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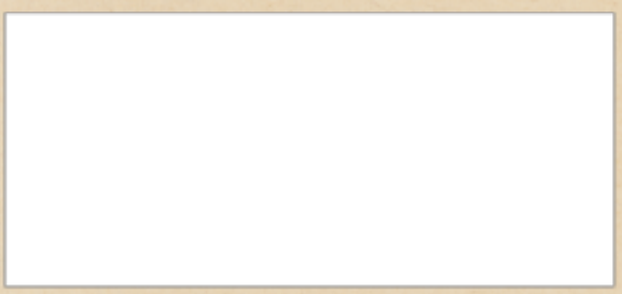
General
VO NGUYEN GIAP

PEOPLE'S WAR AGAINST U.S. AERONAVAL WAR

HANOI
1975

PEOPLE'S WAR
AGAINST
U.S. AERO-NAVAL WAR



General VO NGUYEN GIAP

PEOPLE'S WAR AGAINST U.S. AERO-NAVAL WAR

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Publisher's note

These are speeches delivered by General Vo Nguyen Giap in the years 1969-70 at various military conferences held after the failure of the US aero-naval war of destruction against the RDVN in 1965-68.

In the translation we have kept to the style of the spoken language ; as a result there is some unavoidable repetition in certain passages.

The lessons of the 1972 struggle against the U.S. Air Force have not yet been analysed in depth. We will publish them whenever appropriate texts are available.

OUR PEOPLE'S WAR HAS DEFEATED THE U.S. AERO-NAVAL WAR [1]

I — A VICTORY OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

Together with the emulation congresses of our forces in the various war zones, in the various arms and services since early spring, this Emulation Congress of the anti-aircraft and air forces marks a tremendous victory of our people in their resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. This is *a triumph of the people's war in North Viet Nam over the U.S. imperialists' air and naval war of destruction.* Along with the resounding successes on the South Viet Nam theatre it is *a victory of great consequence, of strategic significance.*

Four years ago, when their "special war" strategy in South Viet Nam was facing complete bankruptcy, the U.S. imperialists, with the utter obduracy of an international gendarme and counting on their economic and military potential, made the most serious strategic and political mistake in the history of their

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1. Speech delivred at the Emulation Congress of the Anti-Aircraft and Air Forces held in early June 1969.

aggressions. To make good their failures, they launched a large-scale "limited war", committed masses of expeditionary troops to an aggression against South Viet Nam, and at the same time started a piratical air and naval war of destruction against North Viet Nam — an independent and sovereign state, a member of the socialist camp.

On the South Viet Nam theatre, they mounted one major counter-offensive after another during two successive dry seasons, which all came to grief. But the heavier their setbacks, the more frantically they stepped up the aggressive war, deploying ever-bigger ground, air and naval forces which soon far exceeded the strength originally intended for a "limited war."

In the North they carried out frenzied raids and continually escalated the war as their reverses increased, extending their attacks up to the 19th and 20th parallels, then to the Northwest, Northeast and Viet Nam-China border, and finally to Hanoi, our capital, and Haiphong, the biggest port in North Viet Nam.

They mustered a fairly big modern air force based in Thailand and on aircraft carriers, together with artillery of various types operated from on board the Seventh Fleet and from the infantry forces south of the demarcation line. They mounted nearly 100,000 strikes against our beloved North Viet Nam, using more than one million tons of bombs and shells. They tried all kinds of hardware in their arsenal such as bombs and shells, rockets, steel-pellet bombs, napalm and magnetic bombs,

and all the other most up-to-date and murderous weapons at their disposal short of nuclear ones.

The U.S. imperialists thought that with their modern air and naval forces and the huge amount of bombs and shells which they believed nothing would resist, they could easily achieve their strategic objectives and finally subdue our people and bring to fruition their scheme of neo-colonialist aggression.

But they were grossly mistaken.

They thought that our determination would be shaken within a few weeks and our people would give in. But, contrary to their expectation, the fiercer their strikes, the deeper our people's hatred for the U.S. aggressors and the firmer the resolve of our entire army and people to defeat them. True, the aggressors had made careful and comprehensive calculations, banking heavily on the effectiveness of their modern armoury. However, there was one hard reality they had failed to take into account, that is: *the Vietnamese people are a heroic people who have since time immemorial never bowed to any invader and who have in less than three decades defeated Japanese fascism and French imperialism one after the other, and are now staunchly fighting and keeping in check the U.S. imperialist aggressors.*

The U.S. imperialists believed that with the force of their weaponry they could within a short period of time destroy all our land and water communications, completely sever North from South Viet Nam and realize their dark design of preventing the North Vietnamese from fulfilling their sacred duty to their

Southern kith and kin. But reality has completely baffled their plans. The more their raids intensified. the warmer the militant solidarity between North and South, the closer the North Vietnamese stood by their beloved countrymen in the South, and the more zealously they fulfilled their duty as the great rear area toward the great fighting front. *Viet Nam is one country, the Vietnamese are one nation; no force can drive them apart.*

In the "All for defeating the U.S. aggressors" and "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" spirit the North Vietnamese people have constantly turned their thoughts toward their Southern kindred, and have discharged with merit their sacred duty toward the liberation cause in the other half of their beloved country.

The U.S. imperialists expected that with the formidable destructive power of their modern air and naval forces, they could promptly bring our people's economic and cultural life to a standstill and cause serious damage to our national defence potential and our socialist construction. But what happened upset their calculations. In the flame of the fighting and in the flush of its victory over the war of destruction, North Viet Nam grew ever steadier and stronger. Agricultural and industrial production has remained stable and even developed. Communications and transport have been safeguarded. Cultural, educational and medical activities have increased. The national defence forces have consolidated and grown considerably. Even in wartime, the people's life has continued unperturbed and the army's needs

have been adequately met. The moral and political unity of our entire people has become stronger than ever before. With such marvellous achievements in fighting and in production the socialist regime has unmistakably proved its superiority and great vitality. The North has brought into full play its role as the base of the revolution for the whole country and as the great rear area for the great fighting front.

In combat, the North has grown steadier than ever before and has become our steel rampart. This we can rightly take pride in. Friends from foreign countries who visited North Viet Nam were astonished by the strong vitality of our nation and the miraculous revolutionary optimism of our people. *Such a nation, such a people, under a socialist regime, will surely defeat any enemy.*

The main goal of the U.S. imperialists' war of destruction against the North was to effectively co-ordinate actions with their expeditionary troops in the South Viet Nam theatre of operations and realize their aggressive design there.

After years of U.S. intensified aggressive war in both parts of our country, big changes have occurred in the South Viet Nam situation. The more the U.S. imperialists stepped up their aggressive war, the heavier their failures; the more our people persisted in their resistance, the greater their victories. Especially since early spring 1968, under the banner of the National Front for Liberation, the heroic people and Liberation Army in the South have been mounting wave after wave of widespread offensives

and uprisings against the enemy, springing powerful, continual and many-sided attacks — military and political — in towns and country, in the plains and hill-forests areas; the liberated areas have been expanded and people's revolutionary power set up throughout South Viet Nam. *The generalized offensives and uprisings have won tremendous and unprecedented successes* on every side, upsetting the strategic battle array of the enemy, rocking their rear area and shaking their aggressive will. They have forced the U.S. imperialists to put an end to the counter-offensive stage of their "limited war" on the South Viet Nam theatre, switch on to the defensive and the "clear and hold" strategy, and muster the major part of their forces for the defence of the towns and important bases.

In early spring this year, at the very moment when the Nixon administration, which had just assumed office, was at a loss to find a solution to the Viet Nam problem, the armed forces and people in the South staged a new wave of attacks, powerful and well-timed, striking hard at the U.S. aggressors in many skilfully prepared and highly efficient actions. *These repeated assaults prove that the longer they fight the stronger the South Viet Nam armed forces and people become, and spell out the great ability of South Viet Nam — the bulwark of the fatherland — to deliver powerful and continuous blows, and its determination to press its attacks till final victory.*

Turning our thoughts to the heroic South we warmly hail the great victories of our fourteen

million beloved countrymen, of the heroic Liberation Armed Forces, the pride of our entire people.

Having bitterly failed in their war effort and confronted with innumerable difficulties not only on the Viet Nam battlefield but also at home and in the world, the U.S. imperialists were forced to reconsider their unjust war condemned by all progressive mankind. They had to enter into talks with the delegates of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. This was something they had not envisaged when they sent massive numbers of aggressor troops to our country. This was one more aspect of their political passiveness in the face of the radiant justice and great strength of our nation. Recently the N.F.L. put forward its ten-point overall solution to the Viet Nam problem together with very sound and serious principles which further aggravated the U.S. imperialists' and their flunkeys' embarrassment.

The U.S. imperialists attacked the North in the hope of extricating themselves from their predicament in the South, but they met with bitter setbacks in both parts of our country. *On the South Viet Nam theatre the heroic people and Liberation Armed Forces inflicted reverse after reverse upon 1,200,000 troops of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen. This marvellous exploit was a telling blow at the U.S. imperialists' scheme of aggression and a very important contribution to defeating their war of destruction in North Viet Nam.* The aggressors were driven to unconditionally cease their bombardments

in the North. It was the failure not only of the war of destruction but also of an important part of the "limited war" strategy and of this strategy itself. it is safe to say that they have now tacitly admitted the bankruptcy of their "limited war" strategy and are forced to consider an "honourable" settlement and of "de-Americanizing" the war. Is "de-Americanization" a new manœuvre ? Surely the U.S. imperialists have not forgotten that they have once used non-American forces — the puppet army and administration — in the "special war", and having failer miserably, they had, out of passiveness, to take the decision to "Americanize" the war. Now that the "limited war" has gone bankrupt, they hope to turn the tide by resorting to the old trick of "de-Americanizing" or "Vietnamizing" the war. Both the U.S. and puppets have failed to gain a position of strength and have sustained more setbacks in the process. Yet they now want to put into effect a plan for a "phased withdrawal" of U.S. forces, with a view to replacing them by puppet troops and securing a position of strength. It is clear that they are plunging deeper into an impass, a quagmire and a losing position.

Our people are determined to continue foiling all their new schemes and keep up our resistance till final victory. And this war against U.S. aggression, for national salvation — the biggest in our nation's history against foreign aggression — will dash to the ground the myth of U.S. invincible military and economic strength. Our people's war is beating off and will surely defeat completely the neo-colonialist aggressive war of the U.S. imperialists.

II — SHINING EXAMPLES OF REVOLUTIONARY HEROISM

Under the leadership of our Party headed by our beloved and venerated President Ho Chi Minh, the people's armed forces in the North have upheld the tradition of resolute fighting until victory, of loyalty to the Party and devotion to the people, and have gloriously fulfilled their duty of crushing the American imperialists' war of destruction so as to make a worthy contribution to the great victory of our nation.

The anti-aircraft forces of our three kinds of armed forces in all localities, from the militia or self-defence member holding the plough or the hammer in one hand and the gun in the other, or fighting on a permanent basis in the battlefields, to the anti-aircraft and air force units have achieved very brilliant exploits and, together with the entire army and people, shot down nearly 3,300[1] American planes, got the better of the modern air force, and sunk or burnt hundreds of warships and commando boats of the topmost imperialist power. These are most glorious feats of arms. At this congress, *it is very gratifying for us to commend all cadres and fighters of our heroic people's armed forces, of the anti-aircraft, infantry, artillery, engineer, transport, signal, naval and other units* on the collective exploits achieved.

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1. Up to June 5, 1969 when the speech was delivered, 3,294 U.S. planes had been downed. *(Pub.)*

We all warmly congratulate our anti-aircraft artillery and missile units, air force, radar and other units of the anti-aircraft and air forces for their very important part in the victory over the U.S. air force. They have displayed revolutionary heroism, their resolve to fight and win, their splendid courage, great vigilance, intelligence and creative power; they have constantly improved their technique and tactics and devised skilful fighting methods to foil the perfidious technical tricks of the American aggressors and shot down nearly all types of their most up-to-date planes.

Promoting their spirit of "aiming right at the enemy", many *anti-aircraft gunners and units* have recorded outstanding achievements. They are the heroic Company No. 1, the Hong Linh unit credited with the highest record of 200 planes downed, the Xung Kich unit which fought with extraordinary perseverance and courage on the strategic communications front. Many comrades such as chief gunner Nguyen Huy Hong who, seriously wounded, continued to fight heroically, chief gunner Bui Xuan Chien who rushed into the flames to keep up the fighting. These comrades have set shining examples of revolutionary heroism.

Our young but heroic missile force has grown rapidly to maturity. Many units and operators recorded great feats such as the heroic Section No. 61, the Section No. 64 which grounded the highest number of American aircraft (over 40), the Song Da unit with 137 planes downed to its credit, the Nam Trieu and Ha Long units with a score of over

100 aircraft each, army hero Nguyen Tuyen and others who have ceaselessly improved their scientific and technical levels thanks to their revolutionary ardour.

Our nascent but heroic air force, true to its tradition of winning every battle has scored valiant exploits: The heroic Company No. 1 downed over 60 aircraft, Company No. 2 over 50, Sao Do unit over 100. Besides heroes Tran Hanh, Nguyen Van Bay and Lam Van Lich, many other comrades fought most valiantly and skilfully, and performed brilliant feats such as Nguyen Van Coc who blasted 9 planes, Ha Van Chuc who broke into an enemy formation of 36 aircraft and grounded the leading one manned by a colonel, thus checking the attack.

Our radar operators, courageous and constantly vigilant have never ceased to improve their technical level and proved capable of spotting the enemy "from afar, rapidly, accurately and thoroughly"; they have fought tirelessly by their oscilloscopes and recorded ever greater achievements; among others we can mention such distinguished units as Companies Nos. 11 and 19 and such able operators as Pham Si Yeng, Do Ngoan, Nguyen Van Giang and Tran Vinh Quang.

Signal, engineer, transport, armoury and other support units, offices and schools have displayed great combativeness and efficiently served the fighting, making an important contribution to the common victory.

Our heroic anti-aircraft and air forces have accomplished the task entrusted them by the Party and

the people with splendid success and earned the confidence and love of our armed forces and people.

We are very proud of our fellow-countrymen who have spared no effort and even sacrificed their lives in helping the armymen and, together with them, in taking part in the fighting. They have spent millions of work-days to build defence positions and roads to haul guns, carry ammunition, and tend the wounded. Without the wholehearted assistance and encouragement of the population, of Party organizations, government bodies and mass organizations of various localities, and of people of various nationalities, it would have been impossible for our army to perform such outstanding exploits.

The victories won by our armed forces are closely associated with the success of *precautions* against air raids taken by the *civilian air defence*. Our compatriots have dug millions of air raid shelters and tens of thousands of kilometres of communication trenches; by efficiently organizing an alert system and a thorough dispersal they reduced the losses caused by the enemy to the minimum. Thus, highly favourable conditions were created to fight the adversary and foil their objectives.

The successes of our armed forces and people are closely associated with our achievements in *production, transport and communications and in the cultural, medical and other branches.* In *production,* our people displayed courage and perseverance, unceasingly improved their technique and increased their labour productivity, overcame natural calamities and the havoc wrought by the enemy and satis-

fied all the requirements of our resistance. More particularly, as of late the enemy concentrated their attacks on the *communication lines*, and as a result the fighting unfolded most fiercely. With the spirit "to mend the roads immediately after the enemy destroy them" and "when the vehicles cannot pass, even houses are dismantled to repair the road", the forces in charge of transport and communications and the population have fought very heroically and gloriously carried the day. Thanks to the valiant struggle and strenuous efforts of our people in all branches, organs and localities to repel enemy raids and overcome difficulties and hardships in order to win on all fronts, we have recently recorded great successes in every field.

Once again, *we warmly hail and praise the tremendous achievements of our people in all localities and on all fronts. We express our profound gratitude and respect to them who, under the leadership of our Party, have given us added strength to defeat the enemy.*

III — OUR PARTY'S CORRECT LINE : FOUNTAIN-HEAD OF ALL OUR SUCCESSES

All the great successes of our people originate from the correct revolutionary line and the sound leadership of our Party headed by President Ho Chi Minh.

Our Party has laid down its revolutionary line by correctly and creatively applying Marxism-

Leninism to the concrete conditions of the revolution and of revolutionary war in our country.

That is the line of "promoting the socialist revolution in the North and at the same time the national people's democratic revolution in the South, achieving the reunification of the country on the basis of independence and democracy, building a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam, thereby contributing effectively to the strengthening of the socialist camp and to the defence of peace in Southeast Asia and the world".

That is the line of revolutionary war in a country with no large territory and population, but carried out by a heroic people — who possess a time-honoured tradition of building and defending their country, who have stood up time and again to fight and defeat enemies many times stronger than themselves economically and militarily — for their independence and freedom, for socialism.

This line, imbued with the radical revolutionary spirit of the working class, is the application of an offensive strategy to the concrete conditions of the present epoch; it is imbued with a constant determination to attack the enemy, to repel them step by step and smash them part by part so as to crush them completely and secure final victory for the revolution. That line gives full play to the ardent patriotism of our people, and at the same time is permeated with genuine proletarian internationalism. Our Party has always upheld the spirit of self-help, of relying mainly on our own strength while highly valuing the devoted assistance of the

fraternal countries and the sympathy and support of all progressive mankind. That line is a condensed expression of our Party's spirit of independence and sovereignty and stems from its sense of political responsibility for the revolutionary cause of our people and nation.

The fundamental point of our Party's line of revolutionary war is this: *the whole people, the whole country fights the aggressors with the people's armed forces as the hard core.* By mobilizing the entire people to resist aggression, by bringing people's war to a very high level, and by displaying unprecedented courage and creative power, our Party has firmly grasped the rule of revolutionary war in Viet Nam, thus generating a mighty force to get the better of any aggressor.

Deeply confident of the people's invincible strength and indomitable in face of U.S. imperialism — an enemy possessed of a tremendous potential and, in addition, utterly cruel and perfidious — our Party has always seen through the nature and scheme of the enemy, their general strategic intentions as well as their political manœuvres and concrete tactics. It has accurately appraised their strong and weak points, their innumerable contradictions and insurmountable difficulties, and has made a scientific analysis of the rules of the U.S. neo-colonialist war of aggression. In this aggressive war, all strategic schemes of neo-colonialism have been foiled one after another by the powerful offensives of people's war. The failure of their "special war" compelled the U.S. imperialists to wage a "limited war". Their

bitter defeats in the South drove them to launch a war of destruction in the North. Their reverses forced them to escalate and it is their losses which led them to de-escalate in their war of destruction. The more reckless they were, the heavier setbacks they suffered as a result of our people's strong offensives. Obdurate in escalation they met with defeats; obdurate and frenzied in de-escalation they met with still more humiliating ones. That is a blind alley which will inevitably lead them to complete failure. *That is the irrevocable development process of the U.S. imperialists' aggressive war, and it has the character of a rule.*

The military line in our people's war against the U.S. neo-colonialists' war of aggression has these marked characteristics:

The spirit of sustained, resolute and all-round offensive against the enemy. To strike the enemy with all our forces: basing ourselves on the valiant spirit and intelligence of the Vietnamese people who have reached a high level of political consciousness and are very closely united, to vigorously develop the efficiency of all kinds of weapons at our disposal, use all forms of struggle and combat methods and hit the enemy everywhere and at any time. To constantly attack and wipe out the enemy while seeing to the preservation and development of our own forces so that we become stronger and score more successes as we fight.

The capability to strike a big force with a small force, the courage to confront and defeat an opponent disposing of modern war means with weapons

which are in most cases unsophisticated, to use seasoned troops and clever combat methods to fight an enemy superior in number and equipped with modern armaments. Imbued with such a spirit and *devising excellent fighting tactics, our people and armed forces always hold the initiative of operations against the enemy, hitting them devastatingly from a position of strength.*

In the South, under the sound leadership of the National Front for Liberation, our people, millions acting as one man, have taken up arms and launched a strategic offensive by making use of both political and revolutionary armed forces, of the regular army, regional troops and militia and guerillas, of all weapons available, rudimentary, improved and modern; they have co-ordinated armed struggle with political action, military operations with uprisings, military and political offensives with persuasion work among the enemy troops, used various combat methods — fielding small-, medium-size and big units in all the three strategic areas: hill-forests, plains and urban centres. The South Viet Nam people and armed forces have skilfully used the method of opposing a small force to a bigger one, concentrating an appropriate troop strength when need be, using a highly effective force, striking hard and telling blows at the enemy's manpower, war means and rear bases, in order to cause them ever heavier losses while we grow stronger in the fighting and win bigger successes.

In the North, to worst the U.S. war of destruction, our people have developed an enormous fighting

potential. To defend the North and fulfil their duty as the great rear area to the great fighting front in the South, our people and armed forces have thwarted all the frenzied efforts of the American aggressors and scored brilliant successes.

Our Party has energetically aroused the patriotism and love for socialism of the entire people, and called on our armed forces and people to enhance their determination to fight, bring into full play their revolutionary heroism, surmount all difficulties and hardships, make sacrifices and endure losses, in order to mobilize and organize the people's forces in the fight against the invader.

Hence, the entire people have taken part in the struggle in a well-ogranized manner. Prompted by deep hatred for the enemy, our army has made good use of ever more sophisticated weapons and equipment and devised highly efficient combat methods. In the course of the fighting *they have developed to the utmost their offensive spirit, searched the enemy to beat them, grasped the rule governing their activities and the characteristics and capabilities of our own forces, then acted with determination, secrecy and suddenness* to engage the enemy and wipe them out. All this has enabled us *to avail ourselves of the adversary's moves to hit them back,* depriving their attacks of all or part of their efficiency while constantly keeping our initiative of operations. We have thus made notable progress in our efforts to oppose a smaller force to a bigger one and to co-ordinate small engagements with medium-size and big ones. Where and when we

grasp this fighting method, there and then we can obtain the greatest success, continually harass the enemy, destroy their manpower and foil all their tactical manœuvres and schemes.

Everywhere in our country, *all our three kinds of armed forces have defeated the enemy*. Our militiamen and guerillas, young or old, men or women, have downed enemy jets and captured American pilots. Each rifle, machine-gun, heavy gun, missile-launching-pad or modern plane at our brave and resourceful fighters' disposal has been brought into full play; even rifles can successfully cope with modern U.S. jet planes.

Being aware of the enemy's perfidious scheme to check our communications and transport and sever the relations between our rear area and our fighting front, we have set our army and people to fight on the communications and transport front considered as an emergency central task. With gallantry, perseverance and commendable creativeness our people have remarkably fulfilled their task on this front, frustrating the above-mentioned scheme of the enemy.

The adversary plotted to cause us heavy losses in life and property and to wreck our economic potentialities and national defence. Parallel to the participation in the fighting, our people have made great efforts to effectively preserve their forces. The dispersal of civilians and precautions against air raids have proved their efficiency in the protection of the lives and property of the population

and their tremendous significance in our victorious resistance.

We have changed the orientation of economic construction in wartime, strengthen regional industry, ensure production while fighting and continue to build socialism, in order to satisfy the immediate needs of the war and to meet the longrange requirements of socialist construction in the North. In the thick of the fight, the socialist relations of production have not only been maintained but they have also developed their great efficiency in the enhancement of our people's material and moral strength to defeat U.S. aggression and to build socialism. Our people have fulfilled this glorious task with a high political consciousness tempered in the process of socialist construction in the North. Whereas our resistance war against the French colonialists was conducted with a people's democratic economy, today, for the first time in our long history we are waging a war of resistance for national salvation against the American imperialists under a socialist regime. *Through the trials of the war the socialist system has proved its excellence and stability.*

Since the outset of the U.S. predatory war against the North, our Party realized that the aim of the aggressors was to stave off the U.S. puppet predicament in the South Viet Nam theatre and it has therefore called on the entire people to devote their heart and strength to the fight against the aggressors with a view to liberating the South and defending the North. Our fellow-countrymen in the South and

their Liberation armed forces have put up a stubborn struggle: against a blow dealt at the North, the enemy received ten at the hand of the South Viet Nam people and armed forces who have thus won bigger and bigger successes.

It is in these conditions that our armed forces and people in the North have unceasingly heightened their combativeness, caused ever heavier losses to the enemy, foiled all their strategic schemes and political and tactical manœuvres, compelling them to unconditionally halt the bombing of the North and resign themselves to total failure in their war of destruction.

Such are the new developments in our Party's line of revolutionary war and conduct of war. The mapping out and development of this line has been a great achievement in the application of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism concerning war and armed forces to the concrete conditions of our country. Our people have promoted to a higher level the traditional indomitability, the heroism and combat skill of a people who have defeated powerful aggressor armies in the course of their long history.

The soundness of the revolutionary and military lines of our Party has been demonstrated by the successes recorded on the battlefield. *These lines are the very source of our indomitable strength and of all our victories.*

Vietnamese military science is an advanced one, which has been outwitting the strategies and tactics of the imperialist war of aggression and the out-

moded military thought of an imperialist power which, though possessed of a tremendous economic and military potential, is on the wane and will continue to weaken in the inevitable development process of history at the present time.

In the revolutionary struggle of our people for independence, for the reunification of their country and for socialism, *Vietnamese military science has brought into play its far-reaching and proved its unquestionable superiority over the military thought of the imperialists, as well as its tremendous combativeness and invincible strength.*

IV — LET US VALIANTLY MARCH FORWARD TO BRING OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION, FOR NATIONAL SALVATION, TO TOTAL VICTORY

The ultimate defeat of the U.S. imperialists is a foregone conclusion. The longer they drag on the war, the heavier setbacks they will incur. But they are still very obdurate and do not want to give up their aggressive designs upon our country.

Though compelled to talk about an "honourable" settlement of the war, the U.S. imperialists are feverishly stepping up their aggression, exerting every effort to retrieve their situation by "de-Americanizing" the war step by step, and continuing their attempt to impose neo-colonialism on South Viet Nam and prolong the partition of our country. In their passive, defensive posture and serious predicament, they are doing their best to reinforce their

defences, frantically shore up the crumbling puppet army in all respects, rally the forces on their payroll and breathe life into them in an attempt to bolster up the puppet Thieu-Ky-Huong administration. At the same time, they are frenziedly using B. 52s, bombs and shells and toxic chemicals to devastate the liberated zone, launching repeated military operations and stepping up the so-called "accelerated pacification" program to repress, persecute and massacre our fellow-countrymen. While drifting toward ultimate defeat the U.S. imperialists still nurture the illusion that they can check the advance of the South Viet Nam armed forces and people who in the impetus of their victories, are dashing toward final victory.

Meanwhile, in the North, they stubbornly go on with their acts of war, carrying on reconnaissance flights and provocations, perpetrating other crimes, encroaching upon the sovereignty and threatening the security of the D.R.V.N., and continuing to dispatch spies and commandos to devastate socialist North Viet Nam. For all their failures in four years of the war of destruction, they have not yet renounced their dark designs upon the North.

For the independence and reunification of the country, and for socialism, *we pledge ourselves to strictly implement the teaching of President Ho Chi Minh: "So long as a single aggressor remains on our soil, we must fight on to sweep him away."* Our people throughout the country, united as one man, are resolved to rush forward to fight the U.S. aggressors till final victory.

It is the sacred duty of our people, of our nation, to completely defeat the U.S. aggressors. *All cadres and fighters of the people's armed forces show their determination to fight and to win, heighten their vigilance and resolutely fulfil all the tasks entrusted them by our Party and people.*

All cadres and fighters of the anti-aircraft and air forces must be well aware of the new situation and of their new tasks, fight stubbornly together with the other arms and services of the people's armed forces, resolutely smash all acts of war of the enemy, bring down all types of reconnaissance planes, be constantly prepared to fight, and with a strong resolve foil all the perfidious schemes of the American imperialists.

To accomplish these tasks, *we must ceaselessly strengthen our anti-aircraft and air forces and help them acquire great fighting capabilities and a great combat efficiency.*

We must build excellent A. A. artillery: all A. A. battalions should fight as well as, or better than, the Nguyen Viet Xuan Battalion; all A. A. units should fight as well as, or better than, the Hong Linh Unit.

We must build excellent missile units so that all its units can fight as well as, or better than, the heroic Section № 61 and № 64 or the Song Da Unit.

We must build an excellent air force so that all its units can fight as well as, or better than, heroic Company № 1 and Company № 2 or the Sao Do Unit.

We must build excellent radar units so that they can detect the enemy in good time whenever they intrude into our air space.

We must consolidate all our services, paying adequate attention to technical and logistic bases.

The standpoint of our Party on the building of the armed forces is constantly *to attach the utmost importance to raising their fighting capabilities and combat efficiency.* Only by so doing can we successfully fight a big force with a small one, vanquish an aggressive and numerous force with modern equipment by a not-so-large force with not-so-modern equipment and get the better of an army of the topmost imperialist power which disposes of the greatest economic and military potentials in the capitalist world. Only by so doing can we promote the fighting tradition of our forefathers and grasp the spirit and content of Vietnamese military science.

The yardstick to measure the fighting capabilities of an army is the combat efficiency of its units. Should all our air force companies be able to destroy over 60 enemy aircraft as the heroic Company № 1 did, should all our missile units be able to knock out of our skies over 40 planes as did one of them, should all our A.A. artillery battalions be able to destroy over 120 aircraft as the Nguyen Viet Xuan Battalion did, even with their present number, our anti-aircraft and air forces would have fighting capabilities five, ten or more times stronger. This means that the fighting capabilities of our army would be considerably multiplied. And this is what we are exerting ourselves to achieve a realistic goal

that all cadres and fighters of our anti-aircraft and air forces must attain at any cost.

