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**An Outline History of
THE VIET NAM
WORKERS' PARTY**

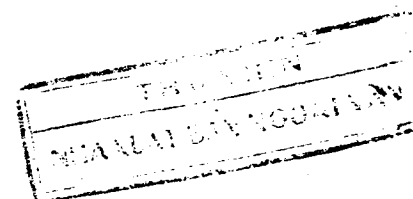
(1930 — 1975)



HANOI — 1976

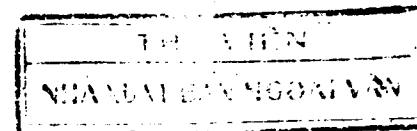


**AN OUTLINE HISTORY
OF THE VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY
(1930 - 1975)**



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
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This is the translation of a publication of the Commission for the Study of the History of the Viet Nam Workers' Party on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Party (3 February 1930 — 3 February 1975).



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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
(1920-1945)**

**THE BIRTH OF THE PARTY OF THE
VIETNAMESE WORKING CLASS**

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

Throughout the 4,000-years of their history, the Vietnamese people have a tradition of resolute and dauntless struggle against both foreign aggressors and reactionary rulers within the country. In the course of that struggle to build up and defend their

country, our people's national consciousness was awakened at a very early date.

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.¹ 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 in various forms.²

The aim of the French colonialists was to turn our country into a market for their goods, grab raw materials, get 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,³ 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 when these contradictions were solved could Vietnamese society develop.

1. See Publisher's Notes.

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 suited 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 a 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 — a class representing the most advanced production forces and active in the very economic centres of the enemy, naturally became the only class capable of achieving political supremacy in the whole 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. As early as the 1920's, after studying the different revolutionary lines 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." (*) He endeavoured to propagate Marxism-Leninism in Viet Nam and prepare the working class for the founding of their party.

He had been active 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. He founded the Intercolonial Union (1921) and participated in the Peasants' International Congress (1923). 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, and laid foundations for solidarity between the peoples of the French colonies and the French working class and labouring people. He regarded the revolution in the imperialist countries and that in the colonies as the two wings of a bird. Right from the beginning he closely combined patriotism with proletarian internationalism. He became the soul of

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works* — Su that Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 705.

the combination of patriotism with proletarian internationalism.

His revolutionary activities and his articles appearing in *l'Humanité* (of the French Communist Party), *La Vie 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) awakened Vietnamese patriots and led the revolutionary movement in Viet Nam to the path of Marxism-Leninism.

Owing to his efforts, Marxism-Leninism and the influence of the October Revolution reached Viet Nam, breaking through the steel meshes of 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. Therefore, what was needed first was an adequate organization in which Marxism-Leninism would be combined with the workers' movement and the patriotic movement of the Vietnamese people. That intermediate organization was the *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association*, founded by Comrade Ho Chi Minh 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-revo-

lutionary 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 exposed the deceitful allegations of the French colonialists and their agents, and at the same time effectively struggled against the reformist nationalist 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 "proletarianization" programme of the Association many members went to work in mines, factories and plantations where they engaged in propaganda and agitation work among the masses, organized and led the workers' struggle and awakened the working class to its historical mission, at the same time educating themselves to become true revolutionaries. As a result, in 1928-1929 the workers' movement grew in strength and advanced from economic demands to political ones. Besides the workers' movement, the struggle of the peasantry and 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 became an independent political force.

In face of the nation-wide upsurge of the masses, the *Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association* was no longer able to provide adequate leadership to the revolution. The time had come when there had to be a real party of the working class, a

Communist Party, to push the Vietnamese revolution forward. The more advanced elements in the Association had perceived that objective necessity, which, however, was not recognized unanimously and in time by the Association's leaders.

Soon realizing the necessity for an independent party of the working class, at the Congress of the Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association held in Hongkong in May 1929, the delegation of Bac Ky (Tonkin) proposed to dissolve that Association and found a communist party. This proposal was not accepted. The Bac Ky delegation left for home and declared the setting up of the *Indochinese Communist Party* and issued a Manifesto in June 1929.⁴ The birth of the Indochinese Communist Party resulted in a vigorous development of the communist movement in Indochina. In October 1929 the Nam Ky (Cochinchina) branch of the Viet Nam Revolutionary Youth Association also declared the setting up of a communist party, the *Annamese Communist Party*. These events caused the *New Viet Nam Revolutionary Party*⁵ a patriotic organization with a progressive tendency, to be transformed into the *Indochina Communist League* in January 1930.

Thus, after 1929, there were three communist organizations in Viet Nam. But this state of thing could not last long, because under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, the stirring movements of Vietnamese workers and patriotic forces 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 the different communist groups on February 3, 1930, at Kowloon, near Hong Kong, to settle the question of uniting the three Vietnamese communist organizations into a single one, the *Viet Nam Communist Party*.

This founding conference had the importance of a Congress. It adopted the Party's *Summary Political Programme and Strategy* written by Comrade Ho Chi Minh. These early documents, sketchy as they were, none the less 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.

Mass organizations 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) were successively set up in Viet Nam.

The founding of the Viet Nam Communist Party marked 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 number⁶, was geographically concentrated to a relatively high degree, and was a homogeneous class without a stratum of aristocratic workers thus not subjected to the influence of reformism. Moreover, it had a close ally, most reliable and highly combative: the peasantry. Both the workers and the peasants are the main revolutionary forces of our people, a heroic people with a tradition of resolute and unbending struggle. These are the favourable circumstances 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 and its basically just line, our Party, although newly founded, had all the requisites of a new-type revolutionary party of the working class and soon became the only leader of the Vietnamese patriotic movement.

In October 1930, the First Plenum of the Party Central Committee decided to change the name of the Party to *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 Russian October Revolution, the Vietnamese revolution had become an integral part of the world proletarian revolution. The Vietnamese revolution had to pass through two stages. In the first stage, the bourgeois democratic revolution was 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 were closely linked. The main forces of the revolution were the peasants and the workers. The Party had to build up the worker-peasant alliance and use the revolutionary violence of the masses in an uprising to seize power.

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

The indispensable condition to ensure success for the revolution was to have a Communist Party based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, with a correct political line to lead the revolution, an organization based on democratic centralism, a strict discipline, and close contact with the masses, a Party which would mature through revolutionary struggle.

The *Political Theses* of the Party had 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 reformist nationalism, provocative and destructive Trotskyism, and petty-bourgeois chauvinism.

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

THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE IN THE YEARS 1930-1931 AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WHITE TERROR, FOR THE RESTORA- TION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Our Party came into being at a time when a severe economic crisis of capitalism had spread to our country. The French imperialists shifted on the Vietnamese people all the burden of this crisis. The workers and peasants were most directly and severely affected. In addition, from 1929 to 1933 our country was repeatedly struck by flood and drought. The peasants were utterly impoverished. The

number of unemployed workers was increasing. Many national bourgeois and petty bourgeois became 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 insurrection⁷ 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 and demanding the release of detained revolutionary fighters and an improvement of the people's living conditions.

The movement started with strikes by 5,000 workers at the Phu Rieng rubber plantation, in Nam Bo (February 3, 1930), 4,000 workers of the Nam Dinh Textile Mill, in Bac Bo (March 25, 1930), 400 workers of the match factory and the saw-mill at Ben Thuy, in Trung Bo (April 19, 1930). Especially after May 1st, 1930, the revolutionary upsurge of the masses spread from industrial firms in Hanoi, Hai Phong, Nam Dinh, Hong Gai, Cam Pha, Vinh, Ben Thuy, Saigon, Cho Lon, etc., to rural areas such as Gia Dinh, Cho Lon, Vinh Long, Sa Dec, Ben Tre, Long Xuyen, Can Tho, Tra Vinh, Thu Dau Mot, My Tho in Nam Bo; Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Ngai in Trung Bo; Thai Binh, Ha Nam, Kien An in Bac Bo. Throughout the country, hundreds of workers' strikes, thousands of peasants' demonstrations took place, together with numerous meet-

ings, school strikes and market strikes of small traders. This movement of conscious struggle by workers, peasants and members of the petty bourgeoisie closely united 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 Soviets. 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 the Soviet style. For the first time, our people were in control of local administration. Although they did not last long, the Soviets 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 the peasants, compelled the landowners to reduce the main rents and renounce the auxiliary rents, organized literacy classes for the population, fought backward ways and customs, superstitions, etc.

The 1930-1931 revolutionary upsurge and the Nghe Tinh Soviets had a great historical significance. It was the first full-dress rehearsal staged 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 "national 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 branch of the Communist International.

The revolutionary upsurge of 1930-1931 and the Nghe Tinh Soviets proved that only the Vietnamese working class and its vanguard, the Indochinese Communist Party, could lead the national democratic revolution in Viet Nam. It also proved that under our Party's leadership, the working class and the peasantry, united with other strata of the population, could overthrow the imperialist and feudal rulers and establish a people's revolutionary power. The method to achieve this objective was to use the masses' revolutionary violence.

Panicked by the masses' rising 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, imprisoned or killed.

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

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 basic line in the Political Theses*, and defined a plan to carry it into effect 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, 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, and oppose the killing of prisoners and terrorism. They turned imperialist prisons into schools of revolution, drawing lessons from past struggles and secretly transmitting the experience gained to Party organizations outside the prisons. Fraternal parties, especially the Soviet, Chinese and French parties, gave our Party wholehearted assistance during those difficult years.

From 1933 onward, the revolutionary movement gradually recovered its strength. In 1934, the Party's Overseas Leadership Committee was created, with the task of unifying Party organizations which had been restored in the country, training leading cadres and preparing for the convening of the First Party Congress. This Congress took place in March

1935, in Macao (China)⁸. 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 activities of our Party and the revolutionary movement in our country proved that despite enemy measures of "white" terror, our Party, far from being liquidated, grew ever more tempered and matured. About this President Ho later said: "Turning bad luck into good fortune, our comrades took advantage of their days in prison to hold meetings and study theory. Once more this proved that the enemy's policy of extremely barbarous terrorism not only failed to hamper the progress of the revolution, but on the contrary became a kind of crucible through which revolutionaries were tempered and hardened. As a result, the revolution has triumphed and the imperialists have been defeated." (*)

THE INDOCHINESE DEMOCRATIC FRONT CAMPAIGN (1936-1939)

The serious consequences of the 1929-1933 economic crisis and the subsequent gloomy economic situation of the imperialist countries further

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works* — Su that Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 765.

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 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 and achieve socialism but to fight against fascism and fascist wars of aggression to realize democracy and to preserve peace. For this reason, the Communist Parties of all countries must unify the workers' forces and create a broad popular front comprising patriotic and democratic parties and organizations and various strata of the population in order to engage in joint action against the principal and immediate enemy, 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 took power in France. This event had a direct influence on the political situation in our country. As a result of the economic crisis and the French imperialists' repressive policies all strata of the

population in our country, including the national bourgeoisie and the democratic personalities, wanted democratic changes.

In view of this situation Comrade Le Hong Phong, alternate member of the Communist International Executive Committee returned to Viet Nam to directly lead the revolutionary movement, together with the Central Committee. In accordance with the resolution of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, our Party, at its First Congress held in the summer of 1936, 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 wars of aggression. The Congress decided to temporarily put aside the slogans "Overthrow French imperialism," and "Confiscate the landowners' land for distribution to the tillers" and to organize an *Indochinese Anti-imperialist Popular Front*. This Front was later changed into the *Indochinese Democratic Front*, which rallied all democratic and progressive forces, struggled against the main immediate 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 forms of organization and methods of struggle, the Party Central Committee instructed that all legal and semi-legal forms be used to carry out propaganda, organize the masses, and at the same time to consolidate and develop secret Party organizations; that legal and semi-legal activities be continued

with illegal activities to expand the organization of the Party and of the Democratic Front and the masses' struggle be intensified.

Comrade Ho Chi Minh, the founder, trainer, and leader of our Party then abroad, was closely following the democratic movement in the country and giving most judicious directives.

To ensure success for the revolution in those days, he urged for the organization of a broad front. But with the Trotskyites, there should absolutely be no compromise. They must be exposed and politically annihilated. He said:

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

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 collecting the people's wishes and demanding that the French Popular Front Government should carry out democratic reforms and improve the living conditions of the masses. As a result of pressure by the popular movement in France and in Indochina, many political prisoners were released. Several

(*) Party Documents 1935-1939, circulated inside the Party edited by the Commission for Research on the Party's History, Hanoi, 1964, p. 434-435.

newspapers of the Party, of the Indochinese Democratic Front and of the Democratic Youth were legally published⁹. Our Party availed itself of the circumstances to engage in joint action with petty bourgeois political groups and democratic-minded bourgeois intellectuals and also with the Indochina branch of the French Socialist Party on a number of concrete questions.

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

In this period our Party regarded its urban activities as the central task, without, however, neglecting the countryside. It severely criticized "left" deviations, such as isolationism, narrow mindedness, failure to use legal and semi-legal forms to push the movement forward, and right deviations, such as legalism, being intoxicated by partial successes and neglecting the consolidation of secret Party organizations, lack of vigilance against the Trotskyites and unprincipled cooperation with them, too much zeal in seeking the support of the bourgeoisie and landowner class while neglecting to

consolidate and develop the revolutionary forces of workers and peasants, and paying insufficient attention to 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 and failed to put forth a slogan making clear its stand on the question of national independence. In the course of leading the masses, the political level and the capability of cadres and 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 was able to use legal forms of activities, including activities in chambers of representatives and colonial councils, constituted a great victory for Communists in a colonial and semi-feudal country like ours where there were more prisons than schools, and where the people enjoyed no democratic freedoms, even mere bourgeois democratic freedoms.

Our Party had achieved still another great success: through the struggle for democratic freedoms and improvement in living conditions and through the mobilization and education of the masses it had built up "a popular political army" comprising millions of people in the cities and in the countryside; this had 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* had been another full-dress rehearsal in preparation for the August Revolution.

Later, when assessing the Democratic Front movement (1936-1939) President Ho said "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 then 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."(*)

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

In September 1939, World War II broke out. The French colonialists in Indochina ruthlessly repressed the revolutionary movement led by our

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *For Independence and Freedom, for Socialism* — Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, p. 98 (in Vietnamese).

Party, and decreed general mobilization, frantically seizing man-power and wealth for the fascists' war of aggression. Legal activities were no longer possible¹⁰. Party organs and cadres who had been engaging in legal and semi-legal activities were 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 forces 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, Comrades Le Duan, Phan Dang Luu, and others¹¹. It stressed that *national liberation was the foremost task of the Indochinese revolution* and decided that the slogan of agrarian revolution continue to be put aside, the policy set forth being only to oppose high land rents, exorbitant interest rates 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, and broadening 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 question and came to the conclusion that *the contradiction between the Indochinese peoples and the imperialist aggressors was the main one in*

the two fundamental social contradictions then existing in the three Indochinese countries, and that the national liberation movement was an integral part of the world revolutionary movement.

In June 1940 France was occupied by Hitler's fascist armies. The Japanese fascists availed themselves of the occasion to invade Indochina. The French colonialists surrendered to them, but the indomitable Vietnamese people rose up to fight against both the French and the Japanese. The Bac Son insurrection¹² broke out in September 1940. The Nam Ky¹³ (Cochinchina) insurrection took place in November of the same year. In January 1941, troops mutinied at Cho Rang and Do Luong.¹⁴ These insurrections and mutinies had great repercussions heralding a fierce struggle by our people to reconquer independence and freedom.

