HOANG VAN THAI ON REVISIONISM

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HOANG VAN THAI ARTICLE OF REVOLUTIONISM

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(Hoang Van Thai article: "It Is Necessary To Hold Fast to the Party Military Line and Check the Revisionist Influence in the Military Sphere")

(all brackets and ellipses are as published—ed.)

(Text) At present the southern part of our country is carrying out a liberation war against the U.S. imperialist aggressors, and the nation has to maintain its readiness at all times to struggle to smash the U.S. imperialist scheme of extending their aggressive war. Today more than ever before, our cadres, servicemen, and people must hold fast to the party military line in order to build and strengthen our armed forces, consolidate national defense, strengthen the proletarian dictatorship, and insure the success of the revolutionary struggle.

Simultaneously with their distortion of and opposition to the Marxist-Leninist line with regard to all essential problems of world politics, the modern revisionists are trying to distort and reject the Marxist-Leninist views on war and the army and on the rules of war and armed struggle. Therefore, officers and men of our armed forces must heighten their revolutionary vigilance, smash any argument of modern revisionism, and check its influence in order to implement correctly the party line.

The main errors committed by the modern revisionists in the military sphere:

If the modern revisionists, while distorting Marxism-Leninism with regard to the main problems of world politics, start from an analysis and distortion of the nature, characteristics, and content of the present era, then in the military sphere they start from distortion and rejection of Marxist-Leninist arguments concerning the origin and nature of war. This distortion and rejection are also the logical result of the distortion of the nature, characteristics, and content of the (present era?). As a result of their distortion and rejection of the arguments of Marxism-Leninism concerning the origin and nature of war, the modern revisionists are unable to expound correctly the rules of war and adopt an attitude or take actions that are suitable to war.

The first basic rule of war which the modern revisionists are trying to distort or reject is the rule that war is dependent on politics. In his speech of the U.N. General Assembly at the end of 1960 Tito declared: "Nowadays the definition that war is the continuation of politics through other means is no longer sufficient." The reasons which the modern
revisionists use to support this argument are mainly based upon their view of the staggering developments in the field of military hardware. Modern revisionists consider that atomic weapons and international ballistic missiles have brought about a leap forward in the nature of war and that imperialism can no longer use war to attain its political goals because the outbreak of a new war would mean the doomsday of mankind and the annihilation of both sides. Therefore, war is no longer a continuation of politics. If war were a continuation of politics it would be a continuation of the politics of the "war maniacs" within the ranks of the imperialists and of those who lack "clearsightedness" and who are "warlike" within the socialist camp.

Is it due to the appearance of atomic weapons that imperialism has renounced the use of war to carry out its schemes of enslave the whole world? All the Marxist-Leninists reply that this is not so. The practical development of the political situation in the world also produces a negative reply. One asks what the aim is of all the programs and plans of armament, especially of production of atomic weapons, which Western countries are carrying out? Are they not aimed at enriching the pockets of the monopolist capitalists in imperialist countries? The present political line of the U.S. Imperialists consists of using every sort of trick to enslave the world in order to gain the greatest net profit and save their outdated capitalism from its doom. The figure of net profits that the U.S. imperialists obtained from the nuclear arms race in preparation for launching war clearly proves the above fact: in 1939, 2.4 billion dollars; in 1949, 27 billion dollars (military budget: 12 billion); and in 1959, 47 billion dollars (military budget: 46 billion).

The U.S. imperialists themselves have spoken of their scheme to prepare for war. U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Taylor wrote in "Desperate Strategy": "The U.S. military program comprises all intelligent measures... to attain our national goal and, after military actions have been successfully developed, we will build the most beautiful world." This most beautiful world, which is the outcome of military action, is, according to U.S. Congressman (Robert J. Corbett?), "only a world in which our will actually triumphs... and in which international relations will be based not on compromise, but on coercion and complete coercion." Let us ask what is the U.S. imperialists' aim in establishing missile bases throughout the world surrounding the socialist camp, in continuing to carry out about a dozen underground atomic tests recently, and so forth?

