

A **AN OUTLINE HISTORY**
OF THE
VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY

HANOI - 1970

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PART ONE

THE STRUGGLE TO SET UP THE PARTY OF THE VIETNAMESE WORKING CLASS - THE AUGUST 1945 REVOLUTION AND THE FOUNDING OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM (1925 - 1945)

THE INTRODUCTION OF MARXISM- LENINISM INTO VIET NAM

The Viet Nam Communist Party, now Viet Nam Workers' Party, came into being on February 3, 1930. This great event was an historical necessity which met the demand of the cause of liberation of the Vietnamese working class and people.

Viet Nam has a 4,000-year history. The Vietnamese people have a tradition of resolute struggle against cruel rulers in the country and of liberation struggle against foreign aggressors. In the course of the struggle

to build up and defend their country, our people's national consciousness was soon awakened.

When the French colonialists invaded our country the class of feudal landowners, of which the Nguyen dynasty was the representative, surrendered to the aggressors. But our people repeatedly rose up in armed struggle against the invaders and the traitors to their country. So it took the French colonialists nearly 30 years (1858-1884) to set up some sort of administrative machine in our country. Nevertheless, our people's struggle continued under various forms.

The aim of the French colonialists was to turn our country into a market for their goods, grab raw materials, utilize our cheap labour, use our people as cannon fodder... They maintained the feudal regime as a tool to oppress and exploit our people, divided our country into three *ky* (zones) with different administrative regimes and legislations in order to divide our people, and carried out a policy of cultural obscurantism to poison our people's minds.

Under the rule of the French imperialists, our country became a colonial and semi-feudal country, where two basic contradictions were dominant: contradiction between our country and French imperialism, and contradiction between our people, especially the peasantry, and the class of feudal landowners. Only if these contradictions are solved can Vietnamese society develop.

But all previous anti-French movements had failed. The contradiction between our country and the

aggressors had not been solved, because our people had no political line adequate to the new historical era—the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution—and no leadership capable of bringing success to the national-liberation revolution.

The feudal landowner class had surrendered to the imperialists ; the fledgling bourgeoisie whose activities were hampered and restricted by French imperialism, was economically weak, politically meek, and therefore bent on making compromise with the latter. The peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, though yearning for independence and freedom, were in an ideological impasse. Although coming into being before the local bourgeoisie the working class became an important political force only after World War I.

The great Russian October Revolution (1917), opened up a new era in the history of mankind—the era of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. The national-liberation revolution in colonial and dependent countries became an integral part of the world proletarian revolution. In these circumstances, the Vietnamese working class, a class subjected to a three-fold oppression by imperialism, feudalism and the local bourgeoisie and representing the most advanced production force, engaging in activities in enemy economic centres, naturally became the only class having the necessary conditions to achieve political supremacy in the country.

Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc, who later became President Ho Chi Minh, was the first Vietnamese to have realized those capabilities and that position of the Vietnamese working class. In the twenties of this century, after studying different revolutionary paths followed by Eastern and Western countries, he had come to the conclusion: "The only path leading to national salvation and national liberation is that of proletarian revolution."¹ He endeavoured to propagate Marxism-Leninism into Viet Nam and prepare the working class for the founding of their party.

He had joined in the French workers' movement, taken part in founding the French Communist Party at the Tours Congress in December 1920 and resolutely sided with the Communist International. Having soon realized that French imperialism was the common enemy of the French working class and of the peoples of French colonies, he established relations of mutual assistance between the French revolution and the Vietnamese revolution, laying foundations for the solidarity between the peoples of French colonies and the French working class and labouring people. The national factor and the class factor are tightly knit in his thinking. He became the soul of the combination of patriotism with proletarian internationalism.

His revolutionary activities and his articles appearing in *l'Humanité* (of the French Communist Party), *La Vie*

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 705.

Ouvrière (of the French General Confederation of Labour), *Le Paria* founded by himself, and his first books such as *French Colonialism on Trial* (1925) and *The Revolutionary Path* (1927) gave an impetus to the revolutionary movement in the country and drew Vietnamese patriots towards Marxism-Leninism.

Owing to his efforts, Marxism-Leninism and the influence of the October Revolution reached Viet Nam, breaking through the steel barrier set up by French colonialism. Vietnamese revolutionaries, especially the young revolutionary intellectuals, eagerly absorbed Marxism-Leninism, like thirsty people who have found water. However, it was not easy for Vietnamese revolutionaries to move from the old patriotic stand to a patriotic one based on a Marxist-Leninist viewpoint. The founding of a proletarian party, when conditions were not ripe for it, would cause division in the impetuous patriotic movement. In an economically backward colony like Viet Nam in those days, not only the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, but even the working class lacked a socialist tradition. Therefore, what was needed first was an adequate organization which could help these classes learn about Marxism-Leninism and apply this doctrine to their movement of patriotic struggle. The organization with such a transitional character was the *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association* founded by President Ho Chi Minh and other patriots in 1925.

with a communist group as a core to prepare for the setting up of the *Viet Nam Communist Party*.

From 1924 onwards, the national-liberation struggle and the class struggle in our country were intensified. Revolutionary forces and counter-revolutionary forces put forward political programmes to seek support from the population. Although it was regarded as illegal and subjected to repression, the *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association* successfully denounced the deceitful allegations by the French colonialists and their agents, and at the same time effectively struggled against reformist nationalist viewpoints and chauvinist viewpoints of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.

In 1926-1927, the revolutionary movement kept growing. The *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association* developed vigorously. To carry out the Association policy, members who were originally petty-bourgeois intellectuals became proletarians by going to work in mines, factories, plantations where they engaged in propaganda, worked among the masses, organizing and leading the workers' struggle, awakening the working class to their historic mission, at the same time educating themselves to become true revolutionaries. As a result, the workers' movement during 1928-1929 grew in strength, and put forward political demands on top of economic ones. Beside the workers' movement, the struggle of the peasantry and of the urban petty bourgeoisie was also very active. They closely combined

and developed into a powerful nation-wide drive for national liberation and democracy, in which the working class had become an independent political force. The founding of a communist party of the working class to rally, organize and lead all patriotic and progressive forces was a pressing need of the Vietnamese revolution at that time.

THE FOUNDING OF THE PARTY OF THE VIETNAMESE WORKING CLASS

In face of the nation-wide upsurge of the masses' struggle, the *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association* was no longer able to lead the revolution. The time had come when there had to be a real party of the working class, a communist party, to further push the Vietnamese revolution forward. The more advanced elements in the Association had realized that objective necessity which, however, was not recognized unanimously and in time by the Association leaders. For this reason, a single communist party could not be founded in the early days, and instead, two communist organizations were born from the Association, the *Indochinese Communist Party* and the *Annamese Communist Party*. This event caused the *New Viet*

Nam Revolutionary Party, a patriotic organization with a progressive tendency, to be transformed into the *Indochina Communist League*.

Thus, after 1929, there were three communist organizations in Viet Nam. But this state of thing did not last long, because under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, the struggles of Vietnamese patriotic forces, especially those of workers and peasants, rapidly united into a powerful upsurge of nationalism and democracy, which required leadership by a single communist party. In these circumstances, comrade Ho Chi Minh in his capacity as a representative of the Communist International, convened a meeting of representatives of different communist groups on February 3, 1930, at Kowloon, near Hong Kong, to settle the question of uniting Vietnamese communist forces into a single *Viet Nam Communist Party*.

This conference had the importance of a Congress. It adopted the *Political Programme and abridged strategy* written by comrade Ho Chi Minh. These early documents, albeit rudimentary, set forth a fundamentally correct political line for the Vietnamese revolution, which later on served as a basis for the elaboration of the *Political Theses* by the Party Central Committee. That political line was: to carry out a bourgeois democratic revolution including an agrarian revolution, in order to overthrow the French imperialists and the feudal rulers, to gain complete independence and lead Viet Nam toward socialism and communism. To ensure

success for this political line, it was necessary to build up a party of the working class, establish a worker-peasant army, form a worker-peasant alliance, organize a national united front, and achieve solidarity between the Vietnamese revolution and the world revolutionary movement. The conference also decided on founding mass organizations in Viet Nam such as the Red Workers' Association, Red Peasants' Association, Communist Youth League, Women's Association for Liberation, Red Relief Society, Anti-imperialist Alliance (i.e. Anti-imperialist National United Front).

The founding of the Viet Nam Communist Party was a momentous turn in the history of the Vietnamese revolution and heralded a new era, the era of Vietnamese revolution under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist party.

The Vietnamese working class, though not large in number, was geographically concentrated to a relatively high degree, and was a homogeneous class without a section of aristocratic workers, not subjected to the influence of reformism. Moreover, it had a close ally, who was most reliable and highly combative: the peasant class. Both are the main revolutionary forces of our people, a heroic people with a tradition of resolute struggle and indomitability. These are conditions which allowed Marxism-Leninism to take root firmly among the masses in our country.

Because of these characteristics of our working class and our people, our Party, although newly founded, had all the requisites of a new-type party of the working class and soon became the only leader of the Vietnamese patriotic movement.

In October 1930, the First Congress of the Party Central Committee decided to change the name of the Party into *Indochinese Communist Party* and to adopt the *Political Theses* elaborated by comrade Tran Phu, its first Secretary General. These Theses pointed out that: in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, after the triumph of the great October Revolution in the Soviet Union, the Vietnamese revolution has become an integral part of the world proletarian revolution. The Vietnamese revolution must pass through two stages. In the first stage, the bourgeois democratic revolution is carried out under the leadership of the working class, to overthrow the imperialist and feudal rulers, achieve national independence, and give land to the tillers. The anti-imperialist struggle and the anti-feudal struggle are closely linked. The main forces of the revolution are the peasants and the workers. The Party must build up the worker-peasant alliance and use revolutionary violence of the masses to stage an uprising and seize power.

After the above-mentioned tasks have been basically fulfilled, the revolution will move to the second stage when Viet Nam is led straight to socialism, without passing through the stage of capitalist development.

The indispensable condition to ensure success for the revolution is to have a communist party ideologically based on Marxism-Leninism, with a correct political line to lead the revolution, an organization based on democratic centralism, a strict discipline, having close contact with the masses and matured through revolutionary struggle.

The *Political Theses* of the Party has great historical significance. For the first time, the Vietnamese working class and people had a programme of new-type bourgeois democratic revolution which exactly reflected the objective laws of Vietnamese society, a colonial and semi-feudal one, and met the urgent needs of the Vietnamese people.

The Party's *Political Theses* was an effective weapon of the Vietnamese communists in the struggle to defeat those upholding viewpoints which ignored the class struggle. They helped workers and peasants avoid the disastrous influences of national reformism, provocative and destructive Trotskysm and petty-bourgeois chauvinism.

With the *Political Theses*, our Party raised high the banner of nationalism and democracy, firmly maintained the working class' absolute leadership of the Vietnamese revolution.

THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE DURING

1930-1931

Our Party came into being when a severe economic crisis of capitalism had spread to our country and other countries of Indochina. The French imperialists had the Vietnamese people bear all the weight of this crisis. Workers and peasants were most directly and severely affected. Moreover, from 1929 to 1933 our country was repeatedly struck by flood and drought. Peasants were utterly impoverished. The number of unemployed workers was increasing. Many national bourgeois and petty bourgeois turned bankrupt. The living conditions of all strata of the population were seriously threatened. The economic crisis, the intensification of colonial exploitation and the policy of widespread terror applied before and after the Yen Bai insurrection¹ further deepened the contradictions between our people and French imperialism. These were favourable conditions for our Party to organize and lead an unprecedentedly powerful revolutionary movement in our country, with a view to opposing the terror policy, demanding release of detained revolutionary fighters, and improving the people's living conditions.

The movement started with strikes by 3,000 workers at the Phu Rieng rubber plantation, in Nam Bo

¹. Staged by the Viet Nam Nationalist Party on February 11, 1930.

(February 1930), 4,000 workers of the Nam Dinh Textile Mill, in Bac Bo (March 1930), 400 workers of the match factory and the saw-mill at Ben Thuy, in Trung Bo (April 1930). Especially after May 1st, 1930, the revolutionary upsurge of the masses spread from industrial firms in Hanoi, Hai Phong, Nam Dinh, Hon Gai, Cam Pha, Vinh, Ben Thuy, Saigon, Cho Lon, etc., to rural areas such as Thai Binh, Ha Nam in Bac Bo; Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Ngai in Trung Bo; Gia Dinh, Cho Lon, Vinh Long, Sa Dec, Ben Tre, Long Xuyen, Can Tho, Tra Vinh, Thu Dau Mot, My Tho in Nam Bo. Throughout the country, hundreds of workers' strikes, thousands of peasants' demonstrations broke out, together with numerous meetings, school strikes and market strikes of small traders. This movement of conscious struggle of workers, peasants and petty bourgeois closely combined the anti-imperialist struggle with the anti-feudal one, completely eliminating the influence of bourgeois reformist nationalism.

The movement reached its climax with the establishment of the Nghe-Tinh Soviet. In face of the impetuous revolutionary movement of the masses, the imperialist and feudal administration in a number of rural areas in the provinces of Nghe An and Ha Tinh disintegrated and collapsed. Executive committees of village peasants' associations led by Party cells took in hand the management of all aspects of village political and social life, thus assuming the responsibilities of people's power in Soviet style. For the first time,

our people was in control of local administration. Although they did not last long, the Soviets had resolutely repressed counter-revolutionary elements, abolished taxes created by the imperialist and feudal rulers, and at the same time ensured democratic freedoms to the people, distributed land to peasants, compelled landowners to reduce main rent, renounce auxiliary rent, encouraged the population to learn to read and write, give up backward ways and customs, superstitions, etc.

The 1930-1931 revolutionary upsurge and the Nghe-Tinh Soviet had a great historic significance. It was the dress rehearsal by the Vietnamese people in preparation for the successful August Revolution at a later date. The Party's political line, which was to carry out a national democratic revolution, with the slogans "independence" and "land to the tillers" became the faith and hope of the masses. In the course of this powerful revolutionary movement, our Party was tempered and matured. In April 1931, *it was recognized as a cell of the Communist International.*

The revolutionary upsurge of 1930-1931 and the Nghe-Tinh Soviet prove that only the Vietnamese working class and its vanguard, the Indochinese Communist Party, can lead the national democratic revolution in Viet Nam. It also proves that under our Party's leadership, the working class and the peasant class united with other strata of the population, can overthrow the imperialist and feudal rulers, establish

a people's revolutionary regime. The method to achieve this objective is to use the masses' revolutionary violence.

Panicked by the masses' powerful movement and the growing influence of our Party, the French imperialists resorted to ruthless terror, in an attempt to crush the revolutionary movement and wipe out our Party. Several leading Party organs were smashed. Tens of thousands of cadres, Party members and patriotic combatants were arrested, killed or imprisoned.

After mid-1931, the movement subsided, but only temporarily. In face of extremely great difficulties, our Party and people still firmly believed in the bright future of the revolution. The heroism, determination and indomitability evinced by cadres, Party members and the revolutionary masses gave to the revolution great prestige both in the country and in the world.

In 1932, the Party put forward a *Programme of Action* which reiterated the *Party's Political Theses*, defined the immediate concrete tasks and new forms and methods of struggle more adequate in the new situation.

Thanks to the loyalty and devotion of Party members who had managed to evade enemy arrest and repression, the Party still maintained close contact with the masses. On the one hand, the Party consolidated its secret organizations, on the other, it combined legal and illegal forms of action, using legal

forms to carry out propaganda, put forward new ideas through the press and in city councils, regional councils, etc. The cadres, Party members detained in imperialist jails continually organized and led struggles to demand improvement of the detention regime, oppose the killing of prisoners and terrorism, turned imperialist prisons into schools of revolution, drawing lessons from past struggles and secretly transmitting the experience gained to Party organizations outside prisons. Fraternal parties, especially the Soviet, Chinese and French parties, gave our Party precious assistance during those difficult years.

From 1933, the revolutionary movement began to recover its strength. In 1934, the Party Overseas Leadership Committee was created, with the task of unifying Party organizations in the country which had been restored, training leading cadres and preparing for the convening of the First Party Congress. This Congress took place in March 1935, at Macao (China). The work of this Committee and that of the Party Congress resulted in the unification of the Party organization at home under the leadership of the Party Central Committee. The Vietnamese revolutionary movement now had the necessary conditions for a new upsurge.

The realities of our Party's activities and of the revolutionary movement in our country proved that "despite their¹ ruthless repression, our Party

1. of the French colonialists.

survived and continued its struggle... Our Indochinese Communist Party was the unshakable steel vanguard of the Indochinese proletariat. Only such a party could organize the cadres' force, maintain contact with the masses, issue propaganda leaflets, secret publications, and lead the struggles of workers and peasants. Only our Party could become the organizing and attacking force of the Indochinese revolution."¹

THE INDOCHINESE DEMOCRATIC FRONT CAMPAIGN (1936-1939)

The serious consequences of the 1929-1933 economic crisis and the subsequent unstable economic situation of the imperialist powers further deepened the social contradictions and intensified the revolutionary movement in these countries. To counter the masses' struggle, the monopoly capitalists in a number of imperialist countries suppressed bourgeois democratic freedoms and carried out fascist policies. The German-Italian-Japanese fascists had established a powerful

¹. Article written on the 4th anniversary of the founding of the Party (3-2-1934) by comrade Nguyen — *Hoc Tap Review*, February 1963 issue.

position. They feverishly prepared for war in order to re-distribute world markets, and for an attack against the Soviet Union in an attempt to wipe out the fortress of world revolution.

In this situation, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International (July 1935) pointed out that the immediate task of communist parties and of the working class was not yet to struggle in order to overthrow capitalism, but to fight against fascism, to realize democracy and to preserve peace. For this reason, the communist parties of all countries must unify the worker force and create a broad popular front comprising patriotic and democratic parties and organizations, various strata of the population in order to unify their action against the principal enemy, in the first place against fascism.

In the anti-fascist movement, the French Popular Front, the core of which was constituted by the French Communist Party, won victory at the elections of May 1936. A Popular Front government was formed. This event had a direct influence on the political situation in our country. As a result of the economic crisis and the French imperialists' repression policy, all strata of the population in our country, including the national bourgeoisie and the democratic personalities, yearned for democratic changes.

In view of this situation and in accordance with the resolution of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, our Party held its First Congress in the

summer of 1936, when it pointed out that the task of the Indochinese revolution was then to participate in the world front for democracy and peace, against fascism and fascist aggressive war. The Congress decided to temporarily put aside the slogans "Overthrow French imperialism," "Confiscate the landowners' land for distribution to the tillers" and to organize an *Indochinese Anti-imperialist Popular Front*. But this form of organization could not split the ranks of the French in Indochina, isolate the aggressive French fascists and reactionary colonialists. For this reason, the Indochinese Anti-imperialist Popular Front was later changed into the Indochinese Democratic Front, which rallied all democratic and progressive forces, struggled against the main enemy — the French fascists and the French reactionary colonialists — for democratic freedoms, improvement of living conditions, against fascist aggression, for world peace. As regards the form of organization and method of struggle, the Party Central Committee instructed to use all legal and semi-legal forms to carry out propaganda, organize the masses, at the same time to consolidate and develop secret Party organizations, combine legal and semi-legal activities with illegal activities to expand the organization of the Party and of the *Democratic Front* and intensify the masses' struggle.

Comrade Le Hong Phong, alternate member of the Communist International Executive Committee, was sent back to Viet Nam to directly lead the revolutionary movement, together with the Central Committee.

Comrade Ho Chi Minh, then abroad, was closely following the democratic movement in the country, giving most judicious directives.

To ensure success for the revolution in those days, he urged: "to organize a broad national democratic front...

"With the Trotskyites, no compromise, no concession, is possible. Every means available must be used to unmask them as fascist agents, who must be politically annihilated...

"In order to fulfil the above-mentioned task, the Party must uncompromisingly fight against factionalism, organize a systematic study of Marxism-Leninism to raise the cultural and political level of Party members..."¹

Under the leadership of the Party, the movement of the masses was greatly intensified, beginning with the campaign to organize an *Indochinese Congress*. Everywhere, action committees were set up, talks and meetings were organized with a view to knowing the people's wishes, demanding from the French Popular Front Government democratic reforms and improved living conditions for the masses. As a result of pressure by the popular movement in France and in Indochina, many political prisoners were released. Several newspapers of the Party, of the Indochinese

¹. *Party Documents 1935-1939*, edited by the Party History Research Committee, Hanoi, 1964, p. 434-435.

Democratic Front and of the Democratic Youth were legally published. Our Party availed itself of the circumstances to rally the petty bourgeois political groups and the democratic-minded bourgeois intellectuals for a unified action, and at the same time co-operated with the Indochina section of the French Socialist Party on a number of concrete questions.

From mid-1936 to mid-1939, the struggle movement of the masses in Indochina developed most rapidly. Strikes and demonstrations broke out in large cities and industrial areas, especially Saigon, Hanoi, Haiphong, Vinh, Ben Thuy, Hon Gai, Cam Pha, etc. The workers demanded improvement of living conditions, an 8-hour work-day, freedom to organize corporations, friendship associations. Manual and brain workers organized friendship associations, mutual help associations. Millions of peasants took part in demonstrations to demand reduction of taxes, an end to exactions and extortions.

In this period, our Party severely criticized "leftist" deviations, such as isolationism, narrow-mindedness, failing to use legal and semi-legal forms to push the movement forward, and rightist deviations, such as legalism, over-rejoicing at partial successes and neglecting the consolidation of secret Party organizations, lack of vigilance against the Trotskyites and reckless cooperation with them, too much zeal in seeking the support of the bourgeoisie and land-owner class while belittling the consolidation and

development of the revolutionary force of workers and peasants, and the question of worker-peasant alliance.