In November 1940, the Seventh session of the Party Central Committee¹⁵ was attended by Comrades Truong Chinh, Hoang Van Thu, Hoang Quoc Viet, Phan Dang Luu, Tran Dang Ninh and others. It pointed out the serious threat to the Indochinese peoples then under a double yoke — the French and Japanese fascists, — and decided that our Party's immediate task was to lead the Indochinese peoples in making preparations for an armed uprising to seize power. It also decided that the armed forces organized for the Bac Son insurrection be maintained and revolution bases established and that the Nam Ky insurrection be postponed. But owing to difficulties in communications the instructions did not reach their destination in time, and the insur-

rection broke out. At this Session, a provisional central committee was elected. 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.¹⁶

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 Eight Session of the Party Central Committee met at Pac Bo, presided over by Comrade Ho Chi Minh.¹⁷ 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 should be a *revolution of national liberation* and that all the revolutionary forces of the people should be spearheaded against the Japanese and French fascist aggressors, because "should we fail at this moment to liberate the country and recover independence and freedom for the entire people, not only would the whole of the country and the people remain enslaved for ever, but also the interests of a section, the working class, would never be reclaimed."(*)

At the Eighth Session, the Party Central Committee developed and amended the resolution of

(*) Excerpts from the resolution of the Eighth Session of the Party Central Committee, May 1941.

the Sixth and Seventh Session 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 Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi*, or Viet Minh, in an abbreviated form), which comprised National Salvation Associations of different strata of the population (*Workers' Association for National Salvation, Peasants' Association for National Salvation, Youth Association for National Salvation, Women's Association for National Salvation, Old Folk Association for National Salvation, Armymen's Association for National Salvation, Buddhist Bonzes' Association for National Salvation, Association of Overseas Vietnamese for National Salvation* etc.) An extremely flexible policy was adopted, with a view to dividing the enemy to the utmost 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 respects, in order to prepare for an armed uprising, proceeding from local uprisings to a general uprising to seize power. A Central Committee was officially elected and Comrade Truong Chinh was made Party secretary-general.

The Resolution adopted at the Party Central Committee's Eighth Session and Comrade Ho Chi Minh's appeal to all our countrymen, issued after the meeting of the Central Committee, greatly stimulated our entire Party and all our people. The policies laid down by the Central Committee

at that historic meeting were strictly carried out by the whole Party and led to the victory of the Revolution of August 1945.

The Japanese and French fascists had conflicting interests in Indochina, but they were equally determined to crush the Vietnamese revolution. They ruthlessly repressed and massacred the people, killed or imprisoned 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 extremely severe 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 Comrade Ho Chi Minh clearly saw that the Soviet Union and the Allies would certainly win victory, that the Japanese and French fascists in Indochina would sooner or later fight each other, and that the Vietnamese people would certainly reconquer their 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 still weak in the cities, especially in the larger ones where a movement of students and intellectuals was still lacking. The Party took 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 *Cultural Association for National Salvation* 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 and the illusion that power could be seized through peaceful negotiations with the Japanese. They fought against the Trotskyite provocateurs and saboteurs and the A.B.'s (*), against division and factionalism: and sought to consolidate unity and single mindedness in the Party and the Front, and to strengthen the Party's leadership of the Vietnamese revolution.

In August 1944, the Party Central Committee called on the people to "get weapons and drive out the common enemy". A revolutionary atmosphere was seething throughout the country. In a number of localities, especially in the revolutionary bases, the people were eager for action, but the Party pointed out that the opportunity had not yet 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.¹⁸ The Party Standing Committee also severely criticized the armed uprising staged at Vu Nhay — Dinh Ca on November 11, 1944 as a petty bourgeois act which

(*) A.B. (Anti-Bolchevik), i.e. saboteurs who feign to be communists in order to undermine communism. Employed by the French, they infiltrated into our Party and tried to divide it and wreck the Indochinese revolutionary movement.

prematurely revealed our forces.¹⁹ 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 Armed Propaganda Brigade for the Liberation of Viet Nam was created in Cao Bang under the command of Comrade Vo Nguyen Giap.²⁰ This unit, together with the *National Salvation Units*, intensified armed struggle, combining it 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 French rule in Indochina, the Party Standing Committee convened an enlarged conference on March 9, 1945 to decide on the steps to be taken. As our Party had predicted, fighting between the French and the Japanese broke out. To eliminate the danger of being attacked from behind if and when Allied troops landed in Indochina, the Japanese fascists staged a *coup de force* on March 9, 1945, overthrew the French and became the sole masters of Indochina. In these circumstances, the enlarged conference of the Party Standing Committee concluded that the coup would create a situation of serious political 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 and save people from starvation". The conclusions and the resolutions of the Conference led to concrete measures, and the historic instruction of the Party Standing Committee on "*What we must do now that the Japanese and the French are shooting at each other*" 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 rose like a tidal wave, local uprisings broke out in many places²¹. And revolutionary base areas were created²².

Active preparations were made for a general uprising. In April 1945, the Party Standing Committee convened the Tonkin Revolutionary Military Conference. Presided over by the Party secretary-general²³, the Conference decided to merge all armed forces into a *Viet Nam Liberation Army*, develop armed self-defence units and self-defence combat groups, and open short-term training courses for military and political cadres. In June 1945, a liberated zone was created which comprised six provinces in Viet Bac: Cao Bang, Bac Can, Lang Son, Thai Nguyen, Tuyen Quang and Ha Giang²⁴. 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 people died of starvation. This was the most disastrous consequence of the policy of exploitation and war 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, and prepared the people for 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 shop-owners, students, state employees but also members of the national bourgeoisie and a number of small landowners. National Salvation organizations, self-defence units sprang up in nearly all hamlets and even in the cities. An atmosphere of insurrection prevailed throughout the country.

World War II was drawing to an end. After annihilating the German and Italian fascists, the Soviet Union declared war on the Japanese fascists on August 8, 1945. Within a matter of days, the Soviet armed forces had crushed the Japanese crack armies stationed in the three provinces(*) of

(*) Liaoning, Kirin and Heilungkian.

Northeastern China. On August 15, 1945, Japan unconditionally surrendered to the Soviet Union and the 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 National Committee.²⁵

To give overall leadership to the general insurrection, the Party Congress appointed a National Insurrection Committee headed by Comrade Truong Chinh.

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, 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 yet received the Central Committee's order for an uprising, but the Party committees there, carrying out the instructions on "*What we must do now that the French and the Japanese are shooting at each other*",

and especially taking into account the favourable conditions for an uprising as specified in these instructions, mobilized the masses for an uprising to seize power immediately after Japan's surrender.²⁶ *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 fifteen days, the general uprising had succeeded in the whole country. The victory of the August Revolution resounded both at home and abroad.

On September 2, 1945, in the capital, 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 Vietnamese people became 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 national people's 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 feudal monarchy of several thousand years, 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 struggle for national liberation, but also the outcome of a revolutionary process which began with the founding of our Party and passed through two full-dress rehearsals, the revolutionary upsurge of 1930-1931 and the 1936-1939 widespread 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 mountain 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 came, had mobilized the masses in time for a general uprising in the countryside and in the cities, to overthrow the rule of the imperialists and their feudal agents and 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 at a time when our country was surrounded by imperialist powers, and strictly car-

ried out the Declaration of the *Viet Minh Front* that "our liberation must be our own work", without waiting for the proletarian revolution to triumph 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 triumphed in a colonial and semi-feudal country, through a *general armed uprising* of the masses, a *clever combination of armed struggle with various forms of political struggle of the masses to seize power, and 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 for the first time in the history of colonial and semi-colonial peoples a party only *fifteen years old*, has successfully led a revolution and seized power in the whole country."

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *For Independence and Freedom, for Socialism* — Su that Publishing House, Hanoi 1970, p. 101

PART TWO

**THE STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE 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. The rice could not be planted in 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 the very moment when our people were facing so 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 fact, they were lackeys of the US imperialists, and were committed to carry out their evil designs — to do away with our Party, destroy the Viet Minh and help the Vietnamese reactionaries overthrow the people's power and set up a puppet administration to work for the US²⁷. 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 comeback.²⁸ 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, their henchmen, the Vietnamese traitors, multiplied slanders, provocations, divisive schemes, and instigated and organized rebellions.

These seemingly insuperable difficulties were an extremely serious trial for our people. Yet, under the clear-sighted leadership of our Party, they maintained close unity and firm resolve, were determined to keep the oath of Independence, and stood ready "to mobilize all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their freedom and independence."

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 the people to "con-

solidate our 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.

To maintain power, it was necessary to struggle against the manoeuvres of the imperialists and their henchmen and repress the counter-revolutionaries, while at the same time stabilizing the people's life, building up and consolidating the people's revolutionary power.

On September 3, 1945, acting on President Ho Chi Minh's proposal, the Government Council decided to launch a campaign to increase production and give relief to the victims of famine. Within a short period of time subsidiary crops were grown in many localities. The production of maize, sweet potatoes and cassava increased several fold. Famine was driven back. The peasants gradually restored the acreage under rice.

Other measures designed to improve the people's livelihood were actively carried out in the first months of revolutionary power: confiscation of land holdings of the French colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors for distribution to poor peasants; equitable and rational redistribution of communal lands to all citizens, men and women; a 25 per cent reduction of land-rent; promulgation of the eight-hour work day; protection of the workers' rights in their relations with their employers.

Great attention was paid to the cultural, educational, and health work and especially to the fight

against illiteracy. By the end of 1946, over two million people had learnt to read and write.

To defeat all reactionary forces and overcome every difficulty, it was important to put into effect and bring into full play the people's sovereignty. Implementing the directives laid down by the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, the Government decided to organize general elections to elect the National Assembly and formally set up the Government.

On January 6, 1946, general elections were successfully held throughout the country at a time when the South was being subjected to armed aggression by the French imperialists, and when in the North, the Chiang Kai-shek troops were resorting to every evil trick to sabotage the general elections and overthrow the people's power. The first general election in our country had therefore, the character of a fierce class and national struggle. In Nam Bo alone, 42 cadres heroically laid down 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 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 govern 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 to be 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 yet joined the Viet Minh. The national union based on the worker-peasant alliance — foundation of the people's power — was steadily consolidated and strengthened.

The Party devoted special care to the building of the armed forces and urged the entire people to turn their minds to our kinsfolk in the South who were heroically fighting against the French colonialist aggressors. The movement of support to the resistance war of our 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' attack in the South were overcome one after another. 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 were conducting a cruel war of aggression, the Chiang Kai-shek troops and their lackeys in the North carried out all kinds of schemes in attempts to overthrow the people's power.²⁹ In face of that extremely complicated and difficult situation, our Party applied most skilful and flexible tactics with a view to dividing 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 our struggle on them"(*). 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 firmly defending national sovereignty and independence. Because 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

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

foiled and their agents' acts of betrayal of the nation duly punished.

After six months' occupation of North Viet Nam, the Chiang Kai-shek troops still failed to carry their dark schemes into effect. 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 come to replace Chinese troops in North Viet Nam³⁰. Thus the imperialists clearly revealed their sinister 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 take advantage of the contradiction between the imperialist countries to drive out the Chiang Kai-shek troops and gain time to consolidate and develop the revolutionary forces in preparation for a nationwide 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. But hardly had the ink dried on the agreement when the French colonialists reneged their pledge³¹. But as a result of the firm and persistent struggle of our people, formal negotia-

tions 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 gain 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 precious time to prepare their 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 was like "a thousand-kilogram weight hanging by a hair." But our Party and Government headed by our venerated and beloved 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 a 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, the French colonialists carried on the policy of "accomplished facts" 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 compromise 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:

"As we desire peace we have made concessions. But the more concessions we make, the more the French colonialists press on for they are bent on reconquering our country.

"No! We would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country. Never shall we be enslaved!" (*)

Following President Ho Chi Minh's appeal, the Party Central Committee 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 strong army and large quantities of weapons. That is why we had to *fight a protracted war* in the course of which we were to put out of action and destroy an increasing number of enemy forces while preserving and developing our own; thus we would gradually turn the table on the enemy, passing from an inferior position to a superior one, 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 man-

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings*—Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1973, p. 68.

power, 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: 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 terrible 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 very high costs to his forces. 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 carried out 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, while still in a position of strength. On the one hand, the enemy 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 dummy 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 some twenty 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 coming 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 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 large numbers of enemy troops and captured big quantities of weapons and military equipment.

After the French defeat in Viet Bac (Winter 1947) the face of the war changed. The enemy realized that it was impossible to wipe out our main forces by means of large-scale operations, and to win 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 (the South) instead of mounting attacks in Bac Bo (the North); 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, press-gang 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 forward, 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 guerrilla actions as the main form of fighting and mobile warfare as a secondary one, but to attach great attention to stepping up mobile warfare and 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 puppet administration, to step up agitation work among enemy troops, to enlist the support of the socialist countries and 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 the planning of the state sector of the economy, to promote foreign trade; 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 an active participa-

tion in the resistance work; 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 a new way of life; to fight against bad customs, to care for the people's health.

In March 1948, the Party Central Committee initiated a big patriotic emulation movement in the 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. In this situation, some people had joined the Party with wrong motives. 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 tasks of

liberating the nation, and ensuring prosperity to the Fatherland and happiness to the people."(*)

President Ho Chi Minh's March 1947 letter to the comrades in Bac Bo and the book *Change the Style of Work* became documents for daily study by cadres and Party members to enhance their virtues and improve their style of work.

President Ho Chi Minh often said: "We can liken the Party to a power generator, the resistance and construction work to electric lights, the more powerful the generator, the brighter the lights." He used to recommend cadres and Party members, to strive for increased unity and single mindedness within the Party. On January 18, 1949 in the *speech made at the closing session of the 6th Congress of Party Cadres*, he said:

Though we may come from different nationalities and classes, we follow the same doctrine, pursue the same goal, are bound together in life and death, and share weal and woe. That is why we must sincerely unite. To reach our destination, to organize ourselves is not enough: We must, besides, be sincere in our minds.

There are two ways to achieve ideological unity and inner cohesion: *criticism and self-criticism*.

(*) *Change the Style of Work* — Su that Publishing House, Hanoi, 1955, page 33. Because at the time of writing the Party was not yet operating in the open, the author used the word "Organization" for Party.

Everyone, from the top down, must use them to achieve ever closer unity and greater progress." (*)

He also said:

"Though comprising a large number of people our Party goes to combat united as one man. This is due to discipline. Ours is an iron discipline — That is, a severe and conscious one.

We must strive to maintain this iron discipline of our Party."(*)

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*.

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.

At that time there existed some erroneous view among Party members about the protracted character of the resistance and the decision to prepare actively for the general counter-offensive. In the summer of 1950, the Party Central Committee rectified in time those incorrect ideas and actions with a view to driving home to the cadres and people the neces-

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* (1920-1969) — op. cit, p. 89.

sity of launching a protracted war of resistance and being self sufficient.

On the basis of the victories recorded in 1948-1949 and the important diplomatic successes, 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 troops, 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 to include three kinds of forces—main force units, regional troops, and militia and guerilla forces.

At the beginning of the war, in view of the discrepancy between our forces and the enemy's some people had likened our war of resistance to a fight between "a grasshopper and an elephant."

Early in 1951, in his *Political Report* to the Second National Congress of the Party, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out:

"And such a fight it would be if things were looked at with a narrow mind, solely from the angle of material strength and in their present state. Indeed against the enemy's airplanes and

artillery we had only bamboo sticks. But our Party is a Marxist-Leninist one. We look not only at the present but also to the future and have firm confidence in the spirit and strength of the masses, of the nation. Therefore we resolutely told those wavering and pessimistic people:

*Yes, it's now grasshopper versus elephant,
But tomorrow the elephant will collapse,*

Facts have shown that the colonialist "elephant" is getting out of breath while our army has grown up into a powerful tiger."(*)

The victory of the Frontier Campaign showed that our resistance forces had grown up in all respects especially in the military fields. Our people and armed forces made active preparations for the general counter-offensive.

