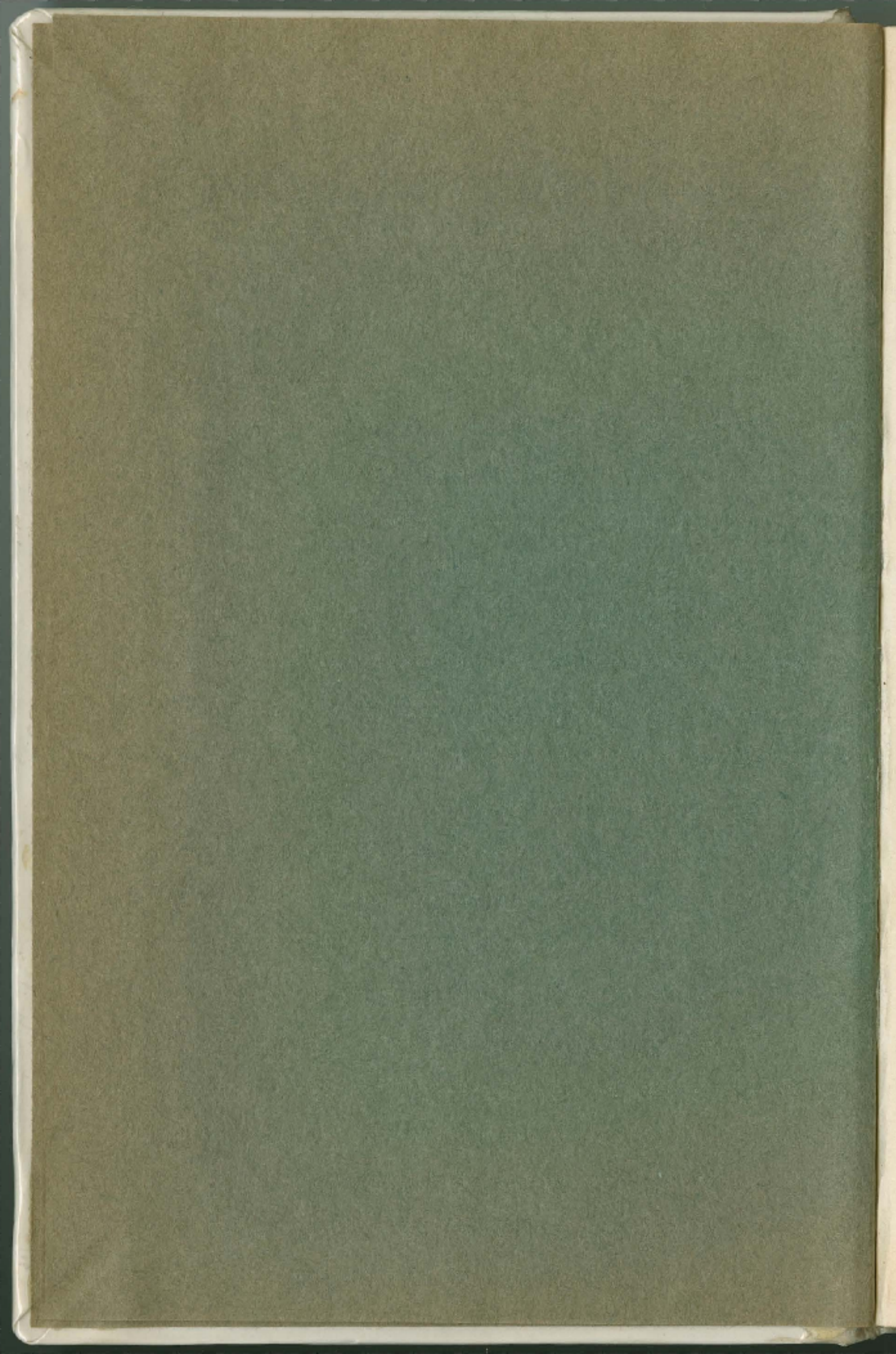


**WE OPEN
THE FILE**

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
HANOI




WE OPEN THE FILE

WE OPEN
THE FILE


FOREIGN LANGUAGE PUBLISHING HOUSE

WE OPEN THE RITE

W



**WE OPEN
THE FILE**



HANOI

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

1961

EN

THE FILE

HANOI

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

1981

CONTENTS

	Pages
Publisher's Note	7
Letter sent on January 26, 1961, by General Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander in Chief of the Viet Nam People's Army to H. E. Ambassador M. Gopala Menon, Chairman of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet Nam	9
The policy of terror of the Ngo Dinh Diem Administration.	21

Diem Diem. When a dictatorship gives its followers no other way than to take up arms to express a wish, one may ask what freedoms do the broad masses of the people enjoy?

November 11, 1960, was the inevitable outcome of a policy of repression which has been hitting indiscriminately since the cessation of hostilities.

Whole divisions raiding the countryside; supported by artillery and airplanes. The napalm bomb. The gaolectric which moves from one province to another. The concentration camps. A new type of torture. Wholesale poisonings. A network of inter-tribes. A political carcanel on the necks of the people of south Viet Nam.

Seven years after the re-establishment of peace under the Geneva Agreements, south Viet Nam is still living in the throes of war.

Why?

We open the file.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE



Pages

7 Publisher's Note

Vo Nguyen
an People's
Chairman
vision and

9 Letter
of
Co

21 The



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

On November 11, 1960, four thousand paratroopers encircled the presidential palace in Saigon. They were joined by units of the infantry, navy and public security.

Who were these men?

They were soldiers whom Ngo Dinh Diem considered as his pets.

If they rose against the regime, it is because they deemed that a stifling atmosphere was prevailing in south Viet Nam, and that there the least freedom of opinion is branded as heresy, political opposition and communist subversion.

However, some of the leaders of this abortive coup d'état upheld the same anti-communist principles as Ngo Dinh Diem. When a dictatorship gives its followers no other way than to take up arms to express a wish, one may ask what freedoms do the broad masses of the people enjoy!

November 11, 1960, was the inevitable outcome of a policy of repression which has been hitting indiscriminately since the cessation of hostilities.

Whole divisions raiding the countryside, supported by artillery and airplanes. The napalm bomb. The guillotine which moves from one province to another. The concentration camps. A new-type gestapo. Wholesale poisoning. A network of inter-families. A political carcanet on the necks of the people of south Viet Nam.

Seven years after the re-establishment of peace under the Geneva Agreements, south Viet Nam is still living in the throes of war.

Why?

We open the file...

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

On November 11, 1960, four thousand paratroopers entered the presidential palace in Saigon. They were joined by units of the infantry, navy and public security.

Who were these men?

They were soldiers whom Ngo Dinh Diem considered as his pets.

If they rose against the regime it is because they deemed that a better atmosphere was prevailing in south Viet Nam, and that there the least freedom of opinion is branded as heresy, political opposition and communist subversion.

However, some of the leaders of this abortive coup did not uphold the same anti-communist principles as Ngo Dinh Diem. When a dictatorship gives its followers no other way than to take up arms to express a wish, one may ask what freedoms do the broad masses of the people enjoy?

November 11, 1960, was the inevitable outcome of a policy of repression which has been hitting indiscriminately since the cessation of hostilities.

Whole divisions raiding the countryside, supported by artillery and airplanes, the napalm bomb, the guillotine which moves from one province to another, the concentration camps, a new-type torture, wholesale poisoning, a network of inter-families, a political carceral on the necks of the people of south Viet Nam.

Seven years after the re-establishment of peace under the Geneva Agreements, south Viet Nam is still living in the throes of war.

Why?

We open the file...

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

Mr. Chairman.

LETTER

SENT ON JANUARY 26, 1961

BY GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP,

COMMANDER IN CHIEF

OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY

TO H. E. AMBASSADOR M. GOPALA MENON,

CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL

COMMISSION FOR SUPERVISION

AND CONTROL IN VIET NAM

Early in 1959, at a moment when a tidal wave of protest against the food poisoning of over 8,000 detainees in the Phu Loi concentration camp was sweeping over south as well as north Viet Nam, Ngo Dinh Diem stated: "(South) Viet Nam is in a state of war." Thereafter, the south Viet Nam propaganda apparatus started a campaign for intensified repression. It is particularly worth mentioning that the "Uach mang que gia", the "training circles" semi-official mouthpiece and leading body in the repression, raised the question of "exterminating the Viet-Cong" in accordance with the guiding principle: "To wipe them

LETTER

SENT ON JANUARY 26, 1961
BY GENERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP,
COMMANDER IN CHIEF
OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY
TO H. E. AMBASSADOR M. GOPALA MENON,
CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMISSION FOR SUPERVISION
AND CONTROL IN VIET NAM

Mr. Chairman,

Time and again, and particularly in early 1959, I have brought to the notice of the International Commission for Supervision and Control the serious violations of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreements committed by the south Viet Nam administration; I have also stressed that "the correct implementation of this provision in south Viet Nam would not only mean guaranteeing the life and democratic liberation of millions of people, but would also create conditions to check any manœuvre aimed at undermining peace and the reunification of Viet Nam". In the present letter, I would like to draw the Commission's attention to the more and more serious character of the situation.

Early in 1959, at a moment when a tidal wave of protest against the food-poisoning of over 6,000 detainees in the Phu Loi concentration camp was sweeping over south as well as north Viet Nam, Ngo Dinh Diem stated: "(South) Viet Nam is in a state of war." Thereafter, the south Viet Nam propaganda apparatus started a campaign for intensified repression. It is particularly worth mentioning that the 'Cach mang quoc gia', the 'ruling circles' semi-official mouthpiece and leading body in the repression, raised the question of 'exterminating the Viet Cong' in accordance with the guiding principle: "To wipe them

out mercilessly, not regarding them as human beings, to mobilize the forces of all branches for this purpose just as in a state of war", and "to combine all military and para-military forces into a single bloc, operating together under a common plan, and actively working under the leadership of a central body".

For this purpose, the south Viet Nam ruling circles have worked out a plan which includes the following points :

"1. To apply the radiating tactics : to muster all the operating forces in one or several centres ; the Army is to be organized into mobile groups specializing in guerilla warfare, encirclements and raids.

2. To set up a secret information network in the villages, and, before carrying out the plan, to have census registers duly established in villages and districts.

3. To re-shape the judiciary system with a view to annihilating the Viet Cong, to set up special courts to judge on the spot, to enforce draconian anti-communist laws, to mete out harsh punishments to the Viet Cong's sustainers.

4. After the elimination of the Viet Cong from a village, to re-organize its administration and to make the return of the Viet Cong impossible".

As is known to public opinion, 'Viet Cong' is a name applied by the south Viet Nam authorities to south Viet Nam peace-loving patriots, the great majority of whom participated in the Resistance war against the colonialist aggressors. Thus the above-mentioned plan is actually a plan for the extermination of these patriots.

* * *

The repression of the people and the reprisal against former resistance members in south Viet Nam over the last two years are obviously the implementation of the aforesaid guiding principle and plan.

The setting up of the 'information' network has been actively pursued on a large scale. Besides the strengthening of the network of secret agents at the communal level, the south Viet Nam administration has created within communal councils the posts of 'member in charge of political affairs', 'member in charge of information' and 'member in charge of the youth' to take up the 'security work'; at the provincial level, a deputy-chief of province is specially responsible for 'internal security'. The increased militarization of the administrative apparatus deserves particular mention. At present, there are in south Viet Nam 14 chiefs of province, 22 deputy-chiefs of province and 67 chiefs of district chosen from among officers on active service. In big cities, the south Viet Nam administration has established a 'network of inter-families'. With regard to Saigon in particular, the entire population is to be organized into 10,687 groups, of which 6,040 have been set up. The so-called 'policy of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam towards former resistance members' is a basis for local authorities to carry out a "differentiation of citizens", and to terrorize the people.

With the promulgation of law 10-59 on May 6, 1959, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration 're-shaped the whole judiciary system'. By their powers and their procedure, the special military courts set up under this law differ completely from the existing courts in south Viet Nam. They are placed under the direct authority of the Defence Ministry, and judge in accordance with special provisions: no preliminary investigation required, no possibility of defence or appeal given to the accused, sentences to be acted upon on the spot... As has been repeatedly pointed out by the Viet Nam People's Army, law 10-59 and special military courts are designed to exterminate south Viet Nam peace-loving patriots opposed to the U. S.-Diem clique, irrespective of political beliefs.

The large-scale military operations carried out from Ca Mau to the 17th parallel, from the plains to the High Plateaus, are clear illustrations of the putting into practice of the 'radiating tactics'. South Viet Nam has been divided into many zones of operation: the eastern region, the western region and the Plain of Reeds in Nam Bo, the western part of Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Thua Thien and Quang Tri in Trung Bo (central Viet Nam), Kontum and Darlac in the High Plateaus... In each of these zones, there is a 'delegate of the Government' endowed with full powers to carry out 'the mustering of all the operating forces in one or several centres under the leadership of a central body'. At present, 'the delegate of the Government' is Nguyen Van Vang in west Nam Bo, and Ngo Dinh Can in Trung Bo... The operations in the above-mentioned zones involved on an average 10,000 to 15,000 regular troops (including the air force, the navy and the artillery), and an equivalent strength of militia men, civil guards, commandos, agents of the 'Công dân vụ', secret agents and security agents. They resulted in tragic massacres of unarmed innocent people although peace had been restored: the victims were either burnt by napalm bombs, or guillotined before thousands of spectators; others had their heads cut off and planted on banana-tree trunks set adrift in rivers... It is obvious that the south Viet Nam ruling circles have put into practice the slogan: "To wipe out the Viet Cong mercilessly, not regarding them as human beings, just as in a state of war".

In accordance with the plan, the carrying out of the 'radiating tactics' is to be followed by a re-organization of the administration according to new principles. This re-organization of the communes according to new principles is precisely the removal of villages and concentration of their inhabitants into so-called 'zones of prosperity'. The south Viet Nam administration has forced the people, especially former resistance members and their families, to settle

in fenced enclosures permanently guarded by the militia and military police, with agents of the police and of the 'Cong dan vu' keeping a vigilant watch upon each person and each family. Actually, such 'zones' are merely new-type concentration camps designed to keep former resistance members and their relatives in forced residence, and at the same time, to facilitate the pressganging of soldiers and hand labour, in furtherance of the manœuvres of military reinforcement and war preparations. For this purpose, the south Viet Nam authorities have resorted to every means: tortures and massacres to intimidate the people; destruction of entire villages, of houses and crops with a view to depriving the people of their means to earn a living, thereby compelling them to join the 'zones of prosperity'; shelling of villages to force away their inhabitants...

*

* *

Since the restoration of peace, for over four years in succession, the south Viet Nam people have been living a very wretched life.

