TRƯỜNG-CHINH

SELECTED WRITINGS

HANOI – 1977

PROGRESSIVE BOOKS
12 BERRY STREET
LIVERPOOL 1
051 709 1905

TRƯỜNG-CHINH

SELECTED WRITINGS

TRƯỜNG-CHINH

SELECTED WRITINGS

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE
HANOI — 1977

CONTENTS

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

Preface 13

CHAPTER I. A Glorious Page in Our History 15

CHAPTER II. Tactics of the Vietnamese Communists in the August Revolution 26

CHAPTER III. The Good Points of the August Revolution 34

CHAPTER IV. The Weaknesses of the August Revolution. 41

CHAPTER V. Character and Significance of the August Revolution 49

CHAPTER VI. Prospects of the Vietnamese Revolution. 57

CHAPTER VII. The Urgent Tasks of the Vietnamese People 64

Conclusion 80

THE RESISTANCE WILL WIN

Preface 85

I — Whom Are We Fighting ? 88

II — Why Must We Fight ? 92

III — What Are We Fighting for ? 98

IV — The Character of Our Resistance 103

V — Military Resistance 107

VI — Political Resistance 114

VII — Economic Resistance 121

VIII — Cultural Resistance 128

IX — Characteristics of the War 134

X — The Three Stages of the Long-term Resistance. 141
XI — Our Difficulties and Those of the French 151
XII — Balance of Forces 158
XIII — What Is to Be Done? 165
XIV — Some Burning Problems in the Military Field. 173
XV — Launching the Militia Movement 186
XVI — Building the Armed Forces 191
XVII — Eliminating Erroneous Tendencies 195
XVIII — Mobilizing the Whole Population 203
Conclusion. 210

MARXISM AND VIETNAMESE CULTURE

I — Culture and Society 217
II — The Stand of Marxist Culture 224
III — Vietnamese Culture, Past and Present 234
IV — The Character and Mission of the New-Democracy Culture 264
V — The United Cultural Front and the National United Front 272
VI — Vietnamese Culture in the World Democratic Cultural Front 278
VII — Some Concrete Problems of Our Country's Present Literature and Art 283
Conclusion. 295

ON THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Part One **The World Situation and the Vietnamese Revolution** 301
I — The World after the Second World War and the Struggle to Safeguard Peace 301
II — The People's Democratic Movement in the World. 309
III — The National Liberation Movement in Colonial and Semi-Colonial Countries 315
Part Two **The Nature of Vietnamese Society and the Vietnamese Revolution** 323
I — The Nature of Vietnamese Society 323
II — The Vietnamese Revolution 342
Part Three **The Party's Policies** 379
Part Four **The Viet Nam Workers' Party** 433
I — Why Does Our Party Take the Name of Viet Nam Workers' Party? 433
II — What Is the Viet Nam Workers' Party? 436
III — Building, Strengthening and Developing the Party. 438
IV — President Ho Chi Minh, the Founder, Teacher and Leader of Our Party 447

THE PARTY'S POLICY CONCERNING THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT IMPLEMENTING THE LAND REFORM

I — Why Do We Have to Carry out Land Reform during the War of Resistance? 468
II — How to Abolish Imperialist and Feudalist Land Ownership in Our Country? 489
III — Distribute Land to the Peasants, Put the Slogan "Land to the Tillers" into Practice 508
IV — Implementation of the Land Reform Requires Mobilization of the Broad Masses of the People 519
V — To Strengthen the Party and Enhance Its Leadership in the Land Reform 539
Conclusion. 553

FORWARD ALONG THE PATH CHARTED BY KARL MARX

I — Karl Marx, a Dedicated Revolutionary, the Founder of Scientific Communism 560

II — How Has Our Party Applied Marxism-Leninism in Viet Nam? 581

III — Let Us March Forward under the Banner of Marxism-Leninism and Accomplish our Immediate Tasks with Glory 641

FOR THE CENTENARY OF LENIN'S BIRTH
ON THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL UNITED
FRONT AT PRESENT

I — To Mobilize and Unite All Anti-US Forces in the Country and the World to Defeat the US Aggressors. 718

II — Role and Character of the National United Front in the Present Stage of the Revolution 733

III — On the Immediate Tasks of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front. 749

SPEECH ON THE 85th ANNIVERSARY OF PRESIDENT
HO CHI MINH'S BIRTH (19 May 1975)
POLITICAL REPORT AT THE POLITICAL
CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL
REUNIFICATION, HELD IN HO CHI MINH CITY,
NOVEMBER 14 TO 21, 1975

I — The Long Struggle of the Vietnamese People for National Independence and Reunification 786

II — The Great Victory and Historic Turning Point. .. 793

III — Immediate Tasks of the Vietnamese Revolution .. 799

IV — The Substance and Objectives of Completion of National Reunification 805

V — The Urgent Problems to Be Solved with a View to National Reunification on the State Plane 812

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

PREFACE

to the 1946 Vietnamese edition

Dear readers,

This little book is a collection of articles published in the newspaper *Su That* (Truth) on the occasion of the first anniversary of the August Revolution. The articles have been revised and filled out. Some passages have been re-written.

Our only aim is to relate the history of the heroic struggle of our people, to submit it to a serious assessment, to determine the character and the significance of the August Revolution, to outline its future development and, lastly, to propose to our compatriots the immediate main tasks necessary to the realisation of national *independence, freedom* and *happiness.*

At the present time, there are people who have not lost a drop of sweat for the revolution, or who have acted and are acting as traitors, who try to deny the importance of the August Revolution. They pretend that our people did not have to struggle very hard and that power fell into their hands by "chance". In face of this reactionary point of view, we have only to recall the phases of our people's struggle in the Great National Salvation Movement against the Japanese Fascists as well as in the August General Insurrection of 1945. We stress particularly the leading role and organising work of the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh Front as well as their skilful tactics in the preparatory period leading up to the insurrection.

We outline the details of this path to salvation and way of building the country at this stage, *the glorious path mapped out for our people by President Ho Chi Minh,* the way to check the policy of

the French colonialists which is a policy of aggression and of successive encroachments in the military field, and of division and deception in the political one.

The August General Insurrection, like the Great National Salvation Movement against the Japanese fascists, was a struggle which had a variety of forms and was rich in content. This book does not pretend to contain the full story of its manifold experiences. We hope that the fighters in our revolutionary movement will draw further lessons from that treasury of experience and complement this book.

In any case, the following pages will be of some use if they succeed in strengthening the reader's faith in the success of the task of national liberation, and help him to understand his civic duties better, and to correctly understand the policy advocated by the communists in our country for the present period and the Marxist-Leninist methods of mobilizing the masses, adapted to the situation in Viet Nam.

The August Revolution was of a decisive character, but it was only the first great victory of the national liberation movement. We shall have to fight harder battles to safeguard our national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, to consolidate our democratic republican regime and to achieve total independence.

The struggle for national liberation is extremely hard, but it is sure to achieve complete victory. We firmly believe this and now invite the reader to review with us our recent heroic struggle so as to prepare for future struggles.

Hanoi, September 29, 1946
TRƯỜNG-CHINH

CHAPTER I

A GLORIOUS PAGE IN OUR HISTORY

THE HIGH TIDE OF THE ANTI-JAPANESE MOVEMENT

On March 9, 1945, the Japanese fascists swept the French colonialists out of the political arena in Indochina. In less than twenty-four hours the French colonialists laid down their arms and surrendered to the Japanese in all the main towns. Some French units scuttled to the frontiers. Others, in Cao Bang and Bac Can, made an attempt to cooperate with the *Liberation Army* in the fight against the Japanese fascists. In Bac Can, a "Franco-Vietnamese resistance committee against the Japanese fascists" was organized. But after a time, the French left us and fled to China[1]. It can be said that the French troops in Indochina did not resist the Japanese, and that the Resistance was solely our people's work.

On the very night of March 9, the Standing Bureau of the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party decided to launch a "Great National Salvation Movement

1. Although Major Reul in Cao Bang and Lieutenant Pontiche in Bac Can ordered their troops to cooperate with the Liberation Army, it was rather to avoid being disarmed by our forces than to carry on the struggle against the Japanese fascists. That was why they fled before waging even a single battle on our side.

against the Japanese Fascists"[1] at a meeting held at Tu Son (Bac Ninh province), about 20 km. from Hanoi.

The next day, in the Hoang Hoa Tham resistance zone (High and Middle Regions of northern Viet Nam), the guerrillas took isolated posts by storm, and disarmed a number of French soldiers and of Bao An[2] units to prevent their arms from falling into the hands of the Japanese; they attacked the Japanese troops moving along the roads from Tuyen Quang to Thai Nguyen and from Bac Can to Cao Bang provinces, harassed them even in the Bac Can provincial capital, and launched sudden attacks against their base at Cho Chu, etc... In northern and central Viet Nam, thousands of Japanese paddy stores were stormed by the people and their stocks of rice distributed to the poor. In this way the famine was relieved by revolutionary means. In Bac Giang, Thai Nguyen, Bac Can and other provinces, peasants rose up, seized and distributed land held by the Japanese and French.

Most of the attacks on paddy stores became armed parades and demonstrations. Armed Viet Minh militants addressed the masses at cross-roads and in market-places to win them over to the national cause. The illusion that the Japanese fascists could be useful to us, that they had come to free us, etc. was firmly dispelled among the masses and in the revolutionary ranks. In the main towns, picked units of the Viet Minh Front, operating under the noses of the Japanese troops, killed dangerous traitors and predatory Japanese

1. See directive of the Standing Bureau of the Indochinese Communist Party of 12 March 1945: "The Japanese - French clash and our action".

2. Bao An: puppet troops.

officers, sowing confusion and fear in the ranks of the Japanese fascists and their lackeys. Self-defence units or guerilla teams developed quickly everywhere. Everyone was in a fever to get hold of any kind of weapon so as to be ready to hurl himself at the enemy at the first opportunity. People's Revolutionary Committees were set up in the regions controlled by the guerillas. In other zones, Liberation Committees sprang up like mushrooms. They led the masses in the preparations for the general insurrection, and trained them in the exercise of power.

The Revolution was gaining incredible momentum. Pre-insurrectionary anticipation prevailed everywhere, arousing the enthusiasm of members of national salvation organizations and winning over even the wavering elements.

In April, the Revolutionary Military Conference of Bac Ky (northern Viet Nam) held in Hiep Hoa, Bac Giang, drew up a plan for unifying the people's armed forces, made preparations for the general insurrection, carried out local insurrections and set up the High Command of the Liberation Army in northern Viet Nam.

The free zone was officially established by decision of the conference of cadres from the six provinces of Cao Bang, Lang Son, Ha Giang, Bac Can, Tuyen Quang and Thai Nguyen, convened by the Viet Minh General Committee in June. It included the territory of these six provinces, and unified the various regions placed under the control of the revolutionary power.

The new Viet Nam came into being.

The people's revolutionary committees adopted forceful measures to suppress the various forms of oppression and

exploitation by the fascist militarists, break the colonialist chains and improve the people's living conditions. A part of northern Viet Nam was effectively controlled by the revolutionary power, and this situation provided the August General Insurrection with extremely favourable conditions at the outset.

From June onward, the Allied air forces launched massive attacks against Japan.

At the Potsdam Conference in July the Soviet Union decided to participate in the war against Japan. The Viet Minh General Committee, headed by Comrade Ho Chi Minh, speeded up the convening of the National Congress. But, because of difficulties of communications, the Congress could not be held in the liberated zone until August, at the very moment of the Japanese capitulation.

THE AUGUST INSURRECTION

On August 9, the Soviet Red Army launched a tempestuous attack on Manchuria, and within six days, the crack Japanese Kwantung Army was destroyed. The survivors surrendered.

This decisive victory of the Soviet Army sealed the fate of the Japanese fascists, and it was the Soviet Union that actually liberated all peoples subjected to Japanese oppression.

Japan's position became hopeless. It was then that the Communist Party, which was holding its National Congress at the time, decided to launch the general insurrection and to found the democratic republican regime in Viet Nam. The Viet Minh General Committee was set up immediately.

At the news of the imminent unconditional surrender of Japan, this Committee on the night of August 13 gave the order to launch the general insurrection.

The People's Congress was convened at Tan Trao village, Tuyen Quang province, in the free zone on the morning of August 16. More than 60 delegates from big and small nationalities and of all political convictions in our country, gathered in an atmosphere of friendship and great enthusiasm, approved the Viet Minh General Committee's order for general insurrection, decided upon the domestic and foreign policies of the revolutionary power, and appointed the National Committee for the Liberation of Viet Nam, i.e. the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

After many years of perilous peregrinations and clandestine activities, Comrade Ho Chi Minh appeared before the people's delegates for the first time.

Because the People's Congress opened immediately after the general insurrection order had been launched, it had to hold a "lightning" session to allow the delegates to return to their regions quickly and lead the decisive struggle together with the local militants. (In fact, some delegates bound for the Congress received the order to turn back as early as August 10).

During this historic Congress, the Indochinese Communist Party advocated an extremely judicious policy : *to lead the masses in insurrection in order to disarm the Japanese before the arrival of the Allied forces in Indochina ; to wrest power from the Japanese and their stooges, and finally, as the*

people's power, to welcome the Allied forces coming to disarm the Japanese troops stationed in Indochina.

In numerous places, the Viet Minh militants took advantage of the extreme confusion of the Japanese forces, who were conscious of their imminent defeat, and implementing the instructions given by the Communist Party on March 12, took the initiative to lead the people to rise up and seize power even before receiving the general insurrection order : from August 11 to 15, victorious insurrections took place in almost all provinces of Bac Bo and northern Trung Bo, in the rural areas of Quang Ngai, Khanh Hoa, (southern Trung Bo) and My Tho, Sa Đec (Nam Bo). Several Japanese posts in the vicinity of the free zone were overrun on August 14 and 15. On August 16, the news of the Japanese surrender began to spread rapidly. In all provinces, huge public meetings accompanied by armed demonstrations were held in the streets and along the roads. A great number of factories and public offices ceased work. The gold-starred red flag was seen waving everywhere. Many armed demonstrations were transformed into sudden attacks on Japanese posts. On August 17 and 18, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in Hanoi. A general political strike began. The Viet Minh delegates called on the masses to seize power. On August 19, the entire capital rose up. The Bao An troops and police detachments were sympathetic to the revolutionary forces. The insurrectional forces headed by vanguard detachments of youths and workers and led by Viet Minh cadres, stormed the palace where the Imperial Delegate had been residing. The latter had fled with his lackeys. The Viet Minh proclaimed the foundation of the provisional revolutionary

power. Faced with the irresistible growth of the revolutionary movement of the entire united nation and people, Bao Dai abdicated. The Tran Trong Kim puppet government surrendered. The Viet Minh General Committee sent their delegates to Hue to receive the king's abdication.

THE BIRTH OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

A few days later, almost all members of the National Committee for the Liberation of Viet Nam met in Hanoi. In conformity with the new situation, the Committee was re-formed to include some non-party personalities and constitute a provisional government of national union presided over by Ho Chi Minh. On August 29, 1945, a detachment of the Liberation Army from the resistance zone entered Hanoi and was hailed by the thunderous ovation of an enthusiastic crowd. On September 2, President Ho Chi Minh appeared before the people in Hanoi's Ba Dinh square, where 500,000 people gathered in a huge meeting to hear the first President of new Viet Nam read the Proclamation of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam to the Vietnamese people and to the world.

On September 23, a million of our compatriots demonstrated in the streets of Saigon-Cholon. The Nam Bo (southern Viet Nam) Administrative Committee was founded, and Vanguard Youth and militia units seized power in the provinces and united to form the revolutionary troops of the South of new Viet Nam.

In the cities and the rural areas, from the delta to the mountainous regions, People's Revolutionary Committees

were elected one after another and completely superseded the corrupt administrative machinery of mandarins and notables. Within less than fifteen days, the people's revolutionary administrative machinery had been established from the central to the local level.

The prison doors were opened and political prisoners and a number of common offenders were released by the revolutionary power; but traitors were punished. Poll-taxes were abolished. The former fiscal regime was gradually modified. Land rents were reduced by 25% and communal rice-fields distributed more equitably. The French industrial enterprises, in the hands of the Japanese since March 9, 1945, passed into the control of the new power and were temporarily managed by the workers. Democratic rights were proclaimed for all citizens and equality was to be practised regardless of nationality or sex. The democratic republican regime with a new democratic character, people's democracy, had been established. Vietnamese residents in Laos helped Lao patriots set up power for the Lao people.

The entire Vietnamese people rose up with inconceivable strength, did their utmost to break the yoke imposed by the Japanese fascists, and made determined progress. Side by side with the peoples of China and Korea, they marched in the vanguard of the liberation movement of the peoples in the Far East.

THE RESISTANCE IN NAM BO

People's power had hardly been established in Viet Nam when the British forces and those of the Chinese Kuomintang came to Indochina to disarm the Japanese troops on the

order of the Supreme Allied Command. The French colonialists in Indochina, who had surrendered to the Japanese, now relied on the British forces as they prepared feverishly to recover their former position.

The most active among the French colonialists were precisely those fascists of the Petain - Decoux clique who had formerly been the most zealous lackeys of the Japanese.

Armed and protected by the British forces, the French colonialists launched their attack and occupied Saigon on September 23. Our people replied by force of arms, and our heroic resistance began from that moment. Since that time, our compatriots in southern Viet Nam have endured hard trials and sacrifices, starting a liberation war which has enhanced the prestige of our people in the international arena and set a good example to the nations of the Far East.

The Dong Nai[1] land, once drenched with the blood of the colonialist aggressors when they landed in our country for the first time, has today become the strong bulwark of the Fatherland. Heroes such as Truong Cong Dinh, Nguyen Trung Truc, Nguyen Huu Huan and others sacrificed themselves to save the country nearly one hundred years ago, and continuing their tradition, their descendants are today in the vanguard of the fight for the freedom and independence of our people.

REMARKS

In reviewing the history of the August Revolution, some remarks should be made :

1. Dong Nai : name of a river in southern Viet Nam. Dong Nai land signifies Nam Bo (southern Viet Nam).

First of all, the triumph of the August Revolution was due to the two following subjective and objective conditions :

Subjective condition : our entire people were united around the Viet Minh Front which was led by the Indochinese Communist Party. The proletarian class exercised this leadership alone, without sharing it with any other class. This means that the revolutionary forces of our people were not scattered, that there were no rivalries or internal conflicts among them (except in some insignificant cases), and that at the decisive moment, they could be gathered under the leadership of a single organization to launch a direct and massive attack against enemy lines.

Objective condition : World War II created an extremely favourable opportunity for the Vietnamese people : the enemies of the Vietnamese revolution, the Japanese and French fascists, fought each other. After overthrowing the French, the Japanese were themselves defeated by the Soviet Red Army. That was enough for the Vietnamese people to be able to fell them with a single blow and to seize power.

Yet, however favourable the objective conditions may have been, they could not have led to triumph without good subjective conditions. That was a fact.

Besides, the August Insurrection was a real people's revolution. The Vietnamese people had to struggle against the Japanese fascists in valiant combat and with arms in their hands to regain their national independence. Immediately after this, they had to shed much blood to defend their freedom. It was by the August Revolution that the dictatorial fascist regime and the monarchy were overthrown and the democratic republican regime set up. Comrade Thorez said judiciously :

" History teaches us that a revolution has many particular features, the most important of which is the powerful uprising of the masses who take their fate into their own hands and pave the way to progress. " [1]

Was that an important characteristic of the August Revolution ? Certainly.

1. Maurice Thorez — *A French Policy.*

CHAPTER II

TACTICS OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS IN THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

MORE FRIENDS, FEWER ENEMIES

It is impossible to speak of the August Revolution without stressing the role of its leading core, the Indochinese Communist Party. The favourable circumstances alone were not enough to assure victory. A correct policy and appropriate tactics were also needed. The triumph of the general insurrection of August 19, 1945, was not due to mere chance.

From 1940, the Indochinese revolutionaries were facing two new facts: the world was torn by war, the Indochinese people were oppressed and exploited by the double yoke of the Japanese and French fascists. The national liberation policy advocated by the Viet Minh Front in the period sprang from these two factors.

The war threw the antagonism between the two belligerent camps into sharp relief. The double Japanese and French yoke united rich and poor, equally hurt and humiliated, in the same hatred and the same struggle against the common enemy. At the same time, the conflicting interests of the Japanese and French who ruled Indochina together, caused a violent collision between them. One of the main tactics adopted by the Indochinese Communist Party and the

Viet Minh Front in those years consisted in fully exploiting this situation.

Thus the foreign policy of the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh Front was based on the realization that anti-fascist forces throughout the world were allies of the Vietnamese people, and consequently the decision to side without reserve with the anti-fascist camp.

In its domestic policy, the Indochinese Communist Party organized the different strata of the people into a national liberation front, the Viet Minh Front. The programme of this Front assured the protection of human and civil rights and of property rights, respect for private property, democratic liberties, equality between nationalities and the sexes, with the aim of bringing about unity of the whole people against the Japanese and French fascists. In view of the concrete conditions of the revolution in Indochina, the Indochinese Communist Party, promoter and leader of the Viet Minh Front, left the watchword "agrarian revolution" out of its programme (deciding, for the present, not to confiscate land held by landlords), and this with a view to making a differentiation between types of landlords and winning a number of them over to the anti-imperialist cause, widening the united national front in the struggle for independence. This Front was to comprise workers, peasants, members of the petty-bourgeoisie and even the national bourgeoisie, and include patriotic parsonalities sprung from the landlord class.

Besides this, the Indochinese Communist Party paid particular attention to developing and consolidating the peasants' and workers' organizations to give a solid base to the national united front, and waged a determined struggle against pro-French and pro-Japanese traitors.

On the one hand, the Party fully exploited the contradictions between the two enemies of our people — the Japanese fascists and French colonialists in Indochina — to give the revolutionary movement a vigorous impulse and on the other hand, it tried every means to isolate the Japanese and French fascists.

When the fascists used repressive measures not only against Vietnamese revolutionaries but also against progressive democratic Frenchmen, the Party undertook to win over these French progressives to its cause, or at least to induce them to adopt a neutral attitude in order to increase its own forces in the struggle against the French and Japanese fascists. When the French had been overthrown by the Japanese and were no longer really dangerous enemies the Party strove to promote unity of action with every French element ready to struggle against the Japanese fascists.

In brief, the Party always kept its sights on the principal enemy, the "concrete immediate enemy" of the Revolution, doing its best to deprive the enemy of his supporters and to find new allies, never deviating from the aim of the national liberation revolution.

FLEXIBILITY OF TACTICS

The Party had correctly foreseen that the Japanese and French would inevitably come into conflict, and had decided to change its tactics at once should this happen and immediately launch the general insurrection.

After the coup d'état of March 9, 1945, the Party accordingly launched a vast guerilla movement to seize local power

and organized a main resistance base against the Japanese in an area in the highlands and midlands of northern Viet Nam. At the same time it changed its slogans and forms of propaganda, organization and struggle so as to mobilize the masses more easily and rapidly lead them towards insurrection.

At this time, the basic aim of propaganda consisted in unmasking the hypocrisy of the Japanese fascists and militarists and in destroying all illusions about the expediency of using the Japanese and cooperating with them with a view to obtaining "reforms" within the "framework of legality"... Such ideas only sowed confusion among the people about the Japanese and their lackeys.

The propaganda used at that time took the ordinary form of speeches in factories, schools, markets, and public thoroughfares and the formation of mobile shock teams who put up flags, banners and posters and distributed revolutionary literature.

A higher form of propaganda was "armed propaganda" including armed demonstrations and guerilla activities.

As for agitation work, it dealt with the vital problem for the masses — checking famine — by leading the masses in the seizure of Japanese rice stocks; these actions could be transformed into armed demonstrations when the situation called for it.

The general form of struggle was the armed demonstration. A higher form used at this time was guerilla activity wherever the topography of the country was favourable, and yet another was the elimination of traitors in town and country by special squads.

"Provisional organizations" were used with great skill to set up local power; national-salvation and combat self-defence groups and militia guerilla teams or squads were organized and developed.

The general organizational forms at that moment were the national-salvation associations and the national-salvation and combat self-defence groups.

The higher forms were the Viet Nam National Liberation Committee — that is, the Provisional Government; the People's Revolutionary Committees, and the Liberation Committees; these Committees had an administrative, political and military character (a pre-governmental character, that is), worked in a specific period, parallel to the local administrative organisms founded by the Japanese, and were transformed into local official administrative organizations after the general insurrection; and lastly, the National Insurrection Committee, the Action Committee for each part of the country or each locality during the decisive hours, etc.

In brief, the tactics of the Party from March to August 1945 had the following characteristics:

First: to exploit the situation created by the Japanese coup de force (March 9, 1945) fully and at the correct time, in order to lead the masses immediately to new forms of struggle and organization of a higher level, to abandon old methods, not to sit back with arms folded in face of the new situation, in other words, to know the importance of:

"Bringing to the fore precisely those forms of struggle and organization which are best suited to the conditions prevailing at a given moment during the ebb or flow of the movement and which therefore can facilitate and ensure the progress

of the masses to the revolutionary positions, of the millions to the revolutionary front, and their disposition on that front."[1]

In fact, forms of struggle such as armed propaganda, demonstrations followed by displays of force, sudden attacks against isolated posts and even some district centres in the delta and midlands, suppression of zealous agents of the Japanese fascists, organization of people's militia units even outside guerilla zones, etc., were so many bold actions showing the flexible character of the Party's tactics. These tactics sowed confusion in the enemy ranks, developed the spirit of struggle and the initiative of the masses, won over the waverers and rapidly spread the movement for national salvation all over the country.

Second: in any given situation, to determine the fundamental task requiring immediate fulfilment in order to concentrate on accomplishing it at any cost, because this is the best way of advancing the movement.

The Japanese coup of March 9, 1945, broke out when the famine was causing frightful ravages among the population. Hundreds of thousands of people starved beside granaries full of rice belonging to the Japanese and the French. A task of the greatest importance for the communist and Viet Minh cadres at that moment was to lead the armed masses in seizing Japanese rice stores and French concessions full of stocks of agricultural produce. The result was that organized and unorganized masses were inspired to take an active part in the movement against the Japanese, so that the more actively they struggled, the more conscious they

1. Stalin — *Principles of Leninism.*

became of their own strength and the more clearly they saw the real face of the enemy.

It was thanks to these attacks on granaries and colonialist plantations that the national salvation movement could be developed, the people armed and the self-defence brigades founded, even where the movement had never been organized, and Liberation Committees set up in numerous provinces, all in a short space of time. As Stalin said :

" The point here is to single out from all the problems confronting the Party that particular immediate problem, the answer to which constitutes the central point, and the solution of which will ensure the successful solution of the other immediate problems. " [1]

Third : to use " transitory organizational forms " according to the situation, such as Revolutionary People's Committees, Revolutionary Workers' Committees, Local Liberation Committees, Viet Nam National Liberation Committee. The aim was progressively to gain on enemy power and paralyze its administrative machine. These organizations were very effective. They gave the people the opportunity to realize universal suffrage and become acquainted with administrative affairs, led them to assume mastery over their own destiny henceforth, break their chains themselves and ameliorate their living conditions by revolutionary means, not paying any attention to the administration of the Japanese fascists and their lackeys. These " transitory organizations " mobilized the masses and encouraged them to participate in the revolutionary struggle ; they extended the national united front against the Japanese to its broadest point and created the

1. Stalin — *Principles of Leninism.*

bases for a new Viet Nam. After the August General Insurrection, the liberation committees became real administrative organs. To use People's Committees and Liberation Committees as springboards for direct transition to the democratic republican regime, was an extremely interesting characteristic of the communist tactics in the pre-insurrectionary period.

Wasn't the triumph of the August Revolution due in great part to the intelligent and correct leadership of the Party ?

CHAPTER III

THE GOOD POINTS OF THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

CAREFUL PREPARATION

Revolution is the work of the masses. But in order to develop their potentialities to the full, the masses must be mobilized, organized and led by a genuinely revolutionary party.

The victory of the August Revolution was due in great part to the correct leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party, to the work of organization and preparation by the Party and the Viet Minh during the pre-insurrectionary period.

In no revolution does victory come by itself; one must prepare it, win it. How did the Party prepare and win the victory of the August Revolution? It skilfully exploited favourable conditions created by the war in thorough preparation of the insurrection. Here is the outline of this preparation.

On the one hand, to unify the people's revolutionary forces, to mobilize the people, to stimulate the patriotic ardour of the people, to consolidate the different national-salvation organizations, to lead the people in the struggle against white terror and for the defence of rights and interests of their daily lives.

On the other hand, to develop para-military and military organizations such as the self-defence and guerilla groups, to train military and political cadres, to procure arms, to establish resistance zones, to carry out propaganda among enemy soldiers, to train the people for destruction work and the tactics of scorched earth, etc., to launch guerilla warfare and seize power in different localities.

The documents of the Party and the Viet Minh Front such as Preparations for the Armed Insurrection, Active Preparations for the Insurrection, Get Arms to Expel the Common Enemy, Towards the General Insurrection, the pamphlets teaching guerilla tactics etc., prove that, besides psychological preparations, we paid especial attention to the materials one. The Party realized clearly that the spirit of sacrifice is necessary but not enough to ensure the success of a revolution; meticulous material preparation is also needed, that is to say military preparation: setting up bases, organizing the regular army, regional troops and militia-guerillas, arming the troops and the people.

As early as the end of 1941, the Party founded two bases, one in Bac Son-Dinh Ca (Lang Son-Thai Nguyen), and another in Cao Bang-Bac Can. The Viet Nam National Salvation Army born at the time of the Bac Son insurrection (October 1940), developed in the course of eight months of guerilla warfare waged in Dinh Ca and Trang Xa (August 1941-April 1942), and in the second armed struggle in Dinh Ca (at the end of 1944). The Viet Nam Propaganda Brigade for Liberation was founded during the struggle against white terror in Viet Bac (1941-1945). In April 1945, these two armies were unified and became the Viet Nam

Liberation Army. After the Japanese coup de force, the Ba To (Quang Ngai province) insurrection gave birth to another guerilla brigade. These formations played an extremely important role in the upsurge of the anti-Japanese movement for national salvation and in the August General Insurrection.

A noteworthy feature of the activities of the Party in preparing for the armed insurrection is that it made the masses conscious of the preparations and led them to active participation in it. At the same time the military action of guerilla brigades was closely coordinated with the political action of the masses, so that the latter, while resisting the terror and struggling for the defence of their rights and immediate interests, might feel the necessity of taking up arms to win power. The struggles against the concentration of villages, arrests, requisitions of paddy, forced enlistment and conscription of labourers, food crop destruction for the cultivation of jute, the pillage of markets, etc., hastened the arming and training of the masses for a bold march towards the insurrection.

Meticulous and principled preparation was a major good point of the August Revolution.

PROMPTITUDE AND TIMELINESS

The victory of an insurrection depends not only on careful preparation, but also on its timely launching.

As we have seen, the August Revolution broke out at a very favourable juncture.

If the general insurrection had broken out immediately after the Japanese coup de force on March 9, 1945, the Revolution could have lost much and power could not have been established all over the country, because the Japanese forces, still strong at that moment, would have been able to destroy the revolutionary forces where they were. That is why only partial insurrections were launched in small areas, to conquer local power. However, if our people had waited passively after the Japanese surrender for the Allied forces to come and "liberate" them, without rising immediately to win power all over the country, what would have happened? Two possibilities existed: either the Japanese lackeys would have come onto the stage to solemnly boast of "having no more links with the Japanese" and to parade themselves as the "defenders of independence and democracy", not for liberating the people, but for surrendering to the Anglo-Americans. Or the French would have tried to raise their heads again, gather the remnants of their forces in Indochina, call back the debris of the troops who had fled abroad in March 1945 and this would have allowed them to found a puppet government over the whole country with the participation of the pro-French traitors, and to declare that they had implemented the Proclamation of March 24, 1945, and given autonomy to Indochina[1].

Both these eventualities would have created equally fatal consequences for our country.

1. It was only after the French surrender in Indochina that the de Gaulle Government agreed to issue a Proclamation recognizing the "autonomy" of Indochina. This hypocritical proclamation was as stupid as it was ridiculous in the eyes of the Indochinese peoples, because it was published when the French no longer had the slightest bit of authority in Indochina.

But fortunately the Party had led the people's struggle for national salvation and effectively created favourable conditions for the victory of the August Revolution. And just before the Japanese defeat (August 13, 1945), it issued orders for the general insurrection to conquer power from the Japanese without the least hesitation or weakness, to organize people's power, and thanks to the revolutionary forces of the masses to reject the bait of "autonomy" dangled by the French!

The leaders of the August Revolution had "chosen the right moment for the decisive blow, the right moment for starting the insurrection, and so timed it as to coincide with the moment when the crisis has reached its climax, when it is fully apparent that the vanguard is prepared to fight to the end, the reserves are prepared to support the vanguard, and maximum consternation reigns in the ranks of the enemy"[1].

Promptitude and timeliness, that is another good point of the August Revolution, which broke out at just the right moment.

THE WHOLE PEOPLE ROSE UP

The victory of the August Revolution was also due to the unity of the whole people and the masses' uprising.

The August Revolution did induce the great majority of the people to rise up and completely paralyze the reactionary

1. Stalin — *Principles of Leninism.*

elements. This is a fact of great importance. If the general insurrection had not involved the whole people:

First, the French colonialists could have found a way out, could have exploited the elements unfavourable to the Revolution, and basing themselves on the latter's attitude, they would have been able to declare before the world that the Vietnamese people would welcome the restoration of their power; at the same time they would have accused the forces of insurrection of being "rebellious elements" who were preventing them from disarming the Japanese troops and restoring order and peace in Indochina, etc.

Second: the international reactionary elements in general could have exploited our lack of unity to widen the gap between the various strata of our people still further. Worse still, they could have provoked a civil war, plunged the country into division and anarchy and sapped our strength, dominating us easily.

Fortunately, our people, who were living wretched lives under the double yoke of oppression and exploitation of the Japanese and French fascists, closed their ranks under the gold-starred red flag and, relying on their own strength, rose up to win back their liberty.

In August 1945, the Dai Viet[1] allied to pro-Japanese elements of the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang[2] and the Phuc Quoc asked the Japanese to hand administrative power over to them in some places (such as Vinh Yen, Mon Cay etc.),

1. Dai Viet (Great Viet Nam) and Phuc Quoc (National Restoration) were two pro-Japanese traitor organizations.

2. Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang: Viet Nam Nationalist Party, another reactionary organization.

in opposition to the Democratic Republican Government. But their shabby behaviour as lackeys of a foreign country was so obvious that the whole people had the most profound contempt for them, and all pro-Japanese parties found themselves completely isolated.

Third : An overall rising by the entire people : this is the third good point of the August Revolution.

Those three good points were entirely due to the powerful organized forces and the correct political line of the Indochinese Communist Party and of the Viet Minh Front.

We can say that without the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh Front, the Revolution would have taken another road. If the Viet Minh had not been able to unify all social classes, had not had prestige among the masses and had not led the entire people in insurrection for the conquest of power, the Revolution could have failed.

Liberation movements launched by predecessors against the French had all failed, mainly because of the lack of a united anti-colonialist national front and a correct political programme. Previous insurrections were crushed principally because they were the rising of a sect only, of a group of militants, or a little vanguard detachment and not a far-reaching and deep-rooted revolution of the people.

In order to triumph, a revolution of these new times must be a real revolution of the broad masses, prepared and led by a vanguard revolutionary organization. The August Revolution conquered power, the direct aim of every revolution, because it was the work of a whole people united in the struggle for liberation under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party.

CHAPTER IV

THE WEAKNESSES OF THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

VARYING DEGREES OF DETERMINATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

Those were good points, but had the August Revolution any weak ones ? Yes, it had.

First, the general insurrection was not launched with the same resolution throughout the three "*Ky*" [1]. This does not mean that the uprisings should have been carried out in one sweep throughout the whole country. It would have been difficult to achieve this in an agricultural country like Viet Nam, where the degree of political consciousness and organizational skill of the people was at different levels in different places and means of communications were still backward. But in the conditions prevailing in our country in August last year, it would have been better to launch the uprisings simultaneously in the main towns. This would have allowed a more decisive and better managed seizing of power and a quicker overthrow of the fascists and their stooges. As it was, the insurrection was launched simultaneously everywhere in the first week following the Japanese surrender, but Saigon waited until the 23rd to rise up.

1. Viet Nam was divided by the French into 3 parts, the 3 "*Ky*".

Nam Bo was a little late because among the ranks of the army of insurrection in the South, there were many elements who did not believe in the strength of the masses and would rather have used mere diplomacy to persuade the Japanese to hand over power to us than struggle relying on our own strength to wrest it from them or support the diplomatic work with action by the armed masses. Furthermore, they feared the crushing of such an uprising by the Japanese forces, forgetting that the latter were already almost paralysed at that moment and would be paralysed even further in face of the strong, broad masses of the whole nation.

This weakness is due to the unequal development of the Vietnamese Revolution and the relative weakness of the Viet Minh organization in Nam Bo prior to zero hour of the insurrection and to the lack of homogeneity in the ranks of the national united front in the South. Another reason is that Nam Bo is situated far from the national leading organism[1]. This led to the Viet Minh in the South issuing instructions which were not entirely in keeping with the situation, preventing the southern branch of the Viet Minh from entirely keeping pace with the general situation and the general line of the Party. In the South, the slowness in starting the insurrection, and the lack of resolution in the seizing of power gave encouragement to the counter-revolutionaries, especially the French colonialists and pro-French Vietnamese traitors.

1. At this time, the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party and the General Committee of the Viet Minh had their headquarters in the northern part of Viet Nam.

FAILURE TO FULLY DISARM THE JAPANESE TROOPS

The second weakness of the August Revolution was the failure to fully implement the slogan of disarming the Japanese troops at the time of the insurrection, before the entry of the Allies into the country. This task was carried out to a certain extent only. There were many places where after assessing our own strength and theirs, we did not use violence to disarm the Japanese; we left them alone when they remained neutral and let us organize the people's power. Generally speaking, that policy was correct in the circumstances prevailing in August last year, because the revolutionaries have no right to waste the masses' blood and launch into hazardous undertakings, out of mere conceit.

Our shortcoming did not consist in negotiating with the Japanese, but in failing to make the fullest use of the armed masses to support the diplomatic action and force the Japanese to surrender more arms; furthermore, we did not act in time to prevent them from destroying a great many modern arms.

Now, each time we consider our lack of modern arms, we cannot in retrospect help regretting that the insurrection troops missed an excellent opportunity to secure such arms in many places.

The pro-Japanese puppets have repeatedly reproached the Viet Minh for having failed to be "flexible" towards the Japanese thus provoking them to destroy many good-quality arms instead of transferring them to us. These people asserted that, had the Viet Minh not intervened, they would have been able to "negotiate" with the Japanese and get many arms

from them within a few days in the conditions prevailing last August. This is our answer to those puppets : if the Viet Minh had not led the whole people in the general insurrection, permitting the quick seizure of a portion of the Japanese arms no one could say when you would be "given" arms by the Japanese and even if you would eventually succeed in your effort to "beg" arms from the Japanese, you would certainly have used them for quite another purpose than establishing and consolidating the democratic republican system and the people's power, or expelling the foreign aggressors and checking the counter-revolution !

This failure to completely disarm the Japanese troops was due to the subjective conditions of the August Revolution. In plain words, without tanks and heavy artillery of our own, we could not take possession of Japanese tanks and heavy guns.

What happened was that in many regions, the Japanese entrenched themselves in their blockhouses and made ready to defend themselves immediately after the insurrectional forces had stormed a post or a town, either by a sudden attack from outside or by an inner uprising. They had enough supplies and munitions to hold out for a long time and so our troops would encircle them but, for want of sufficient firepower, would fail to destroy their fortifications (as happened, for example, in the seizure of Thai Nguyen). Whatever the case it must be admitted that with more promptitude and boldness, we should have been able to disarm the Japanese troops in other places at the very beginning of the insurrection. Were not the insurrection troops successful in many places without any bloodshed ? It seemed that

the forces of insurrection were pushing a door that was already unlocked : faced with an enemy that had been knocked down, yet they failed to go one step further and snatch the arms from his hands. Our military task in that period consisted in fact more in disarming the enemy than in defeating him.

LACK OF FIRMNESS IN THE REPRESSION OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENTS

Here lies the third weakness of the August Revolution : we did not firmly eliminate the various categories of traitors immediately after the establishment of revolutionary power, and we failed to take sufficiently energetic measures against the French colonialists and their agents. Only in some regions, such as in Quang Ngai, did the forces of insurrection carry out the policy "Sweep away all reactionaries", but there they overdid it. Almost everywhere else we were conciliatory to the point of weakness, forgetting that "*any victorious power can only be a dictatorial one*" [1].

The more democratic the power, the more dictatorial it must be — that is, it must exercise the dictatorship of the masses of the people against the very small reactionary minority which is ready to grab back its domination or hinder the march of the revolution. Not being firmly repressed, the reactionaries at home have been used by the French and international reactionaries to create difficulties for the revolutionary power and to divide our nation. One wonders why the Administrative Committee of Nam Bo immediately

1. Lenin : *On the History of the Question of Dictatorship* (1919).

after its foundation, did not order the immediate arrest of the pro-French traitor Nguyen Van Thinh and his clique, of some of the most dangerous elements among the pro-Japanese, and of many confirmed trotskyite saboteurs. This allowed these people to prepare the return of the French by creating provocations before and on Independence Day (Sept. 2, 1945). One wonders why many pro-Japanese traitors and other machiavellian agents of foreign countries in Bac Bo were not arrested after the foundation of the people's power in the capital.

We admit that the extremely intricate situation of our country and the relatively limited strength of the Vietnamese Revolution made it impossible to carry out a systematic repression of the counter-revolutionary elements on Jacobinical or Bolshevik lines. The Vietnamese Revolution was not opposing counter-revolutionary forces at home alone, other forces were intervening from abroad making the situation extremely complicated.

But at a time when the reactionaries in the country were still at a loss and had no time yet to reorganize themselves, it is to be regretted that energetic measures to counteract all possible dangers in the future were not taken immediately upon the seizing of power and before any foreign intervention. This does not mean that we should have imprisoned all the French, after the general insurrection, or put to death all elements who had collaborated in any way with the French or the Japanese. No! We regret only that the repression of the reactionaries during the August Revolution was not carried out as fully as was necessary at the time.

Revolutionary power may pardon the guilty who repent but it must be firm with all traitors.

For a new-born revolutionary power to be lenient towards counter-revolutionaries is tantamount to suicide. Did not the Paris Commune commit a grave error in failing to pursue and eliminate the "Versaillais"?

FAILURE TO SEIZE THE BANK OF INDOCHINA

The fourth shortcoming of the August Revolution was that the forces of insurrection failed to seize the Bank of Indochina: they even failed to gain control of the Bank. The colonialists availed themselves of the opportunity to attack us in the financial field later on, for example by refusing to honour their 500-piastre notes, thus placing more difficulties in our path. The Paris Commune met with many obstacles precisely because it too failed to seize hold of the Bank.

The Japanese and the French left our people's power with an almost hopeless economic and financial situation; but we were able to hold our own because of the sacrifices made by our workers, public servants and soldiers, and because of the industrious and devoted efforts of the government and the whole people.

This fourth shortcoming was not due to any underestimation by the leaders of the August Revolution of the financial question, but rather to the fact that the Bank of Indochina was a financial institution acting not only on behalf of the French and the Japanese but also of other countries. We lost some of our forces when we attacked the Bank of Indochina then resolutely held by Japanese troops.

The four above-mentioned shortcomings of the August Revolution each had their reasons. But, in an objective criticism, we cannot fail to point them out frankly.

We realize that it was difficult to avoid them for one reason or another and taking into account the conditions of the August Revolution. The shortcoming of our revolutionaries consisted in failing to avail themselves of the high tide of the revolutionary movement and of the people's spirit of sacrifice in the decisive hours, so as to reduce to a minimum the extent of these weaknesses.

CHAPTER V

CHARACTER AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

CHARACTER OF THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

The August Revolution was a revolution of national liberation. It aimed at liberating the Vietnamese people from the colonial yoke and making Viet Nam an independent and free nation.

It also had the character of a democratic revolution, because the struggle was against the Japanese fascists and their lackeys, the feudal reactionaries; and because it was a part of the great struggle waged by the world's democratic and progressive forces against fascism. However, it has not abolished all the vestiges of feudalism in Viet Nam, nor realized agrarian reform and given the land to the tillers.

In the present historical conditions, a colonial revolution such as ours must have the following double character: first, it must be an anti-imperialist revolution aimed at overthrowing imperialist domination, and second, it must be an agrarian revolution which confiscates the lands of the feudal landlords and distributes them to the peasants. The August Revolution aimed only at overthrowing the imperialist rule and that of the feudal puppets, and setting up the democratic republican regime; but it has not abolished feudal land

ownership and all feudal and semi-feudal vestiges to create conditions for industrial development. Thanks to the August Revolution, a portion of the imperialists' and traitors' lands have been confiscated, land rents have been reduced by 25 per cent and some of the old debts (principal and accrued interest) have been cancelled. However, the relations between landlords and peasants have not changed generally speaking. Therefore we can say that, although the August Revolution has a democratic character, this character is not strongly marked enough.

Some people have said that, because the August Revolution has abolished the Imperial Government with its machinery composed of mandarins and notables, it has an anti-feudal character. But by abolishing the Imperial Government, we have abolished only one aspect of the feudal regime. Because its basis, the relations between landlords and peasants in the agrarian field, is still alive, the feudal regime has not yet been uprooted. We must advance the anti-feudal struggle still further and not be complacent about the achievements of the August Revolution.

It is clear that the August Revolution has established a democratic republican regime with the character of a people's democracy, a new democracy in Viet Nam. Broad popular representation has been established at all levels by universal suffrage; extensive democratic freedoms, personal liberty, equality between all nationalities, big and small, and complete equality between the sexes, have been proclaimed; the State economic sector is taking shape; the people's living conditions are improved; the 8-hour working-day is officially established; the proletariat now actually holds power, etc.

All these facts make it amply clear that the Vietnamese regime is that of a democratic republic of a new style, quite different from the old-style bourgeois democratic republican regime (for example the French bourgeois parliamentary regime).

The democratic regime in Viet Nam guarantees the interests of all social strata. On the contrary, the parliamentary republican regime in France is a disguised dictatorship of the bourgeoisie: under the cloak of democracy the bourgeois class exerts a dictatorial power which defends only the interests of a minority of exploiters, the capitalists. However, the democratic regime in Viet Nam is different from the present Soviet democratic regime. Under the Soviet Union's democratic soviet regime, the proletariat openly exercises dictatorship, suppresses all exploiting classes and strata (landlords, bourgeois and kulaks) and guarantees the widest interests of all labouring people (workers, collective peasants, socialist intellectuals) who are cooperating to build a new life under the leadership of the proletariat.

The democratic republican regime in Viet Nam is in keeping with the stage of development of our country and with the present trend in the world. Though it has been established in a backward agricultural country, it has a new and progressive character, because it was born of the hard, fierce struggle against the French and Japanese fascists, out of the struggle for national liberation led by the working class. A struggle led by the most revolutionary class against the most reactionary enemy must be crowned with the installation of a non-conservative regime, quite the opposite of the retrograde regime of the enemy. Another reason why our

regime has the character of a new democracy is because it was born at a time when the vanguard democratic regime (socialist democracy) of the Soviet Union has fully triumphed and has been further consolidated in the trials of war, after the collapse of the world system of fascism, and while the great movement of democracy is spreading throughout the world.

Being a product of these new times, the democratic republican regime in Viet Nam inevitably bears the stamp of the new times. The August Revolution is a revolution of national liberation with a new democratic character. It constitutes an integral part of the national people's democratic revolution of Viet Nam.

THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

The August Revolution highlights the indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese people, a people with a long tradition of struggle for independence and freedom, a people who will never resign itself to slavery. It crowns 80 years of uninterrupted struggle of the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists. It also constitutes the greatest historical event in our country since the victory gained by Quang Trung, who drove the Manchu troops out of Viet Nam in 1789. In fact, there has been no national movement since then which has given evidence of the indomitable heroism and the strong unity of the Vietnamese people as fully as the August Revolution. It has not merely broken the yoke imposed by the imperialist fascists, but it has also overthrown the thousand-year-old monarchic regime in Viet Nam, and changed the country into a democratic republic, elevating the Vietnamese people to the rank of the vanguard peoples.

Therein lies the great significance of the August Revolution ; and President Ho Chi Minh, the first President of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the leader of the August Revolution, fully deserves the title of national hero.

Through the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people have clearly shown their anti-fascist spirit and their attachment to democracy and peace. The revolution constitutes the splendid completion of the great anti-fascist movement in Viet Nam during World War II. Before the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people struggled in very hard conditions to harass and wear down the Japanese forces' rear lines. From the end of 1944, the Japanese sea-lines were attacked by the Allied forces and Indochina became a "bridge" over the Japanese "Greater East Asia" road, an extremely important bridge for the movement and supply of Japanese troops from their northern positions to Indonesia. The blocking of this bridge to the Japanese forces was the task assumed by the Vietnamese people. In March 1945, the Indochinese Communist Party launched the great movement of struggle for national salvation against the Japanese, actively leading the Vietnamese people in attacking important strategic Japanese positions, thus blocking the traffic of the Japanese over the "Greater East Asia" road.

From March to August last year, Japanese territory suffered more and more violent bombing raids. In Indochina, the Vietnamese guerillas were fighting the Japanese with increased strength. A free zone was established in the highlands and midlands of northern Viet Nam and constituted a permanent obstacle on the path of the Japanese from southern China to Indochina. In this zone, the guerillas

harassed the Japanese forces and inflicted heavy losses on them. In this way the Vietnamese people made an effective contribution on the side of the Allies, speeding the defeat of the Japanese and indirectly hastening the Soviet Red Army's victory. It is an indubitable fact *that the Vietnamese people have made their share of sacrifices in the struggle against the fascist aggressors during recent years.*

The French colonialists slanderously call the August Revolution "pro-Japanese" and "Japanese-led" to belittle its significance. But there is plenty of evidence which gives the lie to their defamation. Today everybody has to admit that the reactionary attitute of the French colonialists with regard to the August Revolution is that of the thief crying "Stop thief". In point of fact, was it not the French colonialists, abetted and assisted by the British imperialists, who counter-attacked the Vietnamese Revolution in the hope of regaining their position and interests in Indochina ?

Among the peoples oppressed by the Japanese, the Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Indonesian peoples have been the most successful in seizing the opportunity offered by the Japanese unconditional capitulation to win independence, democracy and freedom [1].

By waging the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people have lodged this general claim to the *U.N.O. : the Great Powers must recognize the right to self-determination of*

1. The peoples of Burma, Malaya and the Philippines also organized guerilla forces to resist the Japanese invaders but when the Japanese surrender took place, they were not resolute, strong and quick enough to cope with the US and British imperialists, who were more powerful than their congeners, the French and the Dutch. Therefore, in spite of their efforts and sacrifices, their struggles have not brought adequate results.

the Vietnamese people, in accordance with the Atlantic and San Francisco Charters. As a natural consequence of the Japanese collapse, all peoples under the Japanese yoke must be liberated, and nobody must be allowed to replace the Japanese in oppressing and exploiting them. The Vietnamese people have suffered from Japanese domination since 1940 and they have played a worthy part side by side with the Allies in the struggle against the Japanese. Thus they fully deserve their independence. The Vietnamese people will resolutely oppose the return of the French oppressors as well as the regime of an international "mandate", because they have already attained political maturity.

The August Revolution and the war of self-defence the Vietnamese people have waged for almost a year now against the French reactionaries proclaim these eager aspirations to the world.

The August Revolution breached the colonial system of the imperialists at one of its weakest links, starting a process of irretrievable disintegration of colonialism throughout the world. It warned that the hour of liberation for the oppressed peoples has struck. The Vietnamese Revolution, like the Chinese and Indonesian Revolutions, is a strong impulse to the liberation movements of the Lao and Cambodian peoples and other colonial countries in South-East Asia : this explains clearly why the British imperialists have done their best to help the French colonialists repress the Vietnamese Revolution in southern Viet Nam and why the international reactionaries have made concessions to one another in allowing the French to relieve the troops of Chiang Kai-shek in northern Viet Nam.

In fact, from September 23 last year and all through our struggle waged against the French, our forces have met British, Indian, French and Japanese troops in many battles. Our struggle in self-defence has unveiled the perfidious schemes of the international reactionaries. It has exposed before world opinion that from their landing in Indochina, the British troops, who were only commissioned by the Allies to disarm and repatriate the Japanese soldiers, instead of performing this task of repatriation, used many of these soldiers to help the French colonialists to counter-attack the Vietnamese Revolution and repress the Vietnamese people's struggle for liberation : *Thus, we can say that the Vietnamese people are fighting not only for themselves, but also for the defence of peace, democracy and national independence throughout the world.*

After the anti-fascist war, the task of all progressive world forces is to struggle for national independence, develop democracy and consolidate peace. With the August Revolution and the present War of Resistance, the Vietnamese people have courageously shouldered a part of the responsibility to fulfil this mission with the progressive and democratic forces struggling for a better world. Whether one likes it or not, the August Revolution is part of the great struggle of mankind for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. The Vietnamese people fully understand their international role in this post-war period. They are determined to fulfil this task, whatever the obstacles !

It is precisely for that reason that the August Revolution is warmly acclaimed by progressive opinion in the world and that the Vietnamese people now enjoy the solidarity and support of the world's people, especially the oppressed peoples.

CHAPTER VI

PROSPECTS OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

What conditions will advance the Vietnamese Revolution and ensure its final victory ? These two :

First, subjectively speaking, the Vietnamese people, long under the weight of the French yoke, and in recent years doubly oppressed and exploited by the French and Japanese fascists, have realized that only a revolution can liberate them. Closely united under the national banner, they are determined to support the Democratic Republican Government in national liberation and in the building of a new life. The National United Front, under the clear-sighted leadership of President Ho Chi Minh and with the national salvation and democracy bloc — the Viet Minh — as its base, will certainly fulfil its duty of mobilizing the whole people to smash all reactionary forces and overcome all difficulties and obstacles on the march forward.

Secondly, from the objective point of view : since the world war, the international situation has brought new prospects to the Vietnamese Revolution. The Soviet Union, completely victorious, has become an invincible force. In many countries, the Communist Party has organized power or shared power ; people's democratic movements are developing

in many countries, especially in those just liberated from the fascist yoke ; the movement for national liberation is boiling up in colonial and semi-colonial countries. After the collapse of fascism, the imperialist system has been weakened. The movement for the consolidation of peace, against international reaction, has attracted the majority of mankind. The Vietnamese Revolution, as part of the world movement of peace and democracy, is deeply influenced by the international progressive movement.

The Vietnamese Revolution is also at the confluence of these revolutionary streams : national-liberation revolution, people's democratic revolution and socialist revolution, from which it receives a good influence and with which it is in tune ; at the same time the Vietnamese revolution exerts a considerable influence upon those movements.

In short, the Vietnamese Revolution has sufficient conditions to advance forcefully and will certainly achieve final victory.

OBJECTIVES TO BE ACHIEVED

Nevertheless, no matter how important the achievements of the August Revolution are at present, we must recognize this objective truth : *the national-liberation revolution in Viet Nam has not yet completely succeeded*. The August Revolution seized power for the people, but on September 23, 1945, the French colonialists attacked us and have since partly wrested it back. In the south of Viet Nam, they set up the puppet government under Nguyen Van Thinh and reestablished their domination in some towns. According

to the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, Viet Nam and France came to a compromise : France agreed to recognize Viet Nam as a free state having its own Government, Parliament, army and system of finance ; Viet Nam agreed to remain part of the French Union ; France was given the right to station troops on the territory of Viet Nam for a fixed period, and generally speaking, French economic and cultural interests in Viet Nam were to be ensured. So, our country was only a free state but not yet a completely independent one.

What is complete independence for us ? The whole of Viet Nam from Nam Quan to Ca Mau must be placed under the people's power elected by the people ; there should be no foreign troops on the territory of Viet Nam. The Vietnamese economy must be independent, not tied to the French economy or to that of any other country ; Viet Nam must have the right to develop its national culture. In a word, the Vietnamese people must be the masters of their country in every respect and the revolution for national liberation must complete its task of shattering all imperialist bonds.

The Franco-Vietnamese Preliminary Agreement was not the ultimate aim, but only a temporary measure, in order to give our people a breathing space in which to consolidate the position of the democratic republican regime brought into being by the August Revolution, and to strengthen our forces to march towards a new stage.

The Vietnamese Revolution must progress constantly, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes by leaps and bounds, sometimes stopping for a time to catch its breath,

or move a step backwards to jump over a deep ditch, sometimes dodging to avoid an obstacle so as to reach its goal rapidly.

During the course of its development, the Vietnamese Revolution must not only fulfil its anti-imperialist task, but also complete its anti-feudal task, the agrarian task. As long as these tasks are not realized, Viet Nam will not get rid of its dependence on others, of poverty and backwardness, and the Vietnamese people will not be completely independent and free and have enough to eat and to wear.

Indeed, to become prosperous and happy, Viet Nam must change from an agricultural country, as it is now, into an industrial one. The long imperialist domination has kept Viet Nam in a backward agricultural state. The French imperialists monopolized heavy industry for French capitalists in France and established only some light industry in Indochina. In the development of even light industry, the capitalists of our country suffered from imperialist competition and oppression ; while under the French and Japanese domination, the question of installing heavy industry was something they could never think of. Thus, the French imperialists monopolized heavy industry with the aim of compelling Viet Nam to consume their goods and preventing all competition with them. That is why Viet Nam can become a prosperous country only by freeing itself from all imperialist links and developing its heavy industry, so as to be completely liberated from foreign economic subordination. This means that it must be independent in the economic field as well as in the political and cultural fields. The Vietnamese Revolution has not yet thoroughly abolished all

imperialist privileges in our country, but has only restricted them. Furthermore the Vietnamese people have had to wage a war of resistance to smash the French colonialists' design to reconquer Viet Nam. The Vietnamese revolution must progress further to fulfil its anti-imperialist task.

In another respect, the French imperialists continued to maintain all forms of feudal exploitation in order to exploit our people more and more. In the mountain regions, they continued to practice serfdom. In the delta, the tenancy regime with high land rents was maintained. Moreover there were heavy taxes, corvées, etc. Most of the people were peasants and they were cruelly exploited, and as a result, many of them became impoverished. Unable to live in the countryside they had to go to the towns hoping to find jobs in factories ; but as industry in our country was not developed, the few enterprises which existed (factories, mines, plantations, etc.) could only employ a small number of them while the remainder went to increase the ranks of the army of unemployed or vagrants. The greater the number of unemployed, the lower the wages. The very low wages had a considerable influence on technical improvement in agriculture and industry. As the exploitation of cheap labour was sufficient to earn them big profits, the colonialists did not bother to improve production techniques, and as a result, the economy of Viet Nam under the imperialist yoke was unable to escape from a state of backwardness. The peasants were short of land to till and the workers heavily exploited : long working hours, starvation wages, ill-treatment, fines and other sanctions, etc. In an agricultural country like ours, when speaking of the people's happiness, we mean the

improvement of the workers' and peasants' life, particularly the latter, who make up 90 per cent of the population. But how can the peasants' living conditions be effectively improved if they do not have enough land to till? The question of the people's happiness is thus basically one of giving land to the peasants.

It is for this reason that the regime of feudal land ownership must be abolished, and the slogan "land to the tillers" must be realised. So far, the Vietnamese Revolution has only restricted this feudal exploitation. It must progress further to complete the land revolution and wipe out feudal and semi-feudal vestiges in Viet Nam. In brief, the Vietnamese Revolution must fulfil both the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks to realize *independence, freedom and happiness* for the people. In other words, it must complete the task of national democratic revolution paving the way for the socialist revolution in the future: to socialize all essential means of production, and abolish the regime of exploitation of man by man in Viet Nam.

PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

A wrong conception of the progress of the Vietnamese Revolution must be eliminated now. Some people think that the Vietnamese Revolution must progress step by step: that after the revolution of national liberation (anti-imperialist) comes the agrarian revolution (anti-feudal), then after the completion of the democratic or agrarian revolution, the socialist revolution.

This theory of "orderly advance" is wrong. At home, the leadership of the Vietnamese Revolution grows stronger and stronger in the hands of the proletariat in power; the progressive democratic forces form an unshakable bloc. Abroad, the Soviet Union, the socialist state, has triumphed, and the people's democratic movement is in full development. In such historical conditions, the Vietnamese Revolution can fulfil its anti-imperialist task and at the same time perform the agrarian task. The two tasks of the national democratic revolution in Viet Nam are closely bound together. This revolution will necessarily progress towards socialist revolution. In Viet Nam socialist revolution may get under way even before the existence of all necessary economic and social conditions (for instance: heavy industry is not yet developed; all forms of pre-capitalist exploitation are not yet abolished, etc.) if the leadership of the proletariat has been consolidated on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and if the cause of socialist revolution in our country benefits from the help of socialist and people's democratic countries. As stated in *the Communist International's Programme:*

"... Although the social relations in every colony and semi-colony have not yet ripened, the movements for national liberation in these countries can none the less develop into socialism, if these movements enjoy the help and support of proletarian dictatorship in particular and that of the international proletarian movement in general."

CHAPTER VII

THE URGENT TASKS OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE

FOUR MAIN POINTS, FOUR SLOGANS

After the Second World War, the Vietnamese Revolution, developing in the new conditions prevailing in the world, has many allies and enjoys much support. But no matter how favourable conditions are, the Revolution might fail if our people, and especially our revolutionary fighters, failed to go about it in the right way.

Moreover, the French reactionaries, collaborating with the international reactionaries, are putting into practice a perfidious policy designed to rob us of our power. Officially, they recognize our country as a free state, but in actual fact, they want to reduce our country to being an "autonomous" one.

Under the cover of "New France", they have signed an agreement with us, but at the same time they use fascist methods which run counter to the French people's will: indulging in acts of provocation, *faits accomplis*, and gradual encroachment, so that finally the Agreement becomes an empty shell.

They apply the traditional imperialist policy of "divide and rule" cunningly and according to a systematic plan: division between different nationalities, regions, religions,

political parties, etc. aimed at rendering us powerless to fight against them. They savagely terrorize people in the occupied zones or in the zones where their strength is greater than ours, hoping to annihilate our cadres and to intimidate and demoralize our compatriots.

We are faced with a machiavellian and experienced enemy. New difficulties await us. All our compatriots must remain vigilant and thoroughly understand their urgent task.

In the present stage, our people's revolutionary task can be summed up in these four main points:

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, UNIFICATION, DEMOCRACY, REBIRTH

a) INDEPENDENCE: Our country is not yet completely independent. The foreign army is still occupying part of our territory. We must struggle to force it to withdraw completely from our country some time in the future. We must struggle for our national sovereignty, so that in addition to our own government, army, finances, and Parliament, we also have our own diplomatic representation. We must struggle to change our position from that of a free state to a completely independent state on the principle of "the right of nations to self-determination"; this means that we have the right to adhere to the French Union of our own free will (if France remains a progressive country) or to withdraw from it if need be.

b) UNIFICATION: Viet Nam must be one, and its territorial integrity must be guaranteed. To achieve this, we must wreck the reactionary French colonialists' plot to

partition our territory and to carve out what they impudently call the : "Nam Ky state", "Moi state", "Thai state", "Nung state" etc. There cannot be three states or three *Ky* set up in our country differing from one another in their political, economic and cultural regimes. There is all the less reason why a free state should exist in our country north of the sixteenth parallel and an autonomous one in the south. Viet Nam must be a state worthy of the name because Viet Nam is a nationally, territorially, politically, economically and culturally unified whole ; this unity is not a fortuitous or a temporary combination, but one which has been built up by the blood and sweat of our people in the course of many historical epochs.

c) DEMOCRACY : In maintaining and developing the democratic republican regime, strengthening the people's power and building the new, people's democratic constitution, we must guard against attempts to make our constitution into a meaningless one, along the lines of a bourgeois constitution. We must furthermore oppose all tendencies to sap the regime of popular representation, a progressive regime won by the people's revolutionary initiative in the course of their struggle for liberation. The country must always have a constitutional government which is elected, supported and controlled by the people.

We must reorganize the administrative services, eliminate traitorous and corrupt elements from the public services, and wipe out arrogance and bureaucratism. We should do our utmost to transform Viet Nam into a really democratic country in the Far-East, one of the people's democracies which have just been liberated from the fascist yoke.

d) REBIRTH : We must build up and consolidate the bases of the democratic regime by economic restoration and cultural development and by improving the material and spiritual conditions of the people, particularly the workers and peasants.

On the one hand, we must keep on producing more and more, without interruption. We must increase industrial and agricultural production to heal the war wounds and put an end to all signs of misery and devastation caused by eighty years of slavery. Everyone should make a contribution to the national restoration : the rich should contribute their money, the able-bodied should work hard, those with intellectual abilities should contribute their talents. We must respect labour, encourage private enterprise, reward those who have rendered good services to the country and punish those guilty of misdeeds. It is not enough to make Viet Nam a politically democratic state ; we must change it into a country with a new democratic economy and culture.

On the other hand, we should meet the people's material needs, especially those of the working people (both manual and intellectual), so that they will have the necessary strength to work and produce ; we should strive to protect the health of our people, reduce infant mortality and fight against diseases.

We must further strengthen our nation's resiliency and our people's unyielding will to struggle, and instil in our citizens both genuine patriotism and proletarian internationalism.

RESISTANCE AND NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

The war of resistance consists in struggling for national reunification and independence and repulsing the French colonialists' attack. National reconstruction aims at establishing and consolidating the democratic republican regime, and building a new democratic economy and culture. For a year now, our people have been waging the war of resistance and carrying out national reconstruction at the same time. That is an inherent characteristic of the struggle for the liberation of our country, one part of which has been liberated while the other is still oppressed by the imperialists.

In the reconstruction work, our people have striven for a year now to increase production, simultaneously supplying the front and fighting against famine. We have repaired roads, bridges, dykes, etc. This year, our people have won victories over three major enemies : famine, illiteracy and flood. Those are remarkable achievements. But we still lack a general plan for our reconstruction work. Following are some examples :

Seeking to put into effect the slogan "not an inch of land left untilled" our compatriots in the mountain regions have in some places burnt down parts of the forest, clearing land for cultivation at random — a practice which is harmful to the preservation of forests and the prevention of floods.

In various provinces and localities, the slogan "increase production" is carried out without close guidance as to what crops to grow and how much of each in each period, and how to distribute them, etc.

The efforts exerted by our people in the past year are unbelievable. However, one has the impression that they have thrown themselves into production like a wood-cutter who chops wood with his eyes shut — vigorously, but with much effort wasted.

It is time to work out an overall economic and cultural plan for the whole country, to ensure essential living conditions for the people and supplies for the war of resistance against French colonial aggression.

Of course this work of planning will meet with difficulties because the situation has not yet been stabilized and the question of French interests in Indochina has not yet been settled. Nevertheless, it is not absolutely impossible to draw up a preliminary plan on simple and realistic lines.

If we strive only for national reconstruction but neglect to struggle for independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, our country will be reduced to being an "autonomous state", a form of dependency on France. Our people are not a warlike people. We love peace. Hence our government signed the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946. But the treacherous behaviour of the French colonialists forced us to pursue the war of resistance to defend ourselves. We are ready to accept an armistice on the basis of true recognition by France of our fundamental national interests, but as long as the French forces continue to attack and terrorize us, we must continue to defend ourselves arms in hand until they recognize the impossibility of re-establishing their domination over our country and partitioning our territory. Has the war of resistance in the South only a local and provisional character or will it be transformed into a

long-term and nation-wide resistance ? That is for the French to answer. As for us, we must thoroughly support the struggle of our people in the South, increase our forces everywhere, heighten our vigilance, be ready to face any eventuality and fight until complete victory is gained.

GREAT UNITY : A KEY TASK

To carry out resistance and national reconstruction, we must mobilize all the forces of our country, fight against the French colonialists' policy of division, consolidate national solidarity and seek new allies in the world.

The policy of great unity advocated by President Ho Chi Minh must be carried out thoroughly and extensively.

National unity : frustrate the colonialist schemes to divide our nation along the north-south or the former three-*Ky* line and to set the national minorities against the majority population.

Popular unity : All classes and strata of the people must struggle side by side against the common enemy to gain national independence and unity.

Unity between religions : Not to allow the colonialists to incite Catholic, Buddhist, Hoa Hao and Cao Dai compatriots to oppose their own people.

Unity between all parties : All patriotic and democratic parties must put aside all prejudices so as to struggle hand in hand against the colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors.

The entire people should unite into a National United Front to fight the French colonialist aggressors and wrest

back complete independence. For a year now, nothing has been able to shake that Front, which is cemented by the blood of our fighters coming from all over the country to defend the South. On that front, the whole people should act as one to fight the aggressors, repress the traitors, defend the democratic republican regime and rebuild our country so as to make Viet Nam into an independent, unified, free and happy country.

That is the objective of Lien Viet, the Viet Nam National League. This National United Front represents a highly appropriate form of national unity which our people have devised in their struggle against the French reactionaries and the Vietnamese traitors in the present stage. It must be broadened to include all parties which are struggling for national independence and democracy, as well as all patriotic non-party elements.

It might be asked : Is the Viet Nam National League only a short term political manœuvre as thought by some ? Certainly not ! It must be a political organization able to mobilize all the broad masses to fulfil the tasks of national salvation and national reconstruction.

To broaden and consolidate the Viet Nam National League, we ought to develop and strengthen the Viet Minh Front, because the Viet Minh Front with its strong organizations naturally constitutes the core of the National League. And in order to develop and consolidate the Viet Minh Front, it is necessary to unite and develop all organizations of the working class and to consolidate the worker-peasant alliance.

Inside the front, our compatriots must strive for close, broad and effective unity. But that is still not enough. We

must also find allies outside our country, strengthen international solidarity, and unite with all anti-imperialist forces in the world.

First we must unite with the great Soviet people who have defeated fascism and are healing the wounds of war in order to go on with socialist building and consolidate the Soviet State, the bastion of peace and democracy in the world.

We must unite with the French people who have made many sacrifices in their struggle for liberty and justice, and who share a common enemy with us : the French reactionary colonialists. We agree to join the French Union but this Union must be a "*democratic and fraternal union between free and equal people*", to use the words of Comrade Lozeray, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party at a session of the French Constituent Assembly on March 20, 1946. That Union should not be used as a cage to imprison the colonial peoples after "clipping their wings". In our struggle to force France to respect our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, we must achieve unity of action with the French people and with all parties and organizations faithful to the ideals of the French Revolution : liberty, equality, fraternity. For that reason we greet the formation of the "Franco-Vietnamese Association" warmly[1] and we hope that it will become a firm bridge between the two peoples who have a common enemy : French colonialism.

We should also ally ourselves with all peace-loving and democratic peoples, particularly with the Chinese people,

1. Just set up in France, with Justin Godart as president. The aim of this Association is to promote friendship between the French and the Vietnamese peoples.

our great neighbours who are resolutely struggling for democracy, unification and independence. Generally speaking we must unite with all oppressed peoples who are fighting to liberate themselves.

During the Second World war, we joined our efforts to those of the forces fighting aggressive fascism. Today, the war is over but we must continue to side with revolutionary and progressive forces to liquidate the remnants of fascism, fight the international reactionaries, consolidate world peace and smash the imperialists' schemes to draw mankind into another world war.

For that reason, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam must claim its place in the United Nations Organization and in the international arena as a people who have participated in the struggle against aggressive fascism, wrested power from the Japanese fascists, and now continue to struggle to force the French colonialists to respect the Charter of the United Nations Organization.

CORRECTING SHORTCOMINGS AND ERRORS

To fulfil these tasks, the entire people, and particularly the Communists and the other revolutionary fighters, must correct their shortcomings and errors. President Ho Chi Minh often says : "*We don't fear the enemy ; we only fear the errors of our comrades !*"

Indeed, has not the enemy attacked us by exploiting our shortcomings and errors ? That is why we must resolutely eliminate all erroneous tendencies.

We should wipe out the tendencies to anarchy and indiscipline seen in carelessness and disobedience of orders from superiors, and infringements of government instructions and of Party discipline. These tendencies show a misunderstanding of the democratic regime. There are some who do not clearly realize the meaning of revolutionary order and democratic discipline ; they think that a democratic regime can tolerate disorder, confusion and heedlessness of order and security. From this, anarchy and indiscipline will emerge : parochialism, sectionalism, militarism and bureaucratism.

We must : Root out the tendencies to isolation and narrow-mindedness which are seen in the way certain people are treated and certain events viewed, and also in the carrying out of various party policies, especially that of national unity. This harmful tendency betrays a lack of confidence in the masses and in oneself ; at the same time it shows a dogmatic, mechanical interpretation of Marxist-Leninist theories.

Eliminate subjectivism and "left" deviations which lead to undertaking things when conditions are not yet ripe for them ; to believing that one's personal desires are those of the masses ; "pressing on" without paying the least attention to the objective conditions and the real possibilities of the movement.

Eradicate conservative and rightist tendencies which lead us to cling to routine and old formulas, stick stubbornly to the old prejudices, and fail to recognize new changes early enough, when determination is the only spirit in conformity with our revolutionary era.

Eliminate the tendency to unprincipled compromise with either the reactionaries or with one's companions in struggle. This tendency demonstrates a lack of determination to keep firmly to one's position, an overestimation of the enemy and an underestimation of the strength of the masses, a failure to rely upon the masses or to use them as a strong backing. This tendency also demonstrates a wrong understanding of the policy of the Front, and the existence of the belief that because we are in the same national united front we must always excuse one another's mistakes and abstain from criticising each other.

Resist the tendency to complacency, being satisfied with one's success ; this makes us smug and arrogant, weakens our spirit of criticism and self-criticism, hinders our progress and keeps us away from the masses.

Eliminate the tendency to pessimism and vacillation, which makes us grumble and lose heart when facing obstacles, doubt and lose our heads when suffering failures, and consequently give up the struggle and run away from our responsibility.

The above shortcomings and errors are manifestations of petty-bourgeois mentality. If we do not correct them promptly, we will not be able to unite the entire people in struggle for the country's independence, reunification, democracy and rebirth.

We have no illusions that those erroneous tendencies can be overcome within a short time and that the revolution will quickly wash away the bad habits and customs left by the old regime.

And we are firmly confident that the profound changes in the political, economic and cultural fields will allow us

to gradually overcome them. The point is that each communist militant, each citizen should realize that while seeking to transform society, they should try to remould themselves. Social transformation includes individual remoulding, which in turn contributes to the remaking of society.

TRAINING OF CADRES

After settling the question of the political line to be followed, the policies to implement, and the tasks to be fulfilled, the question of cadres is a very important one to be solved.

Who is it that applies the political line and carries out the tasks? Of course it is the whole people, but first of all it is the cadres, who are the vanguard elements devoting themselves actively to the work of propaganda and organization, of leading the masses to carry out the policies of the Government and the Party, and who serve as good examples to the people.

We must admit that one of the shortcomings of our present movement lies in the lack of cadres. Few cadres for much work, hence each person having too many irons in the fire. Many cadres either do not complete their tasks or botch them; or they work at random without any pre-established plan, or else let themselves be bogged down in details and do not look far ahead.

Therefore, a decisive task at the present time is to strive towards a greater number of cadres, and to have good cadres; to promote existing cadres in a rational and just way and to train new ones patiently and methodically. Every cadre must guide the novices who work alongside him so as

to create new cadres. There are so many active workers and peasants, so many honest youths fully devoted to the Revolution who are ready to accept every sacrifice! Have confidence in them, employ them boldly, guide them patiently, but do not forget to control them.

At present, we are overwhelmed with work. It is necessary to mobilize all our manpower, wealth and talent. No ability, no effort should be wasted. Affairs of State are not the monopoly of some special group of persons, some party or some revolutionary class, but they are the common business of the whole people. Naturally the choice of cadres must not be made at random or be prompted by personal feelings, but neither should we be too rigorous in recruiting them from the specialists and employees of the old regime.

There are not enough schools founded by the Government to ensure the training of new administrative, judicial, military, economic and technical cadres. In addition to these, the revolutionary organizations must frequently open political training courses for their cadres, hold classes to teach them the experience accumulated, and organize talks and lectures to which the public will be admitted on a wide scale.

Simultaneously with the extension of mass education and the struggle against illiteracy, there is a great need for development of higher, secondary, and general education, revision of the curriculum, and selection of students to be sent abroad.

At the present time the question of cadres contains a contradiction. The great majority of national salvation cadres, schooled by the revolutionary struggle, are loyal, eager and skilful elements with a good background, but most of them have a poor educational level. The fault is not theirs, for the

majority come from the labouring masses, and have remained illiterate or have not been able to complete their schooling. On the other hand, the technicians, specialists and intellectuals who have graduated from French universities have a certain cultural level but know little about politics. We cannot reproach them with this either, for throughout our eighty years of slavery, did the imperialists ever let the Vietnamese people study politics and engage in political activities? Their sole concern was the formation of a class of young Vietnamese intellectuals who would serve them as their tools only.

Therefore the remoulding of intellectuals as well as the training of new cadres at this present time must aim at removing this contradiction. National-salvation cadres must be given material conditions to raise their educational level and theoretical political knowledge. At the same time, we must encourage the intellectuals and technicians left by the old regime to join political groups and attend political training classes.

We must criticise the incorrect attitude of some Viet Minh cadres who make light of those intellectuals and technicians, are prejudiced against them, have no contact with them, do not employ them and are averse to learning from them. But at the same time we must condemn the point of view of some non-Viet Minh intellectuals who think that the Viet Minh and communist cadres who have had the merit of leading the revolution to the seizure of power have now fulfilled their task and must now "withdraw" from the political arena and relinquish the task of national reconstruction to people with degrees, to the technicians.

Those who nurture these thoughts fail to understand the necessity of the Communists and generally speaking the Viet Minh militants who marched in the vanguard during the period of underground struggle for the liberation of the Fatherland sticking to their vanguard role now more than ever, devoting their political knowledge and revolutionary spirit to the work of national defence and national reconstruction.

It is comforting for us to know that, from the August Revolution onwards, intellectuals have joined the Viet Minh League and the Lien Viet in ever greater numbers. Struggling in the people's ranks, they have shown an eager patriotism and respect for the State and Front discipline. They have gradually come close to the workers and the peasants and they are now developing into good revolutionary cadres, and the country can pin much hope on them.

CONCLUSION

August 1945.

August 1946.

One year has passed — worth several decades in the experiences gained. The Vietnamese people have broken the imperialist fetters by the August Revolution to march forward now with giant strides. Steeled through their millennia-old history of creative labour and glorious struggle the Vietnamese people are launched upon the conquest of a bright future with enthusiasm. They have always been a young, courageous people full of vitality whose indomitable spirit continues to develop to the astonishment of the whole world.

The Vietnamese people have covered quite a good distance on their path to liberation. However, they have to press forward and carry on pressing forward. Many obstacles have arisen on the road already travelled, but thanks to their unity and struggle the Vietnamese people have gained their first victories.

In these days, the resistance in Nam Bo (southern part of Viet Nam) southern Trung Bo (central part of Viet Nam) continues. This heroic struggle for self-defence develops the achievements of the August Revolution and further steels the traditional virtues of our people.

The French colonialists hoped to solve the Vietnamese problem according to their own desires by armed force. But the war of resistance waged by the Vietnamese people has shown them that they are mistaken. The Vietnamese people are ready to wage a long struggle, overcome all difficulties and obstacles and resolutely fight the brutal colonialists and wipe out all their stooges until Viet Nam is completely liberated and the Vietnamese nation has gained complete Independence, Liberty and Happiness.

THE RESISTANCE WILL WIN

PREFACE

A foul and savage enemy is riding roughshod over the soil of Viet Nam. The Vietnamese people are waging a heroic war of resistance, determined to avenge the blood shed. Will Viet Nam survive ? Will the Vietnamese people succeed ? These are the questions being asked by our compatriots and by many people in other countries.

Here is our answer : the Vietnamese people will not be reduced to bondage ! The movement for the liberation of Viet Nam is an integral part of the new democratic movement surging through the world. As for the enemy of Viet Nam, the French colonialists, they represent out-of-date, decadent imperialism, whose fate has been sealed by history.

At present, the Vietnamese armed forces are still weaker than those of the enemy ; it is therefore necessary to prolong the war of resistance. In the course of the fighting we will develop our forces, and gradually wear down the enemy's strength, until the day we can crush him completely. This war of resistance must be waged by the whole people, in every field — military, political, economic and cultural — so that, wherever the enemy goes he meets our fierce resistance, which encircles and chokes him, giving him not a moment's respite in our country.

This book sets out the guiding principles of the fight to the death against the reactionary French colonialists for the genuine independence and reunification of the Fatherland, for the maintenance and development of the democratic republican regime in Viet Nam, and for the small contribution that the Vietnamese people can make to the safeguarding of world peace and democracy.

Viet Nam's armed resistance is a just war. A just war generally receives considerable support and derives immense strength from the people. However, the experiences of the Abyssinian people in the struggle against the Italian fascists in 1935 - 1936 have shown that even a just war may fail if the military command commits blunders, and if propaganda, mobilization and foreign policy are weak. There is a lesson in this for us.

To win final victory in this long and hard struggle is not an easy task. Success can only be achieved when the following fundamental conditions are assured: the correctness of our political line, the achievement of compact national unity, the consolidation of our rear, the heroism of our army and people and the competence of our command.

This war of resistance enhances the Vietnamese people's prestige throughout the world and enriches the best traditions of our nation. Our compatriots have all heard the sacred call of their Fatherland, and are rising up in response. Determined to fulfil their duty to the Fatherland, they vie with each other in proving themselves worthy of their ancestors.

The salient strong point of the resistance under the Tran dynasty consisted of clever stratagems.

The salient strong point of the resistance in the reign of the Later Le was perseverance and endurance.

The salient strong point of the resistance during the reign of Quang Trung lay in speed and vigour of attack.

Under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, our national hero, a synthesis of the historical experiences of Viet Nam and other countries is being achieved in order to turn defeat into victory. Great sacrifices and strenuous efforts are being made by all the people in every part of our country.

However savage and scheming the reactionary French colonialists may be, the long resistance of our people is sure to be victorious.

The Resistance will win: this is our unshakable belief. And that is the title we have given this book, which comprises articles dealing with the Resistance, first published in Nos. 70 to 81 [1] of the review *Su That* [2], and later revised and amended. The book is now published by the *Su That* Publishing House on the occasion of the second anniversary of the outbreak of the war of resistance in southern Viet Nam.

Bac Bo, September 19, 1947.

TRƯỜNG-CHINH

1. Issued in the period from March 4, 1947 to August 1, 1947.
2. *Truth*. (Translator).

I

WHOM ARE WE FIGHTING?

The Vietnamese people are waging a sacred war for freedom and independence, in defence of the territory handed down to them by their ancestors. The whole country is rising against the enemy.

Who is the enemy? The enemy is the reactionary French colonialists, who are re-invading our country by armed force.

The reactionary French colonialists are our deadly foes, our main enemy. They are our sworn enemy for all time, whose advance we must make speed to check, and who must be crushed and annihilated.

It is not France we are fighting. France is a democratic country, whose new constitution states that it will "never launch any aggressive war and never use force to infringe the liberty of any people".

Is it the French people we are fighting? No! The French people, who love "liberty, equality and fraternity", have no desire to invade our country. They know that this aggression will lead to their children dying on the battlefield, and that only a handful of greedy capitalists will benefit from it. The more we fight, the more the French people will hate the French colonialists; they will demand that their government agree to an armistice and to the withdrawal from

Indochina of the French reactionaries who oppose their aspirations and bring dishonour upon the name of the new France.

Naturally we are not fighting against the French people; we are not even fighting against all types of French colonialists.

President Ho Chi Minh has said: "There are French businessmen who want to carry on their business activities in Viet Nam. They know that to conduct business and make profits, they must cooperate in good faith with the Vietnamese people. They know that the precondition for that cooperation is that Viet Nam be independent and unified. These are the non-reactionary colonialists. As for those who scheme or use force to subjugate our people, they are the reactionary colonialists." [1]

It is only against the French reactionaries who "scheme or use force to subdue us" and who refuse to recognize our right to independence and reunification that we are fighting. The more we fight, the more clearly will the relatively less reactionary colonialist elements realize that the aggressive war in Viet Nam is harmful. They will oppose the stubborn reactionary colonialists, advocating a peaceful settlement and co-operation with us in order to "conduct business and make profits" in our country.

Are we fighting all types of colonialists all over the world? Of course not! We are not so stupid as to declare war on those who remain neutral, who do not send troops against us. That would sow needless hatred between them and ourselves.

1. Reply to journalists' questions, January 1, 1947.

In brief, we are neither Francophobe nor xenophobe. We are only against the reactionary French colonialists.

We pledge never to allow these colonialists to impose their yoke again upon our compatriots. We are rising up, arms in hand and we shall not lay them down before the reactionary French colonialists have been swept right out of our country.

The French soldiers, legionaries and colonial troops are forced to come to Indochina to fight us. They are mere pitiful tools of the reactionary French colonialists. They are forced to leave their homes, their parents, their wives and children, and are sent here to serve as cannon fodder for the imperialists and colonialists.

We have to fire on them because they are obliged to fire on us in the interests of the reactionary French colonialists. In this war against the reactionary French colonialists, we cannot avoid fighting the French and colonial soldiers. We do not hate them however. On the contrary, both we and they have a common enemy : the reactionary French colonialists. When the French and colonial soldiers come to understand this, not only will they refuse to fire on us, but they will even come over to our side with their arms, and together with us they will turn them against the French reactionaries. That is why we must seize every opportunity while fighting the French reactionaries to make propaganda among the French soldiers, legionaries and colonial troops, and must treat them well when they are taken prisoner.

As for the puppet soldiers, they are our compatriots and most of them are peasants. The colonialists are making use of them to fight against the Fatherland. We must strive all the more vigorously to make them realize this, in order to

win them over to the ranks of the resistance with their arms, and to annihilate the aggressors together with us, in atonement for their offences against the country.

If we succeed in achieving all this, the enemy ranks will disintegrate and the reactionary French colonialists will be isolated.

To isolate the enemy in order to overthrow him is the common tactic of a class or of a nation that is determined to fight, and to win.

II

WHY MUST WE FIGHT ?

In his appeal to mount a war of resistance made to our compatriots on December 20, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh said :

"Because we love peace, we made concessions ; yet the more concessions we made, the more pressure the French colonialists put on us. The reason was that they had decided to invade our country again."

We did indeed make numerous concessions to the French colonialists. But, greedy and savage, they broke their word, trampling loyalty and justice underfoot. They have attacked us, so we must fight back in self-defence.

In August 1945 the Japanese were defeated. Our people rose up to seize back power. On September 23, 1945, the French colonialists attacked and occupied Saigon, once again unleashing an aggressive war upon our country.

On March 6, 1946, the French colonialists signed a "Preliminary Agreement", according to which we allowed French troops to enter the North and Centre of Viet Nam. But they did not implement their part of the Agreement. Not only did they fail to effect the cessation of hostilities in southern Viet Nam, but they established a puppet government in

what they called the "Autonomous State of Nam Ky", and attacked and occupied the south-western part of central Viet Nam with the intention of forming a "Western State". At the same time, they attacked Son La and Lai Chau in northern Viet Nam, and occupied the regions of Lang Son and Hai Ninh, with the intention of forming a "Nung State". They also occupied the coast from Hai Phong to Mong Cai, thinking to found a "Federal zone" [1].

On September 14, 1946, a modus vivendi was signed between France and Viet Nam. According to this modus

1. The following quotations from documents are proofs of the perfidious schemes of the French colonialists :

Immediately after the signing of the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, French troops came to northern Viet Nam and the northern part of central Viet Nam. General Leclerc, commander of French forces in the Far East, sent the following directive to the officers under his command :

"Your job is not simply to restore the former French administration ; in addition you must defend French interests during the negotiations being held in Indochina and Paris.

"These defensive measures will be put into effect either by moderate steps bringing steady daily progress... or by force wherever needed..."

On April 18, 1946, General Valluy, French commander in northern Indochina, sent the following directive to the officers under his command :

"Immediately upon arrival in a garrison, the commander must draw up a basic security plan. This plan must include permanent defence of the army's barracks, and provide in particular for action to occupy the town since the best means of defence is generally attack.

"The plan has three objectives :

"1 — Rapid isolation and occupation of the enemy's bases for resistance, such as the principal streets inhabited by Vietnamese and Chinese residents, all barracks, suspect neighbourhoods, arms depots and military equipment stores ;

"2 — Occupation of all key points in the localities (public services, bridges, artistic monuments, tactical points) ;

"3 — And, by applying the above measures, to guarantee protection of the life and property of French residents in the area concerned.

"As soon as this plan has been drawn up and its main facets put into practice, a study must be made as early as possible of complementary measures which can be taken in order to transform activities involved in this purely military operation into activities which will set the scene for a coup d'etat". (Directive No. 11)

vivendi, we recognized the cultural and economic interests of France in Viet Nam. As for France, she agreed to implement the cease-fire, and to respect democratic freedoms in Nam Bo (formerly Cochinchina — *Translator*).

Implementing the modus vivendi, we gave back to France the Pasteur Institute in Hanoi and ceased our fire in Nam Bo. However, France took advantage of our good faith and dispatched troops throughout the countryside in southern Viet Nam to arrest our patriots and to re-establish the "Councils of Notables", a French puppet administration, in the villages. At the same time they blockaded the port of Haiphong, attempted to seize control of our Customs and thus create financial difficulties for our Government.

....From this it is clear that as early as March 1946 the French colonialists intended to occupy our towns and overthrow our Government. On April 6, 1946, Valluy sent the following secret directive to Colonel Vicaire concerning the invasion of "the Nung State":

"Proceed to Co To and prepare for an attack on the Nung State around Mong Cai.

"Leave part of your troops in Co To and Van Hoa and keep these places occupied pending further orders".

Following General Valluy's directive, Colonel Vicaire noted in a report to his commander on the occupation of the Nung State on April 21, 1946:

"Our action may be defined as the occupation of the base of a triangle (Hanoi — Hai Duong — Hongay, Mong Cai), the apex of which is Lang Son".

Reporting on Gribelin's troops use of bandits to stir up troubles in the Quang Yen region, in preparation for the occupation by French troops of the mining area, Vicaire wrote, on the same day:

"The occupation of the mining area of Mao Khe and Uong Bi by the regular army, as proposed by the Tonkin Coal-mining Company, seems impossible in the present circumstances.

"In all events attention must be paid not only to the occupation of the Nung State, and the political activities which must be carried out behind the Hongay — Mong Cai coastal area, but at the same time the actions of a group of partisans must be kept in mind".

These samples of documentary evidence are sufficient to expose the French colonialists' criminality. Faced with such clear proof, how can the French invaders still deny that they attacked and occupied Viet Nam premeditatedly?

Where is the validity in their propaganda accusing Viet Nam of attacking them first?

On November 20, 1946, they obstructed the collection of customs by our Government, and fired on our security and customs officials while the latter were carrying out their duties. Our troops fired back in self-defence. D'Argenlieu and Valluy ordered the outright occupation of Haiphong and Lang Son and, in violation of the agreements signed, simultaneously landed thousands of French troops in Da Nang.

Thus, the French colonialists violated first the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, and then the modus vivendi of September 14.

They were thus attacking us in all three *ky* (northern, central and southern parts of Viet Nam — *Translator*).

There could be no further doubt about their intentions: the French reactionaries' obvious scheme was to re-invade our country.

But that was not all. Following the Haiphong and Lang Son incidents, the French colonialists staged repeated provocations everywhere they had troops stationed.

More oil was thus poured on the fire. The situation became tense.

Our people no longer trusted the French Officials' word and took active measures to cope with all eventualities. Earth ramparts, combat trenches, barricades went up in Hanoi and other places where French troops were stationed.

On December 16, 1946, all the French colonialist ringleaders in Indochina met in Haiphong. On the following day, French troops resorted to provocations and launched an attack in Hanoi. On December 17, 1946, they crossed the

barricade in Hang Bun Street in the Yen Ninh quarter of Hanoi, and fired on the headquarters of the self-defence forces in that street. Their fire was returned. Then the French forces, armed with mortars, machine-guns, cannon and grenades, attacked the whole Yen Ninh area. They broke into houses, raped women, slaughtered children and pillaged property, creating a state of war right in the heart of Hanoi. The reactionary French colonialists in Indochina were taking advantage of the Cabinet crisis in France — the Bidault Government had resigned, the Blum Government was not yet in power — to carry out a policy of *fait accompli*. From that day onwards, there was a state of generalized war between the Vietnamese people and the French colonialists, a war provoked by the French colonialists.

On December 18, 1946, French forces occupied our Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Communications and Public Works. At the same time, Morlière, the butcher of Yen Ninh, sent an ultimatum to our Government, demanding that the self-defence forces be disarmed and threatening to assume control of public security in Hanoi.

The French colonialists were trying hard to press their plans through. The atmosphere of hostility between Viet Nam and France became extremely tense. Then, on the night of December 19, 1946, under severe provocation on the part of French troops in Hanoi, fighting broke out in the capital and hostilities spread throughout Viet Nam.

Events have proved that it was the reactionary French colonialists who failed to keep their word, and who broke the Preliminary Agreement of March 6 and the modus vivendi of September 14. It was they who provoked war

and launched attacks on us throughout the country. They used force to invade our country and to partition it. We could not continue making concessions to them. Had we done so, our Government would have become a puppet government, and our people slaves. For that reason, we were compelled to resist, to fight the reactionary French colonialists, in order to defend the integrity of our country and to maintain our sovereignty.

As President Ho Chi Minh declared in his appeal of Dec. 20, 1946 :

"Even if we must sacrifice everything, we are determined not to lose our country, not to live as slaves".

The French reactionaries insist in their propaganda that we attacked them first, on December 19. This is nothing but an attempt to conceal their own crimes. They themselves attacked us as early as November 20, in Haiphong and Lang Son, and on December 17 in the capital ; they attacked us immediately after the signing of the Preliminary Agreement on March 6, 1946, and even before. They whine shamelessly : "Viet Nam is acting in contravention of the agreements", and hope in this way to delude people and make them forget the French violations of the agreements. But in the face of stubborn fact, they must bear the full burden of responsibility, in the eyes of history, in the eyes of the world and of the French people.

Honest people have to acknowledge today that our people do love peace and that our Government pursues a very moderate policy. But when forced to fight, we do so with determination. The anger our people have long kept at bay blazes forth today like lightning.

III

WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR ?

The reactionary French colonialists intend using methods of attrition to get their hands on our country. Furthermore, they are applying a policy of fait accompli in order to continue their reactionary manœuvres in Indochina regardless of changes in the political situation in France.

If the French people ask questions, they will be told : "The whole thing's settled, there is no problem !"

In order to defeat these policies of "attrition" and fait accompli of the French colonialists, the Vietnamese people must fight !

France has signed an Agreement with Viet Nam. Why should those who call themselves representatives of France expect the Vietnamese people to implement the Agreement, while they regard themselves as free to disregard it ? How do the reactionary French colonialists, of whom d'Argenlieu and his clique are mere lackeys, dare to send "ultimatums" to our Government ? In face of the faithless, unjust, insolent behaviour of the reactionary French colonialists, the Vietnamese people must fight !

The French colonialists oppressed and exploited the Vietnamese people for nearly a century. During the five years of the Second World War, they opened the gates of Indochina

to the Japanese fascists and, together with them, caused our people untold hardships and burdens. Today, on seeing us win power and gain independence and freedom, they become concerned for their sordid interests, and look upon us with hatred. According to the modus vivendi of September 14, 1946, we recognized their cultural and economic interests (interests, alas, which they acquired by our people's sweat and blood, but which they were incapable of protecting, letting them fall into Japanese hands ; it was our people and our people alone, who wrested them back with the August uprising !). But they were not satisfied. They want to make our people once again serve them as soldiers and coolies, and pay them taxes. They want to muzzle our people, torture, massacre and imprison them as before.

To wipe out the cowardly, greedy French colonialists, the Vietnamese people must fight !

How much blood our ancestors shed because of the French invaders ! Today we must again shed our blood because of them !

How many of our young people in the flower of youth have been sacrificed on French scaffolds and in French prisons ? How many women have been raped, how many children burnt alive ? How many mothers have lost their little ones, brothers lost their sisters, husbands been torn from their wives ? How many houses have gone up in flames, villages fallen victim to terrorist raids ? How much gold and rice has been plundered ? How many churches and tombs have been desecrated, pagodas and temples burnt and razed ?

To annihilate the French reactionaries, to defend themselves, to defend civilization and the cause of justice, the Vietnamese people must fight!

The guns fired in our war of resistance spit the hatred of the Vietnamese people in the faces of the French reactionaries.

Now the Vietnamese people not only demand that the French colonialists respect the agreements already signed; their demand is not simply reversion to the position as it was on November 20 and December 17, 1946, as some people have mistakenly understood.

No! The shots now being fired are those of a long resistance! We must win independence and national unification. Independence and unification within the French Union if need be, but it must be independence and unification! The Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, and the modus vivendi of September 14, 1946, entail recognition of the complete independence and the complete unification of Viet Nam: only on these conditions can peace be restored. Otherwise, the Vietnamese people have no alternative but to fight, fight and fight again — fight until they achieve the complete annihilation of all rapacious reactionaries on their beloved soil.

The French reactionaries are attempting to set up a puppet government for the whole country. Then they will proclaim the recognition of the fake independence and unification of a Viet Nam headed by that Government. But their treacherous schemes are doomed to failure. The Vietnamese people are not as easily deceived as they think.

Some people say that the slogan "independence and unification within the French Union" implies a contradiction. Why

does Viet Nam agree to remain part of the French Union when it claims to be independent? These friends forget that the Vietnamese people have firm confidence in themselves and trust the French people, and therefore do not fear to remain part of the French Union. The Vietnamese people are ready to co-operate with the new France, because they know that such co-operation, if it is sincere and based on equality and free consent, will be beneficial to both sides in the present international imbroglio. The Vietnamese people do not want the French people and the democratic world to misunderstand, to think that Viet Nam wishes to leave the French Union in order to join some reactionary bloc hostile to the forces of peace and democracy...

There are others who say that the slogan "independence and unification within the French Union" betrays a wavering resistance and hopes for peaceful negotiation with France. We reply: The Vietnamese people do not hate the French people, and it is not against them we are fighting; so why should we not be on friendly terms with them? On the other hand the Vietnamese people do realize that in order to establish friendly relations with the French people, they must resolutely break down the wall which separates the French and the Vietnamese peoples — that wall is the French colonialists. We are determined to annihilate the French reactionaries, who daily widen the gulf which separates our two peoples, both of whom love peace, justice and freedom.

To achieve the above-mentioned political aim of the war of resistance (independence and unification within the French Union), mere diplomacy with France is ineffective. We must

wage a war of resistance, we must take military action. Here are the military aims of our war of resistance :

1. To annihilate the enemy forces in our country ;
2. To crush the aggressive designs of the enemy completely;
3. To take back the whole country.

Our people advocate a long resistance ; this means to strive to achieve our military aims in order to realize our political aims. If France recognizes the "independence and unification of Viet Nam within the French Union", we shall agree ; otherwise, when the resistance of Viet Nam has scored final victory, Viet Nam will become an independent state outside the framework of the French Union.

IV

THE CHARACTER OF OUR RESISTANCE

History knows two kinds of wars : just wars and unjust wars. Just wars are wars fought against oppressors and conquerors to safeguard the freedom and independence of the peoples. Unjust wars are wars whose purpose is the seizure of territories, and a usurption of the freedom and happiness of the majority of the people of these territories.

Our people are fighting the reactionary French colonialists in order to regain freedom and independence, to defend and liberate themselves ; our war of resistance is therefore a revolutionary war, a people's war fought in self-defence, a just and progressive war. On the other hand, the French colonialists are invading our country with the aim of oppressing and exploiting our people as before ; the aggressive war of the French colonialists is therefore an unjust and reactionary war.

A just war always enjoys warm support from people of goodwill and from progressive nations all over the world. An unjust war wins only disapproval and contempt from sound public opinion and the peace-loving peoples.

We are not surprised that world opinion has not supported France up to now. On the other hand many countries (India, Burma, Indonesia and Malaya in particular) support and encourage us.

This is one of the many factors which weaken the morale of the French soldiers and strengthen the determination of our army.

Moreover, although the August Revolution won power for the Vietnamese people, it did not completely liberate the whole country. The present war of resistance will complete the task of national liberation.

Though the August Revolution set up the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, this regime is not yet perfect. The present war of resistance will extend and consolidate the democratic republican regime of Viet Nam and develop it on the basis of new democracy.

That is why Viet Nam's armed resistance not only has the character of a national liberation war, but is also a struggle for new democracy. Does this not make it part of the great democratic movement now blazing through the world ?

This resistance carries on the work of the August Revolution. It is a revolutionary war aimed at achieving national independence, democracy and freedom. A new Viet Nam is being forged in the fire of the resistance : an independent, unified, democratic, prosperous Viet Nam — a new democratic Viet Nam.

There are some friends who think that since our present struggle has a national and democratic character at the same time as we are fighting the colonialists, then this entails land being taken from the landlords and distributed to the tillers. We reply : this war of resistance is fulfilling the task of national liberation and is developing new democracy. At present, we shall limit ourselves to the confiscation of land

and other property belonging to Vietnamese traitors in order to distribute this land to the peasants on the one hand, and swell the budget of the resistance on the other. This does not mean that we shall carry out absolutely no land reform during the course of the war of resistance. But it must be implemented gradually and undertaken step by step, in such a way as to differentiate among the feudalists, and isolate the French colonialist aggressors.

This war of resistance is a people's war. The overwhelming majority of our people are peasants. Nearly all the fighters of our regular, militia and guerilla forces are peasants too. Our resistance is in fact a peasant war led by the working class.

The Vietnamese people are not struggling for themselves alone. They are struggling for their own liberation and at the same time for the defence of world peace. The French reactionaries who are invading Viet Nam are part and parcel of international reaction. Their ranks consist of a great number of German soldiers who were formerly members of Hitler's fascist armies. A number of French colonialists who took part in the resistance against the German fascists during the last world war, such as Valluy, Morliere, etc., have today betrayed the ideal of opposition to aggression, letting selfish and shameful interests get the upper hand. Their collaboration with French financial magnates has turned them into their lackeys in their aggression against Viet Nam.

In this way the Vietnamese people's fight against the reactionary French colonialists is a fight against remnants of the fascist forces, who openly violate the United Nations and Atlantic Charters and are sworn enemies of world peace.

The Vietnamese people realize that only when the reactionary French colonialists have been swept out of Viet Nam, will the French and Vietnamese peoples, both loving independence and peace, be in a position to enter into genuine cooperation within the French Union, and in the great democratic family of world nations.

Thus, the resistance in Viet Nam is a progressive war in which we are fighting for freedom, independence, democracy and peace.

V

MILITARY RESISTANCE

Many people think that resistance consists in no more than sending troops to the front to fight the enemy. In fact, to take up arms and fight the enemy is only one aspect of the problem. The resistance of our people must be carried out in every field : military, economic, political and cultural.

How are we to fight in the military field ?

Resistance in the military field means using every measure, every stratagem, to maintain and develop our own forces, while destroying those of the enemy. It means using force to drive the invader out of our country.

The guiding principle of the strategy of our whole resistance is to fight a protracted war.

To protract the war is the key to victory. Why must the war be protracted ? Because if we compare our forces with those of the enemy, it is obvious that the balance is still in the enemy's favour. The enemy's country is an industrial one — ours is an agricultural country. The enemy has planes, tanks, warships ; as for us, we have only rudimentary weapons. The enemy troops are well-trained, ours are not inured to war. If we throw the whole of our forces into a few battles to try and decide the outcome, we shall certainly be defeated and the enemy will win. On the other hand,

if while fighting we maintain our forces, expand them, train our army and people, learn military tactics while fighting, we shall gain what we lacked at the outset and grow in strength. If we at the same time reduce and harass the enemy forces, we shall weary and discourage them in such a way that, strong as they are, they will become weak and will meet defeat instead of victory. In short, if we prolong the war, our forces will grow stronger, the enemy forces will be weakened, their already low morale will become still lower, their already poor finances will become still worse. The more we fight, the more united our people at home will be, and the more the world democratic movement will support us. On the other hand, the more the enemy fights, the more the anti-war and democratic movement in France will stay his hands; the rising revolutionary movement in the French colonies will oblige the enemy to spread his forces; and he will find himself in a position of isolation in the international arena. To achieve all these results, the war must be prolonged, and we must have time. Time is on our side — time will be our best strategist, if we are determined to pursue our resistance to the end.

Under the Tran dynasty, our people waged long wars of resistance three times in 31 years to defeat the Yuan invaders. Under the Later Le dynasty, it took us ten years' resistance to wipe out the cruel Ming troops. It took the Chinese people eight years to free themselves from Japanese occupation[1]. Those who want "lightning war and rapid victory", who want to bring the whole of our forces to

1. Those are clear examples of protracted resistance.

the battle-front to win speedy victory and rapidly to decide the outcome of the war, have learned nothing from the invaluable experiences of history; indeed, they understand nothing of the strategy necessary to our people in this war of resistance. They do not believe in the ability of the masses. All that they would achieve would be the premature sacrifice of the bulk of our forces in a few adventurous battles; they would commit heroic but useless suicide. They pretend contempt for the enemy. Yet they are the very ones who are afraid of the enemy and of a long resistance war.

What is our line in the fighting? It is to seize the offensive and force a rapid decision in every battle.

We are attacked. The enemy is stronger than we are. If we remain on the defensive, and only defend ourselves where we are attacked, the more we fight the weaker we shall become — the more we fight the more we shall be defeated. Therefore, in every campaign and battle, the weak points of the enemy must be discovered and attacked, and we must attack forcefully to annihilate his forces. If we attack, we must do it quickly and decide the battle rapidly. (From the strategic viewpoint, we must prolong the war; but in every individual campaign and from a tactical viewpoint, we must achieve quick results). It is only by applying the tactics of lightning attack that we can destroy the enemy sector by sector. The effect of many battles in which the enemy is destroyed sector by sector, will be the weakening of his forces as a whole, and their demoralisation. Our forces, on the other hand, will increase and our fighters' morale will be strengthened. We shall go on in this way

until we reach the point at which we are sufficiently strong to launch a general counter-offensive to defeat the enemy on all battle-fronts and to recover the whole of our territory.

To attack forcefully and wipe out the enemy in every battle we must apply tactics of maximum mobility, penetrating deeply and then withdrawing as far as possible. We must concentrate our forces rapidly, launch lightning attacks, then disperse like a flash. In other words, from a tactical viewpoint, we must wage guerilla and mobile warfare.

Guerilla warfare is the method of fighting in partisan units or with relatively small groups of the regular army disguised as civilians and mingling with the people. Though these forces are armed with rudimentary weapons only they are extremely active. They attack the enemy from behind, outflank him or launch sudden attacks on his weak points. They pretend to attack the enemy's right flank while actually attacking his left, they concentrate for attack and disperse to dodge the enemy's reply. They cut communication lines, harass the enemy while he is eating or sleeping, wear down his strength, cause him weariness and distress, render his forces lame, lost, hungry, thirsty... The three most generally employed tactics of guerilla warfare are : surprise attack, ambush and harassment. Fighting must be co-ordinated with sabotage. Sabotage is a wonderful means of resistance by guerilla forces or by regular troops less well-armed than the enemy.

Mobile warfare is fighting in which the regular army, or guerilla forces mustered in relatively large units and co-operating with the regular army, use more or less advanced weapons, group themselves rapidly and launch lightning

attacks ; encircling the enemy in order to destroy him, working round positions to attack him, attacking from behind rather than launching frontal attacks, advancing rapidly and withdrawing quickly. On a long and deep battle-front (sometimes stretching the length of the country), the fighting units must divide duties among themselves and co-ordinate their actions, attacking the enemy according to a common plan, disturbing his forces, spreading alarm and disorder among them, so that they will either be destroyed or be forced to withdraw. The characteristic of mobile warfare is : to manœuvre with flexibility, attacking the enemy and destroying him.

In order to win, we must wage a guerilla war and engage in mobile warfare or guerilla-and-mobile warfare ; that means, a mixed form of military tactic. But all this does not mean that we shall not practise positional warfare.

What is positional warfare ? It is the deployment of forces of the regular army in readiness for a battle, digging trenches, setting up fortifications, checking the enemy's advance, taking advantage of the enemy's weak points and inadequacies to attack him and occupy his positions.

