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This translation has not been edited. Because it is felt that the document apparently does not contain significant information and that the vein in which the information is presented appears to be consistent, the translation has not been completed.

THEY FIGHT IN VIET NAM

I. "A VERY SAD WAR"

Yu Bronin

"Along the roads of Cochinchina, Annam, and Tonkin carefully tread French soldiers, expecting from any woods, out of any hut, that machine gun fire may be opened against them. Colonial troops do not believe in victory. Suffering from ambushes, malaria mosquitoes and extreme heat, they mutter to themselves 'Damn war!' not confident that their death will have any significance."

With such words Bullitt, the Wall Street agent, the well known intelligence officer and warmonger, was obliged to depict the situation in Viet Nam ^{while} visiting there with an "Investigation mission" in the autumn of 1947.

The American imperialists persistently lust with the wealth of Viet Nam. Coal, zinc and lead from Tonkin (now Bak ^{Noc} - Northern Viet Nam), iron, gold and rubber from Annam (Trung-Bo - Central Viet Nam) - all these for a long time now have attracted the appetites of the U.S.A. monopolists. But not in a lesser measure than the natural wealth of the country, the American claimants to world domination are interested in the strategical position of Indochina in Southeast Asia. American imperialism desires a permanent footing in Viet Nam on behalf of militaristic France.

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But the plans of the imperialists ran against the manly resistance of the Vietnamese people. The expeditionary force of the French colonialists for over three and a half years sustained great losses (up to 1 January 1949, according to data from the government of Viet Nam, 71,300 men dead and 63,900 wounded). From the emaciated French treasury there was spent, in the war against the Viet Nam republic, about a billion dollars. But all the French colonial forces occupy less than one tenth of the territory of the country.

"France stands on the losing side of the war in Indochina" - wrote one reactionary Washington weekly with alarm. But a yes man of the American imperialists, the London periodical "New Statesman and Nation", informed us on 18 February 1949, that the State Department of the U S A was "disappointed in the results of its efforts to support the attempts of the French to defend Viet Nam from Communism." By "Communism" the reactionary world means the struggle of a people for their liberty and independence...

"A very sad war" - thus Bullitt named the war which the French reactionaries know in Viet Nam. In truth, what emotion besides sorrow, might the successes of the heroic struggle of 22 million Vietnamese people against the French colonialists and their American backers excite in these Bullitts?

II. "VIET NAM" HAS NOT BECOME "ANNAM"

During the course of a century, the Chinese empire oppressed the people of Viet Nam. In the third century of our era there appeared Chinese rulers who succeeded in winning in the country "submission and peace." They decided to change the name of Viet Nam (Country of the South) into Annam (Pacified South). But the Chinese usurpers must have been convinced that Viet Nam would not become Annam. The Vietnamese people continued to struggle for their national freedom.

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From the middle of the nineteenth century the Vietnamese had already risen against the French imperialists. The French colonizers brought with them unheard of oppression, rapacious exploitation, harsh tyranny, ^{in addition to} ~~and besides that~~ brought a low standard of living to the overwhelming mass of people.

Here are three facts out of hundreds and thousands.

The export of rice from Viet Nam increased from 1875 to 1928, from 300,000 to 1,666,000 tons. This became the source of vast profit for French exporting firms and financiers of French banks in which is included the M. colonial octopus, as is called the Bank of Indochina. And during that time, rice disappeared as the staple food of the masses of Vietnamese peasants, who were already driven by the end of the last century to malnourished roots.

In Viet Nam there are 300,000 industrial workers and nearly a million agricultural laborers. Vietnamese wages were, at the time of the French colonizers, eight or ten times less than the wages of European workers. In the meantime French monopolists pumped out of the country unheard of profits. For instance, the Tonkin Coal Mining Company with a capital of 100 million francs, realized, in the years from 1928 to 1945, ^{and profit} 361 million francs ~~not profit~~.

During the French colonial regime in the country, the development of culture and education was throttled. Before the second world war, in all Viet Nam there attended schools only about 300,000 children out of 3.5 million children of school age. And in the single university (in Hanoi) there are taught only 300 students out of 22 million people!

