

operated 3,878 stores in 1966 as against 2,053 in 1964.

An average of 16.3 dongs per head of population is now deposited in savings accounts, as against 4.17 dongs in 1964.

During the first quarter of 1967, one million more metres of cloth were produced as well as two million more litres of fish sauce, 3,000 more tons of salt and 1,300,000 more earthenware units in comparison with the first quarter of 1966.

Prices have somewhat risen on the free market, but the consequences of this on the national economy and the cost of living have been very limited on account of the small size of this sector and the nature of the new relations of production, from which springs a method of socialist distribution, and because of the absolute predominance of the State trade sector and tight price control.

In January 1967, the Secretariat of the Workers' Party issued instructions to Party organizations at all levels to seek to improve the standard of living of the people. In late February, it convened a conference on the protection and improvement of public health, which passed the following resolution: "The protection of the health of the people and cadres and the gradual improvement of the physical condition of our race, constitute an urgent problem."

The French journalist Jacques Duhamel, following a visit to the D.R.V.N. wrote in *Le Figaro* (November 1966), "In North Viet Nam people are not surviving, they are living."

This calls for great efforts, because U.S. aircraft have been furiously attacking the country's vital points: factories, mines, State farms, forestry undertakings, villages, towns, storehouses, fishing boats. During the first quarter of 1966, dykes and hydraulic works were bombed 700 times. Steel-pellet bombs have been dropped on peasants working in the fields and napalm on grazing cattle.

The Vietnamese people have vigorously defended the fruit of their labour, producing while fighting.

An irrigation canal also serves as an anti-air raid shelter and as a waterway to transport ammunition to anti-aircraft units. The building of a paddy dyke also aims at serving communications and transport and passive and active anti-aircraft defence. Pumping stations must be located in well-defended places. Any smithy must be able to carry out repairs of small weapons.

“So tan”* is not merely a measure of defence against destruction from the air. It is designed as an active measure, a combat tactics. Functionaries travel with their services, workers move together with their factories, small traders and city workers are sent to agricultural co-operatives and to construction sites lacking labour force.

Workers in their factories and peasants in the fields are armed and form specialized groups for anti-aircraft defence, ammunition transport, fire-fighting,

* This word can only be imperfectly rendered into English: it means dispersion and evacuation with a view to a new disposition of forces for national defence.

first aid to the wounded, or the maintenance of order and security. Whenever U.S. planes turn up, everyone joins his post according to plan. After they have been driven away, work resumes.

Production is also a combat front. Whenever a dyke is bombed and damaged, hundreds of peasants immediately set out to repair it to defend their lands and homes against flood. Along the coasts, teams of volunteers ensure the defence of houses and depots against tempests and U.S. bombardments. At harvest time, in face of the American pilots' attempts to burn the rice with napalm, the crop must be quickly brought in, in spite of air attacks. It must be carefully hidden in underground caches, many of which had been built in the days of the resistance war against the French colonialists. After each air attack factory workers immediately undertake urgent reparations so as to ensure production; machines and spare-parts which cannot be produced in the country are imported from socialist countries; in the meantime work is temporarily done by hand.

In the fields along Highway No. 1 or around Ham Rong bridge, the favourite targets of U.S. pilots, rice continues to grow, lush and green. Fishing is done at night and by small groups of boats. In case of air attack, some fire back at the planes while others carry on with their work.

Factories and construction sites are defended by a fire network which the enemy has found quite "efficient", composed of weapons of all ranges. In some sections

solidly protected, work goes on uninterrupted even during the raids.

In some regions, U.S. planes systematically pounce on the least source of light or smoke; yet brick and lime kilns continue to operate. In Bo Trach district, Quang Binh province, nine lime kilns, nine tile kilns and three brick kilns were built in 1965, and three brick kilns in 1966; 200 more tons of lime are produced per year for the improvement of the soil than before the U.S. air escalation.