So long as we are not as well-armed as the enemy, to apply positional warfare in a hurry is to doom ourselves to failure. That is why guerilla and mobile warfare are at present the chief forms of fighting, and positional warfare only a secondary form. Sometimes guerilla warfare should be applied rather than mobile warfare and sometimes vice-versa, all according to the concrete objective and subjective conditions at each particular time and place. Because we are short of arms, guerilla warfare will in general be the

most widespread method of fighting employed by our people in the long-term resistance. With the gradual development of the war, our army will gain more experience and we shall have more modern arms, so that mobile warfare will be applied more extensively, until, finally, in the stage of general counter-offensive, positional warfare will play the paramount role.

As they have not yet thoroughly grasped the principles of the above mentioned methods of fighting, our regular troops and guerilla forces often commit considerable tactical blunders. The Thi Nghe battle at the end of 1945, the Nha Trang and Thua Thien battles in early 1946, the battle to the west of Hanoi last March and others, showed that in the first stages our troops had a tendency to fight a war of position. They therefore suffered losses or became bewildered when attacked by the enemy. On the other hand, where we shift rapidly and in good time to guerilla and mobile warfare, we not noly avoid losses but are also able to stay the advance of the enemy and to defeat him.

Guerilla warfare must be the tactic of the people as a whole, not of the army alone.

To achieve good results in guerilla and mobile warfare, we must mobilize the people to support our armed forces enthusiastically and to fight the enemy together with them. The people are the eyes and ears of the army, they feed and keep our soldiers. It is they who help the army in sabotage and in battle. The people are the water and our army the fish. The people constitute an inexhaustible source of strength for the army. To increase their numbers, the troops must recruit new fighters from among the people. That is

why the entire people must be armed, guerilla movements must be initiated and the actions of the regular army and guerilla forces must be co-ordinated. We must act in such a way that wherever the enemy goes, he meets the resistance forces of the entire Vietnamese people who fight him arms in hand, ready to die rather than return to slavery.

VI

POLITICAL RESISTANCE

Just knowing how to fight, or fighting well, is not enough if we are to defeat the French invaders : it is necessary to have good domestic and foreign policies.

Within the country, the entire people must be united. The anti-French national united front must be consolidated and develop daily in the struggle against the aggressors.

In order to wage a long resistance war, the entire people must be united and of one mind. The same principle applies to our people as to a bundle of chopsticks : if the chopsticks are bound together it is difficult to break them. But if they are separated, nothing is easier than to snap them all one by one.

But uniting the whole people doesn't mean that we blithely shut our eyes to a handful of Vietnamese traitors who willingly betray their country, and permit them to sabotage the resistance, become the henchmen of the enemy, and deceive and massacre our compatriots. Fighting the enemy and crushing the national traitors are two tasks which must be undertaken simultaneously.

At present, the French invaders are striving to deceive and divide our people. To sow discord between our Catholic

and non-Catholic compatriots they have their agents tell the Catholic patriots that the Viet Minh are Communists, that the Ho Chi Minh Government is a Viet Minh Government and that to follow the Ho Chi Minh Government is to follow the Communists. They say that, should the impossible happen and the resistance be victorious, our Catholic compatriots would be forbidden to worship God, the churches would be burnt and the crucifixes destroyed. "Better to lose one's country than one's God ; better to be enslaved than to face eternal damnation".

Such misleading propaganda must be eradicated. Communism is a doctrine that hides neither its ends nor its means. But it is not our intention here to explain what Communism is. Our Catholic compatriots should nevertheless realize that the Ho Chi Minh Government is a government of the entire people, approved by the National Assembly. This war of resistance is a revolutionary war of the entire people led by our government. It is not a private concern of the Communists or the Viet Minh Front. The Communists and the Viet Minh Front have the sole aim of gaining freedom and independence for Viet Nam. This resistance will bring democratic freedoms to our people, including freedom of belief and freedom of religion. It is neither the Viet Minh nor the Communists, but the French invaders who bomb pagodas, desecrate the cross, and use churches as military posts from which to massacre our people ; who spurn Christian charity, rape Catholic nuns and kill Buddhist bonzes. "To love one's country is to serve God". But how is it possible to love our country and serve God if we do not fight the invaders ?

The French aggressors are doing their best to sow discord between the people of the South and those of the North, between the Thai, Muong, E-De, Mong, Dao, Tay, and Nung peoples and the majority people, between rich and poor. But facts have proved that they are doing so in order to occupy Nam Bo; they are using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese, cutting Viet Nam up into pieces, inciting the minority peoples to oppose the majority people; they are egging the Thai and Nung peoples on to fight the majority Kinh people, and are using the latter to oppose the Thai and Nung peoples, to enable the colonialists to subjugate them all and in ease enjoy the position of "masters of the country".

This resistance aims at wiping out the French colonialists, to win independence and national unification, and bring freedom and happiness to the entire people. The lives and property of the people will be respected. The living conditions of the labouring masses will be improved. Like all other democratic freedoms, freedom of belief is guaranteed. Our compatriots of the Centre, North and South are one; all nationalities — minority as well as majority — are equal. The aim of the resistance is clear. The French invaders cannot fool our people!

The French aggressors even declare that they are "fighting the Viet Minh and not Viet Nam". But in fact they are jeopardizing the lives and property of the Vietnamese people -- Viet Minh or non-Viet Minh — quite indiscriminately! They seek to divide the Viet Minh from the entire people, because they know that the Viet Minh consists of the most patriotic and determined elements in the country.

They are the most faithful to the people's interests. They are ready to make any sacrifice in the struggle for national independence and unification. The enemy is well aware that he can subdue our people only if they succeed in isolating the Viet Minh and inciting the people to oppose them.

On the one hand, the French invaders deceive and divide our people. On the other, they massacre and rob them. Drawing on their own experience of the enemy our people clearly recognize their hypocrisy and are closing their ranks tighter every day in support of the Viet Minh, joining it and the Lien Viet Front, and fighting the enemy together with the Viet Minh. We thank the French for having helped "Viet Minh-ize the Vietnamese people" by their words and deeds.

There was already a basis for our national resistance front which the reactionary French colonialists unwittingly consolidated and encouraged by violating the right to live of the Vietnamese people. We must help the people to understand the intentions of the French aggressors and make skilful use of every possibility, big or small, of contributing to the resistance; thus assuring the success of our policy of wide national unity.

At home, national unity must be maintained; the national united front against the French colonialists and their lackeys must be consolidated and developed. This front must be built on the cornerstone of the alliance of the workers and peasants, and must be led by the working class.

What must we do in the field of foreign policy? We must isolate the enemy and win more friends. We must act in such a way that the French people and the peoples

of the French colonies will actively support us and oppose the reactionary French colonialists, in such a way that all peace-loving forces in the world will defend us and favour the aims of our resistance. That is why French prisoners-of-war and all foreign residents in our country must be well-treated (this does not include the bandits and spies who use their situation as foreign residents to work as lackeys of the French colonialists).

The French people and soldiers have been deceived by the reactionary French colonialists and led to believe that it was we who violated the Agreements and attacked France first. We must make them understand by showing them that it was the reactionary French colonialists who trampled on the Agreements and attacked us first. Not only do they want to exploit our people again but they are also exploiting the French people. To fight the French colonialists is to help the French people directly, because while fighting we weaken our common enemy. The French people and French soldiers should oppose the war in every way. Oppose the sending of troops to Indochina, oppose military expenditure for the reconquest of Viet Nam. These are actions which are completely contrary to the new Constitution of France. They should demand that the French Government engage in peaceful negotiations with the Ho Chi Minh Government. The French soldiers in Viet Nam should demand repatriation and protest against the setting up of a puppet Government. They should fraternize with the Vietnamese People's Army, and turn their arms against the reactionary French colonialists, joining the ranks of the Vietnamese army and people in order to fight side by side with them for the overthrow

of the common enemy of our two peoples. This will enable an independent and unified Viet Nam to form a voluntary alliance with the new France on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

We must make the people in the French colonies realize that while we are fighting the reactionary French colonialists, we are also fighting for them to a certain extent. They should therefore seize the opportunity presented by the predicament of the French colonialists in Viet Nam to rise up and regain their own independence.

We must make the progressive forces all over the world realize that we are making sacrifices and exerting efforts for the cause of world peace and democracy too. In the struggle for peace and democracy, these forces cannot remain indifferent to our struggle, or support Viet Nam by words only where deeds are required. They must arraign France before the tribunal of world opinion, to judge her and compel her to stop the war of rapine in Indochina, a war completely contrary to the ideals of the United Nations Charter. Moreover, they should help the Indochinese peoples from the material point of view as well as giving them moral support so that the reactionary French colonialists, sworn enemies of world peace and democracy, may be defeated rapidly.

Seen from the political point of view, the tasks of the resistance are extremely heavy. To fulfil them, we must on the one hand consolidate the democratic republican State, strengthen the machinery of resistance, and unify all military, administrative, and popular organizations in the whole country; all patriotic organizations must be developed, and the leadership of the people's resistance consolidated; military

questions must be subordinated to political leadership. On the other hand, all traitors, wreckers, opportunists, cowards, bureaucrats, militarist and factionalist elements must be thrown out of the resistance organizations, traitors must be punished, the seeds of disruption and division among the people destroyed, and the political rear consolidated to the highest degree. The following goals must be our constant concern :

Unity of the entire people,
Isolation of the enemy,
Victory of the resistance.

VII

ECONOMIC RESISTANCE

To fight the enemy effectively, we must eat our fill, be healthy and have great qualities of endurance. That is why particular importance must be attached to economic problems and the people's living conditions.

To enable the people to fight the enemy resolutely, we must improve their living standards, while fighting. If the people are poverty-stricken and lack adequate political consciousness, they may be tricked by the enemy.

The enemy is not fighting us in the military and political fields alone, but also in the economic field. They blockade and pillage us, and sabotage our arrangements for food supplies, for instance. We must fight them in the economic field too. An economic plan for the long-term resistance must be drawn up. The economy of the resistance war must be built so that we gradually make inroads on the enemy's economy.

Our resistance in the economic field consists of two parts : to wreck the enemy's economy, and build our own.

How can we wreck the enemy's economy in our country ? There are many ways : blowing up his machines, warehouses and lines of communication and transport, so that he cannot enjoy in peace the wealth extorted from the people by

exploitation ; opposing his policy of rapine, not allowing him to "use war to feed war". (This manœuvre, incidentally, is not peculiar to the Japanese fascists, it is the common practice of all aggressors).

We should act in such a way that wherever the enemy goes, he meets scenes of scorched earth, with nothing left for him to pillage. The further the enemy extends the front, the greater the danger to his food supplies, and the more the war becomes a burden to him.

If we never budge an inch from the people, if we arm the whole nation, if we become masters of the countryside, not only can we check the enemy's attempts to destroy our economy, but we can also destroy his. At the same time, we will build our own economy.

The building of our economy must be directed in accordance with the two following principles :

1. National reconstruction to be carried out simultaneously with the war of resistance.

2. Self-reliance in every field.

Concerning the first principle, we should keep in mind that we must not wait until after the victory of the resistance to start the reconstruction of our country. We must carry out reconstruction in the course of the war of resistance itself : we will reconstruct in order to be able to carry on the resistance.

During the period of the resistance our economy is a war economy in form, and a new-democracy economy in content. This means on the one hand that the people's economic life must meet the conditions of war ; every economic activity must aim at guaranteeing the supply of the front, and

providing the whole people with all the commodities necessary to carry on the long resistance (war form of our economy). On the other hand, individual economy, cooperative economy and State economy [1] must be developed simultaneously. We should make skilful use of the co-operative economy as a link between the individual economy and the State economy. We should improve the living standards of the people to enable them to participate enthusiastically in developing the economy and supplying the army and our compatriots (new-democracy content of our economy).

In our resistance economy, to what should we attach most importance ?

The development of agriculture must receive our closest attention, because our country lives by agriculture. Nearly all the needs of the people are supplied by agriculture. Then come handicrafts. We must encourage handicrafts and small-scale industry to produce articles capable of being substituted for industrial products. Commerce ranks third. We should develop small-scale trade, and organize and carefully control foreign trade. At the same time, we must act in such a way that the co-operatives shoulder an important part of the tasks connected with distribution and consumption. For us, industry can rank only fourth, although it plays quite an important role in war in modern times. We should pay particular attention to industries producing weapons, repair industries and those which process the raw materials we have available.

1. Apart from these forms, we may organize yet another form, that of "joint State-private enterprises", in which the State and private individuals invest capital together.

Keen attention must be paid to the development of cattle-breeding alongside agriculture, and of transport alongside handicrafts. The war is extended every day, roads and bridges are destroyed daily : if we do not establish a system of transport adapted to the new situation, production and distribution of products will suffer disastrously.

As far as the second principle, that of self-reliance, is concerned, we realize clearly that our country is an agricultural country, and that even if we lose all the cities and suffer enemy blockade, we will still be able to ensure our self-supply. (This does not mean that the enemy will be permitted to occupy all the cities, or completely blockade us). Our country is endowed with plenty of raw materials and manpower ; the spirit of our people is high ; and we can build a self-sufficient economy along the following lines :

Raising production norms — We must improve techniques and methods of production, reducing the number of idlers. Except in special cases, soldiers, students and office employees should also take part in production to a certain extent.

Producing according to war-time needs — During the resistance war, we produce what we need, not luxury goods. For example, we produce rice, salt, cloth, tools, guns, ammunition, medicines, paper, etc., but not scent and toilet soap.

Building the State economy and the co-operative economy according to a plan. In our present conditions, we cannot have a completely planned economy, but branches of production and distribution must at any rate be readjusted and put under unified guidance, although individual initiative is free

to develop. Enterprises managed by the State and all co-operatives can produce according to a plan.

To achieve good results from our resistance in the economic field, we must define an economic policy for this period. In our opinion, that policy should meet the following needs :

1. *To increase production.* We should initiate a movement of patriotic competition in increasing production, arouse the people's eagerness in labour, and mobilize all our manpower, all our material and financial resources. Except in some special areas, militia men must stay close to the fields to plough them. (When the enemy comes we fight, when he goes we plough). The aim of raising production during the war of resistance consists in the three points of *eating one's fill, dressing adequately, and having strength to fight.* Work exchange and co-operation in production must be encouraged and developed. We should transfer the refugees, particularly those who have production skills, from the regions ravaged by war to areas that are relatively safe, have land available but lack manpower, in order to set up farms for shock-production. We must pay particular attention to the supply of rice (at the start), salt, medicines, oxen, buffaloes and farming implements to such farms.

2. *To increase income, cut costs, and practise thrift.* A war budget must be prepared. The two main sources of income for this budget are the various taxes, and the income from the State enterprises. Taxes must be collected according to the democratic principle : the rich pay more, the poor pay less, the very poor are exempt from tax. To balance the budget we must increase income and bring down

expenditure. A policy of thrift must be put into effect. In the administrative and military departments, in all organizations and among the people, non-essential expenditures must be done away with. The number of civil servants will be reduced. If we must spend, we will spend boldly; but our spending must be reasonable, all appropriations must be fully justified.

3. *To gradually lighten the people's burden.* Taxes and rates, surcharges, etc. must be reduced to lighten the burden borne by the people. At the same time, we must carry out our land policy step by step with a view to improving the peasants' life, because the peasants are the greatest reservoir of manpower and of material strength for the resistance.

4. *Exhortation, reward and punishment.* Even when our plans are good, if we do not know how to mobilize and encourage the people to carry them out, the people will certainly not take part in the work in large numbers. In every field there are people who work well and people who work badly. To forgo rewards and punishments would be an error. That is why we should organize competitions of products and crafts, institute medals to be awarded to Labour Heroes, talented inventors and those who are rich in goodwill. At the same time, we should severely punish those who steal public poverty, speculators, smugglers, and saboteurs; and confiscate the property of national traitors and use such property to improve the people's life.

5. *Consolidating the currency, stabilizing prices.* We must maintain the value of our currency, avoid inflation, and use Vietnamese currency in production. (We will exchange home products and goods for necessary foreign goods which we

cannot yet produce ourselves). The Government must ensure the supply of staple commodities such as rice, salt, cloth, etc., to all government departments, to the troops and to the people, keeping prices down.

To put into effect the above-mentioned policies, we must fight against wrong ideas concerning economy, and against the tendency to demagogy advocating the abolition of all taxes. This error was committed in many places after the August uprising. We must also struggle against the tendency towards extorting excessively heavy money contributions from the people; against planlessness, working in a happy-go-lucky manner, scratching where it itches, paying attention to the pipe only where it is leaking, or making grandiose plans and extensive programmes without being able to achieve them. We should fight the tendency to passivity, as it exists among those who do not think about developing the economy and further exploiting our rich resources, but only about practising extreme stinginess. We must oppose waste, disorder, corruption and fraud, fighting against the "leftist" deviation in economic affairs of those who can think only of "agricultural collectivization" and the "building of a heavy industry", while neglecting agriculture and handicrafts, and who thus waste considerable time and effort in elaborating illusory plans which can in no way be carried out in the present conditions.

VIII

CULTURAL RESISTANCE

Our all-out resistance requires more than resistance in the military, political, and economic fields. We must also wage resistance in the cultural field. Culture is also a battle-front of our people.

The tasks of the resistance in the cultural field consist in :

1. Doing away with the obscurantist culture introduced by the French colonialists to strengthen their domination.

2. Building a new-democracy culture for Viet Nam.

How is the obscurantist culture of the French colonialists to be done away with ? (And let us never confuse this kind of culture with the genuine and progressive culture of the French people).

Of course, our people's resistance is wiping out the evil influence of this reactionary culture. The slavish, cowardly and parasitic ways of French times are being wiped out. The moral and intellectual fetters used by the French colonialists are being smashed. But we must realize that the colonialist culture remains prevalent in the habits and thoughts of our cadres and people. The French colonialists will continue to deceive our people as long as they remain in our country. Every day, the pamphlets, books, newspapers, magazines, speeches and radio of the enemy sow their poison

among our people, so that there are still some to be found among us who believe that the enemy has good intentions. There are still people who have doubts as to our final victory, or even believe that the enemy's "mission" is to fight us in order to re-establish peace and order, to bring the light of civilization to our people, and so on. These myths, in cultural disguise, are backed by the policy of armed terror and economic corruption, and have been of some service to the enemy, particularly in the occupied zones.

This tendency is very dangerous and we must resolutely fight it.

All artists and writers, all teachers and all intellectuals must now take part in the resistance, open up a cultural front and attack the cultural strongholds of the enemy.

At present, our engineers together with the workers are striving all-out in the rear to produce arms, and to establish workshops and production camps to produce what is necessary for the army and the people. Doctors, medical men and students are taking care of the health of the cadres and the masses. A number of architects are taking part in the construction of defence works, school and office buildings and reception centres for evacuees. They are participating in the resistance in this way.

All our teachers are striving to free the people from illiteracy and to train cadres to serve the long resistance and national reconstruction. Our musicians are writing martial music and inspiring compositions. Our poets are writing lines which arouse love for the country and hatred for the enemy. A number of artists and painters are zealously participating in

propaganda work for the resistance. This is their way of taking part in the resistance.

All political figures, journalists and writers are urging the army and people to unite for the struggle, clearly pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of various political lines, proposing tactics and policies. Is resistance of this kind any less important than going to the front under arms ?

But all this is not enough. Further efforts must be made. There are still many shortcomings in our cultural activity. Not all the cultural forces at our disposal, the talented writers, scientists and artists, are fully mobilized yet. Numbers of cultural workers want to work, but do not know what to do ; there are even people who are still indifferent. Those cultural workers who have boldly taken part in the resistance, and are serving the army and mingling with the people, have made progress. But we feel that they do not have a clear-cut guiding principle and plan yet.

While the enemy is tramping all over our fatherland, and the whole nation is struggling heroically, every cultural activity must be in line with this slogan :

"*Love for the country and hatred for the enemy.*"

All cultural workers must celebrate and work for the renewal of the collective heroism of the people, arousing the greatest possible hatred among our army and people for the enemy, so that they will advance eagerly to fight the enemy, preferring death to surrender. Their work must aim at welding our people into one bloc, in support of the Government, with firm confidence in national salvation, not losing heart when faced with difficulties and hardships. Their work

must aim at doing everything possible to dishearten the enemy troops, lowering their morale, causing them to leave the enemy and to pass over to our ranks, to the right path.

The measures to be taken to achieve the above aims are numerous. Our cultural workers must make frequent use of the simplest forms, capable of winning a ready response from the masses ; for instance : newspapers (particularly wall-newspapers), leaflets, posters, sketches, pictures, talks, songs, dances, etc.

We are not afraid to use the forms of propaganda of the old culture which are familiar to the broad masses, the forms most effective in influencing them ; for example, the various folk song styles such as *Trong quan, Quan ho, Hat dum* and *Hat boi,* should be widely used, provided that we give them a new content and a new artistic spirit.

Using culture in service of the resistance in such a way is to build a new culture for the country.

In our opinion, that culture must be based on the three following principles :

a — It must be national ;

b — It must be scientific ;

c — It must be popular.

Whatever is contrary to national, scientific and popular principles, either in form or in content, must be eliminated.

The war is in part helping us in this work. Indeed, this war is a great upheaval. It helps us to boldly "revolutionize" culture. Big events are taking place : many towns are being destroyed, townspeople are evacuating to the countryside.

The towns, which were formerly the cultural centres, are now occupied by the enemy and are being turned into dark and savage places, abounding in the depraved, obscurantist "culture" of the aggressors. In contrast, the countryside, formerly a dark and backward place, is now becoming civilized and progressive. Culture was formerly something enjoyed by a handful of rich people in the cities; it has now, in a short time, come closer to the broad masses. In order to serve the Fatherland and the people, cultural workers must create works which are simple and well-adapted to the level of the people, who, for the most part, are illiterate, or have only very little education. (Their works must be popular). In this time of war, old elaborate forms and habits, ill-adapted to the new times, bureaucratic styles of work for instance, tend to disappear; in the resistance, every task must be rationally and economically performed, and it must serve a purpose. What is not scientific tends to disappear. (Our cultural works must be scientific). The resistance stirs up our hatred against everything anti-national, against everything which apes the colonialists. In this situation, cultural workers are rapidly able to gain an understanding of their slavish diseases of the "half-breed French" and the "half-breed Chinese" in order to cure themselves. (Our cultural works must be national).

The opportunities are good. The conditions of the resistance are very favourable to the building of a new culture. It requires only that the Vietnamese cultural workers take bold steps and avail themselves of the opportunity to develop Vietnamese culture on the basis of new democracy. Here are their practical tasks :

a — To use art and literature for propaganda and for mobilization of the forces of the resistance;

b — To struggle against illiteracy; develop education;

c — To build a new life;

d — To popularize the practice of hygiene among the people;

e — To wipe out all slavish, colonialist remnants in the cultural field;

f — To develop a culture having a national, scientific and popular character.

In order to advance, our cultural circles must engage in severe self-criticism, and give up their tendencies to arrogance, contempt for and aloofness from the masses. They should shake off their tendencies towards selfishness, avoidance of difficulties and risks, wavering and opportunism.

Regarding traditional culture and foreign cultures, we should refrain from harsh criticism, but we should not follow their examples blindly either. We should have a critical spirit, assimilate what is good in these cultures, and reject what is bad.

In this great struggle, those who fail to keep pace with the movement, who do not adapt themselves to the rapidly changing situation, will certainly be left far behind. Our cultural workers should pay close attention to this fact.

IX

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WAR

We have so far described four aspects (military, political, economic and cultural) of the war against the French. On the basis of the military situation in our country during these last months, we now take up the question of the characteristics of this war :

War of interlocking combs — Our war of resistance is a people's war in which regular army, militia and guerilla forces combine and fight together. Regular forces launch frontal attacks and guerillas fight from the rear, thus catching the enemy between two fires. Sometimes the regular army is obliged to withdraw to avoid losses, but then militia forces and a small part of the regular army split up into guerilla groups and sneak behind the enemy's lines to fight ; or considerable regular forces attack quickly under cover of night, penetrating very deeply into enemy-held areas, launching lightning attacks on bases considered by the enemy to be quite secure. After fulfilling their task, they withdraw according to a plan, foiling the enemy's attempts to encircle and annihilate them. The attacks launched by our troops on Ha Dong (March 20, 1947 and April 13, 1947), on Haiphong (March 22, 1947) and recently on the Viet Nam University Students' Hostels in Hanoi (April 20, 1947) long after our withdrawal from these cities, are striking examples of this.

As for the enemy, they use motorized infantry to penetrate our zones in depth at several points, or work round our positions over a considerable area, hoping to encircle and annihilate our troops, destroy our bases, plunder the people's property and sow bewilderment. Sometimes they send occupation forces of paratroops and commandos to cities or bases in our rear far from the battlefield, in order to hinder our communications and supply lines, or to open another front in our rear. The paratroop raid made by the enemy on Hoa Binh on April 15, 1947 merits attention in this connection.

Thus the enemy attacks deep behind our lines, and we launch attacks deep behind his. This war has the characteristic of two combs whose teeth are interlocked.

"Rough-and-tumble" war — In many regions in the delta, the enemy fights us not only in the military field but also strives to destroy us in the economic field ; they pillage crops and destroy harvests, hoping to drive our people to surrender from sheer poverty. In certain very narrow regions pressed between mountains and sea (such as the Binh Tri Thien zone and the southernmost part of Central Viet Nam), the enemy attacks us at both ends, cutting up the regions into pieces in which he launches mopping-up operations.

In these regions, experience has taught us that to avoid disintegration our troops should quickly abandon their uniforms, mingle with the people, distribute a part of their arms to them, organize them and the militia forces in using every means to fight the enemy. They should cling to the ricefields and struggle against the enemy to win the right to live. The army and the people must unite into one bloc

and be ready to fight to the death against the Expeditionary Corps at any time and anywhere.

Thus the war is a violent, "rough-and-tumble" one.

War without battle-fronts — The result of the interlocking and disorderly war described above is a war without battle-fronts between the enemy troops and ourselves or a war in which the battlefront is not clearly defined. The character of the fighting is constantly changing. Our army and militia forces fight the enemy everywhere, sometimes in his rear, sometimes right in his midst. Sometimes, the enemy advances into our zone, our forces strike at him from behind and at his flanks rather than launching frontal attacks, wearing him out by forcing him to ward off blows.

The battle-front is quite extensive; but even quite close to Hanoi, Haiphong, Saigon, Cholon, our troops are constantly attacking enemy posts. As we arm the entire people and develop guerilla movements day by day, the enemy has to fight for every step forward; our troops and guerillas open a battle-front wherever they encounter the enemy. Neither in areas under our control, nor even in his own occupied zones can he consolidate his rear.

At any given time every guerilla base or nucleus in enemy-held regions will have its front and rear lines. The positions of these bases, and their front and rear lines, are constantly changing.

A war without rear lines, without clear front lines — this is another characteristic of the war against the French colonialists.

War of encirclement — Due to his possession of naval forces the enemy controls the territorial waters and coastal

regions. He also occupies a number of cities close to the frontier. Thus we are encircled by the enemy. But when all-out war broke out, when he wished to attack us with his forces already stationed on our soil, the cities in which enemy forces were garrisoned and all enemy positions were immediately encircled by our forces.

During the first two months of the battle of Hanoi an unusual reciprocal encirclement carried out by the enemy forces and by our own took place: the enemy encircled us in the centre of the city, and we encircled the enemy in the suburbs.

The enemy seeks to occupy many cities and major communication lines thinking to catch us in a net: but when he breaks through our encirclement around the towns and penetrates into the countryside, or parachutes forces into our free zone, his forces are immediately encircled by ours.

Our guerilla bases in the enemy-held regions can appear to be mere enclaves surrounded by the enemy. But all these guerilla bases, together with the extensive free zones, in fact form a huge net encircling the enemy.

Let us look at the world at large. The enemy seeks to appeal to the imperialist forces to encircle us (D'Argenlieu appeals to the British and Americans for help in fighting the "Vietnamese Communists"). But we, together with the democratic, progressive, peaceful forces the world over, with the oppressed peoples in Asia (first and foremost the Khmer and Lao peoples), with the French people and all the peoples of the French colonies who are struggling for national liberation, are encircling the aggressive French colonialists. The enemy is encircled on our soil, in France, in the French

Union and in the world. We see that he is surrounded many times over. In this mutual encirclement, those who enjoy the support and sympathy of the Indochinese peoples and the peoples the world over will carry the day.

War of scorched earth — Everything the enemy can use against us, everything we cannot hold in our hands, must be burnt or destroyed. That is the principle of "resistance by scorched earth". The scorched earth tactics is not a Vietnamese invention but the scale on which we have applied it has bewildered many people. There are foreigners who think that it is madness for the Vietnamese people, of their own will, to raze towns and villages with their own hands, to set ablaze not only the quarters and storehouses of the enemy, but their own houses as well. No, the Vietnamese people are not mad. They have their reasons for applying scorched-earth tactics to a degree unusual in the history of people's wars :

a) Generally speaking, the Vietnamese people are weaker than the enemy with regard to arms and equipment, that is why they should destroy bridges and roads to check or slow down the advance of the enemy's motorized infantry.

b) It is their indefatigable spirit, their will to victory, that enables the Vietnamese people to make great sacrifices in order to cause difficulties to the enemy and bring his defeat closer. The Vietnamese people realize clearly that the task of sabotage is as important as fighting at the front. Sabotage is a tactic used by a people armed with rudimentary weapons to fight better-equipped aggressors who are more inured to war.

Apart from the above-mentioned factors the scorched-earth tactic brings us other advantages. For instance : it causes the enemy to despair, because each time he thinks he is going to occupy a town or a city, in the end he only takes over heaps of rubble and ashes. It displays to the enemy the determination of our people to wage the war of resistance and to defend their freedom.

The more the French invaders and the Vietnamese traitors curse the tactic of scorched-earth, the more clearly they show us that this tactic hurts them very much : it strikes a vulnerable point, by preventing them from filling their pockets. In their propaganda, their plaint is that our High Command applies scorched-earth tactics "to achieve communism by wiping out the difference between rich and poor". What a crude lie ! Our people know very well that when the last reactionary colonialist is driven out of Viet Nam, with our rich resources, the creative spirit of the toiling people, and with the skilful organization and leadership of the democratic Government, fine buildings and cities of new design will gradually appear on the soil of independent Viet Nam. Moreover, the French invaders pillage our compatriots without discrimination between rich and poor many places now. Is it not they in fact who "are wiping out the difference between rich and poor" ?

Scorched-earth tactics are dictated by the circumstances of the resistance in our country, by the relation of forces between the enemy and ourselves, by the weapons at our disposal and by our spirit. Scorched-earth resistance systematically carried out on a large scale is another characteristic of the present war against the French.

In short, the anti-French war is an utterly destructive and brutal war. The enemy is ferocious and we are fearless. The two sides are engaged in a deadly hand-to-hand fight, determined to decide victory and defeat. The characteristics of this war against the French are therefore truly unusual.

X

THE THREE STAGES OF THE LONG-TERM RESISTANCE

In Chapter V, we dealt with the reasons why we must wage a long resistance, why we must prolong our fight in order to win victory. Our long resistance will pass through three stages :

1) The defensive stage,

2) The stage of equilibrium,

3) The stage of general counter-offensive.

Here we cannot describe in advance all the details of the resistance ; we can only map out general lines.

a) *The defensive stage* — At the beginning because the enemy forces are stronger than ours, the enemy's strategy is offensive and ours is defensive. The enemy occupies a number of towns and main communication lines, the coastal region and some areas of the delta. After waging a fierce resistance and encircling the enemy in these regions our troops are obliged to withdraw to safeguard their forces ; in particularly favourable circumstances, they will lure the enemy to penetrate deep into our rear to attack him.

But we do not always withdraw, letting the enemy freely extend his security zone around the cities under his temporary

control, and consolidate the communications and supply lines between occupied towns.

Our strategy may be defensive, but our tactics and campaigning principles are constantly to attack. In the country as a whole we withdraw to prepared positions; but locally we continue to attack, launching sudden assaults on enemy positions right in the heart of the zones he occupies (for example, the attack on Gia Lam airport on January 16, 1947, the battles in Ha Dong and Haiphong in March and April 1947, etc.).

During this period, the military aim of the enemy is to control the big cities, main communication lines, the coastal region, the frontier and the delta, cut our country up into many parts, and block our supplies and communications, hoping to annihilate our regular forces, and destroy our bases, factories and storehouses. In the political field, they justify their aggressive acts before the people of France and the world with deceitful propaganda, accusing us of violating agreements and attacking them first. At the same time, they try to sow discord between the Viet Minh and the people, to entice evacuated compatriots back to the occupied zones, and to set up puppet administrations in the occupied cities and the areas around them.

To achieve these military and political aims, they mobilize their land and air forces, including motorized infantry, applying the tactics both of positional and mobile warfare, launching lightning attacks, working round our positions, attacking us in pincer movements, launching parachute raids or landing troops to attack us by surprise (the battles in Haiphong and Hai Duong of December 1946, in Thua Thien and

Quang Tri of February 1947, in Ha Dong of March 1947 etc.). At the same time, they buy up Vietnamese national traitors and bandits, trick our Catholic compatriots and followers of the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai sects, and bribe national minority people.

Our forces are still small in number, badly equipped, and not yet inured to war; but they have a high spirit and enjoy the unreserved support of the people. Moreover, they know from the beginning how to apply flexible tactics; that is how on the one hand they can maintain their strength and on the other hand wear out the enemy forces. The latter's prestige falls as they suffer these initial defeats. At the same time, we mobilize the people to rise up in resistance. We strive to consolidate the unity within our ranks, unite the entire people, unmask the enemy, win the sympathy and support of the French people and the people the world over, show them clearly our desire for peace and what circumstances have obliged our people to fight in self-defence.

Our tactics during this stage are as follows: at first, we apply positional warfare in the streets, holding on to every house, every street, every quarter (battles in Hanoi, Nam Dinh, Hue). Then we withdraw from the towns, using positional warfare tactics to bottle the enemy up in the towns for a certain time (battle in Hanoi, etc.). Simultaneously, small units of our forces penetrate the streets and use guerilla warfare to harass the enemy. Guerilla warfare complements and helps positional warfare.

Gradually, the enemy extends his attacks from the big towns, and occupies more towns and communication lines. As this process goes on, the war of positions takes second

place, giving way to guerilla and mobile warfare. From now on positional warfare complements and helps guerilla and mobile warfare. It is still necessary to stop the enemy's advance. But if we have resort only to positional warfare, the enemy will use mobile warfare to work round our positions or encircle us, thus causing us big losses. Generally speaking, during the defensive stage, compared with guerilla warfare, mobile warfare plays the leading part. But guerilla warfare comes gradually to play the major role towards the end of this state, as the enemy-occupied zones are extended, and the militia and the guerilla movements are developed.

b) *The stage of equilibrium* — Gradually the enemy's forces and our own become equal. Enemy strategy at this stage is to remain on the defensive, while ours is to prepare for the general counter-offensive. Generally speaking, the enemy no longer has sufficient strength to advance. At some point he must call a halt, or make a few steps forward and then withdraw to his former positions. In general, we no longer have to retreat, but we have not yet sufficient strength to take back the lost areas (although we can take back some positions). The two sides seem to be holding each other in the same positions. But the enemy's forces and ours do not only simply watch one another, like the stork and the oyster [1]. We continue to carry out local attacks on the enemy-occupied zones. The result of many small attacks is equal to that of a big attack. As for the enemy, he does not remain constantly on the defensive and leave us in peace either. On the contrary,

1. The author refers to a Vietnamese fable : a stork wished to eat an oyster, but the oyster caught its bill and held it firmly. Thus they remained, watching one another, for a long time, until a fisherman arriving on the scene caught them both.

he is constantly carrying out raids in the occupied zones and launching spear-head attacks deep into our free zones.

The military aim of the enemy during this stage is to consolidate his positions and communication lines, use relatively big forces to launch terrorist "mopping up" operations, hoping to "re-establish order" in the occupied zones. He strives to encircle and raze our guerilla bases there, to blockade us, to chop up our free zones into many parts to destroy them. He sends agents into our zone to spy on the garrisoning of our troops, our public services, storehouses, workshops, schools, etc, then to rain bombs on them or direct their henchmen to sabotage them. Their political aim is to set up a central puppet government and an administration in each Ky [1]. At the same time they develop the reactionary village organizations, the councils of notables, in order to divide and trick our people into submitting to them. They count on this puppet power and its "armed forces" to repress our movement for national liberation and to plunder our people's belongings. Riding the puppet clique, they hope to enjoy the fruits of their exploitation in peace.

Our own military and political aim during this stage is to wear out the enemy forces, annihilate them piecemeal ; sabotage, disturb, give the enemy no peace to exploit the people easily ; mobilize the people to wage armed struggle against the puppet administration, oppose the enemy's mopping-up policy ; and organize counter-measures against bandits and traitors. Armed propaganda must be carried out on a large scale, particularly in the enemy-held region,

1. Name given by the French to the three parts into which they had divided Viet Nam : North, Centre, and South.

to maintain the people's morale. We must guard against the weariness, discouragement, and tendencies to compromise and defeatism which may appear in the ranks of the resistance. Our aim is also to strengthen our forces, training more cadres, producing more weapons, establishing more regular and guerilla forces, developing and consolidating revolutionary organizations, preparing conditions for the switch-over to the stage of general counter-offensive.

Our tactic during this stage is to apply guerilla warfare to the greatest possible extent, with a view to making it difficult for the enemy to eat and sleep, obliging his forces to scatter, tiring them and wearing them out. On the one hand, a part of the regular forces must be set aside to organize guerilla forces with the help of the people and to carry out guerilla warfare. On the other, regular troops must be concentrated at "mobile" key spots, places where the enemy must pass, and where "we can attack while advancing, or keep our position while retreating", at so-called "hinge" points, from which we can attack isolated enemy posts, encircle and annihilate a part of the enemy's forces at the right time, launch sudden attacks on towns where enemy forces are not numerous, and, better still, liberate certain regions when conditions permit.

The regular troops, militia and guerilla forces always co-ordinate their attacks.

Thus, generally speaking and in the country as a whole, during the stage of equilibrium guerilla warfare is the most widespread tactic; mobile warfare takes its place, after a period in which they are both of equal importance. Positional warfare plays the auxiliary role and supports guerilla and

mobile warfare. By the end of this stage, a part of our guerilla units are deployed in mobile warfare, which is thereby reinforced.

This second stage is an extremely hard and complicated one. It is a relatively long but also the key stage, because it is during this stage that we pass from an inferior position to a superior one to advance to the stage of general counter-offensive.

c) *The stage of general counter offensive* — In this stage, since the balance of forces has changed in our favour, our strategy is to launch a general counter-offensive, and the enemy's strategy is defence and retreat.

There are two factors determining our strategy of general counter-offensive. First, the growth in strength of our army and people, and second, the weakening of the enemy and the extreme demoralisation of his troops. It may be that our material forces are still not superior to those of the enemy. Nevertheless, as a result of the special conditions in Indochina, France, in the French colonies and the world over, and the tendency to disintegration of enemy morale, we can switch over to the stage of general counter-offensive, granted even that our material forces are relatively weaker than the enemy's.

For example, as a result of the long war the enemy troops become weary and discouraged and are tormented by homesickness. The French economy and finances are exhausted; supplying the army is difficult, the French troops have to put up with privations, the French people do not want the war in Viet Nam to go on any longer. The movement against the war and against the diehards in France grows stronger

and more fierce. The peoples in the colonies rise up in active opposition to French rule. World opinion severely condemns France, which is isolated diplomatically. The world movement for peace and democracy scores great successes, etc. Such factors would have considerable influence on our liberation struggle, and create many favourable conditions for us in launching the general counter-offensive.

As for us, although our material resources are not yet adequate, our fighting spirit soars constantly higher. Our army and people become more united. The solidarity of the entire people is strengthened daily.

With such subjective and objective conditions, the success of our general counter-offensive can be guaranteed.

During this stage, the enemy surrenders many positions and withdraws to entrench himself in the big cities. He will possibly hold false negotiations with us with a view to gaining time, and will use delaying tactics while waiting for direct and more active assistance from reactionaries the world over. As for us, our consistent aim is that the whole country should rise up and go over to the offensive on all fronts, completely defeat the enemy and achieve true independence and unification.

As far as tactics are concerned during this stage mobile warfare plays the outstanding role at first, and is complemented and supported by guerilla warfare. Guerilla warfare is rapidly and extensively transformed into mobile warfare (many guerilla groups gathered together form units analogous to those of the regular forces and apply mobile warfare). Mobile warfare is in its turn transformed into positional warfare. Battles for cities and strong points take place all

the time, and finally after a number of campaigns, mobile warfare changes into positional warfare, which plays the predominant role in the last, decisive phase.

Our troops concentrate rapidly, act vigorously on the offensive and launch a series of well-planned lightning attacks on the cities and the enemy positions to encircle and annihilate them. In brief, we throw all our forces throughout the country into the battle to crush the enemy completely and win back the whole of our territory! The machinery of enemy rule temporarily set up in our country is smashed to pieces by our army and people. And at the bottom of the scrap-heap of that machinery lie the rotten corpses of the puppet traitors. This third stage, although the shortest, is also the most victorious and valiant.

In a word, our long resistance will develop through the following stages :

a) First stage - strategy : defensive ; tactics : attack.

b) Second stage - strategy : seesaw struggle (preparing for counter-offensive) ; tactics : attack.

c) Third stage - strategy and tactics : counter-offensive (general counter-offensive).

These are the three stages of our long resistance war. In what stage are we now ? On a national scale, we are in the first stage. But, in the South particularly where the resistance has been going on for a long time, we will switch over to the second stage soon. In fact, there are no clear dividing lines between the three stages. The later stage originates in the former. The former stage creates conditions for the later stage.

In the future, will there be any change in this three-stage war ?

There may be changes : changes in duration but not in the stages themselves. There will be no change if the French colonialists are blind and stubborn in their schemes to re-occupy Viet Nam. Even if the reactionary French colonialists receive support in the course of the war through the intervention of international reaction, the three stages will remain unchanged in general outlines. But if we wage a powerful resistance, if the uprisings and movements for liberation in the French colonies in Africa are intensified and cause France many difficulties, if the movement for peaceful negotiation with Viet Nam now under way in France becomes stronger every day, if the French soldiers and legionaries in Viet Nam oppose the war, and France's already faltering economy and finances become exhausted ; under the pressure of these factors, it is possible that in certain conditions the democratic parties in France may hold negotiations with us in order *to save the situation*. In that case, our long resistance will be interrupted by new talks, and that is precisely *one of its characteristics*[1]. However, as long as the French colonialists remain in our country, and we have not yet completed the third stage, we cannot obtain genuine independence and unification.

1. Since the beginning of the resistance (September 1945), there have been two periods of negotiations between France and Viet Nam.

XI

OUR DIFFICULTIES AND THOSE OF THE FRENCH

The long-term resistance will be very hard, but it will certainly be victorious. That is our opinion and the common opinion of our compatriots.

We should overcome the tendency to groundless optimism, the inclination to think that everything will be plain sailing. We should guard against the tendency to underestimate the enemy and overstimate our own forces ; such tendencies leave us off our guard, leave us indifferent and unprepared, make us slacken our efforts, or cause us to lose our heads when we score the least success.

We should be fully aware that this resistance is a hard and fierce struggle ; a long and painful trial. We must have courage and patience ; we must make energetic efforts if we are to be able to hold out. We must clench our teeth and rise above ourselves to overcome all difficulties and win final victory.

Our difficulties in this resistance are many !

We have to give up a part of our territory and allow our sphere of action to be narrowed down. We will lose several thriving commercial cities, several major communication lines and even parts of our rich plains. Countless families will thus

be broken up, scattered, and deprived of their means of livelihood!

Thousands of our finest young people in the flower of youth have had to sacrifice themselves for the country! Hundreds of talented and experienced cadres have sacrificed their lives for the fatherland! If the war is prolonged there will be mountains of bones and rivers of blood. In some places, due to violent enemy raids, and our own lack of vigilance, we have suffered losses in men and arms with our storehouses pillaged, our countryside devastated.

In the enemy-held regions, the people suffer terrorism, rape, destruction, pillage. Traitors and bandits harass the people day and night poking their noses into everything.

In consequence of the economic blockade, if we do not do our utmost to increase production and to establish adequate organization for the distribution of goods, we will meet difficulties in supplying some regions.

Faced with the enemy's manœuvres to divide us politically, if we do not strengthen our solidarity and do our work of persuasion, there will be misunderstanding and discord between Catholics and non-Catholics, between majority and minority people, there may even be fratricidal conflicts.

Certain international reactionary forces may intervene in this war and temporarily tip the scales in favour of the French colonialists.

All this is not to mention natural calamities, floods and the epidemics that usually go with war!

The above-mentioned difficulties usually accompany war in any country. Our people must be determined to overcome every obstacle!

Pessimists get discouraged at the least difficulty. They forget that our country is an agricultural country with rich resources which are easily exploited; our people are industrious and thrifty, the overwhelming majority of them live by farming and will never starve through the loss of the cities (as we have said already in dealing with resistance in the economic field).

Our territory is relatively small. Our population is relatively small. But the enemy lives thousands of miles from our country. Moreover, he must scatter his forces to defend many places in the French Union and thus cannot concentrate them to annihilate us.

Enemy terror will in fact frighten a few people, but in general it will arouse the deep hatred of our people. The deceptive propaganda of the enemy is indeed dangerous to us; but then his greed and his barbarous methods straight away unmask his hypocrisy before our people's disgust. Eighty years of slavery and five years under the double yoke of the French and Japanese have driven our people closely together in united struggle to the end: they have resolved never to live under the same sky with the invaders. In the course of nearly two years, the people's power has brought to our people freedom and some important economic and cultural gains; therefore, our people are prepared to make sacrifices in their determination to preserve the gains of the republican regime.

Thanks to guerilla tactics and their eagerness our people can to a certain extent make good our deficiency in arms and munitions: they can seize enemy weapons and turn

them on the enemy. While fighting, they can produce still more weapons.

For nearly a century, the French invaders have massacred the men of talent of our nation without let-up. But "young shoots replace the old bamboo". From generation to generation, our people have fought unremittingly for independence. Men of talent have passed the torch on from one to the other. And our sacred resistance of today is forging a whole generation of heroes ! if the enemy murders one of our gifted sons, many others will be ready to replace him.

Cowards are generally blind or have only a limited view of things. They see only our difficulties, but not what we can do to overcome them. They see only our weaknesses, but not those of the enemy.

And when we look at the enemy, what do we see ? France is now confronted with four great difficulties :

1. After the Second World War, France was economically and financially run down. France is short of coal ; she must restrict the running of the machines in her factories. This year, France is short of 600,000 tons of wheat, and she has not even the money to buy abroad to make good the deficiency. The regular budget and extraordinary expenditures in 1947 resulted in a total deficit of 285,000 million francs. France has as yet recovered only to a small extent from the ravages of war ; yet she must spend hundreds of millions of francs on the war in Viet Nam. This situation is having very serious consequences for the supplies to the French Expeditionary Corps.

2. The political situation in France is confused. The de Gaulle clique are agitating for the establishment of a party,

and aim to rely on foreign reaction to overthrow the republican regime. The anti-war movement has been launched. In debates on Viet Nam at the sessions of the French National Assembly in March and May, the Communist Party has clearly expressed its opposition to the policy of using force to re-establish the colonial regime in our country, and opposed the war expenditures. On March 25, 1947, the General Confederation of Labour organized many demonstrations embracing millions of people throughout France, with the slogan : "Immediate negotiations with Viet Nam".

The anti-war movement in France is sure to grow considerably in the future.

3. The situation in the French African colonies is constant turmoil. On March 29, 1947, the people of Madagascar rose up in opposition to the French ; the insurrection is expanding daily. On April 8, 1947, hostilities broke out between the Algerian people and the French in the Kabylia region. On the night of April 7, 1947, at Casablanca (Morocco), there were many hundred killed and wounded in a fight between Arabs and the Senegalese soldiers of the French. In French West Africa, on April 19, 1947, railwaymen went on strike, and at the end of April the people demonstrated in front of the palace of the French Governor, etc. The movement of struggle for independence is spreading in the member countries of the French Union.

4. The peoples in Southeast Asia have shown their indignation at French aggression in Viet Nam. The Indian, Burmese, Malayan and Indonesian peoples have expressed their sympathy for us. In mid-April 1947, the World Federation of Democratic Youth session held in India decided to support

Viet Nam and established a programme of action aimed at pressuring France to cease hostilities in Viet Nam. Thus, we can see that the opinion of honest people in the world against French colonialist aggression will gradually isolate France in the international arena.

And this is only the beginning of France's difficulties. If France does not negotiate with us soon, these difficulties will grow to such an extent that France will be powerless to overcome them. Why ? Because the more France fights Viet Nam, the more she will suffer losses in manpower and material resources, the more hardships the French people will endure, the more the anti-war movement in France and the revolutionary movement in the French colonies will develop, and the more strongly the democratic world will condemn French colonial policy. It is just as French Premier Ramadier said on April 27, 1947 : "*France is like a drowning man gasping for air*".

These words correspond exactly to both the financial and economic situation of France, and to her political situation. Ramadier also said :

"If we do not react, we will sink" [1].

But in our opinion, the only way for France to avoid "sinking" is to negotiate with Viet Nam and recognize the national rights of the Vietnamese people and those of other countries in the French Union. This way France will not fall into the arms of the American capitalists and simply be sold out to the Yankees.

1. These words of Ramadier were designed to appeal for help from the U.S.A. and to prepare French opinion for acceptance of U.S. imperialist assistance, which will mean that France will be subservient to the U.S. But they also clearly show how critical the situation is for France.

We have the necessary conditions to overcome all difficulties in our country. All we need is for our people to be patient, single-minded and skilful, work out plans for every task, fight with determination and increase production.

In the course of the war of resistance, these difficulties will diminish with our efforts. These difficulties exist in our own country ; we can concentrate our forces to minimize them. Moreover, we enjoy the assistance of our allies in the world : the French people, the peoples in the French colonies, and the forces of peace, democracy and socialism headed by the Soviet Union ; thus, it is entirely possible for us to overcome our difficulties.

As for the French difficulties, some exist in France itself, some in Viet Nam, others in the countries of the French Union, and others in the world in general. France cannot concentrate her forces on overcoming these complicated and scattered difficulties, especially as she is much weakened following the recent world war. Therefore, if France wants to be an independent and democratic country, and to keep her position as a great power in the world, she has no other way of easing or overcoming these difficulties than to recognize the independence and unification of Viet Nam. This is one more reason why future victory belongs to Viet Nam, and future defeat to France.

XII

BALANCE OF FORCES

In this war as in all other wars, the stronger will carry the day and the weaker will be defeated in the fray. Strength and weakness here mean strength and weakness in the moral as well as the material fields, and are reflected in the strong and weak points of each side. Whichever side has more strong points and fewer weak points will be able to triumph over the other.

It is difficult for the side which has many strong points, in minor matters, and few weaknesses, in major matters, to defeat the other side when it has fewer strong points, but in major matters, and more weaknesses, but in minor matters. The side whose strong points grow and weaknesses diminish as the fighting wears on will be able to defeat the other side, whose strong points diminish and whose weaknesses grow with the fighting.

Therefore, to know which side will win or lose — our people or the French — we have to consider the strong points and the weaknesses of the two sides objectively.

These are our strong points :

a) The aim of our war is just (we are struggling against aggressors in order to recover our freedom).

b) The entire people are united in the National United Front against the French invaders.

c) The morale of our army and people is high (everyone is vying in heroism for national salvation).

d) Our troops are fighting on their native soil to defend their people's interests, and they thus enjoy three advantages : they are used to the climate (*Thien thoi* : the climate is favourable to them), well acquainted with the natural features (*Dia loi* : the terrain is favourable to them) and supported by the people (*Nhan hoa* : the population is favourable to them).

e) We have many allies (the French people, the peoples of the French colonies, the forces of peace, democracy and socialism the world over, support us).

Our weaknesses are as follows :

a) Our weapons are few and rudimentary.

b) Our troops are not numerous and inadequately trained.

c) Our organizational level is inadequate (particularly in the military and economic fields).

d) Propaganda directed to foreign countries is weak.

These are the weaknesses of the enemy :

a) The aim of their war is reactionary (aggression, oppression, exploitation, and this arouses hatred against them).

b) Internal division (the backers of the war and the supporters of negotiations, the reactionary forces and the progressive forces, sharply oppose one another).

c) The low morale of their troops (several facts show that the French soldiers are afraid of death; puppet soldiers, legionaries and French colonial soldiers have deserted and come over to our ranks).

d) Waging an aggressive war in a foreign country, the enemy meets with three disadvantages: they are not used to the climate (lack of a climate favourable to them), not acquainted with the natural features (lack of a terrain favourable to them) [1] not supported by the people (lack of a population favourable to them).

e) They have many enemies and few friends (the British and American imperialists may back them to a certain extent, in weapons, finances, etc., but this is merely a drop in the ocean compared with their huge expenditures, because France must heal the wounds of war at home and at the same time meet the expenditures in Indochina, face up to the struggle of the colonial peoples in Africa, the anti-war movement in France and the world peace movement).

f) Finances and economy are in a state of exhaustion (France has not yet been restored after the Second World War, and now has to fight in Viet Nam. That is why her already poor finances and economy are becoming worse).

g) Their forces are limited and have to be scattered throughout the French Union.

Here are the French strong points:

a) Numerous modern arms,

b) Numerous well-trained troops,

1. Though the French invaders have lived for 80 years in our country, they cannot be so well acquainted with our land as our own people.

c) High level of organization,

d) Well-orchestrated propaganda directed to foreign countries.

Comparing the advantages and the disadvantages of the two sides, we notice the following five points:

Firstly, the advantages of Viet Nam are the disadvantages of the French, and *vice versa.*

Secondly, France has more weaknesses than Viet Nam.

Third, France has more weaknesses than strong points.

Fourth, Most of the strong points of Viet Nam are political ones; most of the French strong points are military ones.

Fifth, All the strong points of Viet Nam are fundamental; those of the French are secondary. Indeed, the French have many modern arms, numerous and well-trained officers and troops, a high standard of organization and large-scale propaganda with foreign countries; but their war is an aggressive war, so they have few friends and many enemies, suffer from internal division, and cannot enjoy the support of the people; their effective strength is constantly diminished.

Thus their strong points are of no avail.

This is the lesson of wars down through history. The new experiences of the Second World War in particular, have shown this clearly. How did things work out for the Germany of Hitler, and fascist Japan? Had they not many modern arms, able generals and well-trained troops, good organization and clever propaganda? Yet, because of the aggressive and reactionary aims of their war, their army and people were not single-minded; the morale of their troops was very low, and they were opposed by the whole civilized

world. They could only win some resounding victories at the beginning. After that, the more they fought the weaker they became until they were smashed to bits and defeated. The French colonialists must learn this historical lesson, go back quickly on their error, or France's future will be very gloomy.

We should keep well in mind that if we protract the war, and this will be thanks to the strenuous efforts of our entire people, our strong points will constantly increase, and our weaknesses will decrease with every passing day. On the contrary, the more the enemy fights, the more his strong points diminish, and the more his weaknesses grow. Here are some easily grasped examples : The more we fight, the better trained, experienced and tempered our troops are. The more the enemy fights the more critical his financial and economic situation becomes. The more we fight, the more we enjoy the support and sympathy of the French people and peace-loving peoples the world over, the more the peoples of the French colonies will avail themselves of the sending of French troops to Viet Nam to rise up against the French, the more numerous our allies become. The more the French fight, the lower their morale, the more weary and demoralized their forces.

So we see that the more we fight, the stronger our forces grow, and the more the enemy fights the weaker his forces become. Though at present our material strength (weapons, troops, economy, etc.) is still inferior to that of the enemy, our moral strength (the heroism and solidarity of our army and people, the moral support given by the world's people) is tremendous. In the future, if we prolong the war, not

only will our moral strength develop, but our material forces will also increase. Our protracted war aims at developing every reserve of material and moral power, strengthening our strong points and minimising the weak ones, in order to be able to switch over from a weak position to a stronger position vis-à-vis the enemy to win final victory.

In brief, after comparing our forces with the enemy's, we can affirm that *we will certainly win*. Our war of resistance is a people's war, a progressive war. We enjoy the material and moral strength drawn from the inexhaustible resources of the people, from the progressive character of a just war. Temporary failures cannot discourage us, just as small and partial successes cannot intoxicate us. We know that at any time and anywhere, revolutionary success can be obtained only if we organize and make preparations to win it. Our success in this resistance war will be partly due to the difficulties, weaknesses and errors of the French (which we know how to exploit to the fullest extent), and partly thanks to the assistance of our allies ; but it will be *chiefly due to our close unity, our self-reliance, our strenuous efforts to strengthen and develop our forces. Long term resistance and self-reliance are our general guiding principle in this war for national liberation.*

The three great points which will lead us to success are :

1. The entire Vietnamese people are closely united to wage a long resistance war.

2. The French people will oppose war more and more strongly every day, or will rise up to overthrow the reactionaries.

3. The revolutionary movement in the French colonies is on the upgrade and the forces of peace, democracy and socialism all over the world energetically oppose the French colonialists.

These three factors already exist, but they are not yet fully developed. We should make still more sacrifices, and struggle with all our might. Time will bring us more favourable opportunities.

At present, the French reactionaries are plotting a perfidious manœuvre, hoping to overcome all their difficulties and make good the weaknesses of France.

They intend to engage in anti-Soviet propaganda, and anti-Communism ; they seek to undermine the Republic, to crush the French people under the burden of war spending and push France into the arms of the US and Britain in the hope of winning help from these powers to restore the French economy and to prolong the colonial war. But for France this path is suicidal, because France will thus turn herself into a country subservient to foreign powers and, finally, will be unable even to maintain the French Union. The French people and all parties loyal to the French Republic will assuredly not stand by with arms folded in the face of these harmful activities of the French reactionaries. They will struggle against them. At that moment, their struggle will combine with that of the Vietnamese war of resistance, and with the struggle of other peoples in the French Union, and will become a large-scale coordinated offensive which will defeat the French reactionary colonialists.

XIII

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

We have described our strong and weak points, and the strong and weak points of the enemy. But this exposition does not decide the question of victory or defeat in the war.

We should not be content with comparing the potentials and problems, the strengths and weaknesses of the two sides, and subside in complacency because of our advantages. An attitude of groundless optimism robs us of clear vision and the will to make progress and makes us short-sighted and passive.

In the history of war, there have been countries which met with fewer difficulties and had fewer weaknesses than the enemy, but which nevertheless were defeated. On the other hand, there have been countries which encountered more difficulties and had more weaknesses than the enemy, but which triumphed. Why should this be so ? Because the country which had the advantage of its enemy did not try hard enough, underestimated its enemy, and lacked skill. On the other hand, the country whose situation was disadvantageous made strenuous efforts, "knew itself and knew the enemy", and triumphed because it had skilful leadership. When the author of *Kim Van Kieu*[1] wrote : "The will of

1. Poem written by Nguyen Du (18th century), acknowledged as a masterpiece of Vietnamese literature.

man triumphs over fate", he was thinking of the talents and subjective efforts of man, which may exercise a great influence on objective conditions. Of course, if we examine this matter closely, we can see that the amount of influence depends on the nature of the objective material conditions.

When our people struggle with determination, when our leadership is skilful, we can take advantage of the favourable conditions of time and circumstance to turn "difficulties" into "advantages", "weaknesses" into "strengths", and there is nothing strange in this at all! War itself is a great movement. Difficulties the war creates for the belligerents ("strengths" or "weaknesses" depending on the side) do not remain static. They change according to the development of the war. The side which is skilful and makes great efforts will be able to turn these changes to its advantage, and to the enemy's disadvantage. On the other hand, if this side lacks vigilance, is foolish, passive, or cowardly, these changes will become advantageous to its enemy and harmful to itself.

We should also be asking ourselves: if we have more strong points than the enemy, then why do we remain on the defensive and go on retreating? Why, when the situation is viewed as a whole, do we still remain in a passive position? Why have we not yet won the initiative? In our opinion, it is because most of the enemy's weaknesses are moral ones, and most of his strong points are material ones. As for us, our weaknesses are for the most part material, and our strong points moral. War is a struggle between two forces from both the moral and the material viewpoints. And favourable material conditions are necessary to victory — even a temporary victory — in any military action, whether in war, or in an armed uprising.

That is why our efforts to check the advance of the enemy and defeat him should concentrate on diminishing our material weaknesses, increasing our moral strength, and at the same time reducing the material strong points of the enemy and aggravating his moral weaknesses.

This is the heart of the matter.

Because we have fewer arms than the enemy, while fighting, we must on the one hand maintain and develop our arsenals, keep up and increase our flow of weapons; and on the other hand, we must destroy and capture increasing amounts of enemy arms. Unfortunately our firepower is still weak and our tactics are not yet skilful: in many battles, we have killed a considerable number of enemy soldiers, but we have seized only a very small quantity of weapons. Conversely, though we have suffered small losses in men, every time one of our fighters falls, we lose his weapon as well. While fighting we must also produce arms, both rudimentary and modern arms, and constantly improve the standard of our arms manufacture. We should overcome the tendency to overestimate modern arms and underestimate rudimentary ones. Those who have these tendencies do not realize that with the technical conditions prevailing in our country, if there is no manufacture of rudimentary arms, we cannot equip our guerilla forces and arm our entire people.

But at the same time we should overcome the tendency to attach importance to rudimentary arms only and neglect the production of modern arms; if we lack modern arms,

it is difficult to check the advance of the enemy's motorized troops, or to counter-attack him. We should also carry out sabotage, intercept the enemy and use guerilla warfare with a view to minimizing the effect of the enemy's modern arms. We should launch surprise attacks and blow up enemy munitions stores; and we should set up sham targets easily visible, in order to delude the enemy and trick him into firing and expending his ammunition to no effect.

Our troops are not as well-trained as those of the enemy; that is why we must learn rapidly from the experiences gained in every battle, study the enemy's methods, improve our own strategy and tactics, and strive to train our officers and soldiers, militia and guerilla forces. At the same time, we use stratagems to deceive the enemy and drive him onto the defensive; we find out as much as possible about the enemy in order to get to know him; we keep him in the dark about our forces by depriving him of information; we should clearly foresee enemy moves and take advantage of his carelessness and lack of vigilance to launch daring attacks to annihilate him, avoiding all disadvantageous "fights to the death" in order to conserve our forces for a long resistance, for the moment when we can switch over from a defensive to an offensive position.

At present, most of our soldiers only know how to fight bravely; they do not pay attention to the study of tactics. Many officers have their attention focused only on details, knowing only that area in which they are fighting, and not bothering to study and analyse matters thoroughly; or else they collect experiences mechanically, and do not know how to apply them correctly to our practical situation; they limit

themselves to positional warfare or to the former strategy and tactics of the colonialist army. These tendencies should be weeded out immediately.

Our level of war organization is low; therefore it is a matter of some urgency for us to try to discover ways of improving our command, and make it unified, rapid and precise. It is necessary to simplify and militarize the various technical organs. We should give precise orders; these must reach every fighter, and we should maintain strict control of their implementation. Liaison and communications must be rapid and consolidated, even in enemy-held regions. Intelligence work must be speedy and accurate. Supplies should be punctual, sufficient and regular. Militia and guerilla forces must be organised on a wide scale with a view to the constant replenishment of our reserve forces, ensuring that we reinforce the regular army in such a way that our regular troops receive timely relief and do not wear themselves out. At the same time, we must strive to upset the enemy's organization by sabotage and ruses. In order to achieve the aims of the war of resistance not only must our line and policies be correct, and our strategy and tactics flexible and clever, but organizational work, too, is very necessary, in order to ensure the implementation of these lines and policies, and the correct application of strategy and tactics. We should overcome tendencies to work in an amateur fashion, according to the way we feel, without principle, mechanically, unsystematically, without planning and checking. We should at the same time struggle against the tendency to waste time and effort over trifles, not to see the question as a whole; or the tendency to do organizational work so poorly that the execution of the political line is not ensured.

We must grasp this point : the key question in organization is the question of cadres — their political stand, ideology, style of work and experience. To train, foster, choose and use cadres is extremely important.

Is our propaganda directed to foreign countries weak ? We will do our utmost to explain our just cause and expose the enemy's schemes to the world.

Since ours is the struggle of a just cause against barbarism, of sincerity against perfidy, we are bound to win the sympathy of the French people, of personalities in other countries and of small nations, particularly Asian peoples and the peoples of the French colonies. Furthermore, the Soviet Union may raise the problem of Viet Nam before the United Nations Organization and demand that France withdraw its troops from Viet Nam. We should take full advantage of the contradictions between France and other countries in propaganda against the French colonialists. That is why we must document French crimes against our people, against foreign residents and the adherents of various religions ; and document our humanitarian behaviour towards French prisoners of war, our correct policies in regard to foreign missionaries and residents. Propaganda in foreign countries must be undertaken by a responsible organ, and by a number of specialized cadres, in order to avoid negligence and a happy-go-lucky manner of working. We should also send cultural delegates or National Assembly deputies abroad to make propaganda. We should get rid of the tendency to consider propaganda in foreign countries as a completely auxiliary task and thus neglect it ; or else to consider it a "panacea", in other words, to rely on others without making

any attempt to develop our own resources, or to make our own efforts.

These are the tasks to be carried out to minimize our weaknesses and diminish the enemy's strong points. There is no other way to develop our strong points and accentuate the enemy's weaknesses than to carry out the following fundamental tasks : unite the entire people, mobilize the whole country, wage a long resistance, make skilful propaganda directed at the enemy, have a good foreign policy and conduct skilful diplomacy.

However, if we manage to direct our efforts to turning the enemy's disadvantages against him, is the enemy so stupid as not to use our own disadvantages against us in return ? The enemy is more treacherous and cunning than we think. In the course of the resistance, unforeseen difficulties may come our way, created by efforts made by the enemy, by our own errors, or by circumstances unforeseen either by us or the enemy. For instance : natural calamities, or famine might occur, there might be intervention by a third country which would first help the French colonialists to fight us and then oust them ; again, the loss of a number of our cadres and outstanding men could have a considerable effect on the leadership of the resistance ; or grave errors by our commanders could lead to serious losses...

Such things may happen. The duty of our leading organization [1] is to foresee such eventualities and take all necessary

1. The leading organization here is the Indochinese Communist Party (later the Viet Nam Workers' Party and now the Communist Party of Viet Nam). In this book, the author does not refer by name to the Indochinese Communist Party, the Party having proclaimed its voluntary dissolution. In fact it discreetly continued its activities (Editor's note).

preventive measures. But when something has happened that we were unable to prevent, we should remain calm, hold out, and deal with the situation.

If we hold firm to Marxism-Leninism, stick closely to the people, and fully develop their potentialities, we will never be defeated.

XIV

SOME BURNING PROBLEMS IN THE MILITARY FIELD

The nation-wide war of resistance has been waged for nearly six months. The war is expanding and becoming fiercer every day. Here is a brief summary of the main points concerning a number of burning military questions :

1. *Politics and military action* — These two questions are closely related : "*War is a continuation of politics*". (Marx). The politics of our Democratic Republic are hampered by the French colonialists ; we must therefore act militarily to remove the obstacles they have put in our way, so that our politics can be carried out successfully. Military action is a measure by which politics are executed. "*War is an instrument of politics. War is the continuation of politics by other means.*" (Clausewitz). This is why military action can succeed only when politics are correct. And conversely, politics cannot be fulfilled without the success of military action. When military action is successful the aim of war is also realized. After a war comes to an end, politics continue to be carried out by other, more moderate means. That is the relation between military affairs and politics.

Those who rely only on politics often do not realize the important role of armed force in history ; they do not realize that sometimes armed force must be used to fight the internal enemy or external aggressors. Internally, such people often

accept unprincipled compromise. In foreign relations, they are liable to surrender, or make any kind of diplomatic concessions. On the other hand, those who have a tendency to rely on military action only are inclined to militarism. They tend to believe that everything can be settled by armed force; they do not apply political mobilization, are unwilling to give explanations and to convince people; they even use threats, or bring pressure to bear on the people. Or, fighting spiritedly, they neglect political work; they do not seek ways of building ties of affection between officers and men, do not act in a way that encourages the army and the people to help one another wholeheartedly; and they neglect propaganda directed at breaking the morale of the enemy troops. Such people know only how to fight; they fail to consolidate the National United Front, to seek new allies outside the country, and neglect the study of the internal and world situation, which is indispensable to the development of correct internal and foreign policies.

2. *Strategy and tactics* — In brief, strategy is the art of war directed at winning victory in a given war. Tactics is the art of fighting to defeat the enemy in a given battle. Tactics is an integral part of strategy. To succeed, strategy must be correct first of all. If strategy is correct but tactics happen to be wrong, the war will not necessarily fail entirely. On the other hand, tactics may well be correct, but if strategy is wrong tactics will be of no use in the long run. (This was obvious in the Soviet-German and Sino-Japanese war). Nevertheless, if strategy is correct and tactics are consistently wrong, the numerous errors in tactics may lead to strategic failure. Or sometimes a very great tactical error may also have

a harmful effect on strategy. After all, though a strategy may be correct, if command is weak and suffers continual losses in all battles, how can strategy succeed? Again, a single heavy defeat, which shatters the army's strength and destroys the morale of the troops, may endanger strategy. (For example, the defeats suffered by the Germans in the battle of Verdun in the First World War, and in the battle of Stalingrad during the Second World War).

Moreover, strategy decides tactics. Our strategy is to protract the war; therefore, in tactics, we should avoid unfavourable "fights to the death", because we must maintain our forces.

3. *Defence and attack* — At present, we are strategically in the defensive stage. But we would be wrong if we should keep on retreating and refuse to fight on the pretext of defence and preservation of forces. The Thai Binh battle of April 11, 1947 showed the confusion of the local command in this connection, a confusion which caused sorrow and shame to the troops who were indignant at not being allowed to fight, and discouraged the people who felt mistrust for the army and lost confidence.

Sometimes it is better to fight a more or less losing battle than to retreat with unimpaired forces and leave behind a very bad impression. Sometimes we must use forces smaller than those of the enemy to defend a very important position at the peril of our lives, while we await the arrival of our main forces, which will be able to annihilate the whole initially superior enemy force.

We should bear in mind that in this stage our strategy is defence, but our tactics are those of constant attack. This

means that in the whole country we still remain on the defensive, but in each battle we attack and annihilate the enemy. In strategy, the war must be prolonged, but tactically speaking lightning attacks must be launched and rapid decisions won. In other words, "*prolonging the defence in the rear*", and "*attacking to force rapid decisions at the front*" [1].

In general, our cadres already understand this point. But there are still some who do not understand it thoroughly; that is the reason why there have been cases in which they gave up fighting and ran away.

Moreover, we are used to remaining on the defensive in positional warfare, but not yet used to applying mobile warfare in defence, or to launching attacks to ensure defence. So, when we want to defend a position, we often have a tendency to establish a fixed line of defence, dig trenches, set up fortifications and defend them in a rigid manner; we do not know how to combine guerilla and mobile tactics to attack and encircle the enemy, cut off his supply lines, attack him on the flank or from behind, with the aim of obliging him to withdraw; nor do we always know when to send our troops to attack a position important to the enemy to oblige him to detach a part of his attacking forces to save this position. It is by such means that our defence is reinforced in the area in which we are under attack. The attack launched by our forces on Haiphong on March 21, 1947 obliged the enemy to send a part of his forces from Hon Gai and Quang Yen to Haiphong, thus reinforcing our defence in these places where we were under attack. The

1. Mao Tse-tung: *On Protracted War.*

Loc Binh battle at the end of March 1947 obliged the enemy to despatch forces from An Chau to defend the Lang Son - Tien Yen road, thus increasing our strength for the defence of Luc Nam. These are examples of active defence, of defence by offence.

4. *Attrition and annihilation* — To wage war is to fight in such a way as to annihilate the enemy forces in battle, and at the same time to increase our own forces with a view to the final defeat of the enemy. So we must apply the tactics of attrition (to wear away the enemy and exhaust him) and annihilation (to kill or capture the enemy).

At present, the enemy forces are still stronger than ours. That is why we must protract the war to wear them down. Only by wearing the enemy down, can we fulfil the strategic tasks of launching the general counter-offensive, annihilating the enemy and winning final victory. But must we wait for the stage of general counter-offensive to annihilate the enemy? Clearly, no. During the first two stages (defence and equilibrium) we must also launch attacks to annihilate the enemy forces locally, to wear them down *as much as possible*, and seize their weapons, munitions, etc., to provide our forces with more arms. This is the most active way to work towards the moment of general counter-offensive in which the enemy as a whole will be annihilated.

Up to now our troops have often launched attacks to wear the enemy down; in these attacks, both sides have suffered losses, though ours have been smaller than the enemy's. From now on, battles of annihilation must be applied to a greater extent than battles of attrition. What is mobile warfare if not the tactics of annihilation? And guerilla warfare,

if not a combination of the tactics of attrition and those of annihilation ? [1] Our regular army must apply mobile warfare often in order to annihilate local enemy forces. As for the guerilla forces, they must harass and decimate the enemy, and at the same time launch sudden attacks and stage ambushes to achieve rapid annihilation of the enemy forces involved.

5. *How should we attack ?* — Attack is the only effective means of annihilation of the enemy. Fighting the enemy without attacking him is not fighting. However, most of our troops and militia and guerilla forces do not yet clearly understand how to attack. They often split up their forces to probe a series of enemy positions simultaneously, and call this kind of action an "attack". They go and attack some position without reconnoitring, without planning, and start shouting "Assault" two hundred yards before they reach the enemy, giving him plenty of time to get ready to receive them... This they also call an "attack". No ! In our opinion to attack — a town or an enemy post for example — we must :

a) Investigate carefully the enemy's position, his forces, his weapons, his morale, the character of the commander, etc., with a view to drawing up a detailed plan, and then secretly make careful preparations. (But we should avoid formalism and slowness, which could cause us to miss good opportunities).

b) Concentrate forces superior to those of the enemy and such as will enable us to annihilate him in one battle. *Concentration is an essential law of attack*. Use our regular

1. The main characteristic of mobile warfare is annihilation. That of positional warfare is attrition. That of guerilla warfare is annihilation and attrition.

army, when it is superior to that of the enemy, to launch a sudden attack on the objective ; never use more than half or even half of our forces for defensive purposes, or for pinning the enemy down in adjoining areas. Of course while we remain on the defensive, the regular army must be quartered some place as a reserve force, awaiting an opportunity to launch a successful attack. But when we are on the offensive, we must use the regular army for sudden attacks, not as a reserve force. This is the one way in which we can rapidly annihilate the enemy.

c) *Attack in an active, rapid, alert manner, adapt oneself speedily to the new situation* — When the attack is decided upon, and once the order is given, officers and men must be courageous, bold, and attack very rapidly. The troops must be divided for the advance and regrouped to attack, encircle, work round the enemy positions and finally take them by storm.

d) *Define the principal direction clearly* — We should concentrate our forces to defeat the enemy at one point in a sudden attack ; attack the most important key positions of the enemy, completely paralysing his power of defence. It is possible to divide our forces to engage the enemy in one direction, while we actually plan to attack him in another direction.

e) Launch lightning, surprise attacks *availing ourselves of moments when the enemy is off his guard*, when he is eating or sleeping, or when it is drizzling or dark, to attack vigorously for a rapid annihilation of the enemy.

f) After a position has been taken in an attack, if we do not feel strong enough to hold it, retreat immediately in order

to preserve our forces for new battles. Otherwise the enemy may assemble stronger forces to launch a counter-offensive, seize back the position and destroy our forces. But, providing conditions are favourable to us, we should profit from our victory to mop up the front and complete the destruction of enemy forces before retreating.

g) *Make full use of the victorious attack* to enhance the prestige of our troops and the morale of our whole army and people. Experiences must be drawn from all attacks for the preparation of others.

In short, attack is an art. To attack successfully, we must know the enemy and we must know our own forces. We must study the conditions of time and place, rapidly concentrate sufficient forces, and attack in an active, alert and rapid manner.

6. *How do we win the initiative?* At present, the enemy is the stronger and we are the weaker of the two sides. That is why the enemy remains on the offensive and we on the defensive when the situation is viewed as a whole. But even when on the defensive, we must try to win the initiative. *To keep the initiative is a basic general tactical principle, and the basic principle of guerilla and mobile warfare in particular.*

There are many ways of winning the initiative :

a) *To lure the enemy*, by diverse means, into a trap prepared by us. This is one way in which we can keep the initiative although weaker than the enemy. Even though our forces are not numerous, and our weapons not modern, we may sometimes manage to lure the enemy into a trap

and annihilate him. We can for example worry his left before attacking suddenly on the right, in such a way that he does not know where the attack is coming from and is thus unable to ward off the blow.

b) *To attack the enemy's exposed and weak points* in such a way as to make it impossible for him to defend himself. We can take advantage of moments when the enemy is least expecting us to attack him. For instance : when the enemy moves, we lay an ambush for him ; when the enemy troops arrive at their destination worn out by a long march, we launch a sudden attack on them.

c) To mobilize the entire people to rise up and *wage guerilla warfare everywhere in order to scatter and wear down the enemy*, and to enable our regular forces to launch sudden attacks to annihilate him bit by bit ; to organize the people, hush up all news, and conceal our troops, so that the enemy has no notion of our activities and we have favourable conditions for our sudden attacks.

d) *To move skilfully*, advancing rapidly towards the enemy rear, attacking important points, with a view to obliging the enemy troops to regroup, and thus upset their predetermined battle plan ; to strike the enemy on his flank and from behind, rather than throwing ourselves directly at his main front.

e) To keep well informed about the enemy's situation in order to be able to *concentrate our regular troops rapidly and move our reserve forces swiftly to where we want to and in good time.* (At present, our forces are not only weak

in intelligence work but also slow in moving and regrouping ; they often cannot use or do not know how to use their reserves).

f) To centralize leadership in the hands of a higher command. But the local commands are free to act and indeed have the responsibility to act according to their own initiative in order not to miss good opportunities or fall into a state of passivity. In many places, conditions have been favourable, but the commands refused to fight on the pretext that they had received no orders ; thus, they tied their own hands, and by failing to act often created a dangerous situation.

Such are the general methods to win the initiative : on the one hand, we should not fight unfavourable battles, or fight without preparation ; we should not allow ourselves to be forced by the enemy to fight in unfavourable conditions. On the other hand, we should have the initiative, not let good opportunities slip by, strive to make full use of guerilla and mobile warfare, actively attack the enemy at his weak points, attack when the enemy is careless, and cleverly use ruses to lure the enemy into our traps.

When facing more powerful enemy forces, if the guerilla forces want to keep the initiative while fighting, they must follow the four rules drawn up by Comrade Mao Tse-tung :

a) When the enemy advances, we retreat ;
b) When the enemy halts, we harass him ;
c) When the enemy is worn out, we attack him ;
d) When the enemy runs away, we pursue him

One could add more :

— When the enemy concentrates, we disperse ;
— We may lure the enemy deep into our positions, etc.

7. *Base areas* — A base area is an area in which it is relatively safe for us to set up our leading organs, train our regular army, train cadres, produce arms and munitions, tend our wounded, etc.

There are many kinds of bases : in mountainous areas, in the delta and in marshy areas.

Areas fit for the establishment of such bases are those where :

a) the people are active, broadly organized and ready to support the army in every field ;

b) there are regular troops ready to make sacrifices and hurl themselves forward to stay the enemy's advance, to safeguard the base and defend the leading organs and the population ;

c) food crops may be grown to ensure supplies to a certain extent ;

d) the natural features of the country are favourable to our defence.

Of the above three conditions, the first two are of course more important. Where there are neither forests nor mountains, regular forces with high morale and broad masses who are politically conscious will constitute human forests and mountains to protect us.

There are people who think that because our territory is small, it is impossible for us to establish base areas. Such a conception is wrong. It comes from an overestimation of the enemy's forces. Though our territory is small it is not so small that it is impossible to set up bases in it. Moreover,

the enemy forces are limited and they come from afar. It is certain that they cannot wipe out and annihilate our forces, and they do not have sufficient forces to occupy the whole of our territory and prevent us from gaining a foothold.

Others consider that a base area is an absolutely safe area where we can carry out construction on a large and permanent scale. This viewpoint is also wrong. It comes from the overestimation of our own forces. No base can be absolutely firm ! That is why we must not and cannot build anything that, while it may be imposing, is cumbersome and difficult to move in case of need.

When we occupy a place, we must always have in mind the moment when we may have to leave it. When we defend a place, we must always have in mind the moment when we may have to abandon it. However, we should not make the mistake of thinking of a base area merely as a place where we quarter our troops. The "one-day base" of which the comrades in Quang Tri have often spoken was only a temporary camp, no more and no less.

When we choose an area as a base we should convene a conference of cadres of the army, the administration, and the people's organizations of the region to discuss the establishment and defence of the base. The following questions require prime attention :

1. In administration and mass work, we should develop and consolidate the administrative organs and mass organizations (prepare underground groups), and train local cadres to maintain and lead the administrative organs and develop mass organizations in the region.

2. In military affairs, we should establish militia forces on a large scale and arm the entire people, giving the young people military training ; we should assemble the regular forces and weapons necessary to check the advance of the enemy and to destroy his forces once they have penetrated deep into our base area ; we should conceal military objectives, and endeavour to prevent enemy planes from causing us harm.

3. As for the people's well-being, production should be increased according to a plan : supply must be organized and the people's living conditions improved.

4. Concerning security, we should wipe out traitors to the nation, restrict and control all movements of the population and deprive the enemy of all news.

***

Such are the urgent military problems set for us by the war. All cadres, the army and the people, and especially the military commanders at all levels, must have a clear understanding of these questions so that existing shortcomings may be speedily done away with and all errors harmful to the struggle corrected.

To defeat the enemy, strenuous efforts must be made, as has already been stated above. Making good our deficiencies and correcting errors in our command require an especially great effort on our part.

XV

LAUNCHING THE MILITIA MOVEMENT

As has been said before, our war is a *people's war*. The people's war must be waged by the people themselves. This means that not only does the regular army fight the enemy, but all those who are enthusiastic — regardless of sex, or of whether they are in the army or not — also take part in the fighting. Born of the people, the army defends the people and enjoys the people's support. For that reason, our fighters have a very high morale. A war waged by both the army and the people is one whose tactics are very alert and varied, conforming to the varying local topography and the possibilities for fighting (tactics of guerilla warfare and mobile warfare). Furthermore, the war can be protracted until our final victory, despite the barbarity of the enemy forces and all their modern weapons.

How is the people's war to be carried out ? We must arm the people and *launch the militia movement*. To launch the militia movement is the best means of mobilizing the entire people to take part in the fighting ; it is a measure aimed at organizing and training a numerous reserve army to replenish and reinforce the regular army and to enable the latter to prolong the war.

The enemy troops massacre our people, occupy our land, plunder our property, rape our women and destroy our crops. All those who are courageous and able-bodied rise up, arms in hand, to defend the lives and property of the local population and help them carry on their work and production. They help them to carry out the policy of scorched earth, gather intelligence, suppress traitors, and carry out sabotage when need be. At the same time, they do not abandon their ordinary work. They love their native soil, their Fatherland. They are deeply attached to their villages, their ricefields and the graves of their ancestors. Highly indignant at the overbearing and vile acts of the enemy, they take up knives, sticks, spears, cross-bows, guns, grenades, mines, sometimes even a bamboo spear or a stone or a brick, to kill the enemy. They help the regular troops or the local guerilla forces to fight the enemy. These are the self-defence militia forces.

A portion of the most enthusiastic and active of them will leave their ordinary work and organize themselves into a guerilla group, or, together with elements of the regular forces, organize local guerilla groups. These groups do not participate in production any longer : they move about in a specific region, and their duties consist of defending a region or a district against the terrorist mopping-up activity of the enemy. They support the people by helping with their farming work, protecting people's property from the enemy's plunder or carrying out armed propaganda, repressing traitors and bandits, laying ambushes to attack the enemy, and launching sudden attacks on his isolated posts. At the same time, they are in constant contact with the regular forces to co-ordinate their action to wear down, harass and destroy

enemy forces. Their weapons are better than those of the self-defence militia forces, and should comprise guns, machine-guns, mines, grenades, bazookas, etc.

The entire people and the militia and guerrilla forces back up and replenish the regular troops. The militia forces from many villages, from many districts, gathered together to fight the enemy, can form a local guerilla detachment. The advanced local guerilla detachments which gather together to fight the enemy can become regular troops. In the course of our long-term resistance, from ordinary civilian to regular soldier, there is an endless process of development. We see that the people constitute the sources of manpower for the army; and from the militia and guerilla forces we recruit and train our regular forces. If the militia forces are strong, the regular forces will be strong. If the militia, guerilla and regular forces are strong, we will certainly triumph. Lenin said :

"*Victory will belong to the side which has many reserve troops, and plenty of vitality and endurance drawn from the masses*" [1].

Does our militia movement now exist ? Certainly it does ; but it is not yet widespread ; it is not yet the nation-wide ferment that it must become. In regions such as southern Viet Nam, the southern part of central Viet Nam, and, recently, the provinces of Thua Thien and Quang Tri, and around Hanoi, Haiphong, and Nam Dinh, the militia movement has developed and is surging forward.

1. Speech at the Eighth Congress of the All-Russian Soviets.

Generally speaking, the training and arming of our militia and guerilla forces is going ahead at a satisfactory rate. Good points of our militia and guerilla men are their activity and initiative. The battles waged by the militia and guerillas on Road No. 5, around the capital, on the road from Saigon to My Tho, at Ba Long (Quang Tri province) at the beginning of this year, in Dinh Bang (Bac Ninh province), and at Cu Da (Ha Dong province) last month, are worthy examples for the whole country. *The organization of fortified villages and underground defence works* by our militia and guerilla forces in many places is highly praiseworthy. Several special groups have been formed with a view to attacking tanks, waging battles on the rivers, or using mines against the enemy. Nevertheless, the militia movement still has many shortcomings and makes many errors. It is still formalistic, not yet practical. It lacks arms, particularly rifle ammunition, grenades and mines, which are very necessary to guerilla forces. It is short of training and leading cadres ; its political work is weak : so weak, in fact, that in some places, there is even resentment among the people against the militia and guerilla men. Misunderstandings and petty jealousies between guerilla and regular forces are not yet wiped out ; co-operation with the regular troops in battle is not yet close. Some militia men in the villages tend to let their daily work slip ; some guerilla troops tend to fight rigidly in the manner of positional warfare, and have not yet learnt to apply guerilla tactics skilfully.

We hope that the comrades responsible for our militia and guerilla forces will do their best to develop the militia and guerilla movement everywhere, and launch a *patriotic emulation* movement to organize militia forces and fortified

villages, between cantons, districts and provinces and even in enemy-held regions. We hope that these comrades will strive to arm the militia forces, make them understand that they should exchange *their rudimentary weapons for modern ones taken from the enemy,* and disseminate battle experiences of the militia and guerillas among the guerilla forces in the enemy-held areas so that the enemy's rear can be harassed without let-up. We hope that the regular forces, as well as the militia and guerilla forces, will do their utmost to do away with all unreasonable jealousies. The regular forces, the militia and the guerilla forces are brothers. They are born of the same mother, the people. The regular forces should train militia and guerilla forces at their places of cantonment. The militia and guerilla forces should support and welcome the regular forces wherever they appear. When regular troops withdraw, they must inform the militia and guerilla forces of the fact beforehand. The militia and guerilla men who go to seek out the enemy to fight him, must inform the regular troops of what they are doing, and co-operate with them in fighting if need be. When they capture enemy arms by joint action, the regular, militia and guerilla forces must split these weapons up among themselves in a fair and reasonable manner.

Whether our long-term resistance war ends in victory or defeat is the common responsibility of the whole people. But naturally, in military affairs, the regular, militia and guerilla forces must shoulder the bulk of this responsibility.

XVI

BUILDING THE ARMED FORCES

In order to ensure the success of the war of resistance we must have strong armed forces. In the present initial stage, our people's armed forces comprise only two categories : the regulars and the militia. The latter is divided into two categories : the guerilla militia and the self-defence militia. But later these forces may comprise the following branches : the main-force units, the regionals and the militia. In our regular forces several branches will gradually take shape : infantry, artillery, engineers, etc. In future we shall have different armed services : army, navy, air force and others. We are building our forces in the 20th century and must take this into account in our calculations.

The people constitute the reserves of the armed forces in general. The militia is the reserve of the regionals, who in turn are the reserve of the main-force units.

These three categories conform to the law of development of people's war and the people's army : the latter springs from the people, develops from nothing, attains ever higher levels and grows ever stronger.

Our army is the people's revolutionary army and fights for the interests of the people.

The fighting aims of our army correspond to the tasks of the Vietnamese revolution in its successive stages. At present our revolution is a people's national democratic revolution. Hence the immediate aim our army is fighting for is national independence and new democracy. In other words, our army fights and endures sacrifices in order to destroy the invaders and the traitors, i.e. the French colonialists and their lackeys (who represent the feudal landlord class and the comprador bourgeoisie), and to build a Viet Nam that is independent, united and a new democracy. It follows from the above that our army is a *national, democratic and popular one.*

Our army is one of the people, essentially one of the workers and peasants led by the working class. It includes workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals as well, but workers and peasants essentially, and in fact the vast majority of its members are peasants. Generally speaking, cadres of our army must originate from the grassroots strata and follow Marxism-Leninism.

Political work in the army is of decisive importance both in the building of our forces and in actual combat. Its aim is to imbue the soldiers with fervent patriotism and genuine proletarian internationalism, the will to fight and endure sacrifices for the supreme interests of the nation, the resolve to serve the country and the people unconditionally, self-imposed discipline, an ever stronger sense of internal unity as well as solidarity with the people, and to train them to conduct propaganda and agitation work among enemy troops and undermine their morale.

We must constantly strive to strengthen the ideological stand of our cadres and soldiers, foster revolutionary virtues in them and at the same time inspire them with correct strategic and tactical thinking. To this end we must emphasize educational work among our troops in Marxism-Leninism and in the line and policies of the leading Organization and the Government. Cadres in general and army cadres in particular must study seriously the military works of the classical Marxist-Leninist authors. Comrade Mao Tse-tung's book *On Protracted War*, as well as military documents left by our forefathers (For instance : *Essentials of Military Art* and *Message to Generals and Soldiers* by Tran Hung Dao ; *Proclamation of Victory over the Ngo* and *Writings Composed While in the Army* by Nguyen Trai).

We must emphasize the brilliant examples set by our national heroes past and present and by heroic combatants in friendly countries to educate our army and people in revolutionary ethics and heroism.

Political, military, and general education should be systematically organized for our army in order to ceaselessly raise the standard of officers and men in all fields, turning our army into a steeled invincible one.

To achieve internal solidarity and unity of views between officers and men, the cadres should be taught to stay close to their men, love them, show concern for their material and spiritual life and behave democratically towards them. At the same time, the soldiers should be taught to respect their officers and obey the orders of their commanders. The relationships between officers and men and among the men

themselves should be fraternal and comradely. They should share weal and woe and remain together in all circumstances.

To achieve solidarity with the people and unity of views between the army and the people, the former should realize that the people is like water with the army as fish. So the latter should establish good relationship with the people and rely on the people to fight and defeat the enemy. To strengthen solidarity between the army and the people, the former should do good mass work and help the people in production, anti-illiteracy, sanitation and disease-prevention work as well as military training and guerilla tactics. For their part, the people must be made conscious of their duty to support the army in all fields so that it may defeat the invaders. Of course this support must be in conformity with the policies of the Organization and the Government.

Propaganda and agitation work in enemy ranks should drive home to the puppet soldiers, French troops, soldiers from French colonies and Foreign Legionaries the evil aggressive design of the French colonialists and the justice of our cause.

They will slowly awaken and refuse to be used as cannon fodder by the colonialists. They will even come to accommodations with us and when possible will desert the enemy ranks, cross over to our side and together with us level their guns at the French colonialist aggressors and their agents, the Vietnamese traitors.

By working in this way to build our armed forces we are bound to defeat the enemy completely and win final victory.

XVII

ELIMINATING ERRONEOUS TENDENCIES

In the above chapters, we have made a preliminary criticism of certain erroneous tendencies concerning the resistance. Now we think it necessary to outline the four major erroneous tendencies, with a view to unifying the thoughts and actions of our cadres and people in the resistance.

These four tendencies are :

1. Defeatism, pessimism.
2. Complacency, underestimation of the enemy.
3. Tendency to compromise half-way.
4. Tendency to resort to the mediation of a third country.

What do the defeatists and pessimists advocate ? They say : Our people are not well armed, our population is not numerous, our country is small and not rich ; if we fight, we are doomed to failure. It is better to get it over and done with, acknowledge French tutelage and accept an "autonomous" regime ! They also say : France has ground, air and naval forces, she is powerful ; what is the use of resisting her, only to go on suffering ? They even say : Our people have a low standard of education, our country is weak, it is not ready for independence. Tran Van Ty, a puppet belonging to the Le Van Hoach clique, dared to utter these vile

words, which deserve the everlasting scorn of our people: "*Even if France gives independence to Viet Nam,* we shall refuse it..."

All these arguments prove that the pessimists, the national traitors, the defeatists, the capitulationist clique, grossly overestimate the enemy and greatly underestimate our people's strength.

Though our weapons are not good, we have produced new ones with which to resist the French colonialists! It is certain that the more we fight, the better arms will be produced. And if we apply guerilla and mobile warfare skilfully we can use our rudimentary weapons to seize the enemy's superior ones; with few arms, we can defeat an enemy with many.

It is true that our country is small and not rich, and that our population is not numerous; but as we said in Chapter XI ("Our Difficulties and Those of the French"), the enemy's country is far from ours, his troops come from afar, his forces must be split up to fight in many places. The enemy's domestic finances and economy were exhausted after the Second World War; the dissensions between the various French political parties are growing; the struggle between the workers and the capitalists is fierce. As for us, disregarding the question of arms, the political consciousness and the level of organization of our people are higher than before. Our National United Front has been consolidated and expanded. The present world situation is very different from that which followed the 1914-1918 World War. The great and constantly growing movement of democracy and independence constitutes a strong rearguard. We have the necessary

conditions for fighting. It is possible for us to wage a long resistance, and our long resistance will certainly be victorious. The tendency to defeatism and pessimism does not bear scrutiny.

Recently a clique calling itself a "Nationalist United Front" emerged. It is headed by Nguyen Hai Than, Nguyen Tuong Tam, Tran Trong Kim and Nguyen Van Sam. This clique demands "independence and unification within the French Union"; in reality these elements are scheming with the old foxes, the Franco-American colonialists, with the aim of destroying our people's resistance and dividing our ranks. The defeatism of these national traitors is even more dangerous than the "bootlicking" of Truong Dinh Tri, or the "self-rule" — actually "self-murder" — advocated by Le Van Hoach.

The opposite of the tendency to defeatism and pessimism is the tendency to complacency and underestimation of the enemy. Those who are affected by this tendency grossly overestimate our forces and greatly underestimate the enemy. They say: We must avail ourselves of the present time, before the enemy can send big troop reinforcements, while he has to divide his forces between the struggles in the African colonies, and throw all our forces into a few decisive battles: we should not protract the war. In their opinion, a protracted war will create suffering for the people and wear out our forces. They maintain that we should attack the enemy quickly to reach a quick decision. This is an adventurist line and represents certain suicide. It has the character of desperation: Those who underestimate the enemy are afraid of him, of hardship and of the protracted war.

If we follow their line, we will make a premature sacrifice of our forces in some initial forced battles ; once our main forces are decimated, we shall become weakened and will not be able to rise again. At the beginning the enemy forces are stronger than ours ; they are at the peak of their strength. As the enemy concentrates his attacks to annihilate us, we must avoid battles unfavourable to us, we must preserve our forces for a long resistance. While fighting, we consolidate our forces and weaken and discourage the enemy. Thus, we wait for the opportunity to launch a counter-offensive to annihilate him. Protracting the war does not wear out our forces, but on the contrary strengthens them day by day, as it weakens the enemy forces. If we are afraid that a long war will make our people unhappy, and advocate throwing all our forces into the fray in a fit of anger, which would end in military defeat and national bondage, what hardships would there be then ?

Fortunately, this tendency to "attack quickly and force a rapid decision" is not widespread in our country, and has not very serious consequences. And those who wanted to stake everything on this policy when the nation-wide resistance broke out, have admitted their errors now and have given up their "flash in the pan" heroism.

The third tendency to be eliminated is the tendency to compromise half-way in the resistance. Those who are affected by this tendency think that if we prolong the war we are doomed to failure ; that if we are going to negotiate with France, the earlier we do so the better, in order to avoid sacrifices by our people and losses to our forces. These people become too quickly depressed in the face of the

temporary successes of the enemy. Faced with loss of land, they think the country is lost. They do not understand the twists and turns in the development of war : the enemy wins victory only to be defeated later on ; we suffer defeat, to carry the day in the long run.

The aim of our people in this war of resistance is to recover independence and unity. If France recognizes the independence and unity of our country within the French Union, we may discuss the re-establishment of peace with her. On the other hand, our people will continue their fight as long as France does not give up her designs to invade our country again, or recognizes only sham independence and unity. We will fight to the last man. We will fight to the last breath. We are determined not to compromise, because to compromise is to surrender. The guns are cocked, they are firing. The Vietnamese fighters cannot lay down their arms until their task is fulfilled.

The war of resistance necessarily involves hardship. While fighting, we must rally all the moral strength of the people so that they will work with enthusiasm, endure hardships and participate in the resistance to the end. There are battles which wear out our forces ; but there are battles which enhance them. So we must fight in such a manner as to increase our potential. If we surrender and compromise we shall be disarmed by the French ; without any armed forces at our disposal, won't it be irrelevant to speak of loss and gain ?

There is a category of people who are preys to sickly fear, who grow anxious at the mere thought of a long-drawn-out war of resistance. They think of a simple measure, which they hope may rapidly end the war : they propose to reform

the government, to eliminate a number of "red" elements. According to them, this will facilitate negotiations with the French and facilitate diplomatic relations with other countries.

This category of people think that by removing some people from the government the war will cease immediately. How naive ! Whether the war ends or not is decided by the evolution of the balance of force between the two sides, not by administrative measures. The more we "reform the government", the more we show our spinelessness ; the more we make concessions, the more the French will exert pressure on us. This only serves to sow confusion among the people and leaves them in doubt. Why do people who ask for the above "reform" not suggest replacing the reactionaries, the incapable and wavering elements in the administrative machinery at all levels in order to conduct a stronger resistance ? In truth, they are afraid of a protracted war and do not believe that a long-term resistance can be victorious. That is why they seek to use governmental reform as a present to offer to the French colonialists in begging for an armistice. They do not look ahead, but always look back. On the resistance road, they turn their backs on the goal, or march backward. What a pitiful lot !

This does not mean that we brush aside reform of the government. No government is everlasting and unchangeable. But ours is a country with a constitution. Our government is constitutionally formed. If reform is needed, it must be carried out constitutionally. And even if it is reformed, our government must be a constant reflection of the solidarity of the entire people : all sections of the people, democratic parties and patriotic personalities, united within the

framework of the National United Front, under the leadership of the Communists. We must bear in mind that neither the Vietnamese revolution as a whole nor this war of resistance can be successful without the leadership of the Communists !

The fourth tendency which opposes the long resistance, is the tendency to resort to the mediation of a third country. Those who have the above tendency do not believe in our people's power to resist. They have no confidence in final victory. Which is the third country from which they are begging mediation ? It is a powerful imperialist country. How dangerous ! If they demand the mediation of an imperialist country it will play the role of the clever magistrate in the fable of La Fontaine, "The Oyster and the Litigants" ; or it will be the "fight between the stork and the oyster to the benefit of the fisherman" all over again.

There is at present a clique in France which is seeking to call in the assistance of a third country. This clique tends in the direction of submission to the orders of the Dollar God, to sell out France and a part of the French colonies to the U.S. imperialists, so as to have sufficient strength to repress the democratic movement in France and the revolutionary movement in the colonies. We refer to de Gaulle and those around him. Do we want to imitate them ?

There are also people who hope for the intervention of the United Nations Organization. We need only remind them that the U.N.O. with its present organization and spirit is powerless to defend the San Francisco Charter and is unable to sanction its members who have violated it. The problems of Greece, Indonesia and China have proved that even if

the problem of Viet Nam were raised before the U.N., it would bring no better results. If we prolong the resistance war, there may be countries which will raise the question of Viet Nam before the U.N. in the future, in the cause of peace and justice, or because of a situation analogous to ours, or from a sense of rivalry. But we should not rely too much on others. We should help ourselves, and then we will be helped by others. If we lack courage, no foreign force can bring us freedom and independence.

In short, the above tendencies are inimical to a long war of resistance. If we do not combat them resolutely they will develop and cause damage. These tendencies which are expressed in words by some people, remain in the thoughts of others. There are people who express them in deeds, others are biding their time thinking of trying to carry them out later. If we are to win victory, we must act in such a way that shows there is unity of mind among the entire people in the resistance. Eliminating the above tendencies is a vital task in this context.

XVIII

MOBILIZING THE WHOLE POPULATION

This people's war for freedom and independence is very hard and long. To win victory, the whole people must participate in it, shoulder their responsibilities, be courageous and make sacrifices. Therefore, the entire people must be mobilized.

For more than six months now, the people throughout the country have been supporting the government and the army : they enthusiastically enlist, join the militia forces, help the engineers, ensure the supplies of the army and provide it with information, willingly pay taxes to the government and diligently tend wounded soldiers. The most moving thing of all is that the youth in many villages urge one another to harvest rice to help out the families of soldiers. What zeal, what selflessness, what exemplary solidarity and patriotism !

Our compatriots in the rear are worthy of the sacrifices of the heroic fighters at the front.

But is this enough ? Not yet ! What forces there are latent in our people that are not yet fully tapped and not yet made use of in a rational manner ! Is there not *still a lot of lifeless elements* alongside the flourishing forces that are so abundantly contributing to the cause of the Fatherland ? Are there not *still inert elements* not yet stirred by a driving

force to take their part in the struggle ? Many reserves of labour, money and material wealth are not yet mobilized in service of the long war of resistance.

All this is true. Many villages lying a long way from the front are still deep in their dreams ; they do not know yet what the resistance is, they do not yet understand the resistance. The sound of distant gunfire has not yet stirred them from their slumbers.

There are still many areas where the young people think of the sabotage of roads, the building of earthen barricades, helping the army, as they did forced labour under the imperialist regime : they put their heads together to devise ways to bungle the job, or even run away !

How much money is just lying in strong-boxes at the bottom of family chests and is not yet used in production beneficial to the country ! The spirit of mistrust, selfishness and stinginess of those who have it has not yet come under strong attack ; that is why it lies unused while the Government calls for increased production. There are people who use their money for contraband activities, hoarding and speculation, capitalising on the fact that the country is in danger to make their fortunes. Their money does more harm than good to the nation.

There are still many able people who consider that the war of resistance is the affair of the government and the army, and maintain the indifferent stand of "doing nothing while your neighbour's house goes up in flames." There are even trained personnel of various branches who impudently draw their pay from the government only to spend whole days and nights playing cards, while our fighters

are sacrificing their lives for the Fatherland on the battle-front, and while our workers and peasants are straining every nerve to produce munitions for the army, and tools and food for the entire people. There is not as yet any rigorous law on mobilization to discipline these elements, nor any active propaganda to make them see their failings quickly and rapidly mend their ways.

In short our weak political mobilization has not yet aroused the burning patriotism of the whole people. The press only circulates superficially, and is read by a few people only ; it is only people in the areas where the papers are published that really get any benefit from them, and there are still many villages which have not received a single paper since the beginning of the nationwide resistance. The agitation groups and shock propaganda units work hard at delivering speeches, but they generally separate propaganda for the resistance from help to the people both in production and in the struggle against illiteracy ; thus, their propaganda becomes drier and drier every day. Information centres have done much work, but are still very few.

The mobilization of the moral strength of the people is not yet continuous and widespread. And actions that are harmful to the mobilization of the entire people are not condemned or corrected in time. In some places, our troops behave arrogantly and in an authoritarian manner and recruit "labourers" by force. In some places, the Resistance and Administrative Committee is incompetent and passive : it does not know how to mobilize the people and give explanations ; so it issues orders without thought, thus sowing discontent among the people. In some places, sectarian

elements among our cadres dismiss able people and genuine patriots from the resistance. In other places, traitors to the nation have wormed their way into the ranks of the people, using money to bribe or female beauty to beguile government workers in order to get information and to discover the whereabouts of government organs. Worst of all is that in some places, traitors using the cloak of religion have set up the "Viet Kien" Association (Reconstruction of Viet Nam) with the aim of bringing about the "autonomy of the Catholic area" and sowing the tendency to surrender and division among our Catholic compatriots, and calling on them not to pay taxes to the government. They make anti-Viet Minh and anti-communist propaganda, but dare not utter a word against the French. They constantly instigate the people to oppose the government's orders, and sabotage our moral mobilization.

It is a matter of urgency to neutralise these dangerous seeds. Traitors to the nation, reactionaries, and enemies of the resistance must be eliminated immediately. We should punish even those in the ranks of the resistance who have advocated wrong measures or committed harmful deeds. We should wipe out corruption, backwardness, sectarianism, bureaucracy, arbitrariness and militarism, and apply a progressive policy, in the people's interests. At the same time, we must develop propaganda work in a methodical manner. We should strive to raise the people's political consciousness, increase their patriotism and vigilance, and foster their fighting spirit. We should use diverse forms — newspapers, books, music, dances, operettas, plays, photographs, exhibitions, emulation, etc. — to enable the people to grasp why we must

fight, for what purpose we are fighting, how we will win victory and to help them to see that although the war of resistance is hard, it will certainly be victorious. Only in this way will the people assume their responsibilities enthusiastically in accordance with the slogan "Those who have money will contribute their money to the resistance, those who have strength will contribute their strength, those who have talent will contribute their talent". Thus, no force will be wasted, no force will be isolated from struggle, no force will be superfluous. Only in this way will the army and militia forces bravely sacrifice their lives to annihilate the enemy; when one man falls, ten others will rush forward to take his place.

However, if we want all the people to take part in the resistance in every field, verbal political propaganda alone is not enough. We should strive to improve the living conditions of the people, lighten their burdens, reduce land rents, restrict usury, genuinely strive for a decent life for the toiling people and the civil servants, etc. In order to mobilize financial resources, we should levy taxes according to democratic principles, while ensuring a certain standard of living, for only in this way will the people be brought to contribute to the resistance budget, support the army and risk their lives to fight against the French aggressors and defend their own vital interests. At the same time, we must consolidate and develop the new democratic regime, so that the people really feel that they are citizens of a Democratic Republic and have rights. This will provide encouragement to the people to make sacrifices, to defend their sacred freedom

and their political power, to struggle against the enemy's attempts to re-impose upon them the yoke of barbarous and brutal bondage.

There are people who suggest abolition of the committee system and appointment of administrative personnel. They do not understand that restriction of democratic rights will have harmful effects on the war of resistance.

Improvement of the people's living standards and extension of their democratic rights -- these are two conditions that must be fulfilled if the entire people are to be politically mobilized, if the whole vital power of our twenty-five million compatriots is to be drawn into the struggle.

Mobilizing the entire people is not a job that can be done overnight, it must be carried out constantly and systematically until complete victory; brief bursts of activity cannot meet the need. We must announce our victories as the hostilities develop with a view to raising the morale of the people and the army. We must draw the lessons of our failures to educate the people and army in fighting, in combating espionage, in seeking information on the enemy's situation, ensuring secrecy, supplying the army, tending the wounded, etc.

Nor is mobilizing the entire people a task for the government alone; it is a task that must also be carried out by the various political parties and people's organizations. So, to carry out regular, wide-spread and far-reaching mobilization both from above and from below, we must strive to gather the people in patriotic organizations and democratic parties. The development of such people's organizations is a guarantee of the success, consistency and depth of the mobilization of

the people. For instance, to publicise an order issued by the government and implement it rapidly, the various organizations should mobilize their members to respond to that order, cite the organized people as examples, and thus give a good start to the implementation of the government order concerned.

If we neglect the organization of the people, we cannot mobilize the entire people to support the government and the army, or train them to take part in the resistance in every field.

In 1918 Lenin wrote: "To wage a real war, we must have a strong and well-organized rear". (Let's Set to Work, *Pravda*, March 4, 1919).

These words constitute very precious counsel for us in this long-term war of resistance.

CONCLUSION

Our people's war of resistance is a revolutionary war, a just war. It has a popular, all-round and long-term character.

Let us examine our history from the war of liberation which expelled the Manchus from our territory until now. Our present war of resistance is another great war of liberation waged by our people against the aggressors to recover independence. This is the fiercest battle there has been to crush the invaders and recover our sovereignty during the almost one century of French colonialist bondage.