The *Indochinese Democratic Front* campaign (1936-1939) was actually a powerful, extensive national and democratic movement, although our Party at that time was too reserved to declare its own stand on the question of national independence. In the course of leading the masses, the political level and the capability of cadres, Party members had been considerably raised. The prestige and influence of the Party had grown among the masses. The important thing was that the Party had availed itself of the circumstances to use legal and semi-legal forms to propagate Marxist-Leninist thought, and the political line of our Party and of the Communist International. The legal publications of the Party and of the *Democratic Front* played a great role in mobilizing and educating the masses, organizing and leading their struggle, at the same time smashing the deceitful propaganda and sabotage activities of the Trotskyites and other reactionaries, who became more and more isolated.

The fact that the Party could use legal forms of activities, including activities in representative assemblies and regional councils, constituted a great victory for communists in a colonial and semi-feudal country like ours where there were more prisons than schools, where the people enjoyed no democratic freedoms, even bourgeois democratic freedoms.

Our Party achieved another great success in carrying out through the struggle for democratic freedoms, improvement of living conditions, the mobilization and education of the masses who became "a popular political army" comprising millions of people in the cities and in the countryside; this brought about an extensive political movement, during which a host of cadres were trained for revolutionary activities in our country. Clearly, the powerful movement of the *Indochinese Democratic Front* was another dress rehearsal in preparation for the August Revolution.

In the Democratic Front movement, our Party gained valuable experience. "It taught us that anything which is in agreement with the people's aspirations is supported by the people, who will actively participate in the struggle. And only in this manner, do we have a real movement of the masses. It also taught us that we must do our utmost to avoid subjectiveness, narrow-mindedness, etc.¹

¹ Ho Chi Minh, "Political Report" to the Party's Second National Congress (February 1951), *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 354.

THE 1939-1945 NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

In September 1945, World War II broke out. The French colonialists in Indochina ruthlessly repressed the revolutionary movement led by our Party, and decreed general mobilization, frantically seizing manpower and wealth for the fascists' aggressive war. Legal activities were no longer possible. Party organs and cadres who had been engaging in legal and semi-legal activities were in time instructed to go underground. Most of them moved to the countryside where they continued their work with the help of the population, vigorously developing the revolutionary force both in the countryside and in the cities. In November 1939, the Party Central Committee held its Sixth session, attended by comrade Nguyen Van Cu, the Party secretary-general, and comrades Le Duan, Phan Dang Luu etc., stressed that *national liberation was the foremost task of the Indochinese revolution*, decided that the slogan of agrarian revolution continue to be put aside, the policy set forth being only to oppose high land rent, exorbitant interest rate and to confiscate land owned by the colonialists and traitors, for distribution to the tillers. This policy was aimed at rallying all those who opposed the imperialists and their lackeys, winning over progressive elements in the landowner class, broaden the National United Front which became the *Indochina Anti-imperialist National United Front*.

The Sixth session of the Party Central Committee marked a correct change in strategic direction; it made an overall appraisal of the national liberation question and *came to the conclusion that the contradiction between the Indochinese peoples and the imperialist aggressors was the main of the two fundamental contradictions in the national and democratic revolution in Indochina*, that the national liberation movement was an integral part of the world revolutionary movement.

France was soon occupied by fascist Hitler's armies. The Japanese fascists availed themselves of the occasion to invade Indochina. The French colonialists surrendered to the latter, but the indomitable Vietnamese people rose up to fight against both of them. The Bac Son insurrection broke out in September 1940. The Nam Ky (Cochinchina) insurrection took place in November of the same year. In January 1941, troops mutinied at Cho Rang and Do Luong. These insurrections and mutinies had a great repercussion, heralding a fierce struggle by our people to reconquer independence and freedom.

In November 1940, the Seventh session of the Party Central Committee was held with the presence of comrades Truong Chinh, Hoang Van Thu, Hoang Quoc Viet, Phan Dang Luu, Tran Dang Ninh, etc. It pointed out the serious threat to the Indochinese peoples then under a double yoke—the French and Japanese fascists, — decided that our Party's immediate

task was to lead the Indochinese peoples in the preparations for an armed uprising to seize power. It also decided that the armed forces organized for the Bac Son insurrection be maintained and a revolution base established. Comrade Truong Chinh was made acting secretary-general. On October 13, 1940, the Bac Son insurrection forces were organized into the first Vietnamese guerrilla unit under the leadership of our Party. Shortly after, this unit grew into three platoons of the National Salvation Army

On February 8, 1941, comrade Ho Chi Minh returned to the country to assume direct leadership of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement. In May 1941, the Eighth session of the Party Central Committee met at Pac Bo, presided over by comrade Ho Chi Minh. On the basis of a penetrating analysis of the situation in the country and in the world, the Central Committee concluded that the revolution to be carried out in the immediate future was a *national liberation revolution*, and all the revolutionary forces of the people must direct their spearheads against the Japanese and French fascist aggressors, because "should we fail in this moment to liberate the country, recover independence and freedom for the entire people, not only would the country and the people remain enslaved for ever, but also the interests of a section, of the class, would never be reclaimed."¹

¹. Excerpts from the resolution of the Eighth session of the Party Central Committee, May 1941.

At the Eighth session, the Party Central Committee developed and amended the resolution of the Sixth and Seventh sessions on the questions of national liberation, decided to settle this question within the framework of each Indochinese country, to found the *Viet Nam Independence League* (Viet Minh, in an abbreviated form), which comprised National Salvation Associations of different strata of the population (*National Salvation Workers' Association, National Salvation Peasants' Association, National Salvation Youth Association, National Salvation Women's Association, National Salvation Old Folk Association, National Salvation Armymen's Association, National Salvation Bonzes' Association*, etc.). An extremely flexible policy was adopted, with a view to splitting up enemy ranks and rallying all forces that could be rallied in order to save the country and liberate the people. It was decided to establish revolutionary bases, build up and develop armed forces, speed up revolutionary work in all its aspects, to prepare for an armed uprising, proceeding from local uprisings to a general uprising to seize power. More comrades were elected to the Central Committee and comrade Truong Chinh was made Party secretary-general.

The Party Central Committee Eighth session Resolution and comrade Ho Chi Minh's appeal to all our countrymen, which was issued after the meeting of the Central Committee, greatly stimulated our entire Party and our entire people. The measures and policies decided upon by the Central Committee at that

historic meeting, which were strictly carried out by the entire Party, led to the victory of the Revolution of August 1945.

The Japanese and French fascists had contradictory interests in Indochina, but they were equally determined to crush the Vietnamese revolution. They ruthlessly repressed and massacred the people, killed or deported patriotic fighters. The *Viet Minh* programme fully responded to our people's aspirations to independence and freedom. All patriotic Vietnamese did their utmost to realize that programme. And the *Viet Minh* grew rapidly, despite outright repression.

At that moment, the anti-fascist Allied Powers were meeting with difficulties. The German, Italian and Japanese fascists were in a strong position. But our Party and President Ho Chi Minh had clearly seen that the Soviet Union and the Allies would certainly win victory, the Japanese and French fascists in Indochina would sooner or later fight against one another, and the Vietnamese people would certainly reconquer independence. This unshakable faith in our people's bright future was communicated by the *Viet Minh* to the entire population.

In 1943, the liberation movement was fairly strong in the countryside, but remained weak in the cities, especially in the large ones where a movement of students and intellectuals was still lacking. The Party decided on concrete measures to broaden the *Viet Minh* front, vigorously develop the movement in the

cities, and put forward a *Vietnamese Cultural Programme* to draw Vietnamese artists and intellectuals into the *National Salvation Cultural Association*, a member organization of the *Viet Minh Front*. Illegal publications of the Party and of the *Viet Minh Front* denounced pro-Japanese tendencies, the reliance on Japanese forces, the illusion of seizing power through peaceful negotiations with the Japanese, fought against the aggressive and sabotaging Trotskyites and the A.B.'s¹, against division and factionalism, to consolidate unity and oneness of mind in the Party and the Front, and strengthen the Party's leadership of the Vietnamese revolution.

In August 1944, the Party Central Committee exhorted the people to "get weapons and drive out the common enemy". The revolutionary atmosphere was seething throughout the country. In a number of localities, especially at the revolutionary bases, the people were eager to take action, but the Party pointed out that the opportunity had not come for an uprising.

In October 1944, comrade Ho Chi Minh himself gave the order to postpone the insurrection of the Cao Bang - Bac Can - Lang Son population, as conditions were not yet ripe for it. The Party Standing

¹. A.B. (Anti-Bolchevik), i.e., sabotage agents who feign to be communists in order to undermine communism. During the 1939-1945 period, they were employed by the French fascists for provoking and dividing our Party and sabotaging the Indochinese revolution.

Committee also severely criticized the armed uprising on November 11, 1944 at Vu Nhai - Dinh Ca, as a petty bourgeois act which prematurely revealed our forces. At the same time, the Party pointed out that higher forms of struggle were needed to step up the movement. On December 22, 1944, the *Viet Nam Liberation Army Propaganda Unit* was created in Cao Bang under the command of comrade Vo Nguyen Giap. This unit, together with *National Salvation units*, intensified armed struggle combined with political struggle.

At that time, the counter-offensive by the Soviet Army was winning great victories. The fate of the German fascists was sealed. In the Pacific area, the Japanese were in a hopeless situation.

Knowing that the Japanese were preparing to overthrow the French rule over Indochina, the Party Standing Committee on March 9, 1945 convened an enlarged conference to take a step for action. As our Party had predicted, fighting between the French and the Japanese broke out. To eliminate the danger of being attacked from behind when Allied troops landed in Indochina, the Japanese fascists staged a coup d'état on March 9, 1945, overthrew the French and became the masters of Indochina. In these circumstances, the enlarged conference of the Party Standing Committee concluded that the coup d'état would create a situation of serious crisis in which conditions for a general uprising would ripen quickly. The Conference decided to replace the slogan "Drive out the French and the Japanese" with the slogan "Drive

out the Japanese fascists' and *launched a powerful movement against the Japanese fascists, for national salvation, to prepare for a general uprising.* In areas where conditions were favourable, *guerrilla warfare was intensified and the local administration was overthrown.* To speed up preparations for a general uprising and bring quick relief to famine victims, the Conference decided to mobilize the masses for a campaign to "seize rice stocks, save people from starvation". The conclusions and the resolutions of the Conference led to concrete measures, and the historic Party Standing Committee instruction on "*Our Action when the Japanese and the French are shooting at one another*" issued on March 12, 1945 was very timely and stimulated the spirit of initiative of local Party organizations.

From the end of March onwards, the Vietnamese revolutionary movement became increasingly powerful, and local uprisings broke out in many places.

Active preparations were made for the coming general uprising. In April 1945, the Party Standing Committee convened the Tonkin Revolutionary Military Conference. Presided over by the Party secretary-general, the Conference decided on unifying all armed forces into a *Viet Nam Liberation Army*, developing armed self-defence units and self-defence combat groups, opening schools for short-term training of military and political cadres. In June 1945, a liberated zone was created which comprised six Viet Bac provinces: Cao Bang, Bac Can, Lang Son, Thai Nguyen, Tuyen

Quang and Ha Giang. Revolutionary People's committees were established at all levels, and important Viet Minh policies began to be carried out. The liberated zone became the principal revolutionary base for the whole country, it was to grow up into the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

While our people were actively preparing for the general uprising, a terrible famine had broken out in Bac Bo and the northern part of Trung Bo. Two million Vietnamese died from starvation. This was the most disastrous consequence of the policy of exploitation and war provocation of the Japanese and French fascists. The mobilization of the masses for seizing rice stocks and saving people from starvation, which responded to the most urgent need of the people, fanned up the movement of struggle and insurrection, trained the people in rising up in arms and seizing power. The people's revolutionary spirit was greatly enhanced. The revolutionary movement had rallied not only workers, peasants, small traders, small owners, students, government employees but also national bourgeois and a number of small landowners. National Salvation organizations, self-defence units sprung up in nearly all hamlets and even in the big cities. An atmosphere of insurrection pervaded the country.

World War II was ending. The German and Italian fascists has laid down arms, the Japanese fascists were also doomed.

On August 8, 1945, the Soviet Union declared war on the Japanese fascists. Within only a few days, the Soviet armed forces had crushed Japanese crack armies stationed in Northeast China. On August 15, 1945, Japan unconditionally surrendered to the Soviet Union and other Allied powers.

On August 13, 1945, the Party held its Second National Congress at Tan Trao, to decide on a general uprising and to take part in the People's Congress convened by the Viet Minh.

The People's Congress which met at Tan Trao on August 16, 1945, adopted the Ten Major Policies set forth by the Viet Minh, sanctioned the *Order for a general uprising and elected the National Liberation Central Committee*, i. e. the *Provisional Government* headed by President Ho Chi Minh. At this historic Congress, our Party put forward a most correct policy: to mobilize the people for an uprising to seize power before Allied troops landed in Indochina to disarm Japanese troops, wrest power from the Japanese and overthrow the Japanese puppets, then receive Allied troops in our capacity as masters of the country.

The news of the Japanese surrender spread throughout the country. Because of difficulties in communications, many localities had not received the Central Committee's order for an uprising, but the Party leaders there, carrying out the instructions on "*Our action when the French and the Japanese are shooting at one another*",

and especially taking into account the favourable conditions for an uprising as specified in these instructions, timely mobilized the masses for an uprising to seize power immediately after Japan's surrender. *The successful uprising in Hanoi on August 19, 1945* had a decisive effect on the situation in the whole country. A successful uprising took place on August 23, 1945, in Hue, and another on August 25, in Saigon. Within eleven days, the general uprising had succeeded in all provinces, bringing the August Revolution to success.

On September 2, 1945, in the capital of Hanoi, President Ho Chi Minh, *on behalf of the Provisional Government*, read the Declaration of Independence, announcing to the Vietnamese people and to the world the birth of the *Democratic Republic of Viet Nam*, inaugurating a new era in the history of the Vietnamese people, the era when the Vietnamese people are the real masters of their country.

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* *

The Revolution of August 1945 was a national liberation revolution, a decisive step in the people's national democratic revolution in Viet Nam, made under the leadership of our Party. It smashed the French colonialist yoke imposed on our people for nearly a hundred years and overthrew the several-thousand-year throne, founded the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, our people's independent and democratic State, the first worker-peasant State in Southeast Asia.

The August Revolution was not only the result of the 1939-1945 campaign for national liberation, but also the outcome of a revolutionary process since the founding of our Party, passing through two rehearsals, the revolutionary upsurge of 1930-1931 and the 1936-1939 extensive movement of the Indochinese Democratic Front. Through fifteen years of continuous struggle, from 1930 to 1945, our Party had mobilized, educated and organized all strata of the population, mobilized the great worker-peasant force, realized the worker-peasant alliance. On the basis of this strong worker-peasant alliance, the Party had rallied all patriotic forces into a broad National United Front, the *Viet Minh Front*, built up revolutionary forces everywhere, in the mountainous regions, in the countryside and the cities. It had built up people's armed forces, combined armed struggle with political struggle, combined local guerrilla war with local uprising in the countryside, and when the opportunity had come, had in time mobilized the masses for a general uprising in the countryside and in the cities, to overthrow the rule of the imperialists and their feudal agents, seize power for the people.

The August Revolution had a strong popular character. It had mobilized the masses throughout the country for an uprising, paralysed the reactionary elements, raised to a high level our people's spirit of self-reliance when our country was surrounded by imperialist powers, strictly carried out the Declaration of the *Viet Minh Front* that "our liberation must

be achieved by ourselves", without waiting until the proletarian revolution had triumphed in France, without relying on any direct aid from outside.

The August Revolution is a model national liberation revolution led by the working class, which has triumphed in a colonial and semi-feudal country, by an armed general uprising of the masses, by a clever combination of armed struggle with various forms of political struggle of the masses, to seize power, establish a popular regime. It disrupted the colonial system of imperialism at its weakest point, greatly contributing to breaking up that system.

About the August Revolution, President Ho Chi Minh wrote :

"Not only the Vietnamese labouring class and people, but also the labouring class and oppressed peoples elsewhere can be proud that this was the first time in the history of colonial and semi-colonial peoples that a party which was only fifteen years old, has successfully led a revolution and seized power in the whole country".¹

¹ Ho Chi Minh, "Political Report" to the Party's Second National Congress (February 1951), *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi 1960, p.356.

PART TWO

**THE STRUGGLE TO DEFEND NATIONAL
INDEPENDENCE, PRESERVE AND CONSOLIDATE
THE PEOPLE'S POWER. THE PROTRACTED
RESISTANCE WAR AGAINST THE FRENCH
COLONIALIST AGGRESSORS
(1945-1954)**

**THE STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE AND
CONSOLIDATE THE PEOPLE'S POWER**

The young Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was confronted with countless difficulties. Hardly had the terrible famine caused by the French-Japanese fascist imperialists' policy of plunder come to an end when a great flood occurred in Bac Bo, followed by drought. Rice cultivation could not be achieved in good time. There was stagnation in all branches of production, commodities were in short supply and the State stores left by the Japanese were empty.

At that very moment when our people were facing many difficulties, two hundred thousand Chiang Kai-shek troops penetrated into the North. Supposedly they were coming on a mission entrusted by the Allies—to disarm the Japanese troops in Indochina, but in point of fact, they were lackeys of the US imperialists, and were committed to carry out their wicked designs—to do away with our Party, destroy the Viet Minh (Viet Nam Independence League and help the Vietnamese reactionaries overthrow the people's power and set up a stooge administration to their devotion. In the South, British troops, who came also under the pretence of disarming the Japanese, were actually an expeditionary corps whose task it was to pave the way for a French come back. They helped the French colonialists reconquer Nam Bo and Southern Trung Bo, and work out plans for a reconquest of the whole of Indochina. While the different imperialists colluded with one another to attack us politically and militarily, the Vietnamese traitors in the pay of the French, the Americans and Chiang Kai-shek multiplied their acts of provocation and sabotage. Our people had to overcome seemingly insuperable difficulties to preserve the revolutionary power. On November 25, 1945, the Party Central Committee issued a directive on Resistance war and national construction, and pointed out that it was an urgent task of the Party and people to consolidate the political power, fight against the French colonialist aggressors, do away with the domestic traitors, and improve the people's livelihood.

The main problem then was to safeguard the revolutionary power. That was a life-and-death struggle of our entire people against imperialism and its flunkys. First of all, it was necessary to ensure that the revolutionary power was really a power of the people, elected by the people, and supported by the entire people, ready to fight in a self-denying spirit to defend it. That is why our Party and Government made every effort in a race against time to organize the general elections, elect the National Assembly, and formally install the Government. On January 5, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh said: "Tomorrow, our people will show to the world that they are firmly resolved :

- To unite closely
- To fight against the colonialists
- To win independence¹.

On January 6, 1946, the general elections were successfully held throughout the country at a time when the southern part of our country was being subjected to armed aggression by the French imperialists, and when in the North, the Chiang Kai-shek troops were resorting to every wicked trick to sabotage the general elections and overthrow the people's power. The first general elections in our country had therefore, the character of a fierce class and national struggle. In Nam Bo alone, 42 cadres heroically laid down

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 228.

their lives during the election campaign. In all localities, the people also proceeded with a high sense of urgency to elect people's councils at different levels, and these people's councils formally elected the people's committees which replaced the provisional ones set up during the first days after the general uprising.

With the great success of the elections to the National Assembly and the people's councils at all levels, our people demonstrated the invincible strength of their national union and their iron will to determine themselves their own destiny.

Along with the preparation and organization of the general elections, a Constitution - Drafting Committee was set up by virtue of a decree issued on September 20, 1945. Under the chairmanship of President Ho Chi Minh, the Committee performed its work with a high sense of urgency, and on November 9, 1946 the National Assembly adopted the first Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, a revolutionary constitution which laid down the Vietnamese people's right of being masters of the land, and their democratic freedoms. The Viet Minh Front was consolidated and developed. In May 1946, the Viet Nam National Union Association (Lien Viet) was founded to rally those parties and individuals who, for one reason or another, had not joined the Viet Minh. The national united bloc based on the worker-peasant alliance - foundation of the people's power — was steadily consolidated and strengthened.

Measures designed to improve the people's livelihood were actively carried out in the first months of the revolutionary power: a 25 per cent reduction in land-rent, confiscation of the holdings of the French colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors for distribution to landless peasants, equitable redistribution of communal lands to all citizens — men and women — promulgation of the eight-hour work day, protection of the workers' rights in the relations between employers and workers. At the same time, urgent steps were taken to fight against illiteracy, famine and foreign invasion. Within a short period of time, subsidiary crops were grown in all areas. The production of maize, sweet potato, cassava roots and other crops increased manifold. Famine was driven back. Great attention was paid to the cultural, educational, health work, and especially the fight against illiteracy. By the end of 1946, over two million people had known how to read and write.

The Party devoted special care to the building of the armed forces and encouraged the entire people to turn their minds to the beloved South which was heroically fighting against the French colonialist aggressors. The movement of support to the resistance war of the South Vietnamese countrymen became a broad and seething political campaign. "Support-the-Resistance" committees were set up everywhere. Within a short period of time, contingent upon contingent of troops set out from all parts of the Fatherland, and moved South to join the fight. Under the

Party's leadership, the difficulties due to the French colonialists' surprise attack in the South were overcome one after the other. In the military situation, there was a turn for the better. The South Vietnamese people and armed forces won big victories which were a source of encouragement for our entire people in their patriotic fight against the enemy.

