

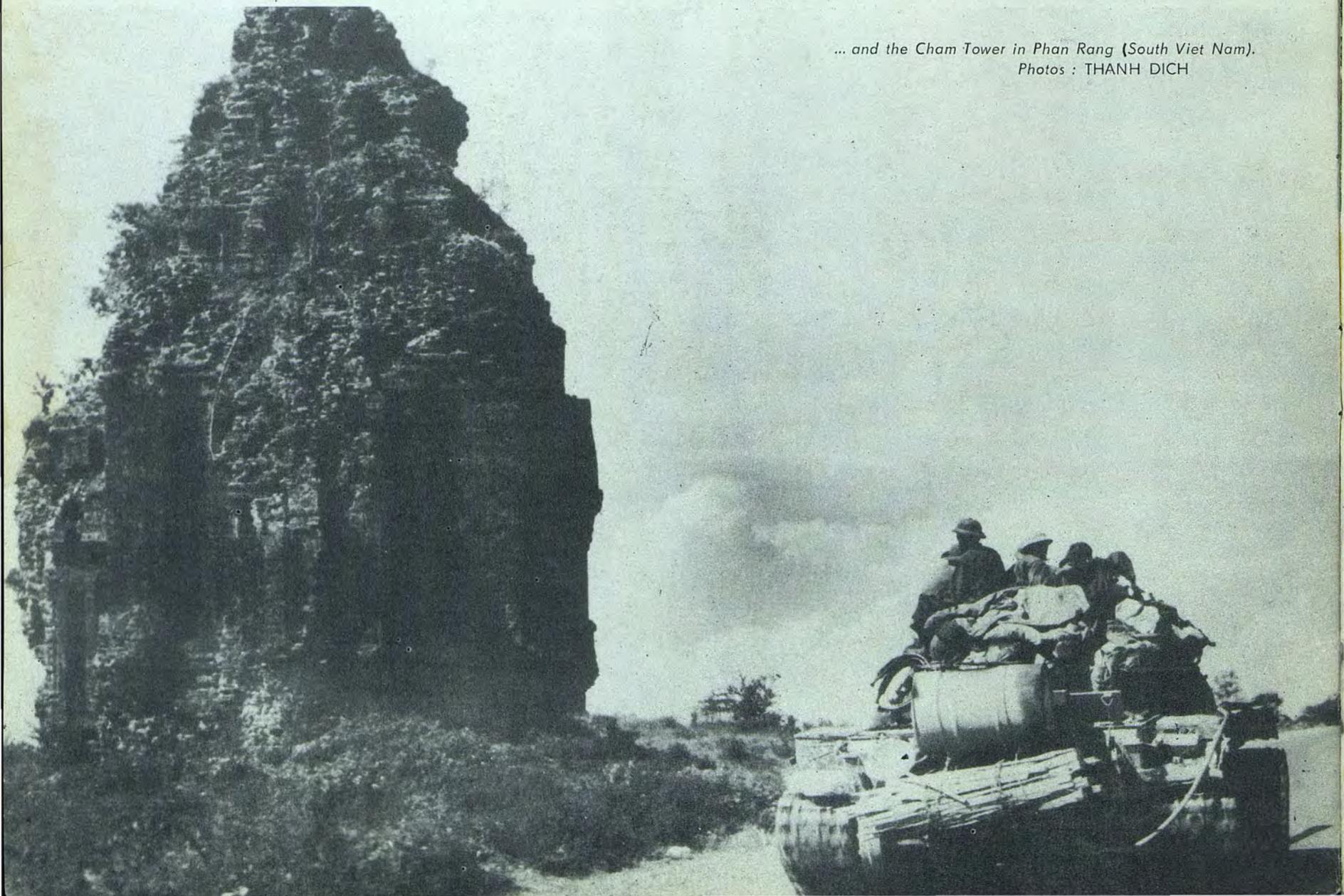
201
1975

Việt nam





Mount Ngu Hanh in Da Nang...



... and the Cham Tower in Phan Rang (South Viet Nam).
Photos : THANH DICH



"... NO MATTER WHAT DIFFICULTIES AND HARDSHIPS LIE AHEAD, OUR PEOPLE ARE SURE OF TOTAL VICTORY. THE US IMPERIALISTS WILL CERTAINLY HAVE TO QUIT. OUR FATHERLAND WILL CERTAINLY BE REUNIFIED. OUR FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN IN THE SOUTH AND IN THE NORTH WILL CERTAINLY BE REUNITED UNDER THE SAME ROOF..."

Excerpt from President HO CHI MINH's Testament



1945 - The 30-year-long resistance began with these bamboo spears.
Photo : TRAN PHUONG

December 18 - 29, 1972 - Hanoi, an "aerial Dien Bien Phu".
Photo : LAM HONG



We've been thirsting for this day a hundred years,
Today it comes, joyful as though in a dream.

These lines were written by To Huu when the US was forced to quit South Viet Nam in 1973. They again became topical when the Saigon puppets were toppled, in May this year.

After 55 days of offensive and uprising crowned by the Ho Chi Minh campaign, our armed forces and people smashed a million-strong puppet army built, equipped and commanded by the Americans and used by them to oppose the Vietnamese people, wreck the peace and their national independence, and sabotage the Paris Agreement.

The US-puppet oppressive and coercive apparatus imposed on the South Vietnamese people over the past 21 years has utterly collapsed. US neo-colonialism has been crushed. The South has been completely liberated.

The war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, waged by our people has won complete, tremendous victory!

From Lang Son in the North to the Cape of Ca Mau in the South, the whole of our land has been cleared of enemy aggressors.

From now on and for ever our Fatherland will be independent.

The long-standing dream of our people has come true. What joy can be greater!

* *

Ever since the Hung kings founded our country, our nation, starting from its tiny cradle in the midland, has travelled a long way. Our land has expanded and at present it proudly lies along the whole length of the Indochinese peninsula.

In the four-thousand-year struggle to safeguard their country our people defeated countless feudal aggressors, wherever they came from, in order to proclaim this truth: "Viet Nam is a land with a master!"

For 117 long years, we have resisted aggression by Western imperialists, and struggled hard to break our fetters, do away with the partition of our land and put an end to the sufferings and humiliation of our people.

Our people have fought hard for thirty years in order to complete the people's

A NEW PAGE IN VIET NAM'S HISTORY

May 1975
LUU QUY KY
Writer

May 1954 - Celebrating victory in Dien Bien Phu.

Photo : TRIEU DAI



May 1975 - V-Day in Ho Chi Minh city.

Photo : NGOC THONG



democratic national revolution started by the August 1945 revolution and realize the age-old dream of our nation: "Independence and freedom for the country; sovereignty, abundance and happiness for the people."

Over the thirty years, led by the Party of the Vietnamese working class, guided by President Ho, supported by friends on the five continents and the whole of progressive mankind, the Vietnamese people have written an extraordinary epic: they have fought hard under all imaginable conditions, against all truculent aggressors, smashed the most perfidious schemes and manoeuvres, and in the end have regained their sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

The victory of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 knocked down old colonialism. The Ho Chi Minh campaign in 1975 put an end to the neo-colonialism of the most cruel imperialist chieftain of our time.

Our people's tremendous battle for independence and freedom has ended in complete victory!

Again a bridge spans the Ben Hai river.
"North and South reunited, can there be a happier spring?"(1)

* *

A glorious page in our national history has been turned.

A new page begins.

Our 45 million people now embark on building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Viet Nam in order to contribute to the defence of world peace.

A new era opens! Developing to the full our patriotism, revolutionary heroism, love of socialism, and genuine internationalism, we are determined to take our country forward to the most glorious era in our national history.

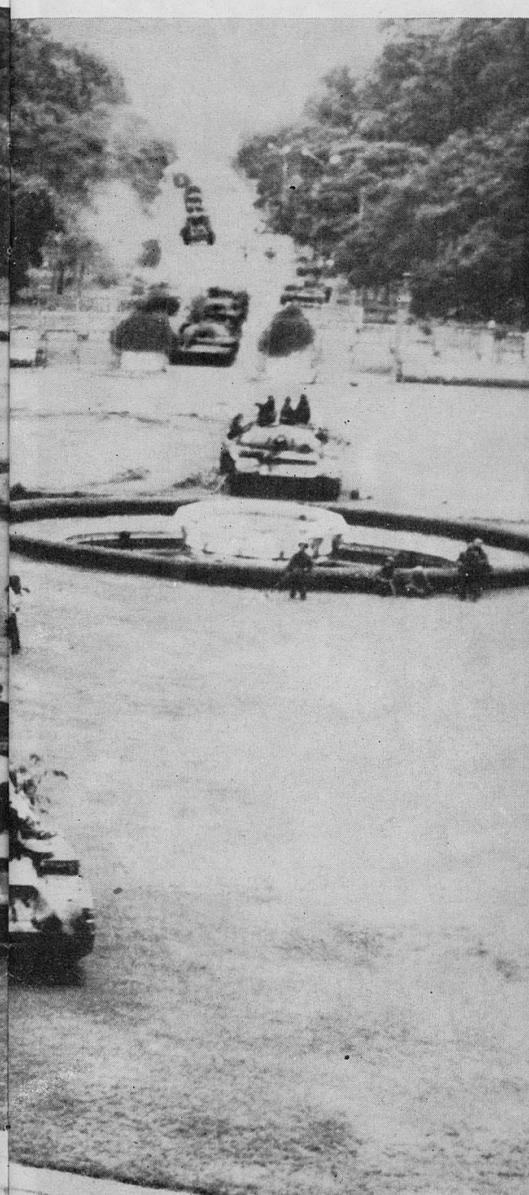
In these days of immense joy, our thoughts are again turned to our brothers in the socialist countries and to the national, democratic and peace forces all over the world, who have extended to us whole-hearted encouragement and persevering assistance in all fields until victory is gained.

(1) New Year greetings by President Ho Chi Minh in the spring of 1969.

THE HISTORIC MOMENTS



11:30 a.m. on April 30: An armour unit of the PLAF storms the premises of the puppet presidential palace. In the middle of the courtyard, a Liberation combatant, a revolutionary flag in his hands, rushes into the palace.



After storming the "Independence Palace", Tank N° 879 returned and stood guard at its main entrance.

GUNS were booming. On Thong Nhat Avenue in the centre of Saigon, an armour column of the PLAF headed towards the "Independence Palace", the premises of the puppet presidency.

Tank N° 843, commanded by company leader Bui Quang Than and manned by Lu Van Hoa, stormed forward, smashing through the iron gate at the main entrance to the palace and opening the way for its unit to take up position in the large yard.

