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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT 5

JUL 21 1975

FILE

July 17, 1975

TO: Church World Service Department Committee  
FROM: Paul McCleary *Paul McCleary*  
SUBJECT: Report on Visit to Hanoi and Hai Hung

Attached is a report received from Ernest Fogg, Director, Fund for Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Indochina, on meetings with the Representatives of the DRVN and RSVN (formerly PRG) in Hanoi and Hai Hung in June, 1975.

cc: Boyd Lowry

SOUTHERN ASIA

JUL 10 1975

BBU

The Fund for Reconstruction and  
Reconciliation in Indochina

A REPORT ON THE MEETINGS WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES  
OF THE DRVN AND THE RSVN (formerly the PRG)  
IN HANOI AND HAI HUNG  
(June 21-28, 1975)

In response to a letter asking for consultations on the new situation in the South plus review of progress on the Hai Hung Hospital project, the FRRI received an invitation for the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the Director to come to Hanoi. Pamela Gruber substituted for chairman, John Yap.

Conversations with Mme. Anh, RSVN Representative in Hanoi, covered most of the questions raised by the team. The suggestion that the team wished to visit the South and continue conversations there, was met with full sympathy but also the explanation that travel arrangements were difficult at present. The invitation originally extended for November would hopefully still be open. An invitation to the city of Da Nang was regretfully declined by the team because of the uncertainty of schedules for return to Hanoi.

Two days were spent in Hai Hung and an additional day was spent with technicians of the Red Cross and the hospital.

DRVN--RED CROSS, PEACE COMMITTEE

The team was received by Mr. Nguyen An Tin, Vice Minister of Public Health, who is a member of both the Red Cross and the Peace Committee; Mr. Quat, Secretary of the Peace Committee; and Mr. Hicu, member of the staff both of the Red Cross and Peace Committee.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Tin noted that it was quite fitting that representatives of the WCC/FRRI who had visited before in the midst of the struggle, should come again now that peace and freedom have come to Vietnam.

"In the war years, we achieved great things but at a very heavy cost. Now we must improve the status of the people, but there is a greater task--repairing the terrible destruction in the South. The North must assist the South first--where there is but a single grain of rice, it must be shared. After emergency aid, reconstruction, must follow. We shall then reunify the country in a 'reasonable' time."

"The WCC/FRRI are in a position for special relationships in this time for you were, you are, you will be our friends. Please extend our feelings on this matter to all the national churches. Many have

of new equipment. "The quality of diagnosis and treatment has been improved measurably by the new equipment."

4. Plans for the new structure await the assistance of the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Public Health.
5. Building supplies furnished by the FRRI are not expected to complete the whole 500 bed hospital. Rather they are a basic supply of technical as well as building supplies from which to draw. Local financing and local supplies are to complete the buildings.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM (Formerly the PRG)

A meeting with Mme. Le Ngoc Anh and technicians from the staff of the RSVN lasted most of a morning. Her remarks were as follows:

"We welcome the WCC/FRRI. Since you were our friends in the time of struggle, especially so now in this time of joy for the Vietnamese and all people. Since the South has been liberated and peace has come, we remember that you were our friends in hard times."

"After many years of struggle for liberation, the consequences are incredibly heavy. Many were unemployed under the old regime. Now must be added their soldiers and those formerly serving the war machine. In addition the diseases of that society present a great problem, including drug addiction and hundreds of thousands of prostitutes. The old society was a consumer society dependant on American money with emphasis on commerce and trade rather than production."

"After liberation, we must carry out social reforms, build a medical network to handle drug addiction and contagious diseases. Unemployment is a consequence of the forced resettlement and evacuation programs. In Saigon, of 4 million, only 1 million are employed. People must return to their homes and we must help with transport and materials for a start. We are grateful to the WCC for the emergency aid that has helped with this problem."

"We are now in a second phase encouraging workers and industrialists to resume production. We must also provide fertilizer and farm machinery to resettle evacuated people and return war damaged fields to production. We are seeing some satisfactory results in normalizing the life of the people, providing order and security and reducing unemployment."

"Now is a time of reconciliation and concord. With the help of our friends around the world, we can succeed. So far those who have left the resettlement camps to return have numbered in the millions."

In answer to questions, the following statements were made:

1. "The Third Force people have been recognized in a celebration arranged by the government. I met Father Chan Tin and many others." (Father Chan Tin led in a ministry to families of political prisoners and received assistance via WCC/FRRI.)
2. "All prisoners have been released; even criminals, and given a new chance. There is no hatred among Vietnamese. Now is the time for healing. My brothers were colonels in the ARVN, but they are still my family."
3. "All the orphans are Vietnamese! There will be no discrimination. Their future is as citizens so we must help them grow up to be the best. We appreciated very much the statements protesting the use of children as political pawns."

A full report was given on emergency aid supplies received to date along with expressions of appreciation for the prompt response to the appeal. A list was furnished after communication with their committees in the South of items most needed for reconstruction. The list is for tractors and agricultural equipment designed to restore war damaged fields to production.

#### THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The team worshipped with the Evangelical Church in Hanoi. Pastor Thu received the team for discussions after the service. It was noted that many more young men in uniform were present than during the October visit.

Pastor Thu described the plans of the Evangelical Church to work with the Evangelical church in the South towards reunification. He is hopeful of attending the WCC Assembly in Nairobi. The Evangelical Church in Hai Duong which was in process of rebuilding in October, 1974 was completed before Christmas. The team was received by the Pastor and some officers of the church. It is noteworthy that funds to rebuild the bombed out church came from the Fatherland Front, which includes the Buddhists, Catholics, labor unions, etc.

#### Summary

Both the DRVN and RSVN are hard at work to restore war-torn society as well as the war-torn countryside. Emphasis is at present on the emotional and kinship ties rather than on political or military solutions. There is a great dam of pent up family loyalties released by the liberation. Traffic is heavy both North and South. Accommodations are over-taxed.

September is to be the month to celebrate Vietnamese National Day. Preparations are underway in Hanoi to provide for a massive "family reunion" to mark the new era. Little can be done in negotiations or with visits until this primary concern has been demonstrated.

Reunification is spoken of by both DRVN and RSVN as eventual but not hurried. It is a family concern but understanding friends are welcome to the festive table.