

INDOCHINA

NUMBER 12
FEBRUARY 1971
5p (1/-)



FROM A NORTH VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA

IN AID OF THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN VIETNAM

• ROLLS-ROYCE IN VIETNAM • CAMBODIAN PARTISANS
• NATURAL & UNNATURAL DISASTERS

A Decisive Year

As each day passes the American strategy becomes clearer. By May there will be 284,000 US military personnel in South Vietnam. New withdrawals will be announced for the remainder of 1971. By the summer the new mosaic of that commitment will be revealed: No regular ground combat troops. An intensive air war against the liberation forces throughout Indochina. Training centres to teach the yellow man how to kill his brother. An intelligence service to learn what cannot be learnt. Special Commando Forces to strike at supply routes and assassinate. Artillery units to give the Saigon army supporting firepower. A logistics and communications network to supply and link up all these forces. A sufficient reserve to guard the enclaves.

A war for machines. Armed helicopters, visual teaching displays, computer filing systems, plastic explosives, howitzers, teleprinters and radars. A sea of refugees are concentrated behind barbed wire. And 1 1/2 million men in Thieu's army in the long combat in paddy field, jungle and mountain. Let the Vietnamese die to kill the Vietnamese. The American losses are small; at home despair and frustration silence the angry minority's protest against a distant and sullen conflict. Fade out the war, fade in freedom.

But the strategy has ignored one element: the people of Indochina. Now the speculation begins. How will the Indochinese themselves shape this decisive year of 1971?

In Cambodia the military conflict is maintained at its present intensity, apparently random flares and bursts, but each week more space is won for the revolution. The towns are left to Lon Nol, decaying visibly like the once-rich boom towns in a western movie. The tumbleweed rolls past.

In Laos, the lines of communication between North Vietnam and Cambodia (and thus on into the South Vietnamese highlands) are widened and strengthened for the supplies of war. The Pathet Lao continue to build socialism East of the Mekong.

In South Vietnam the war continues in its present relatively low key (2000 US dead or wounded every month!) The US Army in any case no longer wants to fight. The John Waynes are greeted by their men with smiles and a fragmentation grenade.

But when the withdrawals cease, the whole tempo of the war in the south is raised - enclaves rocketed, perimeter patrols ambushed, roads cut, urban raids launched against US and Saigon military centers. What could follow next? The pentagon may withdraw completely. We do not believe this is likely. Nixon may escalate by sending the boys back again. We do not believe the people of America nor the soldiers of the US Army will permit this. Finally Washington may escalate the air war still further, beyond the present total of approximately 160,000 tons of explosives per month, or by once again 'bombing the North'. Recent official statements indicate that massive attacks of short duration will even commence within the next few months.

When the escalation of the air war begins, in the United States, in Britain, and in every other country we must repeat old forms of action and create new ones to reveal the isolation of the Pentagon and the US Administration. Together the peoples armies of Indochina, the people of the United States, and movements against the war throughout the rest of the world have it within their power to force this first defeat which marks

Natural and Unnatural Disaster

The world was shocked by the unprecedented natural disaster that caused tens of thousands of deaths in Pakistan, but there has been virtual silence about a man-made disaster that has taken perhaps as many lives in the five northern provinces of South Vietnam in November.

Typhoons Juan, Kate, Louise which hit the northern provinces during October were not especially big on the typhoon scale. However, the damage they wrought was the greatest in Vietnam's recorded history because of erosion from bombing, defoliation and chemical warfare.



As is usual, the typhoons were accompanied by torrential downpours in the mountainous regions. The trees and vegetation destroyed by the tremendous scale of chemical warfare in these regions, with consequent widespread erosion, resulted in torrents of water, uprooting everything before them in a mad race to the coast where the water was backed up against abnormally high tides. Trees, dried up by defoliants, were ripped out by the roots, rice fields together with their crops and topsoil disappeared and scores of hamlets were washed away - houses, inhabitants and livestock swept out to sea.

THOUSANDS DIE

Reports reaching here from survivors paint a horrifying picture of destruction and death on an unbelievable scale. And the death toll was immeasurably higher because thousands of people in the barbed wire encircled concentration camps in the coastal areas had no chance of survival. Saigon papers reaching Paris reported 500 dead and 300,000 homeless by the end of October. But the real figures are known to be many times higher. Four thousand persons drowned in the Hoi An and Duy Xuyen concentration camps, 2,000 died in the Thuong Duc and Kiem Lam camps and 6,000 lost their lives in the northern half of Quang Nam province. These are only some of the figures which have filtered through and those available do not cover the whole afflicted region.

EXITS LOCKED

Police guards abandoned camps and prisons, locking all exits, condemning inmates to certain death. The concentration camps held mainly women, children and elderly people while the prisons held patriots of the liberation struggle.

National Liberation Forces in the devastated regions have been mobilised for rescue operations, to get food and medicines to the worst hit areas and build shelters as the waters recede. Their relief work is being hampered by bombing and strafing, the US-Saigon command evidently having considered the flood waters an ally that has flushed their targets out into the open. US-Saigon "rescue work" is confined to trying to round up escapees from the concentration camps and to mow down those who evade the dragnet

In the five northern provinces, 50 to 85% of the crops have been destroyed and the washing out of eroded topsoil and the influx of seawater, due to the destruction of water-retaining trees and vegetation, is likely to have disastrous long term effects on the fertile coastal plains.

AID FROM THE D.R.V.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam has sent 40,000 tons of rice, 2 million metres of cloth, 20 tons of medicines and 150 million piasters to aid the people of the stricken areas. Puppet President Thieu has promised a paltry 5,000 tons of rice while President Nixon sent a cable of sympathy.

In Quang Ngai and Quang Nam provinces alone, there are 170,000 people homeless and in the whole region it is estimated that about a half million persons lost their homes.

A Saigon newspaper, Lap Truong (The Challenge) was confiscated on November 10th for having stated that the terrible destruction was due to bombings and defoliation.

Wilfred Burchett,
NATIONAL GUARDIAN

The South - City Life

Anti-Americanism and protest is growing in the cities of South Vietnam. For example, a 12-year-old high school student casually shot dead by a GI passing in a jeep sparked off reactions ranging from demonstrators chanting "yankee go home", to burning jeeps and stoning US military offices, vehicles and GIs.

The demand made - so far without success - is that the GI be turned over to the Vietnamese for trial. A 24-hour curfew was imposed and no American was allowed to show his face in the city in an effort by the US to reassert control. This occurred in Qui Nhon, in the north-east, South Vietnam's fourth largest city, and is said to be the largest protest since 1966 when demonstrations were held against the Saigon regime.



Qui Nhon victim: Urban tinderbox

Supporting demonstrations were held in Saigon, where hundreds of police fought Vietnamese hurling fire-bombs. Effigies of Nixon and Park (South Korea's President) were burned, as were a few American cars. The demonstrations grew more violent as another civilian was murdered by South Korean troops near Qui Nhon.



As an example of punishments meted out by the Saigon government two French school teachers were sentenced to three and four years jail for raising an NLF flag in front of the National Assembly in Saigon.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

Corruption flourishes as usual with a refusal of the Saigon authorities to allow Pan American Boeing 747s to land until the US pays up \$416,000 of ground handling equipment for Air Vietnam, the Saigon government's airline. Also as usual, visiting US Congressmen are complaining, after a visit to Saigon markets, about the trade in US military equipment, while the American Ambassador justifies it as "necessary to control inflation". Anything can be bought: boots, pans, M-16 automatic rifles, etc.