This war is a very great but also a very hard one. A great task is never carried through easily! Out of so much blood and ruin will spring a new, independent, unified, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

Of the three conditions for the victory of the war of resistance mentioned in Chapter XII, the *unity of the entire people* must of course be the first one. If the people's front of resistance is broad and firm, even supposing that the movement in France against the "dirty war" and the support of the world democratic forces do not prove strong enough, our war of resistance, though certainly prolonged and harder, will sooner or later end in victory. The future belongs to us. Final victory will be ours, provided that *the entire people are united, are self-reliant and wage a long resistance.*

Our people's long-term war of resistance must pass through three stages. That is a necessity. In the course of the resistance

war, negotiations may take place. *Nevertheless, if we have not yet passed through these three stages we will still not win back true independence and unity.*

The enemy of our people is extremely brutal and treacherous. The French and world reactionaries are seeking to crush us by the most foul means before they themselves are finally crushed by the democratic forces. Our difficulties are still many. The task of every Vietnamese citizen is very heavy. The tasks of *the Lien Viet front, of the Viet Minh and of our Organization* are still heavier. Our people and the cadres of our movement must be determined to overcome every difficulty and do their duty.

With our far-sighted President Ho Chi Minh at the helm, the ship of Viet Nam, with its heroic crew, will certainly negotiate all reefs and weather every storm, to reach its splendid harbour.

MARXISM AND VIETNAMESE CULTURE

(Report delivered at the Second National Cultural Conference, July 1948)

Comrades and Friends,

Guns are thundering on the battlefield. Rice blades have tinted the land green. Iron screeches ; workshop machines whir and clank ; the rattling of pack bicycles and creaking of shoulder-poles carried by supply and transport columns blend in chorus. Experts' heads cluster around armament drawing-boards or operating-tables. Voices chanting the alphabet rise high from isolated hamlets and villages. Day in day out the radio broadcasts news about Viet Nam's war of resistance to the world after the tunes of *Diet Phat xit* (Destroy the Fascists) and *Tien Quan ca* (March to the Front).

The whole machinery of the Vietnamese people's patriotic war is in motion. United under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, the entire nation is resolutely fighting on all fronts : military, political, economic and cultural.

Our all-out war is making tangible progress in the second phase as we are spurred on by the campaign of patriotic emulation. The purpose of our meeting here is to define the principles for cultural activity, unite all those engaged in cultural work into a front, mobilize our country's cultural forces in the national struggle to drive the enemy out, save the country and build a new Vietnamese culture.

We will on this occasion present to you, comrades and friends, a new viewpoint and a new stand with regard to culture, a guideline for resistance and national reconstruction in the sphere of culture. We will deal with Marxism and Vietnamese culture.

I — CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Comrades and Friends,

Culture is a very vast domain that encompasses literature, art, science, philosophy, customs, religion and more besides. There are people who hold culture and civilization to be one and the same thing. History has shown, however, that a good many nations had a culture before they had a civilization. It is not until culture has enriched itself in substance and has developed to a certain point that it becomes civilization.

Men are born, find food, cover their bodies, and build shelters before they sing, dance, draw, write and discuss philosophy. Economics is the foundation, the base of a society. Politics, law and culture are erected upon the base, and make up the superstructure.

In the last analysis, the mode of production or, more broadly-speaking, economics represents the principal determining factor. Naturally, it is not the only factor; nor is it always the direct determining factor, but, in the last analysis, the economic factor gradually makes its way into the picture. Literature, art, philosophy, ethics, etc. form the superstructure based on definite economic conditions and strongly influenced by another component of the superstructure, viz, politics and law. This superstructure seems at times to develop on

its own. In truth, it comes under the strict sway of society's material conditions of life, and in return brings its influence to bear upon the material life and contributes considerably to changing society.

We can ask what the Renaissance in Western-European countries (in the 15th and 16th centuries) was if not the reflection of the powerful vitality generated in those countries when new means of production stimulated the rapid development of productive forces; when the world's immense market opened up before man's eyes and gave impetus to great advances in science, technology and trade? Was China's May Fourth movement (1919) not the reflection of the fact that China herself was in a ferment, when her industry and trade began to develop while imperialist countries continued to tear her asunder, and feudal vestiges hindered her economic growth?

In our country literature in *nom* (demotic characters) and the national culture in general experienced exceptional efflorescence at the time of the Tay Son uprising. The Nguyen Seigneurs' southward spread had resulted in new means of production falling into Vietnamese hands and the expansion of the internal market; the masses, especially the peasants and craftsmen, were harshly oppressed and exploited by the feudal aristocracy. They consequently rose in arms against the cruel monarchy of the last Le kings who had betrayed the country. Amidst the havoc wrought by the long civil war during the period of Trinh-Nguyen rivalry, they were determined to preserve their heritage and reverse the stagnation and sluggishness in the country's agriculture, handicrafts and trade. These sectors had a good opportunity

to develop by virtue of contacts with the external market. It must be noted that one country's literature and art will not exert a marked influence upon that of another except under certain economic and social conditions. It was only with maladroitness that Vietnamese romantic writers, during the period from 1926 to 1945, imitated the works of the French romantic writers, because the economic and social conditions which gave rise to French romanticism and the corresponding Vietnamese conditions were at variance. In 1926 and 1927 romantic literature succeeded in arising all the same, parallel to the appearance of the Vietnamese national bourgeoisie, with the result that the way of life of the urban bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie gradually came into conflict with the morality, customs and habits that were then dominant in a decadent feudal society. Another reason was that the national bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois intellectuals found in romanticism a way of expressing a deep sigh against colonialism.

Is to say that economics determines the culture of a nation the same thing as saying that the culture that crystallises out of definite economic conditions will necessarily die out when these conditions no longer hold valid? No, of course not. Each cultural movement does indeed have but one period of efflorescence; when the economic conditions which give rise to it change, artistic works giving expression to it, however excellent they may be, cease to be "worshipped" as before. Then, their value is more historical than real. None the less, works created under conditions of man exploiting man continue to be admired although the system they portray has disappeared. The simple reason for this is that

labour, love and struggle (against reactionary forces or the blind forces of nature) provide a lasting, inexhaustible source of artistic inspiration. And those works that take their inspiration from actual life and correctly predict the inexorable historical process are all the more valuable to social evolution.

Is to say that economics determines culture the same thing as saying that economics and culture always develop evenly, the one keeping in step with the other ? Is it to say that culture always follows economics with docility ? No, of course not. The disparity between economics and culture is a distinctive feature of class society, in which there are times when the economy expands while culture languishes or develops slowly ; in other words, the economy makes great progress while theories and forms of cultural consciousness lag behind, unable to reflect the changing economic situation. But when political doctrines and artistic works express the interests of the vanguard class, they often are ahead of the real state of the economy.

The dominant culture of a society is the culture of the ruling class in that society.

Marx and Engels said : "The ruling ideas of each age have always been the ideas of its ruling class" [1].

It is through its ownership of the principal means of production that the ruling class controls the machinery of mass propaganda and the system of education to train its cadres ; it makes use of them to gloss over its mission and to idealize

1. *Manifesto of the Communist Party.*

the regime it seeks to consolidate and preserve. The history of mankind from slave society to capitalism testifies to this.

We are uniting the Vietnamese people to fight the French imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors. We have emphasized our "national culture". The following should be noted : in areas temporarily occupied by the enemy, anti-national culture is fostered by the French colonialists and by their Vietnamese collaborators who represent the strata of feudal landlords and pro-French compradores. This culture is dominant in the French-controlled zones. Alongside this culture exists the patriotic culture of resistance, the culture that serves the nation and the people, namely, the culture of new democracy. This culture is dominant in the free areas. The latter culture has two tendencies or two sub-divisions also : the culture of the working class and the toiling masses, and that of the national bourgeoisie. If this fact is not taken into proper consideration, then we will not be able to comprehend the cultural currents and their contest for predominance at present.

Since the August Revolution, Vietnamese society has been under the regime of a people's democracy, of a new democracy. The official culture of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is a people's democratic, new-democracy culture. It defends and upholds the rights of the people, seeks to make the people's democratic system thrive, opposes the imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors. In fighting against French imperialism, our people aim at sweeping away the reactionary culture now dominant in the zones temporarily occupied by the enemy and at creating conditions

for the people's democratic culture, the new-democracy culture to spread throughout the country.

We will now talk briefly about the rise of revolutionary thought and culture.

In the process of social development, means of production become more complex and the productive forces more advanced every day. When a certain stage is reached, these forces of production feel hedged in by the framework of the old society and held back by obsolete relations of production. They have to be liberated; but the whole system weighs them down. This contradictory situation rouses the consciousness of the most forward elements of the oppressed and exploited class[1]. They count on spiritual values to fight the oppressing and exploiting class, and in the course of the struggle, they creatively forge a revolutionary theory. They use all legal and illegal means of disseminating it amongst the masses of the people. As a result, these elements become the stars shining bright in a sky overcast with the dark clouds of obscurantism brought by the ruling class. The struggle between the forces to be freed from oppression and the politico-economic framework of the old society takes the form of ideological struggle at first. This is the time when revolutionary literature blossoms. The revolutionary masses get hold of it, adopt it as their own, and find in it the vanguard ideas showing them the way, lighting the road ahead in

1. These people do not necessarily come from the exploited class; but owing to their close relationship with the masses, their keen awareness of the process of social development and of the historical mission of the working class, which is at the same time the vanguard class, they have abandoned the stand of their class of origin and voluntarily joined the ranks of the vanguard class to fight for the revolutionary aims of this class.

their struggle to emancipate themselves. *Revolutionary theories and literature then come to have the effect of awakening, mobilizing, organizing the masses, imbuing them with a spirit, a will, a faith, appealing to them to rise up to carry out the revolution to overthrow the oppressing and exploiting class, to destroy the old relations of production, to liberate the productive forces and to build a new society in accordance with their interests and aspirations.*

The era of social revolution has dawned.

The ideological struggle has turned into an armed struggle. Offensive by the gun now takes the place of offensive by the pen. Revolutionary culture has preceded economic reality and strongly influenced society.

Economics and politics determine culture, which in turn reacts upon politics and economics, sometimes with extraordinary force.

II — THE STAND OF MARXIST CULTURE

The main aim of Marxist culture in general and Marxist literature and art in particular is to seek truth. They lay bare the causes of the diseases plaguing the old society, denounce the rulers who both oppress and exploit their people at home and usually also want to enslave peoples abroad. They put the old society on the dissecting-board. They reveal the tricks and designs of the ruling class who, no matter how clever and cunning they may be, cannot preserve the already corrupt system. They indicate clearly the historical mission of the working-class which is the most revolutionary class, and are unflinching in their loyalty to its interests. Not only do they predict correctly why the old society will die away, but they also describe truthfully why it is inevitable that the new society will come into existence and along what general lines the new order will evolve. They both reflect actual reality, and mark out the future course of history. Thus, in our present age, the most revolutionary culture is the socialist realist culture. Its method is scientific, its stand materialistic. It is diametrically opposed to obscurantist "culture", the reactionary "culture" of the exploiting classes (bourgeois, landlords), the purpose of which is to conceal the ugly parts of the old society, to distort truth and to splash a coat of glamourous paint over that rotten society. Counter-revolutionary culture is the culture that fears truth as an owl

does sunlight. In spite of its bizarre and deceitful forms, the ugly tail of idealism and mysticism never fails to show.

A characteristic feature of the counter-revolutionary culture is that its unscientific content is enveloped in a scientific form, its poor content hidden inside rich, glossy, subtle and sophisticated forms. No wonder such gaudy mushrooms as cubism, impressionism, surrealism, dadaism etc. sprout from the rotten wood of imperialist culture.

There are some people who hold that with these doctrines "a technical era has succeeded the era of humanism" [1]. As a matter of fact they are only artistic forms which are unscientific, anti-evolutionary and clad in the gloss of aesthetics to entertain a small group of exploiters bent on fomenting wars amongst the human race, fighting for colonial markets, excessively exploiting cheap labour and making quick profits. Those writers and artists who bury themselves in such forms either put their talents at the service of the reactionaries or are hoping for a share of the crumbs from their table. Or they are too cowardly to stand up for an ideal; and they seek "escapism", "forgetfulness" by relying on obscure and bizarre forms and a "transcendental" technique, deceiving themselves and others, whether willingly and knowingly or not.

A number of irresponsible writers and artists have indulged in ludicrous imitation of these schools of decadent art. It is possible that they may sometimes want to protest against the injustices of capitalist society, but when under the influence of these schools, the "progress" they make is down

1. René Huyghe : *La peinture actuelle.*

a cultural blind alley. There is no hope for them in the future if they do not wake up and change course, or unless a social revolution breaks out and comes to their aid.

Decadent French art has had a deep influence in our country. A number of writers and artists, discontented with the imperialist regime, embraced cubism, surrealism etc. in all sincerity and innocence. They dared not boldly adopt critical realism, and resigned themselves instead to the confines of an art that was both preposterous and without a future. The August Revolution rescued the majority of them from the trap set by the decadent art of the French bourgeoisie. How lucky they were!

Culture has been said to be something noble that transcends all classes, political tendencies, and aims solely at serving humanity, a "pure ideal". Is this true? No! In no society, let alone a class society, can there exist a culture (and especially literature and art) devoid of tendencies. Indeed, each work of art implies a definite social attitude. It sides with the oppressors and exploiters or opposes them; it is either for the just cause and freedom or against them. "Art for Art's sake" is a misleading, confused formula. Socialist realist art also has tendencies, guided not by the subjective inclinations of the author, but by the objective trends of the historical process of social development. To serve humanity and the country, and make their contribution to accelerating social evolution, fighters on the cultural front should therefore adopt the stand of the Revolution, that of socialist realism which opposes reaction and every form of decadent, degenerate and obscurantist culture.

How can culture be neutral? Between the forces of national resistance and imperialist aggression within the country, between the two world camps of democracy (progressive) and imperialism (reactionary), everyone engaged in cultural work must take a clear stand: either they participate in the war of resistance or they support the imperialist aggressors; either they approve of progressive democracy or they serve barbaric imperialism. Two roads lie ahead; one must be chosen. To remain neutral, completely indifferent to the sacred struggle of the forces of nationalism and democracy, amounts to retarding the march of history, to unwittingly helping the reactionary camp to maintain or fasten new slavery on humanity, the nation and oneself.

It makes no sense to talk about "culture being completely neutral", "absolute liberty", "standing above politics" and adopting "the attitude of the onlooker". "To remain neutral in order to be absolutely pure and entirely free" is really a line of reasoning that covers up cowardice or reaction!

There are some writers and artists who still claim that "my being is split in half: the citizen in me that harbours clearcut tendencies, and the artist who is absolutely free". What a sophism! Of course liberty is precious, yet there is no liberty on earth that is dissociated from necessity. Engels writes:

"Thus freedom consists in that mastery of ourselves and of the outside world, a mastery based on the knowledge of the necessary laws of nature: therefore it is necessarily a product of historical evolution." [1]

1. F. Engels, *Anti - Duhring*.

Why should "freedom" be associated with "necessity"? Because those who enjoy freedom are the ones who, cognizant of the objective, inescapable laws of nature and society, act within the limits defined by their knowledge of these laws to bring about progress for humanity and their own people. On the contrary, all those who oppose social evolution, democracy and progress will certainly be ground to dust under the wheel of history, and are then "free" to serve as manure.

"What happens to our freedom", some ask, "if we join one of the two sides in the battle, and support one political ideal?" Our answer is, you are still free. The side of national liberation and democracy, fighting for freedom and progress, fights in conformity with the laws of history and the universe. Our fighters on the cultural front cannot find their freedom outside the great battle that the nation and the democratic world are waging against imperialism.

Something to note is that writers and artists who love "absolute freedom" are not usually aware that in a society producing commodities to be sold for profit, a work of art is willy-nilly subject to the law of supply and demand. Generally speaking, the goal of those in capitalist society who can exercise their profession legally, is the brisk sale of their works. They are not free to do what they like. Instead, they have to comply more or less with the wishes of their public. Which customers are likely to spend money freely? No other than the exploiters and parasites. Thus, writers and artists who desire to promote good sales, must gratify the most reactionary wishes and weirdest demands of the parasites. Far from being able to put their formula of "Art for Art's sake" into practice, they have to kneel before the

"golden calf". What becomes of neutrality, of freedom then? Writers and artists who enjoy the greatest liberty are undoubtedly those who uphold wholeheartedly the rights of the revolutionary masses, and use their art to further a revolutionary ideal. This ideal consists in overthrowing the system under which everything is saleable commodity, conscience and genius included, in order to accelerate the setting up of a society that guarantees true freedom for literature and art.

We have mentioned the revolutionary class; now we wish to talk about the nation. In such imperialist countries as Great Britain, the United States, France etc. the truly revolutionary class is the working class (the proletariat). In a country smarting under aggression, like ours, there are many revolutionary classes. The social classes making up the people are more or less revolutionary in character, but the working class is the most revolutionary. This is because the working class has lived thus far under the yoke of imperialism and feudalism, and has been oppressed and exploited the most; the manner in which it earns its living and exists ensures its unity more than that of other classes; it represents the most advanced productive forces; and it has demonstrated great capacities for work and creativeness. It also has friends all over the world and is thus strong, enthusiastic and animated by unshakable faith. You must all be aware that the working class is now the master of a sixth of the globe — the Soviet Union, the first socialist country in history — and the sphere of its rule is extending to the people's democracies. The sacrifices made and the devotion shown by the Vietnamese working class to the cause of national liberation

during the last twenty years are all too clear. Its activities in the enemy's key economic enterprises and its exploits in the war of resistance stand out as eloquent evidence.

At the present time, the fundamental interests of the working class coincide with those of the Vietnamese nation. Like the other social classes, the working class realizes that until and unless the nation is completely liberated, it will not have the required conditions to gain its own freedom, and that until and unless the entire nation enjoys happiness and liberty, happiness and liberty will not be theirs. So the working class is for the moment setting aside its highest aspirations to fight for the country's immediate and sacred rights. It volunteers to form the vanguard in the National United Front fighting against the French colonialists to win independence and unity for the Fatherland.

Vietnamese fighters on the cultural front must therefore boldly stand under the banner of this vanguard brigade, or at least be its closest friends so that they may serve the country as fully and faithfully as possible.

If the stand of Marxist cultural fighters coincides with that of the working class and nation, then the stand of patriotic cultural fighters who are not Marxist should be that of the nation and of close friends of the working class.

Should the war of resistance be carried on solely from the national stand ? No. Our state is a democratic state, better still, a new democracy ; it is not the pseudo-democracy of the minority who exploit and oppress the overwhelming majority, but the democracy of the people (the majority) who are fighting to crush the French aggressors and the

Vietnamese traitors (the minority). One cannot just fight for one's country and people while betraying democracy at the same time. Those who argue that "it does not really matter whether we have democracy or monarchy provided that the country is independent and unified", will sooner or later fall prey to the trap of the imperialists and accept being mere slaves to them !

Our Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is part of the world's democratic forces. It is an advanced member, not only because of the advanced level of its new democracy, but also because our people are shedding blood fighting for themselves and for peace and democracy in the world as well.

It follows that cultural fighters in our country, like the progressive men of letters and art in the world who profess loyalty to their countries and peoples, automatically side and, indeed, must side with the world's forces of new democracy to oppose the imperialist and colonial powers.

The stand of new democracy is the scientific stand, for new democracy represents an important step forward in the process of social development.

Cultural fighters in general and principally new democratic cultural fighters should have a deep understanding of the universe, society and man, grasp the laws of evolution operating in society and nature, and master science. In connection with this, Jean Freville, the French art critic and scholar, writes : "Good intentions are not enough to create great works. Science without art is arid while art without science

is insipid and vulgar."[1] We may add : not only will art be insipid and vulgar, it may sometimes be worse than that, reactionary.

Marxism is a science. It assists cultural fighters to comprehend the objective laws that govern the universe and society, grasp the motive force behind their evolution. It equips people with a highly efficacious method to study and discover matter and man. It helps talents develop rapidly.

The Marxist theory which the world's present giants of culture like Prof. Joliot Curie, the physicist Paul Langevin, the poet Aragon, the novelists Ilya Ehrenburg, Alexis Tolstoi, Sholokov, the Chinese writer Kuo Mo-jo, and the painter Picasso[2] have accepted as well-founded and are proud to be disciples of, is leading humanity's progressive toiling masses to fight for a brighter future. It is known as *Marx's dialectical materialism and historical materialism.*

New inventions only confirm its truth. Amongst these discoveries, mention should be made of the theory of evolution, energy transformation, the discovery of the cell in the nineteenth century, and the theories on quantum, relativity, the electron, the atom etc., and of advances in physics, chemistry, biology and other sciences in the twentieth century.

From the materialist standpoint, by using dialectical laws to investigate nature and society one can gradually unravel secrets that elude our comprehension, and thereby hold in

1. *On Literature and Art.*

2. During this period the painter Picasso was active in the communist and workers' movement and adopted socialist realism. He returned to cubism later in life, however, the cubism of which he was a partisan when he was young. (*Ed.*)

our hands a highly effective method of inquiry and reasoning. It is thus safe to assert that it is mainly due to the fact that this marvellous method has been applied to our country's political and military affairs that our people have not been led astray by the French, and that we have been able to hold our own against the imperialists although in the military field we are weaker in some aspects.

It therefore rests, and this is our conviction, with the men of letters and art to study Marx's dialectical materialism and historical materialism if they wish to serve their people and country and humanity in the best way.

All that has been said leads to this conclusion : the stand of the most revolutionary culture in the world and in our country in our day is as follows :

The working class constitutes the social basis.

National independence, peoples' democracy and socialism are the political basis.

Dialectical materialism and historical materialism form the ideological basis.

Socialist realism should be treated as the artistic basis.

III — VIETNAMESE CULTURE, PAST AND PRESENT

Comrades and friends!

We have briefly discussed the viewpoint and stand of Marxist culture. Now we go straight to our national culture.

From time immemorial, Viet Nam has been a civilized but small country, with a backward economy and the majority of its people depending on agriculture for their livelihood. For thousands of years the agricultural economy has borne the feudalist character which the "Asian mode of production" and the influence exerted by the Chinese feudal system have maintained, and thus it has never reached the stage of capitalist development.

This backward agricultural country lies on the Indochinese peninsula. Two cultural currents, from China and India, the two biggest countries of Asia, met over the rich valleys of its two large rivers, the Mekong and the Red River. Territorial propinquity and the fact that it was ruled by feudalist China for more than a thousand years subjected Viet Nam to considerable influence from Chinese culture. As they moved southward our people assimilated some elements of the cultures of the Khmer and the Cham.

For centuries our ancestors learnt Chinese, wrote in Chinese characters, thought in the Chinese manner; their law was inspired by Chinese law; they studied Chinese

philosophy and adopted Chinese ethics. With regard to faith, they embraced the religions of both China and India. While the literature of the country flourished in some appreciable measure, science and art developed slowly. Habits revealed by clothing, food, and housing were conservative, not based on scientific knowledge. In this ancient literature it is natural that there are a good many gems buried deep under the dust of passing time. It is our duty to continue the work of the regretted scholar Nguyen Van To, and search for, collect and study them exhaustively (not leaving a single gem untouched). For the sake of objectivity we must perceive two weaknesses in our ancient culture: a weak scientific basis and too much Chinese influence.

However, notwithstanding the many ordeals which our people had to endure under the foreign yoke, they *still keep the Vietnamese character and soul that manifest themselves in the language, their ardent patriotism, spirit of national independence, industry in productive labour and bravery in the defence of freedom.*

Men of genius will shine for ever like bright stars in the Vietnamese firmament and bring glory to our race: Ngo Quyen in military strategy; Tran Hung Dao in military strategy; Han Thuyen in linguistics; Le Loi in politics and military strategy; Nguyen Trai in military strategy, politics and literature; Luong The Vinh in mathematics; Nguyen Binh Khiem in philosophy; Lan Ong in medicine; Le Quy Don in literature and science; Quang Trung in military strategy and politics; Ngo Thoi Nhiem in politics, military strategy and literature; Nguyen Du in literature;

Phan Huy Chu in history; Cao Ba Quat in literature and politics; Nguyen Dinh Chieu in literature and politics, and many more.

Alongside the official cultures of various eras there was a whole system of folk culture which has survived in the proverbs, sayings, popular songs, legends, folk wood-engravings, etc. This culture depicts the struggles of the toiling people (while tilling the fields, practising their handicrafts, engaging in commerce, etc.), their dream for a bright future or their spirit of opposition to the aristocracy; it satirizes antiquated customs and superstitions, or dispenses advice on how to do "humane" and avoid "wicked" actions. Scholars of literature, historians and archaeologists should spare no efforts to research and study this valuable treasury in order to gain deep insight into it.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed the arrival in our ports of merchant ships from Western-European countries. They carried goods to exchange for agricultural and forestry products, but also brought along Catholic missionaries. This was our country's first contact with Western culture.

In the nineteenth century the French sent troops to invade Viet Nam. At first they only used our country as a market for the consumption of their products; step by step they developed industry, exploited labour and raw materials, and produced goods on the spot. After the First World War they carried out a policy of "all-out exploitation of the colonies" which consisted in exploiting and plundering property to compensate for the losses sustained by imperial

France during four years of war. Up to then there were two phenomena deserving attention:

a) The French imperialists brought French culture to Indochina with the purpose of fostering an intellectual climate favourable to winning over the educated and the young people; at the same time they went out of their way to preserve traditional morals, customs and habits, which they hoped would enable them to oppress and exploit our people and hamper their development.

b) They made investments in Indochina, developed our country's industry and commerce, and this resulted in the rise of the industrial proletariat and the national bourgeoisie. Once these classes attained a certain maturity, they appeared in the political and cultural arena.

In 1940 the French lost their country to the Germans, and the Japanese jumped into Indochina to sit on top of the French. The two brigands did their best to exploit and oppress our people. Once again Vietnamese culture yielded in some measure to the influence of foreign culture, this time Japanese. Although it was not yet a strong influence, it left traces in our national culture, some of which survive to this day.

A feature shared by the dominant culture during the whole period of French domination is that the content was confused and heterogeneous while the form showed too much French and Chinese influence.

In saying this, we mean no slight on our national culture. We simply wish to infer from objective study that for various reasons what is best in the nation failed to break through

and Vietnamese culture could not flourish in all its vitality : science and technology were still in their infancy ; the economy, laden with vestiges from a distant past, retained semi-feudal and feudal characteristics ; politically, the country had the status of a semi-colony at times and a colony at others ; although it was independent for long periods, yet it remained tributary to or influenced by feudal China to a definite extent ; for nearly a century now it has been under the domination of the French imperialists. Is it pessimistic to hold such a view ? Of course not ! On the contrary, it is only necessary for us to see our responsibilities and to assume them with courage.

After the August Revolution, Viet Nam recovered its independence, but the French imperialists' return meant renewed aggression. At present our country is not yet completely independent : alongside a large portion that has been liberated, there is a small portion that remains temporarily occupied by the enemy. Thus, although it is no longer a colony as in the past, it is nevertheless partly a new democracy, half feudal, and partly a colony. The aims of the war of resistance are the achievement of the task of national liberation, the sweeping away from our territory of the colonialists and imperialists, and in addition the gradual liquidation of feudal vestiges and the rapid development of new-democracy economics, politics and culture.

We have just sketched an outline of the national culture. We will now deal in particular with the question as to how Vietnamese culture developed during the period from the first days of French domination to the present day. There are four periods :

1. — FROM THE FRENCH INVASION OF VIET NAM[1] TO THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In the beginning, when the French first annexed the southern part of Viet Nam, our country was partly independent and partly a colony. Confronted with the danger of losing it, some amongst the scholar-gentry and the peasantry rose up in arms against the French, led by Truong Cong Dinh, Nguyen Trung Truc and Nguyen Huu Huan (1861-1868). It was not until the Nguyen court signed the peace treaty of 1884 with France that all our country became a French colony. Generally speaking, the colonialists had invested little to exploit it up to the First World War and their culture had not yet made its influence felt in Viet Nam. Our national culture, steeped in Chinese influence, continued dominant. During this period the feudal class was rent by dissension : one section of it surrendered to the French imperialists, while another, alive to the fact that the French invasion threatened the interests of the nation as well as those of its class, stirred the scholar-gentry and peasantry to opposition. A number of literati instigated the Can Vuong and Van Than movements, which sought to preserve Confucian education as an antidote to French policies and culture. Phan Dinh Phung and Ton That Thuyet (1885-1896) led these two movements.

A parallel movement, Hoang Hoa Tham's (1887-1913) insurrection and guerilla warfare, involved the peasants of Yen The, and the Ha Thanh Dau Doc case (the Hanoi poison case) took place in 1908.

1. Mid-nineteenth century (*Ed.*)

The reform campaign and the anti-tax movement broke out during the same period (1906-1908) led by Phan Chu Trinh, Huynh Thuc Khang among others.

In 1905 Tsarist Russia was defeated by Japan. For the first time, small, weak countries in Asia grew confident that they could defeat the "white men", and they looked towards Tokyo. The Dong Du (Go East) movement was born in Viet Nam. The patriot Phan Boi Chau selected young people to go to Japan to study. Within Viet Nam itself, a group of intellectuals set up in 1907 a self-education association, ostensibly to spread learning but whose real purpose was to disseminate Chinese (the writings of Leang Ki-tchao, Kang Yeou-wei) and Japanese ideas about democratic reform. This association whose activities centred on Hanoi and Ha Dong, took the name of Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc (Tonking Study Institute). Two newspapers of the time, the *Dang Co tung bao* and the *Dong Van nhat bao,* supported reform.

One after the other the French repressed the Can Vuong movement, the Yen The insurrection, and the Ha Thanh Dau Doc, Trung Kỳ Khang Thue (the anti-tax campaign in Annam) and Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc movements. They published a periodical called *Dong Duong tap chi* to propagate pro-French ideas, abolished examinations in Chinese, opened the Hau Bo school to train bureaucrats, a school for interpreters, and established the system of Franco-Vietnamese schools and the medical college.

When the First World War broke out (1914), the French colonialists exerted themselves making propaganda in favour of their war of plunder, and taxed our people heavily in

blood and money. Here the book *Duc tac an*[1] which was widely circulated in town and countryside, and the *Rong Nam phun bac*[2] poster which was pasted up on every pagoda and street-corner come to mind.

Resisting the barbaric policies of the French aggressors and trying to take advantage of their preoccupation with the war in Europe, King Duy Tan led an abortive coup (1916) and the patriots Doi Can and Luong Ngoc Quyen instigated a rebellion by soldiers and prisoners in Thai Nguyen (1917).

2. — FROM 1918 TO 1930

The French promised that they would grant our people freedom when the war ended. The shackles of colonialism, however, were fastened more tightly than ever before when the hostilities were over.

More plantations, mines, factories and trading establishments were brought into operation. Together with the artisans[3] and rural workers on plantations, new strata of industrial workers were appearing; they constituted the Vietnamese working class which was now concentrated in great numbers, and began mass agitation. Owning no means

1. "Indictment of German Bandits" A propaganda publication, written in verse and put out by the French colonialists condemning German imperialism and aimed at enticing our people to join their army and die instead of French soldiers.

2. "Southern Dragon Belching Silver". The title of a large poster portraying a dragon, the symbol of Viet Nam, belching silver piastres, the aim being to encourage our people to buy "treasury bonds" to assist the French in their war against the Germans.

3. This term refers to those artisans who do not own their means of production and live exclusively on their wages. (*Ed.*)

of production and subjected to the threefold exploitation and oppression of the imperialists, the feudal class and the local bourgeoisie, the working class which represented the most advanced productive forces, flung itself with daring into the class struggle, animated by a vanguard spirit. The struggle, spontaneous in the beginning, soon became conscious and organized. In alliance with the masses of the peasantry, it succeeded during the course of the revolutionary struggle in rallying all walks of life to forge the National United Front to fight the imperialists and their henchmen. In so doing the working class assumed and consolidated its leading role in the revolution.

The Vietnamese bourgeoisie was also coming into being : it depended on commerce with the French, and became rich on the proceeds of acting as their contractors and on developing light industry and handicrafts. As French capitalism established itself in Viet Nam, it both stimulated the growth of the local bourgeoisie and controlled its activities. When this class attained a certain maturity, it split into strata : the comprador bourgeoisie, whose interests coincided with those of the French colonialists, and the national bourgeoisie, which tended to oppose the latter, the ruling feudalists and the pro-French compradores. Despite being hedged in by French restrictions, the Vietnamese national bourgeoisie maintained relations with the colonialists to some extent in order to ensure latitude for its activities ; some of these bourgeois also owned land they rented out. As a result of this, the national bourgeois tended both to uphold the principle of independence and freedom, and to seek reform and compromise at the same time. The revolutionary movement

of the national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie was in character a bourgeois democratic movement.

The world situation after the First World War gave strong impetus to the national liberation movement. 1917 marked the brilliant victory of the October Socialist Revolution under the leadership of the Russian working class and on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. It was the most significant and radical revolution in human history. The newly-formed Soviet government immediately implemented the slogan of "national self-determination" and liberated all Tsarist-dominated peoples. In China the "May. Fourth" movement of 1919 was characterised by strong anti-imperialist sentiments. That same year, prompted by resentment towards Britain and France for their privileges in the colonies, US President Wilson adopted the "open door" policy on behalf of American imperialism, and supported the principle of "national self-determination". All these events, and especially the October Revolution, gave incentive to the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies.

During and after the war the French imperialists were in dread of a Vietnamese awakening. They set Pham Quynh to publish the periodical *Nam Phong* (South Wind) in an attempt to reconcile the cultures, western and eastern, old and present, and established the association Khai Tri Tien Duc. The purposes of the latter were to preserve feudal morals and obsolete customs under the slogan of "national soul, national character", and to introduce the conservative thoughts of French literature. They also put Nguyen Van Vinh to publish the newspaper *Trung Bac tan van* (News from the Centre and the North)

and to run the publishing house *Au Tay tu tuong* (European Thought). This establishment got some French classic and romantic books translated into Vietnamese, but was forbidden to translate the progressive thoughts of eighteenh-century materialists and the revolutionary theories of sociologists in France and other European countries. Both Quynh and Vinh tried to promote a cult of the novel *Kieu* praising the examples set by feudal morality for the purpose of indirectly opposing democratic and revolutionary ideas and confusing young people and intellectuals to the point of neglecting politics.

In spite of the deceitful and diabolical stratagems of the French imperialists, the Vietnamese movement of national emancipation still surged onward. In 1919 Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc sent to the Peace Conference meeting at Versailles a letter containing eight claims from the Vietnamese people. The newspaper *Le Paria,* which he published in Paris from 1922 to 1926, pressed for the rights of the oppressed peoples.

The bomb set off in 1924 by the patriot Pham Hong Thai in Canton's Shamen district, an attempt to assassinate the French governor-general Merlin, roused the Vietnamese and sent a powerful tremor throughout Asia. The French had Phan Boi Chau arrested in Shanghai a year later and he was escorted home, put on trial and sentenced to death by the criminal commission. The campaign for Phan Boi Chau's amnesty provided an occasion for the movement to spread its influence. In the same year, 1925, Phan Chu Trinh returned to Viet Nam. He passed away the following year and his death acted as a spark falling onto the dry prairie-grass

of Vietnamese patriotism. Young students left their classes to mourn and people from all walks of life commemorated the loss.

Upon his release from the prison-island of Con Dao (Poulo Condor) Ngo Duc Ke inveighed against the *Kieu* cult as a scheme to confuse and deceive intellectuals and young people.

Pham Tat Dac's poignant poem *Chieu hon nuoc* (Invocation to the Nation's Soul) echoed under the skies of the north, and was replied to from the south by Tran Huu Do's soul-stirring *Hoi trong tu do* (The Drum of Freedom)[1]. Abroad Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc published *French colonialism on Trial*[2], and copies of Nguyen The Truyen's newspaper *Viet Nam Hon* (Soul of Viet Nam) kept turning up at home[3]. Nguyen An Ninh rang his *Cracked Bell*[4] in Saigon. Meanwhile, in the heart of the former imperial capital, Hue, Huynh Thuc Khang raised the *Voice of the People*[5]. Comrade Tran Huy Lieu poured out his *Confidences*[6]. Phan Van Truong and Nguyen Khanh Toan

1. The title of a book of propaganda, seething with revolutionary zeal, by Tran Huu Do, published in the south.

2. *Le procès de la colonisation française.* The title of a book by Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc which denounces the crimes of the French imperialists. It was written in French and published in Paris.

3. Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc founded the newspaper *Viet Nam Hon,* but in 1923 he left for Moscow on a mission, and could not carry on the project. It was only in 1925 that *Viet Nam Hon* appeared in Paris under the editorship of Nguyen The Truyen.

4. *La cloche fêlée,* the name of an anti-imperialist French language newspaper of which Nguyen An Ninh was the editor.

5. *Tieng Dan,* the name of a progressive newspaper edited by Huynh Thuc Khang.

6. *Mot bau tam su,* the title of a book by Comrade Tran Huy Lieu, published in Saigon, which exalts the spirit of patriotism and nationalism.

reflected progressive thought in the columns of the newspapers *An Nam, Thuc Nghiep dan bao, Than Chung*, etc. In Saigon Mrs Nguyen Duc Nhuan published the mildly progressive *Phu Nu tan van*, which, from the national and bourgeois point of view, furthered the rights of the Vietnamese woman. In Hanoi Pham Tuan Tai and Nguyen Thai Hoc opened their *Nam dong thu xa* publishing house and published the book *Guong thieu nien (Examples for the Youth)* exalting the courage and patriotism of the world's great men and heroes. Anti-feudal literature with a pessimistic note made its appearance with Prof. Hoang Ngoc Phach's novel *To-Tam*. Reformist thought came into conflict with conservative thought in the controversy between Phan Khoi and Tran Trong Kim over Confucianism.

In China, from 1925 to 1927 the movement to join the northward expedition to fight the imperialists and their militarist quislings aroused general enthusiasm. Vietnamese youths were anxious to go to China for initiation into revolutionary thought. Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc left the Soviet Union for China to organize courses of political formation for them to come to in Canton, and he himself strove to train cadres for the Vietnamese revolution.

During this period, a number of revolutionary organizations were founded in secret inside the country : Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, Thanh Nien Cach Mang Dong Chi Hoi, Tan Viet Cach Mang Dang, Cong Hoi, Nong Hoi, Hoc Sinh Hoi, etc.[1].

1. Viet Nam Nationalist Party, Association of Revolutionary Youth, New Viet Nam Revolutionary Party, Trade Union, Peasants' Association, Students' Association. (*Ed.*)

In December 1927 the Canton Commune lasted for three days. Though it failed, the Canton workers proved through this short-lived rule that the working class of a semi-colony or colony in Asia was capable of taking power. Vietnamese workers' and young people's spirits were raised accordingly. They consequently intensified their activities, and this resulted in the foundation of the first communist organization in the north in 1929 : in June of that year the Indochinese Communist Party was established with a Manifesto which served as a political platform. Revolutionary literature in the form of newspapers and books, like *Bua Liem* (Hammer and Sickle), *Tap Chi Cong Hoi Do* (Red Trade Union) etc. circulated surreptitiously among the masses.

The Yen Bai insurrection, led by the Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, broke out in February 1930 but ended in failure, marking the end of a period characterised by movements for a democratic bourgeois revolution in the old Vietnamese fashion — a democratic revolution inspired by nationalistic democratic bourgeois thought. The failure also marked the end of the short period of the development of our country's old democratic culture.

3. — FROM 1930 TO THE AUGUST REVOLUTION IN 1945

On the third of February, 1930, the Communist Party of Viet Nam (which later changed its name to the Indochinese Communist Party)[1] was founded and unified all Vietnamese communist organizations in a single party.

1. Now again the Communist Party of Viet Nam (*Ed.*)

Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc presided over the congress merging the Indochinese communist forces and wrote the party's outline programme. The event represented a great turning-point in the history of the Vietnamese people in this age.

After the Yen Bai insurrection had been drowned in blood, the campaign of strikes and demonstrations spread far and wide. From September 1930 to June 1931 the peasants of Nghe Tinh took political power and set up local soviets.

When the national bourgeoisie failed the youthful working-class stood bravely ready to assume its glorious historic mission: to lead the Vietnamese revolution.

The Nghe Tinh soviets too were drowned in blood. The French colonialists fell on the country, north, centre and south, in a bloodbath the like of which had never been experienced before. They thought they could use force to liquidate the Vietnamese communist movement, but they were mistaken. The crippled national industry had to break the links chaining it to imperialism so as to develop its own heavy industry, independently of imperial France; Viet Nam's agricultural economy had to be liberated from feudal relations of production and distribute land to the peasants; the Vietnamese people had to be freed from the yoke of the colonialists and their feudal lackeys. So, regardless of the savagery and cruelty of the repression, the revolution just had to advance and fulfil its two tasks of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. The Vietnamese revolution thus bears the character of a new democratic bourgeois revolution, a democratic bourgeois revolution under the leadership of the working class.

The reign of white terror in 1930-1931 could only dampen the revolutionary movement temporarily; it subsided but only to burst forth again one hundred times, one thousand times more fiercely.

In 1931 while the Indochinese economy was slowly developing, it became suddenly affected by the general crisis in France and the world. This crisis of capitalism shook the whole imperialist system to its very foundations. While in the Soviet Union socialism prevailed, in the capitalist world the basic contradictions became more acute every day: the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the peoples in the colonies against imperialism, and the imperialist countries against one another in their scramble for markets.

In 1933 Germany witnessed the coming to power of the Hitlerite fascists who were preparing themselves to swallow up the whole world. In their attempt to settle the internal contradictions of capitalism, to escape from the grips of the economic crisis and to set the stage for a new war, the fascist imperialists launched local wars in the three eastern provinces of China and in Abyssinia. As a reaction, the anti-fascist and anti-war movement gathered momentum in many countries. The French Popular Front was established, and was brilliantly successful in the general election held in June 1936, leading to a government of the Front gaining power. It set free the majority of political prisoners in Indochina, and the campaign for an "Indochinese Congress" representing popular aspirations and the demand for democratic liberties gained strength and gathered widespread support everywhere. An unprecedented wave of strikes and active raising of claims swept the peninsula. In order to channel

all agitation into the common cause of opposing fascist imperialism, the war and the colonialist reactionaries, of providing backing for the French Popular Front, and of pressing for "freedom, food and peace", the Indochinese Communist Party cooperated with other progressive political organizations to set up the Indochinese Democratic Front. The front sought to gather in one organization all the democratic forces of the Indochinese people and of the French progressives living in their midst.

After the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Germany (March, 1939), the attack of Italy on Albania (April, 1939), Germany's incursion into Poland (September, 1939), the Second World War broke out (September, 1939). Revolutionary forces in Indochina went underground. A gust of terror lashed the peninsula whipping Viet Nam especially fiercely.

The Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party met in November 1939 at Ba Diem (Gia Dinh) and voted for the establishment of the Anti-Imperialist National United Front to oppose the imperialist war of aggression and to win independence for the Indochinese peoples.

In June 1940 France was defeated when Hitlerite troops occupied a large portion of her territory. Fascist Japan moved into Indochina, and in addition, manœuvered the Thais to fight the French. Our people were determined not to let the imperialists and fascists tear their country apart, not to resign themselves to serving as cannon-fodder for the French, not to let a good opportunity pass, and rose up in three successive insurrections at the end of 1940 and beginning of 1941 in Bac Son, Nam Ky and Do Luong. The Central

Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party met at Pac Bo (Cao Bang) in May 1941 under the chairmanship of Comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc and decided in favour of forging the grand unity of the Vietnamese people to resist the Japanese-French fascists and recover independence and freedom. *Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh* (Viet Minh) came into being during this revolutionary high tide. The entire Vietnamese people, from workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeois to national bourgeois and a number of small landowners, all rallied under the flag of national salvation. For the first time in Viet Nam a nation-wide anti-colonialist united front, the form of the Viet Minh, came into existence with wide adherence.

The Vietnamese revolution remained essentially a bourgeois democratic revolution, but the anti-imperialist task was more urgent than the anti-feudalist task. Moreover, from the start of the Second World War and mainly from the time France fell to the Germans and the Japanese thrust into Indochina, the strata of small landlords had in some measure changed in attitude. They now approved of national salvation and no longer put their faith in the French. In the light of this, the Viet Minh pledged to give first priority to pursuing the liberation of the country ; as for the other professed aims which were deemed liable to damage the great national unity in the fight against the Japanese-French imperialists they were shelved or removed.

In the beginning of 1944 the heroic Soviet army launched its general counter-offensive and in the month of May 1945, annihilated the Hitlerite fascist troops in their lair. A number of European countries were liberated from the fascist yoke.

In March, 1945 the fascist Japanese executed their putsch to eliminate the French and monopolize Indochina. To meet the new situation, the Standing Bureau of the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party met at Dinh Bang (Bac Ninh) and decided to launch the anti-fascist campaign to save the nation and make preparations for a general uprising throughout the country to take power. A tumultuous anti-Japanese campaign of national salvation got underway. The people's armed units were very active in a number of provinces in the north ; the people held armed and semi-armed demonstrations and broke into rice-stores in an attempt to relieve starvation. The pre-insurrectionary period had begun. In August 1945 the Japanese unconditionally surrendered to the Soviet Union and its allies. The Vietnamese people, under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party and the General Committee of the Viet Minh, rose up to take power. The August Revolution ended in victory.

President Ho read the Declaration of Independence on the second of September 1945 and solemnly announced to his people and the peoples all over the world the birth of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

The August Revolution brought with it a "new life" for the Vietnamese people in general and Vietnamese culture in particular.

All these political changes took place in conditions characterised by the economy still being colonial and semi-feudal. How did Vietnamese culture develop during the period from 1930 to 1945 ?

Sadness mixed with anger invaded the Vietnamese soul after the reign of terror in 1930-1931. The romantic literature of the Tu Luc Van Doan group appeared. The bourgeois class was afraid of political and military confrontation with the imperialists and switched to fighting the feudal mandarinate with cultural weapons, (through the columns of the magazines *Phong Hoa* (Mores), *Ngay Nay* (Today) and the publications of the *Tu Luc van doan*). Romanticism in literature and art complemented the "joy and youth" movement which was sponsored by the young people, intellectuals and urban bourgeois and conducive to debauchery. In encouraging these tendencies, the French colonialists aimed at leading the masses, especially the young people, astray. They permitted the running of opium-dens and dance-halls in the cities ; they promoted the publication of pornography, wild adventure, and mystical books ; they revived Buddhism ; they encouraged distribution of a great number of books about the catholic religion which specialised in heaping abuse on communism, and they promoted scouting to keep our youth under control.

However, the activities of the *Tu luc van doan* group did contribute to impel our country's cultural movement forward.

While reformist bourgeois and French colonialists conducted their cultural activities in that way, a public debate on culture took place which stirred up public opinion and produced a victory for proletarian culture : Comrade Hai Trieu's writings gave materialism the better of idealism ; the "Art for Life's sake" point of view defeated the "Art for Art's sake" formula.

A movement led by the Indochinese Communist Party for democratic and popular literature and art flourished during the period of the Democratic Front (1936-1939). Newspapers and books were published openly and in abundance. Newspapers in French like *La Lutte, Le Peuple, Le travail, Rassemblement, Notre Voix* etc. and Vietnamese-language newspapers like *Dan Chung* (The Masses), *The Gioi* (The World), *Doi Nay* (Life at Present), *Tin Tuc* (News), *Nhanh Lua* (Ear of Rice), *Ban Dan* (The People's Friend), *Tieng tre* (Voice of the Young), etc. vied with one another in denouncing the crimes of the colonialists and their collaborators, demanding democratic reform and human rights. Legal books and newspapers of the Indochinese Communist Party and the Indochinese Democratic Front publicly defended the interest, of the nation and of the labouring people, especially those of the masses of workers and peasants. Problems concerning the right to organize, an eight-hour work-day, a minimum wage, and the peasantry, were raised and discussed seriously and heatedly[1]. Books of all kinds which propagated the democratic ideal and Marxist-Leninist theory appeared and the people scrambled to read them. It was the first time the Vietnamese people could engage at all openly in political activity. Revolutionary and progressive literature, music and painting could, for the first time too, exploit legal possibilities to capture a new battlefield to fight for the people.

Alongside the revolutionary culture with a national and democratic character, there was also the movement for

1. Read *Tu do nghiep doan* (Freedom of Trade Union) by Khuat Duy Tien and *Van de dan cay* (The Peasant Problem) by Qua Ninh and Van Dinh, the aliases of Truong Chinh and Vo Nguyen Giap (*Ed.*)

reformist culture at the time. This had two tendencies : the progressive popular tendency fostered by those who took advantage of the possibilities that the law afforded them, to initiate democratic reforms, and the reactionary tendency of the French colonialists and their lackeys, who used the policy of reform to try to deceive the people and buy them off. *Hoi Anh Sang*[1] was active with *Hoi Truyen ba quoc ngu*[2] and the "Lemur"[3] styles of woman's robe were in tune with the houses designed by modern architects. A good many novels written by the *Tu luc* group and others printed by the *Tan dan* publishing house advocated reform, and were accompanied by relief and social assistance activities undertaken by troops of scouts, religious associations, and by the piecemeal "reforms" introduced by the French colonialists.

In addition to abusing reform, the French contrived to distract the young people in every way and lead them into lives of debauchery. Châtel, the Resident-Superior of Tonkin, was particularly keen on organizing beauty contests and amusement fairs.

What did we see in the cultural sphere in Viet Nam during the Second World War ? We saw a revolutionary culture of a national and democratic character which was sponsored by the Indochinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh Front blossom in clandestinity and project its light to the outside world. Besides books published in secrecy, a multitude of illegal newspapers circulated and reached every part of the country. These included *Giai Phong* (Liberation), *Cuu Quoc*

1. *Light*, the name of an association for cheap popular housing (*Ed.*)
2. *Association for the Popularization of Quoc Ngu* (the Latin script) (*Ed.*)
3. Pseudonym taken by the initiator (*Ed.*)

(National Salvation), *Co Giai Phong* (Flag of Liberation), *Tap chi Cong san* (Review of Communism), *Viet Nam doc lap* (Independent Viet Nam), *Viet lap* (for short), *Hon nuoc* (Soul of the Nation), *Bai say,* (name of an old guerilla area), *Duoi giac nuoc* (Driving the Invaders away), *Be Xieng sat* (Breaking the Fetters), *Gai ra tran,* (Women to the Front), *Tien phong* (Vanguard), *Ken goi linh* (Clarion Call), *Lao Dong* (Labour), *Hiep luc* (Joining Forces), *Me Linh* (name of the Capital set up by the Trung Sisters in A.D. 40), *Khang dich* (Resistance), *Khoi nghia* (Insurrection), *Quyet thang* (Determined to Win), *Doc lap* (Independence), *Nuoc Nam moi* (New Viet Nam), *Quan giai phong* (Liberation Army), etc. Particular mention should also be made of the newspapers edited during this period by political prisoners like the *Suoi reo* (The Stream) at the Son La prison and the *Giong song Cong* (The River Cong) at Ba Van.

In 1943 the Indochinese Communist Party published its Proposals Concerning Vietnamese Culture, and founded and broadened the scope of activity of the Cultural Association for National Salvation (*Hoi van hoa cuu quoc*). Publications of the Party and the Front severely censured the legal literature for its erroneous and reactionary tendencies. This literature did have another positive aspect however. Books and periodicals were published in profusion. Hoang Xuan Han compiled his *Danh tu khoa hoc* (Glossary of Scientific Vocabulary). Nguyen Van To discussed ancient writings in the periodical *Tri Tan*. Nguy Nhu Kong Tum, Hoang Xuan Han and Nguyen Xien edited *Khoa hoc* (Science). Comrade Dang Thai Mai introduced the Vietnamese to Chinese

democratic literature. His *Van hoc khai luan* (Essays on Literature) and translations of the Chinese writer Lu Hsun aroused great interest. A group of radical intellectuals founded the periodical *Thanh Nghi*. A movement for the preservation of the Vietnamese language and against the habit of interspersing Vietnamese speech with French words also developed. Western systems of bourgeois idealist philosophy were disseminated. Books from the Han Thuyen publishing house which treated obscure social thought and mechanical materialism and distorted Marxism were made use of by the French in an attempt to reduce the impact of the campaign for patriotism and democracy fostered by the Viet Minh. Although the tendency of the *Xuan thu nha tap* group was nationalistic, they remained alien to the masses because of their far-fetched and obscure art and its "escapist" inclinations.

Fascist culture was very active during this period. The Decoux fascist clique created the *Nha Thong Tin, Tuyên Truyen* (Directorate of Information and Propaganda) and put Cousseau, the police chief, in charge: his job was to poison our people's hearts and minds with Petain's defeatism. A number of writers unashamedly praised the slogans "Franco-Vietnamese Renaissance" and "For a national revolution", coined by the French colonialists.

The Decoux clique also encouraged a movement for the restoration of the past, the cult of antiquated customs, asceticism and idealism. A number of intellectuals and other people, patriotic-minded but conservative in outlook, having not found their bearings yet, unwittingly lent the enemy a hand in the furtherance of this movement.

Besides, the French fascists set afoot a tumultuous sports and physical culture cult, with no other purpose than to win over the young, blind them to the task of national emancipation, while keeping them healthy enough to be used as cattle or cannon-fodder. Here the slogan "Strong to Serve" of Ducoroy the fascist comes to mind[1].

Upon setting foot on Indochina, the Japanese fascists used culture as an instrument to disseminate their "Greater Eastern Asia" doctrine. Some Vietnamese painters were invited to Japan. *Vien van hoa Nhat* (The Institute of Japanese culture) opened its doors. Some writers and artists took to eulogizing Japanese habits and customs and the "Samurai" spirit. The sight of some people openly aping and displaying things Japanese was hateful : there was a vogue for razed scalps and boots, for example.

During half the present century our national culture has been influenced mainly by French culture, which means both the reactionary culture of the French colonialists and imperialists, and the progressive culture of the French people. We should not look in just one direction and reject the progressive influence of French culture. In history, it is common for the aggressed to resist the aggressor but at the same time to assimilate what is best in him so as to make progress. Although we oppose the nefarious culture of the French imperialists, we should not neglect to absorb the essence of

1. Devilish though the French and Japanese fascists might have been, the patriotic tendency spread even within the legal youth and student movement : the Duong Duc Hien, — Dang Ngoc Tot tendency. After the Japanese putsch, *Thanh nien tien phong* (Vanguard Youth) in the south headed by Dr Pham Ngoc Thach tended to cooperate with the *Hoi thanh nien cuu quoc* (Youth Association for National Salvation) and take advantage of its status, being allowed to operate openly, in order to promote the spirit of national liberation.

French democratic culture. It should be admitted that under French domination, against the will of the colonialists, we did adopt the theory and practice of scientific work in some measure. Traces of French progressive literature and art left their imprint on our literature, painting, music, theatre, architecture etc. In assessing the overall impact of French culture on ours, it should however be made clear that what is good is insignificant whereas what is bad is quite a burden ; the good only scratches at the surface but the bad has penetrated into the bones. Thus one of the tasks of our revolutionary culture lies in rooting out the bad influence while trying to preserve the good.

4. — FROM THE AUGUST REVOLUTION (1945) ONWARD

After the victory of the general insurrection in August (1945), a new-democracy economy and political system grew up in our country, providing the new-democracy culture with the basis on which to develop. The goal had become clear, the road lay wide open. The Revolution had supplied all branches of our national culture with wings.

Engrossed though the government was with solving so many highly complex problems, internal and external, military and economic, it did however immediately devote its attention to encouraging intellectuals and people active in the cultural sphere. *Hoi van hoa cuu quoc* (Cultural Association for National Salvation) excelled itself in publishing the periodical *Tien phong* (Vanguard). Our national culture was developing rapidly. Freedom of opinion was decreed for all to enjoy. Political literature came out at an

unprecedented rhythm. Music in particular experienced a remarkable efflorescence. Now that the shackles had been broken after eighty years of slavery, the Vietnamese people engaged in labour in a surge of emulation, rushed to the battlefield to defend the newly-won, sacred rights, and sang heroic and other songs so full of youth and life! The exhibition of two years ago brought to our notice the rigid limitations that constrained our painting and sculpture. However, overcoming many difficulties, these two branches have made great progress since the triumph of the Revolution, and particularly since the start of the war of resistance. Posters, wall-newspapers, short plays and songs are the forms of literature and art that best deserve mention because they render a real service to the war effort at this time.

The *Binh dan hoc vu* (mass education) movement has spread swiftly to reach even the most backward people. Within nearly three years seven million of our compatriots have escaped from illiteracy. We have indeed won the championship title in the fight against illiteracy!

Each army unit is a school of popular education where the soldiers become literate, understand politics, master the elementary principles of military action, methods of mass agitation, and hygiene.

The physical education movement involving exercises rhythmically holding up and placing the limbs is at present fused with that of "training the troops and achieving feats of arms" and of guerilla warfare; such "athletic exercises" as crawling, advance by rolling one's body, sliding and writhing, laying an ambush and springing an attack, have become the rage with Vietnamese youths.

The new-life movement inspired by President Ho's slogan "*can, kiem, liem, chinh*" (industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness) has struck deep root. Gambling, drinking and theft have diminished in villages and districts, and completely disappeared in some. Obsolete customs are dying out in the countryside, especially those attached to marriages, funerals, festivities, "wining and dining" on the occasion of village affairs, and "paying back one's eating and drinking".

With very poor facilities our scientists strove to make discoveries, and, in spite of the paucity of means, achieved a great deal in the fields of armaments and pharmaceutics. Brigadier Tran Dai Nghia designed bazookas and other types of weapons; Dr Nguyen Duc Khoi prepared dry anti-smallpox vaccine; Dr Ton That Tung worked hard training medical cadres and developed surgery under war conditions; Dr Pham Ngoc Thach and Dr Vu Van Can, surmounting all sorts of difficulties, organized the network of military and civilian medicine. There are other scientists who have important contributions to their credit, but the scope of this report permits no mention of them.

The recently-held education congress and the present national cultural congress are clear evidence that our national and democratic culture is flourishing in harmony with the growth of the forces of the resistance in the new phase of the war. Nevertheless, it should be admitted that there are branches of our culture like education (chiefly university education) and literature and art which still lag behind, unable to keep abreast of the heroic struggle of the people. We have as yet no system of military education

worthy of the name although the war has entered its third year. It is a deficiency we should try our best to correct.

The French aggressors are destroying and making a mockery of culture on our land. They burn, kill, plunder property and rape women in the most savage manner. They demolish statues of gods, shatter crucifixes and even slay bonzes and priests and rape catholic and buddhist nuns. They cut up human flesh for sale, tear up children's bodies and throw people into fires. They trample on religion and drag human dignity through the mud. Wherever they come, they cause havoc, death and disease. Their war of aggression is at the same time a war of cultural destruction. Not only do we fight for independence and freedom, we also fight to preserve culture and civilization.

The French are implementing an extremely reactionary cultural policy in the zones they temporarily occupy. They have reverted to their old trick of spreading deceptive rumours, beating the propaganda drum for hedonism, romanticism, pessimism, defeatism and scepticism, and indoctrinating our people with mystic and fatalistic theories. They have also opened innumerable opium-dens and tea-houses where prostitution and lasciviousness lead the young people living under their rule to brutishness and debauchery. At the same time, they start schools and institute examinations to lure our studious youth into their grip. We are however far from being misled : the education their schools provide is nothing but brain-cramming that aims at turning those who attend them into a class of people who serve the enemy like machines, completely loyal to them and treacherous to their

fatherland. Fundamentally, the culture that is dominant in the occupied areas is the obscurantist and reactionary culture of the old times of the "protectorate". We must make energetic efforts to oppose it and to develop the national and democratic culture of the resistance, bring its light to illuminate the temporarily-occupied zones and disperse the pervasive thick shadows of darkness and suffocating atmosphere there.

IV — THE CHARACTER AND MISSION OF THE NEW-DEMOCRACY CULTURE

Vietnamese cultural workers are enthusiastically fighting on the cultural front to resist aggression and build the country.

Our goal is to defeat the enemy, save the nation, and make our people strong and happy; it also consists in opposing enslaving obscurantist culture fostered by the French imperialists, in rooting feudal and backward thoughts out of our national culture, and in constructing a Vietnamese new-democracy culture which may be brought to make its contributions to the world's cultural treasury.

The Vietnamese new-democracy culture must have the following three characteristics : it must be national, scientific and popular.

Opposed as it is to the enslaving colonial feature that characterises the old Vietnamese culture, the Vietnamese new-democracy culture fights against all oppressive and aggressive forces wherever they come from, for the independence and freedom of the people, and respects the independence and freedom of the peoples of the world; it also seeks to banish all ideas that smack of weakness and manifest a lack of independence and self-reliance. The new-democracy culture has all the characteristics and traditional marks of

our people and must grow by developing what is good and beautiful and rejecting what is bad and ugly. It represents what is best in the national heritage : at the same time it stands ready to absorb the good, the beautiful and the progressive in a foreign culture. It is neither xenophobic nor racist. It denounces hybridism and rootlessness and opposes the gulping down raw of other people's culture, parrot-fashion learning, or the mechanical introduction of a foreign culture into our own without taking into account the particularities and concrete conditions of the country and its people.

So that the national element in our culture may blossom, we must make vigorous propaganda for resistance to the French colonialists and combine the offensive by pen and speech with the offensive by the gun. In paint and in ink, in each embroidered thread, in each cut of the sculptor, and each sequence of thought, lies a way to strengthen patriotism and intensify hatred for the enemy. We distinguish what constitutes the enslaving side of French imperialist culture from what represents the beneficent influence of French democratic culture, in order to eliminate the former and keep the latter. We learn from the advanced cultures of the world, yet take a critical view of and censure its reactionary cultures.

We search for and study literary and art works bequeathed to us by our forefathers, but we put them under the microscope, criticize them and pick out only the positive traditions of our national culture.

The Vietnamese new-democracy culture must be scientific in character as opposed to the backward, corrupt and feudal

character that still lingers in the old Vietnamese culture. It upholds freedom of faith but condemns superstition, idealism, mysticism, bungling, carelessness, all those habits that are irrational or retrograde; it speeds up the campaign for a new life and opposes lax discipline and obsolete customs; it brings elementary science and information about preventive medicine to the masses; it propagates scientific thought and Marxist philosophy in order to counter prejudices and antiquated and fallacious viewpoints. A prominent feature of this new-democracy culture is that it takes practice seriously and seeks to combine it with theory. It rebels against the French policy of deceit and obscurantism, and upholds truth. It promotes progress and pushes aside what stands in the way of the advancement of the people. Not progress that is divorced from the past of the nation, but progress that is neither hybrid, uprooted, imitative nor mechanical; nor in favour of the "primacy of science", which claims that it is only with modern science that foreign aggressors equipped with high technology can be defeated, and that we for our part have to accept frustration since we are inferior in science and technology. With regard to artistic creation, the new-democracy culture approves of socialist realism.

Under present war conditions we are anxious to apply modern science and technological advances quickly, and to acquire the latest inventions of world science in order to fight the war and build the country more efficiently. We have not been able to do much in this field, and it is regrettable. But we shall certainly not fold our arms in helplessness. For the present, we can both go abroad to acquaint ourselves with new developments in science, and on the other hand

exert ourselves to improve our techniques under conditions of a backward agriculture and a general dearth of means. We should not dream of using the conventional techniques of developed industrial countries; we should not hesitate to combine manual and semi-mechanised with mechanised methods with the purpose of advancing step by step and improving gradually. When we have the conditions necessary, we will move forward steadily. We will simultaneously rationalize production and develop better working practice: we will warmly encourage inventions and creativeness on the part of workers, peasants, and soldiers, and pool the experience of the labouring masses to complement the limited knowledge of our scientists and technicians.

Since the new-democracy culture opposes the estrangement and anti-popular character of the ruling cultures in former times and in the present French-occupied areas, it must be popular. It serves the masses, the overwhelming majority of the people. It rejects any idea of culture being ethereal, the higher the more precious and the more complicated the better. On the contrary it holds culture to be close to the masses so as to lead and educate them, to raise their cultural level, to single out and nurture the talents that blossom amongst them, and not to tail after while learning from them. The joys and sorrows of the masses should be the joys and sorrows of the cultural fighters who, if they wish to fulfil the mission of enlightening them in thought and feelings and of solving their misapprehensions in time, ought to understand these joys and sorrows. A culture in service of the masses must faithfully reflect the aspirations and

hope of the people who are involved in fighting and production, and make them conscious and enthusiastic, fortified by faith and will.

To that end, we as vanguard cultural workers are bound on the one hand to strive to completely liberate the masses from illiteracy and to awaken them politically, and on the other to eradicate with determination the erroneous tendencies in literature and art and the ailments that afflict our national culture or were passed on by the French colonialists' decadent culture. Examples that can be cited are : individualism, fence-sitting, escapism, neutralism, aestheticism etc. [1].

While the ruling culture in our country for almost a century of French domination was anti-national, anti-scientific and anti-popular, its present new-democracy culture must be national, scientific and popular.

The three traits co-exist and are interwoven, inseparable the one from the other.

Indeed, a national culture that is devoid of a scientific and popular character is likely, on account of the selfish and narrow interests of one's own people, to thwart the evolution of history by clinging to ancient traditions that have become

1. *Individualism* involves the fact of being solely concerned with one's own interests, with big sales for one's works, no matter whether they benefit or harm the masses.

Fence-sitting preaches the shirking of responsibility to the nation and the war of resistance, and aloofness from the people so as to enjoy life and pass the time.

Escapism consists in burying one's head in distractions, in "pure art", not caring for the material and moral conditions of the people.

Neutralism is the doctrine whereby culture is set above social classes and strata, ignorant of the struggle of the people, not caring to serve it and unmindful of politics.

Aestheticism aims at so embellishing the form that it becomes overrefined, recherché, likely to attract only a very few "aristocratic intellectuals" and the group of exploiters and parasites.

reactionary or irrelevant ; or while paying general attention to whatever belongs to the nation, it pays no particular heed to the preoccupations of the workers, peasants and soldiers who make up the most numerous, hard-working and patriotic sections of Vietnamese society.

A culture that is scientific without being national and popular is apt to serve the enemy's science : "for the sake of pure science" people may cooperate with the enemy, or "for the sake of science" they may resign themselves to being slaves to a small group of oppressors and exploiters of the nation and the people ; they use their proficiency in science and technology to serve the interests of this group and in so doing betray the interests of the majority.

Finally a culture that is popular, without being national and scientific is most likely to lack breadth of vision because it shows concern only for the interests of the workers, peasants and soldiers, but ignores those of the entire nation and people while their unification to secure victory in the war is the urgent need ; or it trails behind the masses and practises demagogy, not eyeing scientifically and critically their obsolete customs and irrational prejudices, and not making them become daily more and more conscious politically, and more knowledgeable in science and technology, so that science and technology may have some effect on production, on the fighting and on improving their daily existence.

In brief, national, scientific and popular are the three traits of the Vietnamese new-democracy culture, and they are also the three essential links of the new-democracy cultural chain in a country like ours, which is still steeped in feudal vestiges and partly a colony.

As combatants on the cultural front, we can in the light of these characters of the new-democracy culture advance three principles to guide our task to promote the new culture: to render it national, scientific and popular. What is anti-national, anti-scientific and anti-popular will be vigorously rejected; what is compatible with the nation, science and the people, we will work hard to strengthen, maintain and improve upon. At the same time we will adopt a proper attitude on the basis of these principles:

1. To be absolutely loyal to the Fatherland and the resistance; neither to accept compromise with reactionary thought and culture nor to adopt either neutralism or the attitude of on-lookers.

2. To strive to conduct scientific and technological research and to apply the results to benefit production, the fighting and human life; to rely on Marxist theory as the compass for action; to combine knowledge with action, theory with practice.

3. To serve the people wholeheartedly; to remain close to the workers, peasants, and soldiers, to be in sympathy with the masses, to learn from but at the same time to educate and lead the people.

This should be the proper attitude for us fighters on the cultural front, and the key to our success.

Such an attitude is essential to carry out the mission ahead as President Ho had directed us:

"Culture aims not only at boosting our people's moral and material forces for resistance and national building, but also

at highlighting our people's great achievements for the whole world to know. Our cultural workers must create deserving works, not only to glorify our present efforts but also to bequeath to future generations shining examples of resistance and national building" [1].

1. *Message to the Second National Cultural Congress* (July 1948).

V — THE UNITED CULTURAL FRONT AND THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT

The Vietnamese people's main enemies at present are the French imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese collaborators and traitors who represent the forces of feudal landlords and pro-French comprador bourgeois. To build the Vietnamese new-democracy culture, we must overthrow the French imperialists and abolish their economic and political system. The crumbling of the colonial system will bring with it the fall of the stooges, the appendages of the imperialists, and this in turn will make it impossible for the colonial and feudal culture to survive. The revolutionary struggle of those engaged in cultural work is part and parcel of the people's common revolutionary struggle. They who fight for independence and freedom of the Fatherland cannot remain outside the National United Front in the fight against the French colonialist aggressors.

This Front is made up of people from all walks of life, from workers, peasants and petty-bourgeois to national bourgeois and a number of patriotic landlords. Its task is to use force to overthrow the imperialist aggressors and their puppet regime, to resort to radical democratic reforms in order to gradually eradicate the feudal survivals in Vietnamese society now in a process of change.

Our cultural workers have hitherto stood by the side of the rest of the nation to resist the French colonialists. We fight on the front line and we are active in the rear. That is why the enemy hate us and have never passed up an occasion to kill our cultural workers and patriotic intellectuals. Their recent crimes testify to this. In 1946 they assassinated lawyer Thai Van Lung in Saigon. At the end of the year they killed Dr Nguyen Van Luyen and Mr Nguyen Quang Oanh in Hanoi, and the painter To Ly in Bac Ninh. Last year they slew the scholar Nguyen Van To, and more recently the poet Nguyen Dinh Thu in Thua Thien. These crimes have not daunted our cultural fighters, however, but have instead rendered their hate for the aggressors and their determination to fight them even fiercer.

A closer look at cultural activities reveals that, in spite of a number of initial successes, there is as yet no intimate relationship, coordination and mutual assistance between various branches of culture. A common comprehensive programme of action needs to be drawn up. Common guidelines have not yet been defined. Capacities have been dispersed and wasted in considerable quantity. How many talents there are that could have been fostered to serve the Fatherland but have not! Much inertia remains to be overcome. Each branch and sector of the national culture has organised its own cultural and artistic groups. It is high time all these capacities and cultural organizations were merged into a cultural front of resistance, and supplied with a proper form of organization. This should include all organizations and individuals engaged in cultural activity, regardless of social

class, political complexion, religion, provided they agree with the two following claims : *national independence* and *democratic liberty*.

The nation and democracy form the basis on which these organizations and individuals will unite and coordinate their actions to fight the common enemy. In other words, they serve as the foundation for the programme of action of the Vietnamese Cultural Front against the French colonialist aggressors.

All the people engaged in cultural work who profess loyalty to the nation and the people, approve of and support democracy and take part in the war of resistance, are eligible for membership of the Front. All those who join in the fight against the French imperialists enthusiastically and do not oppose the democratic system can automatically become members. The Front also welcomes as friends all those who are active in the cultural sphere, and remain neutral for one reason or another, but are nevertheless well-disposed towards the resistance or support it without directly participating in it. The Front even opens its ranks to patriotic men of letters and artists who live in enemy-controlled areas or abroad. In brief, we propose to create broad unity in cultural circles, with the purpose of enlisting all cultural talents and abilities in the concentration of the fire of Vietnamese culture on the enemy of the nation, the French colonialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors.

There are people who hold that since the Vietnamese new-democracy culture is national scientific and popular in character, and its guiding principles are to render cultural activities national, scientific and popular, only those who

are in agreement with these principles can be members of the Front ; but this is not a correct attitude. Is a cultural worker who, because of prejudices and religion, does not approve of science, yet is ardently patriotic and actively involved in the resistance to be barred from membership ? We should not confound the three guidelines of the new-democracy culture with the slogan calling for the amalgamation of all patriotic forces and the adoption of a common stand by all cultural tendencies of the present culture of the resistance.

There are others who maintain that only official cultural workers are entitled to membership and that membership of cultural organizations and the Front should not be extended to those Confucian scholars who write a few poems or distichs lauding the resistance and patriotism but do not specialize in cultural work. This argument does not hold good either. Any cultural body aiming at breadth of membership, should comprise not only professional culture workers but also people who are not writers or artists by profession but are active in some kind of cultural activity and try their best to disseminate patriotic and progressive culture amongst the people in different ways.

There are still others who are of the opinion that we should create a single form of cultural front composed exclusively of people involved in cultural work, and go against setting up various organizations as parts of the apparatus of the United Cultural Front. This view is also invalid. Is a people's organization needed ? The answer would depend on whether or not it serves any immediate real purpose and whether or not conditions for its creation

are ripe. If the answer is in the affirmative, then there should be no reason to prevent it from being established. People's organizations are usually of all shapes and forms. An over-simplification of them is not possible. It is the same thing with cultural bodies. They may be organizations for writers, for poets, for journalists. Musicians, painters and sculptors, scientists, technicians and others may also have their own distinctive associations. Provided all of them are brought into one front, directed towards a common goal in order to unify their actions, and placed under the leadership of an organ to be elected by the United Cultural Front. Moreover, our country's cultural circles belong at present to different branches all having their respective organizations almost without exception. We should not disband them only to select individuals for membership of a single cultural set-up.

Still some other friends argue that since the United Cultural Front is a front, it should be "simply a front", that is, only such organizations and cultural associations as *Lien doan khoa hoc* (Federation of Scientists) and the *Hoi van hoc nghe thuat* (Literature and Art Association) should be members; individual cultural workers should not be considered for adherence. We cannot agree with this proposal because it is not realistic. In our country the number of people who have been grouped into associations of whatever walk of life is still insignificant. There are a good many individuals who take their responsibilities to the war of liberation and national reconstruction seriously; but owing to their special circumstances, they have not joined any organization and so can only join the cultural front directly.

Cultural organizations like any other people's groupings should have realistic forms and aims so that they bring about great unity, maximise unity of action and are effective in encouraging all walks of life to participate in the resistance and the revolution, and thereby achieve independence and reunification for the country. Organizations pursuing the same goals, wherever in the liberated zones they operate in, should be urged to adopt common rules. For example, all cultural organizations at the provincial or zone level should go under the same appellation and internal regulations in order to avoid the sort of parochialism and lack of unity of action that now exists.

It is our hope that this Congress will lay the foundations of the Vietnamese united cultural front; President Ho Chi Minh's directives in his letter to the congress will be implemented; all cultural workers who take part in the new organization will find something different from the past: they will have all conditions necessary to put their talents and hearts at the service of the Fatherland; there will be division of labour, cooperation, mutual assistance and encouragement; and realization of the unity of action under a single leadership[1] will make it possible for the united cultural front to play its role in the National United Front to fight the French colonialist aggressors.

1. At the time the Indochinese Communist Party was not openly active so the author refers to "single leadership" meaning the leadership of the Party (*Pub.*)

VI — VIETNAMESE CULTURE IN THE WORLD DEMOCRATIC CULTURAL FRONT

We will now discuss briefly the relationship between Vietnamese culture and world culture.

There are two contradictions in world culture in our day.

The first lies in the fact that in the age of imperialism the capitalist economy becomes an economy which binds all countries and nations in close inter-dependency. Means of transport, communications, information and liaison between them have developed to a moderately high degree ; no country can now remain in complete isolation outside the economic system of the world, which tends towards internationalization. World culture thus acquires the same internationalizing tendency, and it should be remembered that the culture of the Soviet Union is internationalized culture in miniature. Thanks to advanced techniques in printing, information and propaganda, the cultures of the peoples of the world can with ease effect exchanges and learn from one another. Because of its selfish interests, imperialism is always stirring up hatred amongst the world's peoples, imposes censorship, sets up tariff barriers between countries, prevents cultures from coming into contact naturally, wrecks human friendship and understanding and holds back the growth of common culture.

The second contradiction is that as culture becomes more and more the common product of man's intellect, it should benefit mankind as a whole. Cultural geniuses are a pride shared by all society. But in imperialist countries, monopoly capitalists appropriate culture works as their private possessions. They keep control and repress opinion ; they buy up and threaten men of letters and art. They purchase fabrication plans and invention patents to shelve them. There is the example of the latest discoveries in atomic science which are in truth the fruit of concerted labour on the part of eminent scientists in many countries, but which the American imperialist militarists have made into their own property. They use the atomic bomb to intimidate other countries with, and plan to start a third world war. They obstruct the free exchange of opinion between American and world scientists, impede the use of atomic energy for the betterment of life and in defence of peace. So culture which should have belonged to the whole of mankind has been usurped by militarists and financiers to serve their selfish interests. Imperialism is undeniably a great obstacle to the progress of world culture.

So that culture may develop in accordance with its natural trend and serve peace and the happiness of mankind, we must overthrow imperialism, restore the means of propagation of science and ideas to public ownership by the whole of society, together with scientific and technical laboratories and even depots of raw materials required for scientific discovery. We must topple the imperialists and war-mongering and aggressive colonialists, who use science to kill and

to cause mutual massacres. Only with their destruction can humanity come to join hands in cooperation, to strive to make scientific discoveries to ameliorate life and use science to conquer nature.

The ranks of the present socialist and new-democracy cultures are now filled by the cultures of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies and may include part of the revolutionary cultures of the oppressed peoples.

In the Soviet Union at present socialist culture means proletarian culture. It does not come all of a sudden out of nowhere : it arises in the process of the revolutionary struggle conducted by the working class against the regime of oppression and exploitation and the bourgeoisie's obscurantist and demagogic culture. Lenin said : "Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the sum total of all knowledge that humanity has gathered under the yoke of the society of capitalists, landlords and bureaucrats".

Proletarian culture must benefit the class struggle of the working class, play a positive role in the building of a new economy, a new political and social system — the socialist system.

The new-democracy culture in the people's democracies is the culture of the working class and labouring people. Its goal is to serve the struggle aimed at defending and consolidating national independence, setting up and developing the system of people's democracy and creating conditions to advance to socialism.

The revolutionary culture fostered by a number of oppressed peoples fighting imperialism for national independence

and democratic freedom can join the other two components to be part of the new-democracy culture, provided their struggle is carried on under the leadership of the working class and aims at setting up a new-democracy once they have thrown off the foreign imperialist yoke.

The socialist and new-democracy culture of the world is a culture of struggle and reconstruction. It opposes poverty, obscurantism and crime, and works for peace, democracy and the happiness of mankind. It is against the alienation of man and endeavours at the same time to edify human dignity and change man so that man will no longer be "a wolf to man" It upholds and gives reality to true humanism.

The Vietnamese resistance culture pursues as policy the overthrowing of the French colonialists, to swiftly end their cruel war of aggression, put our country on the same level as advanced countries in the world, and bring nearer the day when the Vietnamese all in smiles can take the hands of the French people as friends and brothers. It is indeed an integral portion of the world democratic culture or, in other words, a portion of the fighting culture of the democratic world. As Vietnamese cultural workers, we must make every effort to be worthy of the important responsibility that devolves upon us as we take up position in the front of the new-democracy culture in a world on the march.

For our country's new-democracy culture to make rapid progress, it should actively foster its fine traditions and latent strength, fortify itself with the world's socialist and new-democracy cultures ; it should also contribute its best elements to the world's cultural treasury. Relations exchanges

and mutual enrichment between Vietnamese culture and the progressive cultures of the world are necessary. Our cultural workers should therefore, on the one hand, conduct research into and learn from these cultures, and on the other strive to make our national culture known to the world so that its peoples can appreciate and actively support the just war of our people.

VII — SOME CONCRETE PROBLEMS OF OUR COUNTRY'S PRESENT LITERATURE AND ART

Comrades and friends!

We will at this point switch to some of the concrete and practical problems that have perplexed a number of our cultural workers.

First of all, we would like to talk about art and propaganda.

Some friends hold art to be art, propaganda to be propaganda, the one not to be confused with the other; that propaganda works have only a temporary value, aiming at the short-sighted purpose of the moment; that they are generally created in a hurry and are therefore not art in the true sense of the word. Art, these same people maintain, is pure, ethereal, eternal, soaring above daily occurrences, etc.

Some other friends view propaganda and art to be one and the same, and that there is no art which is not propaganda art.

We are of the opinion that both lines of thought have their weak points. Art and propganda are not completely different, nor are they completely identical. Propaganda is a kind of art. Propaganda art forms part of art in general. And every work of art more or less bears the character of propaganda. We should not however infer from this that art and propaganda are one and the same

thing. As it attains a certain level, propaganda becomes art, which in turn has the unmistakable character of propaganda if it is to some extent realistic. Thus, we can say that there are propagandists who are not or not yet artists, and that there are no artists that are in no way propagandists.

According to still other friends, art is truth while propaganda is more or less an attempt at deceit and exaggeration, and consequently art and propaganda are at variance. Not in the least! Indeed, unadulterated art is truth, but in a class society there is art with a high measure of truth, art with just a modicum of it and anti-truth art. Art serving the just cause is the art that conforms to the truth. If pledged however to the unjust cause, it then becomes an anti-truth "art" or an "art" which is not truly art. Propaganda is also of two kinds : the propaganda of the aggressors is anti-truth propaganda while the propaganda of the revolutionaries is sincere and in keeping with the truth. Propaganda for the just cause is perfectly capable of reaching the level of true art.

Nevertheless, it is but right to welcome the existence of art produced quickly to serve the purpose of the moment, as well as of those which take time and great care to be created, so that art may be refined and elevated. Although there are some creations produced hurriedly for the purpose of the war of resistance which nevertheless are good art, we should not confuse art in general with propaganda art.

Those writers and artists who have the requisite conditions or feel inspired to work long and carefully on their creations to render their art "eternal" should by all means do so. It is certain that if they are faithful to their time and keep close to the struggle of the nation and the lives of their people, as

their works reach the highest level of art, they will also have the highest propaganda value.

Another opinion is that during the war of resistance, owing to the people's level of culture being limited, they are interested only in prosaic and easy works ; that acceding to their wish would result in lowering the quality of art, and if one keeps doing this, what will be left of culture ?

This is our answer : it is only natural, that after having been subjected to the exploiting, oppressing and obscurantist regime of the French colonialists for so many years, the cultural level of the masses of our people has limitations. However, it would be wrong of us to think that they are not capable of artistic appreciation. They are bound to understand, feel for, enjoy and love our works if these render a lively description of reality.

The feelings of the masses are pure, sincere and exceedingly warm. They show indifference only to insincere, recondite, recherché, evasive, preposterous works of art and hate the monsters of imagination.

The second problem that confronts a good number of our men of letters and art is : what is socialist realism ?

As we understand it, socialist realism is a method of artistic creation which portrays the truth in a society evolving towards socialism according to objective laws. Out of objective reality we must spotlight "the typical features in typical situations"[1] and reveal the inexorable motive force driving society forward and the objective tendency of the process of evolution.

1. Engels : *Letter to Miss Harkness.*

Alexis Tolstoi writes :

"The task of the artist... is to draw from reality what is typical, what people can see at first glance, gather facts, ideas and contradictions into a lively picture, and indicate the right direction leading to the correct future." [1]

The attitude of socialist realism is objective. There are objective truths which are unfavourable to us. For example, shall we report a battle we have lost truthfully ? We can, of course, depict a lost battle, but in doing so, we must see to it that people realise how heroically our combatants accepted sacrifices, why the battle was lost, what our gains were and notwithstanding the defeat, that our combatants never felt demoralised because all were eager to learn and draw the appropriate lessons in order to secure victories in future battles. We can depict a local defeat while showing that the war is going our way. It should be borne in mind that there are truths worth mentioning, but there are also truths which are better left unmentioned, at least temporarily, and if mentioned at all, the question is where and how they should be revealed.

Another thing of note in socialist realist literature is that authors should let the facts speak for the opinions they wish to convey or to propagandize. Engels says that "tendencies should spring from situations and actions, not be bared in too candid a manner". Nothing is worse than a play in which the author uses the words of a character to argue interminably.

1. Alexis Tolstoi : *Creative Freedom.*

Another question asked is : should we have criticism and controversy now ?

It is our opinion that we definitely should. It is well known that the cultural life of our people is too tranquil. Generally we have no way of knowing whether new works of art are good or bad, are welcomed or rejected by the public. There is no one to criticize or appraise them ! As soon as a policy, a point of view is put forward, it falls straight into oblivion or is coldly received. As a result, Vietnamese authors have little chance to be patronised and encouraged, or criticised and helped to improve. Without criticism and controversy, our cultural movement is too placid, too uneventful ! It is just like a horse trotting along with his head dropping, who needs the whip of criticism to set him galloping.

Some people fear that criticism may damage unity. What really matters is the manner in which criticism is made : this and not the criticism itself may damage unity. Criticism which is harmful to unity is criticism that is without tact and sincerity. On the contrary, criticism proffered in a responsible spirit, with good intentions and in modest terms, not only does no harm but also helps us to make progress and bring about mutual understanding. Facing the enemy of the nation, unity is undoubtedly necessary ; however it does not require that we never raise any objection. Such unity is one-way unity. True unity must be founded on criticism motivated by unity and aimed at strengthening unity.

We sincerely await the appearance of conscientious critics in the domain of Vietnamese literature and art.

Some friends object to criticism as tantamount to "washing our dirty linen in public", and thereby displaying our weaknesses for the enemy to seize and beat us with. The criticism we have in mind is criticism that abides by principles and democratic discipline and not "free criticism". There may be some who wish to use criticism to sow dissension and doubt in the ranks of our people and supply the enemy with documents to be used against us. They are not critics but trouble-makers, who seek not progress but provocation. Their place is not on the public debating platform of a democratic country but in the prisons of the people's state.

The targets of our criticism should not be confined to fallacious tendencies in our own ideology, scholarship, and art; we must criticize and devote ourselves mainly to assailing the enemy's reactionary thoughts, literature and art. The ideological and cultural struggle cannot be divorced from the political, armed and economic struggle. The enemy use their pessimistic and hedonistic theories to indoctrinate the youth in the areas they control; they stultify the masses with egoistical and idealistic points of view; they propagate their decadent and rotten art; they poison the spirit of our people in the most wicked manner. Have we exposed them yet? Duhamel came to Indochina to speak in defence of the colonialists' policy of plundering. Who in cultural circles answered him as he deserved? In the war against the imperialist aggressors, we must also join ideological battle!

We eagerly await the master-critics of imperialist culture in general and French colonialist culture in particular. We should not forget that decadent French literary and artistic

ideas and their dangerous theories have more or less penetrated into the minds of our young people, intellectuals and the present generation of writers and artists. Criticising the decadent literature and art of the French colonialists constitutes another way of changing the thinking of our intellectual and cultural circles.

As to how to create works of good art, we would like to offer the following opinions.

A number of writers and artists feel that they are running in circles, left behind by the war of resistance which is moving ahead at great speed, with everyone taking an active part in it and in the task of national reconstruction. Time flies, but they themselves are at a loss what to do, what to create; or have created but little, with negligible results. The prevailing mood amongst them is a feeling of perplexity as to the "right path" to embark on. Our friend Nguyen Dinh Thi, writing in the *Van Nghe* periodical, has rightfully echoed the bewilderment, anguish and anxiety that beset a whole generation of our country's writers and artists who are trying to break with the trammels of the past in order to surge ahead and be abreast of the movement[1].

Artistic creation is an important matter. Its process, as we see it, includes a series of tasks:

1. Choosing the topic.
2. Determining the audience for one's creation.
3. Acquiring conditions necessary for realization.
4. Testing works by the reaction of the masses.

1. See *Nhan duong* (Recognizing the Path), an essay in *Van Nghe*, No. 1.

Topics really are not lacking. The war is being fought in a thousand and one forms and situations, which are reflected in our minds and stir our souls.

What is essential is to live among the masses of the people, that is to live a worthy life, the militant life of our people. To investigate, research, collect information, study, be in sympathy with the masses and commit oneself wholly to the movement; to let one's heart beat in harmony with the heart of the nation; to share in its joys and sorrows, to labour and fight with the people and to share their faith and hatred. If we do this, why fear that life will not be rich in ideas and emotions?

The audience for our artistic creation is the people. For any creation we should ask: who is to enjoy and watch what we are creating? If our purpose really is to create for the people, then we should determine who the people are, what sections make them up, what is their present cultural level, what are their aspirations, etc. Only when the answers to these questions are clear in our minds can we produce realistic and worthwhile works. Many works are expensive cakes offered to the masses when they are crying out for bread. We must oppose subjectivity in artistic creation: to take one's own level as the general level. To understand the cultural level of the people thoroughly is not to lower one's art to the lowest artistic level amongst the people, but to adopt the average level of the majority of the people as a standard, while using one's works to raise their cultural level.

Conditions for artistic realization consist of what is directly necessary to the completion of a work of art. Any writer or

artist who wishes to create as he should, requires the three following conditions:

a) to have the opportunity to hear, look, feel and see; to get in touch with the masses, to work in the movement or keep close to the movement. On-the-spot observation has always been profitable to artistic creation (condition of place).

b) to have the time to polish, perfect and revise one's work (the time condition). Having time here does not imply the abandonment of action, the seeking of refuge in one's ivory tower. Henri Barbusse, the French writer, wrote and acted at the same time without ever easing up.

c) to have the means necessary for subsistence and creation (the material condition).

There are some other secondary conditions which are also important: a propitious climate for artistic creation and the publishing of creative works. Favourable circumstances drive and encourage people to create. The war has supplied writers and artists with such an atmosphere, and cultural organizations can complement this condition. The publishing of works of art is also a necessary condition. Without the printing and publishing condition, those engaged in producing art would lose enthusiasm for it.

To be a good finished product, a work of art must be born of the movement and the masses and return to where it originates. If one does not live with the army or is not a member of an army unit, one cannot write a play about the army. Even a play written by someone in the army itself still has to be performed before the army and the people.

and be touched up on the basis of criticism from various army units and the people in order to ensure its artistic worth. The masses are the most impartial and perspicacious judge of art. If works of art, once created, are devoured, admired, enjoyed, adopted, applied, and chosen by the people as their daily spiritual nourishment, they must have value. On the contrary, those works whose birth is heeded and cared for by no one will die an early death.

Do the masses have to learn about art before they are capable of criticising art? No. They are the most expert art critics of all, precisely because they have the many ears and eyes, the sound judgment and feelings of large numbers of people. In this respect no art critic can compare with the masses. It is quite possible that the majority in the masses are not knowledgeable about some technical aspects, but the masses include both experts and non-experts; what some cannot see, others can.

So, to my knowledge, eminent writers never feel condescension, complacency and contempt for the masses, but usually go to them for final control of their works and listen attentively to their opinions with a view to improving and completing their creations.

The method of artistic creation sketched above, together with the right ideological stand and some definite aptitude or talent, will produce good works of art. Let our writers and artists make use of these suggestions in participating actively in the present movement for patriotic emulation which is sweeping over the country.

Lastly, we will briefly discuss the relationship between literature and art and the movement for patriotic emulation.

Our entire nation is engaged in emulation to achieve quick results, to do much and do it well in order to defeat the three enemies — hunger, illiteracy and aggression. Our men of letters and art should contribute their creative part to the campaign of patriotic emulation and encourage it.

Achievements in the fields of culture and the economy remain pale compared with exploits on the battlefield. In the present war, blood, sweat and ink are not shed equally. For cultural circles to be instrumental in mobilizing the spirit of national salvation and building, they should make more positive and energetic efforts and set good examples to other areas. They should not braggingly challenge one another, just for show. Let them do their best to accomplish what is realistic and worthwhile. Such things as writing books, newspaper articles or plays, painting pictures, sculpting statues, composing music, making scientific discoveries or technical innovations, etc., to benefit production and fighting, immediately advance emulation and effectively help everyone engage in it. To do little and well is better than to do a lot but badly. To accomplish something however small, is worth more than to talk and promise the moon. The atmosphere of emulation is precisely the climate for artistic creation. In the movement cultural creation finds a source of strong motivation. Emptiness of the soul and man's inertia are the things to oppose.

Patriotic emulation is a special tempo in labour, fighting, action and study. It holds great significance for our people and is very useful at present.

A great number of cultural workers have joined the ranks and are advancing at the speed of the whole army and people; but how many others are not yet stirring, are still in a quandary and continue to live on the periphery of the national struggle?

Let us hope that this cultural congress will provide an impetus for the movement of patriotic emulation by writers and artists.

CONCLUSION

Comrades and friends!

The Vietnamese are waging a holy armed struggle against the French aggressors. The imperialist shackles that still remain are being shattered by our people while the colonialists are doing their best to fasten new ones on us.

We are living through epoch-making days. A stern trial is unfolding. Many old values are being subjected to re-examination whereas new values are blossoming.

Virtues like sacrifice, bravery, love for mankind, altruism, perseverance, effort, etc. are developing and blotting out the bad habits. Collective heroism becomes an everyday fact of life. There is therefore no reason why such an environment will not give rise to new talent and new artistic creations of value.

During the war of national defence, the Soviet writer Ylya Ehrenburg wrote:

"This age is fast flowing by. It is like a gushing mountain waterfall. It will in the future swell into a single river, a river on whose surface houses, palaces, trees and clouds are reflected. The time will come when great works of art will make their appearance to reflect our present-day heroic achievements with classical clarity" [1].

1. *One Hundred Letters.*

This idea reflects our current hopes well.

At present Vietnamese culture must be the lively image of our nation in struggle and nation-building, amidst destruction and construction, and a myriad of sparks of fire to incinerate the enemy and project its light to the world abroad.

As Marxists, we pledge to be the vanguard on the Vietnamese cultural front, doing battle to the French colonialists, and the volunteer work-team to light the forge of Vietnamese new-democracy culture.

We already have the victories of the river Lo, Bong Lau, La Nga to our credit, so surely we can produce works of art of comparable historic significance.

Just as we have manufactured bazookas, mortars, guns, to fire at the enemy, we must likewise create cultural bazookas, mortars, and guns to destroy him.

"Let us make culture a battleground and culturize the resistance" [1].

Long live Vietnamese new-democracy culture!

Long live President Ho Chi Minh!

1. Words by President Ho.

ON THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Report to the Second National Congress of the Party, February 1951

Dear Comrade delegates,

Following the success of the August Revolution of 1945, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam was founded and the people's democratic regime was established in Viet Nam. Many far-reaching changes have taken place since then, bringing about developments in the Vietnamese revolution different from those in Cambodia and Laos.

That is why, although the three peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos live on the same Indochinese Peninsula and are fighting against the same enemies — the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists — and although the revolution in the three countries, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos, is developing in the same new cycle of war and revolution in the world, the time has come to consider the question of the Vietnamese revolution as separate from that in Cambodia and Laos.

The development of the world situation over the past 20 years has brought to the world working class and oppressed peoples many new revolutionary experiences. The struggles of the Vietnamese people against the Japanese and French fascists in the Second World War as well as their current resistance against the French imperialists and US interventionists have further clarified many problems inherent in the Vietnamese revolution.

The line and policies of the Vietnamese revolution need to be defined in a concrete manner.

We Vietnamese Communists take our internationalist obligations seriously, especially our duty to help the revolution of Cambodia and Laos. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of Marxism-Leninism, we must base ourselves on the concrete conditions and the characteristics of Viet Nam in order to consider the question of the Vietnamese revolution, and at the same time to build a genuinely revolutionary Party of the Vietnamese working class to lead our revolution to complete success.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Party, I hereby present to the Congress the report entitled "On the Vietnamese Revolution".

PART ONE

THE WORLD SITUATION AND THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

I. THE WORLD AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE STRUGGLE TO SAFEGUARD PEACE

Major changes have taken place in the world following the Second World War. The three fascist imperialist powers : Germany, Italy and Japan, have been defeated. The Soviet Union has won complete victory and accordingly her prestige and power have grown even greater. Owing largely to the great victory of the Soviet Union, many peoples struggling against aggressive fascism in Europe (Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, the German Democratic Republic) and in the Far-East (China, Korea, Viet Nam) have regained, or are regaining independence, and have set up or are setting up people's democratic governments. The liberation movement of the colonial and semi-colonial countries has become very active, involving hundreds of millions of people and shaking the foundations of the world capitalist system.

US imperialism which has profited from the war has now become the ringleader of world reaction. Britain and France have sunk to the position of countries dependent on the US.

The world has been split into two antagonistic camps struggling against each other : the anti-imperialist democratic camp led by the Soviet Union, and the anti-democratic imperialist camp headed by the United States.

The founding of the People's Republic of China and signing of a mutual-aid treaty with the Soviet Union have particularly strengthened the democratic camp. The historic victory of the 600 million people of China has taken over another important portion of the world capitalist system. It has had the immediate effect of promoting the movement for safeguarding world peace and the liberation movements of the nations.

"The founding of the German Democratic Republic marked a turning-point in the history of Europe" [1].

The socialist system has been extended and consolidated. The capitalist system has shrunk and weakened.

The balance of forces between the democratic and imperialist camps has tipped in favour of the democratic camp.

The democratic camp is becoming the mainstay of the world front for peace and democracy against aggressive imperialism.

Such is an outline of the major changes in the world since the end of the Second World War.

The socialist and people's democratic countries have become more and more powerful and prosperous.

With the completion of the 6th Five-Year Plan and a great programme for the transformation of nature being

1. Stalin : *Message of greetings on the founding anniversary of the German Democratic Republic (October 1949).*

undertaken, the Soviet Union has not only rapidly healed the wounds of war but has also developed vigorously and is advancing to communism. The new achievements of Soviet science have given a new boost to the living standard of the Soviet people, and further strengthened the Soviet Union's defence potential, thus further consolidating the bastion of peace of the peoples of the world.

The people's democratic system of government has brought real independence, freedom and happiness to many nations. With the active assistance of the Soviet Union, many people's democratic countries are laying the foundations of socialism and are making big strides forward.

In contrast, the imperialist countries are dogged by crisis. This is a new crisis of capitalism stemming from the following main causes : during and after the war, production techniques were improved and the productive forces of capitalism experienced a new development. On the other hand, the world market of capitalism which had shrunk by one-sixth following the First World War has now become even smaller, especially after the founding of the People's Republic of China. Due to the considerable impoverishment of the working masses in the imperialist countries and the people in the colonial countries, their purchasing power has decreased. It is with great difficulty that the economy of the imperialist powers is switching from war-time to peace-time conditions. On the capitalist market, a quantity of merchandise — partly made up of war equipment and weapons — remains unsalable. The number of unemployed has swollen continuously in the imperialist countries.

The uneven development of capitalism, which has become more accentuated daily, requires a solution, temporary though it may be.

In an effort to ward off another crisis, the imperialists are actively preparing for a new world war, either by attacking the Soviet Union, China and other people's democracies, or by waging war amongst themselves to re-divide the world market. They are striving to maintain and expand local wars in order to get rid of their stocks of munitions and to enable the arms manufacturers to continue making profits.

US imperialism, which is experiencing a crisis of over-production, is striving to sell part of its merchandise to Western Europe which is writhing under a crisis of under-production. Taking advantage of the shortages in West European countries, the United States is carrying out the Marshall Plan, allegedly to "aid" them, while in fact bullying and subjugating the "Marshallized" countries to seize more outlets for its merchandise and shift the burden of crisis onto the peoples of these countries. The monopolistic policy of US imperialism and the militarization of its economy are bringing innumerable difficulties to the countries dependent on the US. The policy of US imperialism is the policy of world hegemony, very brutal and also very cunning.

It is not the case, however, that there is no conflict of interests between British imperialism and capitalist firms in the "Marshallized" countries on the one hand, and US imperialism on the other. But, faced with the ever-growing democratic and socialist movement and this grave crisis, they temporarily accept the authority of the US, not without resentment, however. They are executing the war preparation

plan worked out by the US so that their financiers who care little for their own countries and share profits with the American capitalists, in the hope of re-dividing the world market with the United States.

Five years only have elapsed since the end of the Second World War, yet the danger of a new war is already menacing the nations of the world. The warmongers headed by the US, knowing that one day of peace means another day of further consolidation and further advance of the socialist camp, while they themselves are drawing nearer to their grave, are recklessly contemplating a nuclear war. They are seeking more allies, have founded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and are planning to form another military bloc in the Pacific. They have started an arms race and are compelling the people in their countries to shoulder all the burden of war preparations of which they alone are the beneficiaries.

The military aid programme, NATO, the aggression against Korea in the name of the United Nations, the encroachments upon the airspace of the Soviet Union and China, and many other facts show that the imperialists are engaged in open provocations. Most dangerous of all, US imperialism is trying to build up the fascist armies of Germany and Japan again with intent to use these two countries as detonators for a third world war.

In this preparation for war, they are striving to strengthen their rear area, applying a predatory policy toward the people in the metropolitan as well as in the colonial countries. On the one hand, they repress the democratic and peace

movement in their own countries, enforce extremely reactionary laws and fascistize their internal politics. On the other hand, they launch aggressive war (Viet Nam, Korea), and repress the national liberation movements of the oppressed nations (the Philippines, Malaya, Indonesia, Burma...). At the same time, they manipulate the right-wing "socialists" to split the ranks of the world working class, use spies and reactionary missionaries to carry out provocations and espionage in many countries, cause disturbances inside the people's democracies, use all manner of means to vilify, slander and provoke the Soviet Union and other people's democracies. We must guard against other possible aggressions like those being waged against Viet Nam and Korea.

We must guard against the US imperialists broadening their scheme of carrying out direct armed intervention in the name of the United Nations in an attempt to sabotage the freedom of other nations. The just war waged by the Vietnamese people, and that waged by the Korean people assisted by the Chinese volunteers, are of paramount significance. Because Viet Nam, Korea and China are on the frontline of the fight against the imperialist aggressors, the whole progressive world is applauding and encouraging the people of these three countries.

At present, to struggle for the safeguarding of peace against the imperialist war provocateurs is the foremost task of the working class and people throughout the world. This struggle is closely connected both with the struggle for the immediate interests of the masses, and with the struggle for national independence and people's democracy.

To fulfil these tasks, it is vitally necessary to unite the working class and rally all national and democratic forces in each country and the forces of peace and democracy throughout the world.

Under the guidance of the Soviet Union, hundreds of millions of people of various countries, including the people of Great Britain and the United States, are standing up and forming a steel rampart barring the way to the warlike imperialists, and primarily the US imperialists. A world front of peace militants has been formed. It comprises powerful international organizations of workers, youth, women, intellectuals, and many well-known peace-loving personalities, without distinction of nationality, religious belief, and political tendency.

The forms of struggle for peace are very diversified, ranging from petitions to wars of self-defence. International and national peace conferences are a means of mobilizing millions of people to take a moral stand against the war-seeking imperialists. With the creation of peace committees in urban and rural areas, the peace movement in many countries is growing deep roots among the broad masses of the people. A striking characteristic of the present world peace movement is its all-embracing, diversified and broad mass character never before seen in history. The will for peace of hundreds of millions of people has taken on an organized character and is being translated into deeds.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the French people are setting a fine example in the campaign against the war of aggression in Viet Nam, against the US imperialists' attempt to turn France into a dependency of the United

States and against the rearming of West Germany. The danger of another world war is really serious, but there are also great possibilities of preserving world peace. World peace can be saved, because the movement for the safeguarding of peace rests on a very sound basis : the peoples of all countries in the world cherish peace. They have not yet forgotten the nightmarish disasters of the Second World War. The world's peoples constitute great potential force. The camp of peace, democracy and socialism has become stronger than the war-seeking imperialist camp and is growing ever more powerful.

The two systems, capitalist and socialist, are still capable of co-existing on an equal footing and in peaceful competition. However, should the imperialists be blind and reckless enough to provoke a third world war, then the whole world imperialist system would certainly be overthrown by the combined peace forces of all countries. Peace will be consolidated definitively in a world where new democracy and socialism have triumphed.

The war of resistance of the Vietnamese people against the French imperialists and the US interventionists is part and parcel of the movement for peace, national independence and socialism on a world scale. The Vietnamese people are fighting to regain their freedom and to gain democracy for themselves and at the same time consciously struggling in the interests of world peace. Viet Nam has become an advance post of the anti-imperialist front for peace and democracy. At the same time, it is regarded by the imperialists as a strategic bastion in their front line against democracy. History has entrusted the working class and people of Viet Nam

with the task of firmly defending this outpost so that together with the people of other countries, we can defeat the schemes of the war-seeking imperialists. The Vietnamese working class and people are courageously shouldering this responsibility toward the world's peoples.

The Vietnamese revolution is proceeding in the context of a favourable world situation. The victory of the Chinese people and the recognition extended to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam by the Soviet Union and the other fraternal people's democracies have greatly encouraged the patriotic war in Viet Nam. Every success of the world peace movement is a success for the Vietnamese war of resistance, and conversely, every success of the Vietnamese war of resistance is another brick contributed to the building of a citadel of world peace. The future of the democratic world and that of Viet Nam are one and the same. The great and increasing forces for peace in the democratic and socialist camp will triumph over the imperialist camp. The Vietnamese people will win complete victory over the aggressors.

II. THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT IN THE WORLD

During and after the recent war, an outstanding new development has emerged in the form of the people's democratic movement, which has been spreading and has gained success in many countries.

In the world today two great historical phenomena have a decisive impact on the destiny of nations and their revolutionary progress.

First, during the Second World War, the Soviet Union emerged victorious to save mankind from the fascist scourge, helping the peoples of many countries in Europe to escape from the yoke of Hitlerism, establish a people's democratic regime and advance toward socialism. The victory of the Soviet Union also helped the peoples of several countries on the Far East to escape from the disaster of Japanese fascism and militarism, and to march forward on the road of people's democracy.

Prior to the Second World War, socialism was established in one-sixth of the world, bringing happiness to hundreds of millions of people. Through the ordeals of war, the socialist system has proved superior to capitalism in all respects. Today, socialism is being built in the people's democratic countries of Eastern Europe. The people's democratic and socialist bloc comprises over 900 million people, whose countries are linked together in a single stretch from East Germany to Viet Nam, forming a very solid geographical position and a tremendous force. Knowledge of the existence of this bloc is sufficient to encourage, activate, and assist the peoples of many oppressed countries to struggle for liberation from imperialist domination and to win independence and democracy for the furtherance of world peace.

Secondly, though the Second World War ended with the defeat of German, Italian and Japanese fascism, in the capitalist countries the economic basis of fascism (financial monopoly capitalism) and the source of aggressive war (imperialism) still exist. Thus fascism is not yet extinct. The surviving fascists are gathering forces again, and US imperialism is preparing to play the role of Hitlerism.

The US imperialists have trampled upon international charters and treaties signed with the Soviet Union during and after the Second World War. They have encroached upon the independence of many countries. Their lackeys in Marshallized countries are seeking to reduce and gradually suppress democratic freedoms, though these may be no more than bourgeois democratic liberties. The new chieftains of imperialism, the US imperialists, and their hangers-on are carrying out a militarist policy, preparing for a ruthless war in a bid to salvage the selfish interests of monopoly capitalism. This scheme is being strongly opposed by the peoples of many countries in close unity with one another.

The first phenomenon promotes peace, democracy and socialism. The second defends the interests of war-seeking imperialism and fascism. These are the two important historical factors of our times. The first factor represents the vitality of the new emerging society. The second factor represents the decaying forces of moribund capitalism. The two factors are locked in a life-and-death struggle. The revolutionary movement in all countries at present is developing under the direct and far-reaching influence of these two main factors.

During and after the war, under the influence of the struggle between socialism and fascism, many countries of Europe and the Far East carried out revolution, overthrowing the rule of the fascist aggressors to establish the people's democratic government, while socialism prevailed in the conflict with fascism.

These revolutions have a national and democratic character. They do away with the oppression of a nation by the foreign

imperialists, punish the internal traitors and bring full independence to the nation. They do not, however, set up or restore a bourgeois democratic regime, but establish a new type of democratic government, people's democracy. Such victorious revolutions have as their main motive force the working people led by the working class and its Party.

At present, because of the difference in their levels of development, people's democratic countries in the world can be divided into two categories :

a) people's democratic countries where all the necessary conditions for dictatorship of the proletariat exist, such as the people's democratic countries of Europe ; and

b) people's democratic countries which have only established people's democratic dictatorship, such as China and Viet Nam.

These two categories of countries are similar to each other with regard to the form of their social systems, since all of them are people's democratic republics. The difference lies in the content, because that content consists of proletarian dictatorship on the one hand, and people's democratic dictatorship on the other. Proletarian dictatorship is one step more advanced than people's democratic dictatorship.