While in the South, French troops conducted a cruel war of aggression, the Chiang Kai-shek troops and their lackeys in the North carried out all kinds of wicked schemes in an attempt to overthrow the people's power. In the face of that extremely complicated and difficult situation, our Party applied a most skilful and flexible tactics with a view to causing a differentiation in the enemy's ranks and isolating him to the highest degree. The Central Committee pointed out: "Our main enemy at this time is the French colonialist aggressors. We must concentrate the fire of struggle on them" ¹. The Chiang Kai-shek troops were also a great danger to us, but they dared not yet overtly attack us as the French colonialists had done. On the other hand, they were being confronted with a great threat—the powerfully growing revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Therefore, the policy of the Party at that time was to show a conciliatory attitude to Chiang Kai-shek while

¹. Directive on Resistance War and National Construction issued by the Central Committee on November 25, 1945.

preserving national sovereignty and independence. In view of the seething revolutionary spirit of the popular masses in our country and the firm stand of our Party and Government, the provocative schemes of the Chiang Kai-shek clique were foiled and their agents' acts of betrayal duly punished.

After six months' occupation of North Viet Nam, the Chiang Kai-shek troops still failed to attain their objective of doing away with our Party, destroying the Viet Minh and overthrowing our people's revolutionary power. On February 28, 1946, in compliance with the US imperialists' order, the Chiang Kai-shek clique signed with the French colonialists an agreement allowing French troops to replace theirs in North Viet Nam. Thus the imperialists clearly revealed their wicked design to arrange a French colonialist reconquest of our whole country. Our Party was of the view that the Chinese-French agreement did not concern the French and Chiang Kai-shek alone but rather the imperialist camp as a whole. It made clear that in view of this situation, there were only two choices—first, to take up arms and resolutely oppose the introduction of French troops into the North, thus facing the prospect of fighting against several enemies at a time; second, to enter into talks with the French and play off the imperialist countries against one another with a view to driving out the Chiang Kai-shek troops and buying time to consolidate and develop the revolutionary forces in a practical preparation for a nation-

wide resistance war. Our Party chose the latter course. On March 6, 1946, our Government signed a preliminary agreement with the French, laying a basis for formal negotiations. Hardly had the ink dried on the agreement when the French colonialists reneged their pledge. But as a result of the firm and persistent struggle of our people, the formal negotiations between our Government Delegation headed by comrade Pham Van Dong and the French Government Delegation opened at Fontainebleau (France) on July 6, 1946. Our Government's correct and firm stand enjoyed the approval and support of the French people and progressive public opinion in the world. But the negotiations ended in failure because the French colonialists had only one desire—to restore their rule over our country. The danger of a fierce and protracted war on a nation-wide scale was imminent. To buy more time to prepare for the resistance, President Ho Chi Minh signed the September 14, 1946 Modus Vivendi with the French Government before leaving France for home.

The conclusion of the preliminary agreement was a very sound and wise move of our Party. It made it possible for the Vietnamese revolution to remove a cruel enemy directed by the US imperialists, and to spearhead the flames of struggle at the French colonialists, the immediate and most dangerous enemy of the Vietnamese people. At the same time, our people gained a precious time to prepare forces for a protracted resistance war.

The difficult and complex situation which prevailed during the period from the triumph of the August Revolution (1945) to the end of 1946 was a severe test for our Party and Government. Our young revolutionary power hung only by a thread. But our Party and Government headed by our venerated President Ho Chi Minh led our people through all dangers and managed to safeguard it and develop our strength.

When the French colonialists deliberately started war, our nation-wide resistance began.

THE LINE OF CONDUCTING A NATIONAL, ALL-SIDED AND PROTRACTED RESISTANCE WAR AGAINST THE FRENCH COLONIALIST AGGRESSORS. THE IMPORTANT VICTORIES RECORDED IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE RESISTANCE

Just as our Party had anticipated it, the French colonialists carried on the policy of "accomplished fact" in the hope of reimposing their rule on our country. Following numerous French provocations, the war spread to the whole country on December 19, 1946. The period of temporary arrangement had come to an end. Under the leadership of the Party and President

Ho Chi Minh, the entire Vietnamese people rose up in a resolute fight to preserve national independence and unity and to defend and develop the gains of the August Revolution.

On December 20, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out :

"We want peace, we have made concessions. But the more concessions we make, the more demands are raised by the French colonialists, resolved as they are to reconquer our country.

"No! We would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country and accept slavery." ¹

Following President Ho Chi Minh's appeal, the Central Committee of the Party issued on December 22, 1946 a directive about the *national resistance war*. The directive pointed out the goals and character of the resistance and laid down a common program of action for our Party, armed forces and people. It made clear that this was a resistance war conducted by the entire people in all fields, during a long period, and in a self-reliant spirit.

Early in 1947, comrade Truong Chinh wrote *The Resistance Will Win* to explain the Party's line and policy in the resistance war. The fundamental principles were laid down as follows: our people were fighting against imperialism — an enemy possessing a

¹ Ho Chi Minh, "Appeal for nation-wide resistance", *Selected Works, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960.* p. 248.

strong army and plenty of weapons. That is why we had to *fight a protracted war* in the course of which we were to put out of action an increasing number of enemy effectives while preserving and developing our own forces, thus we would gradually turn the tables on the enemy, passing from an inferior position to a superior one over the enemy, and win final victory. To fight a protracted resistance war, we had to rely on our own forces. Therefore, the general strategy of the resistance against the French colonialist aggressors was that of a protracted war conducted in a self-reliant spirit. To win victory, it was necessary to unite the entire people, mobilize their manpower, material resources and intellectual capabilities for the resistance, and struggle in all fields — military, political, economic and cultural. Our people's protracted resistance was to go through three stages: strategic defensive, active attrition and general counter-offensive. The idea of a people's war conducted by the entire people was affirmed. The armed forces with three kinds of troops — main-force units, regional troops, and militia and guerilla forces — were to be the core of the resistance waged by the entire people under the Party's leadership.

Our resistance war began in extremely difficult conditions. The horrible famine caused by the French and the Japanese in 1945 had almost exhausted our people. The enemy possessed air, naval and land forces with modern weapons. We had only a newly organized infantry with little experience and lacking everything.

Our Party advocated, however, the conduct of a resolute resistance in the course of which we would build up our strength and foster the forces of the people while fighting against the enemy.

The facts of nearly one year of nation-wide resistance showed that the enemy was unable to wipe out our main-force units with modern weapons. He managed to occupy only a few towns at a very high cost. Our guerilla warfare developed. The armed forces with three kinds of troops took shape. Our people displayed a high degree of heroism, they feared neither hardships nor sacrifices and ably performed both production and fighting.

The more the war dragged on, the greater the difficulties and embarrassment of the enemy. Therefore, he sought every means to bring the war to an end. On the one hand, he made frenzied preparations for a major offensive which was to wipe out our main-force units and leading bodies of the resistance. On the other, he rigged up a stooge government with which he signed a seemingly radical "agreement" in an attempt to impose his terms upon us.

To this end, the French imperialists mustered in late 1947 over ten thousand troops to mount a large-scale offensive against Viet Bac hoping to destroy the base area of the whole country, annihilate the main-force units and knock out the leading bodies of the resistance. The Central Committee of the Party had anticipated this scheme and directed the Party's

Committees at all levels to be on guard against it. On September 15, 1947, it issued the instruction *What did Bollaert say, and what must we do?*, in which it made clear that "all forces of the nation must be mobilized against the French colonialists' manoeuvre of making Vietnamese fight Vietnamese and preparations must be made to foil all major offensives of the enemy in the forthcoming months. On October 15, 1947 it issued a new instruction *The French winter offensive must be smashed*. Carrying out this instruction, our people and armed forces on all theatres of operations in the country put up a valiant fight in close coordination with those of Viet Bac, and they won glorious victories. After over two months of hard fighting, our people and armed forces smashed the French plan for a lightning war, preserved their strength, maintained the base area of the whole country, wiped out many enemy effectives and captured big quantities of weapons and military equipment.

After the French defeat in Viet Bac (Winter 1947) the physiognomy of the war changed. The enemy realized that it was impossible to wipe out our main forces by means of big operations, and to resolve the war quickly with his own forces. That is why in 1948 there was a shift in his strategy: giving up all attempts to expand the occupied areas, he tried to consolidate his rear areas, firmly entrenching himself in Nam Bo instead of mounting attacks in Bac Bo; big operations gave way to smaller ones intended to

destroy our economy and our mass bases rather than to wipe out our main force units; at the same time, frenzied efforts were made to strengthen the puppet administration, pressgang more men into the puppet army and enlist US aid.

On the other hand, the Viet Bac victory gave our people and armed forces increased confidence in the final victory of the protracted resistance war. As the resolution of the enlarged session of the Party Central Committee in January 1948 rightly put it, "The Viet Bac campaign marked a major turn in our nation's protracted resistance war. It pushed us into the second phase that of attrition."

After pointing out that our resistance had entered the strategic phase of attrition, the enlarged session of the Party Central Committee in January 1948 and the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Conferences of cadres (May 1948, August 1948 and January 1949 respectively) made the following decisions:

In the military field, to smash the enemy offensives against our base areas, to develop guerilla warfare with independent platoons and companies, armed propaganda groups and shock work teams. The general guideline in the attrition phase was to regard guerilla actions as the main form of fighting and mobile warfare as a secondary one, but to attach great attention to stepping up mobile warfare, to build up people's armed forces comprising main force units, regional troops, and militia and guerilla forces.

In the political field, to strive to strengthen the union of the entire nation, to broaden the national united front, to consolidate and strengthen the people's power, to destroy the enemy's stooge administration, to step up the agitation work among enemy troops, to enlist the support of the socialist countries and the peace-loving and progressive forces in the world.

In the economic and financial field, to improve the material and cultural life of the people with a view to conducting a protracted resistance war, to develop the new democratic economy, to develop state-run enterprises, to prepare conditions for a planning of the state sector of the economy, to promote foreign trade, to mobilize all human and material resources according to the slogan: "All for the front, all for victory", to carry out the Party's land policy to foster the peasants' forces and promote agricultural production, to blockade and destroy the enemy economy.

In the cultural and social field, to educate and mobilize the cultural circles for a genuine participation in resistance works, to pursue the struggle against illiteracy, to improve the educational system, to promote a new culture with a national, scientific and mass character, to step up the campaign for new ways of life, to fight against bad customs and practice, to care for the people's health.

In March 1948, the Party Central Committee initiated a big patriotic emulation movement in the whole

Party, army and people. The patriotic ardour and creative spirit of the people and armed forces were brought into play. As a result, guerilla warfare strongly developed as from 1948. Many enemy rear areas became ours. National union was broadened. The Party was further strengthened and developed.

Before the August Revolution, our Party had been an illegal, underground one. But after the Revolution, it became a party in power, and it led the sacred resistance war of our people against the French colonialist aggressors. The overwhelming majority of its cadres and members were tested and tempered in this resistance war. However, because the Party was in power, a number of them were likely to indulge in bureaucratism, "commandism" and aloofness from the masses. Further, some people had joined the Party with a wrong motivation. In October 1947, President Ho Chi Minh wrote the book *Change the style of work*, in which he set forth twelve points for Party building. About the first point, he said:

"The Organization is not one for becoming mandarins and earning money. It must fulfil its task of liberating the nation, and ensuring prosperity to the Fatherland and happiness to the people."¹

President Ho Chi Minh's March 1947 letter to the comrades in Bac Bo and the book *Change the style of*

¹ *Change the Style of Work*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1955, page 33. Because at the time the Party was still underground, the author used the word "Organization" for Party.

work have become documents for daily study by cadres and Party members to enhance their virtues and better their style of work.

President Ho Chi Minh often said : " The Party is like a power generator, resistance and construction works are like electric lamps, to the extent that when the generator is powerful, the lamps give more light. " He used to recommend cadres and Party members, to strive for increased unity and one-mindedness within the Party. In January 1949 he said :

" Our comrades, different as they may be as to nationality or class origin, share the same doctrine, the same purpose ; together they live and die, share weal and woe ; therefore, they must sincerely unite. To attain our goal, organization is not enough, there must also be sincerity in thoughts.

There are two ways for us to achieve ideological unity and internal cohesion, namely *criticism and self-criticism*. From the highest to the lowest level, everybody should use them to achieve ever greater unity and to make progress. " ¹

He also said :

" Our Party comprises many people, but when in action, it is like one man. This is due to discipline. Ours is an iron discipline, that is a strict and conscious one. We ought to strive hard to preserve the Party's iron discipline. " ²

¹ and ² Ho Chi Minh, " Closing Address " to the Sixth Conference of Party Cadres (January 18, 1949), *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 302.

Under the leadership of the Central Committee and President Ho Chi Minh, by 1949, our Party had actually been built into a strong mass party. Its forces developed everywhere. Its leading role over the resistance and construction work was strengthened.

To the victories of our people and armed forces were added those of the world revolutionary movement. In October 1949, the Chinese revolution triumphed. In January 1950, the Soviet Union, China and the other people's democracies formally recognized the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and established diplomatic relations with our Government.

On the basis of the victories recorded in 1948-1949 and the important diplomatic success, the Central Committee decided in September 1950 to launch the frontier campaign, which was a resounding victory. Our people and armed forces managed not only to wipe out an important part of enemy effectives, to consolidate and expand the Viet Bac base area, and to liberate part of our territory, but also to link our country to those of the socialist camp, and to break the imperialist encirclement of our country.

The frontier victory marked a big leap in the growth of our people and armed forces' fighting strength, in our Party's art of directing the war. For the first time in the history of the war against the French colonialists, our armed forces mounted a major offensive and smashed the enemy's defence line along the border. They had grown up rapidly with the three kinds of

forces gaining complete strength—main force units, regional troops, and militia and guerilla forces.

At the beginning of the war, in view of the great disparity between the enemy's forces and ours, some people had expressed the opinion that our resistance was a case of "a grasshopper kicking an elephant."

In early 1951, in his *Political Report* to the Second National Congress of the Party, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that "It was so indeed from the narrow point of view of a man considering only the material aspect and the present state of affairs. Because at that time we had to use sticks against enemy planes and guns. But our Party follows Marxism-Leninism. We do not only consider the present, but also looks into the future. We have firm confidence in the morale and strength of the masses, of the nation. That is why we categorically answered those hesitating and pessimistic people:

True, it is today a grasshopper kicking an elephant, but tomorrow the elephant will have its bowels plucked out.

The facts have shown that the colonialist "elephant" has begun to have its bowels plucked out, while our troops have grown into a strong tiger."¹

As a matter of fact, since 1951, our resistance forces, especially in the military field, had grown up in all respects. Our people and armed forces made active preparations for the general counter-offensive.

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 360.

THE PARTY'S SECOND NATIONAL CONGRESS.
THE PREPARATIONS IN ALL RESPECTS
FOR THE GENERAL COUNTER - OFFENSIVE

In view of the rapid growth of our people and armed forces, the French colonialists had landed in an extremely difficult situation in their attempts to prolong the war of aggression in Indochina. In the military field, in spite of a considerable increase in the enemy's forces in comparison with the beginning of the resistance, the lack of effectives was more and more serious. In the political field, because they were conducting an unjust war, the French aggressors encountered increasing opposition from the French people and progressive public opinion in the world. Their ranks were torn by sharp internal contradictions and divisions. French governments fell one after the other. In the economic field, France was more and more dependent on the United States, there was a serious decline in the French finances. But in view of their reactionary nature and of the policy of increasing dependence on the US imperialists the French colonialists stubbornly prolonged the "dirty war" in Indochina, and strove hard to carry out the scheme of "making Vietnamese fight Vietnamese, and feeding war on war."

As far as we were concerned, our people's cause of resistance and construction was powerfully developing. The prestige of our Party and Government was being heightened in the international arena. This

caused some erroneous views among cadres and Party members about the protracted character of the resistance and the decision to actively prepare for the general counter-offensive. To set them right at the Party's Second National Congress early in 1951, President Ho Chi Minh said:

"We are still making active preparations for the general counter-offensive...

When the preparations are truly completed, the general counter-offensive will be mounted. The more complete the preparations, the quicker the general counter-offensive and the more favourable the conditions attending to it."

The new changes in the international and national situation required an increased leadership of the Party in all fields with a view to pushing ahead the resistance to victory. In this context, the Party's Second National Congress played a particularly important role.

The Congress was held from the 11th to the 19th of February 1951. It was attended by 158 delegates and 53 consultative delegates representing over half a million Party members from Central, South and North Viet Nam and from abroad.

¹ Ho Chi Minh, Political Report to the Party's Second National Congress (Feb. 1951), *Selected Works*, Su. That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 351.

After the opening speech of comrade Ton Duc Thang, the Congress heard President Ho Chi Minh's *Political Report* and comrade Truong Chinh's *Report on the Vietnamese revolution*, then adopted the Manifesto, Political Programme and Rules of the Party.

President Ho Chi Minh's *Political Report* was a document of great theoretical and practical value, in which he not only summed up our Party's experiences of the past 20 years and more, but also pointed out the important achievements of the world revolution during the first half of this twentieth century. He said:

"The first half of this twentieth century has been marked by very important developments. But we may anticipate that with the efforts of the revolutionaries, the latter half century will witness even greater and more glorious changes." ¹

That situation showed even more clearly the brilliant prospects of the revolution in our country under the leadership of the Party. In the *Political Report*, President Ho Chi Minh outlined the glorious stages in the Party's history, and pointed out that the revolution in our country had gone from victory to victory, because:

"We have a big and strong Party. Big and strong because of our having Marxism-Leninism, because of

¹ Ho Chi Minh, "Political Report" to the Party's Second National Congress (Feb. 1951), *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 351.

the unremitting efforts of all its members, because of the love, confidence, support of the entire army and people" ¹.

In his *Report on the Vietnamese Revolution*, comrade Truong Chinh presented to the Congress the whole line of national, people's democratic revolution in Viet Nam. That was the first time our Party held that the bourgeois democratic revolution in a country like ours is a national, people's democratic revolution.

The Report correctly analyzed the character of the Vietnamese society and pointed out the enemies of the Vietnamese revolution, its motive forces, its leading force, etc. It laid down as an immediate task of the national, people's democratic revolution in Viet Nam the struggle to drive out the French imperialist aggressors and to overthrow the feudal forces in the pay of imperialism, to regain national independence, to achieve people's democracy, then to accomplish the socialist revolution and to build socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalist development. The Report pointed out: "Under the leadership of the working class, with the labouring people as the motive force, this revolution not only resolves anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks, but also promotes a powerful development of the people's democratic regime; at the same time, it brings about embryos of socialism, and

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 369.

creates conditions for an advance to socialism. *This revolution accomplishes the bourgeois democratic tasks and grows into a socialist revolution.*"¹

The *Report on the Vietnamese Revolution* was an important document which summed up the Party's experiences during over 20 years of struggle. It represented a correct integration of Marxist-Leninist theory with the practice of the Vietnamese revolution.

The *Political Programme* of the Viet Nam Workers' Party adopted by the Congress on the basis of the *Political Report* and the *Report on the Vietnamese Revolution* was the development and finalization of the Party's general line in the national people's democratic revolution. The basic problems of the national people's democratic revolution were expounded in the *Political Programme* in a concise but complete and clear manner, lighting the way to the Party's practical activities in the period ahead. The *Political Programme* pointed out that:

"The basic task of the Vietnamese revolution now is to drive out the imperialist aggressors, to gain genuine independence and unity for the nation, to remove the feudal and semi-feudal leftovers, to give

¹ Truong Chinh, *On the Vietnamese Revolution*, report to the Party's Second National Congress (Feb. 1951). *Documents of the Party's Second National Congress*, published by the Commission for Research about the Party's history, Hanoi, 1965, p. 101.

land to the tillers, to develop the people's democratic regime, to lay foundations for socialism" ¹.

The Congress adopted basic policies on the building and development of the Party, on the building and strengthening of the administration, the army, the national united front, on the economy, finances, etc. with a view to pushing ahead the resistance war to victory. It decided to bring the Party into the open with the name of Viet Nam Workers' Party. Comrade Ho Chi Minh was elected President of the Party, and comrade Truong Chinh was re-elected Secretary General.

The Second National Congress marked a big growth of our Party. For the first time since its founding, the Party could hold a great Congress fully attended by delegates of all its organizations at home and abroad, democratically elected from below. Generally speaking, all problems discussed and decided at the Congress had been discussed previously in the entire Party. The correct and clear-sighted line of the Congress was a basis to unite the entire Party and people and to lead the revolution to new victories.

In March 1951, the Viet Minh and Lien Viet Fronts were merged. The national union based on a solid worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class was consolidated and strengthened.

¹ Document of the Party's Second National Congress published by the Commission for Research about the Party's history, Hanoi, 1965, p. 117.

During the same month, the Conference for a Vietnamese - Khmer - Lao Alliance strengthened further the alliance between the three fraternal peoples struggling against the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists, their common enemies, for national independence, their common ideal.

In 1952, the Party Central Committee decided to launch a campaign for the remoulding of the Party, the Army and the mass work. This campaign carried out in 1952-1953 resulted in further consolidating and strengthening the Party's leadership and strengthening the people's armed forces to meet the pressing requirements of the situation when the resistance war had entered the stage of fierce battles.

Along with political and military victories, we had, since 1951, recorded important successes in the economic field. The movement for increased production and self sustenance was stepped up. Not only did we manage to ensure adequate supplies in foodstuffs and consumer goods, we also produced weapons. We set up workshops for the manufacture of grenades, mines, bombs, mortars, bazookas, recoilless guns, etc. We built up a war time economy along new democratic lines.