The Observer business section reports that one of the best ways to make money in Saigon is to start a daily newspaper. Of the present forty, few carry any advertising. The secret of financial success lies in a newsprint subsidy dating back to President Diem, who allowed pro-Government papers to buy newsprint at a specially low price. After 1968 this privilege was given to all papers. A paper with a real circulation of a few thousand will claim one of 60,000, for example. The surplus newsprint can then be sold at a considerable profit to publishers and others who need paper but not have a licence from the Economic Minister that would allow them to buy their newsprint direct. In this way those in the clique are rewarded others learn to toe the line in the hope of vast profits, and dissenting views in print are eliminated.

PAPERS SEIZED

Even so, as in the past, numerous editions of papers have been seized by the Saigon Government for such acts as printing a photograph of a dead 12-year-old boy, and for publishing a Vietnamese major's interview with Thieu. The major gained his interview, to protest at corruption in the ARVN, by sitting inside the National Assembly for a day and with a hand grenade.

While all this sounds like business as usual in the South, informants from Western sources, as well as the North and North Vietnamese, believe that the quality of life in the South is breeding a revolutionary force. The process is being speeded up by the withdrawal of US forces. The withdrawal has meant the loss of jobs for a number of Vietnamese, including numerous prostitutes who supported many relatives on their earnings. Also, as GIs leave, the belief that all Americans can be driven out of the country gains ground.

We should expect more and better protests in the cities in the coming months.

By Jalna Han

LIBERATION FILMS have three films on Vietnam for hire: 'Peoples War' (40 min.), 'Army' (20 min.) and 'The Tactics' (20 min.). Free ca

ROLLS ROYCE in VIETNAM

By Bai Lang

This article is the summary of a paper presented to the second Conference of Socialist Economists in Cambridge, October 1970, under the title: "The political economy of complicity".

THE AIRCRAFT

The LTV Corsair is a single-seat light attack jet aircraft which can provide close-support, that is, low-level bombing, straffing and napalming, for ground forces up to 700 miles inland from any coastline approachable by the US Fleet. The aircraft went into combat for the first time with Squadron VA-147 in December 1967 off the USS Ranger in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The Corsair has two 20 millimetre machine guns in the nose. Fuselage racks can be used to mount Sidewinder air-to-air missiles. The normal armament load is 4,000 lb which can include "general purpose" bombs, 2.75 inch rockets, fitted with anti-personnel warheads if required, glide bombs, air-to-surface missiles and napalm. The aircraft can carry a nuclear bomb.

THE ENGINE

The first marks of the Corsair (A-7A and A-7B) were powered by an American engine, but it was decided that new marks, the US Air Force's Corsair A-7D and the US Navy's A-7E, required an engine with greater thrust. The Rolls Royce Aero Engine Division at Derby was chosen to provide the more powerful engine, a derivative of its Spey which has been in production for a number of years. Contracts signed between August 1966 and December 1968 were worth about \$115 million to Rolls.

The first Air Force unit, the 54th Tactical Fighter Wing was "activated" in November 1969 at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona and is planned to be at organisational strength by the end of summer 1971. The first Navy Corsair with the Spey engine derivative arrived at Leemore Naval Air Station in October 1969 to join a block of the same aircraft with American engines. The aircraft is now being phased into operation and "shows promise of becoming the most accurate bombing platform yet developed for the visual attack role". The first two squadrons have completed intensive training and "the initial operational squadron is in combat off South Vietnam.

ROLLS ROYCE PEGASUS ENGINED HARRIER-30 HAVE BEEN ORDERED BY THE U.S. MARINES

ROLLS ROYCE & THE STATE

Here we have, then, a brutally simple act of British complicity in the Vietnam war. Now, in understanding why complicity takes this shape we can actually discover a good deal about the nature of modern capitalism.

First come the direct links between the company and the State. In 1958 there were four important aero-engine manufacturers in this country. Today there is only one - Rolls Royce. This is the result of Government policy under both the Tory and Labour administrations whereby the aircraft industry was concentrated into a small number of giant monopolies, "stronger units

on the aircraft industry put it.

The State is also a market for the industry's output. In 1964, for example, total output of airframes, engines and guided weapons was valued at £480 million, of which as much as 69 per cent came from Government financed research and development, Government procurement and Government assistance to civil aircraft. The development and production contracts of the military Spey engine itself were financed by the Government back in 1960-62.

The State is also a vital centre of research. Plowden showed that one man in five of all the industry's qualified scientists and engineers worked in Government institutes. S.L. Bragg, chief scientist of Rolls Aero Engine Division, has spoken of the company's "unified national programme" with the Government's National Gas Turbine Establishment.

CRUMBS OFF YOUR TABLE

The final link between Rolls Royce and the State turns on Britain's relationship with the United States. Since the Second World War the first axiom of our foreign policy has been the political, military and economic alliance with the USA, one feature of which has been the support by both the Labour and Conservative Governments for the imperialist wars in Indochina.

The alliance has many advantages

for British capital. One is that it permits industries here to sell military equipment to the US Department of Defence, whose total annual expenditure is £80,000 million - about 85% of the British national income! About one-third of the aircraft industry's exports go to the United States - fifty per cent in the case of Rolls Royce.

Another feature of the alliance is that Britain's military strategy ("defence policy") depends crucially on US arms - Polaris is the best known example. Thirteen per cent of Britain's annual defence equipment purchases are imported from the States.

As a result, a mutual trade policy has sprung up. Plowden put it most clearly: as we buy so much from the Americans, they should reciprocate and buy arms from us. The Rolls Royce contract was won precisely on this basis. In 1968 in New York, Raymond Brown, at that

Of more than academic interest

by Stephanie Segall

The academic world seems to have woken up to the need to use its professional skills to counter the devotion of the media to the official United States view of the Indochina war. Press, radio and "objective scholarship" have, with a few aberrations only, hidden the reality of the war from most people.

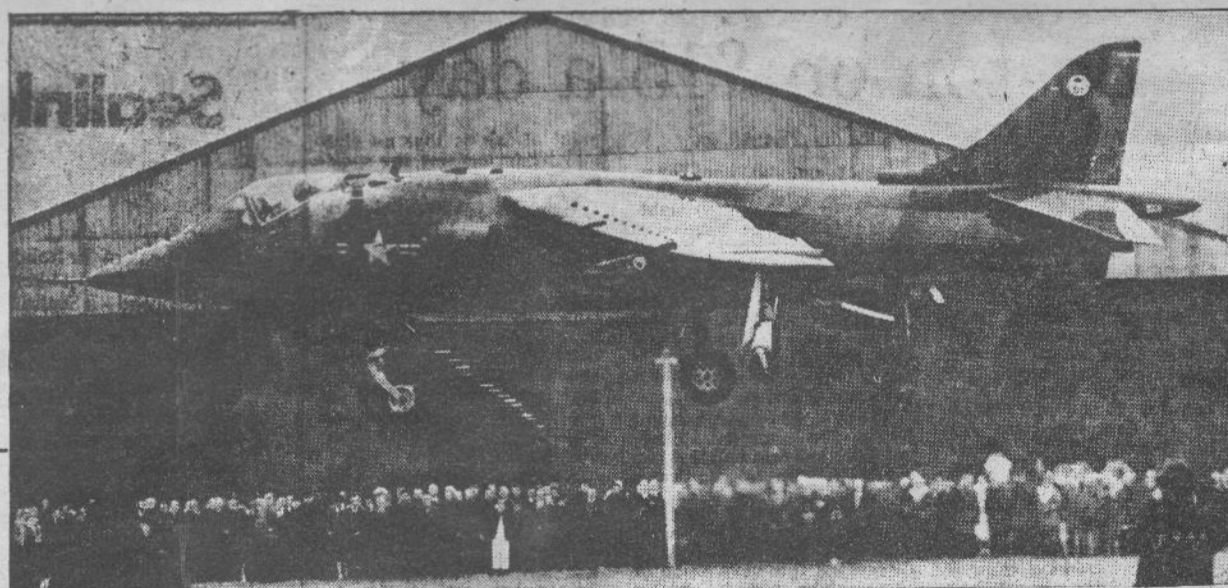
The role of accomplices in slaughter which many US Asian scholars assumed by becoming advisers to the US Government became intolerable to the new generation of academics. In 1968, when the annual conference of the Association of Asian Studies refused "to sponsor intelligent discussion on Vietnam", a group broke away to form the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars. They declared:

We first came together in opposition to the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam

"British industry is willing to embark not only on sub-contract deals but also on joint ventures and on cross-licensing arrangements on a commercial basis (with US defence contractors) It's crumbs off your table, but let's have some more crumbs. We like them!"

