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DEVELOPING VIETNAMESE MILITARY SCIENCE

An Address by Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap



LET US STEP UP THE TASK OF REVIEWING,
STUDYING, AND DEVELOPING VIETNAMESE
MILITARY SCIENCE IN ORDER TO ACTIVELY
CONTRIBUTE TO DEFEATING U.S. AGGRESSION

BY GEN. VO NGUYEN GIAP

INTRODUCTION

Comrades, we are meeting here today to discuss the organization of the implementation of the Central Military Party Committee's resolution on the tasks related to military science. On behalf of the Central Military Party Committee, I warmly welcome you, Comrades, who have come from various Armed Services and Branches, from various agencies of the High Command, from the Military Institutes and Schools, from the Military Zones, from the Provinces, and from various battlefields to attend this conference.

As pointed out in the resolution, in the recent past the Central Military Party Committee, as well as the responsible agencies and units, have paid attention to the recapitulation and study tasks and have scored many achievements. Thereby, these agencies and units have positively contributed toward enabling the Party Central Committee to firmly grasp the laws governing the revolutionary war in our country, to exert leadership over the armed struggle, the building of the armed forces, and the consolidation of national defense in such a way that increasingly great successes have been achieved, and, at the same time, to make our military science constantly develop and encompass rich and creative content.

Nevertheless, shortcomings still remain in the recapitulation and study tasks. Many activities have not yet expeditiously and fully met the urgent requirements arising from the performance of combat and construction tasks on the battlefields. We have not

yet succeeded in establishing a perfect and unified documentary system which fully reflects the realities emerging from the very inspiring and creative struggle of our armed forces and people. These shortcomings have partially affected efforts to heighten the organizational and command standards and the theoretical knowledge of the cadres at various echelons, and the improvement of the troops' combat strength.

Therefore, while all our people are persevering in and accelerating the anti-U. S. national salvation resistance, the Central Military Party Committee deems it necessary to further intensify the recapitulation and study tasks in order to directly support leadership over combat and construction in the immediate future and, at the same time, to support the building of the armed forces and the consolidation of national defense in the long run, and to contribute toward further enriching the treasure of military theories of Marxism-Leninism. "

In this spirit, the Central Military Party Committee has decided to establish a Military Science Organ and a Military Science Council. Recently, the Central Military Party Committee issued a resolution on the tasks related to military science for the years ahead.

These resolutions bespeak the Central Military Party Committee's concern for the tasks related to military science, demonstrate the importance of the tasks related to military science, and, at the same time, clearly define our responsibility to endeavor to further accelerate the performance of tasks related to military science in order to meet in time and fully the requirements arising from the situation and the military task of our entire Party and of all our armed forces and people in the present revolutionary period. The study of military science does not merely involve theoretical, desk discussions, but it is aimed at directly supporting combat and the maintenance of combat-readiness. The present struggle to liberate the South raised striking and complicated problems, which must be solved in time in order to frustrate the enemy's new schemes and tricks and to advance toward winning final victory. The present task of protecting the North also has raised new problems, which must be studied in time so that they

can serve as a basis for determining the trend of our efforts to intensively build the people's armed forces and to consolidate the all-people's national defense in coordination with economic construction, in order to insure that the northern armed forces and people stand constantly ready to fight and to frustrate all aggressive schemes and acts of the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys. The war has now spread throughout Indo-China. This requires an increasingly close combat coordination among the armed forces and people of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos. This new situation also has raised new problems for the tasks related to military science.

Therefore, it should not be assumed that we can put off the study of military science until after the anti-U.S. struggle is over. The study of military science is aimed at expeditiously recapitulating the experiences acquired and at finding out the laws governing leadership over the war in order to avoid moving along a circular path and to vigorously advance the war toward victory, instead of compiling volumes of documentary data. We are waging the greatest and most arduous and most resolute war of liberation in our national history. We have the duty to prepare ourselves so that, in case the enemy adventurously unleashes a war of aggression against the North, our armed forces and people can readily defeat and resolutely annihilate him. Before our eyes are the U.S. imperialists, the extremely insidious and cruel archimperialists. Despite their repeated defeats, they still are very stubborn and crafty. They are concocting, day and night, new schemes and tricks to oppose our people's resistance. They have spent billions of dollars, have set up hundreds of companies and agencies specializing in studying the Vietnam war, have arduously developed their economic and military strength, and have devoted modern science and technology and all psychological warfare tricks to massacring and deceiving our people in the hope of retrieving themselves from the danger of complete defeat. Therefore, it is more necessary than ever before to firmly grasp the rules governing the war, to firmly grasp the enemy's schemes and maneuvers and the rules governing his activities, and to firmly grasp the procedures for and the methods of preparing for and waging our war in order to serve national salvation and national defense. This represents the heavy, yet glorious, responsibility

of all of us in performing the tasks related to military science. It is now necessary to intensify the tasks related to military science because the recapitulative and study undertakings will be tested by realities so that they can be constantly supplemented and developed. By gaining this awareness we can clearly see that our policy of intensifying the tasks related to military science is designed to enable us to fulfill our duties most satisfactorily, with the highest efficiency and quality, and on the basis of fully recapitulating past experiences and intensively studying the new problems constantly arising from the actual performance of combat and other tasks.

Therefore, despite the fact that all of us are busy with many tasks, the Central Military Party Committee advocated holding this Conference on Military Science to discuss in time the organization of the implementation of the resolution adopted by the Central Military Party Committee.

