

## The Two Vietnams Proclaimed United

### Bangkok

North and South Vietnam declared themselves reunited yesterday, formally ending 22 years of partition.

"The Vietnamese nation is officially considered a unified country, from Ca Lang to Ca Mau," Hanoi radio said.

The announcement, with its references to the northernmost and southernmost points of Vietnamese territory, followed the decision of the combined National Assembly, meeting in Hanoi, to declare the two halves one, under the name of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Assembly, which began its first session last Thursday following general elections on April 25, also declared Hanoi the unified nation's capital and in secret balloting chose a slate of leaders dominated by northerners.

Tan Duc Thang, president of the Democratic Republic of (north) Vietnam since 1969, was chosen president of the new Socialist republic. Thang, 88, has been reported to be in frail health. The presidency is a figurehead position.

North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong remains premier. No mention was made in the Hanoi radio broadcast of the composition of his cabinet.

Nguyen Luang Bang, North Vietnamese vice president, was elected one of two vice presidents of the reunited country. Nguyen Huu Tho, who had been head of state of South Vietnam's Provisional Revolutionary Government, was made the other vice president.

Tho, 66, who was born in the Saigon suburb of Cholon, was the only southerner whose name has emerged so far in an elected position following the National Assembly deliberations.

Truong Chinh, one of the most doctrinaire Marxists in the North Vietnamese leadership, was named chairman of the National Assembly's standing committee. All those members of the committee announced by Radio Hanoi were northerners, according to sources in Bangkok.

No mention was made of any changes in the Communist party, headed by First Secretary Le Duan, the most powerful figure in North Vietnam and considered likely to remain so in the unified state.

The assembly earlier appointed a constitutional drafting committee. Until they complete a new national charter, Vietnam will be governed under the constitution in effect in North Vietnam since 1959. North Vietnam's flag, emblem and anthem were chosen as new national symbols.

To honor the late president Ho Chi Minh, whose dream it was to reunite the two Vietnams, the National Assembly changed the name of Saigon, the southern capital, to Ho Chi Minh City.

The announcement officially reversed the process of division that was set in motion in Hanoi on Sept. 2, 1945, when the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was proclaimed. The war with France broke out the next year and ended in 1954 when the Geneva agreement split the country at the 16th parallel, setting the stage for direct U.S. intervention in 1965.

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