Translation of the speech delivered on May 6, 1956, by the Secretary of State for Information and Youth on the occasion of the inauguration of the nation-wide Congress of Information.

Mr. Secretary of State, Delegate of the President of the Republic.

Though prevented by his inspection tour of the Highland region from being here, the President of the Republic has kindly accepted the honor of sponsoring this congress by appointing you to fill his chair to preside over this ceremony.

On behalf of the personnel and cadres of Information, I beg to express here our deep gratitude for that mark of kindness.

Messrs the Secretaries of State,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If the Department of Information was able during the past year to fulfill, to a certain extent, the mission which devolved upon it, it was due to the close cooperation and to the full support of different governmental agencies and political groups as well as to the Information organisms and economic aid of friendly nations. This mark of solidarity which is materialized by your presence comes straight to our hearts.

Dear friends,

From the 17th parallel to the cape of Camau, from the mountainous region to the Plaines des Joncs, you have come and are meeting here today.

While addressing my friendly greetings to you, I request you to extend my best wishes to your friends who were not able to come, being prevented from doing so by the needs of the service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the international plane, if there are changes in the Communist tactics, nothing permits us to think that Communism has abandoned its ambition of world domination.

On the national plane, the many successes of Free VietNam on one hand and the economic and political difficulties of the Vietcong in the North as well as their recent and painful failures in the Center and South on the other hand have spread disorder among their cadres and caused disintegration in their organizations.

On their part, the people of Free VietNam become more and more conscious of their promising future and double their efforts to build up democracy, to intensify their economy and to spread their culture.

Our efforts, crowned with successes, have raised hopes in the hearts of our compatriots who are still under the Communist yoke, and have had echoes in South-East Asia and in the Free World.

It is under these circumstances that the nation-wide Congress of Information is convened in view of reviewing our realizations and working out a program for this year.

At the same time last year when I took up the responsibilities of the Department of Information I had all the services reorganized according to a five-point program:
1st point

Setting up of Information agencies at all levels and in all provinces, districts, and group villages in view of getting not only to the city people but also to the rural people, workers, and mountaineers.

During the last six years and until May, 1955, the Department of Information included only:

3 regional directions,
1 general direction for radio broadcasting, and
10 provincial services which did practically nothing but take care of festivities.

Today, from the popular area of the cities to the remote villages of mountainous regions, we have set up
41 provincial services,
196 district information bureaus, and
5870 rural information sections.

These installations enable us to extend our activities to unknown by-streets and to the most remote villages.

These figures are eloquent enough to show that not only was the 1st point realized to the fullest extent but also its provisions have been exceeded by 20%, for we were able both to set up information sections in newly-created villages as well as in places which did not appear in our work program of the last 12 months.

2nd point

Along with the installation of Information agencies are the recruiting and training of cadres.

During the past year, there have been formed in Saigon, Hue, and Dalat, and in all other provinces (Cantho, Cholon, Giadinh)

777 senior cadres from 5 promotions,
6410 junior cadres from 82 provincial promotions.

Thus the foreseen objective was fully reached; 98% of our personnel received monthly allowances from 300 to 3000 piasters.

5 In large villages made up of several hamlets the monthly allowance of 300$ is divided between several cadres. Though insignificantly paid, our cadres did not hesitate to display their efforts in spite of dangers of all kinds. Some of them died in doing their duties.

In the four new provinces of South VietNam (Tam can, Phong thanh, Moc hoa, and Ca mau) as well as in the mountainous regions several cadres, having no other arms than an invincible faith in the national cause, have volunteered to extend activities into places where armed Communists terrorized the population and were ready to attack them.

The movement of formation of cadres has gone far beyond the limit of Information to influence the people deeply. Thus, courses and conferences are held everywhere to study the general principles of the governmental policy and the plan of action of the campaign of denunciation of subversive Communist activities.

Following the high example of patient and scrupulous work of the President, our cadres have doubled their efforts in order to obtain a better result.
Here are a few examples:
The amount of distributed documents has increased 20 times, and the delivery period has been reduced from 5 to two days from Saigon to distant provinces.
The publication and supply rate of a bill which amounted to 3$ a unit is cut down to only 0$70 a unit.
This, notwithstanding the increase in personnel which has sextupled in a year's time and the amount of material which has quadrupled, the budget of our department in 1955 only tripled that passed in 1954, and only represents 1.1% of the national budget.
With an organization extending to the most remote hamlets, with a personnel motivated by a renovated spirit, we have been able to perform significant feats and to contribute effectively to the organization of the 23 October Referendum and 4 March elections as well as to the different campaigns of denunciation of Communist subversive activities.

3rd point

Setting up of Information halls

To better assure information for the population, notably for the working classes, Information halls with reading rooms, listening places, broadcasting performances have been established in all places.