The Marxist-Leninists never deny that the development of weapons to a certain degree will have a definite effect upon those who use them. But this effect absolutely does not change the class and political nature of the imperialist clique. On the contrary, the new weapons in the imperialists' hands constitute a factor that further stimulates their ambition. The savage and barbarous acts of the U.S. imperialists in using atomic bombs to massacre tens of thousands of Japanese were aimed at menacing and intimidating the world's peoples. It opened a period in which the U.S. imperialists relied upon atomic bombs to carry out their warlike and aggressive political line.
Since then if the U.S. imperialists have not dared to commit new crimes with atomic weapons, it is mainly because they are trembling before the strength of the peace-loving and democratic movement and of socialism. No one can forget that during the days when the U.S. imperialists suffered successive defeats in the aggressive war against North Korea (1950-1953), and when the French imperialists were defeated in the aggressive war against Vietnam (1945-1954), the U.S. imperialists several times spoke of adventurously using atomic weapons to overcome their then difficult situation. But each time they dared not commit additional crimes with atomic weapons, fearing that this would not only prove useless in solving any problem, but would cause unimaginable consequences in the political field.

In theory and practice, modern revisionists are unable to find any evidence and reason to prove that nowadays war is no longer a continuation of politics. But they continue to adhere to their erroneous view. Moreover, they stress the "accident" factor to distort and reject the rule of dependence of war on politics, by saying for instance that "the disaster of a world war may be caused by the breaking down of the guidance mechanism of a missile or by a fit of mental derangement on the part of a pilot." This argument is only a repetition of the arguments of the imperialist psychological warfare organs about the danger of the destruction of the world.

The danger to modern revisionists, a group denying the rule of dependence of war on politics lies not only in the fact that it blurs the class nature of war, creates confusion between just and unjust wars, and prevents the masses from distinguishing between friend and foe, but also in that it also deprives the revolutionary masses of the right to take up weapons to oppose armed repression of the ruling bourgeois. It prevents the oppressed of the right to wage war against the imperialist aggressors, and at preventing the revolutionary masses from realizing their invincible strength and from recognizing that they are able to defeat the imperialists despite the modern weapons they are equipped with.

Starting from the denial of the rule of the dependence of war on politics, modern revisionism has shifted to denying the role concerning the decisive role of the masses in war. All of us know that politics is the reflection of the economic and social system and the political structure of the state and the situation of different classes inside and outside the country, of which the laboring masses form the majority and the decisive force. That is why the laboring masses exert a decisive influence upon war. Only through understanding this point can we explain correctly why--though having stocked quite a large quantity of nuclear weapons, having built multimillion-men armed forces and a gigantic war machine--the warlike imperialists, led by the U.S. imperialists, still hesitate to carry out their plans to wage a war and of aggression. Only by understanding this point can we explain why the U.S. imperialists were defeated in the aggressive war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in their plan to use armed forces to smother the Socialist Republic of Cuba, and why they are being defeated in their aggressive war against South Vietnam.
It is the masses of people in the invaded countries, in their own countries, and in other countries throughout the world who have defeated the warlike and aggressive schemes and actions of the imperialists. The political line consisting of relying on weapons and armed forces to save the outdated and reactionary capitalist system has further isolated the imperialists, caused the masses of people to feel more hatred for the imperialists, and strengthened the determination of the masses to defeat all criminal actions and schemes of the imperialists in order to destroy imperialism, save mankind from an atrocious death, and build a world where there is no exploitation of man by man.

History has many times proved the decisive role of the masses in war. Even the imperialists who have given birth to the theory of the weapon, the theory of pushbutton war, and so forth, must recognize the decisive and important role of the masses in war. Naturally, the imperialists' view differs totally from the Marxist view about the role of the masses in war. The imperialists concede that the masses play a decisive role only because men are necessary "living beings" to handle weapons, while the Marxists recognize the role of the masses because the latter belong to a definite class and they create everything, including war materiel.

The modern revisionists have, at certain moments, declared that the masses play a decisive role in war, but through their propaganda arguments and actions the role of the masses has become unimportant. It is not fortuitous that modern revisionists have repeated the imperialist arguments that "now divisions are only flesh targets; to speak of the balance of military forces is to speak of the number of nuclear bombs and fighter planes," and that "now militiamen do not belong to the armed forces," and so forth. Having sunk deeply into the mud of the theory of weapons, the modern revisionists are unable to see the role of the masses in modern war. They have forgotten the historic lesson drawn from the great war fought by the Soviet people against the German fascists to protect their country. When the German fascists furiously advanced toward Moscow, the Soviet Armed Forces seemed to be inferior to the enemy. Faced with this situation, the bourgeois military specialists and German fascists believed that the Soviet Union would surely be defeated. But the CPSU, led by Stalin, asserted that the victors would be the Soviet people, not the German fascists.

