

LE DINH, THE MAN WHO WANTED NEITHER THE SOUTH
NEITHER THE NORTH.

Thirty years of war have deeply torn apart the majority of vietnamese families. Rare however are those who, like the family of our informer Le Dinh, can offer such a striking example of the conflicts resulting from a national drama that the reunification of 1976 has not been able to put an end to.

Le Dinh is the youngest of an aristocratic family from Hué. His father, Le Hoan, continues to follow the austere path that he has chosen in 1947 when after his meeting with Ho Chi Minh in France he decided to come back with him to Hanoi and then to join him in his clandestine activities. Since then, this doctor who graduated from a french university and who is specialized in the tropical disease of paludism, belongs to a very closed circle of high ranking communist officials. Formerly vice minister of health, he is now retired and is living in Hué after having been one of Ho Chi Minh's doctors and personal friends as well as a trusted advisor of some of the most important political and military leaders of the communist rule.

The oldest son, colonel C. is in a reeducation camp somewhere in Vietnam. His wife and his children have sought refuge with their elderly aunts in their ancestral home of

Hué. The second son, General L., commanded Bureau IOI that the americans created as a cover up for their intelligence network operations throughout south east Asia. Today general L. is imprisoned in Hanoi and not a day goes by without relentless interrogation by the counter intelligence services who consider him to be a very special source of information. His wife and his children live in the United States.

As for Le Dinh, a former captain in the Special Forces of the south vietnamese army, it is on january 9, 1968, not long before the Têt offensive, that he defected to the other side when he volunteered to join the "resistance" forces in the Saigon region. After a rather difficult period of probatipn he was assigned in march 1969 to Bureau I4(I), the intelligence quarters of north Vietnam, as an analyst and as head of the intelligence and infiltration operations. As a member of the Party, he was promoted to the rank of commander. He went back to the south just before the communists took over in 1975.

On march 1978, he left Saigon with 9 other vietnamese in a small motorized boat (the article says a tug boat equipped with a 125 ch motor) "The Thai Binh" ("The Peace") and arrived without difficulty to Malaysia where he could finally put an end to his perillous journey when he and his wife managed to board a plane in Kuala Lumpur and fly to Paris.

(I) Counter intelligence and security missions were the responsibility of Bureau CI3 supervised by the same political directing staff. General Song Hao was head of this staff in 1969 up until 1976 when General Huy Man took over.

MICHAEL: The following article that I translated, parts of it at least, is incomplete. Some passages are missing, that I will indicate by dot, dot, dot (.....)

Article begins with a brief portrait of Le Duan:

Ambitious man, will do anything to gain power. Eliminates his most dangerous rivals by putting them in jobs where they can be of no threat to him. Gives key positions only to those on whose loyalty he can count.

Rather communicative, well mannered, is reputed to be a good organizer and theoretician. In a society where the elderly have preference over the young, he has not hesitated to appoint younger men to important positions. Thanks to him Chu Huy Man and Dong Si Nguyen, both 50, became Colonels; Chu Huy Man was formerly a commander in Laos and Dong Si Nguyen a pioneer of the Ho Chi Minh trail.

His eldest son Le Hong is head of the secret police of the party that in fact answers to the political bureau and to Le Duc Tho; Le Hong saw to it that his Police became the secretary general's police. Tran Lam, a colonel in the intelligence services, is in charge of all the propaganda, radio and television as well. Lam's brother, Tran Quynh, is head of the Nguyen Ai Quoc Institute for marxist and leninist studies. Le Duan's son in law is commander of the air Force and his wife (his second wife in fact, Le Duan

being like most vietnamese and communists a polygamist) is secretary general to the committee of the Party in the important province of Ben Tre, a high ranking job that gives her power over the economy and the finances of the province.

In Le Duc Tho, who is today the right arm of Le Duan, we find the same inclination towards nepotism. His brother, Dinh Duc Thien, is a general, commander of Bureau C38 (arms, health and "intendance")

MICHAEL: The word INTENDANCE, I can not translate since it has many meanings. It could mean administration of the army, in this context.

.....(missing passages) (top of column 3 alludes to POW's that are considered to be a political investment if prisoners convert to communist ideology. They might then serve.....'s purpose (name missing) or those of international communism.)

Article then resumes as follows:

The french were the first to live this experience. Many others followed. Foremost were the americans. Contrary to the general belief, all prisoners were not released after the 1973 Paris Agreement. On this point, our informer Le Dinh, who for many years has had frequent contacts with them while working at Bureau CI4, is absolutely sure. The proof, says he, is that these services whose responsibility was the american prisoners have not been abolished and are

still in existence. Le Dinh states positively that in 1975 thirty three american pilots or aviators ~~remained~~ remained in Vietnam where they were attending courses in communist political theory. These men belonged to category number 3. They were known to be hostile to the war and to the government of the United States and were classified as sympathizers or progressists.....(sentence missing)
Top of column 4(sentence missing)....were not returned in 1973 and are still detained in Vietnam. Also and without giving any other precisions(....name missing) he said that he knew for sure that during the war the north vietnamese selected certain men amongst the prisoners and put in a special category those who belonged to rich families with whom they intended to negotiate personally for their return for some ransom money.

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End of article.

PHOTOGRAPH: Le Dinh

"Captain of the Special Forces in the south, head of intelligence Services in the north, Le Dinh, forever unsatisfied, has chosen temporary exile"