

VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY'S 50 YEARS OF CRIMES

50 Years of Atrocities
50 Years of Genocide
50 Years of Destruction of the National Economy
50 Years of Waste of Human Resources
50 Years of Waste Natural Resources
50 Years of Destruction of the National Heritage
50 Years of Destruction of National Traditions
50 Years of Destruction of the Vietnamese Society

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INTRODUCTION

A full account of the Vietnamese Communist Party's crimes would require thousands of pages, rather than 10 or 20 pages as there are in this paper. However, due to the time limitations in our modern society, this huge task should go to the historians.

As said, within the context where time is as precious as gold, we will limit ourselves to the national events unfolding since 1945 to date, with emphasis on the struggle for peace, justice and human rights by the Vietnamese people, including religious freedom and other civil rights under the so-called Independent, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

What has actually prevailed is an absolute and unashamed dictatorship.

Through certain arrangements with foreign powers, the Vietnamese Communist Party was allowed to control the entire nation since the summer of 1975. From that day on, the entire Vietnamese people have been herded into a most horrible dark and endless tunnel never heard of before in the annals of mankind.

Instead of catering to the welfare and happiness of the people as they boast, the Vietnamese Communist rulers blatantly violate human and civil rights. Religious leaders and followers, artists, intellectuals, and anyone who dare to speak for democracy and political pluralism, even the so-called "honest communists" cannot escape prosecution or persecution.

While deceiving world opinion with attractive political solutions for the country, the Party kept harassing and incarcerating members of all religious disciplines of South Viet Nam for the past 17 years, notably the Catholic and Buddhist churches, along with the arrest and imprisonment of liberal arts elements and those who speak with the "voice of the People".

In the course of these events, the Vietnamese society continued to slide down dramatically and tragically the path of degradation in all human activities, from economic to social fields, from cultural to educational fields, from internal to international affairs and national defense.

The calamity of corruption and wholesale of abuses and misuses of authority, disregard for justice both in public and private sectors throughout the land have poisoned the national atmosphere to turn the nation into a

sick country with disabled defense and foreign relations. In these two fields the Vietnamese Communist government has faced deep and humiliating embarrassments of a war-defeated country.

As a result of the Communist misdeeds and mistakes, the Vietnamese are suffering the damage caused by the losses of national integrity and territories on the political military fronts.

I

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Peace, justice, and human rights are the three elements essential to the survival of a human being, a religion and a people. No rule of power can last indefinitely without coming to terms with all of these three requirements.

In this belief, we beg to present to the Holy Father and the Catholic Clergy, especially the Vietnamese Clergy of the Vatican our deep heartfelt thanks for your concerted efforts with other Vietnamese religious disciplines to convene this three-day conference and prayer under the coordination of Monseigneur Tran Van Hoai, "to pray for peace in Vietnam, to forge a common determination to fulfill the craving for peace and unflinching justice in our homeland to put an end to the sufferings of our compatriots as promptly as possible".

This conference constitutes an indisputable proof that in the past 17 years, justice was non-existent much less human rights in Vietnam, where peace exists only under the gun. Mental and psychological terrors have been carried out and the shadow of terrorism has been cast over the people, the churches, the artists and intellectuals. Communist police keep a close watch on citizens and foreign visitors' every move. As the Party officially authorized open criticism, those who advocated democracy and political pluralism were promptly arrested, or just disappeared.

Following are a few cases of human and civil rights violations committed by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, that is, the Vietnamese Communist Party:

Communist prisons are still holding members of various clergies, several hundreds of RVN personnel and peaceful advocates for religious freedom and democratic ideals;

Among the political prisoners and people under house arrest are Dr .Nguyen Dan Que, a member of Amnesty International, the Venerables Thich Tri Sieu and Thich Tue Si, writers Doan Quoc Si, Phan Van Thuc, and tens of members of the Dai Viet Party, hundreds of "Cai Tao" prisoners, and even Nguyen Ho, president of the Communist Resistance Club;

After their march into Saigon, the Viet Cong arrested one million people among military and civilian citizens;

According to a former high ranking member of the Vietnamese Communist Party, in addition to the victims on record, there were thousands of unrecorded cases involving innocent victims thrown in jail, undergoing tortures and coercions. "There are numberless victims unaccounted for," he said;

A great number of villages having as many as 200 officials each, are misusing their authorities and powers;

There have been thousands of unsaved complaints and requests for action at the village level regarding oppressive acts by village cadres, hamlet cadres and security agents, haunting rural populations;

Thousands of law-suits over misappropriation of private homes, orchards, rice-lands, real estates by powerful party cadres;

These complaints and law-suits have been piled up over the years without any action, causing frustrations, resentments and despairs due to lack of protection.

In the educational field, the selection of students is based on family backgrounds to eliminate children of non-party members. In addition, the students in order to be selected for admission must have behind them three to four generations of involvement in the Communist cause.

In claiming credit for the victory over the South, the Vietnamese Communists committed flagrant violations of human and civil rights by rounding up the citizens' property and interests into their hands; therefore, they committed grotesque crimes against millions of hardworking people. A former Communist party member pointed out, "This is a 50 year-national-tragedy of historic proportions".

