- To cooperate with the technical Ministries concerned in the following matters: relief for ethnic minority citizens fleeing the Communists, relief for the poor and subsidy for ethnic minority organizations.

Art. 2 - All previous texts contrary to the spirit of the present decree are hereby abolished.

Art. 3 - The Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Secretaries of State and Vice-Ministers are charged, each as to that which concerns him, with the execution of the present decree.

The present decree shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Vietnam.

Saigon, 22 December 1969

s/ Tran thien Khiem
THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT,

In view of the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, dated April 1, 1967,

Considering Decree No. 394-Tt/SI of September 1, determining the composition of the Government,

Considering the letter No. 024-PTT/VP of December 16, 1969 of the President of the Republic of Vietnam,

DECREES THE FOLLOWING:

Art. 1 - Now is hereby established an Interministerial Committee comprising:

- The Secretary of State for Executive Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office Chairman
- The Director General of Budget & Foreign Aid Member
- The Secretary General or a corresponding official at each Ministry or Office of the Minister of State Member
- The Director General of Civil Service Reporting Member

Art. 2 - The Committee has the duty to study and draft:

- A decree for amendment of Decree No. 175-NV of 23 May 1955 determining position salaries and the various allowances in money and in kind to high ranking civil servants and employees holding supervisory positions in the public services,
- A law determining the pay and allowances system to leaders of all levels, to all appointed and elected people and to servicemen, civil servants and cadres of various branches, especially the social security system to be applied to servicemen, civil servants and cadres.

Art. 3 - In addition to the components listed in Art. 1, the committee chairman may invite experts in all fields to attend the meeting in order to obtain their opinion.

Art. 4 - The Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers and the Secretary of State at the Prime Minister's Office are charged, each as to that which concerns him, of the execution of the present decree.

Saigon, 22 December 1969

s/ TRAN THIEN KHIEM
THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT,

In view of the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, dated April 1, 1967,

Considering decree No. 394-TT/SL of September 1, 1969 fixing the composition of the Government,

Considering decree No. 156-XDNT of July 30, 1965 determining the responsibilities of the Revolutionary Development Ministry,

Considering Decree No. 691-TT/SL of December 15, 1969 changing the name of Revolutionary Development Ministry to Ministry of Rural Development,

DECLARES THE FOLLOWING:

Art. 1 - The responsibilities of the Minister for Rural Development are hereby fixed as follows:

- To plan a village, hamlet and city neighborhood development program aiming to improve the citizens' welfare,

- To administer and train the Rural Development and People's Desire teams, and to set up for them a program of action designed to activate the popular organizations for village, hamlet and city neighborhood development,

- To provide necessary means and funds to the regions within the duty of the Rural Development Ministry,
- To orient, follow up and review the implementation of the programs already approved.

Art. 2 - All previous dispositions contrary to the spirit of the present decree are hereby rescinded.

Art. 3 - The Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Secretaries of State, and Vice Ministers are charged, as far as their duties are concerned, with the execution of the present decree.

The present decree shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Vietnam.

Saigon, 23 December 1969

s/ Tran thien Khiem
Office of the Prime Minister
No. 043-ND/ThT/BDPT/TU

THE PRIME MINISTER

ENACTS:

Article 1. Hereby create a committee consisting of:

- Minister of Interior or his representative...... Chairman
- Representative/Finance Ministry............... Member
- Representative/Agrarian Reform and Fisheries
  Agriculture Development.............. Member
- Representative/R.D. ......................... Member
- Representative/Information Ministry ......... Member
- Representative/Taxation Directorate ......... Member
- Representative/DGBFA ....................... Member
- Representative/Pacification and Development
  Coordination .................. Member
- An official/MOI .......................... Secretary

Article 2. This committee has the responsibility

1. To draft laws and statutory texts with a view to:

   - Increasing financial capability of villages, so that they can attain sufficient means for autonomy, concurrently with the increase in authority from the standpoint of administration and security, by reallocating the receipts to which the villages are so far not entitled, or are entitled part of it only.

   - Fixing a compensation amount to be paid to village/hamlet officials credited with good performance in the collection of taxes.
- Simplifying financial procedures with respect to expenditures - receipts at village level, increasing financial responsibility and payment authority to village officials.

- Combining all laws concerning land tax, urban land tax into one single law for easy implementation. This law will be applicable nationwide, except Saigon/Gia Dinh which is governed by special provisions.

- Refixing the tax for registration of properties and services, insuring the collection of this tax.

- Eliminating any direct taxes which are no longer considered realistic resources.

- Fixing the time-limit for collecting each tax.

2. To study and recommend the following:

- Modification of rates of miscellaneous taxes and fees for villages.