The Party paid particular attention to fostering the people's potential. While carrying out the resistance war, it put into effect the policy of reduction of land rents, interest rates, and other policies designed to gradually limit the exploitation by landlords, and initially improve the peasants' livelihood. But in view

of the development of the resistance, the above steps were not enough to foster the potential of the peasants and to increase the resistance forces. In 1953, the Central Committee reviewed the implementation of the land policy since the August Revolution and decided to mobilize the masses for strictly carrying out the reduction of land rents with retroactive effects, and for achieving a land reform, thus putting into effect the slogan: "Land to the tillers" even while the resistance was going on. The campaign for remoulding the mass work was integrated into the mass mobilization campaign for implementing the land policy.

Thanks to this correct policy, the resistance forces of our people grew ever stronger and we recorded continuous big victories.

THE HISTORIC VICTORY OF DIEN BIEN PHU AND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA

The Indochina war dragging out caused French colonialists increasingly heavy defeats. Since 1953 virtually the whole of the French Expeditionary Corps had got stuck in "occupation" and "pacification"

tasks, and its mobile forces had been greatly reduced. France's economy and finances were in an increasingly critical situation. The internal contradictions of the French colonialists sharpened. In the meantime, the US imperialists defeated in Korea, were seeking to further intervene in Indochina. On the one hand, they increased aid to the French colonialists and their lackeys, on the other, they forced the French to grant more "independence" to their puppets and to let the Americans control the puppet army and administration and directly command the Indochina war. Thus in mid-1953, with US accord, Navarre was appointed commander-in-chief of the French expeditionary forces in Indochina. Then the "Navarre plan" was mapped out which was in fact a US plan carried out under US direction. Both the French and the Americans wishfully believed that within 18 months they would regain strategic initiative and move from defeat to victory on the Indochina battlefield.

At the beginning of 1953, on the basis of a scientific analysis of the situation of the Indochina war, our Party Central Committee put forward directives for the winter 1953-spring 1954 campaign: to concentrate our forces, launch attacks on places of strategic importance where the enemy is relatively weak, so as to compel him to scatter his forces, thus creating new favourable conditions for us to gradually annihilate the enemy's living forces and expand the liberated zone. At the same time, we intensified guerilla warfare in the enemy's rear areas, and defended the

free zone, bringing about favourable conditions for our main forces to destroy the enemy in places chosen by us.

Our army's constant activities in diverse directions had brought to failure Navarre's plan of concentrating military forces in the Bac Bo delta. Half of the enemy's mobile forces were pinned down in the mountainous regions; this situation created very favourable conditions for a vigorous development of the guerilla warfare in the enemy's rear areas. In Binh Tri Thien and Southernmost Central Viet Nam, regional troops and militiamen foiled enemy mopping up operations, destroy important communication lines and expanded guerilla bases. All the enemy offensive spearheads against the free zone were repelled. In Nam Bo, we intensified guerilla warfare and increased agitation work among French and puppet troops, thousands of posts and watch-towers were wiped out or forced to evacuate. In November 1953, on being informed of the advance to the North-West of a part of our main forces, Navarre hastily concentrated more than 5,000 troops and parachuted them on Dien Bien Phu in order to secure a foothold in the North-West and to protect Upper Laos. Afterwards, they sent more fresh forces, determined to build in Dien Bien Phu their most solid fortified entrenched camp in Indochina.

In December 1953, our Party Central Committee decided on waging a battle of strategic character in Dien Bien Phu. Comrade Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander-in-chief of the Viet Nam People's Army was entrusted

with directing operations on this battlefield. The strategic resolution of the Party Central Committee was swiftly translated into the will and action of the whole Party, army and people. Our artillery and infantry units, with man-power and rudimentary equipment, built hundreds of kilometres of roads through forests and mountains, leading to the battlefield, dug hundreds of kilometres of communication trenches under intense enemy fire, climbed up hill and down dale to bring heavy guns to the battlefield.

Putting into effect the slogan "all for the front, all for victory" 200,000 civic-duty men and women were mobilized and provided more than 3,000,000 work days to serve the Dien Bien Phu front. Tens of thousands of shock youth together with engineering units valiantly opened new roads and defused enemy time-bombs on communication lines. Tens of thousands of hand-driven bicycles, buffalo-carts, ox-carts, horse-carts and boats were used for the transport of rice, foodstuffs and ammunition to the front.

On the anti-feudal front, land reform was stepped up. In a spirit of offensive, the peasants rose up to overthrow the landowner class, accomplishing a leap forward of the resistance forces. The resistance against the French colonialists had come to a decisive phase; the slogans "national independence" and "land to the tillers" could be carried out simultaneously, resulting

in a combination of armed struggle with political struggle on a large scale and constituting a great force which contributed to bringing about the great Dien Bien Phu victory.

After 55 days and nights of continuous fighting, on May 7, 1954 our army completely destroyed the Dien Bien Phu fortified entrenched camp, annihilated or captured over 16,000 enemy troops. The whole staff of the French command led by De Castries surrendered after hoisting a white flag.

The Dien Bien Phu victory was the greatest victory of our army and people in the protracted resistance against the French colonialists and American interventionists, one of the greatest battles in the history of the oppressed peoples' struggle against a professional army of the colonialists. The glorious victory of Dien Bien Phu is a source of pride and encouragement for all our army and people, a great inspiration to the national liberation movement in the countries under the colonial system of imperialism.

During the winter 1953-spring 1954 campaign, the climax of which was the historic victory of Dien Bien Phu, 112,000 enemy troops had been annihilated and numerous areas of great strategic importance liberated.

The winter 1953-spring 1954 campaign and the Dien Bien Phu victory smashed the Navarre plan and con-

tributed decisively to our victory at the Geneva Conference.¹

The Geneva Conference on Indochina was opened on April 26, 1954 at a moment when our army was going to launch the third offensive to decide the fate of the enemy at Dien Bien Phu. Our Government's delegation headed by comrade Pham Van Dong came to the conference table in the position of a victorious nation.

¹ Strategically, the protracted resistance war of our people against French colonialists' aggression underwent 3 stages. At present, there still exist different opinions as regards the name and starting point of the third stage.

The first opinion holds that the third stage was the counter-offensive stage as assessed by the Second Congress of the Party (Feb. 1951). Beginning winter 1953, this stage was marked by a series of strategic offensives of our army and people in all battlefields, the climax of which was the offensive of decisive character on the enemy's strongest fortified entrenched camp at Dien Bien Phu, compelling the enemy to move from the strategic defensive position to the position of withdrawal and failure.

The second opinion holds that the third stage was the stage of offensive beginning with the frontier campaign (Autumn 1950). After the frontier campaign, our army and people having won back and kept the initiative opened campaign after campaign of strategic significance, driving the enemy into the defensive and forcing them to gradually withdraw from important areas in the battlefield. This form of partial offensive developed into all-round offensive in winter 1953 - spring 1954, the climax of which was the great Dien Bien Phu victory.

This question is still being studied.

The great victory of our army and people at Dien Bien Phu came in time, thus effecting wonderful combination of military and diplomatic struggle. In the meantime, the Central Committee of our Party held its Sixth Session (7-1954). The Central Committee unanimously approved the Political Bureau's decision to negotiate peace in Indochina on the basis of French recognition of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam. The Session made a decision "to direct the spearheads of our struggle against the US imperialists and the aggressive French colonialists, to restore peace in Indochina on the basis of the victories won by our people, to frustrate the US imperialists' attempt to prolong and extend the Indochina war, to consolidate peace and bring about the reunification of the country, to win complete independence and achieve democracy throughout the country.

On July 20, 1954, after 75 days of arduous struggle, the Geneva Conference came to a successful end. The French government accepted to restore peace in Indochina on the basis of the recognition of the independence, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia by France and other participant countries in the Geneva Conference on Viet Nam. The Vietnamese people were to carry out free general elections in July 1956¹ in order to reunify

¹ According to the Final declaration of the Geneva Conference on July 21, 1954 on Indochina, Cambodia and Laos were to carry out free elections in 1956.

their country. The French troops were to be withdrawn from Indochina.

In face of the unanimity of the participant countries in the Geneva Conference, the US imperialists, although adamant to sign the joint communiqué of the conference, had at last to make a declaration pledging to respect the Geneva Conference on Indochina.

The great success of the Geneva Conference was the fruit of the struggle against imperialism for national liberation waged by the peoples of Indochina for nearly a century, it was especially the result of the heroic armed struggle of the Vietnamese people during nine years of the holy war of resistance under the leadership of our Party and President Ho Chi Minh. A peaceful settlement of the Indochina problem in the spirit of the 1954 Geneva Conference was not only a great victory of the peoples of Indochina, but also a great victory of the world's peoples struggling for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

*

After about nine years of arduous but extremely heroic resistance, our people have completely liberated the North from the French colonial rule, bringing about conditions for carrying out the land reform throughout the northern part of our country and leading the North to the phase of socialist revolution.

In the war of resistance against the French, our people had to fight not only against aggression by French colonialists but also against the attempt to conquer our country and check the revolutionary movement in the world by US-led imperialists. By resolutely waging a war of resistance until final victory, our people have fulfilled not only their national duty but also their duty to the world revolution.

In his article about the war of resistance of our people against the French colonialists written on the occasion of the 30th founding anniversary of our Party President Ho Chi Minh clearly pointed out:

“For the first time in history, a weak and small colony has defeated a strong colonialist power. That is a glorious victory of the Vietnamese people and also a victory of the forces of peace, democracy and socialism in the world.

Once more, Marxism-Leninism has shown the way to the working class and the people of Viet Nam to successfully wage a resistance war for national salvation to safeguard the fruits of the revolution.”¹

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 771.

PART THREE

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN NORTH VIET NAM AND THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN SOUTH VIET NAM (1954 - 1965)

The extremely arduous and heroic nearly-nine-year resistance of our people under the leadership of the Party has led our revolution to great victory. However, in 1954, the revolutionary forces were not strong enough to liberate the whole country; the enemy was defeated, but he was not completely subdued. Therefore, our country was temporarily divided into two zones. The North was completely liberated, but the South was still under the rule of the US imperialists and their flunkys. Confronted with that situation, our entire people had the task of continuing the struggle to liberate the South, with a view to fulfilling the task of the national people's democratic revolution in the whole country, achieving the peaceful reunification of Viet Nam.

The revolution in each zone of our country has different strategic tasks relevant to the conditions in the zone, but closely inter-related. The North, completely liberated, moved up to the stage of socialist revolution and entered upon the period of transition to socialism, becoming the firm and powerful base area of the revolution in the whole country. Meanwhile, our people in the South carried on the national people's democratic revolution to overthrow the US imperialists and the clique of henchmen who represent the pro-American landlords and comprador bourgeoisie in South Viet Nam, to liberate the South, defend the North, advancing toward the peaceful reunification of the country. With the aggregate strength of the socialist revolution in North Viet Nam and the national people's democratic revolution in the South, our people are sure to build up a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

COMPLETE LIBERATION OF NORTH VIET
NAM, COMPLETION OF LAND REFORM AND RES-
TORATION OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, PRE-
PARATION FOR THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION
IN THE NORTH

In September 1954, a conference of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee set forth the

line and concrete tasks for the new stage of the revolution. The Conference pointed out:

"During a definite period, the general task of our Party is: to unite and lead the people in the struggle for the implementation of the armistice agreement, forestalling and overcoming all schemes to undermine this agreement so as to consolidate peace; to strive to complete the land reform, restore and increase production, step up the build-up of the people's army to strengthen the North; to maintain and step up the political struggle of the Southern people, with a view to consolidating peace, achieving reunification, completing independence and democracy in the whole country."

The fulfilment of the above-mentioned tasks is a process of revolutionary struggle which will be long, arduous, complex, but certainly victorious. The Party Central Committee reminded cadres and Party members to heighten revolutionary vigilance, train themselves in fighting spirit, overcome tendencies to a peaceful, restful, hedonistic and easy-going life; when entering the cities to take them over, they should guard against and oppose all attempts by the bourgeoisie.

Although forced to withdraw from the North, the French imperialists still tried to cause us many difficulties. They violated the cease-fire order, delayed the regrouping and transferring of troops, refused to hand over all prisoners of war, coaxed and forced

our Northern compatriots to emigrate to the South, dismantled and took away or destroyed thousands of tons of machines, equipment and public property. Our people valiantly opposed all that. The enemy schemes to bring about disorders and strains when we took over the cities were frustrated. The takeover of big cities was carried out swiftly and neatly.

On Jan. 1, 1955, our people held a big mass rally at Ba Dinh Square to welcome President Ho Chi Minh, the Party Central Committee and the Government back to the capital after nearly nine years of arduous and heroic resistance. This important historical event made a deep impression on and had great political significance for the people of the whole country. On May 16, 1955 we liberated the whole area of Hai Phong. The last expeditionary soldier of the French colonialists had left North Viet Nam. Half of our country was liberated. That marked our people's brilliant victory.

The North, completely liberated, had the necessary conditions to pass into the stage of socialist revolution. At that time we met with many difficulties but also had basic advantages. The greatest difficulty lay in our extremely backward economy which had been furthermore badly ravaged by fifteen years of war, and the fact that our country was still temporarily divided into two zones. The advantages lay in the fact that our Party had firmly in hand the leadership of the revolution, that the prestige of our Party was

enhanced, that we had a State of people's democratic dictatorship which began to assume the historic mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that our natural riches were abundant, our people united, patriotic and industrious. We also enjoyed the wholehearted assistance of the fraternal socialist countries.

Under the leadership of the Party, our people strove to turn to account the advantages and overcome the difficulties so as to fulfil two very great tasks, namely the completion of land reform and the rehabilitation of the national economy with a view to preparing for the transition of the North to the stage of socialist revolution.

The land reform, a fundamental strategic task of the national people's democratic revolution, was only carried out to a small extent by this time. The requirement of the socialist revolution and of the people's masses was to *complete it thoroughly*. The Party mobilized tens of thousands of cadres and expanded the land reform campaign in a pressing manner.

By the summer of 1956, the land reform had been completed in the lowlands and midlands and a number of villages in the highlands of our North. From August 1959 on, in accordance with the 16th resolution of the Party Central Committee (April 1959), the highlands regions and provinces carried on the land reform through the "campaign of agricultural co-operation, development of production, combined with the completion of democratic reforms", so as to

abolish feudal land ownership, putting into effect the slogan "land to the tillers", and ensuring the right of the peasants in the highlands to be masters of the countryside, strengthening the unity of various nationalities.

The land reform and democratic reforms achieved the following results:

- They overthrew the whole class of feudal landlords, a main object of the national people's democratic revolution in the North of our country.

- They abolished for good feudal land ownership, distributed 810,000 hectares of land appropriated by the landlords to 2,104,100 households of landless and poor peasants, putting into effect the slogan "land to the tillers".

- They completely freed the peasants from the feudal yoke which had lasted thousands of years in our country, bringing the peasantry in the North to the position of real masters in the countryside, both politically and economically.

- They strengthened and consolidated the worker-peasant alliance, the firm basis of the national united front and people's democratic power.

In the course of the land reform, we committed a number of grave errors. The Party Central Committee found out those mistakes in time and resolved to redress them, thus leading the land reform to great and fundamental success.

At the same time with the land reform, the Party led the people in their efforts to restore the national economy. Owing to the endeavours of our whole Party and people and thanks to the wholehearted assistance of the fraternal socialist countries, this task was successfully fulfilled in the main by the end of 1957. Total industrial and agricultural output approximated that of 1939. The output of food crops reached over 4,000,000 tons, surpassing by far the pre-war level. The state managed sector of the economy was consolidated. Privileges and favours enjoyed by imperialism in the economy as well as in other respects were done away with. All aspects of economic activities in the country became again normal. As a result, we were able to reduce difficulties and initiate some improvement in the people's living conditions, paving the way for the period of socialist transformation and socialist construction.

During the period of economic rehabilitation, our Party put forth correct policies with a view to consolidating the national united front. On September 5, 1955, the Congress of the national united front held in Hanoi decided to found the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* and elected the Front's Central Committee with comrade Ton Duc Thang as President. The State of people's democratic dictatorship assuming the historic mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat was strengthened. On September 20, 1955, the fifth session of the First National Assembly appointed comrade Pham Van Dong Prime Minister. The resolution of the

12th (enlarged) Plenum of the Central Committee (March 1957) pointed out the guidelines for strengthening the defence forces and building up the army along regular and modern lines.

In this period, our people smashed the scheme of a handful of counter-revolutionaries who availed themselves of the opportunity when we were redressing the errors in land reform and readjustment of organization to raise their heads and oppose the leadership of the Party and Government.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE-YEAR PLAN FOR SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION AND INITIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMY AND CULTURE (1958-1960)

The success of the land reform and economic rehabilitation brought about major changes in North Viet Nam's society. But as a whole the economy of the North was still a heterogeneous economy, in which the individual economy of peasants, handicraftsmen, small traders and small shop-owners still accounted for quite a large part. Workers in private enterprises were not yet freed from the exploitation

by the bourgeois class. Hence the need of carrying out large-scale socialist transformations to take North Viet Nam to socialism.

The fact was that after the success of the anti-French resistance, North Viet Nam, completely liberated, had moved from the stage of national people's democratic revolution to that of socialist revolution. But, generally speaking, cadres and Party members weren't clear about this necessary development of the revolution. The enemy, furthermore, plotted to destroy the national unity, oppose the Party's leadership and hinder the advance of the socialist revolution. The Party Central Committee put forth many important measures to repress the counter-revolutionaries, educate cadres, Party members and the people in socialist ideology, helping everyone to see the difference between the socialist path and the capitalist one, and to realize that the North must necessarily develop along the former, resolutely opposing all tendencies advocating free development of capitalism for some time before advancing toward socialism. The Party also struggled to overcome inappropriate understanding of the close inter-relations of the task of the socialist revolution in the North and that of liberating the South, characterized by the fear that the advance of the North toward socialism would hinder the struggle for Viet Nam's reunification. The Party pointed out that it was just in order to create favourable conditions for the struggle to liberate the South and achieve the reunification of the country that the North

must advance rapidly, vigorously and steadily toward socialism.

Under the specific conditions of our country, i. e. when the North had just been freed from the colonial and feudal yoke and was going to bypass the stage of capitalist development and advance straight toward socialism while the country was still divided into two zones, what methods and forms should we use and what tempo should we adopt to advance toward socialism? Such were the very complex problems facing our Party. The 14th Plenum of the Central Committee (Nov. 1958) decided that "The *immediate central task* is to step up the socialist transformation of the sector of individual economy of the peasants and handicraftsmen and that of the sector of privately-run capitalist economy, and at the same time to strive to develop the sector of state-run economy which is the leading force of the whole national economy." The main kind was the transformation and development of agriculture.

The Party's line in the socialist transformation of agriculture was to lead the peasants working individually to advance gradually from mutual aid teams (of embryonic socialist character) to low-level farming co-ops (of half-socialist character), then to high-level ones (of socialist character). That was the line of agricultural co-operation before mechanization of agriculture, co-operation to be effected parallelly with water conservancy and re-organization of the labour force. Agricultural co-operation will help

advance the process of socialist industrialization and inversely socialist industrialization will create conditions for consolidating and developing the farming co-ops.

With regard to handicraftsmen, the Party advocated their organization into handicraft co-ops, supplying those co-ops with raw materials, tools and equipment, helping the handicraft sector gradually to improve techniques, increase labour productivity, better the quality of products and contribute to the fulfilment of the State plan.

With regard to private capitalist industry and trade, the Party advocated peaceful transformation. At this stage of the socialist revolution, the national bourgeoisie still recognized the leadership of our Party, they went on respecting the programme of the National United Front and accept the Party's education, that was why, *economically*, the State did not confiscate their means of production but redeemed them; *politically*, the national bourgeoisie was still considered a member of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front.

With regard to small traders, the Party advocated educating them and helping them gradually to step into the road of collective work, transferring most of the small traders to productive labour.

The correct lines and policies of our Party and Government on socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft, private capitalist industry and trade and

small trades were widely welcomed by the masses. Especially in the countryside, since 1959, the movement of agricultural co-operation has become a high tide. The struggle between the two paths, socialist and capitalist, between collectivism and individualism, was, at times and in places, quite arduous and complex. In face of such a situation, the Party had to be really united, single-minded and strong. In September 1957, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out:

“During the period of socialist revolution, the Party has to be stronger than ever. It is impossible to transform a society if the Party members don't remould themselves and improve themselves. The socialist revolution demands that Party members and cadres have firm class position and high socialist consciousness, that they get rid thoroughly of the ideology of the exploiting classes, wipe out individualism and educate themselves in collectivism.”¹

Under the care and education of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh the overwhelming majority of cadres and Party members proved themselves worthy Communists when entering the new revolutionary stage. They devotedly mingled with the masses to educate and mobilize them in order to bring the Party's line of socialist transformation to victory. By the end of 1960, i.e. within three years, in the North Vietnamese countryside, the transformation of agriculture in the

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *Selected works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 637.

form of low-level co-ops had been basically completed. Over 85 per cent of peasant households had joined the co-ops with 68.06 per cent of land holdings. Of those 85 per cent, 11.81 per cent had joined high-level co-ops. In the cities, 100 per cent of industrial bourgeois households, and 98 per cent of trading bourgeois households and 99 per cent of mechanized means of transport within the scope of transformation had undergone socialist transformation. Tens of thousands of workers had been freed from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie. Important results had also been achieved in the transformation of handicraft and small trades. More than 260,000 handicraftsmen had joined co-ops of various forms, accounting for 87.9 per cent of those within the scope of transformation; more than 105,000 small traders had joined co-operative organizations of various forms, accounting for 45.1 per cent of those within the scope of transformation. Nearly 50,000 of them definitely took up productive jobs, mainly in agriculture and handicraft production.

Together with the successes in the transformation of relations of production, the targets of the three-year plan in agricultural and industrial production, in culture, education and public health were also fulfilled. Unemployment and other social evils left over by the old regime were basically done away with.