Some Vietnamese Communists have found out that deception, injustice, lack of communication with the people, and violation of human rights in the past 50 years have brought about countless misfortunes to the people. They believe that the Communist will face inevitable popular verdict!

According to some social scientists, the Vietnamese Communists in carrying out anti-human rights policies with the absence of the respect for human dignity and reducing man into the smallest number and degradation, the Vietnamese Communists are covering the country through frauds and hypocrites.

1. ON THE HUMAN RIGHT FRONT

Early in 1992, Amnesty International informed world opinion that the Vietnamese Communists continued to violate human rights with unlawful arrests, detentions and dispositions without due process of law and disregarding international law, of those who peacefully opposed the Viet Cong Government. The following individuals were among the victims of the VC's oppression:

Lawyer Nguyen Khac Chinh, detained since 1975, without trial; Lawyer Nguyen Si Binh, a Vietnamese emigre in the U.S., and 16 others were arrested in April 1992; they are still detained; Professor Doan Viet Hoat, arrested in January 1990;

Amnesty International has lodged protests against the unfair trials of Lawyers Doan thanh Liem, Nguyen Ngoc Ddat and Trinh Van Thuong:

On September 4, 1992, a Vietnamese refugee from the U.S. and former South Vietnam's Air Force Pilot, Ly Tong, forced a commercial airbus to fly at low altitude above Saigon. Ly' To^ng then opened an exit door, released a reported number (50,000) of business-card-size flyers, parachuted, and was arrested. His message was a call to the people to rise up and bring down the dictatorial government and eradicate Communism from Vietnam. His heroic exploit has been acclaimed by Vietnamese inside and outside of the country.

On September 10, 1992, representatives of 328 Vietnamese organizations and many world and U.S. political and civic leaders held a rally in front of the U .N . Headquarters in New York and demanded the immediate release of all political prisoners still kept in prison by the VC government and the respect of human rights in VN .At this rally, 24 Vietnamese volunteers went on hunger strike for 48 hours. The spokesman of the rally released a list containing the names of 275 political prisoners known to be still in secret concentration "cai tao" camps. This rally was facilitated by the United Front for the Liberation of VN.

2. THE VIETNAMESE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND JUSTICE

Ever since 1945, the VC had compelled the Vietnamese Catholic people and Clergy to participate in the Party's organizations and government,

Since the Fall of South VN in 1975, the pro-Communist Catholics have sought to force the Church membership to set up a Committee of Catholic Patriots in order to eventually make it part of the Catholic Liaison Committee of North Vietnam. As this initiative was not welcomed by the SVN Church, they attempted to set up a Catholic Steering Committee;

By the end of 1983, Archbishop Nguyen Kim Dien of Hue (Central VN) declared in a letter sent to Priest Nguyen The Vinh, Chairman of the pro-communist National Catholic Congress, in which he said: "We all know that the expanding Northern Forces to the South are attempting to destroy our nation ".

Except for a small number of pro-Communist priests, the VC have never succeeded in enlisting the support of any bishop in their scheme to set up a Vietnamese independent Catholic Church;

In April 1984, Archbishop Nguyen Kim Dien reasserted in a letter to the VC Government the following: "My duty is to abide by the law of our Church; I have no other choice... What this means is that I cannot apply the state law of the Socialist Republic of VN to the Church Law".

-Also in 1984, So Bao Ve Chi'nh Tri. (the Bureau of Political Protection SBC) committed the following acts of sabotage;

- The thorough bagging of the Nha Dong Dong Cong of Thu Duc, which included the Redemptorist Institute;
- The bagging of Dong Ten of Saigon,
- The bagging of the Providence in Can Tho;

Prior to these incidents, the VC had committed the same violations against other religions in VN:

- The bagging of the Hoa Hao Group in 1981;
- The bagging of the Cao Dai Group in 1982;
- The systematic bagging of a number of Protestant churches in 1983.

Also in 1983, the VC mounted more attacks on the Buddhists.

Saigon buzzed with rumors over the sudden death of the Venerable Tri Thu and was angered by the incarceration of Bonzesse Tri Hai, the Venerables Tue Si and Le Manh Thac;

After April 30, 1975, 31 of Long Xuyen's priests had their activities suspended by the VC authorities. Others were arrested, among them: Fathers Chu Quang Tao, Vu Tuan, Vu Tro.ng Tri', and Van Chi.

On June 8, 1988, Archbishop Nguyen Kim Dien suddenly died of a mysterious death. He had been restricted in his movements for openly speaking against the VC's anti-religious policies;

As one still remembers, on April 15, 1977, the bishop talked at a meeting of the Binh-Tri-Thie^ⁿ Chapter of the Fatherland Front about the arrest of six Thuong Toa A monks at An Quan Pagoda on April 6, 1977, by the VC authorities. They were members of the Unified Buddhist Churches of VN: "I wish to express my sympathy and understanding with our friendly religion, because I, myself, have gone through a similar experience".

At the same meeting, he also said: "All the rites have been restricted. The priests have been curtailed in their assistance to the people, such as people in the New Economic Zones. A number of churches have been hindered by the authorities from officiating masses or occupied".