The commander of the unit, pistol in hand, broke into the palace in search of Duong Van Minh and other leading officials of the puppet administration.

One Liberation combatant, a PRG flag in his hands, climbed up the steps in the direction of the balcony; he planted his flag, then waved his cap wildly to the cheering combatants standing below on the lawn. It was 11:30 a.m. on April 30, 1975.

Meanwhile, in the reception room furnished with red carpets embroidered with the "Tho" (Longevity) ideograms in gold, Duong Van Minh, his prime minister and many ministers were sitting in silence. They were waiting for the inevitable moment...

When the Liberation combatants rushed in everybody hurriedly stood up. Duong Van Minh said: "We have been impatiently waiting for you since this morning to hand over power."

A Liberation officer firmly answered: "All power has passed into the hands of the revolution. The former administration has collapsed. You cannot hand over what you no longer have!"

Brigadier-General Nguyen Huu Hanh, Assistant-Chief of General Staff, said: "We simply dared not resist you."

As for Colonel Vu Van Chiem, Acting Head of the Presidential Office, he had already got rid of his uniform and cap. Chiem said: "We were very afraid, the top brass as well. We dared not order our troops to resist."

At that time, hundreds of officers and men responsible for defending the palace had mustered in a corner of the grounds to present themselves. They insisted on being allowed to immediately throw away the uniforms they were wearing. "We'd rather have just pants," said an officer, "instead of wearing those shameful garments."

After the occupation of the puppet presidential palace by the Liberation forces, Duong Van Minh went to the Saigon Radio to declare the dissolution of all the organs of the puppet administration and call on his troops to give up to the revolutionary forces.

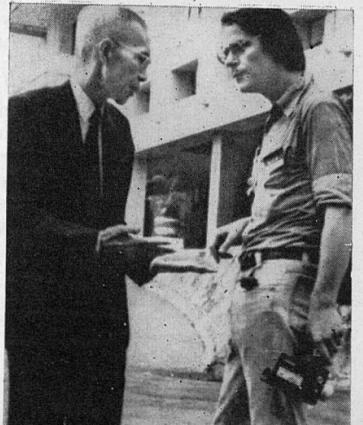
The official representatives of the revolutionary power came to accept the unconditional surrender of the puppet administration. A representative explained the policy of the NFL. Not long afterwards, Duong Van Minh and the other members of the Saigon cabinet were given freedom to return to their families.

Tank N° 879 had been posted at the entrance to the "Independence Palace" after fulfilling its task. On the lawn, eleven other tanks lay scattered beneath the ancient trees, their gun barrels raised high. Outside the palace, over 30 tanks and armoured trucks lined "Thong Nhat" Avenue with small kids climbing about on them, playing with "Uncle Liberation combatants". People riding Hondas, motor cars, bicycles... flocked to the square to applaud the Liberation soldiers, witness the total collapse of the puppet administration and see with their own eyes the invincible revolutionary flag which was fluttering with pride on the roof of the "Independence Palace".

Duong Van Minh (centre) and Vietnamese and foreign pressmen on the morning of April 30, 1975 in the "Presidential Palace".



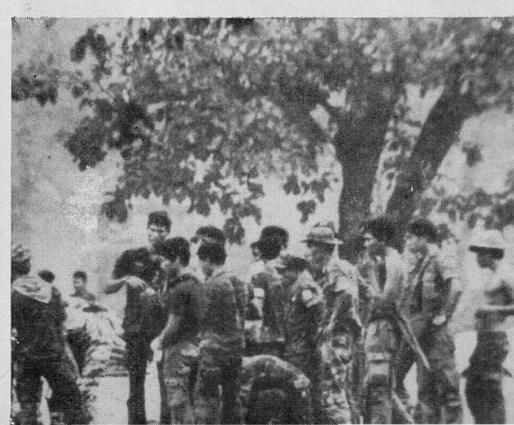
Nguyen Van Huyen (left), vice-president of the puppet administration, says to a West German correspondent: "Yes, all has been completed!"



Duong Van Minh (third from left), about to read his declaration at the Saigon Broadcasting Station at 14:05 hours (April 30, 1975), surrendering unconditionally to the people's forces.



The last minutes of their life as puppet soldiers: throwing away their panther uniforms and asking permission to go home.







WE went amidst a forest of red-and-blue golden starred flags. Endless streams of jubilant people were heading for the "Independence Palace" which had now become the office of the Military Management Committee of Saigon-Gia Dinh city.

The whole population of Saigon was pouring out into the streets to celebrate the complete liberation of their home city which now had the honour to bear the name of President Ho Chi Minh, and to celebrate their beautiful Motherland, once more an unbroken stretch of land.

STORMY ATTACKS

At 5 p.m. on April 26, 1975, began the last stage of the historic military campaign to liberate Saigon and the rest of South Viet Nam still in the hands of the enemy, the campaign bearing the name of the great President Ho Chi Minh. The mighty army corps of the South Viet Nam PLAF bore down upon Saigon from four directions. The enemy defence lines in the East, South and North of the city quickly fell apart.

HO CHI MINH CITY BLOSSOMS WITH FLAGS AND FLOWERS

Text : THU YEN
 Photos : LE BA, NGUYEN THANH DICH, HO HAI, TRAN HO and LE THIEM

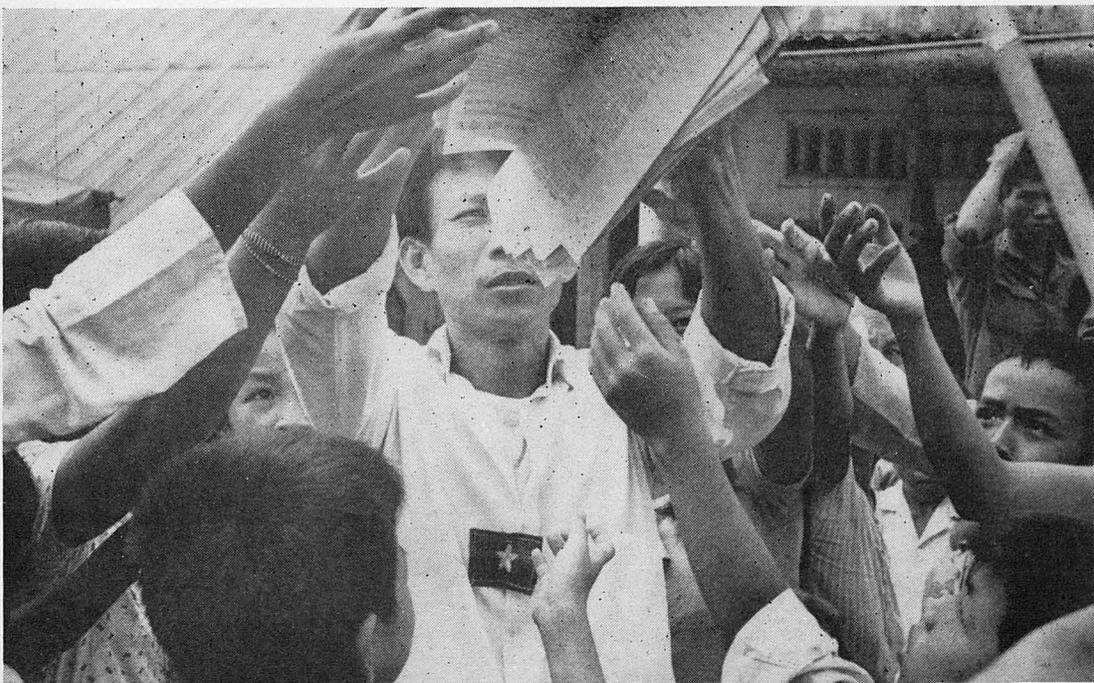


Meanwhile, Saigon itself witnessed one of the most panicky and disorderly retreats of a defeated army ever seen in history. The American "governor-general" of Saigon, Graham Martin, together with the remaining military personnel of the US, scrambled for the roof top of the US embassy to secure a place in the helicopters which made a non-stop shuttle service between Saigon and the ships of the 7th Fleet. The ringleader of the puppets, Nguyen Van Thieu, had fled abroad earlier, taking with him tons of gold he had taken from the South Vietnamese people. As for his agents, they engaged in a spree of looting and killing before fleeing forever from Saigon. Living in such heightful moments, the Saigon population longed every minute and every second for the arrival of the Liberation army.

Their liberators had lived up to this expectation. On the night of April 29, the advance units of the Liberation army closed their way into the nerve centres of the enemy in the heart of Saigon.

The civilian population, inside the city and in its suburbs alike, in close coordination with the Liberation armed forces, rose up to smash the enemy coercive machinery and set up the revolutionary power in many sectors.

At dawn on April 30, Saigon woke up to the tramp of marching troops and the rumbling of artillery. The scattered resistance pockets of the puppets were quickly overcome. The Liberation forces captured the Tan Son Nhat air base, occupied the headquarters of the puppet General Staff, then converged on the presidential palace of the puppet regime.



Clockwise from far left :

- ★ Students of the Saigon Faculty of Letters parade at the meeting in celebration of the nation's total victory (May 15, 1975).
- ★ Saigon intellectuals, writers and artists joyfully welcome the liberation of Saigon and South Viet Nam.
- ★ A scene very common in Saigon streets during the entry of the Liberation forces into the city.
- ★ The documents on the NFL and PRG policies are warmly welcomed.



On May 7, 1975, over 1,000,000 Saigon people met to hail the Saigon-Gia Dinh Military Management Committee's appearance before the public.

Wherever they came, the Liberation forces were met by enthusiastic crowds of welcomers lining both sides of the streets, waving and cheering tirelessly. A French correspondent in Saigon reported that he saw about a dozen puppet troops, after throwing away their rifles, board a tank of the Liberation army moving on Cong Ly Boulevard, and seat themselves happily beside the Liberation combatants. And all along the road leading to the puppet presidential palace the people of Saigon jumped and shouted with joy and fell into one another's arms, many with tears welling in their eyes.

COMPLETE VICTORY IS OURS

Practically the whole of Saigon poured into the streets to welcome the Liberation army and celebrate the historic victory of the Saigon population, of the whole nation. The entire people were turning their thoughts to Saigon and shared the joy of the complete liberation of Ho Chi Minh city, from now on definitively rid of the enemy.

The Ho Chi Minh campaign had won complete victory. In only a short period of time the Liberation army and people of South Viet Nam put out of action more than 400,000 enemy troops positioned around Saigon, smashing the whole puppet administration from the centre to the village and hamlet levels, liberating Saigon and the remaining provinces.

