

THE NEW GENERATION

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An Educated People

Vietnamese government and intellectual leaders recognize that illiteracy, insularism, tradition bind the thinking of too many of their countrymen.

Too many people, particularly rural people, have not grasped, or grasp only dimly, concepts of country, a common culture, national identity. They tend to the old concepts: family, hamlet, religion, clan.

Parochialism among the Vietnamese has contributed to many of the Republic's reverses of the past. Overcoming apathy toward government is a major objective of the widespread self-help projects of Revolutionary Development.

But parochialism and apathy, in Vietnam, are diseases of the middle-aged and old. Young Vietnam—children and the oncoming generation of adults—is another matter.

Students and older youth share the ferment of young people around the world.

And when the very young grow up, Vietnam will have an educated population and electorate instilled from childhood in doctrines of democracy, patriotism, country.

Even for a government oriented toward youth, to provide universal free education in Vietnam is no minor ambition.

It is a matter of starting almost from scratch.

In 1954, only 600,000 Vietnamese children were going to school. Most of them were leaving after the fifth grade.

Education was all but limited to sons and daughters of the rich, the important, the civil servants and other elite.

And almost all education was in the cities. Hamlet children, when they were big enough,

joined their parents at work in the fields.

What education there was based itself on the Nineteenth-Century French standards of eight decades of colonialism.

Today, free education—with modern methods and approaches—is being expanded in the cities, being spread deep into the hamlets.

Vietnam's government is responding in many directions to the demonstrated yearning of the people, especially the humble, to achieve schooling for their children.

For the Youngsters

By late 1966, there were more than 1.7 million children attending elementary school, nearly three times the figure for 1954.

There were more than 31,000 elementary teachers. With building continuing, there were more than 6,500 elementary schools in the nation, with nearly 31,500 classrooms.

By 1970, elementary enrollment is expected to reach more than 2.8 million. And to grow from there.

Elementary education forms the foundation for a broad Vietnamese plan calling for:

- A strong, flexible school system.
- Drawing its inspiration and guidance from the universities.
- Spreading into all parts of the country.
- With basic education for all citizens.
- Vocational, agricultural, technical schools.
- And, at the university level, training in the arts, sciences and professions.

The government maintains high priority for education despite the demands of war.



Learning to be a hamlet teacher, a young woman puts the finishing touches on a new globe as part of her training.

A number of foreign countries offer support.

Australia, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, New Zealand and the United Kingdom have sent teachers to work in universities and technical schools, have also given books or equipment, or money and material for university buildings.

Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands have made contributions of one kind or another.

The United States, through U.S.AID, puts help for education among its most significant programs of assistance to Vietnam. More than 80 Americans work in one phase or another of aid for development of the Republic's schools.

One U.S.AID project provides each elementary-school pupil with a set of textbooks—five to eight of them, depending on his grade.

The texts and illustrations follow tested modern patterns, adapted to Vietnamese terms and locales, gauged to the comprehension of the appropriate age group.

They treat both rural and urban scenes, talk about people who are neither too rich nor too poor, otherwise pursue credibility in the young mind.

The project involves preparation and printing of literally millions of books, many more than Vietnam's publishing industry can handle. Plants at Hongkong, Manila and Seoul produce most of the rest; others come from Australia, the Republic of China, Japan.

The texts are provided in 37 different titles, covering 10 different subjects. Nearly 7 million copies have been distributed in the schools; another 7 million are being held in warehouses against need, or are still being printed.

U.S.AID prints and distributes teacher guides to go with the textbooks. It provides classroom kits of charts and maps and other teaching visuals.

It helps develop educational radio for the schools, and, around Saigon, educational television. It supports seminars and workshops throughout the school system, which train teachers in the thousands to use the new materials.

At least in the elementary schools, the old system of learning by rote has been all but abandoned.

Science instruction is carried into the hamlets. Mobile units, supplied by U.S.AID, carry equipment and Vietnamese staff members trained in imaginative teaching methods. Up to 50 teachers a day borrow books and working models, learn to make science teaching aids from local materials.

Vietnam is concentrating initially on elementary education.

Some 660 secondary schools substantially answer the needs of about 350,000 students who have reached grades six through 12.

But plans are being made against the secondary-education explosion to come.

Higher Training

Elementary-grade teachers are trained or re-trained at five normal schools, with two more to be built by 1970. Secondary-school teachers study principally at Vietnam's universities, in Schools of Pedagogy.

The Ministry of Education is improving teacher-training at the universities, planning new textbooks for upper grades, developing new teaching methods. It is preparing to build comprehensive high schools.

Standard subjects will continue to be offered at these schools. But sterile old methods are to be replaced with modern techniques tested in demonstration high schools being built at two universities.

In addition, the Ministry's plans call for home economics classes, and industrial arts. Student guidance and counselling will be provided; student government will be encouraged, even parent-teacher associations.