The tasks related to military science are not newly initiated tasks, but they have been carried out for dozens of years. It is reasonable to say that not only the comrade leaders and the specialized agencies, but also all of our comrades, since they joined the Army, have been engaged in varying degrees in carrying out the tasks related to military science. However, some comrades have not carried out these tasks in a self-conscious fashion. These comrades are like some people who assume that they would not be able to practice writing literary compositions until after they have attended cultural classes. These people are unaware of the fact that they regularly compose prose in their daily speech and conversations. I cite this example so that we can realize that military science is not something beyond our reach, but is closely associated with the actual performance of our daily combat and other tasks. In the performance of combat and other tasks, we have paid attention, in varying degrees, to drawing experience and finding the rules for determining the direction of our action, despite the fact that some of us might not have used the word "Laws" or might not be able to fully define the word "Laws". During the past decades, on the basis of firmly grasping the laws governing the revolution, armed uprisings, and revolutionary war in our country, the Party Central Committee and President Ho set forth correct political and military lines, leading our armed

forces and people from one victory after another. For many years now, in exerting strategic leadership, in leading various campaigns, as well as in executing command, we have frequently urged each other to firmly and comprehensively grasp our situation and that of the enemy, to find out the laws governing the enemy's activities, and, on the basis of these laws, to determine the pattern of our own actions. While telling me of their combat experiences, the comrade militia girls in Quang Binh also spoke of the laws governing the enemy's air operations. They also said that they had analyzed the enemy's strongpoints and weakpoints in order to adopt accurate firing patterns. This showed that, in fact, these militia girls also performed the tasks related to military science because the tasks related to military science consist of establishing and correctly applying the rules in order to achieve victories.

In a talk with high-ranking officers, Comrade Le Duan said: "Military science is the science of using power, including moral and material power, to defeat the enemy." He also said: "To build up one's power, one must have a correct political line and a correct military science." He has often reminded us of the necessity of building a Vietnamese military science.

Under our Party leadership, we have for a long time carried out the military science task. As a result we have contributed to building a Vietnamese military science with a rich content. However, it is necessary to say that this is the first time that we have held a national conference specializing in the discussion of our military science task. The objective of this conference is to enable us, in the near future, to carry out this task systematically, according to a plan, in a better organizational way, and with a higher consciousness and sense of responsibility. Thus, before the comrade head of the military science organ reads its program of action and its plan on assigning tasks with a view to carrying out the military science task throughout the Army, I would like to talk to you comrades about Vietnamese Military Science.

PART I

SOME FEATURES OF THE SHAPING
AND DEVELOPMENT OF PROLETARIAN MILITARY SCIENCE

Military science is a branch of social science.

Science in general is a system of knowledge about nature, society, and thinking and about the rules of the objective development of nature, society, and thinking. This system of knowledge has taken shape throughout history and has continually developed in accordance with social realities.

Speaking of science, we must speak of laws. Laws are the fundamental relationships among events. These relationships create the substance of the forms of evolution and the development of things. Lenin said: "Laws reflect the most essential points of the evolution of the world." Laws reflect the objective and inherent characteristics of things. They are not created by human imagination in a subjective way. So men cannot change them. Men can study and apply them, but cannot change, reject, or invent them. In other words, if we can keep a firm hold on them, we can apply them in order to promote our interests. If we disregard them, they will disregard us.

The objective of science is to go deeply into complex events in the objective world in order to discover and study the objective laws of the world and, at the same time, to use this knowledge and these laws to guide human activities. Keeping a firm hold on these laws is the foundation of all scientific prediction. Basing ourselves on knowledge of these laws, we can predict the trend and the outcome of the inevitable development of things. We can base ourselves on this prediction to guide our activities along the right trend in order to transform nature or our society.

The laws of our society as well as those of nature survive in an objective way. But one important characteristic of the laws of our society is the fact that their emergence is closely linked with the activities of men, the masses, the classes, the political parties, and a number of personalities in history. Developed in human society and in a certain historic phase, the laws of society have developed and evolved in accordance with the various phases of society's development.

As a social science, military science is the system of knowledge about the laws governing uprisings and warfare and the methods for preparing for and conducting uprisings and warfare under definite historic circumstances. The laws governing uprisings and warfare make their appearance and operate independently, without being influenced by the will power of human beings. But, just as in the development of society in general, the conscious activities of human beings play an extremely important role in uprisings and warfare. If these activities are based on a certain knowledge and correctly applied objective laws, they will exert a great influence and a decisive effect on the process and the outcome of uprisings and warfare. This reflects the important significance of military science.

Like social science in general, military science is a science of class struggle. This is a science that creates the strength to defeat the class enemy through acts of violence. The mission of military science is to deeply study the complex phenomena and events of uprisings and warfare in order to find out and study their objective laws; using this knowledge and these laws we can determine the methods and aims for preparing for and conducting uprisings and warfare in order to win victories.

Like all other sciences, military science represents one aspect of social consciousness and belongs in the realm of the super-structure. Military science has come into being and has derived its practical basis from uprisings and warfare. It is a process of constantly and ever more deeply understanding the laws governing uprisings and warfare. It has developed in accordance with the development of uprisings and warfare through various social systems.

In the history of development of the society of mankind, the content of military ideology and science has changed in accordance with changes in production formulas, the social, economic and political systems, and the objectives and nature of warfare.

In ancient times, after society had been broken down into classes, wars became commonplace phenomena. But due to the fact that, at that time, weapons were rudimentary and the organization of armed forces and the forms of war were very simple, military knowledge was poor. Such knowledge was unable to become an independent branch of human knowledge. It was merely an accumulation of the experiences and military ability of each individual.

Along with the progression from slavery to feudalism and capitalism and the constant development of the productive forces and the development of an increasingly more fierce class struggle in the society of those times, military activities became more and more complex, were carried out on an increasingly large scale, and required a specialized military knowledge. Military theories became more and more elaborate and gradually became an independent domain embracing many branches.

During this process, military theories--which were founded on the concrete realities of uprisings and just struggles, consistent with the laws of social development--had a progressive content and, to a certain extent, faithfully reflected the objective truth. However, due to the restrictions of historic conditions and of the classes directing warfare, these theories could not be developed fully. They could not correctly explain all the laws of objective development of uprisings and warfare. Thus, they could not become a military science, in the strict sense of the word.