On the production front, the Vietnamese people's firm fighting resolve is brought into full play, thanks to three parallel revolutions: the revolution in relations of production, the technical revolution, and the ideological and cultural revolution. The cornerstone is the technical revolution, which makes it possible to raise labour productivity and output. While resisting U.S. escalation, North Viet Nam workers seek to heighten the level of their technical and scientific knowledge so as to boost production in their country, a socialist country with a tropical climate, where industry is yet little developed, where agriculture is considered the basis of industrial progress and an important basis for national resistance, and where each region must concentrate its efforts on the production of food.

Technique has given a big boost to production. Thanks to the adoption of improved implements and new earth-moving methods, the hydraulic team of the Tan An co-operative in Hung Yen province has increased its labour productivity by 600-800 per cent. Methods of intensive cultivation have enabled the Tan

Phong co-operative to obtain a continuous increase in paddy yield per hectare *.

*

The evacuation of hospitals, schools and research centres with cumbersome equipment poses arduous problems. But doctors, professors, research workers, nurses, students, faithful to the traditions of the Resistance War against the French colonialists, have gone back to the jungle or the countryside.

With the help of the local people, they have set to work immediately, building new bases for science and education. Hard living conditions and the lack of modern equipment have not cooled down their zeal to

* A few instances :

— The Dai Phong co-operative (Quang Binh province), subjected to one air attack every 5 or 6 days, increased its income by 9,000 dongs in 1966, compared with 1965.

— In 1945, under the Franco-Japanese regime, famine killed 137 inhabitants of Bung village in Thai Binh province. Now, all its people, members of the Tan Phong co-op, have reached the living standard of the middle peasants.

— In 1939, the peak year under the old regime, the region now under the management of the Nam Tien co-op had less than 100 buffaloes and oxen (most of them owned by landlords), one single mosquito net and not a single bicycle. In 1966, Nam Tien possessed 326 buffaloes and oxen, 1,416 pigs, 240,000 fry, two electric pumping stations (750 and 350 cubic metres per hour), one 7 h.p. pump, two husking machines, two threshing machines, one food grinding machine for animal husbandry, one infirmary, 7 kindergartens, 300 bicycles (one for every two households on an average).

serve fighting and production. The explosions of bombs and shells on August 5, 1964 and February 7, 1965, and the direct contact with the labouring masses have stimulated the patriotism of the North Vietnamese intellectuals who think only of defending the country's independence and freedom.

For the 1965-1966 school year, North Viet Nam had 10,264 general-education schools, with an enrolment of 2,934,890 as against 9,295 schools and an enrolment of 2,673,994 in 1964-1965.

In 1966-1967, enrolment in general-education schools increased by 130 per cent and that in higher-education establishments and secondary professional schools four-fold, compared with 1965-1966. In the countryside the number of infant schools has quickly developed (one million children, an increase of 150 per cent compared with 1964). Complementary education for grown-ups shows an increase of 150 per cent in the number of students. There are 106 teachers' training schools with 35,000 students of all categories, and one special teachers' training college for the highlands.

There exists an average of one first-degree general-education (primary) school per village, one second-degree (junior middle) school for every 1.3 village in the plain regions and for every 3 villages in the highlands, and at least one third-degree (senior middle) school for every district. Results shown in exams as well as the quality of the teaching have ceaselessly improved in spite of savage bombings, which have hit 450 schools up to April 1967. In hard-hit regions, classes are held underground. Teachers and pupils are deeply

conscious of the fact that "to teach well and study well is to contribute to the struggle against U.S. aggression".

This year, mining and building colleges have opened their doors to more than 4,000 students.

In 1965-1966, the number of students, research workers, technical cadres and workers sent to socialist countries for probation or further studies was superior to the total number sent during the ten previous years.

With a view to giving a great impulse to the development of science and technique and the formation of cadres, the Department of Higher Professional Education, right in the midst of war, has been separated from the Ministry of Education to become a Ministry. The State Science Committee has been divided in two: the State Committee for Science and Technique and the State Committee for Social Sciences.