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

Because of the rapidly growing strength of our people and our armed forces, the French colonialists found themselves in an ever more difficult situation in their prolonged war of aggression in Indochina. In the military field, in spite of a considerable increase in the enemy's forces in comparison with the

(* Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings*—p. 114.

beginning of the resistance, his lack of troops grew 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 cabinets fell one after another. In the economic field, France was more and more dependent on the United States and there was a serious decline in 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 by war."

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

The new changes in the international and national situation required an increase of leadership by the Party in all fields with a view to pushing ahead the resistance to victory. For the time being it was necessary to chart a line for defeating the French colonialists and the American interventionists while bringing out the aim, tasks, content and characteristics of the people's national democratic revolution in our country; we had to put an end to the state of semi-clandestinity of a party in power and to clearly lay down the rules for building the Party in accordance with the new situation.

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 alternate delegates representing over 760,000 Party members from central, south and north Viet Nam and from abroad.

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:

"In a word, many events of great importance have occurred in the first half of the Twentieth Century, but we can predict that thanks to the efforts of the revolutionaries, even greater and more glorious changes will take place in its second half."(*)

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

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — p. 102

the revolution in our country had gone from victory to victory because :

"We have a great, powerful Party. Its greatness and strength is due to Marxism-Leninism, to the constant efforts of all our Party members, and to the love, confidence and support of our entire army and people." (*)

In his *Report on the Vietnamese Revolution*, Comrade Truong Chinh presented to the Congress the whole line of people's national 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 *people's national 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 role, etc. It said that the immediate task of the people's national democratic revolution in Viet Nam was to drive out the French imperialist aggressors and overthrow the feudal forces in the pay of imperialism, regain national independence, and achieve people's democracy ; then it should proceed to accomplish the socialist revolution and 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 fulfils anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks, but also promotes a powerful development of the people's democratic

(*) Ho Chi Minh, op. cit., p. 128.

regime ; at the same time, it brings about socialism in embryo, and creates conditions for an advance to socialism. *This revolution accomplishes the bourgeois democratic tasks and grows into a socialist revolution.*"(*)

The Report on the Vietnamese Revolution was an important document which summed up the Party's experiences over more than 20 years of struggle. It represented a correct combination 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 completion of the Party's general line in the people's national democratic revolution. The basic problems of the people's national democratic revolution were expounded in the *Political Programme* in a concise but complete and clear manner, lighting the way for 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 vestiges,

(*) 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 on the Party's History, Hanoi, 1965, p. 101.

to give land to the tillers, to develop the people's democratic regime to lay foundations for socialism."(*)

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 step forward in the growth of our Party. For the first time since its founding, the Party was able to 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 basic one which to unite the entire Party and people and to take the revolution forward to new victories.

On March 3, 1951, the Viet Minh and Lien Viet Fronts merged. The national union based on a solid worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class was consolidated and strengthened. On March 11, 1951, the Conference for a Vietnamese —

(*) Document of the Party's Second National Congress published by the Commission for Research on the Party's History, Hanoi, 1965, p. 117.

Khmer — Lao Alliance further strengthened 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 October 1951 the victory won by our army and people in Hoa Binh frustrated the French colonialists' attempt to regain the initiative in the Bac Bo battle-field and to launch attacks on our free zones.

In 1952, the Party Central Committee decided to launch a campaign for a threefold rectification: rectification of the Party, Army, and mass work. This campaign carried out in 1952-1953 resulted in further consolidating and strengthening the Party's leadership and developing the people's armed forces to meet the pressing requirements of the situation at a time 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 support 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 wartime 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 improve the peasants' livelihood. But in view of the development of the resistance, the above steps were not enough to foster the strength 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, including the repayment of surplus rents, 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 righting 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 constantly recorded big victories.

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

The long-drawn-out Indochina war caused the French colonialists to suffer increasingly heavier defeats. Since 1953 virtually the whole of the French Expeditionary Corps had been bogged down 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 became more acute. 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 sham "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 the 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 over the whole of Indochina, 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 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 many directions had foiled Navarre's plan of concentrating military forces in the Bac Bo delta. Half of the enemy's mobile forces were pinned down in the mountain regions; this situation created very favourable conditions for a vigorous development of guerrilla warfare in the enemy's rear areas. In Binh Tri Thien and the southernmost part of Central Viet Nam, regional troops and militiamen foiled enemy mopping-up operations, destroyed important communication lines and expanded guerrilla bases. All the enemy offensives against the free zone were repelled. In Nam Bo, we intensified guerilla warfare and increased agitation work among French and puppet troops and wiped out or forced them to evacuate thousands of posts and watch-towers. 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 paratroops and dropped them on Dien Bien Phu in order to secure a foothold in the North-West and to protect Upper Laos. Afterwards, he sent even more forces, determined to build Dien Bien Phu into the most solid fortifield 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 by the Central Committee with the direct

command of this battlefield. The strategic resolve of the Party Central Committee was swiftly translated into the will and action of the entire Party, army and people. Our artillery and infantry units, with only rudimentary equipment, built hundreds of kilometres of roads through forests and mountains to the battlefield, dug hundreds of kilometres of communication trenches under intense enemy fire, and hauled heavy guns up hill and down dale to the battlefield.

Putting into effect the slogan "all for the front, all for victory" 200,000 volunteer carriers provided more than 3,000,000 work days to serve the Dien Bien Phu front. Tens of thousands of members of shock youth brigades together with engineer units valiantly opened new roads and defused enemy delayed-action bombs on communication lines. Tens of thousands of pack 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. Roused to action, the peasants rose up to overthrow the landowner class, bringing about 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 building up 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, annihilating or capturing over 16,000 enemy troops. The entire 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 the professional armies of the colonialists. "The great Dien Bien Phu battle will go down in national history as a Bach Dang,³² a Chi Lang,³³ a Dong Da³⁴ of the 20th century" (*)

It was 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, which climaxed in the 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

(*) Le Duan, *The Vietnamese Revolution: Fundamental Problems, Essential Tasks* — Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi 1970, p. 63. Those are three of the most brilliant decisive victories won by the Vietnamese people over foreign invaders, respectively in the 13th, 15th and 18th centuries (Ed).

and contributed decisively to our victory at the Geneva Conference(*).

The Geneva Conference on Indochina opened on April 26, 1954 at a moment when our army was going to launch the third wave of assaults 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 as one from a victorious nation.

(*) Strategically, the protracted resistance war of our people against the French colonialists' aggression passed through 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 in the winter of 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 decisive offensive on the enemy's strongest fortified entrenched camp at Dien Bien Phu, which compelled the enemy to move from a strategic defensive position to 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 at just the right moment, thus effecting a 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 spearhead of our struggle against the US imperialists and the warlike 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 agreed to restore peace in Indochina on the basis of the recognition of the independence, sovereignty, 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 1956 (*) in order to reunify their country. The

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

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 adamantly refusing to sign the joint communiqué of the conference, at last had to make a separate declaration pledging to respect the Geneva Agreement on Indochina.

The great success of the Geneva Conference was the fruit of the struggle against imperialism, for national liberation, waged by the people of Indochina for nearly a century, and 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 people struggling for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

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

In the war of resistance against the French, our people had to fight not only against aggression by the French colonialists but also against the attempt by US-led imperialists to conquer our country, eliminate our Party and the revolutionary movement in our country, check the revolutionary movement in the world. By resolutely waging a war of resistance until final victory, our people 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 anniversary of the founding of our Party President Ho Chi Minh clearly pointed out :

"For the first time in history, a small colony had defeated a big colonial power. This was a victory not only of the Vietnamese people but also of the world forces of peace, democracy and socialism.

Once again Marxism-Leninism lit the path for the Vietnamese working class and people, and led them to triumph in their struggle to save their country and safeguard their revolutionary gains."(*)

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — p. 236,

PART THREE

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION IN NORTH VIET NAM AND THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION IN SOUTH VIET NAM

(1954-1965)

Nearly nine years of extremely arduous and heroic war of resistance waged by 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 flunkies. Confronted with that situation, our entire people had to continue the struggle to liberate the South, with a view to fulfilling the task of the people's national democratic revolution in the whole country and achieving the peaceful reunification of Viet Nam.

The revolution in each zone of our country had different strategic tasks relevant to the conditions in the zone, but these tasks are closely inter-related. The North, completely liberated, moved to the stage of socialist revolution and entered 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 people's national 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, and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the country. With the combined strength of the socialist revolution in North Viet Nam and the people's national democratic revolution in the South, our people are sure to build up a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

TAKING OVER THE NEWLY-LIBERATED AREAS, COMPLETING THE LAND REFORM AND RE- HABILITATING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

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 frustrating all schemes to undermine this agreement so as to consolidate peace; to strive to complete the land reform, restore and increase production, accelerate the build-up of the people's army in order 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 that they should heighten revolutionary vigilance, strengthen their fighting spirit, overcome wishes for a peaceful, restful, pleasurable and easy-going life; when entering the newly liberated cities to take them over, they should guard against and oppose all attempts by the bourgeoisie to influence them.

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 a number of our Northern compatriots into emigrating 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 disorder and tension when we took over the cities were

frustrated. The takeover of the big cities war carried out swiftly and neatly.

On January 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, had great political significance for, the people of the whole country. On May 16, 1955 we liberated the whole of the Hai Phong area. The last soldier of the expeditionary force of the French colonialists had left North Viet Nam. Half of our country was now completely liberated. That marked our people's brilliant victory.

The North, completely liberated, had the necessary conditions to pass on to 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 had been enhanced, that we had a State of people's democratic dictatorship which began to assume the historical 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 bring the land reform to completion and rehabilitate 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 people's national democratic revolution, had only been carried out to a small extent by this time. The requirement of the socialist revolution and of the popular masses was to *complete it thoroughly*. The Party urgently mobilized tens of thousands of cadres and expanded the land reform campaign.

By the summer of 1956, the land reform had been completed in the lowlands and midlands and in a number of villages in the highlands of the 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 cooperation, development of production, combined with the completion of democratic reforms", so as to abolish feudal land ownership, put into effect the slogan "land to the tillers", ensure the right of the peasants in the highlands to be masters of the countryside, and strengthen the unity of the various nationalities.

The land reform and democratic reforms achieved the following results:

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

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— They definitively abolished 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 of the countryside, both politically and economically.

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

The success of the land reform was great and fundamental. It assumed a strategic character.

In the course of the land reform, we committed a number of serious errors. The Party Central Committee found out those mistakes in time and resolutely redressed them.

Along 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 was more than 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 the difficulties and bring about some initial 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 forward correct policies with a view to consolidating the national united front. On September 5, 1955, a Congress of the national united front held in Hanoi decided to expand and consolidate the national union and to found the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front*. It elected the Front's Central Committee with Comrade Ton Duc Thang as President. The State of people's democratic dictatorship assuming the historical 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 Party Central Committee (March 1957) laid down the guidelines for strengthening the defence forces and building up the army along regular and modern lines.

In the 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 THE 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, craftsmen, small traders and small manufacturers still accounted for a large part. Workers in private enterprises were not yet freed from exploitation by the bourgeois class. Hence the need to carry 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 people's national democratic revolution to that of socialist revolution. But, generally speaking, cadres and Party members were not yet fully aware of 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 forward 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 to socialism. The Party also struggled to overcome any incorrect understanding of the close relationship between the task of making socialist revolution in the North and that of liberating the South, characterized by the fear that the advance of the North toward socialism might hinder the struggle for Viet Nam's reunification. The Party pointed out that it was precisely 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. at a time 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 individual economy of the peasants and craftsmen and that of the privately-run capitalist economy, and at the same time to strive to develop the state-run economy which is the leading force of the whole national economy.*"

The main point was the transformation and development of agriculture.

The Party's line in the socialist transformation of agriculture was to make the peasants working individually advance gradually from mutual-aid teams (of an embryonic socialist character) to lower-level farming co-ops (of a semi-socialist character), then to higher-level ones (of a socialist character). That was the line of achieving agricultural co-operation before mechanization of agriculture, along with water conservancy and re-organization of the labour force. Agricultural co-operation will help promote socialist industrialization which, in return, will create conditions for consolidating and developing the farming co-ops.

With regard to craftsmen, the Party advocated organizing them into handicraft co-ops, supplying those co-ops with raw materials, tools and equipment, and 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 their peaceful transformation. At this stage of socialist revolution, the national bourgeoisie continued to recognize the leadership of our Party, respect 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 take 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 trade were widely welcomed by the masses. Especially in the countryside, since 1959, the movement of agricultural co-operation has reached a high point. The struggle between the two paths, the socialist and the capitalist, between collectivism and individualism, was, at times and in some 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 a firm class stand and high socialist consciousness, that they thoroughly rid themselves of the influence of the ideology of the exploiting classes, wipe out individualism and educate themselves in collectivism. (*)

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works* — Su that Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 637.

Under the care and education of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh the overwhelming majority of cadres and Party members have kept up the high moral standard of Communists when entering the new revolutionary stage. They devotedly mingled with the masses to educate and mobilize them in order to carry into effect the Party's line of socialist transformation. By the end of 1960, i.e. within three years, in the North Vietnamese countryside, the transformation of agriculture through the setting up of lower-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 higher-level co-ops. In the cities, 100 per cent of bourgeois industrial households, and 98 per cent of bourgeois trading households and 99 per cent of the mechanized means of transport subject to transformation had actually undergone socialist transformation. Tens of thousands of workers had been freed from exploitation by the bourgeoisie. Important results had also been achieved in the transformation of handicrafts and small trades. More than 260,000 craftsmen 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 took up productive jobs, mainly in agriculture and handicrafts.

Together with the successful transformation of the relations of production, the targets of the three-year plan in agricultural and industrial production and 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 the 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 one, socialist and half-socialist.

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, 1956, 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 resolutely build socialism in the North and struggle for national reunification, with a view to building a peaceful, re-unified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

THE THIRD NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE PARTY, 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 was able to hold 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: "The present Party Congress is the Congress of socialist construction in the North and of struggle for peaceful national reunification." 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 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 back independence and democracy, have sufficient forces to vanquish any aggressor." (*)

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 people's national democratic revolution; the general task of the Vietnamese revolution during this stage is "To strengthen national unity, resolutely struggle to safeguard peace, step up the socialist revolution in the North and the people's national democratic revolution in the South, achieve national reunification on the basis of independence and democracy, and build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, thus contributing effectively to the strengthening of the socialist camp and the safeguarding of peace in Southeast Asia and the world". (**) The *Political Report* also pointed out

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

(**) *Op. cit.*, page 35.

that the building of socialism in the North was the *most decisive task* in the whole development of the revolution in Viet Nam, and the reunification of the country.

On the basis of the *Political Report*, the Congress worked out a 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 historical mission of the dictatorship of the proletariat to achieve the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, small trade, and private capitalist industry and trade; to develop the state-run sector of the economy, carry out 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, and advanced culture and science. (*)

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.

(*) Op. cit, pages 179-180.

Since the Third National Congress of the Party, the North of our country has moved into a period in which the central task is to build the material and technical base of socialism, while continuing to complete the socialist transformation and to consolidate and complete the new relations of production.

To give concrete forms to the line adopted at the Party Congress on economic development, the Party Central Committee successively held plenary sessions devoted especially to agricultural development (July 1961), industrial development (June 1962), the State plan (April 1963), commodity circulation, distribution and prices (December 1964). In those plenums, the Party Central Committee carried out a further analysis of the position, inter-relationship and effects of the three revolutions: revolution in relations of production, technical revolution and ideological and cultural revolution, stressing that the technical revolution was 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, relationship between accumulation and consumption, between economic construction and strengthening of defence, between industry and agriculture, between heavy industry and light industry, between centrally-run industry and locally-run industry, have been settled by our Party in a manner which has become more and

more concrete, correct and suited to the characteristics of our country.