Nor has the government neglected technical and vocational training.

To provide new skills for the new society, there are 30 rural trades schools, many of them new, for elementary graduates. They had nearly 8,500 students in 1966.

By 1970, there are to be 13 more trade and technical schools, more than 10,000 students.

Three agricultural high schools enroll 1,280 students; planning for 1970 calls for five schools and 2,800 students.

A business high school has 200 students, is being expanded to take 600.

A special institute is being expanded to train 500 vocational teachers at a time.

Better Universities

At the college level, Vietnam has an agricultural university at which enrollment is to be doubled (900 students) by 1970. A technical

and engineering center operates at Saigon, is being expanded to 1,600-student capacity.

There are government-operated universities at Saigon and at Hue. The University of Saigon is the larger: 23,000 students in 1966.

For the time it lacks a permanent campus. But the University of Saigon has a history.

Originally it was the University of Hanoi, in North Vietnam, a French-oriented institution dating to 1917.

In 1954, when Vietnam was partitioned, almost the whole faculty, a majority of students, picked up bags and some of the baggage, moved to Saigon to escape communist-style education.

The university now has faculties of law, letters, science, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, architecture and pedagogy.

Its present facilities are primitive.

The library needs books. The buildings are French administrative or military headquarters, even a former prison. Academic performance is handicapped by scarcity of qualified professors.

But projects for improvement hold out hope, and few at the university are discouraged.

Soon the institution will have its own campus. On a site at Thu Doc, nine miles from Saigon, some construction has started. U.S.AID has financed quarters for the Faculty of Pedagogy, complete with a model high school. New Zealand has financed a science building.

The various schools are being reorganized and strengthened one at a time. Teacher training has first priority, then letters, then law and the others. This approach avoids dilution of effort and funds.

The government-supported University of Hue is smaller (about 3,000 students in 1966). Here, too, construction has been in progress.

In October 1966, the University of Can Tho began as an institution of higher learning for youth of the 15 delta provinces. By the end of the first month more than 1,300 students were in attendance, including a large number of Government and Army officials. It had been anticipated that the new university would have an initial enrollment of 800.

Free Vietnam also provides scope for students who prefer education by religious bodies. There is a Catholic University of Dalat, in the highlands. And, at Saigon, the Buddhist Van Hanh University teaches in the areas of letters, Buddhist studies and social work.

In its effort to create chaos as a prelude to conquest, the Viet Cong has made a specialty of "executing" officers of provincial and local government.

From hamlet chiefs up, the list of communist victims is a long one. In a recent period of 18 months, 1,923 government officials met death or abduction at Viet Cong hands.

It is a toll that Vietnam—whose colonial rulers repressed leadership among the people—can ill afford.

But it is an example of Vietnamese fortitude that new officials take the place of the fallen.

If their experience in government is thin, if the number of qualified senior administrators is woefully low, the Republic nevertheless is doing something about it.

A keystone of training is the National Institute of Administration at Saigon. Here, young men and women—1,500 of them at present—train for positions of leadership.

The school stems from an institution established by the French in 1952, at a time they were trying to restore their acceptability in Vietnam. In 1957, it was moved to a new campus built by the government with U.S.AID assistance.

The institute provides courses ranging from night school for present government employees in Saigon to three years of fulltime study for administrators of the future.

There is a one-year course in local government, and a two-year course to train upper-level supervisors.

The institute's students are joining government service at the rate of 240 a year. Top graduates usually are assigned as deputy province or district chiefs.

Training in the field is another institute mission. Courses are held for military officers serving as provincial and district chiefs while Vietnam's constitution is written.

Incumbent village and hamlet chiefs are given training in new methods in a three-week course on their home ground—14,000 of them in 1966.

The government, meanwhile, has set out to streamline and simplify its own operations. A central committee in the Prime Minister's office directs a program of administrative reform.

As one high official puts it:

"My country needs men in government who serve, instead of demanding to be obeyed; men who can respond to a citizen's needs in five min-



Students at Phu Tho Polytechnic School learn turret lathe operations.



With U.S.AID help, a school for tribal girls was built and equipped at Go Den, in Ninh Thuan province. Vietnamese Catholic nuns give elementary education and sewing instruction to more than 100 girls, ranging in age up to 18.

utes instead of five days or five weeks.

"If man is the measure, and if he is trained well, then Vietnam's civil administration is going to meet the need."

The Aspirations of Youth

Work to improve the lot of refugees, or to help build schools in the hamlets, involves thousands of Vietnamese students.

Summer youth programs are among ways in which young men and women find outlets for their discontent with the past, their revolutionary aspirations for their country's future.

The government strives to encourage these attitudes. The Ministries of Youth and Sports, of Education, of Social and Cultural Affairs all enlist young people, particularly students, in projects for social development and national growth.

In the first effort, in 1964, a student relief corps, 800 strong, went into the countryside to help victims of disastrous floods.