First and foremost, *we must grasp the military line and operational thought of the Party*. This is the line of people's war developed to a high degree where the entire people fight and are valiant fighters; this is the thought of resolutely attacking the enemy to wipe them out, of striking them without respite and on all planes, acting with initiative, secrecy, suddenness, determination, courage and resourcefulness and using a small force against a bigger one, so as to achieve ever higher combat efficiency and winning ever greater victories.

Organizationally, our troops must be well seasoned, very strong, built up and equipped in accordance with the requirements of our combat methods. They must be politically and ideologically steadfast, and thoroughly conversant with technique and tactics; they must perfect the organization of their command, be appropriately equipped, and enjoy good material and technical conditions, especially as far as arms and services with modern equipment like the anti-aircraft and air forces are concerned. The officers in particular must be highly qualified, evince revolutionary virtues, master technique and tactics, show a grim determination to fight, and prove equal to their task as commanders, capable of leading their units to victory.

Your emulation congress has highlighted a great many examples set by army units and individual fighters in combat and in training. For the congress to develop its great impact, it is necessary to *review*

more concretely and more penetratingly the experiences of the most representative units, and from these experiences draw guide-lines and principles in order to enrich our Party's military thought, improve our combat methods and achieve greater achievements and feats of arms. This is a very good basis to strengthen our anti-aircraft and air forces, and improve their fighting capabilities *so that they can become an excellent arm, capable of defeating any enemy and effectively defending the beloved skies of our heroic Viet Nam.*

★

A very great and heavy task faces our people throughout the country, that of *making all-out efforts to bring our resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, to complete victory.*

Our countrymen and the liberation armed forces in the heroic South are rushing ahead like tidal waves, pushing up their attacks, and winning great victories, thus landing the American imperialists in an ever graver losing position and passive posture. For the liberation of South Viet Nam, for the reunification of our country, for socialism, and for the fulfilment of our lofty internationalist obligation, our armed forces and people in the North are exerting the greatest efforts to fight in order to defend the North, push ahead socialist construction and accomplish their sacred duty as the great rear area toward the great fighting front.

Never have the Vietnamese people been confronted with such a historic and glorious task as today.

Never have they deployed their combat strength with such an impetus.

Under the banner of the Party headed by our beloved and venerated President Ho Chi Minh, all our cadres and fighters in the people's armed forces in general and the anti-aircraft and air forces in particular *will courageously march forward together with our people all over the country in order to carry through our glorious mission and record the most shining exploits in the history of our resistance against aggression: to completely defeat the American aggressors, liberate the South, defend the North and advance toward the reunification of the country.*

PEOPLE'S WAR AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL [1]

Today you are meeting to discuss the review of four years of people's war versus the war of destruction in the various regions of the North, I am very glad to address your meeting. Let me convey the cordial greetings of President Ho Chi Minh, the Party Central Committee and the Central Military Committee to all the participants in this congress and all cadres and fighters of the regional armed forces, to all our fellow-countrymen and all cadres and Party members in the various regions.

On many previous occasions I have talked about people's war versus the U.S. war of destruction in the North as a whole. Today I would like to deal with *the brilliant successes and immense strength of people's war in the various regions* of the North, i.e in the various provinces, and take this opportunity to set forth some views about the progress, new potentialities, and important position of *regional military work.*

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1. Speech delivered at the Conference for Summing Up the Four Years of Victorious Resistance to the U.S. War of Destruction, held by the 3rd Military Zone in July 1969.

Over the past years, *under the direct leadership of the regional Party organizations, the gallant fight and creative labour of our people and armed forces accounted for a worthy part in the common achievements of the North and of the country as a whole,* and our people's war in various regions attained a rather high level.

The people's war versus the war of destruction was a nation-wide and all-sided resistance with new features. Hence the abundant and valuable experiences gathered by the various regions in all fields.

The first experience consists in having *the entire people fight the enemy,* in having the entire people hit back at enemy aircraft to defend our airspace, and at enemy vessels to defend our territorial waters, *in conducting wartime mobilization in such a way as to expand our regular troops* and at the same time *to build and develop our regional armed forces,* and make comprehensive preparations to guard against the expansion by the enemy of the "limited war" of aggression to the whole country.

As the war goes on, the various regions have continued to maintain and boost production and to build socialism, the immediate aim being to help bring the resistance to victory and the long-term one being to push socialist revolution forward. That is why they have also gained experience in *changing the economic orientation, building socialism in wartime conditions,* and closely combining combat duties with the task of building socialism. We must stress that this is the first time in our history that people's war has been conducted on the basis of a

socialist regime, unlike the former resistance against French aggression and the current resistance in the South against U.S. aggression, waged on the basis of a people's democratic regime in the liberated areas.

Another experience of great importance consists in *strengthening the leadership of regional party organizations in an all-sided way,* in combat and production, in ideology and organization, so as to bring the power of people's war into full play in all regions.

The American imperialists' perfidious design is to perpetuate the division of our country. But in their war of aggression they have looked upon Viet Nam as one single battlefield, thus tacitly and unwittingly admitting that Viet Nam is one. They have introduced a large expeditionary force into the South, considering this as the main battlefield at the same time attacking the socialist North with air and naval forces, considering it as a battlefield. That is why the resistance waged by the people and armed forces of the North against the American imperialists' war of destruction, for the defence of the D.R.V.N. is at the same time part and parcel of the common resistance waged by the entire nation against the limited war of aggression, for the defence of the great rear base of South Viet Nam, the great fighting front. Therefore, *the experiences gained by people's war in the North in opposing the enemy's war of destruction are also those gained by people's war against their "limited war" of aggression in the socialist rear base.* Meanwhile, in the South, our

countrymen and the Liberation armed forces are getting the better of over 1,200,000 American and puppet troops, winning great successes, and gaining very precious experiences in the fight against American ground, air and naval forces.

And so the experiences drawn by our people and armed forces in both zones of the country are very rich; they complement each other and complete the experiences acquired by our entire nation in the resistance against American aggression, for national salvation. In practice, people's war in the various regions in both the South and the North has proved to contain extremely great potentialities. That is why *we must not only sum up the experiences obtained in the North but also strive to learn from those secured in the various regions of the South.* Only so can we substantially strengthen regional military work, develop the tremendous power of the regions and contribute to bringing our resistance to complete victory, and at the same time make good preparations for the long-range building of our armed forces and the consolidation of our national defence.

I — THE PEOPLE AND ARMED FORCES IN ALL REGIONS HAVE MADE A WORTHY CONTRIBUTION TO DEFEATING THE AMERICAN AGGRESSORS' WAR OF DESTRUCTION

The summing-up report prepared by the command of the military zone is fairly complete and to a degree reflects the ideas of the leadership of

the provinces concerned. This is very good. I would like to add my comments on the following subjects:

1. The entire people fight the enemy and oppose their war of destruction by air and naval forces.

2. Wartime mobilization; building and development of regional armed forces.

3. Change in economic orientation; building of socialism in the various regions in wartime.

4. The strengthening of the leadership of regional Party organizations.

1: The entire people fight back the air and naval war of destruction

Against the U.S. imperialists' modern air and naval forces our armed forces and countrymen in the North waged an unusual people's war: *the entire people hit back at enemy planes and vessels, carried out defence and "dodging" work, and ensured the functioning of communications and transport.* Owing to the particular features and specific goals of the war of destruction, the above-mentioned three fronts, of which combat was the primary one, were closely related to each other and all of them actively contributed to defeating the enemy, foiling their main design against the North of our country. On these fronts worked side by side the anti-aircraft units of the regular forces and the regional forces, the communication-transport-maintenance units at the centre and the provinces and villages. The forces at the centre played a part of utmost importance. The widespread regional forces had also a very important role.

a) As regards *combat tasks,* we successfully implemented this directive: *the entire people hit back at enemy planes, taking the anti-aircraft units of the three armed forces as the nucleus.* This is a new development in people's war in our country. We had acquired experiences in our resistance mainly against ground forces, but not against air force. With our Party's sound line, our people's determination, intelligence and creative power, we launched a plane-hunting mass movement and achieved splendid results.

Our young anti-aircraft defence and air force developed by leaps and bounds. Regional anti-aircraft units also grew more experienced. Militia and self-defence members, young and old, men and women, no matter what their nationality, in the plains as well as in the hill regions, managed to down up-to-date U.S. jets. *Regional forces* of provinces and districts also grounded enemy planes. Our *people* valiantly fought and served the fighting, captured air pirates, built defence works and roads for anti-aircraft guns and missiles, helped the army in every respect. We used all available weapons from rifles, machine-guns and anti-aircraft guns of various calibres up to missiles and modern planes. With anti-aircraft units of both the regular forces and the widespread regional forces and all kinds of weapons, we wove an extensive network of fire with key points, many layers and many directions, to trap enemy planes at every altitude, place and moment. The strong fire-power in the socialist North

inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy air force and struck fear into American pilots.

The impact of the regional armed forces in anti-aircraft defence could be felt in the number of enemy planes brought down by the militia, self-defence and regional forces. Keeping watch round the clock and using automatics of various kinds, while working in the fields or in the factories, and sometimes simply using rifles, militia and self-defence members managed to shoot down modern jets: those of Quang Binh province downed over 100 enemy planes and many militiawomen also participated in this. Provincial anti-aircraft units gave a good account of themselves, some of them blasting up to 70 or 80 enemy planes — a high record indeed.

The impact of the regional armed forces could be seen in their co-ordination in combat with the regular anti-aircraft units to knock down as many enemy planes as possible, forming an efficacious flak at different altitudes and in different places.

On the other hand, in the war of destruction, the enemy air force was in a position to strike at any target in our rear. To cope with the enemy's mobility, we had to build an extensive air defence system with focal points. Thanks to the close co-ordination between the air defense forces of the regular army and of the regional troops, and between the regional troops and the militia and self-defence forces, we satisfactorily met that complex combat requirement.

Another major role of the armed forces was their important assignment in air defence: fighting enemy planes flying at low altitude. The regional forces and militia and self-defence units kept watch, detected adverse aircraft and helped the people organize air defence, and therefore succeeded in protecting their lives and property and defending production, helping them to live a normal life under the conditions of a gruelling war.

The regional armed forces in the coastal areas successfully hit back at U.S. vessels and U.S.-puppet commando-boats. In co-ordination with regular artillery units operating at key centres, regional gunners fired at enemy boats, provided cover for the people's activities within their gun's range and opened up new possibilities for the regions to defend our rather long coast-line.

Together with the people, regional troops and people's security forces honourably discharged their responsibility by grounding adverse planes, wiping out commandos, keeping order and security, and foiling the enemy psywar moves.

Along with operations of the regular forces, courageous and effective actions of the regional armed forces stimulated the people's fighting spirit and production zeal, and strengthened their determination to defeat American aggression, and their confidence in the final victory.

As regards *operational thinking*, the very fact that Vietnamese militia and self-defence units were able to knock down U.S. jets with infantry weapons bears a very important significance. It gives a con-

crete expression to the high level of our people's traditional military thinking: to fight a big force with a small one and to use all weapons available to worst an adversary possessing up-to-date ones usually superior to ours. One can say that the successes of our militia and self-defence forces supply part of the answer to the question why the Vietnamese people have got the better of the American aggressors.

b) Parallel to the directive "The entire people hit back at enemy planes and vessels" is this one: *"The entire people actively take part in civilian air defence."* The past years' fighting has highlighted the extremely important significance of the civilian air defence which frustrated the enemy's objective and reduced to the minimum our losses in life and property.

"To wipe out the enemy so as to defend ourselves, to preserve our forces to wipe out the enemy," this fundamental principle of every war has to be thoroughly grasped when opposing a people's war to a war of destruction. Indeed, to fight the enemy air force is not like dealing with their infantry, especially when one does not yet possess a strong air force and long-range missiles to destroy their planes on the ground at their bases or on the wing to their targets. In these conditions, in order to bring our initiative into full play and reduce our losses, it is of utmost importance *to nullify or lessen the effectiveness of the adversary's air strikes, and on this basis to turn their attacks into opportunities for us to wipe them out.* Therefore,

targets of eventual enemy strikes must be kept secret, protected by defence works, camouflaged, scattered and moved from place to place. Civilian air defence as well as the change of orientation in economic activities have a strategic significance, in the sense that they aim at neutralizing or diminishing the destructive effect of the enemy's raids. The satisfactory functioning of civilian air defence makes it possible for the regions to carry out fighting, maintain production, keep communications and transport going for a long time. Moreover, in many areas, especially in the southern provinces of the Fourth Military Zone, where the adversary intensified their attacks during the "limited bombing" period, our losses were smaller than previously due to better air defence measures.

In this domain the people's efforts were truly considerable. Throughout the North the population dug tens of millions of shelters, tens of thousands of communication trenches, adequately organized first aid, and made good the aftermaths of enemy attacks. We evacuated to the countryside millions of people living in the places worst hit by the enemy and in cities and other urban centres, dispersed many factories, offices, storages, schools and hospitals. Some provinces played hosts to hundreds of thousands of evacuees and helped them in their work and life. These were very great achievements and at the same time new experiences of the various regions in this war.

Civilian air defence work is directly related to the people's life, feelings, ways and customs, and

to the production and combat activities of various bases, government services and branches of activity. We must, therefore, adequately perform the job of educating the masses, cadres and Party members in their tasks and of conducting deep and broad political mobilization, and at the same time pay the utmost attention to organizational work, relying on the socialist relations of production, and, in rural areas, mainly on the co-operatives. Once the task of reinforcing civilian air defence is set forth, we must engage in organizational work, adopt concrete measures and correct policies with a view to fulfilling this task. We must have manpower to dig trenches and shelters (for instance the trench-digging teams of the co-ops), elaborate policies to ensure in every way good conditions for this activity, adopt a sound line in building shelters, for instance building priority shelters for families of war invalids and war martyrs, organize first-aid and transport of the wounded, adopt concrete lines and policies concerning evacuation and dispersion, etc. In many regions, effective models of shelters have been worked out and popularized, as well as efficient material and technical means which have made it possible to build better shelters with less labour. In the recent period, our people have built many types of highly effective shelters against the American imperialists' savage bombing and shelling: individual shelters, collective shelters, shelters for cattle, shelters for movable property, mobile shelters in the fields, shelters in sandy beaches, and solid and complex shelter systems.

Co-ordinating the resistance against the war of destruction with the preparations against the enemy's eventual expanding of the "limited war," many regions paid attention to coupling the building of shelters with the erection of combat villages.

Civilian air defence was very successful and has demonstrated our people's engineering capacities and the immense inventive power of people's war.

c) The *communications and transport front* was also an important part of the people's war against the war of destruction.

One of the enemy's major objectives was to strike at our communications and transport and check all assistance of the great rear to the great fighting front. To this effect, the adversary at times concentrated three-fourths of their air attacks. The military report of Grant Sharp, U.S. commander in the Pacific, revealed his vicious schemes and measures and strenuous efforts to bomb scattered targets as well as networks of targets, especially our most important communication lines. This report also admitted the bitter U.S. failure on this front, where our people's feats were remarkable.

Indeed, they unmistakably spelled out the grim determination to outwit the enemy, the courage, cleverness and organizational skill of the regional armed forces and people. *The entire people were mobilized to maintain communications and transport in good order under all circumstances, this being regarded as a central emergency task.* To repair what the enemy fiercely destroyed was a real combat job, especially in a country with an intricate

terrain, so many rivers, bridges and roads difficult of access. To get the better of the enemy here, one must have a tight hold on all the forces of transport, of road-building and road-mending, and of self-defence to protect the communication lines. Leadership in this tasks became part of military art, which requires a good understanding of the enemy situation and ours, a close co-ordination between the central and regional forces. Organizationally, the forces ensuring the smooth running of communications and transport were set up along the line of the three categories of armed forces: centrally-directed forces and forces of the regular army; the specialized units of the province; and widespread militia and self-defence forces at the grassroots. The centrally-directed forces and the regular forces were most important, especially in the uninhabited or sparsely populated areas and at key points subjected to heavy attacks. But the regional forces played also a part of great consequence, without which our tasks in communications and transport could not have been fulfilled in the past years.

Experience proves the potentialities of the various regions, provinces and villages to be very great. The point is to develop these potentialities in the most rational way: any job a region can tackle should be entrusted to it, on condition that this will not affect the unified leadership of the central level and the mobility and flexibility in the overall activities of the transport and communications branch. Over the past years, transport and communications work was best ensured in those provinces

which put adequate emphasis on it, which received adequate reinforcements, which knew how to use adequately both army engineers and young volunteers, which were adequately strengthened as regards their fighting forces, which benefited from resolute command and concentrated and unified leadership, and where the central forces were effectively combined with the militia, self-defence corps and people at the grassroots level.

2. To mobilize the manpower needed by the war, to set up and develop the regional armed forces

In the tough fight against the war of destruction, every region *actively encouraged the youth to enlist in the army while steadily building and strengthening its armed forces, and militia and self-defence forces.*

a) To meet the requirements of the war, our regular forces, especially the modern arms like the anti-aircraft force and the air force, were considerably expanded in a short time, in both number and quality, and did well on the battlefield. This was made possible by the great contribution of the various regions to the strong reserve forces built there since the years of peace

As production, combat and service to the front had to be carried out simultaneously, *successful mobilization of an adequate contingent of young people to serve in the army was in itself a tremendous achievement of the regions.* It was possible thanks to the patriotism and love for socialism of our people and youth, to the leadership and organ-

izational ability of the regional Party organizations and government services, and to the superiority of our socialist system. It also threw light on the new progress of regional military work and military organs.

It was the first time that the regions had to draft so many young men. In peace time, we had made good preparations for wartime mobilization by working out relevant laws, statutes and regulations. When the war broke out, we further realized the necessity of combining the enforcement of State laws with a careful political education, of carrying out the ideological mobilization of the masses, of following the mass line and of relying on the Party cells, co-operatives, State farms, enterprises, offices, schools, mass movements like the youth's "three readies," [1] the women's "three responsibilities." [2]

In those regions where the masss line was followed and which possessed a strong mass movement, in particular the youth movement, the work of selecting men for the armed forces was always fulfilled, even overfulfilled, both quantitatively and qualitatively. A point to be stressed is that the various regions should pay full attention to strengthening the movement wherever it is still weak, and at the same time to getting a good hold on it wherever it is advancing, so as to bring about overall progress. All

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1. The three "readies" : ready to fight (U.S. aggression) and to join up, ready to overcome all difficulties to drive ahead production and study in all circumstances ; and ready to do any work, to go anywhere, when requested.

2. The three "responsibilities" : responsibility in production, in family tasks and in the fighting.

regions should act in such a way as to perform their duties towards the resistance.

Organizationally, we have adequately solved the relation between production and combat, and in replenishing the regular forces and setting up on the spot combat forces, with an adequate mobilization rate for each region. The selection of men for the armed forces was well done wherever this task was combined with that of giving a strong impetus to other regional works: fostering and developing nuclei of regional forces; building militia and self-defence corps; building reserve forces, ensuring strong on-the-spot combat forces with adequate mobilizable reserves; paying full attention to the carrying out of policies vis-à-vis members of the armed forces in the rear.

Over the past years, *the overwhelming majority of the youth enlisted have proved to be courageous and staunch fighters, faithful to the Party, dedicated to the people, capable of rapidly mastering military knowledge. They are worthy of being the cream of the youth of the socialist regime, patiently educated and trained by the Party. This was another great achievement to our beautiful socialist system.*

The various regions should ceaselessly strive to heighten the quality of their selective services, so that every soldier and cadre setting out should be a fighter with high resolve, courage and military skill, eager to join the fighting and able to fulfil his duty after only a short training period. To this end, they should pay still greater attention to the political education of the youth, use and develop such good

experience gained as that which consists in actively educating the youth ever since they join the militia and self-defence corps, raising the overall quality of regional complementary training, building at regional level whole units for a good quality to replenish the regular forces, organizing reservist sections at the grassroots level, etc.

b) In the high tide of the resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, *regional armed forces grew up by leaps and bounds, in terms of organization and equipment, and acquired new fighting abilities.*

The militia and self-defence units increased in number though many were incorporated in the regular forces, and their quality enhanced. Self-defence units rapidly developed in enterprises, offices and city-wards. The percentage of Party members, Labour Youth members and women in militia and self-defence units also went up. They got more and better equipment. Many villages set up gunners' groups and special groups (like engineer, liaison, intelligence, first-aid groups) or even a mobile combat force. Militia and self-defence members learned to man many kinds of weapons and equipment — both rudimentary and sophisticated — brought down enemy planes, shot ablaze enemy vessels, disposed of tens of thousands of modern bombs and mines.

The regional forces rapidly grew up, in terms of organization, equipment and fighting ability. Many provinces boast anti-aircraft units which have grounded enemy planes, artillery units which have sunk

or set ablaze enemy vessels and commando boats, or engineering units which have made a great contribution to keep traffic flowing. Many regional infantry units also knocked down enemy planes, and in some places performed most admirable feats of arms.

Regional military services at all levels made noticeable progress in helping Party committees, in leading the armed forces and in guiding the militia and self-defence movement.

The above facts show *our actual capacities to build very strong armed forces comprising strong and widespread militia and self-defence regional armed forces with high quality, required arms and appropriate organization, and regional military services consolidated at all levels.* Those regional armed forces, which have specific functions and tasks, adequate organization and equipment, appropriate training and especially a high fighting spirit, knowledge of the terrain, population and climate of their areas and suitable tactical methods, can fight succesfully with a small force and few munitions and can fulfil their important functions and tasks with the best results.

Strong armed forces constitute a solid nucleus for the nationwide and all-out people's war in the regions. Only with strong regional armed forces and a strong regional reserve force, can one have firm bases to vigorously and rapidly develop the regular forces when necessary.

3. To change the economic orientation, set up and develop the local economy, continue to push ahead with the socialist revolution, bring into full play the superiority of the socialist system, forge the power of the people's war in all regions.

In face of the U.S. imperialists' "limited war" in the South and war of destruction in the North, our Party Central Committee pointed out that the North had *to carry out production while fighting to defend itself, support the South with might and main and continue to push ahead with socialist construction in accordance with the new situation.*

The resistance to U.S. aggression, for national salvation, and the continuation of socialist construction constitute the revolutionary task of our people in the new situation. Only if we successfully carry out the resistance for national salvation can we safeguard the building of socialism in the North and, together with our compatriots in the whole country, bring to completion the national democratic revolution in the South.

On the other hand, only if we continue socialist construction in the North can we strengthen our economic and national defence potentials, serve the resistance against U.S. aggression in the most efficient way, and bring it to victory.

To fulfil this task, our Party advocated *a change in the economic orientation by setting up and developing the regional economy.* Economic construction and development in the North must conform to the wartime situation in order to meet fighting requirements of the moment as well as the possibility of the U.S. expansion of the "limited war" to the

whole country. At the same time it must be consistent with the long-range orientation of socialist construction after our victory has been won. This was a perfectly sound and creative policy of our Party.

Despite the enemy's fierce attacks, together with the fighting and supplying of the front, the regions strove hard to implement the new economic orientation of setting up and developing their own economy in line with their situation. They went on with the revolution in the relation of production, the technological revolution, and the cultural and ideological revolution to build and consolidate the socialist regime in wartime, and to promote the superiority of the socialist system and step up people's war in their regions. These are new and most valuable experiences of our Party as well as of the regional Party organizations in this war.

The struggle on the production front, the development of education, culture and public health, the improvement of the living standards, and the building of socialism constitute a real epic which exalts the Vietnamese people's courage, creative labour, cleverness and thirst for learning. *In all regions, our armed forces and people are heroic not only in combat but also in production and in the building of a new life under enemy bombing and strafing.* This also is a characteristic of our people's revolutionary heroism. It spells out the greatness of our resistance and justifies the fact that the socialist Vietnamese can take a pride in themselves. Civilization has triumphed over violence. This is

why the U.S. war of destruction has lamentably failed. For all our weaknesses and shortcomings, our achievements are, indeed, considerable. A Western journalist has referred to the economic achievements in the North as a "Vietnamese miracle." The U.S. imperialists who have caused difficulties to and inflicted losses upon us have nevertheless failed in their scheme of shattering our economic potential to weaken our fighting capacity and disrupt the people's life in North Viet Nam. *In wartime, our regional socialist economy was preserved and continued to expand, efficiently serving our war effort.*

In *agriculture,* the socialist relations of production have been consolidated and developed. The number of households which are members of the co-ops and advanced co-ops has increased during the war years. Far from being weakened, the co-ops have evinced great vitality. They mobilized manpower, organized combat forces, ensured supplies, solved the problem of remuneration and other policies concerning production, combat, serving the fighting, and civilian air defence tasks. They ensured regional transport and communications and stabilized the life of their members. Were it not for the existence of co-operatives and the socialist system, it would be very difficult for the various regions to fulfil their heavy and complex wartime duties as they have done in the past years.

Agricultural production has been maintained, even developed in some regions: in spite of fierce enemy attacks, part of the work force has been

taken out of the agricultural sector. The various regions have striven to be self-sufficient in food, considering it to be a strategic problem.

The technological revolution in agriculture continnues to receive a great impulse. The number of mechanical workshops is on the increase. In many provinces, the areas mechanically ploughed have expanded. A movement for "attaining three targets in agriculture" has appeared in wartime. Under bombs and shells, in many regions the co-operative peasants observe the "straight rows" method in rice-transplanting. This shows the indomitable spirit and the determination to improve technique of the new peasantry, the collective peasantry in the socialist North.

The development of *regional industry* is an important feature of regional economy during the past few years. Many enterprises have been built and commissioned. In wartime, a network of regional industry with thousands of medium and small-sized entreprises has taken shape in the North. The various regions have succeeded in turning out goods which they had previously been unable to produce even in peace time. Regional industry has contributed to serving agriculture, transport and communication, the life of the people and the armed forces, and at the same time national defence at regional level. Part of the technical services for the army and the repair of ordinary weapons are ensured by regional mechanical workshops.

In wartime conditions, *educational, cultural, and health work* in all regions has also developed. School

enrolment at all levels has increased several times; classes are held in underground shelters or at night. Our educational work in wartime has made great efforts in keeping with the requirement of production and combat. Almost all villages have a health station, with an assistant doctor. Village health stations and district and provincial hospitals have turned to serving the fighting, contributing their share in first-aid care and giving medical treatment to armymen and civilians.

With the development of regional agriculture, industry and medical work, the on-the-spot logistical base of people's war was substantially strengthened.

War is one of the hardest trials for a social system. Thanks to the new economic orientation to suit wartime requirements and to the stepping up of the three revolutions in various regions, *the socialist regime in the North continued to be built, consolidated and developed during the war, and turned to account its superiority to push ahead the resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.*

The reality in the various regions over the past years of war has made it plain that the elimination of the exploitation of man has brought about among the labouring people *increasing political and ideological oneness of mind.* Hence people's war could rely on the immense capabilities of the broad masses of workers, collective peasants and socialist intellectuals. Our armed forces and people displayed a high sense of collective mastery, courage in combat and production, and solidarity in face of fierce enemy attacks. One cannot list all the examples

given by ordinary working people of heroism and selflessness in combat, of industriousness in production, or of the sense of responsibility as regards the affairs of the co-operative, the village or the country, caring for these even more than for their own.

Socialist ownership under the two forms of ownership by the entire people and collective ownership has been consolidated and perfected step by step in various areas. This constituted an objective factor favourable to the scientific organization of people's war. Between the labouring people there were not only sympathy and revolutionary consciousness but also new organizational relationships. Many combat and production units emerged and operated with efficiency thanks to the socialist relations of production and to the existence of co-operatives. Militia and self-defence groups to keep watch and to defuse bombs, co-op teams devoted to building shelters, co-op gangs devoted to carrying out production and fighting at the same time, etc., revealed the great capabilities of the socialist regime in many fields and especially in organization.

Before the war broke out, the regions had laid some *material and technical bases for socialism.* These were strengthened and gradually modernized in wartime. They provided new facilities for people's war to meet its logistical needs on the spot, raised labour productivity and liberated manpower for the fighting, thereby contributing to the increase of combat potential and services to the front of the

regional armed forces and people. In plane-hunting, civilian air defence, maintainance of communications and transport, the various regions required substantial material and technical contributions from co-operatives, enterprises, State offices and people.

The superiority of the socialist system in the North is embodied in *the new man, the socialist Vietnamese* with ardent patriotism, genuine proletarian internationalism, a spirit of collective mastery, a high fighting spirit, a continuously improving cultural level, good health, a loyal, simple and sound way of life. Regional young people, labour youth members and Party members who joined regular units set bright examples in the life-and-death struggle against the enemy, which are a source of pride for the socialist regime. Our militia and self-defence members are not only courageous but also clever in the handling of many kinds of modern weapons and equipment. Our workers and co-op members are industrious, good organizers and show great ability and ingenuity in improving technique, increasing labour productivity, in production and in the service to the front.