In furtherance of the U. S. imperialists' manœuvres aimed at sabotaging the implementation of the Geneva Agreements, perpetuating the partition of Viet Nam, and turning south Viet Nam into a new-type colony and a military base of the U. S. A., the Ngo Dinh Diem administration has unceasingly carried out a cruel policy of terror. With this policy, the most typical illustration of which is the 'Wipe out communists campaigns', it hopes to be in a position to suppress any popular aspiration for peace and unity in south Viet Nam. These 'campaigns' resulted in numerous casualties and cases of arrest or deportation. The policy of military reinforcement and the consequences of the so-called 'U. S. aid' have driven the south Viet Nam economy into a **cul de sac**. As a

result, while encountering the greatest difficulties in their daily life, the people, already harassed by indiscriminate arrests and savage tortures, have, furthermore, been despoiled of their lands for the building of strategic roads and military bases. Faced with increasing opposition from the people, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration has set out on the so-called plan for 'exterminating the Viet Cong just as in a state of war'. Since it was put into effect, the south Viet Nam people have been driven to an utterly wretched life. Although peace has been restored for six years now, they are living not only in the perpetual anxiety of arrest and execution by the police, but also through the horrors of a real war with napalm bombings, savage massacres, destruction of entire villages, destruction of crops, etc. They are not given the possibility of leading the peaceful life they are longing for. Violence and oppression have led them into a situation wherein they have no way out other than to take into their own hands the defence of their lives, property and living conditions. Popular indignation has been spreading from the countryside to big cities, reaching even the inner ranks of the south Viet Nam administration and army. The November 11, 1960 coup d'etat involving almost all south Viet Nam paratroops, and a part of the naval and air forces, and the tearing-up of Ngo Dinh Diem's photographs and south Viet Nam flags by many civil servants and armymen, clearly evidenced the fact that broad strata of the people in south Viet Nam were already fed up with Ngo Dinh Diem, and wanted to overthrow his dictatorial regime.

In face of the development of the opposition movement, the ruling clique in south Viet Nam has intensified the repression. On October 26, 1960, Ngo Dinh Diem stated: "the Government has decided to strengthen the pacification and security work...". On November 5, 1960, he stage-managed the farce of the 'National Assembly' requesting the 'application of all emergency measures'. In the south Viet Nam 1961

budget, the appropriations for the Directorate General of the Security and Police, the Directorate General of the Militia, and the Central Inspection service of the Civil guard have increased by 130,240,000 piastres as compared with 1960; this increase alone is double the appropriations for the south Viet Nam Ministry of Economy, which account for only 66,216,000 piastres. Since the coup d'etat the atmosphere of terror has become even more stifling. After achieving the task of rescuing Ngo Dinh Diem, parts of the regular troops have been sent back to western Nam Bo, Kontum, etc. to carry on mopping-up operation there. A committee endowed with large powers has been set up to 'fight the rebels and the communists'. Many people have been arrested, including former ministers of the Ngo Dinh Diem administration and officials or army men whom Diem had not the opportunity to eliminate before. Many others are under the menace of being arrested. Although it has been camouflaged recently under the signboard of "United Front against the rebels and the communists", this committee is an instrument of repression most dangerous for the people. Public opinion is being deeply disturbed by the arrests and the atmosphere of terror in general. While previously the calumnious accusation of 'communism' was for the south Viet Nam authorities a sufficient pretext to carry out arrests, they are now basing themselves on a new charge: that of 'being involved in the coup, or of entertaining close relations with its authors'. Thus, in south Viet Nam simple citizens as well as civil servants and army men, irrespective of political affiliation are now living under the perpetual fear of being arrested or killed, or having their houses destroyed.

All these facts show that the leaders of the south Viet Nam administration are going deeper and deeper along the path of persecutions against the people, and reprisal against former resistance members, thereby violating in a most serious manner Article 14 (c) of

the Geneva Agreement concerning Viet Nam. Nevertheless, immediately after the coup d'etat, they have again impudently resorted to the slanderous allegations about so-called 'subversive activities' by the authorities of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which they have been constantly using for over six years now to cover up their policy of terror. However, the coup d'etat has clearly revealed who is at work for the overthrow of Ngo Dinh Diem. Undoubtedly, the calumnious allegations of the south Viet Nam ruling circles cannot conceal the truth.

It is not fortuitous that the Ngo Dinh Diem administration is intensifying the persecution of patriots and all opposition groups in south Viet Nam, while increasing its calumnious propaganda against the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. For the last few years, the policy of terror and repression has always been an instrument to further the U. S. imperialists' policy of intervention and war in south Viet Nam. But, in view of the failure of this policy, and of 'the cold war' in the world, the U. S.-Diem clique has pushed forward military reinforcement in this region, in the hope of carrying on the preparations for a new war, and of consolidating its domination. That is why M. A. A. G. has been reinforced with hundreds of American military advisers, and is striving to speed up the building of military bases and strategic roads in south Viet Nam. That is why the U. S. Government decided to increase its aid in armaments in 1960 almost twofold by comparison with 1959, and openly to send warships and planes to the south Viet Nam naval and air forces. That is why, as revealed by the U. S. Secretary of State for the Army, W. Brucker himself, a 'plan of operation' has been worked out for an eventual military intervention in south Viet Nam. That is why the U. S.-Diem clique has availed itself of the International Commission's majority decision authorizing the introduction of U. S. military personnel as reinforcements for

M.A.A.G., to give a legal cover to the continued existence of this mission, with a view to pushing forward military reinforcement and war preparations in south Viet Nam. The slanderous propaganda about so-called 'subversive activities' by north Viet Nam, is designed to achieve the same aim, and, at the same time, to cover up the use of the regular army in savagely suppressing any popular opposition.

Mr. Chairman,

The intensified persecution of the opponents of the U.S.-Diem regime and policy, and of the peace-loving patriots who stand for the Geneva Agreements in south Viet Nam, is a question coming within the purview of the Geneva Agreements concerning Viet Nam. This is because such persecution is an instrument in furtherance of the U.S. interventionists' war manoeuvres, in flagrant contravention of the provisions of the Geneva Agreements aimed at consolidating peace in Viet Nam. This is because, running counter to Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreements, it constitutes a serious menace to the life and democratic liberties of millions of people who participated in the Resistance war against the colonialist aggressors in south Viet Nam.

The Viet Nam People's Army High Command strongly protests against the incessant persecutions which the Ngo Dinh Diem Administration have perpetrated against south Viet Nam patriots who, in their vast majority, participated in the Resistance war. Such persecutions are an extremely serious violation of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreements.

The Viet Nam People's Army High Command declares that the said administration must bear full responsibility for the creation of 'a state of war' in south Viet Nam and for the eventual consequences of its policy of intensified terror.

I request the International Commission to pronounce severe condemnation against the south Viet Nam authorities policy of terror and reprisal as a whole, and to urge them to put an end to this policy, to stop the operations of reprisal, to abrogate law 10-59, to dissolve the Saigon special military court, to dissolve "the zones of prosperity" and other concentration camps, and to ensure all democratic liberties to former resistance members in conformity with the stipulations of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement.

I take this opportunity to renew to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the other members of the International Commission, the assurances of my highest consideration.

The Geneva Agreements concerning Viet Nam clearly stipulate:

"Each Party undertakes to refrain from any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the hostilities in Viet Nam)

THE POLICY OF TERROR OF THE NGO DINH DIEM ADMINISTRATION

the authorities of Laos and Cambodia, must not permit any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the war, or against members of such persons' families." (Point 9 of the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference).

Thus, with regard to millions of people (as the Vietnamese Resistance was a national resistance in all fields) who are living in south Viet Nam, and who participated in the Resistance war under the leadership of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, whatever their political affiliation or the form of their participation in the Resistance war may be, and in regard to their families as well, the south Viet Nam administration must:

- a) Refrain from any reprisals or discrimination (either individual or collective); and
- b) Guarantee their democratic liberties.

Nevertheless, it has continuously violated the above-mentioned stipulations over the last six years and more.

I request the International Commission to pro-
vide a severe condemnation against the South Viet
Nam military and police forces and reprisals as a
policy of terror and to urge them to put an end to this policy
and to stop the operation of military tribunals, to
bring all military tribunals to an end, to release all
prisoners of war, to release all political prisoners
and to release all members of the former resistance
in conformity with the provisions of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva
Agreement.

I hope this opportunity to refer to you, Mr. Chair-
man, and to the other members of the Inter-
national Commission to provide a severe condemnation
against the South Viet Nam military and police forces
and to urge them to put an end to this policy of
terror and to stop the operation of military tribunals,
to bring all military tribunals to an end, to release
all prisoners of war, to release all political prisoners
and to release all members of the former resistance
in conformity with the provisions of Article 14 (c) of the
Geneva Agreement.

This document has been attached to General Vo Nguyen Giap's
letter dated January 26, 1961.

The Geneva Agreements concerning Viet Nam clearly stipulate:

“Each Party undertakes to refrain from any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the hostilities and to guarantee their democratic liberties.” (Article 14 (c) of the Agreement on the Cessation of hostilities in Viet Nam).

“The competent representative authorities of the northern and southern zones of Viet Nam, as well as the authorities of Laos and Cambodia, must not permit any individual or collective reprisals against persons who have collaborated in any way with one of the parties during the war, or against members of such persons’ families.” (Point 9 of the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference).

Thus, with regard to millions of people (as the Vietnamese Resistance was a national resistance in all fields) who are living in south Viet Nam, and who participated in the Resistance war under the leadership of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, whatever their political affiliation or the form of their participation in the Resistance war may be, and in regard to their families as well, the south Viet Nam administration must:

- a) Refrain from any reprisals or discrimination (either individual or collective); and
- b) Guarantee their democratic liberties.

Nevertheless, it has continually violated the above-mentioned stipulations over the last six years and more.

The Geneva Agreements concerning Viet Nam clearly stipulate:

"Each Party undertakes to refrain from any reprisals or discrimination against persons or organizations on account of their activities during the hostilities and to guarantee their democratic liberties." (Article 14 (c) of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Viet Nam)

"The competent representative authorities of the northern and southern zones of Viet Nam, as well as the authorities of Laos and Cambodia, must not permit any individual or collective reprisals against persons who have collaborated in any way with one of the parties during the war, or against members of such persons' families." (Point 9 of the Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference)

Thus, with regard to millions of people (as the Vietnamese Resistance was a national resistance in all fields) who are living in south Viet Nam, and who participated in the Resistance war under the leadership of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, whatever their political affiliation or the form of their participation in the Resistance war may be, and in regard to their families as well, the south Viet Nam administration must:

- a) Refrain from any reprisals or discrimination (either individual or collective); and
- b) Guarantee their democratic liberties.

Nevertheless, it has continually violated the above-mentioned stipulations over the last six years and more.

I

FROM THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES TO 1958

1. LISTING OF FORMER RESISTANCE MEMBERS, 'DIFFERENTIATION OF CITIZENS'

During the investigation into the case of 110 former resistance members at Quang Tri, Bui Quang Uyen, deputy-chief of the province, declared to Team 57 of the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Viet Nam:

"After the cessation of hostilities, the National Government has to keep under observation former resistance members in the areas taken over by the National Army. A list of former resistance members not regrouped to the North was worked out. Consequently, such persons should be arrested at all costs immediately after our arrival, and put under observation so as to ensure security."

After an enquiry into the massacre of former resistance members in Duy Xuyen district, Quang Nam province, the International Commission gave the following finding:

"After the cease-fire, in the district of Duy Xuyen, former resistance members were separately listed and

kept under observation. Former resistance members were asked to declare their former resistance activities, and some of them had thereafter to periodically report to the Security Service. The commission finds that, inasmuch as such measures were applied only to former resistance members, this amounts to a discrimination against them vis-à-vis the rest of the population in terms of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreements" (Ref. IC letter No IC-FB-3 — 49-3-154 dated February 6, 1959).

Afterwards, the south Viet Nam authorities carried out a 'differentiation of citizens'. According to that policy, the south Viet Nam population was divided into three categories:

a) 'Illegal citizens', or citizens of category A including all peace-loving patriots who stand for the Geneva Agreements in south Viet Nam, and the great majority of whom participated in the Resistance war against the colonialist aggressors;

b) 'Semi-legal citizens', or citizens of category B including the relatives and friends of the citizens of category A, and of former resistance members regrouped to north Viet Nam; and

c) 'Legal citizens', or citizens of category C, including for the greater part people who fought against the Resistance, and who are now efficient agents of the Ngo Dinh Diem regime.

Of course, such a differentiation led to the application of special measures against 'illegal and semi-legal citizens'.

2. DISCRIMINATION MEASURES

Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, in the areas under the control of the French Union Forces including the French Expeditionary Corps and the military forces of the Ngo Dinh Diem administration, the authorities ordered their troops to shoot at the

crowds of demonstrators from former resistance regions, who were hailing the return of peace: such was the case in Ngan Son, Chi Thanh, Ha Lam, Cho Duoc, Vinh Xuan, Mo Cay, etc. These incidents resulted in hundreds of casualties. After on-the-spot enquiries, the International Commission recorded, in a number of cases, violations of the Geneva Agreements against the south Viet Nam authorities.

After taking over all former V. P. A. resistance regions south of the 17th parallel, and listing former resistance members in every locality, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration put into practice a policy of reprisal and discrimination against individuals and organizations who had participated in the Resistance war.

Former resistance members and their relatives — who were to be classified afterwards as 'illegal' or 'semi-legal citizens' — were compelled to report periodically to the authorities; they were subjected to all kinds of restrictions and prohibitions in their movements, including business movements. In numerous localities such as Khanh Hoa, Go Cong, My Tho, etc., they were issued with red identity cards, as distinguished from white-card holders. In many areas such as Ninh Hoa (Khanh Hoa), the authorities put a red and blue stamp on the soles of the feet of former resistance members at sunset to check on the prints on the following morning.

People who had relatives regrouped to north Viet Nam were forced to cut off all conjugal or paternal relations with them. On December 15, 1954, Le Trung Chi, Chief of Quang Nam province, ordered all the wives of former resistance members, whether the latter were regrouped to the North or still living with their families, to report within three months to the administrative services to make applications for divorce. In implementation of this instruction, 'divorce weeks' were organized by the authorities in numerous localities such as the communes of Duy Trinh (Duy

Xuyen district), Dien Ninh(Dien Ban district), Que Xuan, (Que Son district), etc. Divorces imposed on the wives of former resistance members were regular occurrences in south Viet Nam. Mothers were also forced to deny their children who had participated in the Resistance war. On December 15, 1954, Mrs. Nguyen Giao, at Duy Hung commune (Quang Nam province), was compelled to divorce her husband and to deny her son, both being former resistance members regrouped to the North.

Cases happened when even after his death, the body of a former resistance member was subjected to indignities and shocking violations. The families of Messrs. Dao Yen, Ngo Du and Nguyen Huan in Duy Xuyen district, Quang Nam province, were not permitted to wear mourning for them after their murder by the authorities. On account of his participation in the Resistance war the Buddhist monk Che Van Vang in Thanh Phuoc commune, Go Dau Ha district, Tay Ninh province, was refused burial for six days after his death.

3. INDIVIDUAL ARRESTS

From 1954 to 1955, individual arrests and murders were frequent, and people killed in such circumstances were numbered by the thousand. Some were summoned before the communal council or the district administration, and never came back; others were secretly arrested at night-time, and taken to unrevealed places; others were arrested by the authorities while going to their fields, to market, to fishing ponds or to work in the forests. All were submitted to atrocious tortures before being killed, jailed or sent to a concentration camp.