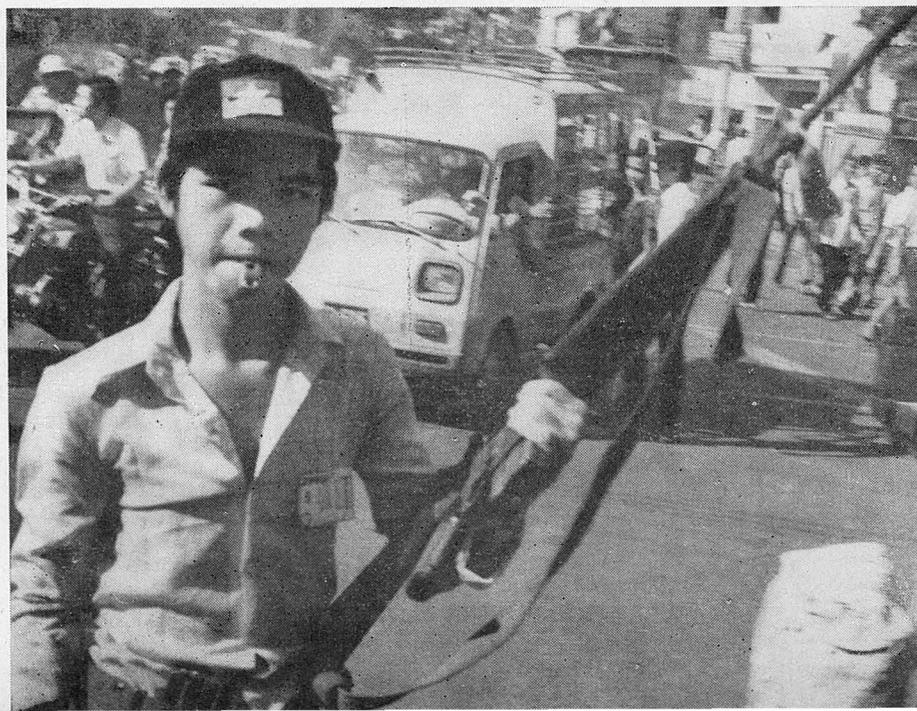


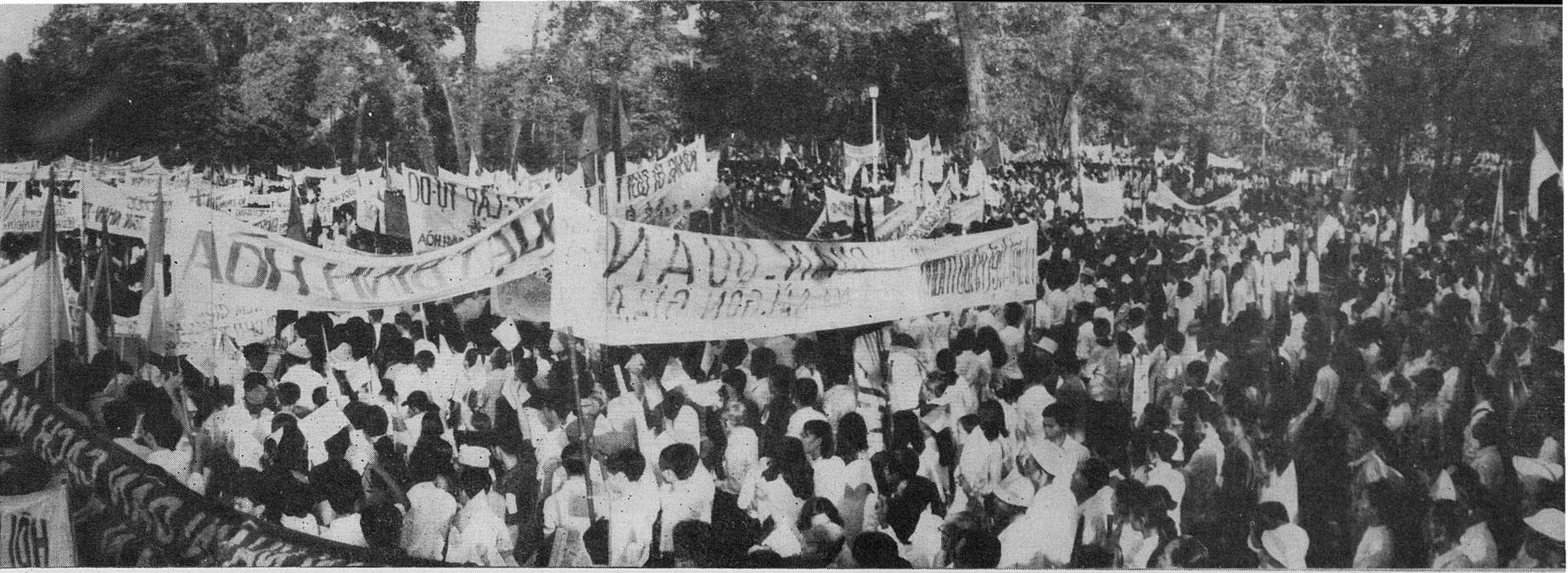
Lieutenant General Tran Van Tra, President of the Saigon-Gia Dinh Military Management Committee.

HO CHI MINH CITY BLOSSOMS...

Young people in Saigon crowd the premises of the Liberation Students' and Pupils' Association to make a voluntary offer of their services to the revolution.

The new order has been established. In the photo below a Saigon home guard is regulating traffic and maintaining security in the city.





If the review goes back to early March when the Tay Nguyen armed forces and people cut off the highways 19 and 14 and isolated Pleiku and Kontum, raising the curtain on the general offensive and uprising of Spring 1975, within only 55 days of fighting, the army and people of South Viet Nam wiped out or completely dispersed the whole puppet army of more than one million men which the Americans had so painstakingly built and equipped, and liberated all the 44 provinces and cities of South Viet Nam.

Every person in Saigon feels immense gratitude to President Ho Chi Minh, his heart vibrant with emotion as described by poet To Huu in the following lines :

*"Oh this noon how beautiful the sunlight is!
Uncle Ho, complete victory is already ours!
We arrive, gleaming with the steel of our
weapons,
The city bearing Your Name blossoms with flags
and flowers."*

DAWN OF A NEW ERA

The revolution is a great festive day of the masses. This is completely true for Ho Chi Minh city in these historic days.

The Saigon population who had, for many years, lived under coercion and oppression, the young men

of Saigon who had been constantly on the move to avoid forcible conscription, now poured into the streets to take in the first breath of freedom.

In almost every street, young men and women wearing red arm bands regulated the traffic taking the place of the puppet police who had fled. At the Ben Thanh market-place and in all shopping centres, economic life went on as usual. Workers at the Cho Quan power plant and the Thu Duc water station worked round the clock to preserve the equipment and maintain electricity and water supply to a city of more than three million. Many other factories also immediately resumed operation. Hospitals also reopened almost immediately after the Liberation forces entered the city. Group after group of students and pupils, hoes and spades in hands, spread through every street to carry out a general clean-up, removing the enormous garbage dumps left by the puppet regime. Thousands of young men and women enthusiastically enlisted in the Saigon - Gia Dinh Armed Youth Brigade to defend the revolutionary administration.

As twilight fell on Saigon, the bell from the Cathedral of Notre Dame rung out its peaceful chimes. And at all the pagodas in the city, amid puffs of smoke rising from incense burners elderly women went on methodically intoning the Buddhist scriptures punctuated by the melancholy beats of the tocsin.

Soon, at night, the cinema houses were screening revolutionary films and art ensembles gave numerous performances showing a highly national artistic character.

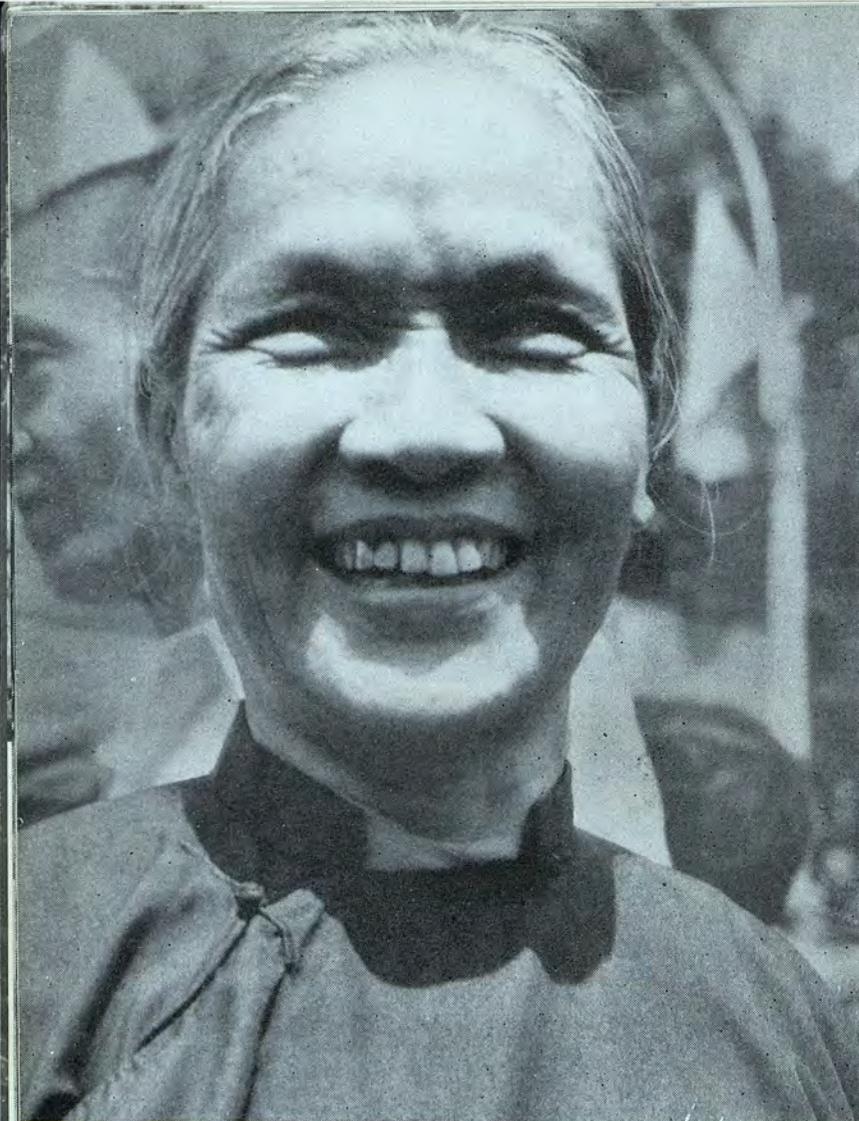
Meanwhile, people's revolutionary committees were set up in every district and quarter and made their public appearance. In Ban Co district, one of the most populous working people's residential districts of Saigon, Mrs Tran Huu Hanh, a teacher of the Phan Dinh Phung primary school, was appointed president of the people's revolutionary committee. This woman who had many times been arrested and deported by the Nguyen Van Thieu regime for her persistent struggle against oppression and dictatorship, today solemnly read a proclamation on behalf of the revolution, declaring the abolition of the old reactionary administration and the setting up of a new administration, a new life in Ban Co district.

