the offices of the local city administration and then stormed the U.S. AID compound, confiscating classified documents and chanting, "U.S. Imperialism, get out of Laos!" (*Hsinhua* 5/17/75)



Students carry away sign after demonstrations at U.S. Embassy

On May 16, a massive campaign was launched to oust all rightists and U.S. puppets from office. Dozens of officials, bosses and army and police officers were sent before "People's Tribunals" (which consisted of workers, students and arymen) to confess their crimes against the people. According to one report, "Posters denouncing numerous officials appeared on walls and workers occupied buildings and called for the sacking of all reactionaries. On May 20, 100 members of the Justice Ministry staff called for the ousting of five officials, including the director-General; workers at the water supply Company demanded the expulsion of top managers; administrators of the Bureau of War Veterans and the Disabled Serviceman's Center came under fire from angry employees and ex-soldiers. These were just a few of many targets." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/6/75)



On May 17 and 18, at the invitation of the local populations, Pathet Lao troops peacefully entered the cities of Pakse, Thakhet, and Sayaboury, all former strongholds of the rightists.

On May 21, Pathet Lao troops entered Savannakhet, the last major city still controlled by the rightists, where they were greeted by more than 20,000 cheering people (over half the city's population). On the same day, thousands of students and workers, many employed by the U.S., seized control of the entire U.S. AID compound in Vientiane, holding two marines captive, and demanding that all U.S. spies and personnel get the hell out of Laos. With tensions mounting and demonstrations growing bigger and bigger, on May 24 the U.S. agreed to close all AID offices in Laos, withdraw all American and foreign personnel, and to hand over its business and all property to the coalition government by June 30.

On June 16, more than 6,000 workers and peasants, in coordination with the Lao Liberation Army, rose up and overthrew the rightist regime in Borikhan province, bringing the entire country under the control of the Lao Patriotic Front and the Provisional Government of National Union.

Remain Vigilant !

In the short period of a few months, the masses of Laotian people in the cities and towns have risen up and completely smashed the neo-colonial apparatus that had enslaved them for so many years. U.S. Imperialism has suffered another stunning defeat. But the Imperialists have never been known to step down from a throne peacefully, and Laos is certainly no exception. Despite all their promises and goodwill gestures, the Imperialists will continue their aggression and interference, as witnessed by the Mayaguez incident last month in Cambodia.

On June 5, CIA agent, Rosemary Ann Conway, was caught in a Vientiane hotel room inducing a Laotian Air Force officer to fly T-28 bombers out of the country. According to one source, *"She offered a large sum of money to the air force officers and men so as to buy them off to fly T-28's to an American base in Thailand once used by the CIA to train recruits for its 'Secret Army' in Laos."* (NY Times, 6/14/75) The Pathet Lao Radio called on the Laotian people *"to heighten their vigilance, and continue their struggle to wipe out all CIA agents from Lao soil."* It also demanded that *"the U.S. embassy in Laos put an end to the CIA activities... or bear full responsibility for all the consequences."* (Khoesan Pathet Lao, 6/13/75)

But while the people of the world are drawing valuable lessons from the Indo-chinese people's resistance, the U.S. imperialists have learnt nothing. The march of the Laotian people down the road to freedom and independence has been difficult and long. No amount of dollars or CIA agents can reverse this historical trend.

Though small, poor and underdeveloped, Laos has waged a victorious struggle against a powerful and wealthy imperialist superpower. Under the leadership of a genuine Revolutionary Communist Party, and based on a strong peasant-worker alliance, the Laotian people have proven once again that the small can defeat the big, if the people unite and dare to rise up in struggle. □



On the road to victory!

**LONG LIVE THE HEROIC RESISTANCE OF THE LAOTIAN PEOPLE!
BUILD THE SOLIDARITY OF THE LAO AND AMERICAN PEOPLES!**

CAMBODIA

Vigilance & Self Reliance



The US imperialists, led by ambassador John Gunther Dean wrapped in an American flag, fled Cambodia April 11. On April 17 Phnom Penh was liberated and the war in Cambodia ended with total liberation. Less than four weeks later the US was bombing the mainland again during the Mayaguez incident. This incident is only the most blatant example of the consistent attempts by the US to discredit, slander and subvert the Cambodian revolution.

All these attempts have failed miserably, in fact they are but examples of the fundamental weakness of US imperialism today. For years the Chinese have maintained that while the US is strong and dangerous tactically in any given situation, strategically US imperialism is a paper tiger and cannot determine the course of history because it stands against the masses of people and cannot win. This analysis is fully supported by the recent Mayaguez incident in which the US suffered a military defeat; the process of the total breakdown of US hegemony in Southeast Asia was accelerated; and the liberal cover of "peace and reform" was once again ripped from Congress as the naked, ugly face of imperialist aggression leered out at the people of the world.



The Mayaguez Incident

Most of the facts of the incident are well known today. Cambodia, as one of 40 countries claiming a 12 mile territorial limit, seized the Mayaguez May 12 after it had sailed within three miles of Poula Wai Island. This was preceded by two weeks of daily US reconnaissance flights over Cambodia and the seizure of at least 14 "South Vietnamese" and Thai fishing boats engaged in espionage and sabotage missions against the GRUNC. (US State Department figures, Washington Post 5/16/75)

For instance, on May 11, a boat was seized on Koh Pring island, outside Sihanoukville. "Aboard

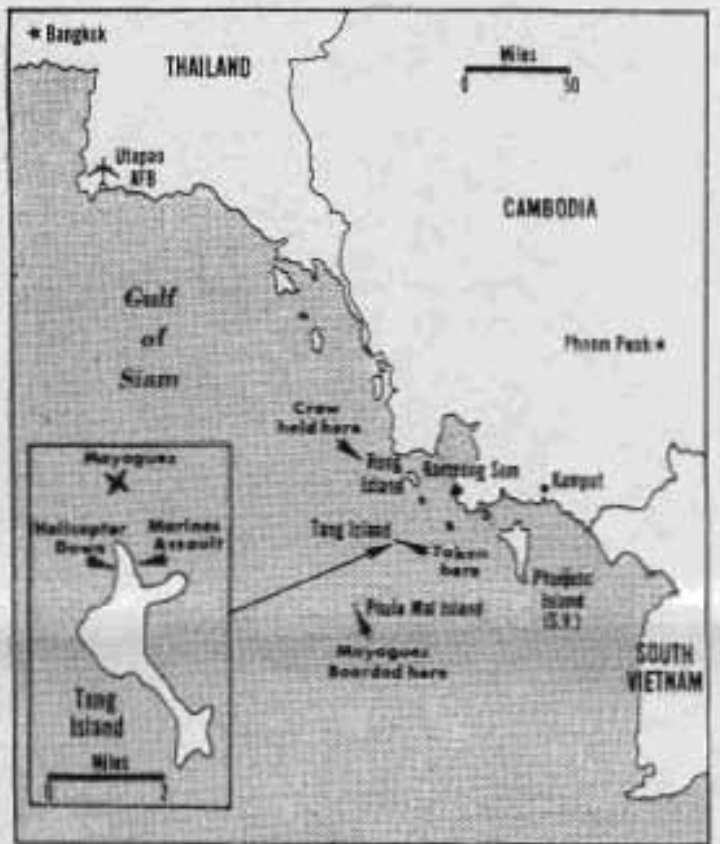
that boat disguised as a fishing boat, were seven Thai, all of them armed, including two 12.7mm guns, a lot of plastic explosives, bombs and land mines. The boat also carried highly efficient, US-made communication between countries over great distance. All those seven Thais confessed they were CIA agents sent in for sabotage missions and for getting in touch with forces organized and screened by the US imperialists before the latter had withdrawn from Kampuchea." (AKI, 5/20/75)