Moreover, those military theories--founded on the realities of unjust wars--had a reactionary and unscientific content. Conceived with the aim of serving the interests of reactionary classes which ran counter to the evolution of history, these military theories ignored the laws of the objective development of warfare and grossly distorted the truth.

Such is the present so-called military science of the bourgeois class and of imperialism headed by U. S. imperialism. It reflects the idealist and metaphysical viewpoints of bourgeois military thinkers. They deny that there are laws on the development of war or allege that these laws are imperceptible. They view warfare as a period of intricate, accidental actions and exaggerate the individual roles of generals or the role of technological equipment. They study war in a subjective and one-sided manner and seek keys to success on the basis of unchanged military principles, thus they restrict the content of their military science to purely military problems or they turn their military science into a mere matter of military art.

In the history of the development of society, it was only after the birth of Marxism that a real social science could be created and that a real military science, the military science of the proletariat, could gradually take shape.

Marx and Engels established the basis for scientific theories on war and armies as well as on military art. According to Marx and Engels, the science of warfare is a product of the social regime. Laws of war and of military art are determined by political, economic, and social conditions that are the starting points for military science.

Exchanging views on the Crimean War, Marx and Engels talked about the "internal laws of war." In many of his military writings, Engels clearly pointed out that these laws are those of armed struggle and that they determine the characteristics and the principles of strategies and tactics, of supplies and equipment, of the organizing, training, and educating of troops, and so forth. Engels also dealt with "the laws of strategy." Even in 1851, Engels was predicting that after the success of the proletarian revolution, there would certainly be a new military science, that of the proletariat. "The new military science will be a necessary product of the new social relationships just as the military science of the Revolution (French bourgeois revolution) and of Napoleon was the inescapable outcome of the new relationships created by the Revolution." (Engels: "The Capabilities and Prospects of the War

of the Holy Anti-French Alliance in 1852," in Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, On People's War. Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, pp 59-60.

Creatively applying and developing the military views of Marx and Engels in accordance with new historic conditions, Lenin and later Stalin made important contributions to the building and development of proletarian military science, the first typical contribution was to Soviet military science. The preparations for and execution of the 1905 and 1917 armed uprisings by the Russian proletariat laid the foundation for the theory and practice of a new military science. Starting from this foundation, the military science of the Soviet State took shape and developed during the founding of the new regime while the war to safeguard the socialist fatherland was developing in the Soviet Union.

The success of the great Russian Socialist October Revolution, of the civil war and of the struggle against foreign armed intervention, and of the struggle for national defense of the Soviet Union as well as the great success of revolutions in China, Viet-Nam, and other countries under the leadership of their Marxist-Leninist parties have reflected the superiority of the proletarian military science.

In this process, proletarian military science has been constantly developed on the basis of the increasingly inspiring, practical conditions of the uprisings and wars led by the proletariat in various countries. In addition to Soviet military science, new China's military science emerged from the experiences gained during decades of protracted, victorious revolutionary war against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism. At the same time, our Vietnamese military science also came into existence and has been developed in the new era. This is a proletarian military science which has been built on a practical basis through nearly thirty years of continuous uprisings and victorious war led by the political party of the working class.

In terms of basic theories and methodology, as well as content, the proletariat's military science is a completely new military science, which is qualitatively different from the previous military theories or military science. The proletariat's military science reflects in a truly scientific manner the laws governing the

development of uprisings and war during the period of imperialism and proletarian revolution. In this period, there is a distinction between unjust war and just war and a distinction among imperialist wars, civil wars, wars of national liberation, and wars to protect the socialist fatherland.

It should be added that on the basis of the stand, viewpoint, and methods of Marxism-Leninism, proletarian military science does not eliminate, but rather absorbs the essence of achievements accumulated by the former military ideology or military science. Proletarian military science uses, further develops, and improves upon the essence of the former military ideology or military science under modern conditions. Marxism-Leninism, in general, and proletarian military science, in particular, never negates the advanced experience of other peoples. Soviet military science carried forward the advanced traditions of Russia's military science. Our country's present military science also inherits the valuable military heritage of our forefathers. This is a necessity and is consonant with the laws governing the development of history, especially regarding a people who, like our own people, have a history of and an extremely rich experience in armed struggle, waged for thousands of years, and who have developed a system of military knowledge and outstanding military art.

In the process of formulation and development, proletarian military science also absorbs in a discriminating manner the worthwhile essence of bourgeois military knowledge, adjusts this military knowledge to the nature of the proletariat, and, at the same time, resolutely exposes and criticizes the reactionary nature and content of bourgeois military knowledge.

PART II

THE SHAPING AND DEVELOPING
OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY SCIENCE

- 1 -- Present day Vietnamese military science is a military science of the proletariat and of Marxism-Leninism applied to the concrete conditions of our country:

As mentioned above, contemporary Vietnamese military science is a military science of the proletariat. Like the military science of fraternal socialist countries, the ideological basis of Vietnamese military science is Marxist-Leninist science and its methodology is dialectic materialism and historical materialism. However, military science is not something abstract or general but is a concrete product of certain historical circumstances.

Our military science is that of the proletariat and of Marxism-Leninism applied to the concrete conditions of Viet-Nam. It was shaped and has developed on the practical basis of the uprisings and wars which have been waged by our people, under our Party's leadership, and in our country during recent decades. Therefore, along with the general laws of armed uprisings and revolutionary wars, our military science reflects the particular laws of armed uprisings and revolutionary wars in Viet-Nam which have been led by the party of the Vietnamese working class.

During recent decades, these uprisings and wars have been essentially national liberation uprisings and wars. This is the continuation of our people's thousands-of-years struggle for national liberation and defense. Therefore, our military science possesses both a class character and a national character that reflect the characteristics of Viet-Nam and of the Vietnamese people in the modern era.