- Training of village/hamlet officials in the establishment of tax rolls and collection of local taxes; specialists of the Directorate General for Taxation will come to villages to guide village/hamlet officials in the above duties.

- Curtailment of government subsidies to villages in accordance with the new procedures for allocation of resources, so that they can achieve self-sufficiency in financial domain; fixing criteria for subsidy.

- Bringing up to date of land registers, land tax rolls. Personnel of the Ministry of Agrarian Reforms, and Development of Agriculture/Fisheries are sent to provinces to perform these duties.

- Bringing up to date of licence tax rolls.
- Establishment of programs of public information, education and motivation to get the people to become aware of their civic obligation and to make their contribution toward the support of village/hamlet administration.

Article 3. If required, the Committee chairman may establish several sub-committees, each sub-committee will be in charge of one or several definite matters.

The committee will meet upon convocation of its chairman and it must fulfill its duties before 1 April 1970.

Essential recommendations will be submitted to the Prime Minister before 1 April 1970 for consideration and implementation procedure will be established.

Article 4. The Interior Minister, Finance Minister, Agrarian Reform, Agriculture and Fisheries Development Minister, R. D. Minister, Information Minister, Executive Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, Director General of Budget and Foreign Aid are charged, each as to that which concerns him, with the execution of this Arrete.

Saigon, 12 January 1970

s/Tran Thien Khiem
Prime Ministry  
No. 1340-ND/DDPT

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT,

In view of the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, dated April 1, 1967,

Considering decree No. 394-TT/SL of Sept. 1, 1969 fixing the composition of the Government,

Considering decree No. 155-SL/BDXD of Nov. 9, 1968 and subsequent texts establishing the Pacification and (Re) construction Councils at various levels,

Considering decree No. 626-a/TT/SL of Nov. 15, 1969 transforming the name of the Pacification and (Re) construction Councils into Pacification and Development Councils,

ENACTS THE FOLLOWING ARRETE:

**Art. 1** - An interministerial committee bearing the name of National Interministerial Committee for Distribution of Manpower Resources is hereby established.

**Art. 2** - The National Interministerial Committee for Distribution of Manpower Resources is put under the direct jurisdiction of the Central Pacification and Development Council.

**Art. 3** - The composition of the National Committee for Distribution of Manpower Resources is as follows:
- The Prime Minister of the Government Chairman
- The Minister of National Defense Secretary General
- The Minister of Labor Member
- The Minister of War Veterans Member
- The Chief, Joint General Staff, RVNAF Member
- The Secretary of State for Executive Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office Member
- The Vice Minister of the Interior Member

In addition, the Committee may invite the Ministers of State, Ministers, Secretaries of State, Vice Ministers and representatives of the agencies concerned to attend the meeting: to give their opinions whenever deemed necessary.

Art. 4 - The National Committee for Distribution of Manpower Resources has the following responsibilities:

a. To determine general policies relative to the distribution of national manpower resources

b. To coordinate government and private activities with the aim of coordinating the use of manpower resources

c. To determine general standards for classification of government and private agencies in the implementation of the general mobilization law.

Art. 5 - The National Committee for Distribution of Manpower Resources has a Permanent Bureau composed of the following:
- The Chief or Deputy Chief, Central Center for Coordination of Pacification and Development
- A representative of the Ministry of Interior
- A representative of the Ministry of National Defense
- A representative of the Ministry of Labor
- A representative of the Joint General Staff, RVNAF
- The Director General of Civil Service

Art. 6 - The Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Secretaries of State, Vice Ministers, the Chief, Joint General Staff, RVNAF, and the Director General of Civil Service, are charged, each as to that which concerns him, with the execution of the present arrête.

The present arrête shall be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Vietnam.

Saigon, 17 December 1969

s/ Tran thien Khiem
CIRCULAR NOTE

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE GOVERNMENT,

TO: The Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Secretaries of State, Vice Ministers

SUBJ: Use of personnel - Recommendation for Supervisory Positions and Detail of Personnel

I. Some time ago, I have found that the utilization and assignment of personnel to key positions at central and regional agencies were not logical and often contrary to regulations.

On the use of personnel, there are many cases of personnel of one branch who are assigned jobs of another branch, such as nurses or teachers performing secretarial jobs, cadres performing the duties of administrative clerks, etc.

On the assignment to supervisory functions, a number of civil servants of lower cadre are assigned to the positions which must be reserved to the civil servants of a higher cadre, as provided by special statutes.

Under these conditions the performance of duties
cannot be efficient, and at the same time discontent and inactivity may result in the internal functioning of government agencies.