Prior to the Mayaguez boarding, two other large ships had entered Cambodian waters. A South Korean ship was chased out May 4 and on May 7 a boat flying a Panamanian flag, crewed by Thais, Filipinos and Americans was seized deep in Cambodian waters and released two days later. The following excerpts from public statements by Hu Nim, GRUNC Minister of Propaganda and Information, May 15-16 explain the capture and release of the Mayaguez.

"What has that vessel come for? What was its goal? We are convinced that it did not lose its way, for the Americans dispose of radars, electronic and the most sophisticated scientific apparatuses. So, it was obvious that it has come with a view to encroaching upon our territorial waters, spying and provoking -- which would serve as pretexts to deceive the world opinion, the American people and statesmen through presenting the nation

and people of Kampuchea as those who provoke and the US imperialists as acting within their rights.

"We are convinced that the peoples the world over understand perfectly that the nation and people of Kampuchea, which is a small and poor country, running out of everything and just emerging from the war of aggression of the US imperialists, have no intention, no means, no possibilities to arrest an American ship in high sea. It is because the vessel has deeply encroached upon our territorial waters and was found near our coasts that we were able to arrest it. The US imperialists slanderously accuse us of committing acts of piracy. That beats all! In reality, it is they who are the sea pirates who have come to provoke the nation and people of Kampuchea in our territorial waters as they have formerly carried out subversive activities, staged the coup d'etat overthrowing the independent, peaceful, neutral Kampuchea, to aggress her, spreading destruction, devastation, misery and suffering. Now, they are seeking pretexts to mislead international public opinion, the American people and statesmen in order to smash a country which wants not to kneel down in front of them.



"Because of our good will and our desire for a calm and peaceful life, the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea decided to release the vessel "Mayaguez" and its entire US crew on the night of May 14, 1975 despite the fact that the vessel had encroached upon and blatantly carried out spying and provocative activities on the territorial waters of Kampuchea. Acting on this decision, our patrol units took all the US crew to their vessel at 6am on May 15, 1975, who were under our protection during the wanton bombing by US aircraft. Our patrol units released all US crew after warning them against committing intrusion and provocation again.

"But in return for this act of good will, the US imperialists have responded by the most savage and cruel acts of aggression. At 9:30am on May 15, 1975, three to six US F-105's bombed the Kang Keng airfield, Ream naval base, the oil refinery and storehouses in Sihanoukville. At the same time, the US marines intruded into our islands, Koh Tang Island in particular. These acts of open aggression put into evidence the premeditated plan by the US Imperialists to block our waterways, destroy our ports and wreck our economic installations. Such acts of aggression clearly show that the "Mayaguez" incident is a brazen act of provocation and a pretext for the US imperialists to carry out their criminal plans. This aggression clearly shows the world public opinion, peace and justice loving American people and youth and statesmen that it is not the people of Kampuchea who provoked the United States, On the contrary, it is the US imperialists who provoked the people of Kampuchea on the very territory of Kampuchea." (AKI, 5/20/75)

"Piracy and Madness"

So what were the costs? The 40 man crew of the Mayaguez was returned unharmed and is now suing the company for sending them provocatively into Cambodian waters. US marines who landed at Koh Tang Island took 35% casualties, 19 dead and 51 wounded and 11 helicopters were destroyed or damaged. Seven Cambodian patrol boats were sunk or damaged and the US air attacks on the mainland destroyed 17 T-28 planes, damaged an airfield, barracks, fuel dumps, warehouses and Cambodia's only refinery and killed an unknown number of people.

Most importantly, the Mayaguez incident heightened the contradictions between the US and its former "client" states in Southeast Asia, today grouped in ASEAN -- Association of South East Asian Nations. These countries -- Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand have been scrambling since victory in Indochina to secure their maximum independence from US imperialism. In all these countries reactionary governments rule and Thailand and the Philippines in particular have provided the military bases for US hegemony throughout Southeast Asia. Today all ASEAN countries are clamoring to open diplomatic relations with revolutionary governments in Indochina. They are being met with great skepticism, particularly by Cambodia whose policy is caution for "those who smile too broadly and suddenly want to establish relations, quickly and unconditionally." (interview with Sihanouk, *Kommunistische Volkszeitung* 5/7/75, *PTS* 5/17/75)



Thai Students Stab Effigy of Uncle Sam in Mayaguez Demo.

Thailand was used by the US as the forward base for coordinating and launching the Mayaguez attacks. The Thai government called the incident "piracy and madness" and a violation of sovereignty. Demonstrations rocked Bangkok for four days. The Thai government of Premier Kukrit Pramoj is from the same right-wing group which backed the military dictatorship that ruled from 1963 until toppled by student uprisings in 1973. Following elections in 1975 this group had only 14 out of 269 seats in the Thai assembly but managed to convince or buy the votes to install a government. However, the military and political defeat of the US in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and the intensification

of economic and political struggle within Thailand is forcing the Thai government into a policy of nonalignment and a reasserting of national independence. This July Thailand will be the #101 country to open diplomatic relations with China (the Philippines was #100). US troop strength in Thailand was reduced in June below 20,000 and US bases are scheduled to be closed in March 1976. All B-52s and F-111 fighter bombers have been withdrawn.