Clearly enough, *the socialist regime has made the most of its superiority to step up people's war in politics, in organization, in the material and technical bases, and in ideology, intelligence and human qualities.* These are new capabilities, a great source of strength of people's war in the regions. Any region able to develop and use all potentialities to the full and to perform a skilful division of labour and a rational combination of all forces can

fulfil brilliantly at regional level all the complex tasks of the war waged in every sphere and involving the entire people, with the highest quality and effectiveness.

4. To strengthen the leadership of local Party organizations

If people's war in the various regions developed a great force and scored brilliant successes, it was due primarily to the leadership of the regional Party organizations which strictly followed the correct policy of the Party Central Committee. Those Party organizations upheld the radical revolutionary spirit of the working class, brought into full play the cleverness of Party members and of the masses, did their best to grasp the Party's line and policies, and successfully fulfilled all the tasks assigned to their areas in our great national resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. They took care to give overall leadership while seeing with particular attention to the accomplishment of the military tasks entrusted to their areas and attaching special importance to political education, ideological guidance and organizational work, thereby making the most of the great strength of the socialist system so as to push forward the people's war.

Leadership in the war does not imply only military leadership but also overall leadership, coordinating military affairs with economic affairs, the fighting with production, the front with the rear. *The achievements of the regional Party organizations lie in the fact that they intimately coupled production with combat, discharging their task of*

mobilizing manpower and resources to meet the resistance needs, while fulfilling their production and combat duties on the spot, in accordance with the specific situation of their areas under different circumstances. That is why, under all circumstances, in general the regions were able to keep up production, fight effectively and perform satisfactorily all the military and other tasks set by the central authorities. These accomplishments show the high sense of political responsibility and the practical organizational ability of the regional Party organizations and their progress achieved in many fields.

The Party organizations credited with the fulfilment of their tasks in wartime were those which *paid due attention to military leadership, providing guidance to both combat and production, and displayed great ability in leading production amidst fierce fighting.* This has become a new requirement from the leadership of all Party organizations.

Many regional Party organizations, especially those in the areas worst hit by the enemy, met this requirement with distinction and drew many experiences, mainly the following:

— Provincial Party committees must strengthen their leadership over the regional military services and promote the latter's role;

— In order to give the best help to the Party committees, the regional military services must be not only expert in military affairs but also conversant in economic affairs, grasp the main problems

of socialist construction in the area and ably co-ordinate military with other affairs;

— All regional services and branches of activities must grasp the military requirements, and closely co-ordinate the fighting with production, and economic affairs with national defence affairs;

— One must raise the military knowledge of Party members and cadres; the work and way of life of all branches and services must be adapted to war conditions;

— One must closely co-ordinate the activities of all branches and services under the overall leadership of the regional Party committees.

In order to fulfil the task of leading and guiding people's war in the regions the Party committees attached the greatest importance to *consolidating themselves* in every aspect, political, ideological and organizational. In the provinces, the number of Party members has increased and their quality has been enhanced. In wartime, in many provinces, particularly in the Fourth Military Zone, there emerged many outstanding Party members and many Party cells that staunchly and ably led the people in combat and production, worthy of being the standard-bearers, the steel fortresses, the efficient general staffs of people's war. They are the pride of the regional Party organizations of our entire Party. In sum, *regional Party organizations have been tempered, have grown up in the gruelling fight and made a worthy contribution to the great achievements of our entire Party.*

II. RESOLUTELY MARCH FOWARD, GIVE PRACTICAL REINFORCEMENT TO REGIONAL MILITARY WORK AND STRIVE TO FULFIL ALL TASKS SUCCESSFULLY

The successes won by people's war in all regions are very brilliant ones. The strength of people's war in the various regions of the socialist North is truly immense. Those successes have brought a worthy contribution to the common victories of the population and armed forces of the North and to the common victories of our people throughout the country.

At present, the American imperialists have been forced to put an unconditional end to their bombing of the North. This bespeaks not only the complete failure of their war of destruction but also the bankruptcy of their "limited war" strategy in the southern part of our country.

An American politician has written that when President Johnson spoke on March 31, 1968, of the Viet Nam issue before the American people, he did not only declare the end of the military escalation, the stepping up of the search for negotiations and renunciation of his candidature in the presidential elections but also spelled out the fiasco of a policy and, may be, even the termination of a period.[1] He thereby means the end of the period in which the American imperialists considered themselves to be a super-power, and the collapse of their role in the world.

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1. Arthur Schelesinger Jr., a former adviser to President John F. Kennedy, in an article in *Harper's* magazine, No 3, 1969.

Our people's resistance to American aggression, for national salvation, has not yet come to a close; we have not yet achieved complete victory, but *it is clear that we have won and that the American imperialists have lost. The Vietnamese people's victory is an extremely important one, on account of its significance both as regards our nation and vis-à-vis the world revolutionary movement.* The failure suffered by the American imperialists on the Vietnamese battlefield is one of their heaviest failures in the history of their wars of aggression.

In the recent years, Viet Nam has become for the American imperialists their number one problem. Johnson has declared that the Viet Nam war is a crucial trial and has an importance equal to any war waged so far by the U.S. That is why the American imperialists have sent more than half a million troops to invade Viet Nam. Counting puppet and satellite troops, they have mustered over one million troops. With such a great military force, the American imperialists' aim is to commit aggression against the southern part of our country, but they also nurture other perfidious designs.

Viet Nam is now standing in the van of the national-liberation movement. The American imperialists' hope is that, if they win in Viet Nam, they will be able to defeat the national-liberation movement of the world's peoples. Viet Nam is also standing in the frontline of the socialist camp against the imperialist chieftain. It is the American imperialists' hope that, if they win in Viet Nam they will have struck a great blow at the socialist camp.

That is why they have shown the greatest frenzy and ferocity in rushing headlong into a military venture with a colossal force, in spite of the extremely heavy price in wealth and manpower, the military and political costs, and also the costs to the honour and future of the United States. They never anticipated that in this "crucial trial" the Vietnamese people would be the victor and they the vanquished.

The victory of the resistance to American aggression, for national salvation, will bring our people independence, freedom and the reunification of their country, and will play an ever greater role in mobilizing, encouraging and uniting the world revolutionary movement. The victory of the Vietnamese people means the victory of the world peoples' national liberation movement and that of the socialist camp. Our victorious resistance is a great historic event in the latter half of the 20 th century, an important milestone in the collapse of imperialism in its role of world gendarme, marking the upsurge of, and opening up bright prospects for, the common struggle waged by the world's peoples for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism. That is precisely why the Vietnamese people's valiant struggle has been looked upon as the hope, the conscience and honour of all progressive mankind.

Ever since the American imperialists put an end to their war of destruction against the North, our fellow-countrymen and the liberation troops in the heroic South have repeatedly attacked them in the

military, political and diplomatic fields. On the battlefield, the recent powerful onslaughts prove the great strength and stamina of the South Viet Nam liberation troops, who, fighting with great skill, have inflicted extremely heavy losses on the enemy and foiled the American scheme of increasing military pressure while cutting casualties. At the conference table, the ten-point solution put forward by the N.F.L. has driven the enemy into a state of passivity and confusion. The subsequent formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam has won extremely great sympathy and support in the international arena.

Clearly, the American imperialists cannot continue their war of aggression with the present scope and intensity for a long time. Nixon himself has said that the Viet Nam war is the most difficult ever for the Americans.

However, they remain very obdurate. Although they are seeking to extricate themselves from the war, they want to do it from a position of strength and to keep the southern part of our country within their neo-colonialist orbit. They are actively carrying out a scheme of "de-Americanization" and "Vietnamization" of the war, nurturing the illusion that, the puppet army and administration would grow stronger as the American troops withdraw. The American imperialists were insane when they rushed into a war of aggression now considered their greatest strategic mistake by the American rulers. At present they are proving themselves to

be even more insane by seeking, following their heavy failures, to "Vietnamize" the war in the hope of getting out of it, American style. Surely they will sustain even more pitiful failures.

The present resistance against American aggression, for national salvation, is the greatest war against foreign aggression in our national history. *To be resolved to carry on the resistance until final victory, for the independence and reunification of our country, for the fulfilment of our lofty internationalist duty, such is the most sacred task of every Vietnamese citizen.* President Ho Chi Minh has said: "So long as a single aggressor remains on our soil, we must fight on to sweep him away." The complete victory of the North over the enemy's war of destruction has created favourable conditions for its building and consolidation and for the strengthening of its forces in all fields. The armed forces and people of the North are well aware that so long as the more than one million American and puppet troops are trampling on the South, all activities by our people should follow the watchword: *"Everything to defeat the American aggressors!"*

The military task of the people in the North remains very heavy. In all regions they should continue to show vigilance and stand ready to fight in order to defend the North and fulfil the duty of the great rear area towards the great fighting front. We must continue to raise the fighting standard of the armed forces, shoot down all enemy reconnaissance aircraft, smash all enemy sabotage activities, destroy all enemy commando units, maintain secur-

ity and order, and watch out for any enemy comeback.

In order to accomplish successfully the military tasks of the various regions in the present situation, *we must give real reinforcement to regional military work and keep it abreast of the Party's policy of regional economic construction with a view to building our provinces militarily and economically into ever stronger basic units of people's war.*

Regional military work is an important part of our Party's military work. Its strategic position, hitherto already important, will grow ever more so in both the general revolutionary struggle and the armed struggle of the Party.

First, regional military work embodies our Party's views on people's war. It is closely connected with the just character of the wars for the defence of the fatherland and for national liberation waged by our people on their soil.

To defend the fatherland and liberate the nation, our Party holds that the entire people should engage in fighting the enemy, using the people's armed forces as a nucleus. The setting up of the three categories of armed forces is the most adequate form of organization for the people's armed forces, aimed at mobilizing and organizing the entire people in the fight against the enemy, for national salvation. That is why the regular troops assume a very important role, while that played by the regional troops, the militia and self-defence corps is also very important. The task of regional military work is to rely directly on the regional people's political

and economic bases, directly develop all the various people's forces, organize regional armed forces to fight on the spot, destroy the enemy, safeguard the people's lives and property, protect the people's regional power, firmly preserve the rights of the local people as the masters in their own areas.

Second, in the present resistance to American aggression, for national salvation, regional military work assumes an even more important role. This is because our enemy is a ferocious imperialism, with a numerous army, up-to-date weapons and a high degree of mobility; moreover, in modern warfare it is hard to make a clear distinction between front and rear.

In those conditions, the requirement that we should hit at the enemy in time, effectively and wherever he comes, so as to destroy them, defend our rear, and safeguard the people's lives and property, becomes all the more urgent and enduring. That is why regional military work should be reinforced, strong regional troops and militia and self-defence corps should be organized everywhere, the people should be mobilized and stand ready to hit back at the enemy. If the entire people and the entire army are valiant fighters, we can defeat any enemy however ferocious. Local forces in all regions always in a state of readiness constitute an advantageous feature of people's war against a highly mobile enemy, for the man on the spot is the most mobile of all, as is admitted even by the bourgeois military writers.

Third, on account of the new potentialities of the regional armed forces regarding technique and equipment and on account of the new development of military art in revolutionary warfare, regional military work becomes all the more important.

In the North the regional troops, militia and self-defence corps are now equipped with weapons and means to bring down enemy jets, sink or set afire enemy vessels, defuse and blow up enemy bombs and mines of the most modern types. In the South, the guerillas cannot only annihilate enemy infantry but also cope with armoured vehicles, tanks and helicopters. The regional troops have been able to fight relatively important annihilation battles.

Our way of fighting has undergone new developments: using few troops to fight many, fighting big battles with few troops, hitting hard and telling blows, striking at nerve centres and logistic bases with a view to destroying the most precious live forces and up-to-date war equipment. With this creative fighting style, the regional troops and guerillas have acquired new fighting power and progressed by leaps and bounds.

In face of the new situation, we must further strengthen regional military work and bring the potentialities of the regional armed forces into full play. In the conditions of modern warfare, guerilla warfare should be brought to an even higher level, thus creating favourable factors for regular warfare to defeat the enemy. The regional armed forces should be all the more broadly and powerfully expanded. In this way the regular forces will see

their mobility and striking power increased. The harmonious co-ordination at a high level between the three categories of armed forces, between the armed and political forces, creates new offensive power for people's war, which attacks the enemy without respite, by all means and ways, with forces of various sizes, everywhere and at all times, depriving them of effective striking power in spite of their numbers and driving them into dispersion, passivity and defeat.

Fourth, the ever growing importance of regional military work also springs from the development of all regions, especially the provinces, in wealth and manpower, economic potential and logistic capabilities as regards people's war.

In the North, ever since the Party Central Committee set forth the policy of regional economic development and building the provinces into ever stronger economic units, new favourable conditions and new potentialities have been created for regional military work. Generally speaking, the provinces of the North have fairly wide areas and populations of varying numbers, from one to two millions. In keeping with the rate of socialist building, agriculture has been expanding, regional industry growing, transport and communications widening, the material and technical bases of socialism in the various regions ceaselessly strengthened.

Hence, the point is to give real impetus to regional military work in order to use all latent forces in each region, combine economics and national defence within the regional framework, build each

province in both the economic and military fields and turn the province into an ever stronger basic unit of people's war at regional level.

Fifth, regional military work is closely connected with the important role played by the reserve forces in people's war and national defence for the entire people.

Only by reinforcing regional military work can we build strong reserve forces, qualitatively and quantitatively, stand ready to fight in peace time, and rapidly expand and strengthen the armed forces in wartime.

Over the past war years, regional military bodies have actively organized, managed and trained reserve forces and effectively carried out wartime mobilization with a view to replenishing the permanent forces. Thanks to this, our standing forces have developed by leaps and bounds within a short time. We constantly have at our disposal reserve forces in order to ceaselessly expand our armed forces and meet the new requirements of the resistance.

In future, following the complete victory of our resistance and the restoration of peace, we shall, at the same time as maintaining a moderately-sized standing force, have to activate regional military work more, so as to organize, manage and train reserve forces properly. Only so, while concentrating on peace time economic construction, shall we be in a position of combat readiness and be fully prepared to carry out mobilization and expand our forces should war break out.

And so, *we may aver that, under all circumstances, whether in peace or war, we must lay great stress on regional military work.* To raise our awareness of the important position and role of regional military work is a foremost problem, if an even stronger change is to happen in the thinking of leading cadres at all levels of the Party, the armed forces and the administration. To make light of regional military work is to stray from the viewpoint of people's war and to commit a serious mistake.

Having acquired a correct viewpoint on regional military work we must, when tackling *practical work,* continue to build, consolidate and heighten the quality in all fields of the militia, self-defence corps and regional troops; we must also raise the quality of the reserve forces and build and manage them adequately, and carry on with the building of combat villages according to given priorities. On the basis of a good combination of the regional economy with the requirements of national defence, we must strive to build material and technical bases and logistic bases of people's war at regional level, parallel to the building of common rear bases for the armed forces. An important point, which should be fully carried out by authorities at all levels, is the application of policies in the rear regarding the armed forces, for instance concerning wounded servicemen, soldiers' families, war martyrs' families, etc.

To carry out the above-mentioned tasks, we must really *strengthen the leadership of regional Party*

organizations, consolidate regional military bodies at all levels, especially at provincial and grassroots levels, which does not mean that the district level should be made light of; we must *foster and train regional military cadres* who are not only proficient in political and military matters but also familiar with the local political and economic situation, and who know how to closely combine military work with other regional works.

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The greatest resistance war in our national history has reaped extremely important victories. We are facing a heavy but extremely glorious task: *our entire people are of one mind and are resolved to carry on the resistance and bring the struggle against American aggression, for national salvation, to final victory.*

The American imperialists have suffered crushing defeats. However great their bellicosity, perfidy and stubborness, they will not be able to retrieve the situation and escape total failure. Our people are firmly determined to resist until victory, for the sake of the independence, freedom and unity of the fatherland, and for the sake of socialism. This fighting resolve is the most precious spiritual characteristic of the Vietnamese people. It has sprung, and has been tempered from one generation to another, in the course of the history of national resistance to foreign aggression. This will to fight and win, this "nothing-is-more-precious-than-inde-

pendence-and-freedom" spirit, is creating the invincible strength of people's war.

In this hard struggle against a cruel enemy, whose economic and military potential is many times greater than ours, our people, under the correct leadership of our Party, headed by President Ho Chi Minh, have shown both determination to resist the aggressors and defend the country, and high fighting skill. Not only have they set brilliant examples of revolutionary heroism, they have also evinced great military talents and creative originality. The fight in the various regions of the socialist North against the enemy's modern air and naval forces engaged in a war of destruction is one instance of that creative originality.

The experiences gained in people's war in general, in military work in particular, in both parts of our country, are extremely valuable ones. Their timely review will help Viet Nam's military science make another step forward and enrich our Party's military line. They also contribute to strengthening the fighting capacity of our armed forces and people so as to bring the resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, to its final victory and also to make good preparations for the building of our armed forces and for the consolidation of our national defence in the future.

We are resolved to preserve our beloved Viet Nam, now and for ever, for all generations to come, as the possession of the heroic Vietnamese nation.

IN THE TOWNS AND INDUSTRIAL CENTRES[1]

Today, availing myself of the visit I am paying to you, and before talking to you at this conference, I am very happy to convey to you, to our fellow countrymen, cadres, Party members, and armymen in this port city, the fraternal salutations and commendation of the Party Central Committee, the Government, and President Ton Duc Thang.

Our people in the North, with their armed forces as the core, have completely defeated the extremely barbarous war of destruction of the American imperialists. Today we are making full use of the new advantages and strengths of the socialist system to fulfil our task, the task of the great rear base toward the great front line. We are ready to smash all the warlike acts of the Americans against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. In the South our fellow-countrymen and the Liberation armed forces are beating the U.S. war of aggression. In the flush of great victory won in spring 1968, we are making

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1. Talk given on February 17, 1970, at the Conference of Cadres of Haiphong City, reviewing four years of victorious resistance to the U.S. war of destruction (1965-68).

rapid preparations in all fields—material and moral—in position and strength, to bring our greatest war of resistance to foreign aggression to complete victory. That is why, in these glorious days when we are celebrating the 40th founding anniversary of our beloved Party, we have the right to be proud of the great successes we have achieved, the successes of our Marxist-Leninist line, of the correct and creative leadership of our Party.

Today, reviewing the great victories won by our nationwide war of resistance to U.S. aggression for national salvation, we cannot refrain from mourning over the death of our beloved President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of our Party and our people. All of us, every Party member, every fighter, every inhabitant of this port city, every Vietnamese, whether living in the North or in the South agree with Comrade Le Duan when he said: "President Ho Chi Minh is no more, but he is always there to guide us. We feel his constant presence in our midst. For we continue to follow the path charted by him, we continue his great work. He will live for ever with our rivers and mountains, his name and image is ever more deeply engraved in the heart and mind of each of us."

With regard to the people's war waged in the North against the U.S. war of destruction, little by little we have drawn valuable experiences in the recapitulation conferences recently organized in various localities and in various arms and services. But there is another aspect — a most important one — of this problem which needs to be reviewed,

and it is the experience gained in our resistance in towns, and industrial centres.

This conference organized by the Haiphong municipality has a very rich content and stresses the strong points of the leadership of the Haiphong Party branch and committee. The city Party Committee has constantly followed and correctly implemented the line and policies of the Central Committee, keeping abreast of the situation in the city with a high determination to fulfil the tasks entrusted by the Party Central Committee and strengthening unity within the Party branch and among the population. It has attached great importance to providing overall leadership while grasping and closely co-ordinating the two main tasks, production and combat. It has worked out the general and concrete tasks, defined its policy and responsibility, speeded up the organization and the measures to carry out these tasks and has known how to concentrate on and complete a task in a given period of time.

I. THE BIG TOWNS AND CITIES — A STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT BATTLEFIEL IN THE PEOPLE'S WAR

In the history of our struggle against foreign aggression, our towns, especially our big towns and cities, have been the site of fierce battles between us and the enemy. In this regard our capital, Hanoi, has achieved many glorious exploits : the battles of Dong Bo Dau, Chuong Duong, and Thang Long against the Yuan army, the victorious battle of Dong Quan in

which 90,000 Ming troops surrendered, the resounding victory at Dong Da won by Nguyen Hue over 200,000 Ching aggressors. Haiphong twice routed the aggressors on the Bach Dang river. Nam Dinh and Vinh too have a long-standing tradition of fighting aggressions.

During their eighty years-odd of domination in our country, the French colonialists tried to turn these localities into reactionary political, economic and cultural centres under their control. Our people, with their indomitable spirit have continually risen up to cast off the imperialists' yoke, Since the foundation of our Party the struggle against the French colonialists, Japanese fascists and their henchmen developed more and more powerfully under its glorious banner among various sections of the townspeople, especially among the workers, the poor labourers, the youth and students, the revolutionary intellectuals and the peasants in the peripheries of towns.

After the complete liberation of the North the patriotism and tradition of revolutionary struggle of the workers and toiling people in urban centres developed more vigorously than at any former time. The successes we have achieved in socialist transformation and socialist economic construction and development have enabled us to turn the luxury-and consumption-oriented towns and cities into political, economic and cultural centres.

First the towns are the political and cultural centres: Hanoi, the capital city, is the seat of the Party Central Committee, the Government and leading

political and cultural organs, and the diplomatic corps ; Haiphong, the biggest port of the North, links our country with the socialist camp and other countries in the world. Our present-day towns, like others to be built in the future, are political and cultural centres which will attract a great number of workers — a class which, possessed of profound revolutionary spirit and the most advanced mode of production, is capable of uniting with the peasantry and other classes to transform the old society and build a new one. In the past four years of war, the self-defence units of the working class in the towns and industrial centres, together with the rest of the population, have achieved many brilliant exploits. They have proved their capabilities in combat, combat support, A.A. defence, maintenance of transport and communications and security and order; they have brought into play their vanguard role in production and shown that they are the true nuclei of the urban population's struggle against the enemy. The energetic actions of the townspeople to counter the predatory raids of American aircraft are symptomatic of the determination of the people in the North and throughout the country to defeat the American aggressors completely and achieve independence and freedom for the Fatherland.

The towns are also economic centres. At present our towns have truly become production centres provided with a modern industry as well as small industries and handicrafts and the areas surrounding them have quite a developed agriculture. In peace time, industrial production in the urban centres plays

a role of paramount importance in the whole national economy. In the war, its task has been all the heavier. At the central level, industry serves the fighting, national defence and economic development; in the localities, it serves the people's life and the gradual development of the material and technical basis of agriculture and other productive branches. That is why the protection of production in the urban centres is of great importance.

At present all our industrial enterprises are concentrated in the towns and industrial centres, which have a network of communication lines to transport goods and materials in and out. These lines fan out to every corner of the land and link our country to other countries, especially the socialist camp. For this reason, in the war of destruction against the North, the Americans have striven to destroy the communication lines of many towns and cities.

The towns have also a strategic importance and have thus been the site of fierce battles between us and the enemy.

We do not have such big cities as many other countries in the world; our future cities will have populations of only about one million. Though our urban population is not very great, it shows great density, amounting in the big towns and industrial centres to twenty or thirty thousand inhabitants per square kilometre, and even thirty to forty thousand in some town quarters. The townspeople belong to various sections and occupations: they are mostly workers, civil servants, cultural, scientific and technical workers or students. They are valuable assets

of the country, its huge productive and fighting forces.

These features show the difference between the town and the countryside and also the strategic importance of the towns. They explain to some extent why the large towns, cities and industrial centres were the particular targets of fierce American raids, why they were singled out for the greatest war escalation. If, in the recent war of destruction against the socialist North, the Americans did not attack the big towns from the very beginning, it is not because they were "stupid" but because they had to abide by the rule of "escalation." They were waging a war of aggression in the sixties of the 20th century, when the balance of forces was most unfavourable for the imperialists. This deterred the Americans from mobilizing their forces for massive attacks from the very beginning. They had to use these forces cautiously and pursue limited goals of aggression in order to avoid heavy losses. While fighting they had to prepare public opinion and proceed with care, probing and listening. In this way, they hoped to be able to ward off heavy military and political failure, avoid being isolated in face of public opinion, and alleviate somewhat the contradictions within their own ruling class as well as those between the American people and the American rulers.

But our people in both zones, North and South, are resolved not to let the American aggressors realize their wild dream. The air operation "Flaming Dart" launched at the beginning of 1965 as a curtain-raiser for their "retaliatory offensive" was

repelled with heavy losses. Operation "Rolling Thunder," another escalation, was duly punished. Then the aggressors attacked Vinh, Thanh Hoa, Ninh Binh, Lao Cai, Yen Bai and began their air raids on the peripheries of Hanoi and Haiphong, which resulted in the loss of many planes and a new failure for their strategic scheme. The determination of our people to liberate the South and defend the North, far from faltering was more and more strengthened.

In face of that stalemate in both zones of our country, the Americans were compelled to take a new, rash step: to strike at the big towns of the socialist North, threatening to send the North "back to the stone age" in order to attain the strategic objectives of their war of destruction. The reports made to Congress by the U.S. Pacific Command and the Commander of the U.S. expeditionary forces in South Viet Nam acknowledged that a plan had been worked out to attack Hanoi and Haiphong as early as November 1965, but the date had been postponed until June 29, 1966, by President Johnson after weighing the pros and cons: he has been asking himself whether that escalation would entail even heavier losses, whether it would soften the blows delivered by the patriots in the South, whether it would shake the determination of our people, and whether it would be severely condemned by world opinion. By raiding Hanoi and Haiphong, the Americans hoped to attain their strategic goals and to prevent the brother socialist countries from helping our war of resistance. In his report Grant Sharp wrote that the aim of the bombing throughout 1967 was "to isolate

Haiphong from Hanoi and Hanoi and Haiphong from the rest of North Viet Nam." In their attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong the American aircraft did their best to destroy all the sources of energy of our nascent industry, all the means of transport and the fuel depots with the definite intent of wrecking our economic potentialities and national defence. The Americans stupidly reckoned that the North would then give up its resolve to fight by the side of its Southern brothers.

This is obviously an impudent challenge not only to our people but also to the peoples of the socialist countries and of the whole world. By this rash action President Johnson committed a mistake of strategic importance.

In practice, it was when the escalation was at its highest that the American aggressors received the hardest blows, the greatest number of U.S. planes was downed and the greatest number of airmen killed or captured, including the "aces" of the U.S. Air Force; the most sophisticated types of planes and the latest new tactics failed before the determination and creative initiative of our people. This shows that, because they wage an unjust war of aggression against our people's just war of self-defence, the Americans are doomed to failure despite the use of a huge quantity of war materials and modern technique. This also exposes the truth that the "unimaginable strength of the U.S. Air Force" in fact has its limits and is not so terrible as they boast. At the same time a fundamental military thesis of the U.S. imperialists that "the air force decides

the outcome of the battle" has been knocked down by the iron-like determination of our people.

On the other hand, the heinous crimes committed by the Americans aggressors against our people brought severe criticism from the world ; the American people castigated the American rulers who saw their ranks more and more divided and their inner contradictions, already acute, deepen. The heavier their military setbacks, the more isolated they grew in the political field, and the greater their difficulties and losses in the two parts of our country. That is the reason why the American imperialists scaled down the war and finally admitted defeat. They were compelled to unconditionally stop the bombing and shelling of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and to sit down and talk with the representatives of the D.R.V.N. and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, now the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, the genuine representative of the 14 million South Vietnamese.

We study the law governing the actions of the American imperialists in the past so as to draw the necessary conclusions on the conduct of the war and thwart all their strategic schemes at present and in the future. While they have been forced to end their war of destruction, they are still engaging in armed reconnaissance missions and local raids combined with commando activities, infringing the security of North Viet Nam. In future when the U.S. imperialists suffer even heavier defeats in South Viet Nam, it is possible that they may step up their activities to

retrieve their situation in the battlefield, and again attack the urban and industrial centres in the North. We must be highly vigilant and beware of their new perfidious manœuvres. Of course, the war to be waged in future will not be the same as it has been. Since the U.S. imperialists are a most warlike world policeman who recoils from no treacherous means, it is possible that, under definite circumstances, they will not necessarily follow the path of gradual escalation before attacking our big towns and important industrial centres. This analysis of the features and laws governing the activities of the enemy and our experiences from our recent victorious resistance will enable us to raise the level of our conduct of the war in future and to take it to even greater successes.

II — BRILLIANT VICTORIES OF PEOPLE'S WAR IN THE URBAN CENTRES OF THE SOCIALIST NORTH

Assessing the great successes of four years of people's war against the American imperialists' war of destruction, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that "This is a victory of paramount importance for our people's war against U.S. aggression, for national salvation."

We have partially beaten off the war of aggression waged by the American imperialists, we have foiled one of their strategic schemes, and a new form of war, a part of their war against our country.

While 1.2 million GIs, puppet mercenaries and satellite troops suffered heavy defeats in South Viet

Nam, the "supremacy of the U.S. Air Force" was buried in the North. This testifies to the invincible nature of people's war, the hopeless bankruptcy of the obsolete military science of imperialism and our ample capability to defeat any kind of aggressive war by any imperialist who dares to invade our country.

As you have mentioned in your report, the victory won by the inhabitants and armed forces of the towns and industrial centres are most brilliant and significant in many ways. I will develop some ideas.

1. First, this is a triumph for the determination of our people to sacrifice themselves for independence and freedom and for the political and military line of our Party and its most correct and skilful conduct of the war.