From 1961 onward, in the implementation of the first five-year plan, our people have had to overcome numerous difficulties caused by natural calamities, enemy actions and by the utterly poor and backward state of our economy, in order to advance with steady steps. This was reflected in the emulation movements "Three First", "Dai Phong", "Duyen Hai", "Thanh Cong", "Bac Ly" (*) and especially in the efforts to gain the title of socialist labour team or brigade. Through those movements, thousands of production and work teams and brigades have been

(*) *Three Firsts*: First in the number, the regularity, and the quality of one's 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 from 1960 onward the standard bearer of the emulation movement to improve the management of farming co-ops, improve techniques, and increase production 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 "study well, teach well" in education, from 1961 onward.

recognized by our Government as socialist labour teams and brigades, thousands of farming co-operatives 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, while striving to build a *socialist economy* in the North of our country, we still find many difficulties ahead. These are not accidental, temporary difficulties, but difficulties which have deep roots in our economy. Therefore the Party constantly reminded Party committees at various levels, local Party branches, and Party and Government offices to strive to overcome their shortcomings and weaknesses, to improve their good points, and unceasingly endeavour to do better. In the spring of 1961 the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee decided to launch a drive for ideological remoulding. In this spirit, in April 1961, the 4th Plenum of the Party Central Committee discussed the problem of strengthening the leadership of the Party, essentially in organization and executive guidance. The Central Committee also pointed out the extreme importance of grassroot organisations in carrying out Party policies, and launched the "movement to build four-good (*) Party cells and organizations" while,

(*) Good work; good implementation of Party and Government policies, good mass work, good Party-building work.

at the same time, paying great attention to consolidating 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 forward, 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 realized that the tendency to spontaneous capitalist development in the economy of our North, though weak, could, however, arise and grow, especially among those who were still working individually in the free market. Moreover, the enemy never ceased attempting to undermine our efforts. Therefore, in relation 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 technical revolution, and 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 imperialists' schemes to intensify and extend the war. The

Conference heard President Ho Chi Minh's report, and unanimously approved and wholeheartedly backed the internal and external lines of our Party and Government. At the Conference President Ho Chi Minh called on everyone to “redouble his efforts to be worthy of our Southern kinsmen.” *President Ho Chi Minh's Report at the Special Political Conference* was a great document and was widely distributed throughout all levels of the people, the Party and the armed forces. It inspired everyone with more confidence, enthusiasm and eagerness to fulfil their tasks in carrying out the 1964 State plan and the first five-year plan.

At that time there was serious disagreement between a number of communist and workers' parties. All over 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 pointed out that our Party's responsibility was to take part in the struggle to safeguard the purity of Marxism-Leninism, contributed to the restoration and strengthening of unity in the socialist camp and the international communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and 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, the socialist and the capitalist; that agricultural cooperation was premature; such views paid little attention to the transformation of handicrafts and small trades, to economic management and market control. At the same time, the Party also severely criticized dogmatic views, the lack of the spirit of independence and sovereignty, the hesitation to cast off the spirit of dependence on foreign powers left over by a thousand 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 passed the stage of capitalist development and advanced with steady steps straight toward socialism.

By the end of 1965, 80 per cent of farming co-operatives 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 were being manufactured. Hundreds of locally-run industrial

enterprises had been established. In the North, an industrial economy was gradually taking shape, which included the extraction of raw materials, their processing and the development of various branches of heavy and light industry.

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

"Over the past ten years, the North has made big strides forward, without precedent in our national history. The country, society and man have changed."(**)

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

(*) as of 1964.

(**) Ho Chi Minh. *Selected Writings*, p. 282.

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

THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL 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 so as to prepare for an attack against the socialist camp, destroy the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia, and check the influence of socialism in this region. This attempt is part of the US imperialists' global strategy of counter-revolution facing the powerful revolutionary wave that is continually storming the stronghold of imperialism headed by US imperialism. Therefore, the US imperialists helped the French to 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

(*) Resolution of the 12th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, Dec. 1965.

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 and make it serve their design to conquer our whole country, the US imperialists tried by 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 imperialists 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 landlord class and the comprador bourgeoisie who had been defeated by the revolution, and create a new class of pro-US landlords and comprador bourgeois as the social basis 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 military and economic "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, hooliganist American way of life, poisoned our youth and people with their filthy, rotten, reactionary and

decadent kind of civilization.³⁵ Ngo Dinh Diem, a feudalist ringleader who had been a flunkie to both the French and the 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 varnish of "republicanism", and "independence" so as to hoodwink the masses.

Obeying American orders, Ngo Dinh Diem strove to build an inhuman fascist dictatorial regime in the South of our country. As early as late 1954, his clique perpetrated bloody massacres in Ngan Son, Chi Thanh, Cho Duoc, Mo Cay, Cu Chi, Binh Thanh, etc. They launched several campaigns for "denouncing and exterminating Communists", suppressed the patriotic struggles of our compatriots in the South with the ferocity of war maniacs and class revanchists. Tens of thousands of communist fighters and patriots were killed; hundreds of thousands of people were detained and tortured in US-Diem jails. On December 1, 1958, Diem agents killed by food poisoning over a thousand revolutionaries at the Phu Loi concentration camp. In May 1959, they passed law 10-59 providing for the guillotining of patriots and perpetrated mass massacres 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 demanding consultations and general elections to reunify the country, opposing the faked "referendum" and the election of the puppet "national

assembly", and 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, members of national minorities and Northerners who had been coerced to move to the South, thus giving rise to concerted action by city people and rural people undertaking various forms of struggle. Struggles against terrorism, against reprisals upon former resistance fighters, against the "denunciation and extermination of Communists", against land grabbing and house eviction, etc... took place persistently and fiercely everywhere. Revolutionary heroism, grit and dauntlessness 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 kept their absolute confidence in the Party and President Ho Chi Minh. With solid and well-reasoned arguments, they laid bare the enemy's distortions and slanders, resolutely defended revolutionary bases, and gave protection and shelter to revolutionary cadres even at the risk 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 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 trained and tempered 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 people had learned how to mobilize and organize the masses, to set up broad fronts, to isolate the enemy, to confront him. Southern revolutionary leaders and people had acquired a great deal of valuable experience to turn the movement into a widespread revolutionary tide. It was just when the enemy was frantically resorting to the most savage means to suppress the revolution that the Southern revolutionary leaders, due to their close touch with the masses, were able to assess the situation correctly and clearsightedly, holding that the enemy had suffered *basic political failure*; therefore they actively prepared for mobilizing the people in partial uprisings, to seize power.

RESISTANCE AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION, FOR
NATIONAL SALVATION IN THE SOUTH, MOVE-
MENT OF CONCERTED UPRISINGS AND U.S.
IMPERIALISTS' FAILURE IN THEIR
"SPECIAL WAR"

The US imperialists' policy of enslavement and war-provocation and the Ngo Dinh Diem clique's acts of terrorism and national treason had caused

extreme sufferings and strain on the people of the South. At the beginning of 1959, people from all walks of life were seething with anger. Workers and peasants were especially roused 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, warlike one which had betrayed the national interest. It was obviously a tool for US 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, and 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 concerted uprisings of the people of Ben Tre province.

On the night of January 17, 1960, under the leadership of Ben Tre revolutionaries, and armed with sticks and spears, the masses rose up like one man to get rid of cruel enemy agents and attack enemy posts, capturing enemy weapons to destroy enemy forces. They broke up large sections of the

enemy's administrative and coercive 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 evil landowners was confiscated and distributed to poor peasants. From then on, the tide of concerted uprisings swept over the provinces of Nam Bo, the Tay Nguyen highlands and several places in Central Trung Bo.

The concerted 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 repeated and violent surprise attacks on the enemy's *weakest spot*, his lowest-level administration in the countryside.

The success of the concerted uprising movement created the basis for pushing forward the nationwide, all-sided and protracted people's war against the aggression of US imperialism, and shaking the very foundation of the US-controlled puppet regime. In this revolutionary surge, 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 a 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, and neutral South Viet Nam, and advancing to the peaceful reunification of the country.³⁶

From mid-1961 onward, frightened by the vigorous and repeated struggles of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people, the US-Diemists launched the "special war" from a position of passivity. It was a kind of war in which they tried to "use Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese", combining the inhuman methods of aggressive war of 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 and its 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 gain experience in suppressing the national liberation movements, menacing newly-independent countries and forcing them to accept US neo-colonialist policies.

To wage the "special war", they worked out the Staley-Taylor plan. According to this plan, the US imperialists took a series of steps to increase their war potential, 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.³⁷

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 overall task of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation is to unite the whole people, struggle resolutely against the aggressive and war-mongering US imperialists, overthrow the Ngo Dinh Diem ruling clique, their henchmen, set up a democratic and national administration of broad alliance in the South, achieve national independence, democracy, freedom, better living conditions, safeguard peace and carry out a policy of neutrality, advance toward peaceful national reunification and, take an active part in defending peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world."(*)

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 not only did not shrink but were even enlarged. The correct line of the Front penetrated ever deeper into all sections of the people 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 concentrating people and setting up "strategic hamlets" was seriously hindered.

(*) 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.

The US-Diemists regarded their policy of "strategic hamlets" as the basic point of the Staley-Taylor plan, the backbone of the "special war". Therefore, they mobilized all forces, and resorted to every means to mop up and terrorize the people, "trampling upon anger and hatred", so as to carry out his "state 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.

But right at the beginning, the "strategic hamlets" plan was resolutely opposed by our people. The herding of people was not so easy as the enemy had expected. The tempo of the plan slowed down day after day. A number of "strategic hamlets" were taken down 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 broken up.

On January 2, 1963, a resounding victory was won at Ap Bac in Cai Lay (My Tho province) which inspired our people with still more confidence in their ability to defeat the American aggressors. Here, for the first time, with forces only one-tenth of the enemy's strength, the South Viet Nam army and people defeated a mopping-up raid by over 2,000 enemy troops belonging to different armed services supported by 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 the armed struggle 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. It was at the same time a 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 to face the enemy. The powerful political armies of the masses defeated many a mop-up operation, 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 despots, won over tens of thousands of puppet soldiers and officials to the people's side.

In two years of "special war", the US imperialists and their henchmen met with many difficulties 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 South 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 him and his brother Nhu like hounds that had become useless, putting Duong Van Minh then Nguyen Khanh in power instead.

Thus after over nine years of resolute, undaunted, heroic and clever 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.

In face of such a situation, in March 1964, the US imperialists worked out a new plan, the Johnson-McNamara plan, aimed at pacifying the South within two years (1964-1965). They set up the Viet Nam-US joint command and proclaimed the so-called Vung Tau charter. Meanwhile, they introduced 6,000 more 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 new US schemes met with extremely violent reactions by the South Vietnamese people. The anti-US-Khanh movement spread quickly from Hue 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 mar-

kets 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 execution ground 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 to demand that the Tran Van Huong administration be overthrown.

As political and armed struggles grew vigorously in all three strategic areas (countryside, cities and highlands — *Ed.*), in December 1964, the armed forces and people of South Viet Nam won another great victory at Binh Gia (Ba Ria province). 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 and shot down or damaged 37 aircraft. While Ap Bac was a counter-sweep battle, a victory of the Southern armed forces and people over the enemy's "heli-borne" tactic, 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, all the forces of the Southern army and people grew by leaps and bounds. 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, 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 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 comprised three kinds of troops were growing vigorously. 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-strong 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; it proves that their aggressive colonial policy in South Viet Nam

during the past 11 years and their so-called 'special war' is bankrupt."(*)

The bankruptcy of "special warfare" marked a *strategic failure* of the US imperialists in their scheme to "use Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese." By 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". They had foiled 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 of the world. As early as March 1964, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out:

"The present situation in the South is clear evidence of the inevitability of US failure in this 'special war'. The 'special war' which the US imperialists are experimenting within South Viet Nam has been defeated, and will fail in any other place. This is the international significance of the patriotic struggle of our Southern compatriots with reference to the national liberation movements of the world."(**)

(*) *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*

(**) *Ho Chi Minh: Selected Writings* — p. 287.

PART FOUR

THE NATION-WIDE RESISTANCE AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION, FOR NATIONAL SALVATION, TO LIBERATE THE SOUTH, DEFEND THE NORTH, AND ADVANCE TO THE PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION OF THE COUNTRY

(1965-1975)

THE PARTY'S GREAT DETERMINATION TO FIGHT AND DEFEAT THE AMERICAN AGGRESSORS

Having failed to put 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 had 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, carried out a profound and complete study of the situation arising from the new schemes and acts of war of the US imperialists. Following 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 into 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*. Thus, it would be more arduous and atrocious. But the US imperialists were intensifying and widening the war while being deprived of all initiative and in a position of defeat and were forced to follow a strategy full of contradictions, leading them into a blind alley. *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*, because of the unjust nature of the war of aggression, the US expeditionary forces were fighting without motivation and were opposed

by the people of Viet Nam, progressive Americans and other people in the world, hence their ever-sinking morale. However modern their equipment might be, they were in no position to cope with the united 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 potential in the imperialist camp, world opinion and the state of affairs in the United States would not permit the use of all its potential. It could not send to South Viet Nam unlimited troop reinforcements and ignore the various difficulties they would encounter on the Viet Nam theatre of operations, in the world as well as in the United States itself.

In the meantime, the revolutionary forces of the Vietnamese people had grown 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 tremendously, their morale was high and they 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, encompassed the majority of the population and were consolidating with every passing day. The *Viet Nam People's Revolutionary Party*, with its widespread and solid basic organizations, was a heroic vanguard, tempered in battle, in close touch with

the masses, enjoying great confidence from the people, having correct lines and policies and rich experience in political and armed struggle.

In the North, the people, who daily and hourly thought of their kinsfolk in the South understood clearly their duty of standing shoulder to shoulder with their Southern compatriots in the patriotic resistance against US aggression. 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 hundreds of thousands of US troops into South Viet Nam. Our people had solid requisites for maintaining the initiative on the battlefield and were in a position to frustrate all immediate and long-term schemes of the enemy.

Proceeding from the above views, the Party Central Committee was strongly determined to mobilize the forces of the whole Party, the entire armed forces 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 people's national democratic revolution in the whole country and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the country" (*)

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

On August 2 and 4, 1964, the US imperialists fabricated the provocative "Tonkin Gulf incident", then on August 5, 1964 they sent out their aircraft to bomb our bases on the river Gianh and at Lach Truong and Bai Chay. 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 of their Southern kinsfolk against US aggression; destroying socialist construction and impairing the determination of the Northern people to fight US aggression; and compelling the people of both zones to end the war of liberation in conditions favourable to the US.

Confronted with such a situation, the Party pointed out that the pressing task of the revolution in the North was to make a timely shift in ideolog-

(*) Resolution of the 12th Plenum of the Party Central Committee, December 1965.

ical guidance, organization and economic construction, and strengthen national defence. In so doing, it was necessary to give the North sufficient strength to defend itself against the enemy's bombing, shelling and blockade, to be ready to cope with any widening of the war at any level, to give wholehearted support to the resistance of the Southern kinsfolk, while 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 all kinds of up-to-date weapons. But under the leadership of our Party, our people remained cool and, by dint of heroic and resourceful struggle, defeated the enemy at every step of his escalation. Meanwhile the Southern people also recorded very great victories in their struggle.

During the four years of their 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 people. 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 the North were attacked again and again, and 6 were subjected to extermination raids: Dong Hoi, Ninh Binh, Phu Ly, Bac Giang, Yen Bai, Son La. Whole towns were razed to the ground — Ha Tu (Quang Ninh) and Ho Xa (Vinh Linh). More evil 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 it 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 statistics, up to November 1, 1968, we had shot down 3,243 US aircraft, including 6 B.52 strategic bombers, two F.111A swing-wing aircraft, the most up-to date aircraft of the US, killed and captured thousands of pilots, hit and set ablaze hundreds of warships of various sizes, *driving the US war of destruction to complete failure.*

Right at the beginning of the war of destruction waged by the US imperialists over the North of our country, our Party had correctly assessed the enemy's strategic designs and capabilities for action, his strong points and weaknesses, both political and military, and particularly his basic weakness in this war strategy. The war of destruction against the North was *part of the US strategy of*

aggressive war in Viet Nam aimed at retrieving US failure in the South. It depended on the development of the war in the South and it would end only when the US aggressive war in the South was completely defeated. On the basis of this assessment, everytime a great victory was recorded by the revolution in the South, we would work out plans to frustrate US schemes of destruction against the North.