A new era has begun for the people of Saigon, an era in which the Saigon population and the entire South Vietnamese people are taking their destiny into their own hands, when they will endeavour to welcome the aftermath of war to rebuild their homeland in national reconciliation. Saigon, from where 64 years ago President Ho Chi Minh went abroad in quest of a way of national salvation, today is joining with the entire nation to set out with great enthusiasm on a new stage of the revolution.

Passing the "Independence Palace" after liberation, the Saigon population is no longer haunted by the fear of being shot dead.

Traders and businessmen join in public activities.





Mother Pham Thi Tuyet, in the Yen Do sector, has just been freed from the US-puppets.



The first helicopter of the PRG landed on Tan Son Nhut airport on May 2, 1975.



At the Saigon Post Office: people wait for their turns to send telegrams to the North after 30 years of separation.



"Liberated Saigon", Saigon's new daily newspaper, is eagerly devoured.

HO CHI MINH CITY BLOSSOMS...

(Continued on page 14)



These feet which had travelled thousands of leagues with "Uncle Ho's sandals" make their entry into the city bearing his name.

Photo : NGOC THONG



Upon our arrival at Saigon on the first day of its liberation, we were surprised to see that the electricity and water were still working! At night, the streets and shopping centres were bathed in light (see the Ben Thanh Market Sector in the photo above), though the war had ended only six hours earlier.

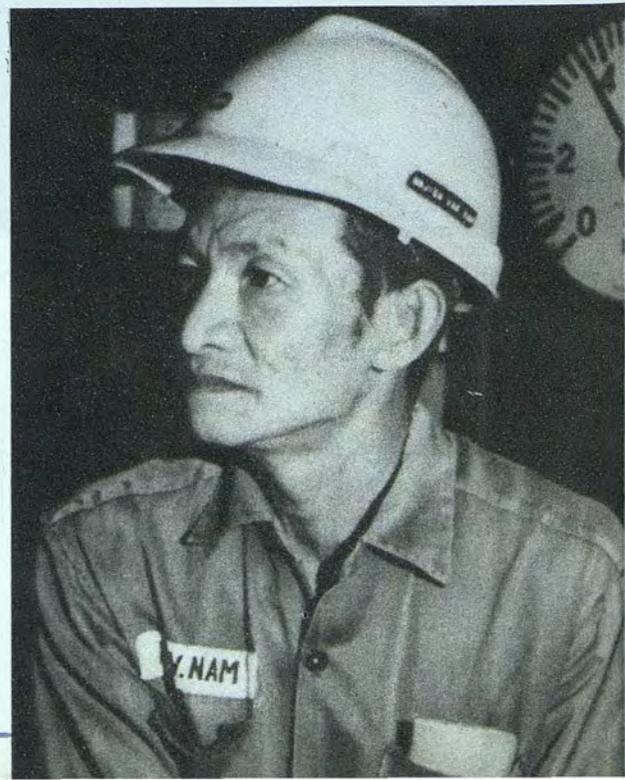


We went to see the workers of the Cho Quan Power Plant. "Thank you for your contribution to the management of the city by our revolutionary forces," we said. Engineer Bui Van Nghiem, Director of the Plant, replied with a broad smile: "We've long prepared for this day and now it has come." Bui Van Nghiem has worked at this plant since 1969, after he graduated from a College for the formation of electrical engineers in Paris (France). He refused to join the "exodus" proposed by the Americans and stayed back, together with his personnel, to defend the plant. Why? Because "only now does the plant really belong to the people and do we really become its masters!" he said.

THEY KEEP THE ELECTRIC CURRENT UNINTERRUPTED

THANH DICH - TRAN HO

"I'm very, very happy" said Nguyen Van Nam with great emotion. "So, I'm ready to accept any job! I've worked at this plant since the time of the French colonialists. Thirty one years of work and suffering! I personally participated in many workers' struggles at Cho Quan: in the past we went on strike to demand the improvement of our living conditions. Now that the revolutionary army, has liberated the city we have become masters of the plant. We'll certainly work much better than before!"





The plant remained intact. No worker had evacuated. Not a single screw was lost. Nguyen Van Cung (centre), Huynh Van Rang (left) and Nguyen Van Ba (right) are three very different people but each one determined to protect the plant. Nguyen Van Cung related to us :

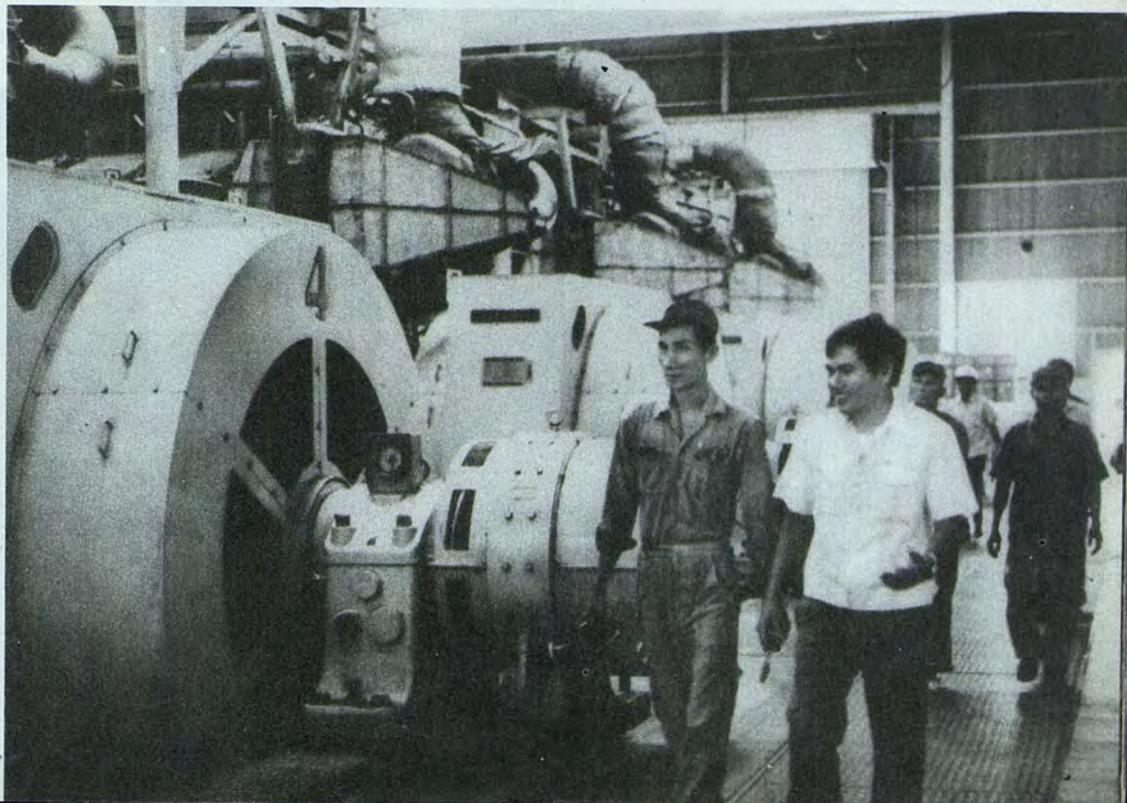
"Before their flight the Saigon puppets ordered their men to destroy the plant. But, seeing through the enemy's schemes, we had taken appropriate measures to protect it.

"A concrete plan was worked out and successfully put into effect : the puppet troops guarding the plant were called on to cross over to the people's side ; the workers remained by the machines while the office personnel were entrusted with protecting the documents. A self-defence force was set up under the command of Huynh Van Rang. He was the first to climb up onto the roof of the plant to hoist the NFL flag as the Liberation forces entered the city."

"We burned with impatience at the news of the liberation of Da Nang and Nha Trang," said Nguyen Van Ba, a fitter, in an enthusiastic tone. "One fact was certain : Saigon would be liberated ! We prepared everything so that the current would be kept flowing under any circumstances. Many electric lines were cut by bombs and shells. But we have worked tirelessly to repair them..."

In this spirit the cadres and workers at the Cho Quan Power Plant have discussed plans to increase electric production. Nguyen Van Chen (right), a young technician, puts much confidence in the common plan :

"Our plant had six boilers which were discarded when we started using fuel oil-fired boilers. Now that the boilers are back in operation we'll certainly have more electricity for the city. Our country is rich in coal. It's a splendid idea to use coal as fuel for our power plant."





The Saigon-Gia Dinh population meets in front of the former presidential palace of the puppet administration to warmly welcome the Military Management Committee's appearance before the public.



The revolutionary flag again flutters high on the Thu Ngu flagpole at Nha Rong Wharf where President Ho Chi Minh left in quest of a way for national salvation.



These three Liberation combatants captured two generals of the puppet administration.

Bach Dang port in Saigon on the evening of the festive day.

"Fish and water" solidarity between the army and people.



The bustle of Ben Thanh market after liberation.



HO CHI MINH CITY BLOSSOMS..

(Continued from page 10)

Photos : NGOC THONG, LE BA and HO HAI

COMBATANTS OF THE PHU XUAN UNIT

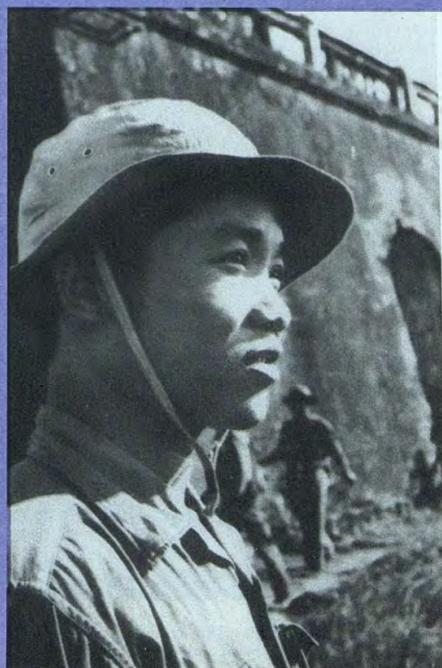
TAN TUONG



At the foot of the Phu Van Lau flag post 30,000 people and the Liberation armed forces in the city held a meeting to welcome the victory.