Some typical cases are given hereunder:

The murder of Mr. Tran Nguyen

Messrs. Tran Nguyen, Mai, Toai, Tien, Dan and Dieu in Bang Son, Cam Lo district, Quang Tri province, were all former resistance members. On December 12, 1954, Le Dinh Phap, Chief of Cam Lo district, Thai Hanh, a civil official, and Dat, Chief of the district police, ordered Mr. Tran Nguyen to be arrested and strangled. Then they had Messrs. Mai and Toai arrested and savagely tortured into declaring themselves to be 'members of an assassination committee' of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and authors of 'the murder of Mr. Tran Nguyen'. On December 14, 1954, the authorities set up a 'military court', which sentenced to death Messrs. Mai and Toai; the same sentence was passed against Messrs. Tien, Dan and Dieu in their absence.

On the other hand, the south Viet Nam administration lodged a complaint with the International Commission charging the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam with responsibility for the 'murder' of Mr. Tran Nguyen.

On this case, the Commission gave the following finding:

"From the thorough enquiry made into this case by Mobile Team 57, and from the detailed evidence obtained by the Team, the Commission has reached the following conclusions:

1. The complaint of the French High Command (which then represented the Ngo Dinh Diem administration) that the murder of Tran Nguyen was engineered by an Assassination Committee has been disproved.

2. The action taken against Mai and Toai, and the sentences passed against Tien, Dan and Dieu in their absence amount to reprisals against former resistance workers and, hence, violation of Article 14 (c).

3. There is a grave suspicion that the murder of Tran Nguyen was engineered by the authorities with the intention of planting it on the accused".

On the basis of these conclusions the Commission requested the competent authorities in south Viet Nam to announce the 'innocence' of the five accused persons publicly, and to mete out punishment to those responsible for this affair, in particular, to Le Dinh Phap, Thai Hanh and Dat. (Ref. I.C. letter No ICSC ADM III-38 55 139 dated June 17, 1955).

The case of Mr. Vo Luong buried alive

Mr. Vo Luong, a former resistance member, native of Nhan Phong commune, An Nhon district, Binh Dinh province, was arrested on October 19, 1954, and savagely tortured by the south Viet Nam authorities in an attempt to force him to declare his activities during the Resistance war. On the night of November 3, he was led by a number of agents of the south Viet Nam administration to a ditch, stabbed, then pushed into the ditch and buried though still alive.

After his torturers had gone, concentrating all his remaining strength, he succeeded in getting out of the ditch (fortunately, it was raining at that time), and made for the nearest village where he was tended; then he was taken on a stretcher to the I.C. Fixed Team at Qui Nhon.

Dr. Vo Van Vinh at Qui Nhon concluded after examination:

"From the character of the wounds, I conclude that the man received many stabbings with a kind of flat, sharp instrument (as shown by the wound on the front part of the left forearm) ending in a sharp angle (traces of stabbings). The location of the wounds also shows that while being injured the man showed his right side and tried to defend himself with his arm (traces of cutting and stabbing)."

After a careful enquiry, on November 9, 1955, the International Commission concluded that "in this

case, there was a violation of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement." (Ref. I.C. letter № ICSC-FB-55-3-5286 dated November 9, 1955)

The murder of Mr. Tran Tham

Native of Dai Dien Trung village, Dien Khanh district, Khanh Hoa province, Mr. Tran Tham had participated in the Resistance war. Since the restoration of peace, he had resumed his normal activities to support his family. On January 18, 1955, he was arrested by the authorities under the slanderous charges of 'theft of bullocks', taken to the Dai Dien Trung post, subjected to the most savage torture which made him faint several times, and finally he was strangled. After an on-the-spot enquiry by Mobile Team F. 16, the International Commission gave the following finding:

"As a result of the investigation, it has been ascertained that on January 18, 1955, Tran Tham was arrested by soldiers from the military post at Dai Dien Trung for alleged theft of bullocks, and was taken to the post. There, he was tortured, beaten and throttled, as a result of which he died. It has also been found that Tran Tham was a member of the Resistance movement before the cease-fire.

The Commission has arrived at the finding that the torture causing the death of Tran Tham constituted a breach of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement". (Ref. I.C. letter № ICSC-FB-55-2-4569 dated July 20, 1955).

The murder of Messrs. Nguyen Luong and Le Tham

On October 3, 1954, on orders from the authorities, Major Ho Van Anh led his troops to Dien Ban district, Quang Nam province, to carry out arrests of former resistance members. Mr. Le Tham at An Truong commune was shot dead and Mr. Nguyen Luong at Thi Nhon commune was stabbed to death.

After an on-the-spot enquiry, the International Commission concluded: "These murders constitute a violation of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement". (Ref. I.C. letter No ICSC-ADM-III-50-55-589 dated August 29, 1955).

The case of Tran Thi Nham alias Ly

Miss Tran Thi Nham alias Ly, native of Dien Hong village, Dien Ban district, Quang Nam province, was a guerilla fighter during the Resistance war. As she was a former resistance member, and had, on behalf of the inhabitants of her village, handed over a petition to the International Commission Team at Da Nang (Tourane), she was arrested on July 28, 1955 by the security service, and subjected to tortures during three consecutive months in the Ky Lam prison. On November 20, she was arrested for the second time, savagely tortured, and again set free over one month later. In March 1956, she was arrested for the third time, and taken to Hoi An where she was subjected to tortures of mediaeval atrocity: knife incision into the flesh, application of red-hot needles to the thighs and nipples, hanging to the ceiling by means of hooks fastened to the feet, tearing out of handfuls of hair... Thinking that she was doomed to die, the authorities gave her back to her family. But with the villagers' assistance, she was brought to the North for medical treatment. When she was admitted to a Hanoi hospital, her body bore over 40 wounds which were still bleeding. She has exposed to the International Commission the crimes committed by the south Viet Nam administration. In January 1959, the International Commission sent its representatives to meet her in the hospital, and to hear her expound in detail her case which is still pending.

The case of Professor Nguyen Thi Dieu

Professor Nguyen Thi Dieu, a daughter of former minister Nguyen Van Hien, and a sister of Doctor

Nguyen Thi Vinh, was a member of the Executive Committee of the Nam Bo Women's Union during the Resistance war. After the return of peace, she resumed her normal business as a professor at the Duc Tri girls' school in Saigon. On July 10, 1955, she was arrested and killed most savagely by the authorities. According to the complaint of her eldest brother, Mr. Nguyen Van By, an electrical engineer, the autopsy showed many wounds: "fractured skull, congestion in the inner ear, bruises on the wrists caused by handcuffs, contusions of the kidneys and bladder caused by kicks".

Professor Nguyen Thi Dieu was then 29 years old. She had three children and was five months pregnant.

So far, the south Viet Nam administration has persisted in opposing an on-the-spot investigation by the International Commission into this case.

4. ORGANIZED TERROR: 'DENOUNCE COMMUNISTS' CAMPAIGNS

As from June 1955, the south Viet Nam authorities passed from individual arrests and murders to a large-scale organized campaign of systematic terror.

Forming anti-communism into a 'State policy', they set out to organize so-called 'Denounce communists' campaigns.

Under the 'anti-communist' signboard, they planned to terrorize the people, to carry out reprisals against former resistance members, and to suppress by force any aspiration for peace and unity in south Viet Nam.

They adopted the principle: "Rather kill a man wrongly than miss a communist".

A whole system of leadership ranging from the top to the lowest level was set up for the 'denunciation of communists'. The highest body was the 'Leading

Council for the Denunciation of Communists' which included all the ministers in the government with Ngo Dinh Diem as honorary chairman. This council appointed a body labelled 'Central Committee for the Denunciation of Communists', and entrusted it with the task of taking directly under its authority the denunciation of communists in government offices and in various localities. Each ministry, each province had its own leading committee for the denunciation of communists. At the communal level a councillor was specially entrusted with this task.

On March 1955, the Special Commissariat of the 'Cong Dan Vu' under the direct authority of the office of the President of the Republic — a secret security service specializing in the denunciation of communists — was set up to make preparations for, and to further the 'Denounce communists' campaigns.

In towns and cities, the denunciation of communists was organized in all government offices and enterprises. An atmosphere of suspicion and terror was thus created everywhere.

But especially in the countryside, the authorities mobilized the regular army, the militia, the civil guard, and the 'Cong Dan Vu', sometimes even the air force and the artillery, to launch numerous 'Denounce communists' campaigns. According to the document published in Saigon in late October 1959, and entitled 'Achievements of the Government over five years of activities', from mid October 1955 to the end of 1958, the south Viet Nam administration successively carried out:

The Dinh Tien Hoang campaign (from June 5 to December 29, 1955), in Can Tho, Long Xuyen, Chau Doc, Rach Gia, Ha Tien provinces.

The Hoang Dieu campaign (from September 21 to October 21, 1955) in the Sat forest (Baria province) near Vung Tau.

The **Thoai Ngoc Hau** campaign (from June 8 to October 30, 1956) in the provinces bordering on Cambodia.

The **Truong Tan Buu** campaign (from July 17, 1956, to December 15, 1957) in the eastern provinces of Nam Bo.

The **'Hong Chau plan'** campaign (from July 10 to August 10, 1958) in the Chau Boi region, near the Cambodian frontier.

The **Tho Lo** campaign (from March 2 to October 20, 1958) in the two provinces of Binh Dinh and Phu Yen.

The **'Nguyen Trai plan'** campaign (from April 20 to September 20, 1958) in East Nam Bo, in Binh Duong (Thu Dau Mot), Binh Long, Bien Hoa, and Tay Ninh provinces.

The **'Nguyen Trai plan'** campaign (from September 20, 1958, to February 1, 1959) in West Nam Bo, in An Giang, An Xuyen, Ba Xuyen, Kien Giang, Phong Dinh and Vinh Long provinces.

As a matter of fact, this list is far from being complete since it does not mention all the campaigns, (for instance the Nguyen Hue campaign from early 1955 to June 1, 1956, under the command of a brigadier in the Ca Mau region; the Doan Duc Thoan campaign in Binh Dinh province; the campaigns "to agitate the people" in the High Plateaus in the western part of Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces...), or hides their true duration (for instance, the Thoai Ngoc Hau campaign lasted until February 24, 1957, and not October 30, 1956). Generally speaking, in the 'Denounce communists' campaigns the army, operating in coordination with the militia, the civil guard, and the 'Cong Dan Vu' mopped up again and again the regions where broad strata of the people had participated in the Resistance war. All inhabitants were forcibly concen-

trated in one place for two or three consecutive days, sometimes one week or ten days, to "study a document drawing a distinction between the 'National Government' and the 'communists'. Afterwards, they were compelled to denounce former resistance members and their activities during the Resistance war. Such denunciations were generally started by specialized agents of the same type as Mac Carthy' 'informers'. This was the so-called carrying out of the slogan :

"To make the people denounce one another". The authors of positive declarations were accused of 'entertaining relations with the communists', while negative statements brought about charges of 'lying to hide the latter'.

5. SOME MASSACRES DURING THE 'DENOUNCE COMMUNISTS' CAMPAIGNS

Each 'Denounce communists' campaign resulted in hundreds, sometimes thousands, of victims. Thus the total number of people arrested, wounded, or killed was over 2,000 in the Truong Tan Buu campaign, over 3,000 in the Thoai Ngoc Hau campaign, over 10,000 (including 700 killed) in the Nguyen Hue campaign... A number of campaigns were marked by savage massacres.

Some cases of ferocious persecution are given hereunder :

The general persecution in Duy Xuyen district

From late 1954 to early 1955, during four consecutive months, the south Viet Nam authorities carried out the 'Phan Chu Trinh campaign' in Duy Xuyen district, Quang Nam province. About 8,000 former resistance members were arrested and subjected to the most savage tortures. On January 21, 1955, in one

single day, the agents of the south Viet Nam administration arrested 116 people in Vinh Trinh area, and led 47 to the Vinh Trinh dam where they tied their arms and legs with wire, cut their tongues and ears, gouged out their eyes, cut their throats, opened their bellies, poured oil on their heads, and set fire to them. Afterwards they fastened stones to the corpses, and threw them into the river.

The International Commission sent out Mobile Team 103 for investigation into this massacre, but the team "was not given freedom of movement, documents needed by it were not placed at its disposal and witnesses necessary for holding enquiries were not summoned. This resulted in the Mobile Team being recalled before the fulfilment of its task". (Ref. IC letter № IC - FB - 3 — 49 - 3 - 154 dated February 6, 1959).

The destruction of Huong Dien

Like many other communes of the region, Huong Dien was, during the Resistance war, a base of the People's Army of Viet Nam in the mountainous area of Quang Tri province.

On July 8, 1955, the south Viet Nam administration sent its troops to the commune to encircle the Tan Lap hamlet where they burnt down, or destroyed all dwellings and property, and massacred all inhabitants fallen into their hands, irrespective of age. On the following morning, the authorities summoned people allegedly for a 'meeting of militia men', at Tan Hiep, a neighbouring hamlet; 22 persons came, and were foully murdered. On July 14, 15 women accompanied by 10 children, went to the administration's offices to inquire about their husbands or sons who had not come back from the 'meeting of militia men'. They were led to the A Che ravine where they were raped, then butchered, disembowelled, beheaded, and thrown into the ravine. Before raping the mothers, the soldiers snatched away the children from their

hands, stabbed or strangled them to death or struck their heads against the rocks. Their corpses were thrown into the ravine. On July 16, troops came again to Tan Hiep hamlet where three more grown-up persons and 13 children were massacred, and all houses were burnt down or destroyed. On July 20, the soldiers came to Trai Ca hamlet, but all the inhabitants having fled, they seized all property, and burnt down the thirty houses of the hamlet.

Thus within 12 days, the south Viet Nam administration, putting into action one infantry battalion, razed to the ground the two hamlets of Tan Lap and Tan Hiep, killed 92 persons, including 31 children and 32 women, five of whom were pregnant.

Up to the end of 1955, 2,514,482 persons in north Viet Nam signed 17,422 petitions addressed to the International Commission in protest against the Duy Xuyen and Huong Dien massacres. So far the south Viet Nam administration has persisted in opposing on-the-spot investigations by the Commission on this subject.

The burying alive of 21 persons at Cho Duoc (Quang Nam province)

On November 28, 1955, during a wave of 'denunciation of communists', the authorities savagely tortured 21 persons out of hundreds of former resistance members in the communes of Binh Lac, Binh Tuy, Binh Tan, and Thang Trieu (Thang Binh district). Afterwards they put them into a cave, and buried them alive.

On December 1, the relatives and friends of the victims, having discovered the cave, came to unearth the corpses in order to organize funerals. They were encircled on orders from the authorities, and shot at. This resulted in numerous casualties. Great numbers of arrests were made.

The International Commission has decided to carry out an investigation into this case ; however, the south Viet Nam authorities have so far refused to agree to such enquiries.