In order to insure the proper use of manpower according to abilities, to put the right man in the right place, to make the administrative machinery more efficient, and to realize broad and sound reforms in various fields, I kindly turn your attention to apply firmly the following principles of personnel management:

1. For the logical use of personnel, it is necessary to distinguish between two kinds of positions: administrative and technical:

   - positions or jobs in the administrative field must be assigned to civil servants of administrative cadres;

   - positions or jobs which have a technical character should be assigned to civil servants of the technical cadres concerned.

All Ministries and Agencies must review and regularize their use of manpower according to the above standards.

2. For the functioning of a Service to achieve best results, it is necessary to respect these two basic criteria when assigning personnel to supervisory positions:

   - cadre and grade
   - ability and good behavior

The criteria "ability and good behavior" have
been noted previously by the Prime Ministry in Circulars No. 108-TT/Th.T/PC1 of June 24, 1968, No. 237-TT/Th.T/PC1 of May 19, 1969.

In regard to the criteria of cadre and grade, the special statutes of each administrative and technical cadre contain provisions specifying clearly what positions may be reserved to cadre grade; it is mandatory to respect these provisions.

If there are several candidates who meet the minimum requirements of cadre and grade, the priority of choice shall be reserved to the candidate with the highest grade and step, or with the highest seniority among the competitors having the same grade and step.

The assignment of a civil servant holding a supervisory position to a higher one should be made only after a minimum duration of two years in the lower position.

II. In addition, to avoid the dissemination of personnel of technical cadres, the detail of personnel of one branch to another must be restricted to the minimum.

Details may be considered only in special cases.

On the other hand, in order to reduce the number of personnel now on detail, the agencies which have received them should arrange for their replacement and for their return to the original branches.

So I kindly request that you give instructions to your
dependent agencies to review and regularize the use of manpower according to the above specifications, within 3 months from the date of signature of the present Circular.

After this time-limit, the Directorate General of Civil Service and the Directorate General of Budget and Foreign Aid, which have the responsibilities to make pre-controls, shall refute all cases of assignments contrary to the present circular.

Saigon, 16 December 1969

s/ Tran thien Khiem
Mr. President,

In order to improve the administrative machinery by means of proper utilization of personnel, improving standards for civil servants, increasing operational efficiency to serve the people effectively, and for the purpose of implementing the President's directives given in the session of 15 October 1969 of the Council of Ministers, I plan to put into effect in 1970 a certain number of operations, namely: review and determination of the procedures for recruitment and choice of supervisory personnel in administrative and technical fields; establishment of standards for organizing the Ministries and Agencies; establishment and approval of personnel allocation lists; study and appropriate action on a position classification system.

1. **Recruitment and choice of Supervisory Personnel**

In recent years, with successive changes of government and with some Ministry leaders paying little respect to standards for appointment of key personnel, the efficiency of the Civil Service has decreased due to a lack of ability and confidence in a number of personnel holding supervisory positions.
In the current situation more than at any time, instead of acting as examples in every field and as leaders encouraging their employees to give all their attention to their work, on the contrary many of them have failed in this responsibility, thus creating poor morale, inequities and discontent.

This is a preliminary measure, for only the proper use of manpower by putting the right man in the right place may give hopes for further improvement. For the purpose of providing the administrative machinery with able leaders at all levels and with an objective choice for appointment of key personnel, I shall establish a Civil Service Committee to carry out the study for a list of candidates to be recommended for vacant administrative positions, according to the following principles: the administrative positions (Personnel, Budget, Accounting, Logistics...) shall be reserved to civil servants of Central Administrative Cadres. (The civil servants of technical cadres shall carry out technical jobs only).

As for the positions of Bureau Chiefs and Service Chiefs, Ministers and Secretaries of State concerned have the right to make their choice according to established standards.

For the Directors, Deputy Directors General and equivalent positions, the Committee shall recommend candidates meeting requirements to the Ministers and Secretaries of State concerned for choice and appointment.

In addition to these advantages, the above procedures also help maintain the morale of supervisory officials, encouraging them to fulfill their jobs and thus creating a continuity in the service.
I also desire a study to determine appointment procedures and responsibilities of the Personnel Directors in the Ministries toward the Ministries concerned, and towards the Directorate General of Civil Service in the implementation of Civil Service policy and the standardization of personnel management.

2. Establishment of Standards for Organizing Ministries and Agencies

In order to avoid a change in the organization of a Ministry each time a change of Minister occurs, which creates operational difficulties and influences the general efficiency, and to establish a Staffing Pattern for the agencies, I feel it necessary to set standards to stabilize the organization of the Ministries.

For some time the general trend of the Ministries has been to enlarge their organization and to increase employee benefits, thus increasing operational expenditures.