History proves that it was due to the strength of the masses that the Soviet people defeated the German fascists, that the Chinese people defeated the Japanese fascists and the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique, which was aided by the Americans, that the Chinese and Korean peoples defeated the U.S. imperialists and their allies in the aggressive war they waged in Korea, that the Vietnamese people defeated the French colonialists and the U.S. interventionists in the recent war, that the South Vietnamese people are defeating the "special war" of the U.S. imperialists in South Vietnam, and that the Cuban and Algerian people defeated the imperialists and colonialists although the latter had more powerful weapons.
Military history supplies us with much evidence of the decisive role of the masses in war, and history also shows that the higher the level of weapon development, the greater the role of the masses in war. Marxist-Leninists must clearly realize this point and understand where their basic leaning point is during the war in our present era. Especially in our present era when the socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of human society and communist ideology has won the minds and hearts of almost all workers the world over, the role of the masses in war is ever greater and has manifested itself in the most centralized and comprehensive way in revolutionary wars having a popular, comprehensive, and absolute character in those countries where the parties of the proletariat assume power.

While asserting the decisive role of the masses in war, we must not underestimate the role of weapons. We understand clearly that to defeat the imperialists and reduce the people's sacrifices we need weapons. Our country and other socialist countries are saving dong after dong and taking advantage of all available capacity to produce more powerful weapons, including nuclear weapons. We have high regard for the achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of producing nuclear weapons and missiles. We regard these weapons as an important contribution to heightening the national defense capacity and the military strength of the entire socialist camp for the struggle against the aggressive and warlike schemes of the imperialists, led by the U.S. imperialists.

We also regard the production of nuclear weapons by another socialist country as necessary to increase the capacity for protecting world peace and protecting the socialist camp. However, despite these considerations, we must not deny the decisive role of the masses. We must not base ourselves on nuclear weapons to formulate the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary armed forces. We must not regard nuclear weapons as the decisive factor in the success or failure of war. The factor deciding the success or failure of war can only be men, the masses.

Modern revisionism is also injecting its venom into the rules of special war in countries where a weak army has to face a stronger army and in countries which are pursuing a liberation and anti-imperialist war. Historic realities of the present era and the realities of the national liberation struggle movement today that the oppressed and the newly independent nations can defend the imperialist and colonialist aggressors. They must engage in protracted war if the enemy is equipped with stronger weapons. If they can pursue this protracted war, they will surely win, no matter how much stronger the enemy is. The protracted war against the French colonialist aggressors (1945-1954) in Vietnam, the protracted liberation war of the Algerian people, the present protracted war against the U.S. aggressors in South Vietnam, and so forth, support this rule.
The success of the protracted armed struggles of the Chinese, Vietnamese, Algerian, and other peoples proves that if the oppressed nations and peoples are determined to take up weapons and rise up to struggle against the imperialist aggressors and the local reactionaries, they will be able to destroy the "fight quickly and win quickly" plan of the imperialists and their lackeys and will surely win the final victory. The victory of the Algerian people, the repeated victories of the South Vietnamese people in the protracted armed struggle against the U.S. imperialist aggressors, and the victories in the liberation war of the Angolan, Venezuelan, and other peoples are creating many difficulties for the imperialists and are confusing them and weakening them daily. But the modern revisionists have brazenly declared that this has been possible thanks to good will and an arrangement among the leaders of big powers, that the imperialists do not want to pursue war, and that this is a (special rule?). These arguments prove that the modern revisionists accept only the rule that weapons, especially nuclear weapons, decide everything.

In criticizing the arguments praising the role of weapons and of professional armies in denying the revolutionary nature of the masses and denying the possibility of victory for the oppressed when they have to use rudimentary weapons to oppose modern weapons in their struggle for self-liberation, Lenin said: "... although they are weak and although the European oppressors seem to be invincible thanks to their technical miracles and military art, the revolutionary struggle that the oppressed are pursuing—if it actually awakens millions of laboring and exploited peoples—will bring about many possibilities and miracles..." This view of Lenin has been regarded by the oppressed, while pursuing their liberation war, as a motto, a rule to be followed.

