

# The August Revolution

By Truong Chinh

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## **Publishers' Note**

Truong Chinh, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party (Workers' Party), Vice-Premier of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, wrote the "August Revolution" in 1946, on the occasion of the first anniversary of this momentous event, the cornerstone in our history.

Since then, great changes have taken place in our country. Dien Bien Phu and the Geneva Agreements have brought the long war of resistance to a victorious end. Under the leadership of the Lao Dong Party and President Ho Chi Minh, our people are now waging a peaceful struggle to unite their country and build up socialism step by step in the completely liberated zone of North Vietnam.

We deem it right to say that although this book was written in 1946, it still has high interest, not only because of the importance of the events it deals with, but also because of the personality of the writer who, in his capacity as General Secretary of the Indochinese Communist Party, played a prominent role in the August Revolution in 1945.

## Preface

to the 1946 Vietnamese edition

*Dear readers,*

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

*Our only aim is to relate the history of the heroic struggle of our people, to submit it to an impartial criticism, to determine the character and the significance of the August Revolution, to outline its development for the future and, lastly, to reveal to our compatriots the immediate main tasks in view for the realisation of national independence, freedom and happiness.*

*At the present time, there are people who have not lost a drop of sweat for the revolution, or who have acted and are acting as traitors, who try to deny the importance of the August Revolution. They pretend that our people did not struggle so hard and that they got possession of power by "chance". Against this point of view which stems from obvious bad faith, we have only to remember here the phases of our people's struggle in the "Great National Salvation Movement against the Japanese fascists" as well as in the August General Insurrection: we stress particularly the leading role and organising work of the Indochinese Communist Party and the Vietminh Front as well as their*

*skilful agitation tactics in the preparatory period of the insurrection.*

*Besides, to check the policy of the French colonialists – a policy of aggression and of successive encroachments in the military field, and of division and deception in the political field – we outline the details of this single path for the salvation and building of the country at this stage, the path of union and of struggle mapped out for our people by President Ho Chi Minh.*

*The August General Insurrection, like the Great National Salvation Movement against the Japanese fascists, is a struggle varied in forms and rich in content. This book would not dare pretend to contain the full story of its manifold experiences. We hope that the fighters in our national liberation movement will draw further experiences from it in order to complete this book.*

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

*The August Revolution is only one of the first victories of the national liberation movement. We shall have to fight harder battles to safeguard our national sovereignty and territorial integrity, to consolidate our democratic republican regime and to achieve our total independence.*

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

**Truong Chinh**

Hanoi, September 20, 1946

## **Chapter I**

### **A Glorious Page in Our History**

#### **The high tide of the anti-Japanese movement**

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

\* Although Major Reul at Cao Bang and Lieutenant Pontiche at Bac Can ordered their troops to co-operate with the Liberation Army, it was to avoid being disarmed by our forces rather than to carry on the struggle against the Japanese fascists. Therefore they fled before waging even a single battle on our side.

On the very night of March 9, the Bureau of the Central Standing Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party, at a meeting held at Tu Son (Bac Ninh province), about 20 km. from Hanoi, decided to give a strong boost to the "Great National Salvation Movement against the Japanese Fascists".

The next day, in the Hoang Hoa Tham resistance zone (High and Middle Regions of North Vietnam), the guerillas took the isolated posts by storm, disarmed a number of French soldiers and Bao An\* units to prevent their arms from falling into the hands of the Japanese; they attacked the Japanese troops moving along the roads of Tuyen Quang, Thai Nguyen, Bac Can and Cao Bang provinces, harassed them even in the chief town of Bac Can province, and launched sudden attacks against their base at Cho Chu, etc... In North and Central Vietnam, thousands of paddy stores set up by the Japanese were stormed by the people and their paddy stocks distributed to the poor. In this way the famine was relieved by revolutionary means. In Bac Giang, Thai Nguyen, Bac Can and

other provinces, peasants rose up, seized and distributed land held by the Japanese and French.

**\* Bao An: troops ensuring the puppet government's security.**

Most of the attacks against the paddy stores became armed parades and demonstrations. Armed Vietminh militants harangued the masses at cross-roads and in market-places to win them over to the national cause. The illusion that the Japanese fascists could be useful to us, that they had come to free us, etc... was vigorously combated by the masses and revolutionary ranks. In main towns, *picked units* of the Vietminh Front, operating under the noses of the Japanese troops, killed the dangerous traitors and the predatory Japanese officers, sowing confusion in the ranks of the Japanese fascists and their lackeys. Everywhere, self-defence units or guerilla teams developed quickly. Everyone feverishly sought to get any kind of weapon so as to be ready to hurl himself at the enemy at the first opportunity. *Peoples' Committees* were founded in the regions controlled by the guerillas. In other zones, *Liberation Committees* sprang up like mushrooms and began on the one hand to lead the masses in the preparations for the general insurrection and on the other hand, to train them to exercise power.

The Revolution was gaining incredible strength. The pre-insurrectionary atmosphere prevailed

everywhere, arousing the enthusiasm of the members of organisations for national salvation and winning over even the wavering elements.

In April, the Revolutionary Military Conference of North Vietnam held at Bac Giang, drew up the general insurrection preparatory plan and formed the General Command of the *North Vietnam Liberation Army*.

In June, by decision of the conference of cadres from the six provinces of Cao Bang, Lang Son, Ha Giang, Bac Can, Tuyen Quang and Thai Nguyen, convened by the Vietminh General Committee, the *free zone* was officially founded including the territory of these six provinces and unifying the various regions placed under the control of the revolutionary power. The *New Vietnam* came into being. The people's committees adopted energetic measures to suppress the fascist militarists' forms of oppression and exploitation, actively break the colonialist chains and improve the people's living conditions. A part of North Vietnam was effectively controlled by the revolutionary power, a situation which provided the August General Insurrection with extremely favourable preliminary conditions.

From June on, the Allied Air Forces launched massive attacks against Japan.

In July, at the Potsdam Conference, the Soviet Union decided to participate in the war against



Japan. The Vietminh General Committee, headed by comrade Ho Chi Minh, speeded up the convening of the National Congress. But, because of difficulties of communisations, the Congress could not be held until August, in the liberated zone only, and at the very moment of the Japanese capitulation.

### **The August Insurrection**

On August 9, the Soviet Red Army launched a powerful attack on Manchuria, and within six days, the crack Japanese Kwantung Army was entirely routed.

This fundamental victory of the Soviet Army decided the fate of the Japanese fascists and the Soviet Union had actually liberated the peoples subjected to Japanese oppression.

The situation of Japan became hopeless and it was then that the Communist Party, which was at the time holding its National Congress, took a decision to launch the general insurrection and to found the democratic republican regime in Vietnam. The Vietminh General Committee approved these decisions and the *Insurrection Committee* was immediately set up. At the news of the imminent unconditional surrender of Japan, this Committee gave the order on the night of August 13, for the launching of the general insurrection.

In the morning of August 16, the *People's Congress* was held at Tan Trao village, Tuyen Quang province; in the *free zone*. More than 60 delegates from big and small national minorities and of all political convictions in our country, gathering in an atmosphere of friendship and great enthusiasm, approved the Vietminh General Committee's order for general insurrection, decided upon the domestic and foreign policies of the revolutionary power and appointed the *Liberation National Committee of Vietnam*, i.e. the Provisional Government of the *Democratic Republic of Vietnam*.

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

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

During the historic Congress, the Indochinese Communist Party advocated an extremely clear policy: to lead the masses in insurrection in order to disarm the Japanese before the arrival of the Allied forces in Indochina; to wrest power from

the Japanese and their puppet stooges and finally, as the people's power, to welcome the Allied forces coming to disarm the Japanese troops stationed in Indochina.

In numerous localities, taking advantage of the extreme confusion of the Japanese forces, who were conscious of their imminent defeat, the Vietminh militants, implementing the instructions given by the Communist Party in March, took the initiative to lead the people to rise up and seize power even before receiving the general insurrection order: as for example the insurrection at Ha Tinh on August 11, at Quang Ngai on August 13, and the taking of several Japanese posts in the vicinity of the *free zone* on August 14 and 15. On August 16, the news of the Japanese surrender began to spread rapidly. In all provinces, huge public meetings accompanied by armed demonstrations were held in the public thoroughfares. A great number of factories and public offices ceased work. The gold starred red flag was seen waving everywhere. Many armed demonstrations were transformed into sudden attacks on Japanese posts. On August 17 and 18, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in Hanoi. A general political strike began. The Vietminh delegates called on the masses to seize power. On August 19, the entire capital rose up. The Bao An troops and police detachments tended towards the Revolutionary forces. The

insurrectional forces headed by their vanguard shock detachments of youths and workers and led by the Vietminh cadres, took by storm the hotel where the Imperial Delegate had been residing. The latter, however, had fled with his lackeys. The Vietminh League proclaimed the foundation of the provisional revolutionary power. Faced with the irresistible growth of the revolutionary movement of the entire nation and people, united as one, Bao Dai abdicated. The Tran Trong Kim puppet government surrendered. The Vietminh General Committee sent their delegates to Hue to receive the King's abdication.

