



Hanoi's booty: Factories go north

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HONG KONG — North Vietnam apparently has decided to help itself to some of the economic wealth it inherited with the conquest of South Vietnam.

As a result, according to usually reliable sources, entire factories in the south are being dismantled and shipped north.

What seems to have happened is that the North Vietnamese conquerors discovered their half of Vietnam was a backward country compared with the more-developed south, the beneficiary of lavish American spending for more than two decades.

"We still feel great hatred toward the Americans for all the suffering and destruction they inflicted on our country," Huynh Van Tam, leader of the Communist regime's trade union movement, said recently.

"But we must admit they left a great amount of industrial property behind."

That was something of an understatement. More important than the staggering American military loot they acquired, the Communists inherited intact an estimated \$12 billion in the form of industrial plants and the infrastructure to serve them.

This was the U.S. investment that was to have made non-Communist South Vietnam economically self-reliant once the war ended.

Apparently feeling that Saigon could spare a little of its booty, especially after years of hardship and spartan living in the north, Hanoi has dismantled and shipped to North Vietnam one of the south's most modern textile plants.

Hospital equipment, another American legacy, also has been shipped north. According to recent arrivals from Saigon, South Vietnamese specialists went along with the equipment.

Hanoi also has appropriated a monosodium glutamate (MSG) plant, and moved it north.

Visitors to Hanoi say some equipment of Foremost Milk, the American dairy company, which had an extensive operation in South Vietnam, has turned up in the north.

Also much in evidence in the North Vietnamese capital are American cars, including Ford Falcons and Mustangs, left behind in Saigon.

One American official who left Saigon in a hurry April 29 still groans when he thinks about the brand new \$5,000 Volvo he left behind.

"It didn't even have 50 miles on it," he says mournfully.