Recently the modern revisionists set forth the following argument: "all military conflicts can be settled through negotiations. Historic realities and the personal experiences of the countries that are embarking on armed struggle against old and new colonialism and imperialism prove that the imperialists and colonials never withdraw voluntarily or want to compromise and negotiate. The 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina could be convened and achieve results only after the Vietnamese people had struggled for nine long years and dealt the French imperialists a deadly blow at Dien Bien Phu. The 1962 Geneva Conference on Laos could be convened and achieve results only after the Laotian people had continuously struggled and destroyed the scheme of enlarging the war of the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, especially after the Nham Tha victory of the Laotian combatants and people. McCarr, chief of the U.S. military advisers in South Vietnam, once said: To annihilate the Vietnamese people's combativeness, it is necessary to instill in them "the illusion that it is possible to settle all conflicts through peaceful means."

The above facts prove that the imperialists, especially the U.S. imperialists, are extremely wicked and cunning and that the modern revisionists, if they do not intentionally serve the plots of the
imperialist aggressors, are truly naive and credulous and are only vaguely aware of the cruel, warlike, and greedy nature of the imperialists.

Starting from the erroneous views about the origin and nature of war, from the emphasis on the important role of weapons, and from the denial of the rules of war, the modern revisionists have committed a series of errors while solving the problems concerning the study of military theories and while making preparations for the revolutionary armed forces to oppose the aggressive wars of the imperialists. The modern revisionists have committed mistakes about "the changes in the quality of weapons." They have also committed mistakes in expounding the military strategy for the present era. They believe that the military strategy of the present era "by nature is the strategy of using nuclear weapons." Here they have become confused concerning the bases and methods of military strategy and have standardized the bases of military strategy.

Marxism-Leninism never denies the importance of weapons in military strategy and of the military changes caused by the development of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, whose appearance has made these changes more important.

Faced with an enemy having nuclear weapons, we will surely commit mistakes in expounding military strategy if we do not take into consideration the military changes caused by nuclear weapons. However, we must not regard this as the only base on which we will build our military strategy, because military strategy in practice is only a plan, a program of action designed to achieve political goals and satisfy the demands set forth by politics in the entire war. That is why the base on which we build our military strategy can only be a political base—that is, the economic, social, and the political structure, and the situation of classes in and outside the country. Weapons are only a concrete manifestation of the economic and social system, although they are the most important manifestations in case of war. To formulate a correct military strategy it is necessary to start from all these bases. Nuclear weapons can only be a base on which we rely to decide on the methods of pursuing the war and not a base which decides everything and completely changes the basic principles of war.

The change in the military strategy of the U.S. imperialists from a "furious counterattacks" strategy to a "versatile reactions" strategy proves that this change is not decided by nuclear weapons and that nuclear weapons are not the basis of this reactionary strategy. This is admitted by the U.S. imperialists in their document "General Recapitulation of the Experiences of the Anticomunist War." They say: "To overcome the present political deadlock in the world there is only one means: limited war." Thus we see clearly that the base of the new U.S. strategy is precisely "the present political deadlock in the world"—that is, the deadlock of the economic system and the political structure of the imperialists and the deadlock they encounter in dealing with the class struggle in capitalist countries and with the struggle for national independence—struggles which are strongly developing daily.
Starting from mistakes committed while formulating military strategy and from confusion concerning the bases and methods of strategy, the modern revisionists have arrived at these odd conclusions: to struggle against the imperialists it is necessary to have nuclear weapons only, and when a country in the anti-imperialist camp has nuclear weapons that are stronger than those of the strongest imperialist country, the other countries have nothing to fear and do not have to discuss their military strategy further. These mistakes have led the modern revisionists unilaterally to magnify the unexpected factors in modern war. In the present era, when military materials are highly developed and have great power and high mobility, the unexpected factors have become those which exert great influence on the evolution of strategy. Pointing out this fact is extremely necessary. But at no time, in no case, and under no circumstances, can the unexpected factors paralyze the enemy to the point that other factors cannot be made use of.

In a capitalist country in which it is impossible to take advantage of all permanent factors deciding the process and results of the war, or in countries which do not try to consolidate these factors, the above assertion is partially correct. But Marxist-Leninists must not use a temporary event to replace a rule. Marxism-Leninism has pointed out that the unexpected factors are not the permanent factors deciding the process and results of war because those who are favored with the unexpected factors but who lack the other basic factors—such as the political factor, a consolidated rear guard, the economic capacity, and so forth—cannot win. This is strikingly proved by the failure of the aggressive war launched by the German fascists against the Soviet Union.