The Dai Loc affair

In 1957, the 'denunciation of communists' entered an extremely cruel stage, which the south Viet Nam authorities labelled 'the second phase'. In the framework of this great wave of terror, towards the end of 1957, the Quang Nam provincial authorities carried out mass arrests of former resistance members in Dai Loc district (more than 9,000 according to Saigon press reports). The arrested persons were led to so-called 'rooms of denunciation of communists' which were, in fact, concentration camps, and subjected to tortures of mediaeval savagery. They were taken there high-handedly, leaving their businesses and homes, and threatened with blows and death. Driven into a *cul de sac*, thousands of people rose up and armed with sticks, hoes, shovels, etc. fought off the 'teams of denunciation of communists'. Their families sent in thousands of petitions to the provincial authorities, to the 'Government', to the 'National Assembly', and to the press. In spite of the ruling circles' attempts to hide the truth, the persecutions perpetrated in Dai Loc district were revealed by a number of Saigon newspapers. Public opinion was deeply disturbed, and the south Viet Nam authorities were finally forced to withdraw the teams of 'denunciation of communists'. In addition, they were compelled to mete out feigned sanctions to a number of cruel agents.

6. THE VARIOUS FORMS OF TORTURE

There are 'modern' forms commonly applied in the colonialists' torturing rooms :

- Electric torture ;

- 'Punching-ball': The victim is hung head down, and four torturers use his body as a 'punching ball' with kicks and punches;

- Beating the hands with cudgels;

- Pig cage: The victim is forced to lie flat on his belly in an open ditch with just enough place for one person, and overtopped by a cage of barbed wire;

- 'Journey by Dakota': The victim is hung head down with his hands kept in an iron-press, and security agents shower him with blows;

- 'Journey by boat': Dirty soapy water mixed with urine and excrement, or small pieces of bone are poured into the mouth of the victim, tied up and compelled to lie on his back on the floor; when the stomach has swelled, a security agent tramples on him with hobnailed boots to make him throw out the water through his mouth, nostrils and anus;

- 'Journey by submarine': Immersion of the victim in cold water for hours;

The forms which were often applied by the cruel despots of the Middle Ages are also resorted to:

- Tearing out handfuls of the victim's hair;

- Kneeling on a board bristling with nails;

- Driving needles into the genital organ;

- Suspension by a hook passed through the hands or feet while the torturers drive needles, into the head or belly, or other parts of the victim's body;

- Tearing off pieces of the flesh from the victim's thigh with red-hot pincers, or introducing these tools into his throat;

- Winding around the victim's fingers a bandage soaked with oil (sometimes petrol), and setting it alight;

- Burning the victim's nose and ears with oil (or sometimes petrol soaked in pieces of cotton);

- Burning various part of the victim's body by setting fire to bundles of straw or dry grass tied to the body;

- Cutting off the victim's lips, ears, tongue, hands, and feet ;

- Slashing the victim's stomach.

There are still many other forms depending on particular localities and police agents ;

- Nailing the victim to a tree before killing him (case of 23 youths at Nhan Hoa Lap and Nhan Ninh communes, Tan An province) ;

- Trailing the victim to death by a jeep (case of Mr. Le Ngo, former chief of a guerilla unit at Phuong Lang Dong village, Hai Lang district, Quang Tri province) ;

- 'The Confession' : The victims are obliged to stand balanced on high piles of bricks in a room where the ground bristles with long, sharp steel points, or they have to kneel down on debris of broken glass, the eyes turned towards a lighted lamp placed under a portrait of Ngo Dinh Diem or on a skull. They have to keep such position from 11. p. m. in the evening to 4 a. m. in the following morning. Those who stagger with exhaustion fall on the steel points ; at the least movement a shower of blows is rained on them. According to the authorities, this practice is to enable the victims to 'repent' of the 'crime' which they committed in participating in the Resistance war against the French colonialists.

- 'The test of strength' : The so-called 'die-hard' elements are placed on high platforms and beaten on the head and chest with three-edged iron sticks. Then the torturers holding them by the feet thrust their head against the ground, or grasping them by the hair, they throw them against the wall until their skull and limbs are broken. Relatives and friends of the victims are forced to attend the scene.

- 'Exorcising' : The victim is put into a jute bag placed on a high stool in a closed room where incense is burnt, and deafening noises of drums and gongs are made as was done formerly in the 'exorcising

ceremonies' in Viet Nam. Police agents pierce the victim through the bag with sharp sabres, or set the bag alight after soaking it with petrol. According to them, this form of 'exorcising' is to cast the 'communist devil' out of the victim.

(The last three forms of torture are applied in Quang Nam concentration camps, especially that of Phu Hoa in Hoa Vang district).

- Running ahead of a jeep: The victim, completely naked, is compelled to run ahead of a jeep along a road fringed with barbed wire on both sides, the least failure would immediately result in the victim being crushed under the vehicle.

With regard to women, there are various forms of torture aimed at terrorizing them or making them barren for ever: thrusting of sticks into the vagina, cutting off of breasts, thrusting of needles into the nipples, burning of the nipples, raping in turns by syphilitic people, putting of snakes into the trousers after tying their legs together...

It can be stated that there is not a single arrested person who has been subjected only once and to only one form of torture. It can also be stated that some have passed through almost every imaginable torture. Subtle tortures are intercalated with violent ones as if the aim is to protract the sufferings of the victim or to demoralize him. Thus, in a variant of the 'journey by boat', 'small pieces of bone are put into the water', and these are to remain in the victim's throat; a variant of the 'journey by Dakota' consists in hanging the victim by five ropes above a trench bristling with long sharp steel points, and slowly cutting the ropes one by one. The suspension by the feet is outdone by plunging the victim's head into a bucket of bran or excrement.

People have been massacred by various means, with those used by feudal despots being resorted to in most cases:

- Shooting;
- Guillotining;

- Shelling and bombing from the air (including napalm bombing) ;
 - Throat-cutting ;
 - Beheading ,disembowelling and extraction of the liver ;
 - Beheading, with the victim's head being shown through the streets at the end of a stick ;
 - Beheading and exhibition of the victim's head at the door of the military post ;
 - Beheading, with the victim's head being used as a target for shooting exercises ;
 - Cutting-up of the victim's body into small pieces.
- Burying alive of the victims. Individual or collective poisoning.

7. PRISONS AND CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Within the framework of its policy of mass arrests and the promulgation of ordinance №6 providing for establishment of concentration camps for the detention of patriots under the pretext of 'national defence' and 'public security', the south Viet Nam administration has, on the one hand, enlarged the system of prisons left by the French colonialists and, on the other hand, set up a whole network of concentration camps in south Viet Nam.

Prisons.— At the time of the cessation of hostilities, throughout south Viet Nam there were about 50 prisons located in most cases in big cities and provincial towns.

At present, districts and sometimes even communes have their own prisons. Thus, in a small province like Phu Yen, the figure at one time reached 109 for a population of about 250,000 inhabitants. As there were not enough prisons, the south Viet Nam administration transformed churches, pagodas and schools

into jails. In a number of localities, they even used for this purpose underground cellars or former fortifications built during the war. The Nhat Tai and Tuong Giac pagodas..., and even the Caodaist Holy See of Tay Ninh were turned into jails with hundreds of detainees being packed inside.

The number of political prisoners interned in the Mang Lang church reached at one time 300.

In south Viet Nam there are at present about 100 big jails (not counting the small and middle-sized ones). These include the prisons in:

- Quang Nam, with more than 2,000 detainees.
- Thu Duc, with more than 2,000 detainees.
- Hoi An, with more than 2,000 detainees.
- Tam Ky, with more than 2,500 detainees.
- Bien Hoa, with more than 3,000 detainees.
- Chi Hoa (Saigon), with more than 4,000 detainees.
- Con Dao, with more than 4,000 detainees.
- Phu Loi, with more than 6,000 detainees.

The regime of detention is very harsh.

The prisoners are given insufficient food rations. They are supplied daily with 600 grams of mouldy rice cooked in lime water, and rotten dried fish. They also receive insufficient rations of drinking water and a restricted quantity of water for washing. Medicines are lacking: Sick people are not admitted to any hospital, or are sent there only when their life is doomed. The relatives of the detainees are not allowed to send them a letter or parcel. Ill treatment and savage torture are frequently inflicted. Cases happened when prisoners were executed in the dead of night without reason. Lieutenant-Colonel Nguyen Quoc Hoang, Chief of the Kien Phong province, within a few nights in late June 1960, ordered over 50 detainees in the Cao Lanh jail to be beheaded, their corpses being thrown into the river.

Such a regime has resulted in every detainee catching at least one of the following diseases: beri-beri,

heart disease, tuberculosis, dysentery, anaemia. In a prison where about 2,000 prisoners are detained, from 200 to 400, sometimes even 500 people are daily confined to bed owing to sickness while the daily death rate is from one to three.

Very concrete evidence on the detention regime in south Viet Nam prisons is to be found in the following statement by M. P. Tran Ngoc Ban concerning the Gia Dinh prison:

“Let us take one room among so many others in the Gia Dinh prison: 15 metres long by 3.6 metres wide, that is to say an area of 54 square metres. In this area are generally packed 150 detainees. A division suffices to let us see that in this room three persons occupy a square metre. It is in this place that the detainees sleep, eat, wash themselves and ease their bowels. A bucket with a lid is put in a corner of the room for that purpose. It suffices that each of the 150 prisoners uses it once a day for five minutes, and the bucket would remain open 700 minutes. If the detainees go there twice daily, this means that the bucket is never covered. It is easy to imagine the stink prevailing in the room. Besides, — allow me to go into another detail — there are in this room a little ‘door’ 2 metres high and 0.08 metre wide and in the opposite wall, an indirect light 3.6 metres by 0.04 metre. It is in such a place that 150 people live. Now let us speak about the possibilities for sitting and lying down. As I have said, there are on an average three persons per square metre. Squatting they have just enough room; sitting cross-legged, they are very cramped for room. At night, they can just sleep lying with their knees under their chin. So a quarter of the detainees have to stand up to allow the others to stretch out for a moment. It is a fraternal gesture but also a necessity. Because of the sweltering heat and smallness of the room for so many occupants, many detainees are unable to bear wearing a garment and remain half-naked. They

must live day and night in this room and only go out into the court-yard once a day for a meal, which has to be taken outside, even in rainy weather. Medicines hardly exist and as it is very difficult to be admitted to a hospital, many sick persons frequently lose consciousness". (Report № 75 of the January 3, 1958 sitting of the south Viet Nam 'National Assembly').

Many other deputies, such as Messrs. Pham Van Thung, Ho Ngan, Tran Thuc Linh, also spoke about the detention regime in south Viet Nam prisons.

Concentration camps.— A number of camps are openly recognized as concentration camps, such as those of Pho Trach, Cho Niu, Dai Loc, etc. But most are camouflaged under various names: 'camp for a just cause' (as was the case in almost all the camps at district level in Trung Bo in 1955), 're-education centre' (as at Thu Duc, Bien Hoa, Phu Loi, Con Dao etc.). Since 1957, there have existed camps disguised as 'agricultural settlements'.

Up to the end of 1958, the number of 'agricultural settlements' alone reached 50. In 1960, the figure rose to 126 with more than 200,000 former resistance members being detained there.

In concentration camps, the regime of detention is not less harsh than in prisons. In particular, the political detainees in 'agricultural settlements', are required to work very hard at least for 12 hours, sometimes even for 18 hours, a day. Their task is to build military bases, strategic roads and military storehouses.

Here are some characteristic features of concentration camps in south Viet Nam:

'The Con Son (Poulo Condore) political re-education centre', established on an island several hundred kilometres away from the mainland is used on a permanent basis for the detention of about 4,000 prisoners.

As regards food, the lack of vegetables there is such that the political detainees are obliged to eat

herbs; shortage of water has resulted in their being compelled in a number of cases to quench their thirst with their own urine. The children who have followed their mothers, or who were born in the camp, are deprived not only of water for washing, but even of food; their mothers and many other detainees have to feed them out of their meagre daily rations of rice. In camp № 1, chains of 1.5 or 3, or even 10 kilograms, are attached to the political detainees' feet. Those who are 'punished' are put into dark underground cells. Those who are still strong enough have to dive into the sea in search of coral, or to climb up rocky mountains in search of nests of salangane.

The daily average death rate is from two to three; in particular in September 1957, it amounted to 20. In addition, there were daily from four to five hundred people seriously sick. As a result of this regime, from December 1956 to 1959, more than 3,000 former resistance members were executed or died from starvation, torture or sickness. In December 1959, 200 political detainees were massacred at one time.

'The Hoa Vang re-education camp' is a small camp in Quang Nam province. Established in April 1960, it is used for the detention of about 300 former resistance members, sent there on account of their being 'illegal' or 'semi-legal citizens', or arrested during mopping-up operations carried out by the regular army. Like others, the Hoa Vang camp is fenced in by barbed wire and surrounded by watch towers, but its distinctive feature is the existence of a kind of 'no man's land' labelled 'forbidden area': Whoever enters there, for any reason whatever, is immediately shot dead or at least arrested.

It is in this camp that the prisoners are commonly subjected to the most atrocious and subtle tortures described above: 'Confession', 'test of strength', 'exorcising'.

The death rate here is very high. In the first two months alone after the establishment of the camp, more than 30 deaths were recorded.

The network of "re-education centres" and "concentration camps" in general is developing. For instance in the 1961 budget, the appropriations for "re-education camps" amount to 190,000,000 south Viet Nam piastres, thus showing an increase of 72,299,000 as compared with 1960; this increase alone is greater than the whole appropriations for the Ministry of the Economy, which account for only 66,216,000 piastres.

8. HINDRANCES TO, AND SABOTAGE OF, THE INVESTIGATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

Since the International Commission assumed the responsibility of supervising and controlling the implementation of the Geneva Agreements concerning Viet Nam, it has instituted, in terms of Article 37 of the Agreement on the Cessation of hostilities in Viet Nam, the practice of investigations both documentary and on the spot to bring violations to light. But since that very day, whenever the Commission decided to carry out investigations into any case in south Viet Nam, the authorities there always tried by every means to hamper and sabotage the enquiries. They refused to produce witnesses and documents required by the Commission, imposed restrictions on the investigation teams' movements, committed violent actions against the V. P. A. liaison officers, and even the Commission's teams, threatened the witnesses, and took reprisals against them. They went so far as to stage investigations by false teams with a view to finding out which witnesses would speak against

them, and what they would say; by so doing, they aimed at persecuting such witnesses before the arrival of the true team of the Commission. Besides, they attempted to annul the validity of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement concerning Viet Nam by limiting it within the 300-day period; such interpretation was a brazen distortion of the Geneva Agreements, and was rejected by the International Commission.

Nothing is more illustrative than to let the International Commission itself point out the south Viet Nam authorities' manoeuvres to restrict and hinder its activities in this field.

— With regard to the investigation by Mobile Team 24 into the reprisals against Mr. Tran Het at Ky Lam commune, Dien Ban district, Quang Nam province, the Commission concluded that:

“1. French liaison officer expressed inability to produce witnesses.

2. Chief of province refused to give guarantee that no reprisals would be taken against witnesses. Some local authorities refused to give evidence.