### **The birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam**

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

*Proclamation of Independence* of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the Vietnamese people and to the world.

On August 23, in Saigon-Cholon, a million of our compatriots demonstrated in the streets. The South Vietnam Administrative Committee was founded. The vanguard youth and militia seized power in the provinces and united together to form the revolutionary troops of the South of new Vietnam.

One after another, from the cities to the rural areas, from the delta to the mountainous regions, the elected *people's Committees* completely superseded the corrupt administrative machinery of mandarins and notables. In less than fifteen days, an entire new administrative machinery had been founded.

The prison doors were opened wide and political and common law prisoners were released by the revolutionary power; but traitors were severely punished. The personal tax was abolished. The former fiscal regime was gradually modified. Land rents were reduced, and communal rice fields distributed more equitably. The French industrial enterprises, in the hands of the Japanese since March 9, 1945, passed into the control of the new power and were temporarily managed by the people or the Government. Democratic rights had been legally proclaimed and equality was to be

practised regardless of nationality or sex. The republican regime with a new democratic character had been established.

With inconceivable strength, the whole Vietnamese people rose up and did their utmost to break the yoke imposed by the French and Japanese fascists, and resolutely went forward; side by side with the peoples of China and Indonesia, they marched in the vanguard of the Far-East peoples' liberation movement.

### **The resistance in Nam Bo**

People's power had scarcely been founded in Vietnam when the British forces and those of the Chinese Kuomintang, on the order of the Supreme Allied Command, landed in Indochina to disarm the Japanese troops. The French colonialists in Indochina had easily surrendered to the Japanese, now relying on the British forces they prepared feverishly to recover their former position. And the most active among these French colonialists were precisely those fascists of the Petain – Decoux clique who were formerly the most zealous lackeys of the Japanese.

On September 23, armed and protected by the British forces, the French colonialists launched their attack and occupied Saigon. Our people replied by force of arms, and from that moment, our heroic resistance began. Since that time, our

compatriots in South Vietnam have endured hard trials, bearing almost all the weight of a revolutionary war which has enhanced the prestige of our people in the international arena, and set a good example to the smaller and weaker nations of the Far-East.

The Dong Nai\* land, once drenched with the blood of the colonialist aggressors when they landed for the first time in our country, has today become a strong bulwark of the Fatherland. And continuing the tradition of heroes who, nearly one hundred years ago, sacrificed themselves to save the country, their descendants are today in the vanguard of the fight for the freedom and independence of our people.

\* Dong Nai: name of a river in South Vietnam. Dong Nai land signifies Nam Bo (South Vietnam).

#### **Some essential remarks**

Reviewing the history of the August Revolution, we can make some essential remarks.

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

Subjective condition: our people are united around the Vietminh Front led by the Indochinese Communist Party. The proletarian class exercises this leadership without sharing it with any other

class. It results from this that the revolutionary forces of our people are not scattered, that they have no rivalries or internal conflicts (except in some insignificant cases), and that at the decisive hour, they can be gathered together under the leadership of a single organisation to launch a direct and massive attack against the fortified enemy lines.

Objective condition: World War II created for the Vietnamese people an extremely favourable opportunity: the enemies of the Vietnamese Revolution, the Japanese and French fascists, had exhausted each other and grown weak. Moreover the Japanese were then defeated by the Soviet army; that was enough for the Vietnamese people to fell them with a single blow and to seize power.

Yet, favourable though the objective conditions might have been, they could not have led to triumph without good subjective -conditions. That is the truth.

Besides, the August Insurrection was a real revolution. The Vietnamese people, in bloody combat and with arms in their hands, had to struggle against the Japanese fascists to regain their freedom and independence. Immediately after this, to defend these rights, they had to shed more blood. It is by the August Revolution that the dictatorial and fascist monarchical regimes



have been overthrown and the democratic republican regime set up.

*"History teaches us that a revolution has its particular features, the most important of which is the powerful uprising of masses who take their fate in their own hands and prepare the way to progress".*

*(Maurice Thorez – A French policy)*

That is also an important characteristic of the August Revolution.

## Chapter II

### **Policy and Tactics of the Vietnamese Communists in the August Revolution**

#### **More friends, less enemies**

It is impossible to speak of the August Revolution without stressing the role of its leading core, the Vietminh Front and the Indochinese Communist Party. The favourable opportunity was not enough to assure victory. A just policy and appropriate tactics were very much needed. Nor was the triumph of the general insurrection of August 19, 1945 due to mere chance.

From 1940, the Indochinese revolutionaries were facing two new facts: the world torn by war, the Indochinese people oppressed and exploited by the double yoke of the Japanese and French fascists. The national liberation policy advocated by the Vietminh Front in the recent period was based on these two things.

The war threw into sharp relief the antagonism between the two belligerent camps. The double Japanese and French yoke united rich and poor, equally hurt and humiliated, in the same hatred and the same struggle against the common enemy. At the same time, the conflicting interests of the

Japanese and French who ruled Indochina together, violently collided. One of the main tactics adopted by the Indochinese Communist Party and the Vietminh Front in these recent years consisted in fully exploiting this situation.

That is why, in their foreign policy, the Indochinese Communist Party and the Vietminh Front, realising that anti-fascist forces throughout the world were allies of the Vietnamese people, decided to side without reserve with the anti-fascist camp struggling for a just cause.

In its domestic policy, the Indochinese Communist Party organized the different strata of the people into the National Liberation Front: the Vietminh Front. The programme of this Front assured the protection of human and civil rights and of property, the respect of private property, the liberty of conscience, as well as equality between nationalities and the sexes, with the aim of realising the unity of the whole people against the Japanese and French fascists. Facing the concrete conditions of the revolution in Indochina, the Indochinese Communist Party, promoter and leader of the Vietminh Front, left out of its programme the watchword: Agrarian revolution (deciding, for the present, not to confiscate land held by landlords), and this with a view to making a differentiation between types of landlords and winning a number of them over to the anti-imperialist cause, widening the United

National Front to struggle for independence. This Front should comprise workers, peasants, petty-bourgeoisie of towns, even national bourgeoisie, and include patriotic personalities belonging to the landlord class.

Besides this, the Indochinese Communist Party developed and consolidated in particular the peasants' and workers' organizations to give a solid base to the United National Front, and was determined to struggle against pro-French and pro-Japanese traitors.

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

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

action with that of every French element ready to struggle against Japanese fascists.

In brief, the Party always saw clearly the principal and immediate enemy of the Revolution, doing its best to deprive the enemy of its supporters and to find new allies, never deviating from the aim of the National Liberation Revolution.

### **Flexibility of tactics**

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

So, after the coup d'état of March 9, 1945, the Party launched a vast guerilla movement to seize local power and organized in the High and Middle regions of North Vietnam model resistance bases against the Japanese. At the same time it changed its watchwords, forms of propaganda, organization and struggle so as to mobilize the masses more easily, and rapidly lead them towards the insurrection.

At this moment, the indispensable aim of propaganda consisted in unmasking the hypocrisy of the Japanese fascists and militarists and in destroying every illusion that it was expedient to use the Japanese and cooperate with them with a view to obtaining 'reforms' within the 'framework

of legality' ... This only sowed confusion among the people toward the Japanese and their lackeys.

The propaganda used at that time took the ordinary form of speeches in factories, schools, markets, and public thoroughfares and the formation of shock teams by mobile groups who exhibited flags, banners and placards and distributed revolutionary documents.

A special propaganda form also used was the 'armed propaganda' with all its forms, including armed demonstrations and guerilla activities.

As for the agitation work, it took in hand the vital problem of the masses – to check famine – to lead the masses to seize Japanese rice stocks; according to the situation, these actions could be transformed into armed demonstrations.

The general form of struggle was the armed demonstration. Another special form used at this moment was the guerilla wherever the topography of the country was favourable, and yet another, the elimination of traitors in towns and country by *picked detachments*.

In organization, cleverness was used to transform the 'transitory organization' (temporary) into real organizations of the local people's power; especially to develop the national salvation and self-defence groups (or guerilla troops) and organize the people's militia.

The general organizational forms were at that moment the association for national salvation, and especially the self-defence and combat groups.

The special forms were the *Vietnam National Liberation Committee*, that is the provisional Government, *the People's Committee*, and *the Liberation Committees*. These Committees had at the same time an administrative, political and military character (that is a pre-governmental character), working in a determined period, simultaneously with the local administrative organisms founded by the Japanese and being transformed, after the general insurrection, into local official administrative organizations; and lastly, the *National Insurrection Committee*, *the Action Committee* for each part of the country or each locality in the decisive hours, etc...