In 1965, the first summer youth program enlisted 7,000 students in building roads, bridges, canals and public buildings in 27 provinces, as well as cities.

In 1966, more than 12,000 students took part in these or other projects. Among them:

- They helped develop, in 20 secondary schools, pilot programs to bring young teachers and students together, change the old French system into a new pattern of education—including civic action and effective student government.
- They conducted youth leadership seminars.
- They trained in community development techniques.
- They worked at 300 places in improvement and construction projects.

U.S.AID helps the government support youth programs with advice, funds in small amounts, some supplies. An American physical education adviser works with the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

American graduate students—30 of them in 1966—are brought to Vietnam as summer interns. They work in the provinces with U.S.AID and International Voluntary Service staff members.

They join Vietnamese student leaders in teaching, water and sanitation projects, farm improvement, organization of sports competitions.

Vietnamese young people are ardent sports fans, and participants. The government's youth program trains physical education teachers, develops village-level sports competition, encourages athletes and teams in national and international contests.

Some provincial and district capitals have formal youth centers. Those in Vinh Long province, in the delta, for example, have enrolled nearly 5,000 young men, nearly 3,000 young women.

Sports is only one activity. There are member-maintained reading rooms, handicraft classes, social gatherings.

Vinh Long young people built and maintain a concrete stadium at the provincial capital, a nearby youth headquarters comprising three buildings. Members give some of their time to improvement of nearby hamlets: footbridges, culverts, roads.

Government youth officers work in the villages. They, too, are targets for Viet Cong terrorists.

On a Monday afternoon in September, 1966, Le Van Y., youth officer of Tan Tue village in Gia Dinh province, next to Saigon, was passing through an alley on the way to his youth center. Two "strangers" shot him down with pistols.

The most dramatic single demonstration of youth's identification with the Vietnamese social revolution lies in a city neighborhood, Saigon's District 8.

District 8 was a riverfront shantytown of three square miles and 30,000 population. The people, mostly refugees, were prime targets, in their misery, for communist agitation.

Viet Cong agents slipped through District 8 easily, or hid among the squalor of packing-case shacks.

In 1965, a dozen student leaders petitioned the government to let them take over an entire province, to show what they could do in civic action.

Government leaders would not go so far as a province. But, in an experiment other nations might regard as daring, they handed the students complete control of Saigon's District 8.

The old district officials moved out. The young new leaders enlisted a thousand students in the cause, developed an improvement plan around the normal district budget of U.S.\$84,700.

They shoveled away trash. They dredged 30 acres of swampy dumps, dug drainage ditches

and reservoirs, built three miles of new streets.

They erected buildings—a hospital, 17 health centers, homes for 600 refugee families. A 19-year-old ran the bulldozer which cleared a site for the district's first high school, which the students are building.

Initially, cynical slum residents scoffed at what they thought would be passing enthusiasm. But after a few weeks of watching the students, many of the people turned in to help them work.

The government kept an eye on progress. A single U.S.AID adviser, Charles Sweet, himself a

young man, stood by with supplies and guidance. But mainly, the determined young men and women leaned on their own ideas and initiative.

In the first year, they had 200 separate projects complete or under way. Their work had generated construction worth U.S.\$254,200.

District 8 no longer harbored a concentration of Viet Cong infiltrators.

And an admiring government asked the students to take over two adjoining problem districts with a population, including District 8, of 600,000 people.



Before and after in Saigon's District 8. New housing units, built by the young people running the district, replace the shanties of yesterday.

The Building Continues For Peaceful Tomorrows



AS VIETNAM BUILDS

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War and Industry

Vietnam's most accessible deposits of coal lie in the North. The French, when they ruled the country, concentrated colonial industry around Hanoi and Haiphong where it was easy—near the coal, near minerals readily available for export.

They were content to leave the South to rice, rubber and tea.

Their railroads and highways primarily served French commerce. The French built few of either. Ordinary Vietnamese moved their goods—still do to a great extent—by bullock cart and sampan.

From this meager start, usually in the presence of warfare, the Republic of Vietnam has built a surprisingly active economy.

There is some industry, and more on the way. Wartime demands have strengthened, rather than strained, the channels of commerce. Agricultural yields, farm by farm, are increasing. Fishing shows dramatic development.

The Republic's future economy may not be that of "a little Japan," as some Vietnamese like to predict.

But it can be one of the bright economies of Asia.

The Viet Cong is a destructive enemy. To disrupt economic life in the Republic, it seeks to block the movement of goods, to seize or destroy civilian as well as military supplies, to burn warehouses, mine shipping, destroy power lines.

Or to "tax" transport, when communists covet money more than plunder.

Suffering this kind of aggression, it might be

considered remarkable that Vietnam has an economy at all.

But the fact is that stresses of growth create more economic problems than those brought by warfare.

The Vietnamese are talented and resourceful in commerce and trade. The wartime influx of men, money and supplies has made boom towns of Saigon, Danang and other cities.