The decisive success of the three-year plan of socialist transformation and initial development of economy and culture consisted in *establishing the socialist*

relations of production, basically abolishing exploitation of man by man in the North of our country and turning the heterogeneous economy of the North into a homogeneous, socialist and half-socialist one.

The major changes in our society were reflected in the 1959 Constitution. After the success of the resistance against the French colonialist aggressors, the North, completely liberated, had moved into the stage of socialist revolution, while the South was still under the rule of the imperialists and feudalists. The 1946 Constitution was no longer appropriate, so it had to be altered so as to accord with the situation and strategic task of the new stage. Therefore, on January 23, 1957, the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam passed a resolution on amending the Constitution and elected a *Committee for Constitutional Amendment* headed by President Ho Chi Minh. After nearly three years of work, this Committee completed its task and submitted to the National Assembly the draft of the amended Constitution. On December 31 1959, the new Constitution was adopted by the National Assembly. This is the first *socialist Constitution* of our country. It affirms our people's will and aspiration to carry on resolutely the building of socialism in the North and the struggle for national reunification, with a view to building a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

THE THIRD NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE
PARTY, OUR PARTY'S GENERAL LINE IN THE
PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM AND
THE FULFILMENT OF THE FIRST FIVE - YEAR
PLAN (1961-1965)

The Party's Third National Congress was held in Hanoi from September 5 to 12, 1960. After thirty years of arduous and heroic struggle, it was the first time our Party held a Congress in the capital city of our beloved fatherland. The Congress was attended by over 500 delegates and alternate delegates representing over 500,000 Party members in the whole country. In his opening speech, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "This Congress is the Congress for the socialist construction in the North and struggle for the peaceful reunification of the country." The Congress heard the *Political Report* of the Party Central Committee delivered by Comrade Le Duan. In this report, Comrade Le Duan gave a profound analysis of the great changes in the international and national situations since the Party's Second National Congress (February 1951), drew the basic lessons of experience of the Vietnamese revolution and affirmed: "In the present international circumstances, a people, however weak, who have risen up in unity to struggle resolutely under the leadership of a Marxist-

Leninist party to win independence and democracy, have sufficient forces to vanquish any aggressor.”¹

Together with the *Resolution of the Congress*, the *Political Report* was the beacon illuminating the road to socialism and the struggle of our people for the reunification of the country. The *Political Report* pointed out that since the restoration of peace, the Vietnamese revolution had moved into a new stage: the North had entered upon the period of transition to socialism, the South was carrying on the national people's democratic revolution; the general task of the Vietnamese revolution during this stage is “To strengthen the national unity, resolutely to struggle to safeguard peace, to step up the socialist revolution in the North, as well as the national people's democratic revolution in the South, to achieve national reunification on the basis of independence and democracy, to build a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, contributing effectively to the strengthening of the socialist camp and safeguarding peace in South-East Asia and the world.”² The *Political Report* also pointed out that the building of socialism in the North was the *most decisive task* in relation to the development of the entire revolution in Viet Nam, to our people's cause of reunification of the country.

¹ *Documents of the Congress*, published by the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, Hanoi 1960, Vol. I, page 23.

² *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, page 35.

On the basis of the *Political Report*, the Congress worked out the general line aimed at taking the North rapidly, vigorously and steadily to socialism.

"To achieve this aim, it is necessary to make use of the people's democratic power assuming the historic mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat to put into effect the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft, small trade and private capitalist industry and trade; to develop the state-run sector of the economy, carry out the socialist industrialization by giving priority to the rational development of heavy industry, while striving to develop agriculture and light industry; to step up the socialist revolution in ideology, culture and technology; to turn our country into a socialist country with modern industry, modern agriculture, advanced culture and sciences." ¹

The Congress adopted the direction and tasks of the first five-year plan for economic and cultural development along socialist lines, decided policies on consolidating the Party and passed the new Rules of the Party. Comrade Ho Chi Minh was re-elected Chairman of the Party Central Committee and Comrade Le Duan was elected First Secretary of the Party Central Committee.

Since the Third National Congress of the Party, the North of our country has moved to a period in which the central task is to build the material and

¹ Op. cit., Vol. I, pages 179-180.

technical base of socialism, while continuing to complete the socialist transformation, to consolidate and complete the new relations of production.

To give concrete forms to the Party Congress line on economic development, the Party Central Committee successively held Plenums devoted especially to agricultural development (July 1961), industrial development (June 1962), the State plan (April 1963), commodity circulation, distribution and prices (December 1964). Through those plenums, the Party Central Committee gave a clearer analysis of the position, relation and effects of the three revolutions: revolution in relations of production, technological revolution, ideological and cultural revolution, at the same time defining the technological revolution as the key one.

The socialist revolution in the North of our country is a process of all-round development of the three above-mentioned revolutions. In the course of those three revolutions, such important problems as primary accumulation, relation between accumulation and consumption, between economic construction and strengthening of defence, between heavy industry and light industry, between centrally-run industry and locally-run industry have been settled by our Party in a manner which is more and more concrete, correct and appropriate to the characteristics of our country. From 1961 onward, in order to fulfil the first five-year plan, our people have overcome numerous difficulties caused by natural calamities, enemy actions and by

the utterly poor and backward state of our economy to advance with steady steps. This was reflected in the emulation movements "Three Firsts", "Dai Phong", "Duyen Hai", "Thanh Cong", "Bac Ly" and especially in the emulation to gain the title of socialist labour team or brigade. Through those movements, thousands of production and work teams and brigades have been recognized by our Government as socialist labour teams and brigades, thousands of

Three Firsts: First in the number, in the regularity, in the quality of achievements — targets of the emulation movement in the people's army and people's militia from 1959 to 1961.

Dai Phong: a farming co-op in Phong Thuy village, Le Thuy district, Quang Binh province, the standard bearer of the emulation movement to improve the management of farming co-ops, improve techniques, increase production from 1960 onward in agriculture.

Duyen Hai: an engineering plant in Haiphong, the standard bearer of the emulation movement to rationalize production and improve techniques in industry from 1961 onward.

Thanh Cong: a handicraft co-op in Thanh Hoa, the standard bearer of the emulation movement to heighten the spirit of self-reliance, industry and thrift in building co-ops in the handicraft sector, from 1961 onward.

Bac Ly: a junior secondary school, in Ly Nhan district, Nam Ha province, the standard bearer of the emulation movement "learn very well, teach very well" in education, from 1961 onward.

farming co-ops have become advanced co-ops, thousands of units of the people's armed forces have been recognized as "determined-to-win units". The spirit of self-reliance, industry and thrift in building socialism of our people has been greatly enhanced.

However, on the way of striving to build a *socialist economy* in the North of our country, there are still many difficulties ahead. These are not incidental, temporary difficulties, but the ones which have deep origins in our economy. Therefore the Party constantly reminded Party committees at various levels, local Party branches, Party and Government offices to strive time and again to overcome shortcomings and weak points, to improve good points, unceasingly endeavouring to do better. In this spirit, in April 1961, the 4th Plenum of the Party Central Committee discussed the strengthening of the leadership of the Party, essentially the leadership in organization and executive guidance. The Central Committee also pointed out the extremely important position of grassroots organizations in carrying out Party lines and policies, and launched the "movement to build 'four good' Party cells and basic Party organizations", while paying great attention to perfecting local Party committees.

Early in 1963, the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee pointed out that economic management was one of our weak points; therefore, it put forth and led to success two great campaigns: the campaign for improvement in co-op management and

technical improvement in agriculture, and the campaign for heightened responsibility, better management of economy and finances, technical improvement, against bureaucracy, waste and corruption — the so-called “three for and three against” campaign — in industry and trade. Through those campaigns of revolutionary significance, we could see clearer that the tendency of spontaneous capitalist development in the economy of our North, though weak, was able to arise and grow, especially among those who were still working individually, in the free market. Moreover, the enemy never ceased to attempt at undermining our efforts. Therefore, with respect to the building of socialism as well as the socialist transformation, the struggle between the two paths in the North to settle the question of “who will win” is still going on under the various forms of the revolution in relations of production, the technological revolution, the ideological and cultural revolution.

In March 1964, President Ho Chi Minh convened the *Special Political Conference* with a view to further strengthening the unity and single-mindedness of the entire people in face of the US imperialist's schemes to intensify and widen the war. The Conference heard President Ho Chi Minh's report, unanimously approved and wholeheartedly backed the home and foreign lines of our Party and Government. At the Conference President Ho Chi Minh called on every one to “redouble one's efforts to make up for our Southern kith and kin.” *President Ho Chi Minh's Report at the Special*

Political Conference was a great document and was widely distributed among the entire Party, the entire people and the entire armed forces, which inspired every one with more confidence, more enthusiasm, more eagerness in striving to fulfil his task, first of all to successfully carry out the 1964 State plan and the first five-year plan.

It was a time when there was serious disagreement between a number of communist and worker's parties. In the world, a struggle was taking place between Marxism-Leninism and various forms of right and "left" opportunism, especially between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism, the main danger of the international communist and workers' movement.

In December 1963, the 9th Plenum of the Party Central Committee gave an analysis of the characteristics of the world situation, the task of the international communist movement and defined clearly our Party's responsibility to take part in the struggle for safeguarding the purity of Marxism-Leninism, to contribute to the restoration and strengthening of unity in the socialist camp on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, to strengthen the unity and combative force of our Party. The Party severely criticized rightist views which held that the North of our country had basically completed the socialist transformation of the national economy, hence there was no more class struggle, no more struggle between the two paths, socialist and capitalist, that

agricultural co-operation was premature, such views paid little attention to the transformation of handicraft and small trades, to economic management and market control. At the same time, the Party also severely criticized dogmatic views, the lack of spirit of independence and sovereignty, the inferiority complex which makes one hesitate to wash off the spirit of dependence on foreign powers left over by thousands of years of foreign rule.

The fact is that since its Third National Congress, the Party has paid great attention to educating cadres and Party members *strongly to develop the spirit of independence and sovereignty*, to apply creatively Marxism-Leninism and the experience of fraternal countries to the specific conditions of our country. Thanks to that, the North of our country, starting from a small-scale and very backward agricultural economy, has by-passed the stage of capitalist development and advanced straight, but with steady steps, toward socialism.

By the end of 1965, 80 per cent of farming co-ops had been turned into higher-level ones. The first bases of engineering, metallurgical and chemical industries had been built and were gradually coming into operation. New branches of industry had developed and new items of goods had been turned out. Hundreds of locally-run industrial enterprises had been established. In the North, an industrial economy was gradually taking shape, which included both exploiting and processing industries, comprising various branches of heavy and light industry.

The people's livelihood has been improved day after day. Under the French rule, 95 per cent of our people were illiterate. By 1965, practically every one in the North had been able to read and write. As compared with the day when peace was just restored (in 1954 — Ed.), the number of pupils was three and a half times as many, that of students of universities and specialized secondary schools 25 times as many ¹. National scripts were devised for some minority peoples. Many children of highlanders had graduated from universities. Epidemics and social diseases were prevented; the people's health was improved. Better care was given to children. Literature and arts, with socialist contents and national character, were developing vigorously. In March 1964, President Ho Chi Minh said :

“Over the past ten years, the North of our country has made long strides,unprecedented in the nation's history. The land, the society and the man have all changed.” ²

In December 1965, the last year of the five-year plan, the Party Central Committee asserted that “After over ten years of socialist revolution and socialist construction, the North has become the firm

¹ as of 1964.

² *President Ho Chi Minh's Report to the Special Political Conference* (27 March 1964) *Su That* Publishing House, Hanoi, 1964, p.9.

base area for the Vietnamese revolution in the whole country, with *its superior political regime, its powerful economic and defence forces.*"¹

THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN SOUTH VIET NAM, THE STRUGGLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS

For over a quarter of a century now, the US imperialists have been the enemy of our people. They have been attempting to conquer our whole country, to turn our country into a new-type colony and a military base of theirs so as to prepare for an attack against the socialist camp and destroy the national liberation movement in South-East Asia, checking the influence of socialism in this region. This attempt is part of the US imperialists' global strategy of counter-revolution aimed at coping with the powerful revolutionary wave that is continually storming the stronghold of imperialism headed by US imperialism. Therefore, the US imperialists helped the French to

¹ Resolution of the 12th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, Dec. 1965.

prolong and widen the aggressive war against Viet Nam. Thanks to the unity and valiant fight of our army and people, to the sympathy and support of the fraternal socialist countries and of peace- and justice-loving people in the world, the Geneva Agreements on Indochina were signed, peace was restored in Indochina on the basis of recognition by other countries of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos.

Unable to prolong the war in view of their design to conquer our whole country, the US imperialists tried every means to undermine the implementation of the Geneva Agreements, to undermine the peaceful reunification of our country. From July 1954 onward, on the one hand the US imperialist gradually encroached upon the position of the French then ousted them from South Viet Nam, on the other, they sought to restore the positions of the class of landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie who had been defeated by the revolution, creating a new class of pro-US landlords and comprador bourgeois as the social base for their neo-colonialist aggressive policy. In the South, they did not set up an administrative apparatus as the French had done, but they made use of a puppet administration with a dense network of "US advisers" they used the power of the dollar, of the military and administrative aid to interfere ever deeper in South Viet Nam. *Militarily*, the US imperialists built up, trained, equipped and commanded the puppet army in a direct manner. *Economically*, South Viet

Nam was turned gradually into a market for surplus goods of the United States and its allies. The major economic resources fell gradually under the control of US capitalist monopolies. *Culturally*, they propagated, the corrupted, depraved, cow-boy-like American way of life, poisoned our youth and people with their filthy, rotten, reactionary and decadent civilization. Ngo Dinh Diem, a feudalist ringleader who had served as a flunkey to the French and Japanese imperialists, was fostered by the Americans and brought back to Saigon to form a "nationalist" government. The US imperialists coated this government with a layer of "republican" and "independence" paint so as to hoodwink the masses.

Obeysing American order, Ngo Dinh Diem strove to build an extremely inhuman fascist dictatorial regime in the South of our country. As early as late 1954, they perpetrated bloody massacres in Ngan Son, Chi Thanh, Cho Duoc, Mo Cay, Cu Chi, Binh Thanh, etc. They launched several campaigns of "denouncing and exterminating Communists", suppressed the patriotic struggles of our compatriots in the South with the ferocity of war maniacs and class revanchists. In February 1958, they killed by food poisoning over a thousand revolutionaries at the Phu Loi concentration camp. In 1959, they passed the 10-59 Act providing for public beheading of patriots and massacring of our people with barbarous mediaeval methods.

Our people seethed with extreme anger. From July 1955 onward, there arose in the South tumultuous and widespread movements of political struggle for consultations and general elections to reunify the country, against the faked "referendum", against the election of the puppet "national assembly", demanding better living conditions and democratic liberties. Those movements involved millions of people from Quang Tri to Ca Mau, including Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Christian believers, and Notherners who had been coerced to move to the South, thus giving rise to concerted action of city people and rural people with variegated forms of struggles. Struggles against terrorism, against retaliation upon former resistance fighters, against the "demunciation and extermination of Communists", took place persistently and fiercely everywhere. Revolutionary heroism, grit and undauntedness ran high in the masses. There were widespread examples of gallant self-sacrifice to preserve revolutionary dignity by cadres, Party members and people of all ages and all nationalities in the highlands, delta regions and cities. In the hours of utmost trials, the people of South Viet Nam still had absolute confidence in the Party and President Ho Chi Minh. With sharp and clever arguments, they laid bare enemy's distortions and slanders, determined to defend revolutionary bases, to defend and hide cadres even at the cost of their lives.

In 1959, the South Vietnamese revolution was faced with extremely grave trials. Nevertheless, revolutionary bases were preserved and grew up rapidly. The leading organs of the revolution still kept in close touch with the people and persistently led the masses in struggle against the US aggressors and their henchmen.

The period of political struggle (1954—1959) had provided much training and tempering to cadres and the masses. Through the movements of struggle for consultations and general elections to reunify the country, for better living conditions, and democratic liberties, against terrorism and massacre, the cadres and masses had learned how to mobilize and organize the people's masses, to set up broad fronts, to isolate the enemy, to struggle face to face with him. Southern revolutionary leaders and people had acquired a great deal of valuable experience to turn the movement into a widespread revolutionary high tide. It was just when the enemy was frantically resorting to the most savage means to suppress the revolution that the Southern revolutionary leaders, thanks to their close touch with the masses, were able to assess the situation correctly, clearsightedly holding that the enemy had suffered *basic political failure*, therefore they actively prepared for mobilizing the people in partial uprisings, seizing power for the people.

RESISTANCE AGAINST US AGGRESSION,
FOR NATIONAL SALVATION IN THE SOUTH,
MOVEMENT OF SIMULTANEOUS UPRISINGS
AND US IMPERIALISTS' FAILURE IN
THEIR "SPECIAL WAR"

The US imperialists' policy of enslavement and war-provocation, the Ngo Dinh Diem clique's acts of terrorism and national treachery had caused utter sufferings and tensions in the people's life in the South. As 1959 began, the people's life was seriously in danger. The people from various walks of life were seething with anger. Workers and peasants were especially excited and eager to struggle. They felt they could no longer live under the US-Diem regime but should rise up in a life and death struggle with the enemy.

Confronted with such a situation, in January 1959, in an important conference, South Viet Nam's revolutionary leaders pointed out that South Vietnamese society was a neo-colonial and semi-feudal one. The Ngo Dinh Diem administration was a reactionary, cruel, war-like one which had betrayed the national interests. It was obviously a US tool for aggression and enslavement. The direction and task of South Vietnamese revolution could not diverge from the general revolutionary law of *using revolutionary violence to oppose counter-revolutionary violence, rising up to seize power for the people. It was time to resort to armed struggle combined with political struggle to push the movement forward.*

In the light of this conference, the people of South Viet Nam passed from various forms of political struggle and armed struggle to insurrections, beginning with the simultaneous uprising of the people of Ben Tre province.

Just on the night of January 17, 1960, under the leadership of Ben Tre revolutionaries, and armed with sticks and spears, the masses rose up, all to a man, to get rid of cruel enemy agents, to attack enemy posts, capturing enemy weapons to kill the enemy. They broke up large portions of the enemy's administrative and repressive apparatus in the villages and hamlets. The people's armed forces were built up and developed. People's committees for self-governing were set up in newly liberated areas. Land belonging to wicked landowners was confiscated and distributed to poor peasants. From then on, the tide of simultaneous uprising swept like rushing waters over the provinces of Nam Bo, Tay Nguyen highlands and several places in Central Trung Bo.

The simultaneous uprising movement was successful because it broke out just at the moment when the enemy had suffered *basic political failure*. In extreme anger, the masses resorted to revolutionary violence, launching *unexpected*, repeated and violent attacks on the enemy's *weakest links* that were his lowest-level administration in the countryside.

The success of the simultaneous uprising movement created the basis for stepping up the nation-wide, all-

round and protracted people's war against the aggression of US imperialism, shaking the very foundation of the US-controlled puppet regime. In this revolutionary high tide, on December 20, 1960, in a liberated area of Eastern Nam Bo, representatives of various classes, parties, religious groups and nationalities coming from all parts of South Viet Nam held a Congress to found the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation*. The Congress adopted the ten-point *Programme of Action*, the main content of which was to overthrow the disguised colonial regime and the Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorship, with a view to building an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral South Viet Nam, advancing to the peaceful reunification of the country.

From mid-1961 onward, frightened by the violent and repeated struggles of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people, the US-Diemists launched the "special war" out of a passive position. It was a kind of war in which they tried to "use Vietnamese to fight against Vietnamese", combining the inhuman methods of aggressive war by the imperialists who have modern weapons and technical means with savage repressive and terroristic measures of the pro-US feudal and comprador bourgeois revanchists in South Viet Nam. The main force of the US-puppets in the "special war" was the army of the puppet regime. With the "special war", the US imperialists not only aimed at committing aggression against South Viet Nam but also attempted to use the South of our

country as a testing-ground to draw experience in suppressing the national liberation movements, menacing newly-independent countries and forcing them to accept US neo-colonialism.

To wage the "special war", they worked out the Staley-Taylor plan. According to this plan, the US took a series of steps to increase the war potentials, herded the people into "strategic hamlets" and launched offensives to wrest back the initiative in an attempt to complete the "pacification" of South Viet Nam within 18 months.

On January 17, 1962, the provisional Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation issued a statement pointing out the extremely grave situation arising from the armed aggression of the US imperialists and their henchmen. Following this, on February 16, 1962, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation held its first Congress. The Congress asserted: "The general task of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation is to unite the whole people, to struggle resolutely against the aggressive and war-mongering US imperialists, to overthrow the Ngo Dinh Diem ruling clique, their henchmen, to set up a democratic and national administration of broad alliance, to achieve national independence, democratic, freedom, better living conditions, to safeguard peace and carry out a policy of neutrality, advancing toward peaceful reunification

of the country, taking an active part in defending peace in Indochina, South-East Asia and the world.”¹

The Congress elected a Central Committee with Lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho as President.

The salient point in the 1962 situation was the fact that in face of enemy attacks, the areas we had liberated or controlled did not shrink but were enlarged instead. The correct line of the Front penetrated ever deeper into the people's masses and was turned into actions by millions to oppose the US aggression and save the country. Guerilla warfare developed widely and vigorously everywhere. The enemy's plan of setting up “strategic hamlets” was seriously hindered.

The US-Diemists regarded their national policy of “strategic hamlets” as the basic point of the Staley-Taylor plan, the backbone of the “special war”. Therefore, they mobilized all forces, resorted to every means to mop up and terrorize the people, “trampling upon anger and hatred”, so as to carry out this “national policy” at all costs. They estimated that they could set up 17,000 “strategic hamlets” within a short period of time, thus turning South Viet Nam into a huge concentration camp, then they would be in a position to make deep thrusts into revolutionary bases and destroy our forces completely.