3. Security of V.P.A. liaison officers threatened. Demonstration against team and V.P.A. liaison officers.

Withdrawn by the Commission due to lack of cooperation of local authorities and lack of security arrangement for the team and V.P.A. liaison officers without completing all of its tasks.”

(Ref. Fourth Interim Report of the International Commission in Viet Nam to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, appendix V, paragraph 33).

— With regard to the investigation by Mobile Team 26 into the burying alive of Mr. Vo Luong (Binh Dinh province) the Commission gave the following finding:

“Due to lack of security arrangements, team stayed in Nha Trang and went daily to the scene of the incident. There were demonstrations against the team and the presence of V.P.A. liaison officers.”

(Ref. Fourth Interim Report, appendix V, paragraph 35).

— With regard to the investigation by Mobile Team 57 into acts of reprisals perpetrated in Quang Tri, the Commission recorded the following:

“Not enough security arrangements on first day of investigation. An angry crowd surrounded the team but the team managed to get away.”

(Ref. Fourth Interim Report, appendix V, paragraph 37).

— With regard to the investigation by Mobile Team 61 in Tam Ky (Quang Nam province), the Commission recorded that:

“From the date the Commission asked for concurrence to the date the team was recalled, there was a total delay of 97 days. Team unable to make any investigation.”

(Ref. Fourth Interim Report, appendix V, paragraph 38).

— With regard to the investigation by Mobile Team F. 29 (Cap St Jacques) into arrests and reprisals denounced by the inhabitants of Hiep Hoa, the Commission recorded that:

“A number of witnesses prevented by soldiers from appearing before the team.”

(Ref. Fourth Interim Report, appendix V, paragraph 25, heading: “Mobile elements of fixed team”).

The International Commission has been meeting with ever-increasing difficulties in the supervision and control of the implementation of Article 14 (c) in south Viet Nam:

“In the Sixth Interim Report, the Commission had informed the Co-Chairmen of its difficulties in the supervision of the implementation by the parties of the provisions of Article 14 (c). Those difficulties have persisted and increased as the Commission has not received the necessary assistance and co-opera-

tion from the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam and has, therefore, not been able to supervise the implementation of Article 14 (c) in accordance with the Geneva Agreement."

(Ref. IC letter № IC-ADM-VI-DI-57 dated April 11, 1957, to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference).

"The difficulties with regard to supervision and control of the execution of Article 14 (c) in the Republic of Viet Nam mentioned in the Sixth Interim Report, have persisted and increased."

(Ref. Seventh Interim Report of the International Commission to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, chapter III, paragraph 19).

During the period under report there was no change in the stand of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam with regard to Article 14 (c), as mentioned in the Seventh Interim Report."

(Ref. Eighth Interim Report of the International Commission to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, chapter III, paragraph 14).

During the period under report there was no change in the stand of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam with regard to Article 14 (c) as reported to the Co-Chairmen separately and as mentioned in paragraph 19 of the Seventh Interim Report."

(Ref. Ninth Interim Report of the International Commission to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, chapter III, paragraph 11) ⁽¹⁾.

(1) Fourth Interim Report covering the period from April 11, 1955, to August 10, 1955.

Sixth Interim Report covering the period from December 11, 1955, to July 31, 1956.

Seventh Interim Report covering the period from August 1, 1956, to April 30, 1957.

Eighth Interim Report covering the period from May 1, 1957, to April 30, 1958.

Ninth Interim Report covering the period from May 1, 1958, to January 31, 1959.

Despite such restrictions and hindrances by the south Viet Nam administration, after investigations into a small number of cases, the International Commission recorded that in 42 cases (involving 2,749 persons arrested, wounded, or murdered) the south Viet Nam administration had taken reprisals against former resistance members, thereby seriously violating Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement.

Such a situation has only increased the south Viet Nam administration's apprehension about the International Commission's investigations; that is why, since mid 1956, it has not allowed any team of the Commission to investigate into cases of terror and reprisal in south Viet Nam. At present, the following teams, the despatch of which has been decided by the Commission, are still unable to go to south Viet Nam to carry out their missions:

- Mobile Team 90: murder of one, arrest of 23 and detention of 14 former resistance members, in Huong Tra district, Thua Thien province.

- Mobile Team 93: massacre at Huong Dien (Huong Hoa district), reprisals against former resistance members at Huong Hoa district, and massacre at A Luoi (Phong Dien district) resulting in 31 adults and two children killed. All these localities belong to Quang Tri province.

- Mobile Team 105: enquiries into a number of concentration camps in Thua Thien province (Dai Loc, Pho Trach, Cho Niu, Con Ong Cai, Dong Hy, and Trach Hoa).

- Mobile Team 117: burying alive of 21 former resistance members at Cho Duoc, reprisals against 44 persons in Tan Luu and An Tra villages, murder of six former resistance members in Thang Binh districts. All these localities belong to Quang Nam province.

- Mobile Team 121: arrest and detention of eight former resistance members in the prisons of Cap St Jacques and Xuyen Moc (Baria province).

- Mobile Team 122 : arrest of three former resistance members in Saigon.

- Mobile Team 123 : murder of Professor Nguyen Thi Dieu.

- Mobile Team 87 : cases of reprisals in the Demilitarized Zone.

— Mobile Team 85 : arrest and torturing of 79 former resistance members in Hong Ngu district, Chau Doc province.

— Mobile Team 104 : massacre of three families of former resistance members at Gia Rai (Bac Lieu province).

A number of teams were withdrawn without completing their enquiries owing to difficulties encountered in south Viet Nam : Mobile Teams 24, 61 ; in particular Mobile Team 103 had to give up its enquiries on the massacre in Duy Xuyen, Quang Nam province.

In spite of all attempts to hinder the enquiries by the International Commission, and to annul the validity of Article 14 (c) with a view to evading its binding force, the south Viet Nam authorities have been strongly condemned by public opinion and so far, the validity of Article 14 (c) continues to be recognized. Therefore they raised the question of so-called 'subversive activities' and repeatedly tried to bring pressure to bear on the International Commission so that the latter recognized this question as attracting the Geneva Agreements (although there is no relevant provision in the Geneva Agreements). By so doing, they aim at interpreting reprisals against former resistance members as 'punitive measures' against 'subversive activities', thus using the question of 'subversive activities' to annul the validity of Article 14 (c), and at the same time, to slander the authorities of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

II

FROM 1959 TILL NOW

In spite of the ferocity of the 'Denounce communists' campaigns, and all manoeuvres to evade the binding force of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement, the south Viet Nam administration has suffered a bitter failure in its anti-communist policy: the indignation of the broad masses of the people has been mounting, the Ngo Dinh Diem regime has clearly appeared as a fascist dictatorial regime while the U.S. imperialists' policy of intervention and war in south Viet Nam has been laid bare.

At a conference held on March 27, 1958, by the 'Party of Labour' which is the party of the south Viet Nam ruling circles, Ngo Dinh Nhu, adviser to the administration, was compelled to recognize this failure, and exhorted his agents to intensify terror and repression; he went so far as to make this impudent declaration: "It does not matter whether the people love or hate us."

The events in Iraq increased the fears of the south Viet Nam ruling circles, and they committed a frantic act: the food-poisoning of 6,000 political detainees in the Phu Loi concentration camp on December 1, 1958. This mass food-poisoning had been carefully prepared with a belt of troops posted around the camp to repress any opposition from the victims,

and to prevent the local population from coming to their rescue. That very night, over 1,000 persons died instantly under the effect of the poison. The survivors who climbed up to roofs to cry for help were shot dead. Fire was also ordered to be opened on those who remained in the buildings, and urged for assistance. To remove all evidence, the authorities ordered the buildings to be set alight after pouring petrol on them. The survivors succeeded in extinguishing the fire. Later on, a curfew was proclaimed in the surrounding region, the bodies were removed and thrown into the sea, all traces were thus wiped out. At the same time, the survivors were removed to other prisons and concentration camps, and replaced with new detainees brought in from other jails with a view to making any investigation impossible.

Prior to this, the Vietnamese people had been ceaselessly protesting against the policy of terror and reprisal, and the Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorial regime. Progressive opinion the world over had also repeatedly condemned this policy. But never has the movement of protest at home and abroad against the U. S.-Diem clique spread to such extent as after the Phu Loi massacre.

This political failure dealt a heavy blow to the Ngo Dinh Diem regime. However, the Ngo Dinh Diem ruling clique stubbornly persisted in its bloody dictatorial policy. It advocated an even more ferocious repression to suppress any opposition and any popular aspiration for peace and national unity.

1. A PLAN FOR MASSACRE JUST AS IN A STATE OF WAR

By the end of 1958, a few days before the Phu Loi massacre, Ngo Dinh Diem declared at a sitting of the south Viet Nam 'National Assembly':

"Last year, I stated that 1957 was a year of postwar stabilization, and that 1958 would be the year in which we should start shifting to a peace-time economy." (1)

However in early 1959, the same Ngo Dinh Diem in person declared to the special envoy of the French newspaper *Le Figaro* :

"Viet Nam (i. e., south Viet Nam) is a nation in a state of war."

About the same period, the Saigon Radio and the newspapers of the south Viet Nam ruling circles started a noisy campaign on the 'state of war' in south Viet Nam.

The *Cach Mang Quoc Gia* (National Revolution), known for a long time as the semi-official mouthpiece of the ruling circles, not only gave a prominent place to this question, but went so far as to outline a whole programme of intensified terror.

It put forward the slogan: "Let us wipe out the Viet Cong (that is: the patriots in south Viet Nam) mercilessly, not regarding them as human beings; just as in a state of war." It advocated "a combination of all military and para-military forces into a single bloc, operating together under a common plan, and actively working under the leadership of a central body".

On the basis of this line of action, it outlined a plan to carry into effect "the wiping out of Viet Cong just as in a state of war" (2). This plan included the following main points:

"A. To apply the radiating tactics: to muster all the operating forces in one or several centres; the Army is to be organized into mobile groups specializing in guerilla warfare, encirclements and raids.

(1) Ngo Dinh Diem's message to the annual session of the south Viet Nam 'National Assembly' (October 6, 1958 sitting).

(2) All quotations from the Saigon daily *Cach Mang Quoc Gia* are from the series of articles carried by this paper from February 21 to March 31, 1959.

"B. To set up a secret information network in the villages with a view to studying the identity of Viet Cong cadres carefully. Once the latter are identified, (sometimes simultaneously in several localities), to launch simultaneous raids in the said localities.

"C. Communal authorities as well as simple citizens have the right, and are duty-bound, to denounce the Viet Cong and their actions. After the denunciation, they will benefit by guarantees in regard to their security and life (for instance: they are allowed to settle in provincial towns, together with their families).

Those who do not denounce the Viet Cong are liable to severe punishment just as the Viet Cong themselves.

"D. To reshape the whole judiciary system with a view to annihilating the Viet Cong, to set up special military courts to judge on the spot, to enforce new draconian anti-communist laws, to mete out harsh punishment to the Viet Cong's sustainers.

"E. After the elimination of the Viet Cong from a village, (and this elimination will be radiating), to re-organize its administration, chiefly in the field of security, in order to consolidate it, and to make the return of the Viet Cong impossible."

The "radiating tactics" in particular were expounded in detail:

"a) South Viet Nam will be divided into several zones. If we have enough forces and troops, we shall carry out the plan simultaneously throughout the country. Otherwise, we shall delimit a few particular zones where we shall resolutely strive to wipe out the Viet Cong (such zones can include several provinces).

"b) The said zones will be divided into operational sectors, each of which will be entrusted to particular units.

"c) Before the carrying out of the plan, census registers are to be duly established in villages and districts."

This plan as a whole was strictly carried into effect by the south Viet Nam ruling circles. In other words, the persecutions and repressions in south Viet Nam since early 1959 are merely the strict application of the plan for "wiping out the Viet Cong just as in a state of war".

2. TIGHTENED SURVEILLANCE ON SOUTH VIET NAM PATRIOTS

With over ten organizations empowered to arrest and torture the people, the south Viet Nam administration is well-known as a 'police regime'. But, from early 1959, this police regime became extremely despotic. The ruling circles advocated a tightening of the surveillance on patriots, and first of all, former resistance members. For this purpose, they mainly applied the following measures:

a) Strengthening of the network of information and surveillance

In addition to the existing functions of 'member in charge of the police', the south Viet Nam administration has created within communal councils the posts of 'member in charge of political affairs', 'member in charge of information' and 'member in charge of the youth' to take up the 'security work'. Thus, at the communal level, besides the 'member in charge of the police' and the 'special secret agents posted in the village', there are many other agents entrusted with the task of keeping a vigilant watch over the people. Besides, the authorities have been actively training communal police agents. According to official documents published by them, up to the end of 1959, the Security Training Centre at Vung Tau trained 860 members in charge of the police for the communes.

In each province, besides the deputy-chief in charge of administrative affairs, there is another deputy responsible for 'internal security'. The number of provinces placed under the authority of south Viet Nam army officers is increasing; in other words, the administrative apparatus is being more and more 'militarised'. To mention only the figures for 1959, 39 new officers on active service have been appointed to administrative posts in the 38 provinces of south Viet Nam. According to still incomplete data, by the end of 1960, in the south Viet Nam administrative apparatus there were 14 chiefs of province, 22 deputy-chiefs, and 67 chiefs of district chosen from among officers on active service.

The network of 'inter-families' is an organization set up by the south Viet Nam authorities for surveillance purposes. Families are obliged not only to declare the number of their members, the names and surnames as well as the profession of the latter, and of visitors as well, but also regularly to write down on the front wall of their houses the numbers of persons who are in or out, they are organized into groups of five headed by a chief of group appointed by the administration; groups are organized into inter-groups. Thus, a real network envelopes the entire population of the towns, and the situation of each family at any time is closely followed up. The establishment of the network of 'inter-families' has been speeded up since early 1959. For instance, Saigon city with its 41 quarters is to be organized into 850 inter-groups including 10,687 'inter-families'. According to official documents published by the south Viet Nam administration, by the end of May, 1960, 6,040 'inter-families' had been set up in Saigon, making 56 per cent of the planned total.

Another measure actively applied by the authorities in the 'maintenance of order' is the use of hooligans. In an attempt to deceive public opinion, their propaganda (the **Cach Mang Quoc Gia** for instance...) labels

them as 'persons who entertain boiling hatred of the communists'. They are appointed to 'communal' councils. A number of them committed such horrible crimes that the local population gave them the nickname of 'Ac on' (cruel notables). Chased out of the villages, many such agents did not dare to come back. It is precisely this popular indignation which prevented the Ngo Dinh Diem administration from appointing its 'Ac on' to all communal councils. Up to the end of December, 1959, the percentage of 'Ac on', who were members of communal councils amounted to only 10 per cent.