NOW THE MARINES

Many other cases of complicity could have been examined. For instance, the supply by GEC's Elliott Flight Automation of electronics to improve the Corsair's accuracy in



ROLLS ROYCE PEGASUS ENGINED HARRIER-30 HAVE BEEN ORDERED BY THE U.S. MARINES

bombing, straffing and napalming. Or the manufacture by Rolls Royce of the Pegasus engine for the Hawker Siddeley Harrier, which Britain is to supply to the US Marine Corps.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Marines has stressed one of the major attractions of this new British vertical take-off attack aircraft: "... it provides increased dispersal, which in a war ... like Vietnam becomes important when you have only eleven or twelve jet capable bases in the whole country".

In each of these three cases one would find the same underlying situation as in the case of the Corsair: the State strengthening British capitalism directly:

- 1) by concentrating production within huge monopolies;
- 2) by acting as a market for a proportion of final output;
- 3) by providing background research and development expertise;
- 4) by developing the Anglo-US

and to the complicity or silence of our profession The CCAS seeks to develop a humane and knowledgeable understanding of Asian societies and their efforts to maintain cultural integrity and to confront such problems as poverty, oppression and imperialism

The CCAS publishes a quarterly bulletin which has quickly won a big reputation. It has analysed the role of Pan Am in the war, the new Japanese military-industrial complex, the position of the Asian scholar.

The initiative of CCAS has been taken up in Britain, in New Zealand and Australia. In 1970, thirty scholars and teachers met to set up Concerned Asian Scholars of Australia and New Zealand. They hope to ensure that the skills of Asian scholars can no longer be used to encourage the suppression of the peoples of Asia - to counter false information in the media, to criticise, textbooks, curricula and present alternatives.

In Britain the Association for



Dessin de KONK.

Radical East Asian Studies (AREAS), c/o Stephen Feuchtwang, 22 Chepstow Crescent, London W 11, was set up by 51 specialists working in the Asian field. It aims, as the other groups, "to expose and criticise the hidden imperialist assumptions of liberal scholarship". It is establishing sub-groups to challenge the media, support left-wing groups with information and study in depth the areas concerned, and Britain's role there.

There is also the Journal of Contemporary Asia, begun in 1970, the product of an informal grouping of radical scholars working in the Asian field.

But while all these developments make more accurate information available, it does not yet really impinge on the mass media, and therefore remains known only to the limited few. Only if these groups can make an impact on widely-held attitudes will they be effective. The Establishment is not harmed by the publication of a few radical books, while it continues effectively to monopolise all other sources of information, education and views.

One such radical book which deserves acclamation though is The Indochina Story, compiled by CCAS and published by Bantam in 1970. It analyses the history of the countries of Indochina, and has sections on pacification, the air war, defoliation, elections, refugees, mercenaries Bantam, however, has no plans to distribute it in this country; anyone wishing to obtain a copy should contact us.

CCAS have achieved their aim - "providing a readily useful handbook containing the arguments for total and immediate American withdrawal from Indochina".

★★★★★

NLF POSTERS

The cover is a reduced reproduction of a silk screen print of a Vietnamese woodcut, 30"x 22", red on white, 15p.(3/-), plus 5p. (1/-) packing and postage. Order from Liberation Posters, 20 Thurlow Rd., London NW3.

SPEAKERS

Speakers - available on any aspect of the Indochinese war.

Pawns in Nixons game

The United States has managed to score two temporary propaganda successes recently; the POW raid in North Vietnam and the massive publicity given to the outright lie that no list of US prisoners has been supplied by the North Vietnamese.

It is generally agreed that the Pentagon knew there were no US prisoners in the invaded camp just as they knew full well of the existence of the list of US prisoners supplied earlier by North Vietnam to a New York anti-war liaison committee. This list was re-released to Senators Kennedy and Fulbright, which gained some publicity the second time around.

The POW raid on North Vietnam served the limited US objective of diverting attention from the renewed bombing of the North. The long term objective of their propaganda war seems to be to prepare the public for an intensification of the war, possible through a series of "lightening" air attacks, or even outright resumption of the bombing.

VIETNAMISATION

Indeed Le Monde reports an increase in the number of actions against North Vietnam since December.

Another aspect is how will the US get their prisoners back when their policy is not to end the war but to change the colour of its troops through Vietnamisation? A prisoner exchange normally follows the ending of hostilities. The Vietnamese, in their recent 8-point proposal for peace, agreed to begin negotiations on the release of prisoners immediately, once the US publicly committed itself to withdraw all its forces - by June 1971 or some other not too distant fixed date. The US have shown no interest in this offer.

I.F. Stone reports that Defence Secretary Laird claims to be ready



to exchange up to 36,000 NLF and North Vietnamese prisoners for a varying number of US and ARVN prisoners. When Laird was asked: "If they get 30,000 prisoners back in one fell swoop won't that help solve their manpower problem?", Laird replied unctuously, "We are concerned about human beings".

LIST OF PRISONERS

In the past the US continually demanded the publication of the names of prisoners held by the North Vietnamese. Now that the list has been published and taken the wind out of their sails, the US, dismissing the list as contemptible, is concentrating its main diversionary and propaganda effort on the treatment of the prisoners.

Yet they are hard put to find anyone with any concrete evidence. Colonel Overly, once a prisoner in North Vietnam, said that "it was worse than the Nazi camps". But it turns out that all he was complaining of was the humiliation of being guarded by young girls with automatic rifles, and hit twice for crossing his legs during interrogation.

The Canada Broadcasting Corporation's Christmas interview with a group of prisoners showed them remarkably relaxed. The US complains that reporters are only ever shown one camp, but in view of the Son Tay raid especially, it is hardly likely that the Vietnamese will reveal the whereabouts of other camps.

PROPAGANDA

By all accounts the prisoners are reasonably well treated, often better than expected by the prisoners themselves. However, the US as part of its propaganda war continues to try to deny this. Success would not only help shift attention from the many atrocities committed by the US against Vietnamese of all ages, both male and female, alive and yet to be born, but would also "justify" further air attacks on the North. Given the type of propaganda being promoted by the US, we should be prepared for yet another extension of the war.

(left) American POWs playing volleyball in a North Vietnamese prison camp.

hospital care, each suffers wretched daily privation. All of the prisoners are women.

The case for a rescue raid is not only morally compelling but tactically appealing. The prison camp, vulnerable to an airborne operation, is but 15 miles from Saigon. It is the Tan Hiep prison, run by the South Vietnamese. The prisoners are Vietcong.