Public health has also made big headway. 95 per cent of plain villages and 77 per cent of mountain villages now possess their own infirmaries and maternity homes; 60 per cent of district centres have their own hospitals. The movement for hygiene and physical training, linked to the struggle against chemical and bacteriological warfare, continuously develops.

Many a foreign visitor has been struck by the achievements recorded in education and health. Said Lelio Basso, an Italian M.P., president of the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity:

"One thing we have been able to record is the great work of civilization achieved by the D.R.V.N. government during the ten years of peace and also since the war started. Dr Nojer, who was for a long time head

of the Swedish health organization, told me that what he had seen here in the struggle against diseases has been an extraordinary success and that in other fields, such as agricultural co-operation, Sweden, often cited in our country as a model of socialist achievement, has much to learn here. I myself, who come from a country which for thousands of years has written admirable pages in the history of culture, must confess that we are not doing at home everything that is being done here to fight illiteracy. These are only a few aspects of an immense undertaking of development and progress which, together of course with the national sentiment of a people who also possess a long history, help explain this people's strong attachment to its country and its government and its unshakable will to repel aggression in order to continue progressing, in spite of the criminal force pouncing on it."

The people's cultural life and literary and artistic activities have received a big impulse, as stressed by the president of the Viet Nam Writers' and Artists' Association :

"August 5, 1964, marked a new page in the history of our people's struggle in the North against U.S. aggression for national salvation. The victory scored by our armed forces which, for the first time, have shot down U.S. aircraft over Hong Gai, Ben Thuy, etc. rejoices our entire people and especially us, artists and writers. Hardly has the war begun when almost all artists and writers of the North have gone to the most exposed places on the frontline." *

* Report on artistic and literary activities for national salvation (August 31, 1966).

The number of books published in 1966 showed an increase of 500,000 copies compared with 1964. For the first time in the literary history of Viet Nam, some works, hundreds of thousands of copies of which have been printed within the country, have been translated and distributed abroad to the amount of several million copies.

In 1966, our cinematographers made 17 films more than in 1964.

Hundreds of stories and plays, thousands of poems and songs have been written by workers, peasants and soldiers which bespeak the ardour and faith of a fighting people.

Theatrical performances, film projections and other cultural manifestations are organized in the remotest villages and in regions the most exposed to air raids. In these areas 400 mobile projection teams are operating at present.

In the space of six months, cultural groups have performed 55 times before 3,000 spectators in a village close to the 17th parallel which was attacked by U.S. aircraft as many as 11 times on certain days, and which has received so far 1,400 tons of bombs, i.e. 42 tons per head of population. Performances have been carried out underground before small audiences.

The continuity of the cultural effort in the D.R.V.N. has elicited the following comment from an American visitor, Hughes Manes, a member of the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal, and a member of the Secretariat of the American Jurists' Association: "What surprises me most is the fact that in spite of

the hard war-time conditions, the Vietnamese people's life has remained normal. I have visited classes installed near shelters. The children study with zeal and sing. I have visited hospitals and talked to doctors who are competent and devoted to their patients, out of love for the people and not love of money."

He concludes :

"No force can subjugate such a people as the Vietnamese people."

Under the blows of the powerful U.S. air force, the D.R.V.N. has not flinched in the least. It has won the battle of communications and reinforced her cultural and economic front.

David has held out before Goliath.

THE PEOPLE'S UNSHAKABLE RESOLVE

Besides economic, cultural and military targets, U.S. Air Force and Navy planes have been furiously attacking the civilian population with scientifically worked out methods as revealed by Lieutenant Commander Richard A. Stratton* :

"The first mission on 14 November, my first in combat, was against a highly populated section of Vinh. The target was briefed by the Wing Air Intelligence officer Ltjg O'Farrel as being of the highest political

* A navy officer, he was attached to VA-192, CAW.19, U.S.S. Ticonderoga.

priority in that the people themselves must be made to feel the pressures and realities of war.