The same elements are widely resorted to in the operations of reprisals launched against former resistance regions. They are gathered together into a special armed organization dubbed 'commando detachment'. This organization is precisely what the Cach Mang Quoc Gia while outlining its 'radiating tactics' called 'the mobile groups specializing in guerrilla, encirclements and raids' ⁽¹⁾. These units have been trained by the U. S. adviser of M.A.A.G. in the Commando Training Centre at Nha Trang. Trained and encouraged by the U. S.-Diem clique, the commandos behave as beasts. They no longer had anything in common with man. During a mopping-up operation launched in Ca Mau region, one of them publicly boasted to be 'the most cruel man in Indo-China'. Perhaps he wanted to say that he was even more cruel than the commando 'Hum-Xam' (literally: grey tiger) commanded by Captain Vandenberg in the recent war of aggression against Viet Nam.

b) A policy of differentiation of citizens

Along with the establishment and the consolidation of the surveillance network, the south Viet Nam autho-

(1) Cach Mang Quoc Gia (Saigon), March 6, 1959 issue.

rities proclaimed a so-called 'policy of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam towards former resistance members' (1).

For the purposes of this policy, the south Viet Nam ruling circles drew a distinction between:

- former resistance members 'recognized as such'
- former resistance members 'not recognized as such'.

Former resistance members who were 'not recognized as such' were classified into the category of 'Viet Cong saboteurs'.

This differentiation constituted in itself a flagrant violation of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement concerning Viet Nam. Firstly, people who are not 'recognized as former resistance members' are, first of all, former resistance members. Secondly, Article 14 (c) must obviously be applied to all persons who collaborated in any way with one of the parties during the war, irrespective of political affiliation, social origin and religious creed. Discrimination to any extent or under any form whatsoever is completely at variance with Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement.

Nevertheless, the south Viet Nam administration established a differentiation of former resistance members to classify them into the category of 'Viet Cong saboteurs'. The 'policy towards former resistance members' clearly stipulates:

"The Government of the Republic of Viet Nam (i. e. south Viet Nam) is determined to punish the Viet Cong saboteurs. For this purpose, the National Assembly passed and the President promulgated law 10-59 on May 6, 1959."

Therefore the differentiation of 'former resistance members' under this policy was precisely designed to persecute them, and to "punish them with determination".

(1) This policy was announced on August 25, 1959.

The so-called 'policy towards former resistance members' was part of the ruling circles' manoeuvres aimed at arresting, torturing, jailing, deporting, and massacring mercilessly former resistance members in south Viet Nam. In practice, basing themselves on it, and relying in particular on the services of security and secret information the communal authorities worked out lists of persons to be arrested or murdered secretly during operations involving the regular army, militia forces, or 'commandos'.

These facts brought to light the meaning of the sentence deliberated vague: "Census registers are to be duly established in villages and districts". Such was the wording used by the Cach Mang Quoc Gia when it outlined the things to be done by the authorities before carrying into effect the 'radiating tactics'.

In short, the consolidation of the security services as well as the so-called 'policy towards former resistance members' in south Viet Nam were but manoeuvres to tighten the watch over former resistance members, and to carry out reprisals against them.

3. A SYSTEM OF INDEPENDENT COURTS WITH EXTENDED POWERS

On May 6, 1959, the south Viet Nam administration promulgated law 10-59 providing for 'punishment of crimes of sabotage and injury to life or property of the people, and establishment of special military courts'.

By its aim and its contents, this law was an integral embodiment of the south Viet Nam ruling circles' intention of 're-shaping the judiciary system with a view to annihilating the Viet Cong (setting up special military courts to judge on the spot, enforcing new draconian anti-communist laws, meeting out

harsh punishment to the Viet Cong's sustainers)'. This was advocated by the Cach Mang Quoc Gia as early as in March 1959 ⁽¹⁾.

As is known to everybody, besides the 'Tham chinh vien' and the Saigon administrative court which form a system of administrative courts, there is at present in south Viet Nam a whole network of judiciary courts. Not counting the courts of the peace with extended powers, the ordinary courts of the peace, and six courts for children, this includes a Supreme Court of Appeal at Saigon, the Courts of Appeal at Saigon and Hue, and six Country Courts at Saigon, Dinh Tuong, Vinh Long, Hue, Quang Nam and Khanh Hoa. Besides, mention should also be made of the three military courts at Saigon, Hue and Nha Trang. In theory as well as in practice, this system of courts has been used for the purpose of persecution against a considerable number of patriots in south Viet Nam.

By the promulgation of law 10-59, the south Viet Nam administration has, however, established another system of independent courts the powers of which are extended as compared with those of the judicial court. The special military courts set up under this law are placed under the authority of the Defence Ministry. Their entire personnel, from simple clerks to judges and commissaries of the government, is to be chosen from among armymen. It is worth noticing that the Defence Minister or the Assistant Secretary for Defence may order proceedings without first instituting an inquiry. The special military courts is to sit within three days of receipt of the order of the Defence Ministry. The summons is served on the accused 24 hours before the sitting. The special military court judges without appeal, and its sentences are to be acted upon immediately; execution of death sentences only is postponed pending acceptance or rejection of the appeal for mercy. Besides, the court can sit outside

(1) Cach Mang Quoc Gia (Saigon), March 6, 1959 issue.

its usual seats. At present, only one special military court has been set up in Saigon; therefore, its jurisdiction extends over the whole south Viet Nam, and it can move around in all the 38 provinces. In view of such a procedure, the right of defence is just a mockery, and the same can be said of the right of appeal for mercy, the power to grant it being vested in the hands of Ngo Dinh Diem, President of the Republic and Defence Minister, the very man who decides upon the proceedings.

Law 10-59 also includes a part dealing with the crimes which come under the jurisdiction of the special military courts. It has been designed to punish whoever 'commits or intends to commit crimes with the aim of sabotage, or of infringing upon the security of the State, or of injuring the life or property of the people'. With such a vague wording, the accused is prosecuted not only for serious crimes, but also for trifling offences; not only for crimes already 'perpetrated', but also for acts which he 'intends to commit' (these are quite different from 'attempts'). Moreover, only two penalties are provided for: death or hard labour for life. Offenders, accomplices, and instigators are not allowed to enjoy the plea of extenuating circumstances.

Law 10-59 has been labelled 'guillotine-law' by the Vietnamese people. It is regarded by many lawyers as a 'juridical monstrosity'.

As has been mentioned above, the so-called 'policy of the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam towards former resistance members' clearly stipulates:

"The Government of the Republic of Viet Nam is determined to punish the Viet Cong saboteurs. For this purpose, the National Assembly passed, and the President promulgated law 10-59 on May 6, 1959".

Law 10-59 and the establishment of special military courts are obviously designed to 'wipe out the Viet

Cong saboteurs', i. e. former resistance members in south Viet Nam. Without any aim in view other than to carry out reprisals against former resistance members and peace-loving patriots, the south Viet Nam ruling circles have set up a system of special military courts to judge according to a special procedure, and to impose on them sentences of death or hard labour for life, whether the charges are supported by evidence or not.

Law 10 - 59 is a fascist law. It also amounts to an extremely serious violation of Article 14 (c) of the Geneva Agreement concerning Viet Nam.

4. THE CARRYING OUT OF THE 'RADIATING TACTICS'

As has been revealed by the **Cach Mang Quoc Gia**, this is regarded by the south Viet Nam ruling circles as 'the biggest work in the year'.

In accordance with the scheduled plan :

a) South Viet Nam was divided into several zones which were in their turn subdivided into operational sectors

In 1959 and 1960, the south Viet Nam administration divided south Viet Nam into several zones for the purpose of the repression: West and East Nam Bo, the Plain of Reeds (Nam Bo); the provinces of the High Plateaus, the Western part of Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai provinces (Trung Bo), etc. Each zone which included one or several provinces was divided into several operational sectors under the authority of the chief of the province, with special sectors being established at key points. As early as at the beginning of 1959, the south Viet Nam

ruling circles declared: "If we have enough forces and troops, we shall carry out the plan simultaneously throughout the country. Otherwise, we shall delimit a few particular zones..." That is why after the division of the territory into sectors, the 'radiating tactics' were applied sometimes in one sector, sometimes simultaneously in several sectors. Operations of reprisals succeeded one another without interruption in East and West Nam Bo, in the Plain of Reeds, in Quang Ngai, Pleiku, Kontum, etc.

b) The south Viet Nam authorities "combined all military and paramilitary forces into a single bloc operating together under a common plan, and actively working under the leadership of a central body"

During the operations of reprisals launched against former resistance members, the south Viet Nam authorities have mobilized the regular army: the infantry, the paratroops, the artillery, the marines, the air force, the Navy and the commandos. Mention should also be made of other armed organizations such as the militia, the civil guard, the police and the organizations of the 'Cong Dan Vu'. In important zones, 'delegates of the Government' have been appointed with full powers to make use of the military forces, the police and the civil guard within the area under their authority, for instance, late Tang Van Chi in East Nam Bo, Nguyen Van Vang in West Nam Bo, Ngo Dinh Can in Trung Bo, etc. Each mopping-up operation involved 10,000 to 15,000, and sometimes 20,000 men, counting only regular troops. General Myers, deputy-chief of M.A.A.G., revealed part of the truth on the participation of the Ngo Dinh Diem regular forces in the operations of reprisals when he said :

"The major part of the Army and a considerable part of the Navy were involved in non-coordinated operations... If I remember well, out of 10 divisions, six were thrown into the fighting, 13 local regiments were put into action to a greater or lesser extent, over half of the logistic services participated in the operations, with the support of the entire river forces of the Navy" (1).

In practice, the following units participated in the mopping-up operations launched by the regular army in 1959 and 1960:

- The 1st division commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Duc Thang.

- The 2nd division commanded by Colonel Duong Ngoc Lam.

- The 5th division commanded by Colonel Nguyen Van Chuan.

- The 7th division commanded by Colonel Huynh Van Cao.

- The 21st division commanded by Colonel Tran Thien Khiem.

- The 22nd division commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Nguyen Huu Tri.

- The 23rd division commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Tran Thanh Phong.

c) And persons labelled Viet Cong were 'wiped out just as in a state of war'

1. The south Viet Nam armed forces carried out mopping-up operations sector by sector

It may be said that all hamlets have been the scenes of repeated raids. A number of areas were mopped up with unimaginable violence. For instance, in May 1959, Long My district (Can Tho) was subjected to 800 operations involving from one group to three

(1) Times of Viet Nam (Saigon), October 3, 1959 issue.

battalions (not counting 100 commando operations). In Tay Ninh and Quang Ngai provinces, scores of raids were launched against a number of localities such as Soc Ky, Trai Bi, the districts of Tra Bong, Ba To and Son Ha.

2. The people were massacred by all means, irrespective of age or sex

Generally speaking, rifles, automatic weapons, and guns have been used everywhere in mopping-up operations. But subsequently, and especially since the operation launched in the eastern part of Bien Hoa, the south Viet Nam authorities have used military planes to drop explosive, incendiary, and even napalm bombs. In the first half of 1959, only Ta Lai, Cao Lanh, and Moc Hoa were air-bombed, but since the end of 1959, the number of areas strafed and bombed by military planes has been increasing... In October, November and December 1960 alone, more than 90 localities in 16 provinces of south Viet Nam were subjected to air raids: Ca Mau, Chau Doc, Tra Vinh (Vinh Binh) Phong Thanh (Kien Phong), Sa Dec, Rach Gia, Moc Hoa (Kien Tuong), Kontum, Pleiku, Bien Hoa, My Tho, Bac Lieu, Can Tho, Ben Tre, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai... The persons who could escape from the bombs, but not from the agents of the 'Cong Dan Vu' and the commandos, were atrociously tortured, beheaded and disembowelled. Entire villages were razed to the ground, and all inhabitants who fell into the authorities' hands were killed. Such was the case in Da Ban hamlet, Binh Dinh (province): all houses and crops were burnt down; 31 persons (including 12 children and 14 women) who could not run away, were locked up in a house, and burnt alive. In Kon Ma Ha village (High Plateaus) not a single house was left standing after an air-raid.

It is worth mentioning that troops have been encouraged by the authorities to commit all these horrible crimes.

The delegate of the 'government' or the chief of staff, the Assistant Secretary for Defence or Ngo Dinh Diem himself were present wherever fierce operations were carried out. During the mopping-up operations launched in the eastern part of Bien Hoa in early 1959, Ngo Dinh Diem came in person to confer medals on individuals and commando-units who had recorded 'achievements'. In the massacre at Long Phu island, when urged by Father Le Huu Phuoc from Rach Trang church not to kill innocent people, the officer commanding the operation gave the following reply: "We are acting on President Ngo's orders. Approach him, please, if you like."

3. The people's property and crops were plundered or destroyed

Paddy, rice, fowls and pigs were not only taken away, but also burnt or killed. Other property was also plundered. What was not taken away was burnt down or destroyed. Crops were destroyed, trees cut down, and fruit gathered. In the mopping-up operation launched in the western districts of Quang Ngai province, local people lost hundreds of tons of paddy, and hundreds of tons of cinnamon (cinnamon is produced in great quantity in this region). These lootings and destructions are by no means to be considered as isolated acts committed by a number of officers and men. Ordered by the authorities, they were part of the plan for mopping-up operations to deprive the people of their means to earn a living, and to drive them into a cul de sac with a view to facilitating the recruitment, either by force or by persuasion, of manpower and soldiers, and compelling the people to come to 'agricultural settlements'.

The persons labelled 'Viet Cong' were not only treated just as in a 'state of war'. In fact, at certain moments, their situation was even worse than during hostilities because war is not in itself an excuse for ferocious massacres of innocent people.

5. SOME TYPICAL OPERATIONS OF REPRISAL

Since December 1958, more than 15,000 soldiers of the regular army and equivalent forces of militiamen and civil guards have been carrying out an operation of reprisal in West Nam Bo, under the orders of Colonel Nguyen Van Y, commander of the 5th military region and the supervision of Nguyen Van Vang, 'delegate of the Government' in the region, and many American military advisers, including General S. Williams, chief of M.A.A.G., and Lieutenant-Colonel John H. Chamberts.

The centre of the operation was Ca Mau, Can Tho and Ba Xuyen provinces.

In Ca Mau, over three regiments and one battalion of commandos, scattered into small groups, lay in ambush at the edges of forests, and along roads, or encircled villages and hamlets. Whoever fell into their hands was arrested, tortured, then killed. The corpses were cut into pieces. Women were raped in turns, subjected to electric tortures, or to the thrusting of a stick into their vagina, etc. Sheep-dogs were used in man-hunting, and all people caught were bitten to death. A number of women were raped in the presence of their husbands who were afterwards shot dead before their eyes. At night, mass executions took place, the victims, heads were cut off, their skulls broken and their corpses thrown into rivers. According to still incomplete data, from February 14 to April 15, 1959 alone, 92 former resistance members were killed, 28 seriously wounded, and more than 1,000 jailed in Ca Mau area. In addition, considerable damage was caused to houses and crops...

During several days in succession, from October 10 to 15, 1960, the south Viet Nam authorities launched in this region repeated air raids involving dozens of military planes; even napalm bombs were dropped on places such as Trai Day, Sao Luoi, Cai Cam, Tan

Quan, Cong Nghiep, Tan Hung Tay (Cai Nuoc district). This resulted in hundreds of casualties and many houses burnt down.