"In the past two years, we, Catholic people, have had the feeling that we have been subjected to suspicions and treated unfairly. School children have been subjected to repeated anti-Catholic lectures and defamations. I am willing to go to jail and die for the causes of Human Rights and Justice". After having been appointed Assistant to Archbishop Nguyen Van Binh two years ago, while he was on a mission to the Vatican, Bishop Nguyen Van Thuan was not allowed to return to VN to assume his new responsibilities. He has been forced to live in exile since that time.

3. THE VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS' STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

In discussing the VC's violations of religious freedom and practice against the Vietnamese Buddhist Churches, the Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, presently under house arrest in Quang Ngai, states:

"It's everybody's knowledge that since 1975 the Buddhist Church has continuously been terrorized by the Government with the intention to destroy all the Church's capacities and means to carry out all religious, cultural, humanitarian and social activities. The Government has even imprisoned, killed, isolated into death the highest ranking Buddhist leaders, let alone numberless members condemned to untold spiritual and mental sufferings".

In their public policy vis-a-vis the nation's religions, the VC Government has violated religious freedoms and practices for which the Buddhist Church has demanded satisfactory explanations and answers:

- The mysterious death of the Venerable Thien Minh at the Detention Center of the Ho Chi Minh (Saigon) City Security Department in 1978;
- The self-immolation of 12 Buddhist Nuns in Can Tho City, November 2, 1975;
- The removal and destruction of Buddha's statues and figurines;
- The justification for the detention and imprisonment of a number of Buddhist monks, including the Venerable Huyen Quang; The illegal use of the Buddhist Church's worshipping centers, headquarters, cultural centers, social services offices, by the authorities and the State's Buddhist Church; including the illegal use of the Buddhist Churches in North Vietnam since 1945;
- The isolation of Hoi Phuoc Buddhist Church in Nghia Chanh village, Quang Ngai, where the Venerable Huyen Quang has been under house arrest; and the isolation of Thanh Minh Thien Vien, in Phu Nhuaⁿ, Gia Dinh, the current residence of the Venerable Quang Do.

On the other hand, the Buddhist Church of VN demanded:

- Freedom of religion and religious practices, the respect of human rights and freedoms, and the right to function, as before 1975, with overseas member churches;
- The release of all Buddhist clergymen and members, and the nation's writers, journalists, political prisoners and detainees who either were sentenced under the travesty of justice, or deprived of due process of law;
- The Government must bring the Buddhist case dating from 1945 to 1992 before the court of law. Within this context, the Venerable Huyen Quang declares: "They can not detain me indefinitely without trial. Ever since the day when the Communists rule South VN, and from that day on, I have lost all my freedom including my freedom of movement".

And finally, in a joint effort with other Christian and Buddhist Churches of VN, the Central Headquarters of Overseas Missionary Affairs has convened this three-day-prayer conference for Peace and Justice in VN. We would like to take this opportunity show our deep appreciation for the laudable efforts and lofty purpose of the Catholic Church.

This meaningful meeting will certainly help enhance the efforts of all VN's faiths striving for religious freedom and justice for the Vietnamese people who have been victims of cruel injustice and enduring sufferings for too long.

II

A HANDICAPPED NATIONAL ECONOMY

A glimpse of the country's social and economic conditions can tell how hapless and pitiable the people of Vietnam are for a reason which is common knowledge, except to the stubborn, selfish, and utopian Vietnamese Communists (VC). They capitalized on the aspiration for national independence of the people and espoused a foreign ideology unfit to the conditions of the country in all respects. It has been mainly responsible for the impairing of human potentials. Built on the blood and tears and self-sacrifices of millions of their own fellow countrymen and women, the Communist rule of Vietnam since 1945 has embarked on human rights violations, senseless anti-religious and negative economic policies. Following are a number of reasons for the present economic status of Communist Vietnam:

Difficulties in real estate financing due to lack of real estate and bankruptcy laws to make it possible for financial institutions to function safely and effectively in VN :

Unfamiliarity of the situation in VN by foreign bankers and less risky countries elsewhere to lend money to local investors;

Unclear or little laws as to titles, securities and their enforceability;

Political uncertainty over the future makes foreign investors reluctant to bring capital into the country;

The way of doing business in VN is based on the pre-condition whereby "deal is made when money is paid";

All business transactions and initial market testing are conducted through back doors;

The central government's decisions have no effect on village chiefs and political commissars who make final decisions for financial gains; No nationwide research on market requirements. As a result, there are no effective exclusive distributorship, but only limited direct market access and localized distribution networks; Poor distribution facilities; No technical after-sale services;

Haphazard sourcing and stock maintenance;

Supplies of goods on inconsistent and irregular basis and present other serious problems, i.e. standard, quality, criteria, specifications;

The predominance of a massive unrecorded market from Saigon to Hanoi, Saigon alone has 13,000 flea market merchants. Products smuggled across Chinese and Cambodian borders represent 80% of inventories throughout the country. Inferior domestically manufactured goods have lost the competitiveness battle to Chinese and Thai products, let alone imported western goods;

Poor and mediocre quality of road and rail; no maintenance work since 1954, in the North; and since 1975, in the South;

- Lack of effective advertising and promotion;
- Printed media limited, and under government censorship;
- Most industries at entry level;