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

*First:* to fully and at the correct time exploit the situation created by the Japanese coup d'état (March 9, 1945) in order immediately to lead the masses to new forms of struggle and organization of a higher degree; to renounce the old methods, not to sit back facing the new situation, in other words, to know the importance of:

*"Putting in the forefront precisely those forms of struggle and organisation which are best suited to the conditions prevailing during the ebb or flow of the movement at a given*

*moment, and which therefore can facilitate and ensure the bringing of the masses to the revolutionary positions, the bringing of the millions to the revolutionary front, and their disposition on the revolutionary front." (Stalin – Principles of Leninism).*

Effectively, after March 9, 1945, the forms of struggle such as armed propaganda, demonstrations followed by displays of force, sudden attacks against lonely posts and even the districts in the delta, suppression of the zealous agents of the Japanese fascists, organization of people's militia units even outside guerilla zones, etc... were so many bold blows showing the flexible character of the Party tactics. These tactics sowed confusion in the enemy ranks, developed the spirit of struggle for national salvation and the initiative of the masses, won over the waverers and extended quickly the movement for national salvation all over the country.

*Second:* in a given situation, to determine during the revolutionary work the fundamental task requiring immediate fulfilment in order to devote all forces to it and to accomplish it at any cost, because it is the best means to push the movement forward.

The insurrection of March 9, 1945 broke out when the famine was causing frightful ravages among the population. Hundreds of thousands of people starved beside granaries full of rice kept by



the Japanese and French. At that moment a task of the greatest importance for the communist and Vietminh cadres was to lead the armed masses to seize Japanese rice stores and French concessions full of stocks of agricultural produce. This had the result of inspiring organized and unorganized masses to take an active part in the movement against the Japanese, so that the more actively they struggled, the more they became conscious of their own strength and saw more clearly the real face of the enemy.

It was precisely thanks to these attacks on granaries and colonialist plantations that the national salvation movement could be developed intensely, the people rapidly armed, the self-defence brigades quickly founded where the movement had never been organized, and the Liberation Committees set up in numerous provinces. As Stalin said,

*"The point here is to single out from all the problems confronting the Party that particular immediate problem, the answer to which constitutes the central point, and the solution of which will ensure the successful solution of the other immediate problems."* (Stalin – *Principles of Leninism*).

*Third: according to the situation, to use "transitory organization forms" such as Revolutionary People's Committees, Revolutionary Workers' Committees, Local Liberation Committees, Vietnam National Liberation*

*Committee*, progressively to gain on enemy power and paralyze its administrative machine. These organizations were very effective. They gave the people the occasion to realize universal suffrage and become acquainted with administrative affairs, led them to direct henceforth their own destiny, and break their chains themselves and ameliorate their living conditions by direct means, not paying attention to the power of the Japanese fascists and their lackeys. These “transitory organizations” mobilized the masses and encouraged them to participate in the revolutionary struggle; they extended to the highest point the National United Front against the Japanese and created the bases for a new Vietnam. Effectively, after the August General Insurrection, these different liberation committees became real administrative organizations. To use People's Committees and Liberation Committees as springboards for the direct transition to the democratic republican regime, was an extremely interesting characteristic of the communist tactics in the pre-insurrectionary period.

The August Revolution won victories. Is that not due in great part to the intelligent and correct leadership of the Party?

## Chapter III

### The Good Points of the August Revolution

#### A careful preparation

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

*"In every revolution, victory does not come by itself, one must prepare it, win it."* (Stalin). How did the Party prepare and win the victory of the August Revolution? It has exploited with cleverness favourable conditions created by the war to carry on fully the preparation of the insurrection. Here is this preparation plan in its main lines:

On the one hand, to unify the people's revolutionary forces, to mobilize manpower and wealth, to stimulate the ardent patriotism of the people, to adjust the different national salvation organizations, to lead the people in the struggle against white terror and for the defence of daily rights and interests.

On the other hand, to develop the para-military organizations such as the self-defence brigades, to train military and political cadres, to procure arms, to organize the army, to establish the resistance

zones, to carry out propaganda among the enemy soldiers, to train the people for destruction work and the tactics of scorched earth, etc..., to launch guerilla warfare and seize power in different localities.

The documents of the Party and the Vietminh Front such as *Preparations for the armed insurrection*, *Active preparations for the insurrection*, *Arms to expel the common enemy*, *Towards the general insurrection*, the pamphlets teaching *guerilla tactics*, etc... prove that, besides the psychological preparations we had to pay special attention to the material ones. The Party realized clearly that for the success of a revolution, the spirit of sacrifice is not enough, a meticulous military preparation is also needed: that is to say, the *founding of bases*, the *organizing of the regular army*, the *arming of the troops and the people*. As early as the end of 1941, the Party founded two bases, one at Bac Son – Dinh Ca (Lang Son – Thai Nguyen), and another at Cao Bang – Bac Can. *The Vietnam Liberation Army* was founded during the struggle against the white terror in the Viet Bac (1941-1945); *the Vietnam National Salvation Army*, still in an embryonic state at the time of the Bac Son insurrection (October 1940), developed through eight months of guerilla warfare waged at Dinh Ca and Trang Xa (August 1941 – April 1942), and in the second armed struggle at Dinh Ca (at the end of 1944).\* After the Japanese coup de force, the Ba To (Quang Ngai province)

insurrection gave birth to another guerilla brigade. These formations played an extremely important role in the *upsurge of the anti-Japanese fascist movement for national salvation* and in the *August General Insurrection*.

**\* In 1945, these two armies were unified and became "the Vietnam Liberation Army".**

A noticeable feature of the activity of the Party in preparing for the armed insurrection is to have made the masses conscious of the preparations for it and led them to become active participants in it; simultaneously *to co-ordinate closely the military action of guerilla brigades with the action of the masses, so that the latter, while resisting the terror and struggling for the defence of their rights and immediate interests, may feel the necessity of taking up arms to win national independence*. The struggles against the concentration of villages, arrests, requisitions of paddy, forced enlistments and conscription of labourers, crop destructions for the cultivation of jute, the pillage of markets, etc... had hastened the arming and training of the masses for a bold march towards the insurrection.

The preparation, meticulous and in conformity with principle, was one of the good points of the August Revolution.

### **Promptness and timeliness**

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

As we have seen, the August Revolution took place at a very good time.

If on March 9, 1945, the general insurrection had broken out immediately after the Japanese coup de force, the Revolution could have lost much and power could not have been established all over the country, because where the revolutionary forces were weak, the Japanese forces, still strong at that moment, would have been able to destroy them. That is why the insurrection was launched only in small areas to conquer local power. However, if after the Japanese surrender, our people had passively waited for the coming of the Allied forces to "liberate" them without rising immediately to conquer power all over the country, what would have happened then? Two possibilities could have occurred: either the Japanese lackeys would have come on to the stage to solemnly boast of "having no more links with the Japanese" and to parade themselves as the "defenders of independence and democracy", not for liberating the people, but for surrendering to the Anglo-Americans. Or the French would have tried to raise their heads again, gather the remnants of their forces in Indochina, call back

the debris of the troops who had fled to China after the blow of March 9, which would have allowed them to found, with the participation of the pro-French traitors, a puppet government over the whole country, and to declare that they had implemented the Proclamation of March 24, 1945, and given autonomy to Indochina.\*

\* It was only after the French surrender in Indochina that the de Gaulle Government agreed to issue the Proclamation recognizing the autonomy of Indochina. This hypocritical proclamation was, for the Indochinese Peoples, as stupid as it was ridiculous because it was published just at the time when the French had no more authority in Indochina.

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

But fortunately the Party had led the people's struggle for national salvation and effectively created favourable conditions for the victory of the August Revolution. And just before the Japanese defeat (August 13, 1945), it immediately issued the general insurrection order to conquer power from the Japanese without the least hesitation or weakness, to organise people's power, and thanks to the revolutionary forces of the masses to bundle out the so-called "autonomy" proposed by the French!

The leaders of the August Revolution had

*"Well chosen the moment for the decisive blow, the moment for starting the insurrection, so timed as to coincide with the moment when the crisis has reached its climax, when it is fully apparent that the vanguard is prepared to fight to the end, the reserves are prepared to support the vanguard, and maximum consternation reigns in the ranks of the enemy." (Stalin – Principles of Leninism).*

Promptitude and timeliness, that is another good point of the August Revolution.

### **The whole people rose up**

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

Truly, the August Revolution induced the great majority of the people to rise up and paralyze entirely the reactionary elements. This is a fact of great importance. If the general insurrection had not won the whole people:

*First*, the French colonialists could have found a way out, could have won and exploited the elements unfavourable to the Revolution, and basing themselves on the latter's attitude, they would have been able to declare before the U.N.O. and the world that the Vietnamese people welcomed the restoration of their power; at the same time they would have accused the forces of insurrection, as "rebellious elements", preventing them from disarming the Japanese



troops and restoring order and peace in Indochina, etc...

*Second:* the international reactionary elements in general, could have exploited our lack of unity to dig still deeper the ditch between the various strata of our people. Worse still, they could have provoked a civil war, plunged the country into division and anarchy and worn out our forces to dominate us easily.

But fortunately, our people, wretched under the double yoke of oppressions and exploitation of the Japanese and French fascists, closed their ranks under the gold starred red flag and, relying on their own forces, rose up to win back their liberty.

In August 1945, the Dai Viet\* clique allied to the reactionary elements of the Vietnam Quac Dan Dang Party\*\* and the Phuc Quac\* clique asked the Japanese to give them the administrative power in some places (such as Vinh Yen, Moncay etc...), to stand up against the *Republican Government*. But their shabby behaviour as lackeys of a foreign country was so obvious that the whole people had the most profound contempt for them, and their influence, far from extending, withered away.