What our people have experienced in our recent war of resistance against U.S. aggression in both parts of our country has enabled us to see our foe more clearly. The American aggressors are the leading imperialists, cruel, perfidious, wealthy with a huge military and economic potential.

In order to defeat them, we must first have a very firm resolve, for it is the decisive factor of our victories. It is also the manifestation of a profound revolutionary spirit, a firm stand and a solid basis from which to carry out a correct and creative political and military task. Our resolve is to defeat the American aggressors. This is the resolve of our Party Central Committee headed by President Ho Chi Minh, of the 17 million people in the North who are determined to fulfil their lofty duty towards the

Fatherland and of their 14 million brothers and sisters in the South. This is also the resolve of the South — the Brass Wall of the Fatherland — whose people are determined that "should the American aggressors strike the North once, the South would strike them ten, twenty times harder." With such an iron will, our people duly punished the aggressors immediately after they had fabricated the "Tonkin Gulf incident" and brazenly unleashed on August 5, 1964, their war planes against many localities in the North, including the towns of Vinh and Hong Gai. With this firm determination, the people in the North thwarted all U.S. escalations of the war. Meanwhile, the American aggressors who landed en masse in South Viet Nam to save the Saigon puppet regime were soundly beaten by the South Vietnamese people. To escape from their difficulties in both zones of our country, on June 29, 1966, the American air pirates attacked Hanoi and Haiphong, the two biggest cities in the North, inaugurating a most serious stage in their war escalation. Determined to fight selflessly for independence and freedom our people repulsed them. This resolve was expressed in President Ho Chi Minh's appeal of July 17, 1966, an unforgettable sacred call to the nation. He said : "Johnson and his clique should realize that they may bring in 500,000, one milion or even more troops to step up the war of aggression in South Viet Nam. They may use thousands of aircraft for intensified attacks against North Viet Nam. But never will they be able to break the iron will of the heroic Vietnamese people to fight against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. The

more obstinate they are, the graver their crime. The war may last another five, ten, twenty years or longer. Hanoi, Haiphong and other cities and enterprises may be destroyed but the Vietnamese people will not be intimidated! Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. Once victory is won, our people will rebuild our country and make it even more beautiful."

Responding to that appeal, we resolutely defeated the two wars of destruction of the American aggressors, who reached a very high rung in their escalation. Because we were convinced that "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" and were not afraid of seeing Hanoi and Haiphong destroyed, these two cities stood firm and became two heroic cities. This has been confirmed by Western writers and journalists who have visited our country. The British journalist Felix Greene wrote that he had seen every citizen in those cities ready to sacrifice his life, and when an entire people are ready for such a sacrifice, nothing can frighten them.

Our determination is a concrete manifestation of the profound revolutionary spirit of the working class and the superiority of our socialist system. It is also a well founded, objectively and scientifically-based resolve. As soon as the U.S. "special war" strategy proved a hopeless failure in South Viet Nam, our Party foresaw that the Americans might engage in sustained efforts to wreck the North. Our assessment was that the war of destruction was an integral part of the U.S. war of aggression in South Viet Nam. Its task was to hit at the great base

of the great frontline, to attack the revolutionary base of the whole nation, in order to save the U.S. and its puppets from severe defeat. That is why this war of destruction is related to the development of the U.S. war of aggression in South Viet Nam, and, in the main, it will end only when the U.S. aggressors are completely defeated there. Besides waging their war of destruction, the Americans are attempting to deliver a blow at the socialist camp and the nations who have gained independence and sovereignty, thus challenging the revolutionary people in the world.

Politically, this is the fundamental weak point of the U.S. war of destruction, because, originating as the by-product of the Americans' strategic failure in the South Viet Nam battlefront it has from the very outset, borne a strategically passive character. At the same time, as part of the U.S. "limited war" of aggression in the South, it cannot escape the law of this war which works as follows: "As he fails, the U.S. aggressor is obliged to escalate the war; when this escalation comes to grief, he is compelled to scale up the war, only to suffer a bigger setback which eventually forces him to climb to the highest rung. Then, when he meets with even greater failure, he is compelled to scale down the war before he meets total fiasco."

If the U.S. war of destruction is governed by this law, this is also due to the fact that it bears the character of an unjust and brazen aggression against the D.R.V.N., an independent sovereign country, a member of the socialist camp. This impudent provoc-

ation against our people and the revolutionary and progressive forces in the world leads to the fact that the bigger the size of the U.S. imperialists' military operations, the heavier their defeat and the greater their isolation in the political field. That is why notwithstanding its huge air force, ample modern technical means and air bases close to North Viet Nam, the U.S. is still ruled by the law of gradual escalation. In fact, over the last few years in the big towns we have seen that the Americans have sometimes scaled up the air war, and sometimes scaled it down to escalate it later. They closely combined their barbarous methods with political and diplomatic manœuvres and their acts of destruction with psychological war. At times, they made use of concentrated forces to launch massive attacks on big towns so as to shake our resolve to fight them. But the bigger the battles, the heavier their defeat, and they were compelled to resort to sneak attack by small groups before finally resigning themselves to failure.

To lead our people in their victorious struggle against the U.S. war of destruction, our Party has charted a correct and skilful political and military line. It has come to the conclusion that the war of destruction waged by the U.S. in the North is not yet an outright aggression but a part of its war of aggression aimed at imposing its domination on South Viet Nam. Our Party has laid down for both parts of our country the line and revolutionary task to beat the U.S. war of destruction and build up socialism in the North; it has correctly handled the

relation between production and combat and clearly set concrete tasks to our people in the new situation, together with the policy of the transformation of peace time to wartime activities simultaneously with the swift development of the armed forces.

Our review of people's war in big towns must bring into relief the skilful application of the Party's general line and policy at the same time as it studies and analyses the military line, the people's war. It needs to make clear that the people's war waged against the U.S. war of destruction in the North is part of the people's war waged by our people throughout the country against U.S. aggression. It has been conducted in the large rear area of the resistance war — the revolutionary base of the whole country — and therefore is a war of liberation. On the other hand, this people's war is also a war to defend the socialist North, an independent and sovereign country, member of the socialist camp. That is why it has the task and the character of a war for nationl defence, one which, this time, is waged when the North has a great political and moral strength, a great material force and the superiority of the socialist system. With its own forces and the staunch support of the brother socialist countries, the North can meet the primary needs of combat, construction and the people's life in a long war and at the same time establish the basis for national construction when the war comes to a victorious end.

Formerly Lenin differentiated between two kinds of just war, the liberation war and the self-defence war or war for national defence. The liberation war

is waged by a subjugated people rising up with bare hands and eventually winning victory, as Uncle Ho said in a poem composed at Pac Bo [1]. The self-defence war is waged by a nation which has gained independence, has a political, economic and military base, and uses its power to mobilize its human and material forces to fight foreign aggression. In the history of our struggle against aggression our people have waged these two kinds of war. Today the advanced relations of production in the socialist North have enabled us to make a genuine people's war with a new quality and a new strength extending over a wide area, from the vast rural areas to the cities and industrial centres.

The socialist system has created favourable conditions for all regions to develop vigorously, objectively and subjectively, so as to become vanguard regions. Nevertheless, the urban centres, especially the big towns with the features mentioned above possess better conditions for an extensive people's war with the elements of a modern war, waged on every front.

If our struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation is first of all a decisive test of our will and determination, here, especially in Hanoi and Haiphong, this will and determination is most typical of our people and their armed forces. It is typical of our conviction that nothing is more precious than independence and freedom, of our resolve to smash the greatest war escalation of the American aggressors. Here the socialist relations of production

(1) The author is referring to the poem *Majestic Pac Bo* which Uncle Ho wrote in February 1941.

have gained predominance and appeared in the form of public ownership and collective ownership, serving as a firm basis for the close unity and unanimity of the entire people and for the worker-peasant alliance under the leadership of the Party. Here the profound revolutionary spirit of the working-class is closely linked to the new potentialities of our nascent but developing industry.

That we have defeated the U.S. Air Force and defended our economic and defence potential, especially in the big towns and cities marks a step forward for the people's war and is a great success of our Party in the guidance of people's war. We can be proud that we have accumulated valuable first-hand experience on the role played by A.A. units, rocket-launching units, air force and modern war means and weapons used in the anti-aircraft defence in urban centres. These are advanced experiences because in this strategic battlefield we have concentrated a fairly big force against the American aggressors. That is why it is precisely in the towns and urban centres that our people have gained the most important experiences in anti-aircraft defence technique, especially in such fields as the organization of operations, guidance of combat co-ordination and in devising the best fighting methods for each category of anti-aircraft defence and air forces.

In the guidance of anti-aircraft defence in urban centres, especially in big towns and cities, offensive should go together with defensive and people's air defence should be stepped up. We must lay great emphasis on these two tasks, because they comple-

ment each other in the protection of the people's lives and the property as well as that of the State, they reduce our losses to the minimum and create conditions for our people to replenish their forces for a long war. People's anti-aircraft defence in big towns and cities also contributes to the stabilization, consolidation and improvement of our living standard and so enhances our determination to struggle.

The people's defence work has been satisfactorily carried out in every locality in the North, but it was the big towns which gained the most valuable experiences. It is there that the people's air defence has shown to the greatest extend its initiative, eagerness to fight the enemy, popular character and sense of discipline. It is there that many complicated problems of people's air defence have been solved. It can be said that it is there that the development of people's war has manifested itself most clearly in order to beat a war waged mainly by the U.S. air force.

In transport and communications we have gained valuable experiences the most important of which is in long-distance transport south of the 4th Military Zone, which was constantly subjected to fierce American bombardments. Nevertheless the big towns and cities and some big industrial centres have transport problems of their own: the major one is the leadership, organization and mobilization of the huge potentialities of the working class with its well-knit force, a force which has rapidly adapted itself to war conditions, reached a high technical level and possessed modern equipment and means. Another major problem is the simultaneous protection of many

communication lines to ensure regular traffic in a small area constantly exposed to enemy raids.

Furthermore, the big towns and industrial centres possess rich experience (different from that gained in the countryside) in such problems as organization of the people's life, keeping security and order, mobilization of human force for the front, building of the militia and self-defence units.

Another important task of the people's war policy successfully applied to big towns is shifting the economy from a peace-time to wartime economy and building and developing the local economies. With the manpower found locally, and the assistance afforded by other localities, the central government and the brother countries, we have met the needs of the struggle and sent supplies to the great front, meanwhile helping to satisfy the people's requirements in primary goods. We have been able not only to protect our material and technical bases but also to establish new ones, to maintain the centrally-run economy while developing the local economies, increasing our economic potential and strengthening our national defence. In the four years of war against U.S. aggression, the economic tasks successfully carried out in the big towns and cities have contributed to the great victory of our people in the North, a victory of strategic significance in all fields.

How has the Party's economic line been applied to the war conditions in urban centres ? Besides those problems related to the policy and trend of production, it is clear that the organization and distribu-

tion of production in close coordination with the combat forces and the protection of production, as well as the continuity of industrial production while the enterprises were partially or wholly scattered, are experiences susceptible of further application. These experiences are not only to be applied if war breaks out again but are immediately applicable so as to coordinate the national economy with national defence. The most correct attitude of those who are masters of their country is to see to its economic development as well as the strengthening of its defence.

2. Skilful application of the military art of people's war to A.A. defense in towns and industrial centres.

In their air strikes at our towns and industrial centres, the American aggressors made use of a huge air force comprising the most up-to-date planes (except for B.52s which were used only in Vinh Linh and Quang Binh), which manned by experienced air pirates, struck in repeated waves of attack and resorted to the most perfidious tricks. The US Air Force used demolition bombs of from 1,000 to 3,000lls to destroy buildings in urban centres; time-bombs and delayed-action bombs to seal off access to them; CBUs. gas bombs and fragmentation rockets to strike at populous town quarters, rockets and guided bombs to hit at industrial bases and other important targets. They continually changed their striking methods, using now big forces for massive operations and launching successive waves of attacks; now small forces for

sudden attacks, and shifting from day operations to day and night operations.

Though perfidious and cruel the American aggressors could not attain their strategic objectives, because our townspeople had a great resolve and skilfully applied the military art of people's war to A.A. defence.

This military art stems from the Party's people's war line. The primary purpose of this line is to unite the whole nation and entire people for the fight and to use the people's armed forces as a fighting nucleus under the leadership of the working class to bring into play the combative force of the whole nation in order to defeat the powerful aggressive forces of imperialism. The military art of people's war applied to A.A. defence derives from the line of people's war against the U.S. war of destruction waged chiefly by aircraft. The main content of that line is to unite the entire people against enemy air strikes, for A.A. defence and for the maintenance of traffic communications; to co-ordinate closely production and combat, attack and defence; to change the trend of economic production in order to serve national defence, the people's life and the building of socialism. This military art applied to A.A. defence is also based on the general principles of the war of resistance against US aggression: popular, all-sided and prolonged resistance relying mainly on our own powers while drawing international support.

Basing itself on the above-mentioned points and on our characteristic features and those of the enemy, our Party has at once realized that in order to

counter the piratic attacks of American aircraft and to defend our towns and cities and industrial centres — chiefly the big ones — and other important points, it is necessary to mobilize the entire people for the fight, to take the three categories of our armed forces as nuclei, to make the most use of the weapons and war means in hand, from small guns (rifles and tommy-guns) to A.A. batteries of various calibers, rockets and jet planes. From experience in fighting we can now draw the conclusion that this way of posing the question is correct and imaginative and expresses the view-point of people's war as applied to operations of defence against US modern aviation. The point has been comfirmed that in a modern war, the factor deciding victory is man and not weaponry. The new man in the socialist system is one with profound patriotism and deep hatred for the enemy, capable of handling any weapon in hand and using flexible tactics to defeat the enemy.

In the defence of urban centres and other important targets, each A.A. weapon has its own usefulness. Whereas our rockets and aircraft strike the enemy at long distance and high altitude, rifles and 12.7 and 14.5-mm machine guns are needed in battles against low-flying planes. That is why, despite the fact that the big towns and cities have a wide range of sophisticated weapons and war means such as aircraft, rockets and A.A. batteries of various sizes, since the very beginning we have paid attention to the launching of a widespread aircraft-hunting movement among the population.

The correct solution of that problem has not only resulted in a great number of enemy planes brought down but, more important still, it has gradually shaped the fundamental lines of military art in A.A. defence. Today practice has confirmed that an efficient A.A. defence system operating in urban centres must possess a ubiquitous multi-level fire network operating in close co-ordination with the gun emplacements built in the suburbs and in adjacent areas adding their actions to those of the batteries installed in the town itself. In order to bring into full play the fire network defending the town, the key problem in A.A. defence operations is to organize a good combat co-ordination between various arms and various units in which weapons of different kinds must closely co-ordinate their action and develop their full efficiency.

But how is that combat coordination organized in urban centres ? Many problems crop up which require a judicious guiding principle. That principle is "to closely combine the operations of the army A.A. defence forces (A.A. batteries, rocket, air force, radar) with those of the widespread aircraft-hunting movement in infantry units, especially in self-defence units and militia." This principle is most appropriate and has a practical meaning as it contributes to the unity of thought, organization, command and fighting style, enabling the army units to closely coordinate their action, thereby intensifying the efficiency of A.A. fire. Whenever enemy aircraft make their appearance, the harmonious coordination of our A.A. defence is a nice sight to watch. It can be said

that all the units recently taking part in the defence of our cities — A.A. batteries, rockets, air force, self-defence, militia and in some localities, the navy and people's armed police — have achieved brilliant exploits.

Because they have grasped the guiding principles of people's war and skilfully adapted them to the condition of A.A. defence in the cities, our armed forces have devised many resourceful and flexible fighting methods. The A.A. gunners fight the enemy unremittingly and with mobility, using the surprise factor and sometimes concentrating their fire to the maximum. The rocket launching units focused their attention on a prepared battlefield while sometimes using mobile combat tactics. With its own specialized combat methods our air force has downed many enemy aircraft, including the most up-to-date ones. Our self-defence force and militia have two main forms of fighting: firstly, organization into teams or sections fighting in rotation so that combat duty is permanently assured; and secondly fighting and production work carried out in place, "gun in one hand and hammer or plough in the other." Thanks to their tight organization and good command our self-defence units were able to save manpower for production while displaying high combat efficiency, particularly the 12.7 and 14.5-mm gun teams. We have devised fighting methods appropriate to Vietnamese conditions and over the towns. These are most valuable experiences which enable us to fight victoriously against superior numbers. With weapons and war means in the main inferior to those of

the enemy in quantity and modernity, we were able to defeat him. We have fought with the spirit of "attacking the enemy to wipe him out, defending our targets, maintaining and replenishing our forces, and developing our strength in the course of fighting." This has prevented the US air force from bringing its strong points into full play while it exposes its weaknesses more clearly for us to exploit.

The struggle of our urban centres against the US air force has enabled us to correctly assess the possibilities, roles and positions of the various components of the armed forces in our A.A. defence network.

Our A.A. artillery units, a most important force, fight perseveringly and unremittingly, showing their great potential in the defence of the town and cities, industrial centres and other targets. They are easy to move and easy to replenish ; in addition they have a wide range of fire and consequently in case of need can independently defend a point inside or outside the city. Our rocket launching units and young air force, even in their baptism of fire, have proved to be a match for the modern US air force. Equipped with sophisticated weapons, they are one of the main elements in the anti-aircraft defence system of the cities as they are able to foil the enemy attacks from afar, wipe out the enemy at high altitude, co-ordinate their action and create favourable conditions for A.A. batteries or the militia and other combat units to wipe out the enemy. The building and development of these modern arms is the result of great efforts made by our people's army towards meeting the requirements of combat, and marks the maturity

of our people's armed forces. Meanwhile, we have paid great attention to spread the aircraft-hunting movement far and wide, taking as core the self-defence forces in the city and the militia in the suburbs.

In fact, the self-defence units and militia in various towns, cities, and industrial centres have played a role of paramount importance. Fighting independently, these self-defence and militia units have shot down many American jets by small arms.

The battle recently given to the sophisticated American aircraft over the towns and cities has made us realize the necessity of fighting low-flying planes in a modern war. It can be entirely undertaken by self-defence and militia units in the towns and cities. In Hanoi, Haiphong, Nam Dinh, Hongai, Cam Pha and other urban centres, besides self-defence units equipped with small arms, there appeared self-defence units handling small caliber A.A. artillery pieces fighting most courageouly and resourcefully, an efficient help in air defence. From this fact we can infer that the self-defence forces in urban centres have ample possibilities for using sophisticated weapons to strengthen air defence. The self-defence units in urban centres are composed mainly of workers who live and work together in close-knit organizations belonging to various branches of production, chiefly industrial production, and can therefore quickly adapt themselves to the fighting conditions of the armed forces. These units are also made up of office workers and town people who also have a high revolutionary spirit, a good cultural

standard and particularly a fair scientific and technical knowledge enabling them to assimilate modern military tactics and technique. They are organized according to production units and government, technical departments, and have many possibilities to serve in combat and combat support. If over the recent period there had been better organization, equipment and training for self-defence units in urban centres, they would probably have developed their combat efficiency even more vigorously.

Self-defence of late was also the main combat support force in urban and industrial centres. In the past four years, Haoni and Haiphong alone used tens of millions of work days for combat support; other towns, townships and industrial centres used hundreds of thousands of workdays each. In these localities this work showed a high degree of technical proficiency. There, members of self-defence units of industrial enterprises worked hundreds of thousands of days for national defence to turn out or repair means of communications and transport, and parts for A.A. batteries, rockets, telecommunications, army engineers and the navy. The self-defence units also train tens of thousands of gunners, transport workers and other technicians to replenish the regular armed forces. Here, the workers' skilful hands and the material and technical basis of our young industry have created huge potentialities for combat support as is proved by facts: it was the worker members of self-defence units who made bridges, ferries, prefabricated fortifications or used modern technical means to repair or expand airfields and build

"urgent military roads" for the pressing needs of the war. All this shows that the local logistic forces of our socialist towns and cities have a huge potential for serving a long war if they are well organized, protected and made use of.

We are aware that in military operations, particularly in A.A. operations, protection plays a role of paramount importance. Attacking the enemy should go hand in hand with A.A. defence and the protection of the population. This is a most correct policy, a guiding principle of A.A. operations and has yielded tremendous results in the defence of urban centres. These are two tasks closely connected with each other. Whatever the circumstances they cannot be separated. Because we carried out such work as A.A. defence, camouflage, protection of the population, and decoys, suitable to the topography and the conditions of our urban centres, we were able to reduce our losses to a minimum and strengthen our forces in the course of a long struggle.

Our urban and industrial centres have also satisfactorily carried out such work as protection of the lives and property of the population, the property of the State and the stabilization of the people's life and production work in wartime. Civilian A.A. defence helped to raise the fighting spirit of our people. It is particularly important in urban centres, chiefly in big towns and cities, as conditions there are more pressing and complicated than in the countryside. In the countryside, to protect ourselves against enemy bombs and shells, even in the hardest-hit areas, like the 4th zone, we have concentrated our efforts on

protecting the people's lives and property by building a system of underground shelters without considering it necessary to make a large scale transfer of the population, as its density here is not so heavy as in urban centres and the material and the technical basis not so important. In urban and industrial centres civilian A.A. defence work is more complicated as it is necessary to solve the problem of evacuation, the scattering of the population, machines, equipment, and goods within a short time. Not just tens of thousands but hundreds of thousands of people were evacuated from urban centres to rural areas and not just some parts of a factory but whole factories indeed a large number of modern factories, were transferred. This was a very hard job. However, thanks to the great sense of responsibility of our cadres at all levels who were concerned with the people's lives and the property of the people and the State, and thanks to the people's high vigilance, the application of the principle of joint efforts by the State and the population and, to the activity, initiative, scientific organization, and mass character of civilian A.A. defence, we were able to overcome difficulties, which at first sight had seemed to be insuperable. Realizing that this was a most difficult task, we required that evacuation should be promptly done but safely ensured that production and other work should be normalized and the people's life should not be greatly affected while their living standard should be adapted to the war conditions in order to bring success in both production and fighting.

After organizing evacuation, we can now draw some experiences to be applied to towns and cities and industrial centres. The main points are :

Compulsory evacuation of aged people, children, production units whose presence in the towns is not required, schools, administrative offices, and non-combatants.

Evacuation in case of need of those duty-called to stay.

Partial evacuation or scattering to various places in the town itself of offices and factories whose presence in the towns is necessary, of heavily populated town-quarters, areas where offices and enterprises are concentrated, or those near likely targets of the enemy.

It is clear that for the leadership and guidance of production and combat, and a good organization of the people's life, it is necessary to classify the objects of evacuation : evacuation of production units, of government offices and of the population.

Haiphong has based itself on that classification to determine the zones of evacuation most convenient for each category such as the zone reserved for heavy industry, the zone for light industry, the zone for government offices and education, etc. Nam Dinh relies on the particular features of each category to provide it with proper leadership in order to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance, establish close relations between industry and agriculture, between town and country. This is an indispensable work, a good experience.

Besides the organization of evacuation, we have also seen to the building of shelters in urban centres. We understand that a shelter is not only destined to afford refuge but also to guarantee the continuation of production and fighting and create conditions for the population to keep up production, fight, and give combat support. One noteworthy success achieved by various localities was the widespread shelter building movement in which the population displayed many initiatives such as the building of 20-mm shell-proof, CBU-proof, demolition bomb-proof shelters, the building of underground trenches for refuge during air raids; the building of revetments and communication trenches to counter enemy surprise raids, etc.

A.A defence in urban centres includes other important works such as the organization of an air-alarm system and of means to overcome the aftermath of air raids (chiefly the rescue of people in collapsed shelters). These problems, which were more complicated in the towns than in the countryside, were satisfactorily settled. Many localities had their own plan to hunt enemy aircraft as well as to combat flood and to check the sabotage activities of the few bad elements which might still remain in urban centres.

These are but some problems related to the guidance of the struggle against American air raids in the towns. Reviewing the whole A.A. defence work in urban centres, we see all the more clearly that this is a clear manifestation of the development of the

people's war against the U.S. war of destruction. Its tremendous effects have greatly reduced the damage done to the townsfolk in lives and property.

3. Changing the trend of the economy ; meeting the requirements of combat, the people's life and socialist construction

In the four years of resistance to the US war of destruction, our people, who have fought courageously and with great revolutionary heroism and worked painstakingly, have won victories of strategic significance ; these victories were made possible thanks chiefly to the completion of the economic tasks of the various regions in the socialist North, including the urban and industrial centres.

The success of the urban population in production lies first in the shifting of economic activities from peace time to war time, and the building and development of the regional economies. Our townspeople have skilfully applied the Party Central Committee's resolution on the trend and task of production in the new situation: continuing the construction of the North, closely coordinating production with combat and economic construction with strengthening of national defence, resolutely defending the North and defeating the air and naval war of the enemy. In the light of a correct analysis of the American imperialists' scheme against the socialist North, the great rear base of the resistance to US aggression and revolutionary base of the whole country, we have rapidly adjusted the direction of our economic building and development in urban centres which includes many lines of production, mainly industrial produc-

tion. To maintain industrial production in big towns and cities, where is concentrated an important part of industrial enterprises in the North, our urgent task is to efficiently protect these productive forces: men and machinery first of all the men.

At the end of 1964, when the US air force was intensifying its spying activities and carrying out provocations south of the 4th zone, we took an initial measure to protect our industrial installations, especially in the regions likely to be attacked by the enemy. We also urgently carried out the necessary preparations with regard to the stocking of goods and material, while taking measures to maintain traffic in the best conditions, aware that "transport and communications is the urgent central task of the Party and the people." Early in 1965, while coping with the raids of the US air force which was committing crimes against our population south of the 4th zone, we foresaw that the enemy might intensify his war of destruction by unleashing his aircraft against our big towns and cities and attacking relentlessly these centres and their suburbs. We advocated that in order to cope with the US air war, the best way in the urban centres is to organize combat as well as defence and protection, to normalize the people's life and production quickly after each battle and to keep communications and transport in good order under all circumstances. That is why, before the enemy's attacks on big towns and centres, we had had a concrete policy with regard to the activities of industrial enterprises by deciding which of them would be evacuated, which of them would remain,

that the evacuated ones should have a definite plan for that purpose, and the remaining ones should dig shelters, build revetments and arrange things in a suitable manner.

The purpose of the evacuation of workshops and factories is to protect the productive forces so as to maintain the continuity of production and wage an all-sided and prolonged war so as to win repeated victories. Stemming from this the evacuation of industrial enterprises was zealously carried out in order of priority and classification : which would be evacuated first, which would follow suit, which would go for good, which would be transferred only partly and which wholly.

The guidance in the evacuation of production units in big towns and cities calls for a long process of political education with the creation of various forms and methods for its execution. It is for us a new task which requires a concrete and scientific plan to carry out. Under the energetic leadership of the Party at various levels, learning from the example set by the cadres and Party members and bringing into play the role of the T.U. organization with the militia and youth union members as core, we have satisfactorily resolved that problem. Over the past four years, hundreds of enterprises and store houses at central and regional level have been carefully protected together with hundreds of thousands of tons of machines and equipment and millions of tons of goods.

This protection requires great efforts on the part of our people and armed forces. It is of paramount

significance as it allows the continuation of production under any war conditions. The maintenance and acceleration of socialist construction in big towns and cities has an important effect as it enables us to meet the requirements of combat and supply to the front and contributes to the stabilization of the people's life and of other aspects of life.

In order to successfully shift the economy from a state of peace to a state of war and to build and expand the regional economies, it is necessary to inculcate a sense of vigilance on the masses, combat all complacency, raise their sense of responsibility in the struggle and do away with all manifestations of shirking duty. In government offices, enterprises and workshops, this ideological education must be translated into action in combat, protection of production and development of the role of the working class.

One of the many experiences we have gained in the organization of evacuation is the need to make a careful study of the characteristics of each enterprise, of its chain of production, its system of management... in order to find an appropriate site, decide the extent of evacuation, and calculate the size of the new constructions. Due to difficulties in the evacuation of a huge volume of machinery and equipment, many enterprises have had to alter their production processes to adapt themselves to the war conditions. In the end, they were well protected and able to rapidly normalize and maintain the tempo of production. On the other hand, through lack of preparation and delay in evacuation many workshops

took a long time to stabilize their production and even suffered human and material losses.

Another important experience in the evacuation of enterprises from big towns and cities is the co-ordination between the urgent need of evacuation and the drawing up of plans for the building of permanent local economic enterprises which should lead to the gradual stabilization and development of production, whatever the circumstances, to meet immediate as well as long-term requirements.

In big towns, cities and industrial centres, skilled workers go to the front in greater and greater numbers; nevertheless production is not disturbed because the Party's combat slogan "the more stubbornly we fight, the greater victories we win, and the stronger we become" has been made to govern wartime production: "produce while seeking to raise productivity and expand production." In urban centres, tens of thousands of cadres and skilled workers have been recently trained in long term courses and correspondance courses, the major part being trained on the job. Many women workers can now replace men in work requiring advanced technique so that they can go to the front. Resolved to "produce well and fight well", the working class and other toilers in the towns, and collective farmers in the peripheries of towns have energetically defended their production work and courageously clung to their working sites to keep production going. As it is an important front in the struggle against US aggression, all the fighters on that front have shown clearly that they stand firm on it. "Fight when the enemy

comes, continue production and normal life when he has been driven away." In this struggle, the working class and peasantry have set a bright example in worker-peasant alliance. Despite fierce enemy raids the workers have toiled day and night to meet the requirements of the fighting and the people's life, and especially to serve the technical revolution in agriculture. In the new relations of production, the collective peasants have given up lands and houses to the workers to set up industrial enterprises, and fought with them to defend the workshops as well as their villages. It is clear that, thanks to the superiority of the socialist system and the material and technical basis of socialism, our urban and industrial centres have enjoyed more favourable conditions to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance and to use it as a firm basis to unite the people and step up people's war in the political, military and economic fields. This is the new force and potential of people's war in urban centres at present.