- Foreign investors not allowed to see specific plans for modernization, if any;
- No restructuring of the price system and the labor force;
- No market economy planning; no strong economic incentives;
- The total strength of Vietnamese labor force is 30 million.
- Each year brings 1.5 million additional man-power.
- Between now and over the next several years, the following additional sources of manpower will inflate the national labor force in need of jobs and housing:
 - Tens of thousands of troops returning from Cambodia;
 - Over a million Vietnamese émigrés will be kicked out of Cambodia under the consensus of all Cambodian political leaders;
 - Tens of thousands of boat people ineligible for political asylum in Western countries;
 - 500,000 Vietnamese of Chinese descent being returned to VN by the Chinese Government;
 - 150,000 to 300,000 Vietnamese workers to be repatriated from Eastern European countries;
 - Hundreds of thousands of discharged military personnel.
- Each year, the schools turned out thousands of graduates from universities, vocational, technical and high schools looking for jobs;

These people have to take any available job, doing anything to barely survive, including smuggling, searching for gold nuggets in the mountains or doing sideline businesses. Those who find themselves at a dead end will spend their time in the coffee shops, opium dens, or wandering city streets, and try to ignore all about the world around with the help of drugs or alcohol.

With a handicapped economy, suffering from the continuing U.S. trade embargo, experiencing an incompetent management in all government areas, and facing wide-spread popular passive resistance, the VC government sees no light at the end of their own ideological and economic tunnel, and with them, 70 million Vietnamese.

Peanut, sugar canes and sugar are not sellable due to prohibitive prices. Rice exports were limited to about 800,000 tons, also due to higher prices compared to the same commodity from neighboring countries. Farm inventories are stockpiled;

From end to end the opening of the frontier with China has created the most favorable conditions for smuggling of goods that inundated the Vietnamese markets from the frontier to the southern most tip of Vietnam and at lower prices than domestic products, even after rudimentary transportation over 2,000 miles of dearth highways;

According to Vietnamese sources, the reasons for the lack of competitiveness are twofold: incompetent management and workers' lower productivity that cannot compare with Chinese workers.

Three years ago, imported Thai goods took over 70% of the Vietnamese market. Chinese goods were almost non-existent. Now, however, Thai goods control only 30% of the Vietnamese market, whereas Chinese goods control at least 70% of this market.

Other fundamental causes for the poor performance of domestically made goods are the lack of overall production policies, including business law, domestic investment law, taxation system, credit, monetary, foreign exchange and banking policies, and the lack of an adequate infrastructure of roads, railroads, electricity and water supply;

The same Vietnamese sources also pointed out that foreign credit systems have failed to function in VN due to economic unwritten laws (luat rung). Recently several foreign business ventures in VN had to decrease business or stopped operating. Among these were: a French credit investment corporation of Lyon, Indochina Hotels Corporation, and Lloyds Bank of Fund Management and Asia Securities.

III

A DECADENT AND CRUMBLING SOCIETY

Evoking the picture of a certain society is primarily the job of people living in the local environment. These people are eyewitnesses of the daily happenings and events in that society. But those who are not live witnesses have to rely instead on sources of information. In our case, these sources are newspapers and publications from and on VN, and accounts from new and old settlers.

Following are some of these sources:

In the opinion of the Vietnamese who recently left VN, including former high ranking Communist party members, corruption was tied in with the one-party rule by the Communists who are denounced as the principal architects of the current high rate of unemployment, prostitution, school dropouts, runaways, gang affiliations and crime. The one-party rule is also responsible for rampant poverty that includes even the intelligence;

Widespread corruption in VN is a symptom of the cultural decadence of the Vietnamese society. Cultural requirements have changed emphasis. According to these eyewitnesses as well as the Vietnamese news media, the downhill decline of the Vietnamese society in terms of cultural values is almost a free fall. There are so-called cultural needs which are not cultural in nature at all, and which, therefore have caused the deterioration of the Vietnamese society, and resulted in numerous social evils. The rate of unemployment and underemployment was so high that it contributed to moral degeneration.

Family relationships, social constraints have become more and more inoperative.

Parents have lost their authority and power to raise and provide guidance to their children. A few parents found even a good thing to let their kids commit crimes or misdeeds to help the family survive.

Corruption under the dictatorial rule of the Socialist Republic of VN has become more and more sophisticated and systematic, developing along three patterns: from the central hierarchy down; horizontal along lateral levels; and individual, that is from person to person and through friendly referrals;

According to a gentleman who labels himself "the people's teacher", in the current underworld of rampant corruption, there are what he terms many "bando-crats", from the central level to the provinces, or from the provinces down to the villages within various agencies;

They are powerful and clever to the extent that the People's Congress has to call it quit to their investigations. A former Communist sadly commented, "When greed prevails from top to bottom, when morality no longer exists and there are no legal measures to hold it in check, then society sees no limits to degradation";

Going hand in hand with corruption is the stealing and embezzlement of government property and resources. In the first quarter of 1992, over 1,000 such cases were uncovered, causing a total loss of VN \$17 billion to the taxpayers. Knowledgeable people indicated that the perpetrators were high-level government officials;

