

(continued from the last issue)

III. IRRIGATION PLAN FOR 1996

a. In the plan for 1996, we should concentrate on works needed for opening up undeveloped land and increasing crop, building residential areas in flood plains and pushing ahead with the desalination program in order to create favorable conditions for realization of the five-year plan by 1999.

b. Main targets for the year 1996 are:

- In the central area of Đồng Tháp Mười Plain belonging to Long An and Đồng Tháp provinces, the Tân Thành-Lô Gạch Canal will be dredged and enlarged in order to build the road network in the borderland and a residential area of 50 km long. This target must be achieved before the flood tide of 1996.

- Other works are: a levee around Tân Hồng district, canals and residential areas in borderland such as: Hưng Diền canal (Long An), Sa Rải canal (Đồng Tháp), Tân Ngàn canal (An Giang), KH6 canal (Cần Thơ-Kiên Giang). These works in borderland aim at opening up new land or increasing crop. In addition, provincial governments should make levees along second-level canals and around residential areas.

c. Source of capital:

- Total: VND550 billion

+ Of this amount, VND300 billion spent on the program for struggling against flood (130 billion); Phụng Hiệp Canal (84 billion); South Măng Thít Program and other programs will be under control of the MARD.

+ VND250 billion under control of provincial governments will be spent on developing flood plains (180 billion) and other regions (70 billion).

- In 1996, according to the Decision 99/TTg, the Treasury will supply some VND80 billion, VND120 billion will come from ABD and WB, and around VND100 billion will be made by issuing T-bills.

Local budgets can supply around 100 billion, provincial governments will make some 150 billion by collecting tax on land use rights (not transmitting to the national budget).

IV. MEASURES TO REALIZE THE PLAN

1. To encourage local residents to invest in production and rural development:

The greatest contradiction of the Mekong Delta is between its potential as an abundant source of agricultural products and its low level of development in comparison with other regions of the country. To industrialize and modernize agriculture

LONG TERM AIMS AND THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN (1996-2000) FOR DEVELOPMENT OF IRRIGATION AND COMMUNICATIONS IN THE MEKONG DELTA

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and to make rural areas in this delta more civilized and developed require great efforts of both the Government and the people.

In the coming years, we must try our best to change the face of the delta, that is, to cause the production to increase, help the people become richer, make the life in rural areas more civilized and modern, and repair shortcomings of the Mekong Delta. The targets are: brick house for every family, schools for children of school-leaving age, no noon time classes, clean water for everybody, asphalt roads leading to all villages and concrete bridges in replacement for wooden ones in rural areas.

In order to achieve said targets, all local resources must be mobilized, all local residents should share with the Government and the Party the determination to complete this plan on time by contributing money, time and labor to it.

In this spirit, each family must settle down and prepare everything for production, that is, all farmers have to dug ditches in their fields, raise the floor of their houses and take part in local public works.

In each province, a village or a district will be selected as a site where the pilot scheme is carried out before it is introduced on a larger scale.

If this plan is completed in this five-year period, it will lay the groundwork for a new stage of development of the Mekong Delta in the twenty-first century.

2. To mobilize all industries, branches, economic sectors and organizations to take part in the plan:

- Party committees and authorities of all levels should cooperate with related governmental bodies and direct subordinate bodies to mobilize all local residents to take part in public works of all kinds, inspect and sum up the situation regularly in order to repair shortcomings on time with a view to completing the plan perfectly.

- All organizations such as the National Front, Youth League, Women Association, Farmer Association, Veteran Association, etc. should be assigned to cooperate with local authorities in directing public works.

- Related offices and services under the direction of local governments are responsible for supplying legal advice, technical assistance or training courses needed for the realization of the plan.

- Co-operatives, farmers' groups... should find ways to cooperate in carrying out rural development projects.

- Local industries and businesses

had better make contribution (from their profits) or supply labor to local development projects.

- Local military units had better mobilize their members to help revolutionary families and households in remote areas build houses or ditches.

- All officials and students can also take part in the plan.