Company commander Nguyen Manh Em, who twice (1972 and 1975) took part in a shock unit to hoist the revolutionary flag over the city.

Below, right to left : ★ The delegation of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam led by President Nguyen Huu Tho visits the Phu Xuan Unit. ★ Patrolling the city together with its homeguards.



◀ A 34-square metre flag was hoisted on V-Day.

PASSING through two brick vaults of the Old Citadel, company commander Nguyen Manh Em led us to visit the combatants guarding the flag pole, an important target in the recent offensive to liberate Hue City.

The red revolutionary flag fluttering in the blue sky 60 metres up could be seen from a long distance from the city.

In 1968, the combatants of Phu Xuan unit once overran a dense network of enemy posts in the areas surrounding the city and then stormed the Chanh Tay Gate deep in the centre to seize the flag pole. The US and its stooges at that time made all-out efforts by sending 54 battalions covered by tanks and aircraft to launch frantic counter-attacks against the Liberation fighters. However the revolutionary flag still fluttered majestically above

Hue city for 25 days of glorious offensive and uprising.

Nguyen Manh Em was among these staunch fighters. This time he again joined in the liberation of Hue as commander of a shock unit whose task was to make a deep thrust into the enemy's den.

These combatants of the Third Company had spent many years clinging to areas around Hue, so now, when assigned this task, they were overjoyed and very moved. All of them volunteered to assume yet heavier tasks. Many of them such as Mac and Quang who had not yet recovered from long illnesses, got out of their beds and earnestly asked the political instructor's permission to take part in the fight.

A nine-member death volunteer squad was formed with company commander Em as head.

They spent ten days marching at great speed without respite. In spite of their swollen feet, they seemed to have wings during an advance in which they had to fight hard to clear the way for other units' offensive. In face of the powerful attacks by the Liberation armed forces in all directions the enemy disintegrated and fled in great confusion, leaving behind, along the roads, tanks and artillery pieces.

"Lightning Speed! More lightning Speed! Daring Actions! More Daring Actions!"

These were the orders from the superiors, and the Liberation artillery cut all the enemy retreat routes.

The Huong (Perfume) River and Ngu Mountain were visible before them.

Nguyen Manh Em ordered the

unit to overrun Bach Ho bridge, overwhelming the enemy resistance.

Thirty five minutes later, the revolutionary flag was hoisted on the top of the mast. Waves upon waves of people from all districts and quarters poured into the streets to welcome the Liberation combatants.

Nguyen Manh Em and his comrades held high the "Staunch Offensive and Uprising" flag and advanced through the Chanh Tay Gate into the Royal Palace.

Today, in the streams of people from Dong Ha market to Trang Tien bridge and the Phu Van Lau flag post, we again met with the Phu Xuan combatants in their olive uniforms, maintaining security and order in the streets of completely liberated Hue city.

I'm getting on for 70, but I have never felt so happy as today, the day of the liberation of Hue.





**HUE, AS ALWAYS BEAUTIFUL
AND POETIC**

At the Faculty of Letters I talked to Thai Thi Ngoc Du, who told me she had taken a doctorate of geography in France in 1971 and had returned to the country to teach in 1972. I asked her :

"After so many years under the influence of the depraved culture of the imperialists, how does it come about that Hue has remained so beautiful and poetic?"

She answered with a smile : "The poet To Huu has written these lines about Hue :

*O Hue of a thousand years, Hue,
my city !*

*The road leading to you will join
that leading from you,*

*Like a child returning to her
mother's birthplace,*

*You'll return to the bosom of the
Republic.*

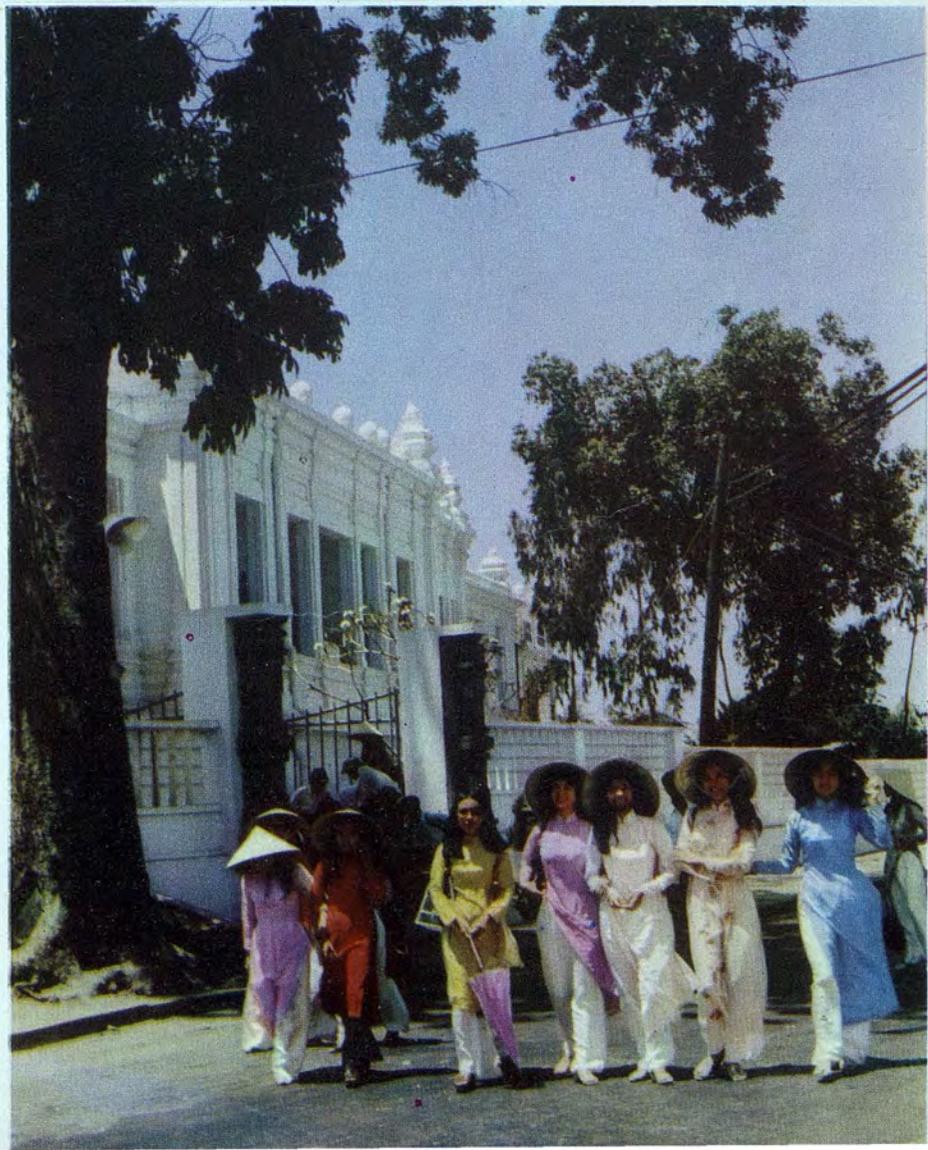
"At present Hue has returned, full of joy, to the bosom of the Republic. The city is endowed with a long tradition in national culture. Combined with the persevering fighting spirit of her population, this tradition has maintained for her a very definite style of life. Together with other strata of the people, the youth, students and teachers of Hue have struggled for long years against the enslaving neo-colonialist culture of the American imperialists, against the militarization of the schools, for university autonomy and for democracy in education. Today

The revolutionary flag of independence and freedom will for ever flutter in beautiful and poetic Hue.

TRUNG BO REVISITED

*Text : NGUYEN THANH DICH
Photos : NGUYEN THANH DICH
TRONG THANH, MANH TAN
and HO HAI*

In front of the Cham museum in Da Nang.



those seeds of revolution have sprouted."

Thai Thi Ngoc Du is also a member of the national liberation committee of the city. She has a heavy workload: the business involved in getting the college re-opened after liberation, the working out of a curriculum, political work among the women... But to me she looked relaxed and confident. About her teaching job she said, "I teach geography but I am only too conscious of the gaps in my knowledge of the subject. I haven't had occasion to travel the length and breadth of the country to do the necessary field work, and research documents are so scanty here. Once the country is reunified I'll visit the socialist North. This will help make my lectures richer in content and more vivid."

I am sure that her wish and that of thousands of young people and intellectuals in Hue will be fulfilled, and that they will do a great deal for the country.

THE STRENGTH OF THE NATIVE LAND

Here I am in the land of Quang which stood in the van of the anti-US struggle. And here I come to Quang Ngai, my native province, famous for the battle of Van Tuong in 1965, at the start of the era of victorious battles against American troops.

The enemy troops have left, but the traces of their hobnailed boots are

still visible in this landscape full of mourning and suffering. Along Highway One, the roadside is lined with wrecks of military vehicles and ruins of military posts. A new life, however, has begun after liberation, the most striking image of which is the long columns of men walking or riding in lorries heading back for their native lands. They have destroyed the concentration camps in which they were kept and flattened the barbed wire entanglements. They have pulled down the huts in which the Americans and their puppets forced them to live a transient and dependent life. The native land is calling them back.

Mingled with the crowd of returning displaced persons I came back to my mother's birth-place after twenty years' separation.

At first I felt bewildered and confused. The land is now a wilderness of tall grass and low bush. Nothing remains of the villeges and hamlets of yore, with their cottages, pagodas and temples. Nothing remains of the bamboo hedges where the wind sang in the summer. The areca and coconut palms of my childhood are no longer there. And gone are the curved roofs of the village communal house and the tall banyan trees in the shade of which buffaloes used to rest at noon when the sun was beating down hard.