This would be a four-plane flight — all A-4's, the first two aircraft would have 2 C.B.U.'s and two 500-pound fragmentation bombs, the second two would have 2 napalm tanks and two 500-pound frags. The tactics would be to come in low in two sections, climb to 5,000ft next to the city, and dive across from east to west. The C.B.U.'s and napalm would be used to catch exposed people. A second sweep from west to east with frags would catch the sheltered areas and spread the flames made by napalm.

I led the flight and flew in as briefed. The time of 10.00 a.m. was chosen so that as many people would be exposed as possible. The weather was good and there was no difficulty finding the target. The first pass with C.B.U.'s and napalm found people running for cover. On coming back for the second attack, people could be seen lying about or running with clothes afire.

About this time we saw the Vinh B.D.A. photographs. There was obviously no military and no discernible industrial significance to anything in view. It was so obviously a residential area that we had the photo and target coordinates checked against each other. There was no doubt that this burnt-out area had been our target."

The city of Nam Dinh, with a population density of 17,000 to the square kilometre, has been subjected to 50 raids of this type.

But bombings, far from terrorizing the Vietnamese, have cemented their solidarity. The day they dropped

their first bomb on North Viet Nam, the Americans in fact welded the nation into a single, indestructible bloc.

The entire people have been selflessly fighting to defend the fatherland, as was stressed by the National Assembly on April 1966 :

“Our armed forces, carrying out the watchword ‘Aim straight at the enemy’, are resolved to defeat the American aggressors.

The working class, imbued with a high fighting spirit, is the vanguard of the Revolution. Standing firm in all circumstances, it has evinced great courage, creative spirit and resourcefulness in the defence of production work and in fighting.

The peasants, members of agricultural co-operatives, have worked with diligence and courage, struggling against natural calamities and the Yankee aggressors. They have practised intensive cultivation to raise output, and contributed ever more manpower and wealth to the anti-U.S. resistance for national salvation. In heavily raided zones, they have, rifle in one hand and plough in the other, intensified production and fought valiantly.

The intellectuals have carried out the ‘Three Resolves’: they are determined to struggle against U.S. aggression and save the country, carry out the technical revolution, and train ever more scientific and technical personnel.”

Vast popular movements involve men and women, old and young, even the children.

The "Three Readies" movement is a powerful lever which urges the youth to go resolutely forward in production, fighting and study. Tens of thousands of young men and women have enlisted in the armed forces, undergone military training, participated in the "run, jump, swim, shoot, wrestle" physical training movement, taken an active part in anti-air raid defence, volunteered for the most arduous tasks on the production front, at the same time striving to raise their cultural and technical level. Young Volunteers in the Anti-U.S. Resistance for National Salvation are present in the most exposed places along communication lines. The Viet Nam Labour Youth Union has consolidated and broadened its ranks and is guiding the activities of four million young people and six million children in North Viet Nam.

The "Three Responsibilities" movement mobilizes the women in accomplishing war-time duties: to replace men in various branches of activity; to fulfil all household work; to participate in fighting. In industry, women workers have carried into effect various slogans: "to master one trade while learning several others" and "management by women". In agriculture, women have joined the management committee of farming co-operatives and helped boost output through new techniques. Under the bombings, women carry ammunition and food, give first aid to the wounded, and help and solace to the families of those who have given their lives to the country.

Old folk encourage their children and grandchildren to enlist in the armed forces, plant trees, help in afforestation, grow *azolla pinnata* for manure, raise pigs

and poultry, collect rice for the struggle against U.S. aggression. They seek to liquidate superstitions and bad habits and disseminate rudiments of hygiene and disease prevention. Many, by their presence at gun sites during battles against U.S. aircraft, galvanize the gunners.

The children strive to carry into effect the "five teachings" of Uncle Ho: to love one's fatherland and compatriots; to study and work well; to show close solidarity with one's comrades; to respect discipline and hygiene; to be frank, brave and modest. In 1966, half a million of them were awarded the title of "worthy nephews and nieces of Uncle Ho". Outside their school hours they graze buffaloes and oxen, help to ensure public security, camouflage anti-aircraft guns, bring refreshments to the gunners, etc.

