

January 6, 1986

**Letter from Director of Technical Operations Sector
Schmidt to Minister of State Security Erich Mielke,
Cooperation with the Mdl of the SRV**

Citation:

"Letter from Director of Technical Operations Sector Schmidt to Minister of State Security Erich Mielke, Cooperation with the Mdl of the SRV", January 6, 1986, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU MfS Abt X 348, 257-259. Obtained for CWIHP by Martin Grossheim and translated for CWIHP by Sean O'Grady.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/120728>

Summary:

The document reaffirms the highest objective at the time: improving requirements technical work in the Vietnamese Ministry of the Interior. The document also recounts successful cooperation in areas of electrical engineering and electronics, precision mechanics, and camouflage.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Berlin, 6 January 1986

Technical Operations Sector
Director

Personally

Comrade Minister

Cooperation with the Mdl [Ministry of Interior] of the SRV [Socialist Republic of Vietnam]

According to the confirmed plan for cooperation that took place at the time
from 26.11. - 4.12.1985 in Hanoi

A meeting of the director level with the technical operations partner service of the
Mdl of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

The delegation of the brother institute stands under the direction of Comrade Vo van
Mang, assistant director of Main Department IV of the Mdl of the SRV. The delegation
of the OTS [Technical Operations Sector] was led by me.

In the course of this meeting I entered into a conversation with the Minister of the
Interior of the SRV, Comrade Pham Hung. I had the opportunity to report to him about
the development of cooperation between the OTS and Vietnamese partner service.
With that, Comrade Pham Hung expressed in very cordial terms his thanks to our
party and to the Comrade Minister Mielke personally regarding the accomplished,
effective assistance. He asked me to convey his most sincere regards to you,
Comrade Minister, as well as the best wishes for your health.

The starting point in the leadership consultation for the assessment of the fulfillment
of the plan for cooperation in 1984/85 was from the fixed objective from the protocol
of April 1984:

"Support of the Main Departments H 18 and A 23 in selected areas with the goal of
further addressing the requirements for their own technical operations work,
supplemented through the delivery of technical operations materials of the agreed
extent for the immediate support of operational work."[1]

Accordingly it could be established, that this concept has been confirmed as correct
and useful for the Vietnamese brother institution.

In the areas of document technology, cryptographic analysis, instrumental analysis
and SVG-technology, the help of the OTS to the partner service comprised of the
delivery of devices and consumables, the handover of operations procedures and also
the training of Vietnamese specialists for the use of handed-over devices and
procedures. A special part of this consultation with the Vietnamese comrades was
occupied by the planned construction of a printing shop and the expansion of a
special paper mill, in connection with the introduction and coordination of essential
activities in the economy of the GDR. (The project documentation for the printing
shop was able to be handed over to the Vietnamese side during the meeting.)

In the areas of electrical engineering and electronics, precision mechanics/optics as well as concealment and camouflage the plan was completely fulfilled.

This included the provision of technical operations devices as well as documentation, examples, and materials for in-house development by the Vietnamese partner service. So it is that the Vietnamese comrades, with the help of OTS, successfully produced functional micro-cameras. That is the example of fundamental importance for the further planning of cooperation.

One of the comprehensive measures of the expired planning period was the outfitting of a workshop for concealment and camouflage by specialists of the OTS together with Vietnamese comrades in year 1984.

The extent of value of the financed solidarity materials shipments to the Vietnamese brother institutions amounted in year 1984/85 to approx. 1.5 million marks.

The Vietnamese comrades reported that the materials delivered from the OTS were used in operational and technical operations work. That was able to be confirmed through inspection of workrooms and work results of Main Departments H 18 and A 23 in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Vung-Tau. However, it has to be simultaneously assessed that essential reserves still lay for an increase of work results in the effective formation of leadership and direction activities. This concerns both targeted instruction and control of subordinate managers to align them with operational service units for the accomplishment of the core mission, to tighten formation of organizational process, as well as the consequential protection of conspiracy and secrecy.

The conveyance of corresponding experiences and suggestions stands therefore at the center of my consultation with Comrade Vo van Mang and they were accepted by him with attention and agreement. This was also reflected in my conversation with Comrade Minister Pham Hung.

In the course of the consultation, the plan for cooperation for years 1986/87 was approved and signed. It includes the continuation of support for the Vietnamese partner service in the previous scope in the previous main areas.

The most important objective--newly reaffirmed--is, with help of the OTS, to further improve on the requirements for independent operative-technical work in the Mdl of the SRV. This is provided especially in the plan for the conveyance of information and experience, as well as the support for the independent development and production of technical operations devices and materials.

It is assessed, that the single sided character of collaboration for the next years will continue, despite ascertained positive developments. The first starting point for an active role of Main Department 18 presents itself in the examination of the possibility of produced OTS-designed devices in the SRV or in the planned delivery of a magnifying glass for dactylographic examination constructed at Main Department H 18 to the OTS. According to the sum already approved by you for the Plan for Collaboration 1986/87, the free delivery of technical operations and technical materials to the partner service of the SRV is valued at 700,000.- Marks. In addition, there are already requisition notes of an estimated value of over 1 million Marks, which are considered as ordered with payment.

The plan for cooperation 1986/87 between the OTS and the Head Department H 18 of the Mdl of the SRV corresponds to both the wishes of the brother institute as well as the possibilities of the OTS.

I request approval of the documents.

/s/

Schmidt

Major General

[1] The H 18 was the "Department for Research and Production of Technical Devices" (Cục Nghiên cứu, sản xuất phương tiện kỹ thuật) within the Vietnamese Ministry of Interior, It had been established in 1960 under its first name "Cục Kỹ thuật nghiệp vụ" (Technical Professional Department) and was similar to the Technical Operations Sector of the GDR Ministry for State Security. See Phạm Văn Quyền et al. (eds.). Bộ Công An. 60 năm Công An Nhân Dân Việt Nam (1945-2005) [60 years People's Public Security Forces (1945-2005)], Hanoi: NXB Công An Nhân Dân, 2006: 757-759. Based on a close reading of the available Stasi files we guess that "A23" was the "Main Department for Signals Intelligence" (HA Nachrichten) which was the second area of cooperation next to operational technique. See "Agreement on the cooperation between the Ministry of State Security of the German Democratic Republic and Ministry of the Interior the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. 28.10.1980" and the files in BStU MfS Abt. X 346.