From the ruling class perspective, the Mayaguez incident was a success because it would reassure US allies and allow the government to regain some political initiative at home. Clearly few US client states have taken heart at the revolutionary victories in Indochina; and the Mayaguez, far from reassuring, has led the US to steadily heighten its threats of war and aggression. Ford today threatens a "tactical" nuclear war to prop up the decaying Park Chung Hee regime in South Korea; both in cooperation with Japan to hold back national liberation and reunification in Korea, and to bully Japan more firmly into its sphere of hegemony and exploitation in East Asia.

The US Congress, however, flocked to offer support for this latest aggression. Anti-war sentiment in Congress vanished overnight as "the emotions of Vietnam are almost reversed." (Rubert Humphrey, *Washington Post* 5/16/75) The exact situation the GRUNC had anticipated happened: for purely terroristic and retaliatory reasons the US struck a Cambodian city as a last hateful act. This retaliation to utter defeat was limited to Sihanoukville only by the intense resistance the US met on Koh Tang Island and the

knowledge that any extended attack on Cambodia would result in the massive protest of the American people despite the vascillation and chauvanism of Congress.

Further Subversion

The Mayaguez is only the clearest example of attacks on the Cambodian revolution. Today there is a virtual news blackout in the capitalist press on Cambodia. Throughout May, however, there was a two-pronged propaganda attack by the imperialists to discredit and malign the FUNK and GRUNC -- stories of bloodbaths and atrocity killings and the forced evacuation of the cities of Cambodia.

All stories of mass killings or atrocities by FUNK troops have been lies by the bourgeoisie to spread confusion and suspicion. Every foreigner evacuated from Cambodia denied having any personal knowledge to verify the horror stories. Patrice de Beer, a French journalist for *Le Monde*, who was evacuated by truck from Phnom Penh reported: "Once again today, Washington, going on the word of refugees or secret-service reports -- how badly mistaken they were is only too well known -- speaks of thousands of people being put to death. One instance cited is that of Oudong which we went through on April 30, and where we saw nothing of the sort. Families were said to have been systematically massacred, whereas we saw, for example, the wife of 'super-traitor' Long Boret (former premier) going away free after her husband had surrendered." (*Manchester Guardian*, 5/17/75)

In fact, the dozens of prominent killers, agents and provocateurs among the foreign community in Phnom Penh were allowed to leave the country safely. French mercenaries ("Sunday hunters" who killed FUNK soldiers for bounty), US green berets and American journalists in the pay of the CIA all went into Thailand on the same truck with Sydney Schanberg of the *New York Times* and seven Soviet citizens. (*Richard Boyle, Pacific News Service*, 5/19/75)

Forced Evacuation ?

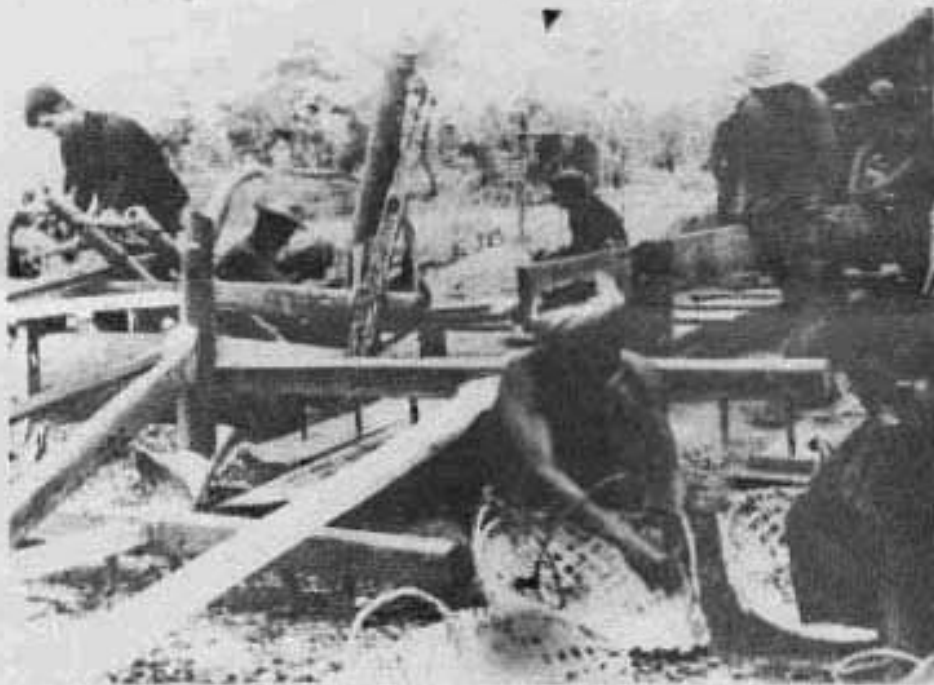
The tale of the evacuation of Phnom Penh was equally twisted. We were told by the *New York Times* that "people were driven from their places of refuge, their homes in the capital, thrown from their hospital beds and, at gunpoint, forced to head north into the heartland of Cambodia." (*NYT* 6/12/75) The reasons given by the capitalists for evacuation were: unjustified paranoia of continued US attack; a blend of oriental culture and dogmatic Communism that glorified the peasant life and sought to destroy the decadance of city living; a simple terror tactic to break the resistance of the people.

Phnom Penh was largely evacuated. By the war's end it had swollen to more than 2 million people from 600,000 in 1970 due to the carpet bombing of cities and countryside by Lon Nol and the US air force. Throughout March and April the city was literally kept alive only by a massive Berlin-style airlift of rice. Every road, railroad and river channel was not only cut, they were destroyed and useless for transport. Even if the GRUNC had the trucks and ships



Fochentong Airport, Phnom Penh, after liberation.

to transport food and supplies into Phnom Penh they would not have been able to get through. Moreover, by the end of the siege all electricity, sewage and drinking water sources had broken down and the city was on the verge of starvation and epidemic. The only way to prevent disaster was to largely evacuate the city, send the 1.4 million refugees home to their villages, and temporarily house many of the city's permanent residents until essential services could be restored. This was possible because the economy and organization of liberated Cambodia was strong enough to accept up to 2 million new residents (25% of the population). Indeed, tucked away at the end of the



Construction of farm implements.

essential transportation has been largely reestablished and thousands of residents have returned to Phnom Penh. Highways 3, 4 and 5 (Phnom Penh to Kampot, Sihanoukville and Battambang) are open for light traffic and the docks in Phnom Penh, 100% destroyed by Lon Nol's bombing, are minimally functional. (AKI 5/29/75)

In the final analysis, the atrocity stories of the bourgeoisie are designed to cover their own acts: "carpet bombing by B-52s, the use of all kinds of bombs, the regrouping of millions of uprooted peasants in fortified villages, shanty-towns, refugee camps; killing, plundering, rape and extortions of every sort inflicted by the republican army (nobody has forgotten the anti-Vietnamese pogrom conducted by Lon Nol in the spring of 1970). (Manchester Guardian 5/17/75) But the imperialists have failed and their propaganda fails with them, burnt away in the bright light of reality and the struggle to build the future of Cambodia.