A study of the wars in Vietnam, Cuba, Korea, Algeria, and other countries shows that it was the combativeness of the people and their comprehensively consolidated rear areas that were the main factors of their victories over the imperialist aggressors. It was thanks to their determination to vanquish the enemy that the people of these countries advanced from the state of having almost no material base for struggle to the state of having a sufficiently strong material base to defeat the enemy. History also teaches us that as far as the comparison between the material base—including weapons—of the revolutionary force and that of the reactionary bourgeois force is concerned, it is not necessary for a revolutionary force to have a material base as strong as that of the enemy to vanquish the latter. On the contrary, in many revolutionary wars a weaker force is victorious over a stronger force.
One cannot arrive at correct conclusions if, in comparing the forces, one fails to look comprehensively at the revolutionary force, see its positive factors, and see the capacities of the people and the revolutionary force. The errors concerning the theory and viewpoints about war in the present era will lead the modern revisionists to errors concerning the building of the revolutionary armed forces. With an eye that sees "only nuclear weapons," modern revisionists have gone astray from the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism while building and consolidating the revolutionary armed forces. Modern revisionists also speak of party leadership and political activities, but these declarations are driven into oblivion or become empty words when the modern revisionists concentrate their attention on stressing "the techniques of using nuclear weapons" and "professional quality."

Replacing the class policy with the theory of "weapons alone" in the building of the revolutionary armed forces, modern revisionists maintain that in the past we paid attention to political activities because our weapons were weak. They forget that class policy continues to be the basic problem in the building of the revolutionary armed forces and that correct political activities constitute the life of the revolutionary armed forces. These two things make the revolutionary armed forces superior to any imperialist armed force.

Historic experiences show that there are cases in which a revolutionary army which is fully equipped with modern weapons but is politically disturbed--having a vague notion about classes and being unable to distinguish friends from foes--is dispersed before the armed attacks of the counterrevolutionaries. The change in the nature of the Yugoslav Armed Forces is an example. Under the control of the Tito revisionist group and because of its sabotage, the Yugoslav Armed Forces have been turned from the revolutionary armed forces of the antifascist war for national liberation into a tool of the false socialist dictatorship--in fact a bourgeois dictatorship--for serving the reactionary plots of the imperialists.

Adhering to the "weapons alone" theory and using eyes which see "only nuclear weapons" to look at the military experiences of other countries, the modern revisionists have shown disdain for the experiences of the revolutionary armed forces, whose armament is weak, and for the correct military policies of these countries. They say: You know nothing about orthodox war. Perhaps for them only world war or nuclear war is orthodox war. They do not understand that armed class struggle has many forms and sizes.

The U.S. imperialists are presently waging regional wars and "special wars" to invade other countries. This is why proletarian military science must study both world wars in which nuclear weapons are used and regional wars and "special wars" in which mainly conventional weapons are used. The revolutionary armed forces in many countries sometimes
have to engage in minor wars before engaging in major wars and use conventional weapons before using nuclear weapons. He who does not study all categories of wars and make full preparations for them fails to realize clearly the imperialist plots and detaches himself from the political tasks of the world revolutionary movement. From the viewpoint of military studies, while the imperialists use the "flexible reactions" strategy, wage minor wars to prepare for major wars, and associate "peaceful infiltration" with "armed aggression" to fight the world revolutionary movement, he who fails to counterattack the imperialists to defeat their attacks and sees only the necessity to prepare for world war has fallen into the state of negative defense and deprives himself of an opportunity to take the initiative and attack. The modern revisionists' errors have had disastrous effects on the military activities of socialist countries in particular and on the military studies of the proletariat in general.

Historic realities have proved and are proving that the military line of our party is correct.

Since its founding, our party has continuously understood correctly and kept a firm hold on the Marxist-Leninist arguments concerning the problems of armed struggle and the building of the revolutionary armed forces. Our party has continuously kept a firm hold on the nature of problems, has not been deceived by secondary or temporary events, has not been lured away from Marxist principles by emotional causes, has resolutely and bravely guarded the truth, and has continuously directed the spearhead of attacks right at the enemy. While leading the people in undertaking the resistance war against the French imperialist aggressors, our party--due to the fact that it kept a firm hold on Marxist-Leninist principles on war and studied the experiences of the Soviet war to protect the fatherland and the Chinese war of liberation--understood correctly how to apply the rules of war to the particular conditions in Vietnam. Set forth by our party at that time, the slogan "Protracted resistance and self-sufficiency," the slogan "Advancing from guerrilla warfare to war fought by the regular army," and the slogan "Building three categories of armed forces," proved that our party understood correctly and kept a firm hold on the rules of war. That is why our party succeeded in leading our people in overcoming thousands of difficulties and to final victory.