\* Dai Viet: Great Vietnam.

Phu Quoc: national restoration; two pro-Japanese traitor organizations.

**\*\* Vietnam Quoc Don Dang: Vietnam nationalist Party (a Party which was against the Vietminh).**

An overall rising by the entire people, such is the third good point of the August Revolution.

These three good points were entirely due to the powerful organized forces and the just political line of the *Indochinese Communist Party* and of the *Vietminh Front*.

We can say that without the Indochinese Communist Party and the Vietminh Front, the Revolution would have taken another road. If the Vietminh could not have unified all social classes, had not had prestige among the masses and had not led the insurrection for the conquest of power, the Revolution could have failed.

The former liberation movements of our predecessors against the French failed. One of the main causes of this defeat was the lack of an anti-colonialist united national front. Those former insurrections were crushed, principally because they were the rising of only a sect, a group of militants, or a little vanguard detachment and not "a far reaching and deep-rooted revolution of the people" (Stalin). To triumph, a revolution worthy of new times must be a real revolution of the broad masses, prepared and led by one or several revolutionary organizations. The August Revolution conquered power, the direct aim of every revolution, because it was the work of a

whole people united in the struggle under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party.

## Chapter IV

### The Weaknesses of the August Revolution

#### Unequal degree of determination throughout the country

Besides these good points, has the August Revolution any weak ones? Yes, it has.

First, the general insurrection was not launched with the same resolution throughout the three "Kys";\* this does not mean that the uprisings should have been carried out in one sweep throughout the whole country. Such an event would present many difficulties because in an agricultural country like Vietnam, the degree of political consciousness and organizational spirit of the people are at different levels in different places and means of communication are still backward. But in the conditions prevailing in our country in August last year, it would have been better to launch the uprisings simultaneously in the main towns, which would allow a more decisive and better managed seizing of power and would end by robbing the French colonialists of all hope. Now, whereas the insurrection was launched simultaneously everywhere in the first week following the Japanese surrender, Saigon waited until the 23rd to rise up. Nam Bo was a little late

because among the ranks of the army of insurrection in the South, there were many elements who did not believe in the strength of the masses and would rather have used plain diplomacy to persuade the Japanese to give us power than struggle by their own forces to wrest it back or support the diplomatic work with action by the armed masses. Furthermore, they feared the crushing of such an uprising by the Japanese forces, forgetting that the latter were already almost paralysed at that moment and would be even more paralysed before the strong, broad masses of the whole nation.

**\* Vietnam was divided by the French into 3 parts, the 3 "Kys".**

This weakness is due to the unequal development of the Vietnamese Revolution as well as to the relative weakness of the Vietminh organization in Nam Bo before the zero hour of the insurrection and to the lack of homogeneity in the ranks of the United National Front in the South. Another reason is that Nam Bo is situated far from the national leading organism,\* a fact that proved detrimental to the judiciousness of the instructions given by the Vietminh in the South, preventing them from entirely keeping pace with the general line of the Party. In the South, the slowness in starting the insurrection, the lack of resolution in the seizing of power, encouraged the reactionaries,

especially the French colonialists and pro-French Vietnamese traitors.

\* At that time, the Central Committee of the Indochinese Communist Party and the Central Bureau of the Vietminh had their headquarters in Bac Bo (Northern part of Vietnam).

### **Lack of a full disarmament of the Japanese troops**

The second weakness in the August Revolution was the failure to fully disarm the Japanese troops at the hour of the insurrection before the entry of the Allies into the country. Effectively, this task *was carried out* to a certain extent. But even in many places where our forces prevailed over those of the enemy, we did not use violence to disarm the Japanese; moreover, we did not even cause them any trouble when they remained neutral and let us organize the people's power. Generally speaking, under the circumstances of August last year, that policy was- correct, because the revolutionaries have no right to waste the masses' blood and throw themselves into hazardous undertakings, out of mere conceit.

Our weakness did not consist in negotiating with the Japanese, but in failing to make the fullest use of the armed masses to support the diplomatic action and force the Japanese to surrender more arms; furthermore, we did not act in time to

prevent them from destroying a great many up-to-date armaments.

Now, each time we consider the lack of modern arms, we cannot in retrospect help regretting that in many places, the insurrection troops missed a very rare opportunity to secure the necessary arms.

We admit that, because of the extremely intricate situation of our country and the relatively limited strength of the Vietnamese Revolution, it was not possible to carry out a systematic elimination of the counter-revolutionary elements on Jacobean or Bolshevik lines. The Vietnamese Revolution was not opposing only the counter-revolutionary forces at home; other forces were intervening from abroad in favour of the French reactionaries and other traitors. It was due to this that the latter were able, in certain places, and at certain moments, to equal, and even to overpower the revolutionary forces (in Saigon, for example).

However, it is to be regretted that energetic, timely and necessary measures to counteract all possible dangers in the future were not taken immediately upon the seizing of power and before any foreign intervention; at a time when the reactionaries in the country were still at a loss and had no time to reorganize themselves. This does not mean that after the general insurrection, we should have imprisoned all the French, or put to death all

elements who had collaborated in any way with the French or the Japanese. No! We regret only that the repression of the reactionaries during the August Revolution was not carried out fully within the framework of its possibilities.

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

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

#### **Failure to seize the Bank of Indochina**

The fourth shortcoming of the August Revolution: the forces of insurrection failed to seize the Bank of Indochina and suppress the privileges of the magnates of the money-market in Indochina; moreover, they failed even to gain control of the Bank. The colonialists availed themselves of this opportunity to attack us later on in the financial field: as for example by the rejection of 500 piastre notes, thus placing more difficulties in our path. In the same way, the Paris Commune met with so many obstacles precisely because it failed to seize hold of the Bank of France.



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

This fourth shortcoming was not due to any underestimation by the leaders of the August Revolution of the financial question, but due rather to the fact that the Bank of Indochina is a financial institution acting not only on behalf of the French and the Japanese but also of other countries.

If we were not able to sweep away all the French imperialists in one blow, how could we hold out firmly against several other imperialists as well?

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

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

The pro-Japanese puppets have repeatedly upbraided the Vietminh for behaving too harshly towards the Japanese and killing many of them in various places, thus provoking them to destroy many good quality arms. These "good" people asserted that, in the conditions prevailing last August, if the Vietminh had not intervened, they would have been able to "negotiate" with the Japanese and get many arms from them within a few days. We regret having to put it to these gentlemen: if the Vietminh had not led the whole people in the general insurrection, permitting them quickly to seize a portion of the Japanese arms held by the "Bao An" units and Japanese troops, when these "gentlemen" expected to be given these "begged-for" arms by the Japanese; and if they had succeeded in getting them, we can be sure they would have used them with an object other than establishing and consolidating the democratic republican system and the people's power, or expelling the foreign aggression and checking the counter-revolution!

This failure to completely disarm the Japanese troops was due to the subjective conditions of the August Revolution. In plain words, when you have only a small capital, you cannot expect to make big profits: and without tanks and heavy cannons, we could not take possession of the Japanese tanks and heavy cannons.

What happened was that in many regions, immediately after the insurrectional forces had occupied a town, either by a sudden attack from outside or by an inner uprising, the Japanese entrenched themselves in their blockhouses and made ready to defend themselves; and while they had enough supplies and munitions to hold out for a long time, our troops merely encircled them and, for want of good tactics, failed to destroy their fortifications (as for example, the seizure of Thai Nguyen); whatever the case, it must be admitted that with more promptitude and boldness, we should have been able to disarm the Japanese troops from the very beginning of the insurrection. Were not the insurrection troops successful in many places without any bloodshed or hard fighting? It seemed that the forces of insurrection were breaking a butterfly on the wheel: faced with an exhausted and already defeated enemy, they failed to avail themselves of the situation and, by taking a further step, should have been able to snatch the arms from the hands of the Japanese. For in fact, our military task in that period consisted more in disarming the enemy than in casting him down.

That shortcoming is one of the reasons why the August Revolution did not take on as heroic a character as that of the great revolutions in other countries.

### **Lack of firmness in the repression of counter-revolutionary elements**

Here is the third weakness of the August Revolution. Immediately after the establishment of revolutionary power, we did not firmly eliminate the various categories of traitors and failed to take sufficiently energetic measures against the French colonialists and their agents. Only in some regions such as in Quang Ngai did the forces of insurrection carry out the policy of "Sweep away all reactionaries ", but they did it in an extremist way; almost everywhere else we were conciliatory to the point of weakness, forgetting that "a victorious power must be a dictatorial one." (Lenin)

The more democratic the power, the more dictatorial it must be – that is, it must exercise the democratic dictatorship of the whole people against the very small reactionary minority ready to grab back their age-old domination and hinder the march of the revolution. Not being firmly repressed, the reactionaries at home have been used by the French and international reactionaries to create difficulties for the revolutionary power and to divide our people, One wonders why the Administrative Committee of Nam Bo immediately after its foundation, did not order the immediate arrest of the pro-French, Nguyen Van Thinh traitors, some of the most dangerous and mischievous elements among the pro-Japanese,

and the most confirmed trotskyite, sabotage experts, which fact allowed these people to prepare the return of the French by creating provocations before and on Independence Day (Sept. 2, 1945)? One wonders why in Bac Bo, after the foundation of the people's power in the capital, many pro-Japanese traitors and other machiavellian agents from abroad were not arrested?