The people of Viet Nam never stopped struggling against the French colonialists. Especially wellknown is the Yen Bay rebellion in Tonkin in February 1930. The crisis occurred in the years of the second world war. Headed by the Soviet Union, the struggle of the people against

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Fascism gave the national liberation movement in Viet Nam new strength and an unheard of early expansion. This foundation brilliantly showed in the Resistance movement against the Japanese occupation forces.

III. THE PEOPLE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

When the Japanese occupation forces appeared in Indochina, the French colonial authority, so bravely tearing to pieces the Vietnamese people, did not even think to show resistance. At that time, the High Commissioner of France in Indochina, Admiral Decoux, stated: "French authority will collaborate in all possible ways with the Japanese army and will help it in every way in its movements".

"His Majesty, the Bank of Indochina," during the Japanese occupation, continued its operation as if nothing were the matter. In the first three years of the war, the bank lent Japan more than 2.5 billion francs. The head of the bank, Paul Hano, spent the entire war period in Japan.

The Vietnamese people with scorn rejected capitulation to Japanese occupation. They raised the banner of struggle against the Japanese usurper. Already in 1941, from the Resistance movement there was born the "League for the Independence of Viet Nam", (the Viet Minh). In it there were united all the democratic organizations of the country. In 1945, from the bands of partisans there was formed the army of national deliverance. In the fire of war against the Japanese imperialists, the movement for liberation of the people in Viet Nam was born and hardened.

After the rout of Japan, there was organized a provisional government with Ho Chi Minh at the head, the leader of the Viet Minh and the hero of the Resistance movement against the Japanese. The

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new regime received the unanimous support of the people in the votes cast for the National Assembly of the Republic in January 1946. The votes were cast throughout the whole country, some among them in illegal ways--- in the territory occupied at that time by the French. ~~There the Vietnamese,~~ the masses gathering in the villages for casting votes, were hunted down by the French planes and subjected to brutal bombardment from the air. But with the coming of night, the voters returned, in order to vote for an independent republic of the people.

The imperialists quarrel among themselves over the sharing of the colonial pie, but they are united by their fierce hatred toward the oppressed people of the colony, rising in the emancipatory struggle. To the help of the bankrupt French colonialists hurried their much experienced English brothers. For the "pacification" of Viet Nam, the English were not fastidious about enlisting the Japanese Samurai militarists still in their territory.

IV. AGREEMENT OF THE COLONIALISTS

Soon after the capitulation of Japan in Saigon, there arrived on a warship the English "War Mission" with General Gracey at its head. His official task was "the disarming of the Japanese." The Vietnamese welcomed the mission cordially and trustingly. But it was soon apparent to them that the only aim of the English was the suppression of the movement for the liberation of the people, and the preparation for the landing of the French troops.

Gracey conducted himself very hostilely with regard to the new democratic regime. The Japanese army not only was not disarmed, but it was entrusted with "maintained peace and order." By his command and arrangement, Gracey transferred [sig] to Colonel-General Terauchi, the command of the Japanese occupation forces in Indochina.

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Soon the French army landed. In harmonious interaction with the English and Japanese, they assaulted and seized Saigon. They began carrying on to the present time the savage aggressive war of imperialist France against the Vietnamese people.

The French colonialists forgot nothing and learned nothing. They wanted to obliterate from history the war years, and determined "not to notice" the very profound changes which had occurred in Viet Nam, as in other dependent and colonial countries. Against Viet Nam there was utilized the whole arsenal of devices of the colonial beasts of prey.

The expeditionary force, numbering, according to French data 120,000 soldiers, will conduct the grasping war in Viet Nam. The China Weekly Review, an American journal published in Shanghai, in October of the past year, stated the figure as 150,000. American imperialism rendered the French colonialists active aid. The war against Viet Nam is financed through appropriations under the Marshall Plan, the French army being equipped with American arms. Part of these arms are in "reliable hands" ^{the} German SS troops of the Foreign Legion.

In the De Gaullet Parisian weekly, "Samedi Soir," was published the photo of the next battalion of Hitlerites headed for Viet Nam. The cynical caption under the photograph read: "This battalion embodies 14 thousand years of imprisonment". In other words, these Hitlerite cut-throats, condemned from 10 to 20 years of hard labor each, have been given amnesty and now are being sent to Viet Nam, "entrusted" to do the "job" because of their proficiency as executioners.