The Future

There are two watchwords in Cambodia today describing the tasks of the nation — defense of the victories and the rebuilding of the country. The method under which these tasks are being met is that of self-reliance and "being masters of the country and of the revolution," meaning "having as principles those of resolutely struggling to meet one's own needs, of bearing all hardship, of being conscientious and thrifty, of showing initiative, of being honest and sound in life." (AKI 6/3/75)

Cambodia is a rich country, rich in resources and natural conditions for production. The fact that Cambodia is, today, poor and underdeveloped is a result of two decades of systematic exploitation by the imperialists. Cambodia is one of the natural surplus rice producers of Asia. Throughout the early 1960's, with only one harvest a year, Cam-

same June 12 NYT article quoted earlier is the admission that "the refugees who were interviewed said that they had been well treated and never wanted for basic food, principally rice. And they said that they had never seen evidence of brutality on the part of the Communist officers." These refugees interviewed were one dozen (out of 2 million) who took advantage of the dispersal of Phnom Penh into the countryside to escape to Thailand.

The People's Liberation Army and thousands of work brigades set out immediately to clean up and restart the city services and factories, to repair the roads and railroads and clear shipping channels on the Mekong River. Since the first of June

bodia exported 400,000 tons of rice annually, Cambodia is also a premier rubber and wood producer. The rubber plantations were built up by the French and exported 45,760 tons of latex in 1964. Forests cover 73% of the land and during the first four months of 1965 alone, 25,000 tons of wood and wood products were exported. These statistics and the favorable conditions for livestock and fishing make clear the strong agricultural and handicraft base and potential for selected industry in Cambodia. (statistics from AKI June 14, 17 and 19, 1975)

Agriculture

The prime task this summer in Cambodia, in conjunction with the reopening of transportation links and cleaning up the cities, is the firm establishment of a two or three-harvest rice crop in the countryside. Given rainfall conditions, there is only one natural rice crop, but the wealth of rivers and lakes makes irrigated rice cultivation possible over vast areas of the country. A process of building and consolidating dams and irrigation systems, carried out in the liberated zones throughout the war, is being qualitatively expanded this summer and the results are dramatic.

By April 1 nearly 1700 dams, 1800 ponds and reservoirs and 210 miles of irrigation canals had been built. (Hsinhua 5/6/75) Chief priority has been given to mobilizing labor for this task and the planting of the summer crop.



Throughout the country, "Groups of Solidarity for Production," cooperative work teams from whole villages or districts are working together on the irrigation and planting of rice. These groups are the form of collective organization utilized in other aspects of reconstruction, like highways, as well. The slogan in agriculture is "It's man, not nature, that counts in farming." Along with the Groups of Solidarity and the expansion of irrigation, the application of existing levels of technology to agriculture helps to assure success and a leap in rich output this year. Careful experimentation and utilization of more productive seed strains and the systematic raising of livestock for natural fertilizer are widespread national projects. Rice yield used to average one ton per hectare of land. Today it has doubled on the average and reached 6.5 tons per hectare in some locations. (AKI 6/17/75) Barring natural catastrophe, the rice harvest of 1975 will be the largest in history, feeding the nation and providing a surplus for export and capital to strengthen the industrial base of society.

Self-reliance

The economy of Cambodia is being rebuilt as a state economy. The major factories and rubber plantations are nationalized and the two-crop rice campaign has set the organizational basis for large scale cooperation in agriculture. There is not today, however, a very large industrial base in Cambodia. The major industries are textile mills, rubber plants, food processing factories and some industrial crop processing plants for cotton, mulberry and jute. (AKI 5/17/75) The development of handicraft is widespread and solid however, and a military support system was built from scratch during the war.

Key to the rebuilding of Cambodia, and particularly of the establishment of an industrial sector of production, is the question of self-reliance. Quite simply, the reliance on the unity and determination of the people is the difference between victory and defeat. "In contrast to the former society where everything came from abroad, where even the slightest things of everyday use, such as nylon bags, were imported; now, in the new Kampuchea, the "Groups of Solidarity for Production" and the inhabitants show their extremely sharp creative spirit. With leaves of palm trees and rattan, mats are woven, with the local products houses are built. Various mannas and baskets are made for transport. In hollow bamboo, containers, bottles and glasses are made. With the scraps of shells and hand grenades, water-bottles, lamps and tools are made." (AKI 5/27/75) This does not mean, however, that self-reliance means accepting a low level of technology and standard of living as a price for independence and self-determination.

Here are two stories from the report of a delegation of Chinese journalists on a trip to Cambodia last March indicating how the principles of self-reliance defeated US imperialist attack and all its technology.

"In a small clearing we heard the buzz of machinery. In two thatched peasant huts, the ammunition factory of the East Cambodian Region had been set up. Its equipment was a small electric generator, eight old small-sized lathes captured from the enemy and four hand-operated simple lathes. However, this small factory not only repaired all kinds of mortars and howitzers, but also made recoilless rifles and rocket-launchers with seamless steel tubes. A local leader told us that when the factory was established in 1972 the labor force consisted of peasants and there was not a single skilled worker. Nobody knew much about how to use the machines. 'Learn from each other was the only way out. Those who knew a little taught those who knew nothing. Finally, all became skilled.' Trial production began in 1973 and the following year weapons were being turned out. The factory has made or repaired more than 10,000 weapons or essential parts. Pointing at the big guns refitted or being repaired, a front leader of the east region said with a smile, 'who knew anything about such weapons in the past? But after we began to make revolution we found we could do anything.'"

"In Cambodia, wherever wreckages of planes, tanks and armoured cars were to be found, the people collected scrap iron and sent them to plants and workshops to be turned into spades, hoes, knives, axes, pots, dishes and other useful articles. Cooking pots made from the metal of the enemy's planes and tanks are among the most attractive items. A plant in Eastern Cambodia alone produces 1500 to 1800 pots monthly. Besides meeting Cambodian people building dikes and irrigation ditches in eastern Cambodia.



the need of the local people, the plant was able to supply the requirement at the front. When we first entered Cambodian liberated areas, a Cambodian friend said to us, 'the people do not fear the enemy planes when they come over; they said it didn't matter, they had come to provide us with iron and steel. When the enemy planes flew over the rural areas the peasants would say, 'run wild for awhile; one day you'll become good cooking pots!' (Hsinhua 5/2/75)

Cambodia, united under the leadership of the Communist Party and the National United Front, has seized the future, with "The weapon in one hand to defend the country; the pickaxe, the hatchet or the pincers in the other to build the country." We hail the victories of the Cambodian people and pledge our utmost support and defense for that struggle!