## Chapter V

# Character and Significance of the August Revolution

### Character of the August Revolution

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

However, because it struggled against the Japanese and French fascists as well as their lackeys, the feudal reactionaries, and because it contributed a part, though small, in the great world anti-fascist struggle, it had the character of a democratic revolution, though it has not abolished all the vestiges of feudalism in Vietnam, nor realised agrarian reform so as to distribute the land held by the landlords to the peasants.

In the present historic conditions, a colonial revolution must have the following double character: first, it must be an *anti-imperialist revolution* aimed at overthrowing the imperialist domination, and second, it must be an *agrarian revolution* so as to confiscate the lands of the feudal landlords and distribute them to the peasants. The August Revolution has only aimed at overthrowing the imperialist rule and that of the

feudal puppets, and setting up the democratic republican regime; but it has not abolished land ownership by the feudal landlord class and all other vestiges of feudalism to create conditions for industrial and commercial development. Thanks to the August Revolution, a portion of the imperialists and traitors' lands have been confiscated, land rents have been reduced by 25 per cent and some of the old compound-interested debts have been cancelled. However, in the agrarian field, generally speaking, the relations between landlords and peasants have not changed. Therefore we can say that, though the August Revolution has a democratic character, this character is not strongly marked enough.

Some people have said that, because the August Revolution has abolished the Imperial Government with its machinery composed of mandarins and notables, it has a distinctly anti-feudal character. But by abolishing the Imperial Government, we have abolished only one aspect of the feudal regime; because its basis, which is rooted now in the relations between landlords and peasants in the agrarian field, is still alive, the feudal regime is still in existence. We must see to it that we advance the anti-feudal struggle, and not be complacent about the achievements of the August Revolution.

It is clear that the August Revolution has established in Vietnam a democratic republican

regime having the character of a new democracy. Popular representation has been widely established at all levels by universal suffrage; complete equality between the sexes, wide democratic freedoms, as well as personal liberty and equality between all nationalities big and small, have been promulgated; the regime of popular assembly, ensuring the legislative and executive powers of the people, has been established and there exists a democratic regime completely different from bourgeois parliamentary democracy, which grants the people, only limited rights in making proposals and in criticizing the government; the State economic sector is taking shape; the people's conditions of life are improved; attention is paid to the life of the working and peasant masses; the 8-hour-working day is officially recognized; the proletarian class now actually holds power, etc... All these facts make it amply clear that the Vietnamese regime is that of a democratic republic of a new style quite different from the old-style bourgeois democratic regime (for example the: French bourgeois parliamentary regime).

However, the democratic regime in Vietnam is different from the present Soviet democratic regime. Indeed, the democratic regime in Vietnam guarantees the interests of all social strata, while the parliamentary republican regime in France is a disguised dictatorship of the bourgeoisie: under



the cloak of democracy the bourgeois class exerts a dictatorial power which defends only the interests of a minority of exploiters, the capitalists. As for the Soviet democratic republican regime, it is a regime, in which the proletarian class officially exercises the dictatorship, suppresses all vestiges of the exploiting class (landlords, bourgeois and kulaks) and guarantees the widest interests of all labouring people (workers, peasants, intellectuals) who liberated themselves and are co-operating to build a new life under the leadership of the proletarian class.

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

Moreover, if our regime has the character of a new democracy, that is because it was born at a time when the vanguard democratic regime of the Soviet Union has fully triumphed over its enemies, and is being consolidated after surviving the

terrible test of war, after the collapse of the world system of fascism, and while the great movement of progressive democracy is spreading throughout the world.

Born in the new times, the democratic republican regime in Vietnam inevitably bears the mark of the new times. The August Revolution is a revolution of national liberation in its form and one of new democracy in its content. In other words, the August Revolution is a revolution of national liberation with a new democratic character. It constitutes a step in the national democratic revolution of Vietnam.

### **The historic significance of the August Revolution**

The August Revolution has highlighted the indomitable spirit of the Vietnamese people, a people who are struggling untiringly to shake off the foreign yoke. It is the completion of 80 years of uninterrupted struggle of the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists. It also constitutes the greatest historic event in our country since the victory gained by Quang Trung who drove the Manchu troops out of Vietnam in 1789. In fact, since then there has been no national movement which has, as fully as the August Revolution, given evidence of the indomitable heroism and of the strong unity of the Vietnamese people. It has not merely broken

the double yoke imposed by the Japanese and the French, but it has also overthrown the monarchic regime established for thousands of years in Vietnam, changed the country into a new democratic republic, promoting the Vietnamese people to the rank of a vanguard people. Therein lies the great significance of the August Revolution; and President Ho Chi Minh, the first President' of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the leader of the August Revolution, thoroughly deserves the title of national hero.

Through the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people have clearly shown their anti-fascist spirit and their attachment to democracy and peace. The revolution constitutes the splendid completion of the great movement against the French and Japanese fascists in Vietnam during World War II, especially from March last year. Before the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people struggled in very hard conditions to harass and exhaust the rear lines of the Japanese forces. From the end of 1944, the Japanese sea-lines were attacked by the Allied forces; Indochina had become a "bridge" over the Japanese "Great Oriental Asia Road", a bridge extremely important for the movement and supply of Japanese troops from the Northern position to Indonesia. The blocking of this bridge to the Japanese forces was the task assumed by the Vietnamese people. Therefore, in March 1945, the Indochinese Communist Party launched the

great movement of struggle against the Japanese for National Salvation, by organizing and actively leading the Vietnamese people to the attack on important Japanese strategic positions, thus causing a block in the traffic of the Japanese over the "Great Oriental Asia" road.

From March to August last year, Japanese territory suffered more and more violent bombing raids. In Indochina, the Vietnamese guerillas were fighting the Japanese with increased strength. A free zone was established in the Highlands and Midlands of North Vietnam and constituted a permanent obstacle on the path of the Japanese from Southern China to Indochina. In this zone, the guerillas exhausted the Japanese forces, not allowing them a moment's respite. In this way the Vietnamese people had effectively contributed their part, beside the Allies, to speed the overthrow of the Japanese and indirectly, to hasten the Soviet army's victory. It is an indubitable fact that the Vietnamese people have made their share of sacrifices in the struggle against the fascist aggressors during the recent years.

The French reactionary colonialists purposely call the August Revolution "pro-Japanese", "Japanese-led" to belittle its significance. But there is plenty of evidence to smash their treacherous slanders. Today everybody has to admit that the reactionary attitude of the French colonialists with regard to

the August Revolution is that of the robber who loots and at the same time cries "Stop thief". In point of fact, did not the French colonialists, assisted by the British imperialists, make use of the Japanese troops to counter-attack the Vietnamese Revolution?

Among the peoples oppressed by the Japanese, the Indonesian, Chinese and Vietnamese peoples have been the most successful in availing themselves of the Japanese capitulation last August to rise up and win democracy and freedom.\*

*\* The peoples of Burma, Malaya and of the Philippines also organized guerrilla forces to resist the Japanese invaders but when the Japanese surrender took place, their forces were still insufficient to cope with the invasion of the U.S. and British imperialists, who were more powerful than their congeners, the French and the Dutch. Therefore, in spite of their relatively big efforts and sacrifices, their struggles have not brought as important results as those obtained by the peoples of Indonesia, China and Vietnam.*

By the fact of the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people have lodged this general claim to the U.N.O.: *the Great Powers must recognize the right to self-determination of the Vietnamese people, in accordance with the Atlantic and San Francisco Charters.* As a natural consequence of the Japanese collapse, all peoples under the Japanese yoke must be liberated, and nobody must be allowed to replace

the Japanese in oppressing and exploiting them. The Vietnamese people have suffered from Japanese domination since 1940 and they have worthily played their part side by side with the Allies in the struggle against the Japanese, thus they fully deserve their independence. The Vietnamese people will resolutely oppose the return of the French oppressors as well as the regime of a “mandated country”, because they have already attained their majority.

The August Revolution and the war of self-defence waged for almost a year by the Vietnamese people against the French reactionaries have proclaimed these eager aspirations to the world. They show clearly that the colonial imperialist system is disintegrating and that the hour of liberation has struck for the oppressed peoples. The Vietnamese Revolution, like the Chinese and Indonesian Revolutions, strongly promotes the liberation movements of the Laotian and Cambodian peoples and other colonial countries in South East Asia: this fact explains clearly why the British imperialists have done their best to help the French colonialists to repress the Vietnamese Revolution in South Vietnam and why the international reactionaries have made concessions to one another to allow the French to relieve the troops of Chiang Kai-shek in North Vietnam.