Another form of personal gain promoting was the misuse of official capacities. A case in point: a Vietnamese diplomatic pouch was opened, for some reason, at an East European airport. To the surprise of everybody, the contents were not diplomatic documents, but 800 jeans and 2,000 quartz wristwatches belonging to a high-ranking party member;

Recently, a Vietnamese received as family packages from overseas relatives 1,200 roto-tillers and 65 TV sets;

Also recently, a number of state coastal vessels were involved in a major smuggling ring; Across the Vietnamese Cambodian border, the following goods had been smuggled into Vietnam in the first six months of this year: 4,000 automobiles 1,700 VCR's, 60,400 motorcycles, 10,300 color TV sets and 29,000 radio cassette players;

Above are the non-graphic pictures of corruption, stealing and misuse of power. But the truly graphic pictures of the social and economic conditions of the people are too poignant, heartbreaking. They can be seen, painted, photographed on the city sidewalks. These are the places of residence of homeless couples and youths. These scenes can be seen on the sidewalks of Saigon as well as Hanoi. Being residences of the homeless, these places are at the same time kitchens, eating areas, business places for the food vendors, laundry quarters, gambling felts, open air rest rooms, and also sleeping quarters.

Saigon Communist news media have recently reported that prostitution and gang activity in Saigon has lately increased at an alarming rate. Even before nightfall, shadows of the prostitutes were already seen dashing between the streets. Gang activity took place all over in the city and the outskirts. Nearly all of the crime perpetrators were from well-to-do families and children of Communist cadres;

In the heart of Saigon, burglaries and robberies were committed under the nose of the people. Victims were often foreign visitors and visiting overseas Vietnamese. The offenders were known to be "dan bu.i" (children of dust or dust of life people). A gang of 3 or 4 would stop you as you walk along the street. One of them would stick a knife at your neck, and order you to stand still. Then his accomplices would strip you of your wallet or purse, wristwatch, necklace, jacket, and whatever was handy for them to help themselves;

Some young wives of political prisoners, after having run out of all resources, had to make a living in disgrace with male partners who were in most cases Communist cadres from North VN.

The chief cause of gangsters and stealing was a life without motivations, engaging in crimes, sex and drug with disregard for consequences. Just like some Vietnamese-Americans youths in our overseas communities, they were deeply influenced by kung fu movies, and "black society" movies made in Hong Kong;

A large number of households make their living by side economy due to lack of job opportunities; a certain number of young women were compelled by the circumstances to practice prostitution to survive and help their families;

With the increasing influx of foreign visitors, businessmen, and visiting overseas Vietnamese, the number of women selling sex has increased accordingly. Besides the known whorehouses, prostitutes can be found at the dancing clubs, the hotels, big sizes, mini sizes, the boarding houses, the coffee shops where rendez-vous time were made at "zero hour".

There were also educated women secretly engaged in prostitution for economic reasons.

In Saigon, Hanoi and other cities, prostitution and porn video films have taken the proportion of nationwide industries.

Security agents enforcing public order stopped traveling public for the official purpose of checking IDs. But their real intention was to ask for a few imported cigarettes or a few thousand Dong (VN currency) to add to the family grocery money. According to former party members, government rank-and-file can not afford to avoid corruption because of wholesale social injustice.

Thousands of young people, dropouts were destroying their lives and bodies with drug abuse. Some of them made cigarette burn scars as large as dimes and as many as 36 holes in one arm. They call this "a self-inflicted physical torture".

Vietnamese infants suffered from Communist rule in a different way. Due to lack of vitamin, nutritional food and adequate health care, infant mortality in VN was as high as 6% a year. The surviving ones have tiny bones and are in need of vitamins. New mothers were not able to breast feed their babies because of lack of milk.

IV

EDUCATION UNDER SOCIALISM: TEACHERS QUIT JOBS; STUDENTS QUIT SCHOOL

Within the traditional society of VN, teachers are even more respected than parents in the order of King, Teacher, Father, and school children reflected the future of the nation. The cultural value of the teachers and the future of the children have been, however, destroyed by the so-called communist and socialist cultural values. The selection of teachers and students used to be based on their ethical and academic merits. It is no longer so.

Under Communist rule, these selections are based only on political, revolutionary and ideological criteria.

This new policy has resulted in the teachers' dramatically lower cultural levels.

The academic levels of the school children are even lower, through a selection process based on social classes. Under these educational conditions along with the worsening of the national economy, the rate of dropouts increased proportionately with academic promotions. As for the teachers, the rate of job abandonment kept escalating.

The teachers' well-being and morale were seriously affected by meager salaries which were generally just enough for one week of groceries. The students were equally demoralized. The traditional thirst of knowledge stopped at the gate of the school. To date, approximately 70,000 teachers have quit their jobs for better opportunities. Those who could not afford to change careers, did moonlightings to add to their existing income, like selling cookies and candies, lottery tickets, cigarettes, operated bicycle parking, sawing, serving coffee and soft drinks in coffee shops.

In the perception of the people inside the country, the teaching body has fallen apart. Even though the government paid the teachers salaries worth only one week of groceries or equivalent to 25 bowls of beef soup (pho), it still owed teachers in 19 Southern provinces VN \$17 billion. While developed countries devote 7 to 10% to national education, VN earmarked only 2.8% in 1988. These former communists also said that corruption has contributed to the degeneration of education.