¹ Statement of the First Congress of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, March 3, 1962 in *The First Congress of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1962, p. 19.

But right at the beginning, the "strategic hamlets" plan was resolutely opposed by our people. The herding of people was not so easy as they had expected. The tempo of the plan slowed down day after day. A number of "strategic hamlets" were undone as soon as they were set up, others were broken up time and again and the enemy was unable to consolidate them. Many turned into our people's fighting villages after being undone.

The year 1963 began with the resounding victory of Ap Bac. Here, for the first time, with one-tenth the enemy's strength, the armed forces and people of the South defeated a mopping-up raid by over 2,000 enemy troops belonging to different arms under cover of tens of helicopters and M.113 armoured cars. The Ap Bac victory highlighted the extremely high morale of our Southern people and fighters. It proved that the Southern armed forces and people were quite able to defeat the United States *militarily* in the "special war".

Together with armed struggles and destruction of "strategic hamlets," there were large-scale and violent political struggles involving all strata of the people. Political struggle on the South Viet Nam battlefield constituted the basis for armed struggle, was closely co-ordinated with and supplemented armed struggle, and it was at the same time the form of fierce struggle between our people and the enemy. Making use of appropriate forms and methods of struggle, everyone, old and young, men and women, rushed forward in a face-to-face struggle with the enemy. The powerful

political armies of the masses defeated many a moping-up operation by the enemy, effectively defending the people's lives and property. This force smashed large portions of the enemy administration in hamlets and villages, isolated and wiped out the leading cruel despots, won over tens of thousands of puppet soldiers and officials to the people's side.

After two years of "special war", the US imperialists and their henchmen were in bad trouble and suffered heavy failures, militarily and politically. Their strategy of quick "pacification" of the South went bankrupt. The Staley-Taylor plan met with ignominious failure in the face of the splendid heroism of the Southern armed forces and people.

Our victories and the enemy's defeats caused deep dissensions, confusion and discord among the US imperialists and the puppet clique. In November 1963, confronted with the powerful movement of struggle of the South Vietnamese people the US imperialists had to stage a coup d'état, overthrowing Diem and killing the Diem and Nhu brothers as they did running dogs that had become useless, putting Duong Van Minh then Nguyen Khanh in power instead.

Thus after over nine years of resolute, undaunted, heroic and wisely-led struggle the people of south Viet Nam had defeated Ngo Dinh Diem's fascist dictatorial administration. Taking advantage of Diem's fall, the masses in enemy-held rural areas rose up and destroyed a larger number of "strategic hamlets", thus

enlarging the liberated areas. At the same time, the movement also surged up in the cities; the peace and neutrality tendencies grew up.

In face of such a situation, in March 1964, the US imperialists put forth a new plan, the Johnson-MacNamara plan, aimed at pacifying the South within two years (1964-1965). They set up the Viet Nam-US joint command, proclaimed the Vung Tau charter. Meanwhile, they introduced 6,000 US advisers and combat troops, thus raising the strength of US troops in South Viet Nam to 25,000 by the end of 1964.

The US new schemes met with extremely violent reactions by the South Vietnamese people. The anti-US-Khanh movement spread quickly from Huê and Saigon to other cities and towns in the South. On August 20, 1964, 200,000 people in Saigon encircled the "Palace of Independence", demanding the resignation of Nguyen Khanh and the abolition of the Vung Tau charter. On August 24, 1964, 30,000 people in Da Nang demonstrated while closing down markets and schools. On September 20, 1964, over 100,000 workers in Saigon and Gia Dinh went on strike and demonstrated in protest against the US-Khanh military dictatorship. On October 15, 1964, the heroic electrician Nguyen Van Troi turned the scaffold into a revolutionary court to indict the US aggressors and their henchmen. In November and December 1964, the people of Huê, Saigon, Da Nang, Da Lat, etc. demonstrated and marched to demand that the Tran Van Huong administration be overthrown.

As political and armed struggles grew up vigorously in all three strategical regions (countryside, cities and highlands — *Ed.*), in December 1964, the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam won another great victory at *Binh Gia*. Here, for the first time, Liberation army regulars attacked puppet army regulars in broad daylight, on their own initiative, and fought for six days running, wiping out two whole mobile battalions and a squadron of M.113 armoured cars of the enemy, shot down and damaged 37 aircraft. If Ap Bac was a counter-mopping-up battle, a victory of the Southern armed forces and people over the enemy's "heli-borne" tactic, then the Binh Gia victory was *one of great strategic significance*, marking the bankruptcy of the US imperialists' strategy of "special warfare" in South Viet Nam.

After the great victory of Binh Gia, the all-round forces of the Southern army and people grew up sharply. The Liberation armed forces went on wiping out many regular puppet battalions in the battles of An Lao, Deo Nhong, Pleiku, Dong Xoai, Ba Gia, etc. In the first half of 1965 as a whole, the Southern army and people put out of action over 90,000 enemy troops, including 3,000 US troops.

Our victories and the enemy's defeats caused the balance of forces to undergo deep changes in our favour. The liberated areas were enlarged and became the direct and firm rear base of the South Vietnamese revolution. In those areas, the people's revolutionary

power was set up, a new social order arose, the traitors' land was confiscated and distributed to poor peasants. The Liberation armed forces which comprise three kinds of troops were growing sharply. Meanwhile, on the enemy's side, the mainstays of "special warfare", namely the puppet army and administration, the "strategic hamlets" network and the cities, were shaken to the roots. The 500,000 man puppet army, organized, equipped, trained and commanded by the United States had been continually defeated by the Southern armed forces and people.

Faced with the danger of complete failure of the "special war", the US imperialists hastily introduced combat troops from the United States and its satellites into South Viet Nam, in an attempt to save from disintegration and collapse the puppet army and administration, the mainstay of their neo colonial regime. In March 1965, the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation asserted that "The present intensification and widening of the war of aggression by the US imperialists is in itself an ignominious failure of theirs; it proves that their aggressive colonialist policy in South Viet Nam during the past 11 years and their so-called "special war" have gone bankrupt.¹"

¹ *Statement of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation relative to the intensification and widening of the US imperialists' war of aggression in South Viet Nam* (March 22, 1965), Su that Publishing House, Hanoi, 1965, p. 11.

The bankruptcy of "special warfare" marked a *strategic failure* of the US imperialists in their scheme to "use Vietnamese to fight against Vietnamese". Defeating the "special war", the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam had built up very great material and moral forces in order to advance forward and defeat the limited war, frustrating the US imperialists' scheme to use South Viet Nam as a testing-ground for "special warfare", a kind of warfare that appealed most to them in their designs of committing aggression by means of neo-colonialism and suppressing the national-liberation movements in the world. As early as March 1964, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out:

"The present situation in the South is clear proof of the unavoidable failure of the US imperialists in this "special war". Once the "special war" they are testing in South Viet Nam has been defeated, it will be defeated anywhere else. That is the international significance of the patriotic struggle of our Southern compatriots with regard to the national-liberation movements in the world."¹

¹ *President Ho Chi Minh's Report to the Special Political Conference* (March 27, 1964), Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1964, p. 13.

PART FOUR

**THE NATION-WIDE RESISTANCE AGAINST US
AGGRESSION, FOR NATIONAL SALVATION, TO
LIBERATE THE SOUTH, DEFEND THE NORTH, AND
ADVANCING TOWARD THE PEACEFUL REUNIFICA-
TION OF THE COUNTRY (1965-1969)**

**THE PARTY HOLDS HIGH THE DETERMINA-
TION TO FIGHT AND DEFEAT THE AMERICAN
AGGRESSORS**

Having failed in putting neo-colonialism in practice by means of the Ngo Dinh Diem fascist dictatorial regime and "special warfare", the US imperialists recklessly embarked on a limited war in South Viet Nam and started a fierce war of destruction against North Viet Nam. By the end of 1965, the strength of US and satellite troops introduced into the South reached 200,000 men.

The important plenums of the Party Central Committee during the year 1965, combining a thoroughgoing revolutionary stand with methods of scientific analysis, proceeded to a profound and all-round study of the situation arising from the new schemes and acts of war of the US imperialists. Through the above plenums, the Party Central Committee held the following views :

The US war of aggression in the South of our country remained, in its character and purpose, a war of aggression *aimed at putting neo-colonialism in practice*, but instead of relying mainly on the puppet army, it had grown into a *US war, relying on two strategic forces, namely the US expeditionary force and the puppet army*. Therefore, it would be more arduous and atrocious. But the US imperialists were intensifying and widening the war from a position of defeat and passivity, following a strategy full of contradictions and deadlocks. *Firstly*, the US strategy reflected the sharp contradiction between the political aim of saving the neo-colonialist regime and the old colonialist way of introducing an expeditionary force of aggression. The aggressive character of the US imperialists and the traitorous character of the puppet administration and army were laid bare. The contradiction between the entire Vietnamese people and the US imperialists and their henchmen grew sharper and fiercer in the whole country. *Secondly*, by the unjust nature of the war of aggression, the US expeditionary force fought without motivation, was opposed by the people of Viet Nam,

progressive Americans and the world's people, hence their ever sinking morale. However modern their equipment might be, they were in no position to cope with the united combat strength of our armed forces and people and to stand up to our people's war. *Thirdly*, though the US imperialists have the most powerful economic and military potentials in the imperialist camp, world conjuncture and the state of affairs in the United States would not permit it to exhaust these potentials. It could not send to South Viet Nam unlimited troop reinforcements without reckoning with various difficulties on the Viet Nam theatre of operations, in the world as well as in the United States itself.

In the mean time, the revolutionary forces of the Vietnamese people had grown up in every field and were in a very favourable position. *In the South*, the overwhelming majority of the people were united in the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation*. The Front had become the organizer and leader of all patriotic forces in the South. The *South Viet Nam Liberation armed forces* had grown up tremendously, were in high morale and were holding their ground in almost all major strategic positions. The *revolutionary movement in the cities* was developing with ever greater vigour. The *liberated areas*, though not forming a continuous whole yet, had encompassed the majority of the population and were consolidated with every passing day. The *South Viet Nam People's Revolutionary Party*, with its widespread and solid basic

organizations, was a heroic vanguard, tempered in the fighting, having close touch with the masses, enjoying great confidence from the people, having correct lines and policies and rich experience in political and armed struggles.

In the North, the people, who daily and hourly thought of their Southern kith and kin understood clearly the task of standing shoulder to shoulder with the Southern compatriots in the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation. After over ten years of socialist revolution and socialist construction, with its developing economic and defence forces, the North had become the firm base area for the Vietnamese revolution in the whole country.

The just struggle of the Vietnamese people in both zones enjoyed ever more active and vigorous support and sympathy from the brother socialist countries, the nationalist countries and peace- and justice-loving people in the world, including the American people.

Owing to the enemy's heavy defeats and our great victories, the *balance of forces between us and the enemy remained unchanged in the main*, though the US imperialists had introduced tens of thousands of US troops into South Viet Nam. Our people had solid requisites for maintaining the initiative on the battlefield and were in position to frustrate all immediate and long-term schemes of the enemy.

Proceeding from the above views, the Party Central Committee held high the determination to mobilize

the forces of the whole Party, the entire armed force and the entire people "resolutely to foil the war of aggression of the US imperialists in any circumstances, so as to defend the North, liberate the South, complete the national people's democratic revolution in the whole country, advancing toward the peaceful reunification of the country" ¹.

U.S. WAR OF DESTRUCTION IN NORTH VIET NAM BROUGHT TO FAILURE

On August 5, 1964, the US imperialists fabricated the provocative "Tonkin Gulf incident" then sent out their aircraft to bomb North Viet Nam. From February 1965 onward, they continually made use of their Air Force and Navy in intensified and fierce attacks against the North, with a view to stopping the great support of the Northern people for the struggle against US aggression of their Southern kith and kin, destroying the socialist construction and impairing the determination to fight US aggression for national salvation of the Northern people, so as

¹ Resolution of the 12th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, December 1965.

to compel the people of both zones to end the war of liberation in conditions favourable to them.

Confronted with such a situation, the Party pointed out that the pressing task of the revolution in the North was to effect a reorientation in ideas and organization, in economic construction and defence build-up. In this reorientation, it was necessary to give the North sufficient strength to meet the need of defending it against the enemy bombing, shelling and blockade, getting ready to cope with any widening of the war by the enemy at any level, giving wholehearted support to the resistance of the Southern kith and kin, meanwhile meeting the need of building the material and technical basis of socialism in the North.

Carrying out its scheme of bombing North Viet Nam, the US imperialists mobilized very considerable air and naval forces with various up-to-date weapons. But under the leadership of the Party, our people were very calm, heroic and clever and frustrated all enemy's escalation steps. Meanwhile, the struggle of the Southern people recorded very great victories.

During the four years of war of destruction, the US imperialists committed untold crimes against our people. They concentrated their attacks on cities, provincial capitals, towns and populous areas, killing many of our compatriots. The six major cities of the North: Hanoi, Haiphong, Nam Dinh, Thai Nguyen, Viet Tri and Vinh were repeatedly bombed, 25 out of the 30 provincial capitals of all the North were attacked

again and again, among which 6 were bombed to utter destruction: Dong Hoi, Ninh Binh, Phu Ly, Bac Giang, Yen Bai, Son La. Whole towns were razed, such as Ha Tu (Quang Ninh) and Ho Xa (Vinh Linh). More cruelly still, they also bombed dikes and irrigation works, schools, medical establishments, sanatoriums, churches and pagodas.

Nevertheless, the US imperialists met with ignominious failures in both zones, North and South. On March 31, 1968, the US government was compelled to de-escalate the war, by announcing the "limited bombing" of the North and on November 1, 1968 they had to end unconditionally the bombing and shelling over the whole territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and had to hold talks with representatives of our Government and those of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation at the four-party conference in Paris.

Thus, after four years of heroic struggle, the people of the North achieved glorious victory. According to incomplete data, up to November 1, 1968, we had shot down 3,243 US aircraft,¹ including 6 strategic bombers B-52, two F-111 As with swing-wings, the most up-to-date aircraft of the US, killed and captured thousands of air-pirates, hit and set ablaze hundreds of warships of various sizes, *bringing the US war of destruction to complete failure.*

¹ By Dec. 22, 1969, the army and people of the North had downed 3,328 US aircraft.

Right at the beginning of the war of destruction waged by the US imperialists over the North of our country, our Party correctly assessed the enemy's strategic designs and capabilities of action, his strong points and weaknesses, both political and military, in the war of destruction, and particularly it discovered his basic weakness in this war strategy. A product of the failure in the South Vietnamese battlefield, the US war of destruction in the North was characterized, from the start, by strategic passivity and failure and this failure and passivity grew ever more obvious as the war proceeded.

To oppose the war of destruction, our Party applied the correct strategic line of conducting a protracted, all round war by the whole people, relying mainly on our own forces, while availing ourselves of international aid.

Our entire Party, our entire armed forces and our entire people were determined to defeat the US aggressors completely. This great determination was clearly stated in President Ho Chi Minh's Appeal on July 17, 1966: "The war may continue for five years, ten years, twenty years or more. Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities and enterprises may be destroyed, but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. Once victory is won, our people will rebuild our country and endow it with bigger and more beautiful constructions!"¹

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *On the Task of Fighting US Aggression and Saving the Country*, Su that Publishing House Hanoi 1967, p. 118.

Under the leadership of the Party, the people of the North have brought into full play the absolute superiority of the socialist regime, proceeding to rational arrangement and use of all forces, combining those forces closely so as to achieve the best effects in performing the task.

Together with the people's war in the South to oppose the US limited war, the people's war in the North to oppose the war of destruction is a new, rich and original development of the theory and practice of people's war of our nation. It is a very important basis for our people to win still greater victories, to frustrate any schemes and forms of aggression devised by the US imperialists.

With the failure of the US war of destruction, we have smashed part of the cruel war of aggression of the US imperialists in Viet Nam, dealing a heavy blow at their aggressive intention.

In his Appeal of November 3, 1968, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "That is a victory of our Party's correct revolutionary line, a victory of ardent patriotism and of the strength of a united nation determined to fight and to win, a victory of the fine socialist regime. These are the common victories of our army and people in both zones, South and North. That is also a victory of the people of brotherly countries and our friends in all the five continents." ¹

¹ "President Ho Chi Minh's Appeal", November 3, 1968, *Nhan Dan* daily, the same day.

Reality has proved that the US war of destruction could not stop the great support of the people of the North to their Southern kith and kin, could not shake the determination of our whole people to fight US aggression, for national salvation, and could not hinder the socialist construction in the North. On the contrary, in many respects, our socialist regime has been strengthened. The socialist economy has been maintained in the main and some branches have developed further. In the flames of war the *co-operativized agriculture* still proved the strength and superiority of the collective way. By 1967, the number of peasant households in farming co-ops had accounted for 93.7 per cent of the total of working peasant households; in the whole North, there were 18,098 high-level farming co-ops, accounting for 88.8% per cent of peasant households in the co-operative sector; 4,655 farming co-ops had been equipped with small machines including 6,350 power generators and 9,362 work machines¹; 2,551 co-ops had reached an average yield of five tons of paddy or more to the hectare. *Industrial production* was maintained in the main, with decreases in some respects and increases in others; locally-run industry developed strongly. The percentage of industry in the national economy which was only 17.2 per cent in 1955, grew up to 49.5 per cent in 1967. Regional economies

¹ By work machines, we mean mechanical pumps, threshing-machines, husking-machines, grinding and chopping machines, etc.

began to take shape within major strategic areas. The most essential needs were ensured for production and the fighting; meanwhile, the people's life in war time was basically stabilized. Works in the cultural, educational and public health fields were not hindered but developed vigorously even in war time and achieved fairly good results.

Communications and transports, one of the main targets of US bombings in the North were considered a *strategic task* and were given special attention by the Party Central Committee, the related branches and local Party committees. Thanks to this, on all communication lines in our country, the flow of transports never stopped, goods were carried to destination, freight volumes grew up daily and the communication lines of various types were further widened.

The resounding victory of our people in the fight against the US war of destruction was also the result of a correct line in national defence. Our Party put forth the slogan "*the entire people take part in the fighting and in national defence*" and advocated the rapid development of the people's armed forces. Together with the build up of modern regular divisions, many new armes and services were created. Great attention was paid to improving the equipment and combat capability of regional troops and militia. The armed forces in the North were properly arrayed so as to cope with US ground forces in the event they were recklessly dispatched to the North.

Party members displayed their boundless loyalty, heroism and intelligence, keeping in close touch with the masses to lead them in every field of production and fighting. This is the result of correct policies in building up a firm and strong Party in politics, ideology and organization, enabling it to fulfil the great historic mission of leading the whole people *in the fight to defeat the US aggressors and to build socialism successfully.*

The Party has paid great attention to the raising of cadres and Party members' ideological and theoretical standard, the training and promotion of young cadres and women cadres, the training of tens of thousands of scientific and technical workers and economic managers, perfecting local Party committees and basic Party organizations, improving leadership and working style, opposing bureaucracy and arbitrariness, reminding cadres and Party members to keep in closer touch with the masses. The Party also started education campaigns to "heighten revolutionary quality and morality, wipe out individualism", enhancing the sense of independence, sovereignty and self-reliance, raising the sense of responsibility, opposing all influence of revisionism and dogmatism, defending the purity of Marxism-Leninism, safeguarding the unity and oneness of mind within the Party. However, the Party Central Committee held that those achievements obviously were not sufficient to meet the need of carrying out the Party's strategic determination in the present period. Our victory was limited by many

weaknesses and shortcomings. There existed such negative aspects as taking advantage of the war conditions to encroach upon and weaken the collective economy, embezzlement, profiteering. A number of cadres and Party members still had bureaucratic and arbitrary manners, violating the people's democratic rights, violating even socialist legality to some extent. Cadres had not taken real interest in the livelihood of the masses. A number of working people did not observe labour discipline. Therefore, since 1968, the Party has paid more attention to strengthening its leadership in the economic front, opposed the loosening of management, educated and raised the sense of collective mastership of the people.

The revolutionary line and methods of our Party, impregnated with the sense of independence, sovereignty and creativeness, reflect our people's qualities of staunchness, dauntlessness, courage and intelligence; they reflect the position of Vietnamese men and women who are now masters of their own destiny. In response to the appeal of the Party, the Government and President Ho Chi Minh, our people in the North have started a *surging movement to fight US aggression and save the country*, producing and fighting at the same time, surging ahead with extremely vigorous élan, doing things that cannot be done in ordinary circumstances. Under the leadership of the Party our people were determined to fight and defeat the US aggressors and they grew up rapidly during the fight. The people's armed forces pushed

forward the emulation movement "determined to defeat the US aggressors", holding high the slogan "aim straight at the enemy". The workers held firm both the hammer and the rifle, worked industriously and creatively, fought valiantly and cleverly, defending the factories and developing production. The emulation movement to work over-time to fight US aggression and save the country, to bring forth technical innovations and improvements, to improve labour organization, to improve management, to strive resolutely to reach "three peaks", (high productivity, good quality, substantial economy) swept over all enterprises, construction sites and state farms. Members of farming co-ops held firm both the plough and the rifle, worked industriously and courageously, resolutely fought against natural calamities and enemy destruction, emulated one another to achieve three targets in agricultural production: harvesting five tons of paddy over a hectare under crop, rearing two pigs averagely for every tilled hectare and a working peasant for every cultivated hectare. The intellectuals emulated one another to carry out "three determinations": determination to serve production and the fighting well; determination to push forward the technological revolution, the ideological and cultural revolution; determination to build up an army of socialist intellectuals. Among the youth, the "three ready"¹ movement became a broad revolutionary

¹ Ready to fight; ready to join the army; ready to go anywhere and do any work as needed by the Fatherland.

movement of the young generation. Among the women, the "three responsibilities" movement¹ brought forth the revolutionary zeal and spirit of boundless sacrifice of Vietnamese women who overcome all difficulties in production and fighting. Besides, such other emulation movements as the "two good"² among teachers and schoolgoers, the "three improvements"³ among cadres and employees, the "two excellent"⁴ in some regions and the "thousand good deeds" among pioneers and children mingled with the above-mentioned movements to make up a surging, widespread emulation high tide, unprecedented in our country.