2 -- The present day Vietnamese military science is not separated from the nation's generations-old military tradition and heritage:

Since the founding of our country, due to its important position in Southeast Asia, our people have almost unremittingly struggled against aggression. Therefore, the history of our people is that of very glorious uprisings and wars for national liberation and defense. The history of our people is also marked by many revolutionary uprisings and wars by our peasants against internal reactionary, feudal powers.

In this continual process of armed struggle, our people have not only forged a stalwart spirit of militant solidarity but also have accumulated the experience for fighting aggressors which fits the concrete conditions of our country. In spite of certain limitations due to historical conditions, these experiences have been progressively generalized into a systematic knowledge on uprisings and wars and of ways to prepare and wage uprisings and wars, based on the past concrete conditions of our country.

Our forefathers' and fathers' glorious feats-of-arms in their fight against the oppressive and aggressive armed forces that were manifoldly more numerous and stronger than theirs reflects the heroic bearing and outstanding military ability of our nation and people and the boundlessly precious value of the military legacies bequeathed to us by our forefathers and fathers.

For nearly 100 years now, in order to maintain their ruling yoke, imperialism and the lackey feudal clique have sought by every means possible to stifle our people's gallantry and to obliterate the valuable military traditions and legacies of our nation, but the spirit of these traditions and legacies will live forever with our people and country, because it has deeply penetrated the subconscious of the majority of the masses and all the Vietnamese patriots and only needs an opportunity to be turned into a new strength.

Since its emergence, shouldering the historic mission of struggling for national liberation and class liberation, our Party has creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the concrete

circumstances in our country, has inherited and developed the valuable military traditions and legacies of our nation to a new degree and a new quality, and has gradually built and developed the modern military science of our country with increasingly improved contents. Our Party has, therefore, led our people's revolutionary undertaking and revolutionary armed struggle to increasingly greater victories.

3 -- The present Vietnamese military science has taken shape and developed on the basis of the vivid realities of the uprisings and wars that have been conducted by our people under the Party's leadership.

Since its emergence, our Party has scientifically used Marxism-Leninism to study the laws governing the Vietnamese semifeudal, colonial society and to set forth correct revolutionary lines in order to lead our working class and people to struggle for their liberation. The Party pointed out: the revolution in our country must be a people's national, democratic revolution that leads to a socialist revolution, bypassing the phase of capitalist development, and the revolution in our country must clearly indicate that the path of struggle to seize the administration for the people must be the revolutionary path through violence.

During World War II, when the problem of preparing for armed uprisings became the immediate, necessary task of the revolution, our Party, headed by the respected and beloved President Ho, paid extreme attention to studying military matters. Applying the military science of Marxism-Leninism to the Vietnamese concrete circumstances through the practical experiences of Soviet-Nghe Tinh and the Bac Son and Nam Ky uprisings, our Party has gradually found and correctly applied the laws governing the armed uprisings in our country, which consists of beginning with phased uprisings and the guerrilla warfare in the rural areas and of advancing therefrom, under the domestic and international historic circumstances at that time, toward conducting general uprisings in both the rural areas and the cities, when conditions permitted. Our Party has, therefore, led the August revolution to brilliant success.

During the resistance against the French imperialists and U. S. interventionists, our Party strove to study and firmly grasp the laws governing the revolutionary war in our country. Our Party has, therefore, successfully led a protracted people's war, from guerrilla warfare to gradually advancing toward a conventional war and to closely combining guerrilla warfare with the conventional war in order to win victories.

After the North was completely liberated, our Party has successfully solved the problem of national defense consolidation, in coordination with economic building, with developing and strengthening the militia and self-defense forces, and with widely arming the masses, along with building the people's army and with turning it into a regular and modern army under the circumstances in which the North has been advancing toward socialism. We have, on this basis, advanced toward completely defeating the U.S. imperialists' destructive war, while fulfilling the duty of the vast rear toward the vast frontline.

In the South, firmly grasping the laws governing the people's war against various forms of the neocolonialist aggressive war waged by the U. S. imperialists and their lackeys, our people have, under the NFLSV's leadership, combined to a high degree the armed struggle with the political struggle and the troop-proselyting task. Our people have combined the masses' uprisings with the armed forces' coordinated combat throughout the three strategic zones with their extremely creative combat methods, the southern armed forces and people have proceeded from phased uprisings and offensive toward general offensives and concerted uprisings in the early Mau Than [1968] spring and are now developing the impetus of continuous and comprehensive offensive in order to advance toward complete victory.

It is on the basis of these vivid realities that the Party's military lines have taken shape and developed, thus establishing a base for the building and development of the modern military science in our country.

After waging continuous armed struggles for thirty years under Party leadership, we have accumulated extensive knowledge of the laws governing uprisings and wars, of the methods to be applied to prepare for and wage uprisings and wars in a colonial and semi-feudal country whose territory is small, whose population is scarce, and whose economy is underdeveloped in order to defeat the old colonialist and neocolonialist forms of wars waged by the big and powerful imperialists and their lackeys.

Here is a noteworthy point: so far, our military science has been built mainly on the realities of uprisings and national liberation wars. We must continue to develop our military science to defeat the American aggressors and liberate our country. Simultaneously, we must pay special attention to studying new problems raised by the present task of defending the socialist North and the future task of defending an independent and unified Viet-Nam. Only by so doing will we be able to further improve the content of our military science, enabling it to satisfy not only the immediate requirements but also the long-range requirements and to serve not only the national salvation task but also the national defense task.

PART III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VIETNAMESE MILITARY SCIENCE

- 1 -- Vietnamese military science is a progressive military science which serves just objectives and the supreme interests of the working class and the people of various nationalities living in our country.