On that point, there are many problems to be discussed, namely:

- whether it is convenient to keep the traditional organization with the positions of Director of Cabinet and Secretary General, or to adopt the Assistant system;

- to determine the number of Political Personnel for the Cabinet of each Ministry;

- to consolidate the organizations in charge of correspondence, archives, library, planning, budget, personnel, accounting, logistics, training and inspection in the Ministries;
- to determine the number of Technical Directorates and Services in each Ministry;

- to reduce intermediary levels: Deputy Director General, Deputy Secretary General, Deputy Director, Deputy Bureau Chief, Assistant, etc...

- to determine equal benefits for equivalent Ministry positions (such as inspectors, experts...)

It is necessary for all Ministries and agencies to contribute to the development of a model of procedures and standards.

3. Determination of Personnel Authorization Lists

When the organization of the agencies become stable, we may take up the personnel authorization lists.

In 1969, the Ministries and agencies established authorization lists, but the results did not achieve the goals because of:

- Lack of attention, encouragement and follow-up from Ministry leaders,

- Neglect on the part of supervisors, and no real improvement reached,

- Lack of enthusiasm from staff personnel to whom the aim of the listing were not clearly explained, and to whom no guidance was provided,

- Working methods were not studied and simplified, so that there was no reduction of personnel,

- Lack of trained personnel, so that the results were very poor despite the use of a large number of employees,
Due to the reorganization of some Ministries, it was necessary to re-establish the authorization lists.

As result, instead of a reduction in personnel, Ministries and agencies have asked an increase and the Central Allocation Committee faced this difficult situation: Instead of reviewing the authorization lists for amendment and approval only, the Committee has to coordinate with the Ministries to regularize lists failing to follow the model or lacking justification. Furthermore, the time for review of the lists coincided with the budget drafting and the Budget comptrollers did not have time to review the authorization lists.

Now, having occasion to review the problem of personnel appointment and agency organization, I feel it necessary to outline a program for the re-establishment and completion of the authorization lists, on the basis of previous results, within the time-limit set up by the President in his speech of October 6, 1969.

4. **Study of the Position Classification System**

When the three above operations have been achieved, the Prime Ministry will begin a study to classify personnel by job, to give civil servants the means of serving according to their abilities and enjoying commensurate benefits.

This system, foundation of a progressive personnel management, is applied by many nations and will replace the current classification of employees by cadres and grade based on diplomas. This project will require a period of 2 or 3 years for study and preparation for implementation, with the assistance of foreign experts.
Within the current framework of the Civil Service, in order to establish favorable conditions for administrative improvement, I think that any change must have the approbation of the President and the cooperation of all Cabinet members.

The above mentioned four changes, although reported separately, are in fact intimately bound together, and must be properly applied in all agencies in order to reach positive results.

I respectfully propose to the President to bring these matters to debate in a meeting of the Ministers Council. Therefore, the Prime Ministry shall rely on the decisions of the Council and shall recommend their appropriate execution.

Respectfully yours,

Saigon, 23 Dec. 1969

s/ Tran thien Khiem
FOREWORD

Following the election of the National Constituent Assembly in September 1966, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam took the first steps toward restoring the village and hamlet administrative institutions to their autonomous positions within the national community. Documents were issued in December 1966 reorganizing the administration of villages and hamlets and providing for election of village and hamlet officials. In areas under Government control and where security conditions permitted, elections for village officials were held during the period of April 2-30, 1967, and for hamlet officials during the period of May 14 - June 11, 1967, in a total of 984 villages and 4,608 hamlets. (Public Administration Bulletins No. 38 and No. 40). Since that time additional elections have been held progressively as security conditions have been improved and extended.

The following pages record the status of village/hamlet administration at the beginning of 1970 and are a measure of the progress achieved during the interim period.

*All of Vietnam, outside of Saigon and the 5 autonomous cities, is divided into villages which in turn are sub-divided into hamlets. The total number of geographic villages and hamlets are indicated in columns (2) and (9) respectively. However, some of these villages and hamlets are in remote or uninhabited areas (often free strike zones) and as a practical matter, are not capable of maintaining a local administration at the present time. The lesser figures in columns (3) and (10) indicate the total number of active or functioning villages in Vietnam. Although minor inconsistencies may be noted in the figures reported, these statistics are provided by the Ministry of Interior and are current as of December 31, 1969.
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Political Parties and Political Life in Vietnam

An Address by Professor Nguyen van Bong
Rector of National Institute of Administration

One day, in an informal discussion, an antiguerilla official told us: "You may visualize a house or, more concretely, a kitchen where exist all kinds of food and utensils such as bread, eggs, butter, coffee, milk, gas stove, black pepper, etc... and that is the dwelling of both sexes, men and women. Yet in the morning there is nothing prepared for breakfast. No fried or scrambled eggs, no coffee made. And that is a caricature of current Vietnam."