New buildings rise in every neighborhood. It is the din of construction, rather than the noise of war, which creates the decibels in business districts.

There is some foreign investment in industry.

A paper mill, owned 18 per cent by an American firm and the rest by the Vietnamese government, is doubling its capacity to make printing and mimeograph paper, wrapping paper, paper for school notebooks.

An American company owns controlling interest in a big new condensed-milk plant, half interest in a textile mill.

Gasoline, fuel oil, lubricants are supplied by two American and one European companies. With the government, they are planning to build the Republic's first refinery.

The largest American enterprise—called RMK-BRJ—is temporary. But its work will be lasting when military needs are over.

This consortium of contractors is building the ports for Vietnam's future, laying down jet airstrips, erecting warehouses and hospitals. The projects are planned for ultimate civilian use.

But most of the capital for business enterprise and industrial expansion comes from the Vietnamese business community.

A Developing Economy

There were nearly no factories in the Republic of Vietnam a decade ago. Today, there are many. It is largely light industry.

In big and small mills, some 19,000 mechanical looms manufacture textiles—mostly cloth for uniforms and refugee clothing now. In peacetime, production will turn to materials for such garments as the flowing *ao-dai* dresses worn by the graceful Vietnamese women.

Factories mill rice, process or preserve food products.

A shipyard on the Saigon waterfront, complete with floating equipment, repairs seagoing vessels, soon will begin construction of lighters and other boats.

Nylon nets are manufactured for the important fishing industry. Sugar is refined.

There is production of chemicals, pharmaceuticals, glass, wire netting, batteries, bicycle tires and other rubber articles.

A factory in the planning state will manufacture automobile tires from Vietnamese-produced rubber. Two plants soon will be making steel pipe. A cement factory near Saigon will reduce imports of this vital commodity.

Vietnam's government encourages expansion and new industry. The Ministry of Economy helps manufacturers find sites, develop sources of raw materials, market their wares. It works to help manufacturers improve quality of their goods.

U.S.AID supports the Ministry in these aspects of industrial development. For the present, it provides most of the dollars for purchase abroad of raw materials not available in Vietnam.

And also to buy machinery to equip the factories.

This is a matter of currency. The Vietnamese manufacturer pays for what he imports in piasters, under the Commercial Import Program.

In 1966, Vietnamese industry added U.S.\$16.3 millions in capital equipment. As an indicator of growth, the figure more than doubled 1965 machinery imports.

Australia, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan all have made direct contributions to Vietnamese industrial development. The U.S. and other countries support trade schools to train tomorrow's factory workers, or provide scholarships abroad for future managers and industrial leaders.

The plastics industry did not exist a few years ago. Today it provides jobs for 2,000 people and goods for thousands of retailers.

More than 70 factories fabricate plastics, usually equal in quality to the imports they have replaced. They make sheets and wrappings, rain-wear fabrics, electric-wire coatings, house screens, vinyl tubing, water pipe.

Some of the smaller plants make household items like buttons, or toys. The stiffening material for the straight, high collars of traditional Vietnamese dresses is now a plastic material.

Textiles is one of the most important industries, and the widest spread. It gives employment to more than 80,000 women and men. Some of the factories have as many as 2,000 workers, operate as many as 40,000 spindles, 800 automatic looms.

From the United States, U.S.AID originally sent U.S.\$500,000 in finished textile machines. In recent months, the Vietnamese manufacturers placed orders for U.S.\$500,000 in follow-on spare parts for their American-equipped factories. A new order for U.S.\$2,180,000 in equipment is being filled.

Two scrap converter mills are in operation with U.S.-purchased equipment. Another one is being planned. These mills take surplus military scrap metal and convert it to angles, reinforcing rods, and sheet. Goal for these mills is 45,000 metric tons annually.

Agriculture

Eighty-five per cent of Vietnam's people live in the countryside. There are about 2 million farms.

It is the residents of farming hamlets who have borne the brunt of communist terror and invasion. Inevitably, total food production has fallen off.

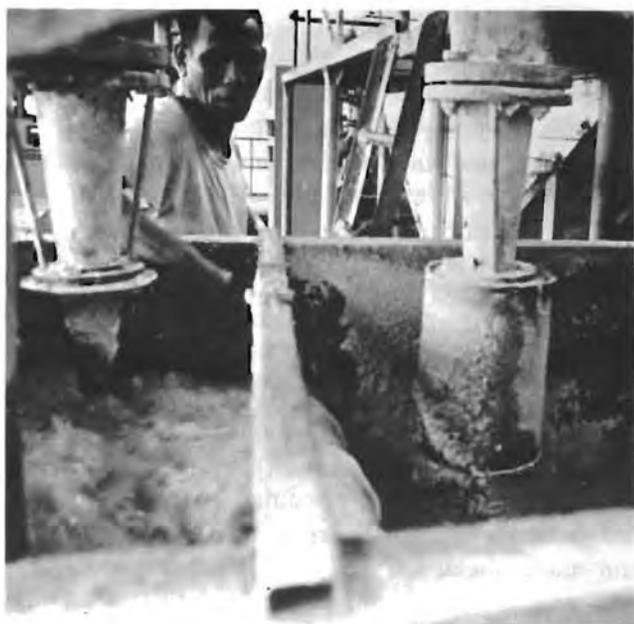
But hectare for hectare, in secure areas, food production is on the rise.