Vietnamese military science has taken shape and developed on the basis of uprisings and wars waged by our people, under Party leadership, to achieve national independence, people's democracy, and socialism, to liberate our nation and working class, and to safeguard our fatherland's independence and not on the basis of wars of foreign aggression. Vietnamese military science is the science that guides our people in fighting the enemy right on our territory so as to safeguard the interests of our nation and people. As such it can take advantage of favorable weather, terrain, and popular support and develop our people's absolute superiority in the political and moral fields and material power in order to defeat the enemy who enjoys only superiority in the field of military numerical strength and technical equipment. The just cause of the uprisings and wars waged by our people under the leadership of our Party--the vanguard body of the Vietnamese working class--and the objective of serving the task of liberating our nation and working class and defending our socialist fatherland have turned our military science into a progressive military science consistent with the rules governing the objective development of our society and consistent with the truth, into a science in accordance with the true meaning of this word. This is the origin of the power of Vietnamese military science.

Conversely, the so-called military science of today's imperialism is a reactionary military science. In fact, it is antiscientific because it serves the objective of enslaving and invading other countries and is aimed at hindering the development of society. It is based on the idealism and metaphysics. It contains many subjective and one-sided views. This is the remote origin of the failure of the imperialists and the bankruptcy of their military science.

2 -- Vietnamese military science is the military science of a relatively small country which has successively defeated big and powerful imperialist countries.

Vietnamese military science is the military science of a country whose territory is small, whose population is scarce, and whose economy is underdeveloped and which has had to continually resist the oppression and aggression from big countries having much greater economic and military potentialities. It is the military science of a brave, intelligent, staunch, and resourceful people having the glorious traditions of resisting foreign aggressions and using a small army to defeat a bigger one and now having the correct leadership of a genuinely Marxist-Leninist Party and of a leader of genius, President Ho.

Under these circumstances, Vietnamese military science has striven to develop our basic strongpoints and overcome our temporary weakpoints, while restricting the temporary strongpoints and aggravating the basic weakpoints of the enemy, in order to creatively settle problems relating to uprisings and war in general, as well as to the application of strategies and to the art of conducting military campaigns and applying military tactics in fighting the enemy, so as to be consistent with the practical conditions in our country.

To settle this problem, how can a relatively small and economically underdeveloped country defeat the aggression by great imperialist countries with modern industry under the favorable conditions of the present era - our military science does not principally rely on the regular military strength and on the material and technical bases in order to provide for a source of strength, but primarily and essentially on the advantageous position of a people who unanimously fight the enemy with courage, heroism, stalwartness, intelligence, and creativeness. From this advantageous position, we can thoroughly exploit all potentialities of our countries, while at the same time relying on the potentialities of the socialist camp in order to defeat the common enemy -- aggressive imperialism.

Our military science does not treat lightly the material and technical factors, but it pays great attention to the moral and political factors. Our military science does not treat lightly the problem of quantity, but it attaches great importance to the problem of quality and combat efficiency. Our military science not only pays attention to developing the strength of each force, of each form of struggle, and of each separate combat form, but it also pays great attention to developing the combined strength of all forces and forms of struggle which are closely related to each other. All this is aimed at considerably augmenting the strength of our troops and people in order to defeat those enemies who have greater armies and more modern military equipment than ours, but who are politically weak and whose fighting spirit is low.

3 -- Vietnamese military science is the military science of a nation which wages an all-out war against the enemy, a science which is developed to an increasingly high degree.

To develop to the highest degree a politically and morally advantageous position and to develop the strength of a people who are enlightened about the purposes and the just cause of uprisings and war in which a small unit--in terms of military strength and equipment--is to be used to fight and defeat a larger one, our military science directs not only the pure military struggle, but also the military struggle in close coordination with other struggle aspects: political, economic, cultural, and diplomatic; it directs the armed struggle in coordination with the political struggle and the troop-proselyting task; it coordinates uprisings with war, the uprisings by the masses with the combat activities of the armed forces, and the conventional fighting methods with guerrilla fighting methods on a strategic scale as well as in military campaigns and in attacks.

With regard to building forces for staging uprisings and waging wars, Vietnamese military science has skillfully coordinated the building of the armed forces with the building of political forces, and has coordinated the arming of the people with the building of the people's army. It has also coordinated the building of the three troop categories as a core force for an all-out war against the enemy.

Concerning the building of a prop for staging uprisings and waging war, our military science has skillfully coordinated the building of political bases with the building of base areas and of the rear which rely on the real revolutionary forces in both rural and urban areas with a firm, steady foothold being maintained in the rural areas. It has also coordinated the on-the-spot rear in all places with the common rear of the entire country, and the rear of our country with the vast rear of the socialist camp.

In short, our military science has created an all-people strength to fight the enemy in all respects, everywhere, with all forces, with all forms of struggle, and by all means, thus turning our 31 million compatriots into heroic enemy-annihilating, national salvation fighters.

4 -- On the basis of objective conditions and rules, Vietnamese military science has developed to a high degree the role of man's revolutionary offensive spirit, initiative, and creativeness in armed uprisings and in revolutionary war.

Applying Marxism-Leninism's dialectical materialist and historical materialist methods, our military science holds that uprisings, as well as war, have intrinsic rules, and that the process and the outcome of uprisings and war depend on the objective and subjective conditions of the two belligerent sides. To achieve victory, it is necessary to have certain objective material conditions. However, victory or defeat in war does not depend solely on objective conditions. Objective conditions only create possible, and not real, conditions for victory or defeat. Ultimately victory or defeat in a war depends to a large extent on the subjective endeavor of man. This subjective endeavor is reflected in the leadership over and conduct of the war. In exerting leadership over and conducting a war, man must try to understand the rules and must act in accord with these rules. This does not mean that one can slacken subjective endeavor and let the rules evolve by themselves. On the other hand, it is necessary to take the initiative in applying the rules in order to defeat the enemy in the most advantageous way and with minimum losses.

