

PREFACE

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

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 As for the enemy of Viet Nam, the French colonialists, they represent out-of-date, decadent imperialism, whose fate has been sealed by history.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Resistance will win: this is our unshakable belief. And that is the title we have given this book, which comprises articles dealing with the Resistance, first published in Nos. 70 to 81¹ of the review *Su That*², and later revised and amended. The book is now published by the *Su That* Publishing House on the occasion of the second anniversary of the outbreak of the war of resistance in southern Viet Nam.

Bac Bo, September 19, 1947.

TRUÔNG-CHINH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I

WHOM ARE WE FIGHTING?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II

WHY MUST WE FIGHT?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“The plan has three objectives :

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

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

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

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