At its recent ninth conference, the party Central Committee criticized the modern revisionists' views about war and peace, deeply analyzed the situation, and based itself on Marxist-Leninist views to assert that in the present world situation, despite the appearance of nuclear weapons, war continues to be the continuation of politics through other means—that is, through the power of weapons. Imperialism is the source of modern war. By nature it is warlike and aggressive. To eliminate war forever it is necessary to carry out the revolution to destroy imperialism.
Dealing with the nature of war, our party asserted that there are two categories of war: just war and unjust war. Community must support all just wars and oppose all unjust wars. Dealing with the struggle for protecting peace and the role of the masses of people in modern war, our party set forth the view that protecting peace is the duty of the majority of the people. Modern war is a comprehensive war in which everyone must participate. It requires that all men and resources of each country be mobilized. That is why modern revolutionary war must be fought by all the people. Consequently, the view concerning the decisive role of the masses of people in war is still fully valid.

Based on the above views, the military line of our party is unchanged; it continues to be the line of people's war and of comprehensive and absolute war, and it remains the line of the people's army. The party line about people's war and the people's army is the result of a creative application of the Marxist-Leninist principles and the experiences of armed struggle in the Soviet Union and China to the particular conditions in Vietnam. Any view or thought which is different from or contrary to the line on people's war and the people's army, no matter how cleverly it is concealed or camouflaged, must be considered erroneous.

In the recent past a number of us cultivated a number of erroneous views and thoughts. A number of our army men had a perfunctory or vague notion about modern war and about the modern and standardized army. At a certain moment and in a certain place there was a tendency to pay little attention to helping and training the paramilitary forces, a tendency to demand a reexamination of the three forms of combat—guerrilla warfare, ideological mobilization of the people, and field combat—a tendency to doubt the correctness of the persistent attitude of regarding the principle of political building as the most basic principle of army building, and so forth. Among the people there was a tendency to pay attention only to economic building and little attention to associating economic building with national defense. There were also cases of lack of awareness of the problem of combat readiness, a tendency to rely entirely on the permanent army, and so forth.

There may be many causes for the above erroneous thoughts and views: for some persons, the "weapons only" theory may be the main influence; for others, it may be mechanicalism, dogmatism, lack of independent thoughts, and so forth. But there is a general cause: the party line on people's war and the people's army has not been fully understood. Under new conditions—the building of both the economy and a standardized and modern army and the combining of personal experiences with those of brother countries—we have many advantageous conditions to build our army and consolidate national defense. But it is precisely due to the fact that they see only the new conditions and forget their origin that a number of people have developed shortcomings in both the fields of ideological consciousness and military studies.
Under any circumstance, no matter how strong we or the enemy are and no matter whether conventional or nuclear weapons are used, our war will always be a people's war. Our primary buttress will always be the masses of people. They will continue to play the most decisive role and the spiritual weapon will always be the strongest. That is why in building our armed forces we must patiently build three categories of forces: the militia and guerrilla force, the local force, and the main force. In combat we must patiently apply, develop, and perfect the three categories of combat forms: guerrilla warfare, ideological mobilization of the people, and field combat. The recent events concerning the building of the armed forces and the consolidation of national defenses show that whenever we keep a firm hold on the line of people's war and people's army, we will score high performances and overcome difficulties and obstacles. On the other hand, whenever and wherever we do not fully understand the line of people's war and people's army, we will commit errors and mistakes and be confused in the face of the difficulties and obstacles created by new conditions.

All of us know that no difficulty, hardship, or danger can be compared to the present conditions under which the southern people are fighting. Yet the southern combatants and people not only are not being exterminated by the enemy, but are becoming ever stronger, causing the enemy to suffer defeat after defeat, and are drawing nearer and nearer to final victory. The brilliant successes of the southern people are due mainly to the fact that they have applied creatively and developed successfully the line of people's war and people's army.

At present, to fulfill the task of building the armed forces as set forth by the party, we must understand fully the line of people's war and people's army. Especially, we must help all the people to become combat-ready and increase the people's capacity for national defense. In order to fulfill the above tasks we must correctly settle the relationship between building up the economy and building up national defense. We must pay attention to economic building, but we must not relax vigilance in the face of the aggressive schemes of the U.S. imperialists. By nature, economic building is aimed at turning the rear into a main base in case of war. But we will be overly concerned with economy if we forget that we are engaging in economic building while half the country is in war and the world is beset with aggression. One of the main errors of the modern revisionists is their worship of economic factors and their separation of the economy from the political struggle of the revolutionary movement which is developing.