The people's democratic countries of Europe are roughly similar in substance to the Soviet Union because they are all under proletarian dictatorship, but they differ from the Soviet Union in form, because the Soviet Union is based on the system of soviets, while these countries follow the people's democratic system. The soviets are an advanced form of proletarian dictatorship, while people's democracy in Europe

is at a less advanced stage of development. Proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union differs from proletarian dictatorship in the people's democratic countries of Europe with regard to the level of development : the Soviet Union is advancing toward communism, while the people's democratic countries in Europe are only in the early stage of socialist construction.

At present, the people's democratic regime in China and in Viet Nam are similar to each other in both form and content, because in form, both are people's democratic dictatorships. However, people's democracy in China is more advanced in development than its Vietnamese counterpart : China has in the main completed its task of national liberation, is carrying out the slogan "land to the tillers", developing a new-democracy economy and culture, and at the same time urging the masses to "Resist the US Aggressors and Help Korea". For its part, Viet Nam is concentrating its forces on waging a war of resistance against the French colonialists, the US interventionists and the clique of Vietnamese traitors and stooges, in order to fulfil its task of national liberation and building the people's democratic regime.

People's democracy is a transitional step toward socialism. Whether the advance to socialism is rapid or slow depends on different conditions in each people's democratic country. Whether the level of economic development is high or low, and the leading role of the working class and of the communist party is powerful or weak are basic conditions having a direct bearing upon the rate of advance to socialism in each of these countries. Besides these internal factors the assistance

of the Soviet Union stimulates the advance of a people's democratic country. On the other hand aggression by foreign imperialism can slow down that advance.

The people's democratic movement is taking on a more and more universal character. It is found not only to suit the countries of Eastern Europe or the industrial countries in Europe, but also colonial and semi-colonial countries. The People's Republic of China has been founded and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is maturing in the war of resistance. These are concrete proofs.

In the present historical conditions, the struggle for independence of colonial and semi-colonial peoples *cannot but turn into a struggle for people's democracy.*

The Vietnamese revolution has been profoundly influenced by the world's situation during and after the Second World War. In defeating Japanese fascism, the Soviet Union helped the August Revolution (1945) of Viet Nam to gain victory. *The Vietnamese people always bear in mind that fact and are forever grateful to the Soviet Union.*

The August Revolution, aimed at the overthrow of fascism and its lackeys, established a people's administration led by the working class. It was a revolution with a national and democratic character, the first revolution to win victory in a colonial country in South-east Asia. It is partly for that reason that the world imperialists are anxious and seek by all means to intervene, vowing to bring that revolution to failure.

The new Vietnamese people's administration had hardly been consolidated before the foreign imperialists intervened :

the French colonialists staged a comeback to carry out aggression and the internal reactionaries picked themselves up again. The war of resistance against the foreign aggressors and internal traitors broke out. The Vietnamese people carried out their patriotic war and their national construction effort simultaneously, under the leadership of our Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh.

The patriotic war of the Vietnamese people is a revolutionary people's war. It is aimed at gaining full independence and complete unity for the nation, and also at consolidating and developing the people's democratic government and opening the way for Viet Nam to advance to socialism.

III. THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES

Another feature of the period following the Second World War is the broad and active national liberation movement in colonial and semi-colonial countries, which is shaking the imperialist system to its foundations. Colonial and semi-colonial countries, from having been a source of reserve forces for imperialism, are now becoming reserve forces for socialism.

Following the First World War, the peoples of colonial and semi-colonial countries began to struggle for independence, but only sporadically. At that time, although the Russian October Revolution had succeeded and the capitalist system had begun to decline, the forces of capitalism were still strong and the workers' movement in imperialist countries and the national liberation movement of oppressed

peoples were not yet broadly organized, not yet closely linked together and not yet led by powerful communist parties. Following the Second World War, the situation of colonial and semi-colonial countries changed markedly.

The Second World War stimulated oppressed peoples to struggle against the fascist aggressors. At the end of the war, three fascist imperialist powers — Germany, Italy and Japan — collapsed, providing the opportunity for oppressed nations to rise up and regain their independence and freedom. The victory of the Soviet Army further weakened world imperialism and liberated many countries, opening up to them the road to people's democracy. Former colonial or semi-colonial countries such as China, Viet Nam, and Korea, have become independent republics or are winning full independence. The national liberation movement is spreading widely in African countries. It has a universal, powerful, and resilient character, and there is no way it can be suppressed by imperialism. Put down in one place, it flares up in another. Sometimes it sustains temporary setbacks but then quickly recovers. Generally speaking, the level of awareness, organization and struggle among colonial and semi-colonial peoples is much higher than ever before. The peoples of Malaya, Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos, etc. have taken up arms to fight the foreign imperialists as well as the international feudalists and comprador capitalists.

Armed struggle has become the main form of struggle for peoples thirsting for independence and freedom.

The working class and the communist and workers' parties in most colonial and semi-colonial countries have matured

and are firmly in the leadership of the revolution. The British, French, Dutch and other imperialists, weakened by the war, have lost all authority over the people of their former colonies. The US imperialists have exposed their cynical nature. The divide-and-rule policy of imperialism has failed utterly.

"The colonial peoples can no longer bear to live as they did before. Neither can the ruling class in the metropolitan countries govern and exploit their colonies as they did before" [1]. The hour of liberation of the colonial peoples has sounded. The colonial system of imperialism is being vigorously attacked.

The power and prosperity of the Soviet Union and other people's democratic countries is a great source of encouragement and support to oppressed nations now fighting for liberation. And now by defeating the US imperialists and their puppets and liberating a vast area, a quarter of mankind, from bondage the Chinese people have just dealt world imperialism a very heavy blow. The historic victory of the Chinese people is of a decisive character. It sounds a call to the oppressed nations and the world's people to rise up and oppose imperialism.

Following the example of the Chinese people, hundreds of millions of people in colonial and other dependent countries are struggling ever more vigorously. The struggle of these countries has become an essential part of the world movement for peace and democracy against aggressive imperialism.

1. Jdanov : *Report made at the Conference of nine European communist and workers' parties* (September 1947).

To cope with the liberation movement of their colonies, the British imperialists are trying to carry out a double-dealing policy. On the one hand, they declare recognition of the right to "independence" of colonial peoples within the British Commonwealth, a half-baked independence aimed at camouflaging machinations of the colonial power and continuing their policy of oppression and exploitation. On the other hand, they supply arms and money to the feudalists and comprador capitalists in these countries, employing them as hired assassins to suppress the people's revolutionary movement.

In contrast, French imperialism persists in its traditional policy, clinging to its colonies and carrying out downright overt repression, as in Madagascar. In Indochina, faced with the fierce wars of resistance of the Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao peoples, they also want to apply the double-dealing policy of British imperialism by granting fake independence to Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos meanwhile striving to organize puppet administrations, recruit puppet troops, carry out the vicious policy of feeding war by war and using Indochinese to fight Indochinese. But the resistance of the Indochinese peoples has become too powerful. The French imperialists are still obliged to send their own troops to suppress these peoples. They dare not give up military occupation and direct armed repression. So their policy of granting sham independence has become completely transparent.

Now, what about the US imperialists ? They intervene in the colonies of other imperialist powers, carrying out Point 4 of the Truman doctrine, seeking desperately to invest in the markets of other countries, buying over the puppets

in the colonies, supplying money and weapons to the British, French and Dutch imperialists and their stooges, and employing the latter in the repression of the national liberation movements. As a result, US imperialism gradually encroaches upon the colonial interests of Britain, France and Holland and turns the colonies of these powers into its own markets and military bases, with an eye to grabbing their wealth to enrich itself and prepare another war. *At present, US imperialism is the most dangerous enemy of oppressed nations.*

No matter what means and methods they may resort to, however, the imperialists cannot destroy the national liberation movement. The heyday of imperialism is past. The more they struggle, the more clearly the colonial and semi-colonial peoples realize that there is only one way to save themselves. And that is :

1. To create national unity, to set up a broad national united front including all forces opposed to imperialism and the indigenous traitors, without distinction of race, social class, religious belief, or political tendency. That front must be based on the worker-peasant alliance.

2. To be prepared to wage a protracted fight against the imperialist aggressors, to coordinate political and armed struggle, with armed struggle as the main form of struggle for national liberation.

3. The revolutionary movement in general and the national united front in particular, the people's liberation army and the people's administration, must all be gathered together under the leadership of the working class, as the most loyal to the cause of national liberation, and the Communist Party,

the vanguard of that class. The leadership of the revolution cannot be entrusted to the national bourgeoisie and its political party, because they could easily compromise with imperialism and bring the nation back into subjection.

4. To keep in close touch with the international workers' movement, particularly the workers' movement in the metropolitan country, to coordinate activities with the proletariat and the working people in the metropolitan country led by the Communist Party there, against the common enemy — imperialism. To keep close ties with the world movement for peace, national independence, and democracy and to stand firmly in the anti-imperialist and democratic camp led by the Soviet Union.

This is the only road to liberation of oppressed nations by which they can gain real independence. If the Chinese and Vietnamese peoples have won success, it is because they have followed and are following that road. The present war of resistance of the Vietnamese people against the French imperialists and the US interventionists and their puppets, is an uncompromising form of struggle to regain national independence, realize people's democracy, and defend world peace. While waging a war of self-defence, the Vietnamese people are helping the French people and the peoples of the French colonies in a practical way in their struggle against French imperialism. At the same time, the French people's movement to defend peace and oppose the war together with the anti-imperialist movement in the French colonies are a valuable support to the patriotic war of the Vietnamese people.

In conclusion, what do we see when examining the world situation after the Second World War ?

1. The world is being violently shaken by the contradictions between the working people and monopoly capitalism, between the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and oppressive imperialism, between the socialist and people's democratic countries on one side, and imperialist countries on the other side, and also among rival imperialisms themselves. The contradictions are getting sharper, indicating a violent crisis of capitalism in its death throes.

2. World peace is being jeopadized by war-seeking imperialism. However, the forces of peace and democracy have become stronger than those of war-seeking imperialism. A world peace front has been formed, rallying all forces for peace, against US imperialism and its lackeys. Should they unleash a third world war, the US-led imperialists would simply be committing suicide.

3. The people's democratic movement is being consolidated and developed. The people's democratic countries in Eastern Europe have begun to build socialism. The work of national construction in the People's Republic of China is showing visible progress. These facts are stimulating the peoples of many countries to boldly take the road of people's democracy.

4. The national liberation movement in colonial and semi-colonial countries is becoming daily more active and vigorous. Many oppressed nations are rising up to wage armed struggle, attacking the various bastions of the enemy, shaking the whole imperialist system and further strengthening the democratic and socialist camp.

5. The world has split into two camps : the camp of peace and democracy, and the camp of war-seeking imperialism. The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam sides with the camp of peace and democracy and against war-seeking imperialism. The Vietnamese revolution is part of the world movement for peace, democracy and socialism. Viet Nam's war of resistance is enjoying the sympathy and wholehearted support of the world's people and the Vietnamese people have a very great obligation toward them : while defending their own freedom and independence, the Vietnamese people are also safeguarding world peace and the development of people's democracy in South-east Asia. Conforming to the world revolutionary trend and developing in favourable historical conditions, the patriotic war of the Vietnamese people, though still meeting with numerous difficulties and hardship, *will certainly be crowned with glorious success.*

PART TWO

THE NATURE OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY AND THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

I. THE NATURE OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY

THE LAND OF VIET NAM

Viet Nam is situated in the Indochinese peninsula and has a history of over 4,000 years. From 1862 to 1945 it was a colony. In 1945, our people rose up to seize power and established the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, founding a new democratic country, the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. As the imperialists have launched another war of aggression, our people are now waging a war of resistance against them, in order to regain full independence and unity.

Our country has a population of 25 million, most of them living in the plains. Among these 25 million, the Viet are the most advanced element, and constitute the overwhelming majority. There are in our country over 4 million people who are members of ethnic minorities (Edeh, Giarai, Bahnar, Sedang, M'nong, Van Kieu, Ta Oi, Katu, Cham, Khmer, Tay, Nung, Thai, Muong, Dzao, Meo, Lolo, etc.) and 300,000 Chinese settlers. The Vietnamese nation has already demonstrated its spirit of self-reliance and that its industrious and creative people love freedom and culture.

Viet Nam has two fairly large and fertile plains in the South and the North, enriched by the silt of two big rivers

— the Mekong and the Red River — and thus very suitable for the cultivation of rice. Our forests and mountains cover almost 50 per cent of our total land area. We have plenty of forest products and mineral deposits favourable to the development of a prosperous economy.

Our country is a long stretch of land, narrow in Central Viet Nam, squeezed between the Truong Son mountain range and the Pacific Ocean. Its shape is often compared to a shoulder pole carrying a basket of rice at each end.

Viet Nam borders on the sea to the east and the south. To the north it has a frontier with China, one of the biggest countries in the world, with an ancient civilization, where now a people's democratic regime has been established. To the west, it borders on Laos and Cambodia, two countries whose peoples, side by side with the Vietnamese people, are waging a war of resistance against the French colonialists and US interventionists. Farther to the west is Thailand, a semi-colony of Britain and the US, and beyond Thailand lie India and Burma, two countries dependent on Britain. India is a big country with a very ancient civilization.

Our land is not far from other bases of imperialism, nor from colonial and dependent countries which are struggling for independence, such as Malaya, the Philippines, and Indonesia. On the other hand, our country is over 10,000 kilometres away from France. The victory of the Chinese people has linked our country to the bloc of socialist and people's democratic countries, which forms a single stretch from Central Europe to Southeast Asia.

Because of its geographical situation, our country has long been under the cultural influence of China and India, particularly China, and at present has become an outpost of the anti-imperialist camp. To the imperialists it is a strategic base in Southeast Asia which they desperately want to hold on to in their preparations for another war.

Viet Nam in Former Times

Before its invasion by French colonialism, Viet Nam was an entirely feudal country.

The social basis of the ancient feudal society of Viet Nam was a natural economy with an autarkic character, based on agriculture. Land belonged to the king. He had the right to give land to his vassals. The lands called *thai dien, thai ap, thac dao dien* and the titles of *ba ho, thien ho,* etc., bestowed by the king, are convincing proofs of this.

The bulk of our population are peasants. For thousands of years they were oppressed by the domestic feudal landlords, and over periods totalling more than 1,000 years they lived under the domination of the Chinese feudalists — a double feudal yoke, internal and external, oppressing and exploiting them. When their misery became intolerable, they rose up in revolt. When this occured, three consequences might follow :

One group of feudal aristocrats, using the peasants as fighting forces, would defeat other feudal lords. They would use the people's backs as stepping stones to gain supremacy, then turn round and suppress and exploit them.

Or a group of domestic feudalists, exploiting the people's patriotism, would drive out the foreign feudal rulers, and take over the exclusive right to oppress and exploit the peasants.

Or the peasants themselves would rise up to oppose both the domestic enemies and the foreign invaders. But when victory was won, their leaders, though born of the people, would absorb feudal ideology and join the old feudalists whose privileges had not yet been abolished in oppressing and exploiting the peasants as before.

Every time the peasants waged a broad and determined struggle, they would bring about either a change in the ruling dynasty in the country, or a glorious national liberation from foreign rule. Usually, when a determined resistance was waged against foreign aggression, broad national unity against aggression was achieved, and the peasantry would serve as the core of that unity. Even in the feudal society of Viet Nam, the struggle of the peasantry was the motive force for change and evolution in our national history, so the history of Vietnamese feudal society is mainly the history of peasant struggles. Every time they struggle with unity and determination, the result was some improvement of their life, but in the end they remained the governed, and their social conditions remained basically as before. The feudal regime hindered the development of Vietnamese society and condemned it to stagnation for a very long time.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, under the Later Le dynasty, the feudal cliques of northern and southern Viet Nam (the Trinh and the Nguyen), fought against each other, inflicting heavy losses upon the peasants. In the 18th century, many

peasant uprisings broke out[1] and finally the Tay Son movement (1771-1802) a revolutionary campaign of the peasants, spread to the whole country. This rising was a struggle against both the reactionary domestic feudalists (the Le, Trinh and Nguyen feudal lords) and the foreign invaders (the Ching). The aim of the Tay Son movement was to overthrow the foreign invaders and the reactionary domestic feudalists, liberate the Fatherland, and redistribute land to the peasants more justly. However, because of the lack of favourable objective and subjective conditions, particularly the lack of leadership by an advanced social class, the Tay Son movement failed to achieve lasting political and social changes.

Early in the 19th century, the ruling feudal Nguyen dynasty ruthlessly repressed the Tay Son movement, but, fearing opposition by the peasants, they dared not abolish all the reforms initiated by the Tay Son. For this reason, it can be said that together with the movement for opening virgin lands in the South, the exploitation of mines by the Chinese in the North and the development of trade by the Chinese, the Japanese and Europeans in a number of towns of our country in the 17th and 18th centuries[2], the reforms carried out by the Tay Son made a contribution towards developing the pre-capitalist elements in the Vietnamese economy. However until the invasion by the French colonialists, Vietnamese society was still a feudal society.

---

1. Such as the peasant uprisings led by Nguyen Tuyen, Nguyen Cu, Nguyen Huu Cau, Nguyen Danh Phuong, Hoang Cong Chat, etc.

2. Pho Hien (in Hung Yen province), Hoi An and Da Nang (in Quang Nam province).

Under French Domination

From 1862 to 1884, the French colonialists attacked and conquered Viet Nam, turning it into a colony. The French colonialists occupied Nam Bo (Cochinchina) first, then Bac Bo (Tonking) and Trung Bo (Annam).

The French began by bringing goods to Viet Nam to sell, then brought capital for investment. During the first period, they considered Viet Nam mainly as a market outlet for consumer goods of the metropolitan country, a market for money-lending and a base for stationing troops. Their main occupations were trade, the issue of currency, and usury. At first mine exploitation, the setting up of plantations and the opening of factories were secondary. Nevertheless, the Vietnamese economy acquired new productive forces and its self-sufficient character was shaken[1]. A stratum of industrial workers emerged in Vienamese society, but was not yet a full-fledged social class.

During the First World War, in view of the difficulties in transport and communications between Indochina and France, the French colonialists had to open more industrial establishments in Viet Nam. They carried out a policy of colonial exploitation aimed at grabbing the natural resources of our country, making up for the losses inflicted upon them by the European war. From then on, industry in Viet Nam took a further step forward, but as yet only within the sectors of mining and light industries. A number of plantations of industrial crops, particularly rubber and coffee, were also further developed.

1. At present, this character is still found in the economy of many areas inhabited by ethnic minorities.

With the development of French capitalism, two new classes emerged in Vietnamese society: the working class, and later the bourgeoisie. As the peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie were harshly exploited, a sizable number of their members were pauperized and rapidly went bankrupt. The new proletarians went to work in the factories, mines and plantations in increasing numbers. Meanwhile, a number of wealthy people, born into the landlord class, and rich peasants and rich tradespeople in the towns, secured exclusive rights as agents to sell French goods, pooled capital with the French capitalists in business undertakings, opened factories to store and buy products in the country or to serve contracts with France, and shared the profits with the French colonialists. These were the comprador capitalists. Others invested capital, set up factories and shops, but did not fare so well, because they could not withstand competition with French capitalism. These were the national bourgeoisie. French colonialism hindered the development of industry and trade among the Vietnamese. That is why a number of Vietnamese landlords, though investing in industrial and trade enterprises, did not give up exploiting tenants by means of land rent, and a number of city bourgeois purchased land, set up plantations and exploited the peasant in the feudalist manner.

As for the resident Chinese and Indian capitalists, they bullied the Vietnamese capitalists in both trade and money-lending. In general, however, they too were hindered by French colonialism, and a number of them served as compradors for the French capitalists.

However, the French capitalists, together with Vietnamese, Chinese and Indian capitalists, only make up a small sector of the Vietnamese economy, and most of them lived in the towns and cities. The old forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation still made up the major part, particularly in the countryside. Serfdom still existed in the areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, in many different forms, such as the *phia tao* regime in Son La and Lai Chau (northern Viet Nam), the *ca ra* regime in south central Viet Nam, and the *tho ty* regime in Ha Giang and Lao Cai (northern Viet Nam), and many other mountain areas. The tenant system, involving principal land rent, supplementary rent, and usury, was common in the midlands and the plains. The system of coolies and corvees of the colonialists and feudalists, the enslaving contracts and brutal punishments inflicted upon the coolies in the French plantations, the system of unpaid servants in families, the systems of "adopted children" and concubines, disguised forms of serfdom, starvation wages, and unlimited working hours, the system of "doing piece work for fixed (poor) wages", usury and heavy taxes, particularly poll-tax, etc. These were all feudalist and semi-feudalist forms of exploitation which the French imperialists tried to maintain and make use of in their own exploitation of the Vietnamese people. However, the colonial system, and the birth and growth of capitalism in Viet Nam narrowed down the Vietnamese feudal regime and transformed it to some degree.

What were *the characteristics of the French colonial system in Viet Nam?*

France was a capitalist country not yet very highly developed. Moreover, it was far from Viet Nam, a country rich in raw materials and manpower. Presumably for that reason, the French colonial policy in Viet Nam was a narrow-minded, conservative policy, with two aspects : on the one hand, it wanted to exploit and get rich, and this brought the Vietnamese working class and Vietnamese capitalism into being. On the other hand, it feared both the growth of the Vietnamese working class and competition by Vietnamese capitalism. That is why it hindered the development of industry in Viet Nam in general and Vietnamese-run industry in particular. It bullied the old feudal regime of Viet Nam, while maintaining the basis of that regime and making use of many forms of feudal exploitation in order to oppress and exploit more effectively.

The colonial policy applied by French imperialism in Viet Nam can be summed up as follows :

a) Economy and finance :

— To exploit raw materials for supply to industry in the metropolitan country, and develop light industry in Viet Nam that would produce articles not competitive with French industrial products. In general the metropolitan country held the monopoly of heavy industry. Hence the Vietnamese economy continued to be dependent on the French economy ; industry and trade were hampered ; the Vietnamese working class could not develop to any significant extent ; unemployment was chronic, and the Vietnamese national bourgeoisie, small traders and shop-owners were kept under.

— To grab land and set up plantations. This policy, in addition to other methods of oppressive and savage exploitation used by the French colonialists and Vietnamese feudal landowners, led to further concentration of land ownership. The peasantry was running short of land more and more. Here are some figures taken from French statistics : 58% of Vietnamese households were without land ; 39% owned less than 5 hectares [1] ; 2% owned from 5 to 50 hectares ; 0.34% owned upward of 50 hectares. French colonialists owned 20% of the land in the whole country. In Nam Bo, their rubber plantations accounted for 90% of the total plantation area. These figures do not include the land owned by the Catholic church and the Cao Dai church [2].

By maintaining the feudal forms of exploitation in order to get cheap labour, the French colonialists did not have to improve their technique of exploitation much in order to make huge profits. (The Vietnamese economy was kept in a backward state partly for that reason). They applied the policy of starving the Vietnamese people in order to facilitate the recruitment of manpower for factories in Viet Nam and of coolies for New Caledonia, New Hebrides, etc. The cheaper manpower, the more they could afford to illtreat the workers. Vietnamese workers were but half-slaves.

— To hold complete control over customs and excise and set up a customs barrier around Indochina in order to turn

1. 1 hectare equals 10,000 square metres, or 2 *mau* and 7 *sao* in Bac Bo (northern Viet Nam)

2. Statistics compiled by the services of the French High Commissioner in Indochina, published in the *Bulletin economique* of October 1945, the *Annuaire statistique* of 1943-1946, and the *Annuaire bleu* of 1948.

Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos into exclusive outlets for French capitalism, then bring goods from France or produce them on the spot with relatively low production costs (because they had plenty of raw materials and labour at their disposal), to sell them at high prices to the Vietnamese people, thereby getting colonial superprofits [1]. To impose an extremely drastic system of taxation : poll-tax, land-tax, salt-tax, license-tax, and hundreds of other unjust taxes.

— To hold the exclusive right to issue bank notes, to establish a huge banking system to carry out usury. French financial capitalism was like an octopus stretching out its tentacles throughout Indochina to suck the blood of the Vietnamese, Khmer, and Lao peoples. Viet Nam in fact became a colony of the Bank of Indochina, a powerful monopolistic organization of French finance capital, having a close relationship with British finance capital and the Vatican, and which later came to be dominated by US finance capital.

b) *Politics and culture :*

To carry out these policies of economic exploitation, the French colonialists set up a repressive machine with an extremely brutal and corrupt police and bureaucracy as well as a puppet administration through the king, the mandarins and the village despots, using them as instruments to oppress

1. Colonial super-profits are profits made by exploiting the colonies. They are higher than those gained in the metropolitan country. Where do the colonial superprofits come from ? On the one hand, the colonialists robbed the colonies of their raw materials, and exploited their cheap labour, lowering production costs. On the other hand, the colonialists, who held power, imposed tax barriers around the colonial markets, barring competition by other countries. Thus they were able to sell goods to the colonial peoples at prices much higher than on the markets of the metropolitan country and other markets, thereby getting bigger profits.

and exploit our countrymen, carry out a policy of white terror and ruthless repression of all national and democratic movements.

They sowed enmity between the peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos, between the majority people and the ethnic minorities, between the Vietnamese people and the Chinese residents, and enlisted the support of the feudal landlords and a number of Vietnamese bourgeois and intellectuals to oppose the people. They divided Viet Nam into three zones, with three different administrative systems (Cochinchina was a colony, Annam a protectorate, and Tonking was half colony and half protectorate). The obvious aim of French imperialism was to divide and rule.

Moreover, they poisoned our people with opium and alcohol, depraved our youth with dancing halls, brothels, and gambling dens, and by various measures restricted the study of the mother tongue by our people. They used reactionary missionaries to enslave the spirit of the masses. They published reactionary and decadent books and newspapers, and developed an obscurantist culture.

As a result of these policies of the French, under the colonial regime :

— Viet Nam was completely deprived of its independence, became dependent on France in all fields, economic, political and cultural, and remained divided ;

— The combined forms of oppression and exploitation by colonialism and feudalism weighed very heavily upon all strata of the Vietnamese people, particularly the workers and peasants ;

— The economic potential of Viet Nam could not develop, Viet Nam could not become strong and prosperous ;

— Capitalism appeared in Viet Nam, the Vietnamese feudal regime shrank in power and the feudal society lost its integrated character.

The history of Viet Nam over the past century is the history of the Vietnamese people's staunch opposition to French colonial expansion. The history of the Vietnamese revolution over one-fifth of this century has been the history of the organized struggle for independence and democracy of the Vietnamese people under the leadership of the working class and its political party, the Indochinese Communist Party.

During the recent World War, the Japanese fascists invaded Viet Nam. The French reactionaries in the colonies, like the capitalist magnates in France, turned fascist. The dual Japanese-French fascist yoke made the colonial regime even more openly ruthless and the Vietnamese people more wretched. On the one hand, the Japanese fascists fought against the Allies, plundered rice from Viet Nam to supply the Japanese troops and in many places forced the Vietnamese peasants to grow industrial crops instead of rice for war purposes. In addition the French colonialists, having surrendered to the Japanese, forced Vietnamese youths to serve as coolies and cannon fodder for both the Japanese and the French fascists. At the same time, they hoarded rice to supply the Japanese troops, pillaging the natural resources of Viet Nam to ship abroad. As a consequence of this, in late 1944 and early 1945, over two million of our countrymen

died of starvation within the space of six or seven months, hundreds of thousands of peasants went bankrupt, and more land fell into the hands of the landlords.

From 1940 to 1944, four uprisings broke out : Bac Son (1940), Nam Ky (1940), Do Luong (1941) and Dinh Ca (1944). In the process of this unremitting struggle, the Viet Nam Liberation Army and guerrilla bases were founded. Following the Japanese coup de force of March 9, 1945, our people rose up in many places. The people's power was established in the Liberated Zone, which comprised most of the provinces of Viet Bac [1]. Part of the lands formerly owned by the French and Vietnamese traitors were shared out to the peasants (Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, and other provinces). The new democratic regime of Viet Nam was born.

So, from the French conquest to the August Revolution of 1945, Vietnamese society was a colonial and semi-feudal society.

Since the August Revolution

In August 1945, after being defeated by the Soviet Army, the Japanese fascists surrendered unconditionally. Under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh, the Viet Minh (League for the Independence of Viet Nam — *Ed*), together with the entire Vietnamese people, carried out a general insurrection, threw off the Japanese fascist yoke and established the people's administration throughout the country. On September 2, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh read out the Proclamation of

1. Cao Bang, Lang Son, Bac Can, Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang provinces, and parts of Ha Giang and Yen Bai provinces.

Independence before our people and the world. The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam came into being.

What democratic reforms has the people's administration carried out since its establishment ?

By way of economic measures, we confiscated the property of the French colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors and handed them over to the people's administration, established State-run factories, provisionally allotted the lands of the French colonialists and Vietnamese traitors to the poor and landless peasants, reduced land rent and usury rates, established cooperative farms, democratized the system of taxation, set up State banks, issued currency, etc.

In the sphere of administration and defence we abolished the administrative system of the imperialists and the court, the regime of the King, mandarins and rural despots, established the Government of the Democratic Republic, drafted the Constitution, organized general elections, elected the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels, established the system of people's committees (now called the administration and resistance committees), promulgated democratic liberties, set up the Lien Viet Front in order to broaden the National United Front, strengthened the leading role of our Party, reorganized our armed forces and people's security forces, punished traitors, waged a war of self-defence, launched a patriotic emulation movement, mobilized the manpower, material and economic resources of our country to carry out the patriotic war, and fostered solidarity and friendship with the Soviet Union, China and other people's democracies.

In the social and cultural fields, we promulgated labour legislation, campaigned for a new life style, developed mass education, established a new democratic education and culture, developed a health service, and fostered public hygiene and preventive health measures among the people...

These important reforms gave the Vietnamese democratic regime the character of a people's democracy because imperialism had reimposed its colonial and feudal regime on part of our country, because we were not yet able to carry out the land reform, because our economic level was still low and heavy industry still nonexistent, State-run and collective sectors of the economy were not yet developed, etc. For these reasons our people's democratic regime was still at a low level of development and even within the new order, the vestiges of feudalism, though reduced, had not yet been abolished.

On September 23, 1945, the French colonialists started hostilities in south and south central Viet Nam in an attempt to restore their domination. The war of resistance broke out in the South. Although the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam had many times expressed its desire for peace, on December 19, 1946, following innumerable provocations by the French colonialists, the war spread to the whole country. Under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, the entire Vietnamese people rose up, ready to wage an all-out and protracted war of resistance, determined to defend their independence and national unity and to develop the gains of the August Revolution.

Up to now, in exchange for heavy losses of men and wealth, the French colonialists have been able to hold only

a limited number of towns and cities, major communication lines, portions of the plains, and control only a small part of our country. In these areas, they are restoring their harsh colonial system, more ruthlessly than ever, and are maintaining debased forms of feudal exploitation.

In the areas held by them, they gather a number of former lackeys (feudal landlords, ethnic minority chieftains, mandarins, former rural despots, comprador capitalists, reactionary clergymen and hooligans), and set up a puppet administration and army with a signboard of fake independence and unity. They indulge in raids, plunder, killing, rape, provocations, and exploitation. In short, they carry out the policy of using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese and feeding war by war, applying a brutal policy of "plundering, burning and destroying everything", in the fashion of the former German and Japanese fascists. The colonialist regime reestablished by the French in areas now under their occupation, is a fascist colonialist regime.

However, in many parts of the enemy-held areas, the people's administration is still supported by the masses; it still exists alongside the colonialist and puppet administration.

Vietnamese society at present is a complex and unevenly developed society. What is the origin of this complexity and uneven development? It is due to the fact that Viet Nam, for many generations a colony of French imperialism, successfully carried out a revolution, the August Revolution of 1945, and has since been invaded once more by French colonialism.

Vietnamese society at present has the following characteristics :

— A people's democratic character,

— A partly colonial character, and

— A semi-feudal character.

The first character is the progressive force of Vietnamese society. The second character is the backward trend in Vietnamese society. The third character is the force that is maintaining the old Vietnamese society. The second and third characters are reactionary, because they hinder the advance of Vietnamese society.

These three characters are struggling against each other, alternating with each other, and sometimes overlapping each other, changing in accordance with the concrete conditions of the war of resistance and the progress of the revolution. The people's democratic character clashes with the partly colonial and semi-feudal character, but the main contradiction is between the people's democratic character and the partly colonial and semi-feudal character. This acute contradiction is sharpening. This is the contradiction between our entire nation on one side and the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys on the other side. The contradiction between the people's democratic character and the semi-feudal character is that between our entire nation and the minority constituted by the landlord class.

Besides these there is the contradiction between the workers and the domestic bourgeoisie, etc. but at present this is secondary.

Today, the US imperialists are intervening in Viet Nam. They invest capital and put goods on the markets of our country, ship weapons and munitions to the French colonialists and their lackeys to help them kill our people. They make use of French troops to wage war and establish military bases for them, in preparation for a new world war. At the same time they buy over stooges and entice a number of big feudal landlords, comprador capitalists and reactionary religious dignitaries, with a view to gradually turning our country into an American colony. Seeing that the French colonialists are running out of steam, the US imperialists are scheming to increase their own intervention in our country.

The interventionist policy of US imperialism only puts more shackles on the Vietnamese people and further aggravates the colonial character that remains in Vietnamese society. Those who dream of an American life-style and crave American technology are nibbling at the American bait. Those who praise "American aid" are lackeys of US imperialism.

In brief, Viet Nam is an underdeveloped agricultural country with an underdeveloped industry, having practically no heavy industry, still bearing many feudal and semi-feudal forms of exploitation ; the colonial regime still exploits part of our country ; the people's democratic regime has been set up, but its level is still low and it has not yet prevailed everywhere, because our country is being invaded by imperialism.

Vietnamese society at present is a complex and unevenly developed society, *with a people's democratic, but also partly colonial and semi-feudal character.* It contains the following contradictions : between the entire Vietnamese people and the imperialist aggressors, between the people and the

landlord class, between labour and domestic capital, etc. *The contradiction between the Vietnamese people on one side and aggressive imperialism and its stooges on the other is the main contradiction.* It is developing in the ruthless form of war.

II. THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Basic Tasks of the Vietnamese Revolution

What do we see when we have analyzed the character of Vietnamese society as we have done in the last chapter ? We see a major problem arising from the objective conditions of Vietnamese society : *the necessity of annihilating all obstacles to the advance of Vietnamese society, and solving the contradictions between the Vietnamese people's democratic regime and the reactionary forces, to clear the way for the Vietnamese people's democratic regime to develop vigorously and advance to socialism.*

The present task of the Vietnamese revolution is to solve that problem.

The forces hindering the development of Vietnamese society are :

1. Aggressive imperialism, which is killing the Vietnamese people, plundering, destroying and hindering the Vietnamese economy, impeding its development, maintaining semi-feudal institutions to increase exploitation and oppression of the Vietnamese people, scheming to destroy the people's democratic regime of Viet Nam, spreading the power of the colonial regime and trying to drive Vietnamese society back to the former colonial period.

2. The feudal forces, which are colluding with the imperialists in oppressing and exploiting the Vietnamese people, supporting the aggressive war of imperialism, blocking the development of Vietnamese economy, and condemning Vietnamese society to stagnation.

For these reasons, it is clear that the main enemies of the Vietnamese revolution are aggressive imperialism (the French colonialists and the US interventionists) and their stooges, the Vietnamese traitors, representing the interests of the big feudal landlords and comprador capitalists.

What then is the basic task of the Vietnamese revolution ? It is to drive out the imperialist aggressors, overthrow their stooges, the Vietnamese traitors, make Viet Nam fully independent and unified, eliminate the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges, redistribute land to the tillers, and develop the people's democratic regime, sowing the seeds of socialism in Viet Nam.

At present, the imperialist aggressors and the reactionary feudalists are working hand in glove.

While throwing off the imperialist aggressors, we must at the same time overthrow the reactionary feudal forces, because the reactionary feudalists are the lackeys of imperialism. Conversely, in order to topple the reactionary feudal forces, we must drive out the imperialist aggressors, because the imperialists rely on those forces in their effort to grab our country. Moreover, only by overthrowing imperialism can we abolish the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges, vigorously develop the people's democratic regime, and starting to develop socialism, we will produce better conditions and

greater strength to drive out the imperialists and wipe out the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges for good.

These anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist tasks are closely linked to each other. At this moment, we must concentrate all our forces on waging the war of resistance, so as to fulfil our task of national liberation. This is the key task of the revolution at the present stage. The anti-feudal task must necessarily be carried out simultaneously with the anti-imperialist task, but according to a plan, and step by step [1], so as to develop the revolutionary forces of our people, while maintaining broad national unity with the aim of waging the war of resistance, driving out the imperialist aggressors, and achieving national liberation. The task of national liberation includes both an anti-imperialist and an anti-feudal character.

To put it briefly, the task of the Vietnamese revolution is to drive out the imperialist aggressors and the clique of their lackeys, do away with the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges, to achieve an independent, unified, democratic, free and prosperous Viet Nam, to build and develop the people's democratic regime, and advance to socialism along the road of people's democracy.

Motive Forces of the Vietnamese Revolution

What is the attitude of the various social classes in our country toward these revolutionary tasks ?

1. To overthrow the kings, mandarins and rural despots, confiscate all the lands of the Vietnamese collaborators and provisionally share them out among the landless and landpoor peasants ; reduce land rents and usury rates. These were the first steps to be taken in implementing the struggle against feudalism.

Vietnamese society now comprises the following classes : the landlord class, the bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry and the working class.

The Vietnamese landlord class exact land rent according to the feudal method. However, a very small section of them exploit agricultural workers according to the capitalist method ; or they lease land to tenants in exchange for land rent, while also owning workshops and stores ; but land rent remains their main income. In Viet Nam, big landlords are a minority in the landlord class, and most of them have moved to enemy-occupied areas. This category is to be found mostly in Nam Bo (formerly Cochinchina. *Ed*).

From the time when the anti-imperialist movements of the Can Vuong group ended in failure until the Second World War, Vietnamese landlords showed a reactionary attitude and collaborated with imperialism in opposing the revolution. During this period, they sometimes protested against the French capitalist sharks, but only in defence of their private interests. In fact, their protests were very weak and had only a temporary character [1].

During the recent world war, a number of Vietnamese landlords, most of them big landlords, turned out to be pro-Japanese, a number of small landlords were bullied by both the Japanese and French rulers, the defeated French

1. In 1935, landlords in Nam Bo (Cochinchina) protested against the Bank of Indochina, because during the world economic crisis, their land were confiscated after they failed to pay the debts they owed to the Bank. After that, together with the national bourgeoisie, they protested against French imperialism for tying the Indochinese piastre to the French franc, and scheming to monopolize trade in Saigon and rice export from South Viet Nam.

imperialists having lost prestige in their eyes. For this reason they took a neutral attitude, which was sympathetic to the Viet Minh.

At present, in the war of resistance, the attitude of the Vietnamese landlord class is roughly as follows : the landlord class in general, and the big landlords in particular, tag along after imperialism and work hand in glove with it in opposing the people.

They seek to distort our democratic reforms and stubbornly oppose them.

A few small landlords and patriotic personalities issued from the landlord class side with the people to take part in the war of resistance and support the people's administration.

However, we should not forget that the landlord class represents the feudal forces. It harshly exploits the peasantry, that is, the majority of the people. It hinders the economic, political and cultural development of Viet Nam. From the class point of view, the landlord class is an enemy of the revolution. The more the revolution advances and the more democratic reforms are promoted, the stronger the antagonistic reaction of the landlord class will be.

Nonetheless, while the spearhead of the revolution is being directed at the imperialist aggressors, as is the case at present, except for the majority of reactionary landlords, a number of individual landlords (mostly small landlords) can and do adopt a neutral attitude or temporarily take part in the struggle for national liberation. This fact, however, in no way changes the nature and basic tasks of the Vietnamese revolution.

The Vietnamese bourgeoisie can be divided into two different sections :

— The comprador bourgeoisie or big local capitalists, who collect and buy home products to fulfil contracts with the imperialist aggressors, hold shares with the latter in joint undertakings, or open big shops to sell goods bought from them, and share land which they lease to tenants. Because their interests are closely linked with those of the imperialists and the feudalists, and indeed feed on imperialism, this section of people has a clearly reactionary nature. These are enemies of the revolution.

— The national bourgeoisie is suffering from competition, hindrance and restriction by imperialism and is impeded in their undertakings by the vestiges of feudalism. That is why they have a nationalist and democratic tendency. However, because they themselves have not yet been able to sever economic ties with the landlords and the imperialists, their basic interests are still served by exploitation of the workers, and consequently their attitude is usually non-committal, double-dealing : while going along with the workers and opposing imperialism, they still fear them. It suits them to make use of the presence of imperialism to secure bigger profits, but they hate imperialism for bullying them. The defeat of the French and Japanese imperialists in the recent Second World War has further awakened them to the right ideas.

Prior to the August Revolution of 1945, a number of national bourgeois either supported or took part in the national salvation movement of the Viet Minh. After the

August Revolution, they tended to support the democratic administration. In the present patriotic war, in the free zones, the national bourgeois take part in or support the resistance, but economically they do not yet actively invest their capital, are still hesitant and have a wait-and-see attitude. In the enemy-occupied areas, the national bourgeois in general sympathize with the resistance.

Because Vietnamese indigenous capitalism is not yet fully developed, the Vietnamese national bourgeoisie is very small in number and holds an inferior economic position. It lacks revolutionary spirit, and therefore cannot lead the revolution. However, in the conditions of national and democratic (anti-imperialist and anti-feudal) revolution, it constitutes one of the revolutionary forces and is an ally of the revolution.

In Vietnamese society at present, capital is necessary for the building of the national economy. The national bourgeoisie can and should contribute to the development of national industry and trade.

Besides the large number of working peasants, the petty-bourgeoisie consists of small traders, small workshop owners, handicraft workers, petty-bourgeois intellectuals (most government employees [1], students, people engaged in the professions, etc.). These sections of the people were oppressed and exploited by the imperialists, feudalists and comprador bourgeoisie in the country. The August Revolution brought this class a number of advantages. But at present, in the enemy-occupied areas, they are still bullied and exploited by the

1. I say "most government employees" because at present a number of wage-earning employees who are serving the people's democratic power led by the working class, are being assimilated with the workers.

imperialists and their stooges. The life of most petty-bourgeois in these areas is precarious. For that reason, the petty-bourgeois in general take part actively in the revolution and constitute one of the effective motive forces of the revolution. They are a reliable ally of the working class and many of them can progress along with the working class to socialism.

This is the general picture. For a more detailed analysis, we may observe that the bulk of the petty-bourgeoisie are poor urban and rural people (mostly engaged in handicrafts, small trade, or peddling), petty-bourgeois intellectuals and semi-intellectuals (students, small functionaries, etc.) who take part very actively in the revolution. In the history of the Vietnamese revolution, these people have sided and are siding with the workers and peasants in struggle against the imperialists and feudalists. The middle petty-bourgeois (small traders, small proprietors, middle-level functionaries, etc.) take an active part in the revolution, but they are not very determined. The small number of wealthy petty-bourgeois (well-off small traders and factory owners, particularly those whose interests are associated with those of the comprador bourgeois, those engaged in the professions with a certain social standing in enemy-occupied areas, etc.) either adopt a wait-and-see attitude, or take part in and support the resistance, but their stand tends to waver.

In view of their intermediary position, the petty-bourgeois do not have a clear-cut and firm attitude in revolutionary struggle. That is why the petty-bourgeoisie cannot lead the revolution. Only under the leadership of the working class

can the nation be liberated. The view that the petty-bourgeois intellectuals of Viet Nam can lead or can take part in leading the revolution is wrong.

The peasantry as a whole constitutes the petty-bourgeoisie in the countryside. It makes up the overwhelming majority of the people (90% of the population), plays the most important role in the national economy and is making the greatest contribution of manpower and resources to the war of resistance. Harshly oppressed and exploited for a long time by imperialism and feudalism the Vietnamese peasants take part very actively in the revolution. Under French domination they rose up many times to oppose oppression and exploitation and to demand their own land. At present, in the guerrilla zones and enemy-occupied areas, the guerrilla forces consist mainly of peasants. The peasantry is a great motive force of the Vietnamese revolution. *Without the participation of the peasantry, the Vietnamese revolution certainly cannot succeed.*

During the Second World War, the brutal policy of the Japanese and French fascists further impoverished the already poor peasants of Viet Nam. Since the August Revolution, the policy of our Government (reduction of land rent and interest rates, provisional allocation of land, etc.) has somewhat improved the life of the labouring peasants. That is why the peasants are greatly attached to the people's administration. The policy of shooting, killing, burning, destroying, plundering, drafting soldiers and coolies and forcibly driving the villagers from their homes applied by the imperialists and their puppets is driving the peasants in both enemy-held

areas and guerrilla zones to desperation. So the peasants inevitably take a very active part in the war of resistance.

A small section of the peasantry is engaged in production while also exploiting manpower : they are the rich peasants. A much larger section work without exploiting or are themselves exploited : they are the toiling peasants — the middle peasants, and the landless and poor peasants.

The rich peasants were originally oppressed and exploited by the imperialists and to some extent by the feudalists. For this reason, in general they take part in the national and democratic revolution. The rich peasants play an important part in production, but exploit poor and landless peasants. A number of rich peasants collect land rent. Their interests are closely associated with those of landlords and are in contradiction with the tenants. Before the revolution and in the enemy-occupied areas at present, the imperialists recruit village notables and puppet village chiefs among the landlord class and among these rich peasants. However, one should make a distinction between the rich peasants and the landlords and admit that in our country the rich peasants still play a certain role in our agricultural economy.

The middle peasants were formerly oppressed and exploited by the imperialists, feudalists and domestic bourgeoisie. They take an active part in the revolution and are a reliable ally of the working class, they are also an important motive force of the revolution. Since our Government put into effect its land policy, the number of middle peasants has increased. At present, the middle peasants hold an important position in the development of agriculture. In the future, they can advance to socialism together with the working class.

The poor peasants are semi-proletarians and the landless peasants are proletarians in the countryside. These two strata together make up the bulk of the peasantry but they have little land or no land at all. In the countryside, they are the people most heavily oppressed and exploited by the imperialists, feudalists and domestic bourgeoisie. That is why they are resolved to carry out revolution and are the most eager for land reform. They are a very big motive force of the revolution. The poor and landless peasants are the steadiest and most reliable ally of the working class. They take a very active part in the war of resistance and will resolutely support the working class in achieving socialism.

In the history of the Vietnamese revolution, the peasantry has played an extremely important role. But the peasants cannot lead the national and democratic revolution, because they carry out individual, handicraft production, and do not represent an advanced mode of production, and therefore are not thoroughly revolutionary. They cannot comprehend the whole picture, and are not possessed of the organizational ability of the working class. From the Yen Bai uprising onward, the peasants have become the most loyal and powerful ally of the working class, because they realize that only by going along with the working class and accepting its leadership can they be completely liberated.

The Vietnamese working class, though still young, came into being before the Vietnamese bourgeoisie. Its number is still small (4% of the population). Since the outbreak of the nationwide war of resistance, a number of them have evacuated to the countryside, and some have changed trades, but afterwards, part of them have gathered in enemy-occupied

areas, and the number of workers in the free zones has also increased. Because of their many ties with land, the Vietnamese working class is not yet purely proletarian, but this does not alter the fact that the Vietnamese working class alone is capable of leading the Vietnamese revolution to complete victory. Since the August Revolution of 1945, and particularly since the outbreak of the nationwide war of resistance (on December 19, 1946 – *Ed*) Vietnamese workers have rapidly become politically conscious, and have demonstrated the full range of their capabilities. Among the Vietnamese working class, industrial workers are the most politically awakened and have the greatest ability for organization. Handicraft and agricultural workers have a lower standard.

Why is the working class the only one capable of being the vanguard class of the Vietnamese revolution ? Here are the reasons :

First, owning no means of production and having to sell their labour in exchange for a livelihood, workers have the most thoroughly revolutionary attitude and are the most loyal to the cause of liberating the nation, developing people's democracy, and advancing to socialism.

Secondly, harshly oppressed and exploited by the imperialists, feudalists and domestic capitalists, they have the greatest determination to carry out revolution.

Thirdly, as they represent the most advanced productive force, are the most homogeneous class, and live in the most concentrated communities, their political standard, organizational ability, sense of discipline, and creativeness are more

highly developed than those of other classes, and they can reach identity of will and action more readily than other classes.

Fourthly, the Vietnamese working class is led by the most powerful political party in the country, rich in experience and armed with the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism ; it follows a correct policy line manifested in the clearsighted leadership of our Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh, the leader of our class and our nation.

Fifthly, as most of the Vietnamese workers come from peasant families who have gone bankrupt, Vietnamese workers have very close relationships with the peasants. Therefore it is easy for them to ally themselves with the peasants, who wholeheartedly support them.

On account of these special qualities, for more than 20 years now, the Vietnamese working class has led the revolution and has proved itself equal to its historical mission. *Only under the leadership of the working class and the party of the working class can the Vietnamese revolution win success.* The history of the Vietnamese revolution over the past 25 years has incontestably proved that truth.

From the above facts we can see clearly what classes are taking part in the Vietnamese revolution. To summarize, they are the working class, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie. Besides, there are a number of individuals from the landlord class (mostly small landlords) who side with the people. They are referred to as "democratic figures" and "patriotic personalities". These four classes make up the Vietnamese people with the working class and the peasantry as the foundation.

The forces of the Vietnamese revolution are the people, mainly the working class and the peasantry.

The motive forces of the Vietnamese revolution are the working class, the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie.

The class leading the Vietnamese revolution is the working class.

The peasantry is the most loyal and most powerful ally of the working class. The petty-bourgeoisie is a reliable ally. The national bourgeoisie is a conditional ally.

With regard to the reactionary feudal landlords and the comprador capitalists headed by the puppet administration lackey of imperialism, together with the other Vietnamese traitors, no matter what their social origins may be, they are the enemies of the people and of the revolution. They constitute only a very small minority in Vietnamese society.

The working class is determined to lead our entire people to drive out the imperialist aggressors and overthrow all their lackeys, and puppets, in order to win back independence, freedom and happiness to the nation.

Of course, the above revolutionary line-up is not final. Later, as the revolution advances to socialism, the ranks of the enemies and allies of the revolution will certainly change to some extent. Another arrangement will then emerge.

What Type of Revolution is the Vietnamese Revolution at Present ?

Here we can answer the question : what is the nature of the Vietnamese revolution, and what is the name of that revolution ?

Carrying out the above-mentioned tasks, with the working people as the motive force and led by the working class, the Vietnamese revolution is a people's national democratic revolution.

It is called a national revolution, because it aims at driving out the imperialist aggressors, and regaining complete independence and unity for the country.

It is a democratic revolution, because it abolishes the feudal and semi-feudal vestiges, carries out land reform, develops industry and trade, and ensures democratic liberties for the people.

It is called a people's revolution, because it is carried out by the people under the leadership of the working class, on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance.

The nature of this revolution is national and democratic. The people are the forces of the revolution.

Is the Vietnamese people's democratic revolution an old-type bourgeois democratic revolution? No, it is not: Although it fulfils the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks as does a bourgeois democratic revolution, it is not led by the bourgeoisie, but by the working class. It opposes imperialism to the end and does not establish the rule of the bourgeoisie but the rule of the entire people under the leadership of the working class.

Is this revolution a socialist revolution? No, it is not that either, because it does not yet establish the dictatorship of the proletariat nor entirely abolish the system of capitalist exploitation. Politically, it establishes the people's democratic

dictatorship, and strengthens the leading role of the working class in the people's democratic State, on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. Economically, it builds the State sector and the cooperative sector of the economy, two important aspects of the people's democratic economy. Moreover, this revolution is an integral part of the movement for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism in the world. It attacks the rear base of world imperialism, contributes to bringing early victory to the forces of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism. That is why our revolution will certainly develop into a socialist revolution.

Under the leadership of the working class, and with the working people as the motive force, our revolution not only aims at fulfilling the anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist tasks but also at vigorously developing the people's democratic regime, at the same time, creating conditions for the advance to socialism. *This revolution fulfils its tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution and then gradually develops into a socialist revolution, without having to go through a revolutionary explosion. It will establish the people's democratic dictatorship in the form of a people's democratic republic, but not proletarian dictatorship in the form of worker-peasant - soldier Soviets. So it is a new-type bourgeois democratic revolution* in an agricultural and colonial country in the present international situation: socialism has completely succeeded in the Soviet Union and is being built in the people's democracies of Europe; a people's democratic regime has been set up in a very big country, China; imperialism is at the end of its tether, has turned fascist and is using all kinds of dictatorial means and measures and warlike manœuvres in an attempt

to survive, while the movement for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism in the world is involving ever broader masses of the people in oppressed countries and nations in opposition to warlike and aggressive imperialism.

Characteristics of the Vietnamese Revolution

What are the characteristics of the Vietnamese people's national democratic revolution ?

Viet Nam is a colonial and agricultural country with numerous vestiges of feudalism, fighting against the imperialist aggressors, who have a developed industry and a modern army. In the initial stage, "the spearhead of the revolution is mainly directed at the foreign imperialists" [1]. The national and democratic forces in the country gather together to form a national united front that is very broad and can include all patriotic Vietnamese opposed to imperialism and the Vietnamese traitors, without distinction of race, class, religious belief, and political affiliation. On the other hand, in order to succeed, *it must be built on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and must be put under the close leadership of the working class.*

The imperialist aggressors oppress and exploit our people in an extremely ruthless manner. Under their regime our people cannot enjoy a single democratic liberty. That is why our revolutionary movement, at a certain point of development and under certain conditions, must include the form of armed struggle. The revolutionary struggle of our

1. Stalin : *On China* (1927).

people against the imperialist aggressors takes many forms : political, economic and military ; but at present the main form of struggle is armed struggle.

The Vietnamese people are resisting an imperialist power which is militarily stronger than we are, that is why our armed struggle is bound to be long and hard. In the process of struggle, the whole potential of our people must be broadly mobilized and our revolutionary forces must be developed from a state of inferiority to the enemy to a state of superiority to them, in order finally to defeat them. A short fight and quick solution is not possible. Local armed struggle must be turned into a nationwide liberation war (a nationwide war of resistance). The overall strategy of this war is protracted fighting ; its tactics must be rapid blows, with quickly-won victories. Our liberation war can be said to consist of a long string of uprisings, rather than one brisk, rapid uprising, aimed at quickly overthrowing the imperialists and their lackeys.

The classic form of fighting in our liberation war is guerrilla warfare. Most of our guerrilla fighters are workers and peasants led by the revolutionary party of the working class. Guerrilla warfare gradually develops into conventional warfare. Guerrilla fighters grow into regular troops of the people's army. However, guerrilla warfare combined with conventional warfare and guerrilla fighters exist alongside the regular army for a fairly long period of time.

Economy, politics, military activities and culture in Viet Nam do not develop evenly, and consequently the Vietnamese revolution also develops unevenly. At present, Viet Nam is divided into different areas : the free zones,

the guerrilla areas, and the enemy-occupied regions. For a long time, the counter-revolutionary forces have controlled almost all the towns and cities which are included in the areas under enemy occupation. The revolutionary forces are strong in the countryside and control the free zones. Our revolutionary countryside encircles the cities temporarily occupied by the counter-revolutionary forces who use them as bases to attack the revolutionary forces[1]. Our economy is based on agriculture. Life in the countryside is not essentially dependent on the cities. That is why the revolution can set up resistance bases in the countryside. In our long and hard struggle against a brutal and stronger enemy, it is very necessary to build and strengthen our resistance bases.

Revolutionary work in the resistance bases and outside, in the free zones, guerrilla areas and enemy-occupied regions must be closely combined. Legal, semi-legal and clandestine forms of activities must be cleverly integrated in the enemy-occupied areas. To win over the people, to foster and increase our forces, to wait for good opportunities to overthrow the enemy; never to give up struggling, but always to struggle with wisdom and patience, in carefully planned steps; all that is a matter of life and death for the work behind the enemy lines, particularly in the enemy-occupied areas.

Viet Nam is a colony which has succeeded in carrying out revolution — the August Revolution — and has established

1. During the war of resistance, due to the balance of forces between us and the enemy, the latter temporarily held the urban areas, while the resistance forces controlled the rural areas, building them into firm bases for the encirclement of the enemy in the towns and cities. The people in enemy-held towns and cities struggled actively, combining illegal, semi-legal and legal forms, closely coordinating actions with the resistance movement in the countryside and developing the revolutionary forces, thus creating favourable conditions for rising up and attacking the enemy.

a people's administration. We have built up a powerful national united front and a people's liberation army. All these organizations are led by the working class and its Party. The liberation war of Viet Nam is a just war, closely coordinated with the wars of resistance of the Khmer and Lao peoples, and wholeheartedly supported by the peace loving peoples of the world, including the peoples of France and French colonies. With regard to France, after having been defeated by the German and Japanese fascists and having now fallen into a position of dependence on the US, it is declining both materially and morally. The French war of aggression against Viet Nam is an unjust war, and is condemned and opposed by the French people and cursed by public opinion. The US imperialists are determined to intervene in Viet Nam, but they are getting more and more bogged down in an economic crisis, isolated politically, and confronted with vehement protests by the peace-loving peoples of the world. That is why Viet Nam, though weak, is in a strong position, while the enemy of Viet Nam, though apparently strong, is in fact weak. The Liberation war of Viet Nam may be long but will not go on forever. The Vietnamese people have a hard fight before them but they will win complete victory. The future belongs to us.

The world movement for peace and democracy against war-seeking imperialism is developing favourably for the Vietnamese revolution. The assistance rendered by the world's peoples to Viet Nam is very important and necessary, but the Vietnamese people cannot rely mainly on outside aid and assistance. Self-reliance is the main thing, foreign assistance is secondary. The Vietnamese revolution must rely mainly

on the forces of the masses of the Vietnamese people in order to persist in their fight and win final victory.

In view of the characteristics of the Vietnamese revolution which have been described, the Vietnamese Communists have before them the following concrete tasks : to strengthen and broaden the national united front on the firm basis of the worker-peasant alliance, to build, develop and consolidate the people's administration and the people's army, to mobilize the masses, particularly the worker and peasant masses, to fight and produce at the same time, to build and consolidate the revolutionary bases, and at the same time to strengthen the leadership of the working class in the national united front, the administration and army, in the armed resistance and national construction as a whole ; to strengthen the alliance between the Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao peoples, to enhance friendship between Viet Nam and the Soviet Union, China and the other people's democratic countries, to join forces with the peoples of France and the French colonies, to unite closely with the world movement for peace and democracy ; to persist in armed struggle, to firmly grasp the principle that our war of national liberation must be a *protracted war waged in a spirit of self-reliance.*

By correctly fulfilling these tasks, in whatever circumstances, the Vietnamese revolution is certain to triumph.

The Road Travelled by the Vietnamese Revolution

The Vietnamese people's democratic revolution at present is an outcome of the process of development of the Vietnamese revolution over almost a hundred years.

Since Viet Nam became a French colony, the Vietnamese people have always struggled for national liberation. The revolutionary movement of the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists has gone through three periods :

At first, because their interests and position were directly encroached upon by the French imperialists, a section of the Vietnamese feudalists (the category of come-down feudalists having some relationship with the people) led the movement of resistance against the French imperialists while the bulk of the feudal class, first of all the big feudalists, surrendered to imperialism. The Can Vuong movement of the scholars was defeated, but it was followed by the Dong Du (Go East) movement, the Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc, the attempts at revolt by (Emperor) Duy Tan, the Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi with the mottoes of "constitutional monarchy" and "democratic rights". That period was marked by an outburst of peasant guerrilla warfare in Yen The, Bac Giang province (now part of Ha Bac province — *Ed.*) the anti-tax movement of peasants in Trung Ky (central Viet Nam) and the uprising at Thai Nguyen. These movements were of a more or less bourgeois democratic character but were not entirely free from the influence of feudal ideology.

These movements all failed, however, because they were not able to set up a national united front against the French colonialists ; they failed to organize the broad masses of the people, had no political programme and lacked the leadership of a politically advanced revolutionary class. They limited their activities to exhorting people to fight the French and paid little attention to mobilizing the broad masses to demand rights and interests related to practical daily life. They did

not attach importance to building their political and armed forces, or to developing guerrilla warfare, or to building, strengthening and developing revolutionary bases, etc.

After the First World War, the French imperialists promoting their policy of colonial exploitation brought both the Vietnamese working class and bourgeoisie into being.

Hindered and competed with by French capitalism, and restricted by the feudalists, Vietnamese bourgeois and petty bourgeois engaged in anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist activities. At the same time, the Vietnamese working class began struggling for its rights, and taking part in national and democratic movements. The Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (Viet Nam Nationalist Party), the Thanh Nien Cach Mang Dong Chi Hoi (League of Young Vietnamese Revolutionaries), the Tan Viet (New Viet Nam), and the Thanh Nien Cao Vong Dang (The Youth with High Ambitions) were established.

Many movements to boycott foreign goods, demand amnesty for Phan Boi Chau (a great scholar-patriot — *Ed.*), hold memorial services for Phan Chu Trinh (another great scholar-patriot — *Ed.*), oppose heavy taxes and stage factory and school strikes and demonstrations against the imperialists and the feudalists, had a clear national and democratic character. The Yen Bai uprising (February 1930), bloodily suppressed, concluded the period of revolution led by the national and bourgeois democratic ideology.

The revolutionary movements during this period failed because they were unable to set up a national united front against imperialism and feudalism, with the worker-peasant alliance as its foundation, and led by the working class and its party. The revolutionary parties were not deeply rooted in the popular masses, discipline of organization was not firm, the political line was not realistic and well-defined, and armed struggle had a limited, spontaneous character.

But the Vietnamese revolution kept progressing.

From 1919 onward, the Vietnamese working class became daily more concentrated. It suffered from treble oppression and exploitation, as has been said. Strongly stimulated by the world workers' and national liberation movement of that period, particularly the Russian October Revolution (1917), the Chinese Revolution (1924-1927) and the communist and workers' movement in France, the struggle of the Vietnamese working class became strong and developed *an independent character*. In 1929, the first communist organizations (the Indochinese Communist Party, the Indochina Communist League, the Annam Communist Party) were founded. On February 3, 1930, at the unification conference presided over by comrade Nguyen Ai Quoc (who later became President Ho Chi Minh), these organizations were merged into the Viet Nam Communist Party, which was later renamed the Indochinese Communist Party. Following the suppression by the French of the Yen Bai uprising, the Indochinese Communist Party led the worker and peasant masses to struggle against white terror and to demand increases in wages, reduction of work hours, an end to beating, an end to heavy taxation, etc. There were work stoppages, strikes and demonstrations throughout the country. In September 1930, the Nghe Tinh Soviets were set up. The working class and its party, the Indochinese Communist Party, holding high the revolutionary banner, led broad

masses of the people to struggle against the imperialists and feudalists, to regain independence and build democracy. Issued in the high tide of struggle in 1930, the "Political Theses on the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution" of the Party Central Committee[1] charted the line for the revolution in Indochina. At that time, organization was not yet well-knit, and the people's political level not yet developed. Under the ruthless persecution by imperialism which followed from 1931 to 1933, the movement dwindled. But thanks on the one hand to the workers' spirit of determined revolution and the organizations of the Indochinese Communist Party still remaining among the worker-peasant masses, and on the other hand, to the leadership of the Communist International and the assistance of fraternal parties, from 1934, the movement picked up quickly from 1934. Its restoration was followed during the period of the Indochina Democratic Front (1936-1939), by the movement for holding the Indochina Congress and for democratic reforms, against the colonial reactionaries, against fascism and war. These movements were followed during the course of the Second World War (1940-1945), by the broad and far-reaching national salvation movement of the Viet Minh Front against Japanese and French fascism, which triggered the uprisings in Bac Son, Do Luong, Dinh Ca and Nam Ky; then by the high tide of anti-Japanese struggle for national salvation. Finally, came the August Revolution (1945), the present war of resistance and the efforts for national construction.

1. These "Political Theses" were drafted by Tran Phu, the first Secretary-General of the Party, on the basis of the resolutions of the Communist International and those adopted at the Conference to merge the various communist organizations of Viet Nam. They were discussed and amended by the Session of the Party Central Committee held in October 1930.

If our Party has been able to win those great achievements, it is because, under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, it has aimed straight at the targets of the national and democratic (anti-imperialist and anti-feudal) revolution and correctly adhered to the Leninist line for revolution in a colonial country, this line being briefly to build and strengthen the Party and consolidate the leadership of the revolution by the working class, set up a broad national united front with the worker-peasant alliance as the basis, to organize people's revolutionary armed forces, carry out armed struggle, to set up a people's administration, and keep close contacts with the international workers' movement.

To sum up, during the period of struggle led by the scholars, the Vietnamese revolution was limited to an anti-colonial character. During the period of struggle led by the national bourgeois democratic ideology, the Vietnamese revolution had a bourgeois democratic (anti-imperialist and anti-feudal character), but it was no more than the old-type bourgeois democracy character. In the period of struggle led by the working class, the Vietnamese revolution assumed a new-type democratic character, which today is called people's national democratic revolution.

Prospects for the Vietnamese Revolution

Now let us examine the road forward of the Vietnamese revolution.

What direction will the Vietnamese revolution take? It will follow the inevitable road to socialism; there can be no other path.

Because the working class and our Party are leading the Vietnamese revolution, it is bound to advance to socialism.

Because the Vietnamese revolution is developing in the epoch of the decline of capitalism and advance of socialism, the Soviet Union, China and other people's democratic countries are assisting the Vietnamese revolution, and thus the advance of the Vietnamese revolution to socialism becomes all the more certain.

The process of development of the Vietnamese revolution is an advance from a colonial and semi-feudal society to a people's democratic society, to socialism. This was begun by the August Revolution of 1945. Our present war of resistance is speeding up that process.

From now to the achievement of socialism, our country must go through a long period. That long period can be divided into several stages, depending on the changes in the strategic tasks of our revolution and on the shifts in the ranks of both the enemies and the allies of the working class.

Lenin said : "...without going through several transitional steps, several different levels of transition, it is impossible to turn that revolution (the bourgeois democratic revolution — *Author*) in a backward country into a socialist revolution" [1].

Why is it that in Viet Nam, the road from here to socialism must go through several stages ? In the first place this is because our country is being invaded, and has not yet thrown off the imperialist yoke. Moreover, it is an agricultural country, with many vestiges of feudalism and semi-feudalism,

1. Lenin : *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918).

and with an underdeveloped industry. To gain independence and democracy and advance to the realization of socialism, the main problem facing us is now to *fulfil the task of national liberation and carry out the objective of "land to the tillers"*.

The process of development of Vietnamese society from now until the achievement of socialism can be summed up as follows :

First of all, the spearhead of the revolution must be directed at the imperialist aggressors (the French colonialists and the US interventionists) and their lackeys (the reactionary feudal landlords and comprador capitalists). For the purpose of dividing the landlord class and winning over the greatest number of people to achieve broad national unity in the fight against the imperialist aggressors, the anti-feudalist campaign must be carried out step by step : confiscate only land belonging to the imperialists and the Vietnamese traitors, provisionally allot it to the landless and poor peasants, redistribute communal land in a fair and rational way, and carry out reduction of land rent and usurious interest rates. This will weaken the feudal forces and foster the forces of the peasantry. Then move forward to carry out the land reform, completely abolishing all forms of feudal exploitation, and thoroughly carrying out the motto "land to the tillers".

The imperialist aggressors will be driven out and the vestiges of feudalism and semi-feudalism will be eliminated, then certainly our national economy will develop vigorously. Two economic factors, the socialist factor and the capitalist factor, will then develop simultaneously. However, Viet Nam will not go through a period of capitalist development

but will evolve in the process of struggle between these two factors. Because we have a people's administration led by the working class, the socialist factor will prevail over the capitalist factor. The people's national democratic revolution will evolve into a socialist revolution and Viet Nam will become a socialist country. In short, our country's road to socialism will be tortuous and long. That it is possible thoroughly to transform society and eliminate the system of exploitation of man by man in one effort is sheer illusion.

That is the main reason why our country must go through several stages before achieving socialism.

The various stages of the Vietnamese revolution will succeed each other and will be closely linked to each other. Some tasks of one period may have to be partly carried out in the preceeding stage, and sometimes only in the later stage will it be possible to fulfill certain objectives which have not been fully accomplished in the previous stage. Nonetheless, we should not forget that each stage has its central task. We cannot shift the immediate central task of one stage to make it the immediate central task of another stage. Neither can we put the central task of one stage on a par with the central task of the preceding stage. If we have partly carried out the central task of one stage in the course of the preceding stage, it will only be in so far as it has been seen to be beneficial to the fulfilment of the central task of that stage. We oppose the tendency to "skip stages", to act in a hasty, thoughtless manner, without firmly grasping the central task of each stage. On the other hand, we also oppose the tendency to go slow, "step by step", according to which theory we

must completely fulfil all the tasks of one stage before starting on those of the next stage. (For example, in the stage of people's national democratic revolution, we must already build and develop part of the State-run and cooperative sectors of the economy, but only at a later stage in the process of socialist revolution shall we entirely eliminate all the vestiges of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation).

When the people's democratic administration exists and is firmly established, the revolutionary stages will succeed each other in favourable conditions. But history has demonstrated that in certain conditions the revolution in a country can leap forward or must temporarily make a retreat before surging ahead again. So we can only predict the stage of the Vietnamese revolution in a general way.

The present first stage is a prolonged revolutionary outburst, a war of resistance. The next stage *can be* a process of both moderate and revolutionary reforms under the people's democratic administration. In these conditions there will be no uprising, no civil war to abolish the existing administration of the people and make the change to a new administration. Once we have defeated the imperialist aggressors, the people's administration will carry out a series of vigorous reforms, or to be more accurate, a series of revolutionary changes, based on the wholehearted support of the masses of working people in both the urban and rural areas. Uuder the people's administration led by the working class, many changes succeeding one another will finally bring about a profound change amounting to a complete revolution. This result may be likened to the socialization of

agriculture in the Soviet Union in the period of the implementation of the first two five-year plans, about which Comrade Stalin said :

"One can do so because it is a revolution from above, because radical changes have taken place on the initiative of the existing administration, with the support of the grass-roots masses of the peasantry" [1].

People's Democratic Dictatorship and Proletarian Dictatorship

While discussing the advance to socialism, we must mention the changes of the people's democratic regime both in content and in form during the process of the development of the Vietnamese revolution from now until socialism has been achieved.

The form of the Vietnamese State at present is the democratic republic, and its content is people's democratic dictatorship. People's democratic dictatorship is democracy toward the people and dictatorship toward the enemies of the people.

We oppose the viewpoint that the people's administration in our country is not a dictatorship, but only a democracy. That concept springs from ignorance of the class struggle character of the State and the revolutionary effect of the people's administration. It leads to the administration reacting weakly in face of the enemies, the puppets and other reactionary elements.

Precisely who are the enemies of the people's dictatorship in our country at present ? They are the imperialist

1. Stalin : *On Marxism and Linguistics* (1950).

aggressors, and the clique of Vietnamese traitors who represent the interests of the reactionary feudal landlords and the comprador capitalists.

Our people's democratic dictatorship is fulfilling the historical task of the worker-peasant dictatorship [1]. It smashes the rule of the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys, the traitors, establishes and consolidates the people's democratic regime, carries out the land reform, and abolishes feudal land ownership. But it does not yet "touch the basis of capitalism" [2] in the country ; it develops the national economy, strengthens the leadership of the working class, consolidates the worker-peasant alliance, and fosters solidarity between our people and the forces of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism in the world.

When the people's democratic revolution develops into socialist revolution, people's democratic dictatorship will become proletarian dictatorship. The basic task of the dictatorial administration having then changed, consequently its whole character will change.

The form of the people's democratic State can still exist when its content has changed to proletarian dictatorship. But if its task and requirements are to carry out socialist revolution and build socialism, then the people's democratic regime will be a socialist democratic regime in essence.

We oppose the view that the present people's democratic dictatorship is proletarian dictatorship. That concept is "leftist" at present and later will be rightist, because at this

1. In the history of human society, worker-peasant dictatorship lies within the category of proletarian dictatorship.
2. Lénin : *Two Tactics* (1905).

moment it prompts us to undertake extremist policies and actions, and afterward, when the revolution has advanced to fulfil new strategic tasks, it will tend to limit us to inadequate policies and actions.

We also oppose the view that Vietnamese society need only go through people's democratic dictatorship and not proletarian dictatorship in order to reach socialism. We must bear in mind that *proletarian dictatorship is one of the indispensable principles compulstory for all countries wishing to attain socialism.*

Lenin said : "In the period of transition from capitalism to communism, it is naturally impossible not to have many different political forms, but the essence of these forms must be proletarian dictatorship." [1]

A dictatorship implies ruthless class struggle. The advance from people's democracy to socialism is a road of ruthless struggle : struggle against foreign invaders and domestic enemies ; struggle in the political, administrative, economic, cultural and educational fields ; struggle which is bloody, bloodless, violent, and peaceful by turns. But the revolutionary struggle in each stage must aim straight at the central task of that stage. In the present stage, the spearhead of dictatorship must be directed at the imperialist aggressors and their agents.

In order to gain national independence, develop people's democracy and advance to socialism, we must constantly strengthen people's democratic dictatorship through the following measures :

1. Lenin : *The State and Revolution* (1917).

1. To consolidate the revolutionary leadership of the working class, that is of the Party.

2. To consolidate the alliance between the workers, peasants and brain workers, and particularly the worker-peasant alliance.

3. To defeat the imperialist aggressors and their agents, to keep vigilant guard against, and resolutely smash all perfidious manœuvres of the counter-revolutionaries both domestic and external.

4. To strengthen and develop the State sector of the economy so as to enable it to take the lead in the national economy.

5. To strengthen the fraternal solidarity between Viet Nam and the Soviet Union, China and the other people's democratic countries.

In short, what conclusions does the above analysis of Vietnamese society and the Vietnamese revolution lead to ?

1) The Vietnamese revolution in the present stage is a people's national democratic revolution, its character is national and democratic, its forces consist of four social classes, its motive force is the working people led by the working class. This revolution is neither an old-type bourgeois democratic revolution, nor yet a socialist revolution, but a new-type bourgeois democratic revolution, developing into a socialist revolution in the new historical conditions of the world and of Viet Nam. In its main process, the Vietnamese people's national democratic revolution has not yet gone beyond the framework of bourgeois democratic revolution.

But at a certain stage of its development, the people's national democratic revolution will turn into a socialist revolution.

2) In Viet Nam, from now until socialism is won, there must be a whole historical process comprising many revolutionary changes. To attain socialism, it will be necessary to go through all these many stages, not just one single stage. These stages are not disconnected but are closely linked together. The simplistic concept of "skipping stages" and the step-by-step tendency are both wrong.

3) Viet Nam already has a people's democratic dictatorship. This administration is being strengthened and developed alongside the victorious war of resistance. Afterwards Viet Nam must advance from people's democratic dictatorship to proletarian dictatorship in order to reach socialism. The road that passes through proletarian dictatorship is the road of Marxism-Leninism. This is the road travelled by the Soviet Union and the people's democratic countries. We must do away with the idea that the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the other people's democratic countries can follow another separate road different from that of the Soviet Union, an "independent", "brand new" road, the road of "smooth evolution" toward socialism ; without going through proletarian dictatorship. On the other hand, we must also do away with the mechanical concept that the process of Viet Nam's advance to socialism must be identical to that of the Soviet Union and other people's democratic countries. This is a concept which overlooks the special characteristics of Viet Nam.

4) Viet Nam now has its people's democratic administration, but it has not yet completely thrown off the imperialist yoke, besides, it still has many feudal and semi-feudal vestiges. That is why, in the first period, *the spearhead of the revolution must be directed primarily at the imperialist aggressors.* The anti-feudal task must be carried out simultaneously with the anti-imperialist task, but step by step, in order to develop and foster all national and democratic forces of the people, at the same time to win over any person that can be won over, so as to isolate and destroy the concrete, immediate enemies of the nation, namely, the imperialist invaders and the clique of their lackeys, the reactionary feudal landlords and comprador capitalists. During this process, the foundation of socialism is built, strengthened and developed gradually. At the same time, however, national capitalism is also bound to develop. In the end, the struggle between the two factors, socialism and capitalism, will certainly end with the victory of the socialist factor and will take Viet Nam to socialism, the first stage towards communism.

5) The Vietnamese people are fighting against the French imperialists and the US interventionists. Viet Nam is an agricultural country up against a modern industrial country. Viet Nam, moreover, holds an important strategic position in South-east Asia. The war-seeking imperialists are trying to stick to Viet Nam in order to prepare bases for attacking China. The war of aggression against Viet Nam is part of their scheme to prepare for a third world war. That is why *a feature of the Vietnamese revolution is that we must go through a protracted armed struggle in order to win victory.* To carry out a protracted armed struggle until complete

victory, we must build and develop our people's army, consolidate our revolutionary bases, strengthen and broaden our National United Front on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, strengthen and develop our people's administration, consolidate the leading role of our Party in the administration, the National United Front and the armed forces. We must unite closely with the fighting peoples of Cambodia and Laos, enhance solidarity and friendship with the Soviet Union, China and the other people's democratic countries, and closely coordinate our actions with the movement for peace and democracy of the French people and other peoples in the world.

PART THREE

THE PARTY'S POLICIES

Dear comrade delegates,

Basing ourselves on the situation in the world and in our country, at the same time proceeding from a consideration of the tasks and nature of the Vietnamese revolution, we have worked out the policies of the Party.

POLICIES OF THE PARTY IN THE STAGE OF PEOPLE'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

In this people's national democratic revolution, we strive to implement the following policies :

1. To step up the war of resistance until complete victory is won, to drive out the imperialist aggressors and the clique of their stooges, to achieve a completely independent and unified Viet Nam.

The main, direct enemies of the Vietnamese nation are the French imperialists and their lackeys, the feudalists.

The most dangerous enemy of the Vietnamese nation at present are the US interventionists.

The US imperialists are directly intervening in Indochina. The French colonialists and the US imperialists, in spite of conflicting interests, are of one mind in their scheme to

enslave Viet Nam. The French colonialists are fighting as mercenaries of the imperialists who supply money and weapons by way of aid to the French colonialists to subdue Viet Nam. At the same time the US is gradually nibbling at the interests of the French and attempting to build up their power in Viet Nam, by on the one hand investing capital, bringing in goods for sale, and on the other hand, winning over the puppets, equipping the puppet army, installing "advisers", organizing spies, carrying out political and cultural propaganda aimed at misleading the Vietnamese people, and so on. The vicious scheme of the US imperialists is that if the French win, they will just sit by and reap the profits, but in case the French lose the war, they will take over direct control of the puppet administration and army, and continue to attack and occupy Indochina. At present, the US imperialists' plan is that if the French army has to pull out, US troops will move in to replace them, or, under the United Nations' flag, they will leap into the fray to save the situation for imperialism. Moreover, the US and French imperialists are trying to stir up discord between the peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos. They work hand in glove with the Thai reactionaries in an attempt to curb the Indochinese countries to the west. The US imperialists are reinforcing their positions in Thailand with the purpose of using that country, when necessary, as a springboard to attack and conquer Indochina.

Thus our present fight against the French is also a fight against the US. To fight the French is to foil the scheme of the US imperialists to turn our country into a market for US goods, and a US military base to prepare for a new

world war, in a bid to attack the socialist countries. Our slogan at present is : *drive out the French imperialist aggressors and oppose the US interventionists and the clique of their lackeys, struggle for independence, unity, democracy and peace.*

To achieve this goal, we must continue fighting to the end.

Our war of resistance is nation-wide, total and protracted. This is a war of self-defence, of a nation dependent mainly on agriculture, pitting its strength against the imperialist aggressors who have a modern industry.

Only through a process of long drawn-out resistance in all fields, military, political, economic, and cultural, can we overcome our difficulties, develop our strong points and correct our mistakes, destroy and wear down the enemy's forces, and foster our own strength so as to catch up with them then overcome them and finally defeat them. That is why our resistance must go through three stages : defensive warfare, a state of equilibrium, and general counter-offensive to win final victory.

To inspire our entire people to take part in a protracted resistance in all fields, we must unite all strata of our nation, mobilize all the manpower and material resources of the people, adapt our administrative machine to the war of resistance, develop our people's army and call to arms ever broader masses of our people, step up production, improve the people's living conditions, and develop the cultural work of the resistance.

In external relations, we consistently seek more friends and fewer foes, and strive to win the sympathy and support of the world peoples and more help from fraternal countries.

At present, we have passed the first stage, that of defensive warfare, and are in the equilibrium phase, preparing to move into the stage of general counter-offensive. The central task of the Vietnamese revolution at present is to step up the war of resistance until total victory. The task of our people in fighting the aggressors between now and total victory is to make preparations for the general counter-offensive and to bring it to victory.

To fulfil this formidable task, we must grasp the guiding principles of people's war. All activities, all sections of our people must concentrate on the task of pushing the war of resistance forward to victory. We must therefore :

— Coordinate military struggle with the political struggle of the masses ;

— Coordinate the struggle in the front line with the struggle behind the enemy lines, the struggle of the people in the free zones with the struggle of the people in enemy-held areas ;

— Coordinate the patriotic war of our people with the movement for peace and democracy of the world peoples and particularly with the French people's movement for peace and against the war ; and

— Coordinate all activities of our army, people, and administration under the centralized and unified leadership of the Party.

This is the outline of the strategy of our people's war. A tenet of this strategy is that though we should not underestimate the importance of weapons, in the end, *the basic factor deciding victory remains the human factor*, the army

and the people. That is why, with regard to the army, we must attach great importance to *continuous political education*, carry out supervised, systematic, and closely-led political work, see to it that our troops are well fed, take care of wounded servicemen, and assist the families of those who have fallen on the battlefield. With regard to the people, we must protect their lives and property, improve their living conditions, foster their forces, mobilize them in a planned, and appropriate way, and be careful to practise thrift, so as to enable the people to wage a long fight and become stronger as the war proceeds ; every effort must be made to avoid exhausting the people.

Our enemy are well aware that our strong point is the people. That is why they seek, in their raids, to massacre many of our young people and draft others as cannon fodder. Moreover, they try to starve us by destroying our crops, stores, villages and factories, to cut off our supplies, in a bid to weaken and discourage our army and people through hunger, cold, and want.

To counter them, we must strive to increase production, oppose raids, arson and destruction, to capture enemy weapons and munitions to add to our equipment. The greatest weakness of our enemy is that they are not supported by the people, and lack manpower. That is why we must wipe out the enemy's forces, organize the people in enemy-occupied areas to actively carry out agitation and propaganda among the enemy ranks, both French troops and puppet troops, attack the morale of the enemy, oppose conscription and wrest back young people whom the enemy have pressganged.

Our patriotic war will be hard and long. We must provide against possible direct military intervention by US imperialism, against our country becoming a hot spot of international conflict.

For these reasons, we must pay attention to building and fostering our political, military and economic forces, realistically building and strengthening our resistance bases.

At present, there are still some mistaken opinions among our cadres and people about the war of resistance :

Many of our comrades have not yet clearly seen that our war of resistance is a people's war ; they do not understand that the basic guideline of people's war is to mobilize the popular masses to wage military as well as political struggle in order to win final victory.

Many other comrades do not pay adequate attention to the leadership of people's war, they do not understand that in order to bring our war of resistance to victory, we must firmly hold the leadership of the war. Leadership of the war is the main duty of our Party at present. So far, our Party has achieved many successes in leading the war. These successes, however, are not yet sufficient. The Party must make further efforts to gain firmer control over the military affairs.

Our military task is becoming harder daily. All the comrades in the executive bodies of the Party must study military science to lead the people's war to complete victory.

There are other erroneous tendencies among our cadres and people. For example :

Either they overestimate the strength of the enemy and underestimate our forces, and consequently become pessimistic and uncertain, lacking confidence and determination ;

Or they overestimate our strength, do not fully assess our difficulties, underestimate the enemy's capabilities and fail to clearly assess their efforts, and therefore indulge in wishful thinking, make light of the enemy, indulge in ideas of engaging in a quick fight and winning quick victory.

Recently, the dispatch of US troops to invade Korea has given rise on the one hand to pessimistic thoughts and fear of US imperialism among our people, particularly in enemy-occupied areas ; and on the other, to an over-optimistic tendency among our cadres, particularly in the free zones. At the same time, the raising of the problem of preparations for the general counter-offensive and the resounding victory of our recent Autumn-Winter Campaign has developed the tendency to over-optimism and underestimation of the enemy. The recent liberation of areas along our northern border has given rise to a tendency to develop a reliance on fraternal countries and to indulge in ill-founded optimism.

To step up the war of resistance until complete victory we must overcome these erroneous tendencies. To defeat the aggressors, we must first defeat erroneous thoughts among our people.

To bring our patriotic war to victory, we must rely mainly on our own strength ; we can seek foreign aid, but *self-reliance must be the main thing.*

We should bear in mind that a nation united to fight for independence and freedom knows no fear. Whether it be

the French colonialists, the US imperialists, or any other imperialism that invade our country, we are resolved to fight and defeat them.

2. To carry out the agrarian policy step by step, proceed to realize the slogan "land to the tillers", and abolish the various forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation in our country.

The system of serfdom in some areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, the tenancy system with a character of semi-serfage still remaining in many areas, the systems of cut-throat usury, corvees and heavy taxes used by the imperialists and their puppets, the system of mandarins and rural despots in enemy-occupied areas, and so on, are forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and oppression that remain and that must be abolished in order to liberate our productive forces, create conditions for the development of the national economy, improve the life of the working peasants, and take Vietnamese society rapidly and vigorously along the road of people's democracy.

The imperialists seek to maintain and make use of these forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation in order to oppress and exploit our people still more heavily. The feudal landlords are also relying on the imperialists to maintain their existence in the enemy-occupied areas.

Therefore, the abolition of these forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation is necessary. The people's democratic regime cannot coexist with the colonial regime, nor can it develop vigorously so long as the forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation exist.

To abolish the forms of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation, we must carry out land reform and other democratic reforms begun with the August Revolution. These reforms must be carried out even during the patriotic war, though they cannot be carried out in their entirety during the war of resistance. So that we can concentrate all our forces on the main task of fighting the French aggressors, these reforms must be carried out gradually, one by one, according to plan, subordinate to the interests of the resistance and depending on the prevailing political conditions in the country and abroad, also depending on the level of organization, the political awareness of the masses and the ability of the Party leadership in each locality.

Land reform is an active way to combat feudalism, liberate the peasantry from the feudal yoke, consolidate the worker-peasant alliance, and develop the economy in our country. Its object is to improve the life of the working peasants, develop agriculture, carry out the slogan "land to the tillers", and create conditions to develop agricultural cooperatives.

During the period of the war of resistance, the anti-imperialist struggle is the main task. But it cannot be separated from the anti-feudal task, because the imperialists rely on the feudal landlord class to support the puppet administration and carry out aggression against our country. That is why we must carry out the Party's agrarian policy during the war of resistance, but we must apply it step by step. At present that policy comprises the following points: to confiscate the land belonging to the French colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors and provisionally divide it among

poor peasants and families of wounded armymen and war dead, to redistribute communal lands in a fair and equitable way, to reduce land rent and usurious interest rates, to postpone and cancel debts, to proceed with the land reform, to abolish the feudal ownership of land, to carry out the slogan "land to the tillers", to restrict and abolish the vestiges of serfdom in some mountain regions, etc. *The main aspect of the land policy at present is to reduce land rent and usurious interest rates.* The immediate purpose of that policy is to give the working peasants incentives to increase production and actively take part in the war of resistance and national construction.

The greater the victories of our war of resistance, the larger our free zones will be. Through the demands of the patriotic war and of the peasant masses, the slogan "Carry Out the Land Reform, Land to the Tillers" will be achieved.

A number of comrades hold that at present we should not yet speak of land reform, for fear of prejudicing broad national unity. They separate the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks ; they fail to see that it is necessary to carry out part of the land reform even during the war of resistance in order to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, strengthen the leadership of the Party, foster the people's strength, bring enthusiasm to the working peasants so that they will boost production and join the armed forces to wipe out the enemy and save the country.

There are other comrades who want to confiscate all the land owned by the landlords right away and share it out among the peasants. This undertaking is too hasty.

We must realize that we are engaged in a war of resistance, and therefore cannot yet throw all our forces into land reform, that we can only carry out land reform in the free zones, under our people's democratic administration and only in those free zones where certain conditions exist : where there is a relatively stable political situation, where the peasant masses are demanding reform, and where cadres are available to organise it.

In our land reform policy the enemy is the landlord class. However, at present, we must concentrate all the forces of our entire people on fighting to defeat the common enemy — the French colonialists and the US interventionists. — Recognising the fact that to some extent the small-landlord class of our country is still inclined and able to oppose the imperialists, our Party is endeavouring to win over some of the landlords (particularly the small landlords) to the resistance, or at least to neutralize them and win their sympathies, at the same time overthrowing the reactionary feudal landlords. For this reason, at present the Party undertakes to restrict exploitation by the landlords, aiming at reduction of land rent and usurious interest rates. But in the implementation of that policy, it is necessary to combine a policy of administrative measures and popular demands with persuasion and explanations aimed at helping the landlords understand that by reducing land rent and usurious interest rates they are fulfilling some of their duties toward the resistance. On the other hand, we will encourage them to offer their land to the State, opening up a path to those landlords who are willing to reform themselves. When and where the land reform will be carried out is a matter to be decided

upon by the Central Committee of the Party and the Government, who will issue the relevant orders. We must not act spontaneously.

With regard to the rich peasants, who are part of the peasantry and who are also "bourgeois elements in the countryside", our policy is to rally them to take part in the war of resistance and national construction, particularly in the development of agriculture. For this reason, even with regard to those rich peasants who have engaged in exploitation by means of land rent and usurious interest rates, we do not put them on a par with the landlords. We use the Peasants' Association for National Salvation to persuade them and help them clearly understand their duties in the carrying out of the Party's agrarian policy, and in contributing to improving the people's standard of living, increasing production and ensuring the victory of the resistance.

The beneficiaries of the agrarian policy are the working peasants, that is the poor peasants, the landless peasants and the middle peasants. We must pay special attention to improving their living conditions for they are the poorest strata and the most determined to carry out revolution in the countryside. At the same time, we should bring practical advantages to the middle peasants, a reliable ally of the working class.

To ensure satisfactory results for the agrarian policy, the main thing is to unite closely with the poor, landless and middle peasants, and to awaken them to their legitimate rights and interests. We must help them understand the land policy of our Party and Government, so that under

the leadership of the Party, relying on the united forces of the Peasants' Association for National Salvation, they may consciously struggle for a correct implementation of that policy.

In carrying out the agrarian policy it is necessary to strengthen and develop the Peasants' Association for National Salvation. This body has the task of intensifying the spirit of unity, the political awareness of the peasants, to encourage and organize them to take part actively in the war of resistance, increase production and correctly implement the Party's agrarian policy.

It is necessary to help the Resistance and Administrative Committees and the mass organizations, particularly the Peasants' Association for National Salvation, to play an appropriate role in solving the conflicts of interests between the peasants and the landlords, to solve them in a way beneficial to the working peasants, at the same time ensuring the lawful rights of the landlords.

We must severely criticize the bureaucratic, authoritarian style of work of many cadres. These often underestimate the importance of educating the peasants and winning the landlords over; they think they are bestowing favours on the people and struggling in the place of the peasants and are inclined to use administrative pressure upon the landlords. We must do away with the tendency to unprincipled union, to make concessions to stubborn landlords, to lack firmness vis à vis landlords who are members of resistance and administrative committees or of people's councils. We must also overcome the tendency to tail after the masses instead of leading them along the right path, the tendency to follow

the "ultra-leftist" actions of a number of people indiscriminately advocating spontaneous struggles to the detriment of resistance solidarity.

To rely on the poor and landless peasants, closely unite with the middle peasants, rally the rich peasants, win over a number of the landlords to side with the resistance, oppose the reactionary or stubborn landlords, defeat the imperialist aggressors, carry out the agrarian policy step by step, foster the people's forces, develop agriculture, ensure victory for our war of resistance and promote the people's democratic revolution. This, briefly stated, is the basic line and policy of our Party in the countryside at present.

3. To build, strengthen and develop the people's democratic regime politically, economically and culturally, and prepare for the advance toward the stage of socialist revolution.

We must build, consolidate and develop the people's democratic regime with the following requirements and content :

a) *People's democratic politics*

The essential thing in a revolution is to seize and consolidate power. The essential thing in people's democratic politics in our country at present is to strengthen and consolidate our people's democratic State. The people's administration is very important. If the Party firmly controls and strengthens that administration, it can mobilize the abundant forces of the people, ensure victory for our war of resistance, achieve independence and democracy and lead our people to socialism.

At present, the essence of people's power in our country is people's democratic dictatorship. The people comprise the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and

the national bourgeoisie. These strata of the people, led by the working class, take part in the administration, exercise dictatorship over the foreign aggressors — the French colonialists and US interventionists — and the domestic enemy, the Vietnamese traitors, who represent the pro-French and pro-American feudal landlords and comprador bourgeoisie.

People's democratic dictatorship is dictatorship with regard to the counter-revolutionaries, and democracy toward the people. *In the stage of people's democratic revolution, the essence of people's democratic dictatorship is worker-peasant dictatorship.*

With regard to its form, our people's administration is a body linking together all strata of the people, elected by the people, comprising all national and democratic forces in the country, without distinction of political party, race, social class, sex, and religious belief. However, the basis of this administration must be the workers and peasants.

Internally, the task of our people's administration is to unite the entire nation to fight against foreign aggression and to carry out national construction, resolutely defeat the aggressors, smash the colonial administration and the puppet administration in areas under enemy control, punish the traitors, complete the liberation of the Fatherland, and bring independence, freedom and happiness to the people.

Externally, we stand in the ranks of the world forces struggling for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism, against war-seeking imperialism, uniting with all the peace-loving and democratic people in the world, entertaining close relations with the Soviet Union, China and other people's democratic countries, coordinating our

struggle with that of the French people and supporting the oppressed nations in their struggle to gain independence and freedom.

To establish dictatorship, the State of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam must strengthen its people's army and people's security forces, because these are necessary forces to carry out the war of resistance against foreign aggression, wipe out the invaders and the traitors, maintain revolutionary order, defend the people's administration, safeguard the interests of the people and ensure that our citizens fulfil their tasks toward the Fatherland. These rights and interests are : human rights, civil rights and economic rights[1]. The tasks are : to take part actively in the war of resistance, defend the Fatherland, support the people's administration, contribute to public funds, protect and develop the public property of the country.

Our people's administration must constantly work in close association with the National United Front in order to mobilize and organize the people to defend these rights and fulfil these tasks.

1. *Human rights :*
   — Freedom of the body ; freedom of movement and residence ;
   — Freedom of correspondence ;
   — Freedom of study, thought, faith ; freedom to make inventions and discoveries, etc.

   Civil rights
   — Right to elect and dismiss one's representatives ; right to stand for election ;
   — Freedom of speech, of the press ;
   — Freedom to organize, hold meetings and demonstrations ;
   — Freedom to work and to rest ;
   — Right to social insurance ;
   — Equality between the sexes ;
   — Equality among the various nationalities, etc.

   Economic Rights
   — Equal pay for equal work ;
   — Right to ownership of property ;
   — Right of inheritance, etc.

We must strengthen the Party's leadership of the administrative organs at various levels, and see to it that the people's administration always correctly follow the line of the Party. The Party leads the administration by means of Party Committees.

Our people's democratic administration is organized and works on the principle of democratic centralism, that is, the administrative organs must be elected by the people and are responsible to the people, the lower levels must follow the directives of the higher levels, the regional authorities must follow the central authorities, the minority must respect the decisions of the majority.

The guiding principle of the people's democratic administration is to combine the means of coercion by the State with the method of persuasion and education by the Party, the Front and the administration, to induce the people to voluntarily follow the correct line ; combine the method of issuing administrative orders, that is, acting from the higher level downward, with the method of letting the people voice their demand ; that is, acting from the lower levels upward ; and study carefully the initiatives of the popular masses and inquire about their aspirations.

b) *People's democratic economy*

People's democratic economy is the economy prevailing in the period of transition to socialist economy.

The Vietnamese people's democratic economy is composed of the following elements : firstly, the State economic sector which consists of factories, farms, building sites, trading stores and shops ; communication and transport services

and other organs managed by the State; secondly, the collective economic sector which consists of agricultural cooperatives and handicraft cooperatives, supply and marketing cooperatives and credit cooperatives; thirdly the private individual sector of the economy, that is, the economy of peasants and craftsmen, small traders and owners of small shops and fourthly, the private capitalist sector, which includes the business enterprises of the national bourgeoisie. Besides these, there is the economic sector of State capitalism, which includes enterprises jointly operated by the State and by private capitalists who enter into partnership with it. The State economy and the cooperative economy together form the decisive section of the people's democratic economy.

To develop the Vietnamese people's democratic economy is to develop all these economic sectors with the purpose of defeating the enemy, improving the people's life, fostering the people's strength, and creating conditions for the later advance to socialism.

Our economic policies at present are roughly as follows :

— To confiscate the property of the imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors, to abolish their special privileges so as to smash the economic shackles imposed by them, and develop the productive forces of the country.

— To establish a fair, equitable and simple system of taxes, suited to the people's capabilities.

— To carry out the agrarian policy step by step, beginning with the provisional distribution of the land of the French colonialists and the Vietnamese traitors to poor or landless peasants; to redistribute communal lands, reduce land-rent

and usurious interest rates; depending on the political conditions and the requirements of the resistance, to carry out the land reform, put into practice the slogan "land to the tillers", step up agricultural production, improve the life of the peasants and create favourable conditions for the development of industry and agriculture.

— To industrialize the country step by step, beginning with the development of small industry and handicrafts, proceeding to building light industry and a number of branches of heavy industry, and to build and develop the national defence industry. To give attention to improving techniques and increasing labour productivity.

— To develop the State economy and the cooperative economy, making it possible for the State economy to play a leading role in the national economy, and for the cooperative economy to gradually absorb the economy of the small producers.

— With regard to small traders and owners of small shops we must help them take part in collective economy, and organize supply and marketing cooperatives and production cooperatives. With regard to private capitalists, we must encourage them to invest in enterprises beneficial to the resistance and to the people's life. At the same time, we must restrict capitalism, prohibit private monopolies and guide the capitalists toward State capitalism.

— In finance, we must endeavour to increase income and reduce expenditure endeavour to achieve a balanced budget and on the basis of developing production, to maintain and raise the value of our currency, thus strengthening our national finances.

— To advance toward planning the national economy; to begin planned production for the State and cooperative sectors of the economy. First of all, we must draw up a short-term plan for gradually restoring and developing the economy, and later draw up a long-term plan.

— To organize an emulation campaign for developing production and practising thrift, fulfilling the economic plans of the State.

— To preserve and develop the work force, to educate our people in the spirit of labour, to train scientific cadres, technicians and skilled workers (to apply the law on the eight-hour work-day, the law on social insurance, to reform the wage system, to organize the training of scientific and technical cadres and give vocational training to young people, etc...)

— To develop economic relations between our country and friendly countries on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and mutual cooperation and assistance.

— To destroy the enemy economy, a necessary form of struggle in our war of resistance. We must do agitation work among the workers in the enemy-held areas and organize special units to undertake this task, with the determination not to allow the enemy to continue to exploit our people and amass wealth in areas under their control.

The above tasks must be begun immediately. But it is certain that they can only be partly achieved during the war of resistance and must be continued after it.

The guideline for our people's democratic economy is to carry out division of labour and coordination between

the various economic sectors under the leadership of the State sector; division of labour and coordination between the centrally-run and the local economies under the leadership of the centrally-run economy, to develop the economic interflow between the urban and rural areas, to improve the rights of labour, and at the same time, to pay adequate attention to the rights of private capitalism; to get aid from friendly countries, but to rely mainly on our own resources.

c) *People's democratic culture*

Our people's democratic culture has a national, scientific and mass character. This means that:

1. It opposes the enslaving, deceitful and obscurantist culture disseminated by imperialism; it develops the best part of our national culture and the fine cultural traditions of our nation in order to serve the war of resistance and national construction; it preserves and develops the culture of our ethnic minorities, and studies world culture selectively and critically;

2. It opposes the backward culture which is a legacy of feudalism, opposes superstition, disseminates and develops science and technology with the aim of serving the economy, the people's warfare and national defence;

3. It serves the workers, peasants and soldiers, serves the working people, keeps in close contact with the masses, heightens the ideological level and fosters noble feelings among them, and constantly raises their cultural level.

Our cultural and educational policy in this revolution is: to organize and mobilize all cultural forces to develop our

culture, art, science and technology; wipe out illiteracy, bring culture to the masses, develop education, train cadres for the various branches and levels; urge the people to adopt a new life-style, according to the slogan "industry, thrift, integrity and uprightness" advocated by President Ho Chi Minh; instil into our people and develop a sense of the new democratic ethics which consists of the following main points: to understand the duties and rights of citizens, to serve the people and fulfil our responsibility to the people, to understand what to love and what to hate: to love our country and our people, to hate the imperialists and the reactionaries, to love work and science, to hate parasitism and exploitation, to encourage a spirit of proletarian internationalism, etc.

The guidelines for people's democratic culture are: to combine theory with practice; to coordinate the initiatives, experiences and capabilities of the masses with the knowledge and technique of the specialists; to take into consideration the standards of the masses while seeking to raise them; to learn from and at the same time to educate the masses; to improve the people's living standards, to help them enjoy culture and take part in developing our people's own democratic culture. In short, the fulfilment of the above tasks leads to the building of a people's democratic Viet Nam and prepare for the advance to socialism.

4. To consolidate the National United Front against the imperialist aggressors

The French colonialists and the US interventionists are striving to divide our people, in an attempt to weaken our resistance forces and conquer our land. They apply their perfidious policy of "using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese",

of "divide and rule". However, strengthened by our experience of over 80 years of French domination and five years of resistance war, our people have seen through the divisive manœuvres of the colonialists and imperialists and are concious of the strength and unity of our entire nation, and have closed their ranks ever more tightly against the common enemies. Experience also shows our people that the workers and peasants are the most patriotic people and that the working class is capable of leading all our national forces to bring the revolution to victory.

Every day has brought new proof of the correctness of President Ho Chi Minh's policy of broad national unity. In the Second World War he founded the Viet Minh (League for Viet Nam's Independence — *Ed*). After the August Revolution, he broadened the national unity, and founded the Lien Viet (Viet Nam National United Front) which included the Viet Minh and patriots outside the Viet Minh.

Both the Viet Minh and Lien Viet are National United Front organizations and came into being in the process of the revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people against imperialism. The Vietnamese working class closely unites with the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and patriotic landlords to form the National United Front, which is based on the worker-peasant alliance and is led by the working class. In this Front, our Party joins forces with other political parties, mass organizations and patriotic and democratic personalities so as to step up the war of resistance and national construction. For these reasons, the National United Front of our country is broad and well-knit; *it is a mainstay of the Vietnamese people's democratic State*

The goal of the struggle of the National United Front at present is to consolidate and develop our national unity and mobilize our entire people in order to drive out the colonialist aggressors and achieve national liberation.

After the French colonialists have been driven out, the targets of the Vietnamese revolution will change, so will the tasks of the revolution, and the political programme of the National United Front. The Front will then advance to a new stage.

At present, our war of resistance and national construction require a strengthening of the organization of the National United Front in organization, ideology, and practical work.

Ideologically, we must oppose any erroneous attitudes in the cadres at various levels and in different branches with regard to the National United Front; for instance, the tendencies to look down upon the Front, to underestimate the importance of the problems of the allies of the working class, to imagine that to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance is enough to bring success to the revolution, to adopt an order-giving attitude toward the mass organizations and the other political parties in the Front, or to settle for simplistic solutions; or to unite with other people without criticizing their errors and shortcomings; it is a mistake not to criticize and struggle within the Front. We also oppose the Party members' tendency to take over the work of the Front instead of showing the Front what to do, or to slacken leadership in the Front's activities.

Organizationally, we must merge the Viet Minh and the Lien Viet on a nationwide scale, and change for good the system of having two overlapping forms of national united

front as at present. We must proceed from the immediate tasks of the National United Front to redefine its programme and constitution.

We must perfect the organizations affiliated to the Front, and the executive bodies of the Front at all levels; we must strengthen the Party organizations within these bodies, and assign more able cadres to the Party organizations in the Front at various levels.

We must help the Khmer and Lao peoples build and develop their own national united fronts. We must proceed to organize a united front of the Indochinese peoples against the imperialist aggressors. At the same time, we must consolidate the relationship between the National United Front of Viet Nam and the world peace front.

Recently, the work of the National United Front has experienced some difficulties, and Front cadres have shown a lack of enthusiasm, because although the situation has changed, the guideline and method of work of the Front have not changed accordingly.

How has the situation changed? Many strata of our people who did not take part in political activities before the outbreak of the war of resistance are now actively opposing the imperialists, taking part in armed struggle as well as in productive labour, supporting the people's administration, etc. They have joined the organizations of the Viet Minh and the Lien Viet and even though some may not have joined any organizations, still they serve as actively as many members of the Front. So, on the one hand, the Front organization develops widely, while on the other hand, the distinction

line between the unorganized masses and the masses within the Front's organizations gradually fades away wherever our cadres do not know how to give the Front an appropriate style of life and work. Moreover, in many cases, upon the issuing of orders by the administration both the unorganized and organized masses set about executing them and this causes the Front to lose part of its influence.

The relationship between the Party and the Front has also changed to some extent. The Party develops vigorously, attracting an increasing number of members from the Viet Minh organizations. When the Party adopts a resolution, Party members directly lead the administration and the masses to implement it, and the Front becomes virtually redundant. In such a situation, the Party tends to take over the work of the Front, so much so that Front work often becomes limited to playing a ceremonial, representative or symbolic role with a formalistic character.

In face of this situation, it is necessary to clearly define the tasks and guideline for the work of the National United Front.

The tasks of the Front now are to strengthen unity among the social classes and strata of the people; to seek new allies, particularly in enemy-occupied areas, newly-liberated areas, and regions inhabited predominantly by religious people and ethnic minorities; to consolidate the worker-peasant alliance as a firm basis of the National United Front; to isolate the French colonialists, the US interventionists and their stooges, the Vietnamese traitors; and to mobilize all strata and classes of the people, including still hesitant persons, either to join

in, or support, the war of resistance, contribute to defeating the aggressors, carry out the policies of the Party, the Front and the Government, and support the people's administration and the people's army.

The work of the Front now must be to explain thoroughly the policies of the Party, the Front and the Government to the people; to achieve unity of action between the various organizations and strata of people in carrying out these policies; and plan division of work and coordination between the various organizations of the Front, according to the characteristics and influence of each organization.

Concerning the strengthening of the Party's leadership in relation to the Front, the major policies of our Party and Government that have an influence upon the entire people must be discussed within the Front before they are carried out among the people. Only by so doing can we turn these policies into common policies of the Front. Only in this way can we ensure the coordination of the administration's orders with the Front's mobilization and persuasion of the people, so that they can apply enthusiastically and voluntarily.

Finally, to lead the Front correctly, we must firmly grasp the following principles of our Party's policy toward the National United Front:

a) Our Party's leadership toward the Front is an exclusive one and must be based on the worker-peasant alliance.

b) The method of leadership of our Party toward the Front consists in making proposals and using persuasion, and not issuing orders.

c) Our Party allies itself with the various political parties and mass organizations within the Front, but our Party has its own organization and its own political programme (maximum programme).

d) In allying itself with the friendly parties, our Party makes concessions to them whenever necessary, but never, not even for a moment, should it cease making propaganda for communism.

e) While our Party unites with the friendly parties, it must struggle against their mistakes, in keeping with the spirit of mutual help to make common progress.

f) The parties and mass organizations affiliated to the Front should join forces to carry out all undertakings and policies of the Party, the Front and the Government.

g) Broad national unity consists of alliance at the top (alliance between the leaders) combined with alliance at the base (alliance among the masses).

5. Building and developing the people's army

To fight victoriously, to strengthen the administration, and to bring the revolution to success, it is necessary to have a people's army. The people's army is the main instrument of revolutionary violence.

Our army is a people's army, the revolutionary armed forces of the people, built and led by our Party.

Externally, our army's task is wiping out the aggressors to defend national independence and the Fatherland. Internally, its task is to protect the interests of the people, maintain revolutionary order, and defend the people's administration.

Our army was born in the movement against the Japanese and French fascists and has always fought for the country and the people. It is an integral part of the people, it lives among the people, and draws its strength from the people. On the whole, the social composition of our army reflects the social composition of our nation, the overwhelming majority of its cadres and combatants being of worker and peasant stock. Our army has grown up and is fighting in a new era. That is why it must have three characteristics : national, democratic and modern.