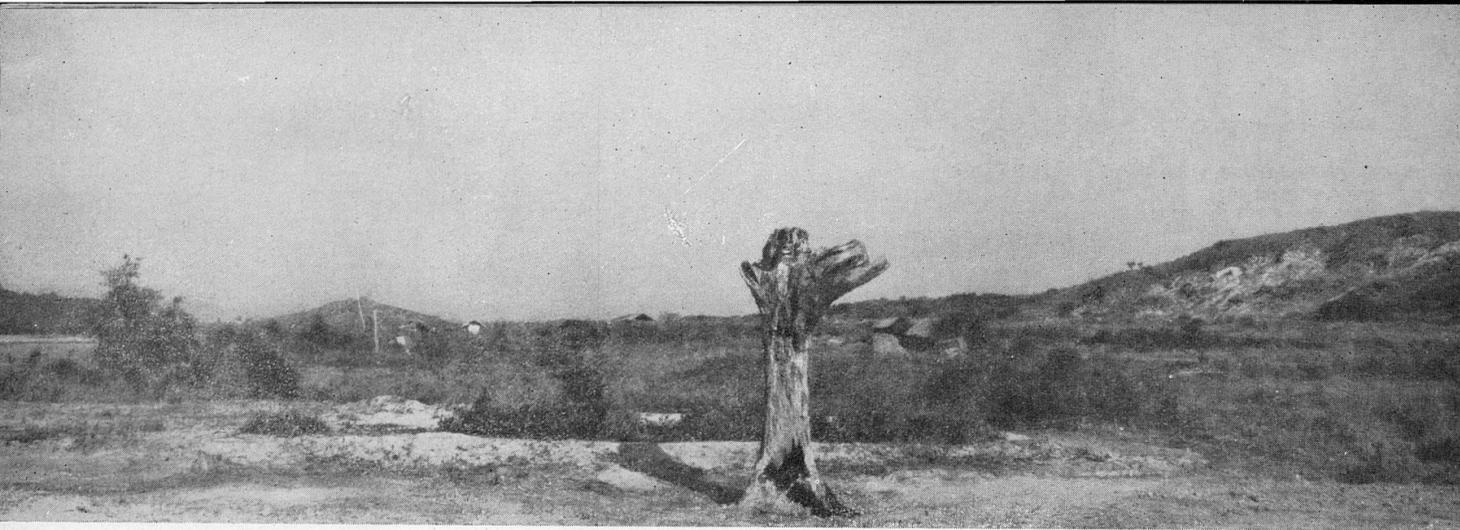
"American tanks came here on three occasions," my nephew Phuong told

Thai Thi Ngoc Du, Doctor of Geography, lecturer at the Faculty of Letters in Hue city. ▶



In liberated Hue—Learning new dances, their movements are still a bit awkward.





"American tanks came here on three occasions", my nephew living in Quang Ngai province told me.

me. "The troops destroyed the houses, bulldozed the shelters, killed people and exhibited their impaled heads in the market-place. I fought with the guerillas. We killed dozens of American aggressors."

There was a tin-covered hut by the roadside. I stepped in. There was a man inside - Mr. Tinh. He recognized me as his former neighbour, hugged me and burst into tears. Tears also welled in my eyes. He talked to me about the past, the changes that had happened, those of our relatives who had died...

"I've rebuilt my house many times," he said, "and this won't be the last. For I'll pull down this tin hut now that the country is fully independent. I'll build myself a decent house. Our people are not used to living in tin huts."

Before my eyes, stretches of ripe rice lay next to patches still overgrown with grass. People were erecting bamboo huts on the sites of their old houses. A new life was beginning.

I HAVE NEVER SEEN OUR LAND SO BEAUTIFUL

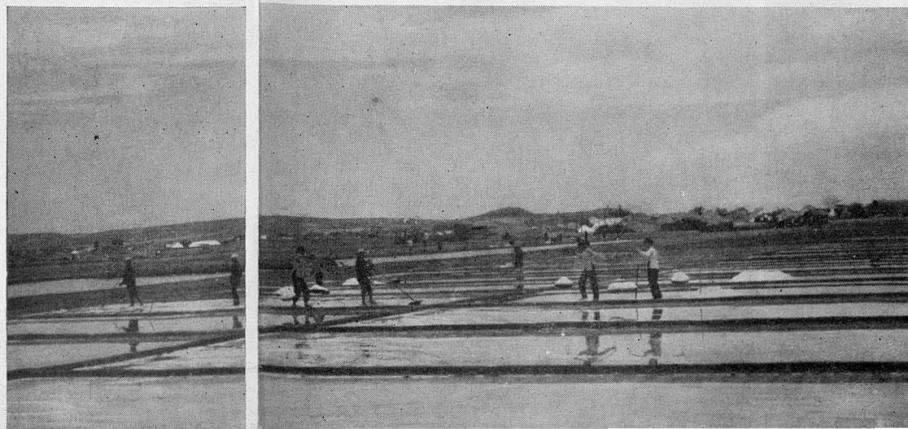
Highway One runs along the coast, up and down slopes, through the Hai Van pass, Sa Huynh, Qui Nhon, Tuy Hoa, Nha Trang... White clouds were drifting in the deep blue sky. The roadway still bore the track marks of the PLAF tanks which had launched a lightning thrust into the enemy's den along it. It had been raining during the night and the landscape looked fresh and beautiful. These are probably among the most beautiful stretches of the 2,000-kilometre-long highway. There is a strange harmony between mountain, river and sea. Mountains wade into the sea and foamy waves wash



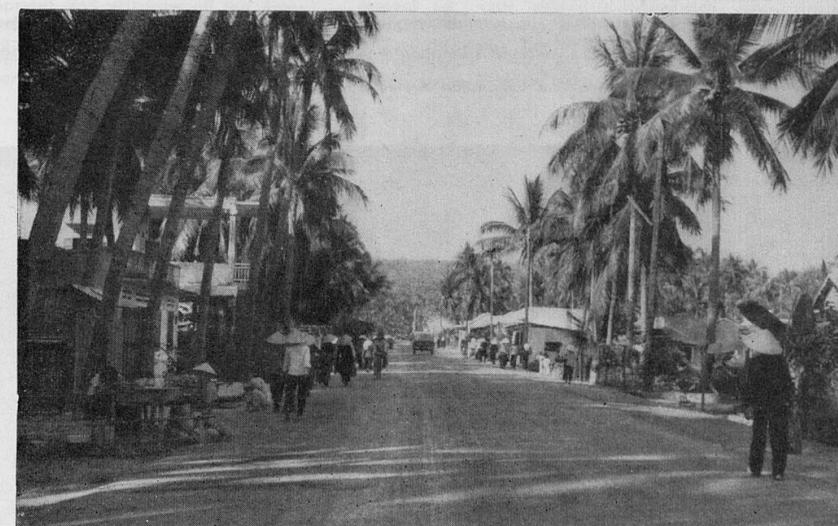
Returning to their native village.



Restoring communications as quickly as possible.



- Clockwise from right :
- ★ A bumper crop in Binh Dinh province.
 - ★ Tuy Hoa's shady coconut-palms.
 - ★ The air and sea of Binh Thuan belongs for ever to the people.
 - ★ Phan Thiet salt marshes.
 - ★ A docker of Da Nang - one of the new masters of the port.



their foot. Rivers hug mountains and wind around gentle villages. Fertile fields, immense salt-marshes and sandy beaches... The blue-and-red flags of victory flutter everywhere. In Trung Bo nature is truly generous. Our car runs past large palm groves of Binh Dinh and Phu Yen. The toxic chemicals sprayed and bombs dropped by Ame-

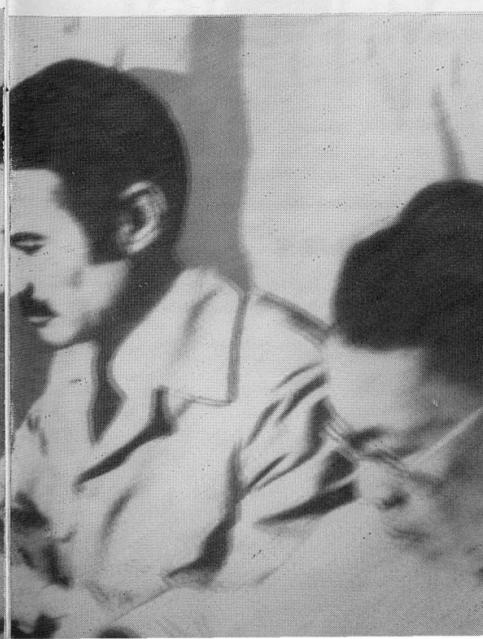
rican aircraft failed to destroy them. The coastal waters are rich in fish and shrimps. Phan Thiet, the last town before we leave Trung Bo, is renowned for its fish and fish brine, the famous nuoc mam. As I walk in the streets of Phan Thiet filled with the characteristic smell of nuoc mam, I feel proud of the wealth and beauty of our country.

TOGETHER THE INDOCHINESE PEOPLES ARE EMBARKING ON A NEW ERA

Photos : HOANG NHU THINH, THOONG KHAM and Viet Nam News Agency

Below left to right :

- ★ Heading the march of the revolutionary forces, the Liberation flag flutters high everywhere in South Viet Nam.
- ★ Savannakhet people welcome Liberation troops coming to join in the defence of their province capital.
- ★ The Cambodian National Liberation Armed Forces march into Kompongcham city.



Far left: Graham Martin, US ambassador in Saigon, about to quit South Viet Nam.

The US Charge d'Affaires in Laos signs the accord agreeing to the dissolution of ARVN in this country from May 25, 1975 (left).

Stromytko, John Gunther Dean, US ambassador in Phnom Penh, pulls out of Cambodia (April 12, 1975).



THROUGHOUT history hardly has there ever been such a marvellous coincidence: together three nations have fought and gained victory over the most cruel enemy of the time, and together they are embarking on a new era full of promise, that of independence and freedom.

This is no chance occurrence: all the three Indochinese peoples had to face a common enemy, US imperialism, the ringleader of the imperialists, which appointed itself an "international gendarme" to block and crush the national liberation movement, and check and expel socialism from this part of the world. Over the past decades the Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodian peoples have gone through thousands of difficulties and hardships and suffered untold sacrifices in life and property, but they have brought into full play their revolutionary heroism and have finally won glorious victory.

In Viet Nam, the first war of resistance, which lasted for nine years and ended with the victory of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, heralded the death of old-colonialism. The second resistance, lasting for 20 years, was marked by many resounding exploits culminating in the Ho Chi Minh camp-

aign which smashed the last lair of the US-puppets, and has ushered in a period when the US imperialists' neo-colonialism will be completely defeated.

In Cambodia, developing their persistent and indomitable struggle, the armed forces and people have defeated the aggressive operations mounted by over 100,000 American GIs and Saigon troops in 1970, the US air war, and the US neo-colonialist war waged by nearly 200,000 troops of Lon Nol, totally liberating their country.

In Laos, the people's long, hard and immensely valiant struggle was marked by brilliant successes—the declaration of independence on October 12, 1945, the signing of the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos and the signing of the 1973 Vientiane Agreement—and by recent achievements whose decisive character has allowed the Lao revolution to make a great step forward, forced the US to dissolve its Agency for International Development and withdraw all the American personnel and other foreigners from Laos, and led to the removal of the ultra-rightist agents of the US from the Provisional Government of National Union and the armed forces, and the

recovery of the cities, provincial capitals, townships and military bases formerly occupied by them.