Economic development by itself does not guarantee a firm rear because the firmness of our rear depends mainly on political development. That is, if while building the economy we forget to strengthen our determination to fight, our revolutionary consciousness, our confidence in the political line of the party, and our determination to protect revolutionary gains, this economic base can never become a strong and firm material base for a war which the enemy forces us to join.
On the other hand, after keeping a firm hold on the military line of the party in order to fulfill the task of consolidating national defense and achieving combat readiness, it is necessary to build the material and spiritual base for a protracted, comprehensive war of all the people and to be ready in the event of the outbreak of such a war. At present our southern people are engaged in a protracted war. If the enemy forces us to participate in a war on a national scale, this war will also be a protracted and comprehensive war involving all the people. And the enemy whom we must oppose is the U.S. imperialists, who are superior to us in the domain of technical equipment and who are the richest of the imperialists.

Of course, the protracted war which we would be forced to participate in— if it breaks out—would be totally different from the previous anti-French resistance war. Our present material base is much stronger than our past base. Our absolute superiority in the spiritual and political fields is more obvious. Moreover, we have a large and firm rear, which is the entire socialist camp. Thus, the execution of strategy, tactics, and military operations would be greatly different from in the past. The form of the war would also be different, as would the evolution of the war. Right now we cannot predict how the war would develop. But it is certain that, as in the past when our people defeated the French colonialist aggressors, and just as our southern people are defeating the U.S. imperialists in a protracted and comprehensive war, if the U.S. imperialists dare to extend their aggressive war to the North they will undoubtedly face a more shameful and serious defeat than the one suffered by the French imperialists in the past.

To show that we have fully understood the nature of the comprehensive, thorough, and protracted people’s war, the most concrete thing we must do consists—in addition to helping the people to understand the same thing—of consolidating positively and developing strongly the building of the three categories of forces—the militia and guerrilla force, the local force, and the main force—and of continuously keeping a firm hold on the class policy with regard to the building of the armed forces. In the recent past, due to the fact that we have satisfactorily fulfilled the task of building the militia and guerrilla force, the police force, and the main force, we have thwarted the scheme of the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys to use spy rangers to sabotage the North. But we must not be satisfied with the results achieved thus far. In the future the U.S. imperialists may be more daring than before in initiating provocations in and provoking North Vietnam. They may even extend their aggressive war to North Vietnam. Therefore, party committees at all levels inside and outside the army must be more active and positive in building the three categories of forces.

Many of our comrades are still uncertain as to how to search for and learn new things in the military domain. Our party strongly encourages the searching for and learning of new things in all fields of activity. Our party’s viewpoint is the viewpoint for development. Marxism-Leninism
will no longer be itself if it is not developed. Since the realities of life have continually developed, Marxism-Leninism must continually be developed. The important thing is that only by holding firm and remaining loyal to Marxist-Leninist principles will we be able to know truly new things and avoid being fooled by "false new things" created by modern revisionists. It is necessary for us now to learn new things from our brother countries. Moreover, we should even learn new things from the enemy. But while learning new things, we must not forget our old experiences. We contend that only on the basis of the old can we build the new and raise our dialectic standard to a new level. Today in the military domain many new things have arisen from the situation in the revolutionary struggle and from scientific and technical developments. The most basic new things are the advent of nuclear weapons and missiles and the comprehensive and thorough development of the people's war in countries led by the parties of the proletariat.

In the military domain the difference between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism also lies in the acknowledgement of two new basic things. Modern revisionism sees only one new thing, which is the existence of nuclear weapons and missiles. What it does not understand is that the comprehensive and thorough development in military science of a war must be further developed in the struggle to achieve national independence, democracy, and socialism. Although there are now many new things, we must realize that they are unable to change basic Marxist-Leninist military principles and that they can only cause a few changes in the methods and conditions for conducting wars and armed struggles. This is a point which we can assert. But the modern revisionists fail to understand it. Therefore, they have committed mistakes in a series of other military problems.