These three characteristics are also the three major principles upon which the building and development of our people's army is based.

To build and develop our people's army in keeping with these principles, we must take the following points into consideration :

In the recruitment of troops, we must first of all apply the volunteer principle ; then, depending on the level of political awareness of the people, introduce compulsory military service. However, whether military service is voluntary or compulsory, we must help each citizen to understand clearly why he has the sacred duty to enlist in or to support the army, to fight alongside the army against the aggressors, to save the country, and liberate and defend the Fatherland.

With regard to equipment and supplies, part of the weapons, equipment, and military supplies are produced by us or come from fraternal countries, but the main source of supply of our army at present is the battlefield. We must see to it that our soldiers are adequately fed and clad, so that they will fight well, and fight victoriously. Whenever

and wherever conditions permit, our army must engage in production work so as to produce part of their own food and lessen the burden on our people. We must avoid wasting ammunition, and severely punish any embezzlement and waste of public property.

Discipline in our army must be just and strict, and we must help our army to observe self-imposed discipline. Cadres and combatants are equal in dignity; they differ only in their concrete tasks : that is why cadres must love the soldiers, and treat them in a democratic way.

With regard to training, we must emphasize political and ideological education and training in culture and sports, strategy, tactics and techniques. Soldiers must learn from cadres, and vice versa. Intellectual cadres and worker and peasant cadres must help one another to advance together. Moreover, both cadres and soldiers must learn from the experiences of fighting people's war in our country as well as from the experiences in liberation wars of foreign countries. The latest experiences on the battlefield must be summed up for dissemination in our military schools and combat units.

Political work within the army must ensure internal unity and unity between the army and the people, foster the spirit of courage, daring, endurance and self-denial in the face of hardships in the most critical moments. We must raise the ideological standard of our entire army, overcome such bad habits as bureaucracy, formalism, militarism, individual bravado, and claiming rewards for one's services, etc.

With regard to the enemy, political agitation must aim at shattering the morale of enemy troops, driving them from war-weariness to anti-war actions and to defection to our side.

For the replenishment and building up of our army we must build and develop our village guerrilla and militia forces and our regional forces, and gradually upgrade them to regular forces. Village militia and guerrillas and regional troops are an abundant reserve of the regular army. These three kinds of armed forces are closely related and coordinated in building the army as well as in actual combat. We can enlist a number of selected puppet troops who have crossed over to our side or have been captured by us, train them and use them to replenish our army. But we should guard ourselves against mistakes and against enemy trickery.

At present, as we are mustering our main forces for conventional warfare, we must strive to develop and strengthen the people's regional armed forces, promote guerrilla warfare in coordination with conventional warfare, and build abundant reserve forces.

The task of preparing for the general counter-offensive is very heavy, the situation is changing rapidly, and the requirements of our patriotic war are many. Our Party and Government must develop the armed forces, turning them into a powerful regular army capable of fulfilling any task assigned by the Party. We must pay attention to the development of artillery, engineering, etc., and when conditions permit, build other arms, and modernize our army step by step.

As we need to build powerful forces, we must consider the very urgent problems of food supply, equipment and cadres. We must solve these problems in an imaginative and prompt way.

At present, there are many places where, the building and development of our armed forces is hampered by certain wrong tendencies. These are :

— Attention is paid only to actual combat, while build-up is neglected ; in the long run this has a bad effect on actual combat.

— Hasty build-up without due consideration to questions of supplies, equipment and cadres.

— Premature concentration of the regional, militia and guerrilla forces, and premature withdrawal of independent regular companies while these regional and militia forces are still weak : a tendency which reduces the fighting capacity of the localities in question.

— A tendency to withdraw from action in order to concentrate on building the army, overlooking the fact that building should be carried out in the hard process of action, and that only in such conditions can our army become steady and strong.

— Cumbersome command — organs coupled with shortage of cadres and fighters in combat units. Faulty implementation of the slogan "Build A Regular Army" giving rise to bureaucracy and formalism.

We must rapidly overcome these bad tendencies and bring the positive results to bear on the building and development of our army.

At the same time, we must strengthen the high military organs of the Party, reorganize the Party committees, assign more able Party cadres to the army, and ensure firm control of the army and firm leadership of the war by the Party.

These are the guidelines for action and the tasks to be performed in order to develop the Viet Nam People's Army into a powerful regular army, to carry on our protracted resistance war, vigorously switch over to the general counter-offensive, wipe out the aggressors, completely recover our beloved country, and make an active contribution to the defence of peace and democracy in the world.

6. Policy on nationalities

The Vietnamese nation is made up of over 50 nationalities. Besides the Kinh (majority people living mostly in the plains — *Ed.*), we have many ethnic minorities with different languages, traditions and customs, all of them together forming the Vietnamese nation. There are ethnic groups with few members living in scattered communities, such as the Meo, Dzao, Lolo, and others. There are relatively large ethnic groups living close together in fairly large areas, such as the Muong in the southwestern part of northern Viet Nam and northern central Viet Nam, the Thai in northwestern Viet Nam, the Tay and the Nung in Viet Bac, the Ede in the Central Highlands of central Viet Nam.

For almost a century, the various nationalities of Viet Nam have led lives of destitution under French colonialist domination. The French colonialists sought to deceive and divide them, and sowed enmity among them with the aim of pitting them against each other. At present, in the enemy-occupied areas, the French colonialists still continue this divisive and deceitful policy. They scheme to set up separate "states" — Muong, Nung, Thai, and Tay Ky (Western) "states" — with the purpose of splitting our country into many parts, and bringing our people under their domination.

The aspiration of all the nationalities living together on Vietnamese territory now is to unite, love and help one another, and to join forces to oppose the colonialist aggressors, with the determination not to relapse into their former life of slavery. For this reason, our Party's policy now is to unite the various nationalities in our country so that they can fight and defeat the aggressors and together build an independent, democratic, unified and prosperous Viet Nam, a country in which all nationalities are equal, and love and help one another to advance together.

This policy is based on these principles : national independence, national self-determination, equality, and mutual assistance.

The aim of our patriotic war now is to win the right to self-determination : the Vietnamese people shall regain complete independence, decide their own destiny, and decide for themselves which political and social system they prefer. The Vietnamese people, majority and minorities alike, are consciously, voluntarily and closely united in one single state. There is no problem of the ethnic minorities in Viet Nam breaking away from the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and setting up separate states.

We recognize the right of relatively large ethnic minorities living together in certain areas to autonomy. At this moment, however, that right to autonomy cannot yet be put into practice. Firstly, the right conditions do not yet exist : neither the majority people nor the ethnic minorities are prepared ideologically ; our ethnic minorities still do not have enough cadres of their own, the ethnic minorities have not yet carried

out democratic reforms, the reactionaries in many areas inhabited by ethnic minorities have not yet been neutralized, etc. Secondly, if autonomy is achieved now, this may bring a negative result, that is, division within the resistance and national construction forces, which may eventually turn each nationality into a prey for the imperialist aggressors, and create conditions for the enemy to divide, deceive, and oppress these peoples.

As a matter of fact, with regard to the nationalities living together on Vietnamese territory, our present policy is one of equality and mutual assistance. The Kinh, who constitute the ethnic majority of our nation, must actively help the ethnic minorities to build their economy and culture and train cadres of minority origin so that they may catch up with the rest of the people. To bring the policy on nationalities to success we must fulfil the following tasks :

1. To help the ethnic minorities to take part in the people's administration at various levels ; to arm the ethnic minorities so that they can defend their localities against the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys.

2. To develop the economy in the mountain regions, improve the living conditions of the ethnic minorities, pay attention to organizing the economic interchange between the mountain areas and the plains.

3. To develop mass education and national culture in the areas inhabited by the ethnic minorities, to develop Latinized scripts for a number of nationalities who still have no scripts for their languages and use these languages for teaching in the lower classes of local general education schools.

4. To do away with national prejudices among the nationalities, to solve all conflicts between nationalities in a spirit of solidarity, equality and friendship, to punish all provocative actions, to strengthen the bonds between the various nationalities, and to strengthen friendly relations between the ethnic minorities and the Kinh people.

5. To punish local bandits and reactionary chieftains of ethnic minorities who are lackeys of imperialism.

In order to fulfil these tasks, we must carry out practical investigations and studies on the economic, social, and cultural situation, on the local level, among the ethnic minorities, in order to find a suitable way in which to implement the policies of the Party and the Government. In the areas mostly inhabited by the ethnic minorities, the policies of our Party and Government must be very carefully applied. We must avoid generalizing and indulging in wishful thinking in their application ; we must overcome any leftist tendency to carry out too hasty reforms in areas inhabited by the ethnic minorities, and to try to mould the areas of ethnic minorities to the image of the plains by mechanically applying measures devised for the latter.

At the same time, we must guard ourselves against and overcome the tendency to hastily set up autonomous regions of ethnic minorities or to assimilate ethnic minorities with the Kinh people. We must avoid taking a patronising and overbearing attitude toward cadres and other members of ethnic minorities, as some cadres of Kinh origin have done.

We must do away with the prejudices cultivated by the colonialists among our ethnic minorities which lead to discord among them and between them and the Kinh.

7. Policy toward religions

Our country has many religious communities, such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, etc. The largest community is Buddhism.

In every period of our history, the ruling and exploiting classes have used religions to deceive the masses, to make them submit to their oppression and exploitation.

The French colonialists have set up "autonomous Catholic regions", urging a number of fanatical and cruel priests to organize armed forces to carry out raids, massacre our people, burn their homes and plunder their property. They have bombed, shelled, and destroyed pagodas and churches, and raped nuns, Buddhist and Catholic alike. Their crimes are indeed innumerable !

Being communists, we do not adhere to any religion. But we are fully aware that religion is a social phenomenon, a concern of the masses. So long as the masses are unhappy but unable to find the causes of their unhappiness, and are not able to enjoy a satisfying material and cultural life, nor to understand the causes of and remedies for natural phenomena harmful to human life, they continue putting their faith in one religion or another.

That is why our Party must have a long-term policy toward religion. This policy can be summed up as follows :

Our Party and our Government respect both the freedom of belief and freedom of non-belief for the people. Buddhist monks and Catholic priests are allowed to preach, but nobody is allowed to take advantage of religion to cover up acts harmful to the revolution and the war of resistance.

All religious believers are treated on an equal footing with non-religious people. They must fulfil their obligations toward the State and the war of resistance like all other people. They must uphold patriotism, maintain public order and security, support and take part in the war of resistance and uphold the people's democratic power. Those who act against these conditions will be brought to book in accordance with the law, and those who distinguish themselves in fighting and production will be rewarded.

We must do all we possibly can to expose the imperialists' schemes to misuse religion, we must denounce the crimes they have committed against religious believers. At the same time, we must strive to make clear the correct policy of our Party and our Government toward religion and to foil all fallacious propaganda spread by the enemy among religious believers.

To implement the policy of our Party and our Government toward religion, any wrong approach to the religious problem must be put right; on the one hand, all "rightist" tendencies, such as reluctance to punish reactionaries in religious disguise, keeping aloof from religious people and failing to carry out propaganda and persuasion among them; on the other hand, all "leftist" tendencies, such as failure to implement correctly the policy toward religion, which in certain cases involves moves to prohibit worship and even interfere with pagodas and churches. These mistakes and shortcomings are prejudicial to national unity and the success of the war of resistance and therefore must be redressed without delay.

8. Policy toward enemy-held areas

Enemy-occupied areas are those places where our people are subjected to the enemy's barbarous persecution and massacre. There the enemy plunder the people's property, set up a puppet administration and a puppet army and train personnel for the control of the people. They want to turn these regions into safe rear areas for reactionary forces and to use them as springboards to attack the free zones.

Our policy toward enemy-held areas is to liberate the people there from the colonialist and feudal yoke and wrest back the whole territory, encourage the people in these areas to participate in and support the war of resistance, harass and carry out sabotage activities against the enemy, never let them live in peace. We must open guerrilla fronts behind the enemy lines and get the people in enemy-held areas to coordinate actions with the people in the rest of the country so as to step up the nation-wide war of resistance. Whenever the main forces from the free zones attack enemy-held areas, our countrymen there must rise up to struggle and join in the fighting against the aggressors according to each area's capacity.

Our Party's policy toward enemy-held areas is to unite with people of all walks of life there and urge them to take part in the war of resistance or in pro-resistance organizations to fight against French colonialism. The Party must make use of all capabilities — legal, semi-legal and clandestine — to organize the masses and lead them to struggle. The Party must integrate the forms of economic and cultural struggle with the forms of political and military struggle.

The objective of our struggle is to unite the people and lead them to fight against the enemy's exploiting and oppressive policies, to win back their rights and daily interests and coordinate actions with the free zones.

While leading the people's struggle, it is necessary to observe the following guidelines :

Firstly, that struggle should be appropriate, useful and well planned. This means that while waging the struggle, our objectives must be comprehensible to the majority of the masses so that they will respond to our call and follow our lead. We must be certain of success, win complete or partial victory, and know when to stop the struggle[1]. We must base our actions on the balance of forces between us and the enemy and call a halt to the struggle at the right moment so as to preserve the ranks of the masses.

Secondly, we must protect our cadres, maintain and develop our revolutionary bases, and help the people in enemy-held areas to carry on their struggle and at the same time create better conditions for them to coordinate their actions when the crucial moments arrive.

We must oppose rightist tendencies, such as hesitation, reluctance to do propaganda work, and to organize and lead the masses to struggle, failure to recognize the time to change the direction of the struggle and go on to more advanced forms of organization and struggle when conditions permit. At the same time, we must overcome "leftist" tendencies, such as complacency and wishful thinking, underestimation of the enemy, indulging in adventurist exploits

1. We are talking about struggles for daily interests.

without a sound understanding of the way in which struggle should be conducted in enemy-held areas. The tendency to underestimate the importance of activities in these areas, particularly in the towns and cities, and the slackening of guerrilla warfare behind the enemy lines must be combated.

With regard to the organizations of the puppet administration, wherever we have a solid political basis and our forces are stronger than the enemy's, we must resolutely destroy these organizations. But in the areas where conditions are not so favourable, we must give careful consideration to matters of time and degree, and take advantage of the organizations of the puppet administration while at the same time setting up secret organs of people's power to prepare for the complete destruction of the local puppet administration.

With regard to Vietnamese collaborators of various kinds, severe warnings must be issued and, if necessary, due punishment must be meted out to them. However, we must distinguish between the downright traitors and those people who have been deceived or coerced by the enemy. The ringleaders must be punished, while we must appeal to and try to persuade those who have been led astray to mend their ways and cross over to the people's side.

With regard to the functionaries of the puppet regime, we must discriminate between the top officials whose interests are tied to the enemy's and the poorer rank-and-file employees who only want to earn their living. For these two kinds of people, propaganda and persuasion should be used. For top officials, warnings and even punishment are necessary, while the lower officials should be awakened by persistent explanations.

With regard to the puppet soldiers, generally speaking agitation work is necessary to arouse their patriotism so that they will turn their guns against French troops and puppet officers and either come over to our side bringing with them their weapons or desert. Puppet soldiers taken prisoner by our forces should not be humiliated or maltreated. However, it is necessary to distinguish between those who have been forcibly drafted into the puppet army and gangsters and bandits. With regard to the former, appeals, propaganda and persuasion are necessary. For the latter, punishment must be considered.

With regard to the mass organizations set up by the enemy, ways and means must be found to infiltrate our men into them so as to mobilize and persuade the people, and isolate the leaders and then wipe them out when conditions permit and when this proves to be a necessary step.

We must seek to destroy the stores and depots and technical equipment of the enemy, but before taking such action we must ask ourselves : will this act of destruction cause any damage to the enemy's aggressive war and strike fear and confusion into their ranks ; will the masses in the enemy-held areas sympathize with us ? It is better not to undertake acts of destruction without careful calculation. And we should always bear in mind that go-slows are a good moderate form of sabotage.

We must be prepared to take over newly-liberated areas, particularly towns and cities, to rally the people and give them peace of mind and confidence, restore the economy

and culture, maintain public order and security, keep watch for and get rid of enemy secret agents and provide against enemy air raids and attempts at reoccupation.

Before pulling out from an area, a city or a provincial capital, the enemy has often shot our patriots and destroyed stores and technical equipment. We must take timely measures to protect political prisoners and the people's lives and property, defend factories, offices, stores, and means of communications and transport, as well as technicians and skilled workers, for the future rehabilitation of our national economy.

To carry out this policy, attention must be paid to the following points :

1. We must attach as much importance to the work done in enemy-held areas as to that undertaken in the free zones. More tested and capable cadres experienced in underground activities are needed to take charge of enemy-occupied areas, including towns and cities.

2. Cadres should be concentrated on political, economic and military centres and along the main communication lines to build firm bases there.

3. We must closely coordinate and unite the army, people and the administration under the Party's leadership in all activities in enemy-held areas in accordance with definite plans and delegation of tasks so as to avoid disagreement and overlapping of work.

4. We must closely coordinate our leadership of the mass struggle with the building of grassroots organizations.

Agitation work among the people to struggle must proceed at the same time as the protection of our bases and cadres and the strengthening of our international solidarity.

5. The forms of propaganda, organization and struggle in enemy-held areas should vary in accordance with the situation and conditions at each moment in each area.

The art of mass agitation in enemy-occupied areas consists in proceeding from the specific conditions of each moment and each area and cleverly coordinating legal and illegal forms of struggle, military and political forms, and regional drives with nation-wide movements.

6. We must sum up experience gained in enemy-occupied areas and discuss and popularize them quickly.

9. Policy toward foreign nationals

At present, a number of foreign nationals are living in enemy-held cities, while others are working or doing business in the free areas. Most of them are of Chinese nationality.

Our policy toward foreign residents in our country is not so simple. It must suit both the foreign nationals living in the free zones and those living in enemy-held areas. Our policy toward people coming from socialist and people's democratic countries differs from that toward nationals of capitalist countries. These policies must serve the interests of our patriotic war against the French colonialist aggressors, as well as the struggle of the world's people for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

Because they lack a full understanding of the complex character of our policy toward foreign nationals, particularly

an insufficient grasp of the relations between this policy and the tasks of our resistance war, and because they do not proceed from the above viewpoint in considering the problem, some of our cadres have made mistakes in dealing with the question of foreign nationals, especially the question of Chinese residents. Some comrades hold that an "autonomous administrative area of Chinese residents" should be set up and this while the French colonialists and secret agents of Chiang Kai-shek are actively seeking to sow enmity between the Chinese residents and the Vietnamese people and to instigate the Chinese residents to oppose the Vietnamese patriotic war.

In some localities, disputes about the nationality problem have taken place because Vietnamese cadres have tried to force the Chinese residents there to renounce their nationality and adopt Vietnamese citizenship, or because the Chinese themselves have distributed Chinese nationality "certificates" to Chinese ethnic minorities who are not Chinese residents in Viet Nam.

In other places, the Chinese residents have turned their "Management Association" into an autonomous administration existing alongside or even in opposition to the administrative office of the Vietnamese people in these localities.

On the other hand, a number of Vietnamese cadres have tried to force Chinese residents to join the Vietnamese mass organizations, to make contributions and perform military duties incumbent upon Vietnamese citizens. All these mistakes have had an adverse influence upon the friendly relations between Viet Nam and China.

To avoid errors in dealing with foreign nationals, our Party and Government should adopt a practical and suitable policy toward these people.

With regard to citizens from socialist and people's democratic countries, they may enjoy the same rights as the Vietnamese citizens, if they so desire, and if their governments agree with ours on that matter. At the same time, propaganda and persuasion must be carried out to induce them to undertake voluntarily the same duties as the Vietnamese and to take part in or support the resistance war of the Vietnamese people.

As regards people of other foreign nationalities, we undertake to protect their lives and property, to let them live and earn their living on an equal footing with the Vietnamese, on condition that they abide by the laws of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

With regard to foreign revolutionaries taking refuge in Viet Nam, we recognize their right to seek political asylum and to enjoy all such advantages as do other foreign residents, and to receive protection and assistance.

On the other hand, any foreign resident who is opposed to our people's administration, collaborates with the enemy or interferes with the Vietnamese people's lives and property, or disturbs public order and security, shall be severely punished under the laws of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

These policies must be applied to foreign residents in the free zones and will be applied to those in the enemy-held areas once they have been liberated. For the time being, we must encourage foreign residents in enemy-held areas to support the Vietnamese people's patriotic war or at least to show

a sympathetic neutral attitude toward our people's struggle. We must also help them to set up anti-French organizations to defend their daily interests and coordinate actions with foreign residents in the free zones in support of the Vietnamese resistance war and in defence of world peace and democracy.

10. Foreign policy

Our foreign policy is imbued with a national and democratic character, with the spirit of patriotism and proletarian internationalism. The basic principle of this policy is to defend the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, support the liberation movements in colonial and semi-colonial countries, defend peace and democracy in the world and oppose war-seeking and aggressive imperialism, closely unite with the Soviet Union, China and other people's democratic countries and establish friendly relations with all countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

With this as our fundamental line, we are determined to carry our resistance war through to the end, so as to wipe out the French colonialists and defeat the US interventionists. We must closely unite with the French and American working people in the struggle against French and US imperialism. Active assistance must be given to the liberation wars of the Khmer and Lao peoples and to the struggle of other nations for independence and freedom.

Friendly relations with the Soviet Union, China and other people's democracies must be constantly strengthened. We are ready to establish diplomatic relations with all countries on

the basis of equality, mutual respect of each other's sovereignty, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

People's diplomacy should be widely developed.

Vietnamese residents in foreign countries, especially in Thailand and France, should be protected.

Foreign residents in Viet Nam, particularly those who have been hunted by the reactionary governments in their own countries and on account of their struggle for peace, independence, democracy and socialism have been forced to take temporary refuge in Viet Nam, must be protected.

Looking back on the work we have done over the past few years in the diplomatic field, we have found that thanks to the efforts of our entire people, to the wise policy of our Party, our Government and President Ho Chi Minh, and to the active help of fraternal countries, our people have achieved considerable success. The recognition of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam by the Soviet Union, China and other people's democratic countries and their active support of the Vietnamese people's resistance have been the greatest diplomatic achievement of our people over the recent years.

However, we still have many shortcomings. Lacking cadres, we have not yet been able to reinforce our existing diplomatic service or to expand our diplomatic efforts to advantage. Because of our still insufficient grasp of people's diplomacy, we have not yet worked out practical plans for resolutely overcoming difficulties and obstacles in the way of our people's diplomacy. We have not kept close watch over the diplomatic schemes and manœuvres of the French colonialists and the puppet administration so as to thwart them in time.

The training of diplomatic cadres, which has just started, is still done on a small scale and is not yet sufficiently practical.

To step up our diplomatic activities in keeping with the requirements of the present and the future, we must do our best to overcome these shortcomings and give special attention to the following points :

1. To expand diplomatic services and enhance diplomatic relations with fraternal socialist and people's democratic countries.

2. To give active help to the Khmer and Lao peoples' wars of resistance.

3. To work out plans to follow and expose in time the schemes and machinations of the French colonialists and the puppet administration in other countries, particularly in Southeast Asia.

4. To strengthen our militant solidarity with the French and American peoples in order later to work out some effective forms of coordination in the struggle against French and US imperialism.

5. To develop people's diplomacy, to take part in wide international campaign and strengthen relations between the democratic mass organizations of the Vietnamese people and the democratic mass organizations of the rest of the world's people.

6. To do our best to train and foster diplomatic cadres. To select politically reliable cadres and to train these

politically, ideologically, culturally and professionally to become qualified diplomatic cadres with high professional, moral and cultural standards.

7. To heighten our revolutionary vigilance in diplomatic work and to avoid falling into the ways of formalistic bourgeois diplomacy.

11. Give all-out support to the Khmer and Lao revolutions

The Vietnamese revolution has close links with the Khmer and Lao revolutions.

Since 1930, when Indochina was still a French colony, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos have fought side by side against French colonialism, under the leadership of the working class and its party, the Indochinese Communist Party. Now, the revolutionary movements of the three Indochinese countries have developed and all three nations have matured. The time has come to realize clearly that the revolutions undertaken by the three Indochinese peoples are the revolutions of three separate countries. The general revolutionary task of the three countries is to oppose imperialism, but there are many concrete differences.

The three peoples have been closely bound together in opposing their common enemies, the French colonialists and the US interventionists. This is very good. In their protracted struggle, the three peoples will have to cooperate for a long time. The present cooperation is aimed at carrying on the wars of resistance to win real independence and unity while long-term post-war cooperation will aim at giving mutual assistance so as to advance together along the road of people's democracy.

It is the Vietnamese people's duty to give active help to the fraternal Khmer and Lao people in their wars of resistance and must closely coordinate their actions with these peoples.

We must help the Khmer and Lao revolutions materially and morally, especially in training cadres and in passing on fighting experiences to them.

We must help the Khmer people strengthen and develop their Itsarak Association and the Lao people to consolidate and develop their Itsara[1] Association.

We must help the peoples of these two countries to build up their revolutionary bases, build and develop their people's armed forces, and build, consolidate and develop their anti-imperialist national and democratic power.

Together with the Khmer and Lao peoples, we must strive to set up a united front of the Indochinese peoples against imperialist aggression.

To fulfil these tasks, we must overcome and avoid wrong ideas and attitudes harmful to the solidarity between the three countries.

We must overcome the self-centered attitude of some Vietnamese cadres who only want to use the Cambodian and Lao revolutions for the benefit of the Vietnamese revolution or who only care for the Vietnamese revolution and do not give sufficient assistance to the Cambodian and Lao revolutions.

---

1. Both *Itsarak* and *Itsara* mean *freedom*.

We should help the Khmer and Lao peoples not to rely on Viet Nam for assistance on the one hand and not to doubt the sincerity of the assistance of the Vietnamese people on the other.

We should combat prejudices stemming from narrow-minded nationalism, and oppose the schemes of French colonialism, US imperialism and their stooges to divide our three nations. Overcoming all difficulties and obstacles, the three peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos will surely win glorious victory in their revolutionary cause.

12. Make an active contribution to the struggle for peace, democracy and national independence of the world's people

Viet Nam has become a forward outpost of the world front for peace and democracy in Southeast Asia.

The resistance war of the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists and US interventionists is an integral part of the struggle for peace, democracy and national independence in the world.

The Vietnamese people's resistance has driven the French aggressors into a quagmire, drained France's economic and financial resources, and weakened the forces of French imperialism, thus providing the French people with more favourable conditions to defend their national independence and win more democratic liberties. Viet Nam's war of resistance is encouraging the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial peoples for independence and freedom. It has frustrated the scheme of US imperialism to turn our country into a strategic base in preparation for a new world war. It has made a

substantial contribution to the struggle of the world's peoples against war-seeking imperialism, for peace, democracy and national independence.

Does this mean, however, that we have already fulfilled our obligations toward the world's people ? No. It is necessary to recognize that we still have many shortcomings to overcome in this matter. We often fail to give strong and timely response to the movements for the defence of world peace. Generally speaking, we have not yet clearly grasped the importance of the many other aspects of the struggle for peace, democracy and national independence throughout the world, apart from the form of armed resistance of our own people. The war situation has partly restricted our efforts in this direction.

To correct these shortcomings, we should :

— expose the US-led war mongering imperialists' schemes to prepare for a new world war ; at the same time, strengthen our people's belief both in the great strength and inevitable victory of the world movement for peace, democracy and national independence, and in the direct influence of this movement on our people's war of resistance.

— coordinate our people's struggle with this world movement for peace, democracy and national independence as it emerges in various countries ; develop all forms of conventional struggle to preserve world peace and judiciously coordinate these forms with our people's resistance war.

— Deeply and broadly instil into our people a spirit of proletarian internationalism combined with genuine patriotism ; oppose the bourgeois nationalist tendency to care only

about our own war of resistance and to neglect the general movement for peace, democracy and national independence of the world's people.

The Vietnamese war of resistance is playing an important role in the great struggle of the people throughout the world against war-seeking imperialism, and for peace, democracy and national independence. Although many difficulties and obtacles still lie ahead, the Vietnamese people are determined to fulfil their internationalist obligations towards the socialist and people's democratic countries and all peace and justice-loving peoples throughout the world.

*
* *

These are the concrete policies of our Party to be implemented in the immediate future.

We should carry out active propaganda work and explanations, and help our cadres, our Party members and our people at large to thoroughly understand these policies and to implement them with enthusiasm.

We firmly believe that it is in our power to do so because these policies are well-thought out and are completely consistent with the interests and most cherished aspirations of the great majority of our people.

PART FOUR

THE VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY

I — WHY DOES OUR PARTY TAKE THE NAME OF VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY ?

Dear comrades,

Above, I have presented to you the line and policies of the Vietnamese revolution. To lead our working class and the rest of our people in executing this line and these polices, we must have a vanguard party. In Viet Nam, this is our Party, and our Central Committee has proposed to this Congress that it be renamed *Dang Lao Dong Viet Nam* (The Viet Nam Workers' Party).

Where does the Viet Nam Workers' Party come from ? It springs from the Indochinese Communist Party. According to this proposal, the Viet Nam branch of the Indochinese Communist Party now emerges as a separate Party pertaining to Viet Nam, to be named "The Viet Nam Workers' Party".

Why do we have to form the Viet Nam Workers' Party ? The communique of the Central Committee issued in July 1950 has made this clear. Here I only give the main reasons :

The founding of the Viet Nam Workers' Party is aimed at reinforcing the leading role of the working class, strengthening the worker-peasant alliance, uniting the working

class more closely with other strata of the working people, and unifying the national and democratic forces under the Party's leadership so as to defeat the imperialists and their stooges, complete national liberation, develop the system of people's democracy, preserve peace and democracy in the world, and prepare conditions in our country for advancing to socialism.

Taking the name Viet Nam Workers' Party is a positive step, not only towards promoting the unity of our entire people in the struggle to defeat the aggressors, but also towards the unification of the anti-imperialist front of the peoples of Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos, against French and US imperialism and for complete independence.

A number of our cadres do not yet understand why we give our Party the name of "Viet Nam Workers' Party". Some of them even feel uneasy about it; they think of the many comrades who have given their lives for the Indochinese Communist Party and it makes them unhappy to have to part with that dear name. Others argue that the name of "Dang Lao Dong" is akin to "Labour Party", which is not liked by the masses in Britain, so why should we adopt a similar name?

Of course, to give up the name of "Indochinese Communist Party" is a sacrifice on our part. Every sacrifice is painful. But every sacrifice made in the interest of the revolution is a necessary sacrifice.

We should not proceed from a narrow sentimental standpoint to consider the naming of our Party, instead we should do it from the standpoint of the interests of the revolution.

As a matter of fact, our Party is not the only one to have

taken the name of "*Dang Lao Dong*". The revolutionary parties of the working class in such countries as Albania and Korea have also taken that name, and the revolution in these countries became stronger rather than weaker. The Labour Party in Britain is a reformist party. But "*lao dong*" (labour) is a beautiful word nevertheless.

We should not forget that in 1919, Lenin insisted that the genuine revolutionary parties of the working class should take the name of "Communist Party", and that these parties should conform to other requirements as well in order to be admitted to the Third International. He did so with the purpose of drawing a line between the vanguard parties of the revolutionary working class and those of reformist social-democratic persuasion.

Today, the situation has changed. The Soviet Union has triumphed over fascism and is marching in the vanguard of the world movement for peace and democracy. The Soviet Union is the first country in the world to succeed in building socialism. In many other countries, the communist and workers' parties have become genuine Marxist-Leninist parties, powerful parties of the masses, and the only leading or ruling forces of society. Many people's democratic countries have been set up and either are building a people's democratic system or have actually begun to build socialism.

The imperialists are facing a serious crisis and are preparing for a new world war. The rightist social-democrats have lost the confidence of the masses. Many intermediate social strata in various countries admire and love the Soviet Union and the communist parties, think highly of socialism and are pleased with people's democracy.

In this context, our Party does not need to take the name of "Communist Party", but can take other names, provided that it follows Marxism-Leninism, and communism is its ultimate goal. So the change of name of our Party is beneficial to the revolutionary movement, to the development of our Party into a powerful party of the masses, the strengthening of the Party's leading role and the reinforcement of the relationship between our Party and the masses.

II. — WHAT IS THE VIET NAM WORKERS' PARTY ?

Many comrades have asked themselves that question, not for sentimental reasons, but in order to get things elucidated. They have asked : What is the class character of the Viet Nam Workers' Party ? What is its ideological position, its organizational principle, and so on... ?

First of all, concerning its class character, we reaffirm that the Viet Nam Workers' Party is *the vanguard and general staff of the Vietnamese working class, the highest organization of the Vietnamese working class, and the leader of the revolution of the Vietnamese working class and people.*

President Ho Chi Minh said : "The Viet Nam Workers' Party must be the clearsighted, resolute and loyal leader of the working class and other labouring people of Viet Nam, of the Vietnamese nation" [1].

He also said : "Concerning its membership, the Viet Nam Workers' Party will admit workers, peasants and brain workers who have a really fine revolutionary ardour and awareness.

1. Ho Chi Minh, *Political Report* (1951).

"Concerning its ideology, the Viet Nam Workers' Party follows Marxism-Leninism.

"Concerning its organization, the Viet Nam Workers' Party follows democratic centralism.

"With regard to discipline, the Viet Nam Workers' Party must have an iron discipline which is at the same time a self-imposed discipline.

"With regard to the law of its development, the Viet Nam Workers' Party applies the method of criticism and self-criticism.

"Concerning its immediate objectives, the Viet Nam Workers' Party unites and leads the entire people to bring the war of resistance to complete victory, win back complete independence and unity, leads the entire people to achieve new democracy and to prepare the way for socialism" [1].

As we can see, the Viet Nam Workers' Party is a new type of party of the Vietnamese working class, a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party, because it has all the essential qualifications of such a Party :

— It takes Marxism-Leninism as its ideological basis ;

— It takes democratic centralism as its organizational principle ;

— It takes criticism and self-criticism as the law governing its development ;

— It keeps close contacts with the masses, etc.

As a matter of fact, the Viet Nam Workers' Party is not only the vanguard and general staff of the Vietnamese

1. Ho Chi Minh, *Political Report* (1951).

working class, but also the vanguard and the common general staff of the Vietnamese working people and nation as a whole. The reason is that the Vietnamese working class has become the ruling class. It represents our nation. The working class is the staunchest and most advanced part of our labouring people and our nation. At present, our working class and other labouring people, our nation as a whole, share one and the same desire : *to bring the resistance war to complete success and build an independent, democratic, reunified, prosperous and powerful Viet Nam.*

Carrying forward the valiant tradition and great cause of the Indochinese Communist Party, the Viet Nam Workers' Party now has the task of leading the protracted resistance war of our nation to complete victory, leading the construction and development of the Vietnamese people's democratic society, leading our country toward socialism, helping the Khmer and Lao peoples to carry on their national liberation revolution and achieve people's democracy, thus contributing to supporting the struggle of the people of the world for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

There is nothing for us to worry about. Let us close our ranks within the Viet Nam Workers' Party, hold high the banner of Marxism-Leninism, and march forward.

III. — BUILDING, STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING THE PARTY

To define the tasks and guidelines for building, strengthening and developing the Viet Nam Workers' Party, we must first of all clearly understand the characteristics of the Indochinese Communist Party over the past 20 years of its growth.

What are these characteristics ?

The Indochinese Communist Party was born, has grown up in a backward agricultural country. That is why most of its members come from the peasant class and the petty bourgeoisie, while the working class makes up a very small section of the Party, and the cultural standard of most Party members is low. The bases of the Party both in the factories and the countryside are important. The non-proletarian character of many Party members is still obvious.

The Indochinese Communist Party was born and has grown up in a colonial country. The French colonialists and the feudal kings and mandarins resorted to ruthless persecution, using barbarous methods to kill our cadres and Party members. The building and development of our Party organizations has been disrupted at times and in some places. Our Party has always been short of cadres, particularly able cadres.

Our Party has inherited the Vietnamese nation's tradition of ardent patriotism and unity in the struggle against foreign invasion. The spirit of valiant sacrifice and persistent struggle of our cadres and party members is, in general, very high, but their style of work is still inappropriate and of an unsophisticated character.

Although our Party is still young, it has experienced many stages of struggle : illegal struggle from the day of its founding in 1930 until 1936 ; semi-illegal struggle in the period of the Indochinese Democratic Front (1936-1939) ; illegal struggle again during the Second World War (1939-1945) ; legal struggle after the successful August Revolution of 1945 ;

semi-legal struggle in the free zones after the Party "declared itself dissolved"; and illegal struggle in the present enemy-held areas.

Through these different stages of activity, our Party has acquired rich experience in mass struggle, struggle within the councils of people's representatives, military and non-military struggle, and in struggle in the political, economic and cultural fields. Our Party has gathered particularly rich experience since it took over power and began to lead our patriotic war.

Our Party has quickly matured politically and has accumulated much practical experience, but it still has shortcomings: its line and major policies are, in general, correct, but some of its practical policies are still inadequate. We have accumulated much experience, but we have not yet applied ourselves enough to drawing conclusions from them. We still devote most of our time to practical day-to-day affairs and do not give adequate attention to theoretical and ideological work. The tasks assigned to our Party cadres and members grow ever heavier, yet their theoretical and professional standard is generally speaking still too low.

Since the August Revolution of 1945, more especially since the outbreak of our war of resistance, although the Party has carried out half-open activities, its influence among the people has increased daily. Party membership has increased unprecedentedly. Meanwhile, the education of Party members has fallen behind the numerical development of the Party. Many opportunist elements who, eager to gain important positions for themselves, have joined the Party, have taken advantage of their Party membership to work for personal ends. The

number of petty-bourgeois elements in the Party has increased. The Party has grown in numbers but the quality of its members is not up to the mark. Such evils as individualism, bureaucracy, authoritarian attitudes, corruption, and loose morals, have developed.

The Indochinese Communist Party, born after the successful October Revolution and growing up in a country close to China and having direct relations with France, has been deeply influenced and has been assisted by the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, China and France. Our Party has gained much valuable experience from these three fraternal Parties.

The Indochinese Communist Party has a clear-sighted leader with rich experience in struggle — President Ho Chi Minh. He is the leader of our working class and also of our nation as a whole. Thanks to his great prestige and clear-sighted leadership, our Party has always preserved its internal unity. Since it took power, although it has chosen to withdraw into underground activities, our Party has maintained sole leadership over our armed forces, people and administration.

The Viet Nam Workers' Party has inherited all these characteristics from the Indochinese Communist Party. That is why, to understand clearly the tasks and direction for building, strengthening and developing the Viet Nam Workers' Party, we should carefully study these characteristics.

Basing ourselves on the characteristics of the development of our Party, we can see that the present tasks and direction for building, strengthening and developing the Party consist

in developing the strong points of our Party, overcoming mistakes and shortcomings and striving to solve the following contradictions :

— The political line of the Party is correct, but in practice its policies are still fraught with shortcomings ;

— The responsibilities of the Party are heavy, but the theoretical and professional standard of our cadres and Party members is still very limited ;

— The number of Party members has increased rapidly but the quality of many of them is still below standard ;

— The requirements of our political responsibilities are high, but the organizational level of our Party is not yet up to standard ;

— The volume of work to be done is increasing daily, yet the training of cadres does not keep pace with it.

These contradictions demonstrate the difficulties the Party is going through in its development at the present stage.

That is why, in order to build, strengthen and develop the Party, the following things should be done :

1. *To train and foster cadres and Party members.* The study of Marxism-Leninism, the Party's line and policies as well as education in general culture should be organized for cadres and Party members. Theory must be combined with practice in training work, in order to help learners to know how to apply the Marxist-Leninist theory and the Party's line and policies to their own situation and to work from the concrete conditions and the characteristics of the movement in each period and in each place without falling into the errors of either opportunism or dogmatism. We must

select outstanding people in the emulation movement for production, in fighting and in work and give them special training. We can right away select a number of Party members from among workers, peasants and soldiers who have been tested in the patriotic movement, and train them into cadres. Attention must also be given to selecting and training women cadres and cadres of ethnic minorities.

We should do our best to train our military cadres so that they can firmly control the armed forces, command them well, fight unremittingly and defeat the aggressors. We must train economic, financial, scientific and technical cadres, develop economy and culture, ensure the success of the war of resistance and improve the people's living standards.

2. With regard to ideological work, criticism and self-criticism must be stepped up, and struggle must be waged on two fronts against both rightist and "leftist" tendencies. We must uphold the correct line of the Party, and raise the revolutionary qualities of our cadres and Party members.

Rightist tendencies are manifested, for instance, in the underestimation of our forces and overestimation of the enemy's forces, reluctance to face a long and hard struggle ; a war-weariness that leads to the illusion that the war could soon be ended through a settlement reached with French colonialism. The lack of determination in implementing our Party's land reform policy is another rightist sign, due to the erroneous view that during the resistance war, only the reduction of land rent and interest rates, and the postponement or cancellation of debts should be carried out, and that radical land reform aimed at giving land to the tiller cannot yet be even partially accomplished. Meanwhile, in the policy

toward the National United Front, rightist cadres tend to unite indiscriminately without recognising the need to struggle against mistakes and errors in our allies within the Front, cajoling them without criticizing them or helping them to make progress.

"Leftist" tendencies are manifested, for example, in the belief that the people's democratic dictatorship at this stage is already proletarian dictatorship, and in the desire of some cadres to carry out the policy of socialist transformation of the national economy and of socialist construction prematurely. They want to "skip stages", thinking that the present stage of people's democratic revolution is also a stage of socialist revolution. They overlook the fact that this has to be a long-drawn-out war of resistance and want to go in for a quick fight and quick victory. They overestimate our capabilities and underestimate the enemy's, so they tend to carry out the general mobilization order lopsidedly, concentrating the main forces too soon and too quickly, thus producing an adverse effect on the development of guerrilla warfare in their localities.

Alongside the criticism of these errors, we should struggle against bad habits and practices within the Party such as corruption, waste, loose morals, bureaucracy and carelessness in organization and discipline. It is very necessary to raise the quality of our Party and foster the revolutionary qualities and virtues of our cadres and Party members.

3. We must step up the organizational work of the Party, so as to promote Party influence in factories, rural areas, army units and public offices. But, while doing so, we must

constantly ensure the integrity and solidity of Party organizations. Our guideline for Party-building is to attach more importance to the quality of Party members than to their number. No emulation movement aimed at enlarging Party membership should be encouraged because at this stage this might render the Party's organization more complicated.

We must raise the organizational capabilities of our Party to be equal to its political responsibilities, making organizational work capable of ensuring the implementation of the party's line and policies, and pushing forward the war of resistance toward victory. Attention must be given to improving the quality of Party organization, improving our style of work so as to reduce bureaucracy and do away with our casual method of work, though at the same time taking care to avoid formalism.

After a policy has been worked out and directives issued, the question of organization is of decisive importance for its implementation. Therefore, special importance should be attached to organizational work, first of all, to the choice and preparation of cadres, and tasks should be clearly formulated and assigned to well-chosen cadres. The coordination of various forms of organization must be carried out in accordance with the conditions in each place; changes in these organizational plans should be made in accordance with the ebbs and flows of the movement, and the organization for implementing proposed policies should be coordinated with the control and supervision of their implementation.

In organizing the implementation of the policies of our Party and Government, two methods can be applied :

1. With regard to the ordinary policies, we only make them known and direct all levels and branches to apply them in a general way ;

2. With regard to major policies and directives, we should, as a first step, set up experimental areas in which to try out these policies and directives, and through the experience obtained, we can then go on to organize a broader implementation of these policies and directives.

3. In both cases, we should review the work that has been done, commend good work and correct mistakes, make observations on cadres and Party committees at all levels, and give appropriate rewards or if necessary punishment.

4. We must conduct investigations and studies so as to enrich our Party's experience and help it work out new and practical policies. We should sum up the experience of the Party on major questions so as to draw conclusions of a theoretical character and perfect the Party line. Only out of the experiences of mass struggle can we determine how far the Party's policies are right or wrong, and whether the Party's directives and resolutions are adequate or not. We must heed the opinions of the masses and learn from the creative experience of the masses to give them proper leadership.

The line and policies of our Party are not copied out of Marxist-Leninist classics or out of resolutions and directives of fraternal parties. Our Party must creatively apply Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country and work out its own line and policies. That is why our Party members must become imbued with Marxism-

Leninism while at the same time inquiring into and studying the objective situation in our country in every respect. Our Party's line and policies cannot be considered to have been worked out and laid down once and for all. Of course they are always subject to shortcomings in one respect or another. It is in the process of implementing them, however, that we can find out these shortcomings. The rich experience accumulated by the masses in implementing these policies will help correct these shortcomings of the Party. That is why it is necessary to inquire into and study the concrete situation and sum up the experience of both the Party and the people.

5. To build, strengthen and develop the Party politically, ideologically and organizationally, our Congress should decide upon the Party's new programme, lay down the line and policies of the Party for the present stage of the people's democratic revolution, and prepare conditions for advancing to the next stage, that of socialist revolution. At the same time, the Party constitution should be amended so as to meet the requirements of our tasks and responsibilities in the immediate future.

IV — PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH, THE FOUNDER, TEACHER AND LEADER OF OUR PARTY

Dear Comrades,

The revolutionary successes we have achieved to date have been possible thanks to the sacrifices made for the revolution by countless comrades and combatants, Party members and other people, who have overcome all difficulties and hardships to fulfil all revolutionary tasks assigned to them by

our Party. They are due for an important part to our great President Ho Chi Minh, the founder, teacher and leader of our Party.

President Ho Chi Minh founded the Viet Nam Young Revolutionaries' Association, a forerunner of the Indochinese Communist Party.

President Ho Chi Minh merged the first three communist organizations of Viet Nam — the Indochinese Communist Party (northern Viet Nam), the Indochinese Communist League (Central Viet Nam) and the Annamese Communist Party (southern Viet Nam) — into the Communist Party of Viet Nam which was later renamed the Indochinese Communist Party.

Since the Indochinese Communist Party came into being, whether at home or abroad, President Ho Chi Minh has always shown great concern for the Party, trained it into a new type of revolutionary Party of the working class, led it through all difficulties and dangers and caused it to win one victory after another.

He has personally trained cadres and Party members. He has set a bright example of industry, thrift, integrity, and uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and selflessness, of determination to struggle and absolute loyalty to the Party, the working class and the nation; of energy, perseverance, simplicity and modesty.

He has taught us to unite the whole Party, love our comrades and take care of our cadres, who constitute the most valuable asset of our Party and our State.

He has taught us to preserve broad national unity to carry on our protracted war of resistance.

He has taught us to use the method of criticism and self-criticism in the ideological struggle within the Party and the National United Front.

He has taught us to practise a careful style of work, to inquire into and study problems, keep in close contact with the mass movements, and avoid falling into errors of bureaucracy and authoritarianism.

He has taught us to associate revolutionary ardour with revolutionary realism in all things.

He has taught us to keep in close contact with the masses, believe in the masses, learn from the masses, but to lead them, coming forward and setting examples for people to follow, and never to tail after the masses.

He has taught us that to keep a close relationship with the masses, we should speak and write so as to be understood by the masses. He said that to lead the people, we must win their trust, admiration, and love.

He has taught us always to grasp the main objective in a sequence of operations, concentrate our strength and imagination on it, with the determination to achieve it at all costs and then to advance further.

He has taught us to combine ardent patriotism with genuine proletarian internationalism.

His most precious teaching is always to associate theory with practice, and creatively apply Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country.

Deeply imbued with Marxism-Leninism, he has judiciously applied it to every eventuality: he has always combined

strictness of principle with flexibility of tactics, and never let himself be deflected from revolutionary objectives by any immediate advantage.

He has taught us to work in such a way that our Party, when working out slogans and policies, should base itself not on rigid formulas learnt by heart, but on the specific conditions of the Vietnamese revolution together with the actual situation at home and abroad. He underscored the importance of studying the experiences of our country and at the same time learning selectively from the experiences of other countries.

He has taught us that whenever the situation has changed, new conditions for the revolutionary movement have appeared, and shifts have occurred in the ranks of our enemies as well as our allies, we should reconsider at once our revolutionary policies and slogans, basing our assessments on the new situation to work out revised directions, strategy and tactics, instead of sticking to outdated guidelines.

We have found that at each turning point of the Vietnamese revolution, President Ho Chi Minh has quickly put it on the right tack. Thanks to that, the boat of our Party has weathered many storms and steered clear of all rocks and rapids and forges ahead toward its goal. All these successes stem from the fact that he has always firmly held our compass : Marxism-Leninism.

We must do our best to learn from President Ho Chi Minh, the great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, unite single-mindedly around him, always uphold the banner of Marxism-Leninism, complete the liberation of our nation, develop people's democracy, and advance toward socialism.

CONCLUSION

Dear comrades,

To bring our revolution to success, and our war of resistance to victory, we must strive to consolidate our National United Front, our people's army and our people's power, and reinforce international solidarity. But most important of all, we must strengthen our Party, make it a pure and powerful Party with a Marxist-Leninist line and a correct programme suited to the new conditions of the revolution in our country. By so doing, we will be able to lead our entire people to carry on the patriotic war, defeat the aggressors, win independence and achieve national reunification, and firmly advance along the road of people's democracy, progressing towards socialism.

Numerous difficulties still lie ahead of us. We do not indulge in wishful thinking and self-complacency. However, it is our firm belief that under the leadership of our Party and President Ho Chi Minh, we will win total victory.

Wipe out the French colonialist aggressors !

Long live an independent, democratic, reunified, and prosperous Viet Nam !

Long live world peace and democracy !

Long live invincible Marxism-Leninism !

Long live the Viet Nam Workers' Party !

Long live President Ho Chi Minh !

THE PARTY'S POLICY CONCERNING THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT

(Speech delivered at the Congress of the National United Front, March 3, 1951)

Dear members of the Presidium,

Dear delegates,

First of all we wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the Central Committee of the Lien Viet Front (National United Front of Viet Nam — *Ed.*) for having warmly welcomed our Party's membership of the front. It is our duty, as a member of the Front, to present our Party's policy concerning the National United Front to you.

The imperialists have many methods they apply to maintain domination over the people of their own country and the colonial people, including repression, deception and division of the people.

What should our people do to win victory in the people's national democratic revolution, the revolution we are carrying out at present? In our opinion, it is necessary to foster the following, which constitute *factors for victory:*

— A powerful vanguard Party, with a correct political line;

— An anti-imperialist national united front;

— Liberation armed forces of the people;

— International solidarity; and some other factors.

The most important factor is *the vanguard Party* and *its correct political line.* With a correct line, the Party can gain the backing of the people. With the people's backing, we will achieve a National United Front, and build people's

liberation armed forces (because these forces spring from the people and are supported by the people) ; and with the people's armed forces, we can capture enemy weapons to fight back against the enemy. A correct line will win us foreign aid and assistance from friends abroad. A correct line must be laid down and firmly grasped by a *vanguard party* that leads the masses of the people to advance along the correct line to attain the goals of the revolution.

The French colonialists' aim in invading our country is to reimpose their colonial domination over our people, but our entire people are resolved to oppose them. For these reasons, the National United Front has been established to *concentrate the forces of our entire people on resisting the enemy and building our country, so as to win final victory.*

Our Front is a national front, not a people's front. Our National United Front is a united bloc comprising four classes : the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie, and a number of patriotic landlords. It is based on the worker-peasant alliance, and led by the working class. The Front is also a broad organization aimed at realizing unity of action, co-operation and mutual assistance between political parties, mass organizations, and democratic and patriotic personalities, to resist the common enemies of the nation — the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists and their clique of lackeys — so as to wrest back complete independence and freedom, and build a people's democratic Viet Nam, a new democracy.

The history of the Vietnamese revolution over the past twenty years and more has confirmed the leading role of

the Vietnamese working class in the revolution. Views that in Viet Nam the working class and the petty bourgeois intelligentsia are cooperating with each other in leading the revolution, or that the National United Front is leading the revolution, are both wrong.

This does not mean, however, that the National United Front is not important. The Front is one of the pillars of the administration. In the people's democracies of Eastern Europe, some people say : the people's democratic State has three pillars : the National United Front, the People's Council, and the State-run economic sector. In our country, all these three factors exist, but our State-run economic sector is still small, and our People's Councils are playing but an ordinary role. In contrast, we have a very solid pillar, *the Lien-Viet Front*, and a very powerful force, *the People's Army.*

We agree with the representative of the Viet Nam Democratic Party, who said : "The National United Front serves to back up the administration".

The Front is a pillar of the State, it serves as the backing of the administration. These two things are not contradictory. But to say, "The Front leads the administration", is not right, because the role of leading the Vietnamese revolution in general, and leading the people's administration in particular, belongs to the most revolutionary class in Viet Nam, the Vietnamese working class. The Vietnamese working class leads the revolution through its party, the Viet Nam Workers' Party.

Nor is it correct to say, "The Front is the master of the administration". Because the master of the administration is

the people. The Front is an organization uniting the people in support of the administration. The Front belongs to the people, so does the administration. In our people's democratic regime, each of these organizations has a definite role.

The policy of the National United Front is based on the principle : common progress through sincere unity, mutual concession, long-term cooperation and mutual help with a view to common progress.

A friend asks : "What then about the Communists' theory on class struggle ? Why are we talking about uniting the various classes of the people when we are engaged in class struggle ? "

Right. We are involved in class struggle. So long as society is divided into classes, there will be class struggle. But, in the face of our common enemies — the aggressors, the French imperialists and the US interventionists — in the face of the danger of atrocious war now threatening mankind, all strata of our people, all revolutionary classes in our country, are in the same position : they have no other way to safeguard their interests in a reasonable manner than to concentrate their forces on resisting the common enemies. They have no other way of resolving the class antagonisms in the country in a reasonable manner than to join forces and defeat the external enemies who have come to invade their country. For us, this war of resistance is an advanced form of national struggle and class struggle. The nation-wide war of resistance led by our working class against the foreign imperialist aggressors and their puppets, the collaborators who represent the pro-French feudal landlords and comprador bourgeois,

is in essence both a struggle for national liberation, and a class struggle whose spearhead is mainly directed to the outside.

To defeat the aggressor army, all strata of our people, all revolutionary classes in our country must unite. To unite, they must make mutual concessions. These concessions, however, must be made in keeping with principles : we should take the interests of the revolution, and the rights and interests of the people, as the criterion. Concessions are aimed at raising the revolutionary consciousness of the masses, bringing enthusiasm to the overwhelming majority of the people, so that thay take an active part in the patriotic war and in national construction.

We undertake to wage a protracted war of resistance. Our revolutionary struggle is a protracted one. After our patriotic war has come to an end, we will still have to fight against reactionary forces in the world and in our country. That is why we undertake to maintain long-term co-operation. We co-operate both during and after the war of resistance, we co-operate to fight the enemy and build our country. Our aim is to achieve an independent, unified, democratic, free, and prosperous Viet Nam, a people's democratic Viet Nam, a new democracy. That is why long-term co-operation among us is necessary.

How does the alliance between the various strata of the people, the revolutionary parties and the social classes within the National United Front manifest itself ? Not by empty words, but by *joint action*. Otherwise, the National United Front would no longer be a national united front, co-operation would be phony, and unity would only be given lip service.

In order to take joint action, the Front must have a common Political Programme based on the aims of national independence and people's democracy.

President Ho Chi Minh has propounded the policy of broad national unity. This policy is correct. What is broad national unity? In our opinion, broad national unity is broadly-based and far-reaching union. Broad national unity is not only a broad alliance of many elements, from the working class to democratic personalities and patriotic landlords, but also an alliance at the higher and the lower levels; an alliance between representatives of the various political parties, mass organizations, and social classes, an alliance between their leaders and an alliance among the organized as well as non-organized masses.

Alliance at the top level is neccessary. Alliance at the lower level is still more necessary. Alliance both at the higher and lower levels is not only necessary, but also the only right thing to do. Alliance at the higher level alone would not be advisable.

Broad national unity also means close unity based on the worker-peasant alliance. Only when it is based on the worker-peasant alliance can the National United Front be firm and strong.

The political parties and the mass organizations uniting with one another within the National United Front retain their independent organizations and are free to publicize their undertakings and lines, provided these are not contrary to the common Political Programme of the Front.

We have said that in order to preserve unity it is necessary to carry out criticism and internal struggle. Criticism

is a form of struggle. While struggling against the enemies, struggle among allies is also necessary. We must struggle against the enemy with weapons; struggle among allies within the Front is carried out through criticism. In other words, we criticize the enemy with guns and bullets, and criticize our allies with frank, friendly, sincere words, with the aim of helping one another to make progress, stimulating one another to fulfil our task of saving our country and our people.

A matter of special concern on the part of the delegates to this Congress is how to improve the work of the Front.

We very much welcome the current Congress of the National United Front, which is called upon to solve the following problems:

a) To achieve the merging of the Viet Minh and the Lien Viet on a nationwide scale.

b) To decide on the new Political Programme and Constitution of the Front;

c) To lay down immediate concrete tasks of the Front;

d) To improve the work style of the Front, etc.

The merging of the Viet Minh and the Lien Viet on a nationwide scale is closely linked with the working out of the Political Programme and new Constitution of the Front.

Clear drafts of this Programme and Constitution have already been made. Here we would only like to speak of the immediate tasks and the work style of the Front.

The immediate tasks of the Front, in our opinion, are:

1. To unite the entire people to fight the colonialist aggressors, to build our country, and struggle to defend peace

and democracy in the world. To unite the entire people, we must reconcile the interests of the various strata of the people in a reasonable manner, and create favourable conditions for uniting the various strata of the people within the Front.

2. To popularize the policy of the Front and of the Government among the whole population, so that the people clearly understand and make efforts to execute these policies.

3. To report the opinions and aspirations of the people to the administration at various levels ; to report the initiatives of the people or forward their observations and criticisms to the administration.

4. To mobilize and educate the people, so that they clearly understand their rights and duties, strive to fight the enemy and build the country, support the army, and support the people's administration.

5. To mobilize the masses to take part in the war of resistance and national construction in accordance with the slogan : let those who have money contribute money, those capable of labour contribute labour, those who have talents contribute their talents ; let everybody actively fulfil his or her duty, so as to defeat the aggressor army and build a new Viet Nam.

With regard to the improvement of the work style of the Front, from now on, when a question arises relating to the State plan, the people's welfare, the rights and interests of the social classes and the political parties and mass organizations, it should be brought up for discussion to find a solution. This is the way to deal with such matters as the salaries of workers and public employees, taxes, the agrarian policy, the patriotic emulation movement, compulsory

military service, general mobilization, mass education, hygiene and disease-prevention work, the maintenance of public order and security and the building of a new life style.

With regard to problems concerning each political party and mass organization, they should not be discussed in the Front, except when a party or organization requests that the Front make suggestions about how to solve these problems.

Some problems may be raised at the initiative of the member organizations of the Front for discussion in the Front. In this case, the Front will gather opinions, then mobilize the various strata of the people to implement its decisions, or make proposals to the administration about the relevant instructions to be issued.

Other problems may be brought up by the leading Party or the administration before the Front, in order to have its opinion about them.

The important thing is that the Front distinguish between what should be discussed, and what should not. Once the problem is brought under discussion, decisions must be taken ; and once decisions are taken, they must be carried out !

Now I would like to speak of the anti-imperialist front of the Indochinese peoples.

At present, the people of each country — Viet Nam, Cambodia (now renamed Kampuchea — *Ed.*) and Lao — have their own National United Front with their own political programme and Constitution. All these fronts are keeping in close touch with each other with the aim of establishing a United Front of the Indochinese Peoples against the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists.

Organizationally, each Front has its own independent organization, but acts according to a minimum anti-imperialist programme based on the principles of *equality, mutual assistance and cooperation, and mutual respect.* At the top, it is possible to organize a liaison organ of the three Fronts.

The present Lien Viet Front and the future Indochinese Peoples' Anti-Imperialist Front are an integral part of the world front for Peace and Democracy against warmongering imperialism.

Above is a summary of our opinion on the question of the National United Front in the present conditions. We will make proposals in the commissions for the delegates to discuss and decide on.

Dear delegates,

We Vietnamese have a tradition of unity and struggle against the aggressors, for independence and freedom. During the past centuries our forbears developed that fine tradition in order to win victory. Today we have still more advantageous conditions in which to develop this tradition and win complete victory .

— Defeat the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists !

— The National United Front against the French colonialist aggressors will win !

— Long live independent, democratic and unified Viet Nam !

— Long live President Ho Chi Minh !

IMPLEMENTING THE LAND REFORM

Report delivered at the First National Conference of the Viet Nam Workers' Party (November 14-23, 1953)

Respected President Ho Chi Minh,

Dear comrades,

Our people are waging a war of resistance and are at the same time engaged in national construction. At this juncture, everything must be geared to the patriotic war and national construction in order to ensure their victory. The land reform we are undertaking is aimed at precisely this goal.

Our people, the overwhelming majority of whom are peasants, are making revolution, are fighting against the aggressors, and are building the country. To bring both our patriotic war and our national construction to victory, we must wipe out the imperialist aggressors and liberate our peasants from the feudalist yoke.

Land reform is the immediate and major method of accelerating the development of the national economy. Only if the national economy is developed can supplies to the front and the rear area be guaranteed, the people's strength be replenished, and only then will we have enough manpower and material resources to carry on a protracted war of resistance until final victory.

President Ho Chi Minh has laid down two central, immediate and closely-related tasks : to fight hard against the enemy and to implement the land reform. My report deals with the essence of the land reform policy and the method of carrying out land reform in our country in the present conditions of the war of resistance.

I

WHY DO WE HAVE TO CARRY OUT LAND REFORM DURING THE WAR OF RESISTANCE?

President Ho Chi Minh's report has brought out the following important points:

— The line of the Vietnamese revolution points clearly to the necessity of carrying out land reform.

— Our people's war of resistance requires that we carry out land reform.

— The peasant masses and our people as a whole demand a land reform.

To carry out land reform at this moment is thus consistent with both the interests and the desire of our people.

Some people have raised queries:

1. In view of the necessity of uniting the entire people to overthrow the imperialists, does our present undertaking to carry out a land reform to overthrow the feudal landlord class, harm the policy of uniting the people to fight the aggressors?

2. Why don't we concentrate all our forces on wiping out the imperialist aggressors, instead of scattering our forces, and weakening our resistance by carrying out a land reform.

To answer these questions, we must consider the problem from its origin.

1. THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN VIET NAM

Feudal economy is still relatively well anchored in our country. Ours is a predominantly agricultural economy. Under the French colonialist rule, capitalism came into being in Viet Nam, and the former entirely feudal society has changed into a society with a colonial and semi-feudal character in which the forms of feudal exploitation are still very common. Land is concentrated mostly in the hands of a small number of Vietnamese, the feudal landlord class, and partly in the hands of the French colonialists. The peasants, who constitute the majority of the population, have used their labour to clear land and transform it into crop fields, and have always played the worthy role of carrying out production to feed the nation and safeguarding their homeland since the founding of our country. And yet, they have either no land or not enough, due to ruthless oppression and exploitation by the imperialists and the feudalists.

Our country has more than 5 million hectares of land under rice and subsidiary crops (not counting land owned by the colonialists planted with industrial crops such as tea, coffee and rubber... If we put at 5 million the total number of households in our country, then each of them could have almost three *mau* (1 *mau* = 3,600 square metres — *Ed*). But as things are, half the households in Viet Nam own no land at all.

Of these 5 million hectares and more, the French colonialists own 9%, communal and semi-communal land accounts for 10.2%, land owned by the Catholic Church makes up 1%, and Vietnamese landlords own almost 50%.

Thus, the French colonialists, the Vietnamese landlords and the Church own up to 60% of cultivated land in our country. This does not include the land producing other resources, such as coffee and rubber plantations and timber forests, owned by the big Vietnamese landlords and the colonialists.

Communal and semi-communal land in Viet Nam has been appropriated and exploited by the feudal landlords for generations, and can therefore be considered as feudal land. Roughly speaking the colonialists and the landlord class hold more than 70% of land in Viet Nam; whereas the peasants, who make up 90% of the population, own less than 30%.

2. TWO MAJOR OBSTACLES TO THE ADVANCE OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY

The landlord class, which constitutes less than 5% of the population, is exploiting 90% of the population, the peasantry, by means of high land rents, usurious interest rates on loans, etc. This does not include the forms of exploitation of an entirely medieval character in areas inhabited by the ethnic minorities (with the regime of *tho ty, lang dao, phia tao, ca ra*[1]...). The rural despots, landlords who hold power in the countryside, ruthlessly manhandle the peasants, rob them of their land and their homes and even of their wives. How inhuman the feudal regime of oppression and exploitation is!

Our peasants have vehemently condemned this regime and no longer want to live under it.

1. Local tyrants (*Translator*).

Since the beginning of French imperialist rule in Viet Nam, the Vietnamese landlord class has relied on the imperialist forces to oppress and exploit the Vietnamese peasants still more harshly. A considerable number of peasants toil all the year round and yet do not have enough to eat and to wear. Under the colonialist and semi-feudal regime, when any natural calamity occurred enormous numbers of labouring peasants would die of starvation. At the end of 1944 and early in 1945, two million of our peasants died of starvation not only due to savage exploitation by the feudal landlord class, but also because the Japanese fascists and the French imperialists brutally robbed them of their resources. This has aroused deep hatred in the hearts of every peasant in our country.

Feudal exploitation has also meant that the landlord class has so far "sat in the cool shade and eaten out of golden bowls", feeling no need to improve farming techniques. They have even objected to technical improvements, and arrested the development of productive forces. No wonder that our harshly exploited peasants neither show any enthusiasm for increasing production, nor manage to improve techniques.

The peasants are the largest body of consumers in our country, yet they are the poorest stratum. They lack everything, their purchasing power has decreased, home markets have shrunk, and consequently it is difficult for industry and trade in our country to develop. The under-development of industry and trade in their turn affect agriculture, providing it with insufficient conditions to develop rapidly.

The French imperialists, who hold the monopoly of heavy industry, are unwilling to develop heavy industry in our

country. They also have the monopoly of imports and exports and control our home market, and use their position to hinder development of Vietnamese industry and trade.

The French imperialists have followed a policy of pauperizing our peasants, and have joined the feudal landlords in robbing our peasants of their land. They protect the landlords in their harsh exploitation of the peasants, driving many peasants to destitution. As a result, the imperialists obtain more dirt-cheap manpower, exploit the working class more ruthlessly, and reap more profits.

In addition, the French imperialists have sought to maintain the regime of feudal exploitation to increase their exploitation of the labouring people of our country. Since the feudal forms of exploitation suit their purposes, they see no need to improve techniques in keeping with modern scientific developments. The imperialists and feudalists have hindered the development of our national economy, and hindered the growth of the productive forces of our society.

The imperialists and feudalists are the two major obstacles to the advance of Vietnamese society at present. The Vietnamese people must smash both these forces, and clear the way for the development of Vietnamese society. We must smash the colonial and feudal shackles, liberate our productive forces, liberate our people, liberate our nation.

3. ABOUT THE TASKS AND CHARACTER OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Imperialism and feudalism, the two most reactionary forces, have dominated Viet Nam in collusion for more than 80 years now. It was the feudalists of the Nguyen dynasty

who sold our country to the French imperialists, and who became the puppet administration, lackeys to the French imperialists who then occupied our country. The imperialists used the feudalists as a prop to invade Viet Nam : the Vietnamese feudalists licked their boots to maintain their selfish interests. The Bao Dai puppet administration and the clique of puppets now in power represent the feudal landlord class and the comprador bourgeois, who are actively opposing our patriotic war, betraying our country and doing harm to our people. The imperialists and feudalists are the two main targets of the Vietnamese revolution, the two main enemies of the Vietnamese people.

To defeat the imperialists we must at the same time overthrow the feudalists. Inversely, to overthrow the feudalists we must at the same time defeat the imperialists. The anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks are closely linked to each other, *and are inseparable.*

We must combat the idea that the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks are separate and the idea that imperialism alone is the main enemy, while feudalism is the secondary enemy.

As a matter of fact, we must clearly see that imperialism is the foremost enemy of our people, because it is the more brutal. It brings troops to invade our country and massacre our fellow-countrymen. For this reason, the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks are twin main tasks *but the anti-imperialist task is the foremost task.*

In short, the present form of our people's national democratic revolution is an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution, a revolution of the broad masses of the people,

that is, of the working class, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and democratic personalities, led by the working class, on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. The aim of this revolution is to win national independence, build and develop people's democracy, and create conditions for a transition to socialism. This is the general line, the overall policy of our Party in this revolutionary stage.

The motive force of our revolution is the working class, the peasantry, and the petty-bourgeoisie. However, the peasantry, which is the largest stratum of our people, and constitutes the bulk of our nation, is the greatest motive force of our revolution. At present our people's patriotic war is in essence a revolutionary war of the peasants, led by the working class.

If we want our revolution to be successful and our patriotic war and national construction to be victorious, we must rely mainly on the workers and the peasants, of whom the peasants make up the overwhelming majority. The aspiration of tens of millions of peasants of our country at present is national independence and the distribution of land to the tillers. These two questions are inseparable. We must put the slogan "Land to the Tillers" into practice so as to win the war of resistance and achieve national liberation. To make the slogan "Land to the Tillers" a reality we must undertake a land reform, an agrarian revolution.

Stalin said many years ago :

"The national question is in essence the peasant question".

The agrarian revolution is the keystone of the people's national democratic revolution in our country.

Our people are fighting against the French colonialist aggressors and the US interventionists. To win victory we must win democracy and well-being for the people.

Today we are undertaking land reform as a positive solution to the questions of democracy and people's well-being, and consequently to have more strength to drive the French imperialists and the US interventionists out of our country.

4. THE AGRARIAN POLICY OF OUR PARTY AND GOVERNMENT

Proceeding from this appraisal of the social conditions of Viet Nam and from the character and tasks of the Vietnamese revolution, what should our agrarian policy be ?

The aim of the policy is :

— To abolish imperialist and feudal land-ownership in this country, make the peasants landowners and carry out the slogan "Land to the Tillers".

— To liberate the productive forces from feudal relations of production to create conditions for developing production, developing agriculture, industry and trade, so as to raise our country from its economic backwardness, and lay the foundations of the people's democratic economy.

— To improve the living conditions of the peasants, replenish the forces of the people and the resistance forces, maintain and give impetus to our protracted resistance so as to wipe out the French colonialists and the US interventionists, topple the puppet administration, achieve national liberation, develop people's democracy, and contribute to the defence of peace and democracy in the world.

— To smash the political power of the feudal landlords, bring the labouring peasants in the countryside to political power, liberate the peasants from the feudal yoke, from the rural despots; and to improve local organization of the military, people's, administrative and Party organizations at all levels.

To attain these goals, we must carry out a land reform. However, because the balance of forces between us and the imperialists is a decisive factor, because we must concentrate our forces on overthrowing our foremost enemy — imperialism — and cripple the resistance of the feudal landlord class for a definite time, our agrarian policy will be carried out in three steps:

1. Confiscation of the land belonging to the imperialists and the Vietnamse collaborators, redistribution of communal land and disposal of land belonging to absentee owners; spearheading our agrarian policy against the imperialists and the most reactionary feudalists.

2. Reduction of land rent and usurious interest rates, moratorium and abolition of debts; to weaken the economic forces and initially reduce the political power of the feudal landlord class in the countryside, and take the first steps towards fostering the forces of the labouring peasants.

3. Achievement of the land reform, abolition of feudalist ownership of land, an end to the political power of the feudalists, realization of the slogans "Land to the Tillers" and "The Labouring Peasants As Complete Masters of the Countryside".

The first step prepares the ground for the second, and the second step paves the way for the third.

We are now engaged on the second step; and it is time to move on to the third.

5. WHY MUST WE CARRY OUT THE LAND REFORM DURING THE WAR OF RESISTANCE?

The workers and peasants are making the greatest contributions to the patriotic war in terms of manpower and material resources; they are making enormous sacrifices for the revolution. The war of resistance must rely mainly on the worker and peasant masses, the peasants being by far the largest group, in order to win final victory.

Our patriotic fight must be long-drawn-out. Its requirements in terms of manpower and material resources is increasing daily. These are mainly contributed by the peasants; but the peasants, who have little or no land at all, are poverty-stricken.

Although the August Revolution of 1945 and the mass mobilization for reduction of land rent have brought some benefits to the peasants and some improvements to the life of the peasants, the basic demand of the peasants — land — has not yet been settled and satisfied.

It is now time to carry out a land reform, taking land from the feudal landlords and distributing it to the peasants and gaining political power in the countryside for the peasants. This is the basic method to be used in the immediate

future to replenish the forces of the peasants, supply the war of resistance, develop production and advance our patriotic struggle.

On the one hand, the war of resistance is becoming more and more difficult and demanding. The imperialists are relying increasingly on the feudalists and are building a puppet administration and puppet army to oppose the resistance and continue their war of aggression. Of late they made a great ballyhoo about giving "full independence" to Viet Nam, staged a deceitful farce of "democratic elections", and even made propaganda about a false "land reform", trying to trick the people, especially the peasants of our country, into accepting their measures.

The enemy's aim in carrying out a policy of deceit is to attract and entice the people in areas under their control to support them, in order to promote the policy of using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese, and using war to feed war.

On the other hand, the feudal landlord class is more and more actively opposed to our agrarian policy, agricultural tax and the movement to increase production. Feudal landownership continues to hinder development of the productive forces of the countryside, hinder the supply of food to our armed forces and to our people, and it also hinders our continuing war of resistance and our efforts to bring it to total victory.

Since the August Revolution of 1945, the landlords have seized the leadership in our rural organizations in many places. The political power of the landlords has not been weakened as much as is necessary; and the political power

of our peasants in the countryside has not yet been fully effective. That is why our backing in the countryside is not yet steady, our rear area is not yet consolidated.

While our patriotic war is becoming daily more ruthless, the feudal landlord class is becoming daily more reactionary, and its defeatist and capitulationist tendency increases day by day. The further we proceed with necessary democratic policies (agrarian policy, agricultural tax policy, etc.) the more strongly the feudal landlord class reacts and the more closely it colludes with the imperialists to oppose the resistance and oppose the people's administration.

A proof of this is that through the present mass mobilization for land rent reduction, through the denunciations by the masses, we have discovered many cases of landlords organizing spies, gathering intelligence for the enemy, serving as bases for enemy commandos, or setting up reactionary organizations, and sabotaging our Government's policies on taxes, agrarian reform, voluntary civilian labour, and production. In a number of places, they infiltrate the Party cells, the administration, the peasants' associations and the Lien Viet organizations to oppress and exploit the peasants, sabotage the resistance, and undermine the implementation of our policies.

In the second mass mobilization for land rent reduction recently, the reaction of the landlords was fairly strong. Some of them murdered cadres, burned peasants' homes, poisoned wells, called for help from the imperialists and the puppet administration, helped enemy planes locate and strafe the offices of peasants' associations, etc. For their part, the French colonialists made armed thrusts into the free

zones in an attempt to sabotage our mass mobilization in the 3rd and 4th Interzones (covering the Red River delta and four provinces north of the 17th parallel respectively — *Ed.*).

The reactionary feudal landlords are the servants of the imperialist aggressors ; and the imperialist aggressors are the masters of the reactionary feudal landlords.

Thus in order *to strengthen the people's democratic dictatorship, to consolidate our rear area, to suppress the counter-revolutionaries, to develop production, and ensure supplies to enable us to persist in and step up our patriotic fight, it is necessary to carry out the land reform, overthrow the feudal landlord class, and smash the social basis of imperialism in our country.*

The effect of the land reform bringing land to the peasant masses is to enhance their enthusiasm and their zeal in increasing production and taking part in the war of resistance, and consequently the resistance forces will grow in strength. As a result, the work of building up the army, mobilizing transport for war supplies, and ensuring supplies to the resistance, will be facilitated ; the worker-peasant alliance will be further strengthened ; and on that basis the administration and the National United Front will be consolidated, economy and culture will develop, and the Party's leadership will be further entrenched.

President Ho Chi Minh said : "The key to the victory of our resistance lies in strengthening and broadening the National United Front, strengthening the worker-peasant alliance, strengthening the people's administration,

strengthening and developing the armed forces, consolidating the Party and enhancing the Party's leadership in all respects. Only by carrying out a land reform can we proceed favourably with these tasks ".[1]

6. REVIEWING OUR PARTY'S AGRARIAN POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Since the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party (1930), our Party's agrarian policy has on the whole proved correct.

Our Party's programme for bourgeois democratic revolution in 1930 made it quite clear that to overthrow the imperialists, it is necessary to topple the feudalists at the same time. To oppose imperialism and feudalism are two major tasks of the Vietnamese revolution.

During the Second World War, when our people were living under the yoke of the Japanese fascists and French imperialists our Party campaigned for the establishment of the Viet Minh Front embracing all patriots and other Vietnamese who opposed the aggressive fascists and the Vietnamese collaborators and traitors. The Viet Minh's agrarian policy is : to confiscate land belonging to the imperialists and the Vietnamese collaborators and distribute them to the peasants, to carry out reduction of land rent and usurious interest rates, to proceed to put the slogan "Land to the Tillers" into practice with the aim of winning independence for the nation, democracy for the people, and improving the latter's living conditions.

1. Report to the First National Conference, November 14 - 23, 1953.

After the August Revolution (1945), the French imperialists started hostilities, and brought troops to invade our country once again. In the face of the tension between us and the imperialists, President Ho Chi Minh called on the entire people to unite and oppose the imperialists and the traitors. This policy of national union is very correct and necessary.

In the past few years, however, we have had a one-sided concept of the policy of broad national union to fight the aggressors. We also lacked experience, and failed to fully assess the demands and prospects of a protracted resistance. We somewhat under-estimated the role of the peasants in the resistance and in the people's national democratic revolution.

This is why we did not take steps to actively implement the agrarian policy; we did not clearly realize the necessity of carrying out land reform concurrently with the resistance, although we did recognize that possibility theoretically.

For that reason, we made light of the anti-feudalist task at times. We did not fully realize that to promote the anti-feudal task is in fact a basic method of contributing to the anti-imperialist task, and ensuring the early success of the latter.

Another thing is that we have applied experiences gained from the Chinese revolution in the anti-Japanese resistance mechanically. We did not see that during the eight-year anti-Japanese resistance, the Chinese revolution restricted itself to carrying out land rent reduction because at that time the Chinese people had a partner to cooperate with in resisting the Japanese; that is, the Chiang Kai-shek administration, representing the feudal landlord class and the bureaucratic

capitalist class of China. We for our part have no such partner to cooperate with in our present resistance, and therefore need not restrict ourselves to the stage of land rent reduction.

These mistakes and shortcomings have not only resulted in our failure to initiate a timely land reform and to make the requisite preparations for its implementation, but it has also affected the land rent reduction.

Our main mistake in implementing the agrarian policy lay in not clearly realizing that the implementation of the agrarian policy of the Party and the Government was bound to be a difficult and ruthless class struggle; we did not fully realize that in order to carry out the agrarian policy, we must achieve broad mobilization of the masses, and follow the mass line. This explains why the method we used to carry out the agrarian policy was bureaucratic and high-handed.

As a result, stubborn landlords refused to implement the policy of the Party and Government correctly, while the class consciousness of the peasants was not raised, nor were they strongly organized for struggle. In some places, the agrarian policy was simply not carried out; in others, it was only carried out half-heartedly. In some isolated cases, the campaign for implementing the agrarian policy has been turned into an extremist "leftist" political struggle, faulty both in strategy and tactics.

Land confiscated from the imperialists and the collaborators following the August Revolution has already been provisionally allotted to poor peasants. These peasants are receiving little help to develop production however. There are many places where land rent reduction has been effected since 1949, but where the peasants have not been mobilized to struggle,

and as a consequence almost all the landlords refused to reduce land rent according to requirements. They only paid lip service to the land rent reduction, or found ways of taking back with one hand the rent they had reduced with the other.

The failure to fully implement the agrarian policy has affected the whole of our work :

— There has been delay in broadening and consolidating the National United Front on the basis of a firm worker-peasant alliance, and in many places the Front has been misused by the landlords.

— Although our armed forces have made significant progress, they are still falling short of the requirements of the situation.

— In many places, the lower levels of the administration, especially at village level, have been misused by landlords and rural despots, and in these places the labouring peasants are not truly holding power in the countryside.

— There has been some delay in strengthening the Party ; in some places the Party's grassroots organizations in the countryside are heterogeneous, the relationship between the Party and the masses is not yet close.

From another angle, the failure to fully implement the land rent reduction policy and the delay in carrying out land reform have restricted the development of the econmy and culture of our country.

In short, although we have brought a number of benefits to the peasants during the past few years, yet the shortcomings in the implementation of the agrarian policy and the

failure to implement it actively have had a bad influence on our resistance to foreign aggression and our national construction.

That is why the 4th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee held early this year reviewed the agrarian policy and the method of implementing the agrarian policy of our Party over the past few years. It adopted the Party's programme for land reform and the decision to mobilize the masses for land reform in the free zones.

The mobilization of the masses for land rent reduction this year has brought good results. In those places where the masses were mobilized, the peasants have regained part of their economic interests and seized considerable political power in the countryside. The reactionary landlords and the cruel rural despots have begun to be overthrown and the economic power of the landlords has been reduced. We have summed up a number of experiences gained in leading broad mass movements and have trained a number of cadres to continue extending land rent reduction and to prepare for the implementation of land reform in the years ahead.

The recent 5th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee discussed the implementation of land reform in order to make relevant proposals to the National Conference of the Party. The present National Conference will discuss and adopt land reform policy, and will decide on the implementation of land reform in the free zones, thereby developing the important resolution of the 4th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee.

In the present war of resistance, our Party has led the people to many big victories in all fields, a brilliant

achievement of our Party and our people. As far as agrarian policy is concerned, however, we have made a number of mistakes. Our Party, being a Marxist-Leninist Party, uses the methods of criticism and self-criticism to make progress. We frankly admit our mistakes and shortcomings, and are resolved to correct them. We will succeed in this too.

7. OUR PARTY'S GENERAL LINE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE AT PRESENT

To carry out land reform, the most important thing is to clearly define the general line of the Party in the countryside at present. As President Ho Chi Minh has said, that line is to "rely fully on the poor and landless peasants, unite closely with the middle peasants, ally ourselves with the rich peasants, wipe out the regime of feudal exploitation gradually and judiciously, and develop production and the resistance".

The landless peasants are the proletarians and the poor peasants are the semi-proletarians in the countryside. The poor peasants make up about 5% per cent of the rural population. They contribute the most labour, but are the poorest stratum in the countryside, and they either have no land at all or own very little land. For centuries now they have been harshly oppressed and exploited by the feudal landlords (the kings, mandarins and rural despots) and the imperialists. The August Revolution of 1945 brought them very little land. The poor and landless peasants are the strata which work with the most ardour to make the slogan "Land to the Tillers" a reality. They take the lead in revolutionary enthusiasm both in fighting the aggressors and in resolutely opposing feudalism in the countryside.

For these reasons, in order to carry out a land reform we must rely on the poor and landless peasants, have confidence in their spirit of revolutionary struggle, develop their role as the core of the struggle, and satisfy their demands. At the same time, we must educate them, so that they will not simply chase after their immediate interests and forget the long-term interests of the revolution.

While relying on the poor and landless peasants, we must unite with the middle peasants. The middle peasants are also labouring peasants; they are also harshly oppressed and exploited by the imperialists and feudalists. The middle peasants make up around 40% of the rural population and have rich experience in production. They are a considerable revolutionary force. Only by uniting with the middle peasants can the poor and landless peasants avoid being isolated and increase their strength in opposition to the landlord class. In uniting with the middle peasants, we must take their interests into consideration, educate them in the content of class interests, and the slogan "Poor, Landless and Middle Peasants, Unite Like Members of the Same Family".

With regard to the rich peasants, our present policy is to rally them politically and maintain the rich peasant economy. The rich peasants still have the right to hire labour to increase production.

By rallying the rich peasants, we can isolate the landlord class so as to get rid of it, and bring the rich peasants into the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal ranks, thereby reassuring the middle peasants.

The policy of relying on the poor and landless peasants, uniting closely with the middle peasants, and rallying the

rich peasants is essentially aimed at abolishing the feudal ownership of land gradually and judiciously, so as to develop production and the war of resistance.

How can we abolish feudal land ownership and wipe out the feudal regime of exploitation gradually and judiciously ? In terms of overall policy, the first step is to confiscate the land belonging to the French imperialists and the Vietnamese collaborators ; the second step is to reduce land rents and usurious interest rates ; and the third step is to implement land reform. We reduce land rents first to prepare the ground for land reform. This is a sure way of proceeding step by step. With regard to implementation of the land reform on a nationwide scale, we are obliged to carry out the slogan "Land to the Tillers" step by step, both in view of the balance of forces between us and the enemy, and because of the war : that is to say, in the free zones first, then in other areas.

We will decide on our policy toward the feudal landlords on the basis of the political attitude of each category of them, and depending on the character of each kind of land, we will deal with them judiciously and appropriately.

This is the basic spirit and content of the general line of our Party in the countryside at present. We must fully grasp this line in order to carry out the land reform well.

II

HOW TO ABOLISH IMPERIALIST AND FEUDALIST LAND OWNERSHIP IN OUR COUNTRY

1. FEATURES OF THE PRESENT VIETNAMESE SITUATION TO BE GIVEN ATTENTION TO IN THE LAND REFORM

Attention should be given to the following points in the present situation in Viet Nam :

1. The Vietnamese people are waging a war of resistance to foreign aggression. To implement land reform during the resistance is to engage in difficult and crucial struggles on two fronts — the anti-imperialist and the anti-feudal fronts.

2. The National United Front of Viet Nam includes the various classes of the people and even a number of democratic personalities and landlords who are members of the resistance.

3. Viet Nam was formerly a feudal country dominated by imperialism for more than 80 years ; the country has gone through the August Revolution of 1945 and is waging a patriotic war. Thus the problem of land in Viet Nam is very complicated. There are usually changes in land ownership each time there is a big change in the situation.

4. Following several years of collection of agricultural tax and the campaign for reduction of land rent and usurious

interest rates the situation now is as follows : a number of landlords (mostly small landlords) continue to hold their estates, but many other landlords have scattered their land in many different ways : selling, giving away, sharing it out (real or phony) among their children all in order to avoid and obstruct the implementation of the agrarian policy. In some cases, landlords who formerly owned hundreds of hectares of land, now own only half a dozen.

5. Our country is divided into many zones, where conditions are different and where the revolutionary movement develops at different rates : in the free zones, the guerrilla-base areas, the guerrilla areas, and the enemy-held areas. The free zones, in their turn, are divided into mountain and jungle areas mostly inhabited by the ethnic minorities, the midland regions and the plains. The land conditions as well as the political, military, economic and cultural situation vary from area to area.

6. Our cadres are still few in number and are inexperienced. Our organizations are not yet truly pure and steady, particularly our grass-roots organizations.

In this situation the guideline for the land reform policy and the plan for implementing that policy can include the following points :

a) On the basis of meeting the labouring peasants' demand for land, we must be judicious in dealing with the various kinds of landlords, differentiate them properly and give due consideration to the resistant landlords, so as to reduce the number of our enemies to a minimum.

b) It is necessary to be judicious in dealing with the different kinds of land, in such a way as to benefit the peasants, the resistance, and production.

c) We must deal appropriately with the landlords' scattering of their land, so as to have enough land to distribute to the peasants, and turn the slogan "Land to the Tillers" into reality.

d) We must implement the land reform step by step, and in accordance with local conditions. We should avoid carrying out the land reform as a massively concentrated campaign. In some special areas, special decisions must be taken.

e) While implementing the land reform, we should train and foster cadres. The leading organs themselves must also gain more experience, complement policies, and readjust and strengthen themselves through practical work.

2. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO ABOLISH IMPERIALIST AND FEUDALIST LAND OWNERSHIP IN OUR COUNTRY

The imperialists and colonialists have invaded our country. They have no right to own land in our country.

The feudal landlord class is reactionary and its ownership of land is illegal. However, the reality in our country is that there are three kinds of landlords : (a) collaborationists, reactionaries, and cruel rural despots, (b) ordinary landlords, and (c) landlords who are members of the resistance, among them a number of democratic personalities. There are also different kinds of land : land belonging to the imperialists, to the feudalists, and land owned by the peasants, by the

State, etc. The land belonging to the feudalists includes that owned by the landlords, communal land, semi-communal, semi-private land, and land owned by the religious communities.

For the purpose of dealing discriminately with the various categories of landlords and the various kinds of land, the following measures should be taken to abolish the ownership of land by the imperialists and feudalists in our country :

The land belonging to the imperialists and colonialists must all be confiscated (without compensation).

With regard to the land owned by the feudal landlords, one of the following three measures can be taken :

1. Confiscation (without compensation),
2. Requisitioning (without compensation),
3. Forcible purchase at prices set by the State.

Confiscation is a way of dealing with and a form of punishment meted out to the counter-revolutionaries — those who have committed crimes against the resistance and the people. It is necessary to confiscate the land and property of the collaborationist landlords, reactionaries, cruel rural despots, and of foreign residents who collaborate with the imperialists and the puppet administration.

Requisitioning is a method of taking what is necessary and using it in a rational way. We must requisition the communal, semi-communal and semi-private land, etc.

Forcible purchase is a method of showing some consideration to the resistant landlords or those landlords who have not committed crimes. We forcibly purchase land of landlords

who are not collaborators, reactionaries, or cruel rural despots ; that is, democratic personalities, resistant landlords and ordinary landlords.

Thus we use three measures — confiscation, requisition and forcible purchase to deal discriminatingly with the landlords on the basis of the political attitude of each category.

3. CONFISCATION, REQUISITION, AND FORCIBLE PURCHASE DEPEND ON CLASS STATUS, AND NOT ON THE AMOUNT OF LAND OWNED

Our agrarian policy in the present revolutionary stage is aimed at abolishing imperialist and feudalist land ownership, in order to wipe out the feudal regime of exploitation of the landlord class. For this reason, apart from the land and property of the imperialists which we must confiscate, our policy is to confiscate, requisition, and forcibly purchase the land of the landlord class, but not to confiscate, requisition or forcibly purchase land in general upward of a certain area.

If a person is a landlord, his land is either confiscated, requisitioned or forcibly purchased on the basis of his political attitude, not of whether he is a big, medium-sized or small landlord.

Our policy is to encourage the development of industry and trade. That is why our policy with regard to the industrialists and traders who are also landlords, or landlords who are also industrialists and traders, deals only with that part of their land which they lease to tenants for cultivation or hire labour to exploit. Our policy does not touch on their industrial or commercial property and land directly used for their industrial or commercial enterprises (capital, machinery,

raw materials, products, merchandise, and housing facilities used in industrial or commercial enterprises; land on which these houses are built and land on which dwelling-houses are built; shops and stores for raw materials, goods stores, drying-yards, etc.).

Landlords whose businesses are based on hiring labour to work with ordinary tools are treated like other landlords.

There are people who own a little land, but who lack the labour force necessary to cultivate them, because they are in the resistance, or because they are busy with other occupations, and consequently have to lease their land to tenants or cultivate them entirely with hired labour. These are not considered landlords, and their land is not requisitioned.

With regard to the rich peasants, since our policy is to protect their economy, we do not touch them. The land leased to tenants by a number of rich peasants is not touched either. Rich-peasant tenants who own no land will receive shares of land.

In special cases, rich peasants who are collaborators, reactionaries or cruel rural despots, have many blood debts toward the peasants, and are hated by the peasants, are considered members of the landlord class, and their land is either wholly or partially confiscated.

The land and property of the middle peasants is protected entirely. If middle peasants lease land to tenants, such land is not touched. Middle peasants who own little land will receive additional shares of land.

In short, our policy is to strike at the landlord class and abolish the feudal regime of land ownership, and the feudal forms of exploitation by the landlord class.

4. DEGREES OF CONFISCATION, REQUISITION AND FORCIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND BELONGING TO THE LANDLORDS

The policy of confiscating, requisitioning, and forcibly purchasing land must be implemented appropriately. First of all, we must clearly distinguish what can be confiscated, requisitioned, or forcibly purchased from the landlords and what cannot. These are, in order of importance:

— land,
— draught animals,
— farming implements,
— surplus food, and
— surplus housing facilities.

Land, draught animals and farming implements belong to the same category. Without draught animals and farming implements, it is difficult for the peasants to cultivate the land. Likewise, food and housing facilities are very necessary to the peasants' life. In the past, many peasants who had provisionally been allotted land but did not have enough to eat, had to spend much of their time trying to earn enough to eat and were unable to till these lands. With regard to housing, how many peasants are homeless and have to live with other people? We must confiscate or requisition the surplus food and surplus housing facilities of the collaborationist landlords, the reactionaries and cruel rural despots, and distribute them to the poorest peasants. We must, however, make clear what surplus food and surplus housing facilities are, so as to avoid excessive confiscating or requisitioning. We should only confiscate or requisition surplus housing facilities or food, because it is necessary to leave the landlords enough space to live in, and enough food to eat too.

With regard to the surplus land, draught animals, farming implements, food and housing facilities of the collaborators, reactionaries, and cruel rural despots, we confiscate all or part of them, depending on the gravity of the crimes they have committed. We requisition the rest.

With regard to the land, draught animals and farming implements of the landlords who support the resistance and ordinary landlords, they will be forcibly purchased. There is no question of forcibly purschasing the surplus housing facilities and surplus food of these landlords in general.

With regard to any kind of landlords, we should not investigate their movable property (gold, silver, precious stones...), because experience shows that if we do so, we create disorder and cause the landlords to destroy these things, thereby diminishing the overall wealth of society.

When confiscating, requisitioning, or forcibly purchasing, we must leave the landlords and their families part of their property so that they can labour and live on them, and avoid becoming hoodlums and tramps. At the same time, we must provide the landlords with conditions in which to remould themselves ideologically through labour.

5. POLICY TOWARD LANDLORDS WHO SCATTER THEIR LAND AND OPPOSE THE LAND REFORM POLICY

Since the August Revolution of 1945, and especially since 1949, many landlords have scattered their land estates in an effort to dodge our agrarian policy. According to surveys conducted recently in three villages of Phu Tho province,

since 1949, the landlords have scattered more than 31% of their land estates. The percentage of scattered crop fields alone exceeds 50%.

The motivation behind the landlords' scattering their land estates is to avoid the implementation of the agrarian policy and the policy on agricultural tax, and to buy off and divide the peasants.

For these reasons, concerning the period from July 14, 1949, when our State issued the first decree on land rent reduction, until April 12, 1953, when the State promulgated the decree on mobilizing the masses for thorough reduction of land rent, all selling, distribution and giving away of land by landlords during this period are considered illegal, except in these circumstances mentioned in the circular No 277-TTg of June 1, 1953, issued by the Premier's Office :

— actual legacy to the landlord's children or to his lawful successors ;

— when such lands and property have been sold because their owners have suffered from natural calamities or enemy destruction, and there is really no other way for them to meet their needs ;

— the landlords concerned have actually switched over to industrial or commercial enterprise.

Land previously mortgaged or sold by the peasants to the landlords, and now bought back by the peasants ; land previously seized by the landlords from the peasants but now returned to the peasants ; and land given by the landlords to the peasants as compensation for the latter's struggle are not considered land scattered by the landlords.

Who owns the land scattered by the landlords since 1949 ? Mostly middle peasants, poor peasants, and rich peasants, a number of former landless peasants and people of other strata ; most of the fertile land has been bought by or entrusted to middle and rich peasants ; most of the infertile land has been bought by or entrusted to poor and landless peasants; most of the land given away is not fertile ; most of the recipients of fertile land are relatives or close friends of the landlords.

How should we now deal with the scattered lands of the landlords so as to benefit the peasants and the resistance ? The question of dealing with the scattered lands of the landlords is very complicated. If it is not solved, we will not have enough land to distribute to the peasants. But if this problem is not solved properly, it might do more harm than good. That is why it is necessary to make certain distinctions between the recipients of the lands scattered by the landlords :

a) With regard to land transferred from one landlord to another, we confiscate, requisition or forcibly purchase such land, depending on the political attitude of the recipient. If landlords who support the resistance and ordinary landlords have purchased such land, we repurchase them at the prices they paid.

b) Transfers of land to rich peasants shall be cancelled and the land redistributed to landless or land-poor peasants ; the purchasers will be repaid either in cash or in kind at the price paid.

c) If land is transferred to middle peasants, the distribution of this land must be considered as an internal affair of

the labouring peasants and will be solved in a more circumspect way. The best solution is to persuade and educate the middle peasants to take the initiative in ceding the land they have received in this way to landless or poor peasants. At the same time, the administration should compensate the middle peasants who cede this land for the price paid, either in cash or in kind. When the middle peasants cede this land, we must see to it that they continue to own an area not below the average owned by the middle peasants in the village.

d) If the recipients of the scattered land are poor or landless peasants or lower middle peasants, that is people who have no or little land, the land will not be touched.

e) Transfers of land to the national bourgeois shall also be cancelled and the land distributed to the peasants ; compensations shall be made as in the case of rich peasants.

f) In the case of scattered land in the hands of petty bourgeois, persuasion should be used so that they will voluntarily cede this land to landless or poor peasants, and compensation shall be made to them as in the case of middle peasants. If the recipients really cannot earn a decent living without the land, then part of this scattered land shall be left to them.

Above is the policy concerning the land scattered by the landlords from July 1949 to April this year (1953 — *Ed*). Starting from the day the Government promulgated the decree mobilizing the masses for thorough reduction of land rent (April 12, 1953), except for cases stipulated in the circular No 277-TTg, all scattering of land by the landlords

is regarded as illegal and the scattered land must be confiscated for distribution to the peasants. The landlords who have illegally scattered their land must pay compensation to those who purchased these lands.

We must clearly explain these redistributions to the peasants so that they do not misunderstand the policy toward the landlords who have scattered land as above. Failing this, the landlords may make negative propaganda distorting the situation to win over recipients of the land they have scattered.

We should not only deal with the landlords' scattering of land and their opposition to the agrarian policy until now, but also deal with scattering of land and opposition to the agrarian policy from now on.

To prevent landlords from scattering land, destroying property and opposing our land reform policy, *from now on and until the land reform is completed, the transfer and scattering of land by landlords shall be considered illegal, except for special cases to be stipulated by the Government.* Destruction of crops, farming implements and water conservancy works, as well as slaughtering of buffaloes, oxen, horses and mules, shall be severely punished. Legitimate slaughtering or selling of draught animals shall be the subject of stipulations by the administration.

6. TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF PURCHASING LAND BELONGING TO THE LANDLORDS

All the land owned by the landlords are the fruits of the labour of peasants, and should therefore be taken back by the Government and the peasants, instead of being repurchased.

However, in keeping with the policy of treating the different kinds of landlords discriminatingly, the Government has defined different measures : confiscation, requisition and forcible purchase of these lands.

Confiscation and requisition are both carried out without compensation, the only difference between these two measures being their political significance. As for forcible purchase, it will be followed by compensation. The forcibly purchased land will be paid for with a special bond. Every year the Government will pay the equivalent of 1.5% of the capital in paddy, money or materials as interest. After a 10-year period, it will refund the capital.

Capital here means the price of the forcibly purchased land. This price should be fixed in terms of the average yearly output of the land forcibly purchased.

Forcible purchase of land is applied to landlords who are not collaborators, reactionaries, or cruel rural despots.

With regard to democratic personalities, cadres or families of cadres who volunteer to give their land away, if the peasants agree and if these are deserving cases, they are allowed to make such gifts. By so doing, we can somewhat reduce the number of forcible purchases, and thus further differentiate among the landlords. But we should not encourage widespread gifts of land.

7. SPECIFIC TREATMENT OF THE VARIOUS KINDS OF LAND

What is the correct way to deal with the various kinds of land, proceeding from the policy of confiscation, requisition and forcible purchase of land ?

a) *Land in the hands of the imperialists and feudalists:*

All the land, draught animals, farming implements, housing facilities, food, and property of the imperialists shall be confiscated and either distributed to the peasants or put under State management.

The plantations owned by the imperialists, whether they have been provisionally allotted to the peasants or not, shall be definitively distributed to them, except for those to be kept for the establishment of State farms. Draught animals, farming implements, and housing facilities already distributed to the peasants shall not be touched. Those remaining shall generally speaking be shared out to peasants.

All selling or giving away of plantations by the managers or families of plantation-owners after the August Revolution of 1945 shall be considered illegal, and therefore these lands should be taken back to be shared out to the peasants in principle. But in the case of land already scattered by the imperialists into the hands of labouring peasants and poor strata of the rural population, appropriate readjustments shall be made in distributing this land.

With regard to the land, draught animals, farming implements, surplus housing facilities and surplus food of the collaborators, reactionaries and cruel rural despots, they shall be confiscated or requisitioned, depending on the gravity of their crimes, but these things shall not be forcibly purchased.

With regard to the land, draught animals, and farming implements of democratic personalities, landlords supporting the resistance and ordinary landlords, they shall be forcibly purchased and distributed to the labouring peasants. The land usurped by these landlords shall be confiscated.

b) *Semi-communal semi-private land.*

Communal and semi-communal semi-private land is an aspect of the feudal economy in our country. So far, the landlords and rural despots have misused these kinds of land to their own benefit, by seizing the more fertile plots for instance and leaving the less fertile ones to the peasants, or using income from them to organize eating and drinking bouts, thus wasting communal wealth. Communal and semi-communal semi-private lands are usually allotted on an "egalitarian" basis or "auctioned"; they frequently change hands, which accounts for their very low output. For this reason it is necessary to use these lands in a way beneficial to the peasants, to production.

With regard to communal land, it shall be requisitioned and distributed to the peasants.

Alluvial soil along the sea-coasts or the river-banks or in the middle of rivers, are also considered communal land and shall be requisitioned and distributed to the peasants.

Communal and semi-communal semi-private land misappropriated by individuals shall be confiscated.

With regard to semi-communal semi-private land, such as *phe, giap, tu van, tu vo, loc dien, but dien, hoc dien, ruong hau, ruong ho* (lands owned by various associations under the old regime — *Translator*), and land owned by mass organizations etc. they shall be requisitioned like communal land and distributed to the peasants.

The land jointly owned by two or more households or belonging to production collectives shall not be requisitioned, for they are not considered semi-communal semi-private land or land owned by mass organizations.

c) *Special categories of land :*

Land owned by absentee landlords.

Land owned by landlords who have disappeared shall be confiscated. Land lying in the free zones owned by landlords living in enemy-held areas, shall be confiscated, requisitioned or forcibly purchased, depending on the political attitude of the landlord.

If landlords are absent because they are taking part in resistance activities or if they have evacuated to another free zone and are neither collaborators, reactionaries, nor cruel rural despots, their land shall be forcibly purchased.

If a landlord is a Vietnamese national who resides abroad and does not collaborate with the enemy, his land is subject to forcible purchase.

Waste and fallow land.

Land owned by landlords but left waste or fallow for whatever reason shall be requisitioned and distributed to the peasants, except for the plots of land already tilled by the peasants, which are considered as belonging to those who have the merit of exploiting them, and therefore are not requisitioned.

Land not belonging to landlords, but left waste or fallow for more than two years for no plausible reason, and whose owners continue to leave it waste or fallow, neither tilling nor leasing it to tenants even after explanations of Government policy, shall be requisitioned and distributed to the peasants.

Plausible reasons for leaving land waste include the following :

— Land lying near enemy military posts, and frequently raided by the enemy and therefore not available for cultivation ;

— Land which is particularly badly affected by floods or drought, and not easily recoverable ;

— Many members of the families of the owners of such land are sick or engaged in resistance activities, causing a shortage of labour in these families ;

— Because of the war, there are no outlets for some products, and the owners do not have enough capital to maintain production.

Land owned by religious communities.

Land owned by the church, pagodas, holy sees, etc., shall be distributed to the peasants according to circumstances, and according to the following methods :

a) Land owned by the church, pagodas, and holy sees, and which they have legitimately bought with their funds, shall be forcibly purchased by the State.

b) Other land of the church and pagodas shall be requisitioned and distributed to the peasants, but part of it shall be reserved for the church and pagodas, for worshipping purposes.

The farming implements and draught animals accompanying these lands shall be either *forcibly purchased* or *requisitioned*, depending on the circumstances.

Land owned by parish priests, clergymen, head priests of holy sees, chief monks, bonzes and nuns, is considered private land, and shall be disposed of depending on whether their owners are landlords or not, and are guilty of crimes or not.

Land owned by foreign residents.

Land owned by foreign landlords is treated like that owned by Vietnamese landlords, (whether the title-deeds contain the names of these landlords, their wives and children or other people, including Vietnamese names). Depending on the circumstances, this land shall be confiscated, requisitioned or forcibly purchased. The land owned by foreign residents who are not landlords is treated like land owned by Vietnamese, the only difference being that the *Vietnamese people have the right to own that land, whereas foreign residents have only the right to use it.* They may hand over the right to use that land to their wives and children, but they may not mortgage or sell it. When they and their families no longer want to make use of their land, they must return it to the Vietnamese Government.

Foreign residents taking part in the resistance are protected. Foreign residents who collaborate with the imperialists and oppose the resistance, oppose the Government and people of Viet Nam, are treated like collaborators and their land and property are confiscated like those of the collaborators.

Foreign peasants who have been living on farming in the Vietnamese countryside and who perform all their duties like the Vietnamese, have the right to own land like Vietnamese peasants.

d) *Some special stipulations.*

Cancelling debts to the landlords.

The landlords usually exploit the peasants by means of usurious interest rates. That is why in the land reform, debts contracted with the landlords by poor, landless and middle peasants and other poor people in the countryside shall be cancelled. Title-deeds and contracts concerning land owned by landlords become invalid. With regard to other debts, they continue to be dealt with according to previous government stipulations and are not cancelled during the land reform.

Fish, buffalo and salt rents.

Our rivers and seas belong to our State. The imperialists and the landlords and the rural despots have no right to seize them, nor levy taxes or collect fish rent. Therefore from now on, the monopoly of the imperialists, feudalists and other private individuals on our sea areas and rivers shall be abolished.

With regard to the buffalo and salt rents related to animal husbandry and salt-making, experience should be drawn from places where experiments are being conducted, and measures taken accordingly.

III

DISTRIBUTE LAND TO THE PEASANTS, PUT THE SLOGAN "LAND TO THE TILLERS" INTO PRACTICE

To solve this problem, it is necessary to specify the following points :

1. LAND TO BE DISTRIBUTED AND LAND NOT TO BE DISTRIBUTED

All land, draught animals, farming implements, etc. confiscated, requisitioned or forcibly purchased from the imperialists and landlords should be pooled and distributed to the peasants, except for the following items :

— Experimental plantations, plantations of industrial crops such as coffee, rubber and pepper ; plantations of fruit-trees where new techniques are being applied ; forest and mountain areas where valuable products are being grown and which therefore have to be protected ; mines, dykes, bridges and culverts, roads, groves of pines along the coast, and water conservancy works which have to be taken care of and managed by the administration.

— Places of historical significance or scenic beauty, palaces, pagodas and temples, landscapes of historical renown or having a cultural value, cultural works, such as books,

political and cultural, literary and artistic materials, etc. Artistic works confiscated or requisitioned from the landlords must be carefully protected and handed over to the care of the administration, and should in no way be distributed or destroyed.

Neither should the cemeteries, tombs and trees planted around them be distributed or destroyed.

Villages with communal lands must reserve part of these lands to receive and accommodate disabled soldiers. Villages that do not have communal lands shall reserve part of the land belonging to the landlords for this purpose.

Besides, an amount of reserve land must be kept for eventual use in case of readjustment and additional distribution after review of the land reform, or for distribution to villagers who return from afar and who need land. (The amount of such reserve land should not exceed what is strictly necessary).

Land belonging to the towns and cities, provincial capitals and townships, and land bordering on important communication lines shall not be distributed ; this is to provide for the eventual growth of urban centres, provincial capitals, townships and communication lines. Neither shall the land which constitute the grounds of public offices or schools and hospitals be distributed.

Any land confiscated, requisitioned and forcibly purchased, which does not fall into the categories to be managed by the administration, and is not reserved for disabled soldiers, for rebuilding urban centres, provincial capitals and townships, enlarging roads, or building public offices and schools, shall not be retained for whatever other purposes. If too much

of this land is retained, this would be detrimental to the poor and landless masses. The management of reserve land must be carefully stipulated so as to avoid misappropriation of public land, leaving land waste, lowering production, or irrational use.

Fish-breeding ponds and hills planted with fruit-trees or industrial crops according to ordinary methods, may be distributed wherever conditions permit.

In order to protect forest land, generally speaking forests shall not be distributed, except for very special cases, such as bushland, hills planted with palm-trees, some lacquer and resin trees etc., which may be distributed to the peasants or to the hamlets and villages for their use and collective management.