Analyzing the Marxist attitude in analyzing the laws of the history, Lenin said: "Marxism is different from all other social theories in that it outstandingly combines the extremely strict scientific analysis of the objective phenomena of things and the objective process of natural evolution with an unreserved recognition of the importance of revolutionary energy, of revolutionary creativeness, and of the revolutionary initiative of the masses and, naturally, of a number of personalities, groups, organizations, and political parties capable of finding and upholding their relationship with one class or another." (Lenin, Complete Works, Volume 13, Russian version, 4th edition, page 21-22).

Our war is a revolutionary, just war. Therefore, our military science has adequate conditions for developing to a high degree the role of subjective endeavor--that is, the role of the revolutionary energy, initiative, and creativeness of the leaders, the masses of cadres and combatants, and the masses of people in winning victory for the war. In a situation where a small strength is used to defeat a bigger strength, subjective endeavor is of particularly important significance. For this reason, in the revolutionary war, our armed forces and people have not only heightened their courageous, stalwart spirit, but also have arduously developed their activeness, initiative, skillfulness, and creativeness, have constantly trained themselves, and have acquired the ability to control the war situation and to make it develop to our favor. As a result, for decades now, our armed forces and people have succeeded in overcoming difficulties that seemed insurmountable, have scored unexcelled achievements, and have successively defeated the big imperialists possessing material and technical means tremendously superior to ours.

The strategic offensive concept is a vivid manifestation of the Vietnamese people's revolutionary energy, initiative, and creativeness in the present people's war in our country. Based on the thoroughly revolutionary spirit of the working class and on the indomitability of the Vietnamese people, the strategic offensive concept represents an outstanding characteristic of modern Vietnamese military science.

Deeply imbued with this spirit, our military science has been able to accurately assess the balance of forces between us and the enemy, has constantly developed our strongpoints and our most effective fighting methods, has rendered the enemy unable to develop his strongpoints and his most effective fighting methods, has deepened and struck accurately at the enemy's weakpoints, and has annihilated him with all forces at our disposal, through a multisided struggle, employing all methods of fighting, and with all appropriate means. All of this will drive him into a situation where he is attacked relentlessly and everywhere; his material resources will be more and more extensively destroyed, his morale will become increasingly low, and he will ultimately be defeated.

PART IV

SOME IDEAS CONCERNING THE CONTENT

AND SCOPE OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY SCIENCE

As mentioned above, military science is a systematic knowledge of the laws of uprisings and wars and on the methods to prepare and wage uprisings and wars under certain historical circumstances. There are laws of wars, in general, and laws of revolutionary wars, in particular. On the one hand, revolutionary armed uprisings and wars in all countries comply with their general laws. On the other hand, revolutionary armed uprisings and wars in each particular country possess the particular characteristics and comply with the particular laws which are determined by the concrete conditions of each country.

Viet-Nam's military science possesses an extremely rich and original content. What are the questions upon which it focuses? And how to classify them? These are important problems that must be studied in depth. Some of their points can be confirmed only after they are backed up by concrete facts. Following are a number of ideas that I advance for common study:

- 1 -- The general theory of the Party on uprising and war, on armed struggle, on building of the armed forces, and on consolidating national defense is the most important part--the fundamental part--of contemporary Vietnamese military science.

Military science is a science that studies uprising and war. As a produce of class struggle in human society, any uprising or war is waged by this or that class. Therefore, military science possesses a very clear class character. In any country, military science serves the interests of a certain class and originates in the standpoint and the ideology of this class.

The modern day uprisings and war in our country have been led by the Party of the Vietnamese working class. Therefore, contemporary Vietnamese military science complies with the Party's political lines, which are based on a thorough knowledge of working class viewpoints and ideology.

The first objective of its study is the Party's military line. Based on the Party's political line, on the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint on uprising and war, on the nation's military tradition, on the concrete characteristics of the enemy, of ourselves, of international conditions, and so forth, the military line determines the trend, guidelines, and fundamental principles which govern uprising and war, the building of forces, bases, and the rear, and the methods to carry out war and the military art, in order to fulfill the Party's military task in the various phases of revolutionary struggle. Because the laws of uprising and war are being constantly developed, the Party's military line has constantly developed also.

Viet-Nam's military science must study the Party's general theory on uprising and war, on armed struggle, on building of the armed forces, and on the consolidation of national defense in our country; it must study the theory on the Party's leadership over uprising and war, in general, and over the people's armed forces, in particular, and the theory on the Party task and political task, and must properly solve every dialectical relationship between the military and the political, between the military and technology, between the military and the economy, between the army and the rear--that is the problem of coordinating national defense and the economy--between armed struggle and political struggle and the military proselyting task, between revolutionary war and armed uprising, and between the armed forces and the political forces.

Concerning the armed forces, it is necessary to study the theories on organization, allotment, and equipment, and to determine the positions of and every relationship between the three troop categories, military branches and services, and the aspects of building political, military, material, and technological bases.

- 2 - -Military art, a very important part of military science, includes military strategic technology, operational technology, and tactics technology. It studies questions concerning the concrete methods for carrying out military activities in uprising and war.

Due to the all-people and comprehensive character of the revolutionary struggle in our country, our military art is not only a simple art of guiding armed struggle but also is an art to guide the close coordination between armed struggle and political struggle, between revolutionary war and armed uprising, and between military attack and mass uprising, in the strategic as well as the operational and combat aspects.

Military art has important effects upon the success of uprising and war. However, it cannot develop its effects by itself. If it is separated from our economic and spiritual forces, from the consideration of the enemy's economic and spiritual forces, like other segments of military science, it cannot possess proper direction and content or succeed without being fundamentally guided by proper military line.

3 - - Military technology which is also a part of military science is playing an ever more important role in modern warfare.

It is responsible for the study of the scientific and technical achievements of the national economy and applying them in the military field and for inventing, improving, and using weapons and military equipment in a way suitable to the topographic and climatic conditions and to our situation and to that of the enemy on the battlefield.

