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AUG 1996

From: (Long P.Pham )  
Date: Thu, 22 Aug 1996 21:04:13 -0700  
Subject: [vnforum] Dissident Ha Si Phu Sentenced

- Mesg from (Long P.Pham )

Hi  
Ha Si Phu has been sentenced for 12 month term, and Le Hong Ha for 24 month term.

To be fair the 1000 of pages of Ha Si Phu personal writing should be returned to him intact.

Long P. Pham

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From lmvntd@BEST.COM Tue Sep 24 15:55:23 1996  
Date: Sat, 21 Sep 1996 09:39:39 -0700  
From: Vietnam Democracy  
Reply-To: Southeast Asia Discussion List  
To: Multiple recipients of list SEASIA-L  
Subject: VN-DEMOCRACY: Ha Si Phu Biography

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SEP. 1996

Ha Si Phu The Dissident Intellectual  
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Ha Si Phu is the pen name of Nguyen Xuan Tu, born April 22, 1940 in Bac Ninh province (northern Vietnam).

A biologist by training, Ha Si Phu completed his post-graduate work in Czechoslovakia. Upon returning home, he worked at the Vietnam Institute of Science and distinguished himself by adhering to scientific methods in research. As he moved up the academic ladder, eventually holding the post of vice-director at the Vietnam Institute of Science in Da Lat City, Ha Si Phu was invited to join the Vietnamese Communist Party. His refusal to apply for Party membership caused his early retirement.

At first, he undertook scientific research at home. Friends talk about his diligent efforts to mimic the qualities of the laboratory above a bathroom, his attention to dusty bottles of chemicals in a small, poorly-lit room. Facing economic hardship, he later applied his scientific knowledge to growing mushrooms for the market and brewing homemade beer. Ultimately, with his scientific interests stymied, he turned toward the study and analysis of social problems.

In September 1988, Ha Si Phu penned "Hand In Hand We Go Under the [Direction of] Intelligence," which was circulated initially among close friends. In the essay, he methodically dissects socialism under the current communist regime and points out its many contradictions. The high-minded claims of the regime contrast with the actual consequences of its policies. Therefore, the people should follow their own intellect, rather than the imposed direction of a party which claims to be at the "pinnacle of human intelligence."

This ten-page discourse eventually made it to the Politburo of the Vietnamese Community Party, sending shock waves through the leadership. Over the next two years, no less than 30 commentaries in the official media attacked the article and its author. Prominent party thinkers joined in the campaign to discredit Ha Si Phu's ideas, a subject for many internal party gatherings. Over time, the author and his writing became a "ghostly presence," haunting and threatening the regime's existence.

The pervasive influence of Ha Si Phu became evident at the Seventh Party Congress in 1991, when the Party adopted a new motto: "Intellect, Democracy, Renovation, Solidarity." For the first time, "Intellect" was placed first among the pantheon of important goals.

Prior to this Party Congress, in April 1991, the dissident experienced his first direct run in with authorities. While in Hanoi, he met with Duong Thu Huong, the former communist party member turned critic of the regime. During the visit, the Hanoi public security raided Duong Thu Huong's house and detained Ha Si Phu for interrogation. He was released after ten days, sent back to Da Lat City, and closely watched by the public security afterwards.