Common criminals constitute another source of manpower for the expeditionary army. Not long ago a Saigon newspaper published a circular of the French Ministry of Justice to all prison wardens in

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connection with the selection of prisoners for "military service in colonies." The newspaper said that the first military contingent of criminals had already been formed and was ready for shipment Viet Nam.

The war is being conducted with unheard-of cruelty. They are trying to break the will of the Vietnamese people with brutality and terror. In a typical communication from Hanoi on 2 March 1949, for instance, we read: "At the time of the French attack on the town of Thien Dong in Hai Duong Province, 20 peaceful Vietnamese citizens were shot and 11 persons unmercifully beaten. A very old resident of the village and his wife were burned alive. The soldiers took more than twenty children away from their mothers; a number of them were beaten with sticks, while the others were nailed up with bayonets. In the Vimadung ~~area~~ region (Kien An Province) after heavy torture, lasting several days, the French executed 62 Vietnamese young men and girls."

Between 28 November and 4 December 1948, the brutal French authorities put to death several hundred Vietnamese imprisoned in Hanoi. They bound groups of 5 or 6 people together and threw them from a bridge into the river.

Not forgotten also were such "well-tried" methods of the colonial enslavers, as opium. In the cities occupied by the French, on every corner, appear signs: "Salon for disaddiction." These are the opium dens where, at whatever hour of the day or night one likes, one may get a pipe with the stupefying and enervating organization, opium.

For camouflage and deceit, the French imperialists already three years ago had begun negotiations with the government of Ho Chi Minh, and even concluded agreements with him, in order then and there to break them treacherously. It was the same with the "preliminary" agreement concluded on 6 March 1946 in Hanoi, and with the second, also "preliminary" agreement, adopted 14 September of

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the same year, as a result of the discussions at Fontainebleau. At the same time, the French authorities tried to set up puppet "governments," supported by traitors and unpopular feudal elements who faithfully and honestly served the Japanese occupation forces.

But all the plans of the French colonialists and their American protectors were wrecked on the indestructible firmness of the national liberation movement of the Vietnamese people.

V. THE PEOPLE'S WAR

The French expected to win the war quickly, counting on their huge superiority in armaments. At first they succeeded in seizing a series of large cities. They occupied a part of Cochinchina, where the flat country favored the operations of a mechanized army. But with that the "victories" of the French forces ended.

They failed also in counting on the stifling of the republic by famine. This terrible danger sprang up before the young republic in the first months of its existence. Under the pressure of the Japanese occupation forces and with the assistance of the French authorities, millions of hectares of ricefields were sown with hemp and castor oil plants. As a result of an unprecedented flood in the north of the country in 1945, there were inundated 700,000 hectares of land and 300,000 tons of rice were destroyed. The French colonialists tried even more to make the situation worse, resorting to the destroying of rice savings and irrigation works. The government of the republic put forward the slogan: "Struggle with the French occupation forces at the front, fight against hunger in the rear!" At the end of 1946, the area of sowings with rice was increased by one and a half times, with potatoes, by three times. The people themselves removed the threat of starvation.

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There even overcame the consequences of the inhuman "medicine blockade," organized by the French colonialists in particular, and ^{the} ~~they~~ ^{people} succeeded in restoring to the country the distribution of anti-cholera and anti-plague vaccines.

At present all efforts of the people concentrated on the organization of military resistance to the enemy. The armaments of the people's army of Viet Nam are improving. A significant part of the Vietnamese armed forces is now equipped with weapons seized from the enemy.

In the territory of the republic there are no large scale concerns. Resourcefully making use of not very up-to-date machines in their small plants, the Vietnamese fell to the production of anti-tank guns. The output of handgrenades, mines and light infantry armaments was organized.

The regular army of Viet Nam numbers approximately 150,000 war-hardened soldiers and officers. According to data in the New York magazine "The Nation," partisan detachments, entering the war in concerted action with the regular troops, number 300,000 men. Besides this, there are the "units of the people's defence," into which enter many hundreds of thousands of peasant men and women. This is the extraordinary people's militia which operates within the limits of its own region, maintaining communication with the regular units and the partisan detachments.

For the Vietnamese republic, the significant achievements are the political and economic reforms: the introduction of progressive labor legislation for workers; the redistribution of the common lands; the reduction of rents for land; the abolition of inequitable taxes; and the strengthening of the democratic organs of the government.

Actually the Vietnamese government, in the various democratic organizations of the republic, comprises more than 10 million citizens.

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