Another problem to be solved by urban centres is "how to combine the triple revolution: the revolution in relations of production, the technical revolution, and the cultural and ideological revolution, while maintaining and developing production in wartime conditions."

We know that a good organization of wartime production is dependent on the socialist relations of production. The urban centres are the points of industrial concentration and if they are determined to develop industrial production to an appropriate size

they can serve the people's life and the fighting while helping to improve the new relations of production. To accelerate industrial production we must overcome such shortcomings as perfunctoriness, slackness, the relaxation of labour regulations, and the tendency to think that "in time of war, the mere fact of producing commodities is already a good thing" and belittle their economic value. There is also a tendency to relax management and flout cost accounting practice. The movement in which the workers take part in the management of their workshops and take their production team as a basis, launched in many localities, has raised the sense of responsability of the workers, their love of labour and their courage in combat and has taught them to live an organized and disciplined life. Experience has confirmed that, when production is scattered, the production team is the best-managed unit. Nevertheless, it is necessary to maintain in good working order the leadership of the local Party branch, and the activities of the trade-union, youth organization and self-defence unit, to lay emphasis on better management, gradually solve the problems of labour management, ensure the efficiency of workdays, rationally divide manpower between production and fighting, carefully manage receipts and expenses, encourage the workers and production teams to raise productivity.

There is no hiding the fact that, as a consequence of the revolution in the relation of production achieved in the four years of war, the technical revolution

in urban centres has continued to make its effects felt in industry, agriculture, communications and transport...

Industry : On the whole, industrial production was maintained in the fierce war years. The enemy strove to deny us electric power by hitting at our depots of fuel, materials, equipment and machines causing us great difficulties, but our various industrial branches were able to maintain their activities. Regional industry has increased its production year by year and built new production units. The economic structure has undergone an initial change and many valuable branches of production have taken shape, meeting the war requirement. Engineering developed fairly harmoniously supplying greater and greater quantities of implements to agriculture and gradually equipping it with small machines for the technical revolution.

The industrial branch harnessed to communications and transport also developed at a quick tempo, fulfilling its targets every year and satisfying the requirements of central and local transport and communications. The consumer goods industry also made progress. We may come to the conclusion that in the stubborn struggle against the US air force, our townspeople have not only successfully defended their material and technical bases, but also maintained production. Though still with shortcomings, these are very big successes and valuable experiences of our people.

Agriculture : The farmers in the periphery of the towns and cities have gradually overcome the impe-

diments caused by natural calamities and war and surmounted the difficulties created by the enemy, including the shortage of manpower caused by recruitment for the army or other activities. Over the past years, the agriculture around urban centres has always met the food requirements of the farmers and provided a major part of the foodstuffs to the townspeople, the raw materials for the processing industries and agricultural produce for exports.

With the assistance of industry, the technical revolution in agriculture has been accelerated. The supply of implements, ordinary and improved, mostly equipment produced by small shops for agriculture, has been a practical help for the development of agriculture. Today the farmers around urban centres have favourable conditions for intensive cultivation and increased crops, to push forward the "three targets in agriculture" movement for the attainment of 5 tons of paddy per hectare per year. The socialist relations of production has improved day by day and testifies to a powerful vitality in war time. Thanks to these new relations of production, the cooperatives have fulfilled their food quota to the State. They manage labour, organize the fighting forces, give work-points for missions carried out for the benefit of production, combat and combat support, civilian A.A. defence and transport and communications. Generally speaking, the life of co-op members has remained stable; solidarity is closer and identity of mind greater in the cooperatives.

Besides industry and agriculture, the building sector has also devoted greater efforts to serve the other

economic branches. The commercial and financial branches, whose function is circulation and distribution of goods, have helped production develop in its initial stages and served as a bridge linking industry to agriculture, production to consumption, home trade to foreign trade, the State trade sector to the cooperative trade sector.

The cultural and ideological revolution has been carried out in the political, economic and military framework of the war of resistance against US aggression in general and as the task of the urban centres in particular. Here the Vietnamese national and working-class tradition of unyielding struggle has been applied to the education of the masses to raise their patriotism, love of socialism and revolutionary heroism, to build a revolutionary mode of life, to resolutely foil U.S. aggression in order to liberate the South, defend the North, reunify the country and fulfil our task toward our country and our internationalist duty. Here, in the fierce struggle against the US air war, the building of the political forces has been carried out among the masses simultaneously with ideological work. If there were no strong Party organization and no broad mass organization such as the Trade-Unions, Youth Union, Women's Union, Young Pioneers, and the militia in enterprises and town quarters, it would not be possible to achieve any task. If no patriotic emulation movement had been launched, it could not be possible to stimulate the masses to carry out revolutionary activities ceaselessly and vigorously.

It is clear that the socialist system has given our people a huge force and our army a very solid rear base, it has been a decisive factor in beating the US war of destruction.

The victory won by big towns and cities has the same cause as the success obtained by the socialist North in the economic field. It is the outcome of the very correct Party line, the great heroism and creative and painstaking labour of our people, the superiority of the socialist system of the North and also the precious assistance of the brother socialist countries.

4. Successes in communications and transport, mobilization of manpower in war time, building and expanding regional armed units, ensuring security and order

The successes scored by the inhabitants of big towns and cities and industrial centres in transport and communications, in the mobilization of manpower in wartime, in the building and expanding of regional armed units, in the organization of the people's life and in ensuring security and order stand also as great and all-sided successes and testify to a new turning-point in the development of people's war against the US war of destruction.

In transport and communications.

We have frustrated one of the fundamental strategic objectives of the US in its scheme to destroy our big towns and cities and industrial centres. The "isolation of Hanoi from Haiphong and that of these two cities from the rest of North Viet Nam" as threatened by Grant Sharp and Westmoreland was

not realized by the aggressors according to their subjective calculations. The roads radiating from the capital, Hanoi, the heart of the whole country, are like arteries sending healthy blood to various parts of the Fatherland. In the war years, the port city of Haiphong remained bustling. In other towns, our communication lines were, generally speaking, opened to traffic. The struggle waged by the inhabitants in big towns and cities to protect our roads was vigorous and stubborn. All the most barbarous means of war used by the enemy—concentrated attacks and indiscriminate strikes by big waves, or sporadic incursions by small forces day and night — were foiled by our armed forces and people. All the kinds of sophisticated weapons and modern war means used by the US to destroy our communication lines such as demolition bombs, time-bombs, magnetic bombs, have of course created difficulties for us but proved powerless in face of our high fighting spirit and the skilful and creative labour of our inhabitants and armymen to protect our communication lines.

Skilfully applying the Party line and principle, we have affirmed since the very beginning that "to maintain communications and transport in good order is the central task of the Party, armymen and inhabitants in urban centres in order to meet in any circumstances the requirements of the national economy and national defence, to serve production and fighting in the rear and at the front." With this determination, a movement was launched in urban centres, urging our people to ensure communications and transport. This was carried out according to the

principle that one should regard the communications and transport forces as core, and the vanguard youth brigades as shock troops, to bring into play the potentialities of the region and solve urgent problems on the spot. In our guidance of this work, we have rapidly found the main links in the chain which is, the efficient organization of river crossings and keeping the roads and rivers open. We have devoted all our efforts to beating the enemy on this front. This is a successful experience we have gained in transport and communications in big towns and cities.

We had estimated that this would be the fiercest trial of strength between the enemy and us, one which would be concentrated on a number of "vital" points inside and outisde the urban centres and so we guided, developed and organized our forces and strongly increased our road and river transport means compared with pre-war days. In the same spirit we correctly advocated that traffic could be guaranteed only when we hit hard at the enemy, regarding this as a very important task of the armed forces. While doing such a heavy and urgent work, we had also to carry out the "militarization" of the communication and transport service so as to raise the quality of that branch ; we had to intensify the repair and overhaul services, build new roads and bridges, increase the means of transport, resolutely ensure traffic at "vital points" while finding other roads and making the most use of all means available.

With their determination to shed their blood if need be in order to keep traffic going, the A.A. gunners of the regular forces and regional army units,

together with the self-defence groups and militia men using rifles and machines guns, resolutely defended the communication lines. It can be said that wherever there was traffic, there were forces to protect it. This explains why, despite the fact that the number of enemy air strikes on communication lines in big towns and cities was very high, and big quantities of bombs and shells were used by the enemy, we could reduce the damage we suffered to the minimum.

Especially in a number of "key points," our bridges and traffic were in good order, whereas hundreds of enemy planes were downed by our A.A. batteries.

With the intelligence and creative initiative inherent in the working class, the defenders of communications and transport have solved many problems which at first sight had seemed to be insoluble. Such bridges as Long Bien, Duong (Hanoi), Quay, Niem (Haiphong), Ham Rong (Thanh Hoa) attacked tens and even hundreds of times, were immediately reopened to traffic. The ratio was two or three bridges newly built for one bridge hit. After each combat, we accumulated many more experiences, devising new methods to protect communication lines with more advanced techniques. The workers of the transport and communications branch in urban centres were capable of repairing the transport means of the army and other branches, maintaining a high technical standard. With their own strength and local possibilities they were able to repair the existing air fields and build new ones in a fairly short time. In

the de-activization of time-bombs and delayed-action bombs the local engineers have introduced many valuable innovations, combining rudimentary methods with modern technique and splendid courage with great resourcefulness and initiative.

We have successfully carried out the work of guiding transport, kept the transportation means and goods secure and fulfilled the transport plans. The main experiences which deserve our attention were the following: to make the most use of all possibilities and means, take advantage of all favourable conditions to do transportation work, combine rudimentary means with modern means, handicrafts with engineering, use roads or waterways according to circumstances, all this with the determination to be able to use both. The establishment of a transport coordination committee from the centre to the base, the maintenance of this committée's normal functioning in urban centres under fierce bombings and the continuation of the normal activities of the port were the resulf of lessons learnt from past achievements.

Today, we have all the facts for an assessment of the huge potentialities of the localities in transport and communications. Besides reviewing the guidance of people's war, the transport and communications department must make a more profound analysis in this respect. The local Party committee and organs concerned must enhance their guidance in this work and do it well. Whatever the war conditions, communications and transport is a most important strategic task for our Party and people. At present, though the local requirement in this respect is not so urgent

as in time of war, the urban centres and other localities in the North are duty bound to meet the needs of the whole country and the front line in this field. The experience we have recently gained shows that preparation work in peace time, such as additional roads and bridges, repair facilities, manpower available, guidance and direction, is of paramount significance for the shift from peacetime to wartime work. Therefore, we must be constantly prepared to cope with the eventuality of a new attack by the enemy as well as to satisfy the permanent requirements of national defence.

Mobilization of manpower in war time and building and expanding of local armed forces

We are aware that any victory won at the front stems from our strength in the rear area. The greater our victories at the front, the better they contribute to the defence and consolidation of the rear. That is why replenishing our forces for the front and strengthening the rear area are indispensable tasks for all localities if we are to ensure the success of the struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation.

The resistance to the recent U.S. war of destruction has shown that the towns, cities and industrial centres in the socialist North have huge potentialities and favourable conditions to carry through this task. Nevertheless, we met a number of difficulties as it was the first time that we had carried out large-scale recruitment for military service. Moreover that mobilization was undertaken in conditions of urgent production and fierce fighting in order to foil the new U.S. air escalation. These difficulties have now

been surmounted and these possibilities and advantages developed. The Party cadres at all levels and the inhabitants in these urban and industrial centres have realized more and more clearly the role, requirements and relations between these two tasks and consequently have done their best to fulfil their tasks. The urban and industrial centres have met the requirements of the tasks of strengthening forces for the front, building local armed forces and consolidating the rear area in every respect.

They have, on the whole, carried out the mobilization of troops well and, by this, have shown their determination to foil US aggression. The industrial enterprises have trained workers for replacement and made careful arrangements in the chain of production. Preparations for this mobilization have been made in peace time, ready for wartime, and have been accompanied by education and the drawing up of regulations. In time of war, political education and ideological remoulding among the people is increased particularly among the youth and mass organizations. Thanks to this, we have been able to launch a widespread, seething, movement in which the slogan: "We have the potential to deliver the quantity of grain required by the State and to recruit soldiers in the number required by the army," is changed into "We have the potential to deliver a quantity of grain above that required and to recruit even more soldiers". In the four years of fighting against the U.S. war of destruction, tens of thousands of cadres, Party members and workers have been mobilized for the front. Battalions and regiment-

sized units numbering tens of thousands of officers and soldiers made up of young men coming from urban and industrial centres have achieved brilliant exploits. We are highly elated and proud to know that these young people have greatly contributed to the common victory.

These successes have illustrated the patriotism and love of socialism of the townspeople and their deep hatred for the enemy. They have been obtained thanks to our ability to rely on the local Party branches, the local military organs, the coordination between various branches, and the sense of responsibility and contribution of the cadres at all levels. They are also the outcome of the "three readies" movement launched among the youth and "three responsibilities" drive among women. Experiences have taught us that in urban centres as well as in other localities, political education, ideological remoulding, good implementation of policy coupled with a tight guidance in organization are fundamental factors leading to a successful mobilization of troops.

Parallel to the task of serving the front, the townspeople are also anxious to strengthen the rear base; one of these tasks is to build and expand the local armed forces as this meets the immediate requirement and also the long-range need to defeat US aggression under any circumstances.

In the four years of war, our self-defence groups in the towns and cities and militia in the periphery of cities have fought the enemy while doing construction work and serving as shock troops in other activities in the localities. They have now matured in

all fields — political, ideological, military, organizational, and in equipment; they have swollen in numbers and improved in quality. Within a short time, through our experiences gained in the war years, we have been able gradually to classify the self-defence units according to their characteristics and efficiency to lay the basis for the building and utilization of each of them. This is an excellent task which can raise the strength and combat efficiency of the self-defence forces; we must continue to study them and draw experiences for better work.

In the last war, our self-defence units have proved their ample combat possibilities. They can fight independently or in coordination with army A.A. units against enemy war planes. Usually their weapons are rifles and machine-guns. Many of them have been organized into companies or battalions armed with small A.A. artillery pieces or into groups to defend production bases, or they have fought in close co-ordination with A.A. units of the regular armed forces. The technical teams or brigades of the self-defence forces such as engineers', scouts', telecommunications, chemical teams, and the sections handling mortars or other sophisticated weapons, have fought efficiently and given an effective support to combat in urban centres. The self-defence forces in the towns have trained tens of thousands of reserve gunners to replace if need be those manning batteries of the regular armed forces fighting in their localities. The combat support force in town is composed mostly of self-defence fighters who have undergone military training or taken part directly in the fights. Against

the fierce raids of American aircraft, the self-defence units are the shock forces of the workshops and factories which have been entrusted with difficult assignments at vital points.

We can come to the conclusion that, if we build a powerful self-defence force and militia, we will not only be ready to fight and fight well, but we will be able to maintain and intensify production in all circumstances. The growth of self-defence forces with their new possibilities are obviously a novelty in urban and industrial centres, going hand in hand with the growth of the working class in factories, construction sites and agricultural farms. These forces occupy one quarter of the total self-defence forces in the North. If experiences can be drawn from past lessons to give them a better leadership, a more efficient command and training and appropriate equipment, surely they will become very powerful forces capable of meeting the local requirements in wartime as well as in peace time, in the strengthening of the rear area as well as the replenishment of forces for the frontline.

In the building of the self-defence forces at present, it is necessary to pay attention to raising the quality of the fighting forces. Stress must be laid on the main task which is the training of the commanding officers. The military organs in urban and industrial centres also need to be strengthened so as to discharge their task as staff of the Party local committee in the guidance of the self-defence and militia movement in particular and in the direction of the armed force in general.

Apart from countering air raids, the task of the people's war in urban centres is to foil in time all the sabotage acts of the enemy, all his psywar activities and all his slanderous propaganda and to check all trouble-making by bad elements. It is even more important to keep order and fight against enemy psychological warfare in urban and industrial centres than in other localities, because they are the political, economic and cultural centres and form the material and technical bases of our country.

In the war years, security and social order was maintained and the people's life was not disturbed. The leading organs at central level and in various regions, foreign embassies and foreign visitors and the ships calling at our ports were kept safe. Evacuated or dispersed workshops and factories, storehouses, and machines and equipment were well protected by our people.

These great achievements were obtained thanks to the concern of the Party committees in the towns, the great efforts of the authorities and the determination of the security forces, chiefly the people's police and the self-defence units in various factories, government offices, town quarters, construction sites... With the movement to keep security and order spreading all over the urban centres and countryside, the people's police and self-defence forces have played a most important role. Usually they co-ordinated with each other very closely and together worked out a common plan of action. The forces in charge of security and order also knew how to divide the sectors of protection, to rely on the

masses and make use of educational methods, and most important, to mobilize the masses so as to ensure security not only inside the urban centres but also outside them, particularly in the localities to which the state organs and townspeople were evacuated.

This work has been well executed by the capital, Hanoi, and the port of Haiphong, the two biggest cities in North Viet Nam. During the war, our people's material and spiritual life has met with difficulties, but has remained stable in the main and even improved in some aspects. The Party Committees have solved many problems regarding, for example the distribution of foodstuffs and commodities, and the expansion of services to evacuated people and those required by duty to remain in the towns. We have made housing arrangements and solved housing difficulties for the air raid victims, and combined the action of the State and that of the population in the organization of relief to these victims.

During the war, the medical network has developed very rapidly. Disease prevention and treatment and health protection have increased together with the number of hospitals and physicians. All this has greatly contributed to the preservation of the people's health and the strengthening of their productive and fighting forces. The educational movement and cultural activities have reached down to the lowest level.

We can take pride in the success of people's war as shown in the keeping of order and security and organization of the people's life in big towns and industrial centres. This success which testifies to the

growth of people's war in urban centres is the result of the political, military and economic forces as well as the outcome of the good management and organization of the people's life in war time. It also reflects the superiority of the socialist system, manifested in the political awareness of our people and their spirit of being collective masters. It also demonstrates that only socialist relations of production can offer great advantages to overcome the difficulties created by the war. Though shortcomings still exist, the achievements recorded by our big towns, cities and industrial centres in order and security and in organization of the people's life are great indeed !

III. TURNING URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL CENTRES INTO PROSPEROUS ECONOMIC UNITS WHICH WILL ALSO PROVE POWERFUL IN NATIONAL DEFENCE : A CONTRIBUTION TO THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTIONARY CAUSE OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY

The people's war in urban and industrial centres in the socialist North was waged in the form of valiant surface-to-air battles fought at a fairly high technical level. It brilliantly defeated the U.S. air force even when the air escalation in the North was brought to a height. This victory played a great part in the defeat of the U.S. air and naval war waged on an unprecedented scale against North Viet Nam.

Together with the victory won in the South this victory dealt a hard blow not only at the aggressiveness of the Americans in Viet Nam but also at the neo-colonialist policy pursued by the U.S imperialists

in many countries. Many American politicians admit that the U.S. defeat in Viet Nam is the failure of a major part of US global strategy, its aim as well as its policies and means of execution. Institutes for strategic studies in the U.S. and other countries in the world have also advanced many data showing that the huge expenditure defrayed by the U.S. for the Viet Nam war has landed it in an economic plight which seems to be beyond remedy. And worse still, this predicament has gone beyond the economic field and led to serious difficulties in the political field. Most typical of this is the confusion within American society. Johnson called it an "event" while Nixon more vividly called this a "moral crisis" of the American people. For their part, the Western press made no bones about it. An American paper (the *Los Angeles Times)* wrote that this crisis was rampant in the US and that the American people had lost all confidence in the government. The Viet Nam war, it said, had ruined U.S. reputation abroad, kindled riots in the country and driven young people abroad. The English paper, the *Times*, pointed out that the U.S. was sinking into a deep social crisis.

In the military field, the defeat of the U.S. in Viet Nam has worn out and emasculated its military potential and sapped the fighting spirit of its army. The American militarymen have complained that the U.S. strategic reserve forces were "thinned out" by the Viet Nam war, being reduced from eight divisions to four. With this reserve, they were afraid that it would be very difficult for the US to have a "quick response" in threatened areas. Part of the

five divisions defending the strategic bases of the U.S. in West Europe was sent to Viet Nam, while within Viet Nam the U.S. had a force corresponding to ten infantry divisions, and an important naval and air force. Yet it could not stave off defeat.

It was with this gloomy background that the "Nixon doctrine" and the "Vietnamization" of the war saw the light of day. This new strategy is an official acknowledgement to the American and world's people that the U.S. was economically, politically and militarily weak. It shows that the U.S. is no longer in a position to squander its money and scatter its armed forces all over the world to meet the requirement of massive response as it did before. Though still clinging to their role of world policeman, the U.S. imperialists are compelled to reconsider the key points of intervention and to revise the extent and method of intervention in their counter-revolutionary global strategy. They must tailor this strategy to a situation in which the balance of forces in Viet Nam and in the world is more and more unfavourable to them.

But they are very obstinate. Behind the camouflage of the Nixon doctrine and the "Vietnamization" of the war the aggressive and warlike nature of the U.S. imperialists is always apparent. They continue to pursue their neo-colonialist and warlike policy in order to consolidate their position, dominate the capitalist world and carry out their global strategy.

The American imperialists are doing their best to achieve their "Vietnamization" plan in order to get out of their quagmire in South Viet Nam. This is an

aggressive plan in all fields — military, political, economic — a most perfidious strategic scheme, aimed at consolidating their defence line, pushing forward the pacification program and destroying our liberated zone, in order to prolong the war, strengthen the Saigon army and administration and gradually repatriate the GIs while maintaining their position of strength. "Vietnamization" is for the U.S. a way to get out of the war but also an effort to win a position of strength while being in fact in a losing position. It is an aggressive plan full of contradictions and considered crazy dream by public opinion in the world as well as in the U.S. With an expeditionary force over half a million strong, the US has bitten the dust. How can it expect to carry the day when the GIs are superseded by a disintegrating puppet army and our people and armed forces are growing in strength and posture in the military and political fields ?

President Ho Chi Minh said in his testament : "The resistance war against U.S. aggression may drag on. Our compatriots may have to face new sacrifices of property and life. Whatever may happen, we must keep firm our resolve to fight the U.S. aggressors till total victory."

We are resolved to follow his teaching and to fight the American aggressors until they give up their aggressive design, withdraw their troops and respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country. We defeated them when their "limited war" was at its height ; we can surely beat them completely as they are losing the war and grad-

ually scaling it down. In the frontline of the world people's struggle against U.S. imperialism our people are quite aware of their heavy but glorious responsibility. Despite all our difficulties and hardships, we are determined to defeat the U.S. imperialists; this is our duty to the Fatherland, to the revolutionary people in the world and also an honour and a historic mission of our people.

1. Today our urgent task is to perseveringly wage the war against the U.S., liberate the South, defend the North and progress towards the peaceful reunification of the country. Therefore the primary task of our people in the North, and of the inhabitants in urban and industrial areas, is to supply and reinforce the front line in every respect.

As the revolutionary base of the whole country, the North must, after the U.S. war of destruction, fully play its role as the great rear area of the great front line. While our fellow-countrymen in the South are making great sacrifices to wrest back national independence and freedom we, in the North, must overcome all difficulties and hardships to build and develop the national economy, strengthen national defence, step up socialist construction and do our best to fulfil our duty towards the South. Only by satisfactorily building socialism and turning the North into a solid rear base, can we replenish the fighting forces at the front and step up our resistance to U.S. aggression till complete victory. Commemorating the 40th anniversary of our Party, Comrade Le Duan, First Secretary of its Central Committee, analysed the main content and the great experiences

in socialist construction in the North. We must carefully study that document for future application in the concrete situation of our respective regions.

We have come out victorious of the fierce wars against truculent imperialist countries, Japan, France and the US, and are held in high esteem by the people of the world. This is because our Party has adopted a sound strategic line and creative, judicious revolutionary methods. In the conduct of the war, we have grasped the law governing the activities of the enemy and fully understood the law of revolutionary war in our country. Likewise in economic construction, we must grasp the economic principles and apply them creatively to economic organization and management. Economic construction has its own special features and laws. We have revolutionary zeal and ardour, we have a large amount of experience in leadership and organization in revolutionary warfare. With the progress made in our study and work, we will surely grasp the law of socialist economic development and do ever better in socialist construction in the North. We will resolutely turn our urban and industrial centres into economically prosperous and strongly defended areas.

2. As said above, being builders and guardians of socialism, in all circumstances we must see to the development and protection of production. Furthermore, as at present the American aggressors are still waging a ferocious war in the South, certainly they are working out perfidious plans to sabotage our socialist North.

Our people's armed forces must constantly heighten their vigilance, be ready for the fight, and do their utmost in training to raise their technical, tactical and organizational standard and perfect their command in order to down American aircraft of all types if they dare to violate our skies. In big urban and industrial centres, our plan of combat must cope efficiently with all war conditions and closely coordinate with the plan for the protection of men and material and technical bases. We must organize the fighting force, the defence of the people and the camouflage and decentralization of goods and warehouses all at the same time. While they are fighting American aircraft, the self-defence units, militia and regional troops must closely co-ordinate their actions with the people's armed police to counter the enemy land attacks (raids, commando operations) and help in the maintenance of order and security in their localities, especially in city streets, district and provincial towns and other important areas.

The military line of our Party has been more and more perfected during the war of resistance against U.S. aggression. We have gained richer experiences in operations as well as in the building of our armed forces and consolidation of our national defence. In the new conditions, we must apply these experiences well. As required by the region, we will study, readjust and amend our plans of local defence and building of armed forces in urban and industrial centres. These are urgent basic tasks to strengthen our potential for national defence which needs to be carefully

planned and not scamped in such a way as to cause a waste of labour and money and delay.

3. In the development of the local economies, we must closely coordinate economic construction with the consolidation of national defence in urban and industrial centres as they are the seats of our political, economic and cultural activities. This co-ordination must be carried out in all fields, especially in the following :

In the industrial sector (particularly local industrial enterprises in urban centres) attention should be paid to mechanical engineering, chemistry and some light industries so that when the war breaks out we will be in a position to manufacture or repair some kinds of weapons and equipment, and meet the requirements of production, the people's life and the armed forces. The industrial enterprises must be built in such a way as to facilitate their protection, guarantee production in war time, be consistent with the policy of economic reorientation in wartime, and suit the trend and plan of long-term national construction.

In the agricultural sector in the suburbs and the surrounding areas, it is necessary to meet a part of the needs of the locality in foodstuffs and to satisfy other wartime requirements. The development of hydraulics and afforestation must be closely linked to the defence of the locality, the transformation of the terrain and construction of fighting villages, and facilitate the operations to wipe out the enemy and the protection of the people.

In local transport and communications, attention should be paid to motor roads, railways and waterways. We must build a solid and extensive communications network to facilitate the movement of troops and meet transport requirements in war time.

In the health service we must train technicians, build a solid broad medical network to enable the medical branch to treat soldiers and civilians wounded during the war, develop our potentialities to counter chemical warfare and heal the wounds caused by the enemy's weapons and other war means.

In postal communications, we must pay attention to both telegraph and radio in order to maintain steady communication in wartime, serve the Party and State leadership and the operational commands of the armed forces, and guarantee normal exchange of correspondence among the population.

The people's war waged in the North and the South of our country has supplied us with a wealth of experiences including those regarding the building and development of our armed forces and the establishment of local bases. We must sum up these most important experiences to raise our level of leadership and the quality of our future work.

In the co-ordination between the national economy and national defence in urban and industrial centres, we must speed up the people's preparation to switch from peace-time to wartime activities. In peacetime we must have a plan to evacuate and scatter the population, enterprises and storehouses, and a plan of on-the-spot defence for when the war breaks out. In heavily-populated areas, there must be an

adequate plan of reorganization in line with the development of local production and co-ordination between the construction of important works and the building of shelters together with the maintenance of the existing shelters, chiefly in urban and industrial centres.

Our experience is to concentrate big enterprises in one locality. In the construction of major industrial enterprises, consideration should be taken either to maintain their production in place or move them to safety in the event of war.

In a word, the shifting of the townspeople from a state of peace to a state of war should be considered in State plans and prepared for in peace-time. Only in this way can we replenish our human and material forces, keep production going, rapidly normalize the people's life and ensure peace and order in time of war.

4. We must build our national economy and strengthen our national defence in the new conditions. Local economies are more and more developed. The provinces and big towns are becoming important economic and military bases. That is why, at present and in the future, local military work has a strategic role of greater and greater importance and is an essential part of the Party's military line ; it is one of the main requirements for the Party to carry out its policy of people's war and national defence. This calls for a radical change of views in the Party and army to lead and step up local military work.

