

New crack-down on Vietnamese dissidents: wrong and harmful action for the ruler.

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The Vietnam's Communist Party (VCP)- the only party to rule Vietnam for decades, has found itself in an dilemma since China's Government decided to found a new district-level city Tam Sa that includes Vietnam's archipelagos, Paracel and Spratley, in December last year. Actually, China invaded the whole Paracel and parts of Spratley for years. To maintain economic growth over 7% CPV has to incline more towards Western world that contains democratic values opposed to one-party rule. To retain an authoritarian power VCP has to hold on the ideological back-up of China but ironically China is looking more aggressive to Vietnam's sovereignty. After coward reluctance to speak out against China's invasion and deplorable repression on people who wanted to organize public demonstrations against China's hegemony, recently CPV has shown few moves worth a praise: confirmation by a deputy-foreign minister about sovereignty of Spratley, responding to an objection of China to the cooperative project PetroVietnam-ExxonMobil in exploring the sea around Spratley and evocation of China's foreign officials in Vietnam to say against an aggressive and provocative article posted on sina.com – a website controlled by Chinese Communist Party, detailing a plan to attack and conquer Vietnam in 31 days. Both of those two rare moves brought a little but valuable credibility for VCP. But the crack-down VCP just launched on dissidents on last September 10th risks to cost VCP's legitimacy more.

The crack-down began just 02 days after the arrival of a Chinese visitor, Mr. Wang Yang - a member of Chinese Communist Party's Politburo and Party Secretary of Guangdong province, by arresting at mid-night 04 dissidents: Nguyen Xuan Nghia, a 59 year-old writer and a fresh Hellman-Hammett prize laureate, Pham Van Troi, a 36 year-old bachelor in sociology and Human-rights activist for years, Nguyen Van Tuc, a denouncing impoverished peasant and Ngo Quynh, a pro-democracy student. In addition, earlier on the same day, a well-known blogger Nguyen Van Hai (nicknamed Dieu Cay) famous for anti-China activities was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison. Next many days, several other dissidents were summoned to the police office and many other suffered close watch or limited travel. And right at the time of devising this article two more dissidents, Pham Thanh Nghien, a 31 year-old female still getting sick and Vu Hung, a 42 year-old teacher, have been handcuffed away after being harassed for days, the former taken away with a banner reading “ Paracel and Spratley belong to Vietnam”.

All arrested victims are believed to be among those who are keen on public manifestation that was likely to happen upon a call spread few weeks ago on the internet for a demonstration outside the China's foreign offices in Hanoi and Saigon on 14 September, 08 – the 50th day of anniversary for the Communiqué by former Prime Minister Pham Van Dong of Democratic Republic of Vietnam to recognize the declaration of China over sea sovereignty that includes Vietnam's archipelagos, Paracel and Spratley, at that time these archipelagos belonged to Republic of Vietnam. The call might also be a stronger response to the above-mentioned article of sina.com. As happened, the demonstration

failed to take place while a large contingent of all kinds of security agents deployed to the areas around China's Embassy in Hanoi and China's Consulate general in Saigon.

Those Vietnam's Authorities who still favor a double-face game, taking advantage of open economy towards Western support and retaining closed politics towards China's back-up, might think that the crack-down is right to do. On one hand, the crack-down may sow more terror on people who intend to stand up for freedoms. On the other hand, the crack-down, at this time, may assuage their Chinese superiors' worries over their political loyalty after Vietnam's recent closer moves to U.S.A.

However, in reality, since 2000 every crack-down on Vietnamese dissidents have seemed to help give birth to other more challenging dissidents and activities. 03 young dissidents arrested at their early 30's in 2002's crack-down then saw many other fellows of whom several are more highly-educated or much younger. And now it is clear to see many other dissidents including students continued to go on the stage after the "most severe" (viewed by International Amnesty) crack-down since 20 years that took place at the beginning of the year 2006. In 2002, spreading smoothly a dissident writing among the people was considered a success but now people feel dissatisfied with some periodicals that contain each about 30 A4-size pages. And one thing, much more important to mention, is wishes and aspirations for an open society have become more vocal and determined. Non-communist parties, private associations, public vigils for civil rights and mass protests against local government, though still sparse, at a small-scale and often facing threats, are no longer a dream.

No one is sure about whether the arrests of the recent crack-down were the main cause of the failure of September 14th demonstration but every Vietnamese patriot believes the arrests pleased the Chinese invader. So the recent crack-down has brought a great disgrace on VCP whose legitimacy is left a modicum.

For this moment, VCP could ignore Western blames over its Human-rights abuses since economic interests seem much more alluring than spiritual values of humanity in the crisis time and the Western world is getting busy to tackle cold-war like incidents. However, every regime that despises the country's interests and only relies on foreign back-up could never stand. And in the history of human-beings, people could forgive a ruler for many of his mistakes or even crimes but never for a "mistake" of turning back to the nation or plotting with the invader. A Chinese Confucian philosopher Xunzi in 02nd century BC said, "The people are the water and the ruler a boat. The water can keep the boat afloat, the water can also capsize it". So in every view, the recent crack-down by VCP is wrong and harmful for itself.

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