Part of the Vietnamese social revolution is a government program to change old methods, bring modern agriculture to the rice paddies and the fields.

As new areas are pacified, as farmers return to their land, government agricultural agents join them. They bring along fertilizers and improved seeds, teach techniques tested at government experimental stations.

Farmers receive this help with various degrees

Cong Ty Ky Nghe Giay Vietnam (Vietnam Paper Company) makes newsprint and other papers. A worker removes foreign matter from pulp.



More than 70 plastic factories make household and other wares which once had to be imported.

of acceptance. Livestock vaccination, for example, was viewed in the hamlets with deep suspicion at first.

Some farmers resist any kind of change. A few adopt new ways swiftly and with enthusiasm. Most can be shown, and are willing to learn.

The agricultural education program, running through the schools up to college level, brings youngsters back to the farm eager to convert parents and neighbors.

Among farmers themselves, provincial and district agents conduct regular classes and field demonstrations. More than 400,000 farm men and women have received this training—170,000 in 1966, more than that scheduled in 1967.

“Vietnamese agriculture is at a point where it can move ahead very rapidly, if the needed supplies and personnel can be brought to bear,” U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman observed after a 1966 tour.

Major Vietnamese agricultural products are:

- Rice, staple food of much of Asia, grown on about 20 per cent of the cultivated land. Where tested new seeds are used, production rises 21 per cent or more.

- Rubber, mainly for export. Plantations total 135,000 hectares, can produce 74,000 tons of raw rubber a year. But deliveries are down because of the war.

- Coffee and tea, for domestic consumption, some for export.

- Corn. Grown presently on about 37,000 hectares of land; tested new seeds raised production 20 per cent.

- Sweet potatoes. The government has distributed more than 250 million seedlings of proven varieties, raising yields 10 per cent. About 48,000 hectares are devoted to sweet potatoes.

- Fruit, mainly pineapple, grown on 52,000 hectares.

- Sugarcane. New varieties raise production 17 per cent; the government has distributed more than 8 million seed pieces. Grown on 34,000 hectares.

- Vegetables. Within five years, the government expects to provide farmers with tested new varieties of garlic, cabbage, soybeans, peanuts and other crops.

- Pork, principal meat of the Vietnamese. Hogs bred from American stock grow to nearly

double the marketable weight of the Vietnamese variety. The government distributed 44,000 piglets in 1965 and 1966; their progeny are replacing the local breed throughout the country.

- Poultry. Six government stations breed improved chickens; agricultural field workers distribute chicks (250,000 in 1966) and fertile eggs.

Diversification plays a big part in the farm program.

In one area, farmers who had been realizing 3,000 piasters per hectare for rice are earning up to 200,000 piasters for a hectare of onions—a new variety developed at a government experiment station from Texan strains.

The Farm, the Land

About 75 per cent of Vietnamese farms are small—up to two hectares in size.

Farmers themselves, with their wives and children, work their paddies or fields by hand, or use buffaloes or other draft animals.

A few big farms, mechanized, run as commercial enterprises. They number about 300; some raise as many as 100,000 chickens, or 5,000 swine.

The Republic's land area is something more than 17 million hectares.

Only about 3 million hectares are cultivated.

About 5.6 million hectares are classified as forest. Much land is jungle or swamp, not suited to cultivation.

But Vietnam is by no means land poor. Government authorities believe that 2 to 3 million hectares can be brought into use for additional farming.

Large reclamation projects await the future. But local irrigation development goes ahead despite the war. In many cases, farmers themselves supply the labor.

Canals, small dams, dikes, windmills move water to the land, or prevent salt water intrusion into the paddies. Water management is an ancient Vietnamese art; modern water management a matter of government concern.

In 1966, irrigation projects of one kind or another were under way in 30 of Vietnam's 43 provinces.

The Ministry of Agriculture, and other government agencies, work with local authorities in a countrywide approach to farming which is almost unique in Asia.

American support includes help of some of the men who are responsible for the continuing, dramatic U.S. farm revolution.

Early in 1966, President Johnson noted that the Vietnamese could use the assistance of some good American county extension agents. By September, the newly-formed U.S. Agricultural Advisory Corps for Vietnam had 14 county agents under training in language and tropical agriculture, getting ready to come to Vietnam. Others will follow.

As with all Vietnamese programs, agricultural development is intimately entangled with security. Vietnamese agricultural agents are a favorite target of Viet Cong terrorists.