The "unshakable resolve" of our people, in the words of the French journalist Jacques Duhamel—a people united in a monolithic bloc—has sobered down the most reckless partisans of escalation. General Maxwell D. Taylor has had to admit: "The bombing of North Viet Nam is not enough to bring about victory." William Bundy has also recognized that "U.S. bombings may reinforce the fighting spirit of North Viet Nam."

These opinions fall in with the views of Senator Robert Kennedy, which reflect the preoccupations of some political circles in the United States:

"I have serious reservations about the bombing of North Viet Nam. This accomplished no military purpose." (*A.F.P.*, Oct. 24, 1966).

IV. THE RELATION OF FORCES ON NORTH VIET-NAM THEATRE

With all its huge and cumbersome war means, the United States is being bogged down in the Vietnamese quagmire. Its powerful air force, faced with a well-organized people's war in North Viet Nam, shows more and more insurmountable weaknesses.

A MOUNTAIN-MOVING FORCE ; INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM

In a press conference held in Hanoi, many a foreign reporter expressed their doubt about Ngo Thi Tuyen's achievement. This twenty-year-old peasant and militia woman weighs no more than 42kgs. Laden with two munition trunks of 48kgs each, she ran one kilometre under bombs and machine-gun fire to supply an A.A. battery defending Ham Rong bridge in Thanh Hoa province.

During another air engagement, Tuyen carried 104kgs of munitions at one stretch to the astonishment of these sceptical journalists.

Pham Van Dai, of the Ham Rong A.A. battery, looks tiny beside his gun. In one of his many fights the gun was on the point of tumbling, its prop being hit by a bomb. Dai hastily made room for one of his mates. He gathered his strength to lift up the barrel with his shoulder and shouted, "Fire! They dive on the bridge!" The militiamen who were carrying munitions hurriedly came to his rescue and everything was put in order again.

While working out their escalation plans, the strategists of the Pentagon left out an essential element in their calculations: the Vietnamese people's moral strength which creates so many Tuyens and Dais, capable of countering up-to-date weapons with simple means.

The militiaman's rifle has, on many an occasion, proved to be as deadly for the U.S. air force as the missiles or the Migs. In his encounter with the American aircraft just at the moment it dives down on him, the peasant of the Red River delta pulls his trigger without shivering. He is strong because he struggles for the defence of his land. As to the American pilot who is caught in a fire net of various ranges, he is prompted by no ideological motive.

Let us see how the militiamen of the coastal district of Tinh Gia, Thanh Hoa province, with eight rifles, successfully resisted U.S. aircraft and warships.

At 3.10 p.m. on April 15, 1966, two pilots bailed out of a Phantom hit by our A.A. batteries into the sea. Eight militiamen rowed a small boat towards them in defiance of the gunfire of enemy planes and naval units sailing off shore. The fierce fire of our coastal artillery

dispersed the aircraft, while our men, 3 kilometres away from the coast, were about to lay hands on the Yankees. A seaplane alighted before them, followed by jets and helicopters. The militiamen fired and hit it, putting nine men on board out of action. A chopper was also badly damaged and the Americans gave up their rescue mission.

Our tenacious defence astonished the enemy.

Admitted Robinson Risner, Lieutenant-Colonel belonging to Air Wing No 18 stationed in Thailand, captured in Thanh Hoa on September 16, 1965 :

“Your patriotism has been readily apparent by the fierce determination with which you have met the attacks of the U.S. air power. You have gained the admiration of American fighter pilots, by your grim tenacity, standing by your guns in the face of cannons, rockets and bombs, to return the fire of the attacking airplanes.”

Fighting and daily life offer abundant examples of valiance.

Some men engaged in welding work on a bridge were blown away by a bomb explosion into the river. They swam to the bank and set to work at once as if nothing had happened.

For 120 nights running, the 9th road haulage company covered tens of thousands of kilometres under bombs and shells.

The men of the 2nd transmission company, 134th Brigade, plunged into the cold water for several successive nights to secure telephone liaison in a vast mountain and jungle area.