The emulation movement to fight US aggression and save the country is of very profound significance. Here, our people's patriotism and proletarian internationalism reach their height, for, just as President Ho Chi Minh said, "our people fight and make sacrifices not only for the cause of their own freedom and independence, but also for the common freedom and independence of all nations and for peace in the world."⁵

¹ Responsibility in production and work; responsibility in family affairs; responsibility in serving the fighting and in fighting.

² Good study and good teaching.

³ Improvement in work, in organization and in working style.

⁴ Excellent in fighting, excellent in production.

⁵ Ho Chi Minh, *On the Task of Fighting US Aggression and Saving the Country*, Su That Publishing House, 1967, p. 57.

That is why progressive mankind not only watches our people's struggle with admiration and wholehearted support, but also recognizes that "the struggle of the Vietnamese people is the vanguard banner, the centre and the apex of the revolutionary struggle of the labouring people and oppressed peoples in the world against US imperialism."¹

The fight against US aggression for national salvation has proved the great vitality of the fine socialist regime and of the people's democratic dictatorship in the North of our country.

NEW STAGE IN THE RESISTANCE OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE

The landing of more and more US expeditionary troops in our country *caused the contradiction between the Vietnamese nation and US imperialism to become most acute in the whole country and set out the task of fighting US aggression and saving the country as the sacred task of our entire people from North to South.* Our people have fought under the slogan "All for Victory over the US aggressors."

¹ Resolution on Viet Nam by the World Cultural Congress in Havana, January 14, 1968, *Nhan Dan* daily, Jan. 22, 1968.

In March 1965, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation issued a statement pointing out that "The people of South Viet Nam and their armed forces will never lose hold of their arms when the fundamental goals of the South Vietnamese people, namely independence, democracy, peace and neutrality, have not been achieved. The South Vietnamese people are resolutely going on to deal thunder blows on the US aggressors and their henchmen and are sure to win final victory."¹

In his address at the second session of the Third National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, on April 10, 1965, President Ho Chi Minh affirmed:

Even if the United-States introduces hundreds of thousands of US troops and tries to involve more troops from its satellites in this criminal war, our army and people are determined to defeat them.

"The statement of the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation* has highlighted this heroic spirit. The appeal of the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* has indicated this iron-like determination...

"Once again, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam solemnly states its consistent position as follows:

¹ *Main Documents of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation* (from Nov. 1964 to Dec. 1965), Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1966, p. 12.

“Resolutely to defend the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam. Viet Nam is one, the Vietnamese people are one, no one can encroach upon this sacred right of our people...”¹

In response to President Ho Chi Minh's Appeal and under the leadership of the National Front for Liberation, the heroic South Vietnamese people maintained the initiative and attacked continually, not only wiping out puppet troops in big battles but also defeating US troops themselves in big battles too.

The US imperialists believed that they were defeated in the “special war” because of the poor quality of puppet troops, therefore their advantages in armaments could not be brought into play. Now that the US expeditionary force was directly engaged against the Vietnamese people, US modern weapons were used by US troops themselves for shooting at and massacring Vietnamese, nothing would be able to resist them. Such a situation posed to the Vietnamese people a vital problem: our people must necessarily defeat the US expeditionary force. With the determination which President Ho Chi Minh had instilled into our people since the resistance against French aggression — “we would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country, than be slaves” — the Southern armed forces

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *On the Task of Fighting US Aggression and Saving the Country*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1967, pp. 55 and 57.

and people brilliantly overcame the first trial in an engagement with US troops at Van Tuong (Quang Ngai) in August 1965. Here, a unit of Liberation troops together with local guerillas valiantly foiled the first large-scale mopping-up operation by 8,000 US troops having air and naval cover. In the same way as the Ap Bac battle in January 1963 started the surging movement to wipe out puppet troops organized, trained, equipped and commanded by Americans, the Van Tuong battle started a *surging movement to wipe out the US aggressors*. The Van Tuong victory proved that the Southern armed forces and people were fully *able to defeat the US aggressors militarily in the limited war*, though they had to fight both US aggressors and puppet troops directly.

The possibility of defeating the US aggressors militarily in the limited war became a reality right during the 1965 winter-1966 spring with the glorious victory of the Southern armed forces and people, smashing the first dry season counter-offensive¹ of 200,000 US and satellite troops and half a million puppet troops. The second strategic dry season counter-offensive in the winter of 1966 and spring of 1967 with over 400,000 US troops and over half a million puppet troops was defeated again by the armed forces and people of the South. The result: through the two dry seasons 290,000 enemy troops, including

¹ In South Viet Nam, the dry season lasts seven months, beginning in October and ending in April the next year.

128,000 US and satellite troops were put out of action. The victory of the Liberation armed forces and people of the South in the two above-mentioned strategic dry season counter-offensives smashed the enemy's two-pronged strategy of "search and destroy" and "pacification", deteriorated the enemy's morale and sharpened the contradictions within his ranks.

Political struggle was maintained and developed in an ever fiercer manner in conditions of *direct engagement with the US expeditionary force*. It was marked by the drive of struggles in early 1966 in nearly all cities of South Viet Nam, particularly in Huê and Da Nang, with slogans demanding the overthrow of the US-controlled puppet government and the withdrawal of US troops.

On the basis of those victories, the Extraordinary Congress of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation held in August 1967 adopted the *Political Programme* with a view to further broadening the national united front against US aggression, for national salvation, leading the revolutionary cause of the Southern people to complete victory. After the Congress, the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation decided on an extremely important strategic direction: that of *opening a new front in the cities* through generalized attacks by the armed forces combined with a mobilization of the masses in all cities to rise up and seize power.

Carrying out this decision, on January 30, 1968, the armed forces and people in the South simultaneously rose up in 64 cities, towns and in many rural areas adjacent to the cities. Revolutionary administrations were established in Huê and in many newly liberated rural areas. The *Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces* in Saigon and Huê was formed. The national united front against US aggression, for national salvation was broadened.

The 1968 Spring general offensives and uprisings were a thunder blow dealt at the US aggressors and the puppets; they not only wiped out considerable enemy vital forces, destroyed a gigantic amount of his war matériel, but also upset his strategic position, forced him to give up the "search and destroy" and "pacification" plan suddenly, and turn to the passive strategy of "clear and hold". With over a million US—puppet troops, the leaders of the White House and the Pentagon still complained of shortage of troops; the rural areas were left uncontrolled; the "pacification" plan went bankrupt. The enemy had to fall back to defensive positions in the cities, where even surrounded by multiple defence lines he lived in constant fear of surprise attacks by the Liberation army.

On the contrary, on the side of the Southern army and people, never before had the war conjuncture been so favourable, the strategic position so firm as after the general offensives and uprisings in Spring 1968. South Viet Nam's revolution not only had firm positions in the highlands and countryside but also had a

new front in the cities. The Southern army and people have thrust the revolutionary war into the very lair of the US aggressors and the puppets. The enemy's headquarters and key positions were dealt telling blows and were paralyzed and disrupted.

General offensives and uprisings constitute a process. Waves of offensives and uprisings broke out continually. Attacks by waves are combined with regular attacks. As the fighting goes on, our people grow ever more powerful, our forces ever stronger. In 1968 as a whole, the Southern army and people put out of action 630,000 enemy troops, including 230,000 US and satellite troops. In the first six months of 1969, they wiped out and captured 330,000 enemy troops, including 145,000 US and satellite troops. Since January 1969, the US imperialists have been compelled to hold official talks with the delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation at the four-party Conference in Paris. Since then, the Southern people have opened a new front, the diplomatic front. On all three fronts — military, political and diplomatic — the Southern people make continuous attacks on the enemy and have scored great victories; the liberated areas have been enlarged, in some places reaching the cities' outskirts. People's administrations were established, not only at village and district levels but also at provincial and city levels.

On June 6, 1969, the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation*, the *Viet Nam Alliance of National*,

Democratic and Peace Forces in the South together with other patriotic forces held a Congress of Representatives of the people of South Viet Nam and unanimously elected the *Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam* and the *Advisory Council to the Government*. The formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government was a victory of decisive character in the process of perfecting the system of revolutionary administration in South Viet Nam, a really national and democratic administration. The establishment of the revolutionary administration shook the very foundation of the US-controlled puppet administration.

Under the leadership of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and under the revolutionary administration of the Southern people, democratic reforms have been effected in the liberated areas, especially with the implementation of the agrarian policy. The slogan "Land to the tillers" has become a reality. The great majority of South Vietnamese peasants have been given land to work on. Agriculture and handicraft develop. Important achievements have been recorded in the fields of culture, education and public health. The democratic reforms initially carried out in the liberated areas have brought out the sharp contradictions between the two regimes in fierce opposition in the South of our country: the people's democratic regime and the neo-colonial regime. The revolution of the Southern people originates from the forces of a regime full of vitality and growing

vigorously, and is opposed to declining, corrupted forces, originating from a decadent regime, the offspring of US neocolonialism.

The process of historic development of the South Viet Nam revolution since the general offensives and uprisings (January 1968) foretells the inevitable ultimate failure of the US imperialists and their henchmen, exactly as President Ho Chi Minh affirmed in his message to the Southern compatriots on February 4, 1968:

“The Spring victory of the Southern army and people has brought about a new very favourable situation in the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation of our entire people. Nothing can save the US aggressors and their flunkies from total collapse!”

The enemy is, however, very stubborn. That is why we must persevere in our resistance till complete victory. In his Appeal of July 20, 1969, President Ho Chi Minh said:

“It is clear that the US imperialists are meeting with failure, but they have not given up their intention to cling on to our South. The army and people of our whole country, millions as one man, holding high revolutionary heroism, fearing no sacrifices nor hardships, are determined to persevere in and push forward the resistance, determined to fight and to win, and will fight so that the US troops be totally withdrawn, so that the puppet army and administration

completely collapse, to liberate the South, defend the North, advancing toward the peaceful reunification of the country.”¹

At present, the people in both zones of Viet Nam are launching continuous attacks on the enemy on all three fronts, military, political and diplomatic.

The *four-point stand*² of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the *Ten-Point Over-all Solution*³ of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, with their shining justness, have cornered the US imperialists and their henchmen into a very

¹ “President Ho Chi Minh’s Appeal” on the occasion of July 20, 1969, in the *Nhan Dan*, July 20, 1969.

² The four points of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam can be summarized as follows:

1 — Recognition of the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people: peace, independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

2 — Pending the peaceful reunification of Viet Nam, the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam must be strictly respected.

3 — The internal affairs of South Viet Nam must be settled by the people of South Viet Nam themselves.

4 — The peaceful reunification of Viet Nam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones.

³ The ten points of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam can be summarized as follows:

1 — Respect for the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people: independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

awkward and passive position. Under the clear-sighted leadership of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, the

2 — The US Government must withdraw all troops, military personnel, weapons and war material of the United States and its satellites from South Viet Nam without any conditions whatsoever.

3 — The right of the Vietnamese people to fight in defence of their Fatherland is a sacred and inviolable right of self-defence. The question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Viet Nam is to be settled by the Vietnamese parties.

4 — The people of South Viet Nam settle themselves their own internal affairs, without foreign interference.

5 — During the interval between the restoration of peace and the general elections, neither side shall force the South Vietnamese people to accept its political regime.

6 — South Viet Nam shall carry out a foreign policy of peace and neutrality.

7 — The reunification of Viet Nam will be achieved step by step by peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between both zones, without foreign interference.

8 — Both zones, North and South Viet Nam, shall pledge themselves not to enter into military alliance with foreign powers, not to allow any foreign country to have military bases, troops and military personnel on their soil, not to accept the protection of any country, any military alliance or bloc.

9 — To settle the consequences of the war :

a) The various sides shall negotiate the release of military men captured during the war.

b) The US government must bear full responsibility for the damage and ravages caused by the United States to the Vietnamese people in both zones.

10 — The various sides shall agree on an international supervision of the withdrawal of the troops, military personnel, weapons and war material of the United States and other foreign countries on the US side from South Viet Nam.

heroic South Vietnamese people are repeatedly frustrating the desperate efforts of the US imperialists in their attempt to "Vietnamize" the war.

Our people's confidence in the final victory of the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, in the inevitable success of the national people's democratic revolution in the South and in the peaceful reunification of the country is based on real scientific foundations. They are the factors that decide the success in the fight against US aggression for national salvation of our entire people: *First*, our people enjoy the *clearsighted and correct leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation*. This leadership is the creative application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of revolutionary struggle and people's war in our country. *Secondly*, under the leadership of the Party and respected and beloved President Ho Chi Minh, the unity of the entire Vietnamese people in the fight against US aggression, for national salvation, based on the worker-peasant alliance, is being firmly consolidated, the tradition of national unity and undaunted struggle of our people is being vigorously enhanced. *Thirdly*, under the leadership of our Party and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, people's war in Viet Nam has become invincible, is continually overcoming the US imperialists' unjust war which is based on a corrupted bourgeois military outlook. In the process of revolutionary war, the *Vietnamese people's armed forces* are becoming a powerful revolutionary

army, which fights well, is battle-tested, with a tradition of combat and victory. *Fourthly*, we enjoy the sympathy, support and assistance of the fraternal socialist countries and the sympathy and support of the world's people, including the American progressives. Of all the above-mentioned factors, the leadership of our Party—President' Ho Chi Minh's Party—armed with the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, is the most decisive factor.

Drawing the lessons of experience of the Vietnamese people in the two long wars of resistance, against the French colonialists formerly and against the US imperialists now, President Ho Chi Minh has pointed out:

“From their own experience, the Vietnamese people are firmly confident that in the conditions favourable for the revolutionary movement in our present time, any people, however small, who are closely united and determined to fight along correct political and military lines, and who enjoy the active support and assistance of the socialist camp and the revolutionary people in the world, are certainly able to defeat any imperialist aggressors, including the leading imperialist, US imperialism.”¹

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At a time when our entire people from South to North are pushing forward the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation nearer to victory,

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *The Great October Revolution Opened the Road of Liberation to All Peoples*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi 1967, pp. 17-18.

President Ho Chi Minh, the boundlessly respected and beloved leader of our working class and people, of the whole Vietnamese nation, an outstanding fighter of the international communist movement and the national liberation movement, passed away. On September 3, 1969, President Ho Chi Minh departed from us. The whole Party, the entire armed forces and the entire people in both zones, South and North, felt boundless grief and regret. The whole progressive mankind shared our people's utmost sorrow. Our Party, National Assembly and Government have received over 23,000 messages and letters of condolence from 121 countries. Forty foreign delegations came to Hanoi to attend the funeral of our leader. In many countries mourning and memorial ceremonies were held in honour of President Ho Chi Minh.

President Ho Chi Minh's demise was a great loss to our entire Party and people. But he has left us an extremely precious heritage. That is his great cause and his brilliant example.

Parting from us, President Ho Chi Minh left a historic *Testament* to our entire Party and people. First of all, he advised us to strengthen the unity and oneness of mind within the Party: "All comrades, from the Central Committee down to every cell, must preserve the unity and oneness of mind in the Party as the apple of their eye... Our Party should preserve its entire purity, it should remain worthy of its role as the leader and a very loyal servant of the people." He reminded our Party to train the Youth League

members and young people into continuators of the building of socialism, both "red" and "expert", to pay the greatest attention to "educating the revolutionary generation to come", to take interest in the livelihood of the labouring people, to work out "a good plan for economic and cultural development, with a view to ceaselessly raising the living standard of the people". On the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, he entreated us: no matter what difficulties and hardships may lie ahead, our people must persevere in the fight till complete victory.

About the world communist movement, he wished that "our Party will do its best to contribute effectively to the restoration of unity among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way which conforms to both reason and sentiment."

President Ho Chi Minh's Testament is a great historical document, reflecting his thorough-going revolutionary spirit, his pure thinking, virtues and sentiments; it is a beacon illuminating the road of unity and struggle of our entire Party and people advancing toward the fulfilment of heaviest and most glorious tasks: *completion of national liberation, achieving of people's democracy, building of socialism and communism in our country.*

After Uncle Ho's death, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee started a vigorous and widespread

political campaign in the whole Party, the entire armed forces and the entire people with a view to "turning grief into revolutionary deeds"¹, in a *determination to carry out President Ho Chi Minh's Testament* by abiding by the oaths made by Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Party Central Committee, on behalf of our whole Party, our entire armed forces and our entire people, at the solemn ceremony in memory of President Ho Chi Minh at Ba Dinh Square on September 9, 1969:

"We will for ever carry aloft the banner of national independence, resolved to fight and to defeat the US aggressors, to liberate the South, defend the North, and reunify the country in fulfilment of his wish."

"We will go on devoting all our strength to realize the lofty ideal of socialism and communism that he has set for our working class and people so as to achieve prosperity for our land and happiness to our countrymen."

"We will preserve with heart and mind the unity of the Party as we would the apple of our eye, increase the fighting strength of the Party, the nucleus of national unity and ensure total victory for the revolutionary cause of the Vietnamese working class and nation."

¹ The Party Central Committee's Appeal, September 3, 1969.

"We will constantly enhance the pure internationalist sentiments shown by President Ho Chi Minh, do our utmost to contribute to the restoration and development of solidarity and unity in the socialist camp and among the fraternal parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism; to strengthen solidarity and friendship among the Indochinese peoples; to extend wholehearted support to the revolutionary movement of other peoples; to make an active contribution to the struggle of the world's peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism."

"We will all our life learn from his virtues and style of work, foster revolutionary virtues, fearlessly face hardships and sacrifices, temper ourselves into fighters loyal to the Party and the people, worthy of being his comrades, his disciples. Following his example, our entire people and youth pledge to do their best to steel themselves into new men, masters of their country, masters of the new society, and to carry his ever victorious banner to the final goal."

On September 23, 1969, in its fifth session, the Third National Assembly held a solemn ceremony in memory of President Ho Chi Minh and unanimously elected comrade Ton Duc Thang President and comrade Nguyen Luong Bang Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Developing the historic tradition of forty years of struggle of the Party, learning from the thought, virtues and style of work of President Ho Chi Minh, our whole Party, our entire armed forces and our entire people will do our best in the patriotic emulation movement, improve our strong points, overcome our weaknesses, and bring the resistance against US aggression for national salvation and the socialist revolution to complete success.

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CONCLUSION

On February 3, 1970, our Party is exactly forty years old. Tremendous changes have taken place in the world and in our country over the past forty years. Our Party and people have also grown up tremendously. Forty years ago, our people were suffering under the colonial and feudal yoke of slavery, leading a life of humility and obscurity. President Ho Chi Minh said:

"With the French invasion, our country became a colonial country, our people slaves without a nationality, our fatherland was trampled under the iron heel of the cruel enemy. During the decades when the Party had not been founded, the situation was gloomy and seemed quite hopeless."¹

Our Party, headed by respected and beloved comrade Ho Chi Minh, has pointed out to our working class and people a bright and glorious *way out*, and has become the firm leader of the extremely arduous

¹ Ho Chi Minh, Opening Address at the Ceremony Marking the Party's 30th Anniversary, *Selected Works*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 764.

and extremely heroic revolutionary fight of our people and the sole organizer of all successes of the revolution in our country. This is due to the following essential things which our Party has achieved:

1. The Party has constantly stood firm on the position of the working class, thoroughly devoted itself to the class and national interests and *creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country to work out correct lines and policies* so as to lead the Vietnamese revolution from victory to victory. Our Party has ceaselessly opposed reformist tendencies of the bourgeoisie and adventuristic tendencies of the petty bourgeoisie in the national movement, "leftist" phrase-mongering by the Trotskyites in the workers' movement, and rightist and "leftist" tendencies within the Party through various periods. The Party's lines and policies embody the basic interests of the broad masses, hence they are actively supported by the masses. Thanks to that, our Party has won and maintained the leadership of the revolution in the whole country and has smashed all attempts by the national bourgeoisie to dispute this leadership by our Party.

2. Marxism-Leninism has helped our Party clearly to realize that in such an agricultural country as ours, the peasants are not only a large revolutionary force in the national people's democratic revolution but also a large force in the socialist revolution. Peasants and workers form the main force of the revolution. Therefore, through the various periods of

revolutionary struggle, our Party has, in general, grasped and handled the peasant question correctly, *constantly strengthening the worker-peasant alliance*. Our Party's practical work has proved that "only the worker-peasant alliance led by the working class can resolutely and thoroughly overthrow the counter-revolutionary forces, seize and consolidate power for the labouring people, fulfil the historic task of the national democratic revolution and advance to socialism."¹

3. In each of the revolutionary stages, our Party has been able to *rally all patriotic and progressive forces into a broad national united front based on a firm worker-peasant alliance, under the Party's leadership*, achieving united action by those forces to oppose the common enemy, the imperialists and their henchmen, carrying out the programme of the front. In the process of building and strengthening the national united front, our Party has carried on a constant struggle on two fronts: against the tendency to isolationism and sectarianism, not trying to win over all forces that can be won over, at the same time against the tendency to stress one-sidedly on unity, unity without struggle within the front, without resolutely opposing attempts to belittle the Party's role of leadership, to belittle the position of workers and peasants, the foundation of the national united front.

¹ Ho Chi Minh, *The Great October Revolution Opened the Road of Liberation to All Peoples*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1967. p. 10.

