

### Indelible memories



Three days ago, a high-ranking leader from the Vietnamese Communist Party visited us. Before leaving, he conveyed to me his wish that I write some recollections of my visit to the territory of Vietnam liberated in its heroic fight against the yankee troops in the south of his country.

I do not really have much time available, when a large part of the world is striving to seek a response to the news that a war, with the use of deadly weapons, is about to break out in a critical corner of our globalized planet.

However, recalling antecedents, and the monstrous crimes committed against countries with lesser economic and scientific development, will help all peoples to fight for their own survival.

The 40th anniversary of the visit of an official Cuban delegation to Vietnam falls on September 12.

In a Reflection which I wrote February 14, 2008, I published information about the Republican candidate to the U.S. Presidency, John McCain, humiliatingly defeated in his candidacy by Barack Obama. The latter, at least, could talk in terms resembling those of Martin Luther King, vilely assassinated by white racists.

Obama even proposed imitating the train journey of the austere Abraham Lincoln, although he never would have been capable of delivering the Gettysburg Address. Michael Moore fired at him,

"Congratulations, President Obama, for the Nobel Peace prize, now please earn it."

McCain lost the Presidency of the United States, but fixed things so as to return to the Senate, from where he is exercising enormous pressure on the government of this country.

Now he is happy, moving his forces so that Obama can fire the greatest number of accurate missiles with the capacity to hit with precision the living forces of the Syrian troops.

Sarin gas is as deadly as atomic radiation. Nine countries already have nuclear weapons which are far more deadly than sarin gas. Data published in 2012 notes that Russia possesses approximately 16,000 active nuclear warheads, and the United States around 8,000.

The need to deploy them on enemy objectives in a question of minutes imposes procedures for their use.

A third power, China, the most solid economically, already has the capacity for mutual assured destruction with the United States. For its part, Israel exceeds France and Britain in nuclear technology, but has not allowed one word to be spoken on the fabulous funds it receives from the United States and its collaboration with the latter country in this area. A few days ago, it dispatched two missiles to test the response capacity of U.S. destroyers in the Mediterranean pointed at Syria.

What then is the power of such a small, advanced group of countries?



In order to extract the enormous energy derived from a hydrogen nucleus it is necessary to create a gas plasma of more than 200 million degrees centigrade, the heat needed to force the atoms of deuterium and tritium to fuse and release energy, according to a BBC dispatch which seems to be well informed on the subject. This is already a scientific discovery, but how much will need to be invested to transform these objectives into reality?

Our suffering humanity is waiting. We are not a mere handful; we already total more than seven billion human beings, the vast majority children, adolescents and young adults.

Returning to the recollections of my visit to Vietnam which prompted these lines, I did not have the privilege of meeting Ho Chi Minh, the legendary creator of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the country of the Annamites, the people of whom our National Hero José Martí talked in such a praiseworthy fashion in 1889 in his Golden Age children's magazine.

When I visited the country in 1973, the first day I stayed in the residence of the former French governor in Indochina, arriving there September 12, after the agreement between the United States and Vietnam. Pham Van Dong, then Prime Minister, put me up there. That hardened combatant, alone with me in the old mansion built by the French metropolis, began to weep. Excuse me, he said to me, but I am thinking

## Indelible memories

Published on FIDEL Soldier of Ideas (<http://www.fidelcastro.cu>)

---

of the millions of young people who have died in this struggle. It was at that very moment when I perceived in its full dimension how hard that battle had been. He also complained of the acts of deception the United States had used against them.

In a brief synthesis, I shall use the exact words which I wrote in the abovementioned Reflection of February 14, 2008, as soon as I had the possibility of doing so:

"The bridges, without exception, throughout the journey, visible from the air between Hanoi and the South, were effectively destroyed; villages devastated, and every day, splinter bomb grenades –dropped with that objective – exploded in the rice fields where children, women and even old people of advanced age, were working to produce food.

"A large number of craters could be observed at every one of the entries to the bridges. At that time, far more precise laser directed bombs did not exist. I had to insist in order to make that tour. The Vietnamese feared that I might be the victim of some yankee adventure if they knew of my presence in the area. Pham Van Dong accompanied me the entire time.

"We flew over the province of Nghe-An, where Ho Chi Minh was born. In that province and that of Ha Tinh, two million Vietnamese died of hunger in 1945, the last year of World War II. We landed in Dong Hoi. One million bombs were dropped on the province where this destroyed city is located. We crossed the Nhat Le on a raft. We visited an aid post for the wounded in Quang Tri. We saw countless captured M48 tanks. We toured wooden roads of what had been the National Route, destroyed by bombs. We met with young Vietnamese soldiers who covered themselves in glory in the battle of Quang Tri. Serene, resolute, weather-beaten by the sun and war, a slight tic was reflected in the battalion captain's eyelid. No-one knows how they were able to resist so many bombs. They were worthy of admiration. That same afternoon of September 15, returning by a different route, we picked up three wounded children two of them seriously so; a girl aged 14 years was in a state of shock with a metal fragment in her abdomen. The children were working the land when a hoe made a chance contact with a grenade. The Cuban doctors accompanying the delegation gave them direct attention for hours and saved their lives. I have witnessed, Mr. McCain, the results of the bombing of North Vietnam, of which you are so proud.



"In those September days, Allende had been overthrown; the government Palace was attacked and many Chileans tortured and murdered. The coup was promoted and organized from Washington."

Lino Luben Pérez, an AIN journalist, quoted in an article published December 1, 2010, the words stated on January 2, 1988 at the event for the seventh anniversary of the Revolution: "We are prepared to give Vietnam not only our sugar, but our blood, which is worth far more than sugar!"

In another part of his article, the AIN journalist wrote, "For years, thousands of young Vietnamese

## **Indelible memories**

Published on FIDEL Soldier of Ideas (<http://www.fidelcastro.cu>)

---

studied in various specialties in Cuba, including the Spanish and English languages, while another considerable number of Cubans learned their language there.

"At the port of Haiphong, in the north bombarded by the yankees, Cuban ships docked loaded with sugar, and hundreds of technical personnel worked during the war in that territory as constructors.

"Other compañeros founded poultry farms for the production of meat and eggs.

"The first merchant ship from this nation to enter a Cuban port was a tremendously significant event. Today, state or business collaboration and the political understanding between the two [Communist] parties and their relations of friendship have been maintained and are increasing."

I ask you to excuse me for the modest effort of writing these paragraphs in the name of our traditional friendship with Vietnam.

This morning, the risk of conflict breaking out with its disastrous consequences would seem to have been reduced due to the intelligent initiative of Russia, which remained firm in the face of the unheard of pretension on the part of the United States government, threatening to launch a devastating attack on the Syrian defenses which could cost thousands of lives of the people of this country and unleash a conflict of unforeseeable consequences.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov spoke in the name of the government of this valiant country and is possibly contributing to avert, in the immediate future, a world disaster.

For their part, the U.S. people are strongly opposed to a political adventure which would affect not only their own country, but all of humanity.

***Fidel Castro Ruz***  
***September 10, 2013***  
***3:20pm***

## **Source:**

Cubadebate  
10/09/2013

---

**Source URL:** <http://www.fidelcastro.cu/en/articles/indelible-memories>