This illustration is rather distorted, for its author wanted to stress a confused and disorderly political situation of Vietnam - a potentially rich country abounding in talented people yet plunged deep into an endless war. What is the real cause of such confusion?

One of the deep causes weakening our political life is the absence of a well organized system of political parties to bear the foundations for proper political activities. The existence of strong political parties is not only a basic requirement for strong political life, but also is vital to Vietnam in its struggle for securing national freedom.

It is in this direction that we wish to present the following points:

1. Political parties as vital nuclei of political life.
2. Political parties vis-a-vis the present situation of the Nation.

I. Political parties as vital nuclei of political life

Political parties are expedient means and tools for
political participation. Vietnam's current democratic regime would not take deep roots in the people nor subsist if political parties are absent as agencies for motivating and focusing public opinion. If there are no political parties and if they are not strongly organized and effectively operated, the future of our democratic regime will be darkened and the political life of our Nation precarious. We may compare the relationship of the nation to political parties as the relationship of a living man to his heart or stomach. Our heart and stomach have so often made us suffer. And nobody can think that a man can live without a heart or a stomach. It is the same with political parties. They are sources of worries and sometimes turn to be pretty great obstacles to political life, but it is impossible to conceive an effective democratic regime, a free and proper political organization, if no political parties exist since they are vital to real political life.

A. They provide political training to the citizens and educate future leaders of the Nation.

This is one of the most important roles but often overlooked when speaking about political parties. And this is a mission altogether great and practical. In fact, in a democratic regime, there are two different trends of thoughts regarding the role of the government: One opinion holds that anyone can make politics and in a democratic country, anyone can do anything he wants. Another opinion claims that government is something very complicated and only those who know it, who have much experience with it, and possess high levels of education, can make use of it. Those are two extremes to be rejected. The proper and realistic concept is that government can be practiced by
anyone having a minimum required knowledge in political matters. And this minimum of knowledge is actually taught in the school of political parties. Why?

Because a political party always has to deal with problems of organization, public information, interpretation, motivation, decision making... in brief, all problems similar to those a politician would encounter and would have to solve.

Naturally, in his capacity as a party member, a man can have different points of view or political concepts or solutions which could be extremes or erroneous. Nevertheless, as regards political knowledge, it is certain that a citizen who participates and works for a political party would better understand political questions than another citizen who is not a member of a political party. In fact, political parties are the proper stage where government problems play to the level of understanding of all citizens. The majority of the people of a nation cannot understand government problems which are more and more complicated and technical. It is the mission of the political parties to keep them informed, and they can keep them informed. The more complicated and arduous the tasks of the government, the deeper and more adequate their information and interpretation should be. The citizens like and pay attention only to what they know, and can control only what they understand. They may not grasp all political decisions in detail, but can comprehend the real causes and reasons of these decisions, and hence, can judge solutions proposed by the government. In brief, political parties are the kilns for political cadres, and schools to train citizens in politics and produce future leaders.
The political life of a nation consists of many important affairs which are not routine or technical, but selective: war and peace, neutrality or leaning to left or right, planned economic policies dominated by the state or giving complete freedom for private enterprises, a policy for distribution of incomes to bear down on or giving privileges to some class of the people in the society, investments which promote developing conditions for the nation, etc...

Solving these basic selective problems is the job of a politician. This ability for decision-making regarding basically selective problems with a panoramic overview of all problems in general and this courage to decide, are the prerequisite qualifications of a politician and a national leader.

The leader has not only to decide, but also to convince the representatives of the people and their majority to approve and follow. How to accomplish these important tasks if the government cabinet has a mere executive of non-political character? How can those technicians without adequate political knowledge obtain the support of the majority of congressmen and political groups and mobilize the people to follow?

B. Criteria for selection: Political parties, like ballots, are tools for selection. To force or entreat citizens to vote is useless if the elections do not really mean actual selection. In elections how can the citizens vote for their representatives or the President if they do not have political parties to present their own candidates and voice their own programs? Indeed, any one individual can be a candidate and can have a good program. But this is a disorderly and ineffective situation since it is hard enough to choose one from just three candidates, or a few political parties.
Political parties are not only criteria in themselves but also play an important role in defining and specifying criteria for selection. The people will make use of these criteria to choose government leaders and voice their aspirations more easily.

Being criteria for selection, political parties also provide standards for the materialization of this selection. The citizens cannot give their faith to a political party and ignore all consequences, but they expect proper materialization of their programs and policies.