Children going to public schools were required make contributions to the upkeep of the school facilities and help the teachers, as follows:

Students in grade 4, 5, and 6 turn in 1.5 kilos of rice a month;

Middle school students turn in 2 kilos of rice a month;

High School students turn in 3 kilos of rice a month;

Kindergarten children contribute money.

Many students had to drop out because of their families' inability to contribute rice or money.

Academic levels of school leaders are not on a par with the levels before April 1975. An example often cited by the people: the President of Can Tho University is a party member since the 1940s. He did not finish elementary school.

Over 80% of technical school directors were discharged military personnel, with the only ability called "fanaticism". They run the schools with iron discipline.

The teaching body included a large number of party members who regarded themselves as the Party's missionaries. Their backgrounds are workers and peasant families, having received trainings in night classes.

In vocational education, priority was given to manual work, at the expense of science and theories.

In Saigon, more than 50,000 children between 6 and 14 never went to school;

Generally speaking, about 20% of the children are illiterate;

Over 30% of rural children dropped out at elementary school levels to work in the fields to help their parents. When business was promoted in the urban areas (88-89), university and high school students dropped out in search of business opportunities or jobs. This phenomenon explained why the student population decreased when the population increased.

The number of technical schools had been reduced from 360 in 1982 to 275 in 1987. Reason: the curriculum did not match the economic opportunities; general knowledge and technical skills did not generate enough income for a fair standard of living.

The rate of dropouts: 85% of children attended elementary schools. More than 40% of these dropped out before the 5th grade. The remaining students went through elementary level. At middle school level, 50% of these dropped out before going to high schools.

The status of education as depicted above can tell us why the Communist press reported that prostitution and gang population have increased at an alarming rate.

V

THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS' TRAGIC FAILURES IN FOREIGN RELATIONS AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

Similar to the beginning of the end in any rule deprived of popular power base, the Vietnamese Communist regime has experienced in the past few years what amounted to an extremely grave crisis of confidence. In this ever growing crisis, the circle of confidence around them has been shrinking and has in fact further reduced the number of loyal collaborators; and in the manner of a chain reaction, the loyalty of their personnel in all departments of the civilian government and the defense apparatus, and so on, has practically shrunk.

This was precisely the reason leading to the VC government's failure to take counter-actions against China's invasion and occupation of the Spratly Islands' areas covering rich oil deposits. It was also the reason for the VC government not to fight back and push the Chinese troops back across the borders. The VC power holders simply entertain no trust in the loyalty of their military rank-and-file in general, and their army and navy in particular.

Isolated within the world community in the wake of the collapse of the Communist empire in Eastern Europe, the VC were plunged into paranoia and felt terribly insecure. They immediately sought to grab anything that could be their life-boat. They found it in the Chinese Communist party, their former bitter enemy.

Now, as a savior and big brother, China saw no problem whatsoever if they want any part of Vietnam;with impunity. So, they took over the oil rich islands of the Spratly Archipelgo, and pushed their borders further south into North Vietnam.

The VC have been compared to a Vietnamese girl married into a wrong family (ga'i ngo^i pha?i co.c) in the traditional society. They succumbed to the dilemma they created. To them, that's "give and take"; but to the Vietnamese people it is a loss of territorial integrity and a national humiliation.

In the face of a country proving its utter impotence in the defense of its frontiers such as Vietnam, any neighboring country can comfortably raise the frontiers issue to claim territorial sovereignty, either inland or offshore Vietnam.

Following the Chinese steps was Cambodia. All the four ruling parties of Cambodia have, in fact, recently reached a consensus whereby the all the Vietnamese settlers in Cambodia should be extradited, and certain parts of the frontiers between the two countries should be redefined. Promptly, the VC agreed to talk.

With the Communist armed forces in quarantine by the Communist hardliners, some people in the region might be spurred to make one kind of vendication or another. There have already been rumors that the FULRO are seeking a status of self-rule for the Montagnards of Central and North Vietnam.

Right after their occupation of the South, and for lack of foreign relations expertise and skills, the VC demanded war reparations, which was not technically the case. This unwise, if not arrogant, attitude had resulted in the isolation and weakening of the "socialist economy and finance" to the point of bankruptcy. In the past 17 years, 70 million people of Vietnam suffered the consequences, not the Vietnamese Communists, the new ruling class.

It follows that the only way out for this extremely grave crisis (political, economic, financial, social, cultural, technological) is the establishment of diplomatic relations between Communist VN and the United States, for the benefit of the Vietnamese Communists. The dilemma for the U.S. is this: the worsening, on the one hand, of the untold mass poverty of the Vietnamese people at the bottom of the economic abyss, if the trade embargo is not lifted and diplomatic relations are denied to Communist VN. But, on the other hand, the lifting of trade embargo and the diplomatic recognition of Communist VN will help perpetuate the Communist rule. With the backing of Communist China, the VC would eventually foster Communist resurgences in Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia and other Southeast Asian countries, including, but not limited to, the Philippines.