A rescue raid on this camp - so repellently reminiscent of the prison island "tiger cages" exposed last summer - would not only strengthen American demands that the North Vietnamese act decently. It would validate the US-sponsored prison care resolutions just approved by a United Nations committee.

from NEW YORK POST, Dec. 7, 1970



Not quite military?

by Terry Smith

Aspects of Britain's political and material complicity in the Indochina war have once again been brought to light by the globe-trotting antics of Heath and his Foreign Office Undersecretary Kershaw.

Early in December Mr Anthony Kershaw paid a visit to the South Vietnamese regime in Saigon, where he held talks with President Thieu about the puppet government's politics and "progress" in the war and praised the regime's "courage and strength".

On Mr Kershaw's return, questions were asked in the Commons about whether or not Britain's £600,000 annual aid, at present spent on hospitals and schools, would be increased. Mr Wood, the Minister for

LON NOL AID

Overseas Development, replied non-committally that Kershaw's talks had "indicated new areas in which our aid may contribute to the economic development of the country".

It was also reported at this time that Britain had offered the Lon Nol regime £100,000 worth of aid, described as "not quite military" - but including 500 yards of Bailey bridges.

This all very conveniently led up to Heath's visit to Washington for talks with President Nixon. Mr Heath left Britain to a phoney fanfare from the press about "restoring the special relationship". This implies that Wilson had let the relationship slip, whereas in fact he had always maintained the closest ties with Nixon and had made at least three official visits to the US between the time Nixon became President and the Labour defeat.

Visiting Forces Act

The second reading of a bill to amend the 1952 Visiting Forces Act to limit the jurisdiction of visiting forces over their deserters in this country was defeated in the Lords by 95 votes to 54. At present deserters may be arrested and repatriated without the knowledge of British authorities.

BLOOD

Blood donor sessions for Vietnam are to be held in the following areas:

Lewisham	31 January
Oxford	7 March
Baling	25 April

Manchester probably 16 May

Anyone interested, please contact The Medical Aid Committee for Vietnam, P.O.Box 100, 36 Wellington Street,

Wilson's relationship with the US differed from Heath's only in that he hid behind a hypocritical mask of socialism while giving full support to the US in Indochina.

Heath's two-day talks with Nixon included a long discussion on South-East Asia, after which Heath, in a TV broadcast, defended US bombing of North Vietnam by saying: "He (Nixon) must do this to protect his own forces which still remain in Vietnam. And this I think is quite justifiable, and so I agree with the policy he is pursuing". On the question of Nixon's overall policy in Indochina, Heath replied that it was "absolutely clear.... that he is carrying out an honorable withdrawal". A phrase we have heard many times!

Also in Washington at the same time was Sir Alec Douglas-Home, conducting talks with US Secretary of State William Rogers. Some weeks earlier US Senator Charles Percy had paid a call on Number 10 and met with the Prime Minister and Sir Alec. He reported afterwards that they (Heath and Home) were "deeply interested" in the US position in Vietnam and that he was "very gratified" at their "understanding".

STONY GROUND,

Just before Mr Heath left London, 100 Labour MPs tabled a House of Commons motion calling on Heath to press Nixon for the "creation of a provisional coalition government in Vietnam". The motion, needless to say, fell on stony ground.

Saigonorrhoea

Of the crudely designed badges sold by Saigon tailors, the favorite amongst GIs is one that is yellow, round and four inches across. Three symbols appear in the centre: a label of 33 Export Beer, a rifle and a naked girl with open legs. The lettering round the sides reads: FIGHTERS BY TRADE, DRUNKARDS BY CHOICE, LOVERS BY NIGHT, SORRY 'BOUT THAT. It's the simple fantasy of the eternal soldier.

Unfortunately for the GIs who are 'lovers by night', they stand a 25% chance of getting VD and, in particular, a strain of gonorrhoea which resists penicillin. This strain, nicknamed by sufferers Saigon, has spread to Britain and has contributed to making VD the second most widespread disease in Britain.

To cure it the penicillin dosage has to be increased and for some strains the dosage is more than doubled. There are growing fears that antibiotics will eventually be useless. Already 80% of the strains in South-East Asia are to

A rare opportunity

An almost providential opportunity, one for which the Pentagon may well have been waiting ever since the fruitless prison rescue raid, has suddenly developed; if it acts quickly, the Army may save hundreds of captives and add to its noble traditions.

The circumstances are dramatic. The prisoners in question are being subjected to barbaric abuse by their captors; scores have apparently been tear-gassed and a number appallingly burned by chemical



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Q What has been the historical development of the Cambodian resistance?

A The Cambodians played a very important role against the French, fighting along with the Vietminh and the Pathet Lao. By 1953 Sihanouk appealed to all the forces fighting against the French that after Cambodia had achieved independence, the country should have a policy of neutrality. So many felt there was a need to join Sihanouk in the same struggle.

Thus it should not be too much of a surprise that by 1954 at the Geneva Conference, the Vietminh played a major role in the discussion whereas the Cambodian and Pathet Lao partisans were ignored. Then the most urgent need for Cambodia was to have independence and peace. In my experience most of the fighters were not necessarily Communist by any well-defined ideological commitment, they were nationalists. Certainly some were attracted by the Marxist analysis of Cambodian society but by and large I think the basic concern was to have a neutral and independent Cambodia.

At the same time, many of these people had been very lucid in their analysis of the situation in South-East Asia in general. For already they knew that America was going to replace the French. Therefore many had agreed to join Sihanouk and work with him in the Constitutional Framework because Sihanouk had asked them, right and left, to do that, that is, to have left and right wing factions within the Parliament.

But at the same time they were lucid enough to be thinking about what might happen 15 or 20 years later. So arms were hidden and in the capital they established cells which were quite typical of the Communist cells: each cell was known to another cell only by one representative. At this point one found that the Cambodian left had quite matured in terms of organisation and that it was this which prevented them from ever being crushed.

ASSASSINATION

Q What were the developments in Cambodia after 1954?

A In 1955 Sihanouk founded the single Parliamentary party, the Sangkum. Many of the left agreed to work within it. At the same time they felt the government was on the right in terms of basic social policies and that working within the constitutional framework posed very real dangers. Nevertheless, many were still willing to go all the way, who were left-wing, but not necessarily committed Communists, like some members of the People's Party who were killed in 1961-2.

For example, Nop Bophan, editor of the left-wing newspaper Pracheachoun, was assassinated right in the middle of Phnom Penh. After that many who were known to be militant on the left simply disappeared. Either they were killed or they took to the jungle. There were some like Hu Nim, Hou Yuon and Khieu Samphan, who were basically left-wing but had made their names in Parliament, and to some degree were

protected by Sihanouk. He needed them, - for one thing, they were very bright people, of great personal integrity. Also, in order to maintain some sort of equilibrium within Cambodian politics, Sihanouk managed to use them.

Anyway, by 1963 obviously the US were trying very hard to overthrow Sihanouk and at that point Sihanouk said they had to reject American aid.

Q You have described the repression of the Left from the start of the sixties. Was this because the Right was becoming more powerful, therefore bolder?

A Yes. Particularly the assassination of some of the well-known militants which discouraged them from carrying out any political action within the constitutional framework. Khieu Samphan, for example, in 1961 was the editor of a newspaper called L'observateur and he was stripped naked by the military right in the middle of the capital. Fortunately he did not get killed. It was very shocking. They were very very courageous people who at the same time knew that Sihanouk was protecting them therefore they agreed to work within the Sangkum.

MONEY AND POWER

I think the decisive period which caused the Left to break off from the Sangkum completely was the 1966 election when Sihanouk agreed for the first time to have a "free" election, an election held much like those of the Western parliamentary countries. But one found that Cambodia had no experience of that kind of election. Money and power managed to buy up the votes. The irregularities were staggering. Most of the people elected were of the comprador type who had the money to buy up the vote. Fortunately the three deputies I mentioned before were elected with huge majorities without the use of any money.