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

At the end of the anti-fascist war, the task of all progressive world forces is to develop democracy and build peace. With the August Revolution and the present Resistance War, the Vietnamese people have shouldered a part of the responsibility to fulfil this mission side by side with the progressive and democratic forces struggling for a better world. Whether one likes it or not, the August Revolution is part of the great movement of mankind for the building of peace and democracy. The Vietnamese people fully understand their international role in this post-war

period. They are determined to fulfil this task, whatever the obstacles may be!

This is precisely the reason why the August Revolution is warmly acclaimed by progressive opinion and why the Vietnamese people now enjoy tokens of solidarity and sympathy from all democratic countries throughout the world, especially from the oppressed peoples.



## Chapter VI

### Prospects of the Vietnamese Revolution

#### Favourable conditions of the Vietnamese Revolution

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

Here are two important conditions:

First, subjectively speaking, the Vietnamese people, weighted for a long time under the French yoke and recently by the double oppression and exploitation of the French and Japanese fascists, have realized that only Revolution can liberate them. Closely united under the national banner they are determined to support the Republican Government in national liberation and national reform. The National United Front, under the remarkable leadership of President Ho Chi Minh and with the bloc of national salvation and democracy – the Vietminh – as its base, will certainly achieve its duty of mobilizing the whole people to counter all reactionary forces, overcome all difficulties and obstacles and march forward.

Secondly, from the objective point of view, since the world war, the international situation has brought new prospects to the Vietnamese

Revolution: the Soviet Union, completely victorious, has become an invincible force. In several countries, the Communist Party has organized power or taken part in it, new democratic movements are developing in many countries, especially in those just liberated from the fascist yoke; the movement for national liberation is boiling up in colonial and semi-colonial countries. After the collapse of fascism, the imperialist system has grown weak. The movement for the consolidation of peace against international reaction has attracted the majority of mankind. The Vietnamese Revolution, as part of the world movement of peace and democracy, is inevitably deeply influenced by the international progressive movement.

The Vietnamese Revolution also stands between the revolutionary streams of China, Indonesia and India, from which it receives a good influence and with which it is in tune; at the same time the Vietnamese revolution exerts a considerable influence upon those movements.

In short, the Vietnamese Revolution has sufficient conditions to march forward strongly to final victory.

#### **Objectives to be achieved**

Nevertheless, no matter how important the achievements of the August Revolution are at

present, we must recognize this objective truth: the national liberation of Vietnam has not yet completely succeeded. The August Revolution seized power for the people, but from September 23, 1945, the French colonialists attacked us and partly wrested it back. In the South of Vietnam, they set up the puppet government under Nguyen Van Thinh and reestablished their domination in some towns. According to the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, Vietnam and France came to a compromise: France agreed to recognize Vietnam as a free State having its own Government, its Parliament, its army and its own system of finance; Vietnam agreed to remain part of the French Union; French troops were given the right to station on the territory of Vietnam for a fixed period, and generally speaking, French economic and cultural interests in Vietnam are to be ensured. So, our country is only a free State, but not yet a completely independent one.

What is complete independence? The whole of Vietnam from Nam Quan to Ca Mau must be placed under the people's power organized by the people; there should be no foreign troops on the territory of Vietnam; Vietnamese economy must be independent, not tied to French economy or to that of any country; Vietnam must develop its national culture. In a word, the Vietnamese people must be the masters of their country in every respect and the Revolution for national liberation

must complete its task of shattering all imperialist bonds.

The Franco-Vietnamese Preliminary Agreement as well as the Franco-Vietnamese treaty which may be signed soon are not ultimate aims but only temporary measures in order to give our people a moment's breathing space in which to consolidate the position of the democratic republican regime brought into being by the August Revolution, to strengthen our real forces to march towards a new stage.

The Vietnamese Revolution must unceasingly progress, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes by leaps and bounds, sometimes stopping for a time to regain breath, or move a step backwards to jump across a deep ditch, sometimes dodging to avoid an obstacle so as to reach rapidly its goal.

During the course of its development, the Vietnamese Revolution must not only fulfil its anti-imperialist task but also complete its anti-feudal task which is land reform. Because so long as these tasks are not realized, Vietnam will not get rid of its backwardness and become really strong and prosperous; so long as these tasks are not realized, people's happiness cannot be guaranteed.

Indeed, to become prosperous and happy, Vietnam, now an agricultural country, must

change into an industrial one (because only with a developed industry can a country produce sufficient arms for its national defence and sufficient goods for the people's well-being). But the long imperialist domination has always kept Vietnam in a backward agricultural State. The French imperialists monopolized heavy industry for French capitalists in France and established only light industry in Indochina. In the development of small industry, the capitalists of our country suffered from imperialist competition, while under the French and Japanese domination, the question of installing heavy industry was far beyond their reach. Thus, the French imperialists monopolized heavy industry with the aim of compelling Vietnam to consume their goods and preventing all competition with them. How can an essentially agricultural country compete with a country which has a developed heavy industry? It cannot. That is why, to become a prosperous country, Vietnam, must get free of all imperialist links and develop its heavy industry, so as to be completely liberated from foreign economic subordination. This means that it must be independent in the economic field as well as in political and cultural fields. The Vietnamese Revolution has not yet thoroughly abolished all imperialist privileges from our country, but has only restricted them. It must progress further to fulfil its anti-imperialist task.

In the other field, the French imperialists continued to maintain all forms of feudal exploitation to make use of them in order to exploit our people more and more. In the mountainous regions, even today, they continue to carry out serfdom and forced labour. In the delta, the tenancy regime with high land rents is still maintained. Moreover there are still heavy taxes and requisitioning, side by side with many privileges for a few. Most of the people are peasants and they are cruelly exploited, and as a result, many of them have become impoverished; they cannot continue to live in the countryside and have to go to the towns hoping to find jobs in factories; but as industry in our country cannot develop, the few enterprises which exist (factories, mines, plantations, etc...) can only employ a small number of these people while the remainder go to increase the ranks of the "Reserve army for industry", in other words, the army of unemployed or vagrants. The greater the number of unemployed, the lower the wages. The very low wages have a considerable influence on technical improvement in agriculture and industry. As the exploitation of cheap labour was sufficient for their own interests, the colonialists did not bother to improve production techniques, and as a result, the economy of Vietnam under the imperialist yoke was unable to escape from a vicious backward circle. The Vietnamese peasants are still short of land to till and the workers heavily

exploited. In an agricultural country like ours, in speaking of the people's happiness, we must speak of the improvement of the peasants' and workers' life, particularly when nearly 90 per cent of the people are peasants. But how can the peasants' living conditions be effectively improved if they have not enough land to till? Therefore, the question of the people's happiness basically one of giving land to the peasants.

Finally, for this reason, the regime of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation must be abolished, and "land to the tillers" must be realized. So far, the Vietnamese Revolution has only restricted that feudal and semi-feudal exploitation. It must progress further to realise land reform and wipe out all vestiges of feudalism. In brief, the Vietnamese Revolution must fulfil both the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks to realize independence, freedom and happiness for the people. In other words, it must complete the task of democratization to pave the way to the socialist revolution in the future: to socialize all means of production, abolish from Vietnam the regime of exploitation of man by man.

### **Process of development of the Vietnamese Revolution**

The wrong conception of the progress of the Vietnamese Revolution must be wiped out now. People think that the Vietnamese Revolution must

progress step by step: that after the revolution of national liberation (anti-imperialist) comes the agrarian revolution (anti-feudal) then the socialist revolution.

This theory of "successive progression" according to a fixed plan, cutting the Vietnamese Revolution into three stages, is not right. Abroad, the Soviet Union, the socialist State, has triumphed and the new democratic movement is in full development. At home, the leadership of the Vietnamese Revolution grows stronger and stronger in *the hands of the proletarian class in power*; the progressive democratic forces form an unshakable bloc. In such historic conditions, the Revolution for the national liberation of Vietnam can fulfil its anti-imperialist task and at the same time *realize a part* of the agrarian task. The Vietnamese democratic revolution does not have to wait for a determined date before it breaks out, but can be realized in the course itself of the development of new democracy in Vietnam, a development which may be rapid thanks to the support of the new democratic movement throughout the world (particularly in China and in France); and because the movement for the socialist revolution is growing steadily all over the world, the Vietnamese socialist Revolution may also be achieved even if it has not all the necessary social conditions (for instance: heavy industry is not yet developed, all forms of small capitalist



exploitation are not yet abolish etc...). As is stated in the Communist International Programme:

“...Although the social relations of every colony and semi-colony have not yet ripened, all movements for national liberation in these countries can also develop into socialism, if these movements enjoy, in particular, the help and support of proletarian dictatorship and in general, that of the international proletarian movement.”

## Chapter VII

### The Urgent Tasks of the Vietnamese People

#### Four chief points, four slogans

After the second world war, the Vietnamese Revolution, developing in the new conditions prevailing in the world, has several allies and enjoys much support. But no matter how favourable conditions are, the Revolution might fail if our people, and especially our revolutionary fighters, were to go the wrong way.

Moreover, the French reactionaries, collaborating with the international reactionaries, are carrying out a perfidious policy designed to rob us of our power. Officially, they recognize our country as a free state, but in actual fact, they want to make of our country an autonomous one.