The strengthening of military work in urban centres as well as in other localities includes many tasks

which have been laid down in various resolutions. In 1970 we had to do such work as strengthening the Party's leadership over local military work, perfecting the system of leadership and the local military organs, particularly strengthening the organization and raising the quality of self-defence units and militia and the guidance for the implementation of policies in the rear area towards the army.

At present, the self-defence forces and militia in urban and industrial centres are developing quite vigorously. Therefore, in time to come, our main task is to strengthen them. We must go further in assessing the concrete task of the regional armed forces in each sector (countering air strikes, commando attacks, maintenance of order and security, doing production work, etc), and on this basis streamline and consolidate our organization, personnel, rationalization of equipment, and regulating the training to suit the immediate task. First we must pay attention to priority sectors and areas where our bases are still weak, strengthen our nuclei (guerilla and self-defence combat forces) mobile forces, gun emplacements and technical teams. We must lay stress on the building of the self-defence forces inside the towns while building the guerilla and militia in the peripheries. The self-defence units are the armed forces of the working class and toiling people in the towns; they are not divorced from production. In the process of socialist construction, as the working class is growing, the self-defence forces have greater fighting possibilities and are a very

important source of technical reinforcement for the various arms of the standing army.

In organization we must base ourselves on the requirements of combat and on the characteristics of production of each branch to ascertain the use of the self-defence forces in peacetime and wartime and to classify these forces in order to give them appropriate training. We must build the self-defence forces in workshops, factories, mines, transport and communications, posts and telegraphs, construction sites, geological survey teams, agricultural farms, etc. In government offices we must consider the necessity of setting up self-defence groups in certain organs and not necessarily in all of them.

The building of the reserve force and its mobilization in wartime is one of the major military tasks in urban and industrial centres. The reserve forces should be built with an eye to both quality and number; infantry is to be completed by various categories of other forces. They must be able to reinforce the standing army in peacetime, and be in a position to readily replenish and increase the strength of the armed forces in wartime. The urban centres are localities in which to build reserves, and to recruit and train forces in order to strengthen the standing army. At the same time as recruitment, we must improve our work of building and managing the reserve army, especially the registration and administration of ex-servicemen capable of serving in the reserve force; we must rehearse military mobilization so that in case of need, we can rapidly

strengthen our armed forces and the regional units as well as the regular army.

In urban centres we must build our reserve force in all branches and departments of the State, but more particularly in factories and workshops (chiefly engineering) transport and communications, health service, post and telegraph, in a word where members of the reserve force are proficient in techniques badly needed by national defence, particularly in the event of war.

To guarantee that the ex-servicemen when recalled to service may develop their abilities and make rational use of them, the cadres in various localities must be fully aware of the political, military and technical level of each man. They must also grasp the quality and number of the reserve force in their localities, branches or State organs.

If this work is well done, if close co-ordination is established between the building, management and training of the reserve force and of the self-defence units and militia, the localities can always fulfil and even overfulfil the targets for recruitment, in both quality and number. The regions which have recently gained rich experience and distinguished themselves in local military work are those which have thoroughly implemented the Party's resolutions on this work. This year and in years to come, this work will be ever heavier and more urgent. That is why we must strengthen our leadership and guidance in order to carry out these resolutions, grasp the central

points, strengthen supervision, and study and propose concrete and efficient methods so as to win greater and greater successes in every respect.

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Our resistance war against U.S. aggression is now entering a most important period. The situation is very propitious for our entire people. We will win bigger and more glorious successes for our revolutionary cause.

For the sake of the liberation of the South, the defence of the North and the reunification of our country, let us valiantly march forward. For the sake of our lofty internationalist duty, our working class must heighten its splendid revolutionary heroism, our people's army its high revolutionary spirit and determination to fight and to win, and the entire heroic Vietnamese people their indomitable spirit. In the flush of our victories, let us close ranks with our 14 million fellow-countrymen in the South and bring our greatest war of resistance to complete victory. Let us be resolved to fulfil the oath made before the soul of President Ho Chi Minh.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL ARMED FORCES [1]

I. LOCAL PEOPLE'S WAR AND LOCAL ARMED FORCES : MOST IMPORTANT BASES OF RESISTANCE WAR AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

Our country has a long tradition of people's war against foreign aggression, which was waged by the Trung sisters, Tran Quoc Toan, Nguyen Trai, and Nguyen Hue who developed a peasants' revolution into a war against foreign aggressors.

Since the founding of our Party its *military line has been that of a people's war waged under the leadership of the working class.* In comparison with other periods in our history our people's war today has a new quality, a rich content and a great strength.

The people's war is waged by the entire people.

In the armed forces, we have operations launched by concentrated units of the regular army in all parts of the country and operations of regional units

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* Speech delivered at the All-North Viet Nam Conference on Local Military Work in July 1970.

and self-defence militia who wage guerilla warfare, or local people's war.

Guerilla war, local people's war, has been a basic content of our Party's military line all through the various revolutionary stages. Local people's war, self-defence militia and regional forces are the firmest and broadest basis of the whole armed struggle and all the people's armed forces. Leading the local people's war and building the local armed forces have always been the bases of our Party's military work, and of the anti-US struggle and the long-term consolidation of national defence.

Marxism-Leninism and the Problem of Arming the Masses.

In the waging of a people's war, making full use of the fighting force of the masses in the revolution and armed struggle, one of our Party's fundamental and outstanding experiences has been the creative and successful application to the Vietnamese situation of the Marxist-Leninist theory on the problem of *arming the entire people and building the people's army.*

More than one century ago, Marx and Engels advocated the problem of arming the masses in insurrection and revolutionary struggle in opposition to the then rulers' emphasis on the building of a professional army. According to Marx and Engels, when the working class, the peasantry and the conscious toiling people rise up, they must certainly wage armed struggle to seize power. But Marx and Engels believed that socialism would succeed simultaneously in many countries and would be unlikely

to succeed in a single country. Therefore, the countries which have just carried through the socialist revolution would have little fear of being besieged by the imperialists. So when the armed masses rose up and seized power, it would be only necessary, in order to protect the fruits of the revolution, for them to organize such armed forces as people's troops, people's military police or armed units which would be concentrated mainly in the localities, but most of al *to arm the masses*. Thus, it would not be really necessary to maintain a strong standing army.

In the historical conditions of that time, according to Marxist military theory, the *organization of the armed forces was the problem of arming the masses* and not yet the problem of organizing the army. In the present historical conditions, we can see that this problem is *clearly a basic one*.

After the triumph of the October Revolution, the armies of 14 countries invaded the Soviet Union. A new problem arose: after arming the masses for the uprising, was it necessary to organize them into an army? At the Central Committee meetings and at the Congress of the CPSU (Bolshevik) there were heated discussions on this problem. Some people thought that it was simply necessary to arm the masses and rejected the idea of building the army. Then Lenin advocated the *arming of the masses at the same time as the organization of a standing, regular army*. He advanced the well-known thesis: to build the worker-peasant Red Army on the basis of arming the masses. At the Third Congress of the All-Russia Worker-Peasant Soviets held from January

10 to 18, 1918, Lenin said that the socialist Red Army is an army set up by all socialist people on the basis of arming the entire people [1]. In his declaration made in January 1918 on the rights of the toiling and exploited people, he wrote : "To ensure the sovereign power of the working people and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peassants... are hereby decreed." [2] And the worker-peasant Red Army was born.

Since then, many uprisings, many revolutionary wars, have taken place in various countries. Thus a new problem arose : after the building of the revolutionary army, the regular army, how would the problem of arming the masses be handled ? Generally speaking, after the triumph of the revolution, after the formation of a modern regular army, the problem of arming the masses, arming the entire people, was not, in many countries, given its true importance.

Why was it necessary to pose the problem of arming the masses at the same time as building the people's army ? When this question came up, Engels saw clearly the might of the armed masses. At that time the working class had nowhere seized power ; but Engels had realized that, when that seizure of power took place, all able-bodied men among the workers, peasants and labouring people would be mobilized

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1. V.I. Lenin, *Military Strategy and Tactics during the October Revolution,* Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1959, p. 361.

2. V.I. Lenin, *Complete Works, Progress, Moscow, Vol. 26, 1964,* p. 424.

and armed, creating a huge military force. Commenting on the war between France and Germany at that time, when Metz and Paris were invested by the German army, he remarked that the French had done their best to keep these two strongholds, while the Germans, with their many dozen divisions, had besieged them. With such a huge standing army, what were the Germans able to do ? They only occupied one-sixth of the French territory while the remainder was out of their control. Engels thought that, if the revolutionary fervour of the French population living on the remaining five-sixths of France at that time was equal to that of the Spaniards who fought Napoleon in 1808, it would have been possible to arm the French people, destroy communication and supply lines of the German aggressors and relieve Paris. According to Engels, had each town, each city, each village in France become a stronghold and each Frenchman a combatant, the situation would have changed. The Germans would have been finished, because they had no more reserves. The working class and labouring people rose up in Paris and fought with matchless heroism in the Paris Commune. But without the backing of the toiling masses throughout France, they failed. Thus, as early as 1870, Engels had seen the might of the armed masses. He spoke highly of the combats of the Spaniards though their arming of the masses was then very limited [1].

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1. F. Engels, V.I. Lenin, J. Stalin : *On People's War*, Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, pp. 151, 156.

Later, and especially after the October Revolution in Russia, the masses were armed in many uprisings and revolutionary wars.

In the great patriotic war waged by the Soviet people against the German fascists, Stalin always appealed to the men of the Red Army and guerilla fighters of both sexes. In many fierce battles the armed forces of the population living in the enemy-held areas played a very effective role, coordinating their action with that of the Soviet army. The reports made by German generals recognized that guerilla warfare, widespread in the territories under their control, upset all the principles of German military science and caused great difficulties and heavy losses to their armies. So we can see the importance of the strength of the armed masses, of guerilla warfare !

In the long revolutionary war in China, people's war was waged over immense rural areas and won great victories. In the resistance war against the Japanese, the Red Army fought shoulder to shoulder with guerilla units which had sprung up behind the enemy's lines. Developing its tremendous strength in the civil war, the people's war annihilated millions of Chiang Kai-shek's troops, and liberated the Chinese mainland.

Our Party's Line and the Problem of Arming the Masses

In Viet Nam, from the very beginning, we correctly advocated *the arming of the masses while setting up the revolutionary army*. This clearsighted line was set forth right at the founding of our Party. In its very first documents, our Party discussed such

problems as the organization of self-defence units, military training of the labouring masses, preparation of conditions for the building of guerilla units, prosecution of guerilla warfare and armed uprisings, building of the Red Army of the worker-peasant Soviet State. Thus our Party has correctly applied Marxism-Leninism to the realities of our country. It can be said that, compared with any other period in the history of our nation, our Party has had the most success in its implementation of the policy of arming the masses and building the people's army.

To guide the preparation of armed uprisings in the period of the Second World War, our Party passed a resolution in which it expounded very clearly the necessity to develop the political bases of the masses, expand self-defence and guerilla units and, on this foundation, to organize concentrated armed forces and the revolutionary army. In practice, our people's army was born and grew up from the widespread armed forces forged by the masses in the crucible of the revolutionary war against Japan, for national salvation. In this crucial moment the August Revolution was a great leap forward, a time when the armed forces of the masses developed vigorously. The Liberation Army and our revolutionary armed forces saw a powerful growth.

From the very beginning of our resistance war against the French the appeals made by President Ho Chi Minh and the Party Central Committee's instructions on the prosecution of the resistance war and national construction pointed out that *each hamlet, each street was to be a stronghold; each*

citizen a combatant; each Party cell a staff. This policy yielded great results in the defeat of the French imperialist aggressors.

Our country is an agrarian country having large rural areas and many towns and cities. The regular troops of the revolution are the workers and peasants; the workers play the leading role and the peasants make up the bulk. The law of the development of the revolutionary forces in our country is first of all to develop the revolutionary forces among the grassroots masses, among the toiling peasants and also among the workers, in the countryside as well as in the town. In the war against the US, this law is fully expounded in the theory of the three strategic areas: the rural areas in the highlands, the rural areas in the plain, and the urban centres. It is for this reason that, whether in political struggle or in armed struggle, not only the peasants but the revolutionary people in the towns, with the workers at their head, must be armed. In the arming of the masses, our Party advocates the organization of not only the militia and guerilla forces in the countryside but also self-defence and combat self-defence forces in the towns. Not only each peasant but each worker, each toiler in an urban centre, must become a combatant.

Since liberation, the North has embarked on the road of socialist construction; as a result the industrial centres have become more crowded and the working class more numerous. Hence, in arming the masses, we must not only turn each hamlet or village into a stronghold but each enterprise, each town-

street, into a fortress. In the armed forces of the masses in the socialist North, the militia and guerilla forces are becoming more widespread and powerful and the self-defence and combat self-defence forces have become more developed and are playing a more important role. We have laid emphasis on the strengthening and development of the militia and guerillas — the grassroots armed forces of the collective peasants. We must pay greater attention to the consolidation and expansion of the self-defence and combat self-defence forces — the grassroots armed forces of the working class. To belittle the role of the self-defence and combat self-defence forces is a mistake that should be corrected.

The people's war is a revolutionary war, waged by the people and for the people. In the present juncture a genuine people's war must be led by the working class. To speak of people's war is to speak of rousing the people, of organizing them for the fight. When the people are organized, armed and correctly led, they are invincible. The revolutionary war waged in our country has shown that the *strength of all the armed people will beat any aggressor, however powerful he may be.*

The strength of the people's war stems first from the huge force of the conscious and organized people. The people are the solid mainstay of the whole revolutionary tasks. *The political force of the people is the basis of all revolutionary struggle in general and all armed struggle in particular.* Political struggle is precisely the basis from which to develop and intensify armed struggle. This is the closely-linked relation

between the revolutionary armed forces and the people's revolutionary forces, between armed struggle and the people's revolutionary struggle.

If we deeply consider the essence of the problem, armed struggle is a high form of revolutionary struggle, the armed forces, a special form of the political force of the masses, a political force including workers, peasants and labouring people roused, closely organized and fighting the enemy with a gun.

Insofar as armed forces and armed struggle are concerned, *the armed forces of the masses are precisely the solid mainstay of all our armed forces.* The masses' guerilla warfare is precisely the foundation of all the revolutionary armed struggle.

We can affirm that, to wage a true people's war, to bring into full play the huge strength of people's war, it is absolutely necessary to mobilize the entire people for the fight, to organize the armed forces of the masses and the revolutionary army ; to co-ordinate the political forces with the armed forces, the armed forces of the masses with the revolutionary army. Only by so doing can we fully apply the principle of arming the entire people, of spreading the people's war far and wide. This is the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, the truth of revolutionary war in our country as well as in any other country and nation resolved to rise up and prosecute a just war.

David versus Goliath or the Problem of Arming the Masses

Here it is important to mention that the revolutionary war in Viet Nam does not only reflect this universal truth but has its own features. In our coun-

try, revolutionary war and all wars against foreign aggression have been just wars of a small country against much bigger feudalist and imperialist aggressors.

Our country is not large in area and population ; our army is less numerous and less well equipped than that of the enemy. We have to fight an enemy who has greater manpower, better equipment and a more powerful economic and military potential. This is a problem of the utmost importance for our strategists; it is not a new one but has existed for millennia. Whenever our country has been invaded by a foreign army our people and national heroes have had to solve this problem.

What is thus the most important factor which has enabled us to find a solution ? It is this : *all our people must pool their efforts to fight the enemy,* and to *organize a nation-wide resistance.* The enemy must be repelled not only by the army but also by the civilian population. That is why, formerly, all the people were soldiers. Apart from the regular army, there were the provincial armed units, the *dan binh, huong binh, tho binh* operating in hamlets and villages and in grottos and caves in the highlands. Today also the entire people fight the enemy ; we have a people's army which, compared with the enemy's, is smaller in number but has a very high fighting spirit ; we must have a big armed force organized by the masses, the regional troops, militia and self-defence units. In his appeal for resistance to the French aggressors, President Ho Chi Minh said : "Men and women, old and young, regardless of religious creed,

political affiliation and nationality, all Vietnamese must stand up to fight the French colonialists and save the Fatherland. Those who have rifles will use their rifles ; those who have swords will use their swords ; those who have no swords will use spades, hoes or sticks. Everyone must endeavour to oppose the colonialists and save his country." In the resistance war against American aggression he said : "The thirty-one million of our compatriots in both zones, regardless of sex and age, must be thirty-one million valiant people fighting the Americans to save the country".

As we fought the enemy in the specific conditions mentioned above, our military thinking has also a special content. In the West, from an early date military thought laid stress on the principle of concentrating a numerically superior army so as to wipe out the enemy rapidly, as for example, in the wars of Napoleon. In the East, before the birth of Christ, Ton Tu wrote in his military book : "We besiege the enemy when we are ten times more numerous, we assault him when we have a number five times superior, we can still attack him when we are twice as many, we withdraw when we have an equal number or are less numerous." But Vietnamese military thinking is different. Our thinking is to oppose a smaller force to a bigger one, to oppose a weaker unit to a stronger one, to oppose humanity to brutality according to the practice of Tran Quoc Tuan and Nguyen Trai. Today, continuing that tradition and applying it to people's war, Vietnamese military science must satisfactorily solve the problem of

opposing a smaller force to a bigger one, and rudimentary weapons to the sophisticated arms of the imperialists including the American imperialists. To apply this military art successfully, we must mobilize and arm the entire people. Moreover, we must train crack troops with a high fighting spirit, and arm the masses whose morale must also be very high. Apart from our great determination to fight, we must adopt skilful methods of combat. This is what makes for the high combative quality of our revolutionary armed forces.

Speaking of the organization and method of combat of the army, of the quality and number of the population and of technique, Engels recalled the mercenary troops of feudal Prussia and the revolutionary army of bourgeois France. The Prussian army fought in three-row-four-side formations, which prevented the hirelings from running away; well aware of that necessity, the Prussian commander at that time said: "Should my soldier know the reason why he has to fight, he would take to flight; he must be made to fear the whip of the corporal more than he does the bullet of the enemy; only on this condition can he fight." In the revolutionary army of bourgeois France the situation was quite different. The troops had a high morale for the entire people were rising up, the army had an appropriate fighting formation and was organized in columns, enabling it to rout the reactionary European armed forces of that time. Engels also recalled the Spanish guerillas and the American insurrectionists in the war for independence who fought heroically because they defended the interests

of their countries, and were victorious as they used the methods of both group fighting and individual fighting. Through this we can see the importance both of morale and of fighting technique. In order to use successfully the method of opposing a smaller unit to a more numerous one, a weaker force to a stronger one, of fighting with rudimentary weapons against sophisticated weapons, our armed forces must have a rational organization, a good fighting method and an iron-like determination to wipe out the enemy. We must know how to organize the armed forces of the masses, and the people's army. We must be good at fighting in concentrated units and waging guerilla warfare; we must know to fight big, medium-sized and small battles. Our armed forces must have the resolve, formerly to kill all the aggressors, today to defeat completely the American invaders. "So long as there remains an aggressor in our country, we must continue to fight to annihilate him."

We have taken into account the just and revolutionary character of our people's war and the reality that "a small country can defeat a big imperialist power" so as to analyse the paramount significance of the problem of arming the masses, of the people's war at the local level, and the great significance of the revolutionary army and the operations of the main-force army. That is why to speak of people's war without paying adequate attention to arming the entire people, to fail to build the army on the basis of arming the masses, is also a failure to understand the meaning of the application of Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country, a failure

to fully grasp the revolutionary character and specific features of our people's war in the conduct of the war. Then, naturally, the enemy cannot be defeated.

Arming the Masses and the People's Army; the Three Categories of Forces

To bring the resistance war of the entire people to a victorious end, to strengthen the national defence of the entire people, it is necessary to build solid armed forces of the masses. I avail myself of this occasion to make it clear that the content of the concept of armed forces of the masses is not quite the same as the content of the concept of people's army, because the militia and self-defence units do not belong to the army. The army has a tighter organization and discipline; it has a broader military knowledge and a more centralized command. That is the distinction between the armed forces of the masses and the people's army. The regular armymen and regional troops belong to the army. The militiamen and self-defence fighters do not belong to it. But they are all members of the armed forces of the masses.

The regional armed forces include: the regional army which is that part of the army stationed in the region, and the militia and self-defence forces. When the armed struggle develops, a part of the militia and self-defence forces may become regional army units. The regional armed forces play a very great role: they are closely linked to the revolutionary masses in each locality. They are a military force closely combined with the political force in each

locality. Their activity is closely linked to the economic tasks of the people for they directly protect the lives and property of the people. That is why in order to wage a people's war, to have a core force for the people to rise up and prosecute the war, to provide direct protection to the local inhabitants, it is most important first of all to build the local armed forces. For this reason local armed forces, local troops and the militia and self-defence force play a strategic role not only in armed struggle and guerilla warfare, but in revolutionary struggle as a whole. According to Lenin, it is incorrect to dissociate guerilla warfare from an insurrectional situation ; this shows a lack of historical and is unscientific [1].

It is incorrect because "guerilla war is a natural form of struggle unavoidable in the period when the mass movement has effectively taken the path of uprising. [2] It is the form used by the masses rising up to win and maintain power. *The regional armed forces are the nucleus of armed struggle, of guerilla warfare and of people's war in the regions. They are the bases of all armed forces of the Party. Without strong, widespread local armed forces, there would be neither widespread local people's war nor any powerful movement to arm the population.*

The more widespread the war, the more modern equipment the enemy has, and the greater his number, the more strengthened and steady should be the local armed forces. The role played by the regular

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1. F. Engels, V. I. Lenin, J. Stalin, *On People's War.* cp. cit.
2. Ibid.

army is most important, but the regular army develops favourably and brings its huge strength into full play only when the local armed forces and local military work are very solid and powerful.

The militia and self-defence forces and regional army are the two basic armed forces in the region.

The militia and self- defence units have a fighting force of paramount importance, though their organization level is not so high and their command not so effective as those of the regional army and regular army. Militia and self-defence forces are closely bound to the masses. They maintain and bring into play the strength of the masses at the grassroots level. During the war, it is difficult without these forces to protect the people, to keep them and struggle with the enemy for them, and impossible to develop our military, political and economic strength. President Ho Chi Minh said: "The militia, self-defence units, and guerillas are the force of the whole nation, an invincible force, an iron wall of the Fatherland. However brutal the enemy may be, should he bump his head against that wall, he would be forced to withdraw." [1]

In order to enable them to play their strategic role and fulfil their strategic task in an effective manner, it is indispensable to take into consideration, the number as well as the quality of the militia and self-defence force. We must build them everywhere, in hamlets, cooperatives, state farms, factories, streets,

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1. Ho Chi Minh, *On Armed Struggle and People's Armed Forces,* People's Army Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, p. 174.

town quarters. Meanwhile we must pay great attention to consolidating the guerillas and self-defence combat units, deploying them with flexibility, combining combat with production work and using them as a core for the grassroots movement, impelling the entire people to fight the enemy.

The regional army, which is one of the three categories of armed forces and the regular force in the region, *plays a role of great importance*. Together with the militia and self-defence force, it serves as a core for the "Let the entire people fight the enemy" movement in the locality.

It is the link between the forces prosecuting the people's war and guerilla war at the base and the regular army fighting in concentrated units. It should be strong enough to coordinate its action effectively with the "Let the entire people fight the enemy" movement in the locality, and with the movement for mass uprisings so as to foil all enemy manoeuvres aimed at attacking, pacifying and penning up the local inhabitants, create favourable conditions for action by the regular army, and to coordinate its action with the latter's in all battlefields. Together with the huge militia and self-defence forces, *the regional army is a force operating locally ; it stands ready for action* in every field of operations. Omnipresent, it can rapidly counter any action of the enemy even when he uses modern weapons and techniques. It is the basis on which to build and develop our posture of strategic offensive, and the direct and most effective force to defend our rear and our war potential. Therefore, at present and in the future,

we must lay great emphasis on the building of regional armed forces, especially the militia and self-defence force at grassroots level.

Of course, when stressing the importance of regional armed forces, we must *clearly realize the great role played by the regular army operating in concentrated units,* the great mainstay of all our people's armed forces. It is made up of regular units drawn from many arms. Well-equipped and well-trained, they operate under a good command and leadership, fulfilling a mobile operational and strategic task in close coordination with the regional armed forces and dealing decisive blows at the enemy to wipe out his regular forces operating in concentrated formations. It is precisely because we have clearly seen the great role of the regular army that our Party is constantly anxious to build it up, raising its fighting efficiency and strengthening it so that it may develop even more rapidly and steadily and win even more brilliant victories.

Revolutionary Wars through Various Periods in Our Country and the Importance of Arming the Masses

During the years preceding the armed insurrection and in the August Revolution, though the political forces of the masses played the leading role, the armed forces of the masses were also very important. At that time, the liberation forces were still small, amounting to a few platoons and companies, totalling about 5,000 men. But, under the leadership of the Party, the self-defence forces and guerillas developed rapidly all over the country ; they were the armed

forces of the masses in various localities. The form of armed struggle adopted at that time was guerilla warfare. In close co-ordination with these armed forces, the political forces of the masses waged the general insurrection, brought the August Revolution to success, founded the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and set up the first people's democracy in South-east Asia.

The Liberation Army played a most important role in the general insurrection, but it is erroneous to belittle the great role of the guerillas and self-defence units of the armed forces of the masses in the August Revolution. When Hanoi rose up, it had the resistance bases as its mainstay, but at that time the Liberation Army was still at Thai Nguyen. Therefore, the forces which played a directly decisive role were the political and self-defence forces of the masses. *That is why, in armed insurrection the armed forces of the masses and the regional armed forces play a role of paramount importance.*

The people's war and the armed forces in each locality had a fundamental strategic position *all through the war of resistance against the French colonialists.* Our policy was very correct : we stepped up guerilla warfare and strengthened the militia, guerilla and regional army at the same time as we did our best to build the regular army. There was a time when we resolutely sent a regiment to each of a number of provinces, a battalion to each of a number of districts, and set up independent companies and concentrated battalions in order to establish a

political base, organize the guerillas, and serve as a core for guerilla warfare in the region.

During the Hoa Binh campaign, while we attacked the enemy on the main front and in his rear, the regional forces, militia and guerillas were very active in the delta, creating favourable conditions for the regular army units to operate and millions of inhabitants to rise up. This is also a form of armed insurrection.

When the Dien Bien Phu campaign started, local people's war developed vigorously in all fields of operation behind the enemy's lines in North, Central and South Viet Nam. Militia, guerilla and regional forces in combination with the inhabitants decimated a large part of the enemy's forces, overran hundreds of military posts and extended the liberated areas.

But our resistance to the US is the biggest war waged by our people against foreign aggression and for national independence and freedom. Compared with the French, the Americans have more troops, more modern equipment and a greater economic and military potential. They pursue a neo-colonial, not old-style colonial, policy. After many reverses, they have been compelled to change their strategy many times and use different strategies; in the North they have launched the air war of destruction, while in the South they have also used infantrymen, first only the Saigon mercenary army, then also the U.S. expeditionary forces.

In the anti-US resistance war, the very important role and strategic position of the local people's war

and guerilla war and the regional armed forces have come to the fore.

During the "concerted uprisings" in the South, the popular armed forces were small. It was the huge political force and the still limited armed forces of the people which brought these "uprisings" to success, spreading them far and wide in the rural areas of the South. The strength of this self-defence militia, so closely linked to the political mass movement, has created a huge revolutionary force.

While the movement of armed uprising was developing powerfully in the years of resistance to the "special war," our people in the South stepped up guerilla warfare and local people's war, and built the regional armed forces. It was during the development of the regional people's war and the mass political struggle that the liberation regular army, though small in number, was able to operate very effectively. The result was that most of the enemy's "strategic hamlets" were destroyed, his new tactics, such as those using "heliborne" and "motorized" units were shattered, his "special war" was defeated and the Ngo Dinh Diem regime collapsed.

When the U.S. imperialists shifted to "limited war" by sending increasingly massive numbers of their troops into South Viet Nam, equipping them with ever more sophisticated weapons and raising their mobility, the importance of the local people's war in defeating the enemy showed all the more clearly. The powerful and ubiquitous units of guerilla and regional troops forced the enemy to scatter his forces and reduce the intensity of his attacks ; he was deci-

mated or annihilated everywhere. Thanks to this, the lives and property of our people were protected and conditions were prepared for our regular army to launch annihilation battles.

When this "limited war" was at its height, it received punishing blows from our people and armed forces. The enemy was obliged to shift to the "Vietnamization of the war," a strategy more consistent with the objectives of neo-colonialism but at the same time fraught with inner contradictions. More consistent because the U.S. imperialists carried out the perfidious policy of pitting Vietnamese against Vietnamese and feeding the war by the war and using Vietnamese blood and American money and weapons to serve the sordid interests of U.S. monopoly capital, fraught with contradictions because, to attain his goal, the enemy must rely on our manpower and resources, things that no aggressor could obtain owing to the fundamental contradictions between our people and the enemy, and to the indomitable spirit of our people. For the execution of this new strategy, with a powerful buildup and using the most perfidious military and political manoeuvres, the Americans carried out their "pacification" policy, a policy which consisted in killing our people, destroying our bases, penning the inhabitants up in strategic hamlets, strengthening the puppet army and administration, coercing and exploiting the inhabitants. In this new situation, it is clear that the *schemes of the enemy are best thwarted by the preservation of the political bases and the strengthening of the armed forces of the masses.* Thus the self-defence militia,

regional army and local people's war play a role of paramount importance. With powerful, ubiquitous guerilla units, inured to war, with a strong and experienced regional army, with adequate organization and activity and a close co-ordination between armed struggle and political struggle at grassroots level through triple action — military, political and agitation work among enemy troops — we can protect the extensive force of the revolutionary masses, foil all coercive manœuvres of the enemy and preserve the potential of the resistance.