Towards the close of 1966 the tiny Con Co island near the 17th parallel, had repelled 800 air raids and downed 30 U.S. aircraft.

Old mother Suot is a ferrywoman on the Nhat Le river, Quang Binh province. One day, seeing in the river someone hit by the gunfire of a U.S. plane, she hurriedly rowed to his help. She succeeded in rescuing him while continuing to carry munitions to one of our warships, right under enemy attack. When the engagement was over, the reporters found her sitting quietly on the riverside, repairing her oar broken by a bullet. Asked what she thought of, in the face of danger, she replied, "Of nothing." She added, "We must defend ourselves. After all, it's not so dangerous as in the first Resistance War. Dong Hoi town was then occupied by the French. I had to carry cadres and supplies across the river at night. Both banks were full of enemy posts. Motor-boats patrolled uninterruptedly, sweeping the water with dazzling lights. The French kept up a much more deadly cross fire."

During an air attack, Van, a twenty-year-old militiawoman of Lai Vu village, Hai Duong province, jumped into a trench. A snake happened to be down there. Trampling on the reptile's head she fired at the aircraft with her rifle. Later on, when asked whether she was afraid, she said, "Oh yes, I was. But then I didn't argue. I only thought of shooting down the enemy aircraft. I suppose I was right to do so. If the snake had bitten me, I alone would have been its victim. By hitting the aircraft in good time, I might have contributed to spare heavy losses in life and property for our compatriots."

Phan Dang Cat was about to go home on leave. A fighter plane came to attack the location of his unit. He then stayed to fight with his comrades-in-arms. His team leader told him, "Go home, comrade. Our struggle will be long. You'll rejoin us later." But Cat insisted on having his share in the engagement, which he was allowed to, and got badly injured. Before dying, he said, "My family will be proud to know that I die at my post."

Mai Xuan Diem, a motor-boat driver and engineer on the ferry 'April 3' was deadly hit by rocket splinters. Availing himself of his last moment, he helped his deputy to drive the motor-boat under bombs and shells and imparted to him his fighting experiences.

Company political officer Nguyen Viet Xuan had given his name to his A.A. unit. Having a leg broken by a bomb fragment, he kept stimulating his mates, "Aim straight at the enemy and fire." Carried on a stretcher to the ambulance, he reiterated his exhortations to every fighter he met.

During an enemy raid, eleven-year-old Nguyen Ba Ngoc was already in safety in a trench when he heard two children crying. He hurried out to take the younger to a shelter. The enemy dropped bombs as he was guiding the other boy to a trench. No sooner had Ngoc lain down upon his protégé to cover him with his body than he was killed by a splinter.

Returning from a visit to North Viet Nam, E. Salisbury, deputy editor-in-chief of *The New York Times*, acknowledged that "the North Vietnamese were suffering", but said he "gained the impression that their

fighting spirit was very high and they were determined not to budge from their stand." (*A.P.*, January 12, 1967).

Hatred for the aggressor has become a strong mover as Hugh R. Manes, an American attorney, has noticed, "I recalled one mother, a Catholic woman whose husband was killed in an air raid. She had six children, one of them was eighteen, and no help to support that family, except the cooperative of which she was a member. The co-op has suggested to her that her eldest son should stay and help support the family but she said he must go to avenge his father. He also said that her other son too, as soon as he reaches the required age, would take up the gun to avenge his family. The more U.S. crimes pile up, the more resolved the Vietnamese will be."

This firm determination is no blind impulse nor fanaticism. It implies a lucid intelligence, sang-froid, great efforts to master science and technology. In his first combat, pilot Tran Hanh has skilfully dodged the Sidewinder missile boasted as an engine of extreme accuracy.

The case of Nguyen Van Bay is typical as regards the efforts displayed by ordinary people to master modern technique. Having not yet ended primary education, he was sent to a training course for pilots. By dint of continuous efforts and with his mates' help, he made astonishing progresses. In his first combat, more than once, he dodged Sidewinder missiles and brought down a Phantom, which earned him the title of hero.