3. To improve managerial skills of governmental bodies at central and local levels:

- The MARD should cooperate with the Ministries of Communications, of Construction, and People's Committees of provinces in the Mekong Delta to perfect the plan against flood in the delta. Besides short-term aims set forth for the period from now until 2000, the plan should set forth long-term ones, such as basic irrigation projects against flood by:

- Directing the flow of water from Vietnam-Kampuchia border to Vàm Cỏ river and Thailand Gulf.

- Noting changes in the environment and flow in Tiên, Hậu and Vàm Cỏ rivers.

- Studying the system of irrigation works including levees, flood-gates, and canals which could help with controlling flood completely.

The plan against flood in the short-term period should be completed in 1996.

Basic irrigation projects of long-term period should be written down basically in 1997 and completely in 1999.

+ Personnel in charge of realization of the Decision 99/TTg: The MARD will form a directorial board under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. This board includes two standing committees directed by two vice-ministers, one in Hà Nội and one in the Mekong Delta. Two committees will take charge of realization of the Decision 99/TTg. The Ministries of Planning and Investment, Science-Technology and Environment, Finance, Labor-War Invalids and Social Affairs, Construction, Communications and Transportation, Education and Training, Health and the State Bank will form respective representative offices to cooperate with the MARD in carrying out this Decision.

In April 1996, all these bodies must be organized and reports should be made and submitted to the Prime Minister.

For the time being, the following

tasks must be completed:

- Setting forth the deadline for all works in the plan.

- Carrying out perfectly the task of estimating feasibility studies and technical designs in parallel with the progress of works.

- Mobilizing both central and local construction companies to meet deadlines of all works according to the planned outlay and required standards.

+ Related governmental bodies (the Ministries of Planning and Investment, Labor-War Invalids and Social Affairs, the State Bank, the National Fund for Investment) set forth criteria for deciding on supplying loans to residents in flood plains before April 1996. Chairmen of provincial people committees will look over classes of borrowers in April 1996.

b. Related ministries

- The Ministry of Communications, in cooperation with the MARD and provincial people's committees in



the delta, make the plan of communications network (roads and waterways) and submit it to the Prime Minister before September 1996 and at the same time, carry out the plan for 1996 immediately.

- The Ministry of Construction, in cooperation with the MARD and provincial people's committees in the delta, make plan of residential areas, and designs for rural cottages, and report on results to the Prime Minister.

- The Ministry of Education and Training, in cooperation with the Ministry of Construction and people's committees in the delta, make the plan of school system and report on results to the PM.

- The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Con-

struction and provincial people's committees in the delta, make the plan of, and designs for, hospital system and report to the PM.

- The Ministry of Science-Technology and Environment and the National Center of Natural Science and Technology, in cooperation with the MARD, make the plan for struggling against flood in the delta (for both long-term and short-term periods) and helps local scientific centers study problems relating to the environment and flow of water.

- In 1996, the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Finance mobilize VND550 billion from various sources (ADB, WB, and ODA) in order to build urgent irrigation works on the suggestion of the MARD.

If the needed capital can not be found, the Ministry of Finance and the State Bank can petition the Government to issue T-bills.

c. Duties of provincial people's committees in the delta

- To zone the land for irrigation, communications works and residential areas and submit the plan to the PM before December 1996.

- To make policy to attract contribution from the people and other sources of capital in order to develop the irrigation, communications, hospital and school systems.

- To form a directorial board in each province responsible for carrying out the Decision 99-TTg including representatives from related bodies under the direction of a vice-chairman of the provincial people's committee and director of the Service of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Chairmen of district or village people's committees will take direct charge of projects realized in their localities.

In order to carry out the above-mentioned tasks, ministries, governmental bodies, provincial people's committees in the delta have to make plan and take measures to realize the plan in each year. In 1996, reports should be sent to the MARD before it could be summed up and submitted to the PM.

(This is the report presented in the conference discussing the Decision 99/TTg held in HCMC from March 13 to 15, 1996)