The experience gained during the years of stubborn resistance to the enemy's "pacification" program has given us a clearer understanding of this fact: *the political forces of the people are the foundation of all revolutionary wars, and the armed forces of the masses that of all armed struggles.*

In many vast rural areas, our central task was rapidly assessed as the foiling of the "pacification" operations. Agitation work among the masses was given due attention, local military work stepped up and the form of organization and struggle were correctly analysed. As a result, even in the thick of the struggle, we were able to maintain our political and armed forces; the inhabitants clung to their villages and hamlets; the guerillas closed in upon the enemy; the Party cells were constantly by the side of the people; the cadres at higher level kept close to the grassroots; the enemy's coercive forces were in the end wiped out or disbanded; the enemy posts were overrun or evacuated or surrendered, many "strategic hamlets" were dismantled; the

offensives and concerted uprisings were maintained or expanded by the masses, and greater and greater victories won. Together with the big battles of annihilation given by our regular army units co-ordinating their actions with the political struggle put up by the masses, especially in urban centres, the people's war which is being extensively waged in various localities has contributed to the failure of the "Vietnamization" of the war and will surely defeat it completely.

In the North, we have totally beaten a most barbarous war of destruction launched by the US Air Force and Navy. If we analyse deeply the nature of the great people's war in the North, we realize that this is a *war of national defence* to safeguard the socialist North. On the other hand, taking the country as a whole, *this is a part of the war of liberation waged against the U.S., for national salvation*, for the defence of the great rear base so that the latter can fulfil its task toward the Southern battlefront, make the greatest contribution to national liberation and defeat the US imperialists' large-scale "limited war."

Without our militia and self-defence forces and the powerful regional army, would we, in recent times, have been able to win such big victories over the enemy's war of destruction ? Certainly not. Thus, if greater attention had been paid to these forces, our successes would have been even greater.

A.A. defence units, missile launching units and the people's air force are the core and play a role of paramount importance. But the militia and

self-defence force and the regional army have also a great role to play in attack as well as in A.A. defence, in the protection of the rear area and of production. in changing the orientation of the economy and production as well as in keeping order and security.

In the new conditions, the militia and self-defence force have great fighting possibilities. In Quang Binh, Vinh Linh and other localities, after receiving more powerful equipment, the militia and guerilla forces doubled the number of planes they were shooting down. With regard to the regional forces there were battalions which had brought down 70 or 80 aircraft each. That is why, apart from rudimentary weapons, we must boldly increase the number of sophisticated armaments in the hands of the militia, self-defence units and regional army. This is a very sound policy.

In the people's A.A. defence, the militia and self-defence force play the leading role. Without their powerful units, could we carry out successfully civilian A.A. defence, protect and maintain production and keep order and security ? No. Without the huge force of militia and self-defence units, local patriotic workers and sappers, without the population, could we keep traffic going while the communication lines were being hard hit by the enemy ? No, we would have met with greater difficulties. It is the same in the struggle against enemy commandos. In the coastal areas, most of them have been wiped out by the militia and self-defence forces, who do a great part of such work as obser-

vation and deactivation of time-bombs and magnetic bombs on roads and waterways.

To fight against the enemy air force, navy and ground forces, we must have a strong regular army, equipped with modern arms, and, at the same time, we must have a powerful regional armed force. That is why we must build a good militia and self-defence force and do good local military work.

This work must be done satisfactorily also if we want to defend our rear effectively at the same time as protecting and accelerating production during the war and changing our economic orientation. As an armed organization not separated from production, having a huge force composed of the best elements at grassroots level and with a close-knit organization and tight discipline, the militia and self-defence units are also the shock force in production. Local military work must pay due attention to this problem.

One of the great achievements recorded by localities in the North is the achievement of a high level of *mobilization and enlistment,* in fulfilment of their duty toward the frontline. Why, within a short time, have we been able to carry through such work as mobilization, organization, and training of a great number of the best elements among our young people to send them to the front? This is because we have managed to carry out militia and self-defence work and army reserve work. Under the leadership of the Party cadres at various levels, the provinces, municipalities and branches have contributed a great deal to that achievement.

At present, the primary task of the great rear base is to join forces with the great front in order to defeat the American aggressors. The consolidation of the regional military apparatus at all levels and in all branches is to help the regions carry out the task of mobilization and recruitment satisfactorily and at the same time efficiently build and train the reserve forces. In future, to defend the country and face the eventuality of war, mobilization and recruitment must be prepared even more carefully. It must be done in peace time in all localities, in all branches, in the town as well as in the countryside. To this end, we have to perform our regional military task well. This is a concrete manifestation of our high vigilance and an effective measure to defend the country.

In a word, in the light of Marxism-Leninism and of the Party line and in the practice of revolutionary armed struggle in each stage in our country, we have seen the very important strategic role of regional people's war and of the local armed forces. Regional military work has become a most important task. It holds a key position in the revolutionary struggle in general and armed struggle in particular, in uprising and the war for liberation, and in the war for national defence. The more modern and the fiercer the war, the greater the importance of regional military work.

The regional military task is a fundamental link in the chain of the Party's military work and is one of the leading tasks of the Party's cadres at all levels in the locality.

CONCLUSION

From the above problems we can draw the following conclusions:

Firstly, *to carry out the Party's military line of people's war,* at the same time as developing people's war and building the people's army on a nation-wide scale, we must *carry out local military work in a satisfactory manner and build local people's armed forces.*

Local military work plays a role of great importance not only in the past and at present, but for a long time to come. Of course, with powerful regional forces but without powerful concentrated units of the regular army, it would be very difficult for us to defeat the enemy in the case of a large-scale war of aggression. On the other hand, if the regional military force is not powerful enough, it would be difficult to build a powerful regular army and, if this army exists, it would be difficult to develop our combat efficiency to the full to secure victory for the people's war.

This is a great experience of our party, a fundamental principle of people's war in Viet Nam, a country small in size and population, which relies mainly on its own power to defeat a large army of aggression.

Secondly, *the more modern the war and the more we have to face powerful imperialist armies using modern techniques and sophisticated weapons, the more we have to strengthen local military work, the militia and regional army, and to prepare for local*

people's war. At present, good local military work is an indispensable and most effective way to defend the North, so as to be ready to smash all the frenzied schemes of the U.S. imperialists against the D.R.V.N. and fulfil our task in the war of anti-US resistance for national salvation.

Thirdly, *in a neo-colonial war, the enemy is bent on destroying our human and material reserves by hitting at the inhabitants*, disputing them with us, swelling the ranks of the quislings and setting up "civilian guards" for the Vietnamization of the war. That is why *in local people's war the militia and self-defence units and regional troops must play an ever more important role ;* they exert a direct and decisive effect on the foiling of the enemy's perfidious schemes and on the maintenance of the people's political and economic bases.

Fourthly, the new possibilities of our socialist system, of the socialist man, of our technical equipment and of our fighting technique develop with every passing day. We are in a better condition to equip our militia, self-defence force and regional troops with better and more powerful means. Our fighting technique, especially that of opposing weaker forces to stronger ones, smaller units to bigger ones, is constantly enriched by innovations. That is why *our militia and regional army have a greater fighting capacity and are developing more vigorously than ever before.*

Fifthly, *local military work becomes more and more important due to the development of the regions, especially the provinces and towns, in man-*

power, materials, economic and defence potential, and in logistic possibilities to serve the local people's war. By their all-sided development in the political, economic and military fields, the provinces and towns become basic economic units and basic units of people's war. Therefore local military work is of paramount importance in relation to operations mounted to defend the locality and the country as a whole.

Sixthly, *local military work is very important for the building, consolidation and defence of the rear and shows the effects of the rear on the frontline.*

We must in the shortest time make large-scale preparations for the population to change from a state of peace to a state of war, by protecting their lives and property and the property of the State, and by protecting the economic and national defence potential in war.

Seventhly: *local military work is closely linked to the important role of the reserve force in people's war and in people's national defence.* The reserve force must be built up satisfactorily: this is the only way to have a strong reserve so that in peace time it is possible to reduce the size of the regular army while enabling it to be rapidly expanded in case of need. To build this force and make it ready to replenish the army rapidly in war time, is a task of strategic importance.

The Party political and military line must be clearly grasped. The various regions and branches must understand the strategic role of local military

work in the present struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation as well as in the future long term building of the people's national defence. Radical changes must be brought to leadership work by Party committees at all levels and by various administrative authorities, in all branches and even in the army as a contribution to the total victory of the anti-U.S. struggle and the establishment of a steady national defence.

II. TO PERFORM LOCAL MILITARY WORK WELL AND FULFIL EVERY DUTY TOWARD THE RESISTANCE WAR IS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE VICTORY OF THE WAR AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION, FOR NATIONAL SALVATION

The anti U.S.-struggle of our people in both zones of the country has won great victories, but our resistance war is still going on fiercely.

The American imperialists have suffered repeated defeats, yet they are diehard and warlike. In the South they are doing their best to carry out "Vietnamization" in order to prolong their war of aggression. In the North they have increased their acts of war and brazenly bombed many localities. To seek a way out of their quagmire in Viet Nam, they were rash enough to invade Cambodia and turn that peaceful and neutral land into a bloody battlefield. Meanwhile they stepped up the aggression of Laos. The Indochinese peninsula has become a single battlefield, Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, a single front-line against U.S. aggression.

The tasks of all our Party, people and army at present is to resolutely execute President Ho Chi Minh's sacred testament, intensify the war of resistance against the U.S. aggressors till victory, liberate the South, defend the North and pave the way for the peaceful reunification of the country and the successful construction of socialism. Meanwhile we must strengthen our militant solidarity with the fraternal peoples of Laos and Cambodia, pooling our efforts with theirs to defeat the aggressors and oust them from Indochina; we will thus contribute a worthy part to the revolution of the people of the world.

In the South, at present the American troops have been obliged to proceed to a phased withdrawal, but the enemy are doing their best to reinforce and strengthen the puppet army, which is to replace the GIs and carry on their scheme of implanting neo-colonialism. They muster their troops to mount "pacification" raids so as to repress, terrorize and pen up the population, pressganging them into the army to strengthen the corrupt puppet administration. Under the N.F.L. and P.R.G. flag, our compatriots in the South, in the flush of their victories, have enthusiastically accelerated the resistance war in every respect and have gained an even clearer realization of the most important role of the people's war in the regions. Keeping step with the steady building of a broadly-based political force and the work of raising the fighting quality of the liberation troops, there is an urgent need for a powerful development of guerilla and local people's

war and the further reinforcement of leadership over local military work in the plains, the highlands, and the urban centres. Through practice in various localities in the South, we have come to realize that only by constantly developing and strengthening the political forces of the masses, by building and consolidating the guerilla and self-defence forces and strengthening the regional army in the districts and provinces can we steadily increase our offensive posture in the localities and bring into play the fighting force of the Liberation Army.

In the South Viet Nam battlefield at present, the enemy "pacification" program has suffered an important setback in many provinces and this trend is being maintained and developed. This is precisely because these provinces have stressed the role of local people's war. They have grasped the policies and military line and powerfully developed the political forces and the guerilla and self-defence forces at the base. They have strengthened leadership at grassroots level and over the regional troops in the provinces and districts, reinforced and unified leadership and strengthened the local military organs.

One of the major experiences gained in the South is as follows:

In order to defeat an aggressive army possessing a big buildup and a huge potential, maintain and constantly increase our own aggressiveness and thwart the U.S. neo-colonialist schemes, one of the fundamental necessities is, simultaneously with the building of a powerful regular force, to rely on the

powerful development of the army of our political forces to do local military work, step up local people's war, and strengthen and expand vigorously the local armed forces, especially the guerilla and self-defence units.

Our people in the South have profited by this very important experience to expand guerilla warfare and local people's war in all localities and strategic areas.

In the North, at the same time as the building of socialism and the carrying out of national defence after defeating the U.S. war of destruction, we in the rear are continuing to do our best to fulfil our sacred task toward the great frontline. Fighting U.S. aggression for national salvation has always been the primary task of all our people. Everything to vanquish U.S. aggression ! This is the lofty mission of all the Vietnamese people and the honour of all our Party and people at present.

We must satisfy all the requirements of the frontline. We must have the highest sense of political responsibility toward the frontline. We must devote ourselves heart and soul to the fierce struggle now unfolding on the battlefield so as to make a worthy contribution to its victory.

To build and defend the North, to strengthen its economy and national defence, and to fulfil our task in the rear toward the frontline, we must satisfactorily carry out our local military work. Recently, this has been clearly realized by the cadres at all levels and in all branches. In many localities, attention has been paid to the building of local armed

forces and the regular training of the militia, self-defence units and the reserve force. Great efforts have been made for mobilization. Attention has been given to the combination of economic construction and national defence and also to civilian A.A. defence and combat readiness. The cadres at all levels in various regions and branches have constantly heightened their vigilance, and made a sound assessment of the new situation and new tasks. In face of the U.S. imperialists' dark designs and of the state of war now prevailing in half the country, this is a very correct position.

As a long-term duty, the heightening of vigilance and preventive measures against all imperialist schemes of aggression, is a need which should certainly never be belittled. In a country like ours, this is quite understandable. Because she holds an important position and has rich resources, Viet Nam has been the target of aggression by many cruel enemies. In only a few decades we have had to cope with three powerful imperialisms. In time to come, as our country's position rises in importance after our victory over the American imperialists, we may have to cope with other insane schemes and adventurist acts on the part of imperialism. President Ho Chi Minh, when alive, constantly reminded us to look out far afield and to heighten our vigilance. If we do not look out, certainly we cannot have the necessary vigilance ; then we may easily neglect our national defence. Our President also stressed that, if we are to be vigilant, the most important thing is to build the militia and self-defence units into a

powerful force. Some comrades and Party cadres in the localities have not grasped that problem. These comrades, including armymen, have not a profound knowledge of the present revolutionary task and the Party's military line. That is why they do not pay due attention to local military work. And, as I said above, to neglect this work is to make light of the building and consolidation of national defence at the grassroots, to make light of the achievement of independence and the defence of the country at the grassroots. This is a question of basic viewpoint, of revolutionary stand.

In our present struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, as well as in economic rehabilitation and development and in socialist construction, we are swamped with work. This urgent work needs to be done satisfactorily. The cadres in various branches and localities must endeavour to overtake and outstrip the target figures. Therefore if, in some localities, our Party cadres and inhabitants do not pay full attention to military matters, especially at grassroots level, it is quite possible that the local military task will be neglected. The Party cadres and responsible cadres in these localities will pay less attention to this work; they may have no consideration for it or do it only perfunctorily. Perhaps the requirements of the front will not be met. The need to raise the fighting capacity and the sense of combat readiness of the local armed forces and the building of local military organs may be ignored. Economic construction and the consolidation of national defence may become

separated and not given appropriate guidance. Of course, we must actively prevent these phenomena and, if they take place, eliminate them.

We must get down to the construction of socialism, the rehabilitation and development of the economy and the consolidation of national defence. National construction and national defence must be given their rightful due and cannot be dissociated from each other. Therefore, while devoting our efforts to economic work, we must attend carefully to national defence. The cadres at various Party levels and in all branches including villages, hamlets, cooperatives, agricultural farms, enterprises, town quarters and public offices must fully grasp this problem.

All the branches, including industry, agriculture, capital construction, post and telegraph, communications, health service, education, *must assume a great part of the responsibility for the construction of the people's national defence.* That is why, while fulfilling the mission entrusted to one's own branch, one must pay due attention to national defence, especially by a satisfactory performance of local military work. With regard to the various branches, public offices, enterprises and agricultural farms which have been newly set up and are not yet acquainted with local military work, they must carefully study the Party's military line, and the experiences of other localities so as to carry through that work successfully. This is a problem of paramount importance, because the larger the size of socialist construction, the greater the number

of economic undertakings and industrial centres. The self-defence force, which comprises the best sons and daughters of the working class and toiling people, will develop and play an important role. Like the rural militia and guerilla this force serves the proletarian dictatorship at the base. In peace time it is the armed force defending production and the shock force for production; in war time it is the armed force directly prosecuting the people's war in the locality, it is the core for the entire people to fight the enemy right at the local level. For this reason, in war time as in peace time, all branches of activity, public offices and enterprises must carry out local military work and pay attention to the building and training of the militia, self-defence force and reserve force.

The Party cadres in the army, the cadres in charge of military work in various localities, must fully understand their responsibility to improve their guidance with regard to the execution of this work. They must stick to the military line of the Party and the resolutions and directives of the Central Committee, the Government and the Central Military Committee; they must resolutely and creatively carry out this work by adopting appropriate plans and methods to push it vigorously ahead; they must prevent all symptoms of negligence, lack of vigilance, and conservatism checking their bold march forward.

The staffs, political and logistic departments, regular units, services and arms must understand clearly that, together with building the people's

army, it is necessary to pay attention to arming the masses. They must not think that the regular army, artillery, tanks, aircraft, can solve all problems. True, they can solve many problems, but what about that of the base ? Everyone knows that the regular army, operating in concentrated units, is very important; it therefore requires building up and being made well-seasoned and powerful. However we must understand that, parallel to this, it is necessary to build strong units of the regional force and the militia and self-defence force. Recently, in the resistance to the U.S. war of destruction, had we increased even more the strength of the A.A. defence of the regions and strengthened, boldly and rapidly, the A.A. equipment of the militia and regional armed forces, we would certainly have seen a considerable increase in the strength of these local armed forces, and won even greater victories.

Our Navy has done good work by organizing the people's war on waterways and at sea; this should be continued so as to yield even better results.

All officers and men must fully realize the importance and content of local military work and actively take part in it.

The military cadres, including those in charge of local military work, *must also pay sufficient attention to economic construction.* They must study this and grasp the requirements of the economy in order to help the Party cadres and branches to combine economic activities with national defence, local economic constructioon with local military work. They must constantly bear in mind Uncle Ho's teaching:

"Fighting the enemy cannot be divorced from political and economic activities; a military cadre who only knows military matters is like a man standing on one foot."

It is necessary to continue to *bring into play the exemplary and vanguard role of the militia and self-defence force in production.* It must be coordinated with production work in order to be strengthened and built and to gain political education and military training. At present this work is under way in some provinces in the Third and Fourth Military Areas, along the left bank of the Red River and in other regions. It must be given due attention by other localities. Apart from their vanguard role in agricultural production, we must highlight the role of the militia and self-defence force in industrial production and in other branches of activity, such as the Bach Dang works (Haiphong), the Vang Danh and Ha Lam coal mines (Quang Ninh province). We must do it in such a way as to make this a widespread movement; this is the responsibility of the Party cadres and those attending to military work in the localities.

Once again, I want to stress that every one of us must be thoroughly acquainted with the new situation. We must heighten our vigilance in the realization that the struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, is the primary task of our people in both zones of the country. To defend the country is at present and in future one of the cardinal tasks of our Party and people. Therefore, in national construction, in the building of socialism in our country

and the effort to improve the livelihood of our people, we must clearly realize all our responsibility towards the frontline and the strengthening of national defence; we must fully understand the importance of local military work, its fundamental role in the struggle against U.S. aggression at present as well as the consolidation of national defence in future. To neglect local military work is to neglect national defence work at the base, and as a consequence there will be neither powerful local people's war, nor powerful revolutionary military work.

In organization, there is plenty of work to do. *First, the cadres at all levels and in all branches must thoroughly understand the military line of the Party, its viewpoint on the role of local people's war and on local military work.* This is a basis on which to solve concrete problems consistent with the situation and task in each locality.

We must pay great attention to the building of regional armed forces and fully understand the importance of the building of the militia and self-defence force. Parallel to this work in the countryside, we must help to form militia, *self-defence,* and *combat self-defence forces,* as they embody the new fighting force of the working class and toiling people in urban centres under the socialist regime. Whatever the circumstances, it is necessary to build the militia and self-defence force and the reserve force so that they may develop powerfully and meet the requirements of the struggle against U.S. aggression at present and the consolidation of national defence on a permanent basis.

In the building of the militia, self-defence force and reserve force, we must *lay emphasis on military training* and the popularization of the necessary military knowledge to the entire people; we must push forward national defence sports and organize competitions of traditional sports and gymnastics in order to enhance their fighting force and spirit. This was formerly done by our ancestors as early as the Tran and Le dynasties, and is done today in many localities in our country. In an independent country, even in peace time, the reservists must always be subject to military training. This is very important as it makes us ready for combat, especially if the standing army is to be reduced.

Military training must be organized according to a clear program and not at random. In training, attention should be paid to specialized teams and brigades making up different arms of the militia and self-defence force. The militia, self-defence and reserve force must continuously improve their quality. In our country every citizen, every young person, must be a good worker; at the same time, he must have both resolve and ability to defend the Fatherland.

The building of the regional army must be attended to. The regional army in each province is much greater at present than it was formerly. Not only is it provided with infantry, but also with other necessary arms. This is the reason why the management, training and organization of the regional army should be all-sided and its quality raised to make it really strong; it must be turned into a nucleus, a

school to train military cadres and return them to the localities so that the regional troops can be strengthened swiftly in case of need.

Economic work should be satisfactorily combined with national defence. This problem must be solved both at the central level and in the localities.

As we have found out, people's war in the whole country in general and in each locality in particular, shows our combined strength in the military, political and economic fields... This force has been brought into play recently, in our resistance to the U.S. war of destruction. On the basis of the new relations of production we have satisfactorily combined production with fighting. We have closely combined the operations of the armed forces with the activities of the economic branches serving the people's life. Thanks to this our people have won great successes in all fields. At present we are building up the centrally-run economy while developing the local economies. The more developed the local economy, the greater possibility it creates for the improvement of the people's living conditions and the more it meets the new requirements of national defence and the development of the fighting capacity of the local armed forces and population. It is the material and technical basis of people's war ; therefore, in their leadership, our cadres must not belittle the combination of economic development and the strengthening of national defence, the union of the local economic task and the local military task. With this harmonious combination, in the event of war, conditions will be created for the

protection and maintenance of production, the reduction of damage and the continued development of the local economic potential to serve the requirements of the war and the people's life. This combination must be carried out in all respects, in all branches, in the development of agriculture, industry, transport and communications, post and telegraph, the health and cultural services..., in the construction of the countryside as well as in the development of urban centres.

The local economic branches must see to the combination of their activities with the requirements of national defence; for instance, the combination between industry and the production and repair of armaments; that between various agricultural areas, transport and communications, post and telegraph, and the medical service respectively on the one hand, and national defence on the other; that between national defence and all the above-mentioned branches. This combination must be given great attention all through the process of national construction because such major tasks as division of economic areas, distribution of manpower, and extension of the road network, need many years to complete. Therefore, gradual provision for such tasks must be made in peace time. If not, when the war flares up, we shall have to carry them through under the bombing and then the difficulties and damage incurred will be much greater and the quality of the work affected.

The harmonious combination of local economic construction and local military work requires an

all-sided outlook. We must grasp the tasks of economic development, of socialist contruction and also of local defence and the vital interests of the nation. We will base ourselves on our economic possibilities, on the concrete situation of the material and human resources of the locality to work out a comprehensive plan with various stages combining immediate with long-term tasks. Work should be done by order of priority, and a plan must be mapped out for some of the tasks to be carried out only in the event of war. Those which are completely in accordance with the requirements of national defence and the national economy can be done forthwith.

Those which basically answer the requirements of these two branches but do not show, for the time being, a close co-ordination between them, are subject to further study and are to be done step by step.

This coordination should be understood even at the grassroots level. In all work — construction of a factory, building of a hydraulic system, transformation of the fields, afforestation — we must bear in mind that it is to be done in the interests of both the national economy and national defence.

The Party's leadership over local military work must be strengthened.

At present our cadres must have a thorough grasp of the military situation and tasks as well as the Party's military policy so as to strengthen their guidance over local military work; they must give this work its rightful place, especially when the resistance war against U.S. aggression is raging in half our country and in Cambodia and Laos. While

discussing economic construction and other tasks, our cadres must also take decisions on the local military task, they must strengthen the Party's leadership over the local military organs and send cadres acquainted with local military work to help in various organs and in military commands of provinces, towns and other bases so that they may discharge their task better as staffs of the Party committees. It is necessary to define the responsibility of the State organs and branches toward the strengthening of national defence, the building of local armed forces, and local military work, and to organize and supervise this work in each branch in order to help the Party committee and the head of this branch to guide it. In each village there is a militia staff ; in each workshop or factory there must similarly be responsible cadres for military work. Studies should be made to define the responsibility, organization and method of military work in various organs and branches, especially in those directly concerned with national defence.

We are facing a most glorious and important task — to unite the entire people, perseveringly step up the resistance in order to bring our struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation to total victory.

South Viet Nam has not been liberated yet, the war is going on, our fellow-countrymen and combatants are bravely fighting the enemy at the front. The peoples of the three Indochinese countries are defeating the American aggressors. We are determined to go ahead, carry out the instructions of

President Ho Chi Minh in his sacred Testament, fulfil the task of the great rear area towards the great frontline — South Viet Nam — so as worthily to contribute to the cause of national liberation of the Indochinese peoples and to the revolutionary movement of the world's people.

Whatever work we are doing, military, economic, cultural or social work, we must clearly realize that our first duty is to fight the U.S. aggressors, to save the country. We must thoroughly grasp the slogan "All for victory over the American invaders." That is why all organizations at every level, all branches of activity, all localities, must pay special attention to national defence work, profoundly understand the role of local military work and the very important strategic significance of the local people's war, and try to do this work well.

It is hoped that those points will be reported back to the heads of committees, branches, localities so that all of them will actively execute the directives and resolutions of the Party Central Committee, the Government and the Central Military Committee on local military work, and make it progress vigorously. By so doing we shall make a valuable contribution to the present resistance to U.S. aggression, for national salvation, and to the safeguarding of lasting independence for our beloved Fatherland.

ON THE SEA AND RIVER BATTLEFRONT [1]

Our Navy is a young armed service. Its birth was connected with our people's sovereignty on our rivers and on our sea, with the victory of the Vietnamese nation in the struggle for independence and freedom. President Ho Chi Minh once said: "In the past, we had only night and forest. Now, we have day, sky and sea. Our coast is long and beautiful, we should know how to defend it." Now, under the leadership of the Party and of Uncle Ho, our people have won glorious victories through various stages of hard and resolute struggle. We already have day, sky and sea. This is a very great change which brings independence and sovereignty to our land, the sovereignty on the rivers and the sea of our people.

We must defend our territorial waters and our very long and beautiful coast! This is a very glorious task entrusted to the Navy and the river and

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1. Speech delivered at the ceremony commemorating the 15th founding anniversary of the Navy (1970).

coastal forces by our Party and people. This is Uncle Ho's teaching which we are determined to realize at all costs.

I. VICTORIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S WAR ON THE SEA AND RIVER BATTLEFIELD

Viet Nam possesses a very long coast. In a not very large country like ours, the length of the coast and the quite well-developed network of rivers and canals are special features differing from many other countries.

The topography of our coast is complicated. There are rugged archipelagos with thousands of big and small islands such as the Ha Long and Bai Tu Long bays; there are long flat stretches of sea coast such as the coastal areas of the Bac Bo and Nam Bo deltas, and places where there are high cliffs forming closed bays such as Da Nang, Cam Ranh, etc.

Our country possesses many big rivers with outlets to the sea: the Bach Dang, Hong (Red), Ma, Lam, Gianh rivers and many others in the North; the Huong (Perfume), Tra Khuc, Ba rivers in Central Trung Bo; and the Mekong, a very big river that runs through the whole length of the Indochinese peninsula down to the Nam Bo plain where it splits up into many tributaries before draining into the sea.

Along our coastal areas and rivers there are populous centres and prosperous villages, especially along riversides and rivermouths.

Viet Nam's rivers and sea show enormous prospects of wealth and maritime products. At the same time they constitute very convenient communication and transport lines.

Due to the country's important position, its long coast and big rivers, the enemy from outside, in the past as well as now, have often made use of the sea and rivers to invade our country. In the course of our history, the Vietnamese nation has many times held aloft the tradition of heroic and undaunted struggle against foreign invasion on the sea and on the rivers. Since the founding of the country by the Hung Kings, our nation has performed countless heroic exploits on our land and, more especially, on our rivers and sea.

In the first battle on the Bach Dang River, Ngo Quyen routed the troops of the Southern Han. In the second Bach Dang battle, Le Dai Hanh annihilated the Sung troops. In addition there were the battles of Chuong Duong and Ham Tu on the Red River, and the third battle of the Bach Dang where Tran Hung Dao smashed the Mongol invaders, the battles of Van Don and Cua Luc where Tran Khanh Du shattered the enemy's convoy of supply boats; the battle of Rach Gam-Xoai Mut in the South where Nguyen Hue defeated the Siamese troops, etc.

