

Politics and Paradoxes

Responses to Avian Influenza in Southeast Asia

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Why Politics?

Paradox #1

A threat to the outside world but not
to themselves



6 Feb 2009 in Hong
Van Commune, Thuong
Tin District, Ha Tay
Province



Paradox #2

Poor but picked the most expensive
strategy

Vietnam on the global front of the fight against AI (2004-9)

Seven waves of outbreaks with 2,500 outbreaks (10x Indonesia, 2x Egypt)
52 casualties (cf. 122 in Indonesia, 22 in Egypt)
\$115 m. in aid or \$1.35 per capita (\$0.57 for Indonesia and \$0.27 for Egypt)

Paradox #3

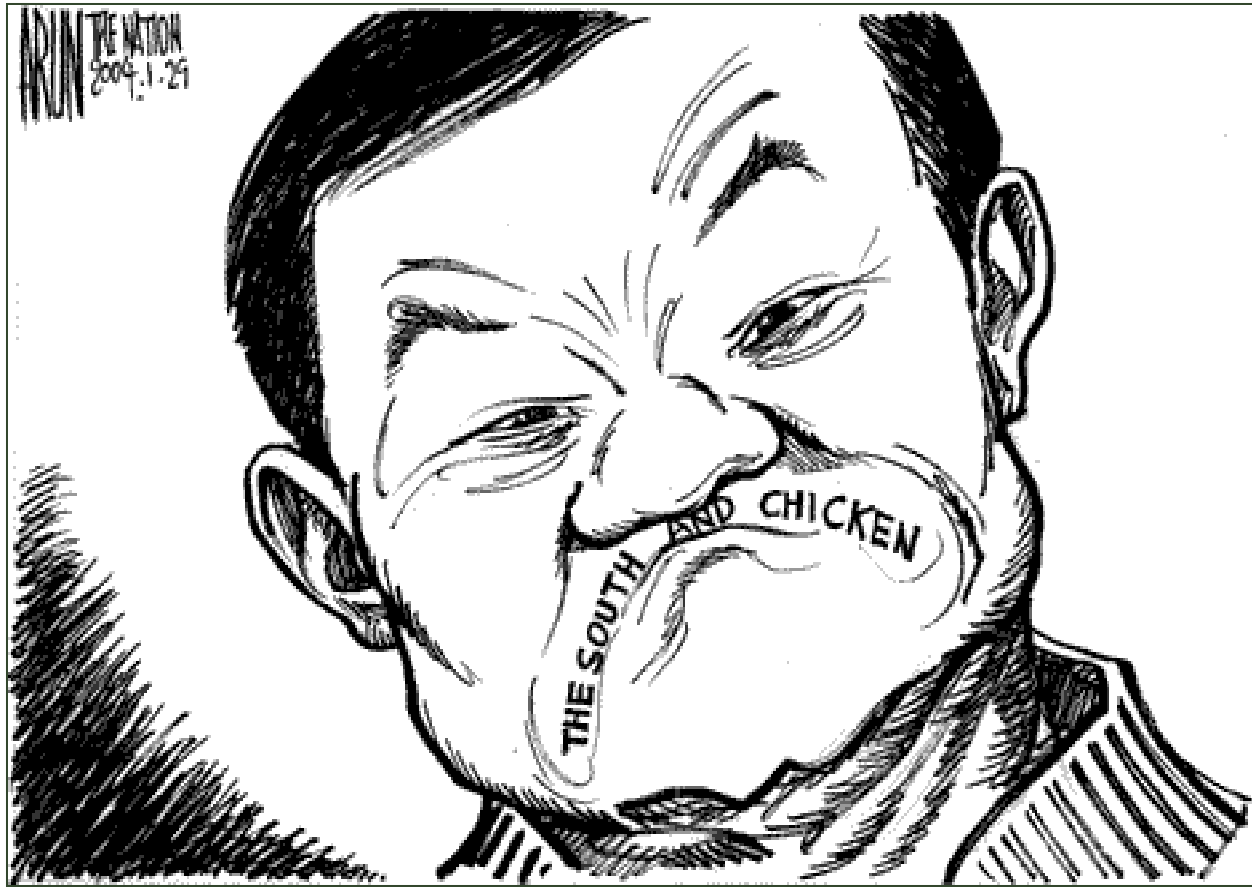
Policy ignored the interest of the
majority



Mr. Nguyen Minh Triet:

To contain the AI epidemic, we acted on our own ... without waiting for directions from the central government. Some think that early culling caused greater losses than necessary, but what about the tens of millions of city residents who could be infected? I dared to act, and I dared to take responsibility for my action. When receiving reports [from the city], the Politburo praised the city [leadership] for our rapid response”

(*Tuoi Tre*, February 11, 2004).



Paradox #4

Central bosses talk big but wield little
power



Mr. Bui Ba Bong:

The epidemic has returned because many provinces are not determined in spreading propaganda and fighting the disease. To correct this situation, MARD Minister will censure those provincial departments that have allowed the epidemic to come back. The Minister will report to the Prime Minister those provincial leaders who have not resolutely directed the anti-epidemic efforts. I'm sure that the Prime Minister will discipline a few Chairs of provincial People's Committees...

(Nong Thon Ngay Nay, February 28, 2008).

Take Home Points

- Sensitivity to the politics of distribution
- Better understanding about living with endemicity
 - Co-ownership and accountability of recipient government to their own people

Co-ownership, co-leadership

- Hanoi Core Statement (2005):
“The Government of Vietnam exercises leadership
in developing and implementing its 5 Year Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) through a broad consultative processes which integrates overseas development aid into mainstream planning...”

Accountability to their people

“The Government of Vietnam and donors jointly assess, and carry out annual independent reviews, on progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness and improved development outcomes... Donors provide timely, transparent and comprehensive information on aid flows and programme intentions to enable Government of Vietnam to present comprehensive budget reports to legislatures and citizens, and co-ordinate aid more effectively.”