At Long My (Can Tho province), three battalions of the regular army, together with militia and civil guard forces, carried out an operation in 12 communes with a view to herding 11,895 families of former resistance members into the Vi Thanh-Hoa Luu concentration camp. They divided this area into many squares, each including from 100 to 200 families, and raided them one after the other. In May 1959 alone, over 900 mopping-up operations and commando raids involving forces upwards of one group were recorded. In the three communes of Vinh Thuan Dong, Vinh Xuong and Long Binh alone, 115 people were killed within six days in late May 1959. The victims were subjected to the most savage torture before being killed; their corpses were cut into pieces, and their heads planted on banana stems set floating adrift along rivers. In some places, by way of intimidation, people were guillotined by scores, in presence of hundreds, sometimes of thousands of onlookers.

The cruel agents of the administration cut down all trees, burnt down or destroyed all houses, and razed to the ground 86 hamlets. Churches, temples and pagodas were deconsecrated.

On Long Phu island (Soc Trang province), 200 south Viet Nam soldiers rushed into the An Thanh Nhi commune, shooting indiscriminately at the people. More than 200 persons took refuge, and locked themselves up in a local militia post. But the assailants broke through the fence, tied them up, tortured them most savagely, and raped all the women including a 10-year old girl. Within an hour or more, they killed 10 persons, raped six women to death and seriously wounded about 200 people. Many houses were burnt down, considerable numbers of oxen, pigs, and fowls taken away or killed. In face of such acts, Father Le Huu Phuoc from Rach Trang church approached the

officers commanding the operation, but received only the following reply: "We are acting on President Ngo's order. Approach him, please, if you live."

The Saigon special military court dragging along with it the guillotine, followed close on the military forces' heels. It held many sittings in the provinces of Can Tho, Ca Mau, Tra Vinh, and My Tho, and passed numerous sentences of death or hard labour under law 10-59. The death sentences were immediately acted upon on the spot.

According to still incomplete data, from the beginning of 1959 to the end of 1960, the reprisals launched in West Nam Bo resulted in tremendous losses:

- 3,848 killed;
- 5,622 seriously wounded;
- 16,539 arrested;
- 24,000 herded into concentration camps;
- 13,000 tons of paddy and other foodstuffs plundered or burnt down;
- 10,000 houses, big and small, burnt down;
- 20,134 head of cattle taken away or killed.

The operation is still going on.

In Quang Ngai province, the operation of reprisal launched under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Bui Huu Nhon, commander of the 3rd military region involved the 2nd infantry division together with militia, civil guard, commando, and security forces, in total over 10,000 men. Launched at the beginning in the districts of Ba To, Minh Long, Son Ha, Tu Nghia, Mo Duc, Duc Pho, and Nghia Hanh, it was extended later on to the district of Tra Bong. The districts of Son Ha, Ba To and Tra Bong in particular, were the scenes of dozens of raids.

It is to be pointed out that in this operation the most savage methods of torture and massacre were resorted to:

Mrs. Gi Vit (Son Ha district), having resisted the attempts to force divorce on her, was tortured into

infirmity. Mrs. Truong Thi Lang, though pregnant, was subjected to 'a journey by Dakota', then hammered into abortion. Mr. Vo Van Hu alias Vinh (Son Ha district) was shot dead after his eyes had been gouged out; his corpse was thrown out on a rock. Mr. Dinh Het (Ba To district) was forced to drink poison. Mr. Dinh Ca Ty (Ba To district) had his tibia broken. Mrs. De's corpse (Tra Bong district) was burnt to ashes. Mr. Hoa, an old man of over 60 (Son Ha district) was burnt alive. Mr. Vo (Tra Bong district) had his head cut off and exhibited in front of the administrative buildings. Mr. Nhan's head (Tra Bong district) was used as a target for shooting exercises until it was broken into pieces...

6. REORGANIZATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION, REMOVAL OF VILLAGES, AND CONCENTRATION OF THE INHABITANTS

The south Viet Nam ruling circles advocate the following: "After the elimination of the Viet Cong from a village (and this elimination will be radiating) to reorganize its administration, chiefly in the field of security in order to consolidate it, and to make the return of the Viet Cong impossible" (1).

This policy was carried out in the mopped-up regions under the form of removal of villages and concentration of their inhabitants into so-called 'zones of prosperity'.

According to the **Cach Mang Quoc Gia** and **Viet Nam Press**, the official news agency of the south Viet Nam administration, the 'zones of prosperity' are to be set up either on or near roads or waterways, or near air fields already or about to be built; they are

(1) **Cach Mang Quoc Gia** (Saigon), March 6, 1959 issue.

to occupy such a position as to offer facilities for the maintenance of security in the whole zone, and even the surrounding areas. This goes to show the authorities' intention to establish them first of all at places suitable for military intervention when needed.

Each zone is to group at least 200 families. With regard to the laying-out of a zone, Tang Van Chi, former delegate of the Government in East Nam Bo, stated: "The zones of prosperity are set out in squares or rectangles just as on a chessboard... The different blocks have been built checkerwise, and are connected together easily and swiftly". The whole zone is to be fenced in with barbed wire and a canal; in addition watch towers of the army or the civil guard are to be set up in some places.

In each zone, besides so-called 'housing quarters' for the peasants, there are different official buildings, occupied chiefly by the Administration and the Security:

- Security and police services;
- 'Cong Dan Vu' office;
- Military police office;
- Civil guard barracks;
- Militia post;
- Local administration office (commune or district depending on place).

The peasants herded into 'zones of prosperity' are obliged to go to work and to come back at fixed hours. There is only one door for entrance and exit, guarded by troops or civil guards. At night, all movement within, into, or out of, the zone is strictly prohibited. The south Viet Nam ruling circles have been making propaganda allegations to the effect that the 'zones of prosperity' are 'agrovilles' and will become 'urban cities'. They have claimed that their establishment would bring about happiness to the peasants. As a matter of fact, those are merely deceitful allegations aimed at hiding the true nature of this policy of

removal of villages and concentration of the people. Each 'zone of prosperity' is merely a disguised concentration camp, otherwise :

a) Why are the people forced to settle down there under threat of arrest, torture, and in many cases, death with destruction of houses and crops ?

b) Why are they obliged to live in a compound fenced in with barbed wire and ditches under the watch of soldiers and civil guards ?

c) Why are they deprived of all freedom in their agricultural work and compelled to go to work and to come back at fixed hours ? And why the ban at night not only on going out to the fields, but also on free movements inside the zone ?

It is not fortuitous that Relman Morin, the **Associated Press** correspondent, wrote :

"These zones look like the kibbutz in Israel and the concentration camps in Malaya."

Brure Russel, the **Reuter** correspondent in Saigon, voiced the following opinion :

"To some extent, the zones of prosperity are an imitation of the 'new towns' built in Malaya in the emergency period."

And P. Chauvet, in an article carried by **Le Journal d'Extrême Orient**, a Saigon newspaper published in French, labelled the 'zones of prosperity' 'sisters of the Malayan fortified village and the administrative sections of Algeria'.

Who are to be herded into 'zones of prosperity' ? As is known to everybody, these 'zones' have been established in areas where broad strata of the people participated in the Resistance war against the colonialist aggressors. Therefore, they are precisely camouflaged concentration camps for the detention of former resistance members and their relatives and friends.

Since such is their true nature which cannot be hidden by deceitful propaganda, the south Viet Nam authorities have been obliged to resort to force to 'build' them, and to herd the people there.

In the main, the work to be done includes digging of protecting ditches, building of foundations, roads, houses, watch towers...

Its volume is far from negligible. According to documents published by the south Viet Nam administration, the establishment of the Vi Thanh-Hoa Luu 'zone of prosperity' (Can Tho province) required the digging of deep ditches, the construction of numerous roads with a total length of over 70 kilometres, the removal of 2,600,000 cubic metres of earth and the construction of about one hundred houses. The whole work was to be completed in 50 days with rudimentary means so as to make it possible for the 'model zone' to be inaugurated within the prescribed time-limits.

To build the 'zones of prosperity', the authorities imposed unpaid work on the inhabitants who were obliged in addition to bring their own tools. While some people were living near the construction site, others had to come on foot from a distance of 30 or 40 kilometres. To do this unpaid work, the inhabitants were obliged to give up their own business, even when harvest was in full swing. Those who could not come owing to sickness, to the death of a relative, or to any other urgent reason, had to pay a certain sum to the authorities. Civil servants and businessmen in towns and cities were also compelled to make 'subscriptions' amounting to one day's pay, or drawn from their daily profits... The above-mentioned facts clearly explain why the south Viet Nam authorities were compelled to use the regular army and local forces to impose unpaid work on the people with a view to building 'zones of prosperity'.

But after the completion of the work, it was not easy to bring the peasants there even by force. The

Cach Mang Quoc Gia recognized that this task was not only difficult, but also most complicated and delicate. It wrote:

"The greatest difficulty is to remove the people from a place where they have lived for years, where they have their houses and gardens, and where they easily earn their living. In such circumstances whatever the reason given may be: security, facilities for the children's studies, medical facilities in case of illness..., they are inclined to regard the removal as something against their will." (1)

Robert Franklin wrote in the British paper **The Scotchman**:

"The completion of a 'zone of prosperity' breaks the state of dispersion of the people who settle down there. But in this way peasants are obliged to walk over 10 miles a day to go to their fields, bringing with them farming implements and draught animals.

"That is why they are in the majority in disagreement with the programme of establishment of 'zones of prosperity', even the persons compelled to do unpaid work to build up the 'new towns' disagree; most of them were required to do unpaid work for entire weeks to build 'zones of prosperity' where they would not settle down." (2)

Once again, the south Viet Nam administration had to resort to force to compel the people in former resistance regions to settle in the 'zones of prosperity'. It put into action the regular army, the militia, the civil guard, the commandos, the security, the "Cong Dan Vu" with a view to launching mopping-up operations. Whoever refused to comply with the orders of the authorities was killed. To make it impossible for the peasants to remain on the spot, instructions were given to destroy, demolish or burn down houses, to fell trees in the gardens, to destroy crops

(1) Cach Mang Quoc Gia, November 11, 1959 issue.

(2) The Scotchman, June 22, 1960 issue.

in the fields, to set alight, or to plunder all stocks of paddy which were discovered... Torture and massacre to demoralize the peasants, then destruction to deprive them of all means to earn a living, were the measures commonly applied by the south Viet Nam administration to compel the families of former resistance members to settle and 'enjoy happiness' in the 'zones of prosperity'.

The aims pursued in the establishment of the concentration camps dubbed 'zones of prosperity', the shootings, tortures, intimidating measures and tricks used to herd the people there have aroused a mounting wave of protest. Owing to this opposition from the people, the south Viet Nam ruling circles have been able to establish only 29 'zones of prosperity' instead of 80 as planned; unable to carry out their scheme everywhere, they have been compelled to reduce its scale in many places and to proceed with the setting-up of so-called 'hamlets of prosperity'.

In fact the so-called 'reorganization of the administration' was merely the merging of villages to facilitate the control by the authorities and to herd the people in former resistance regions into new-type concentration camps.

7. AIR-BOMBING OF CIVILIANS

The events which happened in south Viet Nam over the last two years have irrefutably proved that the ruling circles' plan dubbed 'plan for exterminating the Viet Cong just as in a state of war' has been carried out point by point. The state of war has been deliberately created in accordance with an elaborate plan. The people have been refused any possibility of leading the quiet life they are longing for. The ever-mounting opposition to the Ngo Dinh Diem adminis-

tration's ferocious policy of repression and reprisal, has reached a climax, since the plan for creating a 'state of war' was carried into effect.

Indignation has spread to all strata of the people from the countryside to the towns, from the man in the street to army men and civil servants. It was the deep cause of the November 11, 1960, coup d'etat staged by Colonel Nguyen Chanh Thi and Lieutenant-Colonel Vuong Van Dong, commanding the paratroops, which involved over 4,000 paratroops and part of the Navy, the Air Force and the police. As a number of leaders did not rely on, but showed hostility to, the people, and lined up with the U.S.A., the coup d'etat failed although its forces had been able to seize control of the whole city of Saigon. But from that moment, Ngo Dinh Diem's policy of terror has taken new features. In cities, and especially in the army and the administrative apparatus, the so-called "Committee of struggle against the rebels and the communists" has made every effort to fabricate slanderous charges, to make arrests, and at least to take some intimidating measures. Mass arrests were effected; thousands of suspects run the risk of being jailed at any time. This Committee, endowed with the most extended powers, and led by elements well-known for their cruelty, can be said to have the power of life and death over everybody including members of the south Viet Nam 'government'. In face of the people's opposition to its despotic acts, it has recently taken the new signboard of 'People's Unity Front against the rebels and the communists'; its fascist character has, however, remained unchanged. Mere slanderous charges of 'communism', or of 'relations with the rebels' have in the past given, and will still in future give to the south Viet Nam ruling circles sufficient pretexts for arrests and even murders.

During the days of the coup d'etat, all strata of the people, a considerable number of communal officials and many district officials were given an oppor-

tunity to show their political attitude towards Ngo Dinh Diem: tearing up of the latter's portraits, and pulling down of the flag of the 'regime' may be regarded as common incidents throughout south Viet Nam. That is why mopping-up operations have been marked this time by more indiscriminate persecutions.

On the other hand, fearing the persistent possibility of a new coup d'etat, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration has been compelled to keep ready a certain force to cope with it. This has resulted in a contradiction between the requirements of terrorization in the countryside and the possibilities of mobilization of troops. The Ngo Dinh Diem administration has tried to solve this contradiction in two ways:

a) To enlarge the present scale of the south Viet Nam army as has been declared by Ngo Dinh Nhu, Adviser to the south Viet Nam administration, and Nguyen Dinh Thuan, Assistant Secretary for Defence. In fact, the authorities have decided to stop all demobilization, and to call reservists to active service. (This fact has another significance, being connected with the U. S. and their agents' manoeuvres of armed intervention in Indo-China, but it is not our intention to deal with this point).

b) To intensify air raids against the areas to be terrorized. As was said above, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration repeatedly sent its air force to strafe and bomb the people in former resistance regions. But now, the situation has become much more serious. Following are a few instances:

In early November 1960, the south Viet Nam air force carried out strafings and bombings (including napalm bombings) against:

- The region North and South of the Qui Nhon — Pleiku road.

- The regions of L. Lola, Kon Ro Leng, Kon Rong and Kon Mahar (Kontum province).

- The regions of Rang Rang, Chanh Hung, An Binh, Bung Tre and Thuoc Nghia (Bien Hoa province).

- The villages of Phu My and Khanh Binh, the area along the Song Ong Doc, the district of Cai Nuoc, the area along the Song Dong Cung, the region of Rach Cai Doi, and Mui Ba Quan (Ca Mau province).

On November 17 and 18, 1960, the region South-East of Go Quao, An Bien, U Minh (Rach Gia province), Cao Lanh, Go Ba, Phuoc Long (Kien Phong province), and a number of other regions in Bien Hoa, Kien Tuong and Ca Mau provinces were repeatedly strafed and bombed.