It is clear from our history that our forefathers from an early date knew how to use naval fleets to move their troops by sea and river. Ly Thuong Kiet deployed his troops by using the sea; Tran Hung Dao used both land and maritime routes for his temporary troop withdrawal along the Thai

Binh and the Red River, getting out at the Ba Lat river-mouth and then entering the Ma river. Nguyen Hue made use of the sea route many times to go from Qui Nhon to Thuan Hoa, from southern Trung Bo to Gia Dinh, and from Thuan Hoa to Vi Hoang; the greater part of his military forces, and at times hundreds of elephants and cannons were transported by boats.

All these heroic exploits and creative methods of troop movement testify to the fact that in the past and at the present time, the enemy have made use of the sea and the rivers to invade our country, whereas our people have performed outstanding exploits on those important battlefronts of the country.

The intelligence and resourcefulness of our ancestors in fighting the enemy on land as well as on the sea and rivers had developed from a very early date. Our Navy has had an excellent tradition of fighting both on the sea and on the rivers. Of primary importance is the fact that whether on the sea or on the rivers, there has always been a strict co-ordination between the maritime and the land forces. Those are outstanding features of the wars for national defence and the liberation of our nation, in which we have fought the enemy on land, on rivers and on the sea.

When the French imperialists first invaded our country, we were then under a declining, feudal regime politically and economically backward, while the aggressor was a Western capitalist power. The enemy deployed their Navy and made use of

the rivers and the sea to invade our country. The hole which can still be seen on the wall of the Hanoi citadel was made by a cannon-shell fired from a French war vessel. Under the Nguyen dynasty the patriotic movement and the fighting spirit were not so strong as under the *Tran,* the *Le* and Nguyen Hue. War vessels with a great tonnage and strong resistance to fire-power used by Nguyen Hue in attacks on Gia Dinh no longer existed ; the vessels of the Nguyen Navy now had sailors who "while rowing had to fan themselves," as satirically described by Western missionaries pointing to its weakness.

When the French imperialists invaded our country for the second time, we were a people's democracy and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam had already been founded. The social system was an advanced one, but the country's economy was still backward as it had just been freed from the yoke of colonialist and feudalist domination. At the start, the aggressors again used their war vessels to penetrate our rivers from the sea. Our army and people mounted very heroic battles against the enemy on the rivers and on the sea such as the attack on the warship *Craysac* vessel in Ha Long Bay and a number of other battles on the Lo and Red rivers in Bac Bo ; attacks on enemy vessels in Trung Bo ; and on enemy naval bases and troops on rivers in Nam Bo, etc.

The war of resistance against the French colonialists was brought to a successful end. But our people have had to carry on the struggle against the

U.S. imperialists who came to replace the French colonialists to invade our country. This time the enemy came from a country with very great military and economic potentialities. In their mind, the strength of the U.S. Air Force and Navy is invincible. To put into effect their scheme of aggression against the two zones of our country, a land tens of thousands of miles away from the United States, they have done their utmost to bring into play their own Navy in which the Seventh Fleet plays an important role.

The U.S. imperialists have used their Air Force and Navy to unleash a war of destruction. In South Viet Nam, they have striven to build and consolidate military bases along the coast and used their naval forces to carry out mopping-up operations and attacks against the coastal areas and the riversides so as to reinforce their infantry forces, blockade the sea, land their troops and transport supplies. In the course of their war of aggression against South Viet Nam, they have also tried to build up the puppet army, including the infantry, air force and navy. The puppet navy has both maritime and river forces.

It is obvious that their navy constituted an important force when they came to invade our country. It is also obvious that, unlike the situation during former wars, there is a great difference between our own technical equipment as compared with that of the enemy.

For thousands of years, our nation had to confront invading troops coming from bigger countries

but these were also under a feudal system like our own and so the inequality in economy and technique of both sides was not so great. Often, the enemy were numerically superior, but our arms and equipment were equal to theirs.

At present, in our wars of resistance against the imperialist aggressors, we have the leadership of the Party, an advanced social system, and a highly conscious people. The entire people fight the enemy. But as far as arms and technique are concerned the enemy is at a more sophisticated level than we are and the inequality of naval forces is even more obvious. As everybody knows, man is the decisive factor in a war whereas arms and equipment constitute a very important factor. So, in analysing and assessing the military victories of our people in the past as well as at present, it is necessary to take into account these two factors in a comprehensive manner.

Our Navy came into being in new historical conditions. We have the correct and creative line of our Party on people's war. Our Navy has inherited our nation's glorious tradition, and developed our army's heroic tradition. It enjoys love and affection of our people, the wholehearted assistance and concerted action of other people's armed forces. As far as the men and the system are concerned we have very fundamental advantages. But as for material and technical bases, a very important aspect, we still have many shortcomings.

However, big progress has been made by our Navy throughout 15 years of building and fighting

and the Navy together with the entire army and people, has achieved brilliant exploits.

We are proud of the maturity of our Navy and of the growth of the heroic Vietnamese people's armed forces. Our Navy constitutes the core of people's war on the fluvial and maritime front. It has contributed a worthy part, together with the army and people of the North, to the total defeat of the U.S. imperialist war of destruction and made great efforts in fulfilling the task of the great rear area towards the great heroic front. These exploits and achievements have embellished the Viet Nam Navy's fine tradition: "Fight with valour and resourcefulness, overcome difficulties, be determined to fight and win."

The achievements of the seamen are closely bound up with the merits and great victories obtained by the armed forces and people living along the sea-coast and river banks in defending our territorial waters and seacoast.

We warmly hail *the regional army, militia and self-defence forces* stationed along the seacoast and river banks who have matured in all fields and in their combined actions with the navy have shot down many aircraft, sunk or set afire many enemy vessels, neutralized thousands of torpedoes, bombs and mines of various kinds and heroically held fast to the sea to produce, transport, fight and serve the fighting forces, thus greatly contributing to the common victory.

The various arms and armed services of the people's army who have shown a high spirit of

solidarity in taking up concerted actions to defeat the enemy and defend the country.

We are very proud and feel grateful to the *people throughout the country* for their love and support to the navy.

The people of Haiphong, Quang Ninh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Quang Binh, Vinh Linh and other coastal provinces, and cadres, workers and personnel from various branches and State offices have given devoted assistance to the seamen. They have created the most favourable conditions for the latter to act and fight and recorded many great achievements in their combined attacks with the navy against the enemy.

We warmly welcome the resounding military exploits of our *compatriots and the Liberation Army of the heroic South*. The victories of our army and people on this great front are a source of encouragement and a shining example for the people and fighters throughout the country.

We enthusiastically acclaim the great victories of the *fraternal people and Liberation Army of Laos and the fraternal people and Liberation Army of Cambodia*. The Indochinese people's fighting spirit and solidarity will certainly smash every aggressive scheme of the American imperialists and their henchmen, traitors to their countries.

Besides these achievements, in the process of construction and fighting, the Navy still has weaknesses and faults which must be eliminated. The important question is that in the light of the correct and creative military line of our Party, in the

reality of carrying out people's war on the river and sea battlefield, we have known how to draw experience in all fields as a basis for improving the constructive and fighting qualities of the seamen.

First of all, it is the experience of *the whole people fighting against the enemy on the sea and river battlefield with the naval force as the core, and with various forces joining in action,* to defend our territorial waters and rivers.

Fighting in our own country against an enemy who is equipped with more modern techniques than we are, but has come from a faraway land to invade our territory, we have known how to strike at his strategic weaknesses. With the determination to fight, with a resourceful and creative way of fighting in which a small force can defeat a bigger one, we have won *battles in which high combat efficiency* was attained. That is a great success which contributes to highlight the correct and creative strategic thoughts of our Party, of a small nation which has defeated powerful imperialist countries.

One of the objectives of the U.S. imperialists was to strike at our supply lines and bases. Though the enemy used many cruel methods, mobilizing huge forces to attack us, he has finally been defeated. We have succeeded in transporting our supplies by water as well as by land. The results obtained in bringing supplies to the islands and other localities bear proof of the achievements and exploits in this field.

Concerning *the task of conducting patrols and fighting the enemy,* the very important thing is that

we have managed to bring into play the people's immense strength, closely combine the force of the navy with that of the regular army, the militia and self-defence units situated along the seacoast and river banks, and the artillery and anti-aircraft units of the regular army, etc., set up a strong network for the people's war on the sea and river battlefield, and defend the people's life and property, and our territorial waters in peace as well as in wartime.

To keep the enemy under permanent observation on the sea, we have organized the modern observation network of the navy and at the same time set up observation groups of the coastal local forces. Therefore, we have usually been masters of the situation at sea in peacetime as well as in times of great difficulties during the enemy war of destruction.

We have thwarted the enemy scheme of blockading our communication lines with bombs and mines of various kinds. The armed forces and people, with the navy as the core, have organized adequate forces and taken effective measures to neutralize enemy mines and bombs, ensuring safe movement for ships and boats. The localities and various economic branches along the seacoast and river banks have organized their own forces equipped with adequate weapons and means, both rudimentary and modern, to operate on or along the rivers and narrow channels. The specialist forces have been active mainly on the sea or greater channels, on river sections which were hardest hit or in places where conditions for resisting blockade are the more complex and

difficult. To bring into play our bravery and intelligence, we have actively cleared the channels, reducing the difficulties and damage to a minimum, and restricting the bad effects caused by enemy bombs and mines.

To resist the enemy blockade, we have done our best to *attack the enemy* especially his ships and aeroplanes which came to drop mines.

Such experiences must be drawn continuously and widely applied.

One of the great experiences is in the combination of naval with land forces.

In the present conditions of our country, and for a long time to come, our navy is not strongly equipped with technique. Therefore it is difficult for it to fight the enemy independently. Even with a powerful naval force, when fighting the enemy on the sea and rivers we still have to combine closely the forces fighting by water with those fighting by land in the people's armed forces. Inland bases serve as starting points, supply bases and hiding places for the forces fighting by water. It can be said that to fight the enemy on the sea and river battlefield our Navy must necessarily need forces fighting both by water and by land.

Our Navy is entrusted with the task of fighting the enemy on the sea and rivers. Our country has a long seacoast and great rivers. That is why we have to build up the Navy to defend our fatherland. Formerly, our naval force was already developed and active on the sea and rivers. Nowadays, our

Navy does the same work. This task determines how our Navy should be built up and should fight.

Another very important experience is that *the building up of the naval force must be closely associated with that of the armed forces stationed along the sea coast and river banks. The development of the naval force is closely related to that of the coastal localities and sea economic branches.*

The local armed forces situated along the seacoast and river banks are of great importance. Attention must be given to the building up and fostering of these forces so that they will become a widespread and powerful force which can take concerted actions with the Navy in defending our territorial waters and rivers.

We have determined a correct orientation for building up the *reserve of the Navy*. The Navy must attach importance to recruiting people living along the seacoast and river banks or working in such economic branches as sea products and sea transport. That will afford favourable conditions for the new recruits for they are used to living on the sea or rivers. Later, when they are demobilized, those seamen who have been trained in many fields can become cadres and technicians of various branches of activities or grassroots cadres of cooperatives in the localities situated along the seacoast or river banks.

We have clearly seen the *task of the Navy in economic construction*. The development of our Navy and army must be associated with that of the national economy. National defence must not be

separated from the economy. The Navy must join forces with various economic activities in general and those on the sea and rivers in particular. Consequently, it will not only be able to bring important contributions to the developement of economic activities on the sea and rivers, but also benefit from a number of conditions for building up and developing its forces, training technical cadres and personnel, building and repairing ships and boats, founding the material and technical basis and making a plan for taking closely concerted actions whenever a war breaks out, etc.

We have satisfactorily solved a problem which has the character of a principle. That is to bring about *unity and co-ordinated actions* between the Navy on the one hand and other armed services, the people and different branches and localities on the other.

As regards the building up of the naval force, we have taken initial steps in determining the sections suitable for operations and combat; training a *contingent of undaunted cadres*, and founding a fairly good *technical and material basis*.

We have acquired some experience in shooting at enemy aeroplanes, taking up concerted actions with A.A. units stationed along the shore, combining the task of combat with that of camouflaging and hiding our forces. We have gained initial experience in fighting enemy ships in conditions in which our ships were small whereas enemy ships were supported by powerful air cover. Besides, we have also obtained some experience in transforming the ter-

rain in order to preserve our forces, and conduct combat actions in all fields in wartime.

Firmly grasping the ever more comprehensive and perfected military line of our Party, continuing and developing the tradition of fighting the enemy on the sea and rivers in the new historical conditions, our army and people have brought the people's war on the sea and river battlefield to a new stage of development and won new victories.

Recently, our Navy has recorded some exploits and achievements but they are only initial ones. We must be modest in learning, fighting and working, and try to go forward. It is necessary to rally and organize the forces of the people living along the seacoast and river banks, and build up our naval force in keeping with this orientation to make it worthy of being the nucleus force of the people's war on the sea and river battlefield.

II. THE NAVY IS THE NUCLEUS FORCE OF THE PEOPLE'S WAR ON THE SEA AND RIVER BATTLEFIELD

The war on the sea and river battlefield is waged by our people living on or beside the sea and rivers, with the naval force as the nucleus. Therefore, when speaking of the important role of the navy as the nucleus, we should know that the strength of the people and the local armed forces living on or beside the sea and rivers is an essential factor of people's war on the sea and river battlefield. That is why in solving the questions of combat

and build-up of the Navy we must strive to bring into play the powerful strength of the people and the local armed forces living on or beside the sea and rivers.

To determine the task of combat and build-up of the Navy we must *rely on the following points :*

Firstly, it is necessary to base ourselves on the revolutionary task of the Party and the people's army in general, and the Navy and the other forces fighting on the sea and river battlefield in particular. The task of our army is, together with the whole people, to defend the socialist North, liberate the South and fulfil its international obligations. As part of our people's armed forces, the Navy assumes the same task. It is a very heavy but very glorious task of our people, the people's army and the Navy.

Secondly, it is necessary to base ourselves on the sea and river conditions of our country. A nation always lives in a certain region. The conditions of geography, mountains, rivers, sea, population, and economy and the political regime are of great importance.

For centuries, the Vietnamese people have existed and developed on this stretch of land, our country. The fact that our country is not very large, and its population not very numerous, sets off a characteristic of people's war in Viet Nam, a small country which has defeated many more powerful aggressors.

Our country has a long seacoast, rich national resources and many rivers. For this reason we badly need a naval force, which together with the whole

people must carry out the task of national defence on the sea and rivers.

Thirdly, we must rely on the development of socialist construction and the national economy. Socialism has already been established in North Viet Nam. Socialist construction has made new steps forward. The ever developing economy of our country is closely related to the building of our army and Navy. The more industry, agriculture and other economic branches develop, the quicker the shipbuilding, navigation and sea transport branches grow up and the better the material and technical conditions for developing the Navy. On that basis, *the task and orientation of the Navy* have been determined. Over the past years, side by side with the armed forces and people living on the seacoast and river banks, the Navy has tried hard to fulfil its task.

That is the task of defending our territorial waters and seacoast, ensuring safe movement for the ships and boats of our State and people and those of foreign countries on our territorial waters and safeguarding our people's interests on the high seas.

In war time, the Navy has the task of fighting the enemy on the sea and rivers, smashing their raids, attacking their ships to prevent their troop landings, launching surprise attacks on their military bases situated along the seacoast and river banks, destroying their communication lines on the sea and rivers, etc.

In addition to fighting, the Navy has the duty to follow the enemy situation on the sea, to give combat support, and to ensure transport and communications on the sea and rivers. Besides, the Navy must take part in production work.

As regards the *Navy's fighting task*, conclusions have been reached on a number of questions.

First of all, let us deal with the *opposing forces*. Throughout their history, the Vietnamese people have fought against the fleets of many invaders, from foreign feudal dynasties to the French and the US and its Saigon puppet regime. At present our Navy's opponents are obviously the US and its puppet's navies. And while the US imperialists are trying to carry out their "Vietnamization" of the war, we must keep a strict watch on these two opponents without neglecting either. We should also keep track of the US satellites' navies and the navy of any other power which might come to invade our country.

In naval combat, *it is also of great importance to determine the theatre of operations.*

Experience has shown that nearly all the enemies who invaded our country made use of the sea and rivers to attack us. Therefore, our Navy's battlefield is not only the sea but also the rivers.

Here the sea includes the seacoasts, the inshore regions, the archipelagoes and the high seas. In the present time when our Navy's technical equipment is limited, great attention should be paid to fighting the enemy on the seacoasts, the inshore regions and the archipelagoes. Meanwhile, with the increasing

growth of our army in general and our Navy in particular, we can extend our theatre of operations farther.

On rivers, attention should be paid to the survey of river banks and tributaries, especially at places connected with the sea and big-river banks.

In the struggle against the U.S. imperialists for national salvation our army and people in the South have sunk and damaged thousands of big and small enemy boats and warships; our army and people in the North have sunk or set on fire hundreds of U.S. and Saigon puppet warships in our inshore areas. These achievements have proved that this view of our Navy's theatre of operations is quite correct.

While conducting people's war on the sea and river battlefields, *our Party's thinking on strategy and fighting must be correctly and creatively applied.*

First of all, is the idea of the *entire people fighting against the enemy with the people's armed forces serving as the core, and the idea of a small country* defeating the aggressive army of a big country. From these two fundamental views we have worked out an original and creative military art enabling us to defeat any aggressor.

The people's war on the sea and rivers must certainly be carried out by the entire people and, concretely, by the people living by the sea and rivers, on the sea coasts and river banks, with the Navy and other armed forces serving as the core. With a close dependence on the mainland and a

good knowledge of the sea and river channels they can gain the upper hand in the fighting against the enemy. The problem is that we must organize these forces properly so that they can closely coordinate their activity so as to bring into play the strength of the people's war on the sea and river battlefield.

For every fighter of the Navy and every combatant of our people's army in general, to grasp thoroughly the thinking on people's war means first of all that he must clearly realize that he is fighting for the independence and liberty of his Fatherland, for the ideal of socialism and communism, that our army and navy are from the people and fight for the people. This is a fundamental point. The other important point is that, as far as military organization is concerned, we must clearly realize the role and usefulness of the regular army and of the armed forces of the masses. The navy forms the core of the regional troops, self-defence and militia forces of the people living on the seacoasts and riversides, at the same time it must fully bear in mind that only by linking itself closely with the people can it bring into full play its fighting strength and fulfil its task. Thus the Navy should try to help the people and their armed forces in those regions to fight the enemy and defend the country.

Thanks to its creative application of Marxist-Leninist doctrine on military organization to the concrete conditions of our country our Party has great experience in *arming the people* and building up a *people's army* with the people's armed forces serving as its core.

Fighting practice on the sea and rivers in our country has proved the correctness of that conception. Wherever fishermen and their self-defence forces are guided, organized and well-equipped there the army and the navy can find a solid support and thus can make full use of their fighting strength.

Waging people's war on the sea and rivers we must also clearly realize that our country is small and our economy is not yet developed, therefore our army is in general inferior to the enemy in number and in technical equipment. Our task is to combat victoriously an enemy whose army is superior in number and whose technique and armaments are much more modern than ours. This has been a characteristic of our country.

By creatively applying Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country, bringing into play the new strength of an advanced socialist system and inheriting and continuing our nation's tradition of fighting against foreign invaders, our people have defeated a big force with a smaller one, and used equipment and armaments which were in general inferior to that of the enemy both in quantity and in sophistication to get the better of a huge aggressive army with abundant modern armaments and equipment.

This is an important content of Vietnamese military thought. Engels, more than a century ago, pointed out that a small country could defeat a big one and that an army not very large in number and not very strong in equipment could defeat an enemy with a huge, well-equipped army. That

characteristic has become a basic law in the Vietnamese people's history of fighting against foreign aggression.

This thought must be thoroughly grasped and correctly applied in the fighting done by our Navy. With an army which is not very large in number and not very strong in technical equipment, we, and our entire people, are determined to defeat, on the sea and river battlefields of our country, an enemy which has a powerful navy and modern technical equipment.

In order to apply this thought to our military art and increasingly develop it to defeat the enemy, the most important point for our army is to bring into full play our courage, resourcefulness, determination and creativeness. Facing an enemy army many times superior in number and technical equipment we must be courageous and resolved to fight. We must be clever, resourceful and creative, we must know how to fight. Only by so doing can we translate into reality the story of the "grasshopper versus the elephant." We must know how to defeat the enemy with a force inferior in number and armaments. This is our thinking on combat and it must be thoroughly grasped by our Navy. We must fight with dynamism and determination, flexibility, resourcefulness and creativeness and make the best use of secrecy and surprise. Only by so doing can we succeed in pitting a weak naval force against a stronger one.

Our army and people in the South, with creative combat methods, have destroyed thousands of enemy

warships including 10,000-ton warships. Using appropriate means of transport on the sea and rivers we have succeeded in supplying armaments to islands and other units and regions. Also, with courageous spirit and creative methods, we have successfully removed enemy magnetic bombs and mines from our sea and rivers.

These combat methods are much in accordance with our military thought, with Vietnamese tradition. They are the results of applying proletarian principles on military science to the concrete conditions and special characteristics of Viet Nam.

As regards numbers, ours is a small nation, but in view of its fighting spirit against foreign invaders and its ability to win, it is a great nation.

With a view to working out correct direction for the building up of the navy we must base ourselves on our general tasks, on various aspects of our country, on our adversaries and on the military line and strategic thought of our Party. But as was said above, the setting up of our navy must be closely combined with the formation of the armed forces of the masses living by the sea and rivers.

The navy must be built into a service with different arms in accordance with our country's conditions and with the navy's own task. Attention must be paid, on the one hand, to training it into a highly qualified, loyal and courageous navy, with a high technical and strategic level, possessing proper material bases and a large contingent of competent cadres and commanders. On the other hand, efforts must be made to build up militia and self-defence

forces of the people living on the seacoasts and river banks into a powerful force so as to promote the strength of the people's war on the sea and river battlefields.

Here we shall not go into concrete details of the component forces which made up the navy, but on the whole the navy must have forces fighting on the sea and rivers and forces fighting on the ground. These two forces should be taken into account and have an adequate strength. Apart from fighting forces it needs support forces, bases, and material and technical foundations. To have a powerful navy, of course, we must go through a period of development. But the main problem is that we must know how to work out appropriate initial steps, then through actual fighting and building, sum up experience with a view to elaborating the long-term direction.

I would like to stress once again that while building up the navy, attention should be paid to the formation of regional troops and self-defence and militia forces along the sea coasts and river banks, while coordination among various services of the people's armed forces operating on the sea and rivers must also be enhanced.

The armed forces of the masses operating on the sea coasts and river banks have shown their great capability in fighting in this theatre of operations. So far all enemy commando groups invading our soil from the sea have been wiped out by these forces. Patrols inshore and in the coastal regions are also carried out by forces of fishermen. They are

the on-the-spot forces which observe the enemy's actions, marked bomb sites, removed all enemy mines, magnetic bombs, etc. In certain regions, equipped with artillery, they have sunk or set on fire many enemy warships.

Those achievements have proved their great capability as regards the defence of the sea and rivers of our country.

The various activities carried out by sea and rivers are playing an ever more important role in our national economy and their material and technical bases are also becoming increasingly developed. Consequently the fighting strength of the regional troops and self-defence forces is continuously growing. Thus, attention should be paid to developing such forces along the coastal regions and river banks. The combination of productive work with fighting duties and the improvement of their technical level in production and their military knowledge must be satisfactorily carried out so that in peace time they are skilled producers and in war time a powerful fighting force.

Not only are they the on-the-spot fighting forces but they also form an *inexhaustible reserve force for the navy*. That is why the relations between the forces forming the core and the armed forces of the masses, between the regular forces and the reserve, must be intensified. Efforts must be made to give military training to the people living in those regions.

The Navy should try to enrol new men from the people living on the sea coasts and river banks. These

men, trained and tempered during their time of service, will become grassroots cadres for agricultural co-operatives and other economic branches when they leave the Navy. By this means, not only will the relations between the Navy and the other forces of the masses be increased but also there will be favourable conditions for the building of the economy and national defence in these regions.

Apart from the navy, many other forces belonging to different armed services take part in fighting the enemy on the sea and river battlefields. This is why the navy must have a good co-ordination with the various arms and services, the infantry, artillery, air defence and air force, as well as with the regional troops and self-defence and militia forces of the people living on the sea coasts and river banks.

Nearly all the military regions and many of the provinces of our country have long coasts and large rivers, therefore coordination and assistance among them should be intensified and organizational relations between the navy and those regions should be gradually set up. The navy must clearly realize that it acts as the core of those localities and that it must be responsible for raising military knowledge and organizing fighting coordination among them so as to promote the all-round strength of people's war on the sea and river battlefields.

While building up its fighting forces the navy must see to the setting up of material and technical bases. This is a problem of great importance especially for the navy, a force which consists of many different technical arms. Repair workshops, quays

and ports, storehouses and dumps, etc. must be built. Special attention must be paid to the transformation of terrain and the building of projects. Only by so doing can the navy have a solid support.

The navy's material and technical bases are closely linked to the economic and defence potential of the country. One can have a powerful army only when one possesses a great economic and defence potential. Therefore the combination of economy with national defence in the setting up of the navy is a problem of great importance. As long as this problem is correctly solved the building up of the navy will meet with favourable conditions.

Production work is one of the important tasks of our army. The present task of our navy is also to participate as a shock force in production work, to protect and help fishermen in their work. Our army is both a fighting and a productive force. To take part in production, to build up the economy in order to produce more wealth for the country and so lighten the contribution of the people: this is appropriate to the function of the army, suitable to the condition and capability of the Navy. To take part in production contributes to training our naval force in productive labour and in preparation for combat and to strengthening the material basis for this armed service.

By joining in production, helping the people and strengthening the relations with the marine branches of the economy, the navy is building a firmer and firmer solidarity between itself and the people. The more the Navy associates itself with the people's

life the better it can understand the situation of building up the militia, and self-defence force. At the same time, it will better co-ordinate with the marine and coastal branches of the economy in effectively creating material and technical bases, repairing equipment, training cadres, and transforming the standing force of the Navy into the reserve.

By so doing we have helped to develop our economy and created conditions for building up the Navy.

In order to carry out these tasks, ever since our navy was founded it has paid special attention to Party work and to political activities. The Party committees and cells and the political organs always have a full grasp of our Party's political and military line and policies and have instilled into the cadres and men an understanding of the revolutionary situation and tasks as well as the concrete tasks of their respective services, arms and units. It is through practice and trial that Party members, officers and men of the Navy, imbued with the spirit of valiant combat, have resourcefully overcome every difficulty. They have fulfilled their tasks of combat and production in tough and complicated situations and especially, they have ensured solidarity with other arms and services, with every branch of State activities and with the localities. We must use such strong points to the full and further strengthen Party activities and political work among the armed services. We must link political work with our military task, and master military thought, science and technology in order to ensure

that our armed service fulfils its duties, both in building and in combat.

With regard to the building up of the Party, Party organs at all levels, especially those at the base, are being unceasingly consolidated in conformity with the special organizational and combat characteristic of our Navy. The quality of Party members has improved steadily; the proportion of Party members among the masses is quite high and they are fairly well distributed among the various branches and units. In the campaign "to raise the quality of Party members and admit new members into the Ho Chi Minh batch," we should continue to pay further attention to the building up of the Party so as to strengthen the leadership of the Party branch.

Another problem of great importance, a key problem in the Navy's development is the *training and fostering of a contingent of cadres*. We have paid attention to every aspect of this question.

Generally speaking, the political and organizational level and military and professional standards of our Naval officers are growing continuously thanks to their close contact with the realities of fighting. Nevertheless our cadres' standard is not, at present, sufficient for the requirements of building up the service. That is why we should try to raise our political and ideological as well as professional and military level still further in order to build up a really strong contingent of military cadres for our country's Navy. Special attention must be paid to the training and fostering of command cadres,

cadres of different branches and high-level technicians. To train a contingent of qualified cadres, who combine a firm political understanding with a good technical level, and can master general military science together with advanced naval techniques, is both a most fundamental requirement, and, at the same time, an indispensable condition for the building up of our Navy.

As a means of heightening the level of our cadres, the work of research, the summing up of our activities, and the military schools play an important role. Our Navy has a research institute and has directed its research activities to practical subjects. We have also analysed past experiences. We must continuously improve our research institute and step up the work of research and analysis. We must make a deep study of naval matters in general as well as of our own Navy's combat methods, fighting means and organizational orientation and step up training so as to enable our Navy to have a contingent of cadres armed with modern military knowledge. All these are very important for our Navy's organization and combat and will considerably help it to make greater advance.

This is a brief survey of the main problems facing our Navy in combat and organization. It is also very relevant to coastal and river localities and branches of activity operating on the rivers and the sea.

In the struggle against an enemy whose economic and military potential is far greater than ours, our people, under the leadership of our Party, headed

by our great President Ho Chi Minh, are determined to fight for the safety of the country, and have created original, resourceful and skilful ways of combat. Our engagements on the rivers and sea have shown that great determination and resourcefulness.

It is necessary to give a profound study to the above problems and to sum up in good time the experiences of building up our forces for naval combat. These are concrete contributions to enrich our Party's military line, to bring into full play the fighting capacity of our people on the river and sea battlefields, and to make our Navy stronger and stronger, worthy to act as the core of the people's war on our Fatherland's sea and river battlefields.

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