In fact, if we look closely at political movements of recent years, we cannot deny that our generation is a generation of universality, of competition, science and technology. The prosperity or deterioration of a regime, the existence or dissolution of a nation no longer depend on a minority of individually talented leaders but depend on the capability of leaders who can mobilize the whole nation and coordinate efforts in the implementation of programs.

A non-political government directed by isolated individuals lacking communication with people's organizations can never mobilize the whole nation. Therefore, in most advanced countries political parties are structural communication media between the public and the government.

This basic data - political parties as foundations of the government and centers for political activities - we find in any political regime, democratic or dictatorial. In totalitarian countries like Russia, Red China, Hitler's Germany, Fascist Italy, or democratic Britain, the United States, or
West European countries, political parties have been the resources for building the government. We recall that when General De Gaulle was not President of France, he always criticized the Fourth French Republic as a partisan regime (to be understood disparagingly). Yet, when in power, he had to organize for his own support a political party which so far has helped the Fifth French Republic to survive.

In a few words, with these missions we just have cited (training the citizens and educating future leaders, setting up criteria for elections) political parties are essential for political activities, because they are the representative organs which consolidate national will, and through which the citizens directly and actively participate in political activities.

II. Political parties and Vietnam's current situation

Being principal centers for political activities in general, political parties are vital to Vietnam's fledgeling democracy.

A. Political parties and government structures.

A common democratic regime is a decentralized government. In this regime, the Executive Branch and the Legislative Branch have different missions with the Legislative overseeing the Executive. However, both the Executive and the Legislative must cooperate with each other to solve important national issues.

In advanced countries, the cooperation between the Executive and the Legislative is easily implemented through the media of political parties which make up the government with their members in the Executive Branch and in the Congress. The members of political parties in the Government will have their partisan
Congressman to defend government platforms in Congress, and if they are the majority in the Congress, all government proposed laws will be passed by the Legislative, and all government programs and plans will be approved by the Congress.

With the 1967 constitution, the Republic of Vietnam adopted a decentralized regime, but has no political parties as basic support in the government and the Congress. The current government of Vietnam is a government of specialists. Most of the senators and members of the House are from no political parties. This situation has hampered smooth operation of government machinery in the second Republic of Vietnam.

The first thing we notice is a complete disintegration of tendencies in the Congress. Both the Senate and the House possess many different blocks, without any one of them being stronger than the others. Senators or Representatives in any given bloc have no common platforms among themselves regarding various issues, hence none of the blocs can apply good discipline for decision-making.

Through the various names of the blocs in both chambers, we can realize that there is no bloc in the Senate related to any other blocs in the Lower House. Therefore, there is no structural relationship between the two chambers. And both Legislative chambers have no close cooperation for the implementation of any common legislation. Furthermore, they strongly oppose each other.

Between the government and the Congress, the relationships are no better. There are no political parties working as structural liaison between the Executive and the Legislative, and both become
isolated agencies. Between Legislative personnel and government officials there exists no esprit de corps, they have no joint political program to implement, no support for the government, since Senators or Representatives may be suspected of being bought by the government.

Therefore, even though they realize that the government is right, Congressmen rarely defend government platforms at the National Assembly. As a result, in various discussions regarding proposed laws or recommendations from the government, one would hear more criticism than defense. Hence when a law or recommendation from the government is approved by the National Assembly, the people are rather surprised by such an outcome. And such reaction is rather harmful to Congress' prestige.

On the other hand, since there is no significant group of Senators or Representatives in support of the President helping him to have his bills passed, the President has to resort to his veto power to finally have passed bills deemed necessary for his policies. The use of this veto power has often helped the President to make laws with the cooperation of a minority of Senators and House Representatives at the National Assembly.

B. Political parties and the public.

Disparity of relationship between the Executive and the Legislative, a government without political parties for support, and non political ways of life are very harmful within Vietnam's current situation. Due to lack of coordination
among elite elements and an absence of social activities, the citizens of the nation become indifferent toward public affairs and continue to live unconcerned like irresponsible strangers.

They really continue to "live on the moon", forgetting that today in the United States there is a change of policy and government, forgetting that it is time for them to save themselves. If they are positive that the Allied nations, chiefly the United States, will continue to help them preserve their freedom and self determination - which nobody denies - they must be clear-sighted and add that this help will not be given at any price but, on the contrary, with a condition: South Vietnam must make enough efforts to create favorable conditions to come out victorious in its future political struggle. That is the chief point to be emphasized and it is the key to all the problems.