The Government will provide detailed rules with regard to the burning of forests for hillside fields.

2. PERSONS ENTITLED TO DISTRIBUTED LAND AND THEIR RIGHTS

The peasants who cultivate the land must be the main recipients of land in the land reform. Priority should next be given to those who have rendered services to the revolution, to those who take part in and serve the resistance. Due consideration must also be given to members of various religious communities.

Besides, we must win over the puppet troops and create conditions for the landlords and their families to earn their living on their own and to transform themselves through labour. But at the same time we must punish the

collaborators, reactionaries, and cruel rural despots, including the landlords and their hirelings who actively sabotage the land reform campaign.

For these reasons the following stipulations are necessary :

a) *With regard to the peasants.*

Land shall be distributed to peasants who have no or little land : poor and landless peasants, and middle peasants who are in need of land.

Rich peasant tenants who lack land may also receive shares of land.

b) *With regard to war martyrs, disabled and sick soldiers, and revolutionary military personnel :*

War martyrs, revolutionary military personnel, disabled and sick soldiers, whose families in the countryside are entitled to receive land, shall be listed as members of households to receive land, and are given priority treatment in the distribution.

Revolutionary military personnel, disabled and sick soldiers who have no families, who return to their native villages after their demobilization, shall receive part of the reserve land.

Disabled soldiers receive shares of land in their native places. When they are living temporarily in another village, disabled soldiers are provisionally allowed to use part of the land in this village.

c) *With regard to other strata of the people.*

Poor strata of the rural population (small traders, fisherfolk, people who live on rod-fishing or net-casting, handicraft

workers, porters, carters, practitioners of traditional medicine, teachers, etc.) who do not earn enough to live on but who can work shall receive part of the land to supplement their earnings.

Part of the land shall be distributed at their request to unemployed workers who are recognized as such by the people's administration or the local trade union, and whose families live in the countryside.

Cadres, functionaries, personnel serving the resistance, and workers at State-run factories whose families live in the countryside and belong to the categories entitled to shares of land, shall be listed as members of recipient families.

People evacuated to the countryside who do not earn enough to live on but who can work and who apply for land, shall receive shares of land if the locality can afford it and if the peasants there agree. But they are only allowed to use the land allotted to them and do not have the right to appropriate them. When they return to their own homes, they must hand this land back.

d) *With regard to the churches, pagodas, and family shrines.*

When confiscating, requisitioning or purchasing land from the Catholic church and from pagodas, we must leave part of it to the local parish or pagoda, for worshipping purposes.

Land used to finance seminaries, convents, orphanages, etc. are also requisitioned, but the Government will make sure that the activities of these organizations can be maintained.

Land shall be distributed to religious people who do not earn enough to live on, but who can work, and who apply for land.

Much family land is bound up with the worship of ancestors; but most of the families that own family land are feudal families and most of those who make use of family land to exploit the peasants are landlords. For these reasons most family land will be requisitioned. But in this process, depending on the decision of the masses, part of the land can be reserved for worshipping purposes.

e) *With regard to puppet soldiers, officials in the pay of the colonialists, personnel of the puppet administration and their families.*

Puppet soldiers who are labouring peasants are also allotted land if they have no or little land. Puppet military personnel, including soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the puppet army, also receive shares of land in absentia. So long as these soldiers do not leave the puppet army's ranks and return to the side of the Fatherland, their lands shall be provisionally entrusted to the local peasants' association for management. When these soldiers return, they will receive these plots of land.

Families of rank-and-file personnel working for the colonialists and puppets, who are living in the free rural areas, and who belong to the categories entitled to land shall receive shares of land. If these personnel return to the free zones and can work but know no trade, and apply for land distribution, they shall also receive shares of land.

f) *With regard to the landlords.*

During the land reform, landlords and families of landlords who are not collaborators, reactionaries, or cruel rural despots, shall be allotted land to till and earn their own living.

Due consideration shall be given to democratic personalities and landlords who support the resistance.

Landlords who have been collaborators, reactionaries, or cruel rural despots, but who have not been jailed, or have served prison terms of less than five years, are also entitled to shares of land. The land belonging to prisoners and managed by the peasants' association shall be handed back to them on their release.

Collaborators and traitors who do harm to the country, and the cruel rural despots who have committed grave crimes and are hated by the local population, and the reactionaries who are dead set on sabotaging the resistance and the land reform campaign, must be severely punished. They are not entitled to shares of land.

But their families shall receive shares of land to live on provided they are not accomplices with them in their crimes. The families of collaborators and reactionaries now living in enemy-held areas, who live in the free zones, and who are not guilty, shall receive shares of land; but these persons (ie. collaborators and reactionaries) shall not be listed as members of the households recipient of land.

Landlords who have fled to enemy-held areas, but have not engaged in actions harmful to the country and the people, and who have now returned to the free zones, have no way of earning their living, and apply for land distribution, shall also receive shares of land to live and work on, if the people agree.

g) *With regard to foreign residents.*

Foreign residents who have no means of earning their living, but who can work and who apply for land, shall receive shares of land, but they have no right to give away, pawn or sell the land distributed to them.

h) *Rights of land recipients.*

Peasants and people of other strata who receive shares of land *shall be issued with land deeds, shall not have to pay any sum of money to their former owners or to the administration, and have the right to keep this land as their own property* (that is, they can keep them to till, or give away, pawn or sell them).

Foreign residents who receive shares of land shall also receive deeds establishing their right to use these lands.

3. ON WHAT PRINCIPLES IS THE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND BASED?

Fair and equitable distribution of land should be based on the following principles:

— those who need more land shall receive more, those who need less shall receive less, those who do not need land, shall receive none;

— on the basis of respect for land now under cultivation, those who own little land shall receive more, those who own infertile land shall receive more fertile land, those whose plots are far from their home shall receive additional plots closer to their homes;

— land shall be allotted in proportion to the number of members of each household, and not to the labour available.

— the norm for land distribution is based on the average acreage and output in the locality;

— land shall be distributed according to its location, the commune being the determining unit.

The principle of distributing more land to those who own little land, less land to those who own enough, and no land at all to those who do not need it, is aimed at meeting the demand for land by the poor, landless, and middle peasants who lack arable land.

When allotting land to the poor and landless peasants, draught animals, farming implements, surplus food and surplus housing facilities of the landlords must also be distributed to them.

In implementing the land reform, attention must bé paid to the interests of tenants because they are victims of land rent exploitation by the landlords. For that reason, while distributing land, we must make sure of correct application of the principle of *allotting land to those who are tilling it, allotting more to those who have little land, giving fertile land to those who own infertile land and the principle that those whose land is far from their homes shall receive plots closer to their homes; and in this way distribute the land in a fair and reasonable way.*

When allottting land to tenants, we should give them fertile plots they are already cultivating. We should avoid withdrawing all or part of the fertile lands they are leasing for distribution to other farmers, for this would be prejudicial to unity among the peasants. Nor should we let one tenant enjoy all the fertile land near his home, while another tenant receives land far from his. In this situation we can take part of the leased land near the home of one tenant and allot it to another tenant.

To encourage increased production, no land owned by peasants as a result of their opening of virgin land not more than three years ago shall be listed as land owned by the peasants to be subtracted in the process of distribution.

To distribute land in proportion to the number of household members and not in proportion to the labour available in the household means that the more members a family has, the more shares of land it shall receive, without distinction as to their age and physical condition. Special attention should, however, be paid to households of poor peasants with only one or two members, where these members are capable of plenty of work. In these cases, more land shall be shared to these households than stipulated in the norms.

The distribution of land must be based on the acreage owned by each household member in the area and the average output of each kind of land. What is the acreage of each household member ? We add the total area of land confiscated, requisitioned or forcibly purchased to the land already owned by the recipients, then divide it by the total number of household members, and we get the acreage to be alloted to each household member. (Land to be reserved as described above should be excluded).

The average yield of each hectare varies according to the quality of the land. The acreage and yield of land distributed will vary : we should see to it that after the distribution, the part owned by each recipient in terms of area and yield is equivalent to those of the other recipients. If we base our distribution solely on yield and not on acreage as well, one household may receive many plots of infertile land some of which they cannot cultivate, while other households will receive only fertile land, and have more labour force than

needed to till them. Conversely, if we base ourselves solely on acreage and not on yield also, then this would be prejudicial to households receiving infertile land. We should therefore combine the acreage with average yield as the basis for land distribution.

In the land reform, the village is the basis for distribution, that is why the peasants of each village shall receive shares of land situated in their own village in principle. Only surplus land is ceded to nearby populous villages that lack land, if the peasants in the village concerned agree.

If the land of a landlord in one village is situated in another village and tilled by the peasants of the latter then this land shall be distributed to the peasants in the village where it is situated.

In the case of peasants of one village tilling the land of landlords in another village, a distinction must be made between these two cases.

1. If the peasants concerned have come to live in the other village, and are considered as tenants of this village, they shall receive shares of land as peasants of this village.

2. But some peasants only go to the other village to till their land and actually live in their own village somewhere else. The main solution in the land reform for these peasants is for them to make use of the land allotted to them in their own village. But if too much land is withdrawn from them in this way, partial compensation must be made to them.

Communal lands of one village which lie in the territory of another village shall normally be distributed to the peasants of the other village on the principle of distributing land where it is situated.

IV

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAND REFORM REQUIRES MOBILIZATION OF THE BROAD MASSES OF THE PEOPLE

Land reform is a very difficult and relentless class struggle, a revolution in the countryside. To adopt an authoritarian method and carry out the reform in the place of the masses, bestowing favours on the masses, would lead to failure. We cannot carry out the land reform in a peaceful manner either. Implementation of the land reform requires that we make propaganda, educate and rouse the masses, to voluntarily throw themselves into struggle, and compel the landlord class to return land to the peasants it has been oppressing and exploiting for thousands of years now. The campaign for land rent reduction conducted over the past few years has provided us with precious experience: only when the peasants are awakened, voluntarily rise up and unite and struggle unremittingly against the landlord class, can they win back what is owing to them; otherwise the policies of the Party and the Government, however judicious they may be, would remain dead letters. To rouse the masses to struggle for land rent reduction is only the first step in weakening the strength of the feudal landlords. To overthrow the feudal landlords for good, to achieve the political

superiority of the labouring peasants, and make the slogan "Land to the Tillers" a reality we must make all-out efforts to rouse the masses to struggle.

In general, the campaign for land rent reduction this year has brought about good results. We have mobilized the masses, made relevant changes in our organization, and successfully carried out the first steps towards overthrowing collaborators, reactionaries and cruel rural despots. During our agitation work among the masses, the landlord class has sabotaged the movement and opposed the peasants frenziedly and treacherously, dividing, enticing, threatening, and even murdering them. When the land reform campaign is concluded somewhere, the landlords use any means at their disposal to counter-attack the peasants. In some places their treacherous manœuvres include bribing, working through corrupt elements they are related to, and which still remain in our organizations, especially in the Party cells, in order to undermine the growing strength of the peasants. In some places, where we have consolidated our organizations during the mass agitation, no sooner have the land reform teams been withdrawn than the landlords devise ruses and used their hirelings to oust poor and landless peasants from the village leadership, and manage to control the leadership in the hamlets and villages through their hirelings. In short, in the villages where the masses have been mobilized for land rent reduction, the class struggle, far from waning remains difficult and relentless and continues in new forms.

Such has been the reaction of the landlords to our campaign for land rent reduction and to the demand that they pay back the rent they had previously collected. Now that we

are actually carrying out the land reform, how can we avoid waging a ruthless struggle against the landlords ? We should not forget that all through history, the nearer their doom, the more strongly an exploiting social class struggles for its survival.

The struggle of the masses in the land reform is very necessary. We have had a people's administration for eight years now : our administration is also a sharp weapon in the struggle against the feudal landlord class. We should make use of it, and develop its effect, and combine the mass struggle with the administrative struggle of the people's power. This method of struggle will be even more beneficial to the mass movement, and the masses will struggle still more effectively.

The following are some problems concerning the mass mobilization for land reform :

1. GUIDELINE AND METHOD OF WORK IN THE LAND REFORM

Our guideline and method of carrying out the land reform are, as President Ho Chi Minh has said, "To mobilize the broad masses of the peasants, to rely on the masses, and to strictly follow the mass line ; to organize, educate and lead the peasant masses to struggle". On the whole, the work of mobilizing the masses to carry out the first stage of land reform is directly assigned to land reform teams.

Cadres engaged in mobilizing the masses to carry out the land reform must organize and array the forces of the masses and rouse them to struggle against the landlord class.

In mobilizing the masses to carry out the land reform, the cadres must keep strictly to the general line of the Party in the countryside, namely *to rely on the poor and landless peasants, closely unite with the middle peasants, rally the rich peasants, wipe out the feudal regime of exploitation gradually and discriminatingly, boost production, and advance the war of resistance.*

The peasants' association is the main form of organization for rallying the peasant masses to struggle. *The Conference of Peasants' Representatives* and the *Executive Committe of the Peasants' Association* are the official organs through which the agrarian policy of the Party and the Government will be implemented in the mobilization of the masses in a village. The Executive Committee of the Peasants' Association must be free of bad elements so as to ensure the satisfactory fulfilment of its tasks.

In villages where the *Administrative and Resistance Committee* has been reorganized to some extent through the mass mobilization for land rent reduction, the Committee must meet with the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Association to discuss the implementation of the policies of the Party and Government and coordinate their actions during the mass mobilization.

Experience gained from the mass mobilization for land rent reduction shows that it is not necessary to set up Poor and Landless Peasants' Groups during the implementation of the land reform, but when it is really necessary, cadres can hold separate meetings of poor and landless peasants or hold poor and landless peasants conferences (with the

participation of representatives of the middle peasants). The narrow-minded tendency to separate the poor and landless peasants from the middle peasants must be avoided.

The main thing is to admit labouring peasants into the Peasants' Association, but it is also necessary to admit other poor people in the countryside, such as peddlers, handicraft workers, hired hands and servants, because they also are members of the proletariat and semi-proletariat in the countryside.

We must firmly grasp the principle of simultaneously mobilizing peasants of both sexes, admit both young men and women into the Peasants' Association, and pay special attention to the role of women in struggle and production.

To motivate the masses ideologically and to consolidate the peasants' association and make it strong and stable are important tasks of a decisive character in the mass mobilization to carry out the land reform.

2. DIFFERENTIATE AMONG THE LANDLORD CLASS; RALLY ALL ANTI-FEUDAL FORCES IN THE MOBILIZATION OF THE MASSES

The target of our struggle is the feudal landlord class. We must isolate and differentiate within it so as to topple it. Our agrarian policy is based on the principle of distinguishing between the various kinds of landlords, with the aim of splitting the landlord class up as far as possible. In the mass mobilization for the implementation of the land reform as well as in the mass mobilization for land rent reduction, it is necessary to explain the policy of the Party and the Government clearly to the landlords, in order to win the approval of democratic personalities and divide the feudal forces.

The administrative organs shall convene the landlords, tell them clearly about our policy, urge them to implement it, and warn them against taking action to oppose or sabotage the mass mobilization for land reform. Those landlords who abide by the laws of the Government and submit to the decisions of the Peasants' Association, shall enjoy leniency; those who stubbornly oppose them shall be severely punished.

Experience shows that a number of landlords who are collaborators, reactionaries, or cruel rural despots, usually oppose or scheme to sabotage the peasants' struggle for land reform by one means or another.

Timely measures must be taken to repress the actions of those landlords, and they must be tried by special people's tribunals and given due punishment. But it is *absolutely forbidden to arrest or kill them unwarrantedly, to beat them, torture them or use other forms of physical violence against them.*

At the same time, we must rally the anti-feudal forces in the mass mobilization. Apart from the Peasants' Association, we must unite *all anti-feudal elements* (including a number of democratic personalities).

During the land reform, we must carry out widespread propaganda to help all strata of the people to understand the agrarian policy of the Party and Government clearly, so that everybody will take part in or support the struggle of the peasants enthusiastically and ardently.

With regard to the *workers*, we must help them understand clearly that to mobilize the masses to implement the land reform is an excellent way to *strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, boost agricultural production, and encourage the development of industry and trade*, provide jobs to the workers, and further developing the working class. The working class, through the Viet Nam Workers' Party, leads the peasants to struggle to make the slogan "Land to the Tillers" a reality, and afterwards helps the peasants to advance together with them to socialism. That is an extremely important task.

With regard to the soldiers, we must make clear to them that the land reform *is in their families' interests; it ensures the supply of manpower and material resources for our soldiers to fight the enemy.* We must help the army understand clearly that to struggle against the feudalists is to boost the anti-imperialist struggle and that the immediate goals of the fighting our soldiers are engaged in are national independence and land to the tillers.

With regard to *intellectuals and students*, including the children of landlords who are not directly responsible for exploitation, we must win them over to our cause and help them understand clearly that the land reform is a measure *which favours the development of the national culture*, and that giving land to the tillers is only fair and reasonable.

To *industrialists and traders* we must point out that the land reform is aimed at *expanding the home market* and that this will be very good for their enterprise; this with the aim of encouraging their active support for the peasants' struggle.

With regard to the rich peasants, we must explain to them the policy of seeking their support and protecting

their economic interests so as to reassure them and make them sympathize with the struggle of the labouring peasants against the feudal landlords.

We must help *persons related to the landlords* to side unequivocally with the peasants, not to plead for the landlords, but instead point out to the landords that the only sensible way open to them is to abide by the law and submit to the peasants' demands.

We must pay attention to these points in rallying the anti-feudal forces to support the mass mobilization for land reform.

3. HOW TO DETERMINE PEOPLE'S CLASS STATUS

Judicious determination of class status is very important in the mass mobilization for land reform, because it has a direct bearing upon the implementation of our line and policy in the countryside : in deciding whom to rely on, whom to unite with, whom to rally, whom to overthrow, who our friends are and who our foes. Moreover, correct determination of people's class status in the countryside has a direct bearing on the question of whether to confiscate, requisition or forcibly purchase the land of the landlords to distribute to the peasants. For that reason, the class determination must be made very carefully. Considering the practical situation in the countryside at present, the draft definition of classes which has already been made public, should be revised.

Quite a long period has elapsed since the August Revolution of 1945, and our country has gone through many changes. After our State promulgated the decree on

reduction of land rent and usurious interest rates, and the decree on agricultural taxes, the landlords and rich peasants have transferred many of their crop fields to evade the implementation of land reform policies and to falsify their class status. Peasants in the free zones have been provisionally allotted land, and the living standards of a number of them have changed for the better. We cannot use people's class status before the August Revolution of 1945 to define their class positions at present. For that reason, we must take the 12th of December 1953 as our starting-point, that is, the day when the Land Reform Law will be promulgated, then go back five years to determine landlord status, go back three years to determine rich peasant status, and go back one year to determine the status of labouring peasants. Some examples :

a) *Fall in class status*

Any *landlord* who has been impoverished since the beginning of 1949, has been one of the main workers in his family five years running, does not exploit by land rent (or exploits just a little) shall be allowed to change his class status.

Any *rich peasant* who throughout the period from early 1951 to the present has not exploited according to the rich-peasant method (or exploited just a little) and whose living standard has dwindled to that of a middle peasant shall be allowed to change his class status.

Any *middle peasant* or *poor peasant* who for one reason or another has become and remained impoverished (i.e. a middle peasant has become a poor peasant, or a poor peasant has become a landless peasant) for more than a year is allowed to change his class status.

b) *Rise in class status*

Before and after the promulgation of the Land Reform Law, *rich peasants* exploiting according to landlords' methods and enjoying the living standard of landlords, and *middle peasants* exploiting according to rich peasants' methods and enjoying the living standard of rich peasants three years running are considered as having changed their class status.

If a poor or landless peasant has changed his main source of livelihood or income by purchasing more land (not belonging to the category of land illegally transferred by the landlords), bought more draught animals, etc. and if consequently his living standards have risen to the level of a higher class (landless peasant to poor peasant or middle peasant; poor peasant to middle peasant) for more than a year, he shall be regarded as belonging to the upper stratum.

Some poor and landless peasants, because they have leased some land, or have received land provisionally allotted or distributed to them, or have newly opened land or have received land transferred by the landlords, have seen their living standards rise. Former poor peasants have reached the level of middle peasants. Former landless peasants have reached that of poor peasants or middle peasants. However, if these changes have taken place less than 3 years ago, they will return to their former class status.

These stipulations have the advantage of avoiding confusion between landlords, rich peasants and labouring peasants, increasing the numerical strength of the poor and landless peasants — our prop in the countryside — and also making the united forces in the countryside stronger and more stable.

4. SCOPE OF THE LAND REFORM

Land reform is stipulated for the whole country, including areas behind enemy lines. But it will take place first in places where the necessary conditions obtain, and those places which do not yet have the necessary conditions will do it later.

Only those places in which all the following three conditions obtain shall mobilize the masses to carry out the land reform :

1. A stable political and military situation.

2. Most of the people actively demand a land reform.

3. There are enough cadres to lead the mass campaign for the reform. As these three conditions exist in the free zones only the land reform shall be carried out in the free zones first. Generally speaking, our *guerrilla bases* at present do not yet have the necessary conditions for a land reform. Later, as the situation changes, those *guerrilla base areas* where the necessary conditions for the land reform obtain, shall be assigned the job of implementing the land reform.

Many areas inhabited by the *ethnic minorities* and ruled by a system of *tho ty, lang dao, phìa tao,* and *ca ra,*[1] may have already been liberated, but the land reform shall not yet be carried out there because the land conditions and the nationalities problem there are complex. Besides, since the political consciousness and organization of the local population are still limited and cadres are still lacking, it is not advisable for the land reform to be hurriedly undertaken there.

1. Local tyrants (*Translator*).

In the *guerrilla and enemy-held areas*, the land reform cannot yet be carried out for the conditions required do not exist there yet. Implementation of the land reform in these areas shall be decided upon in the light of future developments in the military and political situation.

In the *Fifth Inter-zone* (south central Viet Nam — *Ed*) and in *Nam Bo* (former Cochinchina — *Ed*) the campaign for land rent reduction and restitution of land rent shall be carried out first, to be followed later by the land reform. The situation in Nam Bo in general at present has a guerrilla character, and the problem of land there has many special aspects. Implementation of the land reform there requires more concrete stipulations taking into account specific conditions of Nam Bo.

5. MOBILIZE THE MASSES ACCORDING TO PLAN, IMPLEMENT THE LAND REFORM STEP BY STEP, IN AN ORDERLY MANNER, AND UNDER CLOSE LEADERSHIP

The mass mobilization for land reform must be carried out in a planned way, step by step, in an orderly manner, and under close leadership.

We must combat wishful thinking, the tendency to underestimate the enemy, to think that after the mass campaign for land rent reduction this year the power of the landlord class has been definitively crushed, and the peasants strongly motivated, and that we can extend the land reform throughout the free zones.

We must also oppose the erroneous idea that to mobilize the masses means to leave them free to do whatever they like,

improvising their actions, causing the cadres to give up Party leadership, and causing social disorder, which is not only harmful to the unity necessary for the war of resistance but also not in the interests of the peasants.

To mobilize the masses does not mean to let the local cadres and masses do whatever they like, not following the plans of the Central Committee, in disorder, and without leadership. *Even in the free zones, the land reform shall be carried out in a number of localities first, and then in others, according to a common plan.*

The whole aim of the mass campaign for land rent reduction this year has been to prepare conditions for the land reform in the coming year; and the mass campaign for land rent reduction will continue to spread. Next year, in the free zones, there will be places which will proceed to the land reform after land rent reduction has been achieved there, while in other places where the campaign for land rent reduction has not yet started, a mass campaign for thorough reduction of land rent shall be conducted.

We will reach a point, however, when we have enough experienced cadres, when we can mobilize the masses both in areas where the land rent reduction has been achieved and in places where the land rent reduction has not yet been started, in order to implement land reform.

In areas where the land rent reduction campaign has not yet started, it is necessary to mobilize the masses for land rent reduction and restitution of land rent to topple the collaborators, reactionaries and cruel rural despots, and improve the organizations before proceeding to the land reform.

In areas which have already conducted the campaign for land rent reduction, measures shall be taken to scrutinize the ranks of the masses and the composition of the organizations, to carry out propaganda and help the masses grasp the land reform policy, investigate the ownership of land and other property of the landlords, before going on to implement the land reform.

However in areas where the campaign for land rent reduction has been carried out, but where the masses have not yet been fully motivated and the leading collaborators, reactionaries and cruel rural despots still hold sway, it is necessary to extend the campaign of denunciation of landlords' crimes, to overthrow the leading reactionaries and cruel thugs once and for all before proceeding to the land reform.

The Party Central Committee will work out a plan for step-by-step implementation. In areas where conditions are ripe, the land reform will be carried out sooner or later. Cadres as well as the masses should avoid rushing things and improvising courses of action. *Localities where the Party Central Committee and the Government have not yet approved the mobilization of the masses for the implementation of the land reform shall refrain from doing so on their own.*

6. PREPARATORY WORK

In order to assure the land reform satisfactory success, preparation is necessary in all fields :

— preparation of policies ;

— ideological preparation ; and

— preparation in organization (including preparation of cadres).

To prepare policies, the Party Central Committee has ordered investigations in the countryside, and the gathering of data as basis on which to work out a concrete land reform policy. After the policy has been approved by the Party's National Conference, the Party will propose it to the Lien Viet Front and the Government.

After laying down the land reform policy, we must extend propaganda among the cadres and the masses and help them to understand it. Propaganda and education must take place in the army units and the public organs, factories and schools ; in the countryside and the provincial capitals and townships ; in the free zones and the areas behind the enemy lines. We must convene the necessary conferences, write newspaper articles, make radio broadcasts, open short-term training courses, send cadres who understand the policy to conferences and ideological rectification courses to talk about and explain the policy.

In short, we must strive to disseminate the land reform policy, so as to help the cadres and people understand and accept the policies of the Party and the Government.

We must make use of these opportunities to study the *frame of mind of the cadres and the masses*, inquire about their worries in order to try and reassure them and correct their mistaken ideas, such as fear of dissensions, lack of confidence in the masses, working hurriedly, indulging in wishful thinking, under-estimating the enemy, taking spontaneous actions, etc.

The first stratum of people to be helped to understand the land reform policy and to be reassured is the peasantry. For this reason, in those places where the masses are mobilized to carry out the land reform, we must help them fully understand the policy. The aim of this is for the policy of the Party and the Government to be absorbed into the consciousness of millions of peasants and help them realize their duty to rely on that policy in their struggle for self-liberation. In areas where the people are not yet mobilized for the land reform, propaganda should emphasize the aim and significance of the land reform, help the masses to heighten their enthusiasm, boost production and take part in all resistance activities, while refraining from acting either hurriedly or spontaneously.

Preparatory work in terms of *organization* includes improving the organization and training cadres for the land reform. We have been carrying out preparatory work in the Party's and the army's rectification campaigns as well as in the mass campaign for land rent reduction this year. But this is not sufficient. In the near future, we must make more preparations in the field of organization, and first *of all we must train and foster cadres to carry out the land reform in the mass movement itself.*

In areas where the land reform is not yet carried out, we must coordinate the improvement of military, civilian, administrative, and Party organizations with the mass campaign for land rent reduction, so as to strengthen these organizations. In particular, the village Party cells, Peasants' Associations and administrative organs (including the village resistance and administrative committee, the militia guerilla

and security forces) must be reliable, under the control of poor and landless peasants, so as to support the masses' struggle and repress the reactionaries. This is a very important thing. At the same time, we must, through the mass struggle, discard the bad elements, win over and educate people who have made mistakes, find out active elements, and foster them into good activists and cadres. Thus the further we carry out the campaign for land rent reduction, the more cadres we train before moving on to the land reform.

The factories and the military, civilian, administrative and Party organs must also have plans for cadres, workers and personnel inside and outside the Party to take turns participating in the mass mobilization for the land reform, so as to give them an opportunity to raise their ideological level, strengthen their stand, correct their style of work, and learn from good styles of work.

After the present National Conference, we must carry out the land reform on an experimental basis in a number of typical villages so as to draw experiences on the definition of social classes, on the confiscation, requisition, forcible purchase and distribution of land, so as to amend our policy and train cadres and activists for the land reform in the future.

7. HELP THE PEASANTS BOOST PRODUCTION FOLLOWING THE LAND REFORM

A problem to which we must give some attention is that during the mass mobilization campaign and after the distribution of land to the peasants, we must guide and help them

to increase production. We should not forget that an important aim of the land reform is to develop agricultural production.

Experience has shown us that when provisionally allotting lands of the French colonialists and collaborators to the peasants, we did not help solve their problems, or assist them. That is why a number of peasants have not produced enough to meet their needs, and have had to give their land back. There are some places where our cadres have forced the peasants to join mutual-aid organizations, or joint-labour teams, or cooperative farms, causing peasants in many places to have doubts about the policy of the Party and Government.

For that reason, the leading organs in the land reform and the land reform teams must pay attention to production, guide the peasants to unite and help one another and get down to cultivation immediately. We should not hinder production under the pretext of its interfering with carrying out the land reform.

After distributing land to the peasants, we must immediately proceed *to mobilize the peasants to boost production.* In this connection, we must solve the following problem :

First, *to stabilize the new relations of production in the countryside,* to reassure the peasants, to combat their fear of having to make greater contributions if they have more land, their fear that if their production goes well and they get rich, they might be subject to struggle and denunciation, their fear of having to pool their lands to build collective farms, the fear that the enemy troops will extend their attacks on the free zones and help the landlords take back

their land and other fears, all of which might cause them to lose enthusiasm in production. We must help the peasants see clearly that it is they who are the masters of the countryside, that they must unite to increase production, unite to fight the aggressors and safeguard what they have gained.

We must *help the peasants solve difficulties in production* such as shortage of draught animals, farming implements, seed, food, etc. if during the land reform the distribution of these things obtained through struggle has not yet been solved satisfactorily. There are two ways of solving this problem. Firstly, the Peasants' Associations will organize the peasants to help one another; secondly, the administration and the trade-union will assist the peasants.

We must persuade the peasants *to develop mutual-aid teams, production teams and village credit cooperatives.* Cadres of the Party and Peasants' Associations must directly take part in fostering mutual-aid teams. These organizations should be on a moderate scale, suitable for the level of our peasants at present. We must reject the idea of building large-scale organizations and forcing the peasants to join them, only to meet with failure.

The Government and the Peasants' Associations should have plans for concrete guidance in production for the peasants. We must encourage agricultural production fighters, make use of the practical experiences the peasant masses have, educate the peasants, and strive to provide the peasants with means of production such as : organizing supply and consumer cooperatives, developing credit and trade organs, helping with the sale of farm and forest produce, granting

loans, draught animals, farming implements, etc. Then we will gradually mobilize the peasants to organize *agricultural production cooperatives.*

The Government and trade unions should help the peasants to improve techniques. This must be done step by step depending on the awareness of the peasants and the stage of industrial development and we must make experiments in the State farms *to set examples for the peasants to follow.*

In the above work, the stabilization of the new relations of production must be carried out first, then we must help the peasants solve the difficulties they face with regard to draught animals, farming implements, food and seeds, coordinated with the development of mutual-aid teams, joint-labour teams and agricultural cooperatives, etc.

Only when these things are achieved can we consolidate and develop the success of the land reform and create conditions for developing the people's democratic economy, and advance to socialism.

TO STRENGTHEN THE PARTY AND ENHANCE ITS LEADERSHIP IN THE LAND REFORM

The mass campaign for implementation of the land reform is a very good opportunity to perfect the Party cells in the countryside, train and promote cadres, and enhance the Party's leadership.

1. TO IMPROVE THE PARTY CELLS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

In an agricultural country like ours, especially at this time when most of our cities and towns and industrial areas are not yet liberated, the rural Party cell is an important grass-roots organization of the Party. To consolidate the rural Party cells is therefore a task our Party must give special attention to.

In the mass campaign for thorough land rent reduction, our Party cells have been reorganized to a certain extent. The requirement of the work of improving the organization of the rural Party cells in the mass campaign for land rent reduction is : ideologically and organizationally to make a clear distinction between the enemy and ourselves and clearly differentiate the landlord class from the labouring people. Have we met this requirement in the recent successive drives of mass mobilization for land rent reduction ? On the whole, we have met it. But in those places where work was not

very well done, the landlords managed to misuse the Party cells. Given the above requirement for improving the organization of the Party cells, even in areas where the work was done best, the Party cells have not yet become the core of leadership in the countryside. We must go one step further in the land reform, and perfect the Party cells, making them real leading cores in all branches, in all mass organizations, as well as in the administration in the countryside.

To perfect the rural Party cells with the aim of meeting the above requirement is *an important political task of the Party in the land reform.* Because this is the most effective way to ensure the leadership of the working class over the peasantry, because this is the most important condition for continuing to guide the peasants forward, and because this is *one of the valuable results the Party must obtain in the land reform.*

Facts have clearly shown that if the rural Party cells are not steady and reliable, then the policies of the Party and Government cannot be fully implemented, and cannot even be carried out in some places.

After the distribution of land to the peasants, *the small production economy* of the latter is good breeding-grounds for capitalist development. If the Party does not give the peasants strict leadership after the land reform, then the latter may take the road to capitalism.

The Party's leadership of the peasants must thus aim at mobilizing the masses to implement the land reform, and through this mobilization develop the great strength of the peasants, develop production, and step up the war of resistance. We must strive to lead the peasants gradually along

the path to socialism, because only socialism can completely liberate the peasants from the regime of exploitation of man by man and from the old backward mode of production.

For these reasons, we must take effective steps to improve the organization of the Party cells in the countryside, get rid of any ideas of neglecting the building of Party cells during the land reform.

The improvement of Party cells during the land reform mainly consists in *drawing a clear line between the Party and the exploiting classes* ideologically as well as organizationally. To meet this demand, the following concrete steps must be taken :

a) On the one hand, resolutely exclude from the Party cells those elements belonging to the exploiting classes that are directly involved in exploitation (except for special cases, i.e. Party members from exploiting classes who so far have resolutely carried out Party policies and submitted to education by the Party. They are to be transferred to other places). The presence in the Party of elements from exploiting classes is not beneficial to the building and consolidation of Party grassroots organizations. After the land reform, we must cease admitting elements from exploiting classes to the Party altogether. On the other hand, we should admit to the Party a number of active and conscious poor and landless peasants who have recently become active in the war of resistance to the French and in the mass campaign for land rent reduction and land reform.

b) We must mobilize all Party members to take an active part in the mass campaign for land reform, and through the practical struggle of the masses help them to heighten

further their class consciousness, to make a clear distinction between the Party and the exploiting classes, and to thoroughly implement Party policies.

c) We must appoint a number of the most active elements of poor and landless peasant origin to the Party executive committees. These should be selected among old and new Party members, so as to enhance leadership of the Party cell. We must make the Party cells cooperate democratically with active non-Party members, and strengthen the relationship between the Party and the masses. When the Party members work actively and are exemplary in all fields, the Party cells can provide effective leadership of the mass organizations and administration in the countryside.

2. IMPROVE LEADERSHIP AND TRAIN CADRES IN THE LAND REFORM

The work of mobilizing the masses for a land reform provides *a very good opportunity for our cadres to strengthen their stand, remould themselves ideologically and improve their style of work*. That is why the various executive levels and cadres of branches under the executive levels, from the centre down to the districts, should take turns participating in the mass mobilization campaign. For both leading cadres and specialist cadres, taking part in the mass mobilization after attending a rectification course is attending another rectification course : one at the school of revolutionary struggle of the masses. This will further strengthen their class stand and their mass viewpoint, correct their erroneous

ideas, cause them to show more concern for the interests of the masses, and further heighten their sense of wholehearted service to the people and the Party.

During this last period, many of our cadres have got "stuck" in their offices or have been working in a bureaucratic manner, without making investigations or doing research, without going deep into matters to inquire about the situation and therefore have not understood realities in the countryside. Their participation in the mass mobilization is a good opportunity for them to correct their bureaucratism, their superficiality, and their distance from reality, to clearly understand the demands of the masses and increase their confidence in the strength of the masses, clearly understand the capabilities of and difficulties confronting the movement at the lower levels. As a result, they will indulge less in wishful thinking and one-sidedness, and their style of work will be less bureaucratic and authoritarian.

With such great interests at stake, executives at all levels should avoid relying entirely on the land reform teams, but should take part in these teams personally to assume close leadership and learn from realities, and at the same time to prepare for the future by acquiring the necessary experience to lead the mass mobilization in their own areas.

To lead the land reform and other tasks successfully, the Central Committee as well as the regional authorities should follow the movement closely and keep the situation firmly under control. We must give *specific guidance* with a view to studying realities and researching the land reform problem in depth. We will steel ourselves and try out our policies, check the correctness of the slogans, sum up experiences and

enhance our leadership in the fire of the struggle of the masses. Through the mass mobilization for land reform we will step up other tasks. At the same time, in the course of the mass agitation we will appraise the cadres, promote good ones, and deal appropriately with bad ones.

3. SOME PROBLEMS CONCERNING LEADERSHIP OF THE LAND REFORM

We are carrying out the land reform while fighting against the foreign aggressors. It is the responsibility of the leadership, to assure both the success of the land reform and the satisfactory execution of all other tasks of the resistance. The following are some problems concerning leadership of the mass mobilization for the land reform which deserve special attention :

a) *Correct wrong ideas about the land reform*

Before the mass mobilization to carry out the land reform, we should concentrate on *combating rightist ideas*, and after starting the campaign, we should guard against *leftist ideas*.

Rightist ideas include :

— *The fear that the land reform may break unity, and prejudice the war of resistance.* This is due to the failure to see that the land reform is one of the best methods both of consolidating the National United Front on the firm basis of the worker-peasant alliance, and of developing the National United Front, because a grassroots organization of the Front — the Peasants' Association — will draw in millions of labouring peasants ; the failure to see that the land reform is aimed at making the ranks of the Front more reliable, because it makes it possible to discard local rotten feudalist

elements who have misused the name of the Front so far to oppose the resistance and the policies of the Party and the Government ; the failure to realize that the land reform is one of the best methods of mobilizing millions of people to take part in the war of resistance, to increase production, to strengthen our rear area in all fields — political, military, economic and cultural.

— *The fear that land reform conducted during the war of resistance, would scatter and split our forces, and weaken our capacity.* This is due to the failure to see that it is the land reform that is the most effective method of building up the people's strength, developing the great force of resistance of the people ; the failure to see that during the land reform we will discover and train many good cadres, steel and temper our cadres and enhance our leadership.

As a result, our forces will be increased and the fulfilment of our resistance and national construction tasks will be accelerated.

— *The fear that the landlords would strongly oppose us, and upset the social order.* This is due to the failure to see that the landlord class is only a very small minority in Vietnamese society and that it is bitterly hated by the broad masses of the people. In the present mass mobilization for thorough land rent reduction, the landlord class is indeed reacting strongly, but the campaign for land rent reduction has partially weakened their opposition. Moreover, we have our administration and our army, and the broad masses of our people have closely rallied around the Party and the Government. Any landlord who acts in opposition to the land reform shall be severely punished.

— *The lack of confidence in the peasant masses, the tendency to tail after the masses.* This is due on the one hand to the failure to see that when educated and imbued with the land reform policy, and when well-organized and well led, the peasant masses will have an extraordinary strength. They will be capable of earth-shaking feats, and will certainly implement the land reform in keeping with the line, policies and plans of the Party and the Government. Our land reform policy is clear and judicious, our cadres, the masses and Party executives at all levels have accumulated more experience with each passing day. If we lead well, there shall be fewer shortcomings and mistakes in the mass mobilization. On the other hand, this error leads to failure to educate the peasant masses perseveringly ; after the masses have been mobilized some of our cadres have slackened their leadership and tailed after the movement, leaving a number of people with wrong ideas among the masses free to act wrongly, indulge their greed and selfishness, take personal revenge, force others to admit crimes they have not committed, put them to torture, and generally fail to abide by Government policy.

Another mistake is that in the mass campaign for land reform, some cadres *only pay attention to the land reform and neglect other resistance and production tasks.* They only pay attention to the anti-feudal task and neglect the anti-imperialist task ; they do not know how to coordinate these two tasks ; they only see the landlords, and not the imperialists. These are rightist tendencies. During the land reform there were cases of imperialist troops making a thrust into an area and our cadres failing to immediately turn the mass mobilization for struggle against the feudalists

into a mass movement to serve the front, take part in the guerrilla activities, and fight the enemy. Or they let the land reform interfere with production schedules, and failed to fulfil the tax-collection task, etc.

"Leftist" ideas include the following :

— *Some cadres criticise our land reform policy for being reformist and the forcible purchase of land from the landlords as not being revolutionary.* As a result, they do not carry out the land reform policy enthusiastically. They fail to see that when carrying out the land reform while fighting against the aggressors, the fewer enemies we have, the better, and that we must therefore make distinctions within the landlord class (confiscation, requisition, and forcible purchase of land) so as to cripple their ability to resist as far as possible. There are two kinds of reform : "reforms" undertaken by the reactionary administration are of course reactionary, for they aim at curbing the spirit of struggle of the masses and further consolidating the ruling position of the exploiting minority.

In contrast, the reforms carried out by the revolutionary administration have a revolutionary character, for they shatter the resistance of the hostile enemy class, serve the interests of the masses, aim to benefit the masses and consolidate the people's revolutionary power. Does not our land reform policy aim at eliminating the feudal landlord class, and liberating the broad masses of the peasants from the feudal yoke ? We should not focus our attention only on the flexible aspect of the measure which consists in forcibly purchasing land from the landlords, and lose sight of the radical character of our land reform policy.

Other "leftist" errors consist in indulging in wishful thinking; underestimating the enemy; making light of the resistance of the landlord class and the collusion between the feudal landlords and the imperialist aggressors; or thinking that as a result of the mass mobilization for land rent reduction, the landlord class has been toppled, and has no more strength to oppose us; and as a consequence: relaxing vigilance, dropping one's guard against their acts of sabotage, failing to repress the reactionary landlords who oppose the land reform campaign. (This is an example of "leftist" tendency turned rightist).

Another mistake is *to use physical violence* against the landlords and their families in the search for movable property, to compel the landlords to admit to political crimes or common offences and to "connections" (with other enemies of the revolution - *Translator*), etc., thus causing chaos in the countryside and creating favourable conditions for bad elements to carry out counter-propaganda against the policy of the Party and Government.

Another mistake consists in *burning or destroying* cultural items (books, pictures, fine arts articles etc.) and objects of worship belonging to the landlords' families with the wrong idea that because these are products of the feudal regime, they must be "obliterated" in the land reform.

Some cadres lose their temper, show impatience, and neither wait for instructions nor follow the Central Committee's plan for mobilizing the masses to carry out the land reform; they act on their own, thus creating chaos and disorder, enabling the imperialist aggressors and the reactionary feudalists to take advantage of the situation and

carry out provocations and cause further disturbances. This has a bad influence both on the resistance and on the peasant masses.

To carry out the land reform and assure its success we must first of all overcome the wrong ideas and tendencies described above.

b) *Make the campaign spread like an oil stain in a series of drives*

The land reform campaign shall begin in the free zones first. This winter, it will be carried out in a number of villages on an experimental basis. Then it will be extended to many other villages, beginning in areas which have the most favourable conditions.

Like the land rent reduction campaign, the mobilization of the masses for land reform must be carried out in a series of drives. After each drive we must sum up experiences, check the concrete stipulations of the land reform policy, correct the erroneous ideas and work styles of cadres, then move on to a new drive. This is the way to proceed. This is because the land reform is a new problem, because we do not have many cadres, and their stand is not yet firm; moreover they lack experience, and our organizations have not yet been fully consolidated. There are a number of peasants who are still influenced by feudal ideology. Class struggle in the countryside is very complex. We are also fighting the aggressors, and it is not in our interest to allow the situation in the countryside to be strained for a long time. That is why we must mobilize the masses to carry out the land reform *well, rapidly, steadily and neatly.*

Only if the land reform is conducted in a series of drives can the leadership firmly control the situation, find timely solutions to the complex problems arising in the mass agitation work, and avoid serious mistakes. We must combat the tendency to work in an egalitarian, massive, widespread manner, with the aim of getting quick results, but which is counter-productive, as it wears out our cadres and the masses, gives the landlords an opportunity to oppose us, and easily drives the leadership into a passive position.

The plan for guiding land reform work consists of the following: to combine key reform areas with secondary areas, the two helping and stimulating each other. The best method is to concentrate our forces on making a breach, to advance a step, gain experience in the key village, pass on these experiences to secondary villages, then move part of the forces there, start the land reform in all villages, send more cadres to the secondary points so as to rectify the uneven advance, and strive to achieve the land reform everywhere at approximately the same time.

The key and secondary key areas must have unified leadership and a unified plan, and use cadres according to a common plan. We must immediately popularize elsewhere experiences acquired in places where special guidance is undertaken and use the realities of the mass movement to educate the masses, and train and foster cadres.

This constitutes both the law governing the development of the mass movement and the art of leading the movement to ensure a good, rapid, steady and neat implementation of the land reform.

c) *Combine land reform work with other tasks*

According to the instructions of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, next year our whole country will have to carry out two central tasks simultaneously, namely, fighting hard against the aggressors, and carry out the land reform. There will be another three major tasks to accomplish: to step up the building of the armed forces in all fields; to foster and raise the ideological standard of cadres, promote and transfer cadres, and improve the Party organizations in the countryside; to increase production, meet the requirements of the resistance and ensure food supplies for the people, thus giving strong stimulus to the national economy. In areas behind the enemy lines, we must fight the enemy, oppose mopping-up operations, maintain and develop our grassroots organizations, in coordination with the implementation of the land rent reduction as has been done so far. We must take advantage of the resounding effects of the mass mobilization for land reform in the free zones to demand that the landlords reduce land rent in keeping with the Government's policy.

The land reform is aimed at fostering peasant forces and pushing forward the war of resistance. A victorious struggle against the aggressors will encourage and ensure success to the mass campaign for land reform. These two central tasks are closely related and stimulate each other. While performing one task we should not neglect the other. On a nation-wide basis, fighting the aggressors is the number one central task, and *the land reform must bow to the first claim of a victorious resistance*. But a decision must be taken in each place and each branch of activity, depending on the development

of the military situation, whether it is the fight against the enemy or the land reform that is the number one central task for this locality or this branch of activity. However, the major tasks must everywhere be focused on and serve the two central tasks.

d) *Set up Land Reform Committees*

From the centre down to provincial level, it is necessary to set up Land Reform Committees. Under the Party's leadership, these committees have the task of implementing the Land Reform Law promulgated by the National Assembly and give concrete guidance to the mass movement for land reform. They will follow the development of the mass mobilization for land reform in the various places, study problems relating to the concrete policies and land reform work so as to make proposals to the leadership for the solution of problems. They can also issue orders relevant to the implementation of policies worked out by the leading echelons.

To ensure a broad-based guidance of the land reform each land reform committee must include representatives of the political parties, mass organizations and democratic personalities.

The Party executives must participate in these committees directly and lead them closely.

In the present situation, it is not necessary to set up Land Reform Committees at the district level.

In the villages, the Conferences of Peasants' Representatives and the Executive Committees of the Peasants' Associations are the legal bodies leading the masses' struggle, and their official task is to implement the land reform in the villages.

CONCLUSION

Dear comrades,

President Hồ Chí Minh has clearly pointed out the great benefits of the land reform :

"Successful implementation of the land reform will help us overcome many difficulties, and resolve many problems.

"*Militarily*, our peasants will feel great enthusiasm about taking part in the resistance, and the expansion of the army and the mobilization of the war-service volunteers will be facilitated. Our soldiers will feel more reassured about their families and will fight still harder.

"*Politically*, the political and economic power in the countryside will be held by the peasants, the people's democratic dictatorship will become a reality, and the worker-peasant alliance will be strengthened. The National United Front will include more than 90% of the rural population and will be very broad and powerful.

"*Economically*, once free from the yoke of the feudal landlords, the peasants will joyfully increase production and practise thrift, their purchasing power will increase, industry and trade will develop, and the national economy as a whole will be expanded.

"Thanks to increased production, the life of our peasants, workers, soldiers and cadres will be more rapidly improved.

"In the *cultural and social* fields, the overwhelming majority of the people will have enough to eat and to wear, as 'one can only do one's work properly if one has enough to eat'. They will study harder, and develop fine customs and habits."

In short, the land reform, carried out successfully, is sure to provide us with more conditions to push forward our resistance to final victory, regain real independence and unity, consolidate and develop our people's democratic regime and make active contributions to the defence of world peace.

The land reform is aimed at eliminating the regime of feudal exploitation which has existed in our country for thousands of years, liberating tens of millions of peasants of our country from oppression by the feudal landlords, liberating the productive forces in the countryside, creating the necessary conditions for the development of the national economy, smashing the social basis of imperialism in our country, consolidating our rear areas, consolidating the worker-peasant alliance, strengthening the Party's leadership, consolidating and broadening the National United Front, strengthening and developing the people's armed forces, and strengthening the people's democratic administration.

Together with the war of resistance, the land reform will radically change the face of Vietnamese society; it will change the countryside and take Vietnamese society one big step forward on the road of people's democracy, which will lead us to socialism. The land reform is a great endeavour, conforming to the law of development of Vietnamese society, and with the aspirations of our entire people.

To mobilize the masses in order to implement the land reform is to launch a broad offensive against the feudalists, a great opportunity to steel and temper all our cadres and Party members. Our entire Party must achieve identity of will and action, reinforce their determination to win in this offensive and rapidly mature in this drive.

We must implement the agrarian policy of the Party and Government actively, and serve the people wholeheartedly, determined to make the slogan "National Independence and Land to the Tillers" a reality at all costs.

Simultaneous implementation of the land reform and fighting against aggression is difficult; but the masses of our people have great revolutionary ardour, and with the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, and the precious experiences of the revolution in other countries we have learned, we are sure to win resounding success.

— Defeat aggressive imperialism and down with the feudal landlord class!

— Long live independent and unified Viet Nam!

— Long live the Viet Nam Workers' Party!

— Long live President Ho Chi Minh!

FORWARD ALONG THE PATH CHARTED BY KARL MARX

(Speech at a cadres' conference to mark the 150th birthday of Karl Marx)

Dear comrades,

Karl Marx, the greatest thinker of our time, the founder of scientific communism, the greatest teacher and leader of the world proletariat, was born 150 years ago.

This year, together with the workers and labouring people of all countries, the oppressed nations and all progressive mankind, we celebrate Karl Marx's 150th birthday at a time when his doctrine has won brilliant successes in the world and in our country.

On this occasion, I wish to elaborate the three following questions :

1. Karl Marx, a dedicated revolutionary, the founder of scientific communism.

2. How has our Party applied Marxism-Leninism in Viet Nam ?

3. Let us march forward under the banner of Marxism-Leninism and fulfil brilliantly our immediate tasks.

I

KARL MARX, A DEDICATED REVOLUTIONARY, THE FOUNDER OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM

Karl Marx was born on May 5, 1818, at Trier, Rhenish Prussia, into a lawyer's family. When a student, he joined the *Young Hegelians* and tried to draw atheist and revolutionary conclusions from Hegel's idealistic philosophy. After graduation, in 1841, he contributed to the *Rhenish Gazette* with the radical bourgeois leaders in Rhineland and eventually became its editor-in-chief.

The democratic inclination of the *Rhenish Gazette* and its influence among the masses frightened the royal government of Prussia into banning it.

Marx's contribution to the *Rhenish Gazette,* though short-lived, had a strong influence on his thinking. Engaged in intense political activities, he had the opportunity to gain better understanding of the political life in Germany and of the wretched condition of the labouring masses. Discussions in the *Rhenish Gazette* on various problems relating to the labouring people's material interests set Marx the task of thoroughly investigating questions of political economy and of correctly determining the relationship between the State and law on the one hand, and the material conditions of society on the other. *A Contribution to the Critique of*

Hegel's Philosophy of Law completed by Marx in the autumn of 1843 marked the first change in his world outlook, from idealistic to materialistic, and from revolutionary democratism to communism.

Immediately after the banning of the *Rhenish Gazette,* Marx decided to go abroad and publish a revolutionary paper to be circulated in Germany.

In October 1843, he went to Paris. There he published the *Franco-German Year Book*. France's capital was a thriving industrial centre where a fierce struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was unfolding. This had a decisive influence upon Marx's thinking. He frequented workers' quarters in the Paris suburbs, contacted underground revolutionary organizations of French and German workers, and dedicated his efforts to a critical study of English classical political economy and French utopian socialism. During his stay in Paris he reached extremely important conclusions. In the preface of *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, he wrote*: "As philosophy finds its *material* weapon in the proletariat, so the proletariat finds its *spiritual* weapon in philosophy. And once the lightning of thought has squarely struck this untouched soil of the people, the emancipation of the *Germans* into *men* will be accomplished."

This proposition and many others show how the philosopher and revolutionary fighter had merged in Marx, and how the young intellectual full of revolutionary ardour and thirst for truth had placed firm confidence in the historical mission of the proletariat. From that time he devoted all his energy and abilities to its emancipation.

Whilst in Paris, Marx gave up idealism and revolutionary democratism to adopt materialism and communism. Engels in the English industrial centre of Manchester followed a similar path. From then the collaboration between the two men grew ever closer so that the life work of each became the work of both, and Engels' name was inseparably associated with Marx's.

Banished from France, Marx left for Brussels in early 1845. In France as in Belgium, together with Engels he thoroughly criticized Hegel's idealistic philosophy and Feuerbach's metaphysical materialism. On this basis he elaborated a scientific world outlook for the proletariat. In Brussels, Marx made strenuous efforts in propaganda and agitation work among the proletarian masses and set up the *German Workers' Union.*

In early 1847, Marx and Engels joined the *League of the Just*, an underground organization comprising workers from Germany and many other countries, and completely reshaped it. *The League of the Just* was renamed *Communist League.* The Second Congress of the League convened in late 1847 unanimously adopted the principles of the Programme put forward by Marx and Engels, and entrusted them with the drafting of a manifesto to expound these principles. Thus, the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, an immortal document of scientific socialism, came into being, establishing the Marxist doctrine as the comprehensive revolutionary doctrine of the proletariat.

Lenin said about the *Manifesto of the Communist Party :*

"With the clarity and brilliance of genius, this work outlines a new world conception, consistent materialism, which

also embraces the realm of social life, dialectics, as the most comprehensive and profound doctrine of development, the theory of class struggle and of the epoch-making revolutionary role of the proletariat — the creator of a new, communist society..." [1]

Ending the *Manifesto*, Marx and Engels raised the slogan "*Workers of all countries, unite!*", calling on the world proletariat to close its ranks in the struggle to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and build a new society.

The February Revolution (1848) which broke out in France had a resounding echo in the neighbouring countries. The frightened Belgian government arrested Marx and expelled him from Belgium. He moved to Paris where he worked actively for the progress of the proletarian movement. The Central Committee of the *Communist League* appointed him its President. In April 1848, together with Engels he returned to Germany and took a direct part in the seething revolutionary movement there. In June the same year, he published the *New Rhenish Gazette*, the only journal voicing the viewpoint of the proletariat in the democratic movement in Europe at that time. In this journal he profoundly analysed the momentous events of the revolutionary years of 1848 - 1849, laid bare every scheme and manœuvre of the reactionary forces and the bourgeoisie, and guided and encouraged the masses in their struggle. But the Revolution failed and the *New Rhenish Gazette* was prohibited. Marx was indicated by the Prussian government and banished in May 1849. He returned to Paris but was again expelled by

1. V. I. Lenin, *Marx, Engels, Marxism.*

the French government shortly afterward. He then left for London where he was to complete the main work of his lifetime : *Capital.*

In 1859 Marx's *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* was published. His theory on value was systematically expounded for the first time. In 1867 the first volume of *Capital* appeared, of which Engels said :

"As long as there have been capitalists and workers on earth, no book has appeared which is of as much importance for the workers as the one before us. The relation between capital and labour, the axis on which our entire present system of society turns, is here treated scientifically for the first time..." [1]

In the early 1860's the proletarian movement again surged up so powerfully that Marx could think of realizing his long-cherished dream : the establisment of an international organization of the proletariat to unite, educate and lead the latter in its struggle for self-liberation. In September 1864, the *International Workingmen's Association,* or *First International,* was founded with Marx as its guiding force. He himself drafted nearly all the documents issued by its Central Committee. The great achievement of the *International* was to unite the workers' movement in various countries and direct its activities toward common action, to fight non-proletarian socialist theories, and secure triumph for Marx's revolutionary theory in this movement.

After the failure of the Paris Commune (1871) the *International* could no longer operate efficiently. In application of the resolution of the Hague Congress (1872),

1. F. Engels, *Marx's Capital.*

it temporarily withdrew from the political scene. The *First International* had fulfilled its historical mission and had opened a period of extensive development in the workers' movement, that of the formation of many socialist workers' parties with a mass character.

Despite the dissolution of the *First International* the role played by Marx and Engels as leaders of the international workers' movement continued to be strengthened. By giving instructions and critical advice, Marx and Engels showed constant concern for the setting up of genuine proletarian parties in various countries, especially in Germany and France. Such well-known works as Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* and Engels' *Anti-Duhring* were written with this specific aim.

The correction of the drafts of the second, third and fourth volumes of *Capital* occupied most of Marx's time, but his health did not enable him to finish this gigantic work. The strain from mental overwork coupled with material privation soon reduced his robust strength. Marx breathed his last on March 14, 1883, in London, at the age of 65.

Dear comrades,

Where does Marx's genius lie ? In the fact that *he provided timely and judicious solutions to the great problems of the epoch, posed by progressive mankind.*

By the middle of the 19th century, world capitalism had reached a high degree of development, and the productive forces of society had gone through a fairly vigorous growth. On the one hand, large-scale industry in its expansion had

impoverished various strata of the labouring people and, on the other, it had turned out a great amount of commodities for which there were only limited markets. The clash between over-production and the destitution of the working people reflected the intensifying conflict between the productive forces of society and the capitalist relations of production, between Labour and Capital.

From spontaneous actions such as the wrecking of machinery, the proletariat soon became conscious of its class interests and gradually reorganized itself for a more vigorous fight against the rule of the bourgeoisie. The struggle of the proletariat, particularly the French proletariat, had a strong influence on the shaping of Marx's scientific socialism.

In the domain of natural sciences, man had also achieved remarkable successes. The three great discoveries of the 19th century on the origins and evolution of the species, on the cell, and on the conservation and transformation of energy, together with other feats of science, had an influence on the shaping of Marxist philosophy.

In this historical context, Marx inherited in a critical way, and inventively developed the three main trends of 19th century thought, namely German classical philosphy, English classical political economy, and French utopian socialism.

In *philosophy,* Marx resolutely repudiated idealism which was constantly wedded to religion. He was critical of non-dialectical mechanistic materialism, which only sought to explain the world without trying to change it.

He developed the gains of German classical philosophy, more particularly Hegel's dialectics and Feuerbach's materialism, and upon the strength of the new findings of natural

sciences, he conceived his own *dialectical materialism.* This is the science of the general laws of motion of nature, society and thought, the most perfect, exhaustive and comprehensive theory of evolution, the theory of man's knowledge of the objective world.

Marx's dialectical materialism provided the proletariat and mankind with a wonderful tool of thought.

Applying dialectical materialism to an examination of human society, he completely revolutionized man's conception of world history. Earlier, idealism had attributed historical change to man's thought and the most important historical developments to outstanding heroes. Disposing of such an erroneous view, he proved that the material world was an objective reality existing independently of human consciousness and that the latter was only the reflection of the former. The material life of society, social being, exists prior to social spiritual life, and does so independently of man's consciousness. The latter is determined by that objective reality. It is the conditions of the material life of a society which determine its social theories, its political, legal, literary and artistic views, its political regime, and so on. Economy is the basis of society, on which are founded its political system, laws, philosophy, ethics, literature, arts, etc.

What is the main decisive factor which moulds the conditions of the material life of society ? The mode of production. By using instruments of production, man produces material wealth which enables him to subsist. The producers, together with the instruments of production, make up the productive forces of society. As individual labour alone cannot produce material wealth, collective production is necessary, and thus

connections are established among labourers. At times, the connections take the form of labourer-to-labourer relations : at times, they assume that of exploiter-to-exploited relations. During its uninterrupted process of development, the productive forces at a given time violently clash with the relations of production. Then a social revolution breaks out, destroys the outdated relations of production, and sets up new ones to make possible a vigorous growth of the productive forces.

Human history up to the 19th century (when Marx founded scientific socialism) had in the main experienced the following relations of production : primitive communist, slave, feudal, and capitalist[1]. Marx and Engels show that when the ownership of the means of production was instituted, the process also created exploiting and exploited classes. Since class society emerged, the history of man has been that of class struggle. The masses of the people are the genuine makers of history, and class struggle is the motive force which impels forward its development. The appearance and survival of classes is dependent on material conditions, economic conditions in which production and exchange of daily necessities of life are carried out in each given historical period.

In his preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* Marx wrote : "In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which

1. Do Asian relations of production belong to a different category from that of the Western ones ? And what are in fact those "Asian modes of production" mentioned by Marx ? These are questions to be carefully considered before serious answers can be found.

correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or — what is but a legal expression for the same thing — with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed...

"In broad outlines, Asiatic, ancient, feudal and modern bourgeois modes of production can be designated as progressive epochs in the economic formation of society. The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production, antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of one arising form the social conditions of life of the individuals ; at the same time, the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism. This social formation brings, therefore, the prehistory of human society to a close".

Marx's historical materialism demonstrates that under capitalism the growth of the productive forces reaches such a level as renders capitalist relations of production no longer suitable and their breaking up by proletarian revolution inevitable. This proposition leads us directly to socialism and arms the proletariat with a most incisive weapon which is not only capable of *interpreting the world,* but what is more important, of *changing it.*

In *political economy,* Marx's most significant discovery is his *surplus value* theory. This supplies the most thorough explanation of the relations between Capital and Labour, and exposes the exploitation of the latter by the former in the capitalist mode of production.

English classical political economy, the exponents of which were Adam Smith and Ricardo, had been credited with momentous achievements. In studying capitalist economy which emerged first in England, those two economists had come to the conclusion that labour alone was the source of all wealth, of all value. But owing to their class limitations, they were unable to give the reason why the wage-earners did not get the whole product of their labour and were unable to explain correctly the source of the capitalists' wealth.

For nearly half a century, Marx carried out research on the economic system of capitalist society, starting from its basic unit, the commodity, to extended large-scale mechanized industry, and succeeded in formulating the economic law of the motion of capitalist society. His conclusions: the capitalist mode of production conditions the existence of two social classes; on the one hand, the capitalists who own the bulk of the means of production and means of living; and

on the other, the proletariat, deprived of all means of production and forced to sell its labouring power for the means of living necessary to its survival. The value of a commodity is determined by the amount of social labour needed for its manufacture. The proletarian who sells his labouring power to the capitalist is paid a wage which corresponds only to a part of the time of labour he spends, the value of the rest, the surplus value, being pocketed by the employer. This viewpoint eloquently proves that all the wealth of the bourgeoisie is made up of the surplus value produced by the proletariat and appropriated by the capitalists.

Capitalist primitive accumulation, the emergence of capitalism in the course of history, means essentially savage and ruthless despoliation of small producers by the bourgeoisie. Capitalism came about by the elimination of small production, the abolition of small producers' private ownership based on individual labour and its replacement by capitalist private ownership based on exploitation of the labour of the proletariat through the agency of the wage system. Brought to ruin by the bourgeoisie, millions of small producers turned proletarians and were assembled in great factories to produce all material wealth while a handful of capitalists were living leisurely on the fat of the land, on the fruits of their labour. Marx concluded: "Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with the capitalist framework. This framework is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." [1]

1. Karl Marx, *Capital,* Volume I, Part III.

Marx's scientific socialism was founded on his own historical materialism and political economy. On the strength of his findings in these fields, he established that the eventual destruction of capitalism and its supplanting by socialism is an inevitable and objective historical necessity.

For the first time in human history, he elaborated a comprehensive theory on *class struggle* and made the fullest use of it. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* Marx and Engels wrote : "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles (except the history of the primitive community, Engels added subsequently - *T.C.*).

"Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open, fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes...

"The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

"Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature : it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other : Bourgeoisie and Proletariat." [1]

1. K. Marx - F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party.*

Making an objective appraisal of the attitudes of various classes with vested interests in the economic base and their respective social positions under capitalism, Marx and Engels said : "Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry ; the proletariat is its special and essential product." [1]

Marx shed a bright light on the role of the proletariat in world history, as *the grave-digger of capitalism, and builder of a new society, a classless, communist society, free from exploitation of man by man.*

He also blazed the only trail for the proletariat to attain self-liberation : *under the leadership of the communist party, its vanguard, the proletariat, in close alliance with the peasantry, will use revolutionary violence to overthrow the capitalist rule and seize power for itself.*

The *dictatorship of the proletariat* occupies a central position in Marx's scientific socialism. In his review of different class struggles which had taken place in human history, more particularly that of nineteenth-century France, Marx commented : "What I did that was new was to prove : 1. that the *existence of classes* is bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production ;* 2. that class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat ;* 3. that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society...*" [2]

1. *Ibid.*
2. K. Marx, *Letter to J. Weydemeyer.*

Having analysed the economic and political conditions of capitalist society, Marx concluded that between the latter and communist society, there will be a period of revolutionary transformation, when the state must be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, *the road to communism must necessarily pass through the dictatorship of the proletariat.* Marx also highlighted the objective inescapability of the two stages of communism: the lower one which is socialist society, and the higher one which is communist society. In the former, the main means of production fall under socialist ownership of two kinds: ownership of the whole people, and collective ownership; the principle determining the distribution of goods is: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work". In communist society, all means of production are the common property of the whole people, the basic difference between manual work and mental work is wiped out, just as that between the towns and the countryside; classes no longer exist, the state is no more; man enjoys all-round development; labour becomes a need and habit for everyone; the productive forces are greatly increased, goods are superabundant and the principle applied in society is: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Marx was the first to chart the proletariat's line of struggle for self-liberation, to enlighten it on its historical mission, to organize and lead it in the fight to liberate itself and mankind from all forms of oppression and exploitation. Regarding revolutionary struggle as his *raison d'être* and greatest source of happiness, he carried it out valiantly,

passionately and dedicatedly to emancipate the proletariat, in defiance of the enemy's persecution and repression, and in the face of hardships and privations.

Throughout his life, he stood in the forefront of the fight of the proletariat, devoting his heart and soul to its organization and education and guiding its revolutionary effort to overthrow the bourgeoisie. Not only was Marx a thinker, he was also — first and foremost — a revolutionary.

While struggling for the revolutionary cause of the proletariat, he and Engels had to put up a bitter fight against all un-proletarian tendencies in the workers' movement from the "Prussian socialism" of the Lassalle group in Germany to the Proudhon circle's petty-bourgeois socialism in France and Belgium, from the rightist opportunism of English trade-union leaders to the German communists' "leftist" adventurism, from Bakunin anarchism in Russia to bourgeois nationalism on the questions of war and colonies, etc. It was in this process that Marxism grew and was forged into the invincible weapon of the proletariat.

As the most outstanding proletarian leader, Marx supplied his class with important principles regarding the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggle, namely: To establish the proletariat's leadership (through its political party) over the whole struggle for the emancipation of the labouring masses; to set up a steadfast alliance between the proletariat and the masses of the peasantry, to enlist the wholehearted support of the peasantry for its revolutionary attempt to topple capitalism and build a new society; to co-ordinate the drive of the proletariat with democratic and national liberation movements: constantly and thoroughly to grasp the ultimate

goals of class struggle without neglecting the struggle for everyday interests so as to rally the broad masses of the people and push them forward; to change fighting tactics in time to suit changes in the revolutionary situation and in the relation of forces between classes; to display unfailing loyalty to proletarian internationalism, and so on.

Karl Marx is no more, but his doctrine is wielding growing influence and will last for ever. We always highly value revolutionary theory, and have no doubt that it is perfectly capable of changing society if the following three prerequisites exist: 1. It must reflect the objective laws of society; 2. It must be the exponent of the thinking, and champion of the rights, of the vanguard class of society; 3. It must penetrate deep into the masses of the people, and make it possible to mobilize, organize and lead them into action.

The cogency of Marxism precisely resides in its ability to reflect accurately the objective laws of historical development, and to represent the most advanced class, the most revolutionary class of modern society, the proletariat, and hence to strike roots into the broad masses, to win the hearts and minds of millions and millions of people, and stir them into an implacable and uncompromising fight against the enemy of their class, against world bourgeoisie, and into the building of a classless, communist society.

Lenin said: "The Marxist dortrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is complete and harmonious and provides men with an integral world conception which is irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction or defence of bourgeois oppression...

"Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished. Marx's economic theory alone has explained the true position of the proletariat in the general system of capitalism." [1]

After Marx's death, Engels, his most intimate comrade and companion in-arms, acting as continuator, brought to completion Marx's interrupted works, while keeping aloft the banner of militant Marxism and giving a fresh impetus to the workers' movement. Engels founded and headed the *Second International* until the end of his life. He spurred the international workers' movement forward and speeded up the formation of proletarian parties with a mass character in many countries.

Carrying on Marx's and Engels's work, Lenin imaginatively developed their doctrine in the new stage of history, the stage of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. He tirelessly combated reformism, rightist and "leftist" revisionism then existing in the *Second International.* He challenged dogmatism and other opportunistic trends in defence of the purity of Marxism, and raised it to a higher stage of development, that of Leninism, at a time when capitalism was in its death throes and proletarian revolution topped the order of the day of the world proletariat. Such works by Lenin as *What Is To Be Done? Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution; Materialism and Empirio-Criticism; Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism; The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade*

1. V. I. Lenin, *On Marx, Engels and Marxism.*

Kautsky; The State and Revolution; "Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder and a series of other writings added to the theoretical wealth of Marx's doctrine in the realm of philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism as well as to the strategy and tactics of the proletariat.

Lenin showed the essence and features of imperialism and its serious contradictions which make it the highest stage of capitalism. Examining the development of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism he formulated the law of the uneven development of capitalism and came to the extremely important conclusion that the proletarian revolution can perfectly triumph at first in a number of countries or even in one single country. He laid special stress on the question of revolutionary violence and dictatorship of the proletariat whose task, he pointed out, is to fight the class enemy inside and outside the country, to build a new society, the classless, communist society. The important mission of the proletariat is to work out and put into effect "a new organization of labour of a standard higher than capitalism" and its most complex long-term duty is to transform the millions of small producers and thereby to prevent the resurgence of capitalism.

He also pointed out that for the proletarian revolution to triumph, a close alliance with the masses of the peasantry at home and with the proletariat of all countries and oppressed peoples of the world is indispensable. His war-cry "*Proletarians of all countries and oppressed peoples, unite!*" has become the clarion call rallying all revolutionary forces on the earth in the battle against the common enemy, imperialism, and for national independence, democracy and socialism.

He built the Russian Bolshevik Party, a new-type party of the proletariat, and led the Russian proletariat and working people to success in the Great October Socialist Revolution (1917) and in the setting up of the first proletarian dictatorship state in the world. The October Revolution has ushered in a new epoch in man's history, the epoch of the collapse of capitalism and of the victory of socialism on a world scale.

He founded the *Communist International*, i. e. the *Third International*, to supersede the *Second International* which had degenerated after Engels's death, due to the betrayal of the revisionists Bernstein and Kautsky. The new body played an important part in the defence of the revolutionary spirit of Marxism, in the expansion of the international communist and workers' movement, in the preparation for the world proletariat to overthrow the imperialist rule and seize power.

After his death, Stalin, the disciple and continuator of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, held high the revolutionary standard of the proletariat. He fought implacably rightist and "leftist" opportunism and preserved the purity of Marxism - Leninism, while making an inventive use of it in the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, and impelling forward world revolution. True to Marxism - Leninism, Stalin did everything in his power to strengthen the Party ideologically and organizationally, to maintain and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, to carry out socialist industrialization, agricultural collectivization and cultural revolution, to enforce equal rights for all fraternal nationalities of the country, and at the same time to give all-out support to the revolution in various countries of the

world. As a result, the gains of the revolution were preserved and increased, and the Soviet Union was built into a powerful socialist state in the midst of capitalist encirclement.

In the Second World War, the Soviet Communist Party (Bolshevik) headed by Stalin led the exceptionally heroic fight of the Soviet Army and people to a glorious victory over fascism, thereby safeguarding the first socialist state in the world and paving the way for the triumph of the revolution in a series of countries in Eastern Europe and in Asia, and that of our August Revolution. The greatest historical event after the October Revolution was the Chinese Revolution whose success dealt a staggering blow at imperialist positions in Asia, and tilted the world balance of forces in favour of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

Today, the world socialist system, which consists of thirteen countries in three continents, with a population of more than a thousand million, has been established. The movement of the working class and labouring people in the capitalist countries for democracy and social progress and the national liberation revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America are vigorously growing. The colonial structure of imperialism is swiftly sliding towards disintegration with a momentum that no reactionary force can halt.

All this represents a tremendous achievement for Marxism-Leninism, for Karl Marx and, generally, for the founders of scientific communism, and those who have developed it in the new conditions of world history.

II

HOW HAS OUR PARTY APPLIED MARXISM-LENINISM IN VIET NAM?

Dear comrades,

During nearly a century of French colonialist rule, finding life impossible under the oppressive regime of the colonialists and the feudalists, our people had risen up to struggle courageously for the independence and freedom of the fatherland. For each one who fell, others rushed forward. But all national liberation movements before the birth of our Party had failed. One of the causes for this failure lies in the inability of former revolutionaries to develop the scientific world outlook of the proletariat, the most revolutionary class of our time, hence to work out an adequate programme capable of leading the Vietnamese revolution to victory.

Mankind has entered a new epoch which began with the Great October Socialist Revolution, that of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale. The central force of our time is the working class.

The essential feature of our time is that the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the evolution of human society.

"Today it is the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society." [1]

In our time, to be successful any truly profound revolution of the masses of the people must be led by the authentic revolutionary party of the working class, the Marxist-Leninist party. The role of leader of the revolution played by the working class was expounded 120 years ago by Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, the first revolutionary programme of the world working class.

Thanks to the resounding influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the dissemination efforts of Comrade Ho Chi Minh, the first Vietnamese to become a Marxist, Marxism-Leninism came to our country.

In 1930 the Indochinese Communist Party (now the Viet Nam Workers' Party) came into being, marking a great turning-point in the history of the Vietnamese revolution.

Applying Marxism-Leninism and holding firm to the revolutionary stand of the working class, our Party carried out a scientific analysis of the economic, political and social situation in our country and set forth a correct revolutionary programme which led the Vietnamese revolution steadily forward.

With the victory of the August Revolution, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the Vietnamese people's democratic state, came into being and the colonial system of imperialism was breached at its weakest link in Southeast Asia. This was

1. Declaration of the Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1960.

the first victory of Marxism-Leninism in a colonial and semi-feudal country in Southeast Asia, and at the same time the greatest event in the history of the Vietnamese nation. For the first time the labouring people of our country became masters of their own land and devoted their talent and intelligence to building a new life.

After the August Revolution, and following nearly nine years of resistance, the Vietnamese people defeated the war of aggression of the French colonialists helped by the American imperialists, and at present they are recording great victories in the resistance to American aggression, for national salvation.

Following the victory of the resistance against the French colonialists, North Viet Nam advanced to the stage of socialist revolution, and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam became the firm outpost of the socialist camp in Southeast Asia.

That our Party has led the Vietnamese revolution from one victory to another and recorded such tremendous achievements is due to the fact that it has applied Marxism-Leninism in a creative manner to the concrete conditions prevailing in Viet Nam and charted a correct revolutionary course for our country's working class and people. This is the *line of the people's national democratic revolution advancing toward the socialist revolution in Viet Nam.*

THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

First of all, our Party took the view that Viet Nam was a colonial and semi-feudal country. Agriculture occupied the major part of the national economy. Foreign imperialists

relied on the feudal landowner class to oppress and exploit our people. The peasantry accounted for about 90 per cent of the population. For those reasons, in Viet Nam two fundamental contradictions had to be solved : *first*, that between the Vietnamese people and the imperialists who had robbed them of their country ; and *second*, that between the broad masses of the people, the peasants especially, and the feudal landowner class. The essential contradiction, for the solution of which all forces should be concentrated, was that between the Vietnamese people on the one hand, and the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys on the other. Imperialism was relying on the feudal landowner class to rule over our country ; on the other hand, the feudal landowner class was acting as an agent of the imperialists and relied on their protection to maintain its interests and privileges. That is why two tasks were set for the Vietnamese revolution :

1. To drive out the imperialist aggressors and win national independence — its anti-imperialist task.

2. To overthrow the feudal landowner class, carry out land reform, and put into effect the watchword "Land to the Tillers" — its anti-feudal task. These two tasks were closely linked together and could not be separated : to drive out the imperialists one had to overthrow the feudal landowners ; conversely, to overthrow the feudal landowners, one had to drive out the imperialists.

Who in Vietnamese society was to overthrow the imperialists and feudalists ? It was the four classes among the people : the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and

the national bourgeoisie. Essentially, however, it was the working class and the peasantry, for they constituted the great majority of the population, were the most heavily oppressed and exploited and had the greatest revolutionary capabilities. Leadership of the Vietnamese revolution must be exercised by the working class, for it is the most advanced and the most thoroughly revolutionary class ; the working class alone is qualified for leading the Vietnamese revolution to total victory.

In short, the tasks of the revolution were to overthrow aggressor imperialism and the feudal landowner class with a view to winning national independence, and thus to put into effect the people's democratic rights, give land to the tillers, and turn Viet Nam from a colonial and semi-feudal country into a truly democratic and independent country. This revolution was carried out by the people under the leadership of the working class on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. In our Party's view, this was the *people's national democratic revolution*, i.e., the new-style bourgeois democratic revolution in our country.

The Vietnamese people's national democratic revolution in fact involved two revolutionary movements which bore close relationship to each other, had influence on each other and pushed each other forward — the national liberation revolution and the agrarian revolution (or land reform). Because of the close collusion between the imperialists and the feudal landowner class to maintain their rule, it was impossible to overthrow the imperialists alone without striking at the feudalists, their agents. Moreover, the peasantry constituted the greatest force of the revolution ; without the

participation of the broad masses of the peasantry, the people's national democratic revolution could not achieve success. In the process of the people's national democratic revolution, in order to mobilize the immense forces of the peasantry and consolidate the worker-peasant alliance, our Party advocated land reform, the overthrow of the feudal landowner class, the abolition of the regime of feudal land ownership, the implementation of the slogan "Land to the Tillers" and the satisfaction of the peasants' claims to land.

The close relationship between the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks was a matter of revolutionary strategy. To separate these two tasks might lead the people's national democratic revolution to failure. However, they were not to be carried out abreast on an equal footing. This was an important experience of our Party in providing strategic guidance.

Why shouldn't the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks be carried out abreast on an equal footing ? Our country was a colonial country, so the imperialist yoke was weighing heavily on the Vietnamese people. The imperialist aggressors were the most powerful and truculent enemy of our entire people, of our nation. Only by overthrowing the imperialists could we win national independence, realize the people's democratic liberties and give land to the tillers.

Imperialism and the feudal landowner class were the two main targets of the people's national democratic revolution, the two main enemies to overthrow, but the more essential target, the more essential enemy was imperialism. In the people's national democratic revolution both tasks — the anti-imperialist and the anti-feudal — were essential, but the

anti-feudal task must yield to the anti-imperialist. That is why in the first stage of the people's national democratic revolution, the spearhead of the revolution must be directed essentially against the imperialist aggressors and all forces should be concentrated in order to overthrow them.

To overthrow the imperialist aggressor, stress should be laid on the question of national liberation. An anti-imperialist national united front should be founded, and the fire of revolutionary struggle should be concentrated on the imperialist aggressors and the feudalists, their devoted agents, in other words the king, mandarins and village tyrants.

In the people's national democratic revolution, the problem for our Party was to isolate the most dangerous enemy — the imperialist aggressors and their devoted servants, the feudalists — to divide the ranks of the latter, strip the former of their allies and weaken their prop, so as to overthrow them more easily. For this reason, it must rally all forces struggling against the imperialists and their lackeys, and carry out a policy of broad national union. The broader the anti-imperialist national united front, the more useful it was to the revolution. But the essential point was that it should be *based on a firm worker-peasant alliance and put under the close leadership of our Party*. Not only should it include all the classes of the people, all the fraternal nationalities living on Vietnamese soil, all the democratic parties, all the patriotic political and religious bodies, but also all the democratic personalities and patriotic notables of the feudal landowner class.

For those reasons, the anti-feudal task had to be carried out step by step. In implementation of the above-mentioned

policy of the anti-imperialist national united front, our Party divided the agrarian task into the three following stages :

a) First : to confiscate all the lands of the imperialists and the Vietnamese traitors and distribute them to the poor peasants ; to re-distribute the communal lands in a just and fair manner.

b) Second : to reduce land rent and interest rates : to order a moratorium of debts and to cancel all debts to landowners ;

c) Third : to carry out land reform, abolish feudal land ownership, confiscate, requisition or buy out lands belonging to the landowner class and distribute them to landless or land-poor peasants and put into effect the slogan "Land to the Tillers."

While applying this strategy of the people's national democratic revolution, we committed shortcomings and errors of a local and partial character. However, revolutionary realities over nearly forty years have proved that our Party's line of the people's national democratic revolution and its guiding principles concerning strategy and tactics are correct. It was for these reasons that the August Revolution (1945) triumphed and the resistance against the French colonialists (1945 - 1954) ended in victory.

Thus, in the first stage of the people's national democratic revolution, we did not yet carry out land reform. But in the process of the people's national democratic revolution, because of its requirements and in order to consolidate the worker-peasant alliance, at some given time land reform had to be

carried into effect, feudal land ownership abolished, and the political and social basis of the imperialists in our country destroyed.

The working class must provide firm leadership to the people's national democratic revolution and cannot share it with any other class, least of all let it fall into the hands of the national bourgeoisie. Experiences supplied by the revolution in our country have proved that only under the leadership of the working class could the people's national democratic revolution fulfil the two anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks as embodied in these major slogans :

— To overthrow aggressor imperialism and its agents, the feudalists ;

— To found the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam ; to realize the people's democratic freedoms (including freedom of religion) ;

— To confiscate all properties of the imperialist aggressors and the Vietnamese traitors and hand them over to the people's power ;

— To abolish all taxes and corvées imposed by the imperialists and feudalists ; to establish a just and fair taxation ;

— To reduce land rent and interest rates, advance toward land reform, carry into effect the slogan "Land to the Tillers" ;

— To decree an eight-hour workday, raise wages and set a minimum wage ; to promulgate labour legislation ;

— To build and develop a national and democratic economy, culture and education ;

— To found a revolutionary army of the people, set up a system of military service and organize national defence ;

— To promote equality between men and women ;

— To promote equality among all nationalities ;

— To establish friendly relations with the socialist countries and all other countries which respect the independence and sovereignty of Viet Nam ;

— To support the movement of revolutionary struggle of the working class and people of other countries ; to defend world peace.

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Following the great victory at Dien Bien Phu (1954) the North of our country was wholly liberated, while the imperialist and feudal regime was maintained in the South. Our Party's policy was to shift the North onto the stage of socialist revolution while continuing the struggle against imperialism and its servants so as to fulfil the tasks of the people's national democratic revolution in the South and advance toward the reunification of the country.

At that time two great problems were posed to our Party : Should we wait for the reunification of the country to be achieved before engaging in socialist revolution ? Should the North go through the stage of capitalist development before advancing to socialism ? To both questions, our Party's answer was : No.

After the fulfilment of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks, the North should switch over to the stage of socialist

revolution without any delay, without having to wait for national reunification. We stand for "uninterrupted revolution". President Ho Chi Minh said :

"...Following the restoration of peace, the North of our country switched over from the people's national democratic revolution to the *socialist revolution*. The immediate task of our entire people is to strive to build and consolidate the North, bring it gradually to socialism and at the same time struggle for national reunification with a view to building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, and prosperous Viet Nam".[1]

The North is fully capable of bypassing the stage of capitalist development and advancing directly to socialism, for the following reasons :

1. The entire revolutionary cause of the people in the North is under the direct leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, a genuine Marxist-Leninist party, on the basis of a strong worker-peasant alliance ;

2. The completion of the people's national democratic revolution in the North has created the basis for the shift to the socialist revolution ;

3. Following the victory of the resistance against the French colonialists and the liberation of the North, the people's democratic dictatorship in the North is fully capable of fulfilling the historical task of the dictatorship of the proletariat ;

1. Ho Chi Minh Speech at the opening meeting of the Eighth Session of the First National Assembly, April 1958.

4. The people in the North are highly patriotic and industrious ; they know how to rely on their own means and are determined to build a new life for themselves in accordance with the Party's line ;

5. Socialist construction in our country benefits from the wholehearted assistance of the fraternal socialist countries in all fields.

In fact, following the victory of the resistance against the French colonialists, the wholly liberated North entered the period of transition to socialism.

Our Party's *general line* during the period of transition to socialism is as follows :

"...To take the North toward socialism rapidly, vigorously and steadily, to build an abundant and happy life in the North, to consolidate the North and turn it into a strong base for the struggle for peaceful national reunification and to contribute to the strengthening of the socialist camp and to the preservation of peace in Southeast Asia and the world.

"To reach this goal, we must make use of the people's democratic state power to fulfil the historical tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to carry out socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, small trade and private capitalist industry and commerce ; to develop the state economic sector, to carry out socialist industrialization by giving priority to the rational development of heavy industry, while striving to develop agriculture and light industry ; to push ahead the socialist revolution in ideology, culture and technique, with a view to transforming our country into

a socialist country with modern industry, modern agriculture and advanced culture and science".[1]

With a view to the implementation of this general line, our Party's policy is on the one hand to *strengthen dictatorship over the enemy of the people*, repress the counter-revolutionaries, maintain order and security ; on the other, to *develop democracy with regard to the people*, put their democratic rights into effect in a correct fashion, gradually build and consolidate socialist legality, and create conditions for the people to participate in a concrete manner in the management of the state. At the same time, our Party advocates the carrying out of the following three revolutions : *revolution in relations of production, technological revolution, and ideological and cultural revolution.*

In the initial period of the socialist revolution, we consider *socialist transformation* the central task. Concurrently we begin building the material and technical basis of socialism, starting with key points. In socialist transformation, we regard agricultural co-operation as the central link : at the same time we carry out socialist transformation with regard to handicrafts, private capitalist industry and trade, and small trade. Socialist ownership takes on two forms : ownership by the entire people, and ownership by the collective. At present, socialist relations of production have won absolute supremacy in the national economy and have become a factor urging forward socialist construction in the North of our country.

The revolution in relations of production should not be confined to transforming the ownership of means of

1. Resolution of the Third National Congress of the Viet Nam Workers' Party on the task and line of the Party in the new period, 1960.

production but should also include the system of management and distribution. The aim of the transformation of relations of production is to establish the collective ownership of the labouring people over the essential means of production as well as production and distribution, thereby developing socialist democracy, and promoting the labouring masses' spirit of initiative and creativeness in production work.

After the basic completion of the transformation of relations of production in the system of ownership, the *technological revolution* holds a key position. It must effectively serve socialist industrialization. We must carry out *socialist industrialization* and wage a *technological revolution* in order to make our economy truly independent and sovereign. We must set up a modern Vietnamese industry capable of transforming the present production, which relies mainly on handicraft labour, into a large-scale mechanized production, quickly developing the productive forces and incessantly increasing labour productivity.

In the process of socialist industrialization, we correctly combine industry with agriculture, regarding heavy industry as the corner-stone of the entire national economy and agriculture as the basis on which to develop industry. We give rational priority to the national development of heavy industry. At the same time we pay attention to the promotion of agriculture and light industry. We stress the development of centrally-run industry while attaching great importance to that of regional industry.

The technological revolution pushes socialism forward. In our country it is carried out in accordance with the principle : *two-way advance*, i.e., on the one hand, advance gradually

from handicrafts to semi-mechanization, then on to mechanization ; and on the other, take a short cut by applying modern technique right away. The latter is conditional on receiving assistance from the fraternal socialist countries and on gradually training enough technicians and skilled workers to master modern technique.

Parallel to these two revolutions and with a view to effectively serving them, we carry out an *ideological and cultural revolution*. In the field of *ideology* we must foster and strengthen proletarian ideology, fight all forms of bourgeois ideology, criticize petty-bourgeois ideology and continue to do away with all vestiges of feudal and other erroneous ideologies. In the field of *culture*, we inherit in a critical way the national culture, and build for Viet Nam a new culture, socialist in content and national in character.

Our ideological and cultural revolution should fulfil the following tasks :

— To educate our people and make them fully understand Marxism-Leninism and the Party's line and policies : to turn these line and policies into revolutionary actions by the masses ; to bring about political and moral unity among our people.

— To instil socialist ethics and revolutionary feelings into our cadres and people so as to imbue them with socialist consciousness as regards labour and social property ; to infuse into them patriotism and proletarian internationalism ; to imbue them with revolutionary heroism and bring into full play our people's tradition of persevering and indomitable struggle ; to make everybody enthusiastically engage in patriotic emulation and carry into effect President Ho Chi

Minh's behest: "Be loyal to the country and devoted to the people, fulfil all tasks, overcome all difficulties, defeat all enemies".

— To pursue to a completely successful end the struggle against illiteracy, especially in the mountain regions; to develop culture, education, literature and art, science and technology; to raise the cultural and technical level of our cadres and people ceaselessly so that everybody may apply his knowledge to the building of socialism and to the resistance against American aggression, for national salvation.

— To pursue the remoulding of former intellectuals and train a new generation of intellectuals sprung from the workers and peasants and absolutely dedicated to socialism.

At present, in the North of our country the struggle between the socialist path and the capitalist path is still going on until a definite answer can be given to the question, "Which will win?" This will be a protracted, difficult and complex struggle. Drives such as the repression of counter-revolutionaries, the development of democracy as regards the people, the transformation of relations of production, the technological revolution, the ideological and cultural revolution, constitute the content of the struggle between the two paths in the North of our country.

While carrying on the socialist revolution in the North, our Party keeps full grasp of the universal laws of the "process of socialist revolution and the construction of socialism" set forth in the Moscow Declaration of 1957, to which is added the law of "socialist industrialization" in keeping with the conditions of Viet Nam, a backward

agricultural country advancing toward socialism without passing through the stage of capitalist development. These laws are as follows:

— To achieve and consolidate the leadership over the labouring people of the working class whose nucleus is the Marxist-Leninist Party.

— To carry out the proletarian revolution in one form or another.

— To set up the dictatorship of the proletariat in one form or another.

— To bring about and consolidate the alliance between the working class and the fundamental masses of the peasantry and the other labouring strata.

— To abolish the system of capitalist ownership and set up a system of collective ownership of the basic means of production.

— To carry out a gradual socialist transformation of agriculture.

— To achieve socialist industrialization.

— To develop the national economy in a planned fashion, aimed at building socialism and communism and raising the living standards of the labouring people.

— To carry out socialist revolution in the ideological and cultural fields and train an intelligentsia which will be large in number and faithful to the working class, the toiling people and the cause of socialism.

— To do away with national oppression and bring about equality among the nationalities.

— To safeguard the fruits of socialism, to counter sabotage by internal and external enemies.

— To realize solidarity between our country's working class and the working class in all other countries ; to carry into effect proletarian internationalism.

In sum, the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution are two revolutionary strategies which follow two different courses of development. However, these two courses succeed each other without any interruption and are even closely connected with each other. For instance, a task belonging to one course may originate from the previous one ; or a task belonging to one course may be completed only in the following one. The people's national democratic revolution is the basis of the socialist revolution which constitutes its necessary development.

THE PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE IN THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Dear comrades,

Marxism-Leninism considers that "the fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power". Only by using the masses' revolutionary violence to smash the counter-revolutionary violence of the exploiting ruling classes can power be won by the people and a new society be built. Never will an exploiting class withdraw of its own consent from the political scene, renounce its power, and forsake the oppression and exploitation of the labouring people.

Marx considered violence as "the midwife of all old societies about to bring forth a new one". Developing Marx's

thinking Engels carefully analyzed the "role of violence in history" in his famous work *Anti-Dühring*. Lenin, the greatest heir to Marx and Engels, said : "This view of violent revolution lies at the root of *all* the teachings of Marx and Engels" [1]. "The bourgeois state *cannot be superseded* by the proletarian state (dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of withering away, but as a general rule, only through a violent revolution". [2]

One fundamental criterion which helps distinguish between Marxist-Leninists and opportunists of all hues is *whether or not they stand for the use of mass revolutionary violence to smash the state machinery of the exploiting classes (the bourgeoisie and the landowner class) and to set up a proletarian dictatorship state.*

The two declarations issued at the meetings of representatives of communist and workers' parties, held in Moscow in 1957 and 1960, mentioned the possibility of either peaceful or non-peaceful transition to socialism. Our Party agrees to this point of view. But at the same time it stresses that at present in many capitalist countries, state-monopoly capitalists have embarked on the path of militarization and fascistization in varying degrees, and are openly using violence to repress the working class and the labouring people. "That is why we must assert that the use of revolutionary violence to smash the state machinery of the bourgeoisie and set up a proletarian dictatorship state is a universal law with regard to the revolutionary struggle of the working class in the

1. V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*.
2. *Ibid*.

capitalist countries in the present conditions" [1]. The possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism is very valuable, but could happen only very rarely. For this reason, while providing leadership for the revolution, the Communists should stand ready to face both the possibility of a non-peaceful and that of a peaceful transition, but they should "essentially prepare for the non-peaceful possibility" [2]; in no case should they nurture illusions about an easy peaceful transition. The working class and people of colonial and neo-colonial countries should particularly guard against such illusions.

Since its birth, always faithful to the Marxist-Leninist concept of violent revolution, taking correct stock of the extremely reactionary nature of the imperialists and feudalists and the strength of the militant solidarity of the people, first and foremost, of the workers and peasants, our Party has *viewed the path of violent revolution as the only correct path leading to the overthrow of the enemy of the class and the nation, the seizure of power by the people, the safeguarding of the revolutionary power, and victory for the revolution in our country.* President Ho Chi Minh said :

"In the hard and difficult struggle against the enemy of the class and of the nation *it is necessary to use revolutionary violence to oppose counter-revolutionary violence, seize power and defend it.*" [3]

Indeed, in such a colonial and semi-feudal country as ours formerly, the imperialists and their agents oppressed our

1. Resolution of the 9th Plenum of the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee (1963).

2. *Ibid.*

3. Ho Chi Minh, *The Great October Revolution Paves the Way for the Liberation of the Peoples.*

people in an extremely savage manner and did not allow them the least democratic freedom. They ceaselessly engaged in terroristic actions and repressed the revolutionary movement in an infinitely barbarous fashion. That is why our Party was very soon imbued with the Marxist-Leninist concept of violent revolution and has persistently kept to the road of violent revolution, which is the only correct one not only to seize power but also to safeguard revolutionary power. This is substantiated by the August Revolution, the former resistance war against the French colonialists, the present one against the American imperialists, the operations against the bandits in the past and all repressive measures against counter-revolutionaries in the North over the past years.

The whole wealth of experience gained by the Vietnamese revolution bears out the truth contained in Marxism-Leninism about violent revolution and repudiates all illusions about "peaceful transition" and all reformist compromising and legalist tendencies...

About the form of revolutionary violence, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out : "Adequate forms of revolutionary struggle should be adopted in keeping with the concrete situation ; forms of armed and political struggle should be correctly and skilfully combined to win victory for the revolution". [1]

Under the leadership of our Party, the Vietnamese revolution has always used both forms — political struggle and armed struggle — to stage insurrections and win power :

1. Ho Chi Minh, *The Great October Revolution Paves the Way for the Liberation of the Peoples.*

it has used both forces — the masses' political forces and the people's armed forces — to smash the state machinery of the imperialists and their agents and win power for the people. Armed forces combined with political forces, armed struggle combined with political struggle — *such is the fundamental form of revolutionary violence in our country.*

Right at the birth of our Party, a revolutionary tide of the masses surged all over the country, culminating in the Nghe-Tinh Soviets in 1930-1931. The worker and peasant masses in the two provinces of Nghe An and Ha Tinh rose up to overthrow the colonial administrators and the mandarins and village tyrants, and set up worker-peasant power in a number of rural areas. Although the uprising failed, it strongly awakened the revolutionary spirit of the people throughout the country. It brought out initial experiences on the combination of the two strategic tasks — the anti-imperialist and the anti-feudal — on the combination of the workers' struggle and that of the peasants, on the realization of worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class, on the combination of the revolutionary movement in the countryside with that in the cities, on the combination of political and armed struggle, and so forth.

From 1936 to 1939, in face of the danger of fascism and of aggressive war by the fascists, and preparing for favourable opportunities to fight the enemy, our Party took as a basis for action the building of the masses' political forces. It skilfully combined illegal and legal actions, including the use of "Chambers of the people's representatives" and "Colonial councils", etc., to trigger off a seething movement of political struggle from urban to rural areas. This was directed against

the colonial reactionaries, king, mandarins, village tyrants, and for democratic freedoms, an improvement of the standard of living, against fascism and for the defence of world peace.

In the Second World War, the problem of armed insurrection was urgently set forth. Our Party advanced from political struggle to the mobilization for armed struggle, from the masses' political organizations to the building of paramilitary forces of the people (self-defence units for national salvation, self-defence combat units, guerilla units of the National-Salvation Troops and the Liberation Troops). It properly combined the two forms of political and armed struggle during the years of preparations for the insurrection, during the pre-insurrection period and right in the course of the August 1945 General Insurrection. The August Revolution arose from the brilliant success of close co-ordination of political and armed forces in the countryside and the towns, of political and armed struggle with a view to winning total power for the people. That revolution was the product of the experience gained in the three revolutionary movements led by our Party: the movement for a national-democratic revolution in 1930-1931, the Democratic Front movement in 1936-1939 and the national liberation movement in 1939-1945. It was the re-staging of the Nghe-Tinh Soviets on a nation-wide scale. The victory of the August Revolution is the victory of the Marxist-Leninist concept of revolutionary violence applied by our Party in a creative manner to the concrete conditions prevailing in our country.

During the nation-wide, all-sided and protracted resistance war against the French colonialist aggressors (1945-1954),

the people's revolutionary violence was embodied in the combination of armed and political struggles, with armed struggle predominating. On account of our Party's correct leadership and our people's ardent patriotism, people's war developed strongly, growing in scale and in strength and gaining ever more victories. The resounding Dien Bien Phu victory brought our resistance against the French colonialists to glorious success. It restored peace in Indochina on the basis of international recognition of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, and also of Cambodia and Laos.

At present, the American imperialists are pursuing a war of aggression in the South of our country and are waging a war of destruction, mainly through air attacks, against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Confronted with this situation, all our compatriots across the country must use revolutionary violence to oppose the counter-revolutionary violence of the American imperialists and their lackeys so as to liberate the South, defend the North, and proceed to peaceful national reunification.

To combine military struggle with political struggle, such is the fundamental form of revolutionary violence in the South at present. This form is a product of the synthesis and enrichment of the experience gained in the August Revolution and the resistance war against the French colonialists. It has been used not only against the American imperialists' "special war" but also against their "limited war." Advancing from political demonstrations co-ordinated with armed propaganda in the years 1954 - 1959 to the concerted uprisings of 1960 and the present development of

people's war, our Southern compatriots have combined military and political struggles on a large-scale and have attacked the enemy militarily and politically and through propaganda and agitation work among their troops.

The offensive and uprising started early this year in the South is a new step in the development of the close co-ordination of military and political forces, of armed and political struggles, of military attacks and popular uprisings in both urban and rural areas, plains and mountains. It has opened a new period in our people's resistance against American aggression, for national salvation, and created conditions for our Southern compatriots to destroy ever more enemy forces, smash the puppet army, overthrow the puppet administration, crush the American imperialists' will of aggression, and seize power for the people.

At present, our people are combining military, political and diplomatic struggles to oppose the American imperialists.

With a view to conducting political struggle in combination with armed struggle, on the one hand our people have organized a National United Front which includes political parties and mass organizations, such as trade-unions, peasant associations, youth organizations, women's organizations, patriotic religious bodies, etc. On the other hand, they have built people's armed forces comprising regular troops, regional troops, self-defence militia and guerilla units, and people's armed police (when power has been won either in the whole country or in given regions).

The experience gained by the Vietnamese revolution over nearly forty years shows that the path of violent revolution is the only correct one to win national independence, people's

democracy and socialism. The fundamental form of violence in the Vietnamese revolution is the close combination of political and armed struggles, with either of them predominating according to the concrete situation prevailing in each period or each region.

Does our Party's line — combining military and political struggles to win power — mean a compromise between armed struggle and peaceful transition? Absolutely not! Our Party's line for winning power is the line of revolutionary violence, the fundamental form of which is the combination of armed and political struggles. In Viet Nam this line has been proved and is being proved a correct one. In our opinion, under the present circumstances when imperialism and militarism hold sway, to stand for a *peaceful transition* in the hope of seizing power is to nurture reformist illusions. A genuinely profound and broad revolution of the popular masses aimed at winning power should as a matter of course combine political struggle (for instance, general political strikes, school strikes, market strikes, office employees' strikes, political meetings and demonstrations, armed demonstrations for a show of strength, etc.) and armed attacks. A protracted people's war should all the more embody the combination of armed and political struggles in many forms.

With regard to the combination of political and armed struggles the Vietnamese revolution has gathered the following essential experiences:

1. In the course of the revolution, one must absolutely mobilize the masses to wage political struggle in many forms, thereby educating, encouraging and organizing them; develop the Party and the masses' political organizations (to build

a "mass political army"). Only at a certain point, when conditions are favourable, should one build the people's revolutionary armed forces and trigger off an armed struggle. The masses' political organizations form the basis of the people's armed forces. Only in such a way will the fish (the people's armed forces) have water (the grass-roots mass organizations) in which to swim.

2. One must raise the combination of military and political struggles to a fairly high level: combination of actions before, during and after the insurrection; during the insurrection for winning power just as in the war for liberation; in rural and urban areas as well as between rural areas and urban areas; on the operational, tactical and strategic planes in the war of liberation. The highest form of combination is that of general offensive with general insurrection.

3. Revolution in any country is essentially the doing of the people of that country. Nobody can accomplish it in their place. Revolutionary armed struggle in any country is first and foremost the doing of the broad masses in that country under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist party. The assistance extended by the revolution in other countries is very precious, very important but it cannot replace the revolutionary struggle waged by the people in their own country. Such assistance can have influence only through that struggle.

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP

Marxism teaches that after seizing power, the working class must build a state of its own, the State of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The task then facing the working class is a most heavy one. It must seek to break up the resistance of the exploiting

classes, and to liquidate every attempt on their part to restore the power of capital. It must rally all the labouring strata around the working class in order to carry out socialist transformation and socialist and communist construction, and to bring about a classless society. It must concentrate its efforts on the setting up and strengthening of the defence forces in order to shatter every imperialist attempt at unleashing war and aggression. It must provide all-sided support and assistance to the revolutionary struggle of the working class, the labourers and the oppressed peoples in other countries for the triumph of socialism and communism throughout the world.

To fulfil these heavy tasks the working class must necessarily establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Marx said : "Between capitalist and communist societies lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*" [1]

Lenin also pointed out : "The essence of Marx's teaching on the state has been mastered only by those who understand that the dictatorship of a single class is necessary not only for every class society in general, not only for the *proletariat* which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire *historical period* which separates capitalism from classless society, from communism." [2]

1. K. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme.*
2. V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution.*

Applying the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat to Russia during its two revolutionary stages — democratic revolution and socialist revolution — Lenin had the following view on dictatorship in the democratic revolution :

"A decisive victory of the revolution over tsarism is the *revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*... And such a victory will be precisely a dictatorship, *i.e.* it must inevitably rely on military force, on the arming of the masses, on an insurrection, and not on institutions of one kind or another, established in a lawful or peaceful way. It can be only a dictatorship, for the realization of the changes which are urgently and absolutely indispensable for the proletariat and the peasantry will call forth the desperate resistance of the landlords, of the big bourgeoisie and tsarism. Without a dictatorship it is impossible to break down that resistance and to repel the counter-revolutionary attempts. But of course it will be a democratic, not a socialist, dictatorship. It will not be able (without a series of intermediary stages of revolutionary development) to affect the foundation of capitalism." [1]

However, the working class does not stop at the stage of bourgeois democratic revolution, but should advance to socialist revolution. When bourgeois democratic revolution develops into socialist revolution, the dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry (worker-peasant dictatorship) will switch over to the dictatorship of the proletariat. The working class will then use dictatorship to liquidate capitalist ownership and establish collective ownership of

1. V. I. Lenin, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution.*

the basic means of production, achieve socialist transformation and socialist construction, and eliminate exploitation of man by man.

In his *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin elaborated a comprehensive theory on the *switch of bourgeois democratic revolution to socialist revolution.*

The historical condition giving birth to worker-peasant dictatorship is the emergence of a new-type bourgeois democratic revolution directed by the working class, which differs from the old-type bourgeois democratic revolution conducted by the bourgeoisie, and engenders a transition state leading to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Indeed, in the countries which carry out the new-type bourgeois democratic revolution, the worker-peasant dictatorship is a transition state due to grow into the dictatorship of the proletariat, of which it constitutes a basis and for the establishment of which it paves the way. *In the history of human society the worker-peasant dictatorship falls under the category of the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

Lenin's theory on the worker-peasant dictatorship is related to his well-known proposition on the realization of the leadership of the working class on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance in the bourgeois democratic revolution. It concerns the transformation of the bourgeois democratic revolution into the socialist revolution and on the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to build socialism and communism.

In Viet Nam, following the success of the August General Insurrection, the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam came

into being and the people's democratic dictatorship was established. In fact, it was a worker-peasant dictatorship which, led by the working class, relentlessly fought against the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys — the representatives of the feudal landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie.

In our country the tasks of the people's democratic dictatorship in the stage of the people's national democratic revolution were :

— To smash the rule of the imperialists and their lackeys, the feudalists, to set up and consolidate the Democratic Republic, to establish and further the people's democratic regime, and put into effect genuine democratic freedoms for the people.

— To organize the people's all-out and protracted resistance against the French colonialist aggressors.

— To carry out land reform, abolish feudal land ownership, realize the slogan "Land to the Tillers" while still leaving intact the foundations of capitalism.

— To build and develop a national and democratic economy and culture.

— To prepare for the switch to socialist revolution politically, economically and ideologically.

— To strengthen solidarity between our people and those of the socialist countries, support the revolutionary struggle of the world's peoples and safeguard world peace.

Only by accomplishing these tasks could our dictatorship of people's democracy actually play its role as a worker-peasant dictatorship.

After our victory over the French colonialists, the North of our country, which had been completely liberated, entered the stage of socialist revolution ; consequently since then our people's democratic dictatorship has assumed a new role : it fulfils the historical task of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, in essence, is a dictatorship of the proletariat.[1]

The tasks of our dictatorship of people's democracy in the stage of socialist revolution are precisely the general tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat applied as follows to the concrete conditions of our country :

"To break up the resistance of the class enemy whom the revolution has already overthrown, and foil their schemes and actions aimed at restoring the power of the bourgeoisie.

1. The question of worker-peasant dictatorship and proletarian dictatorship was asserted at the Second and Third Party National Congresses in the following terms :

"At present the Vietnamese state is in its form a democratic republic and in its content a dictatorship of people's democracy, *i.e.*, democracy toward the people and dictatorship against the enemy and their puppets.

"*Our people's democratic dictatorship is carrying out the historical task of worker-peasant dictatorship.* It smashes the rule of the imperialist aggressors and the traitors, the puppets ; it establishes and consolidates the people's democratic regime ; it puts into effect land reform, abolishes feudal land ownership, while still leaving intact the foundations of capitalism ; it develops the national economy ; it consolidates the leadership of the working class and the worker-peasant alliance ; it strengthens solidarity between our people and the forces of peace, democracy, national liberation and socialism throughout the world.

"When the people's national democratic revolution develops into a socialist revolution, the dictatorship of people's democracy will become a dictatorship of the proletariat. The basic task of dictatorship having then changed, its essence also changes".

(*On the Vietnamese Revolution*. Report of the author at the Second Party National Congress, February 1951).

"While achieving the national democratic revolution the people's democratic state carries out the historical task of the worker-peasant dictatorship. Since the restoration of peace, the North enters the transition period toward socialism, and the people's democratic state carries out the historical task of proletarian dictatorship".

(*Some Problems on the People's Democratic State*, speech by Comrade Pham Van Dong at the Third Party National Congress, September 1960).