South Vietnam: People's Power Consolidated



For the first time in 30 years, the guns have fallen silent, refugees are returning to the ancestral homes, fields are being plowed instead of bombed and shelled and homes are being rebuilt, as the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) officially took power on June 6, its sixth anniversary, replacing the Military Management Committee.

The Military Management Committee (which consisted of 2 generals, 2 colonels, and 7 civilians) was set up in Saigon and other cities after liberation to restore order, clean out the last vestiges of the U.S. neo-colonialist regime and pave the way for the seating of the PRG.

the People's Army

Within days after liberation, life was rapidly returned to normal. Water, electricity and telephones were in full operation. Soldiers, workers and students could be seen cleaning up city streets, walls and sidewalks. While most of the bourgeois press predicted a 'bloodbath' and 'Communist terror campaign', the facts were too stubborn to conceal: "since the NLF troops entered Saigon on April 30, an almost unreal carefree and effervescent mood has set in. Thousands of helmeted riot police, who formerly patrolled the streets with automatic weapons and walkie-talkies, have vanished. The shy and smiling country boys in Ho Chi Minh sandals that now patrol the streets provoke curiosity and amusement rather than fear." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 5/23)



The people of Saigon welcome the Liberation Army.

On taking power, the PRG issued a 10-point program on the policies it would apply in South Vietnam. In summary, they are:

(1) Existing agencies and organizations must carry out a policy of revolutionary government. Abolition of the old system and its laws, dissolution of all reactionary parties and other organizations serving imperialism and puppet regimes.

(2) Sexual equality and freedom of thought and worship.

(3) Prohibition of all divisive activity and a call to unity to build the new life.

(4) Guaranteed right to work and universal obligation to support the revolution.

(5) All property of the puppet administration will be controlled by the PRG.

(6) National duty to care for orphans and the infirm.

(7) Encouragement of rural areas to increase production.

(8) Cultural entities, hospitals and schools run by foreigners should continue serving the people. Talents useful in building the country will be nurtured.

(9) Welcome and kindness for soldiers who desert enemy ranks.

(10) Except for those who oppose the revolution—and they will be punished—foreign persons and property will be guaranteed safety.

They also stated that "all activities of houses of prostitution, dance halls, [opium] smoking dens and all decadent slave cultural activities of the 'American type' are strictly forbidden." (*Liberation Radio*, 5/3/75)

Though many problems remain unsolved, the implementation of the PRG program in many cities has taken place swiftly. According to Dr. Thomas Hopkins, a Quaker who was in the city of Danang before and after its liberation. "Previously this was a town overcrowded with refugees, beggars, prostitutes, small bars and cheap hotels. These catered to the American occupation forces and their followers: the numerous American Embassy staffers, CIA agents, military advisors, aircraft maintenance men, engineers and a host of fellow yanks—social workers, medical technicians and even some ministers. Today the refugees have returned to their homes, the beggars are fed, the prostitutes are not to be seen, and the bars and hotels have become tea houses and legitimate places of rest. And the Americans are all gone." (*American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) - Newsletter*, 5/5/75)

Rely on the People's Initiative

The biggest problems confronting the new Revolutionary administration are crime and unemployment. During the first month after liberation, more than a dozen PLAF (People's Liberation Armed Forces) troops have been killed in sniper attacks. Robbery, looting and murder were still widespread. Confronted with this predicament, the PRG relied on the people's own initiative: "Over 10,000 young people in Saigon-Gia Dinh city have joined the home guards since the liberation of the city. Working side by side with the fighters of the PLAF, they maintain social

order, arrest thugs, do away with robbery and pillage, guard against the enemy's sabotage plots and defend administrative organs at all levels. Wearing red arm-bands they direct traffic on the streets.

Thanks to the joint efforts made by the students, army men and workers of the city, cases of robbery and traffic accidents have been reduced greatly as compared with pre-liberation days."

(*Hsinhua*, 6/18/75)



PLAF soldiers instruct young volunteers for the 'home guard' in the city of Hue in how to load and unload their weapons.

But the most serious problem presently is unemployment. Under the Thieu regime, out of a work force of 7 million, more than 2 million were unemployed; more than 1.1 million men were under arms. As if the situation wasn't bad enough, when the U.S. was evacuating Saigon just before liberation, it ordered the Saigon army and air force to destroy all important industries, transportation facilities and key factories. But the plan was quickly foiled, as tens of thousands of workers rose up to defend their work places and restore production:

"On the eve of liberation, more than 3,000 workers of the Vi Mi textile mill in Saigon rose up to protect the machines and the warehouses...Communication and transportation workers have repaired all major highways, railways, bridges and ports. Since liberation, dock workers have cleared the ports and repaired machines, equipment, warehouses, ships and transport systems." (Hsinhua News Agency, 6/5/75)

Presently, 80% of the textile factories have been restored. And since liberation, production has more than doubled.

The unemployment problem is being rapidly solved. Tens of thousands of civil servants employed by the former Saigon regime are now working for the revolutionary administration. Thousands of unemployed

soldiers have returned to their native villages in the countryside and have been given land to farm. Unemployed workers have been given jobs rebuilding bridges, houses, airports, docks, hospitals and schools. Tan Son Nhut, South Vietnam's largest airport, was badly damaged during the last days of the war. But now workers and technicians, working round-the-clock have restored all the runways and "7 of the 8 repair shops are now operating at full capacity... hundreds of civil airline flights have been made to and from the airport since the first plane landed the day after liberation." (NY Times, 6/17/75)



Work brigades rebuild a bridge along Highway One destroyed by Saigon bombing

On May 3, more than 3,000 workers stormed and took over the offices of the CIA-controlled Vietnam Trade Union Confederation, condemning the former leadership as traitors, and replacing it with a genuine Union that will fight for the interests of the working class. All over South Vietnam workers are awakening to their historical role and waging a valiant struggle to restore production and defend the revolution.

Land to the Tiller

The vast majority of South Vietnamese people are peasants. The National Democratic Revolution in South Vietnam led by the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the PRG is, in essence, a revolution to liberate the peasantry.