In fact, there are some people who are hoping for a military victory. Actually, looking straight at the real situation of the enemy and our progress during last year, we know that a military victory is not impossible. Yet it would demand a long time which would not be allowed by the pressure of international circumstances, by the impatience of public opinion in the United States, as well as the aspirations for peace of the Vietnamese people themselves. In addition, the presence of the Paris talks - the fact that the parties involved have agreed to sit at a conference table to seek possible solutions, implies that there must be political solutions. Therefore it is completely unrealistic to wait for a military
victory. Moreover, a military victory will not solve the problems of a struggle in which the decisive factor is the people.

Also unrealistic is the platform of those who, although they understand the importance of future political struggle, still conceive political life as non-political. Pretending that in order to prepare for the future it is sufficient to train good administrators and courageous soldiers, is really exhibiting superficial understanding of the problems. Nobody would deny the importance of administrative and military factors in any unconventional warfare. Yet these are only secondary factors, which cannot by themselves bring about success. The decisive factor always remains a political one.

We must immediately realize that the type of warfare we are fighting is the hardest one. The Communists have found in South Vietnam a favorable ground and circumstances for the application of a type of insurgency warfare. Drawing on experiences from the Korean war as well as from their own, the Communists of North Vietnam refused to wage an open invasion bringing the bulk of their troops down south, and decided to carry out a type of insurgency warfare in which the peasantry will play the major role. It is the countryside which is the battlefield for their political and armed struggle—the decisive battlefield. Enticing the peasants into this struggle under the false pretext of defending their rights of peasantry, the communist strategy also aims at controlling and making complete use of countryside manpower and resources for this struggle.
This warfare of insurgency, applied to its congenial framework of South Vietnam - an underdeveloped country with only embryonic industries, where peasantry is the majority - has become a struggle for winning support in the countryside. It is at this infrastructure level which encompasses most of South Vietnam that the communist strategists wanted to lay deep roots for future logistical support of North Vietnam's main body of regular forces to back up a general insurrection of the people for the final overthrow of the government of South Vietnam.

And in this general and combined strategy the political factor always plays a top role. The objective of this type of warfare is not to occupy land, nor kill as many enemies as possible, neither capture as many weapons as feasible. The nature of this battle is not the fighting between military units contending for the occupation of a hill top or a few inches of ground. Its main objective is to win the hearts of the people, to occupy the people rather than the ground.

Therefore the battle front - despite its importance - still is secondary to the main and decisive battle front in winning the hearts of the people. Stressing this point we want to remind that building new hamlets, pitching nationalist flags on newly occupied lands, conducting elections, etc. do not necessarily mean actual control of the countryside. The most dangerous communist tactic which must retain our attention is the fact they want to secure for themselves the legal entity of
the people. They want to make the people - although living under their control and participating in insurgency - continue to simulate acceptance of the nationalist government and demand that it solve their own problems of living.

The struggle for winning the hearts of people is a political matter.

Understanding that this war is a struggle for winning the hearts of the people and that the political battle front is at the top, for it governs and influences everything, the question which becomes outstanding is how to win this kind of battle.

The first remark we must sincerely make is that so far the majority of the people is not involved in this kind of battle. They are within the scope of our control, our government takes care of them for hundreds of needs, but their minds and hearts are not with us as yet. Pointing out this fact, certain people identify it as the third force which is the majority of people standing in between.

It is a hasty judgment to pretend that the bloc of people that does not side with communism but does not support the present Government of Vietnam makes up the third force. Everybody agrees (and this is the key to war or peace in Vietnam) that the majority of South Vietnam is against the Communists, but they do not have confidence in their current government as yet. We failed to organize and motivate the majority of the people to struggle for our nationalistic cause. Yet this majority of the
people is nationalist, belonging to the nationalist camp. A clear and concrete political platform must lead to realization that in this decisive struggle there are only two camps: nationalist and communist. The current government of Vietnam has only a temporary character in representing the nation for some stage or period, to lead the struggle and bring peace and freedom back to the nation.

People can oppose the government, openly represent antagonistic viewpoints, demand a change of policies as well as manpower or personnel, but all these changes must take place within the framework of the nationalist camp and relate to current methods and means of the struggle against the common enemy. Therefore it is impossible to consider the current government as one party, and the majority of the people who are not completely for the government as another party. They all are of one party with all their differences concerning ways of leadership. And this is the nationalist party striving to defend South Vietnam from falling into Communists' hands.

The majority of the people live with us but are not with us as yet. Meantime, in communist controlled areas, people are forced to participate in the struggle. With all forms, means and tricks, the communists mobilize all classes of the people to be with them. In Communists' eyes nobody can stay out of the struggle.

Being aware of this situation, we must think of the question of organizing the people into ranks and files, mobilizing the people in order to get them involved in the struggle. And this
is a pre-requisite condition for winning the battle. Proper ways to deal with the problem is not simply to distribute rice and sugar, but also to stress political question in order to strengthen people’s political platforms and ideologies.