"To rally the various strata of the people around the working class in order to carry out socialist transformation and socialist construction and pave the way for the complete abolition of all classes.

"To build, consolidate and strengthen the defence forces with a view to shattering every external enemy's attempt to unleash war and aggression, and struggling against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

"To support and help in every respect the revolutionary struggle of the working class, the labourers and the oppressed peoples in the capitalist countries ; to consolidate and develop co-operation with the fraternal socialist countries."[1]

The present content of the dictatorship of people's democracy in the North of our country is democracy toward the people and dictatorship against the enemy of the people and of socialism.

As regards *democracy*, we must see to it that the labouring masses actually wield power and participate in state management. Socialist democracy is a most perfect democratic system, a truly democratic one, a million times more democratic than the bourgeois democratic regime. In a socialist democratic regime manual and brain workers are really emancipated from all forms of oppression and exploitation ; they become the real masters of their destinies, and actually take part in state management. Socialist democracy is both political and economic. In a socialist democratic regime not only are democratic rights guaranteed to every citizen in the political field, but on the basis of socialist ownership, in the two

1. Resolution of the Ninth Plenum of the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee (1963)

forms of ownership of the entire people and collective ownership, the people's material and cultural living standards rise unceasingly, and every citizen will enjoy more and more material and moral conditions to best exercise his democratic rights. Democracy in economic matters is actually realized right in the process of production and distribution. Democracy in economic management forms an important aspect of socialist democracy.

As far as *dictatorship* is concerned, we must enforce the dictatorship of the majority — the labouring people — against the minority — the counter-revolutionaries and the exploiters, who resist transformation. Ours is a declared dictatorship, one that aims at gradually abolishing classes to advance toward a classless society, a communist society, in which the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat will wither away.

In a socialist democratic regime, the enemies of the people and of socialism are denied democratic freedoms. The state forbids them to misuse the slogan of "democratization of the regime" to weaken or liquidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, belittle or negate the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party over the revolution, put into effect the "peaceful evolution" strategy step by step, drive the country into the path of bourgeois liberalism and back to the capitalist path. At the same time, we must oppose every manifestation of bourgeois nationalism, the enemy of proletarian internationalism, which isolates our country and pushes it into the arms of world imperialism.

On the other hand, one must fight bureaucracy, commandism, paternalism and the cult of personality for they run

counter to the spirit of socialist democracy, most adversely affect the people and the state, and are often used by the reactionaries to oppose the revolution.

Our Party holds that our dictatorship of people's democracy does not mean an end to, but the *continuation of class struggle in new forms, by new means, after the seizure of power by the working class.* To this effect, the working class must ceaselessly strengthen its leadership on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, "the highest principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat." Concurrently, it must unite with the other strata of the people. Our people's democratic dictatorship must therefore rely mainly on the worker-peasant alliance and also on the National United Front.

The people's democratic dictatorship must unquestionably use violence against the counter-revolutionaries and exploiters. From this arises the necessity constantly to consolidate the machinery of repression of the people's democratic state : the People's Army, People's Security Forces, People's Procuratorate, People's Tribunals, etc. At the same time, the Party must always pay attention to broadening democracy toward the people. It must guarantee their right as collective masters, establish, strengthen and perfect socialist legality, and ensure that the people's elected bodies fulfil their functions as the highest state organs at all levels. Among Party and State cadres, a struggle must be waged against bureaucracy and commandism toward the people, and within the Party, against encroaching upon the functions of the state organs.

Lenin said : "The dictatorship of the proletariat... is not only the use of force against the exploiters and not even

mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organization of labour compared with capitalism. This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable and complete triumph of communism."[1]

"Its quintessence (that of the dictatorship of the proletariat — *T.C.*) is the organization and discipline of the advanced detachment of the working people, of their vanguard, their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, to abolish the division of society into classes, to make all members of society working people, to remove the basis for any kind of exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the re-organization of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois dealings can be overcome only by a long and stubborn struggle."[2]

To build a new society and advance toward socialism and communism, the working class must strive to promote its spirit of organization and discipline. It must set a brilliant example of courageous and creative activity in production, of socialist attitude toward labour and social property, and remould and steel itself in this process. At the same time it must patiently educate and persuade millions and millions

1. V.I. Lenin, *A Great Beginning.*
2. V.I. Lenin, *Greetings to the Hungarian Workers.*

of small producers (peasants, handicraftsmen, small traders and small owners) in order to involve them in this great task.

Lenin said: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society."[1]

Therefore, after seizing power for the people, the Communists must firmly grasp not only the machinery of repression, but also the organs in charge of ideological work, information, propaganda and training, and never let bourgeois and opportunist elements hold sway to mislead public opinion and propagate anti-Party and anti-revolutionary ideas. The Communist and workers' parties in power must constantly strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. We hold that *in the socialist camp, whenever and wherever there exists a vague understanding of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a loose grasp of it, or a weakening of it in one way or another, a belittling or renunciation of the leadership of the party of the proletariat, the counter-revolutionaries will not fail to raise their heads and socialism will degenerate.*

Concerning the forms of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, there have been thus far the following three: the Paris Commune, the Russian Soviet and the People's Democracy in a number of Asian and East European countries. The dictatorship of the proletariat in our country takes the form of people's democracy. Lenin said: "The transition from capitalism to communism certainly cannot

1. V.I. Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder.*

but yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, *but the essence will inevitably be the same : the dictatorship of the proletariat.*" [1]

The dictatorship of the proletariat comes into being and evolves in a variety of forms, depending on the concrete historical conditions of each country, on the level of its economic development, on the relation of forces between the classes, on its national characteristics, on its traditional development of state power. It also depends, to a certain extent, on the political situation and the distribution of forces in the world.

THE PARTY'S STRATEGY AND TACTICS

From the examination of the foregoing problems we can see to some extent how our Party has applied the strategy and tactics of Marxism-Leninism to lead the Vietnamese revolution to victory. It is necessary, however, to make a fairly systematic exposé of this question which constitutes an important one relating to the science of leadership in the revolutionary struggle of the working class.

Revolutionary strategy consists in determining the principal enemy on whom to concentrate forces in order to overthrow him at a given stage of the revolution (which boils down to determining the direction of the main blow of the revolutionary forces). It discerns the allies of the working class at each stage, and elaborates a plan to align the revolutionary

1. V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution.*

forces, win over allies, correctly use direct and indirect reserve forces and utterly isolate the enemy. It consists in delivering the main blow at the main immediate enemy, and struggling for the implementation of this plan throughout the particular stage of the revolution.

Revolutionary tactics consists in defining the guiding principle to be followed by the working class at each period of the ebb and flow of the revolution. It chooses forms of struggle and organization, and propaganda and agitation slogans, suitable for each period, each situation. It replaces old forms and slogans by new ones, or combines these forms of struggle and organization to secure success for each drive or struggle.

Concerning revolutionary strategy, our Party has concretely analysed the specific situation in our country at each stage of the revolution so as to establish who is the enemy we must defeat, which is the leading force and which is the motive force of the revolution, who are the allies of the working class — close, remote, trustworthy, temporary, wavering, conditional and other allies. Only with such a clear realization of the situation, can it be possible to rally the broadest forces under the leadership of the working class, storm the enemy's strongholds, smash him and win success for the revolution.

Revolutionary strategy is the science of discerning the enemy, the motive force of the revolution and the allies of the working class at each strategic stage or in each period of strategic significance, in order to muster all the revolutionary forces, win over allies and isolate the enemy to overcome him.

Regarding the question of *discerning the enemy, the* experience supplied by the Vietnamese revolution has shown that to lead it to victory, our Party must first of all make out the enemy to overthrow at each strategic stage, (or, as it occurs, in each period of a given stage) *constantly have in view the concrete, present enemy rather than the enemy in general,* and distinguish the principal from the secondary enemies. It must isolate the principal enemy so as to knock him down, take advantage of the contradictions plaguing the hostile ranks to divide them to the highest possible degree, and focus the fire of revolutionary struggle on the principal and immediate enemy.

In the *people's national democratic revolution,* the strategic enemy to overthrow is aggressor imperialism and its agent and support, the feudal landlord class. But all through this revolutionary stage or in each of its periods, which imperialism and which category of landlords must be overthrown ?

In our country, in the period from the birth of the Party to the year 1940, the *imperialist enemy* was French colonialism. At the time of the Democratic Front (1936-1939), the Party pointed out that it was the French fascists and the French colonial reactionaries in Indochina. From August 1940 to March 1945, after the Japanese fascist militarists had brought their troops to Indochina and the French had shared power with them, the immediate enemy of our people was the Japanese and French fascists. From March 1945, it was the Japanese fascists, who had then toppled the French and were singly occupying Indochina. In our protracted resistance war (1945-1954) the imperialist enemy was again French colonialism, and at the same time United States

imperialism, for the latter lent assistance to the former and urged it to reconquer our country. Since our great victory at Dien Bien Phu, the imperialist enemy to overcome is American imperialism, which, having ousted the French, has committed aggression on the South and unleashed a war of destruction against the North.

As for the *Vietnamese feudal landlord class,* we should, first and foremost, understand that it is also among the enemies of the people's national democratic revolution in our country. Nevertheless, in each period, we should clearly realize which section of it must be eliminated first. For instance, from the founding of the Party to the Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee (December 1939), it was the king, the mandarins and village tyrants, *i.e.,* the feudal faction in power, agent of French colonialism. And following the Sixth Plenum, it was the traitorous feudalists and puppets at the service of the Japanese and French fascists. Thus, we did not at that point suppress the feudal landlords as a class, but divided them and isolated their most reactionary section in order to fight it along with its Japanese and French masters. Later, as the people's national democratic revolution forged ahead, and the resistance to French colonialism required the implementation of land reform, the consolidation of the worker-peasant alliance and the fostering of the people's capabilities to push our struggle ahead, we put forward the task of suppressing the feudal landlord class and of abolishing the right of the feudalists to land ownership.

As far as the division of the enemy's ranks is concerned, at the period of the Democratic Front (1936-1939), our

Party did not set forth the task of overthrowing French imperialism or French colonialism as a whole, but only the French fascists and colonial reactionaries, *i.e.,* the most dangerous concrete enemy of the Vietnamese people at that time.

With regard to the feudal landlord class, after the August Revolution we planned to carry out the land policy in the three stages detailed above, and in implementing the land reform we applied different measures — confiscation, requisition, or forcible purchase of landlords' land, and offer of land by the landlords — depending on the political attitude of individual landlords. This was to divide the landlord class to the highest possible degree, to paralyse its resistance to a certain extent, and to win over landlords who were taking part in the resistance and their families.

At present, in *South Viet Nam* where the task of the *people's national democratic revolution* is being accomplished, the policy of the National Front for Liberation is to spearhead its struggle against the U.S. aggressors and their agent, the puppet administration (now the Thieu-Ky administration). This administration represents the most reactionary pro-American section of the landlord class and the comprador bourgeoisie in the South.

In the *socialist revolution in the North,* the enemy to overthrow is, aside from the American imperialist aggressors and their lackeys in the South, all the forces in the North which oppose socialist transformation and socialist construction. These are exploiting elements resisting transformation, spies, commandos, bandits, reactionaries disguised as religious people, reactionary parties and factions, and so on. The national bourgeoisie is the object of transformation.

However, as during the stage of the people's national democratic revolution it had stood in the National United Front to fight imperialism, and as it continued to acknowledge the leadership of the Party and implemented the policy of socialist transformation when we shifted to the socialist revolution, our Party and Government still regard it as a member of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and have adopted the policy of peaceful transformation towards it.

An important problem tackled by our Party has been to avail itself of the contradictions in the ranks of the enemy of the revolution: contradictions between different imperialist powers, between imperialism and the feudal landlord class, among the landlords themselves, etc. To turn these contradictions to account, to aggravate them while at the same time closing the ranks of the revolutionary forces, constitutes a major question of strategic direction.

How has our Party utilized the contradictions in the enemy's ranks? Some striking examples: In the Second World War we made use of the differences between the French and Japanese fascists, between the Pétain faction and the French capitalist and colonialist factions opposing Pétain and the Japanese, between the landlord class and the French and Japanese fascists (on jute growing[1] and forced purchase of paddy), between the bullied small landlords and the ruling landlords. Now we are taking advantage of the contradictions in the enemy's ranks in the same way.

1. Between 1940 and 1945 the Japanese fascists and the French colonialists plundered our people's rice through forced purchase and compelled them to destroy their food-crops in many areas and plant jute instead in order to meet Japan's war needs. *(Pub.)*

Another problem of no less importance concerning strategic direction is how to concentrate the revolutionary forces on the enemy's weakest points at the moment he is the most exposed so as to secure success. Attack must be launched with the determination to fight and win. Nevertheless, *under certain circumstances,* we may shift to the defensive to gain time, discourage the enemy, muster fresh forces and prepare for new attacks.

As regards the *motive forces and the allies of the revolution,* in the people's national democratic revolution, the working class, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie formed the motive forces, the working class being the leading force. Together with the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, the working class constituted the revolutionary forces. And with the peasantry, it made up the fundamental forces of the revolution, the peasantry being the "natural", the most faithful and closest ally of the working class. Though wavering by nature, the petty-bourgeoisie, which suffered from ruthless oppression and exploitation by the imperialists and the feudalists, was the trustworthy ally of the working class. The Vietnamese national bourgeoisie was economically bullied and politically oppressed by imperialism and feudalism but had economic ties with the latter and, to a certain extent, with the former. Moreover, it exploited the working class and feared its development. This was why it showed a two-faced, wavering attitude. Notwithstanding this, it was an ally of the people's national democratic revolution, unlike the comprador bourgeoisie which had always been an opponent of the revolution in our country.

Those are the allies of the Vietnamese revolution at home. Who are its allies abroad ? The working class and the people of the socialist countries, the working class, the labouring people and the oppressed nations the world over. An important experience drawn from our revolution is that our people must enter into close alliance with the working class and the labouring people of the imperialist powers which have invaded our country (France, Japan, the United States) to counter the common enemy — imperialism. The successful implementation of this alliance policy engenders more forces to oust the imperialist oppressors and aggressors and achieve national independence. The Vietnamese people, therefore, must always distinguish the imperialists who oppress and invade their fatherland from the people of their countries ; they must guard against blind nationalism, *i.e.*, regarding both as birds of a feather.

Concerning the motive forces and the allies of the revolution, the problem facing the working class and the Party is as follows : revolution is carried out by the masses ; acting single-handed, neither the vanguard detachment of the working class (the Party), nor the working class itself can bring revolution to victory. This requires the participation of the broad masses of the people. Thus, the working class must discern not only the enemy but also the revolutionary forces, the motive forces of the revolution at each stage, and the allies in a given revolution with a view to rallying broad revolutionary forces, securing allies, uniting all those who can be united, winning over all those who can be won over, and neutralizing all those who can be neutralized if winning

them over proves impossible. All this aims at utterly isolating the immediate concrete enemy and mustering all revolutionary forces to smash him.

With regard to the alliance policy, we should bear in mind that there are long-term alliances for a whole strategic stage, temporary alliances for a definite period in a given stage, alliances for common action, and alliance aimed at neutralization.

The National United Front against imperialism in our country is a form of organization to *unite* revolutionary forces, and at the same time a form of *long-term alliance* between the various popular strata, political parties, mass organizations and democratic personalities, intended *to achieve united action* on the basis of the Political Programme of the Front.

The experience supplied by the revolution in our country has shown that the broader the National United Front, the better ; it is essential, however, that *the Front should possess a clear-cut political programme and that united action should be achieved by the members of the Front so as to put this programme into effect. The Front must rest on the basis of a strong worker-peasant alliance and be placed under the close leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party.* Only in this way can the triumph of the revolution be ensured.

By taking part in the Front, the Marxist-Leninist party aims at uniting all forces among the people to realize the Front's programme (minimum programme) at each stage of the revolution. However, the Party must always preserve its independence and possess a programme of its own (maximum programme) so as to ensure its leadership over the revolution

on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance. It cannot share this leadership with any party and must absolutely guard against letting the direction of the National United Front fall into the hands of the national bourgeoisie, otherwise the Party would inevitably become an appendage of the latter and the national democratic revolution would be doomed to failure.

At present, the most dangerous enemy of the Vietnamese people is United States aggressor imperialism and its lackeys. To defeat this enemy, defend the North and achieve socialist construction here, to liberate the South and realize the reunification of their country, the Vietnamese people must implement a *policy of broad union against American aggression.* The people in the North must unite within the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, those in the South within the Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces. The people across the country must unite and fight shoulder to shoulder for national salvation.

U.S. aggressor imperialism is also the common enemy of the peoples of Indochina and the world. Therefore, the Vietnamese, Lao and Khmer peoples should unite to resist U.S. aggression, recover and safeguard their independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. The Indochinese Peoples' Conference held in Phnom Penh a few years ago may be regarded as the embryo of the future Indochinese peoples' united front against U.S. imperialism.

The world's peoples should also unite to oppose U.S. aggressor imperialism and defend their national independence and peace. It is very gratifying to see that their

widespread movement for supporting the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggressor imperialism has generated favourable conditions for the formation of the world people's united front against U.S. imperialism.

Now, let us touch on the Party's tactics.

While the purpose of revolutionary strategy is to overthrow the enemy at a given stage of the revolution, revolutionary tactics only aims at winning success in a given struggle or movement. Tactics is an integral part of strategy and contributes to ensuring its success.

Tactics change with the ups and downs of the revolution, with its offensive and defensive moves.

The purpose of tactics is to choose forms of struggle and organization, and propaganda and agitation slogans, suitable for the ebb and flow of the revolution so as to assemble the broad masses of the people, to educate and lead them to revolutionary struggle in the most effective manner. Usually, whenever the situation changes, we must adopt new forms of struggle and organization, new propaganda and agitation slogans, in order to push ahead the mass movement, in time, rally fresh forces or preserve existing revolutionary forces, in preparation for new fights. When the revolutionary tide surges up, we must use *transitional forms* of struggle and organization to make it advance "in a day as in twenty years". In periods of recession, the forms of struggle and organization, mobilization slogans and working methods must be altered with a view to preserving our forces and maintaining our contact with the masses. So long as we have not yet seized power, we must cleverly combine illegal activities

with legal — or semi-legal — ones, the former being always given the main place. In favourable circumstances, we must take advantage of the existence of legal organizations to rally the masses and lead them to struggle for their daily interests. Even then, we must develop the illegal organizations of the Party and the masses. In the most difficult conditions, we must strive to take advantage of legal and semi-legal possibilities to carry on our activities. We must simultaneously undertake underground work right in the enemy's mass organizations, for, as Lenin said, the Communists must be present wherever the masses are, and work for the revolutionary cause. And in whatever difficult circumstances we should know how to guide the masses to wage economic and political struggle, and whenever conditions permit, start armed struggle. We should set forth judicious slogans in good time to fan the struggle of the masses. In the whole chain of our work we should discern the main link and use it as a lever to impel all our other activities. Tactical direction should avoid rightist and "leftist" deviations, maintain close contact with the masses, prove capable of rallying them, and raise their political consciousness. It should defy and overcome all difficulties and obstacles, and discover the proper way to push ahead the mass movement.

Those are some of our Party's experiences in the application of revolutionary tactics.

At the time of the Party's founding and of the revolutionary high tide in 1930 - 1931, the main problem facing the Vietnamese revolution lay in the unification of the communist

forces in the country, the building of a new-type party of the working class and the realization of the worker-peasant alliance. Therefore, after the Unification Conference (February 3, 1930) the Party went on with its policy of sending cadres to the masses, the factories and the countryside where they worked to build Party branches and mass organizations. The paper *Tien len*[1] was published to unify the Party ideologically and organizationally, to mobilize the worker and peasant masses for the struggle, achieve united mass action and, in the Nghe-Tinh Soviet movement, to combine political and armed struggles for the seizure of power in a number of localities.

In the period of the Democratic Front (1936 - 1939) the Party exerted the utmost efforts to take full advantage of every legal and semi-legal opportunity for carrying on propaganda, organizing the masses and leading them in the fight for democratic freedoms and better living conditions. Concurrently it developed the bases of its illegal organizations and prepared to cope with every eventuality. With the outbreak of the Second World War and the resulting step-up of terroristic repression by the French colonial reactionaries, the Party immediately switched over to illegal activities.

During the Second World War our people underwent a triple, most ruthless oppression and exploitation by the Japanese and French fascists and the native feudalists. Our Party led them to combine economic and political struggle with armed struggle, and at the same time changed its

1. Forward (*Tr.*)

slogans. For instance, it laid emphasis on the "national liberation" slogan, withdrew the "confiscate landlords' lands for distribution to poor peasants" slogan and set forth this one : "Confiscate the imperialists' and Vietnamese traitors' lands, reduce land rent and interest rates, proceed towards the realization of the motto : Land to the Tillers." Organizationally, the Party set up associations for national salvation among the masses, built up self-defence combat units and guerilla units, started armed struggle and made effective preparations for an armed insurrection to seize power.

After the March 9, 1945 coup staged by the Japanese fascists, the Party proceeded to an analysis of the developments occurring in the ranks of the enemy and of its own allies.[1] It very rapidly defined the immediate tasks and the new strategic and tactical orientations. With regard to tactical direction in particular, the Party put forward this urgent task and slogan of paramount importance : "Storm the grain stores, check famine." This fanned up the flames of revolutionary struggle by the masses, and mobilized them to stage demonstrations and seize the fascist-held grain stores, thus meeting this earnest demand of millions of people : the distribution of paddy and the elimination of famine. Thanks to this, the movement against the Japanese fascists and their puppet agents, and the preparation for insurrection advanced by leaps and bounds, while national salvation organizations and armed and para-military units also grew up rapidly.

1. *Cf.* Directive of the Standing Bureau of the Central Committee : *The Japanese - French Clash and Our Action.* (March 12, 1945).

From April 1945 many provinces succeeded in setting up *Liberation Committees*, a form of ante-power that appeared when our entire people were making strenuous exertions in preparation for the general insurrection.

The August 1945 Revolution marked the success of the Party and the Viet Minh Front in combining political and armed struggles to wrest power. An extremely favourable situation prevailed at that time : the Soviet Army had knocked down the most seasoned main forces of fascist Japan — the Kwantung Army, — which compelled that country to surrender unconditionally and placed her occupation troops in Indochina in the position of a beheaded snake. Consequently, our task of waging armed struggle had been considerably eased and was crowned with success. The skill of our Party with President Ho Chi Minh at the helm, lay in that it managed to avail itself of this golden opportunity which "occurred only one in a thousand years" to mobilize the masses for general insurrection and seizure of power, and to proclaim the founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam before the arrival of Allied forces in Indochina to disarm the Japanese troops.

In the resistance war against the French colonialists, our people continued to combine armed struggle with political struggle, the former being given priority. Political struggle assumed multifarious forms, such as workers' strikes, school strikes, market strikes, meetings and demonstrations in the zones temporarily occupied by the enemy. In the liberated zones it unfolded in different forms against the French aggressors, and for the implementation by the landlords of the

land policy of the Party and Government. From 1953 the bitter armed struggle at the front was closely combined with the mobilization of the peasant masses in the rear areas against the landlords for a radical reduction of land rent, advancing towards the realization of the slogan : Land to the Tillers.

Above are some aspects of our Party's tactics from its founding to our victory at Dien Bien Phu. Since then the application of revolutionary tactics in both parts of our country has become very diversified : in the North they serve the strategy of socialist revolution and in the South that of people's national democratic revolution. But together they serve our resistance to American aggression, for national salvation. The North has been completely liberated while the South comprises liberated and temporarily-occupied zones. The North is a people's power led by the working class, but in the South there are two sharply conflicting powers — the growing people's power in the liberated zones and the shaky, declining U.S.-puppet power. These different conditions determine not only the tactics but, more importantly, the strategy of the revolution in each part of the country as well. One must realize this, in order to grasp the substance of the Political Programme of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, as well as the basic reason why the N.F.L. has set forth the slogan "All for the front, all for victory" while in the North ours is "All for victory over the U.S. aggressors."

The foregoing is an outline of our Party's art of leading the revolutionary struggle waged by the working class and people in our country.

PARTY BUILDING

Reviewing the revolutionary history of our country over nearly forty years, we feel most gratified by, and proud of, the fact that our Party has valiantly, cleverly and clear-sightedly weathered all storms and brought the Vietnamese revolution to the present brilliant successes.

This has many reasons, a basic one being our correct application of Marxism-Leninism in the building of our Party, in *making it a new-type party of the working class, possessed of high combativeness, a vanguard theory which guides its path, a close-knit organization and strict discipline, and the closest ties with the masses.*

President Ho Chi Mind has said, "The penetration of Marxism-Leninism into the working-class movement and the patriotic movement led to the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party in early 1930.

"The founding of the Party was a turning-point of paramount importance in the history of the Vietnamese revolution." [1]

Though coming into existence in a colonial and semi-feudal country with a small and young working class, and a peasantry which accounts for a very large proportion of the population, our Party has been constantly striving to *preserve and strengthen its class and vanguard character.*

The Vietnamese working class is small in number and subjected to oppression and exploitation on three sides: by imperialism and native feudalism and capitalism. Yet it

1. Ho Chi Minh, *Thirty Years of Activity of the Viet Nam Workers' Party.*

represents the advanced productive forces and is therefore the most revolutionary class since its birth. It is perfectly able to lead the Vietnamese revolution to victory: to complete the task of national liberation, achieve people's democracy and build socialism and communism in Viet Nam. Born and growing up in a new epoch of man's history — the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale — the Vietnamese working class, shortly after its development into a class, succeeded in organizing a new-type party of its own and soon grasped the weapon of Marxism-Leninism to fight and defeat all enemies of the class and the people. In these favourable conditions it has engaged in a relentless fight against colonialism, feudalism and the bourgeoisie. In the crucible of this revolutionary struggle it has rapidly matured politically and become worthy of its leading role.

As a sizable number of Party members are of peasant and petty-bourgeois stock, and in order to strengthen the class character of the Party, we have attached importance to inculcating the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism upon cadres and Party members, to raising their class conciousness and to imbuing them with the revolutionary qualities and virtues of the working class. At the same time we unceasingly combat unproletarian ideologies. During the years 1930 and 1931, our Party sent a number of cadres and Party members to factories, mining areas and plantations where they lived and toiled with the workers in order to carry on propaganda, lead the struggle there, and foster their own proletarian feelings. On the other hand, it paid attention to admitting

outstanding workers into its ranks and appointing cadres and Party members of worker stock to its leading bodies.

By applying in a creative manner the Marxist-Leninist principles on Party building to the concrete conditions of Viet Nam, we have been concerned to make ours a party worthy of the Vietnamese working class and people, the exponent of the vital and long-range national interests. Our country being formerly a colonial and semi-feudal one, the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie suffered from most ruthless oppression and exploitation. For this reason they are ardently patriotic, attached to the cause of national liberation, and their most revolutionary elements always turn to the Party. We, therefore, pay attention to accepting the best elements of the labouring people into the Party. Simultaneously we attach particular importance to the education and remoulding of cadres and Party members in accordance with the stand of the working class. Concurrently we seek the elimination of erroneous, rightist or "leftist" tendencies while enlarging the ranks of the Party and tackling the work of cadre administration.

In Party building we stress both the ideological and organizational aspects. The class and vanguard aspects of the Party find their expression primarily in the fact that it takes Marxism-Leninism as the ideological basis and the guide to all its actions. *The Party must achieve unity in its ranks ideologically and in action, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and of its line and policies.*

On the internal plane we give the first place to the political and ideological education of cadres and Party members, to the fostering of their revolutionary qualities and virtues.

We use criticism and self-criticism as a weapon to counter all influence of unproletarian ideologies. We criticize petty-bourgeois ideology, fight the influence of bourgeois and other erroneous ideologies, and strengthen solidarity and unity within the Party.

At the same time we attach great importance to party building from the organizational point of view, because the Party's political and ideological unity must be guaranteed by its organizational unity. The work of developing the Party must abide by the guiding principle according to which *quality takes precedence over number, thereby guaranteeing soundness and solidity to its organizational structure.* We put into practice the principle of democratic centralism, so that the Party becomes a monolithic bloc in both will and action and possesses a close-knit organizational structure and tight discipline. We properly handle the relationship between the individual and the collective, between the part and the whole, and between the upper and lower levels. We *oppose sectarianism and factionalism,* parochialism, paternalism, arbitrariness, waywardness, anarchism, indiscipline and so on. We build and consolidate the Party also through mass movements for the fulfilment of political tasks in each period, and by stimulating the masses to take part in Party building. This enhances the sense of responsibility of Party members towards the masses and binds the masses to the Party.

An important question relating to the strengthening of the class and vanguard aspects of the Party is the consolidation of basic Party organizations and the raising of their standard. The basic organizations form the foundation of the Party, where Party members participate in the Party's life and

struggle. Consequently, whether its fighting capacity and leading role are great or not, whether it maintains good contact or not with the masses, depends to a large extent on its cells and basic organizations. Our Party's present drive for building "four-good" * cells and basic organizations aims precisely at strenghthening its class and vanguard character and at promoting the vanguard and exemplary role of cadres and Party members at the grassroots so that the Party's basic organizations continue to deserve being the nuclei exercising leadership over the masses.

It is necessary to reinforce the over-all and exclusive leading role of the Party in every field of social activity and to fight resolutely against any effort to weaken its leadership in any field. In the North where our people have taken over power, we must handle correctly the relationship between the Party on the one hand, and the people's democratic power and the organizations of the National United Front on the other. This ensures the leadership of the former while avoiding that it acts in the latter's stead. On the contrary, we shall in this way bring into play the functions of the organs of power and of the mass organizations and, through their agency, further tighten the link between the Party and the broad masses and put in full operation the latter's considerable strength and initiative, thus pushing ahead the revolutionary cause of the masses.

---

* The "four goodnesses" are :
1. Good at guiding the people in production work, in standing ready to fight, and in fighting.
2. Good at helping the people in obeying the law and in the implementation of Party and State policies.
3. Good at caring for the masses' livelihood and doing mass work.
4. Good at consolidating the Party and strengthening its ranks. *(Pub)*.

In short, our Party constantly strengthens its fighting capacity and leading role in order to guarantee complete success to our people's revolutionary cause.

In Party building we have acquired the following valuable experiences :

1. Party building must be conditioned by political tasks and tightly linked to them : we must grasp the Party's line and policies to apply them in an active and creative manner. We must incessantly confront both line and policies with the real situation, with the requirements of the masses and the revolution so as to complete them and make them adequate. Ideological and other work concerning Party building, including the selection of cadres, must be carried out on the basis of a thorough understanding of the Party's line and policies.

2. Party building must be closely linked to the revolutionary movement of the masses and it is through the practice of revolutionary struggle that new Party members must be recruited. In order to improve the Party membership continuously, we must, on the one hand, recruit the most active and conscious elements from among the working class. On the other hand we must attract outstanding elements from among the labouring people who have distinguished themselves in the protracted and arduous struggle against aggressor imperialism and in the patriotic emulation movement for socialist construction. Simultaneously with the recruitment of new members, we must in good time expel from the Party provocateurs and anti-Party, factious and politically and morally degenerate elements.

3. It is necessary to combine the mobilization of the masses with Party building and to stimulate the masses to take part

in Party building. For instance we should provide them with the opportunity to criticize cadres and Party members and introduce meritorious people whom we shall educate and admit into the Party, etc. In this way we make the masses love and safeguard the Party.

4. It is necessary to combine closely the ideological and organizational aspects in Party building. Both of these aspects must be heeded. However, as our Party has now developed into a large and strong mass party, we should pay special attention to the ideological aspect. Only in this way can the Party possess a great fighting capacity and always preserve its vanguard role.

From the examination of the above major problems of the Vietnamese revolution we have seen that our Party with respected and beloved President Ho Chi Minh at its head, has creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country in order to elaborate correct lines and policies and take our working class and people from one victory to another. This is the greatest and surest guarantee for our people's complete success in defending and building socialism in the North, liberating the South, achieving peaceful reunification of the fatherland, and in building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, while making an active contribution to the struggle of the world's people for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

III

LET US MARCH FORWARD UNDER THE BANNER OF MARXISM-LENINISM AND ACCOMPLISH OUR IMMEDIATE TASKS WITH GLORY

Dear comrades,

We are commemorating the 150th birthday of the great Karl Marx in the midst of a series of resounding victories of our armed forces and people in both North and South in our resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

1. TO STEP UP VIGOROUSLY OUR RESISTANCE AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION UNTIL COMPLETE VICTORY

The South Vietnamese armed forces' general offensive and people's uprisings which erupted on the night of January 30, 1968, were crowned with tremendous and all-round success, one of considerable strategic significance. They heralded a new stage in our resistance and have had no parallel in the history of our people's liberation war, in both their scope and intensity.[1]

1. As announced by the 8th Special Communique of the Command of the South Viet Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces, in six months of offensive and uprising since the beginning of this year the South Viet Nam P.L.A.F. and people killed, wounded or captured 380,000 enemy troops, including 133,000 U.S.

Since the start of the offensive and uprisings early this year, revolutionary war has been brought into the U.S.-puppets' lair, the cities, and has upset and shattered their two-prong strategy, the "search and destroy" and "pacification" programmes. It has driven them deeper into strategic defensive and forced on them the "mobile defensive" strategy with the "clear and hold" programme. The puppet army and administration, tools on which the United States depends in its aggressive war in South Viet Nam, are heading for disintegration and collapse. Contradictions between the American people and the U.S. aggressors, among the U.S. rulers themselves, between the United States and its hirelings, etc. have grown more acute. The U.S. invaders' will to aggression has been shaken.

On the other hand, their considerable successes early this year have paved the way for the South Vietnamese people's military and political forces to make startling progress, in size as well as in quality. The liberation armed forces, the political parties and mass organizations in the National Front for Liberation, have been growing at a rapid rate. The creation of the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces indicates that the ranks of those who fight

and satellite troops; disbanded tens of thousands of puppet troops; wiped out or heavily depleted 4 regiments, 16 armoured squadrons, one multi-battalion paratroop force, 123 battalions and 516 companies of the U.S.-puppets; shot down or destroyed on the ground over 4,400 aircraft of all types, blasted 8,730 military vehicles, including 4,560 tanks and armoured cars; sank or set ablaze 580 ships, combat launches and transport vessels; burnt down nearly 500 depots of ammunition, petrol and other war material; blew up over 550 bridges; razed 1,200 military posts; destroyed over 700 heavy guns; brought revolutionary war into the enemy's rear, which upset and frustrated all U.S.-puppet strategic schemes. In many places, puppet administrations and organizations have been overthrown and revolutionary power established. Over a million people and hundreds of whole communes have been liberated.

U.S. aggression, for national salvation, have swollen with new adherents from the areas temporarily controlled by the enemy, more particularly from the towns. The anti-US and anti-Thieu-Ky national united front has been expanding. Revolutionary power at provincial level has been established in Thua Thien, Gia Lai, Kontum and in many districts and chiefly in villages in the form of People's Revolutionary Committees. The Front's prestige has reached a record high.

Our Southern fellow-countrymen's waves of offensive and uprising initiated at the beginning of this year have been dealing deadly blows at the corrupt US-puppet regime. They have created the conditions for the increasing success and ultimate total victory of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people.

These offensives and uprisings are skilful and daring strategic strikes of the Vietnamese people in their people's war. They result from the growth of the integrated forces of people's war and demonstrated the great effectiveness of the principle of the combination of political and armed struggles; of military action, political action and agitation among enemy troops; of military offensives and mass uprisings in the towns and the countryside, in the plains and in the mountains; of the wiping out, depletion and disbandment of enemy manpower on the one hand, and the vigorous development of revolutionary forces and extension of the people's power on the other. They show the team work in combat of the three categories of armed forces, of the various services, and the simultaneous use of diverse fighting techniques of a revolutionary war in a backward agricultural country whose people are endowed with a long tradition of

gallant resistance against foreign invasion, a fervid love for the fatherland, a fairly deep political consciousness, and benefit from a closeknit organization and unrelaxing leadership. This success has supplied a splendid substantiation of Engels' prediction that a people who want to gain independence should not be content with *ordinary* means of warfare. Mass insurrection, revolutionary war and guerilla units everywhere — these are the sole means by which a small people can get the better of a bigger one, and a small army can resist a stronger and better organized one [1].

In concert with their Southern countrymen's continued attacks and uprisings, the stepped-up resistance of the armed forces and people in the North against the US imperialists' war of destruction has also achieved remarkable results. So far, they have shot down over 3,000 modern US aircraft, killed or captured over one thousand US air pirates and sent to the bottom or set ablaze nearly 100 enemy warships and commando boats. In the gruelling trial of the war, the socialist system of the North has displayed a vigorous vitality. United as one man, and resolved to preserve the gains of the socialist revolution and to pursue the laying of the material and technical foundations of socialism, its people have been carrying out combat and production abreast, while giving all-out assistance to their Southern kinsmen's liberation war, fulfilling the duty of the great rear area toward the great front. The North's economic and defence potential keeps growing, the militant solidarity of its people and their determination to fight and defeat US aggression have been

1. Marx-Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4.

strengthened. Basically US imperialism has been thwarted in its aims in its war of destruction against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Its failure is evident : But bellicose and stubborn by nature, it has not brought itself to renounce its aggressive schemes against our country. It still nurtures the dream of imposing neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam, turning it into a US new-type colony and military base and wrecking socialist construction in North Viet Nam, and preparing for a new world war.

To this end, and as immediate steps, it is making all-out efforts to replenish its troop strength in South Viet Nam with US and satellite manpower, rebuild the puppet administration and army, intensify its war of aggression in order to recover its lost positions. Concurrently, it is striking with redoubled fury at the former Fourth Interzone in the North whilst continuing its "peace" hoax with the aim of fooling public opinion or simultaneously prosecuting the war while seeking an advantageous political settlement.

Though its scheme is cunning and vicious, its capacity is not unlimited, and its position and strength are on the decline. Its announcement of "limited bombing" is in itself a confession of heavy failure in both parts of our country. It is at the same time an indication of its insidious scheme to concentrate attacks by its badly battered air force on an important part of the territory of the D.R.V.N., to smooth away the internal dissensions of US political circles and secure more men and money for the Viet Nam war. It is intended to throw dust into the eyes of world and US public

opinion with false professions of peace, and seeks to put a furbished face on Johnson and his confederates for the coming presidential election.

In its April 3, 1968 statement, the Government of the D.R.V.N. exposed the U.S. move, reaffirmed our people's principled position and declared its readiness to appoint a representative who would contact his American counterpart and ascertain the unconditional cessation of all bombings and other war acts by the U.S.A. on the whole territory of the D.R.V.N. This course of action would open the way to the discussion of other issues of concern to both parties.

At present, official talks between the representatives of the D.R.V.N. and the U.S.A. have started in Paris. However their progress has been hampered by the trickiness and stubbornness of the American side which deliberately denies the truth and tries to turn white into black. Not only does it seek to obscure the dividing line between the aggressor and the victim of aggression, but it also wilfully keeps contending that the U.S. troops are in South Viet Nam to defend "freedom" against "aggression" from North Viet Nam, and honour U.S. commitments to the "Government of the Republic of Viet Nam" (i.e. the puppets, traitors to the country and hirelings of the U.S.A.). Meanwhile, the American side dodges the key issue, namely, the ending by the United States of the bombing and all other war acts throughout the D.R.V.N. territory. Each time it is driven into a corner, it unfailingly sets forth its "reciprocity" term, which makes the talks mark time.

Popular feeling in Viet Nam and in the world is running very high against the U.S. aggressors' behaviour. Minister

of State Xuan Thuy has exposed U.S. duplicity, and the D.R.V.N. Third National Assembly (4th Session) accordingly disposed of U.S. arguments in these terms :

"As the U.S. imperialists have sent troops from their country to commit aggression against South Viet Nam, have been violating the Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and daily bombing, strafing and massacring Vietnamese and laying waste Viet Nam, it is up to them to bring their war of aggression to an end, to withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, to dismantle all their military bases there and leave the Vietnamese to settle their own affairs. The U.S. aggressors' "commitments" to a handful of Vietnamese traitors in their pay have been dismissed by the whole Vietnamese people and entire progressive mankind as unlawful, absurd and invalid.

"The D.R.V.N. is an independent and sovereign country. As the U.S. government has been carrying out aerial and naval bombardments and strafings against it, it is incumbent on the U.S.A. to put an unconditional and permanent end to its bombings and all other acts of war throughout the D.R.V.N. territory. It is not entitled to demand any "reciprocity" whatsoever.

"The Vietnamese people are one nation, Viet Nam is one country. Wherever on the Vietnamese territory there are foreign aggressors, the Vietnamese must fight shoulder to shoulder to drive them out.

"To join forces for the liberation of the South, the defence of the North and the ultimate peaceful reunification of the fatherland is the sacred duty of the thirty-one

million Vietnamese in both parts of this country. No one has the right to prevent the Vietnamese people from fulfilling it, the U.S. imperialists — the aggressors — least of all."

Our entire people's task of prime importance and urgency is to mobilize all our energies to defeat the U.S. aggressors and their agents, liberate the South, defend the North and ultimately reunify the country. It consists of the following concrete great undertakings :

a) *In the South* : To keep up our effort to defeat the U.S. "limited war" and to foil the U.S.-puppet "clear and hold" strategy ; to give powerful and steady impetus to our people's offensive and uprising ; to see to it that the violence of our blows grows in proportion to the magnitude of our successes, and that as much enemy manpower as possible will be wiped out. We will thus develop vigorously our people's political and military strength, bring about the disintegration of the puppet army, cause the overthrow of puppet rule, and make all-out efforts to establish the revolutionary power of our people in the South. On this basis we will crush the enemy's will of aggression and achieve total victory.

b) *In the North* : To concentrate our powers on the emulation drive in production, on fighting and on the other spheres of activity, to bring the State plan to fruition, to go on increasing the D.R.V.N.'s economic and military potential. To inflict resolutely complete failure on the U.S. war of destruction. To strive to carry out simultaneously the defence and the construction of the North and fulfil its duty as the great rear area toward the great Southern front and to go on with the building of the material and technical

basis of socialism, concurrently with effective preparations for economic rehabilitation and development after the restoration of peace.

For the satisfactory accomplishment of the above tasks, it is imperative to carry out a successful political mobilization of the whole people under the slogan "*All for our victory over the U.S. aggressors.*"

We must generate a dynamic evolution in the thinking and behaviour of all our Party members, armymen and people. We must make abundantly clear to everyone the new situation and our tasks in the resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, the essence of this new stage, the developing process of the South Vietnamese forces' and people's offensive and uprising, and the significance of the great successes they have achieved. We must bring about full realization by all of the enemy's schemes and tricks, and of our people's duties and enormous capacities. We must be constantly on our guard, combat pacifism and never deflect from this guiding principle : "Fight a protracted war and mainly rely on ourselves". Everyone must be made to grasp the scientific character and creativeness of the anti-US line for national salvation of our Party and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation as well as place unqualified confidence in the Party's and President Ho Chi Minh's leadership. On that basis, let a strong impetus be given to the revolutionary mettle of the masses ; let revolutionary heroism be cultivated, and the determination to fight and win of all our Party members, armed forces and people be stiffened.

The key to the success of the political drive lies in its ability to touch off a stirring *patriotic emulation movement*

in every branch of activity, every unit and every locality for record highs in production, in combat and in other work; it also lies in its capability to focus the thought and activities of all on translating into reality the watchword "*All for our victory over the U.S. aggressors.*"

The road to victory of our people's resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, is still beset with many difficulties and sacrifices. But we have inflexibly made up our minds to turn into deeds this sacred exhortation of President Ho Chi Minh :

"Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom.

" To safeguard the independence of our fatherland, to fulfil our duties to all peoples struggling against US imperialism, our people and army, united as one man and fearless of sacrifices and hardships, will resolutely fight on until they gain complete victory."

Our resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, is very hard but very glorious and bound to win complete success, because our people enjoy the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party with a correct and creative revolutionary line and people's war line. Our people are by tradition staunch and indomitable fighters. Our entire nation is united and of one mind, and is prepared to "make every sacrifice rather than bow to foreign rule and be enslaved". Our people's political and armed forces are tremendous, their ability to wage people's war is considerable, and their rear area, the socialist North, solid and powerful. Moreover, their cause enjoys the increasing sympathy, support and assistance of the fraternal socialist countries and the world's people, including progressive American people.

2. TO CONTINUE SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION AND TO COMPLETE SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATION

Over the past years, in spite of furious American air strikes, the socialist system in the North has gained in vigour and continuously increased its vitality in the crucible of the war.

A rifle in one hand, a hammer or a plough in the other, our people have been carrying out abreast the intensification of production and the resistance against the U.S. war of destruction, the uninterrupted socialist transformation and socialist construction, and the stregthening of the North into the solid rear base of the whole country.

In agriculture the salient feature at present is the drive for "five tons of paddy and two pigs per cultivated hectare per year and one hectare under crop per farmer". Meanwhile industry distinguishes itself with a nascent local industry which is rapidly expanding. Despite fierce enemy raids, our communications and transport have constantly been kept open and have made extraordinary efforts. In war conditions, circulation and distribution of goods has been satisfactorily maintained and has contributed to boost production and meet the main needs of our people and armed forces in production, in the fighting and in everyday life.

Apart from those economic achievements, our people's successes in culture, education, public health, science and technique have also been outstanding.

These are eloquent illustrations of the superiority of the socialist system in North Viet Nam.

A new period has opened in our resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. Inspired by the slogan "All for our victory over the U.S. aggressors" the armed forces and people in the North must resolutely march forward and, together with our gallant Southern countrymen and combatants who have been mounting series of attacks and uprisings, deal more telling blows at the aggressors and their hirelings and take our struggle to complete victory.

A strong and solid rear base is one of the permanent factors of victory in a war. The urgent requirements of our present resistance imperatively call for the comprehensive consolidation of the socialist North in order to inflict total defeat on the war of destruction, fulfil our duty toward the great front, and stand ready to deal with an eventual U.S. adventurist escalation of the "limited war" to the North.

Therefore, the immediate task of the people in the North is economic construction combined with resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

In economic construction, we shall *go on laying the material and technical basis of socialism* with a view to the strengthening of the new relations of production, the vigorous development of production, the satisfaction of the people's material and cultural needs and the reinforcement of the defence potential. To fit the situation created in both parts of the country by our resistance to U.S. aggression, and in conformity with the long-term orientation of socialist industrialization, we have made a timely shift in economic construction and cultural development. We shall build and develop the economy in each important strategic area accordingly, and eventually enable it to be partly self-sufficient in

food, clothing, housing, education, health preservation, and in serving production, construction and combat.

In *agriculture*, we shall strive to develop production, boost intensive cultivation to obtain higher yields, reach the short-term objective of five tons of paddy and two pigs per cultivated hectare per year, and one hectare under grain per farmer. We must supply adequate food for our troops and people to fight successfully, and create favourable conditions for the development of industry and handicrafts.

In *industry*, whe shall continue to give good protection to its central branches, restore, maintain, and expand their production, while stimulating the building and development of local industry and handicrafts, in order to serve satisfactorily industrial and agricultural production, communications and transport, the fighting and the people's life.

Special attention must be paid to *communications and transport*, which have to be kept going in all circumstances to meet the increasing demands of the front and the rear, of production, the fighting and the people's life.

Circulation and distribution of commodities must be improved to help production effectively and serve the living of the people; distribution must be done in strict observance of the principle "to each according to his work," in a just, rational and democratic way, so as to prevent speculation, embezzlement and abuse, and to contribute to the fostering of the resistance force and socialist construction.

Efforts must be made to develop education and culture, train technicians and skilled workers and push forward scientific and technical research and survey of natural resources, etc.

To accomplish these tasks it is necessary to step up the *patriotic emulation drive* in each factory, farming co-operative, unit and branch, in co-ordination with the political mobilization of the whole people.

Our present economic construction and cultural development must meet the demands of the war; at the same time we must make effective preparations for the healing of the wounds of war, the rehabilitation and vigorous development of the economy in peace time, thus engaging in short-term construction while preparing for long-term construction to be carried out when circumstances permit. However, the central task at present is to meet the growing needs of the resistance of the whole people in order to secure total victory over the U.S. aggressors.

While exerting ourselves to fulfil yearly state plans, we must speed up the elaboration of a future long-term plan for national economic and cultural development.

Parallel to the laying of the material and technical foundations of socialism, due attention must be paid to the *completion of socialist transformation and the pursuit of the struggle between the two paths.* Socialist construction and socialist transformation are closely connected: the former strengthens, develops and perfects the new relations of production brought about by the latter which, in return, provides the former with favourable conditions to forge ahead.

The resolution of our Party's Third Congress clearly pointed out:

"In view of the concrete situation in the North, in the first period of socialist revolution, we take socialist transformation as the central task, while taking the first steps in socialist

construction. When socialist transformation has secured a victory of a decisive character, we must switch over to socialist construction as the central task, undertaking socialist industrialization and simultaneously completing socialist transformation."

Marxism-Leninism points out that for a fairly long period of time after their overthrow, the exploiting classes still nurture the intention to stage a comeback, and this design will develop into a scheme to restore the lost "paradise"; the force of habit in millions of small producers is formidable and small production daily and hourly generates capitalism.

As early as 1919, Lenin said:

"It (Soviet power — *T.C.*) sets itself the task not only of definitively wiping out the landlords and the capitalists — a task that we have nearly accomplished — but also of building a society in which there would be no place for the landlords or the capitalists. It happened more than once in the history of revolutions that these elements were wiped out, but that in a fairly short time from among the kulaks, the wealthy peasants and the speculators emerged new capitalists who oppressed the workers even more than the former landlords and capitalists. Therefore, the problem we must solve is not only to wipe out the former capitalists but also to prevent the emergence of new ones so that the power of the toilers, of those who live on their labour, could be fully, thoroughly and perfectly consolidated."[1]

In our country, after completing in the main the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and private

1. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38.

capitalist trade and industry, we direct our attention to the building of the material and technical basis of socialism.

Inspired by the ever-consolidating new relations of production, our working class and co-operative peasantry have been bringing into full play their creativeness and fortitude in labour, overcoming every difficulty, zealously emulating each other in raising production, practising thrift, fearless of all privations and hardships caused by the U.S. war of aggression. The superiority of socialism and our growing political and moral unity account for the achievements of our people in the North over the past few years. However, aside from our successes and good points which are predominant, there have been shortcomings and defects in one respect or another. For example, since the North began to cope with the U.S. war of destruction, economic management and control of the market have been somewhat relaxed and this state of things has made possible the small producers' spontaneous growth. In co-operative farms, the members have not been able fully to exercise their right as masters of the organization, and embezzlement and lack of democracy, rather widespread in production and distribution, has damped the zeal of peasants. The management of collective land and the application of the "three fixed norms" policy[1] have not been free from shortcomings and faults.

A similar situation has also been prevailing in handicraft co-operatives. A few members of the former exploiting classes and profiteers, taking advantage of the war conditions, have

1. This policy consists in assigning to each co-op production team fixed norms in output, work points and production costs for a crop or for a whole year. It does not apply to the co-op members' households. *(Pub.)*

relapsed into exploitation of labour in altered forms. On the other hand, hooligans and speculators joining hands with a few degenerates from state offices or factories have been stealing raw materials, materials and goods from State warehouses and selling them on the free market at exorbitant prices, causing disturbances to some extent. The struggle between the two paths is going on in new and rather complex forms. Consequently, we must attach due importance to consolidating the socialist economic sector (State-run and collective economies), strengthening economic and financial management, bringing into full play the economic impact of State enterprises in production and distribution, and combating corruption, waste and bureaucracy. We must improve the distribution of goods in a fairer, more rational and more democratic way, with due regard to both the work done and the basic needs of the people, and with a view to better serving production, the fighting and the people's living. Meanwhile, socialist transformation must be completed to clear the way for the steady advance of socialist economy.

In the countryside, it is necessary to stimulate and guide the co-operatives in the democratic elaboration of their statutes, internal regulations and various regimes and the expansion of the work for further democratization of the co-operatives so as to assert their members' right as collective masters, and to ensure respect for their political, economic and social rights; to combat embezzlement, waste and bureaucracy; to check all attempts to appropriate collective land and property; to correct the mistakes committed in the application of the "three fixed norms" policy. These tasks will help consolidate agricultural co-operatives, and encourage

everyone to vie with one another to boost production. In the meantime, the strengthening of supply and marketing co-operatives and credit co-operatives should not be neglected, for it helps tighten the control of the market and improve the granting of credits to co-operative members and eliminate usury which is still practised secretly here and there in our countryside. As regards the co-operative members' family economy, it is advisable to provide it with sound guidance toward a wholesome development so as to help them increase their income, while ensuring that it will not interfere with the co-operatives' management of labour and with the continuous strengthening of the collective economy.

In cities, and provincial and district towns handicraft co-operatives must be reinforced politically, ideologically, organizationally and professionally. The small producers' negative practices in the spontaneous expansion of their businesses must be ended, and a new orientation in line with the Party's and Government's policies must be given to these co-operatives' operations. As for the small traders, we must resolutely educate them and help them shift to production or organize them into "service groups," thus giving them employment to earn honest incomes.

Regarding bourgeois who have been admitted into joint State-private enterprises, we must continue raising their political and ideological standards, give them and their dependents jobs with decent wages to make it possible for them to go on with their reformation and become genuine labourers of a socialist country.

Those who steal State or collective property, or engage in speculation and disturb the market must be made to realize

their mistakes and mend their ways. If the offences are serious enough, they should be duly punished according to the law.

To accomplish those tasks is to apply correctly the revolutionary socialist line of Marxism-Leninism, to continue implementing the Revolution of the Party's Third National Congress and pave the way for the North's steady advance toward socialism and for the reinforcement of the great rear base of our resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

3. TOGETHER WITH THE WORLD'S PEOPLES, TO STRUGGLE FOR PEACE, NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

Since Marx's and Engels's *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* the history of mankind has followed the trend they mapped out.

The Great October Socialist Revolution ushered in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale. Its triumph and the founding of the Soviet Union, the first socialist state, converted Marx's scientific socialism from a fine dream of progressive humanity into a tangible reality.

In the Second World War, the victory of the Soviet Union over fascist Germany, Italy and Japan saved mankind from fascism, and created extremely favourable conditions for the peoples under fascist rule — the Vietnamese people included — to gain independence and freedom. National democratic

revolution and socialist revolution triumphed in a series of countries in the Eastern and Western hemispheres. Most remarkably, the Chinese revolution, which was successful in a vast country with nearly one-fourth of the earth's population, has been a source of powerful inspiration and stimulus for the revolutionary movement of the world's working class and oppressed peoples. The socialist system has established itself and has been expanding. Under the impact of staggering blows from the national liberation movement, the colonial system of imperialism has collapsed by big chunks.

The victory of socialism in one-fourth of the world, the powerful growth of the national liberation movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the expansion of the workers' movement and the struggle for peace and democracy in the capitatist and many other countries are weakening the position of world capitalism.

After the Second World War, the market of world capitalism has shrunk, and its inner contradictions have sharpened : its general crisis has been worsening. Monopoly capitalism has all the more rapidly switched to state-monopoly capitalism. Relying on the power of the bourgeois state to regulate the economy, and turning to account the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution to renew their equipment and step up rationalization of production, the state-monopoly capitalists have intensified the exploitation of labour and caused the physical and mental exhaustion of the workers.

In their desperate attempt to cope with socialism which has secured increasing success in the world, with the

growing struggle of the working class and people at home, and with that of the colonial peoples, the state-monopoly capitalists are resorting to their usual tricks, i.e. terror and deception ; the scope and form of these have changed and their insidiousness has increased. Concurrently with fascist repressive and terroristic measures, they stage the "people's capitalism" farce designed to create in the workers illusions about "class co-operation" and "common enjoyment of profit" and to tie them to the capitalist way of life. As regards the colonial peoples, under the rising pressure of the national liberation movement they have had to operate a change-over from old-type colonialism to new-type colonialism, substituting the fetters of the latter for the chains for the former. In some places the neo-colonialism of one imperialism just supersedes the colonialism of another. In others, neo-colonialism gains a foothold through economic, military, cultural and technical aid. In others still, it simply resorts to violence : coups d'état and war.

Along with so-called "people's capitalism" and innovations of neo-colonialism, the state-monopoly capitalists also aid, abet and utilize modern revisionism and reformist socialism to drive a wedge into the international communist and workers' movement, sow the seeds of reformism and compromise, weaken the revolutionary struggle of the working class, the labouring people and the oppressed nations.

Concerning the socialist countries, they are doing their best to utilize and widen the divergences in opinion among some fraternal countries. Through the agency of revisionists and intellectuals who resist reformation, they are seeking

the gradual realization of their "peaceful evolution" plot under the "freedom", "democracy", "nation", etc., signboards (for instance in Czechoslovakia). They are infiltrating spies and commando-saboteurs into, or staging military aggression to various extent against, such countries as the People's Democratic Republic of Korea years ago and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam at present.

The most bellicose imperialists have gone so far as brazenly to start "special war" or "limited war" in an attempt to stamp out the national liberation movement in some colonial and dependent countries and change these into neo-colonies and strategic bases to serve the imperialists' search for more extensive markets and preparations for a new world war.

The aggressive war in Viet Nam is an important part of the global strategy of US imperialism, the leading and most bellicose imperialism. What is in fact the real purpose of its Viet Nam war ? Clearly, it is seeking by all means the permanent partition of Viet Nam, the establishment of neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam, the transformation of the latter into a US neo-colony and military base, the checking of the impact of socialism from China and North Viet Nam on Southeast Asia, the use of Viet Nam as a testing ground for US strategies, tactics and new weapons to be utilized in the suppression of revolutionary movements in different countries and in preparation for a world conflagration.

But the present international situation no longer permits imperialism to rule the roost. The relation of forces has been altered in favour of socialism, national independence, democracy and peace. World imperialism headed by the USA

and its reactionary vassals are weakening and declining irresistibly. The universal drive for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism is gaining momentum and magnitude and has achieved substantial successes. The world revolutionary forces are rising and *on the offensive*. Applying an offensive strategy, the forces of socialism, national liberation, democracy and peace are in a position to crush every war policy and eventually all the war plans of imperialism step by step and smash the capitalist system piece by piece in order to wipe it off the earth.

The Vietnamese people's present resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, is an important part and the culmination of the world peoples' movement against imperialism headed by the United States. It shows that the US brand of imperialism is merely neo-fascism at its most wicked, and also that it is actually not strong. In today's historical conditions, a people, even a small one, if closely united and firmly resolved to liberate themselves by following a sound political and military line, are perfectly in a position to defeat the imperialist aggressors, even such wealthy and well-armed ones as the United States imperialists. It is for their country's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity and for universal peace, national independence, democracy and socialism that the Vietnamese are fighting US imperialism. They take boundless pride in discharging their duty as vanguard fighters in the forefront of the world peoples' revolutionary struggle against their most fiendish foe, US imperialism, the international gendarme. If the latter is using the Vietnamese battlefield as a testing ground for its "special war", "limited war", and

up-to-date armoury, the Vietnamese people and, through their agency, the world peoples are also drawing lessons from the matchless strategy and tactics of people's war, its fighting techniques, and the wide range of its weapons, from the most primitive to the most sophisticated ones (the most powerful being morale). These lessons will help us defeat the imperialists and their henchmen.

To cope with the vicious scheme and overbearing behaviour of the bellicose imperialists led by the United States, we are for the establishment of a world peoples' *united front against US aggressor imperialism, for national independence and peace.* This front takes for its foundations the socialist countries, the international workers' movement and the national liberation movement. It includes the governments and peoples of the socialist countries, the newly-independent countries which really oppose American imperialism, international democratic bodies[1] and organizations which are at present engaged in armed struggle against imperialism and its underlings for national independence, democracy and world peace.

We are gratified to see that in the process of supporting the Vietnamese people's resistance against US aggression, such a front has in fact been taking shape, and is isolating US imperialism to an ever-higher degree.

We express our sincere thanks to the peoples of the fraternal socialist countries and of the world, and also to progressive American people for their warm support for our struggle against US aggression. We pledge ourselves to make

1. Excluding naturally fake peace and democratic organizations dominated by US imperialism and the reactionary circle of its flunkeys.

the greatest exertion to defeat the US aggressors and their agents, in fulfilment of our noble national and international duties, and to prove worthy of the trust put in us by our brothers and friends around the world.

We stand for the restoration and reinforcement of solidarity in the socialist camp and in the international communist and workers' movement *on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.* We see this as a step to further strengthen our force directed against the imperialists and their henchmen and to keep in check all their military schemes and actions or their "peaceful evolution" plot against the socialist countries, to foil their repression and undermining of the international communist and workers' movement and the national-liberation movement, to thwart the plan for the preparation of a new world conflict by the bellicose imperialists, and to bring about increasing success for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

4. TO MAKE ALL-OUT EFFORTS IN THE STUDY OF MARXISM-LENINISM

Only a party armed with a vanguard revolutionary doctrine can lead the revolution to victory. In order to strengthen the leadership of our Party — the main guarantee of the success of our revolution — every cadre and every Party member must strive his hardest to grasp Marxism-Leninism and apply it with imagination to Viet Nam's conditions.

Does a good grasp of Marxism-Leninism mean knowing by heart the propositions and principles put forward in its

classics ? No, for it is "not a dogma but a guide to action". To grasp it means to *understand its substance and essence, to link theory to practice, to apply its doctrine creatively to the concrete situation of our country in the search for sound solutions to problems of our revolution* at each stage of its development and in the differing contexts of class struggle and national struggle.

The union of theory and practice can only be achieved by the Marxist-Leninist scientific method of investigation and analysis of the international and home situation. This will show us the way to apply Marx's and Lenin's tenets to the concrete conditions of our country and work out correct lines, guiding principles and policies capable of ensuring the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

Such an exertion can only be brought to fruition by a spirit of independence and sovereignty in the application of Marxism-Leninism and in the elaboration of the Party's programme and policies. The lessons drawn from the fraternal parties' experience must be learned selectively, and critically, and neither automatic copying nor servile imitation is the right course of action.

The understanding of Marxism-Leninism means a steady grasp of its universal truth coupled with the ability to enrich it with fresh experiences drawn from our own and the world revolutionary movements, to increase its theoretical stock with bold new propositions and conclusions, and to contribute to its vigorous growth in every aspect. Lenin said :

"We do not regard Marx's theory as something complete and inviolable. On the contrary, we are convinced that it

has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists must develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life." [1]

Why does the present world conjuncture require such a development of Marxism-Leninism ?

The socialist system has been established, and is expanding and becoming the decisive factor for the development of human society. The ever richer experiences of its socialist revolution and construction must be summed up and improved.

On the other hand, the colonial system of imperialism is disintegrating. The experiences drawn from the national liberation revolution and the path of development followed by the countries newly freed from the imperialist yoke are raising momentous topical questions.

Imperialism in the form of state-monopoly capitalism, its new policies and tricks to coax, split and suppress mass movements at home and revolutionary movements in the colonies, and concurrently to grapple with the socialist camp and the international communist and workers' movement, the global strategy of U.S. imperialism and its allies — these are problems which should be carefully and penetratingly scrutinized to find effective ways of coping with them.

The revolutionary movement of the world working class and peoples is on the offensive. The forms of extensive and bitter struggle of the world working class and the multifarious strategic and tactical lessons supplied by this struggle must also be summed up to improve guidance of the movement.

1. V.I. Lenin, *Our Programme*, Collected Works.

Moreover, the scientific and technological revolution now going on in the world has brought about achievements of tremendous importance for humanity. Discoveries of great consequence in the use of nuclear energy, in the conquest of the cosmos, in cybernetics, in biology, etc., are elucidating a host of philosophical problems and opening up new vistas for man to tame nature.

The practical situation described above spells out the necessity for Marxist-Leninists to direct their energies towards reviewing the experiences acquired in class struggle, in the man-versus-nature contest, in the achievement and preservation of revolutionary power and in the construction of a new society. It is also necessary to generalize them and reach theoretical conclusions, so as to prove that Marxist-Leninist principles remain valid while contributing to the development of Marxism-Leninism with new propositions.

It is a tough job of great magnitude and merit, in which every Marxist-Leninist party must zealously take part.

Though the 1957 Moscow Declaration and the revolutionary principles of the 1960 Moscow Statement have recapitulated the experiences gained by the international working class in its revolutionary struggle after the Second World War into valuable propositions, these are undoubtedly inadequate to the needs of the rapidly-rising revolutionary tide of the world working class and people.

Our Party must sum up the experiences supplied by the Vietnamese revolution and arrive at theoretical conclusions to enrich Marxism-Leninism as regards, among other problems, colonialism and neo-colonialism, people's national democratic revolution in a colonial and semi-feudal

country, socialist revolution in a backward agricultural country which progresses toward socialism without going through the stage of capitalist development, people's war and armed insurrection of the masses, people's democratic dictatorship, strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, Party building, the Front, the Army, State power, and so on.

Our Party must *play its part in the fight to preserve the purity of Marxism-Leninism* against revisionism which is at present the main threat, and dogmatism and sectarianism as well. It must make a clear-cut distinction between the imaginative application of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of a given country and the world on the one hand, and the trick of modern revisionism of different complexions seeking to garble Marxism-Leninism, wreck its principles and weaken the revolutionary struggle of the world working class and people, on the other.

This fight must be directed against two targets : on the one hand, against every brand of rightist and "leftist" opportunism, modern revisionism, dogmatism, etc., in the international communist and workers' movement. On the other, against all distortions and misrepresentations of Marxism by theoreticians in the pay of the capitalists, against bourgeois doctrines which clash with ours or which claim to "complement" it : neo-Thomism, existentialism, bourgeois nationalism, the "convergence" theory, "neo-Marxism", and so forth.

Naturally, our Party has to make an effective contribution to this long-term and complex struggle. To this end, we must pay attention to the study of Western reactionary

philosophies now gaining currency in South Viet Nam and serving the purposes of the aggressive policy and neo-colonialism of imperialism, particularly U.S. imperialism, in order to fight them in an appropriate and efficient manner.

Our battle in the ideological and theoretical fields must be fought with patience, endurance, continuity and the incisiveness of militant Marxism. We Communists cannot be absent from these battlefields, not even for a short while. Regrettably, for one reason or another, there have been many shortcomings in our ideological and theoretical work. Unquestionably, a strenuous effort is required to set them right.

As our Party's line and policies are the result of the union between Marxist-Leninist theory and the realities of the Vietnamese revolution, it is necessary to couple the study of Marxist-Leninist tenets with the study of the Party's line and policies. This measure will bring home to our cadres and Party members the originality and scientific soundness of the Party's line and policies and make them grasp Viet Nam's realities, and, consequently, strengthen their confidence in the leadership of the Central Committee and President Ho Chi Minh. Experience has taught us that when our cadres and Party members study the classical works of Marxism-Leninism in combination with the Party's line and policies, and work among the masses, they understand these line and policies better and their theoretical and political standards rise rapidly and steadily.

The following immediate tasks are to be fulfilled, as a strong stimulus to the study of Marxism-Leninism and an endeavour to grasp it :

a) To keep up the systematic teaching of our doctrine to cadres and Party members, which must go by the following guiding principles : co-ordination between theory and practice, between the study of Marxism-Leninism and the Party's line and policies on the one hand, and the cultivation of their revolutionary qualities and virtues and the improvement of their cultural, technical and professional standards, on the other ; concurrently, to arrange for them to take part in mass campaigns for the implementation of decisions and policies of the Party and Government.

b) To step up the Party's theoretical work, direct it to important subjects relating to the Vietnamese revolution and the international communist and workers' movement. To develop *independent thinking* in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint, to guard against the influence of revisionism and dogmatism in theoretical work.

c) To press on with the summing up of the experiences of the Vietnamese revolution accumulated during nearly forty years by our working class and our people, under the leadership of our Party, the architect of their successive victories.

"The summing up of experiences is a method of coupling theory with practice, using theory to analyse practice and drawing theory from the analysis of practice. It is a good method for the raising of the theoretical level of Party cadres and members. It is also a good method for combating all tendencies to dogmatism and empiricism, for enhancing ideological unity within the Party" [1].

1. Political Report, Third National Congress of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, 1960.

Dear comrades,

As we commemorate Karl Marx's 150th birthday, we are glad to realize that Marxism - Leninism is an exceptionally sharp weapon for the working class in its struggle to overthrow capitalism and establish a communist, classless society, free from the exploitation of man by man, from the oppression of one people by another, a society in which labour is an honour for everyone, and mankind will enjoy genuine peace, freedom and happiness. We are glad to realize that our Party, headed by President Ho Chi Minh, has been creatively applying Marxism - Leninism to the specific conditions of our country to formulate correct lines and policies for the Vietnamese revolution and lead the Vietnamese working class and people from one victory to another.

We are glad to fight under the banner of Marxism - Leninism, the banner of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of our Party and people, and an eminent disciple of Karl Marx in Viet Nam.

Enthusiastic and confident, let us close our ranks, resolutely uphold our Party's line and policies and valiantly march forward to defeat the American aggressors and their henchmen, liberate the South, defend the North, proceed toward the peaceful reunification of our fatherland, thereby bringing about a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

Enthusiastic and confident, let us, shoulder to shoulder with Marxism - Leninism the world over, resolutely fight to safeguard the purity of Marxism - Leninism and for the defence of the socialist camp, and make our contribution to the world peoples' struggle against imperialism led by U.S. imperialism, for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

Let us pledge undying gratitude to Karl Marx and march along the path he charted!

All for victory over the U.S. aggressors!

Let us do our best to build socialism in the North!

Long live peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam!

Long live invincible Marxism - Leninism!

Long live the Viet Nam Workers' Party!

Long live President Ho Chi Minh!

FOR THE CENTENARY OF LENIN'S BIRTH

Speech at the ceremony marking the centenary of Lenin's birth.
Original title: The Great Lenin Will Live for Ever in Our Cause.

The Vietnamese people, together with the Soviet people, the peoples of the other socialist countries and the whole of progressive mankind, solemnly celebrate the centenary of the birth of the great Lenin, at a time when the world revolution has won tremendous successes and is making steady headway. Under the glorious banner of Marxism - Leninism, our people, relying mainly on their own forces and enjoying the sympathy, support and assistance of the fraternal socialist countries and of people throughout the world, are defeating the US imperialist aggressors and building socialism in the northern half of their country.

I

Vladimir I. Lenin was born on April 22, 1870 into a family of progressive Russian intellectuals at Simbirsk, now Ulyanovsk. Even as a youth he assimilated the progressive literature of his country and abhorred the autocratic yoke of the tsars, and the regime of oppression and exploitation of the Russian people by the landlords and capitalists. When seventeen, he took the revolutionary path and began studying Marxism. He rapidly became an eminent Marxist who resolutely defended Marx's doctrine and creatively applied it to solve the revolutionary problems of his country and the world; he also developed it on the planes of philosophy, political economy and scientific socialism in the new historical conditions.

Lenin founded the *Russian Bolshevik Party*, a new-type proletarian party, to lead the Russian working class and people in the revolution.

He brought to victory the *Great October Socialist Revolution* and founded the *first socialist state in the world*, opening a new era in the history of mankind, the period of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world-wide scale.

He led the *heroic fight* of the Russian people to defend the young Soviet power, shattering the aggression of fourteen imperialist countries and crushing the reactionaries who had fomented a civil war in collusion with foreign imperialists.

He was the first to work out the orientation, tasks and plans for the *construction of socialism* in the Soviet Union, so that the loftiest ideal of mankind, the communist ideal, could materialize.

He founded the *Communist International*, which had a sound strategy and tactics to lead the world communist and workers' movements and rally all revolutionary forces on earth for the struggle against the common enemy, imperialism and its stooges.

Lenin led an ardent and heroic life. He tirelessly worked in a most efficacious way for the revolutionary cause of the working class, either when he was at home or in exile abroad, in liberty or in tsarist jails.

He was a shining example of staunch loyalty to Marxism, uncompromising struggle against the class enemy, affection for the people and confidence in the masses, revolutionary optimism, love for labour, modesty and simplicity. His greatness lies in the fact that he personified all the noblest qualities of a proletarian leader: deeply imbued with Marxism, he gathered and summed up the immensely rich experiences of revolutionary practice; he had a broad and keen mind, was quick to grasp every change in the situation, and always displayed lofty revolutionary virtues in daily life as well as in struggle.

He devoted his whole life to the liberation of the working class from the capitalist yoke, to the emancipation of the peoples from colonial domination, and to the freeing of mankind from all oppression and exploitation.

He was the greatest continuator of Marx's and Engels's revolutionary work, an eminent theorist of Marxism, a genial

strategist of the revolution, a militant revolutionary firm in principles but flexible in tactics. He was the greatest leader and educator of the working class and oppressed peoples in the world in our time.

Lenin passed away 46 years ago but his memory is for ever engraved in the hearts and minds of the toilers and peoples of the world.

*
* *

President Ho Chi Minh said :

"For us, Vietnamese revolutionaries and people, Leninism is not only a 'magic guide', a compass, but also the radiant sun illuminating our path to final victory, to socialism and communism." [1]

Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale. It has taken shape and developed in the crucible of the revolutionary struggle of the working class and the oppressed peoples, in the uncompromising struggle against revisionism, dogmatism and other opportunisms of all hues, and in the tireless struggle against all attacks by bourgeois ideologists, for the defence of the purity and creativeness of Marxism ; it has given the latter a new development and brought about Marxism - Leninism as we know it.

Marxism - Leninism is the acme of human thought in our time. It not only explains the world thoroughly, but

1. Ho Chi Minh : " The Path Which Led Me to Leninism ".

transforms it radically. It is the beacon lighting the path of the international working class, the oppressed peoples and the whole of progressive mankind, who are struggling to rid themselves of all oppression and exploitation and to build a new world, a world of genuine peace, freedom and happiness.

After a thorough analysis of the characteristics and contradictions of capitalism in the era of imperialism, Lenin arrived at such extremely important conclusions as : "*imperialism* is the highest stage of capitalism", is "moribund" capitalism, "imperialism is the eve of socialist revolution" ; at the same time, he worked out a comprehensive theory of *proletarian revolution* and pointed out the definite steps that must be taken by world revolution in order to triumph completely over capitalism.

Basing himself upon the law of unequal development of capitalism, Lenin concluded that in the epoch of imperialism, *revolution can succeed first in a country or in a number of countries*, but not in all countries at the same time. Therefore, socialist revolution can break out first in an economically little developed country (and not necessarily in that with the most advanced industry), if this country is the weakest link of the imperialist system and if in this country the conjunction of national and international causes creates such a revolutionary situation as to make it possible for socialist revolution to break out and triumph. This genial theory of Lenin bears a theoretical and practical significance of the utmost importance for world revolution. It inspires the working class of each country with confidence and determination

in its offensive to break each link of the capitalist system, to overthrow world imperialism part by part and eventually in its entirety.

The collapse of world imperialism is a long historical process comprising different types of revolutions in various countries, determined by their unequal level of economic, political and social development. Lenin said :

"The social revolution can come only in the form of an epoch in which are combined civil war by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries and a *whole series* of democratic and revolutionary movements, including the national liberation movement in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations." [1]

All these revolutions are closely related and aimed at the same goal : to overthrow imperialism and colonialism and take human society to socialism and communism. Today, all nations advance toward socialism and communism but through different types of revolutions and different transitional stages.

Lenin's theory on the *passage from bourgeois democratic revolution to proletarian revolution* had guided the communist and workers' parties in working out a correct revolutionary line which combines the task of struggling for democracy with that of struggling for socialism and which rallies all revolutionary forces in each country under the leadership of the working class. Starting from Marx's thesis of "uninterrupted revolution" and the situation of the revolution in various countries of the world in the epoch of imperialism, Lenin showed that there is no Great Wall separating bourgeois democratic revolution from proletarian revolution, nor any necessary period of bourgeois domination after the triumph of the bourgeois democratic revolution. He asserted that in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the proletariat must assume leadership of the bourgeois democratic revolution so as to carry it to completion and turn it into socialist revolution. The decisive condition for this eventual shift lies in the leadership of the working class based on the worker-peasant alliance.

1. Lenin : " A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism ", Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 35.

The working class' invincible strength is due to its vanguard party which leads the revolution according to a judicious line, the Marxist line, and sets up a firm worker-peasant alliance to serve as the basis for uniting all popular forces with a view to isolating the enemy to the utmost and overthrowing him. Lenin has armed us with his theory on the building of a *new-type party of the working class* which takes Marxism (now Marxism-Leninism) as the compass guiding all its actions, is organized according to the principle of democratic centralism, is governed by strict and just discipline which ensures unity of thought and action within the Party, uses criticism and self-criticism as the law of its development, and keeps close contact with the masses. Only such a party can take the revolution to victory and turn socialism and communism into realities.

Basing himself on the wretched situation and revolutionary fervour of the Russian peasantry and that of other

countries, Lenin affirmed that the peasantry not only can and must go with the working class in the bourgeois democratic revolution, but also can and must join with it in waging proletarian revolution. To take the revolution to victory, the working class must win over the peasantry and turn this reserve force of the bourgeoisie into its own. To realize the *worker-peasant alliance* is a decisive problem for strengthening the revolutionary leadership of the working class, and the peasant problem is a part of the establishment and consolidation of proletarian dictatorship.

With a penetrating and all-encompassing view of proletarian revolution, Lenin developed the national question of Marxist doctrine into the *national and colonial questions* in the epoch of imperialism when the national-liberation movement has become an integral part of world proletarian revolution. Once having achieved political independence, the peoples of colonial and dependent countries *can advance to socialism through different transitional steps, bypassing the stage of capitalist development.* That is their road to genuine independence and freedom. This transition can only be realized under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist party, relying on the worker-peasant alliance and with the help of the working class in the advanced countries, in the first place of the working class in power in the socialist countries. Lenin said :

"... With the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage." [1]

1. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967, III, p. 459.

Lenin untiringly struggled to *unite the world communist and workers' movements on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and to unite the world working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world,* without which one cannot defeat imperialism. He developed Marx's and Engels's motto *"Proletarians of all lands, unite!"* into : *"Proletarians of all lands and oppressed peoples, unite!"*

Under the direction of the Russian Bolshevik Party headed by the great Lenin, the working class, the peasantry and the nationalities oppressed by tsarism united into one bloc, rose up to struggle and *brought the October Revolution to victory.* The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the first state of proletarian dictatorship in the world and occupying one-sixth of its area, is also a state of many nationalities united on an equal footing and helping one another build a new life.

Drawing from the experience of three Russian revolutions, (especially of the first years of Soviet power), and that of the world revolution, Lenin developed Marx's theory on *proletarian dictatorship.* According to Leninism, the dictatorship of the proletariat will last throughout the transitional period from capitalism to classless communism. It does not put an end to the class struggle waged by the working class against the bourgeoisie overthrown but not yet crushed, but carries on that struggle under new conditions, in new forms, with new methods and for new concrete objectives. Therefore, once power is won, the working class must strive to keep it and strengthen it. Hence, it must ceaselessly reinforce and consolidate its revolutionary dictatorship in order on the one hand to repress all sabotage acts by the counter-revolu-

tionaries and all attempts at restoration by the bourgeoisie, and on the other hand to establish socialist democracy (a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois democratic regime) with a view to uniting, organizing, educating and galvanizing the labouring masses so as to successfully build socialism and communism. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class has not only to turn the exploiters into toilers, but also to remould the millions of small producers along the line of socialism, and to transform itself by getting rid of libertarian and anarchist habits as well as of other "petty-bourgeois influence." In the socialist conversion of the labouring masses, that of the peasants proves to be the most complicated and delicate one. The dictatorship of the proletariat must bring a life of plenty and happiness to the working class and the toiling people. Only when the working class has built a socialist economy with an organization of social labour of higher productivity than under capitalism, can socialism win firm success. "In the last analysis," said Lenin, "productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system." [1]

To this end Lenin worked out a *programme of socialist building in the USSR* comprising socialist industrialization, and aimed at implementing the motto: "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country." The synthesis of those three movements constitutes the essential content of the transitional stage toward socialism which aims at definitively settling the problem: "Which will win,

1. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967, III, p. 219.

socialism or capitalism?" in the Soviet Union, and at "creating conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise." [1]

After Lenin's death, under the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party with Comrade Stalin at its head, the Soviet people holding aloft Lenin's invincible banner, engaged in selfless labour, successfully built socialism in a relatively short time, and turned the capitalist and underdeveloped Russia of yore into a socialist power with modern industry and agriculture, strong national defence, advanced science and technology, a country which has opened the road for the peoples to advance to socialism and is now blazing the trail for mankind to conquer the cosmos. This tremendous change brought a decisive contribution to the victory of the Soviet Union over fascism, rid mankind of the fascist peril and created most favourable conditions for a series of peoples in Europe, Asia and Latin America to rise up one after another, break the imperialist system at its weakest links, set up people's democratic states and take the socialist path.

The triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries proves that it is entirely possible to realize it in one country or in a number of countries even in conditions of encirclement by world capitalism.

With great enthusiasm we note that the name of the great Lenin is closely linked to all revolutionary changes in human society since the turn of this century.

*
* *

1. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967, II, p. 652.

Under Lenin's glorious banner, the October Socialist Revolution triumphed and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the first socialist state on earth, came into being; the Soviet people have successfully built socialism and are establishing the material and technical basis of communism.

Under Lenin's glorious banner, fascism was defeated and the world socialist system took shape, which comprises one-third of the population and one-fourth of the area of the world, and is becoming "the decisive factor in the development of human society."

Under Lenin's glorious banner, the oppressed peoples are rising up, determined to break all shackles of imperialism, of colonialism old and new, to wrest back independence and freedom, and disintegrate the imperialist colonial system.

Under Lenin's glorious banner, socialist revolution is winning success after success in China, an immense country with 700 million people, tilting the world balance of forces in favour of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

Under Lenin's glorious banner, socialist revolution is scoring success upon success in Cuba, a small country next door to the USA, the most powerful and aggressive imperialist country.

Under Lenin's glorious banner, our people successfully carried out the August Revolution, defeated the French colonialist aggressors, and are defeating US imperialism and steadily building socialism in a war torn agricultural and backward country, thus disrupting the colonial system at one of its weakest links.

We are boundlessly grateful to Lenin for having opened up for us an era whose "main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism initiated by the Great October Socialist Revolution, a time of struggle between the two opposing social systems, a time of socialist revolution and national-liberation revolution, a time when imperialism breaks down and the colonial system is abolished, a time when more and more peoples take the socialist path, and socialism and communism triumph on a world-wide scale." [1]

We are immensely happy and proud to struggle in this era — the era of the triumph of Leninism.

1. Statement of the Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow, November 1960.

II

On the centenary of the birth of the great Lenin, let us recall how President Ho Chi Minh and our Party have applied Leninism in general and Lenin's theory on the national and colonial questions in particular, to lead the Vietnamese revolution.

"When drinking water from a stream one must think of the source". Let us look back to the days when "our people were reduced to slavery and our Fatherland was trampled under the iron heel of a cruel enemy. For several decades before the birth of our Party, the situation was gloomy and seemed hopeless" [1]. It was then that President Ho Chi Minh assimilated Leninism, which thanks to his efforts reached the Vietnamese people and lighted their revolutionary path. Uncle Ho's feeling when he first read Lenin's "Theses on the national and colonial questions" showed the persuasive strength and the power of attraction of Leninism upon the enslaved peoples thirsting for independence and freedom :

"What emotion, enthusiasm, enlightenment and confidence they (Lenin's theses - *Ed.*) instilled into me ! I cried for joy.

1. Ho Chi Minh : " Opening speech at the ceremony commemorating the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Viet Nam Workers' Party ", *Selected Works*, IV, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1962, p. 425.

Sitting by myself in my room, I would shout as if I were addressing large crowds : "Dear martyr compatriots ! This is what we need, this is our path to liberation !" [1].

Leninism has opened up new prospects for revolution in the colonies. Even before the First World War, Lenin paid particular attention to the countries of the East. He said :

"Everywhere in Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, spreading and gaining in strength... Hundreds of millions of people are awakening to life, light and liberty." [2]

For Lenin, the national liberation movement is a component of the world proletarian revolution. It should enjoy the devoted help of the proletariat in the advanced countries, in the first place in those countries where the revolution has triumphed. From the rostrum of the Communist International, he reminded the Communist parties of the West to do their best to support the revolutionary movement of the colonial and dependent peoples. "Lenin was the first man to resolutely denounce all prejudices against colonial peoples, which were deeply implanted in the minds of many European and American workers" [3]. He was also the first to realize that without the participation of the colonial and dependent countries world proletarian revolution could not triumph.

On the other hand, Lenin advised the Communist parties in the Eastern countries to apply communist theory to the concrete conditions of their countries, where the peasants

1. Ho Chi Minh : " The Path Which Led Me to Leninism ".

2. Lenin *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1952. Vol. I, Part 2, p. 315.

3. Nguyen Ai Quoc, *Lenin and the East*, in Ho Chi Minh, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 140.

constituted the fundamental masses and the primary task of the revolution was to conquer national independence and overthrow foreign domination, while internally its essential struggle was to be waged against feudal vestiges, not yet against national capitalism. He pointed out that in the colonial and dependent countries, after driving out imperialism one should proceed further : to struggle to liberate the toiling people from social oppression. He anticipated that with the help of the proletariat of the advanced countries the backward peoples could advance to socialism and communism through various stages of development, bypassing the stage of capitalist development.

Lenin's theory on the evolvement of the bourgeois democratic revolution into socialist revolution and his thesis on the possibility for socialist revolution to triumph in one country or in a number of countries, not necessarily developed ones, have lighted the way for revolutionary action in the colonies.

His theory on revolution in the colonial and dependent countries in the era of imperialism constitutes extremely valuable directives for the revolutionaries in the countries of the East.

At the beginning of this century, at a time when the Vietnamese revolution was at a loss which way to go, President Ho Chi Minh, having assimilated Marxism-Leninism, especially Lenin's theory on revolution in the colonies, introduced it into Viet Nam, converting many Vietnamese revolutionaries from petty-bourgeois and bourgeois to Marxist-Leninist patriotism. The penetration of Marxism-Leninism into the workers' and patriotic movement in Viet Nam led to the birth of the *Indochinese Communist Party, now the Viet Nam Workers' Party.*

Ever since its founding, under the leadership of President Ho Chi Minh, our Party has creatively applied Leninism to the concrete conditions of Viet Nam and asserted that the Vietnamese revolution, a part of the world revolution, should go through two stages : the bourgeois democratic and the socialist, the two being closely linked to each other. At the same time, the Vietnamese revolution was intimately connected with the revolution in the "metropolitan country" (then France). Thus President Ho Chi Minh said : "Capitalism is a leech with one sucker on the proletariat in the metropolitan country and another on the proletariat in the colonies. If it is to be killed, both suckers must be cut off at once. If only one is cut off the other will continue to suck the blood of the proletariat : the leech will live on and the cut-off sucker will grow again." [1]

President Ho Chi Minh constantly struggled against the tendency among the Western Communist parties to underestimate the national and colonial questions. He put on the same footing the national-liberation revolution in the colonies and the proletarian revolution in the "metropolitan countries". He likened world revolution to a bird with two wings : one is the unity of the working class in the imperialist countries, the other the alliance of the colonial peoples. He said : the alliance of the peoples in the East is "one of the pinions of the proletarian revolution." [2]

1. Nguyen Ai Quoc, *French Colonization on Trial,* Ho Chi Minh *Selected Works,* Vol. I, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1961, p. 130.
2. Nguyen Ai Quoc, *op. cit.*

With the modesty of a communist President Ho Chi Minh wrote : "Step by step, during the course of the struggle, by studying Marxism-Leninism while carrying out practical activities, I gradually realized that only socialism and communism can liberate the oppressed nations and the working people throughout the world from slavery" [1]. Starting from patriotism, he had reached communism, and ever since then the harmonious conjunction of patriotism and proletarian internationalism pervaded all his activities as it did all our Party's lines and policies.

President Ho Chi Minh and our Party have creatively applied Leninism to adequately solve such problems as the building of a new-type proletarian party in a backward agricultural country, the strengthening of the leadership of the Vietnamese working class over the revolution, the materialization of the worker-peasant alliance, the establishment of the National United Front, the setting up of the people's armed forces, and the building of the people's democratic power. President Ho Chi Minh and our Party have solved a series of new and original problems regarding revolutionary strategy and tactics in the specific conditions of our country and taken the Vietnamese revolution to ever glorious victories.

Starting from the Leninist thesis that in the colonial and dependent countries the national question is mainly the peasant question and the problem of democracy is essentially that of land, President Ho Chi Minh and our Party clearly

1. Ho Chi Minh : "The Path Which Led Me to Leninism".

realized the close connection between the questions of national independence, people's democracy and "land to the tillers" in our country.

At its Second National Congress [1] our Party applied Lenin's theory on national-liberation revolution and bourgeois democratic revolution to the concrete conditions of Viet Nam to perfect its revolutionary line. Translating into concrete terms the contents of its first Political Programme (*Outline Programme* and *Political Thesis* [2]), our Party clearly conceived that the Vietnamese revolution was both a national-liberation revolution and a bourgeois democratic revolution, but the latter was one of a new type, led by the working class and not by the national bourgeoisie. Its task was to drive out imperialism and win national independence, and overthrow feudalism and realize the motto "Land to the tillers" and the people's democratic freedoms. Its forces were the people, and its motive power the toiling masses, mainly the workers and the peasants. We call it a *people's national democratic revolution.* Led by the working class and relying on the worker-peasant alliance, *this revolution should and could become a socialist one, and take our country to socialism without passing through the stage of capitalist development.* Our Party rightly understood that the people's national democratic revolution was the premise of the socialist revolution and that the latter was a necessary development of the former.

The Vietnamese people's national democratic revolution was a typical revolution in an agricultural and backward

1. Held in February 1951.
2. Drafted by Tran Phu and approved by the First Plenum of the Party Central Committee held in Canton (China) in October 1930.

colonized country where feudal exploitation prevailed. It differed from the October Revolution in Russia, a little developed capitalist country, and also from the revolution in China which was an agricultural country and a semi-colony.

Starting from the Leninist thesis on the possible success of the revolution in a single country, even one that was economically underdeveloped but constituted the weakest link of the imperialist system, our Party asserted that the Vietnamese revolution was closely related to the revolution in the metropolitan country but was not subordinate to it. Moreover, owing to the concrete conditions of Viet Nam and the world in the era of imperialism, it was possible for socialist revolution to triumph in Viet Nam before it would in many a developed capitalist country.

Basing itself on a sound revolutionary line, our Party, despite imperialist encirclement, independently led the August Revolution to victory. When the French colonialists staged a comeback, it led a nation-wide, all-out and protracted War of Resistance, relying essentially on our own strength to defeat the French aggressors.

Unlike the petty-bourgeois and national bourgeois parties, our Party had educated the masses in our country to discriminate the French colonialists — our oppressors and exploiters — from the French working class and people — our allies who supported our just struggle. Hence, together with the French Communist Party, our Party was able to realize the unity of action between the peoples of Viet Nam and France against the common enemy — French imperialism.

After defeating the French colonialist aggressors and completely liberating the North of our country, our Party pointed

out that *the North could and should go direct to socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalist development, without waiting for the liberation of the South and the completion of the people's national democratic revolution there.* Our Party advocated the simultaneous fulfilment of two strategic tasks in the country: to wage socialist revolution in the North, consolidate and develop the North in all fields, for it to be able to give firm support to the revolution in the South; at the same time, to intensify the struggle for the liberation of the South so as to complete the people's national democratic revolution throughout the country and defend the socialist North.

With regard to the *socialist revolution in the North*, creatively applying Lenin's theory on the dictatorship of the proletariat and his programme of socialist construction, President Ho Chi Minh and our Party advocated the *strengthening of people's democratic dictatorship which assumes the historic task of proletarian dictatorship.* This means on the one hand, to enforce *dictatorship* against the counter-revolutionaries, those who oppose socialist revolution and the struggle to peacefully reunify the country; to consolidate national defence, smash all acts of provocation, sabotage and aggression by the US imperialists and their stooges; on the other, to apply democracy for the benefit of the people, to promote the role of the popular masses as collective master; to enhance the unity of the entire people on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance and the unity of all nationalities in the country; to mobilize the people for socialist revolution and socialist construction, in concrete terms to mobilize, educate and organize the entire people

for a triple revolution : *revolution in production relations, scientific and technical revolution, ideological and cultural revolution.*

Ever since the US imperialists ousted the French colonialists from South Viet Nam and rigged up a puppet Saigon administration to their devotion, then sent troops for direct aggression against the South of our country, our entire people have been waging a sacred war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, in order to liberate the South, defend the North and proceed to the peaceful reunification of the country. In the North, our people have carried out abreast production and fighting, building socialism while continuing our patriotic war of resistance against US aggression and supporting with might and main the revolution in the South.

Up to now, in the North we have recorded great achievements in socialist transformation and construction as well as in the victorious struggle against the war of destruction by the American imperialists [1]. In the South, our people have bested the "special war" [2], and are besting the "limited war" [2], and advancing towards complete victory. Under the banner of the National Front for Liberation [3], our compatriots in the South have brought people's war to a climax and gained great victories without precedent in our history against foreign aggression.

1. On October 31, 1968, US President Johnson declared an unconditional cessation of all bombardments over the whole territory of the DRVN. *(Ed.)*

2. The "special war" can be said to have lasted from June 1961 to May 1965. May 1965 saw the start of the "limited war". *(Ed.)*

3. The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation was founded on December 20, 1960. *(Ed.)*

Basing itself on Lenin's thesis on the character of this era and on the characteristics of the world situation after the Second World War, our Party has judiciously assessed the *offensive posture of the world revolution and the three revolutionary trends in the world at present* : socialist revolution and the construction of socialism and communism in the countries of the socialist camp ; the national-liberation movement against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism in the colonial and dependent countries ; the struggle of the working class and people in the imperialist and capitalist countries for peace, democracy and socialism.

Linking patriotism to proletarian internationalism, our Party follows a *judicious line of international unity,* resolutely defending the purity of Marxism-Leninism while winning the precious help of the fraternal countries in the socialist camp, the sympathy and support of the world's people, including progressive American people, with regard to our people's patriotic war of resistance against U.S. aggression. Concerning the countries in the socialist camp and the international communist and workers' movement, our Party advocates the restoration and strengthening of unity "on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in a way which conforms to both reason and sentiment." [1]

The great Lenin will live for ever in our cause. Leading the Vietnamese revolution over the past forty years, our Party headed by our great President Ho Chi Minh has constantly displayed in its line, policy and directives a thorough revolutionary spirit, independence, sovereignty and

1. President Ho Chi Minh's Testament.

creativeness, steadfast loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, determination to struggle against all right or "left" opportunism, holding high the banner of national independence, democracy and socialism in a former colonial and semi-feudal country. Thanks to its judicious line, our Party has turned Viet Nam, a colonial, agricultural and backward country, into an independent country of people's democracy, which is building socialism in the North. Under the clearsighted leadership of our Party and President Ho Chi Minh, enjoying world sympathy, support and help, our people have become a spearhead of world revolution, valiantly fighting at the frontline of the struggle of the world's people against the US imperialists and their stooges, resolutely defending the forward post of the socialist camp in Southeast Asia, and contributing to the safeguarding of peace in Asia and the world.

At the same time as we express our gratitude to the great Lenin, we feel grateful to President Ho Chi Minh, the genial leader of our working class and people, who founded, trained and educated our Party and taught it to creatively apply Marxism-Leninism in order to take the Vietnamese revolution from one victory to another.

III

To celebrate the centenary of Lenin's birth in the most worthy way, the Vietnamese people must completely defeat the American aggressors and their stooges, and, at the same time, successfully carry on socialist building in the North and bring about a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

Our people's patriotic war of resistance against US aggression has achieved great victories in all fields, compelling the American imperialists to unconditionally end their war of destruction against the North, withdraw part of their troops from the South and come to the four-party conference in Paris. They have met with obvious failure but remain very stubborn. The Nixon administration speaks about peace, but is in fact prolonging its aggressive war against our country through "Vietnamization".

According to US President Nixon's words and deeds, "Vietnamization" of the war implies three operations :

1. To withdraw part of the GIs,
2. To beef up the puppet army, and
3. To step up "pacification".

What is the gist of this plan ?

Having suffered bitter and heavy setbacks at the hands of the Vietnamese people, and run into stern opposition by

American and world opinion, the US imperialists are forced to withdraw part of their expeditionary corps in order to cut down casualties and war expenditure and deceive public opinion with their sham "good will for peace". But they carry out only a partial and piecemeal withdrawal in order to buy time and build up the puppet army, consolidate the puppet administration, prolong the Viet Nam war by pitting Vietnamese against Vietnamese, even extending the war to the three countries of the Indochinese peninsula and using Indochinese to fight Indochinese.

After the pull-out of a part of the US troops, according to the American plan there will still remain hundreds of thousands of GIs who will occupy for a long time strategic zones in South Viet Nam to provide backing for the puppet army and administration, and "support" for the Saigon troops to massacre our fellow-countrymen. Therefore, Nixon's plan to "Vietnamize" the war is but a scheme to prolong the war and at the same time US occupation of South Viet Nam.

To step up "pacification" means to use puppet troops for continual mopping-up operations and barbarous massacres of the population, to attack bases in the hope of destroying the guerilla and resistance forces, to "screen" the population and often relocate them; to re-impose Saigon's grip upon the countryside, to nibble at the liberated zone, extend the areas controlled by the Americans and their puppets, set up a foothold for the puppet administration and enable it to grab populous and rich areas to feed the war.

Thus, to "Vietnamize" the war does not mean to end it as the Nixon administration has often declared, but to carry on the US aggressive war in Viet Nam with the puppet

army and an important part of the US troops, to turn the South of our country into an American military base and neo-colony to perpetuate the division of Viet Nam.

The plan to "Vietnamize" the war is clearly a component of Nixon's "new doctrine" concerning Asia, the aim of which is "to pit Asians against Asians" for the profit of the neo-colonialist policy and global strategy of the US imperialists.

Applying this doctrine to Viet Nam's neighbouring countries in Indochina, the Nixon administration is stepping up "the special war" in Laos, using Meo troops and those of the Lao rightist faction to encroach upon the Lao liberated zone, sending B.52s to bomb areas controlled by the Lao Patriotic Front, bringing Thai troops into Laos and turning this country into a US neo-colony and military base.

In Cambodia, the Americans used the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak reactionaries to stage a coup d'état against Samdech Head of State Norodom Sihanouk, destroying the independence, peace and neutrality of the Kingdom of Cambodia, turning this country into a US neo-colony and military base and bringing about a criminal collusion between Washington and its Saigon and Phnom Penh lackeys to oppose the patriotic resistance of the Vietnamese people.

The putschists in Cambodia began their national betrayal with the sacking of the Viet Nam embassy. At present, they are savagely terrorizing and massacring Vietnamese residents, who have been earning an honest living in Cambodia. This fascist scheme of the US imperialists and their stooges to arouse racial hatred is aimed at implementing the American policy of pitting Indochinese against Indochinese, diverting the spearhead of the Khmer people's struggle (now aimed at the putschists) and turning it against the Vietnamese

people, and preparing to drive the Vietnamese residents to South Viet Nam to serve as cannon fodder for the Americans.

The entire Vietnamese people energetically condemn the Lon Nol - Sirik Matak clique's barbarous policy of terrorizing the Vietnamese residents. They urgently call on the governments and peoples of the fraternal socialist countries, the national countries and the peace - and justice-loving people the world over to use every form of struggle and take every necessary measure to check their bloody hands in a timely way and compel them to abide by international law regarding the treatment of foreign residents.

No savage and cruel action has ever saved oppressors of the people once they are condemned by history. By perpetuating ever more odious crimes, they only dig their own graves deeper. The Lon Nol - Sirik Matak butchers will have to bear the incalculable consequences of their acts.

The cynical moves of the US imperialists in Laos and Cambodia are precisely aimed at turning these two countries into links of the US strategic system in Southeast Asia while encircling and isolating the resistance of the Vietnamese people, and creating favourable conditions for the United States to carry out their plan to "Vietnamize" the Viet Nam war.

By their "Vietnamization" plan and their frenzied acts in Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, the US imperialists hope to create a "position of strength" from which to dictate their terms to the Vietnamese people at the Paris Conference. But they will get nowhere. Clearly the Nixon administration has been using the Paris Conference as a screen for its plan to "Vietnamize" the war. There lies the cause of the standstill and deadlock at the conference.

The machiavellian machinations of the US imperialists against Viet Nam and Indochina betray a passive character on the strategic plane, being conceived in a posture of weakness and defeat and fraught with insolvable contradictions. They arouse increasing opposition from the peoples of Viet Nam, Indochina, the United States and the world. They have met with initial setback and are bound to fail completely.

The solution to end the war and restore peace in Viet Nam has been clearly set forth in the four points of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the ten points of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. *The crux of the matter is that the United States must completely, rapidly and unconditionally withdraw all US and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and let the Vietnamese people settle their internal affairs by themselves, without foreign interference.*

Obdurately carrying on their "Vietnamization" plan, the US imperialists have turned down all the fair and reasonable proposals put forward by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. The entire Vietnamese people are duty-bound to *constantly heighten their vigilance, strengthen their unity, persevere in and push ahead their patriotic resistance against US aggression, completely smash the plan to "Vietnamize" the war and all other machinations of the US imperialists against Viet Nam.*

The powerful attacks which are taking place on the South Viet Nam battlefields show that our people have the

required determination and strength to defeat the US aggressors, liberate the South, defend the North and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the country.

The resolute struggle waged by the workers and students in the South eloquently prove the bitter resentment of the population in the areas under temporary puppet control against the traitorous Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique.

The frenzied acts of the US imperialists who have stepped up their "Vietnamization" of the war in Viet Nam, escalated the war in Laos and overthrown the Government of Cambodia all the more expose them as the three Indochinese peoples' most cruel and dangerous enemy. The already united Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao peoples are strengthening their unity even more, setting up a united front of the Indochinese peoples[1] against the US imperialists and their lackeys to reconquer and safeguard their independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and ensure for each country development in the way of its choice. The US imperialists want to sow division among the Indochinese peoples and pit Indochinese against Indochinese, but the latter *will close their ranks even further to wipe out the common enemy — US imperialism. Whoever sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind!*

The Vietnamese people warmly hail the recent resounding victories of the Lao people in the Plain of Jars and resolutely support their resistance against the US imperialist aggressors and their lackeys to safeguard their fundamental national rights. The Vietnamese people fully support the political

1. The Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples was held on April 24, 1970.

solution in five points of the Lao Patriotic Front aimed at peacefully solving the Lao problem on the basis of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos and the concrete situation in this country at present.

The Vietnamese people fully support the proclamation in five points dated March 23, 1970, of Samdech Head of State Norodom Sihanouk; they warmly hail and unreservedly support the just struggle of the Khmer people against the US imperialists and their lackeys, the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique, in order to build an independent, free, peaceful, neutral and prosperous Cambodia. True to their word, the Vietnamese people pledge to respect Cambodia's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity within her present borders.

The Vietnamese people warmly hail the American progressive people who recently turned out en masse in the streets to demand that the warlike Nixon administration end its aggressive war against Viet Nam, immediately withdraw all US troops from South Viet Nam, Laos, from the Indochinese peninsula, cut military spending and use the money thus saved to solve social problems in a way beneficial to the American people.

Facts have shown that the just struggle of the Vietnamese people, of the three Indochinese peoples against US aggression constitutes an important part of the struggle of the world's peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress. That is why the latter warmly hail and support the struggle of the Vietnamese people in particular, of the Indochinese peoples in general. On this occasion, on behalf of the Vietnamese people, the Viet Nam Workers' Party

and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, I convey my sincere thanks to the governments and peoples of the fraternal socialist countries, the national countries and peace-and justice-loving people the world over, including progressive American people, who have extended their sympathy, support and assistance to our patriotic resistance against US aggression.

President Ho Chi Minh said: "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." Convinced that "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom", and resolved to "do everything to defeat the US aggressors", our entire people, united as one man and determined to act upon President Ho Chi Minh's Testament, will step up and persevere in their patriotic resistance against US aggression until total victory.

Our people's patriotic resistance against US aggression has won and is winning great and resounding successes. The North has recorded all-round achievements of utmost importance which testify to the overwhelming superiority of socialism, while ceaselessly fulfilling its role as the "great rear area" toward the "great front", the South.

At present, while pushing ahead, together with their fellow-countrymen throughout the land, their resistance against US aggression until total victory, our people in the North must exert all-out efforts to overcome the sequels of the war of destruction and gradually re-adapt our economic activities to the new situation; impel the revolution in the relations of production, the scientific and technical revolution,

and the ideological and cultural revolution; carry on the building of the material and technical bases of socialism, step by step improve the people's living conditions, strengthen our country's economic and military potential, consolidate our rear base, heighten our revolutionary vigilance, stand ready to smash all new schemes and acts of the US imperialists against the North and continue to fulfil our duty toward the heroic "great front."

In the immediate future, our people must strive to fulfil the 1970 State Plan. The main orientation of this plan is to boost agricultural production and the making of consumer goods. In agriculture, we concentrate on the development of cereals and other foodstuffs and some industrial crops for processing and export, step up animal husbandry, fishing and forestry. Light industry, food industry, small industry and handicrafts must above all intensify the production of commodities for the people's consumption. Meanwhile, particular attention must be paid to preferential sectors of heavy industry such as coal, electricity, mechanical engineering, fertilizer, cement, timber; to the development of communications and transport and capital construction, in order to efficiently serve the orientation of the above-mentioned plan, while strengthening a step further the material and technical bases of socialism in the North.

To fulfil the State Plan, we must do our best to mobilize the social labour force and organize patriotic emulation under the slogan: "to launch the two thrusts to defeat the Americans" in order to attain the "three peaks" [1] in industry, the

1. High productivity, good quality, great economy.

"three goals in agriculture" [1] etc.. That is the decisive measure to develop production and increase accumulation, heal the wounds left by the US war of destruction and prepare for a new upsurge of the socialist economy in the North.

In industry, construction and in administrative and specialized services, we must "work in a revolutionary way," [2] i.e. with a freely accepted voluntary discipline, *ensure the required number of work-days and work-hours, make the best use of the existing material and technical bases, while trying our utmost to renovate technique, rationalize production, improve the work in all services and raise labour productivity.*

In the countryside, in correlation with the study and application of the Rules for Agricultural Co-operatives and with the continued rectification of errors in the implementation of the "three contractual targets" [3] and in the management of collectivized lands, we must *promote democracy, enhance the collective mastery of the co-op membership as a whole, fire their revolutionary ardour and raise their productivity* in order to extend the sector in which the three goals set for agriculture are attained, improve the people's living conditions and meet the considerable requirements of the struggle against US aggression and those of socialist construction.

Parallel with the mobilization of labour force, we must *improve organization,* streamline the Party and State apparatus

1. 5 tons of paddy, 2 pigs, and one man-year per cultivated hectare.

2. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1967, III, p. 206.

3. This practice consists in assigning to each production brigade in a cooperative a task with three contractual targets in keeping with the acreage at its disposal : yield per hectare, number of work-days, production costs. This applies either to a production campaign or a whole year. *(Ed.)*

and make it more efficient; at the same time, we must strengthen and *renovate economic management,* work out strict regulations in order to mobilize and fully use all our existing equipment and materials according to set norms and with practical economic efficiency. We must display diligence and thrift in building socialism, struggle against embezzlement, waste and bureaucracy.

To foster the labour force and ensure constant high productivity and high yields, we have to better *organize the people's life.*

To mobilize the labour force in order to fulfil the State Plan, we must seek to perfect step by step the *policies and regulations* aimed at stimulating production, raising productivity, improving the quality of products and cutting down production costs. These are important economic levers. At the same time, we must perform *ideological work* so that everybody can understand the situation and the tasks at hand, realize the favourable conditions, which constitute the keynote, and also the difficulties to be resolutely overcome, enhance his revolutionary ardour, carry out production and work with enthusiasm, high productivity and high efficiency.

We must unceasingly *strengthen and consolidate national defence, keep order and security,* resolutely punish and patiently re-educate the delinquents, hooligans, etc..

The Party and its judicious leadership constitute the determining factor of all the successes of the revolution in our country. The situation and tasks at hand require great efforts from our entire Party and people. Therefore we must unceasingly consolidate the Party. It rests with the entire Party to constantly build up its militant strength, *its unity and*

one-mindedness, reinforce its ties with the masses, make itself pure and strong to lead our patriotic resistance against US aggression to complete victory and our socialist construction to success.

To this end we must *raise the quality of Party members* so that "each cadre, each Party member must be deeply imbued with *revolutionary morality*, show industry, thrift, integrity, uprightness, total dedication to the public interest and complete selflessness", "prove worthy of his role as the leader and very loyal servant of the people." [1]

Political education for cadres and Party members must be further improved by linking theory with practice, and its contents must include three aspects : Marxist-Leninist theory, Party line and policy, and revolutionary morality.