It was about 1966, only 2-3 years after the radical change in the Cambodian economic system that the Cambodian economy began to show signs of struggling. By 1963 Sihanouk had cut off US aid. A radical change was needed. In fact it was Khieu Samphan who was the man behind the blueprint of the socialising process of Cambodia.

Obviously many of the comprador class and of the military who were making a lot of money out of US aid began to feel very uneasy about it. The saddest point is that Cambodia was very much like it always had been, that is, a feudal state, with an enormous deal of corruption and nepotism. Therefore people who were responsible for major economic sectors were completely incompetent and began to make a real mess out of

months more the three deputies disappeared. The rumours were that they had been executed by Sihanouk or Lon Nol. Later we found out that they had left Phnom Penh quite safely.

A man who was very important in the Cambodian police force and in charge of watching the three deputies has told me that within the military and at almost every level of government are left-wing sympathisers. Because of the cell system, they are almost never caught and therefore presumably because of that kind of sympathy many could take to the jungle successfully.

The saddest thing is that Sihanouk refused to believe in the warnings of the three deputies of a right-wing plot because he trusted Lon Nol completely.

Lon Nol succeeded in replacing in important posts in the Government people of his own class. He got rid first of all of the real Communists, then the left wing, then the progressives or moderates and even the Sihanoukists. By 1968 Sihanouk was completely alone. Many of us then began to speculate that the coup would come in 1968 or 1969. When it came in 1970 it was completely expected. First of all the economy was not getting anywhere and Sihanouk was not willing to go all the way with Sirik Matak and Lon Nol in their policy changes. He wanted a gradual process, denationalisation in some sectors only, rather than the complete change of inviting in foreign investments. Obviously all of this was related to the Vietnam situation because the Americans felt that to succeed militarily in South Vietnam they had to get rid of Cambodian neutrality.

PARIS-TRAINED MARXISTS

Q What social groups today form the basis of the resistance against the Lon Nol regime?

A With respect to the countryside, take some specific examples, the three deputies: Hu Nim, Hou Yuon and Khieu Samphan. All come from peasant families, all are very bright people who got scholarships to study in France. Each managed to get a PhD in Law or in Economics. But there are also some children from bourgeois families who have been abroad for a long time, were trained in Paris and have become radicalised or "Marxised".

Q But I'm sure the Front contains more than Paris-trained Marxists?

A Yes, the opposition has involved very large numbers of people. Partly this is due to the very realistic programme of the Front because they know very well that in Cambodia

For the present it is in Cambodia est between the people's armies of the Pentagon and its allies Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital rest of the country. Electricity is petrol because the main road ville has been cut by the liber throughout the country are laun and lightning raids. Bridges a seized. Military patrol boats heavy losses.

Washington's man in Cambodia grating as fast as he can press sands of troops of the South Vi try with helicopters and tanks debacle. One month ago at Prey the insurgents and in fierce f dead and 400 wounded. Finally with the assistance of US Phant smashed to pieces, particularly were everywhere. Fires had raz burned to ashes by napalm strik

In the northern part of the and US fighter-bombers are maki cause it is there that the majo National United Front of Kampuc tion from the US point of view Thomas Moorer, President of the mittee, has recently visited Ph ting military situation. And i military and economic aid was a equal to about 30% of Cambodia'

Cambodia, which had been a at the eye of the revolutionary peace could be maintained here peninsula was drenched in blood of the situation in the March 1 which overthrew Prince Sihanouk ening of Cambodian resistance?

In Britain where the Cambodi the eternal 'outside forces', t Vietnamese, virtually nothing i and their history. In Paris re the Cambodian liberation front, order to begin to answer these

Q What is the attitude of the Buddhists to the Front?

A By Buddhists I think one has to make a distinction. For one thing, Buddhism is the State religion which means that over 90% of our people qualify as Buddhists. Altogether there are about 50,000 monks. Many of them have been very shocked by the present situation in Cambodia. Although some had begun to be alienated from Sihanouk in some way, they all knew very well that under him Cambodia had peace. At the same time the monarchy is so much a part of the Buddhist religion in Cambodia, that when Lon Nol got rid of the monarchy recently he seemed to be challenging the Buddhist religion as well. To most Cambodians the link between the King and Buddhism is a part of life.

Cambodia - the

it. Therefore by 1965-6 already the military, comprador and feudal elements began to show signs of a need for a change in economic policies. They sought any excuse to challenge the economic policies of the Left, particularly nationalisation.

By early 1967 also there began the first violent peasant rebellion in Battambang province, where the military began to expropriate land from the peasants - the provincial Governor was himself a colonel. Four or five left-wing deputies began to defend the peasants' cause. Sihanouk was then in Paris. As soon as he returned there were demonstrations against the Lon Nol regime calling for a dissolution of Parliament and formation of a new government, so a special Congress was called in early April.

Unfortunately, Sihanouk was already a victim of the right-wing influence. After a couple of

social problems have never been very acute in terms of land problems.

For instance, the peasant has never had to suffer as much as the Vietnamese peasant. Therefore, it would be very unrealistic, impractical to have a Front which was basically left-wing. Thus as far as the Front is concerned, the Government has never really changed; as I said the basic aspiration is to have peace and independence.

The National United Front of Kampuchea is composed of all types of people in Cambodian society who are basically against the American imperialistic policy and against the fascist elements of the country. Therefore I think the future of Cambodia is still going to be a Royal government. This is after all an important institution to most Cambodians, and in the Buddhist religion. Therefore I think from the political point of view it is realistic on their part.

But one very important new feature since the March 18th coup is that the notion of democracy began to have a very serious meaning. For example, on the executive level, we now have what is called the executive members of the Central Committee, which conducts foreign policy and takes all kinds of vital decisions. So whilst Sihanouk is the Head of the Front, he is only one voice out of twelve, so decisions are made in very much a collegiate system.

Q Am I correct in thinking that in Cambodia there has never existed an important landlord class?

A Yes, from that point of view there is no landlord problem at all. But when one studies the rural situation in Cambodia I think one has to get away from this cliché of an undisturbed peasantry.

I remember reading a thesis, in fact done by Hou Youn, a Ph D. in

that the armed struggle is fierce - Indochina and the armed forces in Saigon, Vientiane and Phnom Penh. It is virtually isolated from the land and water are rationed. So too the southern port of Sihanoukville. These same forces are literally hundreds of ambushes blown up. Ferry crossings are on the Mekong river are shelled with

Lon Nol. His army is disintegrating new recruits and tens of thousands of Vietnamese Army have invaded the country in order to prevent a total military victory. The garrison was trapped by the Vietcong and admitted they lost 50 men. They were relieved by Saigon troops. The little town was hit by the air raids. Deep bomb craters were blown to the ground and palms

everywhere and in Southern Laos, B-52s are particularly intensive attacks be- hind supply lines of Prince Sihanouk's (NUFK) are located. The situation has become so grave that Admiral Sirik Matak, Armed Forces Chiefs of Staff Com- mandant in Chief, has ordered the evacuation of 255 million dollars of aid for the Lon Nol government, and annual national income!