By chasing the US imperialists, defeating the puppets and recovering the totality of their territories, the three Indochinese peoples have opened a new and immensely glorious page in the age-old history of each nation. A new era begins: that of eternal independence and freedom in which the peoples are masters of their own countries able to build a decent and happy life in peace for themselves and posterity.

Entering the new period, as Premier Pham Van Dong said in the report delivered at the First Session of the DRVN National Assembly (Fifth Legislature) held in June 1975, "We pledge to do our best to strengthen the unbreakable friendship between the Vietnamese people and the peoples of the two fraternal neighbouring countries—Laos and Cambodia—on the basis of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, lasting solidarity and co-operation, for the sake of security and the prosperity of each nation, and the sake of stable peace in this region and of the world."

THE news on the complete liberation of Saigon on April 30, 1975 at 11:30 hours spread like wild fire. Everybody "rejoices and feels relieved", as Swedish Premier Olof Palme said, "on learning that the Viet Nam war, has at last ended."

Messages have been sent to Viet Nam by the leaders of the socialist countries, fraternal Laos and Cambodia and many other countries.

In his message, Leonid Brezhnev, Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, said: "... This victory is a common victory of the peoples struggling for peace, freedom and independence, a victory of all anti-imperialist forces, a big contribution to the struggle for peace and security in Southeast Asia, on the Asian mainland and in the rest of the world."

The message of Mao-Tsetung, Chairman of the Central Committee of the

Chinese Communist Party, Chu Teh, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Chou En-lai, Premier of the State Council of the P. R. of China, read: "Your victory opens a new era for liberated Viet Nam and has a major historic and international significance. It is a very powerful encouragement for all the oppressed nations and peoples in struggle and constitutes a shining example for the peoples all over the world in their anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle."

Communist and Workers' Parties, progressive democratic organizations and many personalities and individuals have also sent messages of congratulations.

In many countries, Party and State leaders have gone to the Embassies of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam to share the joy of our armed forces and people. At the Embassy of the Republic of South Viet Nam, Fidel Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and Premier of the Cuban Revolutionary Government, expressed in these terms his sentiments and those of the Cuban people: "We consider this victory as our own. At this moment, I vividly remember our own victory day, the victory day of our revolutionary forces when we occupied the capital. Let me tell you that the emotion I felt on learning the news of the Vietnamese people's victory is comparable to what I felt on that day."

Meetings and parades have been held at many places, in Tokyo, Algiers, Helsinki, Caracas..., in factories, schools,

parks,... In Paris, amidst a forest of flags, posters and flowers, over ten thousand working people with the leaders of the French Communist Party in the van, paraded past the former embassy of the Saigon puppet administration, which had just been taken over by the Provisional Revolutionary Government. In Colombo, during a mass meeting in honour of the victories of Viet Nam and Cambodia, Premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike of the Republic of Sri Lanka, stressed: "The victories recorded by the Vietnamese and Cambodian peoples are a brilliant example for the world... No force can submit a nation which, persisting in its independent lines and relying mainly on its own strength, stands firmly determined to fight." In many countries, soirées, exhibitions and film-shows have been organized. Newspapers and reviews reserved their front pages for the Vietnamese people's victory; "L'Unita", central organ

THE WHOLE WORLD SHARES OUR JOY

of the Italian Communist Party, even put out a special issue.

Another form of sympathy, very practical for Viet Nam which is suffering the consequences of the 30 years of war, is economic aids and financial collections aimed at helping the Vietnamese people rebuild their country, stabilize life, restore and increase production. The USSR and the P. R. of China have each signed an agreement on urgent non-refundable aid to Viet Nam. An agreement on aid and economic co-operation has been signed with Algeria. The Finnish Government presented Viet Nam with 750,000 marks. 5,000 dollars has been donated by El Sebai, Secretary-General of the Asian-African Peoples' Solidarity Organization. The milk, rice, foodstuffs, medicine, medical appliances and clothes sent us by the Algerian people, the International Red Cross, the trade unions and democratic organizations of Japan, the Holland-Viet Nam Medical Committee, the Swiss Red Cross, and a pharmaceutical workshop in Syria, etc., constitute precious aid for our people.

The world people are happy. They are happy at the defeat of the most criminal aggression in history. They rejoice because the Vietnamese people are firmly determined to defend what is most precious and sacred for mankind, because, as Sara Lidman, a Swedish writer, said: "The Vietnamese people are resolved to defend each rice plant and each of their children, to defend the Vietnamese life—a life which is really a life", and because "the Vietnamese have enlightened the conscience of the nations."

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STORIES FROM SOUTH VIET NAM

TEARS OF GRATITUDE



Illustrations : NGUYEN PHAN

THE RED SUIT-CASE



Cartoons

Kissinger "evacuates".

by MURSCHEZ
West Germany's Die Zeit



The explosions, the calls from megaphones to remnants of enemy troops to give themselves up, and the hurrahs of the population made up a tremendous din. From a modest cottage on the roadside, however, we heard the cries of a newborn baby. The door was ajar. We went inside. The room was a shambles. The cries came from under a blanket on the bed. Quang, the political officer, pulled the thin coverlet: underneath there lay a young woman and her newborn baby, the two still linked by the umbilical cord.

I, the nurse, was ordered to stay and give all the help I could while my comrades resumed their patrol. I cut the umbilical cord, gave injections and bathed the baby. Fortunately there was enough hot water in a thermos bottle. The mother watched me but kept silent. Before leaving I put a tin of condensed milk and a pound of sugar on the table and said: "Everything is all right. Don't worry. Please accept these small gifts."

Suddenly the door of the wardrobe creaked open. Out came a man wearing the Saigon navy uniform.

"Please, don't go yet", he stammered. "I surrender myself to the revolution."

He told me his story. As the Liberation forces entered the city, he had run home: he wanted to take his pregnant wife to safety. Unfortunately, just at that moment, the throes came and she gave birth to a baby. A PLAF patrol might turn up any moment. The situation looked so hopeless at one time he thought they should smother the child and make their escape, but his wife would have none of it. Finally, when our patrol approached, he hid in the wardrobe.

"I was sure I would be shot on the spot," he said. Suddenly he burst into sobs. "Please forgive us," he stammered. "We were deceived into taking the path of treason."

The wife also cried. But their tears of repentance were also tears of joy and gratitude.

NGUYEN THAI SON

A motorbike carrying two PLAF men drove into the quarter close to the Duc An church. The two men asked for the house of Ho Thi Minh Nguyet. Some kids took them there.

It was still early in the morning and Mrs Nguyet was still in bed. Answering the knock on the door, she asked sleepily: "Who's there?" "Please open, we're PLAF men," one man said.

Mrs Nguyet was a bit frightened. She thought of her husband, a Saigon armyman who had fled... Something might have happened to him!

The door opened hesitantly. But then Mrs Nguyet caught sight of something that gave her quite a shock: a PLAF man was holding in his hand a small red suit-case. She flung the door wide open and invited the men in. A recent train of events flashed through her dazed mind: The day the PLAF attacked the town, her husband had taken to flight together with his fellow-rangers. They went to Phu Bon, it seemed. That very night, one of his friends, a man named Do Trong Tai, knocked at her door and asked to be given refuge for the night. He looked haggard and exhausted. Seized with pity, Mrs Nguyet agreed. When she woke up in the morning the man had left, taking with him the red suit-case where she had packed all her valuables.

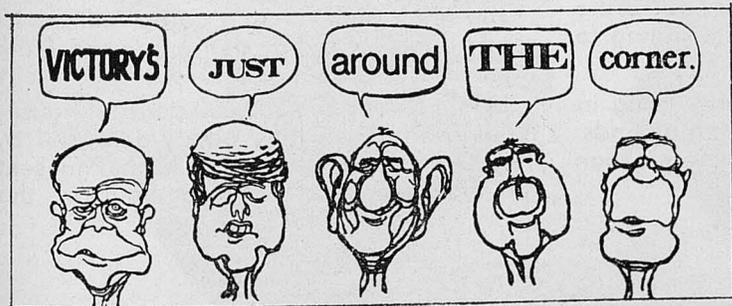
And now, here it was, her precious suit-case, over the loss of which she had grieved so much. Rubbing her eyes, she stared at the red-leather pouch, thinking she might be dreaming.

"We caught Do Trong Tai," a PLAF man said gently. "He admitted having stolen this suit-case from you. When we opened it, we found inside two watches, a sum of 180,000 piastres and some jewels. You can have everything back."

But by now Mrs Nguyet had little thought for her valuables. A strange emotion had welled up in her heart and she burst into sobs, unable to say even a word of thanks.

PHUC AM

Five US presidents: one refrain
by PETERS
Dayton Daily News (USA)



THE DRVN IS 30 YEARS OLD

THE ANTI-US STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL SALVATION IN THE 1965-1968 PERIOD

Having been defeated in their "unilateral war" strategy (1954-1960) and "special war" (1961-1964), in mid-1965 the US imperialists recklessly stepped up the war carrying out a "limited war" in the South and an air and naval war of destruction against the North.

In the four years of the first phase of their war of destruction, the US imperialists fiercely attacked the cities and other urban centres. Many province and district capitals were razed to the ground. Many dykes, irrigation networks, schools, medical establishments, sanatoriums, churches, temples and pagodas became targets of the US planes.

Under the leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, however, the heroic armed forces and people in the North waged a resolute, universal and nation-wide people's war driving the US imperialists to ignominious failure. From August 5, 1964 to October 30, 1968, they shot down 3,243 American jet planes (including 6 B.52s and 2 F.111As); killed, wounded or captured thousands of air pirates; and sank or damaged hundreds of US commando boats or war vessels. Thanks to a rapid ideological preparation and a shift in organization in the building of the economy and the strengthening of national defence to meet the new situation, the building of socialism in the conditions of war time continued to record new developments especially in the different branches of agriculture, the regional economy, transport and communications, public health, education, literature and art.