During the more than 20 years of U.S. Imperialist aggression in Vietnam, successive U.S. strategies were always based on separating the liberation forces from their main base of support, the millions of peasants living in the countryside- to

separate the fish from the sea. Through the use of massive bombing, terror campaigns and pacification raids, peasants were driven off the land and rounded up into 'strategic hamlets', refugee (concentration) camps, and the slums and alleys of overcrowded cities. During the past few years alone, more than 3 million people were uprooted and made refugees.

In order to carry the revolution forward, the PRG has implemented a massive land reform program. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are returning home to their native villages to build a new life free of the chains that enslaved them for so many years.

Land seized from foreigners and compradore landlords, has been turned over to the people. Local PRG cadre, officers and Liberation army fighters are helping the people to build homes, canals, dams, irrigation systems and reclaim large areas of wasteland. In addition, the peasants are being supplied with ample amounts of rice, salt, farm tools and seeds.



In Quang Nam province alone, 144 dams have been built since January and thousands of meters of canals dredged, expanding the area sown by rice by 50% as compared with the whole of last year. (GPA, 5/13/75) In Binh Dinh province, where more than 150,000 people have been freed from concentration camps, 34,000 hectares of rice and 10,000 hectares of fruit tree have been planted in the past two months alone. (Hsinhua News Agency, 6/20)



For the peasants of South Vietnam— from Cau Mau to Quang Tri province, the dream of having their own land to till and their freedom and independence, is daily becoming a living reality.

New Democracy

When Mao Tse Tung and the Chinese Communist Party analysed the changing contradictions in the world and the historical development of the Chinese Revolution, they arrived at the following conclusions:

"In the course of its history the Chinese Revolution must go through two stages, first, the democratic revolution, and second, the socialist revolution, and by their very nature they are two different revolutionary processes. Here democracy does not belong to the old category— it is not old [bourgeois] democracy, but belongs to the new category— it is NEW DEMOCRACY.

"A change, however, occurred in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution after the outbreak of the first imperialist world war in 1914 and the founding of a socialist state as a result of the Russian October Revolution of 1917, changing the whole course of history and ushering in a new era..."

"Although such a revolution in a colonial and semi-colonial country is still fundamentally bourgeois-democratic in its social character during its first stage, and although its objective mission is to clear the path for the development of capitalism, it is no longer a revolution of the old type led by the bourgeoisie with the aim of establishing a capitalist society and a

state under bourgeois dictatorship. It belongs to the new type of revolution led by the proletariat with the aim, in the first stage, of establishing a new-democratic society and a state under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes. Thus this revolution actually serves the purpose of clearing a still wider path for the development for socialism...

"No matter what classes, parties or individuals in an oppressed nation join the revolution, and no matter whether they themselves are conscious of the point or understand it, so long as they oppose imperialism, their revolution becomes part of the proletarian-socialist world revolution and they become its allies." (Mao Tse Tung, *On New Democracy*, pages 343-347, *Selected Works*, Vol. II)

Though the Vietnamese revolution certainly has specific characteristics of its own, they are only minor variations on the same theme layed out by Mao over 35 years ago.

People's Democratic Dictatorship

While Western reporters refer to South Vietnam as a 'Communist State' and the Trotskyites refer to it as a bourgeois state, neither are correct. What South Vietnam has today is a new-democratic state- a united front or democratic alliance of all anti-imperialist forces, led by the working class and its party (called the *People's Revolutionary Party*). In South Vietnam, this democratic alliance is, of course, the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

The reunification of the north and south, and eventually the building of a socialist society throughout the whole of Vietnam is not something that can be forced on the people. Real freedom must be fought for and won by the people themselves, and cannot be bestowed on them by someone.

Vietnam is one country, and has been for thousands of years. Because of the strong historical and cultural ties of the people, the forces moving the country toward reunification are powerful. But placing the country under one social system- under a socialist system and the dictatorship of the proletariat will be much more difficult.

While the northern part of Vietnam, under the leadership of the Vietnam Worker's Party, moved ahead with socialist revolution, South Vietnam remained under the yoke of U.S. neo-colonialism for more than two decades. Through its puppet regime and cultural aggression, U.S. Imperialism brought prostitution, dope addiction, skin flicks, gambling and other diseases packed in with the goodwill blankets it gave the Vietnamese people. Many South Vietnamese, in order to survive, were forced to directly serve the U.S. war machine, oppressing and exploiting their own people.

While the new Revolutionary Government leads the struggle to rebuild the country and meet the material needs of the people, at the same time it is waging a protracted struggle against the cultural and ideological backwardness brought on by years of colonial domination. Throughout South Vietnam, thousands of army officers, police and government officials, and other servants of the U.S.-Thieu regime are going through political education courses, in order to understand the changes that have gone down, and become productive members of the new revolutionary society.

"According to people coming from the central coast, army and police officers in re-education camps in Quang Ngai and Quang Nam provinces have been filling up bomb craters, clearing mines and reclaiming fallow land, besides studying the PRG programme and learning revolutionary songs. They receive free rice rations and a daily allowance." (FEER, 6/13/75)

A massive campaign has been launched to root out the 'decadent culture of the U.S. imperialists from South Vietnam:

"Young people and students in all cities are taking part in sweeping out the U.S. and puppet regime's slave culture and popularizing revolutionary culture. In order to carry out the decree of the Military Management Commission which bans the reading and selling of reactionary books and pornographic novels, more than 45,000 young workers and students have organized themselves into propaganda teams to publicize the prohibition of reactionary culture. In a few days, they confiscated more than 135,000 pornographic books.

"In order to popularize the revolutionary culture, young people of various cities held report meetings, printed and distributed propaganda materials, sang revolutionary songs, gave revolutionary art performances, showed films and organized broadcasting teams to publicize the PRG's policies." (Hsinhua, 6/18/75)

Reconciliation

Another powerful weapon for uniting the people and moving the country toward quick reunification is the policy of national reconciliation. Just as the NLF and later PRG constantly made a distinction between the American people and the American government, so too was the enemy clearly defined in Vietnam: "One NLF cadre, whose two brothers were killed on the battlefield and his wife tortured to death by the Saigon regime was asked by a reporter who he could possibly pardon the policeman who tortured his wife to death, he replied, 'It is very simple to understand. You have to go back to the origin of the problem. It was the Americans who forced the people to commit all these crimes. Basically, we are all victims of American Imperialism. We have to understand this and forgive our brothers.'" (Far Eastern Economic Review, 6/6/75)



Despite all the many difficulties that must be overcome, the twists and turns on the road ahead, the Vietnamese people have shown an iron will and strong determination for surmounting such problems in the past. Having won their freedom and independence after so many years of suffering, hardship and struggle, they are not about to give up now or stop their forward march.