Peace for the last 17 years, is now in a storm in Indochina. Why was it that so long whilst the rest of the world was at peace, what brought about the polarization of Cambodia? The coup by Lon Nol and Sirik Matak. What explains the rapid strength- ening of the insurgency is ascribed entirely to the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. It is known about the Cambodian partisans that they are mostly Sok Bunna of the NUFK, that is interviewed by Frank Pais in interviews.

economics for the University of Paris, in which he stated from his own examination of Cambodian statistics that 20% of the peasants own 60% of the best and most fertile land whilst 80% own the rest which is much poorer. Then there was the usury problem, the moneylending problem from the Chinese middlemen who demand enormous amounts of interest, sometimes as much as 200%! But I think basically the Cambodian peasants did not suffer too much, not to the point of starvation. I don't think either that they had as much food as they should have had but I think because they were Buddhists and therefore very resigned

The serious problem arises when the children of peasants who began to have a better education, finishing high school, had trouble finding employment and then faced the corruption problem - in order to get a job in the Government one had to spend an awful lot of money in bribes.

Sadly enough, because of the ill-planned economy, many of them had the typical arts type of training. They were not able to do any technical work yet were reluctant to go back to the land. Everyone thinks that once one has a certain number of years of education one is entitled to a white-collar job. Therefore they had to spend a lot of money to get a job. Many began to feel very alienated by the failure of the Cambodian economy and obviously were impressed by the left-wing analysis of the situation.

Q Are the people working on the rubber plantations an important source of strength for the Front?

A This is a particularly important point. Many of the plantation workers are North Vietnamese immigrants. They are completely cut off from Cambodian society because very few Cambodians live in those areas in the east where the plantations are concentrated. They

form a real proletariat; they have a real worker type of organisation.

After the coup there was a repression of the Vietnamese minority group and many felt the only way was to join the Cambodian ranks. The racial problem was not the basic problem. I suppose that when a person is born in Cambodia he should be considered Cambodian. Remember there are 600,000 Vietnamese living in Cambodia. After the genocide, the young and able men disappeared and joined the Cambodian ranks - so many of them have been called Vietcong and Fifth Column but obviously the only people staying in the villages are the children and the women.

Q What area does the Front now hold?

A About two-thirds of the country and half the population - that is, about three million people. Their greatest strength is in the north-east and south-west. Apart from Phnom Penh, the whole of the country is insecure.

Q What political organisation is being set up by the Front in the areas it controls?

A Besides forming people to be guerrilla fighters, the political problem is the next most important one. For example, at the village level, a people's committee is set up, and the militia, which means socialisation from the grass roots. This in fact had already begun in some areas from 1967.

Q What are the functions of a village committee?

A I think it is the perfect example for the future of a decentralised type of administration. Each village has its own representative, responsible for its development, elected by the village. There is one thing to be pointed out and that is that the Front know very well that the war in Cambodia is going to be very long and that there is not going to be a single solution for any of these countries. Therefore in order to have a successful revolution the political aspects of the struggle are very important and in this they have been working very hard and will continue to do so.

For example, they could take control of Phnom Penh but this is something they would not do because they know very well that if they tried and captured the capital and established a Government, it would look like just another coup d'etat. It would be a very insecure type of government. Therefore they are ready to work very hard at the grass roots level in order to achieve a successful revolution.

On the other hand, they know very well that the South Vietnamese have two permanent divisions at Neak Loung about 40 miles away, which could get to Phnom Penh in 24 hours and which therefore would result in the flattening of the capital city and there would be very little left.

The Cambodian Front also realise that Lon Nol did have some support from the urban people and this is understandable in terms of the alienation that city people had during Sihanouk's reign. The economy was not going well and there was an enormous need for a change. The only change they could conceive was to have this heavy investment from abroad.

Various intellectuals, honest people, were mostly confused by two major facts: one was their alienation from Sihanouk, they could no longer compromise with him; second was their panic right after the coup when they realised that Cambodia had

become the main battlefield in the Indochina war. The central government succeeded in persuading them that it was a Vietnamese invasion. Therefore from a patriotic point of view it is understandable that they had to compromise with Lon Nol in order to survive.

Nowadays the most interesting thing is that these people have begun to be disillusioned with Lon Nol. Earlier, although they might have suspected that Lon Nol was manipulated by the CIA, they felt it wasn't important because Cambodia was about to disappear from the map. They believed that Cambodia should be neutral and independent in the conduct of its foreign policy but now it becomes apparent that Cambodia can never go back to its former position. Especially when they rely so heavily on the South Vietnamese and the Americans. So this is the choice the people have to make now.

Q I believe the NUFK is based in Peking?

A No. I think one has to make it clear that the Cambodian government has never in fact been changed. Sihanouk is still Chief of State and the government is still in Cambodia.

I think we should make it clear that the use of the term "the Cambodian Government in exile" is not very useful. For one thing, the real power is in the hands of the people who are doing the fighting, who are controlling Cambodia now. Especially the ten members of the Government who are in the jungle, including the Deputy Prime Minister Khieu Samphan, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of State in charge of Information and the other seven Deputy Ministers who are now conducting the guerrilla warfare. They are the people who have any real power inside Cambodia.

Those who are outside are mostly carrying out the necessary diplomatic work. Obviously Sihanouk cannot afford to go back to Cambodia because of his international prestige. I think that it is important that he stays to give press conferences and so on. It's the same thing with the Prime Minister, Penn Nouth, who is in fact the second best known Cambodian.

CABLE ME LIES ABOUT CAMBODIA

One point I would like to make here is that the resistance forces, in the areas controlled by the Front, are often referred to especially in your British press as North Vietnamese or Vietcong, which I find most

unfair. I think this is either true ignorance or a conspiracy.

I noticed when the coup took place that a lot of people in Britain were taken by surprise because they had to rely on the reporting of cables and various news agencies. Obviously from the beginning there was in Cambodia a press censorship. This means that when you cable or telephone to the outside world, you have to mention the North Vietnamese against the present government or they would simply not allow the cable to be sent.

Agence France Press, for example, is a victim of this sort of thing, particularly when it is datelined from Phnom Penh. This is the only way of getting the stuff out. Le Monde is usually clever enough, not to have to reprint all of the cables. They always take the liberty of editing the cables and obviously also use the communiques of the Resistance and so on. In Britain they are either too lazy or

Phnom Penh, Dec. 29.—Vietnamese communist forces today cut Highway 6, Phnom Penh's link with the northern front, emphasizing again their ability to disrupt the country's lines of communication almost all will

Q British newspapers in fact have very few regular correspondents in the area.

A It reminds one of the type of reporting in the early sixties in South Vietnam, when they mentioned only the North Vietnamese, never the Vietcong. It's the same thing with the Pathet Lao.

Q Where does the National Liberation Army get its arms from?

A At the beginning of the resistance they were coming directly from the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong and this is understandable for they needed them right away. Now they come indirectly from China. This shouldn't be too much of a surprise because the Cambodians now believe very much in the United Front of Indochina and therefore there are various exchanges of goods and arms and so on. For instance, in the controlled areas of Cambodia there is more than sufficient rice and food. A very important portion is given to the Pathet Lao and the Vietcong. This is really the most incredible thing.

SELF-SUPPORTING

Q Do the North Vietnamese and the NLF also provide weapons training and so on?

A Yes. Training and logistical support in the early stages. But now the Cambodians are beginning to become more self-supporting. One thing one should remember is that Cambodians believe very much in Mao's writing that to have a successful national revolution you cannot rely on foreigners, you have to rely on your own people.

Everyone is very conscious of this - including the Vietnamese. That is why many of us believe that for the good of Cambodia it is better to have liberation many years ahead and not in the near future. That is to say, because the political aspect of the struggle is so important, we need a long time to form people. I myself, looking at the problem, always feel this.

I just hope that Lon Nol will do the worst thing possible so that he creates what we call the objective conditions which in the long run are obviously in our favour. I think one saw this very clearly with the genocide, that the present regime in Phnom Penh is so foolish and does all kinds of crazy things which in fact have advanced the cause of the Left, put it five years ahead. Especially the declaration of a Republic, that was a political suicide.