In May, 1955, there had been, for the whole prefecture, an information hall in Cholon and a few postboards with bills in front of the big markets. Today we have set up a new information hall on TuDo Street which is reserved for exhibitions, 52 small information halls, reading rooms with newspapers, magazines, and receiving stations in workers' areas, 50 postboards in front of movie-houses and in public places.

Besides, public broadcasting performances are organized in 29 fixed places.

All the province capitals and district capitals are provided with halls, postboards, and listening places. In each village there exists at least one or several information postboards. Several villages are also provided with battery receiving stations.

The third point of our program seemed at first unrealizable. It had been estimated that there must have been a cost of 50,000$ to rent a room and make an information booth out of it. The installation of 52 projected halls would cost 2,600,000$. This enormous expense was above our budgetary possibilities and we would not be able to carry out the project.

And yet, this project has been realized with a total expenditure of 130,000$, that is to say at the rate of 2,500$ for each information hall.

The result thus achieved was the fruit of our effort with house owners who have willingly put the front rooms of their homes at our disposal to be turned into information booths.

This striking example proves that if we succeed in winning the confidence of the population, they will not hesitate to sacrifice their personal facilities to contribute to works of public interest and to serve the national cause.
Information abroad

Information abroad aims at clarifying international opinion and that of Vietnamese living abroad. It has been realized during the past year by the following means:
- Morsecasting of a bi-weekly bulletin
- Increase in the power and duration of national broadcasting. At present the Saigon broadcasting station operates from 5 a.m. to 12 p.m. Several foreign stations have reserved special broadcasting for the voice of the Republic of Vietnam.
- Publication of magazines, newspapers, and information material in foreign languages. Material of this kind is sent free of charge to 4000 different addresses abroad.

So far as the 4th point is concerned much yet remains to be done, and that is an important point of this year's program.

Everyone can notice that great strides have been made on the cultural plane. The press as well as the theater have taken a clear position in the national struggle against the country's enemies.

Literature and artistic works are remarkable for their constructive character.

In the field of culture, the Department of Information along with the Department of Education has sought, within their possibilities, to encourage writers and artists. But it depends on the latter to bring to a finish the task of the renovation of national culture.

In the carrying out of the program we have presented, the information services have intensified their activities here as well as abroad to spread to all walks of life the directives and principles of the policies of the President of the Republic, emphasized the achievements of the government and regional authorities, the military feats and finally broadcasted the news of the Free World.

We never relaxed a moment our psychological actions against the Communists, denouncing their lying propaganda, their crimes and misdeeds.

In the field of psychological warfare, the campaign of denunciation of Communist subversive activities constitutes a powerful force and an effective means to frustrate all Communist attempts at sabotage. Since the launching of this campaign many Communist organizations have been destroyed and many Communist agents have rallied to the national cause.

Thanks to the active participation of people of all levels, of popular groups and administrative and military services, this campaign has achieved many successes giving deadly blows to the Communist subversion, contributing thus to the national restoration.

Let me be allowed here to express my heartful thanks to all the services, groups, and cadres of communist denunciation for their efforts in this campaign.

Under the principle "giving giving" (donnant donnant), the campaign of denunciation of subversive Communist activities has, in counterpart, paved the way for easier operating of different services. In places where the campaign of denunciation of subversive Communist activities was strongly promoted, all the government activities such as security, public instruction, tax collection, agrarian reform are getting on harmoniously without clash.
Based upon the encouraging results obtained during the past year I have the honor to submit to the Congress the work-program, the outline of which we are going to analyze below.

1. Better Cadres - Strengthening of the structure: The formation and betterment of cadres must be furthered, aiming both at quality and quantity. The information agencies must be reorganized in order to obtain the best return.

2. Completion of information sectional at village level. Equipment for information sections at province and district level. So far as the provincial agencies are concerned we will have to provide them with adequate materials to carry on their work effectively.

3. Reinforcement of our propaganda on the international side so that Vietnam will be better known to the world and our compatriots will not be misled by adverse propaganda.

4. Continuity of the campaign of denunciation of Communist subversive activities and starting the 2nd phase of this campaign in order to sweep out of the country the remaining Communist organizations and cadres.

5. Collaboration with different administrative and military agencies and the population to work out the system of mutual assistance between families, and to carry out the program of Agrarian Reform and to popularize a sound conception of democracy.

Like last year, the different information organisms will have to cooperate with other services for the carrying out of special missions created by new necessities.

Taking into consideration the obtained results, the spirit of sacrifice of the information personnel, sure of the support of other departments, of different popular groups, and of the assistance of information services and technical aid of friendly nations, I am confident that you will deal effectively with your task.

It is with that firm conviction that I declare the nation-wide Congress of Information of 1956 open.