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

Cunningly and according to a systematic plan, they apply the traditional imperialist policy, of "divide

and rule": territorial parcelling, division between different nationalities, religions, political parties, etc... aimed at rendering us powerless to fight against them. They savagely terrorize people in the occupied zones or in the zones where their strength is greater than ours, hoping to annihilate our cadres and to intimidate and demoralize our compatriots.

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

What is the aim of our people in the present stage? In our opinion, our people's task can be summed up in these four chief points:

***Independence, Unification, Democracy,  
Rebirth***

a) ***Independence.*** Our country is not yet completely independent. The foreign army is still on our territory. We must struggle to force them to withdraw from our country in the near future. We must struggle for our national sovereignty, so that in addition to our own government, army, finances, and Parliament, we also have our own diplomatic representation. We must struggle to change our position from that of a free state to a completely independent state on the principle of "the right of nations to self-determination"; this

means that we have the right to adhere to the French Union *of our own free will* (if France remains a progressive country) or to withdraw from it if need be.

b) **Unification:** Vietnam must be one, and its territorial integrity must be guaranteed. To achieve this, we must wreck the reactionary French colonialists' plot to partition our territory and to form what they impudently call the: "Namky state", "Moi state", "Thai state", "Nung state", etc... There could not be set up in our country three states differing from one another in their political, economic and cultural regimes. There is all the less reason, why there should exist in our country a free state North of the sixteenth parallel and an autonomous one in the South. Vietnam must be worthy of the name *nation*; that is to say, it is one and indivisible because Vietnam is a *territorial, political, economic and cultural unity; this unity is not a fortuitous or a temporary combination, but one which, in the course of various historic epochs, has been built up by the sweat and toil of our people.*

c) **Democracy:** In maintaining and developing the democratic republican regime, strengthen g the people's power and building the new democratic constitution, we must guard against changing our constitution into a meaningless and out-of-date one, along the lines of the bourgeois constitution. We must furthermore oppose all tendencies to sap the regime of popular representation, a

progressive and adequate regime worthy of its birthright won by the people's revolutionary initiative in the course of their struggle for liberation. The country must always have a constitutional government which is elected, supported and controlled by the people.

We must reorganize the administrative services, eliminate the reactionary and corrupt elements from the administrative offices as well as from the public services, and wipe out bureaucracy. We should do our utmost to transform Vietnam into a really democratic country in the Far East, worthy of ranking among the new democracies which have just been liberated from the fascist yoke.

d) **Rebirth:** We must build up and consolidate the bases of the democratic regime by economic and cultural restoration and by national reform in material and spiritual fields.

On the one hand, we must produce and produce again without interruption. We must push forward industrial, agricultural and cultural production to make good the war wounds so as to put an end to all signs of misery, corruption and devastation caused by eighty years of slavery. Everyone should make a contribution to the national restoration: the rich should put their capital into the enterprises, the able-bodied should work hard, those who have political and intellectual abilities should put all their initiative into drawing up plans

and policies. We must respect labour, encourage private enterprises, reward those who have made sacrifices and punish all speculators and saboteurs. It is not enough simply to make Vietnam a democratic state; we must change it into a country with a progressive and independent economy.

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

### **Resistance war and national reconstruction**

The resistance war consists of struggling for national unification and independence and repulsing the French colonialist attack. National reconstruction aims at establishing and consolidating the democratic republican regime, restoring and transforming the country. Like China, which struggled for many years against the Japanese, for a year now our people have been waging the resistance war and at the same time have been carrying out national reconstruction. That is an inherent characteristic of the struggle for the liberation of our country, one part of which is liberated and the other still oppressed by the imperialists.

In the reconstruction work, for a year now our people have striven to increase production, simultaneously supply the front and fight against famine; and repair roads, bridges, dykes, etc. This year, our people have won victories over three big enemies: famine, illiteracy and floods. Those are our tangible achievements. But we still lack a general plan for all our reconstruction work. The following examples are enough to prove that:

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

In every province and locality, the slogan "increase production" is carried out without close guidance as to the nature of the crops, their quantity, time of growth and consumption, etc...

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

It is time to work out an overall reconstruction plan for the whole country, to readjust every branch of production and to give rational guidance to national reform work.

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

If we strive only for national reconstruction but neglect to struggle for sovereignty and territorial integrity, national independence will certainly not be recognized and our country will be reduced to an autonomous state. Our people are not a warlike people. In keeping with our people's deep love for peace, our government signed the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946. But the treacherous behaviour of the French colonialists forced us to pursue the Resistance war to defend ourselves. We are ready to accept *an honourable armistice*, but as long as the French forces continue to attack and terrorize us, we must remain armed to defend ourselves until they recognize the impossibility of establishing again their domination over our country and of partitioning our territory. Has the Resistance war in the South only a local and provisional character or will it be transformed into a long-term Resistance? That is for the French to answer. As for us, we must thoroughly support the struggle of the people in the South in every field and we will increase our forces everywhere so as to be ready to face any eventuality and fight to the end.



### **Great Unity: a key task**

To carry out Resistance and national reconstruction, we must mobilize all the forces of our country, fight against the French colonialists' policy of division, consolidate our ranks inside the country and win new support from outside.

That is why the internal unity of the whole people must be consolidated.

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

*Unity between nationalities:* To frustrate the colonialist schemes to dupe the national minorities into opposing the majority population.

*Unity between religions:* To fight against the colonialist plot to make Catholic, Hoa Hao and Cao Dai compatriots oppose their own people.

*National unity:* To smash the colonialist scheme to make our compatriots in the South fight against those in the Centre and the North.

*Unity between all different strata of the people:* Side by side they must struggle against the common enemy to gain national independence.

*Unity between all parties:* All patriotic and democratic parties must put aside all prejudices so as to struggle hand in hand against the French

reactionaries, the Vietnamese traitors and their organisations.

The entire people should unite into a *National Front to fight the reactionary French colonialists and wrest back complete independence*. For a year, nothing has been able to shake that Front, cemented by the blood of our fighters coming from the four corners of the country to defend the South. On that front, the whole people should act as one to fight the aggressors, repress the traitors, defend the Democratic Republican regime and reform our country – in short, to change Vietnam into an independent, unified, free and happy country.

That is the objective aimed at by the *Vietnam National League*. That Front represents an adequate form of national unity which our people have achieved in the struggle against the French reactionaries and the Vietnamese traitors. It must be broadened to include all parties and sects which are for national independence and democracy, as well as all patriotic non-party elements.

It might be asked: Is the Vietnam National League only a political manoeuvre being used to neutralize temporarily other political parties? Certainly not! It must be a lasting organisation able to mobilize all the broad masses to fulfil the tasks of national salvation and national reconstruction. It should,

never be regarded as a temporary and insignificant form of alliance between the parties.

But to broaden and consolidate the Vietnam National League, we ought to develop and strengthen the *Vietminh Front*, because the Vietminh Front with its strong organizations naturally constitutes a firm basis for the National League. And to develop and consolidate the Vietminh Front, it is necessary to unite and develop all organisations of the vanguard class, the Vietnamese working class. The alliance between workers, peasants and intellectuals must be especially firm.

Inside, our compatriots must closely, broadly and effectively unite. But that national unity alone is not enough. We must also unite with the allies outside our country. First we must unite with the French people who have made many sacrifices in their struggle for liberty and the just cause, and who with us, have a common enemy, the French reactionaries, the greedy monopolies and their lackeys, the reactionary colonialists. We have agreed to take part in the French Union but this Union must be a "democratic and fraternal union between free and equal people", to use the words of Comrade Lozeray, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party at a session of the French Constituent Assembly on March 20, 1946. That Union should not be used as a cage to imprison the colonial peoples after

"clipping their wings". In our struggle to demand from France the respect of our sovereignty and territorial integrity, we must achieve unity of action with the French people and with all organizations faithful to the ideals of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, fraternity. For that reason we warmly hail the formation of the "Franco-Vietnamese Association" and we hope that it will become a steady bridge between the two peoples who are linked to one another by the same ideal.

We should ally ourselves not only with the French people, but also with all peace-loving and democratic peoples, particularly with the Chinese people, our great neighbours who are resolutely struggling for democracy, unification and independence. In a word, we must unite with all the oppressed peoples who are fighting to liberate themselves. During the second world war, we joined our efforts to those of the forces of counter-oppression in order to defeat the fascists. Today, the war is over but we must continue to stand side by side with the progressive forces to fight against the remnants of fascism and the international reactionaries, to build democracy and world peace and to smash the schemes to draw mankind into an atrocious atomic third world war.

For that reason, our people must claim their place in the United Nations Organisation and in the international arena, as a people who have

participated in the struggle against aggressivefascism, wrested power from the Japanese fascists, and now continue to struggle to exact from the French colonialists the respect of the Charter of the United NationsOrganisation which was supported in San Francisco by France itself.