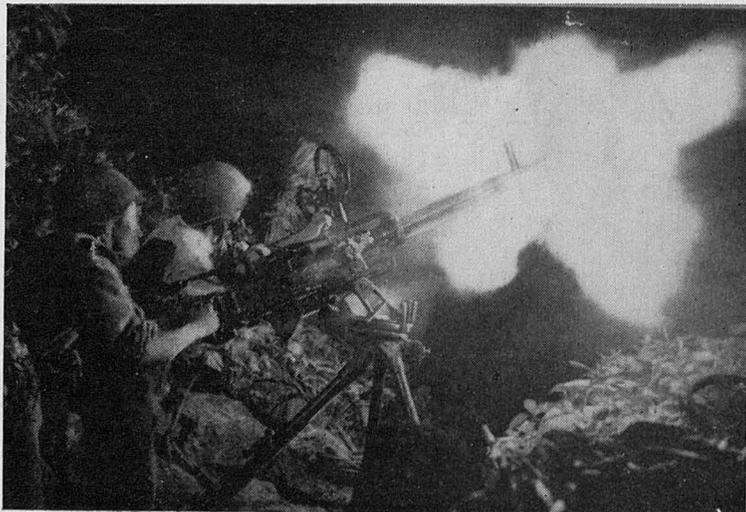
By 1967, 2,552 agricultural co-ops and 40 districts and province capitals had reaped 5 tons of paddy or more per hectare per year. The proportion of industrial production in the national economy had risen to 49.5% as against 17.2% in 1955. In 1968 the whole of North Viet Nam had 12,000 general education schools, over 30 higher learning establishments and 200 vocational schools (each village had a second-level general education school and each district had a third-level school).

Meanwhile, in the South the US-puppets were heavily defeated in their 1965-1966 and 1966-1967 dry season offensives. In early 1968, the heroic armed forces and people of South Viet Nam launched a general offensive and simultaneous uprising in more than 40 cities and provincial capitals among them Saigon. 630,000 enemy troops (including 230,000 American GIs and satellite mercenaries) were put out of action in this year.

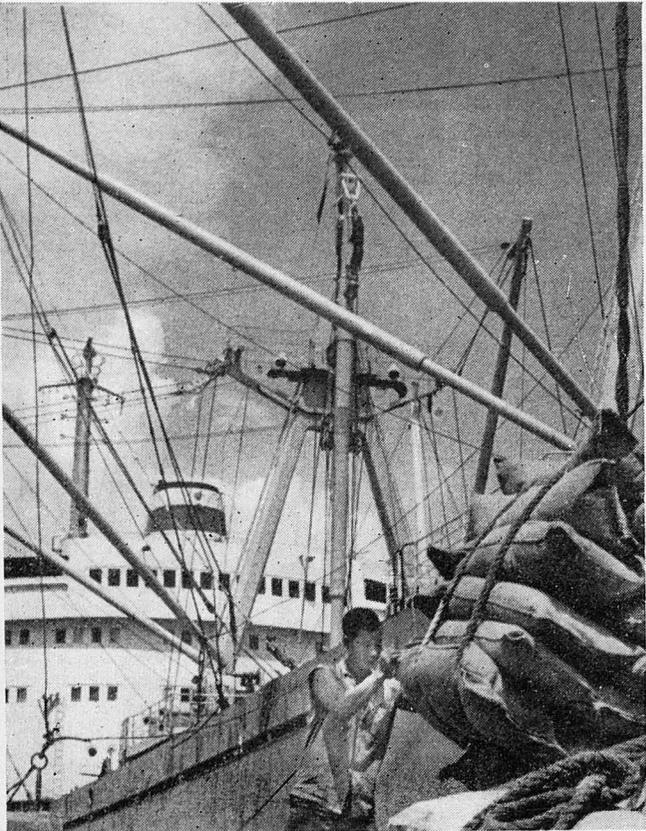
In late 1968, the US Government had to hold talks with the representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and those of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation at the Four-Party Conference in Paris.

In four years of resistance to Johnson's air war of destruction, the combatants on the heroic island of Con Co brought down 48 planes of various types sent by the American aggressors.

Photo: VNA



On a wharf at Haiphong port, rice is being loaded onto a ship bound for the South.



The Nam Dinh Textile Mill turns out an extra 320,000 metres of cloth in the emulation movement to greet the liberation of the South.

THINKING OF THE BELOVED SOUTH

Text : HOANG HANH
Photos : TRAN PHAC,
DUY NHAN, NHU KHUE
and HOANG HOA

*Oh, so much joy comes that one cannot
contain one's tears,
Of one's whole life, only today counts !*
LE DUC THO (!)

Time seems to stop its flow.

In the street a little girl comes up to a war invalid leaning on his crutches and silently puts some flowers in his hand.

An old woman watches the dancing and singing crowd, tears trickling down her cheeks.

People hug each other. Strangers shake hands warmly...

Yes, there are such big moments in life, when one isn't quite sure whether it is dream or reality. One weeps for joy, for reality is even more wonderful than dream.

That extraordinary moment came to the people of North Viet Nam at 5.30 p.m. on 30 April 1975 when news came over the radio that "Saigon had been liberated."

70-year-old Doan Van Binh, whose three soldier sons have been absent from home for eight years now, told a news reporter : "Much work is awaiting my sons. But if the army still needs them, I am quite willing to have them stay on..."

A couple of the La Ha minority living in Muong Te, a remote corner in the highlands, gave their newborn son the name of Toan Thang (Complete Victory).

Nguyen Van Nham, an old worker at the Hanoi - Hue - Saigon shipyard, told his comrades : "We must work even harder for the sake of the South."

Turning out ever more products for the sake of the South !

Such had been the feeling of the 25 million people in the north of Viet Nam all along the 30-year-long fight for the reunification of the North and South under the teaching of Uncle Ho. With victory, this feeling has grown even stronger.

Barely a few days after the liberation of Da Nang, the North sent 100,000 tons of food and medicines to that city. Following the liberation of Saigon-Gia Dinh, all means of transport were mobilized to rush 200,000 tons of food there. As always, North and South share weal and woe.

In Nam Dinh, Pham Dinh Nghinh, a war invalid, contributed 650 kilograms of paddy, the result of several years' saving. Pham Duong and his wife, who had saved 4,000 *dongs* to build a house, said they would put the money in savings account instead, so that it could be used for the reconstruction of the South.

The Minh Sinh farming co-op fulfilled its yearly quota of paddy delivery to the State right after the spring harvest.

In Hai Duong the 200,000 peasant households overfulfilled their paddy deliveries by 10,000 tons ; the people of Vinh Phu sent the sister province of Tra Vinh, in the



South 480 tons of rice seeds. The Hai Hung farming implement factory sent 1,000 mechanical pumps and 10,000 hoes. The children of Hanoi contributed 10,000 books in the first drive to help their young friends in the South build a library.

Joy overwhelms everyone in the North and starts a seething emulation movement.

The Nam Dinh Textile Mill will turn out an additional million metres of fabric. The Haiphong wool factory produces an extra 20,000 kilograms of woollen yarn. The Mai Dong mechanical engineering factory increases its output by half as much again. The Hanoi pharmaceutical factory turns out an additional 14 million phials and 69 million tablets of medicines of various kinds. The Ham Rong phosphate factory fulfils its half-year plan 50 days ahead of schedule.

We must do still more, for the present and future. Every Vietnamese realizes that he should tighten his belt and work harder to rebuild the country. All feel great confidence in the future. As Uncle Ho said in his Testament:

*Our mountains will always be, our
rivers will always be, our people
will always be
The American invaders defeated, we
will rebuild our land ten times
more beautiful.*

(1) Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party. Special Advisor to the DRVN delegation at the Paris Four-Party Talks on Viet Nam.



★ The rebuilding of the Day dam has been completed ahead of schedule to greet the victory.

★ Night and day work goes on at the Hanoi - Hue - Saigon shipyard in Hanoi to build more passenger vessels for the sister city of Saigon.

The Minh Sinh farming co-op in Ha Tay province has been able to fulfil its yearly quota of paddy delivery to the State from the harvest of a single crop. All the rice delivered is of the best quality.



THINKING OF...

Celebrating V-Day in the capital.

Photo : NGOC DU

Front cover : Nguyen Thi Vinh, a member of the Saigon home-guard, at the meeting held in celebration of Viet Nam's great victory.

Photo : LE BA

Back cover : The whole of North Viet Nam pours out into the streets to greet the liberation of South Viet Nam.

Photos : NGOC DU, PHAN CANH



THE JOY OF THE DA NANG POPULATION

TRONG THANH

Wave after wave of people, their faces beaming with joy, converged on the commercial port to welcome the first cargoes of goods sent by the Central Committee of the NFL and the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam to the Da Nang population.

The Liberation ships approached the wharf amidst thunderous applause. Many people climbed on board, and warmly shook the sailors by the hand, talking with them as if they were long-lost relatives.

Tran Thi Ty, a docker, joyfully said to us :

"Since the liberation of the city we, the poor people, have been very happy, but we were still concerned about our future life. My stock of rice was already exhausted... But now this worry was over with : rice is coming. There can be no greater joy !"

After a pause, she added : "This is really a people's power ! The revolution has brought them not only freedom but also rice and clothing."

Everybody approved of Ty's words by handclaps and smiles. As for Mother Dinh Thi Mat, she held the rice grains in her hands, looking at them intently and lovingly.

The joy of the people in Da Nang is complete.



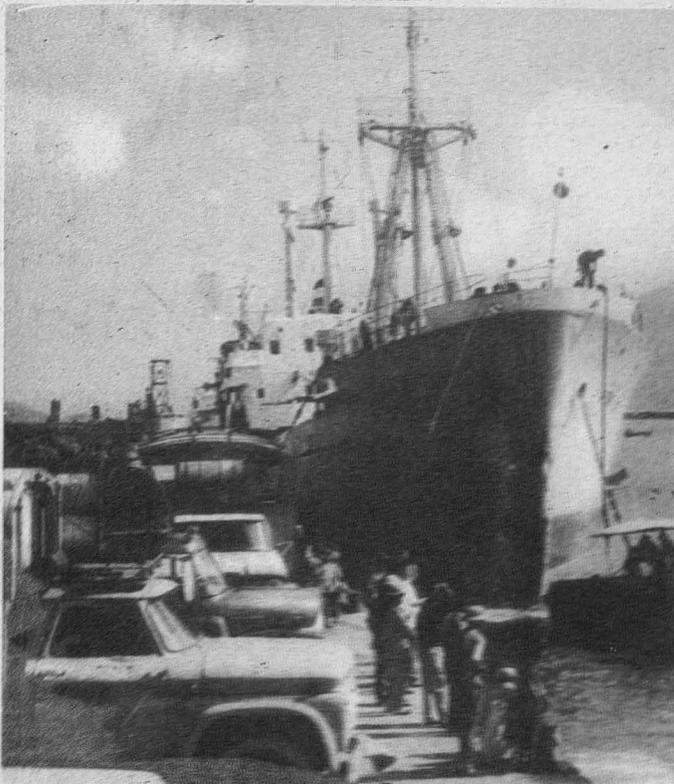
From top to bottom, and left to right :

★ "A warm welcome to the first convoy arriving at Da Nang port !"

★ Joy can be seen on everybody's face.

★ Those trucks wait for their turn to be loaded.

★ Rice grains imbued with the solicitude and affection of their fellow-countrymen.





Việt nam