In future Newsletters, we will deal more fully with the problems of completing the National Democratic Revolution in the South, the continuing class struggle, reconstruction, reunification, and the relationship of the Vietnamese struggle to the world socialist revolution.



VICTORY!



PIAF tanks bursting in to Pres. Palace.



Workers' Demo in Da Nang



*Third Force
Demo in Saigon.
Madame Ngo Ba
Thanh center.*



*Nguyen Huu
Tho (pres.
NLF) and
Ton Duc
Thang
(pres. DRV)
in Saigon.*



Lessons of the War: the Road Forward

This article is the first in a series on what the end of the war in Indochina means for the US anti-war movement. This particular article is intended to summarize the lessons of the war and discuss how the situation in the world today is leading to war. Future articles will deal with the specifics of what a new anti-war movement will look like -- the forces for peace today, how work against war will unfold and where war will break out.



After 25 years of valiant resistance, US aggression against Indochina has been decisively defeated. People throughout the world celebrate this great victory, the triumph of revolutionary struggle, and the severe blow it has dealt imperialism.

The people's of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have won their independence and right to self-determination. For the first time in more than 100 years there are no foreign troops on their soil and they are free of all foreign domination. The end of 25 years of war and destruction means they can devote their energy to rebuilding their nations and a society which is based on serving the needs of the people.

This historic moment, as the Indochinese have pointed out themselves, is also our victory. The system of imperialism, which we face in battle everyday as we fight to keep our jobs, against cutbacks, against police repression, for decent housing and education, has been struck a blow and materially weakened. The inspiration of the Indochinese struggle, which we also took up and supported because of its just nature, will shine as a beacon reminding us all that we can fight back and win!

The Masses are the Makers of History!

The clearest lesson of the war is that the masses are the makers of history. In the beginning, the terrible armed might of the imperialists appeared invincible, and the people weak. But the Indochina war proved just the opposite. Though the Indochinese people, from bitter experience, hated war and the devastation it brings, they never gave up. They continued to fight on, knowing that only the defeat of imperialism could end the devastation of their nations and the battle be carried on to end all oppression and exploitation. The US government relied on its experts and technology to win. But

The Vietnamese, defying the threat of nuclear attack, captured Dien Bien Phu in 1954, decisively defeating French colonialism.



it was the liberation forces, relying on the masses of Indochinese people for volunteers in the armed forces and for all manner of support, fighting initially with the most primitive weapons — like bamboo spikes — who won the war. Clearly it is the people, not technology which wins warfare.

But hating war and oppression wasn't enough to win. That hatred had to be led correctly in order to be a spear that would drive through the heart of the enemy. Looking at the history of resistance in Indochina, and particularly in Vietnam, it is most clear that the existence of a communist party was the difference between defeat and victory in the war against French, Japanese and US aggression.



Under correct leadership, turning hatred into victory. Like other workers in the DRVN, this worker has written beside his place in the factory the slogan: "Turning anger into deeds, the Labor Youth are resolved to fulfill the 1964 State Plan, to avenge Nguyen Van Troi." (who attempted assassination of Robert McNamara.)

"--On the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, to set up a broad National United Front, which brings together all patriotic and progressive forces and directs the spearhead of the revolution against the common enemy of the nation."

Support Just Wars

We also came to see that there are two sides to war. On one hand the unjust war of US imperialism, to dominate and exploit the Indochinese people. And on the other hand, the just war of resistance waged by the Indochinese against US imperialism, for national liberation. In the year 1967-68, while the war was raging on with no end in sight, many of us were feeling demoralized at the tremendous suffering of the Vietnamese people. In the middle of the year the Vietnamese launched the Tet Offensive. Throughout the world peace-loving people watched the weak and underdeveloped Vietnamese nation rise up to

The Vietnamese people had fought for decades against the imperialists. Only with the formation of the Indochinese Communist Party, now known as the Vietnam Workers Party, could the correct leadership be given to the struggle and final victory won. As Le Duan wrote in The Vietnamese Revolution: Fundamental Problems -- Essential Tasks: "Our Party's glorious successes in the people's national democratic revolution are due to the judicious and creative manner in which it has solved a series of very basic problems of strategy and tactics:

"--To establish and unceasingly consolidate the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist party;

"--To correctly combine two strategic tasks: fighting against imperialism and combating feudalism, the latter task being carried out step by step in close coordination with the former and serving it efficiently;

"--To rally the large forces of the peasantry, successfully build a firm worker-peasant alliance, the mainstay of the revolution and the key guarantee of the exclusive leadership exercised by the party of the working class;

break the back of the war mongers. The joy and solidarity we felt at the smashing defeat US imperialism was meeting was indeed a turning point in our support of the Vietnamese. We should carry this lesson into the future, supporting all just struggle of the people against aggression and exploitation -- including armed struggle and revolutionary war -- as the only way to resist unjust war and the ultimate cause of all war, the system of imperialism.

Where Does War Come From?

Through the American anti-war movement itself, other lessons were learned. Millions of people in the US were drawn into struggle against a government unused to such widespread resistance in recent years. Supporting the Indochinese, we helped force the government to bring home the ground troops, to ground the B-52s, and limited the fighting options (like nuclear weapons) of the ruling class. This massive resistance weakened and discredited the US ruling class and helped to defeat the US aggression.

We came to see that it was not one bad war or a decade of rotten "foreign policy" that we were fighting, but a system of exploitation which attacks the people at home and abroad. In the fight of the last ten years, it became clear that students alone, or any isolated acts of resistance, like blowing up symbols of the system, could not bring it down or end the war. It took the strength of millions of Americans, united to oppose the war, along with the armed might of the Indochinese peoples and the solidarity of working people around the world, that forced the imperialists to first Vietnamize the corpses and finally withdraw in total defeat.

The point of summing-up the lessons of the war is not to simply have them down on paper. They are tools to be used in continuing the struggle against imperialism. But what is that struggle going to look like?

With the end of the war in Indochina we hear two different conclusions about the future. One is that the end of the war means the end of an era of war throughout the world. This view sees "detente" and supra-national cooperation to exploit the world as the rising trend. Holding the view that war has passed from the list of acceptable or "profitable" foreign policy choices, some sections of the anti-war movement hold that a new focus of reform to restrict this government's bad policy is necessary.