Many of our cadres have also committed mistakes because of their failure to understand this point. For example, in settling the relationship between emphasis on science and techniques and the improvement of the political character of the army, some comrades pay attention only to science and techniques while forgetting the need to improve political character. As a matter of fact, attention must be paid to both topics. Concerning science and techniques, we still have to exert greater efforts because they are very important. But the political aspect is still the most basic aspect, and only by improving the army's scientific and technical standards on the basis of improving its political standards will we be able to build powerful armed forces along party lines. Laying partial stress on either of these two aspects, or more seriously, neglecting the principal aspect—that is, the political aspect—means committing a mistake in principle.
In order to oppose positively and prevent modern revisionist influences from developing among our cadres, it is necessary to make everyone understand and hold firm to the ideological and military lines of our party and to improve continually the class standpoints and viewpoints and Marxist-Leninist dialectical standards of our cadres. To be able to hold firm to and apply the party's military line, we must, first of all, have proletarian standpoints and viewpoints. Particularly, in order to be able to distinguish right from wrong and draw a line between the Marxist-Leninist line and the modern revisionist line in the military domain, we must stand firm on proletarian standpoints and viewpoints.

On the ideological front we are struggling to protect the purity of Marxism-Leninism and we are criticizing and revealing the erroneous modern revisionist line. In the military domain the struggle to understand more thoroughly the military Marxist-Leninist line of our party and to criticize and reveal the erroneous points of modern revisionism has not only a dialectical effect but also a very great practical effect. Along with positively criticizing modern revisionism, we must use our thorough understanding of our party's military line as the most positive measure to prevent and oppose modern revisionist influences in the military domain.

TIGHT SECURITY SURROUNDS McNAMARA VISIT

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 1232 GMT 13 May 1964--B

(Text) Hanoi, 13 May--In the face of the mounting anti-U.S. movement in South Vietnam, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara yesterday arrived in Saigon for a "quick look" at the U.S. war, with great fear of being assassinated, according to western reports.

UPI said: He arrived at Tan Son Nhat Airport "amid the tightest security precautions ever displayed, with the first paratroopers battalion and an estimated 1,000 national police strung out along the road leading into Saigon and around the airport."

APF reported: "McNamara's plane touched down at the airport four hours ahead of the hour which had been officially announced. In fact, newsmen were informed only one hour before McNamara's arrival of the real time of his landing."

AP stated: "Maximum security precautions were in force around the airport and the highway leading into Saigon to foil any attempts on McNamara's life. McNamara spent only eight minutes at the airport. His motorcade took a different route into Saigon than had been scheduled, apparently as an added security precaution. He did not pass over the bridge that had been mined by the Viet Cong."
14 May 1964

REUTERS said: "Driving to the U.S. Embassy, McNamara's car suddenly left the main motorcade entering the city through (unguarded?) back streets to avoid possible assassination attempts on the normal route . . . an American security official gave last-minute instructions to the chauffeur of his car to separate from the official motorcade immediately outside the airport gates . . . the change of route for McNamara's car even took some high officials by surprise . . . McNamara raced from one conference to another in Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge's car, with flak jackets piled on the floor, on the seat, and behind his back, for protection against bullets, hand grenades, and mines."

UPI revealed that "McNamara met with senior American officials for an intensive discussion" of the 12-point program recommended in March by McNamara and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Maxwell Taylor.

AFP reported that yesterday he "conferred for three hours on South Vietnamese military questions with U.S. senior officers now in Saigon" and continued the study of military problems this morning.

AFP added that on arrival he said that during his visit in South Vietnam he would "consider what additional action if any is required to fulfill the commitment of my government to the South Vietnamese Government to provide whatever economic assistance, military training, and logistical support is required, in whatever form required, for however long it is required . . . ."

HANOI VIA International Service in English 1212 GMT 13 May 1964--B

(Text) Hanoi, 13 May--HANOI DAN today denounces the U.S. collusion with the West German and Japanese fascists and other reactionaries to oppose the South Vietnamese people's patriotic movement. The paper stresses that "the U.S. act of dragging member countries of the SEATO and NATO aggressive blocs into its aggressive war in South Vietnam constitutes a serious violation of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Vietnam, makes the South Vietnam situation ever more complicated, and seriously threatens peace in Indochina, southeast Asia, and the world." The paper recalls that at the NATO ministerial conference which opened on 12 May in The Hague, U.S. State Secretary Dean Rusk called on NATO member countries to offer help to the stooges of the United States in South Vietnam by every means, including the sending of military missions there under the name of "advisers."

REUTERS on 11 May disclosed that before going to Saigon, Robert S. McNamara arrived in Bonn to meet with West German Defense Minister Kai-Uwe Von Kessel to drag the West German revanchist militarists into the U.S. aggressive war in South Vietnam.