But the work goes forward.

All 43 provinces have extension service workers, with 282 trained agricultural agents in the field.

Hundreds of other technicians work with them, or in the remaining provinces.

Despite the war, the government is able to extend farm programs to 60 to 70 per cent of the rural people. Among other things, government agencies, and field men and women:

- Publish, in the millions, magazines, leaflets and brochures to keep farmers abreast of developments and progress.
- Conduct radio programs to the same purpose.
- Operate laboratories which produce vaccines (at the rate of 6 million doses a year) against rinderpest, hog cholera and other diseases.
- Run a youth program, built around 4-H Clubs with more than 80,000 members. Farm boys and girls raise pigs, chickens, ducks, grow corn and rice, make compost; girls learn to sew, to prepare nutritious meals.
- Conduct campaigns to destroy rats, saving 100,000 tons of food a year.
- Help farmers develop co-operatives to provide credit, purchase of supplies, marketing of crops.

Assistance in farm programs comes to Vietnam from several foreign countries.

Australia has sent experts to work in dairy farming and crop protection, has contributed equipment for livestock and poultry breeding, an experimental dairy farm, new kinds of farm tools.

The Republic of China has contributed fertilizer, pesticides, power tillers and improved plows. And has sent 80 experts to assist in farm and

hamlet development.

France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have contributed to the farm program in one way or another.

Support of Vietnam's farm program is one of U.S.AID's most important activities. More than 250 American advisors take part.

Import of fertilizers, seeds, insecticides is made possible by U.S.AID.

It is only the presence of aggressors which prevents fuller development of Vietnam's agricultural potential. Over the years, considering resources of land, water and people, it is possible that the Republic's farm revolution may prove the most significant revolution of all.

Food from the Water

Fish is a principal source of food for the Vietnamese. Fishing is a major industry.

Along 900 miles of coastline, people in 20 provinces net, hook or trap salt-water seafood.

Inland, rivers and canals are fished. And in natural or artificial ponds, fish are bred, and fattened for the family or for market.

Vietnamese prawns and langoustine are plentiful, and superb. Finned fish are caught in great variety.

And they are eaten throughout much of Vietnam. If not as fish, then as *nuoc mam*, a sauce for enriching rice or other foods.

The manufacture of *nuoc mam* is itself a thriving if odiferous small industry. The sauce is made by leaching water through partially-fermented fish.

It is an effective method for utilizing protein in a hot land of little refrigeration and slow transport.

Fishing employs 250,000 Vietnamese. With 57,000 fishing boats.

Even so, the teeming waters have only begun to be exploited. It is a project of the Vietnamese government to improve and expand the industry—to provide even more jobs, enrich the national diet, bring in more hard currency.

Vietnamese seafood already is exported to France, Hongkong, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, the United States.

Salt water fishing is the more important. To develop it, the government:

- Builds icing plants and sanitary fish landing



Winnowing Vietnam's staple—rice. Tested new seeds increase yields 21 per cent.

Tommy Hsu, a farm technician from the Republic of China, talks to a farmer about his old-fashioned hoe. The Chinese demonstration station in Bien Hoa province is introducing hand-operated, wheeled hoes to Vietnam agriculture.



docks along the coast. Fifteen have been completed; others are under construction.

- Motorizes fishing junks, so they can go further afield in search of catches. Addition of an engine can add 300 per cent to a boat's production; 12,000 have been equipped thus far.

- Stimulates co-operatives—75 of them—with fishermen banding together to provide themselves credit for boats, engines and nets, to market their own catches.

- Gives modern, Vietnamese-manufactured nylon nets to poorer fisherman.

A Fisheries Institute at Saigon, with affiliates at major fishing centers, is to be established. Vietnamese staff members, trained abroad, will locate new fishing grounds, develop new products from the seas, new fishing techniques.

France, Japan and the United States support the government's Fisheries Directorate in these programs. An important U.S.AID contribution is currency for import of engines, and of nylon for nets.

Marine fishermen provide some 400,000 metric tons of fish per year. Fresh-water fishing, and fish cultivation, accounts for about 60,000 tons.

Farm ponds are among self-help projects in the hamlets. The government encourages farm people to build them.

It maintains 13 extension centers which provide technical advice to help farmers grow fish as a crop. And which distribute fingerlings for planting. Some 27 million young fish have been distributed for stocking.

In one recent two-month period, the people built themselves 250 farm ponds. Even the tribal peoples, in the highlands, are learning to grow and eat fish.

The main domesticated fish are the common and golden carp. Farmers feed them table scraps, cull vegetables, rice hulls. With government help, they fertilize the ponds to promote natural food for the fish.

A properly fertilized farm pond of a hectare in area can be made to produce up to 10,000 pounds of fish a year.

Fish farming is an ancient art in lowland Vietnam. In the highlands, it has been unknown until now.