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 last five, ten, twenty or more years, 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 make it even more prosperous and beautiful."(*)

Under the leadership of the Party, the people of the North have shown the absolute superiority of the socialist regime, proceeding to a rational division of labour and a rational use of all forces and combining those forces closely so as to achieve the best effects in performing their 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 US war of destruction is a new, rich and original development of our theory and

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — p. 308.

practice of people's war. It is a very important basis on which for our people to win still greater victories and 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: "Our victory can be ascribed to our Party's sound revolutionary line, our people's fervent patriotism, the strength of their single mindedness and determination to win, and our fine socialist regime. It goes to the credit of all our armed forces and people in both zones, South and North. It is also a victory won by the people of the fraternal socialist countries and our friends on the five continents." (*)

Facts have proved that the US war of destruction could not stop the great support of the people of the North to their Southern kinsfolk, 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 even further. In the flames of war the *co-operativized agriculture* continued to prove the strength and superiority of the collective way. By

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings*, p. 347.

1967, the number of peasant households in farming co-ops accounted for 93.7 per cent of the total of working peasant households; in the North, there were 18,098 higher-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 engines and 9,362 working machines (*); 2,551 co-ops had reached an average yield of five tons of paddy or more per 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 to 49.5 per cent in 1967. Regional economies began to take shape within major strategic areas. The most essential needs were met for production and combat; meanwhile, the people's life in war time was basically stabilized. Cultural, educational and health work, far from being hindered, developed vigorously even in war time and achieved fairly good results.

Communications and transport, one of the main targets of US bombings in the North were considered a *strategic task* and were given especial attention by the Party Central Committee, the Government, the related branches and the local Party committees. Thanks to this, on all communication lines in our

(*) By working machines, we mean mechanical pumps, threshing-machines, husking-machines, grinding and chopping machines, etc.

country, the flow of transport never stopped, goods were carried to destination, the tonnage transported grew daily and communication lines of various types were further extended.

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 forward the slogan "*Let the entire people fight the enemy and take part 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 arms and services were created. Great attention was paid to improving the equipment and combat capability of the regional troops, militia and self-defence forces. The armed forces in the North were properly arrayed so as to cope with US ground forces if and when the enemy was reckless enough to dispatch them to the North.

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

The Party has paid great attention to the raising of the cadre's 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 commandism, reminding cadres and Party members to strengthen their ties with the masses. The Party also started education campaigns to "heighten revolutionary qualities and morality and combat individualism"; enhance the sense of independence, sovereignty and self-reliance, raise the sense of responsibility, oppose all influences of revisionism and dogmatism, defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism, safeguard unity and single-mindedness within the Party. However, the Party Central Committee held that those achievements clearly were not sufficient to meet the need of carrying into effect 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 undermine the collective economy, steal public property, practise embezzlement and 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 a 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 on the economic front ;

opposed inefficient management, educated and raised the sense of collective mastery of the people.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution (1917-1967), President Ho Chi Minh wrote an article entitled *The Great October Revolution Opened the Way to Liberation for the People* ; Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Party Central Committee, wrote an article with the title "*Let us Enthusiastically Advance under the Great Banner of the October Revolution.*" On the occasion of the 150th birthday of Karl Marx (1818-1968), Comrade Truong Chinh, member of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee, read a report entitled "*Eternal Gratitude to Karl Marx and Faithfulness to the Road Charted by Him.*" These documents summed up a number of theoretical problems arising from revolutionary practice in our country and from important events in world revolution from the end of the Second World War up to now. They helped shed light on the revolutionary line and methods of our Party, which are full of the spirit of independence, sovereignty and creativeness, and reflect our people's determination, undauntedness, gallantry and intelligence.

Under the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh our people in the North have started a high tide of struggle against US aggression for national salvation, producing and fighting at the same time, surging ahead with extremely vigorous enthusiasm, doing things that could not be done in ordinary circumstances. The people's armed

forces pushed forward the "determined to defeat the US aggressors" emulation movement, 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, in which people save the country, made innovations and technical improvements; improved labour organization, improved management, and strove resolutely to reach "three peaks" (higher productivity, better quality, substantial economies) — 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 per cultivated hectare; rearing two pigs per cultivated hectare and one farmer working for every cultivated hectare. The intellectuals emulated one another to carry out "three determinations": determination to serve production and combat well; determination to push forward the technical revolution, and the ideological and cultural revolution; determination to build up and develop a socialist intelligentsia. Among the youth, the "three ready" (*) movement became a broad revolutionary movement

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

of the young generation. Among the women, the "three responsibilities" movement¹ raised the revolutionary zeal and the boundless spirit of sacrifice of Vietnamese women who overcame all difficulties in production and combat. Besides, such other emulation drives as the "two good"² movement among teachers and school students, the "three improvements"³ among cadres and employees, the "two excellent"⁴ movement in some regions and the "thousand good deeds" among young pioneers and children merged with the above-mentioned movements into 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 great heights for, 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 whole-hearted 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." (*)

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.

DEFEATING THE US STRATEGY OF LIMITED WAR IN SOUTH VIET NAM

The landing of ever 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 the task of fighting US aggression and saving the country as the sacred duty of our entire people from North to South.* Our people have fought under the slogan "All for victory over the US aggressors."

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

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

forces will never slacken their hold on their weapons so long as the fundamental goals of the South Vietnamese people, namely independence, democracy, peace and neutrality, have not been achieved. The South Vietnamese people will resolutely continue to deal thunderous blows at the US aggressors and their henchmen, and are sure to win final victory." (*)

In his address to 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 though they may bring in hundreds of thousands more of US troops, and strive to drag more troops of their satellites into this criminal war, our army and people are resolved to fight and 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 also stressed this iron resolve...

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam once again solemnly declares that its unswerving stand is resolutely to defend Viet Nam's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. Viet Nam is one country, the Vietnamese are one nation; nobody is allowed to infringe this sacred right.(**)

(*) *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.

(**) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — p. 357.

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 major battles.

The US imperialists believed that they were defeated in the "special war" because of the poor quality of their puppet troops, which prevented their advantages in armaments from being brought into play. When the US expeditionary force was directly engaged in combat against the Vietnamese people and US modern weapons were used by the US troops for shooting at and massacring Vietnamese they thought nothing would be able to resist them. Such a situation posed a vital problem to the Vietnamese people: 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, and be enslaved" — the Southern armed forces 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 with air and naval cover. In the same way as the Ap Bac battle in January 1963 had started the upsurge to wipe out puppet troops organized, trained, equipped and

commanded by Americans, the Van Tuong battle started a *sweeping 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 their "limited war", though they had to fight both the US aggressors directly and their puppet troops.

The possibility of defeating the US aggressors militarily in the "limited war" became a reality throughout the winter of 1965 and the spring of 1966 with the glorious victory of the Southern armed forces and people, who smashed the first dry season counter-offensive(*) by 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 undertaken by over 400,000 US troops and over half a million puppet troops was also defeated by the armed forces and people of the South. The result: in those two dry seasons 290,000 enemy troops, including 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", lowered the enemy's morale and sharpened the contradictions within his ranks.

(*) In South Viet Nam, the dry season lasts seven months, beginning in October and ending in April the following year.

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 increase of actions in early 1966 in nearly all cities of South Viet Nam, particularly in Hue 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 a *Political Programme* aimed at further broadening the national united front against US aggression, for national salvation, and 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 general 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 and 31, 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 Hue and in many newly liberated rural areas. The *Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces* was formed in Saigon and Hue. On April 20, 1968 the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace

Forces was founded. The national united front against US aggression, for national salvation was broadened.³⁸

The general offensives and uprisings in the spring of 1968 were powerful blows dealt at the US aggressors and the puppets; they not only wiped out considerable enemy forces, destroyed a gigantic amount of his war materiel, but also upset his strategic position, forced him to give up the "search and destroy" and "pacification" plan hastily, and turn to the passive defence strategy of "clear and hold". With over a million US and 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, though surrounded by multiple defence lines, he lived in constant fear of surprise attacks by the Liberation army.

On the other hand for the Southern army and people, never before had the war situation been so favourable and the strategic situation so firm as after the general offensives and uprisings in early Spring 1968. In South Viet Nam, the revolution not only had a firm hold on the highlands and countryside but also had new fronts in the cities. The Southern army and people have thrust the revolutionary war into the very lairs of the US aggressors and the puppets. The enemy's headquarters and key positions were dealt telling blows and were paralysed and disrupted. 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.

The victory won by our people in 1968 and especially at Tet of the year Mau Than was of great and all-embracing strategic significance:

1. We wiped out large enemy forces and a great quantity of war materials, liberated one million more people, thus shaking the aggressive will of the USA.

2. We drove the US strategy of limited war to bankruptcy, forcing the US government to admit its failure to win its aggressive war in Viet Nam by using the US expeditionary corps.

3. We forced the US to de-escalate its war of destruction against the North and to enter into four-party talks in Paris.

With the Mau Than victory and the ensuing successes in 1968, we successfully made a *shift in strategy*, bringing our people's patriotic struggle against American aggression to a new stage, opening up new prospects for the war, creating a new strategic posture for our forces and in the main upsetting the enemy's strategy.

From January 1969 onward, the US imperialists were compelled to hold official talks with the delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation at the four-party Conference in Paris. Then, the Southern people opened a new front, the diplomatic front. On all three fronts—military, political and diplomatic—the Southern people made continuous attacks on the enemy and scored great victories; the liberated areas were

enlarged, in some places reaching the cities outskirts. People's revolutionary 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*.³⁹ 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 handicrafts 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 peoples' 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 and decaying forces, originating from a decadent regime, the offspring of US neo-colonialism.

The process of historical development of the revolution in South Viet Nam since the general offensives and uprisings (January 1968) foretold the inevitable ultimate failure of the US imperialists and their henchmen, exactly as President Ho Chi Minh affirmed in his message to our 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 flunkys from total collapse!"

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

"The defeat of the US imperialists is already evident, yet they have not given up their evil design of clinging to the southern part of our country. Our armed forces and people throughout the country, millions as one man, upholding revolutionary heroism and fearless of sacrifices and hardships, are

determined to carry on and step up the war of resistance, with the firm resolve to fight and win till the complete withdrawal of US troops and the total collapse of the puppet army and administration, in order to liberate the South, defend the North and ultimately achieve peaceful reunification of the country. *

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* (**) of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the *Ten-point Over-all Solution*(***) of the South Viet

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings*, p. 357.

(**) 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.

(***) 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.

2. The US Government must withdraw all troops, military personnel, weapons and war material of the United

Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, with their shining justness, cornered the US imperialists and their henchmen into a very awkward and passive position.

Our people's confidence in the final victory of the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, in the inevitable success of the people's national democratic revolution in the South and in the peaceful reunification of the country was based on real scientific foundations.

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 questions 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.

The political forces representing various sections of the people and various political tendencies in South Viet Nam—including those forced, for political reasons, to take asylum abroad—and advocating peace, independence and neutrality will discuss together the formation of a Provisional Coalition Government on the principle of equality, democracy and mutual respect in order to achieve a peaceful, independent, democratic and neutral South Viet Nam.

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

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

"On the strength of their own experience, the Vietnamese people are firmly confident that in the present conditions, which are favourable to the revolutionary movement, any nation, even a small one, which is closely united and resolutely fighting according to a correct political and military line, and is furthermore enjoying active support and

7. The reunification of Viet Nam will be achieved step by step by peaceful means, on the basis of discussions and agreements between the two 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.

assistance from the socialist camp and revolutionary peoples in the world, such a nation will certainly be able to defeat any imperialist aggressor, including the ring-leader, US imperialism. (*)

★

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

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — tr.335.

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 spoke about the Party because it is the main factor deciding every victory of the revolution of our country: "Thanks to its close unity and total dedication to the working class, the people and the Fatherland, our Party has been able, since its founding, to unite, organize and lead our people from success to success in a resolute struggle.

Unity is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All comrades, from the Central Committee down to the cell, must preserve the unity and single mindedness in the Party like the apple of their eye. Within the Party, to establish broad democracy and to practise self-criticism and criticism regularly and seriously is the best way to consolidate and develop solidarity and unity. Comradely affection should prevail.

Ours is a party in power. Each Party member, each cadre must be deeply imbued with revolutionary morality, and show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness. Our Party should preserve absolute purity and prove worthy of its role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people."

He reminded our Party to train the Working Youth Union members and young people to be our successors, both "red" and "expert", in the building

of socialism, to pay the greatest attention to educating the future revolutionary generations. President Ho Chi Minh recommended us to pay great attention to the livelihood of the labouring people, to work out effective plans for economic and cultural development so as constantly to improve the life of our people.

He pointed out: "The war of resistance against US aggression may drag on. Our people may have to face new sacrifices of life and property. Whatever happens, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the US aggressors till total victory." He believed that: "No matter what difficulties and hardships lie ahead, our people are sure of total victory. The US imperialists will certainly have to quit. Our Fatherland will certainly be reunified. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and the North will certainly be re-united under the same roof."

About the international communist and workers' movement, he said: "Being a man who has devoted his whole life to the revolution, the more proud I am of the growth of the international communist and workers' movement, the more pained I am by the current discord among the fraternal parties." He hoped 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."

In the last part of his Testament, he spoke of his ultimate wish: "Our entire Party and people,

closely joining their efforts, will build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, and make a worthy contribution to the world revolution."

President Ho Chi Minh's Testament is a great 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 the heaviest and most glorious tasks: *completion of national liberation, realization of people's democracy, building of socialism and communism in our country.*

After President 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" (*) and resolutely carrying into effect President Ho Chi Minh's Testament by living up to the oaths made by Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Party Central Committee, on behalf of our entire Party, armed forces and 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 defeat the US aggressors, liberate the South, defend the North, and reunify the country in fulfilment of his wish.

(*) 'The Party Central Committee's Appeal — September 3, 1969.

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 for our countrymen.

We will preserve with all our strength 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.

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.

AN IMPORTANT STEP IN FRUSTRATING THE "VIETNAMIZATION OF THE WAR" STRATEGY OF US IMPERIALISM. THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIET NAM

The aggressive war in Viet Nam had seriously weakened US imperialism in all fields: political, military and economic. The American people repeatedly demonstrated against the dirty war in Viet Nam. The prestige of the Democratic Party, the party in power, was going downhill. Johnson had to withdraw from the political arena. Nixon, a representative of the most obdurate and warlike forces of US monopoly capitalism, was elected US President in late 1968 for having promised to end the war within six months. Once in the White House he readjusted US world strategy, and proclaimed the so-called "Nixon doctrine" based on three main principles: 1. US power; 2. Sharing of responsibility; 3. Readiness to negotiate from a position

of strength. These were also the basis of the strategy of "Vietnamization of the war", which was aimed at prolonging and expanding the war, pitting Vietnamese against Vietnamese, Indochinese against Indochinese, using US weapons and dollars and under US command.

The "Nixon doctrine" was first put to intensive test in Viet Nam with a view to achieving the target of the US aggressive war. While formerly Johnson had resorted to two prongs — "search and destroy" and "pacification" — in his strategic counter-offensive Nixon carried out three different kinds of war at the same time: a war to seize hold of the people, a war of strangulation and a war of extermination. The "pacification" policy became the core of this strategy.