In fact, how can the people go with us when they do not understand our political stand? How can we mobilize them when our government cadres and high ranking military and civilian officials are still confused, having no insight into the President's platform?

We have so far completed the task of " politicizing" our organizations. With the establishment of central government institutions and the activation of local elected government structures at province, village and hamlet levels, our legal political and democratic framework is pretty well installed.

Now we must start to " politicize" the activities of these institutions. And the basic problem will be the strengthening of proper ideologies for democracy and freedom. What must we do to impress these ideologies in people's minds and hearts - ideologies based on human values of love and mutual understanding, and promotion of community development for mankind?

What must we do to further our nationalistic cause and instill a strong and steadfast confidence in people's hearts for a free and democratic society against communism (a foreign ideology playing against Vietnam, against all concepts of family and religion and against all genuine aspirations of the people)? Our society indeed, abounds with weaknesses. Nevertheless,
we still have opportunities and prospects for improvement, while a communist society is a permanent concentration camp.

Therefore, an aggressive learning movement for fundamental politics must be planned, implemented and coordinated on a nationwide scale. Efforts must be made in revolutionary development, in winning the hearts of the people, and chiefly in trying to build people's political thinking; motivating them to accept our society as it is, with weaknesses and deficiencies, but with strong potential for improvement. Thus they will take appropriate action and strive for improvement with voluntary sacrifice.

If they are effectively taught democratic ideology and choose to live in a free society (in fact this is the trend of mankind's history and reason for existence), the citizens will visualize the importance and necessity of the struggle and become involved.

However, "to politicize" people's activities does not mean only to build up their political thinking but also to stress the unification of political platforms and viewpoints regarding basic problems. Communist tactics aim at destroying confidence in GVN by confusing and slandering it, in order to arouse antagonistic opinions in the people concerning us; and if we fall into their trap, we shall react passively. Except for those undesirables who take advantage of the situation to make their own fortune and get ready to move out, the majority of people live in indifference, relying on others, having no hope for the future, and being discontent with the present.
The task of explaining political points of view and consolidating political platforms belongs to Public Information Services, but actually is a task of civic action. Speaking of civic action, we imply "politicizing" government organizations. And this will demand broad planning and coordination aimed at making each civil servant and each soldier a political cadre at any cost, particularly at the infrastructure levels. Only a cadre imbued with strong political thinking, firm in his basic platform of nationalism, can promote wide acceptance of political training and political confidence in the people.

The cadre shall not only discuss and explain in trying to educate the people politically, he must also tactfully take advantage of the political aspects of all activities. Our weakness is in paying too much attention to technicalities without knowing how to take advantage of political influence from our technical work. If all government employees were convinced they are also political cadres, then those whose daily work has good influence on the people, such as school teachers, Public Health workers, Agriculture Specialists, Social Welfare workers, Veterinarians, etc. should have taken advantage of their prestige to develop nationalistic thoughts in the people.

Such a plan for politicizing government organizations must not be designed for the support of any one individual or group of individuals, but on the contrary must aim at promoting and maintaining a movement of civic action in Public Administration organizations and agencies for the common task of "politicizing" the people.
The above-mentioned policies and plans, initiated and implemented by the government, are very important, but cannot be self-sufficient. They must be supported by different political, religious, professional, ethnic groupings, etc. by those organizations which are capable of integrating the people and can play an important role in winning people's hearts. Such a concept demands from the government an appropriate policy toward all anticommunist associations. If the government cannot give them assistance, at least it should not minimize their influence or jeopardize their activities.

To "politicize" people's activities also means to foster their spirit of struggle. If it is exaggeration to say that victory belongs to those who stand fast for the last fifteen minutes, this idea should serve as guidance to government cadres.

Confronted with a long protracted and trying struggle, there only remains the need for determination to win, in order to promote a spirit of endurance and acceptance of sacrifice in the work of contending with the enemy for the control of people, time and space. Only good morale is able to help us to be self-sufficient and to cease idle reliance on others. If foreign aid is necessary under present circumstances, it is because of foreign aid that we must quickly develop our willingness to be self-supporting and self-sufficient, to be ready for the forthcoming hardships when there is no more foreign aid.

Our success or failure depends on the outcome of this political struggle. We must quickly
get rid of erroneous concepts, of considering the fight against communism as pertaining strictly to the armed forces; as a task of killing and of confiscating enemy weapons. Until the day on which we obtain support from the people, we should not hasten to think of peace and victory.

The foregoing address, which was recently delivered to the Faculty of Law, University of Saigon, is printed here by permission of Dr. Nguyen van Bong.