One thing that is very clear now is that there is not going to be a single Cambodian solution; neither a Laotian nor a Vietnamese. The solution must be on the Indochina level. Therefore we must have solidarity in the struggle.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

"Before the Americans came to our rescue, we lived in quiet and peace. But now that you are here, all our people know is terror and bloodshed.

Unnamed Cambodian army captain. 1970. Chup, Cambodia

eye of the storm

DRUGS & PEACE

Scenes from the Vietnam War

Condensed from an article by J-C. Pomonti in 'Le Monde'

If the Vietnam war is unpopular in the United States, it is still more so among the young Americans who, every week, put on uniform to go and fight on the front. For the young GI, as for many of those in command, the war has no direction. It is in turn mournful, tedious, sad or simply dull. The colonels looking for their first star have long since departed. The majority of the original conquerors have given way to "pacifiers", resigned to "Vietnamisation".

Marching, eating, waiting, fighting, maybe dying, for the past two years the American soldier has usually been disillusioned. Heroics and idealism are no longer in fashion. Whether languishing in an office or risking his life in the jungle, he waits only to "go back to the world", to forget this incoherent hiatus in his life.

The young GI has his first surprise on arrival. Immediately there is an entire vocabulary to learn, attitudes to take, and a world quite different from what he expected. He learns he is a "grunt" that the Vietcong, and in the end all Vietnamese, are "dinks" or "gooks", the "nhacs" of America. Next, a number of tips - for example how to drink a bottle of beer without risking illness (open it yourself, wipe the mouth with a kleenex...), avoid the local soup, Vietnamese or Chinese, and, as a general rule, refuse all local food.

KILLING AND BEING KILLED

A small section of the "American" division had been marching for several hours single file in the forest. All is quiet. Filthy and tired, the men advanced; they knew their job. But soon there would be nothing more to do except return to base.

Suddenly, at a bend in the track, the leading man found himself face to face with five Vietcong, camping with five women and children. The firing lasted 30 seconds. Four partisans were killed, and the fifth was seriously wounded. They had made a "contact". The medical orderly wanted to call a helicopter to evacuate him. The others opposed it, including the radio operator. The medic sorted out the problem with the transmitter on his own and finished by sending a message. The officer let him do it. The women and children were led away for interrogation.

The patrol went on again. According to plan, they spent the night in abandoned barracks, close enough to an artillery base to ensure cover in case of attack. In the middle of the night, mortar shells rained down on the fragile masonry with deadly accuracy, as if the shots had been aimed long before. The roof collapsed. The medic, and two other soldiers were killed. They had to wait until first light before help arrived. The support artillery intervened, but in the dark. The diminished section returned to base. For several days their war was over. That was the character of the war in October 1970.

CORRUPTION

"I don't want to get myself killed to gain time for the gooks." This soldier speaks for many others. An officer: "The corruption is incredible. You are supposed to give 200 dollars to a widow and give her husband a decent burial. Instead

of that, in my sector, the Vietnamese knock up a pair of planks and give the wife 50 dollars. She thinks it's a lot; they pocket the rest."

The Vietnamese have their faults. Officially, for the military and civilian "pacification" advisers, their Vietnamese opposite number is a good officer. "My dai-huy (captain) is a good dai-huy" - who has not heard that? In the evening, over a beer, the slightly forced enthusiasm is replaced by bitterness. "He never does what we ask him, he doesn't give us any warning, he arranges things his own way", said a captain, documents under his arm, a man of clumsy goodwill speaking of his district chief, a crafty peasant Vietnamese officer who knew what he was about. "The other day", said the officer in turn, "I woke him up on the stroke of midnight with the 'Marseillaise' blairing from a loudspeaker". A humorous reminder of a total separation.

PROTESTING

The soldiers today talk openly of their discontent. The harshest officers are obliged to turn a blind eye towards the draftees who go into action with peace buttons on their chests. During 1969-70 the number of draftees from universities has considerably increased. How old were they in 1966 when Congress adopted the Gulf of Tonkin resolution? Perhaps 15 or 16, often less. Their years in college have radicalised them. They are against the war, and don't hide it. "They arrive here", said one of their compatriots, "full of rancour, with the idea of



Antiwar warrior: A young lieutenant flaunts peace symbols

fighting as little as possible and getting out as soon as possible. The first lesson they learn: the necessity to become a killer to survive."

SMOKING

Two soldiers, Wayne Hansen, 21, and Edward W. Rebris, 22, were recently court-martialed. The former was fined \$500, the second given three months in prison. Why? They possessed heroin which had been resold to them by a Thai soldier stationed at Long Binh, near Saigon.

This sort of incident is frequent. Every day the military TV reiterates the dangers of marijuana. It can be bought anywhere, even from pedicab drivers. But the best quality grass grows in Thailand. In some units a third of the soldiers make



by Stephanie Segall

Nixon has announced an orderly phasing-out of the defoliation programme in Vietnam. The announcement was made in response to a request from Elsworth Bunker, US ambassador in Saigon and General Creighton Abrams, the US commanding officer.

With, at a conservative estimate, one-fifth of South Vietnam's territory already devastated by chemical warfare, one wonders why the US has chosen this moment to announce an end to defoliation. The answer seems to lie in the publicity-conscious way in which Bunker and Abrams, in mid-December 1970, sent a telegram to the State Department, asking them to halt supplies of the chemical agents Blue and White. "Because of the changing nature of the war", they said, "the use of herbicides for crop destruction had declined" They recommended that remaining stock should be used only on uninhabited forest regions; this would probably be used up by May '71.

The ban on defoliation was made on the completion of a study by Defence Secretary Laird. But it coincided with growing independent evidence of the harmful effects of herbicides and considerable concern among the scientific community at their use.

The defoliation programme has been going on since 1961. Chemicals of different kinds have been used against forests, grassland and food crops. The Vietnamese repeatedly attributed widespread damage

regular use of drugs. More than half the soldiers there have tried it at least once. The authorities are uneasy and promise help, clemency, even total amnesty to those who embark on a course of de-addiction. They shut their eyes. But there are always a thousand ways to get drugs - in the bars, among base employees, from the villages. Most times it is enough to ask your neighbour. At 20, one no longer informs on drug takers.

Boredom plays an important role. It is very rarely that soldiers smoke on patrol. In Vietnam almost 2½ tons of marijuana were seized by local police in 1969, and more than a million plants have been destroyed. However, a pound of marijuana only costs last August, the equivalent of 24 shillings. The Vietnamese, however, by far prefer opium or betel.

LEAVING

The majority of the infantrymen will have left Vietnam before the end of the year, leaving behind the specialists, those who fight at a distance - in helicopters, behind a general staff card, in front of a production curve, or from an artillery battery. Willingly abandoning a fight they did not want, and leaving the place to the strings of bombs from the B52s and to the "pacification" workers, the American infantryman returns to a home which counts more and more for him. It is as if the "dirty war" is no more than a heavy but remote memory.

to human health to those chemicals, but it was only relatively recently that American scientists began to take a critical interest.

In 1970 the evidence against one particular agent, Orange, became so great that the President decided to ban it. Nevertheless it continued in use for some months after the ban. The threatened court-martial proceedings over this have been dropped.

