

January 28, 1989

**Letter from Liaison Office of the Ministry of State
Security at the Ministry of Interior of the Socialist
Republic of Vietnam to the Ministry of State
Security**

Citation:

"Letter from Liaison Office of the Ministry of State Security at the Ministry of Interior of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Ministry of State Security", January 28, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU MfS Abt X 348, 77-79. Obtained for CWIHP by Martin Grossheim and translated for CWIHP by Sean O'Grady.
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/120729>

Summary:

East German Major Knabe (stationed in Hanoi) requests information on the exact dates of the initial 1964 visits of Vietnamese delegates to East Germany, and notes with concern the required cancellation of collaborative projects due to East Germany's lack of available funds. Knabe also inquires into the availability of printing presses, polygraphs, and building materials.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Liaisons office of the MfS
at the Mdl of the SRV

Hanoi, 28.01.1989

Ministry of State Security (MfS)
Department X
Comrade Major General Damm

B e r l i n

Dear Comrade Major General Damm!

On 27.1.1989, according to your wishes, I had a conversation with the deputy heads of the HA 18 of the Mdl [Ministry of Interior] of the SRV [Socialist Republic of Vietnam], the comrades Nghiem Si Tao and Vu Van Khoan.

Comrade Khoan explained to me that the cooperation of the OTS [Technical Operations Sector] of the MfS with the HA 18 of the Mdl began in the GDR in 1964 with the visit of Comrade Nguyen Minh Tien, at that time head of the operational main department of the Mdl. With this information we can mark in 1989 the 25th anniversary of this highly successful collaboration. Unfortunately, Comrade Tien cannot also remember the exact date of his visit to the GDR. Therefore, I ask of your help to investigate the exact date. As the Vietnamese comrades are reviewing the history of the collaboration with the brotherly institutions, please simultaneously send any existing photos that document this cooperation. Unfortunately, they have very few such documents.

Comrade Khoan gave to me on this occasion the itemization of the needs of the HA 18 agreed upon in the plan for cooperation with the OTS for the year 1989. I enclose this letter with this message and ask that you have it forwarded to OTS.

Comrade Khoan emphasized the effectiveness of the help of the OTS for the HA 18 and the interest in the continuation and deepening of this collaboration. Unfortunately, last year some agreed upon measures had to be canceled because of a lack of available funds. Also, in the future such problems must be calculated and the cooperation must not be restricted because [of these problems], the HA 18 suggests to re-examine to what extent the OTS assembly work can be carried out by HA 18. Capacities and possibilities exist in the HA 18 in the fields of electrical engineering/electronics and precision engineering/optics. Operational technology can be assembled, but so can modern consumer electronics such as televisions, TV recorders, and radio recorders. With such assembly services that can be done with supplied parts in Hanoi but also by workers of the HA 18 who have been sent to the OTS in the GDR, not only would a financing of the cooperation with the OTS be possible, but also a contribution by HA 18 to the financing of the total budget of the Mdl could be made. (As already known, in 1989 the Mdl received only 70% of needed funds from the state budget and had to generate the remaining funds itself.

The comrades of HA 18 were thankful for a short expression of opinion regarding this subject, that was already mentioned in the visit by the Comrades to OTS last year.

As the construction of the new offices of the HA 18 is expected to be completed this year, Comrade Khoan asks that you to consider whether electrical installation materials can be made available. This question was also asked of you at your visit to Hanoi in the spring of 1988 and a corresponding itemized list of needed materials was provided. To date, HA 18 has not received an answer to this.

Comrade Tao is answerable at HA 18 for the installation of the special paper printing press VD-TL 82. He confirmed once more that modifications to this investment should be implemented, that is, the GDR provides the equipment and the SRV assembles the necessary buildings, foundations, etc. As specified in the contract and for the completion of the relevant foreign trade contracts, it is necessary to send specialists of the "Polygraph" to Hanoi as soon as possible. The Vietnamese side is ready to receive them.

Comrade Tao explained that they assume that the plant must be ready for production this year. The government of the SRV resolved to begin issuing new passports in 1989. These will have to be printed on the Vd-TL 82, this year another 200,000 copies. In order to solve this important political task he asks for accelerated work on the project of this facility and the quickest possible realization.

I ask of you, comrade Major General, to arrange for the corresponding information to be transmitted to me, in order that I may respond to the requests of the partners.

With socialist greetings,

/s/

K n a b e
Major General