We disagree. We sum up that imperialism has suffered a tremendous defeat, but has not been smashed, and in its deepening crisis it will scramble harder to expand, and this will lead directly to war. Mr. Le Duc Tho, chief DRVN negotiator at the Paris Peace Talks, was asked by a journalist, following the signing of the Peace Agreement, if he thought that the end of the war in Vietnam heralded a new era of world peace. He said; "As a Marxist-Leninist, it is clear that as long as there is imperialism, there will be war. There is only one correct answer, and the importance of correctly analyzing the forces for war and the forces for peace is clear -- the difference between life and death.

Defend the Victories

It is not time for the anti-war forces to dissipate. Rather there are two tasks before us: to continue work around Indochina, consolidating the victories there, and to prepare for future war.

The tasks around Indochina are clear. As we have seen during the war and by such incidents as the Mayaguez aggression, imperialism attacks more viciously when weakened or defeated. We must be vigilant against future imperialist



attack in Indochina and continue to support and express our solidarity with the Indo-chinese people. We should raise material aid for the reconstruction of war-torn Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (work which ISC has begun with others in New York City). By raising material aid, having cultural exchanges, sending brigades of American workers and activists to help the reconstruction, we can best build friendship between the American and Indo-chinese people. This will not be based on guilt or charity, but on the solidarity of working and oppressed people struggling to free themselves of their chains.

We recognize that the anti-Indochina war movement was successful because we mobilized the just and massive sentiment of the people against that unjust war of aggression. We can and must do it again as the imperialists prepare to launch a new war to enrich themselves and enslave the vast majority of people. As Le Duc Tho said, as long as there is imperialism, with production run for profit and the world divided and re-divided by the capitalists, there will be war.

But simply knowing this general law of imperialism is not enough. We have to begin to study the forces actually leading the world towards war today, so that we can develop the best strategy to fight it.

Oppose Unjust Wars

The US is no longer the top dog imperialist power it was at the end of World War Two. By 1950 the US had consolidated its economic domination over the other capitalist powers in Japan and Europe and established colonial or neo-colonial control over the entire underdeveloped world. The forces to first challenge this world hegemony were the blows struck by the establishment of socialism in Eastern Europe, China, Korea and later Cuba; and the rise of national liberation struggles throughout the world. This challenge led to total victory throughout Indochina this spring, a blow which weakens US imperialism and multiplies the determination to fight back of the peoples of the world suffering imperialist domination.

Today, more than at any time since WWII, the challenge to US imperialism is much broader and deeper than simply the resistance of nations struggling for independence. Japan and the Common Market countries are increasingly competing with the US for control of natural resources, labor power and markets throughout the world. Moreover, the main contender with the US for hegemony around the world is the Soviet Union. Whether it is oil from the Middle East, Russian steel mills in India or oil refineries in France, the Soviet Union is driving aggressively into areas of the world where the US once stood in total domination.

US imperialism is driven to make profit, greater and greater profit. Because the US is getting its ass kicked out of countries around the world and faces economic and military competition to function in the rest of the world, it faces a crisis — a crisis of profit. Unable to increase super-profits abroad and facing a pile-up of excess goods at home, the capitalists shut down or slow down production, throw people out of work, onto unemployment and welfare lines and raise prices to make larger and larger profits off the backs of working people here in the US. So we have crisis today, a heightening of the contradictions inherent in the functioning of the system. We face concretely a depression at home and the threat of war abroad; war to settle questions of competi-



"The small can defeat the big; the weak can overcome the strong."

tion, to redivide the world and ensure the flow of profit for one group of capitalists, at the expense of the people.

The US is driving and being driven towards war, as best we can tell with the Soviet Union over competition for the Middle East, Europe and Japan, who's industry depends on Middle Eastern oil. In response to crisis and depression a worker's movement is rising throughout the US, leading strikes and resistance to layoffs, cutbacks -- refusing to pay for capitalism's crisis. Ford threatens to invade the Middle East for oil and says Americans have to "bite the bullet;" the US is training troops for desert warfare and threatening "tactical" nuclear war in Korea to salvage its hegemony in East Asia, shaken with the victories in Indochina. ROTC is reentering campuses and military recruiters set up outside unemployment centers. At Ft. Benning, Ga., June 15, Ford said: "Today's realities have increased rather than reduced our need for a solid, conventional fighting force and for strong infantry soldiers." The US has reinforced its troops in Europe by two mechanized infantry divisions, one armoured division and one armoured cavalry brigade and added a total of 48 new combat battalions to the US Army.

Today the Soviet Union is in the midst of an agricultural crisis and short of capital to fully utilize technology in production in general. Soviet troops in Eastern Europe have been beefed up by 100,000 men in the last year; and the Soviet military is training for tactical nuclear war -- Russian tanks are equipped to "button up" and escape radiation and all division-sized units have equipment to "clean" vehicles contaminated by radioactivity. Russia has requested naval bases in Portugal, Lybia, Somalia and Viet Nam and is running around the world to line up possible allies, proposing a "collective security" arrangement in Europe and Southeast Asia to replace NATO and SEATO and the US. Once again the working and poor people of the world are being asked to take up arms against each other and give their blood so that imperialists can make more profit.

Today the question of the nature of the Soviet Union is a very pressing one which we intend to take up in future newsletters. Some people in the US look at the aggressive and reactionary actions of the Soviet Union and don't understand what it has to do with our battle against US imperialism. We certainly agree that for the American people US imperialism is the system most directly responsible for our oppression and the target of our work. But US imperialism does not exist in a vacuum. To fight successfully, to understand the situation today in the Middle East and Korea, to name two, we must be aware of and oppse imperialism wherever it rears its ugly head. That includes the actions of the Soviet Union.

the Forces for Peace

While we see the forces propelling us to war, we must not forget that there are great forces fighting for peace. The future may look bleak in terms of imperialist war and aggression, but the strength of the masses of people, united behind correct leadership, as exemplified in Indochina, gives us great reason to be optimistic.

As we saw during the Indochina war, millions will come forward to struggle against unjust war. But future struggle will look different from the Anti-war movement of the Sixties. Today, mass struggle in the US is focused among working people, and the class nature of exploitation and resistance is clearer than at any time since the Great Depression of the 1930's. Both the objective and subjective conditions have changed for anti-war work today. The great possibility that the next war will be a world war and that it will surely take place during a time of great crisis and hardship in the US itself focuses the struggle against war much sharper in the context of the overall battle against imperialism. Also the application of the lessons of mass struggle throughout the Sixties and Seventies has resulted in the development of a concrete Marxist-Leninist analysis of struggle in the US and will lead to the formation of a new, truly revolutionary Communist Party in the US this year. These changes in the world and the US will shape the nature of anti-war work in the next period.

In future newsletters we will discuss in depth some of these changes and the particulars of the responsibilities of an anti-war movement today.