It is also responsible for studying the trend to modernize our armed forces' equipment--including fighting, command, and maintenance material--and for studying the enemy's technical equipment in order to cope with him, to counterattack, and so forth, thus satisfying the requirements of tactics and of the art of conducting military operations and applying military strategies.

4 - - Our military science must solve a series of other problems such as political tasks, tasks referring to staffing and logistics - - which include military medical science-military management, military pedagogy, military geography-military terminology, and so forth.

5 -- Military historical science is also a part of military science.

It is responsible for the study of experience on uprisings and wars in the history of our nation and people in order to contribute to building our country's modern military science and teaching its traditions to our people and militarymen.

To build and develop our modern military science in accordance with the above-mentioned fundamentals, we must review all our people's experience on armed struggle and army building and, simultaneously, continue to study new problems raised by the present anti-U. S. national salvation undertaking and the future task of building our armed forces and consolidating our national defense.

Moreover, we must pay special attention to studying the fraternal countries' military science, selecting and studying their progressive experience, and creatively applying this experience to the concrete conditions of our country. We must also pay attention to studying the military ideology and to the trends in the development of the military art and technology of imperialist countries--especially the U. S. imperialists--in order to thoroughly understand the enemy and to serve the building of our own military science.

In short, our military science embraces all problems concerning uprisings and wars, military struggle and armed struggle. Here it is necessary to assert that concerning other struggles such as political struggle, diplomatic struggle, economic struggle, cultural struggle, and so on and other forms of struggle by unarmed masses such as strikes, the closing of markets and schools, meetings, demonstrations, all of which we have generally called political struggle in the narrow sense of this expression, our military science only studies them in their relationship to military and armed struggle. It does not carefully study the art and scope of these forms of struggle

PART V

POINTS WHICH WE SHOULD THOROUGHLY
UNDERSTAND IN OUR MILITARY TASKS

- 1 -- To thoroughly understand both the Party character and the scientific character of our military science tasks.

As said above, our present military science serves the revolutionary armed struggle of our working class and people under our Party's leadership. Our Party is a Marxist-Leninist Party. Therefore our Vietnamese military science uses scientific Marxism-Leninism as its theoretical foundation and uses dialectical materialism and historical materialism as its reasoning methods. Our Party has cleverly linked the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete realities of our revolution and confirmed the correctness and creativeness of its political and military lines. That is why it has led our people's revolution and revolutionary armed struggle from success to success. Our military science must reflect these correct military and political lines. It must be imbued with the Party's views and positions. In carrying out military science tasks, we must constantly follow the Party's habits--the habits of linking theory with practice, of following the mass lines, and of practicing criticism and self-criticism. While recapitulating past experience as well as studying the present new problems, we must adopt a search-for-the-truth attitude and absolutely respect objective realities. We must not base our reasoning on our own subjective views. We must look at things in a comprehensive way without paying more attention to one aspect to the detriment of others, and simultaneously determine which aspect is the main one. We must concretely analyze the concrete situation in accordance with historic viewpoints, with the development of the situation and with dialectical methods. In analyzing a problem, we must take into account certain historic conditions. Simultaneously, we must clearly realize the trend of the development of facts. We must not be conservative and continue using the outmoded formulas.

Only by so doing can we complete realistic recapitulative and research projects, serve the armed forces' fighting and building tasks, follow and foresee the development of the war.

2 -- To coordinate the development of collective comprehension by the majority of the masses with intensive study and recapitulation by the leading and specialized organs.

The military science task is an all-army task, a collective work. Our military must be based on a recapitulation of practical experiences and on a development of collective comprehension of the masses--including officers and soldiers, militarymen and people. This way of doing things alone is consistent with the objective truth and has a rich and creative content because experiences are criteria for measuring the truth, and the masses have many lively experiences.

But who are the most qualified for recapitulating the masses' experiences, carefully studying them, and advancing solutions to new problems created by the realities of combat and tasks? They are first of all leaders of the masses--Party committees and unit commanders of all echelons. Party committees and unit commanders at all echelons alone can thoroughly understand the intentions, policies, and plans of higher echelons and their own echelons as well as the various aspects of the situation in their own unity or operational theater in order to carefully and comprehensively fulfill their intensive study and recapitulation tasks. Therefore Party committees and unit commanders at all echelons must devote proper time and energy to recapitulating past experiences and studying the present and future tasks within their sphere of competency, and they should not view only present tasks and devote all their time to fulfilling administrative tasks. Only by so doing can they improve their work and combat efficiency and the quality of their leadership. However, due to the necessity to comprehensively fulfill their tasks and focus their efforts on fulfilling present and urgent tasks, Party committees and unit commanders must perform a division of labor. When need exists, specialized cadres and organs can fulfill this task.

The scope of military science is immense, embracing many major and complex problems. No specialized organs can study and solve all these problems. Therefore it is necessary to carry

out this study and recapitulation task on a permanent basis and draw up plans for organs, field command posts, military services and branches, military zones, provincial command headquarters, and so forth.

On the other hand, an organ must be set up to help the Central Military Party Committee recapitulate experiences and study general problems. Moreover, it must help the Central Military Party Committee in leading the military science task in the entire army and organizing a distribution of labor, coordination, and an exchange of experiences among the various branches and echelons. These are the duties of the military science organ. To satisfactorily fulfill these duties, the military science organ must be streamlined. The comrade members of the military science organ must endeavor to improve their work efficiency and attain the cooperation and assistance of various organs and units.

3 -- To coordinate the study of immediate problems with the study of long-term problems.