4. In the struggle against the class and national enemy, our Party *has made use of revolutionary violence to meet counter-revolutionary violence*, mobilized the people's masses in uprisings and revolutionary war to seize power and defend the people's power. Through the various periods, our Party has based itself on concrete situations to decide on appropriate forms of struggle, made use of and *cleverly combined forms of armed struggle and political struggle* to overthrow the enemy, win victories for the revolution. Our Party pays great attention to the building of the people's armed forces which consist of three kinds of troops : the regulars, the regional troops and the guerillas or militia. Those forces, together with the political forces of the masses (i.e. the political organizations in the national united front) put into effect the close combination of armed struggle and political struggle to overthrow all enemies.

5. After winning power for the people, our Party constantly cares for the *strengthening and consolidation of power*, making use of the administration, on the one hand, to repress the counter-revolutionaries, maintain public order, mobilize and organize the people's masses in the resistance against foreign aggressors, safeguard independence and national unity; on the other, to enhance the democratic rights of the people, mobilize and educate them in making endeavours to build up a new life develop the economy and culture, and constantly improve their livelihood. The Party realizes

that this power must be a people's democratic dictatorship performing the historic mission of the worker-peasant dictatorship in the stage of national people's democratic revolution and performing the historic mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the period of transition to socialism and communism.

6. The revolution in our country is part and parcel of the world revolution. All successes of our revolution are inseparable from the wholehearted support of the fraternal socialist countries, of the international communist and workers' movement, of the national liberation movement and the peace and democratic movement in the world. That is why our Party *constantly strives to strengthen international solidarity*. It is just because it knows how to link together the revolutionary movement in the country and the revolutionary movement of the international working class (including the movement of struggle of the working class and labouring people in the imperialist country that commits aggression against our country) and the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples that our Party has won overseas allies for the Vietnamese revolution, creating more strength for our revolution to win successes and making a worthy contribution to the world revolutionary movement.

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In short, the history of forty years' activities of our Party — President Ho Chi Minh's Party — is one full of sacrifices and hardships but also full of glory. It is

the history of the vanguard and staff of the Vietnamese working class who have led the entire Vietnamese people in the struggle to fight the Japanese fascist and overthrow the pro-Japanese puppet administration, to carry out the August revolution successfully and establish the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the first people's democracy in South-East Asia, to wage a long resistance war and defeat the French colonialist aggressors, to complete the national people's democratic revolution and proceed on to the socialist revolution and the building of socialism in the North, and at the same time it is leading the entire people in the resistance against US aggression for national salvation, with a view to liberating the South, defending the North, advancing toward the peaceful reunification of the country.

How many communist and patriotic martyrs have "died so that the Fatherland may live"! How many communist fighters have sacrificed their lives for the lofty ideal of the Party! When one fell, others advanced, waves upon waves, regardless of risks and perils — that made what we have today.

Such was the road we have travelled. But the road ahead is not clear of dangers yet. Great and difficult tasks are awaiting us. Our Party has still to lead the entire people in the fight to win total victory over the

1 Ho Chi Minh: "Letter to Death-braving Squads of the Capital", January 1, 1947, in *Selected Works, Su Thai Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 254.*

US aggressors, the international gendarme, the common enemy of our people and mankind. At the same time, our Party has to lead our working class and people so as to build socialism successfully in a backward agricultural country, by-passing the stage of capitalist development. On this basis, the Party will lead the entire people to build successfully a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

With full confidence and pride, let our whole Party, our entire armed forces and our entire people tighten their ranks, enhance revolutionary heroism and the fine traditions of our nation, overcome all hardships and sacrifices, resolutely carry out the correct lines and policies of the Party, thereby taking the all-conquering banner of President Ho Chi Minh to the final goal!

APPENDICES

**POLITICAL THESES OF THE INDOCHINESE
COMMUNIST PARTY (OCTOBER 1930)**

Excerpts

I

**THE WORLD SITUATION AND THE
INDOCHINESE REVOLUTION**

1. Following the imperialist war (1914 - 1918), the world situation may be viewed as having gone through three periods :

a) During the first period (1918 - 1923), as a result of the war, the capitalist economy suffered depression and crisis, and in many places in Europe the proletariat rose up and fought for power. Eventually on the one hand, the Russian proletariat defeated the imperialists who attacked the country from the outside and the counter-revolutionaries who carried out sabotage inside, and set up a firm dictatorship of the

proletariat; on the other hand, however, the West European proletariat met with failure (for instance the German proletariat in 1923).

b) During the second period (1923 — 1928), availing themselves of the recent setbacks suffered by the European proletariat, the various imperialisms acted on the offensive, exploited the proletariat and the colonial peoples to the utmost, and brought temporary stability to the imperialist economy. On account of its previous failure, the proletariat in the imperialist countries acted only on the defensive. The revolution broke out in the colonial countries. In the Soviet Union, economic consolidation helped Communist influence spread all over the world.

c) The third period, the present one, presents the following characteristics:

Capitalism has not been able to maintain its temporary stability and has slid back into crisis; the various imperialisms again have to engage in a sharp competition for markets, making a new imperialist war inevitable.

The Soviet economy has surpassed the pre-imperialist war-level; successful socialist construction has exasperated the various imperialisms to overthrow the Soviet Union, the citadel of world revolution.

In the imperialist countries, the proletariat has put up a fierce struggle (large-scale strikes in Germany, France, Poland, etc.); the colonies (especially China and India) are in a revolutionary effervescence.

This is due to increasingly harsh exploitation of the masses by the capital, which is plagued by a crisis; in the world the number of unemployed totals scores of millions and the workers and peasants suffer untold misery. In this third period, proletarian revolution and colonial revolution have reached a very high level; in some places they are ready to seize power.

At present, Indochina has contributed its revolutionary forces to the extensive movements going on in the world, thus broadening the worker-peasant front against imperialism. On the other hand, the ebullient revolutionary drive in the world (especially in China and India) exerts a strong influence on the struggle in Indochina and gives it an even more vigorous impetus. And so the world revolution and the Indochinese revolution are closely connected.

II

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITUATION IN INDOCHINA

2. Indochina (Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos) is a settlement of French imperialism. So, its economy is dependent upon that of French imperialism. The following are the two outstanding features of the development of Indochina :

a) Indochina must develop independently, but it cannot do so because of its colonial status

b) Class contradiction has grown ever fiercer between the workers, peasants and other toiling people on the one hand, and the feudal land-owners, capitalists and imperialists on the other

3. Economic contradictions :

a) Though the bulk of agricultural products is exported by the imperialists, the economy has remained feudal in character. Most plantations (rubber, cotton, coffee, etc.) belong to French capitalists. The greater part of the land is owned by native landlords, who exploit it in the feudal way, i. e. rent it in small plots to poor tenants for a very high rent. Rice yields are besides lower in Indochina than in other countries (per hectare paddy output in Malaya : 2,150 kilograms; in Siam, 1,870 kilograms; in Europe, 4,570 kilograms, in Indochina, only 1,210 kilograms). More rice is exported every year, but this is not due to the development of rice-growing, only to increased plundering of the people's rice by the capitalists.

b) The oppressive regime imposed by French imperialism hampers the development of the productive forces in Indochina. The imperialists have not built heavy industries (like iron works, machine-building, etc.) for this would harm the monopoly of French industry. They only develop those industries which serve their administration and trade, for instance railway lines, small shipyards, etc.

The aim of French imperialism is to make Indochina an economic dependency of France, and so it promotes only those industries which it finds more profitable to develop in Indochina than in France itself. Raw material exploitation is meant not to help Indochina's economy develop independently, but to prevent French industry's dependence on other imperialisms.

c) As exportation is in the hands of French capitalists, internal commerce and production is dependent upon the export requirements of the French imperialists. The more exports increase, the more the country is drained of its natural resources by imperialism. Another special feature: French banks (*Banque de l'Indochine*, *Crédit foncier*, etc.) collect capital from native people to aid French exporters.

In short: Indochina's economy remains an agricultural one, with predominant feudal features. All this interferes with its independent development.

4. Class contradictions:

French imperialism, in alliance with native landlords, traders and usurers, ruthlessly exploits the peasants. It takes the country's farm produce for export, imports its own goods for sale within the country, imposes high taxation, drives the peasantry to misery and craftsmen to unemployment.

Land is more and more concentrated in the hands of the imperialists and landlords; the existence of

numerous intermediaries causes the rent that has to be paid by poor tenants to be all the higher. The latter are also soaked so exorbitantly by usurers that they often are compelled to give them their lands or even their children in payment of their debts.

The imperialists pay no attention to keeping the dykes in good repair for protection against floods. Irrigation facilities are in the hands of the capitalists, who exact a high price for their use: no money, no water. And so more and more crop failures occur because of flood and drought. Not only are the peasants prevented from developing their economy, but they also grow increasingly dependent upon the capitalists and fare worse and worse; unemployment and starvation afflict more and more people.

The old economy is falling to pieces very fast, yet the new industry is developing at a very slow rate; factories, workshops etc., cannot hire all the poor and unemployed and many have to starve in the countryside where the situation is truly tragic.

In the factories, plantations and mines, the capitalists cruelly exploit and oppress the workers. Their wages, which are at starvation level, are subject to cuts by all kinds of fines. They work eleven, twelve hours a day on an average. Abuses and blows are rained on them. When they fall sick, far from getting any medical attention, they are thrown out into the streets. Social insurance is totally inexistent. In plantations and mines, the owners pen their workers up in camps and forbid them to wander out. They use

the system of indenture to recruit and move people away, to places where they can impose their own law on the workers and even inflict penalties on them. Due to such harsh working conditions, large numbers of workers in Indochina suffer from dangerous diseases (tuberculosis, trachoma, malaria, etc.) and more and more of them die at a very young age.

The Indochinese proletariat is not yet numerous, but the number of workers, especially plantation workers, is on the increase. They fight ever more actively. The peasants have also awakened and fiercely opposed the imperialists and feudalists. Strikes in 1928, 1929 and the violent outbursts of workers and peasants this year (1930) clearly prove that class struggle in Indochina is gaining momentum. The most outstanding and important feature in the revolutionary movement in Indochina is that the struggle of the worker-peasant masses has taken on a very clearly independent character and is no longer influenced by nationalism as it used to be.

III

CHARACTERISTICS AND TASKS OF THE INDOCHINESE REVOLUTION

5. The above-mentioned contradictions account for the fact that the revolutionary movement in

Indochina is growing day by day. In its initial period, the Indochinese revolution will be a bourgeois democratic revolution, for it cannot yet directly tackle organizational problems of a socialist structure; the country is still very weak economically, many feudal vestiges still linger, the balance of class forces is not yet tipped in favour of the proletariat; besides imperialism still holds oppressive sway. For these reasons, in the present period, the revolution will only have an agrarian and anti-imperialist character.

The bourgeois democratic revolution is a preparatory period leading to socialist revolution. Once it has won victory, and a worker-peasant government has been established, industry within the country will develop, proletarian organizations will be reinforced, the leadership of the proletariat will be consolidated, and the balance of class forces will be altered to the advantage of the proletariat. Then the struggle will develop in depth and breadth and the bourgeois democratic revolution will advance towards the proletarian revolution. The present period is one of world proletarian revolution and socialist building in the Soviet Union; thanks to help from the working class exercising dictatorship in various countries, Indochina will bypass the capitalist stage and fight its way direct to socialism.

In the bourgeois democratic revolution, the proletariat and the peasantry are the two main motive forces, but only if leadership is in the hands of the proletariat can the revolution triumph.

6. The essential aim of the bourgeois democratic revolution is on the one hand to do away with the feudal vestiges and the modes of pre-capitalist exploitation and to carry out a thorough agrarian revolution; on the other hand, to overthrow French imperialism and achieve complete independence for Indochina. The two faces of the struggle are closely connected, for only by deposing imperialism can we eliminate the landlord class and carry out a successful agrarian revolution; conversely, only by abolishing the feudal regime can we knock down imperialism.

In order to reach these essential goals, we must set up the worker-peasant Soviet power. The worker-peasant Soviet power alone is the very powerful instrument which will make possible to overthrow imperialism, feudalism and landlordism, give land to the tillers, and legal protection to the interests of the proletariat.

The essential tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution are the following :

1. To overthrow French imperialism, feudalism, and landlordism.
2. To set up a worker-peasant government.
3. To confiscate all lands belonging to foreign and native landlords and to religious organizations, and hand them over to middle and poor peasants, the right of ownership of the land being in the hands of the worker-peasant government

4. To nationalize all big undertakings of the foreign capitalists.

5. To abolish all current taxes and corvées and institute a progressive tax.

6. To decree an 8-hour workday and improve the living standard of the workers and toiling people.

7. Indochina to be completely independent; national self-determination to be recognized.

8. To organize a worker-peasant army.

9. Equality between man and woman.

10. Support to the Soviet Union: alliance with the proletariat all over the world and with the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies.

**POLITICAL PROGRAMME
ADOPTED AT THE PARTY'S SECOND
CONGRESS (1951)**

Excerpts

**THE VIETNAMESE SOCIETY AND THE VIET-
NAMESE REVOLUTION**

1. The Vietnamese society

1. Before the French conquest, the Vietnamese society was essentially a feudal society based on an agricultural economy which in most part bore an autarkic character. Land was in the hands of the king, the nobility and the feudal landlords.

The peasants were ground down by a very harsh rule and lived in the direst misery. Their destitution aggravated with the domination of foreign feudal conquerors. They craved for freedom. They yearned for land. They therefore rose up in arms many

times and each of their bitter and widespread uprisings brought about a change of dynasty in the country or a splendid success for the national liberation movement. However, in view of immature economic and social conditions and the lack of the leadership of a vanguard class, the peasants' efforts, through many centuries, proved unable to alter the feudal character of the Vietnamese society.

2. Since the conquest by French imperialism, Viet Nam has become a monopolized market, a supplier of raw materials, a money-lender counter and a military base of the French colonialists. The autarkic character of the Vietnamese feudal economy was upset.

After World War I, as a result of the French imperialists' emphasis on "colonial exploitation", French mining industry and light industry was further expanded in Viet Nam. The Vietnamese working class took shape and grew up rapidly. The Vietnamese capitalist class came into being but could hardly make any noticeable headway due to the strict control by French monopoly capital.

The colonial policy pursued by French imperialism was a narrow-minded and conservative one. It made Viet Nam completely dependent on France. It stunted the productive forces in Viet Nam. It combined capitalist oppression and exploitation with feudal and semi-feudal ones, reducing the Vietnamese people, especially the workers and peasants, to most squalid misery.

During World War II, following the invasion of Viet Nam by the Japanese fascists, the French colonial regime in Viet Nam became fascisized. The tribulations of the Vietnamese people grew all the more unbearable. Many revolts broke out. The guerilla bases were expanded and people's power was established in the Viet Bac liberated zone.

Notwithstanding these facts, the Vietnamese society under French domination was, on the whole, a colonial and semi-feudal society.

3. In 1945, after their defeat at the hands of the Soviet Army, the Japanese fascists surrendered. Under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh and the Indochinese Communist Party, the Vietnamese people successfully staged a general insurrection. The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was founded. Democratic reforms were enforced. The Vietnamese society embarked on the road of a people's democracy.

However, the French imperialists' comeback to Viet Nam has triggered a protracted and all-out war of resistance of the Vietnamese nation. At present, aided by the US interventionists and abetted by the traitors, their puppets, the French imperialists have re-established their colonial and fascist rule on part of our country.

The Vietnamese society at present assumes a three-fold character : people's democratic, colonial and semi-feudal. These three features are clashing with one another. But the main conflict at this moment is that

between the people's democratic trait and the colonial trait. It is being settled in the process of the Vietnamese nation's resistance against the French colonialists and the interventionists.

2. The Vietnamese revolution

1. At present, the Vietnamese revolution must remove the contradiction between the Vietnamese people's democratic regime and the reactionary forces to give it a vigorous impulse and smooth its path toward socialism.

The main reactionary force in the way of the progress of the Vietnamese society is aggressive imperialism. The vestiges of feudalism also cause its stagnation. Therefore, the Vietnamese revolution has two enemies. The principal enemy at present is aggressive imperialism or more specifically, French imperialism and the US interventionists. The other enemy of secondary importance is the feudalists who at this juncture are reactionary feudalists.

2. The fundamental task of the Vietnamese revolution at present is to drive out the imperialist aggressors to win back genuine independence and unity for the nation, blot out the vestiges of feudalism and semi-feudalism, give land to the tillers, develop the people's democratic regime and lay the groundwork for socialism.

Those three tasks are closely interrelated. Nevertheless, the main and immediate task is to complete

national liberation. Therefore, at this moment all energies must be bent on the war of resistance to defeat the aggressors.

3. The motive forces of the Vietnamese revolution at present are the workers, peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the intellectuals of the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Besides, they also comprise patriotic and progressive personalities (from the landlord class). These classes, social sections and elements form the people. The basic elements of the latter are the workers, peasants and brain workers. The leader of the revolution is the working class.

4. With the abovesaid fundamental task to fulfil, with the people as the motive force, with the workers, peasants and brain workers as basic elements of the people and with the working class as the leader, the Vietnamese revolution is at the present stage a national people's democratic revolution.

It is not an old-type bourgeois democratic revolution, nor a socialist revolution, but a kind of new-type bourgeois democratic revolution which is to progress toward a socialist revolution without having to go through a revolutionary civil war. It is a revolution typical of its kind in the present historical context.

5. The Vietnamese national people's democratic revolution will inevitably take Viet Nam to socialism. Under the leadership of the working class which is closely allied to the peasants and brain workers, and with the support of the Soviet Union and the people's

democracies, especially China, the Vietnamese revolution will follow no other road than that to socialism.

It is the path of a protracted struggle which will, generally speaking, go through three stages: in the first stage, the main task is to complete national liberation; in the second stage, the primordial duty is to do away with the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges, carry out thoroughly the watchword "land to the tillers", develop industry and lick into shape the people's democratic regime; in the third stage, the principal objective is to lay the foundations of socialism and proceed toward the realization of socialism.

These three stages are not separate but closely related and interlocked. However, each stage has its central task, and it is necessary to acquire full comprehension of the latter and focus all efforts on its fulfilment.

In the first stage, which is the present stage, the spearhead of the revolution is directed at the imperialist aggressors. The Party must rally all national forces into a national united front to carry out the resistance against the imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors of all stripes. At the same time, it must see to the improvement of the people's living standards, especially of the working people, so as to increase their zeal in keeping up the resistance effort.

In the second stage, the point of the revolution will be aimed at the feudalists. By then the Party must devote all its strength to eliminating the feudal and

semi-feudal vestiges and thoroughly implement the watchword "land to the tillers", push up industrialization and perfect the people's democratic regime. However, in this stage the struggle must continue against world imperialism to defend national independence.

In the third stage, the central task of the revolution consists in expanding the foundations of socialism and preparing for the realization of socialism. What concrete steps to be taken then will be prompted by the actual situation at home and abroad at the time.

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**RESOLUTION
OF THE PARTY'S THIRD CONGRESS (1960)
STRATEGIC TASKS**

Excerpts

Since the re-establishment of peace and the complete liberation of the North, the Vietnamese revolution had shifted over to a new stage. Under the leadership of the Party, the North is advancing by firm steps towards socialism; it has strengthened its forces in all fields and become the bulwark of the nation-wide revolution. Meanwhile, the American imperialists and the Ngo Dinh Diem clique have set up a despotic and warlike administration in the South, and turned the South into a colony of a new type and a military base of the American imperialists. They are hampering and sabotaging the cause of national reunification of our people.

In the present stage, the Vietnamese revolution has two strategic tasks:

Firstly, to carry out the socialist revolution in the North. Secondly, to liberate the South from the rule

of the American imperialists and their henchmen, achieve national reunification and complete independence and freedom throughout the country.

These two strategic tasks are closely related to each other and impel each other forward.

To take the North towards socialism is a necessary and unavoidable task following the completion of the national people's democratic revolution. To take the North towards socialism and make it more and more powerful in every field will benefit the revolutionary movement for the liberation of the South, the development of the revolution throughout the country and the preservation and consolidation of peace in Indochina, South-East Asia and the world. Therefore, to carry out the socialist revolution in the North is the most decisive task for the development of the whole Vietnamese revolution, for the cause of national reunification. We carry out the socialist revolution in the North, while in the South we must endeavour to rally all national and democratic forces, expand and consolidate the national united bloc, isolate the American imperialists and their henchmen, and speed up the struggle to strengthen peace and reunify our Fatherland. That is why the guiding principle of the socialist revolution in the North is to build the North and in so doing to take the South into due consideration.

In the completion of the national people's democratic revolution throughout the country, and the

achievement of national reunification, our compatriots in the South have the task of directly overthrowing the rule of the American imperialists and their agents in order to liberate South Viet Nam. The revolutionary struggle of our compatriots in the South also aims at frustrating the attempt of the US — Diem clique to rekindle war, and making an active contribution to the defence of peace in Indochina, South-East Asia and the world.

The two revolutionary tasks of the North and the South belong to two different strategies, each task aiming at satisfying the concrete requirement of each zone under the specific conditions of our divided country. But these two tasks aim at resolving a common contradiction in our whole country — that between our people and the imperialists and their henchmen, in order to achieve a common immediate aim the peaceful reunification of the country.

The common task of the Vietnamese revolution at present is to enhance the solidarity of the entire people, to struggle resolutely for the maintenance of peace, to promote the socialist revolution in the North and at the same time the national people's democratic revolution in the South, to achieve national reunification on the basis of independence and democracy, to build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Viet Nam, and to contribute effectively to the strengthening of the socialist camp and to the defence of peace in South-East Asia and the world.