Our Party held that "Vietnamization of the war" was an extremely perfidious strategic design of the US imperialists aimed at prolonging their aggressive war, withdrawing step by step part of the American troops from Indochina while reinforcing the puppet army and administration. In this policy, the American and puppet armies were at first the two strategic forces. The American army served as the prop of the puppet army and the "Vietnamization of the war" policy. The puppet army was the main instrument to carry out this "Vietnamization" and would gradually replace the American army.

Our Party predicted that the situation would evolve in either of these directions: if the American army was to suffer heavy losses and meet with great

difficulties, the White House would be forced to put an early end to the war by means of a political solution; on the other hand, if our army did not attack hard enough and the American troops were able in some measure to overcome their difficulties, then they would seek to prolong the war, try to de-escalate from a position of strength, carry out "Vietnamization" and give the war a see-saw pattern before resigning themselves to defeat and accepting a political solution.

In either situation, especially in case of prolonged de-escalation, the US imperialists could resume the bombing of the North for some time and on a certain scale, or extend the war in Laos and Cambodia so as to bring pressure to bear upon us.

Relying on this analysis of the situation, our Party put forward the following tasks:

To take full advantage of the victories won, persist in and step up the war of resistance, continue to develop the offensive strategy in an all-sided, continuous and powerful way, intensify military and political attacks, in combination with diplomatic offensives; while attacking the enemy, try to build up ever stronger political and military forces, foil the US imperialists' "Vietnamization" plan and the scheme to de-escalate step by step while prolonging the war and creating a position of strength from which to maintain their neo-colonial war in South Viet Nam; foil the enemy's defensive strategy, bring about a shift in the war situation, win partial successes leading eventually to a decisive victory; fight till the Americans withdraw all their troops and the

puppets collapse, create the fundamental conditions for an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral South, and advance toward peaceful national reunification.

To fulfil the above tasks, the South was to play the direct role, but the role played by the North as the great rear area and rear base of the whole country was still the decisive factor. Although the American imperialists still nurtured many dark designs against the North, at a time when the war of destruction had ended in the main, our Party decided to bring favourable factors into full play, strive hard to overcome the aftermath of war, rehabilitate the national economy and push it one step forward.

Early in 1970, the Party decided to launch three great campaigns: one to intensify production work, one to promote democracy and strengthen the collective mastery of farming cooperative members; and one to raise the quality of Party members and admit more recruits into the Ho Chi Minh batch. The launching of these three campaigns clearly displayed our Party's determination to seize the opportune moment, resolutely rectify mistakes and weaknesses in order to develop production, intensify the economic and defence potential of the North, step up support to the revolution in the South, and fulfil our internationalist duty toward the Lao and Cambodian revolutions.

The problem of rehabilitating and further developing North Viet Nam's economy was solved at the 19th plenum of the Party Central Committee held in early 1971. While affirming that the patriotic

resistance against American aggression was the foremost tasks of the whole Party and the entire people, the plenum solved a number of problems concerning the Party's line, policies and organization, with a view to taking the North Vietnamese economy forward in the direction of large-scale socialist production.

Relying on the theoretical analyses undertaken in the book *Under the Glorious Banner of the Party, for the Sake of Independence, Freedom and Socialism, Let US Advance toward New Successes*(*) by Le Duan, First Secretary of the Party Central Committee, and on the basis of serious practical surveys, the plenum stressed the following points:

In application of the general line of the Party in the initial stage of the transition to socialism and in the conditions of the resistance war the orientation of economic development must reflect this line: giving priority to the rational development of heavy industry based on the growth of agriculture and light industry; building a centrally-run economy while developing the regional economies, co-ordinating economies with national defence.

The task of economic rehabilitation and development and cultural development must be aimed at *satisfying the requirements of the patriotic resist-*

(*) English translation published in 1971 and 1973 by the Hanoi Foreign Languages Publishing House under the title: *The Vietnamese Revolution — Fundamental Problems, Essential Tasks.*

ance against US aggression, meeting the needs of the people, building and safeguarding the material and technical basis of socialism, step by step setting up the structure of large-scale socialist production, and preparing for future economic development.

Important results were obtained in economic rehabilitation. In agriculture rice production in 1970 increased by nearly half a million tons compared with 1969. In 1971 while the task of ensuring support to the South was even heavier and more urgent than in the previous years, the people in the North still had to grapple with the aftermath of the August floods, the most serious in 100 years. Yet, in the year 1971, overall food production reached the equivalent of 5.6 million tons of paddy (nearly 5 million tons for paddy alone), a greater figure than the usual yearly average. Most of the industrial establishments destroyed by enemy bombs were restored. In the first quarter of 1972 industrial production increased by 16% over the same period in 1971. In such important branches as electricity, coal and mechanical engineering the value of output increased by nearly 30% ; that of building materials grew by over 50% when the first US war of destruction ended, all-communication lines were reopened to traffic within a short time.

In South Viet Nam, in view of some results obtained in fierce "pacification" campaigns in the rural areas, the US imperialists thought the time had come for their war of strangulation. In March 1970 they staged a coup d'état to overthrow the Royal Government of Cambodia and sent tens of

thousands of troops to invade this country. In so doing the US imperialists aimed at turning neutral Cambodia into a US military base and new-type colony, encircling and wiping out important bases of the South Viet Nam liberation forces along the Viet Nam-Cambodia border, thus cutting off our supply line to the Southern battlefields. Faced with such a situation, the Cambodian patriotic forces, with the great and timely support of the Vietnamese people, dealt vital blows at the US imperialists and their henchmen. The people's war in Cambodia developed vigorously and the Cambodian revolution advanced by leaps and bounds.

On the Lao battlefield, in 1970 the Lao liberation forces twice thwarted the Americans' schemes to recapture the Plain of Jars in northern Laos and seize control of large areas in the strategic Boloven High Plateau in southern Laos.

In early 1971 the South Viet Nam army and people together with the brotherly Lao army and people again won resounding victory on Highway 9 in southern Laos. Here, the US imperialists had decided to launch a large-scale operation to block the Ho Chi Minh "trail" and completely cut off supply from the North to the South. Formerly Mc Namara had failed in his attempt to set up an electronic barrier close to the 17th parallel. This time Nixon decided to field the best units of the Saigon puppet army with powerful US air support, thus carrying into effect the fundamental formula

of "Vietnamization": puppet regulars + US fire power = victory. But having correctly anticipated the enemy's schemes, we decided to fight him and completely defeated his plans.⁴⁰

The heavy setbacks suffered by the US on Highway 9 and southern Laos once again shattered Nixon's strategy of winning by military means. In face of this situation, the White House tried to compromise with the great powers, hoping that these would put pressure on the Vietnamese people into accepting Washington's diktat. The US imperialists thought they could in this way divert the struggle directed at them by the revolutionary forces. But the Vietnamese people's great war of resistance against US aggression for national salvation, and the world wide movement of support for Viet Nam's resistance to American force brought out this hard truth: nowadays *"the spearhead of the world revolution must be directed at the US imperialists and no one else."*(*)

The aggressive war in Viet Nam deeply affected the American people and all aspects of life in the US, constituting a handicap for Nixon in the 1972 presidential campaign. Therefore, the Nixon, ruling clique tried, on the one hand, to retrieve the situation through a perfidious diplomatic policy aimed at

(*) Truong Chinh, *On Front Work at Present* — speech delivered at the 3rd Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, December 1971.

preventing our strategic offensive which it predicted for early 1972, and on the other, to consolidate its defensive position and prepare to counter our people's war of resistance.

But in the spring of 1972, Tet passed without the Southern army and people taking any large-scale action. The Americans and their puppets thought that our people had lost all capacity for offensive. But suddenly, on March 30, 1972 the strategic offensive of the Southern attacks were launched with overwhelming strength by main force units of the liberation army in coordination with regional armed forces and political forces of the masses against the enemy's external defence lines simultaneously in Quang Tri, Cong Tum and Binh Long. This was followed by repeated attacks on the enemy's internal defence lines in northern Binh Dinh and other places.

By its scope, this strategic offensive was without precedent in the history of people's war in Viet Nam. Within a short period of time, half of the 13 divisions of Saigon regulars, many regiments and battalions of infantry, artillery, and armour vehicles were destroyed or heavily damaged. Whole regiments mutinied and surrendered. The enemy's security forces, civil guard and civil defence forces were destroyed or broken up by mass desertions. Very strong enemy defence lines from Quang Tri to Tay Nguyen and eastern Nam Bo were breached. Newly liberated zones were set up in the highlands, the

plains and along the coast. Strategic fields of action were enlarged, in many important directions and areas, creating great possibility of development for the revolution in the South.

Strategically taken by surprise, Nixon rashly escalated the war, mobilizing a considerable US aero-naval force for participation in the war in South Viet Nam and resuming the war of destruction against the North, using nearly half of the B52 strategic bomber force of the USA for bombing raids deep into DRVN territory and mining her ports and rivers.⁴¹ The June 1, 1972 resolution of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee said: "The Nixon administration is trying hard to carry out its design. This is due on the one hand to its extremely warlike and stubborn imperialist nature. On the other hand this is by reason of the complicated evolution of the world situation. Our people must stand firm, heighten their vigilance, be ready to face any eventuality, and continue to fight and win in all circumstances."

The US imperialists schemed to isolate and encircle our resistance by means of extremely savage military actions combined with perfidious political and diplomatic manoeuvres aimed at holding in check and sowing division among certain socialist countries. In August 1972 in Georgetown, capital of the Republic of Guyana, the Conference of 59 non-aligned countries laid bare that design of Washington. It solemnly recognized the legitimate

place of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in the great family of non-aligned countries and refused to recognize the representatives of the Saigon and Phnom Penh puppet administrations.

The heavy military and political setbacks it suffered in Viet Nam and Indochina and its isolation in the international arena drove the Nixon administration into an extremely critical situation at home: devaluation of the dollar, increasing unemployment, aggravation of drug addiction and other social evils. The US ruling circles were profoundly divided. The prestige of the US in the world was going downhill.

At this juncture, the draft armistice agreement proposed by our government delegation at the Paris Conference on October 20, 1972 was a sudden blow to the White House. To gain more votes for the coming presidential elections, the Nixon-Kissinger group could not but agree to the basic content of the draft agreement which was in conformity with sentiment and reason. But they still nurtured many perfidious schemes. On the one hand, they promised to sign the Agreement on October 31, 1972, but on the other, they resorted to procrastination and delaying tactics, with a view to creating some favourable conditions which would help carry on the "Vietnamization of the war program once the ceasefire agreement was signed. They set up an airlift, the greatest in the history of the Indochina war, to

hastily introduce arms and munitions into South Viet Nam (*). They urged Thieu to prepare for a "campaign of presence" which consisted in encroaching on the liberated zones, planting puppet flags there and inviting the CIC to come and take note. They suppressed opponents belonging to the third force. At the same time they tried all possible means against the North including the use of the heaviest bombardments to force us to make concessions. Seeing through the Americans' design, on October 26, 1972 our government made public the draft agreement which had been reached by the two sides and was awaiting signature, so as to lay bare Washington's double dealing and to assert the results already obtained by our people at the Paris Conference. The draft agreement quickly became an effective weapon in the political struggle of our people, the American people and the world people.

As had been expected, Nixon, after his reelection, intended to abolish the fundamental points of the draft agreement. The Nixon-Kissinger clique ordered extermination bombing raids on Hanoi, Haiphong, and other localities by an important airforce composed of B52 strategic bombers, F.111s and other modern aircraft. This was a large-scale strategic surprise air-attack without precedent in

(*) While trying to put off the signing of the agreement the US imperialists massively introduced into South Viet Nam six billion dollars' worth of weapons and war means (UPI, March 6, 1973), and hastily transferred US military bases in South Viet Nam to the Saigon administration.

the history of war.⁴² Over a period of twelve days — December 18-29, 1972 — the US imperialist dropped 100,000 tons of bombs (40,000 tons on Hanoi) the equivalent of five atomic bombs of the kind dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. By so doing the White House leaders hoped to strike terror into the Vietnamese people, bring pressure to bear upon them and create a position of strength on the battlefield and at the conference table.

Under the firm and timely leadership of our Party and Government, the armed forces and people of the North and especially of Hanoi meted out due punishment to the US imperialists. In those twelve days and nights we shot down 81 US planes among them 34 B52s and 5 F.111s. Hanoi alone brought down 30 aircraft among them 23 B52s and 2 F.111s. Many aircraft were downed on the spot. During the second US war of destruction — from April to December 1972 — the armed forces and people of the North had shot down nearly 700 US aircraft including 54 B.52s and 10 F.111s, and had sunk and set afire many US war vessels. (*)

(*) "Never has the US B.52 force met with such an effective air-defence system and lost such a great number of aircraft in such a short period of time." (AFP, 31-12-1972).

"The USAF possesses 200 B 52s but only 140 are operational. Military observers in Washington estimated that at the present tempo, the US will have lost all its B 52s in three months' time". (Reuter, 29-12-72).

"North Viet Nam's terrible anti-aircraft network has compelled the US to pay high price, which could not be paid indefinitely. If B 52s were sent into a series of raids

The great victories of our armed forces and people throughout the country in 1972, the heavy defeats suffered by the US imperialists in its "Vietnamization of the war" policy in the South and the destructive war against the North along with their setbacks on the Cambodian and Lao battlefields — all these, in the end, compelled the US government to sign in Paris, an *Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet Nam* on January 27, 1973.

The Paris Agreement stipulates that *the US imperialists must end its aggressive war in Viet Nam, withdraw all the troops of the US and its satellite countries from South Viet Nam, undertake to respect the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights namely independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity; as well as the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination; put an end to its military involvement and intervention in the internal affairs of South Viet Nam, recognize the existence in South Viet Nam of two administrations, two armies, two zones of control and three political forces.*

Then on March 2, 1973 an International Conference on Viet Nam was held in Paris by twelve

over North Viet Nam and suffered each time losses at that rate, one need not be a mathematical genius to calculate that in the end the US would lose all of its B 52s." (*Newsweek*, 8-1-1973).

"The victory of Viet Nam is an incomparable example of the victory of the human intellect over machines." (*The Air War*, Cornell University Press, 1972).

government delegations from the Soviet Union, China, the United States, Great Britain, France, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the Republic of South Viet Nam, the Republic of Viet Nam (i.e. the Saigon puppet administration) and the four member countries of the International Commission of Control and Supervision of the implementation of the Paris Agreement namely Hungary, Poland, Indonesia, and Canada. The Conference approved an Act taking note of the Agreement and Protocols on Viet Nam and guaranteeing their strict and thorough implementation.⁴³

On March 29, 1973 the US Command in Saigon held a flag-furling ceremony. The last unit of the US expeditionary corps left South Viet Nam under the control of officers of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Republic of South Viet Nam in the Four party Joint Military Commission. On the same day, Colonel Audel, the last of the two million and a half US militarymen having come to invade South Viet Nam silently left Tan Son Nhut airport, with his head bent, thus putting an end to the presence of foreign invaders on our soil for 115 years since the French began their conquest of our country in 1858.

The victory of our resistance against US aggression marked an extremely important turning point in our history. In its January 28, 1973 appeal the Central Committee of our Party pointed out:

"This is the very great victory of the most glorious war of resistance in the history of our people's struggle against foreign aggression.

... This is also the victory of the peoples of the Indochinese countries united in the struggle against the common enemy.

This victory of the Vietnamese people is also one of epochal significance for the forces of socialism, national independence, democracy and peace, for the freedom- and justice-loving people all over the world."

In late January 1973, the Party Central Committee and the Government received numerous messages of greetings from all over the world. The world's people highly praised the heroic Vietnamese people for having defeated US imperialism, the world gendarme and the common enemy of mankind.