All the above prospects and possibilities considered, the only viable solution in the best interests both of the U.S. and the People of Vietnam would be the removal of the Communist evil, one way or the other, the sooner the better.

VI

THE HIDDEN KILLING FIELDS

Throughout the history of mankind, there have never been any people who wantonly destroyed the lives of their compatriots, wasted and misused human and natural resources, and national wealth to an extent comparable to what the Vietnamese Communist leaders have done.

Of the Communist success stories, it can be said that they were extremely successful in their policies of massacres, imprisonment, tortures of millions and millions of innocent people around the world. At the same time, they did their utmost to destroy the religions of East and West. They also succeeded in demolishing the cultures and traditions of people under their domination, and building walls of divisions and mutual hatred between people within the same countries, and members of the same families. In their goals to install dictatorial

rules, they carried out inhuman, immoral policies, and cynically violated human rights, degraded human dignity.

These policies have been implemented in VN during the past 50 years. And they continued to be implemented even more systematically at a time when the human condition of the people and the economic and social disintegrations warranted immediate and radical changes.

The Communist rulers are, in fact, seating in the midst of mountains of bones and rivers of bloods of millions of innocent citizens, and those who have laid down their lives for freedom and human rights. The VC are holding on to power in the face of millions of people being unemployed, empoverished, in need of education, freedom and human rights. Following is a listing of some of the numbers of people of all walks of life who were killed or died during the 50 years of the Communist war:

- 2,000,000 or more civilian population and troops killed between 1945 and 1954 under the Communist "national salvation" (cuu quoc) banner.
- 47,000 or more persons were killed or shot dead at the people's courts or left to die of starvation, or committed suicide under the Land Reform Program in North VN in the 1950s;
- 1,600,000 or more South Vietnamese people killed by the Viet Cong from 1962 to the end of 1974; of this number, 10,000 were killed during the Tet Offensive of 1968;
- 100,000 VC troops killed during the Tet Offensive;
- 300,000 or more South Vietnamese troops and civilians killed between January and April 1975;
- 254,000 or more South Vietnamese troops killed during the war;
- 500,000 or more boat people died in the South Sea, by starvation, sickness, sea storms, or Thai pirates. Under Plan #2 (or Plan B) the VC organized boat people's exodus to collect gold for the treasury. Each person paid one to three gold leaves to be placed on boats which were often overloaded, then overturned; in some cases they were sunk by the VC onshore security agents. These incidents occurred mainly offshore Rach Gia and Vung Tau;
- 70,000 to 80,000 political prisoners died in "cai tao" Camps since 1975; hundreds of escapees were killed or died in the jungles;
- 100,000 or more VC troops killed in the Cambodian war; hundreds killed by land mines or snipers. According to a former VC member, the graves of the dead volunteers spread from Ben Soi, Tay Ninh, to Hong Ngu, from the outskirts of Phnom Penh to Siemreap and Battambang, Pailin, and Xam Lot. None of these were sons of party members;
- 20,000 or more Vietnamese emigres in Cambodia killed since 1975 by the Cambodian people;
- Thousands of relocated people in the New Economic Zones died of a variety of causes;
- Thousands of villagers and farmers died of landslides caused by uncontrolled deforestation, land mines left from the war, wild animals, especially dislocated elephants, due to the destruction of forests for timber;
- At present, tens of thousands of Vietnamese Communist workers in Eastern European countries, Germany, resettlers in Cambodia, and boat people in Hong Kong and Southeast Asian Refugee Camps are either persecuted or mistreated;

The statistics of the killings and deaths during the VC war will be much higher if we go back to 1930 when the Vietnamese Communists began to cause death to the people with the Nghe An Soviet uprising until 1945.

DECAYING MAN-POWER IN A DECAYING COUNTRY

More than 1,000,000 disabled VC war veterans, let alone tens of thousands of ARVN veterans, are living in appalling poverty without welfare, mental and physical assistance program; Many writers, poets and artists falling into the "Nhan Van Giai Pham" trap in the 1950s, had been targets of arrests, harassment, persecution, and imprisonment, under the dictates of the VC Party;

The VC's efforts to destroy the Buddhist and Catholic Churches have resulted in the weakening of the nation's potentials and possibilities;

The VC's secret and subtle revenge tactics have destroyed or impaired thousands of needed specialists, technicians, and intellectuals for national economic recovery and rebuilding, paving the way to more freedom and democracy. The skilled people who were spared from the secret police's attention either took to the sea to freedom or died of sickness or became disabled;

A former VC member speaks up, "The national wealth and resources were being unpardonably wasted and misappropriated. A combination of a bankrupt economy and an unbridled waste of national resources have contributed to make VN one of the five poorest countries of the world. The war booty had gone into the hands of the powerful, the high and the mighty, the various government offices, and some rank-and-file".

Jobless people took the mountain trails looking for gold nuggets, precious stones, stolen antiques, historical souvenirs and relics to sell to foreign antique dealers;

The concentration camps chiefs sent political prisoners into the forests to cut down trees for cooking logs, for building purposes, or for timber, causing landslides and floods destroying lowland's crops, farms, sweeping away homes, roads and bridges.