More recently in late November 1960, south Viet Nam planes once again strafed and bombed the provinces of Rach Gia (Tra Tien and U Minh Thuong regions), Chau Doc (Hong Ngu region), Ca Mau (Nam Can and Cai Nuoc), and Bien Hoa (the region along the Song Be).

Operations of reprisal, air raids, and persecutions under the signboard of 'fighting against the rebels and the communists' are still being carried out in south Viet Nam. A great tension is now prevailing there, no guarantee exists for the people's life.

III

THE U.S.A. HAS BEEN, AND IS ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING NGO DINH DIEM'S DICTATORIAL REGIME

1. The U. S. A. advocates the building of south Viet Nam into a police regime

On November 11, 1954, John Foster Dulles, the then Secretary of State, addressing the American Senate, declared :

"South Viet Nam must have a strong government backed up by police and security forces efficient enough to eliminate factors of agitation".

In December 1954, during a visit to south Viet Nam, Admiral Radford, Joint Chief of Staff of the U. S. Army, Navy and Air force, stated :

"The Ngo Dinh Diem Government must be given assistance to organize light army units, equipped with machine-guns and light tanks to wipe out the communist rebels."

Speaking on June 1, 1956, about the U. S. Government's policy with regard to south Viet Nam at the 'Congress of U. S. Friends of Viet Nam', Mr. W. S. Robertson, Under-secretary of State in charge of Far-

eastern questions, stressed clearly in his turn that it was the intention of the U. S. to help the Ngo Dinh Diem administration in its efforts aimed at 'mitigating and, if need be, eliminating communist subversion and influence'; and to help it 'to sustain internal security forces'.

These precise documents suffice to show that the U. S. intends to build up in a south Viet Nam entirely under its control in all fields a police dictatorship with a view to ensuring the carrying out of its policy of intervention and war.

2. The U. S. A. has been, and is supplying the Ngo Dinh Diem administration with dollars and equipment to build up the police apparatus

In this field, the U. S. has afforded considerable aid. According to still incomplete data :

a) In 1958, the U. S. gave credits amounting to about 29,000,000 south Viet Nam piastres for the reorganization of the police, security and militia forces. In addition, 'the U. S. foreign aid programme has granted 5,500,000 U. S. dollars for the purchase of various types of modern arms, vehicles, and precision instruments for the creation of a scientific laboratory of investigation.'⁽¹⁾

b) In 1957, the U. S. handed over to the south Viet Nam security and police services 272 jeeps and trucks; in 1958, it delivered to them a new contingent of 405 vehicles. In 1959, with the development of the repression, the U. S. aid granted to the south Viet Nam Directorate General of Security and Police a great quantity of equipment and material including 539 jeeps, trucks, motorcycles, etc... to the value of over 2,000,000 U. S. dollars. Mention should also be made of a supplementary credit of 176,000 U. S. dollars for

(1) Cach Mang Quoc Gia (Saigon), March 2, 1959.

the training of police agents in the U.S. in 1959 (2). According to a statement by Howard W. Hoyt, Chief of the Police section of the 'Michigan State University Mission', the U.S. also helped the south Viet Nam police services to set up a modern system of research on identity (3).

c) With regard to the building of concentration camps camouflaged as 'agricultural settlements', it must be pointed out that the U.S. has granted to the Ngo Dinh Diem administration 97,190,000 U.S. dollars and over 3,000,000 south Viet Nam piastres for the building and maintenance of the network of 'agricultural settlements'.

3. The U. S. has helped the Ngo Dinh Diem administration to organize a police network, and to train police cadres

The U.S. policy being to set up a police regime in south Viet Nam, the U.S. has advocated ever since the restoration of peace the sending of police experts to this region.

In accordance with this line of action, on April 19, 1955, the Ngo Dinh Diem administration signed with the 'Michigan State University' a so-called contract which was afterwards amended twice on June 15, 1956, and March 18, 1957, and improved twice on May 8, 1958, and May 27, 1959.

"Under this contract with a view to granting technical aid to increase the capacity and efficiency of the administration and the national police service, the Michigan State University has sent to Viet Nam a

(2) **Tu Do** (Saigon), March 19, 1959 ; Radio Saigon, July 3, 1959.

(3) **Cach Mang Quoc Gia** (Saigon), March 2, 1959.

mission including professors and specialists to cooperate with the students of the Institute (National Institute of administration)" (1).

It is crystal-clear that the so-called 'Michigan State University Mission' is merely a signboard to cover up the Washington ruling circles plot to send to Viet Nam a number of professors and specialists to "increase the capacity and efficiency of the administration and the national police service" as has been admitted by the south Viet Nam administration itself.

Under the leadership of Ralph H. Smuckler, the 'Michigan State University Mission' includes many police specialists such as Colonel E. Lansdale, Howard W. Hoyt, George Kimball.

Since its arrival in Viet Nam, it has helped the Ngo Dinh Diem administration in the following main fields :

a) To study the organization of the administration and the police; for instance, its specialists have studied the questions of the reorganization of south Viet Nam villages and the administration of Saigon — Cholon, including the setting-up of a network of inter-families.

b) To take a direct part in the training of security and police cadres at the administrative section of the National Institute of Administration ('internal security'), and at the training centres under the authority of the Directorate General of Security and Police. Since 1958, there has existed at Rach Dua (Vung Tau) a training centre which trains subordinate police agents at the annual rate of three classes of 300 each.

A secondary training centre was established in Saigon in mid 1959, meant for chiefs and deputy-chiefs of service, it gives qualification to three classes of 60 each per year. In addition, cadres have been trained

(1) 'Achievements of the Government over five years of activities' (Saigon), pages 270, 271.

for 'mobile identity teams' totalling 120 persons entrusted since 1959 with the task of issuing plastic identity cards.

Besides the training of police and security cadres at home, plans exist for sending to the U. S. A. cadres to undergo training or to get better qualification there. Lieutenant Ho Van Tan, the butcher selected to carry out the mass food-poisoning of 6,000 political detainees in the Phu Loi concentration camp on December 1st, 1958, was among U. S.-trained police agents.

4. The American Military Aid Advisory Group (M.A.A.G.) has been, and is taking an active part in the repression in south Viet Nam

As is known to everybody, the American Military Aid Advisory Group in south Viet Nam is in control of all the armed forces of the south Viet Nam administration from their establishment and training to their movements. From this point of view, it is really the Supreme Command in south Viet Nam and 'blankets' even Ngo Dinh Diem's Defence Ministry.

But the south Viet Nam army does not only serve for the preparation of a new aggressive war in accordance with American plans. For the time being, it is also an instrument for the authorities to terrorize the people, and to carry out reprisals against former resistance members as has been pointed out above. In this connection the role of the officers of M.A.A.G. differs from that of the police specialists of the 'Michigan State University Mission':

a) The officers of M.A.A.G. are directly responsible for training the units of marines to be thrown into the operations of reprisal, and particularly, the 'commando' units well-known for their cruelty in the operations launched in south Viet Nam over the last year or more.

b) They participate directly in mopping-up operations in former resistance regions.

Here are some examples :

- In late 1958, during a large-scale mopping-up operation in West Nam Bo, hundreds of American military advisers were present, including General Samuel Williams, chief of M. A. A. G., Lieutenant-Colonel John H. Chamberts...

- Round about the same date, General Samuel Williams was also present in the repression carried out in the surroundings of the Phu Loi concentration camp after the horrible food-poisoning there.

- In February 1959, Colonel Clay and Lieutenant-Colonel Leister participated in the operation of reprisal launched in the eastern part of Bien Hoa.

- Since mid 1959, Colonel Butler has participated in the operations launched in the regions of Quang Ngai, Thua Thien, Quang Nam, etc.

- The U. S. A. has thus afforded every possible aid to the south Viet Nam administration in building a police network extending from the towns to the countryside; it has trained police cadres both in south Viet Nam and in the U. S. A., it has supplied the south Viet Nam police and security services with equipment, arms, and means of transport for the repression. It has established in south Viet Nam a police regime on the same pattern as the Syngman-Rhee regime in south Korea.

IV

WORLD OPINION AND NGO DINH DIEM'S DICTATORIAL REGIME

(Newspaper excerpts).

I

* The western countries have directly or indirectly given their support to the Diem regime. This has resulted in the establishment in south Viet Nam of another Syngman-Rhee regime which may at any time kindle a new disastrous war.

Times of India, October 21, 1955.

Any conception at variance in the slightest way with that of the President (i. e. Ngo Dinh Diem) is only heresy, subversion, and hence, reprehensible.

La Tribune des Nations, 1955.

The regime in existence in the South (of Viet Nam) is one of the most tyrannical regimes in Asia.

France observateur, June 28, 1956

N. B. — In case when we cannot get the original text, the quotation — re-translated from French or Vietnamese are marked with an asterisk.

Pistol bullets silence any Vietnamese who opens his mouth against the Americans in south Viet Nam.

L'Express, October 20, 1956.

Diem is the most isolated of all dictators, the one who has the greatest number of opponents. The Diem government is but a family council... It is remaining in existence thanks to the police apparatus.

Constellation

The atmosphere now prevailing in south Viet Nam is like that of England under the rule of the Church.

The Times, February 14, 1959.

While passing through the streets, Diem use automatic weapons to cope with the people. He rejects the general elections, knowing that he would be defeated... He is not liked by the people. It is a miracle that he can remain in power.

The World (West Germany), late July, 1957.

The republican regime of Mr. Diem is turning south Viet Nam into a large concentration camp...

The war against people who had taken part in the Resistance war against the French is frantically raging without interruption. The rudest illustration of Mr. Diem's anti-communist activities is the famous law 10-59 which he promulgated last May, and which provides for the establishment of mobile special military courts with the right of sitting everywhere in south Viet Nam and only two sentences to pass : either death or hard labour for life...

Link (India), November 20, 1959.

No longer bearing any criticism, however well-founded, President Diem had either silenced by draconian police measures, or exiled, an opposition movement which included a number of prominent and well-considered personalities.

Under the cover of these dictatorial methods, an atmosphere of terror developed in south Viet Nam

over the last few years, and was made even more serious by Mr Diem's nepotism in favour of the members of his family.

Le Courrier (Switzerland) November 12, 1960.

Diem has always shown himself a dictator and never listens to competent persons. This becomes obvious when he is out of humour. The officials who dare to speak to him of difficulties, of insecurity, and of the growing discontent of the people will certainly make him angry. He would say that they are not well-informed of the situation; and they should consider themselves happier than to be accused of having been deceived by subversive propaganda.

Réalités Cambodgiennes, October 7, 1960 —
article carried by the **Delhi Times**, November 6, 1960.

The Diem government used to label as Viet Minhs all opponents of the regime.

Paris Presse, November 15, 1960.

* The police regime with the prohibition of the parties of the opposition, and a draconian regime of censure applied to all publications and newspapers, have prevented the Vietnamese from voicing aloud what many persons dare only whisper to one another, that is the necessity of a radical change of policy...

New York Herald Tribune, November 22, 1960.

* The "Can lao nhan vi" (Revolutionary party of Labour) has 70,000 unofficial members scattered all over the territory, who spend the best of their time to supply information on their neighbours to the police. There are persistent rumours of corruption in Saigon higher spheres and the names of Nhu and his wife are invariably involved in these stories.

Time, **New York Herald Tribune** and **Express Documents**.

Diem has ruled with rigged elections, a muzzled press, and political re-education camps that now hold 30,000...

Time (U.S.A.), November 21, 1960.

II

* ... The family firm of Mr. Diem, constituted by his brothers whom 'he knows well', is held in contempt by the Vietnamese. The intellectuals have requested Mr. Diem, but without success, to make a small effort to win the people's love... The regime is showing signs of death, but it is not yet dead as is desired by the people. If the French press shows great discretion towards the Ngo family's despised regime, the English and American press as a whole is preparing, since the flight of Syngman Rhee and his clique, the burying of the Ngo Dinh Diem's regime...

News and Reports, June 29, 1960.

... But, discontent is now getting through, and the Saigon people no longer hide their stand although they are running the risk of getting into trouble with the police services which remain vigilant.

Réalités Cambodgiennes, October 1960.

The Vietnamese, who were ignorant of the weakness of the regime, are now conscious that it is possible to overthrow a police regime. It is probable that they also know how to do it.

Réalités Cambodgiennes, September 30, 1960.

Since the beginning of this year, the south Viet Nam countryside has been boiling, but the towns have appeared relatively quiet.

However, the revolutionary movement is beginning to upset urban centres. The demonstrations by catholic refugees in Saigon on September 18, were not the least significant signs of this.

The same remark applies to provincial towns. Demonstrations staged by thousands of people took place successively at Ben Tre (July 29), Cao Lanh (July 30), My Tho (September 29). The demonstrations in the last town, second in importance after the capital, have particularly surprised the Diem authorities. My Tho was in effect selected by the Diem Government as a 'pilot province' in the so-called "Denounce communists' campaign. During this operation, almost all the inhabitants were sifted by the police. Thousands of people — especially former resistance members — were jailed. This repressive effort proved to be vain, or to put it more rightly, it whipped up the people's resentment against the government's policy. Thus, on September 29, 7,000 persons broke into My Tho, carrying banderoles with explosive slogans:

"Stop the repression!", "Stop the mopping-up operations!", "Release the political prisoners!", "We demand the application of essential democratic liberties!". The great highway linking Saigon to the western provinces was blocked: A monstrous jam immobilized, in the vicinity of My Tho, several hundred vehicles and a crowd of 50,000 persons. This was by far the most important mass demonstration in the town for five years.

La Tribune des Nations, November 18, 1960.

Discontent in the armed forces and among the people has been rife, though its sources are manifold. The Diem regime is a barely veiled dictatorship but an undisguised despotism...

National Herald (India), November 14, 1960.

This opposition became more serious, and as a matter of fact, 'unified' when the Diem Government, panic-stricken in face of the events in Japan and South-east Asia intensified the repression.

La Tribune des Nations, September 2, 1960.

This discontent of the Saigon people turned into hatred in the countryside, especially in the places where 'agrovilles' had been set up. The army is also discontented."

Paris Presse, November 15, 1960.

"This then was a revolt against a despotic and corrupt regime..."

"But he (Mr. Diem) would do well to realize that popular discontent will once again seek a violent outlet if he continues to impose on the people of south Viet Nam a thoroughly autocratic regime..."

Times of India, November 14, 1960.

The twin frustrations of dictatorship and an unending war eventually turned the paratroopers to revolt.

Time (U.S.A.), November 21, 1960.

"The attempted coup d'etat shows to what extent the regime established by Mr. Ngo Dinh Diem has lost its initial popularity..."

Le Courrier (Switzerland), November 12, 1960.

Mr. Diem is now reaping the bitter fruit of a policy the violently anti-democratic character of which has in the end worried even his American protectors.

Marchés coloniaux

* Facts are always facts; Mr. Diem's mistakes are always Mr. Diem's mistakes. The consequences of an anti-popular policy are always bad. In any country and any society, the advocates of actions and policies running counter to the people's genuine ideal will reap more or less bad consequences according to their actions.

Le Nationaliste (Cambodia), August 6, 1960.