### **Wiping out errors**

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

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

We should wipe out the *tendencies to anarchy and indiscipline* seen in carelessness and disobedience to orders from superiors, as well as infringements of government instructions and of Party discipline: tendencies showing a misunderstanding of the democratic regime. There are some who do notclearly realize the meaning of democratic order and discipline; they think that a democratic regime can connive at disorder, confusion and heedlessness. From this anarchy and indiscipline

will emerge, on the one hand, regionalism, regional autonomism, on the other, corruption, abuse, militarism and bureaucracy.

We must:

Root out the *tendencies to isolation and narrow-mindedness* which are seen in the abuse of cadres' abilities and in a wrong attitude towards certain events as in carrying out the policy of national unity outlined by the Party and President Ho Chi Minh. This harmful tendency comes from the fear of the masses and from a lack of confidence in the masses and in oneself; at the same time it shows a mechanical interpretation of Marxist-Leninist theories expressed in abstract clichés repeated parrot-fashion.

Eliminate *subjectivity and "leftist" tendencies* which lead to acting even in unfavourable conditions; to believing that one's personal desires are those of the masses; to travelling "post-haste" without paying attention to the objective conditions of the situation and the real possibilities of the movement.

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

Eliminate the *tendency to compromise* beyond all principles with either the reactionaries or the companions in struggle. This tendency demonstrates a lack of determination in keeping firmly to one's position, an overestimation of the enemy and an underestimation of the strength of the masses, a failure to rely upon the masses or to use them as a strong rearguard. This tendency also demonstrates a wrong understanding of the policy of the National Front, and the existence of the belief that because we are in the same front we must always excuse one another, not criticising each other even moderately and with the support of evidence! Like tendencies to isolation and narrow-mindedness, this tendency comes from a "lame policy" which doesn't take into account that criticism without solidarity is bad, but solidarity without criticism is worse.

Reject the *tendency to complacency*, being satisfied with one's small success; that makes us become short-sighted, lessens our vigilance, weakens our spirit of criticism and self-criticism and creates the conception that the revolution is infallible, a detestable and dangerous conception which hinders our progress and keeps us away from the masses.

Wipe out the *tendency to pessimism* which makes us grumble and lack courage when facing the smallest obstacles, or makes us doubt and lose our heads at the least defeat, and consequently leads to

worthless criticism or makes us give up the struggle and run away from our responsibility.

Those shortcomings and errors are the most widespread today among the people, cadres and the as yet unorganized masses, as in organizations, and in political, administrative, military and technical offices, etc... If we do not correct those errors in time, we cannot hope to realize true national unity to build up an *independent, united, democratic and prosperous country*.

Why do the above-mentioned shortcomings and errors exist? In our opinion, due to the four following causes:

1 – The greater part of our economy comes from agriculture and handicrafts. The technical level of our people is low, and as a result, they lack generally a sense of organization. Our work is still routine, non-scientific and without perspective.

2 – Ours is a country of small production. Although led by the proletariat, the movement for the liberation of our country possesses many petty-bourgeois characteristics such as wavering, lack of determination, hesitancy, lack of thoroughness. These defects are still numerous in our movement.

3 – For a long time our compatriots have not only been oppressed and exploited, but have also suffered from the obscurantist policy; they have never participated broadly in political and cultural



activities, therefore their limited knowledge has a bad influence on the work of national salvation and of national reconstruction.

4 – The August Revolution was not carried out with sufficient determination and was therefore not strong enough to wipe out all rottenness of the outmoded regime. Many evil practices of that corrupt regime still persist and do harm to the new regime.

Our shortcomings and errors arise out of the concrete conditions of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement in its present stage.

However we are convinced that under the clear-sighted leadership of President Ho Chi Minh and thanks to our people's march towards progress, we will effectively remedy those errors and shortcomings.

We should not delude ourselves into thinking that in a short time the Revolution can wipe out all the bad habits and customs of the old regime, which have become deeply rooted in our thoughts. Along with the political revolution, the cultural revolution with its "New life" movement must achieve the reformation of thoughts and customs, and the economic revolution should improve the people's living standards so as to create favourable conditions for the success of the political and cultural revolution which is in full swing. But if we are determined to fight those bad tendencies by all

means, it will be possible to correct them rapidly, provided every citizen and every revolutionary combatant sincerely exercises criticism and self-criticism and clearly understands his duty to exterminate all these evil tendencies.

### **Training of cadres**

After settling the question of the political line to be followed and the tasks to be fulfilled, the question of cadres proves to be the most important one to solve.

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

We must admit that one of the shortcomings of our present movement lies in the lack of cadres. Few cadres for much work, hence the weakness of one person having too many irons in the fire. Many cadres are unable to accomplish their tasks or to complete them thoroughly, or they work thoughtlessly in a slapdash manner without any pre-established plan, or display a narrow-minded approach to their work.

Therefore, a decisive task in this present hour is to strive to have a greater number of cadres, and to have good cadres; to promote existing cadres in a rational and just way and to train new ones patiently and methodically. Every cadre must guide the novices who work side by side with him so as to create new cadres. So many active workers and peasants, so many youths fully devoted to the Revolution are ready to accept all sacrifices! Have confidence in them, employ them boldly, guide them patiently, *but do not forget to control them.*

At present, we are overwhelmed with work. It is necessary to mobilize all manpower and wealth. No ability, no effort must be wasted. Affairs of State are not the monopoly of some special group of persons, some party or some revolutionary class, but they are the common business of the whole people. Naturally the choice of cadres must not be prompted by personal feelings, but we must not either be too rigorous in the selection of new recruits, as the case is for some comrades at present.

There are not enough of the schools founded by the Government to ensure the training of new administrative, judicial, military and technical cadres. In addition to these, the revolutionary organization must frequently open political training courses and organize talks and lectures to which the public will be widely admitted.

Simultaneously with the extension of mass education and the struggle against illiteracy, the development of higher education is greatly needed as well as a revision of the curriculum, and the selection of students to be sent abroad.

At the present time the question of cadres is a contradictory one. The great majority of cadres, schooled by the revolutionary struggle, are loyal, eager and skilful elements with a good political background, and a fair degree of organization, but most of them have a poor educational level (the fault is not theirs, for being in the majority born of the labouring masses, they have remained illiterate or have not been able to complete their schooling). On the other hand, the technicians and intellectuals who formerly graduated from the French Universities have a certain cultural level but know little about politics. (We cannot reproach them with this either, for throughout our eighty years of slavery, have the imperialists ever thought of educating the Vietnamese people politically? Have they ever allowed the Vietnamese people to study or go in for politics? Their sole concern was the formation of a class of young Vietnamese intellectuals who would serve them merely as their tools...)

Therefore the training of existing cadres as well as of new ones at this present time must aim at suppressing this contradiction. Existing cadres must be granted time and material conditions in

which to raise their educational level and theoretical political knowledge. A movement to stimulate a fervent eagerness for study, without causing any neglect of the daily task, but coordinated with this task, must be launched. By our propaganda, we must encourage the intellectuals and technicians to join political groups and attend political training classes.

We must criticize the wrong attitude of some Vietminh cadres (including communists) who make light of intellectuals and technicians, are prejudiced against them, keep no contact with them, do not employ them and are adverse to learning from them. But at the same time we must put right the point of view of some non-Vietminh intellectuals who think that the Vietminh and communist cadres who have worthily led the Revolution to the seizure of power must now "withdraw" from the political arena and transfer the task of national reconstruction to trained intellectuals and technicians.

Those who nurture these thoughts fail to understand that the Communist and Vietminh militants who marched in the vanguard during the period of underground struggle for the liberation of the Fatherland must now more than ever keep their vanguard role, devoting their political knowledge and revolutionary spirit to the work of national defence and national reconstruction.

A comforting knowledge for us is the fact that, from the August Revolution onwards, intellectuals have adhered in ever greater numbers to the Vietminh League. Struggling among the people's ranks, they have shown an eager patriotism and respect for Party discipline. They are now developing into good revolutionary cadres, greatly deserving the confidence of the entire people.

## Conclusion

August 1945, August 1946.

One year has passed, worth a whole decade for the experiences gained. By the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people have broken the imperialist fetters, to march forward with giant strides. Steeled through their millenary past of struggle and sacrifice, the Vietnamese people are enthusiastically launched upon the winning of a bright future. They have always been a young, healthy people whose rich and powerful vitality continues to develop with every passing day, to the astonishment of the whole world.

The Vietnamese people have covered quite a good distance on their path of independence and liberation. However, the goal has not been reached yet. They have to press forward and continue to press forward. Many obstacles have arisen on the road already travelled, but thanks to their *spirit of unity, to their struggle and their strenuous efforts*, the Vietnamese people have gained their first victories.

In these days, the resistance in South Vietnam and South-Central Vietnam is still going on. This heroic, tenacious struggle for self-defence develops the achievements of the August Revolution and further steels the traditional virtues of our people.

The French reactionary colonialists hoped to solve the Vietnamese problem by armed force according to their own will. But the Resistance war carried out by the Vietnamese people has shattered their illusions, The Vietnamese people are ready to wage a long struggle to overcome all difficulties and obstacles and resolutely fight all brutal plunderers and their stooges until they recover the integrity of their territory and gain complete **independence, liberty and happiness.**