But the other agents, Blue and White, are equally toxic. Details of the effects of all agents were given in a report prepared by a team from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which recently spent six weeks in Vietnam. Among their most telling points were:

ABNORMAL BIRTHS

- 1) RECORDS OF ABNORMAL BIRTHS in Saigon Children's Hospital from 1959-68 showed a sudden increase in two types of defect after the start of heavy spraying in 1966.
- 2) THE RATE OF DEFECTIVE BIRTHS in the heavily sprayed province of Tay Ninh was 64 per 1,000 as compared with 26 per 1,000 in a Saigon hospital. (The medical experts emphasised that records were insufficient to provide more conclusive evidence of the relation between birth defects and defoliation).
- 3) SPRAYING OF WELL-POPULATED AND CIVILIAN AREAS has occurred. The team visited an area which they were told only guerrillas inhabited, and found 400 villages.
- 4) ONE-FIFTH OF MANGROVE FORESTS have been "utterly destroyed". Those sprayed nine years ago show no sign of recovery.

The extent of long-term ecological damage to the land could not be determined. The team also drew attention to the way in which the development of Vietnam's economy would be affected in the future, since the basis for its export trade - timber and rice - had been destroyed.

These findings, according to the Observer, triggered the White House decision to phase out herbicides. They were discussed at an international conference in Paris, where scientists from thirteen nations condemned the US defoliation programme. American scientists, while welcoming the ban, have called for research to find ways of mending the immense damage already done.

The US command obviously feels that the gains still to be made by defoliation are little, and is therefore prepared to bow to the outcry against it. Enough of the Vietnamese countryside has been devastated - it hasn't helped to win the war for the Americans. What will really happen? Has the Pentagon tested its weapons sufficiently by now?

Or now herbicides are banned in Vietnam, will they be transferred to the rest of Indochina. Defoliation is already occurring in Cambodia, and no one has mentioned stopping it there.

Veetnam" has a strange way of coming to Britain. The curious itinerary is as follows. Mecca says itself a Miss World Contest which it is trying to sell to an American company for \$1 million.) y in Grenada it invites, mess who, the Prime Minister Grenada to be a judge on the panel.

The betting shops open to reveal twelve to one odds against Miss World at Ladbrokes. A smoke-bomb planted by Women Liberationists explodes in a television camera van parked near the "Cattle Market". Her smoke-bombs are thrown and scintillations loudly uttered as the show" went inexorably on. After safe interval, Bob Hope emerges from behind the curtains where he has been hiding, and, with a jaunty smile, cracks a few flat-footed jokes:

"Say, that was good conditioning for VIETNAM".

"On all the fighting fronts I've never some across anything like this."

"Anyone who could do a thing like that against these wonderful girls must be on some kind of DOPE."

"They must be FAGGOTS"- referring to the Women Liberationists of course; and then, reassuringly, with strong note of underlying menace,

"Don't worry, there's SOMEBODY UP THERE who's going to put pay to these people."

In a few sentences he has summed up the middle-aged, middle-class sessions of the American Way of Death. And that's how Vietnam came to Britain - through the Women's Liberation Movement, provoking this veteran Hollywood fool into summing up the organic features of the common enemy: brutal imperialism, cowardice, male chauvinism, psychosocial terror, blind conformism and simple-minded trust in the Almighty, man or mythological.

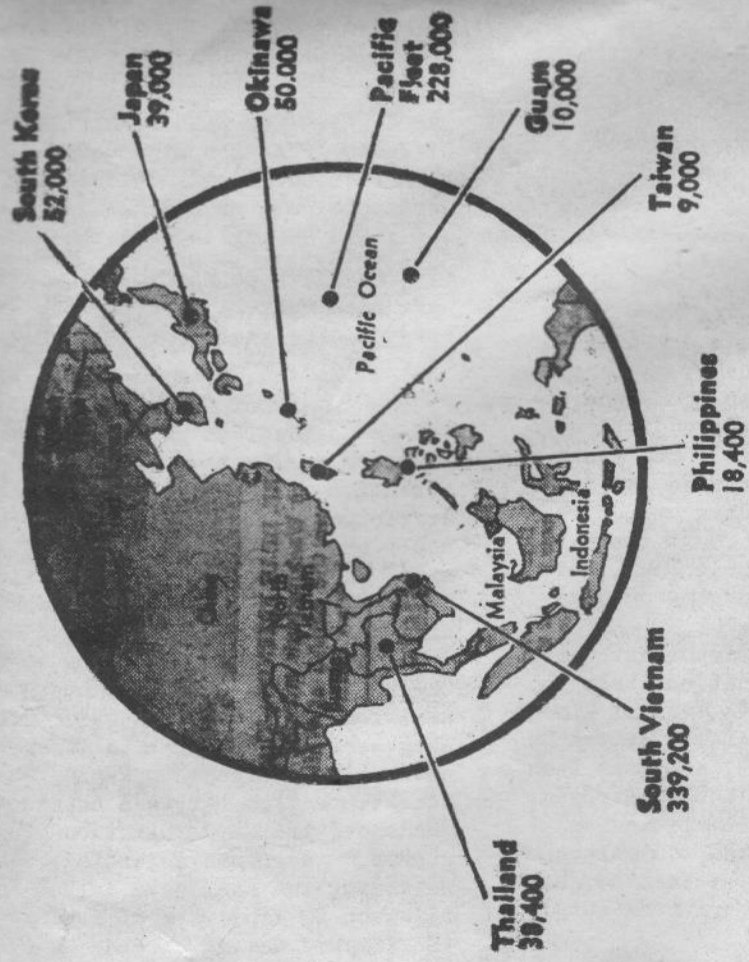
Thank you, Mr Hope.

F. Brown

International day of Solidarity

Saturday, 24th April, a demo and rally organised by the VSC as part of an International Day of Solidarity with the Indo-Chinese people. Those wishing to help please contact VSC, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1.

reproduction invited - please acknowledge source



Riots in Japan

There was unprecedented rioting in December in US bases in Okinawa. A furious crowd of 300 Japanese entered the Kadena base, one of the most powerful, and burned cars and buildings.

Resentment has built up over a long period, in particular over the death of two Japanese caused by American drivers, and the storing of nerve gas in the bases. It was only the explosion of one container of gas that forced the US to admit its presence at all. Now they have agreed to move it away from Japan.

The left in Japan has waged a determined campaign to force the complete departure of the US military from their country, but Okinawa, facing the Asian continent, is considered indispensable to the Americans and they are equally determined to preserve it.

According to ex-congressman Hamilton Fish, "Since Yalta it has cost us \$1,075,000,000,000 to defend ourselves against Communism, and it is costing us more each day we remain in Vietnam."

Churches aid Deserters

Churches appealed in December for £87,500 over the next three years to aid US draft resisters and deserters in Canada. The latest edition of the journal of their youth section, Risk, is entitled "Just Men Desert" and is devoted exclusively to the subject of desertion.

The articles include comments on the effect on the deserter of his act, advice to groups aiding deserters and on the deserters currently living in Sweden. Paradoxically, Sweden was considered a more suitable sanctuary than Canada since the language change stimulates awareness among newly arrived deserters of the irreversibility of desertion, the necessity of desertion, the necessity to completely restructure their lives.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 Angry Arts are showing Edgar Snow's unique film on China: "One-fourth of humanity" at 8 p.m. on January 28th and 29th. Camden Studios, Camden Street, N.W.1.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 THREE INTERVIEWS WITH KIM IL SUNG. 2/- plus postage from 48A Woodstock Road, NW11. From the same address a Photographic Exhibition on Korea is available at a nominal fee to cover transport costs.

INDOCHINA



FROM A NORTH VIETNAMESE PAPER CUT IN AID OF THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN VIETNAM

● ROLLS-ROYCE IN VIETNAM ● CAMBODIAN PARTISANS
 ● NATURAL & UNNATURAL DISASTERS