At the same time, to express our gratitude to President Ho Chi Minh and to increase the Party's militant strength, we must satisfactorily accomplish the task of *admitting new Party members of the Ho Chi Minh batch.*

This batch must show especially good quality to help raise the standard of Party members and set an example for future admissions. To successfully conduct the movement to raise the quality of Party members and admit new members of the Ho Chi Minh batch is to *strengthen the class and vanguard character of the Party*, to make it even worthier of our heroic people's confidence and love, of being a Leninist party, the party of President Ho Chi Minh.

*
* *

1. President Ho Chi Minh's Testament.

Forever grateful to the great Lenin, let our entire Party, people and armed forces *strengthen their unity, strive to brilliantly accomplish the above-mentioned tasks, heighten their revolutionary ardour, energetically struggle to carry on President Ho Chi Minh's work, faithfully act upon his sacred testament and fulfil his last wishes : "To build a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, and contribute a worthy part to the world revolutionary cause."*

Long live Lenin, the genial leader of the working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world, the great teacher of proletarian revolution !

Long live Presdient Ho Chi Minh, the best disciple of Lenin in Viet Nam !

Long live the Viet Nam Workers' Party, the organizer of all the victories of the Vietnamese people !

Let our entire people and armed forces advance on the impetus of their victories and completely defeat the US aggressors and their stooges !

Let us wholeheartedly engage in patriotic emulation to successfully build socialism in the North !

Long live a peaceful, united, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam !

ON THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT AT PRESENT

Speech at the Third Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, held in Hanoi in December 1971.

This Third Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front is held at a time when our people throughout the country are being elated at the resounding victories on the Indochinese battlefields and the great achievements in socialist construction in the North.

You comrades delegates have heard and discussed the important political report by the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and the letter of greetings by the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party. You have seen that the Viet Nam Fatherland Front is confronted with very heavy but very glorious tasks : to further strengthen the all-people great unity, mobilize the forces of the entire people, push ahead the resistance war against US aggression until complete victory, liberate the South, defend and build the socialist North, proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, achieve a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, and contribute a worthy share to the revolutionary cause of the world's peoples.

This Congress is convened 41 years after President Ho Chi Minh founded the vanguard Party of the Vietnamese revolution (the Indochinese Communist Party) and the Viet Nam United Front Against Imperialism (the Anti-Imperialism League) and 30 years after he founded the Viet Minh Front. All his life, President Ho Chi Minh struggled for the independence and reunification of the Fatherland but he passed away before seeing the South of our country completely

liberated and our Fatherland reunified! In boundless regret for and gratitude to him, we pledge to do our utmost to materialize his sacred Testament and carry on his great endeavours.

On the occasion of this Third Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, I would like to express some views on the Front and its works in the present stage of our revolution.

I. TO MOBILIZE AND UNITE ALL ANTI-US FORCES IN THE COUNTRY AND THE WORLD TO DEFEAT THE US AGGRESSORS

Our people throughout the country are resisting US aggression and building socialism in the North, contributing thereby to defending the socialist camp, stimulating the revolutionary movement of the people of other countries, and safeguarding peace.

Our people's resistance is aimed not only at national but also at international goals. The US war of aggression in Viet Nam is intended to materialize the global strategy of US imperialism — the enemy number one of mankind. The Vietnamese revolution is an inseparable part of the world revolution.

Since World War Two, *US imperialism has been carrying out an extremely reactionary, wicked and perfidious global strategy* aimed at destroying the socialist system, suppressing the international communist and workers' movement, the national liberation movement and the democratic movement, wrecking peace, realizing US-type neo-colonialism, and preparing for a new world war to seize world hegemony.

With regard to socialist countries, US imperialism has tried by all ways and means to encircle, divide and attack them militarily on a regional scale (as is the case of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam), foment counter-revolutionary rebellions (as was the case of Hungary), resort to psychological and espionage warfare and bring about peaceful evolution, in an attempt to restore capitalism there.

With regard to nationalist countries, it applies a policy of economic, cultural and military aid to make inroads there in all spheres and gradually convert them into its new-type colonies, or lend a hand to the local reactionaries — its henchmen — in staging rebellions and coups d'état to put in power pro-US elements willing to pursue a policy dependent on the US.

With regard to colonies and dependencies, in the case of new-type colonies or dependencies of the US, it carries out downright repression of all national and democratic movements of the people. In the case of colonies or dependencies of other imperialist powers, the US seeks through political inroads and economic aid to gradually turn them into neo-colonies of its own.

With regard to other capitalist countries, the US makes big investments to exploit the labouring people, applies a policy of competition, restriction and domination and provides economic, scientific and technical aid to draw them into its orbit.

US imperialism is the most bellicose imperialism. For that reason, we must specifically study the military aspect of its global strategy.

Since World War Two, US imperialism has set up aggressive military alliances in Europe (NATO), Asia (SEATO), the Middle and Near East (CENTO) etc., built thousands of military bases in foreign countries and set up a multi-ringed defence system to encircle the socialist camp and prevent the spread of the movement for national independence, speeded up the arms race, manufactured modern weapons including nuclear arms ; devised three different types of war : special war, limited war and total war ; and waged special and limited wars, while preparing for a total war which is also a nuclear show-down.

To prepare and wage a new world war, the US has revived West German revanchist militarism and Japanese militarism and uses them as its shock forces ; it has given aid to the reactionary rulers in Israel to provoke war according to its plan in the Middle and Near East.

During the past 25 years, US imperialism has readjusted its global strategy four times :

a) 1945-1950 : It applied the Truman strategy which consisted in using nuclear blackmail against the world's peoples, checking and repulsing the communist movement, chiefly to defend Western Europe, an old bulwark of capitalism. The US, however, failed to dam up the revolutionary movement in Eastern Europe, North Korea, Viet Nam and China.

b) 1950-1960 : the period of the "cold war" in which US imperialism carried out Eisenhower's strategy of "massive retaliation". With its nuclear superiority, US imperialism applied a foreign policy known as "brinkmanship" to browbeat the socialist camp and other countries, launched the arms race, and deployed its military and economic forces

on a world scale. Also during this period, the US gave military aid to the French colonialists in their aggression against Viet Nam, together with other countries in its camp, triggered the Korean war and took military adventures against Arab countries in the Middle and Near East ; at the same time, it put into practice the so-called "strategy of freeing imprisoned countries" in Eastern Europe and engineered the counter-revolutionary putsch in Hungary (1956).

c) 1961-1968 : US imperialism applied Kennedy's "strategy for peace". Militarily it carried out the "flexible response" strategy which later was complemented by Johnson's "escalation" strategy. By this time, as the Soviet Union had gained nuclear balance with the US, the latter sought a temporary detente with the Soviet Union, it tried to fully exploit the divergence of line within the socialist camp and in the international communist and workers' movement, especially between the Soviet Union and China ; it launched a special war and then a limited war in Viet Nam, instigated Israel to wage a war of aggression against a number of Arab countries, mainly against the United Arab Republic (1967). But the biggest disadvantage for the US in this period was *the failure of its war of aggression against Viet Nam*, a failure that has weakened US imperialism, lowered its prestige, and upset the global strategy of US imperialism.

d) Since 1969 : US imperialism has been implementing the "Nixon doctrine" which is precisely the global strategy of US imperialism under the Nixon administration. It was born at a time when the world balance of forces between revolution and counter-revolution has changed in favour of revolution. In spite of the dissension among socialist countries,

the socialist system has continued to strengthen and consolidate and to exert a decisive effect on the trend of development of human society. The colonial system of imperialism continues its process of disintegration under the crushing blows of the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The struggle of the working class and the democratic movement in capitalist countries continue developing. More than ever before, the US, the ring-leader of imperialism, has been weakened militarily and isolated politically. US imperialism and the other imperialist powers are in the throes of an economic and monetary crisis. The general crisis of capitalism has further aggravated. The contradictions between the US and the other imperialist powers and among the imperialist powers themselves have sharpened day by day.

In such an unfavourable conjuncture, Nixon cannot but readjust the US global strategy. Politically, he has dished up the so-called "new strategy for peace". Militarily, he applies the "strategy of realistic deterrence". Nixon's aim is to reduce US "international commitments" so as to lighten the military and economic burden of the US, stabilize the situation at home and appease the American people, increase its forces to regain a position of strength; to continue the drive for world domination, preserve US interests in the various continents while continuing to play its role of international gendarme toward the revolutionary movement of the people in various countries.

The essence of Nixon's strategy is:

1. To stabilize and increase the US economic and military "strength" to achieve some degree of superiority over the

socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, to use this strength to intimidate and win over a number of countries or to wage wars at one place or another.

2. To settle its conflicts and contradictions with its allies so as to "share responsibility" with them, use those countries as a shock force for the US in specific regions, build up satellite countries as stooges to oppose and sabotage the revolutionary movement of the world's peoples, use other peoples' blood to make war in its own interests.

3. On this basis, it is "ready to negotiate" with a number of countries, especially with the Soviet Union and China, with a view to "deterring" and "containing" these two biggest socialist countries, makes the fullest use of the contradictions between these two countries and sows discord among the socialist countries in general in a bid to create favourable conditions for the US, strives for "detente" among the big powers and continues to bully smaller nations.

The Nixon doctrine applied to Asia has become Nixon's "new doctrine on Asia". Relying on the Asian and Pacific Organization (ASPAC) with Japan as the core, this new doctrine is intended to suppress the national and democratic movement in Asia and dam up the spread of socialism to other countries in this region.

Applying his "new doctrine on Asia" to Viet Nam and Indochina, Nixon has worked out the policy of "Vietnamization of the war" and Indochinization of the war. The essence of this doctrine and policy is to make Vietnamese fight Vietnamese, Indochinese fight Indochinese and Asians fight Asians with US bombs, shells and dollars and under the command of the US militarists.

"Vietnamization of the war" obviously is a perfidious move *to prolong and widen the war, not to end it.* "Vietnamization of the war" or "de-Americanization of the war" *in no ways means that the US will withdraw all its troops from South Viet Nam. Instead it will leave behind a residual force for long-term occupation of a number of military bases* to be used as bridgeheads for helping the Saigon puppet army to continue its criminal persecution and massacre of our people and *turn South Viet Nam into a US neo-colony and military base.*

US imperialism is using the Viet Nam and Indochina battlefields as a testing ground for the Nixon doctrine and for various military strategies, tactics and modern weapons of the US with a view to preparing a new world shambles.

What remarks does the above analysis lead us to :

1. US imperialism is the biggest international exploiter, the most bellicose imperialist, the international gendarme, the enemy number one and the common enemy of our people and of mankind as a whole. The spearhead of the world revolution therefore should be directed at US imperialism, and nowhere else.

2. US imperialism's readjustments of its global strategy through the different periods have invariably been aimed at gaining world domination and shown at the same time that US imperialism is getting more and more passive and is weakening. The socialist system and the revolutionary movement of the world's peoples have strengthened, forcing the US to pull back from the offensive to the defensive position. Therefore, the global strategy of US imperialism is fraught with ever more acute contradictions between its demands

and capabilities. US imperialism is not so strong as some people believe it to be. Its forces should not be overestimated.

3. The Nixon doctrine was born at a time when the Soviet Union and China had developed nuclear weapons, while US imperialism had long lost its nuclear monopoly. The US has been sustaining bitter setbacks in Viet Nam, its prestige has declined and its forces have dwindled. It is facing a deep economic and monetary crisis and political isolation. That is why that doctrine contains factors of defeat and is highly deceptive. To oppose that doctrine by all means is an important task of the working class and people around the world.

4. The nature of US imperialism remains unchanged. It is still very bellicose, adamant and perfidious. In its passive and weakening position, it is seeking by devious ways to divide the socialist camp, sabotage the world revolution, undermine peace and attain world hegemony. Therefore the people of our camp and the people of the world as a whole should always remain vigilant, strengthen unity and be ready for united actions and foil by every means all perfidious plots and adventurous plans of US imperialism.

5. Viet Nam and Indochina as a whole have now become the focus of the basic contradictions of human society*.

---

* These contradictions are :

1. Contradiction between the socialist and the imperialist camps.
2. Contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries ;
3. Contradiction between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and colonialism on the other.
4. Contradiction between imperialism and imperialism, between one monopoly capitalist group and another in the imperialist countries.

(Resolution of the Ninth Session of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, 1963).

The anti-US resistance war of the Vietnamese people and the other Indochinese peoples is not only a test of strength between our people and the other Indochinese peoples on the one hand, and US imperialism and its lackeys on the other, but also a struggle between the socialist countries and the bellicose imperialists, between the national liberation forces and the aggressive imperialist forces, between the peace-loving forces and the war-mongering forces headed by US imperialism.

6. The fight against US aggression, for national salvation of the Vietnamese and the other Indochinese peoples not only is aimed at defending the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese and the other Indochinese peoples, but also has a great international significance since it contributes positively to foiling the counter-revolutionary global strategy of US imperialism, defeating the very perfidious "Nixon doctrine", defending the socialist system at the cost of our blood, stimulating the national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania, and safeguarding peace and democracy in the world.

*
* *

In the face of such a cruel and crafty enemy as aggressive US imperialism, what should we the Vietnamese people do ? We must struggle in all forms, military, political, and diplomatic, to drive the aggressors out of our country.

On the military front, our people and people's armed forces must wipe out much more live forces of the US and its stooges, chiefly their strategic mobile forces. At the same

time, we must smash their "rural pacification" plan, foil their policies of scraping up manpower and material resources for "Vietnamization", destroy "strategic hamlets" and their coercive system as a whole ; wipe out, decimate and disband the enemy "territorial forces", expand the liberated areas, maintain and develop the resistance bases of our people.

Our army and people in the North must always keep high vigilance, organize well civil defence, stand ready to fight and fight well with the resolve to smash all military adventures of the US that violate the sovereignty and security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

On the political front, our countrymen in the South must mobilize and rally all forces standing for peace, independence and neutrality, mainly in the cities, combine various forms of struggle to achieve united actions, demand the rapid and total withdrawal of US troops from South Viet Nam and the ouster of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration, protest against fraudulent elections, demand the people's rights to life and democracy, protest against the depraved culture of the US and urge the restoration of peace, etc. The rising political struggle in the urban centres will have the effect of shaking the foothold of the enemy right in his lair and will be an excellent co-ordination with the armed struggle of our entire nation.

On the diplomatic front, our people warmly support the seven-point stand of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam set forth at the four-party conference in Paris on July 1, 1971. The armed and political struggles of the popular masses at home must create a firm basis for the diplomatic struggle. The latter

must highlight our people's just goals, promptly lay bare all manœuvres and acts of the enemy and their deceitful, demagogic contentions, point to the certainty of our victory and the enemy's failure, contribute to winning the sympathy, support and assistance of the world's peoples for the anti-US patriotic war of our nation.

To lead our struggle on all these three fronts to ever greater successes and ultimate total victory, an important thing is *to mobilize and rally forces*. We advocate the setting up of a three-layered united front to encircle and defeat the US imperialist aggressors.

1. In Viet Nam

Our country is victim of direct aggression by the US imperialists. To resist the US and save the country is the duty of the entire Vietnamese people and the entire Vietnamese nation.

To persevere in and step up our resistance till complete victory, we stand for the union of our entire people in *a national united front against US aggression* to struggle on three fronts : military, political and diplomatic, in order to liberate the South, defend and build the socialist North, proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland and build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, thus making a worthy contribution to the revolutionary pursuits of the world's peoples. In furtherance of their policy of "Vietnamizing" the war, the US imperialists are using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese with a view to turning South Viet Nam into a new-type colony and military base of the US. Therefore, the entire

Vietnamese people must unite millions as one, persevere in and step up the resistance, and smash that vicious scheme of the US.

At present, our country is temporarily divided into two zones under two different political and social systems. The South itself has two different zones, one under the US neo-colonialist regime and the other (the liberated zone) under the people's democratic regime.

The people in both South and North Viet Nam must resist US aggression and save their country. However, besides this common mission each zone has its own strategic revolutionary task suited to its conditions. The North is carrying out the socialist revolution including socialist transformation and socialist construction. The South is waging a people's national democratic revolution to sweep away the US imperialist aggressors, topple their hirelings, the pro-US capitalist compradors and feudal landlords, and win back national independence and democracy for the people.

Therefore each zone has its own front. The South in particular, has not one but several fronts. The North has the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* with its own programme. The South has the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation* with its own programme, and also the *Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces* with its appropriate programme to rally and unite people of various strata in the urban centres under the Alliance's responsibility.

The three programmes differ from one another but have this in common, they aim to unite the entire people, resist the US aggression, and win independence and reunification of the Fatherland.

2. In Indochina

Under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations the US imperialists committed aggression not only in Viet Nam but also in Laos. Under the Nixon administration, the US imperialists have taken another step by widening the war to Cambodia. The three Indochinese countries have thus become one battlefield. The Nixon administration is carrying out the policy of "Indochinizing" the war by using Indochinese to fight Indochinese in an attempt to turn this entire peninsula into a new-type colony and military base of the US.

The flame of people's war is burning throughout Indochina. The three fraternal peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, united and of one mind, are driving the US aggressors out of Indochina, overthrowing the puppet administration, henchmen of the US, in their countries to wrest back and defend their sacred national rights. The Joint Declaration of the Indochinese Peoples' Summit Conference (April 24, 1970) pointed out :

"At this historic moment, the Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples earnestly calls on the three peoples to strengthen their solidarity and wage a heroic and tenacious fight, to overcome all hardships and accept all sacrifices with the firm resolve to defeat the US imperialists and their agents, to defend their sacred national rights, to defend the fundamental principles of the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Agreements so as to make Indochina a truly independent and peaceful area, in accordance with the aspirations of the three peoples mined not to lose their independence, not to be enslaved ! " [1]

To defeat the US aggressors, the peoples of the three Indochinese countries assist and respect one another.

During the fight against the US and its henchmen as well as after their total victory, the people of each country will build their Fatherland according to their own will.

To strengthen and broaden the united front of the Indochinese peoples against the US imperialists and their henchmen, the people of each country must strive for the consolidation and broadening of their own front : the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* in the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, *the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation* and the *Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces* in the Republic of South Viet Nam, the *Lao Patriotic Front* in Laos and the *National United Front of Kampuchea* in Cambodia. All these organizations are members of the *United Front of the Indochinese Peoples against the US imperialist aggressors.*

3. In the world

It is necessary to rally all forces in the world against the US imperialists. We are elated to note that over the recent years a *World Peoples' Front to support the Vietnamese and the other Indochinese peoples against the US imperialist aggressors* has actually been taking shape. This is a type of front for united actions with concrete and limited objectives.

Its targets are the US imperialist aggressors and their henchmen, the cliques of reactionaries.

Its goal of struggle is to foil the aggressive and war-seeking policy of the US imperialists, and defend national independence and world peace.

The forces of peace, national independence, democracy and social progress have joined and are joining that front in increasing numbers. If the three torrential currents of the world revolution — the great force of the socialist countries, the movement for national liberation in the Asian, African and Latin American countries and the movement of the working class and other labouring people in the capitalist countries, keep pouring into the great river which is the above-described World Front, then they can sweep away both the US aggressors and their flunkeys.

Relying on the core forces and firmly grasping the goal of struggle that is to defend national independence and peace, the World People's Front against the US aggressors should unite any force that can be united, win over any force that can be won over, split the imperialist ranks to a high degree, isolate the US imperialists and their henchmen, and spearhead the struggle at the cruellest enemy, US imperialism.

To support the Vietnamese and the other Indochinese peoples' patriotic war against the US has become the *key problem* in the world peoples' struggle against the US aggressors. The world's peoples are centering their efforts on this question *to take united actions against the US imperialists* in very varied forms of struggle, from low to high, from local to global, from separate sections, branches, countries and regions (such as the Asian, African, and Latin American... regions) to the whole world.

The United Front of the Indochinese peoples against the US aggressors and the World Peoples' Front in support of

the Vietnamese people against the US imperialists are important reinforcements to our people's resistance against US aggression, for national salvation.

We take this opportunity to express the heartfelt thanks of the Vietnamese people and the Viet Nam Fatherland Front to the peoples of the fraternal socialist countries, the Lao people, the Khmer people and the peoples in the rest of the world, including the progressive people in the United States, for their sympathy with and their great support and assistance to our people's patriotic war against US aggression.

In short, the anti-US National United Front in Viet Nam, the anti-US United Front of the Indochinese peoples, and the World Peoples' Front against US imperialism, to defend national independence and peace, are three layers of a front encircling and defeating aggressive US imperialism. With the formation of such a three-layered front, the US aggressors will be hemmed in by ring after ring of steel net and cannot escape total failure.

II. ROLE AND CHARACTER OF THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT IN THE PRESENT STAGE OF THE REVOLUTION

The victory of the Vietnamese revolution over the past 40 years has been decided by many factors, first and foremost, the leadership of a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party. Other factors include the worker-peasant alliance, the National United Front against imperialism, the people's armed forces, international solidarity, etc.

Never in the history of the Vietnamese revolution since 1930 has there been a period without a national united front

organization. The glorious success of the August 1945 Revolution which gave birth to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and opened an era of national independence, freedom and happiness, is associated with the *Viet Minh Front*. The Viet Minh was credited with the continuation of the revolutionary work prepared by the *Anti-Imperialist League* (1930 - 1936) and the *Indochinese Democratic Front* (1936 - 1939). Indeed, the success of the August Revolution would have been impossible without two big rehearsals that were the Nghe-Tinh Soviet movement (1930 - 1931) and the democratic movement (1936 - 1939) in which the Anti-imperialist League and the Indochinese Democratic Front successively played their important role. Carrying on the revolutionary work of the Viet Minh Front, the *Lien Viet Front* contributed to bringing the resistance war against the French colonialists to great victory. Furthering the work of the Lien Viet, the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* founded in September 1955 set to itself the noble mission of uniting the people of all strata in liberated North Viet Nam to constitute a prop for the people's democratic power to successfully promote the socialist revolution in North Viet Nam and together with the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, to bring the patriotic war against US aggression to complete victory. Born and growing up in the revolutionary storm, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation has been mobilizing the people of all strata, organizing the patriotic resistance war against US aggression and building the revolutionary power in the liberated areas of South Viet Nam.

It is clear that the National United Front against imperialism has played an extremely important role in the

revolutionary history of our country. This is *one of the factors of victory of the revolution, an indispensable political weapon* for our people to bring into play their combined strength in the struggle against the enemy of the nation to conquer independence, freedom, and build a new life.

As is well known, Viet Nam is neither a big nor a populated country. Through thousands of years of glorious history, our people have had to fight continually against foreign aggression for survival and development. Hence their inborn sense of unity. Many a time, in face of foreign invasion our people have put aside class antagonisms at home to concentrate on checking and driving out the aggressors.

In the process of their protracted struggle, *unity in combat has become a very precious and very solid tradition of our people.*

In invading our country, the imperialists have trampled upon our land and oppressed our entire people. But a people who have a history of over four thousand years of building and defending their country in extremely hard and difficult conditions, who deeply realize what independence and freedom mean and what the shame of slavery is, who deeply know that "unity means life and division means death", have fought shoulder to shoulder, millions as one, for their independence and freedom, "determined not to lose their independence, not to be enslaved!" [1]

Not only did the rotten and outdated feudal regime ruthlessly oppress and exploit our peasants, it also gravely

(1) Ho Chi Minh : Appeal for Nation-Wide Resistance (December 20, 1946).

hindered the evolution of our nation. Thus it became the common enemy of our entire nation, and not our peasants alone. When they invaded our country, the French imperialists closely colluded with a section of the feudal landlord class, then with all the feudal landlords whom they relied on as a prop for their rule. Our people were bent under the double yoke of imperialist and feudalist oppression and exploitation. *This was an objective basis for a broad National United Front against the imperialist aggressors and their henchmen, the traitors.*

At present, in South Viet Nam the US imperialists and their lackeys, the most reactionary capitalist compradors and feudal landlords represented by Nguyen Van Thieu, with their extremely destructive and fierce war against our people, have strongly roused the national spirit of our people of all strata including those functionaries of the puppet administration who are in touch with the popular masses and still retain some conscience as citizens of an independent country. At the end of their tether, the more frenziedly the US - Thieu react, the greater possibility will be created for the broadening of the National United Front or for broad united action of all the social forces, political parties, groups and individuals who have more or less contradictions with the US imperialist aggressors and their flunkeys.

To turn the above-mentioned possibility into reality, and ensure a broad rally of social classes, strata of people into the National United Front, the decisive factor is *to secure the leadership of the working class on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance.*

That the *working class leads the Front* is an objective necessity of the revolution in our country and in many other countries in the present era. It is neither by any wishful thinking that the history of the Vietnamese revolution has entrusted the working class of our country with the mission of leading the people's national democratic revolution. We all know the question of nation and democracy always has a specific class content. Only the class *that best represents the national and democratic interests of the popular masses* can lead the people's national democratic revolution and the National Democratic United Front.

As evidenced by world history, in its nascent stage within the feudal society, the bourgeoisie represented the national and democratic interests of the popular masses. It was then the only class capable of leading the revolution to overthrow the feudal regime, achieve national unity and bourgeois democracy, and to head an anti-feudal front rallying all social classes and strata of the people. This was borne out by the bourgeois democratic revolution in France at the end of the 18th century.

But with the advent of imperialism and especially after the Russian October Revolution which opened a new era in human history, the era of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, the situation has completely changed. *The working class has become the central figure of the new era.* It is the most representative class of the national and democratic interests, the only class able to lead the national democratic revolution to complete victory. Thus, only the working class can lead the National United Front

against the imperialists and their stooges. The victory of the former bourgeois democratic revolution led by the bourgeoisie meant victory of capitalism over the feudal regime, victory of bourgeois nationalism and bourgeois democracy. In the present era, the victory of a people's national democratic revolution led by the working class means not only victory of a nation over imperialism and victory of a people over the feudal regime, but also the initial victory of the working class over capitalism, the prerequisite of a socialist revolution, of the founding of a socialist nation and the formation of a socialist democracy. In the present era, only by advancing to socialism can a genuine and thorough solution be brought to the problems of national independence and democracy toward the people. *At present, national independence and people's democracy are inseparable from socialism.* The people's national democratic revolution is the prerequisite of the stage of transition to the socialist revolution. Therefore, right in the stage of the people's national democratic revolution, the National United Front must be led by the working class.

The working class leads the Front through its party. The working class party joins the Front on an equal footing with the friendly parties, and its leading role is recognized by the Front member organizations *on a voluntary basis.*

President Ho Chi Minh said :

"The Party cannot demand that the Front recognize its leadership. It must instead show itself to be the most loyal, active and dedicated member of the Front. It is only through daily struggle and work, and only after the masses have

recognized the correctness of the policies and the leading capacity of the Party, that the Party can win the leading position." [1]

In the people's national democratic revolution of our country, the National United Front carries out two strategic tasks: opposing both imperialism and feudalism. The front must decidedly rely on the *worker-peasant alliance* because the working class and peasantry constitute the overwhelming majority of the people and were, under the old regime, the most heavily oppressed and exploited and most revolutionary classes. Without a worker-peasant alliance it is impossible to rally the other strata of the people to form a broad National United Front. Indeed, the establishment of the worker-peasant alliance has enabled the working class to firmly grasp the leadership of the Front.

It is precisely because it could not solve the peasant question, which is the essence of the national question, and the land question, which is the basic content of the democratic revolution, that the Vietnamese national bourgeoisie could not unite with the peasantry who forms 90 per cent of the population, could not set up a National United Front and could not lead the national and democratic revolution. On the contrary, by correctly solving the peasant question, holding high the banner of *national independence* and of *land-to-the-tillers* in the people's national democratic revolution, the working class has succeeded in rallying broad masses of the peasantry, materializing the worker-peasant alliance, thereby creating the basis for a great national unity in the

1. Report to the Communist International (July 1939), signed Nguyen Ai Quoc.

National United Front. To develop and consolidate the National United Front essentially means to unceasingly strengthen the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the working class.

To stress the necessity of strengthening the worker-peasant alliance is not to deny the necessity of unceasingly broadening the Front. On the contrary, *the Front can only be broadened and strengthened when it relies firmly on the worker-peasant alliance.* On the other hand, to stress the necessity of broadening the Front is not to deny the necessity of strengthening the worker-peasant alliance, because *the more the Front is broadened and consolidated, the stronger the worker-peasant alliance is.*

***

Over the past ten years, our North Viet Nam society has undergone very deep changes. What are the most typical features of these changes? *They are the new economy, the new political regime and the new man that are being built and fostered step by step.* This is the combined result of three revolutions simultaneously carried out under the people's democratic dictatorship which assumes the task of proletarian dictatorship: the revolution in production relations, the technical revolution, and the ideological and cultural revolution, with the technical revolution as the kingpin. The aim of these revolutions is to take North Viet Nam to socialism, develop its economic and military potentials and secure total victory over the US aggressors and their henchmen.

Naturally, the above changes have been reflected in the National United Front, providing it with new elements:

First of all, fundamental changes have been recorded in *the basis and composition of the Front.* In the past, the basis of the Front was the alliance between the working class and the peasantry conceived as individual farmers.

At present, we have the same worker-peasant alliance, but it is the alliance between a mature and strong working class which is leading the socialist state and a collective peasantry organized in agricultural co-operatives. In the past, intellectuals adhering to the Front were but a minority left behind by the old society. At present, they form a fast developing and maturing contingent of new, socialist intellectuals of worker-peasant origin. In the past, the classes of exploiters were also represented in the Front. At present, all the classes of exploiters have been abolished; the former members of these classes are in the process of ideological remoulding and in fact many of them are directly engaged in productive labour.[1] In the early years of our National United Front, the majority and minority nationalities were united against imperialism. Within the nationalities, however, the feudal landlords colluded with the imperialists to sow enmity and mutual prejudice among the various nationalities. At present, in North Viet Nam, the imperialists and feudal landlords have been overthrown, the people of the various nationalities are bound together by mutual affection, have

1. Owing to shortcomings in economic management, socialist jurisdiction and political and ideological education, there are at present in North Viet Nam's countryside and towns some people engaged in exploitation under given forms, but in small extent and numbers.

discarded racial prejudices and united ever more closely within the Viet Nam Fatherland Front to fight the US imperialists and their flunkeys and build a new life.

With these changes, the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front* has, in essence, become a *front of manual and brain workers.*

Alongside the advance of the revolution, *the character of the Front has also undergone a new development.* In the past, the National United Front was an anti-imperialist and anti-feudalist front, a front of patriots and other people who stood for a democratic regime. Since North Viet Nam entered the period of transition to socialism, our National United Front has become *a patriotic and socialist-oriented front* (embracing the socialist production relations, socialist democracy, socialist labour and morality...). Love of country and socialism has become a noble ideal and profound sentiment of all the Viet Nam Fatherland Front members at present. During the resistance war against the French colonialists, the coalition character of the Front was shown in the negotiations to reconcile the interests of the various members of the Front on the basis of the fundamental interest — to achieve national independence and people's democracy. At present, the coalition character of the Front is manifested in the fact that its members hold discussions and negotiations with a view not only to winning and defending national independence but also to building the Homeland into a socialist country with modern industry and agriculture, advanced culture and science, on the basis of the collective ownership of the main production means and the socialist production relations which preclude the exploitation of man by man.

As the Front character changes, *the Front work is no longer exactly the same as in the past.* In the stage of the people's national democratic revolution in our country, the Front's line was mainly reflected in these problems : gaining back power and building a democratic republican regime, waging a resistance war against foreign aggression and carrying out land reform. In the present stage of the revolution, the Front's line is reflected not only in the policies regarding the people's democratic power which assumes the historical task of proletarian dictatorship and the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation but also in the transformation of the production relations, the technical revolution, the ideological and cultural revolution, the training and fostering of the new, socialist man... Without this understanding, the Front work — from uniting the various strata of the people, nationalities, religious communities, Buddhists and Catholics, to helping those in the former classes of exploiters to remould themselves into toiling people, from selecting and recommending apt candidates for election to the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels to mobilizing the masses of the people into patriotic émulation to fulfil the State plans — will not meet the requirements of the revolution in the present stage.

The National United Front is an organization of a double character : *it is a class coalition organization and at the same time a mass organization.* The Front comprises many political parties, mass organizations, classes, social strata and personalities. Among the Front members, oneness of mind is fundamental, but differences of opinion on specific problems of the revolution at given times and in given places are

unavoidable. To resolve divergences within its ranks, the Front bases its style of work on five principles : *negotiation, democracy, united action, mutual respect and sincere co-operation, and mutual assistance to progress together.* When facing problems concerning the nation's destiny or the people's life, the Front members frankly express their opinions, freely discuss them, and make outspoken criticism and self-criticism to help one another discern the right from the wrong, reach unanimity in appraising the situation then voluntarily join united actions in the spirit of the common programme. Coercion and authoritarianism are absolutely forbidden.

Over the recent years, due to profound changes as to the composition, character and work of the Front, its above-mentioned double character bears a new content : as oneness of mind increases the former five principles still guide the Front work, but their spirit and content need to be developed and amended to suit the new situation. Only in this way can these principles contribute most actively to the *consolidation, strengthening and development of the Front.*

I propose that after this Congress we will analyse and study the changes in the Viet Nam Fatherland Front itself, thence to draw experiences for its practical work. This done, the Front's orientation will be clearer, more concrete and realistic.

*
* *

Over the recent years, when socialist construction was recording great successes, and political and moral unity was becoming the basic aspect of society in North Viet Nam,

some people thought that the Front's scope of activity would be narrowed down, its role downgraded, and some even thought that the Front itself was no longer necessary. This is wrong.

Lenin said :

"The dictatorship of the proletariat is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these strata, an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is the complete overthrow of capital, complete suppression of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie as well as of attempts at restoration on its part, an alliance for the final establishment and consolidation of socialism." [1]

The further socialism advances, the broader and stronger the Front becomes. Because the more brilliant achievements are recorded by socialism — the best regime so far in human history — the greater its impact on the heart and mind of man and the greater its appeal, and it will win over the minds and hearts of millions upon millions of people and make more and more people adhere to socialism, to the National United Front.

Moreover, the socialism we are building in North Viet Nam is not an isolated undertaking by a single group, but a creative and self-conscious pursuit of tens of millions of toilers. *To bring about this creativity and self-consciousness,* to mobilize the boundless force of the labouring masses for

1. V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 29, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 381.

the noble cause of successfully building socialism, we must pay attention *to the mobilization of the popular masses and to the Front work*. Our Party is deeply imbued with Lenin's teaching about the danger of a ruling party becoming, through lack of self-schooling, bureaucratic, divorced from the masses, autocratic, domineering, indulging in wishful thinking and self-complacency, thus running counter to the masses' interests. Our Party always condemns and combats all manifestations of bureaucracy and authoritarianism. This, in essence, is a struggle against the lack of attention to mass work, to the mobilization of the masses, to the Front work.

In the society of North Viet Nam at present, the exploiter classes have been abolished but there still remain different classes and labouring strata, the working class, the collective peasantry and the socialist intellectuals. There are still divergences between the working class and the collective peasantry, as well as between manual workers and brain workers. It will be a long time before our society becomes a classless, communist society. The socialist transformation of agriculture, handicraft and private capitalist industry and trade have recorded decisive success but it takes time to help those in the former exploiter classes become genuine socialist labourers or small producers become collective labourers with a high sense of discipline and technical knowhow. We are advancing from a small and scattered production direct to socialism without going through the stage of capitalist development. The material and technical bases of socialism in our country are still poor. Each class or social stratum in North Viet Nam still retains many ideological vestiges of the old society. The Front still has to mobilize, persuade and educate these

classes and social strata to implement strictly all the lines, policies and laws laid down by the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the State of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, encourage them to emulate one another in production and thrift, and contribute actively to overfulfilling the State plans. The Viet Nam Fatherland Front is a necessary alliance between different classes and labouring strata to build a new society. The struggle between the two paths — socialist and capitalist — to definitely solve the question "who will win" is going on. The Front and its component members must continue their active role in this struggle. Only by so doing can we achieve socialist revolution in North Viet Nam, a most thorough and profound revolution, and therefore a most difficult and complicated one.

Besides their task of socialist revolution and construction, the people in North Viet Nam must stand shoulder to shoulder with their countrymen in South Viet Nam who are fighting US aggression to liberate the South, defend the North, and advance to the peaceful reunification of the country. The Viet Nam Fatherland Front must carry on its active role in uniting the entire people and mobilizing their forces to back the heroic great front, assume the task of all-people national defence, honourably fulfil their task of fighting and serving the fight, and strictly implement the policies for the rear : toward the families of armymen, of those killed in action, of disabled and sick servicemen.

Now more than ever before stands out the special importance of the National United Front against US aggression in Viet Nam and the Indochinese Peoples' Front against the US imperialist aggressors. Our more than 20 million

countrymen in the North are united in the *Viet Nam Fatherland Front,* standing shoulder to shoulder with our 17 million countrymen in the South united in the *South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation* and the *Viet Nam Alliance of National Democratic and Peace Forces.* Our people throughout the country are standing shoulder to shoulder with the Lao people united in the *Lao Patriotic Front* and the Khmer people united in the *National United Front of Kampuchea* to wage a sacred patriotic war against their common enemy, the US imperialist aggressors, and their henchmen in each Indochinese country. We must bring into full play all the potential forces of our nation, closely coordinate the greatest efforts of the people in both the North and the South, increase solidarity and mutual assistance with the fraternal Lao and Khmer peoples, win more sympathy, support and assistance from the peoples of the socialist countries and people all over the world. This is a firm guarantee for the final victory of our people's resistance war for national salvation against US aggression.

The indispensable role of the National United Front is also determined by another important task : the coexistence and long-term co-operation between the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the friendly parties — the Viet Nam Democratic Party and the Viet Nam Socialist Party — to fulfil our people's revolutionary tasks throughout the country.

The above-mentioned elaboration not only explains why the Front is indispensable, but also shows the necessity of unceasingly strengthening and broadening the Front in the context of the revolution in our country at present.

III. ON THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE VIET NAM FATHERLAND FRONT

We fully agree with the delegates on the immediate tasks and works laid down in the political report of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front submitted to the Congress by Comrade Hoang Quoc Viet, its Presidium member.

About the overall task of the Front, the report pointed out :

"Considering the present requirements and tasks of the revolution and the Programme of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, the Front sets itself the task in the coming period *to strive under the leadership of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, to strengthen the unity of the people of various strata, democratic political parties, mass organizations, nationalities, religious communities and patriotic personalities, constantly strengthen and broaden national unity, uphold national heroism, vigorously promote the sense of being collective masters and the revolutionary ardour of the people, mobilize them into a patriotic emulation to resolutely and completely defeat the US aggressors and their henchmen, and successfully build socialism to liberate the South, defend the North and proceed to the peaceful reunification of the country, and build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.*"

The concrete tasks and works of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front as defined in the report are also very adequate :

"1. To strengthen unity, encourage the entire people to bring into full play their revolutionary heroism, their

determination to fight and to win, to persevere in and step up their resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, till complete victory.

2. To stimulate all strata of the people to actively engage in productive labour, continue to push forward the national economy, and take socialist construction a new step forward.

3. To mobilize and educate the people to actively participate in building and consolidating the people's power, promote socialist democracy and strengthen people's democratic dictatorship.

4. To activety take part in building a new culture and a new type of man.

5. To enhance solidarity and friendship between our people and the world's peoples."

Our Party pledges to stand shoulder to shoulder with the friendly Parties, mass organizations and personalities in the Front, and to strive to fulfil these tasks and works.

Hereafter, I would like to stress some immediate tasks and works of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and present a few reflections on the Front work and mass work.

The heavy and most glorious task of our people at present is to fight the US aggressors till complete victory and build socialism successfully.

Our fight against US aggression, for national salvation, is the most ruthless self-defence war in the Vietnamese nation's history of resistance against foreign aggression. At present, fighting US aggression and saving the country is

the foremost task of our people. The 19th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party clearly pointed out :

"We must mobilize the greatest efforts of the entire Party, army and people in both zones of our country, strive to fulfil President Ho Chi Minh's sacred Testament, persevere in and push ahead our resistance war, enhance our determination to fight and to win, march toward complete victory, liberate the South, defend and build the socialist North, and advance to the peaceful reunification of our country while discharging our internationalist duty."

The task of fighting US aggression is very glorious but also very heavy. To fulfil this task at a time when the US imperialists and their stooges suffer setback upon setback on all theatres of operations, we must show high determination. Meanwhile, we must turn this determination into one of our entire army and people.

The Front committees at all levels and Front member organizations must co-operate with the administration to help everybody fully understand the line and policy of *persistent resistance against US aggression for national salvation, till complete victory*, clearly realize his responsibility, heighten his vigilance, promote revolutionary heroism, ready himself to fight and fight well, smash all the military ventures of the US imperialists and their henchmen, with the determination to fulfil the duty of the great rear toward the great front.

The resistance against US aggression is a task of the entire people. The Front committees at all levels and Front member organizations must help our people fully grasp this point, so that everybody discharges well this task ;

mobilize those of service age to enthusiastically join the people's armed forces; mobilize the youth to enlist so as to wipe out the invaders and the traitors and avenge their countrymen.

"Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom"[1]. Our people are performing two strategic tasks: to fight US aggression and build socialism. If we do not fight and defeat the US aggressors, they will not leave us alone to successfully build socialism. On the other hand, if we do not "strive to rehabilitate and develop our economy, develop our culture, maintain public order and security, strengthen the North in all spheres, closely combine the building of economy with the strengthening of national defence, and speed up socialist construction"[2], then we cannot provide all round support for the fighting front. The two fronts of our struggle — combat and production — are closely related.

In order to fulfil the recruitment task, the law on military duty and other policies and undertakings on this matter must be strictly implemented. We must mobilize our manpower and wealth to supply the fighting front. If the rear is firm, and supplies the front in time and adequately, the latter will always be in good shape, fight hard and win great victories.

Moreover, we must strictly implement the policies on the rear already promulgated with regard to the families of the armymen, of those who have given their lives for the Fatherland and of disabled and sick soldiers... The Front

1. Ho Chi Minh: Appeal to the people on July 20, 1965.
2. Resolution of the 19th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party.

committees at all levels and Front member organizations should contribute to the implementation of these policies and help the administration implement them, at the same time help find out inadequacies and irrationalities for amendment and readjustment. The policies on the rear and of mutual assistance will greatly affect recruitment work and the fighting spirit of our people's armed forces.

Socialist revolution is the most radical and the most thorough revolution in the history of human society. It not only builds socialist production relations which are completely new ones, but on the basis of these new production relations it carries out the scientific and technical revolution to develop production forces and achieve such a labour productivity as was never before seen in history, and carries out the cultural and ideological revolution to build a new type of man who loves his country and socialism, works with energy, a sense of organization and discipline, technical skill and high zeal in the protection of public property. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen people's domocratic dictatorship, institute socialist legislation to defend socialism, prevent and punish counter-revolutionary acts and at the same time promote the people's right as collective masters, and stimulate their spirit of creative labour.

In order to enhance the political and moral unity in North Viet Nam's society, it is necessary to continue to perseveringly transform those belonging to former exploiter classes into genuine working people; to transform tens of millions of unorganized and scattered small-producers into collective socialist labourers; to transform intellectuals of the old society into a new intelligentsia imbued with Marxism-

Leninism and maintaining close ties with the worker and peasant masses, and at the same time train a new contingent of intellectuals of worker and peasant stock absolutely loyal to socialism. In short, it is necessary to help the non-proletarian strata remould themselves according to the socialist ideology of the proletariat. Of course, *in this process of transformation the proletariat also has to transform itself* to give up the bad habits it has long inherited from the old society of private ownership and exploitation.

In transforming and developing the national economy and building a new political regime and a new type of man, the Viet Nam Fatherland Front plays a very important role.

In order to promote their active role in socialist construction, the Front committees and member organizations have to mobilize the masses to carry out patriotic emulation, fulfil the State plan, raise labour productivity, produce abundant wealth for society, in order to perform their duty toward the State, contribute to socialist accumulation so as to enlarge production and gradually improve the people's living standard. At the same time, they have to mobilize the masses to take part in economic management and give full scope to their right as collective masters.

How to fulfil well the tasks and works of the Front?

I propose that after this Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, the provinces and cities hold a Congress of their own (wherever a congress has already been organized, a meeting of the Front Committee can be convened) to make known the work and results of this Congress, and at the same time to apply its resolutions to the specific conditions of their region.

The main documents of this Congress have to be printed and widely disseminated among the member organizations of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and the broad masses of the people. It is necessary to summarily vulgarize the results of the National Congress and Regional Congresses during popular meetings, mobilize the masses outside the Front organizations along with its (collective and individual) members to contribute actively to implementing the tasks and works of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front.

With regard to the matters which need and can get united action from the Front member organizations for their realization like the launching of a patriotic emulation drive to achieve the State plan, recruitment work, implementation of policies concerning the rear area, choice of candidates to the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels, maintenance of order and security, implementation of State laws, campaign for sanitation and disease prevention, establishment of North-South brotherhood, etc., the Front committees from the central level down have to convene their members to discuss a plan for *united action* in order to ensure the fulfilment of the tasks and works in a centralized and satisfactory manner.

Regarding matters that can be inserted in the work plan of the Front member organizations for routine implementation, there is no need to convene the Front committees.

In their ordinary meetings, the Front committees at all levels should review the implementation of the resolutions of the national and regional congresses of the Front and decided on necessary measures to step up the fulfilment of their work or set right the deviations if any.

* * *

A problem now has to be solved. After hearing the letter of greetings from the Viet Nam Workers' Party Central Committee and the political report by the Front Central Committee, many delegates remarked that a number of Party executives and cadres did not pay due attention to the Front work according to the spirit of the Party Central Committee; that the tasks laid down in the political report are very correct and very heavy but how can they be fully and satisfactorily implemented when regional Party executives generally give neither close guidance nor due heed to Front work and show some tendency to underestimate the Front and its work.

This is a well-founded worry and at the same time a constructive criticism.

The Viet Nam Workers' Party proceeds from the viewpoint that *revolution is the cause of the masses under the Party's leadership.* Applying Marxism Leninism to the specific conditions of Viet Nam, the Party works out correct line and policies for the masses to follow. This is the most important factor to ensure the success of the revolution. But the revolution can succeed only when it is carried out by the masses consciously, voluntarily and enthusiastically. After correct line and policies are laid down, a most important and decisive question is to popularize them among the masses, to explain, persuade, organize and lead them to fully implement these line and policies. In the process of application, the Party will listen to the masses' opinions, learn from their creative experiences, check on its line, policies and mottoes, thereby setting straight in time the shortcomings and making up for inadequacies, developing and improving

the scientific character of its line and policies. We do not assert that all the Party's line and policies are comprehensive and correct right at the outset. Life is developing constantly, so is the revolutionary movement. Moreover, even the most seasoned revolutionary party cannot always avoid wishful thinking in given circumstances. Therefore, the Party should learn from, and sum up, the rich experiences of the masses through their activities to complement and readjust its own line and policies.

Marxism-Leninism has taught that the Party and its cadres must always care for the interests of the masses and get to know their opinions and aspirations. Only then can it truly reflect the profound interests of the broad masses of the people in its line and policies, put forward adequate mottoes to mobilize the masses, bring them to its combat positions, and help them *realize more and more clearly through their experience that the Party's line and policies are correct,* thereby enhancing their confidence in the Party and inspiring them to participate more actively in the revolution under the Party's leadership and strive to carry out its line and policies.

This explains why right at its founding the Indochinese Communist Party (now the Viet Nam Workers' Party) held that Party cadres must mingle with the masses, especially the worker and peasant masses; in the towns and industrial areas, a number of cadres must "proletarize themselves" by working in industrial enterprises in order to mobilize the proletarian masses. Those cadres had the task of inquiring into the masses' interests and aspirations, single out good people and impart the Party's line and policies to them,

organize them into illegal, semi-legal and legal bodies, and lead the masses to struggle for their daily interests, then through many forms and periods of struggle proceed to a general armed uprising to seize power throughout the country.

In this process of mobilizing the masses, such mass organizations as trade-unions, peasant associations, youth organizations, women's unions, etc., will be formed and developed, some patriotic and democratic political parties will be founded. Together with the Party these organizations form the National United Front under the Party's leadership.

Once power has been seized, the Party must associate itself even more closely with the masses, study their aspirations and capabilities, lead them — but not tail after them — and at the same time attentively learn from the experience of the masses — both Party members and non-Party persons — in order to enrich its knowledge and experience.

Party cadres must wholeheartedly serve the people and place themselves under the latter's control.

We should not think that with the State apparatus and law in hand, the Party only needs give orders to the masses and all will be plain sailing. That is bureaucratism and authoritarianism. Any line and policy, including the Constitution and law, statute and regulation, that is not popularized and patiently explained to the masses so that they may implement them with full consciousness of their actions and on the basis of their voluntariness, will remain on paper.

The people's revolutionary power can use two methods — persuasion or coercion —, but in general persuasion is the

main method. How to persuade the masses to carry out the line and policies of the Party and the State ? Since the Party is in power, its line and policies concerning the vital interests of the entire people must be turned into State decisions to be implemented by them. The Party leads the administration but does not act in its place. However, to avoid bureaucratism and authoritarianism the administration has to rely on the Front and its member organizations ; to use them to popularize the line and policies of the Party and State among the people, help them thoroughly grasp these policies and mobilize them to carry them out enthusiastically. Each Front organization must actively mobilize all strata of the people under its responsibility (workers in the trade-unions, peasants in the agricultural co-operatives, youths in the Ho Chi Minh Labour Youth Union, women in the Viet Nam Women's Union, etc.). The results will be greater if beside works specific for each stratum other works are undertaken that require united action between various organizations and strata.

For these reasons, the Front work is also a mass work. To underestimate the Front work is also to belittle the mass work, and to neglect mass work is not to believe in the masses, to underestimate their role in the revolution and to disregard the people's right to be collective masters.

President Ho Chi Minh said :

"The policy of the Front is a very important one. The work of the Front is very important in the revolutionary work as a whole..." [1]

1. Ho Chi Minh : Talk at a course for Front Cadres (August 1962).

The resolution of the 19th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee pointed out :

"The Viet Nam Fatherland Front which represents our people's political and moral unity is the united force for action of the political parties and organizations within the Front that are holding aloft the heroic determination of our nation in staunchly fighting US aggression, for national salvation, and in building socialism with industry and thrift. Under our Party's leadership, the Front unceasingly struggles for the great national unity, for a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam."

The resolution of the Political Bureau on the campaign to enhance the quality of Party members and admit new members of the Ho Chi Minh drive (March 6, 1970) clearly stated :

"To respect and promote the people's right to be collective masters in State management, economic management, life management according to set policies and regulations, to satisfactorily mobilize the masses ; to help them exercise regular control on democracy ; to struggle against practices of bureaucratism, authoritarianism, arrogance, abuse of power or violation of State laws and the people's right to be masters.

On the basis of these views and directives, the Front committees at all levels and the leaderships of the mass organizations have to be strengthened and stabilized. Those bodies have to clearly realize their responsibility toward the Party Central Committee and lower levels : to win over the masses, mobilize and rally them around the Party, organize them,

and bring about united action between the Front member organizations to implement the line and policies of the Party and the State.

The Front committees elected by the Front Congresses at all levels must have "representative character and the ability to rally broad masses of the people, and bring about unity of mind and action between the Front organizations."

The Party committees and administrative bodies at all levels should pay more attention to Front work and mass work, provide cadres and means for the organization in charge of these works to function, hear periodical reports from them and give them directives. Only by so doing can they give full scope to their role.

As for the cadres in charge of Front work, they have to rid themselves of self-underestimation, enhance their sense of responsibility toward the Party and the people, strive to overcome difficulties, fulfil their tasks with zeal, initiative and creativity.

It is our hope that this Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front will mark a step forward in Front work and mass work.

***

Ours is a very heroic nation. Our people have a long-standing tradition of unity and fighting for independence and freedom.

The Viet Nam Workers' Party, which is responsible for leading the Vietnamese revolution, is a Marxist-Leninist

party with a correct, independent and sovereign line. We have a steady worker-peasant alliance. Our National United Front is a steel rampart to protect our Homeland. Our people's armed forces are valiant, resourceful, well equipped and good at people's war.

Ours is a just cause. Our people are fighting US aggression and building socialism at the same time. To fight against US aggression we combine three forms of struggle : military, political and diplomatic. We firmly abide by the principle of protracted struggle and self-reliance ; at the same time, we enjoy the sympathy, support and active help of the fraternal socialist countries and the people throughout the world.

Therefore, we will certainly smash the US aggressors and their lackeys, liberate the South, defend and build the socialist North, advance to the peaceful reunification of our country, and achieve a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.

Let us strive to further strengthen our solidarity in our country, in Indochina and in the world. Still greater and more glorious victories are awaiting us.

I wish the Third Congress of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front fine success !

I wish you comrades and friends good health and fine success in your work !

SPEECH ON THE 85th ANNIVERSARY OF PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S BIRTH

(19 May 1975)

Respected President Ton Duc Thang,

Respected Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Party Central Committee,

Comrades and friends,

We are gathered here this evening to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the birth of our beloved and venerated President Ho Chi Minh. This grand celebration occurs at a moment when our people have just recorded a great victory by completely liberating South Viet Nam from the neo-colonialist yoke of US imperialism and liberating the whole of Viet Nam from the shackles of imperialist and colonialist slavery.

For the first time in more than a century, the land of Viet Nam is rid of foreign aggressors, and for the first time our entire people have become the real masters of their destiny.

President Ho once said : "Our southern compatriots are citizens of Viet Nam. Rivers may dry up and mountains erode, but this truth will never change."[1]

He also said : "South Viet Nam is always in my heart."[2]

Every hour, every minute, President Ho followed the valiant fight of our compatriots and fighters in the South.

---

1. Letter to the people of Nam Bo, or Cochinchina, as South Viet Nam was called under French rule — *(Ed.)*

2. President Ho's talk with the South Viet Nam people's delegation led by Comrade Nguyen Van Hieu (1962).

So long as South Viet Nam was not yet liberated and our homeland not yet reunified, he could neither eat with appetite, nor sleep with peace of mind.

His feelings toward the South were profound and tender. In 1963 when the Third National Assembly intended to offer him the Golden Star Order, the highest order of Viet Nam, he thanked them for this gesture, but expressed the wish that when the struggle against US aggression had been crowned with final victory, with the permission of the National Assembly he would accept the order directly from the hands of the people in the South. This noble gesture, this sublime feeling deeply moved the entire people of Viet Nam, particularly our compatriots and fighters in the South, and greatly encourage our people and armed forces in both zones of Viet Nam to step up the war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation.

Now that the South has seen its day of liberation, he is no more, and our southern compatriots cannot welcome him to the South and offer him that loftiest Order.

Today, on the 85th anniversary of President Ho's birth, we are happy and moved to report that, living up to his teachings, our people and armed forces have fought and made "the Yankees quit and the puppets topple."[1] We have completely liberated the South and his wish, "our homeland will certainly be reunified, and our fellow-countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof"[2] has thus become a reality.

1. New Year message, 1969.
2. Testament.

Comrades and friends,

Although Viet Nam is not a big country and its population is not large in number, the Vietnamese people successfully carried out the August Revolution which wrested back power from the Japanese fascist-militarists and set up the DRVN. Resolved to fight in defence of the homeland, they defeated the French colonialist aggressors, oppressors of the Vietnamese people for more than eighty years — and have just swept the US imperialists, the international gendarmes, out of our country.

Thus, after so many years of hard struggle, our people have defeated first the old colonialism of the French imperialists and then the neo-colonialism of the US imperialists, and regained complete independence.

This is because our people, united as one man, have struggled perseveringly for independence and freedom following the correct political and military line of our Party and President Ho Chi Minh, and because they have enjoyed the wholehearted assistance of the fraternal socialist countries, and the sympathy and warm support of peace-and justice-loving people throughout the world.

The Vietnamese working class together with the whole people have been carrying out the socialist revolution and building socialism in the DRVN, a backward agricultural country, without passing through the period of capitalist development.

This is because our working class and people are hard-working and are resolved to build a peaceful, independent and happy new life. Our Party and President Ho Chi Minh

perseveringly implemented the proletarian dictatorship and led our people to carry out the three revolutions : revolution in the relations of production, revolution in science and technology, and revolution in ideology and culture, with the revolution in science and technology as the kingpin. The cause of socialist construction in our country has also enjoyed support and assistance in every field from fraternal socialist countries.

While carrying out the socialist revolution in the North and completing the national-democratic revolution in the South our people have also implemented their international tasks : persevering defence of the purity of Marxism-Leninism, striving to contribute to the unity of the great family of socialist countries on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and fulfilling their obligations to the revolutions in Laos and Cambodia. They have actively participated in the struggle of the world's peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism and contributed to the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism, while doing their share in defending and strengthening the world socialist system.

Such achievements have been recorded because we have always upheld our Marxist-Leninist stand, observed the independent and sovereign foreign policy of our Party and President Ho Chi Minh, always combined the interests of the Vietnamese revolution with those of the world revolution, and combined our patriotism with proletarian internationalism.

The services rendered by President Ho Chi Minh to the Vietnamese nation and the Vietnamese revolution are as great

as the seas and the skies. President Ho was the first Vietnamese to find the right way to lead the Vietnamese revolution from victory to victory. At the same time, he fought tirelessly to create the factors vital to the victories of the Vietnamese revolution, as well as the conditions that ensured victory for the Vietnamese revolution over imperialism and its lackeys, and to bring real independence, freedom and happiness to the Vietnamese people.

All the present and past victories of our entire Party, people and army mirror the great contributions by President Ho Chi Minh. When drinking water, one should remember the source. We will always honour the memory of President Ho Chi Minh, and forever remember his services.

We vow to learn from his thoughts, his virtues and work style, and to act upon his precious Testament, by advancing the Vietnamese revolution, successfully building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, prosperous and powerful Viet Nam, and making worthy contributions to the revolutionary pursuits of the world's peoples.

Comrades and friends,

Sixty-four years ago, President Ho Chi Minh left Viet Nam to find the way to save our country. The way he found was quite different from that of other revolutionaries in our country. He visited many countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, America, then lived in France for some time and joined the movement of the French workers.

In 1917, the Russian October Revolution succeeded, shaking the world, and ushering in a new era of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale.

The Russian October Revolution exerted a decisive influence on President Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary activities. Lenin's Theses on the National and Colonial Questions came into his hands as a torch in the dark night of imperialism. He said :

"What emotion, enthusiasm, enlightenment and confidence they communicated to me ! I wept for joy. Sitting by myself in my room, I would shout as if I were addressing large crowds : "Dear martyr compatriots ! This is what we need, this is our path to liberation ! "[1].

The first and greatest contribution of President Ho Chi Minh to the Vietnamese revolution was to have creatively applied Marxism - Leninism to the specific conditions of our country in order to show our people the correct revolutionary path. That way was the new-type bourgeois democratic revolution (which has since been called the people's national democratic revolution by our Party), in a colonial and semi-feudal country, aimed at overthrowing imperialism and its feudalist flunkeys in order to win national independence, set up a people's democratic regime, and put into practice the slogan "Land to the Tillers", then proceed to the socialist revolution in order to build socialism.

In carrying out that line and leading our people of all strata to make revolution, President Ho Chi Minh applied the Leninist doctrine in building a new-type party of the working class, founding the Indochinese Communist Party (now the Viet Nam Workers' Party)[2] the vanguard and the

1. Ho Chi Minh : *The Path That Led Me to Leninism.*
2. Now the Communist Party of Viet Nam *(Ed).*

general staff of the Vietnamese working class. This is a party based on Marxism - Leninism as an ideological foundation and a guide to action ; a pure, firm party with strong and just discipline and close contact with the people. President Ho Chi Minh was the first leader of the Vietnamese revolution to be well aware of the leading revolutionary role of the Vietnamese working class.

In order to bring success to the Vietnamese revolution, broad masses of people must actively take part in the struggle against the imperialists and their lackeys. Therefore, after setting up the party of the working class, it is necessary to do the best possible propaganda work, and awaken consciousness among workers, peasants, other popular strata and organize them into revolutionary organizations, and unite these organizations into a national united front against imperialism in order to fight for their daily interests and advance towards the achievement of the general slogans of each period of the revolution. President Ho Chi Minh was the leader of the Vietnamese revolution who clearly understood that revolution is the cause of the broad masses under the leadership of the working class.

The colonialists and the imperialists used violence to seize our country. They used violence to oppress and exploit our people. Our people have used many forms of revolutionary struggle, but revolutionary violence was essential.

President Ho Chi Minh was one of the Vietnamese revolutionary leaders who closely and at an early stage combined the organization of political forces of the people with the organization of the people's armed forces. Under his clear-

sighted leadership, our Party armed the masses, built and developed the people's armed forces with three categories of forces and coordinated political struggle with military struggle (at times, co-ordinating military struggle, political struggle and diplomatic struggle) to drive powerful imperialists such as the French and the US imperialists out of our country.

President Ho Chi Minh clearly saw that imperialism oppresses and exploits the working class and the other toiling masses in the metropolitan country, while sucking the colonies' blood. That is why he took the view that if the imperialists are to be overthrown, the colonial peoples must closely unite with the working class and the people of the imperialist countries, and the colonial revolution and the proletarian revolution in the metropolitan countries are like the two wings of the world revolution. He believed that the colonial peoples must make a clear distinction between the imperialists and capitalists in the metropolitan countries, on the one hand, and the working class and the oppressed and exploited people, their allies in those countries, on the other. The revolutionaries in the metropolitan countries must actively support the colonial revolution, support the right to self-determination of the colonial peoples, including the right to secede from the metropolitan countries and become fully independent and sovereign countries. President Ho Chi Minh was the first leader of the Vietnamese revolution to link patriotism with proletarian internationalism, the cause of national liberation with the cause of the emancipation of the working class in our country and in the world, and the people's national democratic revolution with the socialist revolution.

In appreciating all the services and achievements of President Ho Chi Minh, we can say that in the history of the Vietnamese nation in general and in the revolutionary history of Viet Nam in particular, President Ho Chi Minh was the greatest leader of the Vietnamese working class, people and nation.

He was the most genuine patriot, the greatest national hero, who led the Vietnamese people to struggle persistently and staunchly for self-liberation from imperialism and old and new colonialism, and to win complete independence for the nation.

At the same time, President Ho Chi Minh was a thoroughgoing democratic revolutionary, who led our people to struggle against feudalism which had ruled over our country for thousands of years, and to win back democratic rights for the people, leading our people from their status as slaves to the position of true masters of their own destiny.

Completely different from the preceding revolutionary leaders in our country, President Ho Chi Minh was a communist fighter imbued with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the vanguard theory of the working class, the class which stands in the centre of the era, and which has clearly realized that in order to liberate itself, it must liberate the whole of human society from all fetters of capitalism.

From this position, President Ho Chi Minh led the working class and other toiling masses in our country to struggle to abolish the regime of exploitation of man by man, to wage the socialist revolution and to build socialism in the DRVN, to build the most advanced political and social system ever

seen in our country, the socialist system, and to advance towards a truly civilized and brilliant system, a classless communist system.

This is precisely why we say President Ho Chi Minh has opened a new era in our national history, the era of independence, democracy and socialism, raising the Vietnamese nation to the level of the vanguard nations in the fight against imperialism and colonialism, in their advance to an extremely radiant future.

The revolutionary goal pursued by President Ho Chi Minh was not only to build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, and prosperous Viet Nam, but also to contribute to the transformation of the world, leading mankind to a horizon of freedom, equity and happiness, and transforming human society into a society without exploitation of man by man, in which no nation oppresses another, a society without crisis and war.

President Ho Chi Minh represented the quintessence and the soul of the heroic Vietnamese nation. He was one of the most eminent revolutionaries of our time, one of the most outstanding leaders of the international communist and workers' movement.

Comrades and friends,

It is now nearly six years since President Ho Chi Minh passed away. Before departing from us forever, he left us very moving, very profound recommendations. Since then we have always striven to implement his last priceless words by every means open to us.

What has he recommended us in his Testament ?

It can be boiled down to this : whatever difficulties and hardships may lie ahead, our entire Party, people and army must be resolved to fight the US aggressors until complete victory ; once the US aggressors have been defeated, we will rebuild our country and make it ten times as beautiful as today ; our Party must work out very effective plans to develop our economy and culture with a view to improving the life of our people ; it must strive to expand its activities to make effective contributions to the restoration of the unity of the socialist countries on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in conformity with both reason and sentiment ; we must build a pure, strong, firm party, train the revolutionary generations of the future, and so on.

At the memorial service for President Ho Chi Minh, Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of the Central Committee of our Party, on behalf of our entire Party and people, read out our pledge to carry through President Ho Chi Minh's Testament.

Today, we are happy to note that over the nearly six years past, with a staunch fighting spirit and with boundless sacrifices, our people throughout the country have fully carried out President Ho's most important recommendation : "To fight until the Yankees quit and the puppets topple", and regain complete independence for our homeland.

In the building of socialism in the North, we have also achieved great successes. Agriculture has recorded substantial

progress in intensive cultivation, increasing crop output, thus opening bright prospects for the advance to large-scale socialist production.

Industry, communications and transport, which were heavily devastated by the war, have in the main been rehabilitated and developed to some degree. Education and public health have also made headway. In spite of the fact that the living standards of our people are still low, we are proud that everyone has adequate food and clothing, can afford schooling, and a bright future for their children is ensured. Such a situation is hitherto unknown in the millennia-old history of our nation.

Over the past years, imbued with President Ho Chi Minh's proletarian internationalism, our people have continued to fulfil their international obligations as well as their national tasks, making a worthy contribution to the revolutionary cause of the Indochinese peoples and the people throughout the world. At the same time, we have won the sympathy and the precious and many-sided support and assistance of our brothers and friends in all continents. The material and moral assistance of the fraternal socialist countries and of the whole of progressive mankind has multiplied the fighting strength of our people. This is because our Party has adopted an independent and sovereign foreign policy, which combines patriotism with proletarian internationalism; because it has always shown a sincere attitude and stood for solutions that conform to sense and sentiment on all important questions arising in the international communist and workers' movement.

After President Ho Chi Minh passed away, the Central Committee of our Party spent much time discussing the building of the Party. The 23rd Plenum of the Party's Central Committee stressed:

"In order that our Party may continue to fulfil its responsible mission before the nation and the international communist movement, *it is necessary to increase the work of Party building in order to ensure that our Party may always firmly and creatively apply the principles of Marxism-Leninism to the new conditions of the revolution in our country; it must have a correct line and policies and a thorough-going revolutionary ideology, a strong and steady organization and the necessary leading and guiding capacity, and be worthy of being the leader and the most loyal servant of the people.*" [1]

We are very glad to note that over the past years the fighting strength of our people has increased, our Party cadres and members have been further tempered in struggle and our entire Party has carried out President Ho Chi Minh's following teaching well: "To preserve the solidarity and unity of our Party like the apple of one's eye". In favourable as well as adverse circumstances our entire Party has always united closely around the Central Committee, overcome all trials and led our people to advance and win ever greater victories.

In the process of leading the development of the new, socialist, man, our Party has paid much attention to the fostering of the revolutionary generations of the future.

1. Resolution of the 23rd Plenum of the Party Central Committee: "To strengthen the leadership and increase the fighting strength of the Party".

Our youth are very heroic. In general they are men and women with noble feelings, culture and good health, who have observed the revolutionary traditions of their fathers and older brothers and sisters. They consider the devotion of their years of youth to the homeland as a very glorious duty. They have worked enthusiastically and have shown great zeal in learning science and technology. Under the socialist regime, these qualities have been developed in labour, fighting and study.

In the war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, the proud posture of "aiming straight at the enemy" of the Vietnamese People's Army combatants, the "Determined to Fight and to Win" spirit of the Liberation Army combatants when marching into Saigon, their jovial, good-natured smiles in meeting the population in the newly-liberated areas, are actually very beautiful images of the new generations educated by our Party and Uncle Ho Chi Minh. Our people take great pride and put great confidence in the youth of our country who we are sure will succeed in an outstanding manner in pursuing the revolutionary cause of our Party and Uncle Ho.

Comrades and friends,

Following the liberation of South Viet Nam, the revolution in our country has entered a new period, a period when 45 million of our compatriots will pool their efforts and energies and, of one mind, will build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam. That is the most ardent aspiration of our people, and also a line compatible with the laws of social development in our country.

In order to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of President Ho Chi Minh in a practical way, our people in the North are striving to fulfil the tasks and targets of the plan for the restoration and development of the economy and the development of culture, complete the healing of the wounds of war, combine economy and national defence and prepare conditions for the advance to the eventual realization of long-term plans. These are to push ahead socialist industrialization and accordingly to step up the building of the material and technical foundations of socialism, thus fulfilling our duty of contributing to the restoration and development of the economy in the South. The principal measures to achieve this purpose are to organize social labour to engage in production and construction with stirring enthusiasm, turn ardour and heroism in fighting into ardour and heroism in peaceful construction, and boost the movement for labour and production to build socialism with industry and thrift. We must arouse a revolutionary movement of the masses in all fields of production, organization of life, ensure public security and order and strive to work and study. The practical results brought about by the revolutionary movement of the masses will be the yardstick by which to measure the revolutionary will and capacities of each unit, each locality and each branch of activity.

After having won victory in the war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, and having completely liberated the South, the immediate tasks facing our people in the South are to strengthen solidarity, achieve national reconciliation and concord, heighten revolutionary vigilance, carry out the 10 policies already promulgated, and continue to struggle to completely smash the war machinery, the

puppet administration, from top to bottom, to root out all vestiges of the neo-colonialism of US imperialism; build a democratic administration of the people at all levels; strengthen national defence; maintain order and security; check and punish all acts of counter-revolution, hooliganism and gangsterism; encourage the masses, make endeavours in productive labour with a view to rapidly overcoming the aftermath of war; restore the economy and eventually build an independent and sovereign economy; eliminate the depraved and mongrel culture (spread by US imperialism-*Ed.*), develop a national-democratic culture, stabilize the material and cultural life of the people, achieve the tasks of people's national democratic revolution, advance to the reunification of the country and bring the North and the South together under the same roof again.

Comrades and friends,

This year, our people celebrate the anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh's birth at a time when the people throughout our country are joyfully acclaiming the great victory of the nation.

The hurrahs of victory are resounding throughout our land.

The whole of our people are singing songs of exaltation.

The future of our homeland is truly bright.

From now on, our people will forever be masters of the whole of our beautiful country. From Dong Van to Ca Mau, from Tra Co to Vung Tau, from the Cuc Phuong forest to the U Minh forest, from Ha Long bay to the Truong Son range, from Shapa to Da Lat, from the plains of the Red River to the delta of the Mekong, how many splendid scenic beauties, how many natural riches spread out before our eyes!

With our abundant labour force, our industry and intelligence, our courage and creativeness, with the support and assistance of our brothers and friends throughout the world, our people will be strong enough to forge ahead and build a prosperous and powerful country.

With these conditions, and continuing to follow the path charted by our Party and President Ho Chi Minh, our people will surely succeed in building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, and prosperous Viet Nam, giving a strong impulse to the revolutionary movement of the world's peoples, and "taking the invincible banner of President Ho Chi Minh to the final goal." [1]

Glory to our generation for having fought under the leadership of the Party and President Ho and created the Ho Chi Minh era, the most glorious era in Viet Nam's history of more than four thousand years.

To be worthy of this honour, let every one of us forge ahead to the level of our era, devotedly serve the people, foster our will to fight, work with zeal, improve our knowledge and carry into effect the precious Testament of our beloved and venerated Uncle Ho.

— Long live a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam!

— Long live the Viet Nam Workers' Party, the organizer of all the victories of the Vietnamese revolution!

— The great President Ho Chi Minh lives on forever in our cause!

1. Oration of the Central Committee of the Party read by Comrade Le Duan at the funeral of President Ho Chi Minh.

POLITICAL REPORT AT THE POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL REUNIFICATION

Held in Ho Chi Minh city, November 14 to 21, 1975

Dear comrades and friends,

This Political Consultative Conference between the delegations of north and south Viet Nam is to discuss measures to reunify the country on the state plane.

It is a matter of great importance for the destiny of our homeland and the national feeling of our people. It will make it possible to achieve national reunification in other respects.

It is, therefore, a great privilege and pleasure for the delegation of north Viet Nam to take part in the present democratic discussions with the delegation of south Viet Nam on a question whose solution our entire people are looking forward to.

Here are the points I beg to deal with on behalf of the north Vietnamese delegation :

1. The long struggle of the Vietnamese people for national independence and reunification ;

2. The great victory and historic turning point ;

3. The present tasks of the Vietnamese revolution ;

4. The substance and objectives of the completion of national reunification ; and

5. The urgent steps to take to reunify the country on the state plane.

I — THE LONG STRUGGLE OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND REUNIFICATION

Dear comrades and friends,

Viet Nam was an independent and unified country, the Vietnamese nation had always been one and a single nation. However, the imperialists constantly resorted to the "divide and rule" policy in an attempt to annex our country and exploit and oppress our people. While encroaching upon our nation's independence and sovereignty they sought all ways and means to undermine the unity of our land. The struggle of our people for national independence was therefore inseparable from that for the unity of our country.

By the middle of the 19th century the French colonialists began their conquest of Viet Nam, by nibbling it away. First they seized the provinces of Nam Bo (south Viet Nam proper). Then they set foot on central Viet Nam, extended their invasion to north Viet Nam and finally the whole of our country.

They divided Viet Nam into three *Ky*, or regions placed under three different rules : Nam Ky (Cochinchina) was a colony of France, Trung Ky (Annam) was a protectorate while Bac Ky (Tonkin) was a semi-colony and semi-protectorate. To travel from one region to another a Vietnamese must have a passport just like when going to a foreign country !

In those days, Bac Ky, Trung Ky and Nam Ky formed together with Laos and Cambodia the five parts of the so-called "French Indochina". The name of Viet Nam was wiped off on the world map.

This explains why right in the early days after its founding, in its 1930 first programme the Indochinese Communist Party (now the Viet Nam Workers' Party) already linked the wresting back of national independence with the restoring of national unity. It made clear that the fundamental objectives of the Vietnamese revolution were independence, unity, democracy and socialism.

From 1940 onwards in execution of the "Greater East Asia" policy, the Japanese fascists invaded Indochina with the view of placing Viet Nam into Japan's "Common prosperity zone", carrying out their "divide and rule" policy and keeping our country divided in three different regions.

From 1941, the Viet Minh (League for Viet Nam's Independence) assembled the entire people to drive away the Japanese fascists and the French colonialists, and brought the General Insurrection of August 1945 to a glorious end.

On September 2, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh announced to the Vietnamese people and the world the birth of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. In early 1946, the Vietnamese people from north to south took part in a general election to elect the National Assembly and at the end of the same year the National Assembly ratified the first Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

The August Revolution thus broke the colonial fetters clamped on our people for almost a century, achieved national independence and unity and instituted people's democratic rights in the whole country.

However, hardly one month had passed since the triumph of the August Revolution when foreign aggressors entered our country allegedly to disarm and accept the surrender of

Japan. Chiang Kai-shek troops were stationed north of the 16th parallel in keeping with the vicious scheme of the United States to do away with the Indochinese Communist Party, destroy the Viet Minh (League for Viet Nam's Independence) and overthrow the people's revolutionary administration. South of the 16th parallel British troops moved in, opening the way for the French colonialists to reconquer Nam Bo and the southern part of central Viet Nam. At first, France and Chiang Kai-shek shared the rule over our country, but later they came to terms for the French troops to replace Chiang's troops and restored French colonial domination over the whole of our national territory.

In face of such a highly critical situation, our Party and President Ho Chi Minh determined the French colonialist aggressors as our main enemy. For this reason the spearhead of the revolution had to be directed at the French colonialists and a policy worked out to make more friends and less foes while exploiting the differences among the latter.

The clever tactical conclusion by the Party and President Ho Chi Minh of the March 6, 1946 Preliminary Convention and the September 14, 1946 Modus Vivendi gained for our people more than nine months' delay to make all necessary preparations.

When the French colonialists started their reconquest in the whole of our country (December 1946 - *Ed.*) our people, responding to the sacred appeal of President Ho Chi Minh, rose up as one man, determined to fight to a bitter end to safeguard national independence and unity.

With the backing of the US interventionists, the French colonialists resorted to a vicious trick — "making Vietnamese

fight Vietnamese and feeding war with war". They restored the old colonialist regime in the temporarily occupied areas, and rigged up the Bao Dai quisling government and set on foot a mercenary army under the signboard of "independence" and "unity"; while making a great deal of noise about "peace" in an attempt to fool our people, the French people and the world people.

So, our people, united millions as a man, in the Lien Viet (National United Front), and joining efforts with the peoples of Laos and Cambodia, launched a protracted war of resistance in the course of which their strength and their successes grew greater with the fighting.

The war against the French colonialist aggressors and US interventionists which lasted nearly nine years ended with the great Dien Bien Phu victory. The Geneva Agreements of July 1954 were signed on the basis of the recognition of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam. Under these agreements, the Vietnamese people were to hold a general election in July 1956 to achieve the peaceful reunification of the country. Pending the general election, the 17th parallel was only the provisional military demarcation line between south and north Viet Nam and constituted neither a political nor a territorial boundary.

In the context of the US imperialists' scheme to prolong and expand the war and intensify their intervention in Indochina in an effort to turn this region into a new-type colony and military base of theirs, a peaceful settlement of the Viet Nam problem was a necessity to thwart this sinister design and move another step nearer to total victory.

But as soon as peace was restored, the US imperialists supplanted the French colonialists in south Viet Nam and made frantic efforts to attain these strategic objectives :

1. Turn south Viet Nam into a US new-type colony and military base and use it as a spring-board for attacks on the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the outpost of socialist camp in Southeast Asia, and

2. Check the influence of socialism on Southeast Asia and, at the same time, sap the mounting national liberation movement in Indochina.

The US imperialists spared no efforts to create "two Viet Nams". On October 23, 1954, US President D. Eisenhower made no bones of the US resolve to make south Viet Nam into a separate state. A so-called Republic of Viet Nam with a client administration was then set up, representing reactionary feudalists, comprador capitalists, bureaucrats and militarists on the US payroll. An "Army of the Republic of Viet Nam", which was but a mercenary army and an instrument of US neo-colonialism was recruited. Farcical "congressional elections" were staged, a sham "constitution" was adopted to put a veneer of "nationalism" and "democracy" on the quisling state. South Viet Nam was blatantly put under the "protection" of SEATO, a US-led military bloc for aggression in Southeast Asia.

In 1956, on US orders, Ngo Dinh Diem refused consultations with the north for the general election to reunify the country. He also declared that "the border of the United States extends to the 17th parallel" and urged his troops to "march on the north" and "fill up the Ben Hai river" and annex north Viet Nam.

The US-Diem "unilateral war" to wipe out the patriotic forces in south Viet Nam having been defeated, the US switched on to a "special war". Since this could not extricate its client army and administration from their predicament, the US, early in 1965, massed over half a million of its troops into south Viet Nam for a direct aggression in an extremely atrocious "limited war". At the same time it charged north Viet Nam with aggression against south Viet Nam as a pretext for an air and naval war against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in order to weaken her and hinder the great rear of north Viet Nam's assistance to the great front of the south.

The wave of widespread offensives and uprisings of our southern armed forces and people in the Spring of 1968 inflicted a heavy reverse on the US imperialists, and forced them to call a halt to the bombings in the north and enter into negotiations with us in Paris. But, persisting in their aggressive scheme and design to prolong the partition of our country, they turned to a new strategy, "Vietnamizing the war" and "changing the colour of the corpses". At the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, they tried to play for time, stubbornly sticking to their "two Viet Nams" stand and setting their faces against the reunification of Viet Nam. They refused to recognize the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, and demanded recognition of the 17th parallel as a real national frontier.

Under the impact of our people's 1972 waves of generalized offensives and uprisings and serious setbacks on the battlefield and snowballing difficulties at home and in the world, they had to make a strategic retreat by signing the Paris

Agreement on Viet Nam, recognizing the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people and consenting to withdraw all their and their allies' troops from the southern half of our country.

But the US heavily undermined the Paris Agreement at its very beginning. It did everything to strengthen the quisling administration and army and to make Vietnamese fight Vietnamese in a neo-colonialist war in south Viet Nam, with a view to overrunning the liberated zone of south Viet Nam and converting the whole of it into a US new-type colony.

Resolved to foil this dark plot and plan of the US, our armed forces and people waged a persistent struggle to defend the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam, and in Spring this year, launched generalized large-scale offensives and uprisings to topple the US-created administration and wipe out its army, and liberate Saigon and the whole of our beloved south.

Looking back at the struggle for national independence and reunification of our people during the past century and more, we can clearly see that the aggressors against our country, whether they were the French colonialists, Japanese fascists or US imperialists, were all bent on dividing our country in order to achieve their dark design of annexing it. To this effect, they stopped at no schemes, military, political, economic, and cultural. But they all failed ignominiously at the hands of the heroic Vietnamese.

To win victory, our people upheld the banner of national independence and unity, and over the past few decades, have never deflected from these objectives of the revolution : independence, unity, democracy and socialism.

II — THE GREAT VICTORY AND HISTORIC TURNING POINT

Comrades and friends,

Our people have completely won the anti-US war of resistance for national salvation. The last stage of this resistance was this Spring's series of offensives which began with the Tay Nguyen (Central Highlands) Campaign followed up by the Tri - Thien - Hue — Quang Nam - Da Nang (five provinces in central Viet Nam - *Ed.*) Campaign and concluded by the historic Ho Chi Minh Campaign.

Our Spring victory was of tremendous importance. It has rid our country of foreign aggressors and cleared dark clouds from the sky of Viet Nam. From now on our country has become one again, the north and the south have been reunited under the same roof. The untold sufferings and humiliations as slaves of foreign aggressors are a thing of the past. From now on, the Vietnamese people have become the full masters of their destiny and will build their country in a way of their own choice.

The last 30 years have been the most ebullient and exciting period in our national history. Having started the struggle for independence and freedom in the new era with the August Revolution, our people have brought it to a glorious end, which is a historic turning point in the life of our nation : we have put an end to the war, achieved firm and lasting peace in the whole country, wrested back full independence, restored territorial integrity and united our people to build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Viet Nam which is today a peaceful, independent, unified and socialist Viet Nam.

This Spring's victory had a historic and epochal significance. It put a glorious conclusion to a 30 year-long liberation war and the 20 year-long struggle against the US aggressors for national salvation. It also marked the complete failure of US neo-colonialism in our country.

"While the triumph of the war of resistance against the French colonialists ending with the Dien Bien Phu battle in 1954 ushered in the initial stage of the bankruptcy of old colonialism, the victory of the anti-US war of resistance for national salvation concluded by the Spring 1975 wave of offensives and uprisings and the historic Ho Chi Minh campaign heralded in the inevitable complete disintegration of neo-colonialism in the world". (Resolution of the 24th session of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party).

Despite the throwing into south Viet Nam of 360 billion dollars, half of its air force, including the strategic air force, about one half of its navy together with its most seasoned army divisions equipped with the most up-to-date weapons, the US met with humiliating discomfiture in Viet Nam and eventually was compelled to sign the Paris Agreement on Viet Nam and withdraw its troops from the south of our country.

In this Spring drive our people overthrew the quisling administration, put out of action over one million and one hundred thousand mercenary troops, destroyed the US-controlled war machinery and captured the whole of the US-supplied technical facilities, weapons, munitions and means of war.

Our people as well as the peoples of Laos and Cambodia frustrated four successive Indochina strategies of four US presidents and upset the US global strategy in Southeast Asia. It has weakened US imperialism and dealt a staggering blow at the ringleader of imperialism and international gendarme, given a push to the national liberation movement and the anti-US imperialist movement in the US-controlled countries and right in the United States while accelerating the process of complete disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism, splitting up the forces of US imperialism and reaction in the world, thus contributing to crack and shatter the military blocs dependent on the US.

Such an achievement has been an effective contribution to the defence of the socialist system and its outpost in Southeast Asia. It has broken through the first defence line of the US in this area, thus narrowing the world system of capitalism and expanding and further consolidating the world system of socialism. It has vigorously stimulated the movement of the world's peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism.

It is a common victory of the world's peoples in the era of transition from capitalism to socialism, the era of fusion of the three revolutionary currents : i.e. the drive of socialist revolution and socialist construction, that of national independence and that for democracy and social progress ; the era in which the balance of forces between revolution and counter-revolution has been changing in favour of the former and to the detriment of imperialism and its stooges ; the era in which the world revolution is on the offensive against imperialism, and the working class and the peoples the world over are ebulliently striving for the noble goals of mankind.

Over the past decades, our country was the focus of sharp contradictions of the world, contradictions between the oppressed nations and imperialism and old and new colonialism, between socialism and capitalism, between the forces of peace and democracy and the reactionary, warmongering and aggressive forces, and between the imperialists themselves. These antagonisms assumed an acute form in the Vietnamese people's effort against US aggression, for national salvation. Their success in this undertaking has been at the same time one of the rising forces in the new world against the forces of the old, declining world.

It has borne out a truth confirmed time and again by the Viet Nam Workers' Party : in our time, a nation not large in area and population but united as one man staunchly following a sound line and method for their just objective, holding high the banner of national independence and socialism, and enjoying the active support, sympathy and assistance from socialist countries and the peoples who uphold peace and justice, can completely defeat any imperialist aggressor, including the strongest imperialism which is US imperialism.

Progressive mankind have said many kind words in praise of the feat of our nation, as "having a strategic significance for all nations in the world and for their future", regarding our people as representative of freedom and happiness of all nations, "Viet Nam is the heart of the world", "the conscience of mankind", etc.

What were the main causes of our people's signal accomplishment ? They are these :

a) The Viet Nam Workers' Party and President Ho Chi Minh's imaginative application of Marxism-Leninism in the specific conditions of Viet Nam and their judicious line, directives, guidelines and methods which took our revolution from one success to another. Due to the profound grasp of all-conquering Marxism-Leninism and of the specific situation in Viet Nam, the Party mapped out a sound line for the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation by combining military struggle with the political and diplomatic action to bring the resistance to complete victory.

b) Our army and people, united and of one mind, clever and courageous, had a single purpose : that was to fight until the aggressors and their henchmen were vanquished. The traditional sense of combat solidarity in the struggle against foreign invaders of our nation, a nation which has over 4,000 years of history of building and resisting aggression, was further enhanced by the Party and President Ho Chi Minh in the anti-US struggle for national salvation. The entire Vietnamese people, military as well as civilian, old as well as young, brought into full play their revolutionary heroism, the will to fight, braving all difficulties and hardships to contribute to exploits.

Our armed forces born of the people, fighting for the people, conducting well the people's war, have a high sense of organization and discipline, "are loyal to the Party, faithful to the people, ready to fight for the Fatherland's independence and freedom, for socialism, ready to fulfil any task, overcome any difficulty, defeat any enemy". (President

Ho Chi Minh's speech at the reception for the 20th founding anniversary of the Viet Nam People's Army — December 22, 1964).

c) The resistance against US aggression, for national salvation of our people had a powerful and solid rear : the socialist north which had always upheld the slogan "All for our kith and kin in the south", supplied the front with manpower, material and wisdom. The socialist regime in the north gave full scope to its superiority in the hard trial of the war, brought into full play its role as the revolutionary base and made a decisive contribution to the common revolutionary cause of the country as a whole.

d) Our people stood shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of Laos and Cambodia in the effort against the common enemy — US imperialism — and together with them struggled hard to cast off their yoke, baffle all US wicked designs in Indochina and Southeast Asia, to wrest back independence and freedom.

In the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation, our people always enjoyed the wholehearted material assistance and moral support from the Soviet Union, China and the other fraternal socialist countries. Their just cause also received the broad sympathy and support from the peoples who uphold peace and justice, and from the US progressives as well.

On this occasion, our people would like to express their heartfelt and warm thanks to all brothers and friends in all continents.

III — IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION

Dear comrades and friends,

The victorious spring drive of generalized offensives and uprisings of our people and army, as a whole, has ushered in a new period in which the strategic task of our revolution is to complete national reunification and to take the whole of our country rapidly, vigorously and steadily to socialism.

"Our revolution having been successful throughout the country, the US neo-colonialist regime imposed on south Viet Nam having been abolished, the cause of the partition of our country completely eliminated, it is quite natural that the whole of our country is independent and unified and is advancing towards socialism". (Resolution of the 24th plenum of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party).

After south Viet Nam's liberation and the recovery of full national independence, one of the most urgent requirements of our people is to complete national reunification.

Over the past 45 years, our people have never ceased fighting with determination and have foiled all divisive manœuvres and tricks of the aggressive colonialists and their henchmen. Right in the first days of the resistance against the French colonialists, when they schemed to sever Nam Bo from Viet Nam, the Party led our people to promptly expose the attempt and resolutely resist it. When they tried to separate the Highlands and set up the so-called "Tay Ky (Western Region) State" there, the Party immediately denounced the move. It was then that President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of the working class and the nation, trenchantly stated : "Our compatriots in Nam Bo are citizens

of Viet Nam. Rivers may dry up, mountains may erode; but this truth can never change". In 1960, at the Party's Third National Congress, President Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "Our nation is one, our country is one. Our people will undoubtedly overcome all difficulties and achieve our aim: the country reunified, North and South brought together again". This idea, feeling and will of the 45 million Vietnamese has cemented them in one monolithic bloc resolved to frustrate all dark plots of the enemy.

However, if in the past, in the confrontation with the French aggressors and their flunkeys, when not all the country was yet liberated, we upheld the banner of national reunification to assemble the entire people from all parts of the country and rally all their forces to struggle for national independence and people's democracy, today in the context of the North having been liberated many years ago and having embarked on socialist construction, the cause of national reunification rests on national independence and socialism, which is a higher basis representing a new step forward in that very cause.

Why must national reunification be based on independence?

Because our people who had been strongly against "reunification" under the rule of the French colonialists and their feudal agents were also firmly opposed to "reunification" under the neo-colonialist rule of US imperialism and the pro-US comprador capitalists, landlords and feudalists. To us, real reunification can be achieved only on the basis of real independence, and only when complete independence is realized can complete national reunification be achieved.

Why must national reunification be based on socialism?

Because socialism means freedom and happiness for the people. The socialist order is one which knows no exploitation of man by man: from each according to his ability, to each according to his work. A socialist society is a society with a prosperous economy, developed culture, science and technology, a society in which national defence is consolidated, the people's right to mastery, equality among nationalities and between men and women and freedom of belief are ensured. It meets the aspirations and supreme interests of the working people both manual and intellectual, and of all progressives. It represents the inevitable trend of human society.

However, the building of socialism is no easy job. It requires industriousness and creativeness, a high level of technique, discipline and productivity, persistent efforts, readiness to cope with all difficulties, and endure all hardships at the beginning for the sake of eventual prosperity and happiness in the end, which is an attitude all the more necessary as our country is originally poor and backward and badly devastated by the war.

Socialist revolution includes socialist transformation and socialist construction. The central task of socialist construction is socialist industrialization. These tasks are very new and complicated for us. But if we try hard to learn while working and are resolved to overcome all difficulties and persist in our efforts, our success is certain.

We are resolved to mobilize our manpower and wealth and the talents of our people to build a socialist Viet Nam with

a modern industry, a modern agriculture, strong national defence, advanced culture and science, and a civilized and happy life.

At present, the North is building socialism. Only when both North and South have embarked on the road of socialism can our national reunification have a practical and solid foundation. Naturally to successfully carry out the socialist revolution and build socialism in the South, we must take into consideration its specific situation.

On what basis to complete national reunification is a very important question of principle. Our people fought the imperialist aggressors and their lackeys and won back independence and unity in order to build a new Viet Nam and ensure for all Vietnamese a civilized and comfortable life. Independence and national reunification are indispensable. But, once independence and national reunification have been achieved there will arise this problem : What road will our country follow so that our people can enjoy real freedom and happiness and our country real prosperity, affluence and strength ? Such is a fond aspiration of our people and also a firm guarantee for the safeguarding and consolidation of our independence and national unity.

The Party did not wait until after the liberation of half of our country or after the complete liberation of our country to consider the problem of shaping the nation's future. Right at its foundation days, it already defined in final and unequivocal terms the ultimate aim of our revolution. If we follow the right path to our goal the revolution will be successful. This vital issue is directly related to the destiny and future

of our country and our people, of every social section and every family among us in these days and of future generations in the thousands of years to come.

In the present historical conditions, after having regained independence, our country is at the crossroads : either take the path of transition to socialism or the path of capitalist development which is likely to be soaked with the blood and tears of millions of toiling people, the path of ruthless oppression and exploitation, characterized by the most abominable social evils one can see every day in the United States or in any other capitalist country and right in south Viet Nam in the past. Decidedly we will not follow this painful and dark path. The bright one can be none other than the path to socialism, the only path that will lead our land to prosperity and our entire people to happiness while securing eternal national independence and unity. Moreover, only socialism can eliminate all forms of oppression and exploitation and all sources of class differences. Only socialism can bring about perfect unity in the political, economic, cultural and social life of our country, and firm political and moral unity among our people.

From another angle, south Viet Nam has implemented a people's national democratic revolution. At present, completely liberated, should south Viet Nam continue it for a period of time before embarking on the socialist revolution and socialist construction ? I think that is not necessary. The great Spring victory has put a victorious end to that phase of the people's national democratic revolution in south Viet Nam and opened up for the south Vietnamese a new phase of revolution with a new strategic task, that of socialist revolution.

After the collapse of the US neo-colonialist regime, the south Vietnamese must not make a halt but immediately strike into the path of socialist revolution, more concretely, begin the step-by-step socialist transformation of the national economy and the building of the first foundations of socialism. At the same time, they must complete the remaining tasks of the people's national democratic revolution through the following movements : that of building the people's revolutionary administration and helping the population to exercise their right of deciding their own destiny, that of repressing the reactionaries and helping former members of the quisling administration and army re-educate themselves into useful members of the society, that of abolishing the feudal system of land ownership and putting into effect the "land to the tillers" watchword wherever this agrarian problem is still pending in social life.

That is the spirit and substance of the Leninist theory on "permanent revolution" (the theory deals with the necessity to take the bourgeois democratic revolution straight to socialist revolution). Applying this theory to the conditions of Viet Nam, the Viet Nam Workers' Party assumes that the Vietnamese working class and people must wage two revolutions : the people's national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution ; and from the people's national democratic revolution they must go direct to the socialist revolution, by-passing the stage of capitalist development.

To sum up, now that the resistance against US aggression, for national salvation has won total victory and our country has recovered independence, our country has been de facto reunified although this reunification is still incomplete. Our

present task is to complete it. Following our total triumph over US aggression the two zones will switch over from their two strategic tasks — the socialist revolution and socialist construction in the north and the people's national democratic revolution in the south — to only one common strategic task — the socialist revolution and socialist construction.

IV — THE SUBSTANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF COMPLETION OF NATIONAL REUNIFICATION

Dear comrades and friends,

At present, the two zones of our country have become reunified and have many things in common :

Concerning the leadership of the revolution of our people, it has always been assumed by a single and genuine Marxist-Leninist Party in both zones. This leadership has existed, been consolidated and strengthened over the past 45 years and more. Under the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, the August Revolution was successful, so was the resistance against the French colonialists, then against the US imperialists, and socialist construction in the north has scored remarkable successes.

As for the revolutionary forces, both zones have a national unity front based on the worker-peasant alliance ; both zones have the people's armed forces composed of three different categories, the regular army, the regional army, the militia and homeguards ; both zones have the people's security forces, and revolutionary administration, assuming the

historical function of proletarian dictatorship : to enforce the collective mastery of the people, repress the counter-reactionaries and build a socialist society.

In connection with the revolutionary tasks in this new stage, each zone must have its own share in national reunification and both zones must carry out together the socialist revolution and socialist construction at different levels. The north which is ahead of the south on the road of transition to socialism has now to do its best to help the south catch up with it, just as it, together with the south, brought the war of resistance against US aggression, for national salvation to total triumph.

As regards the people's aspirations and feelings, with the exception of a small number of people, our people in general wish for the earliest national reunification.

The emulation movement to fulfil the state plan in the north, and the meetings, demonstrations and emulation drives to step up production, economic rehabilitation and development among the south Vietnamese population of various social strata in these days in honour of the Political Consultative Conference have eloquently voiced such an earnest desire.

Nevertheless, at present the two zones still have some differences which should be done away with step by step in the revolutionary process.

Economically speaking, at present the north has two main economic sectors : the state-owned economy and the collective economy (the remaining individual economy is negligible), while the south has five economic sectors : state-owned

economy, collective economy, joint state-private economy, private capitalist economy, and individual economy. In the north, the socialist right of ownership in two forms — social ownership and collective ownership — of the main means of production and the socialist relations of production enjoy absolute predominance. In the south the socialist ownership of the means of production and the socialist relations of production have been established only recently. The economy of the north is planned while in the south economic planning has just begun and on a very small scale. The wage system, the tax system, the price and monetary policies of the two zones are not yet unified.

Concerning the social classes, in the north the classes of exploiters (capitalists and landlords) have been reformed. In north Viet Nam's present society there are the working class, the class of collective peasants and various segments of socialist intellectuals.

In the south, there are now the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie, the comprador capitalist class and remnants of the feudal landlord class. The individual peasants and petty bourgeois form the bulk of south Viet Nam's society.

On the state plane, although Viet Nam is one country, it is still nominally divided into two states : in the north there is the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam while in the south there is the Republic of South Viet Nam. In the north, there is the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. In the south, there is the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. The north has a national assembly while the south has no national assembly,

but an advisory council to the government. The north has a socialist constitution and legislation, while the south has no socialist constitution and legislation but only the programme of the National Front for Liberation and a number of regulations having the character of democratic laws promulgated by the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

Ideologically and culturally, in the north, Marxism-Leninism — the apex of human thought — is playing the leading role in society and the socialist culture imbued with a national and popular character is expanding. New-type, socialist men imbued with patriotism and proletarian internationalism and with socialist virtues (love for productive work, respect of public property, class love and the spirit of socialist co-operation, etc.) are in the making.

In the south, the ideology of President Ho Chi Minh and the Party has prevailed completely, thus generating a great fighting spirit among the cadres and people. Yet, on the other hand, in ideology and culture, evil US neo-colonialist influences and negative influences of the feudal ideology are still quite strong.

There are similarities between the north and the south, for the revolution in both zones has followed the same line of the Viet Nam Workers' Party. The present differences between the two zones mainly derive from the fact that the north has been liberated earlier and is ahead of the south in the socialist revolution. However, similarities are essential and decisive whereas differences are conditional and temporary.

The question now is to increase and perfect what has been unified and what is similar to the two zones, and at the same

time, to gradually do away with the differences and dissimilarities arising in the process of the socialist revolution and socialist construction. Such is the practical and far-reaching objective of the completion of national reunification on the basis of independence and socialism.

Such a task will be brought to fruition not only by blotting out the provisional military demarcation line (which, in fact, was already erased at the end of 1972), not only by the free movement of the people in both zones (this will be achieved step by step) nor only on the state plane. It is to complete the unity of the political and social systems in the two zones, more concretely speaking, of the economic structure, relations of production, social composition, state organization, constitution and legislation, culture and ideology, etc.

In the immediate future, we must step up national reunification on the state plane and the unification of economic and financial management so that the two zones can soon exchange mutual assistance, increase their potentials, and put to national use the labour force and natural resources of the whole country, in order to give a vigorous impulse to the socialist revolution.

In the whole process of completing national reunification, reunification on the state plane is the main link. We should bear this in mind and accomplish it satisfactorily which will facilitate the completion of national reunification. On the contrary, delaying or bungling it is likely to create difficulties and obstacles. For instance, in the absence of a reunified state there will be many difficulties in planning and developing the national economy throughout the country, in unifying

the national defence, in broadening democracy, upholding the people's right of being masters of their country, in ensuring the observance of laws, etc.

This does not mean that the north will stop and wait for the south. On the contrary, it must move forward vigorously in the socialist revolution and socialist construction to help the south to catch up with it. The south needs not discharge all the tasks of the people's national democratic revolution before carrying out the socialist revolution and socialist construction. It must make the most of all its advantages and of the experience of the north in socialist construction and set immediately to the tasks of the new stage.

To increase and perfect the similarities of the two zones, we must strengthen the Party's unified leadership of the people's revolution throughout the country, then proceed to the unification of the political programmes and regulations between the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, on which basis the Front's organizations will be unified, and the South Viet Nam Liberation Army and the Viet Nam People's Army must be merged into one under the same name, with the same duty and the same constitution, etc. We must continue consolidating the people's revolutionary administration in the south to shoulder the historic function of proletarian dictatorship. Both zones must fulfil satisfactorily socialist revolution and socialist construction, and try their best to imbue the people with patriotism and love of socialism, cultivate the sense for reunification of the nation and of the country, and eliminate wrong and backward ideas obstructing the completion of national reunification.

On the other hand, to level step by step the economic and social differences between the two zones, the south must gear its private and capitalist economy to advancing the national interests; gradually transform the private capitalist industry and commerce, agriculture, handicrafts and small trade along the socialist line and set up the economic sectors under the state and collective management or under joint state-private management. The survey and statistics of the economy, population, etc., must be pushed ahead in order to eventually achieve the planning of the national economy in the south. During that process, the north and the south will be brought closer together and become identical in terms of the component sectors of the economy, relations of production as well as social classes.

Economic unity will be very beneficial because the economies of the two zones will be able to complement each other. We shall enjoy favourable conditions to develop the strong points and remedy the weaknesses of each zone. The aggregate strength of the whole country will create great opportunities for dividing the land into specialized economic areas; redistributing the productive forces and social labour; stepping up socialist industrialization; carrying out an early improvement of economic management and the planning of the national economy throughout the country; pushing ahead production and the improvement of the people's living conditions; increasing exports, and expanding economic ties with foreign countries.

To erase the differences on the state plane, we propose a number of necessary measures and procedures.

The representatives of both zones should enter into consultation to reach unity of views on national reunification on the state plane by organizing general elections throughout the country to return a common National Assembly. The latter will meet to appoint the leading organs of the state and also a committee for drafting the constitution of reunified Viet Nam.

To erase the differences in ideology and culture between the two zones, in the north we must carry on the ideological work already laid down by the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Workers' Party; and at the same time we should examine the specific conditions in the south and determine the substance and objectives of the ideological and cultural revolution there. All this is aimed at bringing into full play the existing strong points and dealing with all the evils of US neo-colonialist ideology and culture, against all social evils left behind by neo-colonialism and the remnants of the feudal ideology, at eliminating illiteracy, instituting supplementary education and developing general education, impelling the movement of preventive medicine and a new mode of life, developing culture, science and technology, and building a national, popular and socialist culture as well as socialist-minded men and women in all the country.

V — THE URGENT PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED WITH A VIEW TO NATIONAL REUNIFICATION ON THE STATE PLANE

Comrades and friends,

To complete national reunification with the above-mentioned substance and objectives to take the whole country

onto the path of socialism, the key and immediate task is to achieve national reunification on the state plane.

Such a step is also to formalize national reunification.

"The basic question in any revolution is that of state power" (Lenin : *The Dual Power*). The existing states in the two zones are effective instruments to carry out the line and policies of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, and manifests our people's right of collective mastery. The functions of the state are not limited to administrative management and the maintenance of law and order. It must also play an important role in reforming the old society, building a new one, organizing and managing the material and cultural life of the society in order to ensure a constant rise in the people's living standard and the smooth development and quick rate of socialist transformation and construction.

The administrations in the two zones belong to the people, so to achieve reunification of the two zones is the work of the entire people and must be done by themselves.

The task of achieving national reunification on the state plane must be assumed by the people on a voluntary basis. Therefore, we propose the following steps and methods :

1. The present Political Consultative Conference aims at reaching unanimity of views on the objectives and substance of the completion of national reunification, on the importance and urgency of the issue and steps and methods to achieve national reunification on the state plane. The immediate and important measure is to organize general elections to a common national assembly for the entire country.

2. That election day will be a great festive day for our people as a whole. In the first place, we should decide its date. On what principles are the general elections to be held ? For example, will they be held on really democratic principles which are universal, one-man-one-vote, direct and secret ballot ? Experience in north Viet Nam shows that such principles are very sound.

Concerning the principle of universal ballot, all citizens regardless of nationality, sex, religion, cultural and professional standard, time of residence, from 18 years of age upward, have the right to vote ; and from 21 upward have the right to stand for the National Assembly. Women have the right to vote and to be candidates like men. Members of the People's Army have the right to vote and to run like any other citizen. Those who are mentally disturbed and those whose citizen rights have been denied by the court or by laws have no right to vote and stand for election.

Concerning the principle of one-man-one-vote, every citizen has the right to cast one ballot, all ballots having an equal value. Every electoral unit, every locality having the required population has the right to elect one deputy.

Concerning the principle of direct ballot, the people elect directly their deputies to the National Assembly, the supreme organ of state power. The deputies to the National Assembly must be necessarily elected by the people. There will be no nominated members. Each voter casts directly his ballot into the polling box and is not allowed to deputize for another to cast the ballot on his behalf.

Concerning the principle of secret ballot, each voter must himself (or herself) write the names of the candidates of his

(or her) choice on the ballot without being seen by anyone. This is aimed at guaranteeing the freedom of voters to elect their deputies. Illiterate and disabled voters may ask for the help of others in writing.

It is necessary to fix the total number of deputies to the National Assembly and the number of deputies for each zone of Viet Nam. According to the most recent census north Viet Nam has 24 million inhabitants. South Viet Nam, according to statistics of the former quisling regime, has about 20 million inhabitants. The latter figure is far from reliable. Therefore, we must immediately undertake a census in the south to serve effectively the general elections and the drawing up of state plans.

Constituencies will be constituted by provinces and cities. The heavily populated provinces and cities which must be represented by more deputies than the other localities can be divided into smaller electoral units. The number of deputies of each constituency will be decided by the regional organ in charge of election.

Concerning the organ presiding over and organizing the elections we propose that in the north it will be the Standing Committee of the National Assembly and in the south, the Advisory Council to the Provisional Revolutionary Government. The organ responsible for the elections throughout the country is the National Election Council. This council has the task of supervising the voting, summing up the election, issuing validation certificates to the elected and reporting the election returns to the National Assembly. Under the National Election Council, each zone of Viet Nam will set up its own election council.

In the north, the election to the National Assembly has become a routine. The situation in the south has its own characteristics which must be considered seriously and taken into account satisfactorily. It is necessary for the zonal Election Council to help the organ presiding over the elections in the zone to consider various aspects and make concrete decisions in the light of the characteristics of the south.

3. Concerning the first session of the future National Assembly, the Political Consultative Conference shall agree on the time for the convening of the National Assembly, the convening body and the site for the occassion.

Concerning the objectives and main items of business of the session, we propose that :

— The National Election Council report to the National Assembly on the returns of the general elections throughout the country and the National Assembly validate the elected deputies.

— The National Assembly hear a report on the draft constitution of reunified Viet Nam and elect the Constitution Drafting Committee of the National Assembly. At the same time, it shall decide when the National Assembly will discuss and vote the new Constitution.

— The National Assembly elect the leading state organs.

— The National Assembly decide on the name of the country, the national emblem, national colours, national anthem, and the capital city, without having to wait for the new Constitution.

— The National Assembly decide working regulations for the various state organs pending the new Constitution, etc.

This is, in brief, what we suggest about the steps, methods and regulations necessary to complete national reunification on the state plane. We wish to have your views on these questions.

The result of the Consultative Conference will be published in the two zones at a time to be agreed upon by the two delegations. It will be considered for ratification in the north by the Fifth National Assembly at its coming session in the report of the National Assembly Standing Committee of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. In the south, we propose that the result be considered for ratification by a representative and competent assembly (for example, the South Viet Nam People's Conference) in the report of the Advisory Council to the Government.

If the above questions are settled, we shall settle national reunification in a reasonable and fair manner, in keeping with the mass line and due regard to the role of the masses in the handling of state affairs. That is an equitable and democratic solution to the problem of reunification of the two states of Viet Nam in the present situation of our country. Such a solution is not only neat and sound but also meets the will of the masses. Our people and our friends surely will be gratified by such a solution.

Dear comrades and friends,

I have just expounded the general view of the northern delegation on the completion of national reunification to take the whole country onto the path of socialism, and also

our point of view on how to achieve national reunification on the state plane, a key task necessary to pave the way for the completion of national reunification in all respects.

In his Testament, President Ho Chi Minh said :

"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 in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof."

We have been translating into reality our beloved Uncle Ho's predictions.

Here ends my report.

Thank you for your attention.

PRINTED IN THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM