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JPRS 52097

4 January 1971

TRANSLATIONS ON NORTH VIETNAM

No. 844

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION (1945)

PARTS I AND II



JOINT PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH SERVICE

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[Parts I and II of book by the Historical Research Department of the Lao Dong Party Central Committee; Hanoi, Nhan Dan, Vietnamese, 27-31 August 1970]

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* This is a corrected reprint of the publication originally issued under this number and date.



PUBLICATIONS DATA

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the August Revolution and of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Party's Historical Research Department, which is directly subordinate to the Party Central Committee, compiled a volume entitled Cach Mang Thang Tam (1945) (The August Revolution of 1945), to be used as a study of our cadres and people.

The book will be published by Su That in the near future. Parts 1 and 2 are printed herewith to provide timely service to our readers.

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INTRODUCTION

The August Revolution began to explode on 14 August 1945, one day after the opening of the national conference of the party which decided to launch a general uprising to seize political power nationwide, and ended on 2 September 1945 when President Ho read the historic Manifesto of Independence and announced the establishment of the DRV.

The August Revolution was an extremely important event which signified a great turning point in the history of the Vietnamese people, and it was also a major milestone on the path of struggle for liberation from imperialism of oppressed peoples.

With the victory of the August Revolution, the working class and people of Vietnam for the first time seized political power throughout the country, and, for the first time, a worker-farmer state was established in Vietnam and a people's democratic system was born in Vietnam.

With the success of the August Revolution and the accompanying success of the resistance war against the aggressive French colonialists, the chains of world imperialism were snapped in one of their most vital areas. In the context of the Soviet victory over aggressive fascism, and along with the victory of the various nations which smashed the yoke of fascism in the world, Vietnam, through the victory of the August Revolution, helped to usher in the period of disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism.

The August Revolution crystallized the steadfast and unyielding tradition of struggle of a people with a history of thousands of years of combating aggressive feudal forces and of just under a 100 years of combating the yoke of rule of colonialism. The August Revolution was a result of 15 years of heroic struggle of the working class and people of Vietnam under the leadership of our party, headed by President Ho. During those 15 years, the period from September 1939 to March 1945 was the period of preparing for the general uprising, and the period from March to August 1945 was the period of progression from successful partial uprisings to a general uprising to seize political power throughout the country.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the August Revolution and of the founding of the DRV, we compiled this book entitled Cach Mang Thang Tam (1945) ["The August Revolution of 1945"]. It is composed of three parts:

PART I. How was the August Revolution prepared?

PART II. The full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement, and the August Revolution.

PART III. The character, significance, and experiences of the August Revolution.

It is hoped that the readers will provide their criticisms and observations so that we can continue more intensive research about the August Revolution and serve the party and the people more effectively in our research work.

Hanoi, 19 August 1970
The Party's Historical Research
Department, which is directly
subordinate to the Central Com-
mittee of the Vietnamese Lao
Dong Party.

PART I: HOW WAS THE AUGUST REVOLUTION PREPARED?

1. World War I and the New Programs and Policies of the Party

On September 1 1939, the German fascists attacked Poland, formally beginning World War II and pushing mankind into an unprecedentedly horrendous massacre. On 3 September, France and England declared war against the German fascists.

Right after they plunged into the war, the French imperialists brazenly suppressed the French Communist Party and the democratic and progressive movement in France and in the French colonies.

On 25 September 1939, the Daladier -- Reynaud reaction-ary government ordered the disbanding of the French Communist Party and the arrest of communists in France. Immediately thereafter, French colonial reactionary elements in Indochina issued a series of decisions dissolving democratic organizations and closing progressive newspapers. Actually, French colonial reactionary elements attacked the Indochinese Communist Party and the mass organizations under its leadership right after the outbreak of the war, without waiting for decrees and decisions. 1

Politically in Indochina, in addition to promulgating a general mobilization order, the French imperialists instituted a policy of fascistization, seeking to suppress and terrorize, essentially in the hope of wiping out our party, the leader of the Indochinese revolution. Governor General Catroux clearly revealed that insidious program in a speech to the Indochinese Council of Governments: "...we are conducting an all-sided and swift attack against communist organizations. It is necessary to annihilate the communists during this war in order for Indochina to be peaceful and stable and in order for it to be loyal to France. We have no right not to win. The world situation compels us to act without any sorrow." 2

The French imperialists furiously attacked our party in the cities and countryside but they devoted special emphasis to the major urban areas and the industrial regions such as Hanoi, Saigon, Hue, Vinh, Nam Dinh, Haiphong, Hon Gai and so forth.

They strengthened their repressive apparatus, established additional informer services and police posts, established rural police and urban security forces.3 In addition to the existing jails, the established many concentration camps labelled

"special worker camps" in order to incarcerate members of the communist party and patriots.⁴

Militarily, the French imperialists increased military conscription, built additional roads, airfields, and fortresses and built plants to manufacture ammunition and to repair aircraft and so forth in order to strengthen the defenses in Indochina.

Economically, the French imperialists increased taxes and requisitions, and expanded the use of state bonds and fund collections. They instituted a war time economic policy called "economic controls," severely controlling imports, controlling production and distribution, arbitrarily setting prices and so forth. All of this was intended to increase the exploitation of manpower and material power in Indochina to support the war of the fascists.⁵

All classes in Vietnamese society were harmed by the war time economic policies of the French imperialists:

The working class was very callously oppressed and exploited and severely controlled. All of the social laws promulgated in Indochina after the French Popular Front came to power were abrogated. By decision of the Indochinese Governor General on 10 April 1939, the working hours of workers increased from 60 to 72 hours per week. Wages were reduced. A number of workers were fired and without work. Some were mobilized to fight for the imperialists.

The farming class, in addition to having to pay high rents and heavy interest to the feudal landlords, also had to endure many calamities caused by the fascist imperialists: heavy taxation, expropriation of land, military and civilian conscription, market robbery, requisition of boats, vehicles, horses, and so forth; forceably made to grow jute instead of rice and to grow castor-oil plants instead of corn in order to supply the imperialists' war. Under the yoke of imperialism and feudalism, the life of the farmers, which had traditionally been miserable, became even more miserable.

The petty bourgeois class was also heavily exploited. Its standard of living declined and its life became erratic. Because of increases in licensees, the stagnation of trade, and the soaring cost of living, many small businessmen and owners of small enterprises went bankrupt. The wages of government employees were also reduced and the government employees had to work extra hours and often had to work Sundays. The work multiplied because some of the government employees were mobilized and the public agencies were unable to obtain addi-

tional people. Many intellectual workers such as writers and artists, journalists, and so forth were unable to find work and lived lives of deprivation and wandering. There were not enough schools for elementary and high school students or college students and the students worried about being mobilized to go into battle to die for the imperialists.

The national bourgeois class, except for a few who took advantage of the war to become rich by speculating and hoarding and so forth, mostly suffered a decline because of heavy defense taxes, because of the imperialists' policy of requisitioning transportation facilities, and because of the reduced power of consumption of the people. Some of the national bourgeoisie went bankrupt.

The landlord class, except for some large landlords who had political power and who took advantage of the war to enrich themselves by making high interest loans, buying low and selling high, and confiscating land from the farmers and small landlords and so forth, also suffered considerable losses among the small and medium-sized landlords because of the imperialists' policies of taxation, and of collecting paddy and buying cereals at cheap prices. Some small landlords were seriously hurt.

The Vietnamese people were extremely angry under the fascist system of the French imperialists. Many struggles took place in many areas of our country. In major cities such as Hanoi, Haiphong, and Saigon, workers struck in order to demand that their standard of living be maintained and to oppose Governor General Catoux's policy of depriving the workers of rights they had won during the period of the Popular Front. Many struggles to boycott the market and help the "Franco-Vietnamese Brotherhood" association and to protest the imperialist war took place under every form, such as distributing leaflets, holding rallies, and demonstrating. Farmers throughout the country, particularly in Nam Bo, struggled furiously against high taxes, and against military and civilian conscription and against the war and so forth. There was also an anti-imperialist movement among the enlisted men.⁶

World War II and the terrorist policy of the French imperialists put an end to the pervasive democratic campaign launched and led by our party between 1936 and 1939. The issue of the survival of our people had been raised in a very urgent way. In order for the Vietnamese revolution to develop and succeed, it was necessary to hold aloft the slogan of combating imperialist war and liberating the people.

In September 1939, when World War II broke out, our party directed party committees at all levels and cadres and party members operating legally and quasi-legally to quickly become clandestine and to maintain contact with the masses. It directed them to maintain installations and forces in the cities but, at the same time, to switch the center of operations to the countryside, transforming the countryside into a large and vast base for the revolution.

Immediately after the Munich Conference in September 1939, the Tonkin Regional Committee decided to withdraw some cadres into clandestine operations and to emphasize the development of positions in the countryside as a precaution against vigorous terrorism, particularly in the cities. When the war broke out, the Annam Regional Committee also promptly advocated that cadres and party members pull back into clandestine operations or switch areas of operation and so forth.⁷ In several areas, such as Quang Tri Province, the provincial party committees decided to have some cadres and party members move away and to shift agencies up to the rural and mountain areas.

On 29 September 1939, the Party Central Committee sent a communique to all levels of the party organization, sketching out the first details of the reorientation. The bulletin read: "The situation in Indochina will eventually progress to the matter of national liberation" and, therefore, every facet of the organizational and struggle program of the party must change in order to adapt to the new situation and task.

Two months after World War I broke out, the Sixth Conference of the Party Central Committee met at Ba Diem in Gia Dinh Province of Nam Bo. It was chaired by Nguyen Van Cu, the Secretary General of the party and attended by Le Duan, Phan Dang Luu, and Vo Van Tan and so forth. It analyzed the situation and affirmed that the two basic tasks of the Vietnamese bourgeois democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism announced in 1930 by the party in its Political Program were correct. However, in the context of the outbreak of world war, of the implementation of an extremely cruel fascist system by the Indochinese ruling elements, of the Japanese fascists' invasion and occupation of Indochina, and of the serious trampling of the lives of all our people, "the peoples of Indochina have no other path but that of overthrowing the French imperialists and combating all foreign aggression, whether white or yellow, in order to liberate themselves."⁸ The conference highlighted the task of national liberation:

"All issues of the revolution, even the land issue, must be directed toward that objective in order to be resolved,"⁹ and laid down the requirement to "prepare to move ahead to violence and to a revolution of national liberation."¹⁰

In order to concentrate all capabilities on serving the main task of combating the imperialists' war and winning national independence, the conference advocated that the land revolution slogan be temporarily discarded and replaced with the slogan: confiscate land belonging to the French imperialists and belonging to the landlords who betray the national interests. The conference decided to establish the Indochinese Anti-Imperialist United National Front to replace the Indochinese Democratic Front in order to unite all strata, classes, and peoples in Indochina and, based on an alliance between the workers and peasants, "the two main forces of the revolution,"¹¹ to direct the thrust of the revolution at the main enemy of the people: imperialism and its henchmen. The slogan on establishing a worker-peasant soviet, which was enunciated in 1930, was also replaced by a slogan on the establishment of an "Indochinese Democratic Republic Coalition Government."¹²

The conference decided on specific programs and measures relating to the party in order to consolidate it in every respect. The conference made the following appeal to the entire party: "During this extremely serious time, the duties assigned to us by history are very heavy...Let us close ranks! Let a thousand people be as one!"¹³

Acutely conscious that the contradiction between the Indochinese people and the aggressive imperialists was the main contradiction the conference resolved to hold aloft the banner of national liberation and to closely combine the interests of the Vietnamese revolution with those of the world revolution. The Sixth Conference of the Party Central Committee signified a correct reorientation in strategic guidance and ushered in a new period in the history of the Vietnamese revolution.

The resolution of the Sixth Conference was disseminated to party committees at many levels. As a result, the movement in many areas was maintained and developed despite fierce terrorism. Anti-imperialism organizations were established in many provinces, particularly in Nam Bo. The party organization in Nam Bo established propaganda units which specialized in making speeches in densely populated areas. It organized rallies to combat military conscription in provinces such as My Tho, Cho Lon, Vinh Long, and so forth. The Anti-Imperialism United National Front was extended from the villages to the provinces and preparations were made to extend it to the entire

region. In Nam Bo, 17 provinces established self-defense units. The farmer proselyting program developed vigorously. The military proselyting program, in particular, achieved many objective successes.¹⁴ As for party development, between June and October 1940, party membership increased 60 percent despite fierce terrorism by the imperialists.

The constantly spreading and increasingly severe war among the various imperialists groups made the Vietnamese people acutely aware of the weakness of the French imperialists. On 10 May 1940, the German fascists army began its offensive into France. In just a little over a month, the French bourgeois reactionary elements declared that "Paris is undefended," and surrendered to the German fascists. The two million French troops were disarmed by Hitler's army and 150 French generals were incarcerated. A German lackey puppet government headed by the traitorous Marshall Petain, was established at Vichy. France lived painfully under the iron heel of German fascism and its henchmen. Even the French imperialists were shaken to the foundation. The Indochinese economy was in a state of chaos. The surrender of the French imperialists "made the world aware of the rottenness, weakness, cowardice, and disgraceful betrayal" by the French reactionary bourgeois class of the French people.¹⁵

The Japanese fascist imperialists, one of the principal plotting imperialists in the unleashing of World War II for the purpose of invading and occupying colonies and dividing the world market, took advantage of France's loss to Germany and immediately jumped into Indochina, an attractive piece of bait which they had been looking at for some time.

On 22 September 1940, the Japanese fascists moved troops in to attack Lang Son and, at the same time, landed 6,000 troops at Do Son near Haiphong. After several minor tests of strength in the Sino-Vietnamese border area, the French Governor Decoux quickly followed the example of his cohorts in France and knelt down and surrendered, giving Indochina to Japan.

After that, the Vietnamese people were jointly ruled by two enemies: the French fascists and the Japanese fascists. In view of that situation, the Vietnamese people had no other alternative but to rise up and struggle for their own salvation. When the Japanese troops attacked Lang Son, the French troops fled over the long road from Bac Son to Thai Nguyen. The governmental system of the enemy in areas that the fleeing French forces went through was violently shaken. Taking advantage of that opportunity, on 27 September 1940, the people of Bac Son, under the leadership of the local party organization, promptly rose up and disarmed the French remnant forces in order to arm themselves, fighting the French and driving out the Japanese.

Both Japan and France were terrified by the uprising. Because of their reactionary character, the French colonialists reached an accommodation with the Japanese in order to be free to suppress the Vietnamese revolution. For its part, Japan was also gauging its strength and realized that it was not yet beneficial to overthrow the French colonialists. Therefore, it rapidly reached an agreement with France and used France to suppress the forces involved in the uprising.

The Bac Son Uprising failed because the conditions for victory were not yet ripe.. However, it exposed the savage designs of the Japanese and French fascist clique and created the first people's armed force organized and led by our party -- a force which later developed into the Vietnamese National Salvation Army¹⁶ -- serving as the nucleus for the development of the Vo Nhai-Bac Son revolutionary base area.

The Bac Son Uprising became famous throughout the country. It awakened the masses and ushered in a new period in the Vietnamese revolution, a period of combining political struggle with armed struggle and armed uprisings to seize political power.

Besides sending troops in to attack North Vietnam, the Japanese fascists encouraged and helped the Thai armed forces to attack Cambodia. The French colonialists forced the Vietnamese people (particularly the people of Nam Bo) and the Khmer people to go out to the front to serve as cannon fodder for them. Unable to endure a life of slavery and unwilling to die for the French colonialists, the people of Nam Bo and the Vietnamese troops which were about to be sent to the front struggled furiously. Between March and July 1940, many conferences of the party in Nam Bo discussed the matter of preparing forces for an uprising in order to change the Franco-Thai war into a revolutionary civil war. At that time, Nguyen Van Cu, Le Hong Phong, Le Duan, and a number of other Central Committee comrades were arrested. The Nam Bo Party Organization sent Phan Dang Luu, a member of the Party Central Committee, to the north to attend the Seventh Conference of the Central Committee in order to discuss the common task of the Indochinese revolution and have the Central Committee issue a directive on the matter of launching an uprising in South Vietnam.

In November 1940, the Seventh Conference of the Party Central Committee met in Dinh Bang Village (Tu Son District, Bac Ninh Province). The meeting included Truong Chinh, Phan Dang Luu, Hoang Van Thu, Hoang Quoc Viet, and Tran Dang Ninh

and so forth. The conference made it clear that the aggression of the Japanese fascists and the surrender of the French colonialists had placed the Indochinese people in a situation of double jeopardy. The conference affirmed the correctness of the decision to reorientate strategic guidance, highlight the task of national liberation, and temporarily withdraw the land revolution slogan of the Sixth Conference of the Central Committee. Under the light of the new situation created by the Japanese fascists' invasion of Indochina and by the Bac Son Uprising, the conference affirmed that the enemy of the Vietnamese revolution at that time was Japanese and French fascism. Therefore, the conference decided to change the Indochinese Anti-Imperialism United Front into the United National Front Against the French and Japanese Fascists in Indochina.

The major success of the Seventh Conference of the Central Committee was in placing the matter of armed uprising on the agenda of the Indochinese revolution. The realities of the Bac Son Uprising made our party acutely aware that under the two layers of oppression and exploitation by the Japanese and French fascists, "a full-blown revolutionary movement definitely will rise up, and the party must prepare to take over the sacred tasks of leading the oppressed peoples of Indochina in armed violence to seize their freedom and independence." 17 Although our party was "not yet confronted by a situation of face-to-face revolution," 18 in the context of the conditions in the world and at home at that time, our country's revolution could break out by means of local uprisings in areas where this was possible (such as in Bac Son) and lead to a general uprising to seize political power nationwide. The conference decided to establish a provisional Central Committee and to establish liaison with the Communist International and the overseas component of the party.

The conference also discussed and resolved two burning issues: 1. the matter of developing the influence of the Bac Son Uprising, and 2. the recommendation of the Nam Bo Regional Party Committee for an uprising.

As for the first matter, after hearing Tran Bang Ninh report, the conference decided to maintain the Bac Son armed forces, to establish guerrilla units, to use the form of armed operations when necessary to combat terrorism and to protect the lives and property of the people, to develop revolutionary bases, and eventually to establish large guerrilla base areas with the Bac Son-Vo Nhai area as the center -- areas under the direct command of the Central Committee. Hoang Van Thu was given the responsibility to carry out this resolution.

As for the second matter, after hearing Phan Dang Luu, a member of the Party Central Committee report on the situation in Nam Bo, the conference directed the Nam Bo Regional Party Committee to halt preparations for launching an uprising because of the failure of the Bac Son Uprising and the absence of subjective and objective conditions in Nam Bo for guaranteeing the success of an uprising. The Nam Bo Party organization would have to wait for Tonkin and Trung Bo before launching an uprising in accordance with an overall plan of the Central Committee. Phan Dang Luu was given the responsibility for transmitting this decision of the Central Committee to the party organization in the south.

But when Phan Dang Luu arrived in Saigon, the order for an uprising had already gone down to the local areas, the time for launching the uprising had arrived, and there was no way to stop things. Therefore, on 23 January 1940, the Nam Ky [Cochin-China] uprising erupted in keeping with the pre-determined plan of the regional party committee.

The entire Nam Bo countryside shook from the power of the offensive uprising of the revolutionary masses. The enemy administration in a number of townships and districts was demoralized and routed. The revolutionary administrations established in those areas implemented democratic rights, protected order, and meted out punishments to the counter-revolutionary elements and so forth.

The masses involved in the uprising fought very courageously for a month but were suppressed in an extremely savage manner by the French colonialists in Indochina. They used 20 airplanes to bomb areas containing the uprising masses. Many villages were burnt and tens of thousands of people were killed. Petain's mad-like triggermen at Ba Diem killed everyone they met. An extremely large number of people were arrested, and the enemy strung steel wire through the hands or feet and threw them into the sea.

The Nam Bo uprising failed because it took place before conditions for the victory of the Vietnamese revolution had ripened and before the compatriots of Tonkin and Trung Bo were able to rise up in response.

On 13 January 1941, before the bloody terrorism of the people of Nam Bo by the French imperialists had ended, soldiers, under the command of Doi Cung, spontaneously rose up to attack and occupy the two posts of Cho Rang and Do Luong, and then to move toward Vinh. This uprising was not under the leadership of our party and it did not have the participa-

tion of a large number of the masses. However, as soon as the uprising by the soldiers occurred, our party appealed to the masses to eagerly support it. However, the Do Luong uprising was extinguished rapidly by the imperialists.

The two uprisings of Bac Son and Nam Ky and the uprising by the soldiers at Do Luong were not successful but were "shots signalling a national uprising, the first step in the armed struggle of the peoples of Indochina."¹⁹

2. President Ho Chi Minh Comes Home to Directly Lead the Revolution. New Policies of the Party Are Developed in Every Respect.

After a long period of operating abroad and in view of the great changes in the situation, President Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the party and the people, returned home on 8 February 1941 to directly lead the Vietnamese revolution. He opened a training class for cadres, founded on a pilot basis the Viet Minh Front in order to assemble all patriotic strata of people into the anti-imperialism and national salvation ranks, published Vietnam Doc Lap ["Independent Vietnam"], the propaganda organ of the Front, and wrote propaganda and training documents, including documents written in a concise, brief, and easily intelligible style. He established an agency at Pac Bo, Ha Quang District, Cao Bang Province. His pilot project activities produced good results. In just a short period of time, the people of Cao Bang Province enthusiastically joined national salvation organizations. On the basis of that, Ho Chi Minh organized para-military forces, conducted military training, and developed Cao Bang Province into a large revolutionary base. Ho said: "The large base of Cao Bang will create great aspirations for our country's revolution. Cao Bang has had a successful movement and it is close to the border. It is very advantageous to use it as a base for international liaison. However, it is necessary to expand from Cao Bang Province to Thai Nguyen Province and farther down in order to be able to make contact with the entire country. By joining the movement to Thai Nguyen Province and the entire country, when we launch an armed struggle we can take the offensive when times are favorable and maintain our position when times are difficult."²⁰

As a representative of the Communist International, Ho Chi Minh convened the Eighth Conference of the Party Central Committee at Pac Bo between 10 and 19 May 1941. The conference was composed of Ho Chi Minh, Hoang Van Thu, Phung Chi Kien, Truong Chinh, Hoang Quoc Viet, Pham Van Dong, Hoang Van Hoan, and Vu Anh and so forth, and was chaired by Ho Chi Minh.

The conference analyzed the origin and future prospects of World War II, observing with great foresight that the German fascists would attack the Soviet Union, and that the war in the Pacific would break out, that the war unleashed by the fascist imperialists would cause a hideous massacre of mankind but would weaken the imperialists and rapidly develop the world revolutionary movement, that the Allied camp against the fascists, the pillar of which was the Soviet Union, definitely would be victorious, and that the fascist camp definitely would fail. "If the last imperialist war gave birth to the Soviet Union, a socialist country, this imperialist war will give birth to many socialist countries, and, as a consequence, revolution will succeed in many countries."²¹ The conference also observed that the Indochinese revolution was a part of the world revolution and, at the time, a part of the democratic movement against fascism. It also observed that the fate of the peoples of Indochina is closely linked to the fate of the Soviet Union and also to the Chinese revolution.

As for the tasks of the Vietnamese revolution, after analyzing the contradictions within society and recognizing that the contradictions between the Vietnamese people and the French and Japanese fascist imperialists were the principal contradictions requiring urgent resolution, the conference approved the resolutions of the Sixth and Seventh Conferences of the Central Committee on reorientating strategic guidance and highlighting the task of national liberation. The conference set forth numerous specific programs and policies designed to hold higher the banner of national liberation and to motivate all strata of people to move ahead on the revolutionary front in order to win independence and freedom. The conference emphasized: "At this time, the interests of elements and of classes must be subordinated to the survival of the nation. At this time, if we fail to resolve the matter of national liberation and if we fail to demand independence and freedom for the entire nation, not only will the entire nation and all the people continue to be subjugated but the rights of elements and classes will not be forthcoming for tens of thousands of years."²²

In order to assemble more forces and strata of people against the main enemy of the nation, the French and Japanese fascists and their clique of henchmen, the conference, at the recommendation of Ho Chi Minh, decided that henceforth the United National Front Against French and Japanese Fascism would be called the Vietnam Doc Lap Dong Minh ["Vietnamese Independence League"], abbreviated Viet Minh. All patriotic anti-imperialist mass organizations would be called "national salvation associations" (such as the National Salvation

Workers' Association, the National Salvation Farmers' Association, the National Salvation Youth Association, the National Salvation Womens' Association, the National Salvation Association of Elderly People, the National Salvation Childrens' Association, the National Salvation Soldiers Association, and so forth). On 19 May 1941, the Viet Minh Front was officially born, flying high the red flag with yellow stars appealing to all the people to fight the French, drive out the Japanese, and save the country. Henceforth, the entire movement of our people against French and Japanese fascism would be called the Viet Minh Movement. The name symbolized the patriotism and stalwart determination of our people, and it signified the mobilization of the national spirit of our country's masses, and embodied the policy of great national solidarity, terrifying the enemy.

In order to further the divide the ranks of the landlord class, the conference affirmed the need to continue the program of temporarily shelving the land revolution slogan and of only confiscating land belonging to imperialists and Vietnamese traitors. The conference set forth additional slogans of "reducing rents and taxes, redividing land, and eventually achieving land for the tiller."

In regard to the revolutionary methods of recapturing independence and national sovereignty, which had been sketched out in a preliminary fashion by the Seventh Conference of the Central Committee in November 1946, the Eighth Conference, taking a comprehensive and profound look, observed that in order for our country's revolution to win victory it would have to employ "armed uprisings."²³ Therefore, the conference said that "preparing for the uprising is the central task of our party and our people during the present period."²⁴ In order for the uprising to succeed, it would be necessary to have all of the subjective and objective conditions, and to select the right revolutionary opportunity. Those conditions were:

1. A national salvation front extending throughout the country.
2. A readiness on the part of the people, who could no longer live under the rule of the Japanese and French fascists, to sacrifice their lives, struggle and rise up to seize political power.
3. An extreme economic, political, and military crisis for the ruling camp in Indochina.

4. Objective conditions favoring an uprising by the Indochinese people such as a great victory of the Chinese forces over the Japanese forces, an outbreak of a revolution in France or Japan, a great victory by the democratic camp in the Pacific, a great victory by the Soviet Union over the aggressive fascist forces, and feverish revolutions by the colonies of France and Japan and so forth.

However, based on the concrete conditions of our country and on the experiences of the Nghe Tinh Soviet and of the Bac Son and Nam Ky uprisings, the conference observed that when the opportunity arrived, 'we can, with our existing forces, lead a partial uprising in individual localities and we can also achieve victory and pave the way for a large general uprising.'²⁵

The thinking guiding the partial uprisings to seize political power on a local basis followed by a general uprising to seize political power nationally had been enunciated by the Seventh Conference of the Central Committee. It was concretely developed by this conference. This was the innovation of our party in adapting the Marxist-Leninist theory on armed uprising to the concrete circumstances of our country.

Our party had earlier posited the matter of nationalism within an overall Indochinese framework. Now, the Eighth Conference of the Party Central Committee totally expressed the issue of nationalism within the framework of each of the countries -- Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos -- in the spirit of a mutually dependent and closely interrelated national liberation revolution of the peoples of these three countries goading and helping one another to achieve victory. Thus, the conference simultaneously combated the enemy scheme to divide the three nations and enabled two friendly peoples, the Khmer people and the Lao people, to develop their independence and autonomy and to actively contribute to the fight against French and Japanese fascism, the common enemy of the three peoples, in order to achieve independence and democracy.

The conference devoted special attention to the matter of party development because the party is the force which leads the revolution, the nucleus of the all-people solidarity block, and the chief factor assuring victory in the national liberation movement. The party recognized that there was a very significant shortage of cadres in the party and a scarcity of proletarian elements within it, that the Vietnamese revolutionary movement was not developing uniformly, and that the farmers' and rural movement was stronger than the workers' and urban movement and so forth. Therefore, the resolution of the conference set forth the task of urgently training cadres and

increasing the proletarian membership in the party, and of "giving priority to mobilizing the workers in our party's program to organize the masses."²⁶ Although the party shifted its center of operations to the countryside, using the countryside in the development of large revolutionary bases (first the development of the large Cao Bang base and of the large Bac Son-Vo Nhai base) with the resultant emphasis on the development of the movement in the countryside, in both the delta and mountainous areas of the countryside, the party also needed to emphasize the development of the movement in the urban areas, industrial areas, factories, mines, and plantations. "We must elevate the workers' movement and make it the vanguard movement."²⁷

The conference officially elected a new Central Committee with Truong Chinh as the Secretary General. It also elected a Central Committee Standing Committee composed of Truong Chinh, Hoang Van Thu, and Hoang Quoc Viet in order to take responsibility for day by day leadership.

The Eighth Conference of the Central Committee was of great historical significance and was decisive to the victory of the August Revolution which followed. The resolutions of the conference perfected the reorientation of the strategic guidance and the new policies of the party set forth in the Sixth and Seventh Conferences of the Party Central Committee. The national liberation banner was emphasized by our party more than ever before. The Viet Minh Front was born. The matter of preparing for an armed uprising became the central task. The development of the armed forces and of large revolutionary bases was given impetus.

Right after the Eighth Conference of the Party Central Committee, Nguyen Ai Quoc (under the name for Ho Chi Minh), on 6 June 1941, sent an appeal for solidarity to all the people, asking them to place national interests above all others in order to concentrate the forces on driving out the French and Japanese and on securing independence and freedom. The letter read:

"Comrades! Let us, following the great example of the Chinese people, organize national salvation associations for combating the French and combating the Japanese.

"Fathers and elder brothers! Esteemed elder brothers and fighters! It is hoped that you will follow the example of the elderly persons during the time of the Tran Dynasty. Confronted by an invasion by the Nguyen pirates, they enthusiastically exhorted their children to participate in the national salvation undertaking.

"Patriotic wealthy men! Workers, farmers, soldiers!
Young people, women, workers, government employees, small businessmen!

"At this time, the interests of national liberation are higher than ever before. We must unite in order to overthrow the imperialists and the Vietnamese traitors and in order to save the nation from disaster."

This letter profoundly moved the spirit of nationalism and patriotism of all strata of our people.

One month after the Eighth Conference of the Party Central Committee, there was a major change in the situation of the World War. As anticipated by the conference, on 22 June 1941, Hitler broke his pledge and moved troops in to attack the Soviet Union, forcing the Soviet Union to carry out a war of national defense.

A match of strength took place between the two systems: the socialist system, born more than 20 years ago and the fascist system, a product of capitalism which had grown old and was dying. The Soviet Union allied itself with England and the United States²⁸ and the democratic forces in the world to form the Allied camp against German, Italian and Japanese fascism. At that point, the nature of the World War changed: having been a war between two imperialist groups, it became a war between the democratic forces and the fascist forces in the world. If, previously the national liberation campaign in Vietnam was a part of the world revolution against imperialist war, it now became a part of the world democratic movement against aggressive fascism.

The World War constantly spread and became increasingly severe. In Europe, Hitler's army made the supreme effort, using every modern facility and every savage trick. It gradually probed deeply into the Soviet Union, occupying a major part of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Moldavia and Donbass, besieging Leningrad, and threatening even Moscow. Given the balance of forces between the Soviet Union and Germany at that time, the Soviet army had to temporarily go on the defensive.

In Asia, as Ho Chi Minh and the Party Central Committee had predicted, on 8 December 1941, the Japanese fascists made a new attack, hitting Pearl Harbor by surprise, officially declaring war against the United States and England and unleashing the war in the Pacific. Under the impetus of their offensive, the Japanese fascists seized and occupied American,

British and Dutch colonies in the Pacific, the Far East and Southeast Asia. As for Indochina, the French colony, the Japanese had actually seized it in the fall of 1940.

The French fascists revealed an attitude of surrender with regard to the Japanese militarists and fascists. The French fascists, on the one hand, intensified their repression and terrorism of the Vietnamese people, and, on the other hand, resorted to many tactics of pretended humaneness in the hope of buying off and deceiving the Vietnamese people. For example, in regard to our people in general, they adopted the following slogans: "Work, family, and fatherland," "Franco-Vietnamese restoration," and "national revolution." They adopted the slogan "be healthy in order to provide defense" in regard to our youth and so forth.

Given this situation, the only correct program of our party was to expose every scheme and tactic of the Japanese and French fascists and to advance the revolutionary movement.

The great Cao Bang revolutionary base was led by President Ho and Pham Van Dong, Vo Nguyen Giap, Hoang Van Hoan, and Vu Anh and so forth. The great Bac Son-Vo Nhai base was directly under the leadership of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee. By decision of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, a headquarters for the National Salvation forces and the Bac Son-Vo Nhai base was established, comprising Phung Chi Kien, Luong Van Chi, and Chu Van Tan, with Phung Chi Kien as the commander.

Having been informed by Cong, an A.B. element, the French colonialists mobilized a large force and launched a sweep operation into the Bac Son area with the aim of blocking the comrades of the Central Committee from returning from the Eighth Conference to the delta, and of annihilating the forces of the National Salvation Army and the revolutionary movement in Bac Son-Vo Nhai. The command of the base mobilized a contingent to protect the Central Committee comrades on their return to the delta and, at the same time, prepared to combat terrorism. However, confronted by the ever-tightening encirclement of the enemy, in mid-July in 1941, a majority of the command advocated the movement of most of the armed forces to the Sino-Vietnamese border area in order to build a new base, leaving behind a small element under the command of Chu Van Tan to continue operating in Vo Nhai, Thai Nguyen Province. The element which withdrew toward Cao Bang was ambushed by the enemy as it passed through Na Ri in Bac Can and heavily destroyed. Phung Chi Kien sacrificed his life in battle. Luong Van Chi was arrested by the enemy and sacrificed his life in the Cao Bang Jail.

With their objective no longer in Bac Son, the enemy troops gradually shifted to conduct a sweep operation down into Vo Nhai. Guerrilla warfare raged there continuously for an eight month period from July 1941 until February 1942. The enemy troops conducted very fierce search and sweep operations, attempting to detect and destroy our armed forces. At the same time, they herded the people into fascist-style concentration camps at Na Phao, Dinh Ca, Lang Giua, and Dong En in order to implement their scheme to "dry up the water in order to catch the fish." In view of that situation, the National Salvation Army platoon stationed at Vo Nhai launched a guerrilla war to wear down the enemy forces and maintain our forces under extremely difficult conditions. The gunfire of eight months of guerrilla warfare stimulated the revolutionary movement throughout the country and helped in a small and practical way to support the national defense war of the Soviet Union against aggressive fascism.

Because of the very savage terrorism conducted by the enemy and the fact that the revolutionary movement in the country had not at that time become powerful -- the masses in Bac Son-Vo Nhai had not been mobilized vigorously to carry out a political and armed struggle -- ,after eight months of fighting, the National Salvation Army withdrew from the enemy encirclement in many directions. A large part moved up to the Vietnam-China border in order to reorganize and refit themselves with weapons. One part dispersed among the people, carrying out armed propaganda activities and creating bases among the masses. This element which remained behind created fairly broad bases in Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang provinces, contributing to the favorable conditions for the later uprising.

The eight months of guerrilla combat in Bac Son-Vo Nhai indicated that our people, under the two yokes of Japanese and French fascism, were completely capable, under the leadership of our party, of establishing a large revolutionary base area in the rural and mountain areas and of conducting a prolonged guerrilla fight in order to annihilate and wear down the imperialist armed forces which enjoyed an absolute preeminence in regard to force levels and equipment. In order to accomplish this, the guerrilla forces had to have a thoroughly revolutionary spirit, had to fight heroically, shrewdly, and resiliently in accordance with the correct political line of the party, and had to have a broad mass base in order to operate and develop. The law of guerrilla warfare is to rely on the masses, to simultaneously fight and develop the forces, to be prolific, mobile, and flexible, to change ceaselessly -- sometimes concentrating and sometimes dispersing -- , and to

Constantly maintain the attack initiative. Guerrilla forces must cleverly combine military activities with political activities, and military operations with propaganda activities and the organization of the masses, the elimination of puppet officials, the elimination of villains, and the implementation of enemy proselyting activities and so forth.

After the war in the Pacific erupted, the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee, on 21 December 1941, issued a communique entitled "The War in the Pacific and the Urgent Responsibility of the Party" in which it analyzed the reasons that the Japanese fascists had unleashed the war in the Pacific, and the expectations of victory of the democratic forces and the inevitable defeat of the fascist elements. The communique defined the principles of action in the event that the Allied forces moved into Indochina. As for the Chinese Kuomintang Party, we allied with them to fight the Japanese and French fascists based on the principle of "equality and mutual aid"²⁹ and made them realize that "their entrance into Indochina to help the Indochinese revolution would help them,"³⁰ and that by their joining with the people of Indochina to defeat the Japanese they would be destroying the Japanese threat to China, and that they could not enter Indochina in order to subjugate it. As for the British and Americans, if they provided assistance to the Indochinese revolution, we would be able to allow them to enjoy some economic benefits in Indochina, but if they helped DeGaulle to restore the rule of the French imperialists in Indochina, we would resolutely oppose them and continue to fight for our independence. Wherever the Allied troops went, the local area would have an uprising, establish a people's revolutionary government, and then, under the name of that government, negotiate with them. We did not have any illusion that the entrance into Indochina of Chiang Kai-shek or the British and American troops would bring back our freedom. In our struggle for independence, we naturally had to seek allies, even if the allies were temporary, unstable, and conditional. However, the restoration of independence and freedom had to be achieved by us on our own.

The communique also criticized the "leftist" deviations of some local party organizations which had the opinion that when the "war broke out, and the Chinese forces entered Vietnam, we would immediately have sufficient conditions for a national uprising to seize political power,"³¹ and which, as a consequence recommended struggle and organizational methods and forms relevant to direct revolution. The communique stated: "Conditions are not yet ripe for an uprising in Indochina"³² but where the conditions are ripe, "the party organization can immediately command the masses to rise up and seize political power and to establish a local provisional revolutionary government"³³ in order to facilitate an eventual general uprising.

As for the new task, the communique emphasized the need to push ahead with the development of the armed forces and spelled out specific rules of action for guerrilla units.

Enlightened by the lines and policies of the party, the large revolutionary base areas of Cao Bang and Bac Son-Vo Nhai developed stably, vigorously, and rapidly. The Viet Minh movement developed broadly and rapidly from several pilot areas in Cao Bang province in early 1941. The movement of political and military studies grew very vigorously. At the end of 1941, in accordance with a directive from Ho Chi Minh, an armed unit composed of 12 fighters was established. This unit had the task of protecting the leadership agencies of the party, of consolidating and maintaining communications, and of carrying out propaganda activities and national salvation self-defense training. In late 1941 and early 1942, in many North Vietnamese provinces and in areas under the direct leadership of the Central Committee there appeared National Salvation Associations of the Viet Minh Front (such as in Thai Nguyen, Hanoi, Ha Dong, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, Hung Yen, Ha Nam, Phu Tho, Son Tay, Vinh Yen, Phuc Yen, Hai Duong, Bac Can, Tuyen Quang, Hoa Binh, Quang Yen, Thanh Hoa, and Quang Binh and so forth). In Nam Bo, our comrades in 1942 received a directive from the Central Committee to establish the Viet Minh Front but were only able to organize the front in Saigon, My Tho, Gia Dinh, Vinh Long, and so forth. Our comrades in Gia Dinh, My Tho, Tra Vinh, and Tan An and so forth continued to stay close to the masses and to organize quasi-legal associations such as plowing groups, transplanting groups, roofing associations, treatment groups, and so forth. However, because of the severe terrorism following the Nam Ky Uprising, the movement did not develop broadly or vigorously.

In 1941 and in 1942, the workers' movement encountered very many difficulties but the bases in some of the important enterprises were maintained, and the National Salvation Workers' Association continued to develop in the working villages in the city proper and in the outskirts of Hanoi. Struggles of workers demanding higher wages and improved working conditions and opposing the war and the cruel tactics of the French and Japanese fascists occurred in many areas.

In the countryside, along with the guerrilla war which was launched in Bac Son-Vo Nhai, the struggle movement of the farmers grew more intense. The farmers in Bac Ninh, Phuc Yen,

Ha Dong, Bac Giang, Thai Binh, Vinh Yen, and Phu Tho and so forth carried out struggles to demand that public land be divided, to oppose the raising of jute in place of rice, to oppose market robbery, and to oppose the low prices for peanuts and castor-oil plants.

In Trung Bo, the armed movement, which broke out at Ngoc Trao, Thanh Hoa Province and which temporarily retrogressed in 1941, was restored in a number of local areas. In Thua Thien Province, there were many struggles by farmers in 1942 and 1943 demanding that public land be re-divided. The movement in Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces was subjected to very barbarous terrorism on many occasions but the bases survived. In February 1942, many rallies and demonstrations by farmers in Quang Nam Province (Que Son and Tam Ky districts) took place with as many as 500 people using crude weapons to oppose the procurement of paddy, cotton, peanuts, and castor-oil plants at cheap prices.

The eruption of the war in the Pacific exposed the deep contradictions in the ranks of the world imperialists, exacerbated the conflicts between the Japanese fascists and the French fascists in Indochina, and aggravated the conflicts between the Vietnamese people and the Japanese and French rulers and their henchmen. The French imperialists sought to exploit our people both in order to fuel their avarice and in order to supply the Japanese war of aggression. The life of our people was extremely poor.

In order to scrape up very large quantities of grains from our people, the French imperialists, beginning in the spring of 1942, set forth their paddy procurement policy. A network of "paddy and rice syndicates" were established in Tonkin and Trung Bo, extending down to the villages and townships for the purpose of exacting paddy from the people.

Previously, the French imperialists used the bank to control the Indochinese economies, achieving a monopoly over salt, alcohol, and opium, and implementing war time economic policies as described above, making the lives of our people extremely desperate. Now, they instituted a policy of forcibly procuring paddy, i.e., attacking the principal source of life of our people. This extremely insidious and cruel program had the horrible result of killing two million of our people in late 1944 and in the first months of 1945.

Financially, the French imperialists had to provide ever increasing supplies to the Japanese.³⁴

In order to compensate for the deficits caused by the items supplied to the Japanese fascists, the French colonialists

wanton printed paper, creating serious inflation. Naturally, the effects of that inflation fell upon the people of Indochina.

On the one hand, the Japanese fascists forced the French to supply grains and money to them, and, on the other hand, they directly extorted from our people by investing capital in businesses and exploiting raw materials in Indochina. They requisitioned houses, vehicles, and boats. They drove away the people and expropriated land for air fields and military camps. They stole cattle, hogs, and chickens from our people. They cut ripe rice and fed it to their horses. They extorted vegetables, rice stubble, and eggs. The Vietnamese farmers never forgot the barbarous actions of the Japanese fascists in forcing the farmers to uproot the rice and supplementary food crops to plant jute, peanuts, and castor-oil plants. Many conflicts between our farmers and the Japanese fascists took place because of those cruel actions.

Moreover, the Japanese fascists also murdered, tortured, and raped, causing our people to hate and resent them more and more. All of our people, from the poor to the rich, felt that their nationalism was being trampled upon and that their lives were unstable and desperate. The influence of the Viet Minh constantly spread and the prestige of the Viet Minh became higher and higher.

The French colonialists were very oppressed because the Japanese fascists forced them to share their lucrative Indochinese colony. Therefore, they thought of ways to resist. The Japanese directly encroached upon the French and actually took control of all of Indochina. The conflicts between the Japanese and the French and the conflicts between the Japanese lackeys and the French lackeys became deeper and deeper and conflicts between the two imperialist parties in Indochina were unavoidable.

III. Stepping Up Activities in Every Respect and Preparing for An Opportunity to Rise Up and Seize Political Power

Beginning in 1943, there was a major change in the World War. The Soviet Army switched from a defensive strategy to a counter-offensive strategy, ushered in by the historic battle of Stalingrad. That battle began in November 1942 and lasted until February 1943. At Stalingrad, the Soviet Army destroyed 3,300,000 troops of the Hitler fascists and won complete victory.

In the space of one year, from November 1942 to November 1943, the Soviet Union had regained nearly two-thirds of the territory which had been seized and occupied by Germany. The continuous victories of the Soviet Army made the fascists and their clique of henchmen extremely demoralized and confused. At the same time, the continuous victories strongly encouraged the people who were being suppressed in the West and in the Orient by the fascists, and created favorable conditions for them to struggle for their own liberation. The Vietnamese people were extremely encouraged by the victory of the heroic Soviet Army and became increasingly confident in their own liberation struggle.

The resistance war of the Chinese people under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party against the Japanese fascists also won many victories during the period of the resistance. The struggle movement of the people in the cities and in the countryside, which the Japanese temporarily occupied, developed further. Many sweep operations conducted by the Japanese fascists into the large revolutionary base areas suffered heavy losses at the hands of the Red Army and the Chinese people.

In early 1943, the Vietnamese revolution acquired a new springboard for development. The organization of the Indochinese Communist Party and of the Viet Minh Front took roots among the masses, particularly among the farmers, workers, and students. The large revolutionary base areas in the jungles and mountains, particularly in Viet Bac, were developed and consolidated. The safe areas of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, which were built in 1940 in the outskirts of Hanoi and in several districts around Hanoi and in parts of Phuc Yen, Ha Dong, and Bac Ninh provinces, were now expanded and made more stable. Alternate safe areas for the Standing Committee of the Central Committee were also constructed in the three districts of Hiep Hoa in Bac Giang Province and Phu Binh and Pho Yen in Thai Nguyen Province. The key agencies of the party were shifted to the countryside. The Standing Committee of the Central Committee stayed close to Hanoi in order to conveniently monitor the situation, take the pulse of the movement and conveniently guide the entire party. This was a very positive and creative decision by our party. As a result, when the situation changed due to the Japanese coup d'etat, the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee promptly launched a vigorous and pervasive full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement, the precursor of the direct uprising and eventually the August Revolution.

In view of the rapid changes in the world situation and in the domestic situation, the Standing Committee of the Central Committee held a meeting at Vong La, Dong Anh District, Phuc Yen

Province from 25 to 28 February 1943, analyzing the changes in the situation and stating that "the revolutionary movement in Indochina can burst forward with giant strides."³⁵

The conference exposed the deficiencies and weaknesses of the movement such as the failure to devote serious attention to intensifying the struggle movement of the workers, and the "absence of a revolutionary movement of the national bourgeoisie and of a movement of young people and students"³⁶ in the urban areas. As a result, the conference spelled out specific measures for overcoming the deficiencies, giving special emphasis to worker proselyting activities, because "unless the workers are made to actively participate in the uprising,

1. it will be difficult for uprisings to occur in key enemy areas (industrial cities, mining areas, plantations, key transportation roads, and so forth), and, as a result, the enemy will not be paralyzed.

"2. The uprising will only have a narrow regional character and will not spread nationwide, and, as a result, the enemy forces will be able to concentrate in a few areas to suppress the forces of the uprising.

"3. The revolutionary guerrilla units will lack fighters who know the techniques of sabotage and who know how to manufacture and repair weapons and so forth."³⁷

The conference decided to, on the one hand, intensify the program to enlarge the United National Front Against Japanese and French Fascists (i.e., the Viet Minh Front) on the basis of "constantly consolidating and developing the organizations of the workers and farmers because they are the backbone of the front;"³⁸ and, on the other hand, to campaign for the establishment of an Anti-Japanese Democratic Front in Indochina, beginning to acquire the capabilities to join with the DeGaulle faction and to win over the Chinese residents who were opposed to the Japanese in order to acquire additional allies and thoroughly exploit the contradictions within the ranks of the enemy, directing the thrust of the revolution at the Japanese and French fascists and their clique of henchmen.

Highlighting the spirit of the resolution of the Eighth Conference of the Party Central Committee in May 1941, which viewed "preparations for uprisings as the focal task of our party and people during the present stage," the conference of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee outlined a comprehensive plan for preparing spiritually and materially

for future armed uprisings. The resolution emphasized the matter of intensifying the development of large revolutionary base areas in the mountain and jungle areas, the acceleration of the construction and development of the armed forces, the intensification of proselyting drives among all circles and drives to proselytize enemy soldiers, and the need to devote special attention to operations in the urban areas and to closely coordinate the rural movement with the urban movement while preparing for uprisings as well as during the occurrence of the general uprising.

The resolution of the conference of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee reserved an entire chapter for specific ways to consolidate the party in every way in order to guarantee that the party would complete its proud task of bringing victory to our country's revolution.

In February 1943, while the Standing Committee of the Central Committee was meeting near Hanoi, the leadership cadres in the two bases of Cao Bang and Bac Son-Vo Nhai were also meeting in Lung Hoang, Hoa An District, Cao Bang Province in order to exchange experiences about the development of the movement, about the development of large base areas, about combating terrorism, and about developing guerrillas, and to discuss plans for establishing communications and liaison routes between the two large base areas, opening routes to the delta and coordinating with the movement throughout the country, and organizing regular liaison with the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee.

After this conference, the element of the National Salvation Army which had previously withdrawn to the border now returned to the Bac Son-Vo Nhai base area. At this time, the revolutionary installations of this large base area were expanded to Tuyen Quang and Vinh Yen provinces. In order to facilitate the leadership and development of the movement, the Bac Son-Vo Nhai base (at this time called the Hoang Hoa Tham War Zone) was divided into two sub-zones: Sub-zone A and Sub-zone B with the Cau River as the demarcation line between the two sub-zones.³⁹ The National Salvation Army was divided into numerous operational teams for armed propaganda activities, creating political bases and opening the "Bac tien" (Northward ho!) route.

The large Cao Bang base (which at this time was called the Le Loi War Zone) developed and expanded to Ha Giang and Bac Can and Lang Son provinces. Implementing the decision of the Lung Hoang Conference, Nam Tien (Southerward ho!) group, comprising 19 units, was established. Hundreds of young male and female cadres voluntarily left their families to join the "southward ho" assault units.

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In August 1943, the "southward ho" group, led by Vo Nguyen Giap, which was simultaneously engaging in propaganda activities and creating revolutionary bases from Cao Bang Province to Thai Nguyen Province and the "northward ho" group, led by Chu Van Tan and extending from Bac Son Province to Cao Bang Province, met at Nghia Ta Township, Cho Don District, Bac Can Province.⁴⁰ A political corridor was established linking the two large revolutionary bases in North Vietnam: the Cao Bang base area and the Bac Son-Vo Nhai base area, facilitating the later birth of the Liberated Area.

In the Cao Bang base area armed and para-military forces were rapidly developed with a broad political base among the people. Some comrades who had received military training in China came back to conduct classes for training command cadres for the national salvation self-defense units. Alarmed at the revolutionary movement in Cao Bang Province, the French fascists in late 1943, carried out terrorism: arresting, murdering, herding into villages, concentrating people and paddy, and so forth. Local party organizations decided to disperse their forces to propagandize and explain and maintain the morale of the masses. At the same time, guerrilla cells were established to carry out the task of eliminating tyrants and ambushing small enemy search units. Because the local party organizations properly carried out the rules and methods for struggling against terrorism, the revolutionary bases and the mass movement were maintained and, later on, developed with increasing vigor.

In the delta, the people enthusiastically responded to the slogans set forth by our party such as "oppose the uprooting of rice and the planting of jute and oppose the uprooting of corn and the planting of castor-oil plants," "oppose the plundering of the land," "oppose the procurement of paddy," and "oppose military and civilian conscription" and so forth, and enthusiastically struggled against the enemy in order to implement those slogans.

Beginning with low-level forms and the use of reason in struggling against the Japanese and their henchmen, many farmer areas clashed with the Japanese fascists in order to protect their property. On 14 June 1943, after attacking many people out in the fields, a Japanese burst into Dong Son Village, Tien Du District, Bac Dinh Province to destroy houses, to beat the villagers and to force them to uproot rice and to plant jute. The masses gathered around, encircled and apprehended the Japanese, beating him half to death. He died when he was taken

to the hospital. Three days later, Japanese officers and enlisted men and a French foreign official came to the village and stated in a mild tone: "Henceforth, if Japanese soldiers do something which is not right, take them into custody and then turn them over to the officials. Do not beat them to death..."⁴¹ These were not isolated incidents.

Along with the vigorous development of the struggle movement in the rural delta and in the Viet Bac area, the struggle movement of the workers also grew constantly during 1943 and 1944.

Between March and June 1943, there were many demonstrations by workers and government employees in enterprises in Hanoi, Viet Tri, Dap Cau, Dong Anh, Bac Giang, the Bank of Indochina, and so forth, demanding higher wages and the sale of rice, materials, matches, and soap.

In May 1943, workers on ships operating from Nam Dinh to Hanoi struck.

In December 1943, workers in the I.D.E.O., Le Van Tan, Tin Moi, Action, and Minh Sang printing plants, and in the S.T.A.I. Vehicle Company and the Nam Dinh Silk Plant struck for higher wages. Nearly all of the strikes were successful.

According to the newspaper Co Giai Phong ["Liberation Flag"], the central organ of the Indochinese Communist Party, there were 18 work stoppages and strikes for higher wages in Hanoi alone between 1943 and 1944. All of the workers in the Hanoi carpentry sector struck for eight days, demanding a 75 percent increase in wages. In other areas, such as Bac Ninh, Haiphong, Uong Bi, Kien An, Nam Dinh, and Viet Tri, there were many demands or strikes by workers for higher wages.

In Nam Bo, there were 24 worker struggles between May 1942 and June 1943.⁴²

In March 1944, rice workers⁴³ and workers in the Rach Gia Mill struck for higher wages.

On 15 May 1944, all of the workers sewing clothing for the Japanese on Se-nho Street in Saigon struck to demand indemnities for the families of bomb victims. Also in 1944, 500 construction workers building Japanese military camps in Chi Hoa and Saigon, and all of the shoemakers in the Japanese Dai Nam Plant in Saigon struck for higher wages.

In 1944 there were also many struggles by workers in the No 5 and No 6 warehouses of Khanh Hoi for higher wages and in opposition to the Japanese system of persecution. Some of the struggles led to clashes between the workers and Japanese soldiers right in the court area of the two warehouses mentioned above.

In late 1944, there were just under 50 union installations and enterprises in the Saigon-Cholon area alone, and a start had been made on organizing scattered workers in individual wards such as in the Ban Co, Xom Chieu, Tan Dinh, Dat Ho, Phu Nhuan, Go Vap, Xom Cui, and Binh Tay, and so forth.

The movement of young people and students in the urban areas also gained strength, worrying the Japanese and French fascists.

The French fascists sought to win over the young people in order to thwart them from following the Viet Minh or the Japanese, and in order to prepare a political and military reserve force for themselves. They established many organizations in order to attract youth such as the Catholic Youth Association, the Catholic College Youth Association, the Catholic Young Government Workers Association, and the Indochinese College Students General Association, and so forth.

They had Ducorrois [?Vietnamese phonetics] create a physical education and sports youth movement under the slogan "be strong in order to serve" in all of the urban areas and in many of the rural areas. They set up many schools to train physical education and sports trainers, the largest being the school at Phan Thiet, and organized Indochina-wide Boy Scout meetings. Bicycle meets, swimming meets, boxing matches, and so forth were regularly held.

At that time, the French also were creating an image of concern for the Vietnamese "nationality," and had their henchmen conduct commemorative ceremonies for national heroes such as the Trung Sisters, Tran Hung Dao, Le Loi, Nguyen Hue and so forth in the hope of covering up the traitorous and injurious activities of those henchmen, and, simultaneously to deepen the national contradictions between the Vietnamese people and the Chinese people, preparing the thinking in order to combat "Chinese troops entering Vietnam."

In addition to those cunning and deceitful political tactics, the French fascists actively encouraged decadent trends and corrupt customs in order to poison and degenerate the young people. In Hanoi, Saigon, and other urban areas a very large number of brothels, smoking dens, dancing halls, and gambling houses and so forth appeared. Books teaching fortune telling, "science of mysteries," adventure books, romantic and detective novels, and books propagandizing Confucianism, Buddhism,

and Catholicism and so forth were freely sold in the book stores. More insidiously, the French fascists funded Trotskyite elements and made it possible for them to establish the Han Thuyen Publishing House and to write books in order to distort Marxism in the hope of exploiting Marxism for the purpose of rejecting the patriotism and genuine nationalism of the Vietnamese people.

Indeed, these fascist slave writers used the concept of mechanical materialism to prove the "civilized policies" of the French colonialists, and to combat the patriotism of the Viet Minh and, at the same time, to slander the entire history of the liberation struggle of our people.

In addition to the cultural and ideological activities of the French fascists, the Japanese fascists also sought to propagandize the Japanese empire's theories of "Pan-Asianism," "commonalty of language and race," and "establishing an area of common prosperity." They pretended to have an ardent concern for the destiny of the Vietnamese people and to help Vietnam combat France and regain "independence." They also pretended to hate the white man in order to create a sympathetic relationship with the Vietnamese people. They used every device to propagandize Japanese fascism: they opened schools to teach the Japanese language, they organized Japanese exhibits and film showings, and they exchanged Buddhist, literary and artistic, educational, public health, physical education, and sports groups between Japan and Vietnam. All of these things were aimed at creating a mood of fear about Japan, of subservience to Japan, and of trust in Japan, and to propagandize the Japanese theories of "Pan-Asianism" and an "area of common prosperity."

In addition to the various types of reactionary culture of the Japanese and French fascists, there appeared legally on the cultural and ideological front romantic ties with a bourgeois reformist tendency, or of pessimism and stalemate and of turning one's back on the present and looking back to the ancient past, or of scattered works of prose, poetry, music, and drama of the petty bourgeois or national bourgeois strata expressing patriotism and love but lacking any discernible direction of struggle.

In opposition to the reactionary cultural front and the deviate ideological tendencies mentioned above was the revolutionary cultural and ideological front led by our party. More and more illegal books and newspapers were being published by the party and the Viet Minh Front on the national level and in the local areas. These played an important role in propagand-

izing, motivating, educating, and organizing the masses to struggle against the fascists and their clique of henchmen, and to carry out the lines and policies of the party and the Viet Minh Front.

In 1943, our party issued the Vietnamese Cultural Program, which outlined clearly the following party concepts:

- a). The cultural front is one of three fronts (economic, political, and cultural) on which communists must operate.
- b). It is not sufficient to carry out a political revolution. It is also necessary to carry out a cultural revolution.
- c). Only by leading the cultural movement can the party influence public opinion and thereby achieve effective propaganda.

After outlining the dangers of Vietnamese culture under the yoke of Japanese and French fascism, the program analyzed the relationship between the political revolution and the cultural revolution, emphasizing the leadership role of the Indochinese Communist Party over the cultural revolution and made it clear that it is the party goal to achieve a socialist culture in Vietnam but that it is first necessary to achieve a new democratic culture in Vietnam.

The Cultural Program clearly identified the tasks of patriotic Vietnamese cultural figures:

-- To combat fascist, feudal, backward, and slave culture and people-swindling culture.

-- To build a new Indochinese democratic culture with three characteristics: nationalistic, scientific, and popular.

The birth of the Cultural Program not only armed the entire party and, especially, cultural activists, with a revolutionary platform for a new democratic culture (a people's democratic culture) with which to defeat the Japanese and French fascists on the cultural and ideological front, but also set forth a correct guideline on developing the revolutionary culture of our country. At the same time, it had the effect of bringing together the patriotic writers, artists, and intellectuals, and of opening the way for them to struggle for national liberation, cultural liberation, and personal liberation.

After the advent of the Vietnamese Cultural Program, our party promoted the establishment of the Vietnamese National Sal-

vation Cultural Association, drawing intellectuals and cultural figures into the Viet Minh Front. The Vietnamese National Salvation Cultural Association contributed its share to the victory of the August Revolution and to the work of protecting the revolutionary administration.

The armed struggles breaking out in many areas, the reverberations of the war zones, the revolutionary movement in the countryside, and the struggle movement of the workers and petty bourgeois and students in the urban areas, and the continuous victories of the Soviet Union and the Allied camp influenced the national bourgeois intellectual strata. Moreover, the daily actions of the Japanese and French fascists in trampling upon the nationalism of our people divided the strata: a patriotic element of the strata leaned toward the Viet Minh, and one element was pro-Japanese and one element was pro-French. The pro-French element became smaller and smaller, and the pro-Japanese element became increasingly despairing because of the heavy defeats of the Japanese fascists. During that time, our party was holding aloft the banner of nationalism and democracy, and had correct policies for winning them over, viewing them as the allies of the revolution who would be allowed to participate in the people's democratic government after the revolution succeeded. As a result, the influence of the Viet Minh had an impact on them, causing them to gradually awaken and to side with the Viet Minh.

In early 1944, our party sent cadres to make contact with some intellectuals and college students, helping them to establish the Vietnamese Democratic Party (in June 1944), a revolutionary political party of patriotic and progressive national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals. The birth of the Vietnamese Democratic Party and its entrance into the Viet Minh Front smashed the insidious schemes of the Japanese fascists to attract the national bourgeoisie and the Vietnamese intellectual strata to them. For the first time in the history of the Vietnamese people's fight against the imperialists there appeared a political party of combative, patriotic national bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie within the United National Front and under the leadership of the working class. This was a creative adaption to the concrete circumstances of our country of the Marxist-Leninist principle on winning over allies, and it was a victory for our party within the front program.

At the same time, our party intensified its military proselyting program -- proselytizing Vietnamese troops, French foreign legionnaires and French troops, and French colonial troops -- especially intensifying the program to proselytize the Vietnamese voters. It established the Vietnamese National Salvation

Military Personnel Association in order to attract patriotic Vietnamese enlisted men and officers. Every echelon from the Central Committee to the regional party committee and the provincial party committee established military proselyting agencies or assigned people to take responsibility for military proselyting activities. In Hanoi, our party organized national salvation military personnel cells in 1943 in a number of important French positions such as the First Indochina Infantry Regiment (the First R.T.I.), the Fourth Colonial Artillery Regiment (Fourth R.A.C.), the French General Staff Agency, the Military Recruitment Office, and the Bach Mai Airfield and so forth.

In order to carry out the program of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, intensify the military proselyting program, and establish the Anti-Japanese Democratic Front in Indochina, our party, in early 1944, established contact with some German communists and Austrian socialists in the French foreign legion and in the French government circles in Vietnam. In keeping with the decision of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, a "socialist-communist group" was created in Tonkin with the objective of combating Japanese and French fascism. Through this group, the Party Central Committee and the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh established contact with the leftist faction of the French socialists and with some representatives of the DeGaulle faction in Indochina. During this meeting, representatives of the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh analyzed the situation, made it clear that the contradictions between Japan and France definitely would lead to severe clashes, and brought up the matter of united action against Japanese fascists and French fascists. In order to achieve this united action, it would be necessary for the DeGaulle Frenchmen to take advantage of their social position within the ruling apparatus within Indochina in order to carry out the following tasks:

1. To mobilize the cessation or reduction of the procurement of paddy;
2. To mobilize the release of political prisoners in Indochina;
3. To seek a way to give some weapons to the Viet Minh so that they could fight the Japanese.

Because of their stubborn nature and because of their fear of the Japanese, the proposal of our party to conditionally join with the DeGaulle Frenchmen in order to establish an

Indochinese Democratic Front could not be implemented. It was not until after the Japanese coup de' tat on September 3, 1945 when the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit met a French unit fleeing the Japanese from Bac Can City through Cho Don that negotiations were held for the establishment of a front-type organization to combat the Japanese fascists, called the Franco-Vietnamese Committee on Fighting the Japanese. However, this organization only survived for a short time because the French army lacked the spirit to fight the Japanese and gave us some weapons before withdrawing to China.

Our party gave special attention to winning over the assistance of the anti-Japanese forces in China and to mobilizing the patriotic Vietnamese people living in China to participate in the national liberation movement.

On 13 August 1942, Ho Chi Minh left for China as the representative of the Viet Minh and of the Vietnamese International Anti-aggression Association in order to seek international aid. As soon as he arrived in Tuc Vinh, a city in Tinh Tay District, Kwangsi Province, China, he was seized by the local Chiang Kai-shek administration. He was incarcerated for 14 months, treated very callously and subjected to a life of misery and deprivation in nearly 30 Chiang Kai-shek jails. While in jail, he wrote a book entitled Nhat Ky Trong Tu ["Diary in Jail"] with more than 100 poems. This is a great literary work, an invaluable historical document which strongly denounced the prison system of the cruel and rotten Chiang Kai-shek, and which, at the same time, testified to the revolutionary optimism, iron-like will, heroic character, and poise of a communist. The work had the effect of deeply inculcating revolutionary qualities and ethics in today's and in future generations.

On 10 September 1943, as soon as he left the Lieu Chau Jail, Ho Chi Minh established contact with the Vietnamese Liberation Association, a Viet Minh component in Van Nam. At the same time, he established a cooperative relationship with the Vietnamese Revolutionary League, an organization of Vietnamese people in China, in order to seek both solidarity with the patriotic Vietnamese people operating in China and to isolate the phony revolutionaries. Because of his efforts, a conference of political parties and of Vietnamese anti-French and anti-Japanese organizations in China was convened, with representatives of such organizations as the Viet Minh, the Phuc Quoc, the Dai Viet, the Vietnamese Liberation Association, the Vietnamese Liberation League, and the Anti-aggression International Association Chapter. The conference approved a declaration appealing to the compatriots at home and the Vietnamese compatriots living

abroad to rise up in order to fight the invaders, save the nation, and achieve independence for the country. The conference elected an executive committee. However, that executive committee was unable to do anything significant because Chiang Kai-shek's henchmen (Nguyen Hai Than, Vu Hoang Khanh, and Nguyen Tuong Tam and so forth) tried in every way to sabotage it.

Our party also campaigned for the establishment of the Sino-Vietnamese Allied Front. The Chiang Kai-shek gang planned to use this organization as a tool for carrying out their aggressive schemes against Vietnam. With a thorough understanding of that insidious plan of theirs, our party took advantage of them in order to develop our revolutionary power, and using the name of that front, arranged for many of our cadres to go home to operate.

In the party development work, our party at this time devoted special attention to consolidating itself ideologically and organizationally.

Ideologically, the party struggled against divisive and factional tendencies appearing in some localities, which weakened the leadership role of the party. At the same time, the party promptly criticized rightist and "leftist" tendencies in the program of preparations for the uprising and in the execution of front policies and so forth, increasing the ideological and operational unanimity.

Organizationally, operating illegally under the fascist regime, the Central Committee constantly advised all organizational echelons to be very cautious in developing the party, to give more attention to quality than to numbers, to be especially vigilant, and to prevent A.B. elements from sneaking in and sabotaging the party. As a result, in 1941, our party broke the case of Cong (in Tonkin) early. Cong was plotting to attract several discontent members of the Regional Party Committee to oppose the Central Committee in order to create factions within the party. In Trung Bo, the party broke the case of A.B. elements, led by Dinh Van Di, who had infiltrated the party and operated for a long period of time and who had caused many serious losses to the party.

The Central Committee paid very much attention to the training of cadres because the cadres are the people who have the responsibility to take the lines and policies of the party and propagandize and educate the masses about them and organize the masses to implement them. The task of preparing for the uprising to seize political power made it imperative that efforts be made to train the cadres and to properly select and assign cadres. Many short-term training classes were conducted in order

to train and develop political, military, and military proselyting cadres and ethnic minority cadres to supply the revolutionary movement which was developing very rapidly and very broadly. However, it was impossible to acquire sufficient cadres in order to promptly meet the requirements of the revolution. In view of that situation, our party decided in 1943 to employ every means in order to bring into operation some cadres who were incarcerated in the prisons of Son La, Cho Chu, Ba Van, Nghia Lo, and Ban Me Thuot and so forth. These comrades were people who had been trained in the realities of revolutionary struggle and who still possessed a revolutionary spirit and a steadfastness about struggling against the imperialists and their henchmen. In the jails of the imperialists, communist party members loyal to the revolution established party chapters and led the prison masses in struggles for daily rights of life, transforming the jails into "revolutionary schools." Consequently, these comrades, after escaping from prison and leaving jail, became key cadres in leading the people to rise up and seize political power in the local areas.

After Hoang Van Tu was arrested by the French fascists and executed by firing squad⁴⁵ the Standing Committee of the Central Committee decided to recruit a new class of party members called the "Hoang Van Tu Class" in order to draw in outstanding members of the national salvation organizations, most of whom were of worker and peasant backgrounds, in order to stabilize and strengthen party ranks.

In 1943 and 1944, along with the vigorously developing revolutionary movement in Tonkin, the movement in many provinces of Trung Bo (particularly Thanh Hoa, Quang Tri, Thua Thien, Quang Nam, and Quang Ngai) was also rapidly restored and accelerated.

In view of the constantly improving situation of the revolutionary movement at home, the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh, on the basis of a decision by the Party Central Committee, on 7 May 1944 issued the directive entitled Arranging the Uprising, giving more impetus to the development of forces for the uprising to seize power.

After that, on 10 August 1944, the Party Central Committee issued an appeal entitled Buying Weapons and Driving Out the Common Enemy. All of these things were intended to provide the spiritual and material preparations for a forthcoming armed uprising. All areas responded to the decision of the Party Central Committee. The General Headquarters of the Viet Minh issued Letters of Credit in order to obtain money to expend on the preparations for the uprising. Many localities sought to

develop and consolidate national salvation associations, to consolidate existing self-defense units and to organize new ones, and to purchase weapons and equipment for the self-defense units and intensify their military and political training. The revolutionary masses in the national salvation associations contributed money for the purchase of weapons.

There was a feverish revolutionary atmosphere in many provinces. In many cities and towns, armed propaganda activities created great power for the Viet Minh and supported the development of national salvation organizations. The assault Propaganda Youth Unit in Hanoi proper operated very boldly and flexibly, influencing neighboring provinces. The masses readied themselves for an uprising, particularly in the large revolutionary base areas. However, this period was a period of accumulating forces and preparing to launch the uprising.

In October 1944, pressured by the Japanese fascists, the French fascists conducted a major sweep operation into the Vo Nhai area in the Hong Hoa Tham War Zone. This was the third major terrorist activity in this area. Filled with hatred and resentment for the invaders and possessing a tradition for armed struggle, the National Salvation Army and the revolutionary masses readied themselves for a decisive war with the enemy. Logically in that situation, the leadership committee of the sub-zone should have closely coordinated political struggle with armed struggle, with political struggle being the main focus, in order to combat the enemy terrorism and protect the people. However, the comrades led the masses into the jungles, launched an armed struggle, carried out a massive purge of undesirable elements, and constantly ambushed and attacked enemy posts and severed enemy communication lines and so forth. That struggle against terrorism bore the marks of an uprising.

The Standing Committee of the Central Committee commended the revolutionary spirit of the masses but also criticized them: it was a careless action which did not take into account the overall situation and which, as a result, prematurely exposed the forces. The Central Committee promptly sent cadres down to help in order to overcome the parochial and impetuous thinking. As a consequence, in general, the revolutionary bases were maintained and the forces were preserved for more favorable opportunities.

In the large Cao Bang Base, the Cao-Bac-Lang [i.e. Cao Bang -- Bac Can - Lang Son] Inter-Provincial Party Committee decided in July 1944 that the conditions for launching an armed uprising had ripened. Preparations for the uprising were pushed ahead with great urgency. The Inter-Provincial Party Committee planned to call a final

meeting to determine the date and time for launching the uprising. At that very time, Ho Chi Minh returned from China and promptly issued orders to suspend the preparations because he believed that the decision to launch an uprising in Cao-Bac-Lang was based solely on the local situation and failed to take into account the concrete situation throughout the country, looking only at one part instead of at the whole. He said: "The period of the peaceful development of the revolution has passed but the time for an uprising by all the people has not arrived. If we were now to operate only through political forms, it would not be enough to push the movement forward. However, if we launch an armed uprising right away, the enemy forces will concentrate to counter it. The struggle must now move forward from the political form to the military form. It is necessary to find an appropriate form in order to be able to push the movement forward. If we launch a struggle whereby the people must disperse into the jungles and mountains whenever the enemy arrives, we will encounter very many difficulties. We must act in such a way as to continue armed activities while the people continue to produce in their respective areas. It is only necessary to increase vigilance and to prevent the enemy from arresting and harming the activists..."⁴⁶

That enlightened decision of Ho Chi Minh avoided great losses for Cao-Bac-Lang. Immediately thereafter, he ordered the establishment of the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit, and advised: "It is necessary to rely on the people. By relying firmly on the people, the enemy will not be able to annihilate the unit. The unit must use the party chapter as the nucleus of its leadership."⁴⁷ On 22 December 1944, the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit, composed of 34 people under the command of Vo Nguyen Giap, was born in Nguyen Binh District, Cao Bang Province. The task of the unit was "more political than military, more propagandistic than combative, a transitional task. It is to use armed propaganda in order to appeal to all of the people to rise up, preparing the political and military base for the future uprising."⁴⁸

Right after it was established, the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit efficiently destroyed the two posts of Phai Khat (on 24 December 1944) and Na Ngan (25 December 1944), killing the two post commanders, capturing all of the enemy soldiers, and confiscating all of their weapons. Those spectacular victories created a tremendous effect, gladdened the masses, and ushered in a new period of development in the armed struggle of the Vietnamese people. Just one week later, the unit developed into a company composed of three platoons.

After he returned home, Ho Chi Minh sent a letter reporting to all of the compatriots and comrades that he had returned peacefully after more than one year of "seeking foreign assistance."⁴⁹ Analyzing the world situation and emphasizing the fact that the Allied camp was about to win and that the aggressive fascist camp was close to the day of its annihilation, he wrote: "The opportunity for our people to liberate themselves will arrive within one year or one and a half years."⁵⁰ He appealed to political parties and organizations to strive to prepare for a National Congress in 1944. Ho Chi Minh properly read the pulse of the times. His analysis was very farsighted!

The situation at that time was very urgent.

In late 1944 and early 1945, signs of a major change appeared. World War II began to enter the final stage. The heroic Soviet Army advanced like a violent storm toward Berlin, the final hideout of the German fascists.⁵¹ After many postponements for very bad reasons, England and the United States had to open a second front on June 6, 1944, landing troops in France and advancing toward the western frontier of Nazi Germany. In August 1944, France was liberated, and DeGaulle came to power.

On the Pacific front, the Japanese fascists were suffering one defeat after another. The British army drove back the Japanese forces in Burma. American forces landed in the Philippines. The seaborne communications of the Japanese fascists were under Allied control. The Japanese fascists were very worried that Allied forces would land in Indochina and on the Japanese island of Okinawa.

In China, although the Japanese made the utmost efforts to unleash an offensive into China, they became more and more bogged down in their invasion of this colossally large and broad country. The Japanese resistance of the Chinese people entered the counter-offensive phase.

In Indochina, the contradictions between the Japanese and the French grew more and more severe. On the night of 6 July 1944, an envoy of DeGaulle parachuted down into Lang Son, and then went to Hanoi to deliver orders from DeGaulle to Mordant. The gist of those orders was that the French forces in Indochina were to join in the fight against the Japanese so that they would be able to continue to exercise their rule in Indochina after the victory of the Allied forces. Immediately thereafter, Mordant under the pretext of having reached retirement age, asked to resign from his job as commander in chief of the French forces in Indochina in order to facilitate his organizing of the anti-Japanese resistance. In late 1944, Mordant set

forth a plan whereby French forces, if attacked by the Japanese, would withdraw to the jungles and mountains of Viet Bac and to Laos, and would conduct guerrilla attacks while still in the delta. Allied planes paradropped men, weapons, equipment, and uniforms to supply the DeGaulle Frenchmen in a number of locations in Viet Bac, Laos, Trung Bo, Nam Bo and so forth.

The DeGaulle French elements operated with furious intensity. However, because they lacked sufficient forces to attack the Japanese troops, they plotted to wait until the Allied forces came in to fight the Japanese in order to seize that opportunity to restore their rule in Indochina. The Japanese were quite aware of that scheme of DeGaulle France but they did not immediately carry out a coup de'tat in order to get rid of the French rule in Indochina because they knew that the Indochinese people would take advantage of a fierce clash between the Japanese and French in order to rise up and destroy them. For that very reason, the Japanese and French outwardly maintained a temporary accord. However, the war situation did not permit the "accord" to continue indefinitely. The Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee observed very correctly that "this accord is no different from a boil which contains countless germs and puss inside; as soon as it ripens, it will break open...the Japanese and French enemies are preparing for an eventual life or death struggle against one another."⁵²

The atmosphere between Japan and France became increasingly tense. On 8 March 1945, our agents in Hanoi reported to the Standing Committee of the Central Committee that the Governor General Decoux had been called by Japanese authorities to Saigon on urgent business, and that there were indications of preparations for combat by the Japanese forces stationed in Indochina. Truong Chinh realized that Japan was about to overthrow the French, and immediately convened an expanded conference of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee on 9 March 1945.

PART II: THE FULL-BLOWN ANTI-JAPANESE NATIONAL
SALVATION MOVEMENT AND THE AUGUST REVOLUTION

1. The Full-Blown Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement

As predicted by our party, the severe contradictions between the Japanese and the French in Indochina and the increasingly perilous situation of the Japanese in the Pacific compelled the Japanese fascist imperialists to carry out a coup d'etat in order to overthrow the French and monopolize power in Indochina.

On the night of 9 March 1945, the Japanese opened fire against the French simultaneously throughout Indochina. The French resisted feebly in Hanoi, Lang Son, Hue, Ha Giang, and so forth. French citizens were arrested by the Japanese. The French soldiers rapidly surrendered, disbanded, or fled to China. The French colonialists showed themselves to be as cowardly and inferior in the face of the Japanese invaders as they had been arrogant and cruel in their dealings with the Vietnamese people previously. They cooperated with the Japanese, giving their wives and daughters to the Japanese military officers.

Everywhere the fleeing French remnant forces went, they forced the people to help them and they robbed the people. Before they fled, the French elements in Cao Bang threw grenades into the jail, killing more than 100 Vietnamese political prisoners.

The coup d'etat on 9 March 1945 ended rapidly through the pitiful collapse of the French colonial government. However, the Japanese militarist fascists had not developed their ruling apparatus perfectly. That situation created objective advantages for our people's preparations for the general uprising.

The moment that the Japanese opened fire on the French in Hanoi was also the moment when the Expanded Conference of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee began in Dinh Bang Village, Tu Son District, Bac Ninh Province, a location more than 16 kilometers from Hanoi.⁵³

The conference, which met between 9 and 12 March 1945 under the chairmanship of Truong Chinh, the Secretary General of the party, analyzed the following inevitable reasons that the Japanese were forced to kick out the French in order to monopolize control in Indochina:

1. Two hungry dogs cannot eat one lucrative morsel such as Indochina which was rich in raw materials, had available food, and had a large population.

2. The DeGaulle Frenchmen in Indochina had been preparing frantically to fight the Japanese from the day that France was liberated. The Japanese forces were very worried that when the Allied forces attacked Indochina, the French would turn their guns around and fire on the Japanese, serving as a fifth column for the Allied forces.

3. After the Mariana and Philippine archipelagoes were seized and occupied by the United States, seaborne contact between Japanese and its colonies and strategic bases in Southeast Asia was cut off, for its survival, Japan had to maintain Indochina, a bridge on its only supply route linking the colonies of the South Pacific to Japan.

The conference predicted in advance the defeat of the French and the temporary victory of the Japanese army because the French elements in Indochina lacked a fighting spirit, lacked modern weapons and lacked unity of action with the anti-Japanese forces of the Indochinese people.

The conference realized that the coup de'tat had created a profound political crisis, rapidly ripening the conditions for an armed uprising. Three favorable opportunities helping the rapid ripening of conditions for the uprising were:

"a). The political crisis (the enemy could never be at ease in regard to the revolution).

"b). The frightful famine (the masses hated the country-robbing forces).

"c). The war had entered the decisive period (the Allies would land in Indochina to fight the Japanese)." 54

For that reason, this was the "pre-uprising period" and it was the task of our party to launch a full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement, and to lead all the people to urgently prepare and to eventually carry out a general uprising to seize power throughout the country.

As for the targets of the revolution, the conference realized: "After this coup de'tat, the Japanese fascist imperialists are the only primary enemy -- the specific immediate enemy -- of the Indochinese people." 55 The French imperialists, who had been overthrown by the Japanese and who had lost their rule in Indochina, were no longer the immediate, concrete enemy of the Indochinese people, but the Indochinese people "were still on guard against the DeGaulle campaign to restore the rule of the French imperialists in Indochina." 56

The conference replaced the earlier slogan "drive out the Japanese and French fascists" with the slogan "drive out the Japanese fascists," and called for the establishment of the "revolutionary political power of the people."

The conference decided to change all propaganda, mobilization, organizational, and struggle forms to suit the pre-uprising period, particularly with regard to mobilizing the masses to boldly go out and struggle and destroy the paddy warehouses of the imperialists in order to eliminate the famine. The objective of this was to "launch a powerful full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement as the precursor of the general uprising. That full-blown movement could encompass everything from illegal forms, strikes, market stoppages, and acts of destruction to high-level forms such as demonstrations to show off armed power and guerrilla actions." 57

The conference recognized that the struggle method of our people would have to be to launch guerrilla warfare, to liberate individual areas, to expand large bases, and to maintain and enlarge guerrilla warfare in order to "play a guiding role in driving the Japanese bandits from the country." 58 The situation changed rapidly, and, therefore, it was necessary to use transitional forms of propaganda, organization, and struggle, and "to be ready to switch to the form of the general uprising once conditions were proper."

The conference identified the advantageous circumstances for the general uprising when the Allied forces landed in Indochina to fight the Japanese. However, it also emphasized the spirit of self-reliance of the Vietnamese people: "We cannot use the Allied landing in Indochina as the inevitable condition for the general uprising because that would be relying on others and tying our own hands at a time when the situation is changing advantageously. If a Japanese revolution occurs and a revolutionary government of the Japanese people is established, or if the Japanese invaders lose their country as France did in 1940 and the Japanese expeditionary forces become demoralized, our general uprising can take place and succeed even if at that time the Allied forces have not landed." 59

All of the correct observations and important decisions of the Expanded Conference of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee were clearly recorded in the historic directive of 12 March 1945 entitled "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French and Our Activities." The directive clearly reflected the enlightened, determined, timely, flexible, calm, cautious, and highly creative leadership of our party. It was the compass for all of the activities of the party and of the Viet Minh Front

in the full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement, and had a decisive effect on the success of the August General Uprising.

Thereafter, the Vietnamese revolution entered a new phase: the pre-uprising phase, the phase of the full-blown, anti-Japanese national salvation movement.

After overthrowing the French in order to rule Indochina by themselves, the Japanese fascists resorted to deceitful tricks declaring that Vietnam was "independent" when it was really a phoney independence.

Politically, the Japanese maintained intact the old ruling apparatus, maintained intact Bao Dai, and established the puppet government of Tran Trong Kim. Some people who were not politically astute thought that the Japanese would eradicate the differences between the three regions: Tonkin, Trung Bo, and Nam Bo. However, that was not the case! Tonkin continued as a protectorate. Trung Bo continued as a kingdom. Nam Bo was not only "under the control but also under the rule of the Japanese armed forces." 60

In order to create bases of support, the Japanese fascists created a series of reactionary organizations designed to attract the comprador bourgeois elements, the reactionary landlord elements, and the hooligan and gangster elements and so forth. 61

The Japanese fascists controlled the entire information, propaganda, and book and newspaper publishing apparatus in order to mobilize the Vietnamese people to participate in their "Pan-Asian" war. They recruited Vietnamese people to serve as Japanese soldiers. They conducted schools for unemployed and hooligan youths, training them to become Japanese henchmen. The Japanese fascists created an anti-French spirit among the Vietnamese people and directed the thrust of the Vietnamese people's hatred and resentment toward the French in order to make the Vietnamese people forget their immediate enemy: the Japanese fascists.

Previously, the Japanese fascists used the French colonialists to combat and destroy the Vietnamese revolution and to combat and destroy the Viet Minh. Now, they directly employed military force to attack the war zones, destroy the revolutionary bases, encircle the villages, seizing people and immediately torturing them in a very barbarous manner right on the spot, sometimes beheading them or disemboweling them in order to terrorize the people. They also used other cunning tactics such as sending henchmen into the revolutionary ranks in order to conduct investi-

gations, and sending letters to the Viet Minh both in order to entice and in order to threaten, appealing for close cooperation with them. In many letters sent to the Viet Minh, the conclusion was worded as follows: "Be sure to choose a path yourselves. You have only two paths: either you cooperate closely with the Japanese or you will be annihilated by the Japanese..." 62

Economically, the Japanese fascists formerly had used the French to a large extent in order to extract materials and food from our people. Now, they directly stole property from our people under all circumstances. They seized banks, treasuries, factories, mines, and property of the French and brazenly took clothing, money, bicycles, and other articles and so forth when inspecting passer-bys. They increased taxes, and continued to collect paddy and increased the collections. However, the stockpiles of the farmers disappeared. The people had become worn out, and there was a spreading famine. In order to compensate for the deficits, they forced the Bank of Indochina to print money for them so that they could throw it onto the market in order to obtain more paddy and rice from the people.

In summary, the policy of the Japanese fascists was to use cruel fascist tactics and deceitful methods in order to rob the people economically, divide them politically, and attack them militarily. 63

The Japanese fascists and the reactionary lackey organizations of the Japanese sought to propagandize the Viet Minh in a defamatory way in the hope of isolating and destroying them.

As soon as the Tran Trong Kim puppet government was established, it immediately brought forth a deceitful program and promulgated a series of decrees in order to help the Japanese fascists carry out their insidious political and economic schemes. 64

In order to expose the puppets and henchmen, the newspaper Co Giai Phong ["Liberation Flag"], the central organ of the Indochinese Communist Party, wrote as follows: "...the Japanese cannot deceive our people, no matter what tricks they resort to. Has the Tran Trong Kim cabinet been able to do anything significant lately? Certainly not! Those with the status of puppets can only do the work of puppets. Their rule is to promise a lot but do very little or do the opposite of what they promised. Their job is to collaborate with the Japanese and to oppress and exploit the people.

"Therefore, when they see the Japanese collecting paddy, they are silent. When they see the Japanese increasing taxes,

they doze off. When they see the Japanese murdering, they work silently. Helping the Japanese to conscript soldiers and civilian workers, they will shout encouragements to serve as soldiers and civilian workers for the Japanese.

"And this is their main task: to distribute shares and farm groups in order to bid on construction projects of the Japanese military: to monopolize the sale of several types of goods of the Mitsui and Dai Nam companies, begging the Japanese to allow them to enjoy some of the economic advantages of the recently deposed French colonialists." 65

No matter how cruel and cunning the Japanese invaders and their henchmen were, they could not block the revolutionary tides of the Vietnamese people which were rising throughout the country.

Even while the Japanese and French were fighting one another, pursuant to the party line which had been set forth earlier and particularly following the promulgation of the directive entitled "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French, and Our Activities," the movement of combined political and armed struggle and partial uprisings took place in a very diverse and feverish manner.

In the Le Loi War Zone, the Standing Committee of the Cao-Bac-Lang Inter-Province, which met on 10 March 1945, decided:

1. To immediately overthrow the system of rule of the French in the countryside and, then, depending upon the local situation, to establish people's administrations at the township, "chau" [an administrative area in the mountain region during the period of French rule, comparable in size to a district], district, "phu" [a former administrative area in a province, more important than a district], or provincial level.

2. To assign cadres of the propaganda unit to work together with the armed units of the local areas to organize additional Liberation Army units and to prepare for a direct fight against the Japanese.

3. As for the French armed forces, the policy was not to attack them during their retreat, but, on the contrary, to actively appeal to them to jointly organize to fight the Japanese.

Pursuant to that policy, the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit was split into many components, and sent out

everywhere to lead the people in the uprising. One element went over to fight in Bao Lac in Cao Bang Province and then went to the area of That Khe and Binh Gia in Lang Son Province to conduct coordinated activities with the National Salvation Army. One element went up to the Sino-Vietnamese border, attacked the post of Soc Giang, and liberated the Chau of Ha Quang. Then, they continued to attack toward Bac Quang in Ha Giang Province. The large element commanded by Vo Nguyen Giap went down to Ngan Son Chau, encircled the post of Ngan Son, and called upon the enemy to surrender. The French post commander led all of his soldiers out to surrender to the Viet Minh. Then, his element advanced to liberate Cho Ra in Phu Thong District, Cho Don and Na Ri in Bac Can District, and Chien Hoa in Tuyen Quang District. The commander of the Cho Ra Post also voluntarily contributed four platoons of loin-clothed soldiers along with all of the weapons. No matter where the Vietnamese Liberation Propaganda Unit went, the masses, carrying the red flag with the gold stars and crude weapons, enthusiastically welcomed it and joined with it, disarming the village militia, confiscating the certificates and seals of the district chiefs, punishing the Vietnamese henchmen, and establishing revolutionary governments. At the same time, the unit sought to develop and consolidate national salvation associations, devoting particular attention to the development of combat self-defense units and guerrilla units in order to protect the newly established people's government.

In Bac Can, the French still had approximately five remnant platoons under the command of a colonel. We contacted them in order to establish the Franco-Vietnamese Committee on Fighting the Japanese with the following conditions:

1. That the French respect our sovereignty,
2. that their soldiers could not harass the people,
3. and that we would permit the people to sell food to them.

Because of their stubborn colonialist nature, and because they both feared the Japanese and feared the Viet Minh and could not stand hardships, the French force became demoralized. The Vietnamese soldiers asked to be discharged from the force and the Europeans fled to China after leaving behind hundreds of weapons for us. In Cao Bang Province, a number of French units which had stubbornly resisted the Viet Minh were defeated by our army and people and stripped of all of their weapons, as happened in Tra Linh and Ma Phuc, and so forth.

The National Salvation Army in Hoang Hoa Tham War Zone was also vigorously active.

In Sub-Zone B., upon hearing that the Japanese fascists were attacking the French, the leadership committee decided to mobilize the masses to rise up and seize control of the villages and townships, and move forward to attack Son Duong Chau for the first time on 13 March 1945. Immediately thereafter, the National Salvation Army advanced to attack Cho Chu, and coordinated with the masses in victorious uprisings at Cho Chu on 25 March and at Dai Tu on 29 March in Thai Nguyen Province, and at Yen Son on 1 April and Yen Binh on 18 May in Tuyen Quang Province. At Cho Chu, the National Salvation Army liberated approximately 30 revolutionary cadres who were incarcerated there. At the same time, the National Salvation Army also disarmed the French remnant forces as they were withdrawing through Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang provinces to China. Most significant were the battles wherein the National Salvation Army ambushed the Japanese forces at Deo Khe, confiscating many weapons, pieces of military equipment, and military uniforms.

The revolutionary zeal of the masses in Sub-Zone B. rose greatly. The national salvation associations and the self-defense units developed very rapidly and became strengthened. The sub-zone had a favorable terrain and also easy liaison with the Standing Committee of the Central Committee located near Hanoi.

In Sub-Zone A., the National Salvation Army conducted attacks and established revolutionary administrations in many areas in Thai Nguyen and Lang Son provinces, such as follows: at La Hien, also known as the Vo Nhai Chau Capital on 19 March, Trang Xa on 23 March, Dinh Ca on 10 April, Mo Ga on 15 April, Vu Le on 16 April, Nam Nhi on 17 April, Bac Son on 18 April, Binh Gia on 29 April, and Bang Mac on 2 May. The National Salvation Army coordinated with the Vietnamese Liberation Army Propaganda Unit to attack down from Cao Bang Province, liberating Trang Dinh, Diem He, and Thoat Lang. The National Salvation Army also sent an element to coordinate with the combat self-defense forces of Bac Giang Province to attack Yen The for the first time on 1 April, Bo Ha on 18 April, Mo Sat on 19 April, Huu Lung on 1 April, Luc Ngan on 30 May, and Pho Yen on 3 June. The chiefs of Huu Lung and Luc Ngan districts surrendered to the Viet Minh. In many areas, the National Salvation Army destroyed the warehouses and distributed the paddy to the people.

In one part of the Reserve Safe Area of the Central Committee in Bac Giang Province, national liberation committees were established in most of the townships during March 1945. Xuan Bieu Township in Hiep Hoa District was the first place where a committee was established -- one day after the directive

entitled, "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French, and Our Actions" was issued. The revolutionary masses held a rally to take away the certificates and seals of the township chiefs, and established national liberation committees in the two townships of Xuan Bieu and Trung Dinh. That rally became a demonstration of the armed force of thousands of masses who moved forward to encircle the Vat Plantation of the French landlord Tartarin. The guards at the post were terrified and allowed the revolutionary masses to disarm them of eight weapons. Then, the Viet Minh arranged for the masses to scoop up hundreds of tons of paddy. This was the first time that the farmers in Bac Giang Province destroyed a paddy warehouse.

Hearing the reports that the revolutionary movement was gaining ground everywhere, the French post commander stationed at Tri Cu became very demoralized. On 16 March 1945, he and 20 soldiers fled to Hiep Hoa, but he was ambushed by us when he reached Hoang Lai Post. The following day, national salvation prison youth at Tri Cu led the prisoners there to rise up and disarm the remaining soldiers, destroy the prison, and join the Viet Minh. On 25 March 1945, loyal National Salvation Youth and National Salvation Prison Youth at Tri Cu established the first guerrilla unit in Bac Giang Province, calling it the Bac Giang Province Liberation Army unit. Having received a directive from the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee in the summer of that year, the local revolutionary administration in Bac Giang Province confiscated the land of the French landlords and divided it up among the tenant farmers and among the families who had contributed to the revolution.

The chief of the Yen The Phu became terrified at the rising revolutionary zeal and fled. The head of Hiep Hoa District sought to make contact with the Viet Minh and served as a fifth-columnist so that the Viet Minh could take the district capital on 1 June. Thus, the entire Hiep Hoa District and a part of Phu Binh and Pho Yen Districts were liberated.

In Bac Ninh Province, the Trung Mau Party Chapter in Tien Du District, Bac Ninh Province, on 10 March, the morning after they heard gunfire between the Japanese and the French, called a conference in order to assess the situation, and decided to lead the masses in an uprising, to confiscate the "federal" paddy of the Japanese which was still in the township and to divide it among the farmers, and to organize a powerful self-defense unit. On that very evening, the national salvation self-defense unit took away the certificates and seals of the township chief. The following day, a show-of-force demonstration was organized from

Trung Mau over to Duong Huc, a nearby village. The people in the two villages organized a rally and announced the confiscation of the enemy paddy stocks, the nullification of the puppet administration, and the establishment of a township revolutionary administration.

On 10 March, the Bac Ninh Province Party Committee, meeting in Tien Du, decided to intensify propaganda activities in order to advance the mass movement, to disarm the remnant French forces in order to arm us, and to punish the Vietnamese henchmen.

After that, the mass movement grew vigorously, and there were many attacks on paddy stocks and fights against Japanese fascist terrorism. In just a very short period of time, the number of Viet Minh members in the province rose from several thousand to tens of thousands.

In Hung Yen Province, the local combat self-defense unit, on the night of 11 March 1945, taking advantage of the fact that the Japanese had not yet arrived, attacked the Ban Yen Nhan Post under the direct supervision of the Standing Committee of the Tonkin Regional Party Committee, and confiscated all of the weapons. The post commander fled. ⁶⁶

In Quang Ngai Province, upon hearing that the Japanese had carried out a coup de'tat, some of the comrades who were incarcerated in the Ba To Detention Camp held a party chapter meeting on the night of 10 March 1945, and decided to carry out an uprising and to seize the Ba To Post. The following night, a mass uprising supported by those soldiers in the post whose consciousness had been raised, rapidly succeeded. All enemy weapons were confiscated. On 14 March, the Ba To Guerrilla Unit was officially established, consisting of 28 fighters and 24 weapons. This was the first full-time armed unit organized and led by our party in southern Trung Bo. This guerrilla unit operated in the vicinity of the Highlanders along the Truong Son Chain, with the Japanese fascists constantly chasing and seeking to destroy them. After the Ba To Uprising, the movement in Quang Ngai Province began to gain ground in the vicinity of Trung Chau. At the same time, the development of the two war zones of Vinh Tuy in Son Tinh District and Dau Rai in Mo Duc District was advanced.

Taking advantage of the fact that the Japanese and the French were still firing on one another, imprisoned revolutionary cadres in many areas destroyed their jails or escaped in order to return to operation. At the Nghia Lo Prison in Yen Bai, approximately 100 political prisoners rose up to destroy the prison camp, fanning out to various localities to engage in revolutionary activities. Fifteen people lost their lives in the

fighting. The revolutionary cadres incarcerated in the Son La Prison planned an uprising. However, while being escorted by the enemy to Nghia Lo, they realized that the enemy soldiers were agitated. They dispersed on their own and split up to return to the delta to operate. At the Ban Me Thuot Jail, the imprisoned cadres struggled to force the enemy to free them. At the Hanoi Hoa Lo Prison, many cadres, party members, and revolutionary masses sought ways to escape in order to return to operation. Scores of incarcerated revolutionary fighters returned to various localities to serve as the nucleus for leading the masses after the coup de'tat. They were a supplementary source of cadres and one of the factors which helped to rapidly rebuild the movement and accelerate the anti-Japanese national salvation full-blown movement in the local areas.

Along with the vigorously developing armed struggle and political struggle movement in the countryside, the struggle movement in the urban areas grew strong. In Hanoi, on the evening of 10 March 1945, the Hanoi Municipal Party Committee decided to have many combat self-defense teams and armed assault propaganda teams use bicycles and motor cars to distribute leaflets exposing the Japanese fascists as the primary enemy of our people, and unmasking the fraudulent "independence" trick of the pro-Japanese elements. Assault propaganda units burst into information centers, movie theaters, intersections, and so forth, shouting to the compatriots to support the Viet Minh and to join the Viet Minh in fighting the Japanese. On 20 and 29 April 1945, thousands of young men and women throughout Hanoi held rallies at Me Tri and Canh Market, hearing an explanation about the fight between the Japanese and the French and the program of the Viet Minh.

Beginning on 1 May, national salvation workers in many enterprises organized rallies, distributed leaflets, flew flags, and so forth, accelerating propaganda activities in preparation for the uprising. Elementary and secondary school students studied feverishly after hearing speeches by the Viet Minh on many occasions. The teachers and students at the Thang Long Private School enthusiastically welcomed the Viet Minh fighters.

While the Viet Minh movement was gaining strength throughout the country, the famine in Tonkin and northern Trung Bo which started in late 1944, was becoming increasingly serious. Inflation caused the cost of living to skyrocket. Rice cost 150 dong per quintal in October 1944, 500 dong in December, 800 dong in February 1945, and even higher thereafter.

The main cause for the famine was that the Japanese and French fascists implemented war time economic policies and sought to grab up the food. The most insidious war time economic policy was the program of collecting paddy. The collection of paddy heavily pressed our farmers and people. The Japanese and French forced the farmers to sell paddy cheaply. They only paid 25 dong to the farmers for each quintal of paddy even though the capital investment in the production was approximately 80 dong and the market price was 200 dong. Irrespective of droughts, storms, floods, and crop losses, the farmers still had to sell the amount of paddy stipulated by the authorities. In many areas, the farmers had to buy paddy on the market in order to make their contribution to the Japanese. The landlord elements also had to sell paddy to the Japanese and French, but they used many devices in order to shift the losses to the farmers.

Famine extended from Tonkin to Tri-thien [Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces], and was terrifying in the Tonkin delta area and in northern Trung Bo. Because of the crimes of the Japanese and French fascists, in just a short period of time, in late 1944 and early 1945, the famine had claimed ten percent of the Vietnamese population at that time. There had never before been such a horrifying disaster in the history of our people. Although, physically, our people were weakened, spiritually, their hatred and resentment for the fascists was increased. This increasingly drove our people to move forward with the determination to fight and to defeat the country-robbers in order to win back their right to life. If the slogan "Peace, bread, and land," which was the ardent desire of the masses, brought together and induced tens of millions of Russian workers and farmers in the October Revolution to rise up and overthrow the bourgeois Kerensky government, in the Vietnamese August Revolution, the slogans "national independence" and "destroy the paddy warehouses and eliminate the famine," which were the pressing needs of the masses, brought together and induced our people to rise up and overthrow the yoke of rule of the Japanese fascists and their clique of puppets and henchmen.

Based on the interests of the masses, our party set forth the slogan "destroy the paddy warehouses and eliminate famine," and regarded that as the central task for mobilizing the masses during the pre-uprising period. This decision of our party very accurately resolved a conflict which was becoming severe in social life, and correctly responded to the aspirations of the masses. Therefore, it made it possible to mobilize an unprecedentedly strong full-blown movement.

The struggle of millions of masses to destroy paddy warehouses and to combat hunger took place under many forms from low-level forms to high-level forms. In many areas, the masses combined the destruction of paddy warehouses with the destruction of the enemy political administration, creating numerous organizational and struggle forms. Actually, there was nothing as vivid and diverse as the revolutionary realities!

The Liberation Army and the National Salvation Army, which carried out the uprisings, destroyed paddy warehouses wherever they were located and divided the paddy among the people.

In Bac Giang Province, immediately after the Japanese coup d'etat, scores of paddy warehouses belonging to the Japanese, French, and reactionary Vietnamese landlords were destroyed, such as at the Tartarin and Chesnaye [?Vietnamese phonetics] plantations, at Cau May, Ben Bo, Khanh Giang, Luc Lieu, Song Hoa, Phong, Cam Ly, the Phong-ten Brewery, and so forth.

In Bac Ninh Province, just two days after the coup d'etat, the revolutionary masses confiscated the paddy warehouse of the Japanese in Duong Huc Village, Tien Du District. After that, the masses destroyed the paddy warehouses at Dau Market and Keo Market in Thuan Thanh District, the three warehouses in Bang Tien Hamlet, Tien Du District, the three warehouses of the landlords in Que Duong, and the paddy warehouses of the Japanese at Ba Cat and Qua Cam in Vo Giang District, and Dai Lan in Yen Phong District and so forth.

In June 1945, the Viet Minh called a meeting of some township chiefs in Huong Trien Village. The meeting was attended by thousands of the masses. Having been instructed in advance by the Viet Minh, the township chief in Huong Trien Village stood up and tore up his certificate and smashed his seal, promising to the Viet Minh cadres and the masses that he would no longer collect paddy and taxes for the Japanese.

In early July 1945, when the Japanese moved in Phu Ninh in Tu Son District to obtain paddy, 500 self-defense troops, armed with crude weapons, and thousands of the masses moved out to encircle the enemy. The terrified Japanese shot and killed two of our people and then fled.

In Vinh Yen Province, the mass movement to destroy paddy warehouses became very feverish and decisive between March and May. Nearly 50 paddy warehouses of the Japanese and of the reactionary landlords in Tam Duong, Binh Xuyen, Yen Lac, Lap Thach,

and Vinh Tuong districts containing tens of thousands of tons of paddy were destroyed and the paddy was divided among the poor people. A paddy warehouse in Bat Soan Hamlet containing almost 6,000 tons of paddy was destroyed. Tens of thousands of farmers from those districts received the paddy.

In Vinh Tuong, Yen Lac, and Tam Duong, the Viet Minh took into custody hundreds of administrative chiefs, depriving the Japanese and the puppet government of support for the collection of paddy and taxes.

The Japanese fascists sent troops to Cau Lac in Yen Lac District to obtain 18 vehicle-loads of paddy. Under the leadership of the Viet Minh, the masses moved in and encircled them. The Japanese opened fire, killing three people. However, the masses courageously charged ahead, seizing the confiscated paddy. On 30 May 1945, the masses in Lap Thach conducted an armed struggle against the district chief for bringing ten fully-armed soldiers and hundreds of coolies in to steal paddy from the people. Three of the enemy were killed and the district chief fled. The influence of the raids against the paddy warehouses and of the elimination of famine in Vinh Yen Province spread. Some farmers in Son Tay, Phuc Yen, and Ha Dong moved up to Vinh Yen Province to participate.

In Phuc Yen Province, just a few days after the Japanese overthrew the French, the people of Anh Thang Township moved to the house of the township chief to take 70 quintals of enemy paddy from the warehouse. In May 1945, right in the safe area of the Central Committee, an operational unit led the masses to destroy the paddy warehouse at Dai Lo in Dong Anh District. A boat transporting paddy for the Japanese was interdicted by the masses on the Red River.

In Ninh Binh Province, on 15 March 1945, 3,000 of the masses from Nho Quan and Gia Vien districts demonstrated, destroying 12 paddy warehouses and dividing the paddy among the poor. After that, other districts also carried out raids against the paddy warehouses and confiscated the paddy from the plantations. The Japanese fascists brought troops in to suppress the activities. The raids against paddy warehouses became struggles against terrorism and sweep operations, and eventually led to the development of the great Quynh Luu Base Area.

In Thai Binh Province, during May 1945, the masses rose up to seize dozens of Japanese paddy transport ships on the Thai Binh River. After that, the masses destroyed paddy warehouses at Dong Xam in Kien Xuong District, in Dai Dien, Vong Lo, and

Trang Lu in Phu Duc District, and seized paddy boats at Ben Hiep in Quynh Coi District and Ha Thanh in Hung Nhan District and so forth.

In Hai Duong Province, during March 1945, two paddy warehouses in Hai Duong City were destroyed, inaugurating the local movement to destroy paddy warehouses and avert starvation. When carrying out the uprising and establishing the fourth war zone, the revolutionary masses destroyed paddy warehouses in every area which had an uprising. Not only did they destroy fixed paddy warehouses but they also seized a number of boats and ships used to transport paddy and rice for the Japanese.⁶⁷

In Hung Yen Province, between 9 May and 8 June 1945, the revolutionary masses destroyed many paddy warehouses in Giai Pham in Yen My District, Ban Yen Nhan in My Hao District, and Dong Vong in Kim Dong District and so forth, distributing the paddy among approximately 40,000 hungry people.

There was also a very powerful anti-taxation movement in Hung Yen Province along with the movement to destroy paddy warehouses. Between 21 June and 5 August 1945, there were hundreds of demonstrations, and 30 speeches with 100,000 people from 350 villages participating. This was in response to the appeal by the Viet Minh to oppose paying taxes to the enemy.⁶⁸

In Son Tay Province, on 4 May 1945, the chief of the seven townships comprising the Bat Lam Tong had to return to the people which the "federation" had collected from them.

In Thanh Hoa Province, the masses blocked the paddy be- hicles of the Japanese. The people of Thanh Hoa Province took advantage of the bombing by U.S. aircraft to charge in and rob the paddy warehouses while the terrified Japanese fled.

Other provinces such as Ha Dong, Ha Nam, Quang Yen, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, and so forth had movements to destroy paddy ware- houses and eliminate hunger. Even in Hanoi, on 20 April 1945, national salvation workers led the masses threetimes to destroy paddy warehouses on Bac Ninh Street. The Japanese suppressed the people with bayonets, stabbing one person to death and wound- ing several others. After that, the masses also destroyed paddy warehouses at "Ta-pi" near the stockyards at Pha Den, and at Moc Quan Nhan.

The destruction of paddy warehouses in order to eliminate hunger in many provinces helped the people to avert starvation and brought about a sharp drop in the market price of rice. In view of the power and influence of the masses, the landlords and

rich farmers also had to make loans of paddy to the working farmers. The prestige of the Viet Minh grew higher and higher.

The movement of the masses to destroy paddy warehouses in order to eliminate hunger not only had an immediate economic significance but also had a very profound political meaning: the masses refused to endure the yoke of rule of the aggressive fascists and they also refused to recognize the administration of the Japanese fascists and their puppet henchmen. The armed destruction of paddy warehouses in order to eliminate hunger was the most appropriate form at that time for mobilizing the masses, bringing millions of masses onto the revolutionary front in order to carry out partial uprisings leading to the eventual general uprising.

The full-blown mass movement to destroy paddy warehouses in order to eliminate hunger made the masses clearly understand that it was the fascist imperialists and the feudal lackey landlords who had brought hunger to them, and that the masses would have to unite in struggle and eliminate their hunger on their own if they were to survive. It would be necessary to carry out a revolution, to join the Viet Minh, to be organized, to join national salvation associations, to establish self-defense forces, to arm themselves, to struggle resolutely against the enemy, to rise up and overthrow the enemy administration, and to return political power to the hands of the people, if the paddy warehouses were to be destroyed.

Under the leadership of the party organizations, the struggles to destroy paddy warehouses for techniques for assembling the masses (from hundreds of individuals to tens of thousands of people), for training the masses, and for leading them from low forms of struggle to high forms of struggle and from political struggle to combined political and armed struggle in order to gradually develop a powerful "mass political army" and, at the same time, organize the people's armed forces to provide a nucleus for all the people in the approaching general uprising.

The influence of the movement to destroy paddy warehouses in order to eliminate hunger in Tonkin and northern Trung Bo spread throughout the country. In Nam Bo, there was a drive to contribute rice to support the North Vietnam. By mid-June, the people of Nam Bo had contributed more than 1,000,000 dong to avert starvation and had sent to North Vietnam 1,000 tons of rice to support the hungry compatriots.

The hunger-prevention movement became powerful even in the urban areas, attracting all strata of people, especially the

youth, elementary and high school students, and university students. It had the effect of inculcating a spirit of patriotism and a hatred and resentment for the Japanese in the masses, and of making them clearly understand the savage character of the Japanese invaders and the impotence of their puppets and henchmen.

On 16 April 1945, the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh issued a directive concerning the organization of national liberation committees at all echelons, and, on the national level, establishing the Vietnamese National Liberation Committee, i.e., the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the new Vietnam. In actuality, two administrations had emerged in our country after 9 March 1945: the revolutionary administration of the people, and the puppet administration of the pro-Japanese. The revolutionary administration in some localities was the off-spring of successful partial uprisings.

In order to prepare more aggressively and urgently for the armed uprising to seize political power throughout the country, the Standing Committee of the Central Committee convened the Tonkin Revolutionary Military Conference, at Hiep Hoa in Bac Giang Province from 15 to 20 April 1945. The conference was chaired by Truong Chinh, the party Secretary General. This was the first important military conference of our party.

After assessing the world situation and the full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement of our people, the conference decided: "The situation has placed the military task above all important and urgent tasks at this time."⁶⁹ We must actively prepare for guerrilla warfare and create large anti-Japanese bases in order to prepare for a general uprising when the opportunity arrives."⁷⁰ The conference clearly indicated that in order to resist the offensive of the Japanese, "we are in the strategic phase of mobilizing guerrilla warfare in order to prepare for the launching of the general offensive."⁷¹

The conference decided to develop the armed and paramilitary forces and to unify such existing armed forces as the Vietnamese National Army and the Vietnamese Liberation Propaganda Army into the Vietnamese Liberation Army. (On 15 May 1945, ceremonies establishing the Vietnamese Liberation Army were held at Bien Thuong Pavillion, Cho Chu District, Thai Nguyen Province).

In order to build the foundations for the general uprisings, the conference decided to build seven war zones in the country,⁷² and "to establish liaison between the war zones of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina."⁷³

The conference elected the Tonkin Revolutionary Military Committee 74 in order to "command the war zones of northern Indochina...and, at the same time, to help the entire country militarily." 75

The Tonkin Revolutionary Military Conference discussed specific measures for carrying out the directive entitled "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French, and Our Activities." The resolution of the conference, which was approved by the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, marked a new level of development in the military thinking of our party. It concretized the aforementioned directive of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, particularly in regard to the military task and program, in order to intensify preparations for the armed uprising to seize power nationally.

In early May 1945, Ho Chi Minh returned from Cao Bang Province to the Hoang Hoa Tham War Zone, and selected Tam Trao as his location for living and working in order to guide the national movement and prepare for the National Congress, which he had intended to convene in late 1944. After hearing reports on the overall situation in the country, and on the Tonkin Revolutionary Military Conference, he directed that the Tonkin Mountain area liberated region already encompassed nearly all of the provinces of Cao Bang, Bac Can, Lang Son, Ha Giang, Tuyen Quang, and Thai Nguyen, and some exterior areas comprising parts of Bac Giang, Phu Tho, Yen Bai, and Vinh Yen provinces, which were contiguous, and that, therefore, it was necessary to establish a large revolutionary base area called the Liberated Area.

Pursuant to that directive, on 4 June 1945, the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh called a conference to formally announce the establishment of the Liberated Area. It was placed under the leadership of the provisional command committee, and was to be solidly developed politically, militarily, economically, and culturally.

In the Liberated Area, people's revolutionary committees, elected by the people, implemented the following ten major policies:

1. Liquidate the Japanese forces, eliminate the Vietnamese henchmen, and punish the hoodligans.
2. Confiscate the property of the invaders and of the Vietnamese henchmen, and, depending upon the circumstances, make it the common property of all the people or divide it among the poor.

3. Implement popular elections and other democratic freedoms.
4. Arm the masses and mobilize the people to support the guerrillas and to participate in the anti-Japanese Liberation Army.
5. Organize the clearing of land, encourage production, and achieve a self-sufficient economy for the Liberated Area.
6. Limit the number of work days, and implement social security laws and relief laws.
7. Re-divide public land, reduce rents, reduce interests, and postpone debts.
8. Eliminate taxes and coolie labor, and plan to establish simple and light interest accrual taxes.
9. Combat illiteracy, and provide universal military and political training for the people.
10. Achieve equality among ethnic groups and between men and women.

Thus, the "new Vietnam was born...part of Tonkin was actually placed under a revolutionary administration."⁷⁶ More than one million compatriots had begun to enjoy a new life brought by revolution.

In February 1945, the Standing Committee of the Central Committee met and decided to develop the Quang Trung War Zone, also known as the Hoa-Ninh-Thanh War Zone. However, that war zone was not officially established until May. The area of Quynh Luu in Ninh Binh Province, Ngoc Trao in Thanh Hoa Province, and Diem Tu Ly, Muong Khoi, Cao Phong, and Thach Yen in Hoa Binh Province was selected as the center of the war zone. This is a jungle and mountain area between North Vietnam and Central Vietnam. It contained numerous communications and liaison routes, and an important, mobile, strategic area of operation. The revolutionary bases there, which had been built earlier, were vigorously developed after 9 March 1945.

On 20 May 1945, one of the first concentrated guerrilla platoons of the war zone was created. It served as the nucleus for the development of the armed forces in the war zone. On 27 July 1945, the Japanese sent a company into the center of the war zone at Quynh Luu. The people immediately threatened the enemy. At the same time, a guerrilla self-defense element

destroyed the road and blocked the enemy in order to enable the main force unit to attack the Japanese, killing seven of them. The Japanese were forced to withdraw back to Nho Quan. The news of the defeat of the Japanese invigorated the revolutionary movement of the masses, and caused the guerrilla and self-defense forces to develop rapidly. The administrative apparatus of the enemy in the countryside disintegrated.

In Van-Hien Luong War Zone in Phu Tho and Yen Bai provinces, in June 1945, guerrilla units attacked Phu Ninh, Thanh Son, Thanh Thuy, Ha Hoa, and Don Vang districts in Phu Tho Province, and Nghia Lo, Luc Yen Chau, Tu Le, Gia Boi, Phu Yen, and Quang Huy districts in Yen Bai Province, and established revolutionary administrations in those areas.

In Vinh Yen Province, on 16 July 1945, the Liberation Army attacked Tam Dao Post, killing ten Japanese and liberating some French citizens who were being held there.

On 8 June 1945, the people of the Northeast, under the leadership of the party, rose up and seized the posts of Dong Trieu, Chi Linh, Mao Khe, and Trang Bach in Quang Yen Province, establishing the Fourth War Zone (also known as the Trai Hung Dao War Zone), with people's revolutionary committees and anti-Japanese guerrilla units. This war zone had a very important position. It was situated in northeastern Tonkin, and was joined to the Liberated Area through Bac Giang Province. This was a rich mining area with many workers concentrated together, and a high revolutionary tradition. Therefore, right after the uprising began, the Japanese launched two sweep operations into the war zone (on 10 and 17 June), but to no avail.

After that, the uprising forces leveled the posts of Uong Bi and Bi Cho, seized power in Kinh Mon and Thanh Ha district capitals in Hai Duong Province, and disarmed the enemy military units stationed at Cat Hai Post in Quang Yen Province. On 20 July 1945, guerrilla forces seized Quang Yen City and Yen Hung District Capital. All of the enemy officials and troops surrendered. We collected all of their weapons, including more than 500 rifles. This was the first provincial capital that the revolutionary forces seized in the pre-uprising period. After that, the uprising forces withdrew from the city. In July 1945, the Japanese fascists again launched two more sweep operations, but both were broken by the revolutionary armed forces.

In the course of the battles, the guerrilla units of the Fourth War Zone grew from 30 to more than 500 men with thousands of weapons of various types. The major strong point of the battles waged by the Fourth War Zone was the knowledge

about how to rely on the full-blown national mass movement and of how to closely coordinate military operations with the proselytizing of enemy soldiers.

In Kim Son, 77 on 11 July 1945, the people rose up to destroy the Bang Post in Kien Thuy District, Kien An Province. They destroyed numerous salt storage areas and paddy warehouses, and organized a rally to announce the establishment of a revolutionary people's administration. On 15 July, approximately ten Japanese soldiers and 50 lackeys arrived to suppress the people. However, they were forced to withdraw after being beaten back by the revolutionary masses and the self-defense forces.

The development of the two war zones in Quang Ngai Province (Phan Dinh Phung in the north, and Hoang Hoa Tham in the south) was also pushed forward after the Ba To Uprising. By July 1945, the two war zones had established liaisons with one another and each had a guerrilla company. As a result of the mobile, armed propaganda activities of the guerrilla units, the movement in central Quang Ngai Province grew fairly vigorously. National salvation associations and combat self-defense units were developed throughout the countryside. The revolutionary masses eagerly prepared for the uprising.

In addition to the aforementioned war zones, many provinces built their own local base areas such as Yen The in Bac Giang Province, Lap Thach in Vinh Yen Province, Ngoc Thanh in Phuc Yen Province, Bai Say in Hung Yen Province, Tram Long in Ha Dong Province, Dong An in Ha Nam Province, Phuong Qua in Thai Binh Province, Huong Son and Cam Xuyen in Ha Tinh Province, Trung Thuan in Quang Binh Province, Tam Ky and Que Son in Quang Nam Province, and Bau Beo in Ninh Thuan Province and so forth.

In the process of moving the revolutionary campaign forward to the general uprising to seize power in a country such as ours, the implementation of partial uprisings and the development of large revolutionary bases was a very correct and enlightened decision by our party.

In general, the large revolutionary bases were developed primarily through the painstaking development of political bases among the masses. Paramilitary and military forces were developed wherever those bases were developed, and, then, new large bases were expanded and gradually perfected. These contained political forces, armed forces, and revolutionary people's administrations.

This rule of development was appropriate to the circumstances of our country, because, initially, the balance of forces between us and the enemy was extremely out of line. We had

political and spiritual power but the enemy was very much stronger than us in regard to armed forces. The revolutionary armed forces had to develop from nothing to small forces and then to large forces, and from weak to powerful forces. The important condition for the development of large revolutionary bases was the existence of favorable terrain which would provide for an offensive posture when attacking and a defensive posture when withdrawing. However, the basic condition was winning over the hearts of the people, in order to have the support of the people everywhere and to have the masses organized. This was the only way it was possible for the revolution to build large and stable bases.

Our large revolutionary bases played a very important role prior to the August Revolution, particularly the large base in Viet Bac which later developed into the Liberated Area. It was the banner calling together and encouraging the revolutionary movement throughout the country. It played a major role in threatening the enemy and in protecting the key agencies of the revolution. It was also the embryo of the future DRV. Other large bases also had an important impact on the uprisings in the local areas.

The development of large revolutionary bases was an invaluable experience in the history of the national liberation drive of our people.

Along with partial uprisings in some localities and the struggles to destroy paddy warehouses in many areas, there occurred rallies, demonstrations, and speeches in markets, ferry terminals, enterprises, schools, and theaters and so forth throughout northern, central and southern Vietnam, exposing the Japanese fascists and the puppets and calling upon the masses not to contribute paddy nor to pay taxes, and calling upon them to join the Viet Minh in order to save the nation. In the countryside, national salvation self-defense units in many areas disarmed the guard and the Japanese soldiers, gave warnings to the officials and administrative chiefs, and punished the Vietnamese lackeys. In the cities, honorary Viet Minh Units operated right under the noses of the Japanese soldiers, hunted and killed harmful Vietnamese lackeys and cruel Japanese military personnel, causing the Japanese fascists and their henchmen to become more and more confused.

The movement of workers, farmers, petty bourgeois, elementary and high school students, and university students grew stronger, attracting both national bourgeois and some landlords (mostly small landlords) to side with the revolution or to support it.

In many localities, the enemys' administrative apparatus was completely paralyzed. In areas where the movement was strong, the masses passed by the leaders of the puppet administration to find Viet Minh cadres in order to ask them to resolve conflicts in their lives. Many administrative chiefs, Phu chiefs, district chiefs, and even province chiefs of the puppet government sought to establish contact with the Viet Minh cadres, declaring their political attitudes and promising to be ready to turn over power to the revolution.

The civil guard and armed forces of the puppet government were also very confused and demoralized, and, in some areas, joined the Viet Minh.

In order to further accelerate preparations for the general uprising, our party, on the ideological front, devoted special attention to the press and to other forms of propaganda and mobilization in order to combat the influences of the Japanese invaders, and vigorously attack pro-Japanese thinking, fear of the Japanese, or ideas about taking advantage of the Japanese.

The party exposed the deceitful tactics of the Japanese fascists and the pro-Japanese political parties, and the provocative and subversive arguments of the Trotskyites. In the article entitled "The Policies of the Japanese Invaders Relating to Our People," which was printed in the third issue of the Tap Chi Cong San ["Communist Magazine"], our party made it clear to the people that "...confidence in the Japanese is suicide. According to the pro-Japanese Vietnamese lackeys, it was necessary to eat the poison of the Japanese wild beasts. As for the Japanese, there was only one way. That was for all the people, as one, to take up arms and resist them."

Our party promptly criticized deviate, vague, and opportunistic ideas of some cadres and people about taking advantage of the Japanese. The April 1945 issue of the newspaper Co Giai Phong ["Liberation Flag"], stated: "There are two false ideas developing among the cadres and people now. One holds that sooner or later the Japanese invaders will die in some way because the Allies will turn back and fight them. On the other hand, French imperialism is recovering. We must take advantage of this coup de'tat in order to get rid of the French so that, later on after the Japanese fall, we will not have to worry about getting rid of the French. This concept was wrong because it was not directed at the main enemy and it relied on Allied forces...the second concept held that it was necessary to take

advantage of this coup de'tat in order to enlarge the anti-French movement so that it would be possible to increase the independent spirit of the Indochinese people and train them in the struggle against imperialism. That proposal is naive and stupid...the spirit of independence and liberation and the spirit of anti-imperialism can only blossom under revolutionary forms of struggle. They cannot blossom in the reformist and legal realm permitted by the Japanese invaders." The Party Central Committee severely criticized the aforementioned erroneous viewpoints and encouraged the people to direct the thrust of their efforts at defeating the main enemy, the Japanese fascist imperialists.

Internally, our party severely criticized the mistaken ideas of several comrades in Trung Bo who advocated reforming the Tran Trong Kim government in the hope of securing independence through the path of peaceful negotiations with the Japanese by way of using the pro-Japanese puppet government to promulgate a constitutional monarchy constitution" drafted by those comrades. The party maintained that the aforementioned tendency was very dangerous because it embellished the Japanese fascists and breathed life into the political corpse of Tran Trong Kim, blurring our people's understanding of the Japanese invaders and the Japanese puppets and henchmen and distracting them from the goal of uprisings to seize political power.

The Party Central Committee severely criticized the rightist opportunistic thinking of the comrades in the newspaper Tien Phong ["Vanguard"] of Nam Bo who unilaterally withdrew the slogan on combating French fascism before the Japanese coup de'tat of 9 March 1945 occurred and who, following that date, advocated that we take advantage of the Japanese in order to "win political power." At the same time, the Central Committee also criticized the "leftist" thinking of comrades in the newspaper Giai Phong of Nam Bo who continued to maintain the slogan on "driving out the Japanese and French" after the Japanese had completed their coup de'tat and the French no longer had any power in Indochina. The aforementioned viewpoints of the two newspapers were erroneous but both sides attacked one another with very strong statements. The Central Committee pointed out the errors of both sides and called upon the "comrades to reunite, to promptly discard prejudices, to move onto the path of the party, to do away with private slogans, and to follow the slogans of the party...we will make a big mistake if we are still divided at this decisive time." ⁷⁸ In the full-blown pre-uprising movement, all party activities -- political, military, and ideological -- were directed at the Japanese fascists and the pro-Japanese puppets toward the immediate goal of the general uprising to seize political power.

World War II was almost over. In early 1945, the Soviet Army liberated all of Poland and most of Czechoslovakia. It defeated the reactionary elements in Hungary, the allies of the German fascists. It helped the Hungarian people to establish a democratic people's government. It attacked Germany, occupied East Prussia and most of the Silesia, beginning the victorious march into Berlin. During that time, on the western front, British and American forces rushed across the Rhine River, attacking western Germany. There, the British and American forces did not encounter any powerful resistance from the German fascists. The entire main force of Hitler had massed on the eastern front, hopelessly seeking to block the advance of the Soviet Army. In April 1945, the Soviet Army attacked Berlin. On 2 May, the Soviet Army destroyed the Hitler fascists right in their own hideout, forcing Nazi Germany to lay down its weapons and ask for unconditional surrender. On 8 May, the German fascists signed the last document of surrender in front of the representatives of the Supreme Headquarters of the Soviet Army in Berlin. Thus, the warring furnace of fascism in Europe had been extinguished!

In Asia, the military situation became increasingly unfavorable to the Japanese. The Japanese armed forces gradually pulled back into a strategically defensive posture.

In August 1945, direct revolution took place in Vietnam. The political crisis in Indochina was rapidly ripening. The guerrilla movement in the war zones with the close coordination between the mass movement in the countryside and in the urban areas created a feverish, revolutionary atmosphere. Assault units had readied themselves to dash forward to fight to the end, and reserve forces had readied themselves to follow behind the assault units.

The revolutionary movement throughout the country did not develop uniformly but, generally speaking, the revolutionary masses were ready, waiting only for favorable objective conditions, such as those anticipated by the Standing Committee of the Party Central Committee in its directive of 12 March 1945, for the revolution to break out.

Indeed, in the autumn of 1945, the end of World War II created those extremely favorable objective conditions for the Vietnamese revolution.

Carrying out its pledge at the Yalta Conference⁷⁹, the Soviet Union, on 8 August 1945, declared war on the Japanese fascists. The Soviet Army split into four elements, conducting

a typhoon-like attack against the Japanese in northeastern China: the first element moved from the road behind Baikal into Ch'ang-ch'un and Shen-yang (Mukden). In the second element, Soviet and Mongolian forces advanced into Thua Cud, [possible Ch'i-te], Chin-chou and Chang-chia-k'ou. In the third element, the Soviet Army moved from the direction of Hai Sam Uy [Vietnamese spelling] to attack Kirin and Harbin. The fourth element moved from Khabarovsk and Heilungkiang to attack Harbin and Chi-ch'i-ha-erh.

During that time, the Pacific Fleet of the Soviet Army landed in North Korea, on the southern part of Sakhalin Island, and on the Kurile Archipelago in order to conduct joint military operations.

In just a few days, the heroic Soviet Army had wiped out the number one strategic base of the Japanese fascists in Manchuria and the more than one-million-strong well-trained Eastern Army of the Japanese fascists, forcing them to rapidly drop their weapons and surrender.

Knowing very clearly that the Soviet Union would attack the Japanese fascists, the U.S. imperialists hurriedly dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (on 6 and 8 August 1945), killing hundreds of thousands of ordinary Japanese citizens and jumping into seize and occupy Japan. That action was only a wretched, cursed tactic, a dark action, intended to limit the victory of the Soviet Union in the Far East.

On the morning of 10 August 1945, the Japanese Emperor, along with the Japanese Cabinet and the war council of the Japanese government, met and decided to surrender. Immediately thereafter, news that the Japanese had accepted the statement of the Potsdam Conference was sent to Stockholm, Sweden and Berne, Switzerland. And, on 14 August, the Japanese Emperor publicly announced to the Japanese people his order for unconditional surrender to the Soviet Union and the Allied countries.

World War II ended.

The Japanese army in Indochina, after many years of declaring itself a suzerain, was now demoralized, paralyzed, and fragmented like a snake which had lost its head. The Japanese command in Indochina split into two factions which opened fire on one another during a staff conference because of differing views.⁸⁰ The puppet government of Tran Trong Kim, which had been installed by the Japanese, had no base among the people and was hated by them, thus it was extremely demoralized. Terrified and impotent, some of the ministers in that government

sought to resign. However, the gang which had betrayed the country and harmed the people did not easily agree to yield power to the revolution. After the Japanese surrendered, Tran Trong Kim tried to patch up the pro-Japanese government, hopelessly creating the so-called "provisional government" in order to resist the revolution. On 14 August 1945, the "provisional government" issued a proclamation: "In order to restore the confidence of your majesty, our entire cabinet will absolutely not retreat one step in the face of any difficulty so that we can complete the tasks of building the nation and consolidating the independence of the fatherland. In order to achieve those goals we will continue to cooperate with Japanese officials and we will never forget that the Japanese army liberated us from the oppressive yoke of a foreign power."⁸¹

Bao Dai and the "provisional government" begged the Japanese to hand over the power which the Japanese had been holding tightly since the coup d'etat of 9 March 1945. On 15 August, the Japanese turned over to the Tonkin imperial emissary, the representative of the "provisional government," the civil guard unit, the central secret police, and the press censorship office.

At the same time, the Japanese, in an act of appeasement, returned Nam Bo to the "puppet government." On 23 August, under orders of the Japanese, Saigon arranged to receive Nguyen Van Sam, who had just been appointed as the imperial emissary to Nam Bo.

In view of the fact that the Japanese had surrendered to the Soviet Union and the Allied countries, Bao Dai and the pro-Japanese puppet government resorted to the trick of the servant trading places with the master, and sought to establish contact with the British, American, and French imperialists. However, it was too late! All of their schemes failed. They had not joined with the Viet Minh in time.

The subjective pre-conditions for the general uprising developed very rapidly during the full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement. These, added to extremely advantageous opportunities, made it possible for the general uprising to occur swiftly throughout the country.

The Vietnamese people, particularly the national salvation masses in the Viet Minh organization, had long been ready to sacrifice their lives in order to achieve independence for the country. Now, they were increasingly determined to fight. Previously, the middle strata had been hesitating in the face of the appeal of the Viet Minh because they erroneously thought that

the Japanese were still powerful. Now, generally speaking, they all sided with the revolution.

Another objective condition which propelled the immediate prosecution of the general uprising was the fact that the British and American Allied forces would be entering Indochina in order to accept the surrender of the Japanese forces on this peninsula. That situation raised a question: what would be the fate of Vietnam when, the former aggressor having just fallen, new imperialist elements, recognized by international law, were about to jump into Indochina? Given their character, surely the imperialists would not quietly permit our Vietnamese people to select the social system they wanted. The revolution would have to resolve that question by racing against the British and American Allied forces in order to avoid having to "single handedly cope with many Allied forces (the Chiang Kai-shek, French, British, and American forces) pouring into our country, and installing the government of DeGaulle France or another puppet government opposed to the desires and aspirations of the people."⁸²

At the Tan Trao National Congress, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party, Truong Chinh, the Secretary General of the party, set forth the only correct solution, which was unanimously acclaimed by the congress; the Vietnamese people must fully exploit the defeat of the Japanese fascists and rise up to seize power from the hands of the Japanese and from the Japanese puppets and henchmen before the Allied forces entered Indochina, and must, from the position of the master of the country, receive the Allied forces if they entered to disarm the Japanese army.

The time for decisive action had arrived!

There could not longer be any delay! It was not possible to wait for revolution in Japan to occur! The Vietnamese people had to take their own destiny in their hands.

Thus, the August Revolution broke out under extremely urgent and favorable conditions.

2. The Victorious August Revolution, the Birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

As soon as it received word that the Japanese invaders had been completely routed and had fought to surrender to the Soviet Union and the other Allied countries on 12 August 1945,

the Provisional Command Committee of the Liberated Area immediately issued orders for the uprising to the Liberation Army, the self-defense units, the people's revolutionary committees, and to all of the people in the area.

On 13 August, the National Conference of the party opened at Tan Trao in Tuyen Quang Province. Attending the conference were representatives of the party organizations from northern, central and southern Vietnam and some representatives operating abroad.

The conference worked for three days, from 13 to 15 August, under extremely urgent circumstances.

After analyzing the subjective and objective conditions which had ripened so that an armed general uprising could occur and succeed, the conference decided that the party would have to promptly launch an all-people general uprising in order to seize power from the hands of the Japanese fascists and their clique of puppets and henchmen before the British and American Allied forces entered Vietnam. In order to guarantee victory for the leadership of the general uprising, the conference enunciated three principles:

a). Concentration: to concentrate the forces on the principal tasks.

b). Unification: to unify all military and political aspects, and all operational and command aspects.

c). Timeliness: to take action on a timely basis and not miss opportunities.⁸³

The conference emphasized the need to "concentrate the forces on the essential areas in order to fight"⁸⁴ and "to immediately seize areas where victory was certain, whether they be urban areas or rural areas."⁸⁵

In addition to determining the principal, immediate task, that of leading the general uprising to seize political power, the conference also set forth important programs on domestic and foreign issues to be implemented after the successful general uprising.

Domestically, the conference emphasized the need to give special importance to propagandizing, educating, and organizing the masses, especially to propagandizing and educating the various organizations within the Viet Minh Front, to approving the ten major policies of the Viet Minh, regarding those as the

immediate, basic policies of all our party and people, and to giving attention to agricultural production, especially the production of grains.

In regard to foreign issues, the conference clearly spelled out its program of thoroughly exploiting the contradictions between the French, the British, the Americans, and Chiang Kai-shek, of doing the utmost to avoid situations of having to single-handedly counter many enemies simultaneously, winning over the sympathy and support of the Soviet Union and the people of the world, particularly the French people and the Chinese people, destroying the scheme of the French colonialists to return to our country again and the scheme of Chiang Kai-shek to convert our country into a "satellite country."

On the night of 13 August, the resistance committee established by the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh, issued Military Order No 1, ordering the general uprising:

"Soldiers and citizens throughout the country.

"The time of the general uprising has arrived!

"It is the unique opportunity for the Vietnamese army and people to rise up and secure the independence of the country!...

"We must take action quickly with an extremely courageous and extremely cautious spirit!

"The fatherland is demanding great sacrifices from you!

"Complete victory certainly will be ours!"⁸⁶

As the National Conference of the party ended, the National Congress was held immediately in Tan Trao on 16 August. In attendance were more than 60 representatives of northern, central, and southern Vietnam, representatives of Vietnamese living overseas, and representatives of various political parties, people's organizations, ethnic groups, and religious sects. The congress enthusiastically approved the general uprising program of the Indochinese Communist Party, and ratified the order of the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh for the uprising, and the following ten major policies of the Viet Minh:

"1. To seize political power and build a democratic republic in Vietnam on the basis of complete independence.

"2. To arm the people and to develop the Vietnamese Liberation Army.

"3. Confiscate the property of the country invaders and of the Vietnamese henchmen, and, depending upon the circumstances, confiscate it for the nation or divide it among the poor people.

"4. Do away with the taxes levied by the French and the Japanese, and establish a just and light type of tax.

"5. Promulgate democratic rights for the people:

"a). Human rights, b). property rights (ownership rights), c). civil rights: the right to vote in popular elections, democratic freedoms (freedom of worship, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of movement), equality among ethnic groups, and equality among men and women.

"6. Divide public land equitably. Reduce land rents, reduce interest rates, postpone debts, and provide relief.

"7. Promulgate labor laws: the eight hour work day, minimum wages, and social security.

"8. Develop the national economy, develop agriculture, and create a national bank.

"9. Develop national education, combat illiteracy, provide universal and compulsory education up to the primary level. Construct a new culture.

"10. Befriend allied countries and small and weak nations in order to win their sympathy and support."⁸⁷

The conference determined that the national flag would be the red flag with a five-pronged yellow star in the middle, that the national anthem would be Tien Quan Ca ["Forward Troops"], and that it would set up the Vietnamese National Liberation Committee, i.e., the provisional government chaired by Ho Chi Minh. The National Liberation Committee had a standing committee directly subordinate to it and composed of five persons: Ho Chi Minh, Tran Huy Lieu, Pham Van Dong, Nguyen Luong Bang, and Duong Duc Hien.

The Tan Trao National Congress manifested the solidarity and unanimity of all the Vietnamese people in the Viet Minh Front under the leadership of our party. The congress testified to the spirit of relying primarily on one's own strength and the will

and determination to win of all the people: "Our country will not automatically achieve independence with the Japanese defeat. Many severities and obstacles will occur. We must be clever and determined. Clever in order to avoid unadvantageous matters. Resolute in order to achieve complete independence. Throughout the world, after this war, a nation which is determined and unanimous about achieving its independence, definitely will be independent."⁸⁸

The congress expressed its absolute confidence in the leadership of the party and President Ho, and its determination to implement the general uprising program and line set forth by our party.

At that very time, President Ho Chi Minh sent an appeal to the compatriots throughout the country:

"Beloved compatriots!

"...at present, the Japanese forces have been routed and the national salvation movement is spreading throughout the country...

"The hour of determining the fate of our people has arrived. Let the compatriots throughout the country stand up, and let us enlist our energies to liberate ourselves. Many oppressed peoples in the world are competing with one another to secure their independence. We cannot fall behind.

"Forward! Forward! Under the banner of the Viet Minh, let the compatriots valiantly move forward!"⁸⁹

The Indochinese Communist Party also issued an appeal to all citizens and compatriots and to all national salvation organizations to rise up, along with the Liberation Army and the self-defense forces, to achieve political power under the command of the National Liberation Committee and the uprising committee. The party appealed to communist comrades to "be enlightened in leading and determined to sacrifice in fighting in order to achieve independence for the fatherland and in order to be worthy of being a vanguard army of the nation."

"The hour for the uprising has arrived, and the day of glory for the fatherland has begun. Determined to fight! Determined to fight! Determined to fight!

"Victory is certainly ours!"⁹⁰

The situation at that time was extremely urgent. Some representatives located far away from central were on their way to Viet Bac when they received orders to turn around and lead the masses in prompt action.

Conditions for uprising had ripened throughout the country. These conditions were as clear as day. Therefore, even though the Central Committee order for the uprising had not been received in many provinces, the party organizations and local Viet Minh cadres thoroughly understood the spirit of the previous resolutions set forth by the party, particularly the spirit of the directive of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee entitled "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French, and Our Activities," and, on the basis of developments within the ranks of the enemy and among the Allies, carried out timely, positive, creative, and flexible uprisings, swiftly securing victory in the local areas.

The revolution was taking a giant step from partial uprisings to the general uprising to seize power throughout the country.

The storms of revolution roared. All communist party members, Viet Minh fighters, and people throughout the country clearly revealed their will and determination and their courage to fight for national liberation, just as President Ho had advised when he was sick at a most urgent time: "Favorable opportunities have now arrived, and, irrespective of the sacrifices and even if it is necessary to burn the entire Truong Son Chain, it is imperative to resolutely achieve independence."⁹¹

Between 14 and 18 August, many townships and districts in Cao Bang, Bac Can, Lang Son, Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, Yen Bai, Phu Tho, Bac Giang, Vinh Yen, Phuc Yen, Bac Ninh, Ha Dong, Son Tay, Hai Duong, Hung Yen, Kien An, Ninh Binh, Thai Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Ngai, Khanh Hoa, My Tho, and Sa Dec provinces seized opportunities and promptly rose up to seize power. The three townships of Dich Vong, Khuong Trung, and Giap Nhi in the outskirts of Hanoi also successfully rose up on 17 and 18 August.

In Quang Ngai Province, beginning on 14 August, the guerrilla and self-defense forces liberated the following districts in succession: Tra Bong, Ba To, Minh Long, and Duc Pho, and Gi Lang Post (15 August), Binh Son, Son Tinh, Nghia Hanh, Tu Nghia (16 August), and Mo Duc (17 August). The forces of the uprising fought the Japanese forces at Xuan Pho on 15 August and at Thi Pho Nhi and Mo Cay on 16 August. After that, the Japanese fascists sent troops in to insanely and very savagely terrorize. They attacked the revolutionary forces at Vinh Phu, the Ve River,

and so forth. Our forces attacked and encircled the Japanese in the provincial capital. By 28 August, the Quang Ngai Province capital had been completely liberated.

On 16 August, a unit of the Liberation Army under the command of Vo Nguyen Giap moved out from Tan Trao to attack Thai Nguyen City in order to open the way to Hanoi.

Pursuant to orders from the Provisional Command Committee of the Liberated Area issued on 12 June and of the Uprising Committee, units of the Liberation Army leveled, one after another, the remaining Japanese posts in Cao Bang, Bac Can, Thai Nguyen, Tuyen Quang, and Yen Bai provinces and so forth, and, then, moved ahead to liberate the cities.

On 17 August, the Liberation Army attacked the capital of Tuyen Quang Province. The Japanese fascists fired back but, in view of the zeal of the revolutionary forces, they sought reconciliation, and, on 21 August, the provincial government was turned over to the Viet Minh.

Also on 15 August, while the national conference of cadres was meeting at Tan Trao in Tuyen Quang Province, the Tonkin Regional Party Committee was also meeting in Van Phuc Village in Ha Dong Province. Based on the spirit of the directive "The Fight Between the Japanese and the French, and Our Activities," the Regional Party Committee decided to have an uprising in the provinces under its charge, expanding the uprisings to seize power to the townships and districts and into the cities.

On 18 August, the people in Bac Giang, Hai Duong, Ha Tinh, and Quang Nam provinces rose up to seize power in the provincial capitals. These were the four localities which seized provincial power the earliest in the country.

In Hanoi, on 17 August, the General Association of Government Employees of the puppet government held a large rally in Hanoi's Nha Hat Square, attended by tens of thousands of people, in order to support the Tran Truong Kim "provisional government." Under the leadership of the Tonkin Regional Party Committee and of the Hanoi Municipal Party Committee, the revolutionary masses seized the podium at the rally: our cadres informed the compatriots that the Japanese fascists had surrendered, presented in summary form the programs and national salvation line of the Viet Minh, and called upon the people to support the Viet Minh and, under the banner of the Viet Minh, to overthrow the pro-Japanese puppet government and to prepare

to participate in the uprising. The civil guard and police forces assigned to protect the rally of the puppets also sided with the Viet Minh. After that, the rally turned into a demonstration and show-of-force parade.

The masses both marched and shouted slogans:

- Support the Viet Minh!
- Overthrow the puppets!
- Complete independence for Vietnam!

The demonstrators began from the large Nha Hat Square and noisily marched through Hang Dao and Hang Nganh and through Dong Xuan Market to Cua Bac, the area of the governor general, and the place where the headquarters of the Japanese army was located. Then, they moved along the road from Cot Co to Cua Nam. All of Hanoi was bursting with the zeal of revolutionary offensive and uprisings. On the morning of 18 August, the Revolutionary Military Committee (i.e., the Uprising Committee) of the Hanoi Municipal Party Committee moved from the outskirts of Hanoi to the city proper in order to lead the people in an uprising to seize power.

Early on the morning of 19 August, all of Hanoi rose up under the red flag with the gold stars. Many factories stopped working, stores closed their doors, and markets were empty. All of Hanoi was out in the streets. The revolutionary masses and the national salvation self-defense forces gathered together and marched and demonstrated with the spirit of readiness to fight.

Tens of thousands of farmers from the outskirts of Hanoi and from Thang Tri, Thuong Tin, Phu Xuyen, Hoai Duc, and Dan Phuong districts in Ha Dong Province, and from Gia Lam District in Bac Ninh Province marched into the city proper carrying sticks, knives, scythes, and wooden fish, and some guns.

Under the leadership of the party, the revolutionary masses moved like flood tides from all streets to the great Nha Hat Square to attend the large rally organized by the Viet Minh Front, both moving and shouting slogans:

- Overthrow the puppet government of Tran Truong Kim!
- Establish the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam!

-- Brother soldiers be sure to take your guns and join the ranks fighting along side the Viet Minh!

-- Complete Independence for Vietnam!

The rally began at eleven o'clock. After a volley of guns to celebrate the flag and the national anthem, representatives of the Revolutionary Military Committee read the Appeal of the Viet Minh, made it clear that the Japanese forces had surrendered, exhorted the masses to rise up and establish the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and so forth.

Immediately thereafter, the rally became an armed demonstration. The revolutionary masses, led by combat self-defense units, split into many groups and rapidly fanned out to seize the office of the Imperial Emissary, the civil guard camp, the police service, and other public offices of the puppet government.

After seizing the office of the Imperial Emissary, the Viet Minh used telephones to call the province chiefs and city chiefs of Haiphong, Hai Duong, Bac Ninh, Ha Nam, and Nam Dinh, notifying them that the Viet Minh had risen up to seize power in Hanoi. At the same time, they issued orders to them to rapidly turn over the governments to the Viet Minh or else face death sentences.

At the civil guard camp, the Japanese planned to send in tanks and troops to block the roads in order to threaten the revolution. However, in view of the revolutionary high tides which were sweeping the country and in view of the zeal of the uprising masses and of the nearly two thousand armed combat self-defense forces of Hanoi, the Japanese, although still having tens of thousands of troops stationed in Hanoi, stood still and allowed the Viet Minh to seize power. The attitude of the leaders of the Japanese armed forces in Hanoi in not daring to resist the revolution created favorable conditions for settling the fight which was being intensely waged between the revolution and the Japanese military forces in Thai Nguyen, Tuyen Quang, Yen Bai, and Quang Ngai provinces and so forth.

After the Hanoi party organization, using armed forces in conjunction with political forces, forced the Japanese to allow us to seize power, the Standing Committee of the Central Committee immediately directed all localities which could take the same route to do so. In those areas where the Japanese forces refused and opened fire on us, we would resolutely fight back and we would definitely seize power, irrespective of the cost!

The victory of the uprising in Hanoi encouraged and vigorously stimulated other areas to rise up and seize power and had a major influence on the success of the entire August Revolution. The Japanese henchmen in Ha Dong, Vinh Yen, Phuc Yen, and other areas opened fire to resist the revolution but were crushed by the people involved in the uprising.

On 19 August 1945, the following provinces carried out an uprising to seize power in the provincial capitals on the same day as did Hanoi: Yen Bai, Thai Binh, and Phuc Yen⁹² in Tonkin, and Thanh Hoa, and Khanh Hoa in Trung Bo.

On 20 August, uprisings succeeded in the capitals of Bac Ninh, Thai Nguyen, and Ninh Binh provinces in Tonkin.

On 21 August, uprisings succeeded in the capitals of Cao Bang, Tuyen Quang, Son Tay, Nam Dinh, Kien An in Tonkin, and Nghe An and Ninh Thuan in Trung Bo.

On 22 August, uprisings succeeded in the capitals of Hung Yen and Quang Yen in Tonkin.

The news of the victorious uprisings in Hanoi, Thanh Hoa, and Ha Tinh and of the uprising by the guerrilla forces at Ba To in Quang Ngai Province reached Hue. The districts in Thua Thien Province around the City of Hue also seized power because of mass uprisings. However, before it died, the Government of Tran Truong Kim decided to mobilize the masses to demonstrate on 23 August in order to celebrate the fact that the "Japanese were giving Nam Bo back to Vietnam." The Thuan Hoa Uprising Committee immediately decided to lead the people in an uprising to seize the City of Hue on that day. On the night of 22 and the day of 23 August, under the leadership of the Viet Minh, the entire City of Hue was covered with the red flag and yellow stars. More than 150,000 people, including farmers from various districts, came in and, along with workers, working people, youths, and other strata in the city,⁹³ took to the streets to demonstrate, forming a sea of people inundating the streets. The forces of the uprising seized the public offices without resistance. During the day and during the night of the 23rd, Bao Dai received a telegram from the Vietnamese National Liberation Committee, i.e., our people's provisional government, requesting him to abdicate. On 28 August, the people of Hue enthusiastically received the delegation of the national government which came to Hue to acknowledge Bao Dai's abdication and to receive the seal and long sword presented by Bao Dai. This delegation

comprised Tran Huy Lieu, Nguyen Luong Bang, and Cu Huy Can, and was headed by Tran Huy Lieu. On the afternoon of 30 August, in front of tens of thousands of people holding a rally at Ngo Mon, the Que Ly flag was lowered and the red flag with the yellow stars was raised. Bao Dai read his abdication, stating: "I would rather be a citizen of a free country than the king of an enslaved country" and presented the seal and the long sword to the revolution. The representative of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam announced the end of the monarchy in Vietnam.

Thus, the August Revolution overthrew the feudal government which had been built over the course of thousands of years in Vietnam, clearing the way for eventually eliminating completely the feudal system from our country. The August Revolution had Bao Dai abdicate and used him as an "advisor" for the provisional government essentially in order to divide the feudal ranks and help to defeat the scheme of the imperialists when they jumped into our country.

On 23 August, in addition to Hue, uprisings also succeeded in the capitals of Bac Can, Hoa Binh, Haiphong, and Ha Dong in Tonkin, Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Binh Dinh, Lam Vien, and Gia Lai in Trung Bo, and Tan An and Bac Lieu provinces in Nam Bo.

On 24 August, uprisings to seize provincial power succeeded in Ha Nam and Phu Tho provinces in Bac Bo, Darlac, Phu Yen, and Binh Thuan provinces in Trung Bo, and Go Cong and My Tho provinces in Nam Bo.

On 25 August, uprisings to seize political power succeeded in Lang Son in Tonkin, and in Dong Nai Thuong and Kontum in Trung Bo.

Also on that day, the masses in Saigon and many provinces of Nam Bo such as Cholon, Gia Dinh, Soc Trung, Long Xuyen, Vinh Long, Ba Ria, Thu Dao Mot, Chau Doc, Tra Vinh, Tay Ninh, Bien Hoa, Ben Tre, and Sa Dec rose up successfully after hearing that the Viet Minh had seized power in Hanoi, Hue, and many other areas.

In keeping with the program of the Cochinchina Regional Party Committee, the red flag with the yellow stars appeared publicly in Saigon beginning on 20 August. Tens of thousands of Viet Minh leaflets were scattered throughout the streets. Upon hearing that Hanoi and Tan An (where the pilot project uprising of the Regional Party Committee was held) had gone with the Viet Minh, the Regional Party Committee, in a meeting of 23 August at Cho Dem, decided on an uprising to seize Saigon and various provinces on 25 August. On the night of 24 August, the "assault

labor union" and "assault youth" units of Saigon and Cholon were ordered to assemble, and individual groups of workers, farmers, and youths, carrying spears and sticks, moved from Gia Dinh, Cholon, My Tho, Bien Hoa and Thu Dau Mot, and so forth toward Saigon, using every means available. On the morning of 25 August, the uprising forces seized the public security service, the police service, the railroad station, the post office, the power plant, and various precinct stations and posts and so forth. Even at the Catinat Secret Service, the counter revolutionary elements resisted feebly, and were immediately crushed by the forces of the uprising. More than one million masses in Saigon-Cholon and adjacent provinces poured into the city to demonstrate and parade, shouting the following slogans:

- Down with the puppet Nguyen Van Sam!
- Complete independence for Vietnam!
- All power to the Viet Minh!
- Long live the Indochinese Communist Party!

The red flag with the yellow stars was hoisted above the Thu Ngu flag pole and above public offices. The masses poured in like a sea of humanity to attend the rally welcoming the Nam Bo People's Committee. The Japanese forces were completely paralyzed and did not dare to resist. The uprising succeeded quickly. All major services such as the electrical, water, communications and liaison, food and fuel supply, and public health services and so forth operated normally.

On 26 August, Hon Gai and Son La in Tonkin, and Can Tho in Nam Bo rose up and successfully seized power.

On 27 August, Rach Gia in Nam Bo rose up and successfully seized power.

On 28 August, there was a successful uprising in Ha Tien in Nam Bo.

A number of areas which did not at the time have Viet Minh bases but where the patriotic masses had long been under the influence of the Indochinese Communist Party also promptly and spontaneously rose up to seize power, such as Lam Vien and Gia Lai in Trung Bo on 23 August, and Ha Tien in Nam Bo on 28 August.

Moreover, there were also some places such as Vinh Yen City in Tonkin which were seized and occupied by the Vietnamese Kuomintang Party (with help from the Japanese military forces). The capitals of Lao Cai and Mong Cai provinces in Tonkin were

seized and occupied during August by the Chiang Kai-shek forces and their henchmen. After 9 March 1945, the French remnant forces which fled the Japanese turned back and occupied the capital of Lai Chau Province.

After the Japanese surrendered to the Soviet Union and during the time when all our people were rising up to seize power, the DeGaulle France group parachuted people down into many areas of our country with the aim of re-establishing control over the former ruling apparatus of the French colonialists and continuing to rule our people as in the past. However, nearly all of the French elements which parachuted in were apprehended by our people as soon as their feet touched the ground.

Thus, within the space of 12 days (from 14 to 25 August 1945), the rule of the imperialists, which had been developed over a period of just under 100 years, and the monarchical system which had lasted for thousands of years in our country, were virtually overthrown by our people. For the first time, our national government really belonged to our people.

The format of the August Revolution was very diverse. During the full-blown anti-Japanese national salvation movement, partial uprisings occurred throughout the rural areas. When the general August uprising began, 28 provinces (Cao Bang, Bac Can, Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, Yen Bai, Phu Tho, Hung Yen, Nam Dinh, Ha Nam, Quang Ngai, Lang Son, Phuc Yen, Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Ha Dong, Son Tay, Hai Duong, Kien An, Ninh Binh, Thai Binh, Hao Binh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Thua Thien, Khanh Hoa, My Tho, and Sa Dec, and the two cities of Hanoi and Hue), in the main⁹⁴ rose up from the township level to the district level and then to the province level, or from the outskirts to the city proper.

There were 24 provinces in Nam Bo and southern Trung Bo such as Quang Nam, Phu Yen, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan, Gia Lai, Kontum, Darlac, Lam Vien, Dong Nai Thuong, Binh Dinh,⁹⁵ Tan An, Tay Ninh, Go Cong, Cholon,⁹⁶ Gia Dinh, Bac Lieu, Soc Trang, Long Xuyen, Ha Tien, Chau Doc, Thu Dau Mot, Can Tho, Bien Hoa, and Rach Gia, which had uprisings in the province capitals and then in the districts and townships.

The remaining seven provinces -- Son La in Tonkin, Quang Binh and Quang Tri in Trung Bo⁹⁷ and Ba Ria, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, and Ben Tre in Nam Bo had uprisings simultaneously in the urban areas and in the countryside.

Most of the provinces and cities in Tonkin and northern Trung Bo had their uprisings first in the townships and districts because of the vast bases of the party and of the Viet Minh Front in the countryside, because the revolutionary struggle movement of the farmer masses was relatively powerful, and because the forces of the Japanese and their henchmen in the countryside were relatively weak.

The revolutionary movement in South Vietnam encountered numerous difficulties and, in general, only developed rapidly after the Japanese fascist coup d'etat. Therefore, most of the provinces in Nam Bo and southern Trung Bo had their uprisings only after the Japanese fascists lost, even though many areas in North Vietnam had already had successful uprisings. However, there were also conditions at that time for seizing power in the provincial capitals and, therefore, we sought to take care of the cities first before taking care of the countryside.

During the first several days of the general uprising from 14 to 17 August, uprisings were first carried out in the countryside because the reactions of the Japanese were still being probed. After 18 August, the revolutionary masses actively rose up in the urban areas as well as in the remaining rural areas.

The victory of the uprisings in Hanoi, Hue, and Saigon, and the other urban areas had an extremely important impact on and made clear cut the victory of the August Revolution throughout the country.

During the August Revolution, these diverse developments of the uprisings resulted from the fact that the Vietnamese Revolution, led by the working class, knew how to motivate the farmers to carry out revolution, relied on the countryside and built large revolutionary bases in the countryside in order to conduct a prolonged fight, and also gave very serious attention to the urban activities, based on their belief that the revolutionary movement in the urban areas would defeat the key agencies of the enemy forces.

During the August 1945 General Uprising, our people were really courageous, intelligent, positive, flexible, and creative.

The August Revolution was thoroughly prepared for, and broke out at the right opportunity. It was able to motivate all the people to rise up, closely combined political struggle with armed struggle, and succeeded quickly and efficiently. There was little bloodshed. Before 1945, there had never been a revolution in any colonial country which achieved such success. However, the August Revolution also had some shortcomings such as the

failure to seize the bank and the few weapons that were taken from the Japanese forces.

One of the reasons that the Paris Commune failed, as Karl Marx criticized, was that it did not know how to seize the bank, the key apparatus governing all sectors of activity of the capitalist system. The August Revolution did not seize the Bank of Indochina and, consequently, the people's government later found itself in difficult financial straits, caused by the enemy.

The Bank of Indochina did not belong to the French imperialists alone. A band of international capitalists had placed money in it. The Hanoi party organization mobilized its forces to attack and seize the Bank of Indochina in the same way as other public services had been seized. However, the Japanese forces did not yield there as they did in other areas. They made a life or death struggle to hold onto the bank because they were afraid that the Allied forces would later punish them. Later, the Japanese allowed the forces of the uprising to guard the bank with them, but there was constant friction between the two sides. On the basis of the actual situation at that time, the revolution needed to concentrate its forces on smashing the enemy's governmental apparatus and establishing a new government before the British, American, Chiang Kai-shek, and DeGaulle France troops entered Indochina. The general uprising was not able to seize the Bank of Indochina, but it was able to seize all treasuries. The revolution later encountered difficulties because it had not been able to seize the bank. However, in reality, the bank of the imperialists, in an agricultural country such as ours, did not have a decisive impact on the entire national economic life as it did in developing capitalist countries. Therefore, the aforementioned shortcoming was limited.

The fact that few weapons were collected from the Japanese military forces was also a shortcoming of the August Revolution. This matter was determined by the balance of forces between us and the enemy, and primarily because our armed forces had not been developed to become real large and powerful, and not because the revolutionary masses lacked determination. During the days of the uprising, nearly all of the instances during which Japanese military forces turned over their weapons to us resulted from our political struggle with them. Furthermore, they only turned over to us those weapons which they had previously confiscated from the French.

The Party Central Committee sent Le Duc Tho to the war zone to greet President Ho Chi Minh on his return to Hanoi. On

26 August, he arrived in the capital. The provisional government held a meeting. In accordance with his recommendation, a united national government, representing a policy of broad solidarity and encompassing representatives of patriotic political factions and a number of reputable non-partisan figures, was established. Many members of the General Headquarters of the Viet Minh in the Provisional Government automatically asked to withdraw in order to yield their places to some not in the Viet Minh. As President Ho said: "This is a beautiful gesture of not seeking social position, and of placing the interests of the nation and of national solidarity above individual interests. This is a commendable and admirable gesture which we must learn from."98

On 2 September 1945, President Ho Chi Minh, before a rally of more than 500,000 people in Ba Dinh Square in Hanoi celebrating the government, read the Manifesto of Independence on behalf of the Provisional Government of the DRV, announcing to the world:

"Every person who was born has equal rights. The creator gave them inviolable rights. Among those rights are the right to live, the right to be free, and the right to seek happiness...

"A people which courageously combated the yoke of slavery of France for more than 80 years, and a people which courageously sided with the Allies against the fascists for several years now -- such a people must be free! Such a people must be independent!

"Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence and to actually become a free and independent country. All the Vietnamese people are determined to enlist all of their spirit and forces, lives and property, to maintain that right of freedom and independence."99

The Manifesto of Independence of President Ho Chi Minh was a development of the requirements which he sent to the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, and a development of the Viet Minh program which he wrote in 1941. It crystallized the basic interests and most ardent aspirations of the Vietnamese people, and articulated the pure soul and brave character of our people.

"The Manifesto of Independence is the result of the unknown amount of blood which has been shed and the unknown number of lives which have been sacrificed by the brave sons of Vietnam in prisons and concentration camps, on remote islands, in guillotines, and on the battlefield.

"The Manifesto of Independence is the result of the in-

calculable hopes, efforts, and confidence of more than twenty million Vietnamese people."100

Our Vietnamese people had a major holiday on 2 September 1945. It ended the colonial and feudal system in our country, and at the same time, ushered in a new era, an era when our people took their destiny in their own hands in order to achieve independence, freedom, and happiness.

Thus, the DRV was born with the successful August Revolution.

The Vietnamese people are really deserving to be a heroic people in Southeast Asia.

3. The Success Factors in the August Revolution

During and after World War II, human society underwent far-reaching changes. The German-Italian-Japanese fascists were completely defeated. The Soviet Union was completely victorious and their prestige and forces increased more than ever before. Thanks to assistance from the Soviet Union, the peoples of Albania, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Korea, and so forth rose up against fascism, secured national independence, built democratic people's regimes, and advanced to socialism.

The national liberation movement in colonial and semi-colonial countries gained ground, attracting hundreds of millions of people and shaking the colonial system of imperialism to its roots. In the Southeast Asia area, the struggle movement for independence and freedom was also very tempestuous in scores of countries: Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaya, Burma, India, Thailand, and so forth. However, why was it that only the Vietnamese working class and people were able to exploit the failure of the Japanese fascists and carry out the victorious August Revolution? It was because the August Revolution had the necessary subjective conditions and had extremely favorable objective conditions.

We can highlight the following subjective conditions: first, our country's revolution was led by our party, a genuine Marxist-Leninist party. Beginning in 1930, our party secured the sole right to lead the Vietnamese revolution. The party went through a period of struggle and training before it was able to consolidate that leadership and bring the August Revolution to victory.

Le Duan said: "Without the Communist Party, there definitely would not have been an August Revolution. Without the Communist Party, there would definitely not be the Democratic Republic of Vietnam."101

The great Russian October Revolution was the result of nearly 20 years of arduous struggle by the Bolshevik Party led by Stalin, and the result of great rehearsals: the revolution of 1905 and the revolution of February 1917. The victorious Chinese Democratic Revolution in 1949 was the result of a revolutionary campaign by the Chinese people under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party: the battles of the Northern March, the Long March, the three civil wars, and the resistance war against Japan.

Inheriting our ancestor's legacy of thousands of years of combating aggression and our revolutionary predecessor's experience of nearly 100 years of combating the French, the August Revolution was the result of 15 years of struggle by our people under the leadership of our party, and the result of three great rehearsals: the full-blown revolutionary movement of 1930 and 1931, the far-reaching and broad democratic campaign of 1936-1939, and the national liberation drive of 1939-1945.

The full-blown revolutionary campaign of 1930-1931, the zenith of which was the Nghe Tinh [Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces] Soviet was the first great rehearsal for the 1945 August Revolution. During that movement, our party flew high the banner of nationalism and democracy, built a firm worker-farmer alliance, and completely took over the leadership of the Vietnamese revolution. In the full-blown Nghe Tinh Soviet Movement, our party learned the art of mobilizing and organizing the masses from small groups into a broad movement attracting hundreds of thousands of people, and the art of closely coordinating the workers' movement with the farmers' movement, using revolutionary violence to seize political power in some rural areas in the two provinces of Nghe An and Ha Tinh so that, 15 years later, it was able to have an uprising to seize power throughout the country.

The 1936-1939 democratic campaign was the second rehearsal for the 1945 August Revolution. That campaign, organized and led by our party, trained millions of the masses to struggle against the colonial reactionary elements, to demand democratic freedoms and an improvement in their lives, to combat fascism and war, and to preserve world peace. Previously, our party primarily led the workers and farmers. Now, it moved ahead to lead many other strata in the urban areas and in the countryside, establishing a broad democratic front. From illegal

activities the party shifted to combined illegal and legal and quasi-legal activities, mobilizing an unprecedentedly feverish political struggle movement throughout the country. The prestige of the party rapidly grew.

In the course of those two rehearsals, the revolutionary movement, led by our party, was politically, ideologically, and organizationally readied in both the urban areas and in the countryside. Our people engaged in illegal and legal struggles out in the streets and in the legislature, and practiced the exercise of power in some rural areas. Our party gained successful and unsuccessful experiences during those two great rehearsals for leading the victorious August Revolution.

The national liberation drive of 1939-1945 was the third rehearsal directly leading to the victory of the August Revolution. During that period, our party, led by the great President Ho Chi Minh, adapted Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country, set forth correct lines and policies, organized powerful and steady political and armed forces, and utilized appropriate revolutionary methods. Our party enunciated the line on people's national democratic revolution, correctly resolved the relationship between fighting imperialism and fighting feudalism, held aloft the banner of nationalism and democracy, and assembled all the people under the banner of the Viet Minh Front in order to struggle against fascism and its henchmen. Our party developed the spirit of relying primarily on one's self to a high degree, and resolutely employed revolutionary violence to seize political power. In September 1939, when World War II broke out, the revolutionary situation changed. Our party calmly and promptly changed the locus of its operations to the countryside, using the countryside to build large revolutionary bases, while still devoting serious attention to the urban movement, and closely coordinating the urban movement with the rural movement. It closely coordinated the development of political forces with the development of armed forces. It took advantage of opportunities, carried out partial uprisings, seized political power locally, and moved forward to the general uprising in order to seize power throughout the country.

Secondly, our party achieved a firm worker-farmer alliance as the nucleus for uniting all the people and mobilizing all the people to participate in the revolution. The working class and the farming class represent a large part of our population. Workers and farmers were the most heavily oppressed and exploited people and, consequently, they enthusiastically sacrificed during the revolution. The workers and farmers were the main force of the revolution. In order for the revolution to succeed, it was necessary to make the great masses of people participate in the revolution, particularly the workers and farmers.

During the August Revolution, the workers and farmers allied closely and enthusiastically participated in the revolution. Therefore, they were able to attract all the people to rise up during the general uprising to seize political power throughout the country, both in the rural areas and in the urban areas.

In achieving a firm alliance between the workers and the farmers, our party consolidated the leadership of the working class and of the party in the revolution -- an extremely important fact because only when that leadership was consolidated could the August Revolution succeed, could political power be returned to the people, and could the DRV be born. And when the French colonialists turned around and invaded our country again, our people were able to engage in a prolonged resistance war in order to firmly maintain the fruits of the August Revolution and protect revolutionary power only because that leadership had been consolidated.

Thirdly, our country's revolution had the great force of all the people united together in the Viet Minh Front, which was based on the worker-peasant alliance, under the leadership of the party. Our people had a long tradition of struggling against foreign aggression, and they were also educated, organized, and led by the party. Consequently, they were able to develop their spirit and power to a new level and to a new quality. During the period of World War II, all strata, all classes, all nationalities, and all religious sects, oppressed, exploited, and treated with extreme cruelty by many enemies at once, had a high-pitched hatred and resentment for the enemy. They quickly and profoundly absorbed the lines and policies of the Viet Minh, had absolute confidence in the correct leadership of the party, and enthusiastically joined national salvation organizations. When the opportunity arrived, our people from the north to the south, in response to the appeal of the party and President Ho, unanimously rose up to overthrow the ruling yoke of the fascist imperialists and their henchmen with miraculous creativity, and extraordinary courage.

Fourthly, our country's revolution had the people's armed forces developed and led by our party. The struggle to regain power in a country such as ours, ruled by imperialism, definitely required revolutionary violence. In order to complete the task of leading the Vietnamese revolution to victory -- and a victory decisive for the securing of power -- our party constant-

ly concerned itself with the development of the political forces of the masses and, based on the development of the political forces, with the development of the people's armed forces under many different forms.

During the 1939-1945 national liberation campaign, our party viewed the matter of preparing for armed uprising as its central task. Armed uprising was the only way to secure political power. It was necessary to have forces in order to carry out an armed uprising. All of the activities of the party during that period were aimed at preparing the political forces and armed forces for the eventual armed uprising to seize power. Our party also clearly understood that the securing of power was only the first step of the revolution, and that after power was secured, it would be necessary to protect the revolutionary power and to advance it. Therefore, it was necessary to assiduously develop the people's armed forces in order to carry out uprisings in order to seize power and to fight to protect the revolutionary power following the victory of the uprisings.

Right after the unsuccessful Bac Son uprising, our party decided to maintain the people's armed forces begotten by that uprising. Our party developed the Vietnamese National Salvation Army from the Bac Son guerrilla units, and, later, established the Vietnamese Liberation Propaganda Army, and unified the Vietnamese National Salvation Army and the Vietnamese Liberation Propaganda Army into the Vietnamese Liberation Army in 1945. In addition to the aforementioned forces, the forerunners of the regular army organized and led by the Central Committee, our party often directed all echelons, depending upon their circumstances, to organize people's armed forces of many different types throughout the country, such as guerrilla units, commando units, national self-defense units, combat self-defense units, armed assault teams, units to eliminate Vietnamese henchmen, honor units, and so forth.

Prior to and during the August Revolution, we had not developed a large and powerful regular army, but this did not mean that the role of the people's armed forces and of armed struggle was unimportant.

Indeed, without the people's armed forces there would not have been the Bac Son Uprising and the Nam Ky Uprising, there would not have been the eight months of guerrilla warfare in Dinh Ca and Trang Xa in Thai Nguyen Province, there would not have been drives to destroy the Japanese and to eliminate the Vietnamese henchmen, nor the great demonstrations to destroy paddy warehouses and to eliminate hunger, and there would not have been guerrilla attacks, partial uprisings, the establishment of large

revolutionary bases, and the establishment of revolutionary political power in many localities after 9 March 1945. Those victories layed the foundation for the August Revolution. Later, because of the coordination between the armed and paramilitary forces and the political forces, the people enthusiastically and resolutely rose up throughout the country, overthrew the political power of the Japanese and their henchmen, and established the people's government.

However, the aforementioned subjective conditions were not sufficient for rapidly securing victory in the August Revolution. It was also necessary to have favorable objective conditions.

As for the objective conditions, the war between the world's democratic forces, the pillar of which was the Soviet Union, and the fascists ended with the proud victory of the Soviet Union and the other democratic forces and the pitiful defeat of aggressive fascism, creating extremely advantageous conditions for the national liberation movement throughout the world. The national liberation revolution of the Vietnamese people was a part of the democratic fight against fascism throughout the world.

In World War II, the Japanese and French fascists, the concrete and immediate enemies of the Vietnamese revolution, weakened each other through the Japanese coup de'tat of 9 March 1945. Under the leadership of the party, our people thoroughly exploited the contradictions between the Japanese and the French in order to have partial uprisings and, eventually, a general uprising. Later, the heroic Soviet Army defeated the Japanese fascists, forcing them to lay down their arms and seek unconditional surrender. That situation created an opportunity found once in a thousand years, enabling the August Revolution to succeed quickly and with little bloodshed.

The victory of the August Revolution was in the close coordination of objective conditions with subjective conditions, in the close coordination between the correct lines and programs of our party and the creativity, courageous spirit, and struggle power of our people, and the combination of the efforts of the Vietnamese people themselves and the splendid military feats of the Soviet Army. It was a victory for the democratic forces in general throughout the world in their fight against aggressive fascists.

Among the aforementioned conditions of victory, subjective conditions played the decisive role in the victory of the

August Revolution. Why? Because a country's revolution essentially must be handled by the people of that country. The chief conditions for guaranteeing victory are the internal conditions of that country. Therefore, in order to have a successful revolution in one's country, the revolutionaries must struggle to create the subjective conditions necessary for that victory. It is necessary to rely principally on one's self, rather than to depend on external forces. However, in today's world, one country's revolution is a link in the chain of world revolution. The struggle movement of the people of the world for peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism definitely has a far-reaching influence on the revolutionary movement in a country. Conversely, one country's revolution also definitely has a resounding effect throughout the world, encouraging and stimulating the revolutionary movement of the people of the world.

FOOTNOTES

1. Even during August 1939, the newspapers Doi Nay, Ngay Moi, Nguoi Moi, Notre Voix in Hanoi were under surveillance by the French, and scores of writers were arrested by the French.

During September, 14 newspapers in Saigon were shut down, including the newspapers Le Peuple, Dan Chung, Lao Dong, and Cong Luan sponsored by our party. In Tonkin, there were 1,051 investigations, and many arrests.

On 28 September 1930, the Indochinese Governor General Catroux decided to dissolve the Friendship and Professional organizations, confiscating their papers and property. On 17 November 1939, based on that decision, the property of the Indochinese Communist Party was confiscated and sold. On 5 October 1939, Bao Dai issued a decree prohibiting communist meetings and propaganda.

2. Twenty-five years later, in his book entitled Deux Actes du drame Indochinois ["Two Acts in the Indochinese Drama"] Catroux affirmed that decision of his and maintained: "As far as its domestic rule, France would not have encountered any opposition or resistance to its presence and protectorate rule if there had not been a communist party operating clandestinely and illegally. This party had approximately 30,000 members, all of whom were very dedicated and awesome because they knew how to operate clandestinely and had confidence in their ideology (Edit. Plon, Paris, 1959, p. 20).

3. In September 1939, France set up 14 police posts in Hanoi alone. Previously, Thai Binh, Nam Binh, Ninh Binh, and Ha Nam Provinces were under the command of the Nam Dinh Province Intelligence Service. Now, each province had its own intelligence service.

4. France established the concentration camps of Ba Van and Nghia Lo in Tonkin, Lao Bao and Tra Khe in Trung Bo, and Ta Lai Ba Ra in Nam Bo. Moreover, France also moved Indochinese revolutionaries to Son La, Con Dao, Ban Me Thuot, Ma Dao, Trung My, and so forth.

5. In addition to opening fund drives and markets, France forced government employees to deduct part of their wages each month for the "Franco-Vietnamese Friendship" fund. Between September 1949 and April 1940, Trung Bo paid in 35,000 dong and Tonkin paid in 100,000 dong.

The budget for all Indochina grew very rapidly, based primar-

ily on an increase of old taxes and an imposition of new taxes. That budget increased as follows: 1938, 18 million dong, 1939, 102 million dong, and 1940, 134 million dong.

During the first eight months of 1940, the French imperialists extracted from Indochina 37,955 tons of raw materials and took them to France (it only extracted 15,093 tons during the same period the previous year). At the same time, the French imperialists forced 80,000 Indochinese youths to enlist in the army and go to France in order to serve as cannon fodder for them.

6. In Haiphong, 4,000 soldiers demonstrated. Thousands of soldiers demonstrated in Saigon, Quang Tri, and Vinh Yen, demanding a better life. Even larger was the struggle of 5,000 soldiers in Danang and the demonstration of thousands of soldiers in My Tho. In Tay Ninh Province, 60 soldiers took their weapons and went into the jungle to prepare to fight the French imperialists. In Thu Dau Mot, 100 Vietnamese soldiers revealed an attitude of opposition to the imperialist war.

7. Cadres who were exposed in one area were shifted to other areas to operate.

8. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 57.

9. Ibid, p. 60.

10. Ibid, p. 73.

11. Ibid, p. 61.

12. Ibid, p. 60.

13. Ibid, p. 87.

14. We created revolutionary bases among the soldiers in important military camps such as O Ma, Tuy Ha, O Cap, My Tho, Tay Ninh and so forth.

15. See the letter from the French Communist Party Central Committee to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia on 28 January 1941.

16. The Vietnamese National Salvation Army consisted of three platoons:

-- the first platoon was established on 14 February 1941.

1941. -- The second platoon was established on 15 September
- The third platoon was established on 25 February 1944.
17. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 142
 18. Ibid.
 19. Ibid, p. 189.
 20. Vo Vguyen Giap, Tu Nhan Dan Ma Ra ["From the People"], p. 34.
 21. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 180.
 22. Ibid, p. 194.
 23. Ibid, p. 211.
 24. Ibid, p. 393.
 25. Ibid, p. 213.
 26. Ibid, p. 216.
 27. Ibid, p. 217.
 28. In July 1941, the Soviet Union and England signed a treaty to jointly fight Germany. In June 1942, the Soviet Union and the United States also signed a treaty to jointly fight Germany.
 29. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 305
 30. Ibid.
 31. Ibid, p. 306.
 32. Ibid, p. 306.
 33. Ibid, p. 306.

34. Year	Amount of Money Supplied	
1940	6,000,000 dong	Between Oct. and Dec. 1940, 2 million Indo-chinese dong were supplied each month

1941	58,000,000 dong	More than 4 million each month
1942	86,000,000 dong	More than 7 million dong each month
1943	117,000,000 dong	More than 9 million dong each month
1944	363,000,000 dong	More than 30 million dong each month
1945	90,000,000 dong	30 million dong each month between Jan. and Feb."
Total:	723,000,000 dong	

*This does not include the period between March and August 1945, when, the Japanese, ruling Indochina on their own, forced the Bank of Indochina to contribute to them more than 780,000 million dong. (J. DeCoux, A' La Barre de L' Indochine ["At the Helm of Indochina"] EDT, Plon, Paris, p. 446).

35. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 385.
36. Ibid, pp. 384, 385.
37. Ibid, p. 389.
38. Ibid, p. 389.
39. Sub-zone A, i.e., the Quang Trung Sub-zone. Sub-zone B, i.e., the Nguyen Huy Sub-zone.
40. In order to commemorate this meeting, our comrades called Nghia Ta Township Thang Loi ["Victory"] Township.
41. The newspaper Cuu Quoc ["National Salvation"], 28 August 1943 issue.

42. According to Thong Ke Hang Nam Cua Dong Duong ["Annual Statistics of Indochina"], 1939-1946.

43. The network of rice warehouses.

44. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 412.

45. Hoang Van Thu was arrested by the French at Tam Mai in Hanoi in August 1943 and shot to death by them at Bac Mai on 24 May 1944.

46. Vo Nguyen Giap, "From the People," Quan Doi Nhan Dan Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 138, 139.

47. Ibid, p. 141.

48. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 461.

49. Ibid, pp. 446, 447.

50. Ibid, pp. 446, 447.

51. In January 1944, the Soviet Army broke the seige of Leningrad. In April 1944, they liberated the large territorial area adjoining the Czechoslovakian and Rumanian border. In May 1944, they liberated the Crimea. In June 1944, they defeated the German forces at Karoly. In late 1944, the Soviet Army swept the German fascists from their territory and fought the enemy in Germany.

52. See the article "The Boils Will Break Open," the newspaper Co Giai Phong, No 7, 27 September 1944.

53. It was too hurried and impossible to have a meeting of the entire Central Committee because some of the members of the Central Committee were operating in Cao Bang Province or in China and could not return on time.

54. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 475.

55. Ibid, p. 476.

56. Ibid,

57. Ibid, p. 476, 477.

58. Ibid, p. 482.

59. Ibid, pp. 482, 483.

60. See the statement of 30 March 1945 of Minoda [Vietnamese phonetics], the Japanese governor in Nam Bo.

61. Japanese lackey reactionary organizations cropped up in Tonkin and Trung Bo, such as the Tan Viet Quoc Dan Party, the Dai Viet Quoc Xa Party, and the Phung Su Quoc Gia Party and so forth. The Dai Viet Quoc Gia Alliance was the front which brought together the various lackey reactionary organizations of the Japanese in Tonkin.

In Nam Bo, in addition to the old pro-Japanese political parties and the Cao Dai Hoa Hao and Pure Land religious sects, there was also added the following: The Vietnamese National Independence Party, the Phuc Viet Party, and the Japanese-Vietnamese Defense Group, and so forth.

62. See Nhung Mau Chuyen Ve Doi Hoat Dong Cua Ho Chu Tich ["Stories About the Activities of President Ho"] by Tran Dan Tien, Van Hoc Publishing House, 1969, p. 101.

63. See Truong Chinh's article entitled "The Policies of the Japanese Invaders Relating to Our People" printed in the magazine Cong San ["Communist"], No 3.

64. That fraudulent program included the following three points:

"The first matter is to achieve the hope of the Vietnamese people to make Vietnam an independent nation, restore its ancient status, and see to it that it becomes stronger and stronger.

"The second matter is to give attention to solving the food problem because the most crucial issue -- having priority over political and cultural issues -- is the food problem.

"The third matter is to build a Vietnamese national psychology, and the primary method of achieving this is to improve the methods of educating and revitalizing the youth, to mobilize a drive and find a way to suppress illegitimate organizations (i.e., anti-Viet Minh and anti-Communist -- the Historical Research Department of the Party), and to see to it that the national thinking of the people is solidified." (Vietnam Tan Bao, 22 May 1945).

The edict of 30 May 1945 stated: "Henceforth, newspapers and magazines, books, plays and songs, speeches, programs, and notices and so forth must be presented to the censorship office. Anyone who disobeys, will be punished."

The edict of 13 June 1945 provided a death penalty for anyone who "deliberately sabotages, partially or entirely, bridges, culverts, canals, irrigation ditches, railroad lines, buildings, trains, land routes, waterways, dikes, public offices, warehouses, electrical generators, machinery, and so forth. The assembly of a party of ten or more people, and the stealing, destroying, or damaging of cereal warehouses, edibles, goods, and rice."

The edict of 17 May 1945 announced amnesty for political criminals in order to deceive the people, but did not pardon communists.

65. An article by Tan Trao in the newspaper Co Giai Phong ["Liberation Flag"], No 13, 16 June 1945.

66. The Ban Yen Nhan Post located on Route 5 (Hanoi to Haiphong), approximately 27 kilometers from Hanoi.

67. According to incomplete figures, in the province as a whole, 39 warehouses were destroyed and 43 boats containing nearly 2,000 tons of paddy were stolen.

68. The newspaper Cuu Quoc ["National Salvation"], No 28.

69. Our underlining, the Historical Research Department of the Party.

70. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 494.

71. Ibid, p. 497.

72. Those seven war zones were: 1. the Le Loi War Zone in Tonkin; 2. the Hoang Hoa Tham War Zone in Tonkin; 3. the Quang Trung War Zone in Tonkin; 4. the Tran Hung Dao War Zone in Tonkin; 5. the Trung Trac War Zone in Trung Bo; 6. the Phan Dinh Phung War Zone in Trung Bo; 7. and the Nguyen Tri Phung War Zone in Nam Bo.

73. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 495.

74. The Tonkin Revolutionary Military Committee was composed of Vo Nguyen Giap, Van Tien Dung, Le Thanh Nghi, Tran Dang Ninh, Chu Van Tan and so forth.

75. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 502.
76. Truong Chinh; Cach Mang Thang Tam ["The August Revolution"] the Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 9.
77. Kim Son had bases among the masses and a powerful movement and effectively opposed enemy terrorism. Therefore, local cadres often called it the Kim Son War Zone. This war zone included Tan Trao Township, Kien Thuy District, Kien An Province.
78. "Let Us Promptly Follow the Line!", Co Giai Phong ["Liberation Flag"], No 15, 17 July 1945.
79. At the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union pledged to England and the United States that it would attack the Japanese fascists three months after defeating the German fascists.
80. The bulletin of the Viet Minh Tonkin Regional Headquarters of 13 August 1945 concerning the new situation which occurred because Japan surrendered to the Allies stated: "Before Japan surrendered, the Japanese ruling elements in Hanoi held two conferences at the Staff Headquarters and the Vietnamese Boarding School. Both conferences were dissolved after gunfire broke out between the faction advocating peace and the faction advocating war."
- On 15 and 16 August, Marshall Terguchi, the commander of the Southern Army of the Japanese fascists, held a conference in Da Lat, consisting of the commanders of the Japanese armies in China and the south. General Hagaki, the commander of the Japanese forces in China, wanted to continue to fight (according to data of Giuglaris in his book entitled Le Japon Perd La Guerre du Pacifique ["The Japanese Defeat in the War in the Pacific"], Edit. Plon, pp. 418-419).
81. It is our underlining -- the Historical Research Department of the Party.
82. Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 548.
83. Party Documents, 1939-1945, pp, 545, 546.
84. Ibid, p. 550.
85. Ibid, p. 546.
86. Ibid, p. 542.

87. Ibid, pp. 555, 556.
88. Ibid, p. 557.
89. Tuyen Tap ["Selected Works"], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, pp. 201, 202.
90. The Party Documents, 1939-1945, p. 538.
91. Vo Nguyen Giap: Tu Nhan Dan Ma Ra ["From the People"], Quan Doi Nhan Dan Publishing House, Hanoi, 1964, p. 222.
92. On 19 August, the people of Phuc Yen Province rose up and seized power in the provincial capital. The puppet province chief surrendered but several leaders of the civil guard, using the Japanese as support, resisted the revolution. As a matter of strategy, we established a "coalition government" with them. On 27 August, the Vietnam Quoc Dan Dang collaborated with the leaders of the civil guard against the revolution, but were routed by us. On 30 August, power was completely in our hands.
93. The population of Hue at that time was approximately 50,000.
94. "In the main" because most of our people in the aforementioned provinces and cities rose up to seize power in the townships before moving to the districts and provinces, and in the outskirts of the cities before moving into the city proper. However, in some provinces and cities, a few townships and districts seized power after power was seized in the provinces or cities.
95. There were two Viet Minh groups in Binh Dinh Province. One group led the uprising in the provincial capital on 23 August, and the other group led the uprising in the countryside later.
96. There were a number of townships in Cholon Province which, seeing Tan An rise up on 23 August, also rose up and seized power.
97. In Quang Tri Province, Dong Ha rose up later.
98. The documents of the Second National Congress of Delegates of the Party in February 1951. Published by the Historical Research Department of the Party, 1965, p. 28.

99. Ho Chi Minh: Tuyen Tap ["Selected Works"], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p. 207.

100. Tran Dan Tien: Nhung Mau Chuyen Ve Doi Hoat Dong Cua Ho Chu Tich ["Stories About the Life and Activities of President Ho"], Van Hoc Publishing House, Hanoi, 1969, p. 110.

101. Le Duan: Giai Cap Vo San Voi Van De Nong Dan Trong Cach Mang Vietnam ["The Proletarian Class and the Farmer Problem in the Vietnamese Revolution"], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1965, p. 77

PHOTO CAPTIONS

Photo on p. 2 of the 27 August 1970 issue of Nhan Dan. Pac Bo in Cao Bang Province, the place where President Ho established the agency for leading the revolution throughout the country in February 1941.

Photo caption on p. 3 of the 27 August 1970 issue of Nhan Dan. The rattan suitcase which President Ho brought with him when he returned home from abroad in February 1941. President Ho used this suitcase to carry his clothing, documents about Marxism-Leninism, and a Chinese language edition of the History of the Soviet Communist Party. (The top picture). The net bag which the Pac Bo National Salvation Association of Elderly People presented to President Ho when he returned home from abroad. President Ho used this bag to carry books and magazines, documents, and even bowls and chopsticks when he travelled on business. (The lower picture).

Picture on p. 3 of 28 August 1970 issue of Nhan Dan. The Phai Khat Post in Cao Bang Province, the place where the fighters of the Vietnamese Liberation Propaganda Army won their first battle on 24 December 1944.

Picture on p. 2 of the 31 August 1970 issue of Nhan Dan. The Haiphong Platoon of the Vietnamese National Salvation Army during August 1915.

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