The Viet Cong, seeking to discredit the legitimate government in all its undertakings, has

tried to prey on ignorance to discourage fishponds.

Carp from the ponds, the Viet Cong have told highland people, cause leprosy which the government wishes to inflict on the people.

A government fisheries agent, and a U.S.AID advisor, countered this attack by introducing ponds into areas infiltrated by the terrorists.

The hungry Viet Cong destroyed their own propaganda by catching and eating the fish.

Lifeblood of the Land

It starts somewhere high in the Tibetan Plateau, a trickle of water from melting snows. Some 1,500 kilometers later, by the time it reaches Laos, it is a river—the Mekong, broad and temperamental.

Slowly and deliberately it twists and turns for 2,500 kilometers. From the hills and mountains of Laos, through the dry plateau of Thailand, the forests of Cambodia, the delta of Vietnam, spilling eventually into the South China Sea.

Sometimes it stops along the way to irrigate a rice paddy. At other times it stops to flood an entire city—or the delta complex in Vietnam. It is not crossed by a bridge. It was not bothered by a dam until 1965.

More than 20 million people live within the eight million square kilometers of watershed of the Mekong. Four-fifths of them are farmers or fishermen, dependent upon the river for their livelihood.

For centuries they have used the river the best they could, hoping it would give them enough fish to eat, hoping it would irrigate their fields without destroying their crops.

Never have they tried to utilize the river's power; never have they tried to regulate its flow. The peoples of the Mekong have been masters of water, but not of the river.

The dream of converting mighty rivers to the service of man and his needs for more food, more electric power, a more abundant life, has come true in America's Tennessee Valley. It can come true in the long, long valley of the Mekong.

Because the pattern of centuries is changing in Southeast Asia. Dams to generate power and regulate the flow of water from the Mekong are being planned.

The idea of harnessing the unruly Mekong first attracted widespread interest in 1952 among



Vietnamese-manufactured nylon nets are given to poorer fishermen to help them improve their catches.

An American girl, of the International Volunteer Service, teaches in a delta orphanage operated by Irish nuns. The Vietnamese, staunchly supported by foreign friends, are determined that their children will grow in a land of freedom.



members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). They sponsored a preliminary survey of the area, examining it for possible development sites. This study was followed four years later by a more extensive examination by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

Positive plans to harness the Mekong were launched in 1957 when Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam formed the Mekong Committee. Composed of representatives from these four nations and staffed by the United Nations, the Committee directs all development projects along the entire river system.

It meets alternately in each of the four countries, and continues its work regardless of international political developments.

In a remarkable display of international cooperation, considering the politically sensitive atmosphere prevailing in the area, men and governments from all the world are combining their skills and resources to take control of Southeast Asia's greatest natural resource—the Mekong River.

The complexities of developing the river are immense. To build a dam anywhere along the system will affect conditions downstream. The task, therefore, is not one of simply building a string of dams, but to create an integrated system of projects which will ensure benefits for all the peoples along the course of the river.

A number of minor projects in the vast scheme have been completed, or are nearing completion. Most of the major projects are still in the blueprint stage.

By mid-1966, 54 teams from 25 nations were participating in a variety of Committee-sponsored projects. Under the direction of 12 United Nations agencies, these groups were aiding in the research, planning and actual construction of the many dams and canals needed to control the river.

They were carrying on extensive studies of the entire Mekong area as an economic unit. Economic progress cannot be achieved simply by damming the river and building a series of power plants. Along with increased electricity and improved irrigation must come an increase both in industry and in agriculture—and these increases also require improved communication and transportation facilities.

The task of the Mekong Committee is to see

that this entire economic development progresses as one unit so that none of the facilities created by mastering the river will be wasted.

Irrigation and power alone are not the answers to the complex problems of developing the Mekong basin. Some roads are being built. But many more will be required before the region can advance very far.

Schools are desperately needed, not only to eliminate the high illiteracy rate, but also to train future engineers and technicians.

And as the life span increases and the death rate—especially among infants—is reduced, new lands will have to be settled to accommodate the growing population.

These problems and many more will face the Mekong Committee in the next 20 years as it considers its proposals and selects its projects.

In their effort to develop the Mekong's potential for the good of their people, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam can count on the help of many countries. And the Asian Development Bank will provide additional capital for regional development. President Lyndon B. Johnson has pledged that he will ask the United States Congress "to join in a US\$1,000-million American investment in this effort. . . ."

A start has been made. During the next two decades, plans will be changed many times. Projects now being considered may be abandoned as new needs develop.

But the foundation for progress has been laid.

The Mekong River will still flow through its channel, not aimlessly and purposelessly, but harnessed to produce electricity for all the basin. The waters will still rise during the rainy season, not to flood and devastate, but to irrigate vast farmlands.

The capital and the other cities meanwhile get their power from thermal plants, and from hundreds of diesel generators imported by U.S.AID and the military.

The country's richest resource is its people.

The emancipated role of Vietnamese women is unusual for Southeast Asia. Women work in business, in factories, in offices, in government. They are educated to the same standards as men; often, they compete with men for the better jobs.

Union labor crosses all the lines of class, clan and origin, is a major force for unification. *Confederation du Vietname de Travail*, the national

labor organization, has 300,000 members in such diverse jobs as fishing, unloading ships, growing rubber.

Member unions range from the 60-man Swallow Nest Gatherers local at Nha Trang to the tenant farmers, with 80,000 enrolled.

CVT is staunchly anti-communist, staunchly pro-membership, independent of government—and it is growing. Strikes are not unusual in Vietnam. But they are the strikes of working men and women, not political organizations.

The central confederation prints its own newspaper. It sponsors refugee villages. It operates 21 social welfare centers for working people, some with kindergartens, elementary schools, medical clinics. Subsidized low-cost restaurants, even housing projects are part of the trade union picture, along with collective bargaining agreements and welfare funds.

There is a women's division, national in scope, headed by a woman.

The economy has demonstrated capacity to support and extend Vietnam's war against aggression. Economically, given the prospect of peace, the Republic's future is one of great possibilities.

As the enemy is driven away, Vietnam can begin to exploit its great capacity for export of rice. A 50 per cent expansion of land under rice cultivation is feasible.

With more fertilizer, more irrigation to permit more double-cropping, the Mekong delta alone is capable of growing 12 to 15 million tons of rice a year, against present production of about 4 million tons and domestic need for 5 or 6 million.

Heavy export of rice can bring hard currency for other development.

In the highlands, non-rice-eating people can be made self-sufficient in food after four or five years of peace.

Vietnam has the capability to grow enough cotton to meet its needs; it could become an exporter of pork. Rubber production can be increased, for domestic manufacture and export.

Sugar, grown in Vietnam and processed in Vietnamese mills, is another potential export. Coffee and tea can be grown in greater quantity.

Large stands of hardwood and pine timber in the highlands will be available in peacetime for forest products—paper, plywood, lumber, alcohol, tars, paint oils.

There are salt deposits along the sea. Resources exist for some chemical industries.

Because the French confined non-agricultural development to North Vietnam, the Republic has never been explored thoroughly for minerals.

There are calcium deposits. Some minor sources of iron are known, coal of inferior quality, some molybdenum. Excellent silica sands exist for glass and ceramic manufacturing.

Industries based on agriculture offer possibilities. Soil and climate suit oil crops—castor beans, sesame, palms which produce more revenue per hectare than rubber. Refining of edible oils for export, chemical products from vegetable oils, are being discussed by some planners.

When peace is restored, the Republic of Vietnam, given its head, can enjoy an unprecedented period of growth and prosperity—more surprising, perhaps, than most of its people anticipate.

Growth, and the resulting benefits to the Vietnamese people, may come slowly and painfully, three steps forward and one or two back, as the security forces slowly eradicate the Viet Cong from its burrows and hideouts.

Or, with an end to fighting and withdrawal of the aggressor, it could come swiftly and dramatically.

In either case, the leaders of Vietnam's government, supported by staunch foreign friends who also believe in freedom, are determined that it will come.

The Growth Ahead

The tide of war has changed. The main force—communist battalions and village guerrilla forces no longer see a military victory.

But they still hope that military and terroristic pressures eventually will sap the will of the people, halting the continuing work of building a nation.

While its military forces, and the forces of revolutionary development, continued the painstaking process of liberation, the Republic was getting on with building an economy.

Few nations would choose wartime to improve civilian telephone service. In Vietnam, over the past two years, 21 cities and towns have been equipped with dial systems, linked with each other and Saigon by microwave.

Vietnamese technicians are training in the

United States to expand the system.

With the possible exception of schools, Vietnamese tend to look on pure water as their greatest need.

Water purification systems, and also sewage disposal systems, are being developed or expanded in the cities. The Directorate of Water Supply operates 27 drilling rigs to provide deep wells in smaller places.

Electric power—still unknown in many hamlets—remains a matter of thermal plants and diesel

generators.

These are being installed, transmission lines are being extended. Rural electric co-operatives are being developed in Tuyen Duc province in central Vietnam, An Giang province in the delta, Bien Hoa province near Saigon.

Transmission lines to Saigon, from a big new hydroelectric plant in the highlands, have been cut by the Viet Cong. But the plant serves nearby Dalat, and the lines can be restored swiftly with peace.

Vietnam's coastal fishing industry has been expanded through efforts of the Government of Vietnam, assisted by U.S.AID. Fishing hauls have increased considerably following wide distribution of Vietnamese-manufactured nylon fish nets and outboard motors from the U.S.





Vietnam has the makings of an outstanding deep-water port at Cam Ranh Bay. The bay now buzzes with wartime activity, but with peace, the area could become the site for a model industrial and commercial center.