Elephants and other wild animals invaded the villages, killed the villagers and ravaged the farms. According to VC authorities, in the past 17 years, between 65% to 75% of forest areas had been deforested senselessly.

VII

WHAT NOW?

The available information and data documented in this survey point to the poignant fact that from 1945 to date, almost half a century, the VC have caused immense misfortunes and misery to the people and the nation, committed monstrous atrocities, killed millions of people, including their own, in the name; of "independence, freedom and happiness". But what they did achieve was a national independence deprived of freedom, happiness, and inalienable human rights. And it was a independence under a bankrupt communist-socialist mandarin regime, with regionalist discrimination overtone.

In Hue, Central VN, slogan coined by Ho Chi Minh was displayed in a city park, saying: "khong 00 gi quy bang ddo^c lap va` tu do" (Nothing is as precious as independence and freedom) .Seeing the irony in the slogan, some truth-loving people managed to scrub off the last seven words and left alone: "khong co gi" (meaning: no thing).

In their power, the VC destroyed natural and human resources, national heritage, created a handicapped economy, and negated time-honored moral, cultural and spiritual values of the nation.

People wondered, and asked one another: Are the VC leaders thick-skulled? Are they paranoid? Are they playing the waiting game? Are they too greedy? Or are they too proud of themselves? No simple answer seems satisfying. But maybe a combination all these questions would produce a suitable answer.

In any case, the most important elements on this political landscape are 70 million Vietnamese striving for democracy, religious freedom, human rights and justice. They are the real victims being dehumanized, humiliated and embarrassed by their rulers.

In the past 17 years, we, the free and democratic Vietnamese around the world, have proved our inability to unite and challenge the communist rule. Now, the time has come for the spiritual leaders to remind us that along with human will power there is the need for a spiritual, transcendent power to help achieve freedom, justice and human rights.

Ho Chi Minh's unified country has been deeply impoverished with an alarmingly increasing rate of crimes, gambling, prostitution, corruption and power brokerage corruption among the high level government officials. Even several former communists remark, "In today VN, people hurried to make money, to make fast bucks. Big houses, villas, schooling for the children of the big shots in foreign countries, import of luxury items, have been handled on reciprocity basis and through referrals and recommendations".

Meanwhile the communist rulers continued to kill people, destroy religions, frustrate non-communist citizens, waste national wealth, and impoverish the entire nation.

The VC are doing everything possible to perpetuate their power, their status and vested interests. To this end, they flirited China and foreign investors. They sold out public property, precious stones, antiques... to foreign buyers, just in case.

In their hands, they offer golden investment and business opportunities on silver plates to international investors, while their bodies are bathed in the wells of tears of millions of people suffering from disgrace and degradation.

If before 1975, the hands of the Communists around the world had been stained with Vietnamese blood, today, the foreign investors' hands might as well get stained with Vietnamese blood and tears. Foreign investors could see these tears in their drinks and soups.

A number of former communists have finally admitted that the VC leaders are the real culprits who have committed the following crimes:

- They made Vietnam the 5th poorest country of the world;
- They killed or caused the deaths of 5,000,000 or more people since 1945;
- They oppressed the people in violation of human rights, including religious freedom;
- They operated an unjust and oppressive judicial system to nail advocates of freedom and democracy;
- They created a bankrupt educational system;
- They built a handicapped economy and finance;
- They caused tragic failures in national defense and foreign relations;
- They wasted natural resources and national wealth;
- They wasted human lives)
- They dehumanized human dignity;
- They have failed to improve the internal political and economic conditions to make it possible for the US to lift the trade embargo)
- They have failed to put the country on the right track in economic development, and have caused the British investors to withdraw VN \$7.5 billion in investment in VN.

We therefore call upon the international community and investors to help the people of Vietnam put an end to this inhuman, immoral insensitive power-house if you would not want to see rising wells of tears, and the Vietnamese people continue to live as modern slaves in disgrace, degradation, in heartbreaking poverty;

We call upon all foreign governments and international investors to temporarily put on hold all business transactions, co-operations and investment negotiations with the present government of Vietnam until human rights, religious freedom and justice have become realities and guaranteed by the law and the government;

We call upon the United States of America to continue to enforce the trade embargo and refrain from extending diplomatic recognition to Vietnam until the legitimate aspirations of the people of Vietnam, as mentioned above, have been satisfied.

The Communist leadership and government, which is responsible for the hidden killing fields, the untold poverty of a country rich in all natural resources but reduced to mendicity; a government which is responsible for a handicapped economy, a bankrupt education and a disintegrated society, must not be allowed to continued to exist with impunity, and benefit from the cooperation and assistance of civilized and democratic nations. unless and until it genuinely decides to drastically change its course in the direction of civilized, modern, democratic and pluralistic societies.

During this Conference of Fellowship and Prayers, we respectfully request the Holy Father and all the Spiritual Leaders to help, with your prayers and influence, the Vietnamese People get out of the present economic abyss and the dark tunnel of poverty, sufferings and oppression they have been enslaved in for the past many years.

Please accept our deep gratitude.

PATRICK DU PHUOC LONG, Ph.D.

Summer of 1995

San Jose, California

The Vietnamese Communist Leaders are urged to use their right to answer.