The great victory of our people's resistance against US aggression are due to the following factors:

1. First of all, the Vietnamese revolution is led by our Party, a Marxist-Leninist Party, united, of one mind and steeled in revolutionary struggle. Our Party knows how to foster every factor of victory and bring into play national, democratic and socialist forces; it has a firm grasp of revolutionary violence, possesses a correct line and methods of revolutionary offensive, firmly maintains its independence and sovereignty and unceasingly strengthens international solidarity.

2. The victory of our resistance against US aggression is a victory of the patriotism, indomitable fighting spirit, glorious tradition of struggle against foreign aggression of a nation deeply imbued

with this truth "*Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom.*"

3. The victory of our patriotic war of resistance originates from the strength of the socialist regime of the North. This is the strength of a new social regime which, having abolished oppression and exploitation, is building a happy free-from-want life, ceaselessly strengthening its economic and defence potential, creating conditions for the North to fulfil its role as the common base of the revolution in the whole country and the great rear area for the great fighting front in the South.

4. The victory of our resistance is a victory for the militant solidarity of the people of the three Indochinese countries. This solidarity is a firm support for the people of each country in the struggle to win back and consolidate national independence and to contribute to the revolutionary cause of the peoples of all countries and to the safeguarding of peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world.

5. The victory of our people is inseparable from the international sympathy, support and assistance for our just cause. Thanks to our independence in line and policy and our efforts to achieve the utmost international solidarity, we have in all circumstances, favourable and unfavourable, benefited from the support and help of the brotherly socialist countries, the international communist and workers' movements, the national liberation movement, peace- and justice-loving people all over the world including

progressive Americans. In this support and help, the part of the Soviet Union, China and the other brother socialist countries is of extreme importance.

NEW STAGE OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE'S
REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE: TO COMPLETE
THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVO-
LUTION IN THE SOUTH, TO STRIVE TO CARRY
OUT SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION
IN THE NORTH

The victory of our patriotic struggle against US aggression ushers in a new period in the history of our revolution. *For the first time in 115 years no aggressive foreign troops remain on our soil.*

Since our country was invaded by the French colonialists, the Vietnamese revolution has known great developments: 1. The August 1945 Revolution gave power to the people in all the country; 2. The protracted war of resistance defeated the French colonialist aggressors, and French old-type colonialism; 3. The land reform overthrew the feudal landlord class which had ruled for centuries and carried into effect the slogan: "Land to the tillers"; 4. The socialist revolution and the building of socialism abolished the exploitation of man by man in the North; 5. The patriotic war of resistance against American aggression defeated the US imperialists'

neo-colonialism thus contributing to the opening of a period of disintegration of neo-colonialism in the world.

The long resistance against American aggression was the most arduous and complicated stage of the people's national democratic revolution in Viet Nam. In the past whenever the imperialists were driven out of our country, their henchmen would collapse. This time though the Americans have got out of our country, the puppets have not yet been toppled. The American imperialists have had to withdraw from our country, but national liberation and the people's national democratic revolution in the South have not yet been completed. However we can say that after driving out half a million US and satellite troops, the Vietnamese revolution in general and the South Vietnamese revolution in particular have grown up in strength and prestige and now benefit from more favourable conditions for fulfilling the task of completing the people's national democratic revolution in all the country and achieving peaceful national reunification.

After the signing of the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam the US policy in Viet Nam consisted mainly in "Vietnamizing the war" in the new circumstances, practising the "Nixon doctrine", continuing to use the Saigon puppet administration as the instrument of neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam, and prolonging the division of our country. The US imperialists strove to build up the puppet administration and army and hoped to win victory through applying

this formula: puppet army plus US advisers and aid.

Of course, they could not realize their scheme. In South Viet Nam there exist two zones of control, two armies, two administrations and three political forces. The prestige of the South Viet Nam Provisional Revolutionary Government has not ceased growing in the world. "The summit Conference of about 80 non-aligned countries held in Algiers in September 1973 recognized the Republic of South Viet Nam as an official member of the movement of non-aligned countries, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government as the only genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people. After the Paris Agreement the Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodian revolutions have developed in a favourable way. The liberated areas of the three Indochinese countries lean on one another, forming a single large area favourable to the revolution in all three countries.

Our Party's view is that the principal enemy of the South Vietnamese revolution in this new stage is US imperialism and the ruling clique of bureaucratic, militarist and fascist comprador bourgeois who are zealous henchmen of the Americans and represent the interests of the most reactionary pro-American comprador bourgeois and feudal landowners in South Viet Nam. US imperialism is the mastermind and the prop of the puppet administration. The ruling clique of bureaucratic, militarist and fascist comprador bourgeois is the effective instrument for the US imperialists to implant their

neo-colonialism, the direct enemy that the South Vietnamese revolution has to overthrow.

The fundamental task of the revolution in the South is to *carry on the people's national democratic revolution, unite the entire people in the struggle against US imperialism, the comprador bourgeoisie and the feudal landlord class, bring to completion the people's national democratic revolution, direct the spearhead of struggle at US imperialism and its zealous lackey, the bureaucratic, militarist and fascist comprador bourgeois in power in the enemy controlled areas, repel and defeat the enemy step by step, with a view to eventually abolishing the puppet administration and the neo-colonialist regime, establishing a genuine national and democratic power, achieving national concord completely breaking free of dependence on the United States, building a peaceful, independent, democratic, neutral and prosperous South Viet Nam, and advancing toward peaceful national reunification.*

The immediate task of the South Vietnamese revolution is to *unite the entire people, carry out the struggle on three fronts — political, military and diplomatic — with initiative and flexibility, combine these three aspects of the struggle according to place and circumstance so as to force the enemy to strictly implement the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, ceaselessly maintain and develop the revolutionary forces in all aspects, defeat the enemy step by step, keep the initiative in all circumstances, and cause the South Vietnamese revolution to forge ahead.*

Since the signing of the Paris Agreement the South has not known a single day of peace. The US and Thieu have concentrated their forces and resorted to all military, political, economic and psycho war schemes and manoeuvres. Relying on "pacification" and encroachment as their foremost strategic measures they hope to destroy the liberated zones, the people's liberation armed forces and the people's power, consolidate their administration and army, finally to destroy the fruits of the revolution as well as the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and place the whole of South Viet Nam under the yoke of US neo-colonialism.

Facing this situation the South Vietnamese people reserve for themselves the right to fight for self-defence, safeguard the fruits of the revolution and protect the liberated zone, while forcing the adversary to implement the Paris Agreement. On October 15, 1973 the Command of the Liberation Armed Forces (LAF) ordered the liberation armed forces throughout South Viet Nam to resolutely counter all acts of war of the Saigon administration, at any place and using all appropriate measures. In implementation of this order, the LAF not only intercepted enemy "pacification" and encroachment operations in a resolute way but also attacked enemy troops right at their starting bases. The fighting efficiency of the three categories of troops was raised. The liberation regulars fully played their role as a strike force in counter-pacification and counter-encroachment campaigns, closely coordinating their actions with those of the regional

revolutionary forces and created favourable conditions for them to liberate more people and win sovereignty for them.

The liberated zone was firmly maintained, consolidated and expanded. Production developed and the people's life was gradually improved. In the plains, in many places the people's living standard was higher than in areas still under Saigon control. In regions inhabited by minority nationalities, the living standard was visibly raised. There was an adequate supply of necessities such as salt, fabric and medicines. Traffic was ensured on strategic communication lines and travel time was greatly reduced.

In the liberated zone, under people's power national democratic politics, economy and culture developed. The three categories of liberation armed forces did not cease growing up; they stood firm in all important strategic areas and firmly maintained the initiative. Our Southern compatriots' spiritual and political unity was ever greater.

Starting from early 1974, the movement in the cities has known important developments. Townspeople and, in general, people in enemy-controlled areas have become ever more aware of the enemy's new schemes and have heightened their vigilance accordingly. They demand the immediate overthrow of the Thieu administration as well as the whole bellicose, dictatorial and fascist regime subservient to the US.

The Thieu administration's repeated military setbacks, economic difficulties, and policy of subjection

to the United States, as well as its attempts to sabotage the Paris Agreement, prolong the war, intensify its fascist oppression, plunder and exploitation of the people... have led this tool of neo-colonialism into an all-embracing and deep crisis. On December 13, 1974 an enlarged session of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation thus assessed the situation: "The just struggle of our people has achieved ever greater successes and will certainly win final victory. This is an ineluctable trend which no reactionary scheme or force could reserve."

Though military clashes are still going on in the South, in the North peace has been restored. This peace has been made possible after the North, together with the people in all the country, had broken the aggressive will of the United States. This is a very important fact. Nowadays the US imperialists and their agent have not yet renounced their design of aggression against the North, yet the setbacks suffered by the US in Viet Nam and the weakening of the US after its aggressive war there have driven it one step further towards bankruptcy. In the new stage, we are able to rebuild our country and make it more prosperous and beautiful.

By 1974, 20 years have passed since the North entered the period of transition to socialism. But the time spent on peaceful construction only totals about eight years. As the North is advancing directly to socialism by — passing the stage of capitalist development, and her economy, characterized mainly by small production, has been heavily ravaged by war,

difficulties are inevitably numerous, the greatest being the weakness of the material and technical basis and the low labour productivity. The rate of population growth is fairly high whereas total social production has increased but slowly: The national income is almost stationary and there is no internal accumulation. However, we have fundamental favourable factors: our people are industrious, courageous, intelligent, inventive, devoted body and soul to the Party, and inspired by great revolutionary enthusiasm after the victory of the patriotic resistance against US aggression, for national salvation. We possess abundant manpower and a fair contingent of scientific and technical cadres. We possess a wide range of natural resources and immense areas of land have remained untilled. We receive help in many fields from the Soviet Union, China and the other brother socialist countries. We are in a position to intensify economic, scientific and technical cooperation with the brother socialist countries and extend economic and technical relations with other countries. Our Party has been steeled in struggle and has a sound revolutionary line. Under the leadership of our Party, our people have defeated US imperialism and will no doubt succeed in building socialism.

The tasks and orientation for post-war economic rehabilitation and development were worked out at the 22nd Plenum of the Party Central Committee in late 1973. The Plenum made a thorough analysis of the serious effects of the US aggressive war on our country and pointed out that they were the

main cause of the low level of production, the slow development of our economy, and the difficulties in our people's life. It also pointed out the shortcomings in leadership, guidance and management. The slowness in rectifying these shortcomings was at the origin of the slackness in economic and social management, which engendered negative aspects in social life.

The plenum concluded: "*In the new stage, the general task of the North is to unite the entire people, struggle for the maintenance of peace, strive to carry on socialist industrialization, give a strong impetus to the triple revolution, take the North quickly, vigorously and firmly to socialism; closely combine economy with national defence, heighten vigilance, stand ready to foil every scheme of the US imperialists and their puppets; exert every effort to fulfil its duty in the struggle to complete independence and democracy in the South and advance toward peaceful national reunification: fulfil its internationalist duty to the Lao and Cambodian revolutions.*"

To carry this task into effect, the Party Central Committee approved a plan for economic rehabilitation and development in 1974-1975. The tasks to be fulfilled in these two years are part of the initial stage of socialist industrialization in the North and are aimed at the following:

1. Mobilize and organize the social labour force in production and construction, take full advantage of the economic potentialities, boost production and practise thrift. Make the level of production of every

economic branch and unit at least equal to the highest level reached in 1965 and 1971. Strive to increase quickly the gross national product and national income. See to it that by 1975 national income will be sufficient to cover social expenditure and by 1976 accumulation will begin. Satisfactorily ensure assistance to the revolution in the South.

2. Further consolidate and perfect the socialist relations of production in both the State and collective sectors; do away with the negative aspects in economic and social life.

3. Strengthen Party leadership in State management, rectify managerial work from central to grass-roots levels, solve immediate problems while preparing for long-term economic and cultural development.

The rehabilitation and development of our socialist economy are being carried out while a fierce national and class struggle is proceeding in the South. The impact of this bitter struggle on the North is felt in many aspects. Therefore, in the spirit of the resolution of the plenum, the whole Party and the entire people must heighten their revolutionary vigilance and stand ready to cope with any eventuality. However, construction must not be neglected. On the contrary, the people in the North must avail themselves of peace to engage vigorously in economic rehabilitation, heal the wounds of war, develop economy and culture, build the material and technical basis of socialism, combine economy and national defence, strengthen the economic and military potentialities of our country, stabilize the

people's life, give adequate assistance to the revolution in the South, while fulfilling their internationalist duty to the Lao and Cambodian revolutions.

In the light of the Resolution of the 22nd plenum of the Party Central Committee, the working class, collective peasantry, socialist intelligentsia all over North Viet Nam have worked hard to liquidate the aftermath of war, restore and develop agriculture, industry, communications and transport, capital construction, etc.

In 1973, though the gross national product was a bit higher than in 1965, the number of State employees had greatly increase, the consumption of raw materials was high, labour productivity was about two-thirds that in 1965, and the gross national income was lower than the 1965 figure.

In 1974 things were better. There were two successive bumper rice crops. The production of paddy surpassed the State plan target by 8% and the 1973 figure by 21.4%. Thai Binh province obtained 7 tons of paddy per hectare. Many other provinces in the plain obtained high yields. Many more cities, towns, districts and cooperatives reaped 5 tons per hectare. A number of cooperatives attained 10 tons/ha.

New progress was made in building the material and technical basis of agriculture. The collective peasantry exerted every effort to restore and improve the water control network, fill up bomb craters in ricefields, restore and build more seed-supplying and animal breeding stations and farms, reclaim virgin land, build new economic areas, carry out

afforestation and so on. Attention was given to the consolidation of agricultural cooperatives. In many cooperatives land was better managed, illegally used land retrieved, and an end put to wasteful use of land. The campaign to reorganize agricultural production and improve agricultural management in the direction of large-scale production was launched in a number of districts and cooperatives. Congresses of collective peasantry were held in many localities. Millions of co-op peasants enthusiastically contributed precious ideas about agricultural production and the (detailed) draft rules concerning higher-level agricultural cooperatives.

As regards industrial production, in 1974, the total value of industrial and handicraft output exceeded the State plan target by 4% and the 1973 figure by 15%.

Coal mining, though failing to reach the pre-war production level, surpassed the State plan target by 12% in production and 8% in earth-moving work. The quantity of coal supplied to industry, agriculture and export considerably increased over the previous years. The production of electricity exceeded the State plan target by 2% and the 1965 figure by 66%. The mechanical engineering branch saw the value of its output doubled compared with the pre-war period. There was a considerable increase in the production of such important items as metal-cutting machines, electric motors, small tractors and others. Six new mechanical engineering plants were put into operation. A number of large mechanical engineering plants, nitrogenous fertilizer

plants and textile mills were being built. Small industry and handicrafts with great possibilities in producing consumer goods were restored and developed to a higher level than before the war.

With regard to communications and transport, the total volume of transported goods in 1974 rose by 30% over 1973 and 60% over 1974. Many ports and roads were restored rapidly. May bridges which had been destroyed by the enemy were repaired. Construction was started of some important bridges. Workers and soldiers joined forces in clearing mines and dredging channels leading into ports; high-tonnage vessels can now sail in and out easily.

However, shortcomings and weaknesses were committed in economic rehabilitation and development. The results obtained in the execution of our plans failed to meet the increasing demands of the national economy. The needs for many kinds of materials and commodities were not fully met whereas great potentialities were not fully exploited. Economic management improved but slowly. The State plan failed to reflect a good application in the North of the economic law of socialism which is to *progress from small production to large-scale socialist production*. In some places, there were still manifestations of a lack in the sense of responsibility, discipline and organization in implementing directives, resolutions, rules and regulations and striving for State plan targets. There were even cases of violation of the law and infringing State and collective property. Bureaucracy, lack of democracy, and slackness in economic management and in the

maintenance of order and security were not resolutely overcome.

Generally speaking, agricultural and industrial production in 1974, in some important aspect, reached and even surpassed the figures of 1965 and 1971, the two peak years of economic development in twenty years of socialist construction in North Viet Nam. The people's life was stabilized and gradually improved. The progress made by the North proved the soundness of the resolution of the 22nd plenum of the Party Central Committee, the first important resolution concerning the rebuilding of our country after our victory over US aggression (*).

(*) In the South, countering the policy of war which the US imperialists and their henchmen continued to practise in flagrant violation of the Paris Agreement, the people and liberation armed forces, combining armed struggle with political struggle, dealt severe blows at the puppet military and police machine in 1973 and 1974. The Nguyen Van Thieu regime was bogged down in a political and economic quagmire while its armed forces were demoralized. But instigated by Washington, Thieu pursued his policy of war and repression against the people. In early 1975 fired by their victories, the people and liberation armed forces of the South, launched a military offensive in concert with popular uprisings which, in less than two months, led to spectacular successes: liberation of Tay Nguyen, then of Hue and Da Nang, finally of Saigon and the whole of South Viet Nam. On May 1, 1975 the entire Vietnamese nation, from North to South, celebrated its complete liberation. The whole neocolonialist structure built by the USA more than twenty years had collapsed. For the first time since 1858 national independence was totally regained.

(Translator)

President Ho Chi Minh said: "Once victory is won, our people will rebuild their country and make it ten times more prosperous and beautiful." Our people have fulfilled President Ho Chi Minh's recommendation concerning the defeat of US imperialism. We are convinced that our people will certainly carry into effect his behest on national reconstruction. Our Party which has led the war of resistance against US aggression to victory in very difficult and complex conditions will no doubt satisfactorily lead our people in economic rehabilitation and development, cultural growth and national reconstruction.

CONCLUSION

On February 3, 1975, our Party is exactly forty-five years old. Tremendous changes have taken place in the world and in our country over the past forty-five years. Our Party and people have also grown up tremendously. Forty-five years ago, our people were suffering under the colonial and feudal yoke of slavery, leading a life of humiliation and obscurity. President Ho Chi Minh said:

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

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*,

(*) 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 has become the firm leader of the extremely arduous 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 achievements of our Party:

1. Our Party has always taken a firm working class stand and shown absolute loyalty to the interests of the class and the nation; it *has creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country and worked out correct lines and policies* so as to lead the Vietnamese revolution from victory to victory. It has ceaselessly combated the reformist tendencies of the bourgeoisie and the adventurism of the petty bourgeoisie in the national movement; the "left" phraseology of the Trotskyites in the workers' movement; and the right and "left" deviations within the Party at each stage. The Party's lines and policies embody the basic interests of the broad masses, hence they are actively supported by the masses. This has enabled our Party to win and hold leadership of the revolution in the whole country and to crush all attempts by the national bourgeoisie to contend with it for leadership.

2. Guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, our Party has realized that in an agrarian country such as ours, the peasants are not only a great revolutionary force in the people's national democratic revolution but also a great force in the socialist revolution. Peasants and workers form the main force of the revolution. Therefore, at each stage of the revolution, our Party has on the whole, firmly grasped and

correctly solved the peasant question, and *constantly strengthened the worker-peasant alliance*. Our Party's activities and the revolutionary movement in our country have 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 toiling people, fulfil the historical mission of the national democratic revolution and advance to socialism" (*)

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, and carry 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 lay stress solely on unity, unity without struggle within the front, without resolutely opposing attempts to belittle the Party's leading role, to belittle the position of workers and peasants, the foundation of the national united front.

4. In the struggle against the enemy of the class and the nation, our Party *has made use of revolutionary violence to meet counter-revolutionary*

(*) Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Writings* — p. 329.

violence, and has mobilized the masses in uprising and revolutionary war to seize power and defend the people's power. At each stage, our Party has based itself on concrete situations to work out appropriate forms of struggle; it has made use of and *cleverly combined various forms of armed struggle and political struggle* to overthrow the enemy and 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 guerilla militia or self-defence militia. Those forces, together with the political forces of the masses (i.e. the political organizations in the national united front) closely combine armed struggle with political struggle to overthrow all enemies.

5. After winning power for the people, our Party constantly concerns itself with *the strengthening and consolidation of political power*, making use of it, on the one hand, to repress the counter-revolutionaries, maintain public order and security, mobilize and organize the 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 striving 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 historical mission of the worker-peasant dictatorship in the stage of people's national democratic revolution and fulfilling the historical 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 precisely because it knows how to link the revolutionary movement in the country to 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 is committing aggression against our country) and the liberation movement of the oppressed people 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.

★

In short, the history of forty-five years of 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 fascists 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 Southeast Asia, to wage a long resistance war and defeat the French colonialist aggressors, to bring to our people the honour of having defeated old-style colonialism, to complete the people's national democratic revolution and proceed to the socialist revolution and the building of socialism in the North, and at the same time it has been leading the entire people in the resistance to defeat US imperialism, the world's gendarme, the common enemy of our people and mankind, bringing to our people the honour of defeating the neo-colonial aggressive war of American imperialism.

How many communist and patriotic martyrs have "braved death 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, wave upon wave, 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 still has to lead the entire people in the fight to win total victory over the US aggressors, to overthrow the

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

ruling clique of bureaucratic, militarist, and fascist comprador bourgeoisie, devoted henchmen of American imperialism, fulfil the task of national liberation, complete the people's national democratic revolution in the South and bring about the peaceful reunification of the country. At the same time, our Party has to lead our working class and people to build socialism successfully in a backward agricultural country, by-passing the stage of capitalist development. On the basis of those achievements, the Party will lead the entire people to build successfully a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

With full confidence and pride, let our whole Party, our entire army and our entire people close their ranks, bring into full play the revolutionary heroism and the fine traditions of our nation, overcome all hardships and sacrifices, resolutely carry into effect the correct lines and policies of the Party, and take the ever-victorious banner of President Ho Chi Minh to the final goal!

PUBLISHER'S NOTES

1. Most representative were the insurrections in Nam Ky, the part of the country which was first occupied by the French and where the people launched the first insurrections against the invaders, such as those led by Truong Cong Dinh (1859-1864) in Go Cong-Tan An and his son Truong Cong Quyen (1864-1868) in Tay Ninh; the insurrection by Nguyen Trung Truc (1867-1868) in Hon Chong (Rach Gia province), etc.

2. For example :

a) The *Can Vuong* movement led by patriotic scholars sprung from the feudal class: Phan Dinh Phung with the Huong Son insurrection in Nghe Tinh (1885-1895), Tong Duy Tan with the Ba Dinh insurrection in Thanh Hoa (1885-1892), Nguyen Thien Thuat with the Bai Say insurrection in Hung Yen (1885-1889).

b) The peasants' movement of which the most outstanding example was the Yen The insurrection led by Hoang Hoa Tham (1887-1913).

c) The "Renovation" campaigns in the early 20th century marked by Dong Du (Go East) and Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc movements, the Nam Ngai movement against taxation... were launched by people with bourgeois democratic tendencies such as Phan Boi Chau, Luong Van Can, Tran Qui Cap and others. The 1923-1926 patriotic movement the core of which was made up of young petty bourgeois intellectuals active in such organizations as Phuc Viet (Restoration of Viet Nam) (1925); Thanh Nien (Youth)...

d) The Workers' struggle movement (1925-1929).

3. Nam Ky was a colony, Bac Ky, half colony and half protectorate, and Trung Ky, a "protectorate".

4. Before that date, in March 1929, the Bac Ky Party Committee had founded a 7-member party cell in Hanoi, the first to be set up.

5. Mainly active in Trung Ky.

6. In 1929, the total number of workers in various branches of activity in Viet Nam was about 220,000.

7. The uprising broke out in the small hours of February 9, 1930. Its failure led to the breaking up of the Nationalist Party, which had launched it, and at the same time, ended the role of the petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie as leaders of the revolution in Viet Nam.

8. The Congress was held from March 27 to 31, 1935 with the participation of representatives from North, Central and South Viet Nam and from Laos. It elected a 9-member Central Committee with Comrade Le Hong Phong as Secretary General.

9. There were *L'Avant-garde*, *Le Peuple*, *Viet Dan*, *Pho Thong*, *Lao Dong Moi*, *Dan Chung* in Nam Ky; *Nhanh Lua*, *Kinh Te*, *Dan* in Trung Ky; *Le Travail*, *Rassemblement*, *En Avant*, *Notre Voix*, *Ha Thanh Thoi Bao*, *Doi Nay*, *Ban Dan*, *Tin Tuc*, *Ngui Moi*, *The Gioi* in Bac Ky.

10. Communist groups working in the open such as *Tin Tuc* (in Hanoi), *Dan Chung* (in Saigon) were arrested. All progressive periodicals and books were banned. Friendship associations were closed down and their property confiscated.

11. The Conference was held in Hoc Mon — Ba Dien in Gia Dinh (Nam Ky).

12. Led by the Lang Son Provincial Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party.

13. Advocated by the Nam Ky Regional Party Committee.

14. This mutiny was commanded by Sergeant Nguyen Van Cung and was neither led by the Party nor supported by the masses.

15. The Conference was held in Yen Vien and Dinh Bang (Bac Ninh province).

16. The first platoon of the National Salvation Army was formed on February 14, 1941 in Khuoi Noi forest (Lang Son province); the second, on September 15, 1941, in Khuon Manh forest (Thai Nguyen) and the third, on February 25, 1944, in Khuoi Lich forest (Tuyen Quang).

17. This was the first time our Party's leader personally presided over a conference of the Party Central Committee held in the territory of our country.

18. At that time, although in these three provinces preparations for insurrection had already been made, conditions were not yet ripe for a nation-wide insurrection. Therefore, if the insurrection was launched prematurely, the French colonialists would be able to concentrate their forces to suppress it.

19. Because of its failure to grasp the general situation in the country, the local Party Committee launched the insurrection prematurely and it was fiercely suppressed by the enemy.

20. The brigade was founded on the personal instructions of Comrade Ho Chi Minh, with the motto: "Political struggle is more important than military action", according to which various forms of armed struggle were used to prepare for the general insurrection.

21. For example in Ban Yen Nhan (Hung Yen), Bac Giang, Hoa Binh, Thai Nguyen, Nghia Lo, Son La, Quang Ngai, Buon Me Thuot, etc..

22. Owing to favourable topographical conditions, anti-Japanese bases were developed in Bac Ky and Quang Ngai (Trung Ky). Besides already existing resistance zones such as Cao Bac Lang, Thai Nguyen, Tuyen Quang, new ones were set up like Hien Luong in Phu Tho, Van Hoi in Yen Bai (June 1945), Quynh Luu in Ninh Binh (June 1945), the Fourth Resistance Zone in Dong Trieu and Chi Linh in Hai Duong (June 1945), Ba To (March 1945) and Vinh Son, Nui Lon (May 1945), in Quang Ngai. There were also resistance zones in the plain which rested on firm popular support, like Kim Son in Kien Thuy district (Kien An province), Bai Song in Van Lam, Yen My and Yen Hao districts (Hung Yen province).

23. It was held in Hiep Hoa (Bac Giang) with the participation of representatives from the Viet Bac and Hoa Ninh Thanh resistance zones. This was the first major military conference of the Party.

24. It also includes parts of Bac Giang, Vinh Yen, Phu Tho and Yen Bai provinces.

25. Seeing that conditions were ripe for the general insurrection, Comrade Ho Chi Minh recommended that a national conference of the Party be convened on August 13-15, 1945.

26. Prior to the insurrection in Hanoi (August 19, 1945), there had been uprisings to seize power in Tuyen Quang, Quang Nam, Bac Giang and Ha Tinh on August 17 and 18, 1945.

27. Gangs belonging to the Viet Nam Nationalist Party and the Viet Nam Revolutionary League with such ring-leaders as Nguyen Tuong Tam, Vu Hong Khanh, Nguyen Hai Than... quickly returned to the country in the wake of the Chiang Kai-shek troops and with their help occupied many places in Viet Tri, Phu Tho, Vinh Yen, Yen Bai, Lao Kai, Quang Yen, Hon Gai and Mong Cai.

28. There were then in Viet Nam about 300,000 Chiang Kai-shek, British, Indian, Japanese and French troops. For a century up to that time, Viet Nam had never been occupied by so many foreign armed forces.

29. Besides plundering our people's property by every possible means: forcing our people to supply them with foodstuffs, and use their currency, they demanded that our government reserve 80 seats in the National Assembly to the Nationalist Party (Viet Quoc) and the Revolutionary League (Viet Cach) and replace Communist ministers with their henchmen. They schemed to overthrow the revolutionary power, and turn the North of Indochina into a "colony" of the Chiang Kai-shek clique.

30. According to this treaty, the Americans and Chiang Kai-shek recognized French sovereignty in Indo-

china while France yielded some economic concessions to Chiang Kai-shek.

31. Typical was the French colonialists' scheme to have Viet Quoc and Viet Cach agents throw bombs into a French military parade scheduled for July 14, 1946. This would be used by the French as a pretext for engaging in provocations against the revolutionary power. But on July 12 the revolutionary power arrested almost all the reactionary ringleaders and refused to give permission for the parade.

32. In 938 Ngo Quyen routed the Southern Han army by having pointed stakes planted in the bed of the Bach Dang river against their war boats. This victory not only completely foiled the aggressive scheme of the Southern Han dynasty but also ushered in an era of lasting independence for Viet Nam. In 1288 also on this river Ngo Quyen's tactic was again applied by Tran Hung Dao in a creative manner in the resistance against the Yuan army. Within a single day (April 9) our army annihilated the whole enemy fleet, contributing to the defeat of the third invasion by the Yuan army and basically destroying the enemy's aggressive will. This victory not only safeguarded the independence of our country but also foiled the Yuan-Mongol imperialists' attempt to turn our country into a springboard for attacking other Southeast Asian countries.

33. The great victory over 100,000 Ming troops commanded by Lieu Thang at the Chi Lang pass (1427) forced the enemy to sue for peace and restored our country's national independence.

34. On January 5 of the lunar year Ky Dau (1789) King Quang Trung defeated the Ching aggressors' troops in Ngoc Hoi, Dong Da (in the area of present day Hanoi), winning national independence and reunification.

35. See *Vietnamese Studies* No 31

36.	-id-	No 1, 17, 23
37.	-id-	No 11
38.	-id-	No 23
39.	-id-	No 23

40. The Americans and their puppets concentrated 45,000 troops along Highway 9, turning it into a springboard to launch Operation "Lam Son 719" against Southern Laos. In 60 days and nights of fighting, the people's liberation armed forces annihilated 7,000 enemy troops, shot down or destroyed on the ground 234 aircraft, damaged 863 military vehicles (among them 286 tanks and armoured cars), and 72 heavy guns, sank 43 war vessels. See *From Khe Sanh to Tchepone*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1971.

41. For this war of destruction the US imperialists mustered:

- 200 B.52s (nearly half the strategic bomber force of the USA),

- 1,400 tactical aircraft (nearly one-third of the total number of tactical aircraft of the USA).

- over 60 war vessels of various kinds of the 7th Fleet.

It is worth noting that this time the Americans used war means that had been improved compared with their first war of destruction (1964-1968) like F.4 fighter-bombers, M.111 swing-wing aircraft and laser-guided bombs... They carried out fierce attacks night and day and spared no targets.

42. On Nixon's orders on some days the Americans flew as many as 140 B.52 sorties, this massive assault being combined with about 30 sorties by F.111 swing-wing aircraft and from 500 to 700 sorties by fighter aircraft.

43. See *Vietnamese Studies* No 39.

44. By October 6, 1973, 41 countries had recognized and established diplomatic relations with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, while the PRG had set up embassies in 38 countries and information halls in 3 more countries.