As said above, the main objective of the present military science task is to directly serve the leadership over combat and the present building task in order to completely defeat U.S. aggression, liberate the South, defend the North, and advance toward national unification. Thus, it is necessary to closely follow combat and building realities and timely recapitulate the recent experiences in order to disseminate them in the entire army. It is necessary to study in time the problems newly created by the liberation of the South and the defense of the North in order to frustrate the enemy's new plots and tricks, thus contributing to steadily accelerating the anti-U.S. national salvation struggle. Along with studying immediate problems, we must gradually study the fundamental and long-term problems. Only by so doing can we correctly solve the immediate problems and make good preparations for satisfying the requirements of the armed struggle, the army building task, the consolidation of national defense, and the consolidation of the country.

4 -- To raise high the spirit of independence in our studies and, at the same time, to select and assimilate the military scientific achievements of our brotherly countries.

The Vietnamese people are highly conscious of the sense of independence, which independence also applies to the military field. That is why they have for long built up a system of unique military formulas. The success of our people's revolutionary undertaking and revolutionary armed struggle in the past few decades is the success of our Party's independent political and military lines. Through defeating the military science of U. S. imperialism--the top imperialist whose economic and military potentialities are the biggest in the imperialist camp--Vietnamese military science has demonstrated its superiority and invincible power. It has made important contributions to the development of the military science of Marxism-Leninism.

We must heighten our national pride and our spirit of independence and self-governing and of daringly thinking, acting, and creating things in order to resolutely and deeply study and to strive to develop our national military science. When upholding our spirit of independence and self-government we must pay extreme attention to assimilating the valuable experiences from the brotherly parties and countries. These experiences, especially those of the USSR and China, are very valuable for us, because they have been gained from the realities of combat in diversified aspects and filled with the glorious achievements of the people and people's armed forces in various countries in their revolutionary struggles against domestic enemies and foreign aggressors and against the common enemy--the aggressive imperialism and its lackeys. We must pay attention to adequately basing ourselves on the concrete characteristics in our country in order to selectively assimilate these experiences and to appropriately and creatively use them, along with combating pure, mechanical imitation.

5 -- To strengthen the leadership of the Party committees and unit commanders of all echelons over the military science task.

The Central Military Party Committee has issued a resolution on the military science task of the entire armed forces, including

the duties of various branches, military forces, army branches, armed services, and so forth.

In order to insure that the Central Military Party Committee's resolution is adequately fulfilled and to step up the military science task so as to enable it to catch up with the requirements of the present revolutionary situation and task, a problem of decisive character consists of strengthening the leadership of the Party committees and unit commanders of all echelons over the military science task.

It is necessary to base ourselves on the resolution of the Central Military Party Committee on the military science task of the entire armed forces to concretely affirm the recapitulative and study tasks and plans in our branch and echelon so as to have precise trends for agencies and units to carry out their tasks.

It is necessary to firmly grasp the main tasks and to fulfill them at all costs within definite periods of time, along with meeting concrete requirements.

It is necessary to streamline the present agencies charged with carrying out the recapitulative and study task, to clearly determine their responsibilities and relationships with related organs, and to create conditions for the military science organs to follow the situation and to study necessary materials.

In the long run, it is necessary to have plans to improve the cadres charged with carrying out the military science task in order to meet the ever-growing requirements of the recapitulative and research tasks.

It is necessary to approve in time the recapitulative and research projects in order to develop their influence in time vis-a-vis the armed forces' combat and building tasks.

Dear Comrades, I have expressed a number of views on modern military science in our country and various points to be firmly grasped in the military science task. In the history of development of social science, the military science of the proletariat in general, as well as the military science in our country in particular, are still very new. Therefore, there still are many problems that we must continue to study. However, we can assert that, under the leadership of our Party and respected and

beloved President Ho, our armed forces and people have built a superior military science with brilliant features that reflect the laws governing the armed uprisings and the revolutionary war in our country.

Vietnamese military science is obviously an invincible military science, because it has undergone many challenges in the realities of our people's protracted and fierce struggle against the big and powerful imperialists for decades now. Our military science has defeated the military science of the U. S. imperialists--the craftiest and cruelest enemy of mankind. Our military science has completely bankrupted the outmoded ideas of the imperialists concerning the decisive role of their armed forces' strength, their modern equipment and weaponry, their modern air force, and so forth in the war and has inflicted shameful defeats on their modern armed forces on the battlefields. The circumstances of our people's continuous and fierce struggle against one imperialist after another possessing far stronger material and technical bases, especially against the U. S. imperialists--who possess large economic and military potentialities and who have concocted many wicked and cruel schemes and tricks--constitute objective conditions that require that the Vietnamese military science develop constantly and be always creative. To date, the Vietnamese military science is, together with the military science in brotherly countries, standing in the leading position of the military sciences of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples who are struggling for their liberation. This conference marks a new advance of the all-army military science task. I hope that you comrades--after thoroughly understanding the resolution of the Central Military Party Committee Standing Committee--will actively contribute your views to the project on organizing the implementation of the resolution presented by the Military Science Committee and--after returning to your units or organs--will take positive and practical measures with a view to satisfactorily fulfilling your tasks. We will strive to struggle in order to further develop the Vietnamese military science, thus enriching its contents further and further and making it acquire an increasingly greater combat strength. To do this means to contribute positively toward stepping up the combat and building task of the people's armed forces, as well as the revolutionary struggle of our entire people, toward winning complete victory in the sacred anti-U. S. national salvation undertaking, while contributing toward serving the national defense undertaking on a permanent basis. This is a heavy and great task which we must be determined to fulfill and will certainly and successfully fulfill.

DEVELOPING VIETNAMESE MILITARY SCIENCE
AN ADDRESS BY GEN. VO NGUYEN GIAP

In September 1970 North Viet-Nam's Minister of Defense, Vo Nguyen Giap, addressed an "All-Army Conference on Military Science." Quan Doi Nhan Dan, the official Viet-Nam People's Army newspaper, announced on October 29, 1970 that the meeting had been held, without specifying its time or place, ⁽¹⁾ and reported that General Giap delivered an "important speech" titled "Let Us Step Up the Task of Reviewing, Studying, and Developing Vietnamese Military Science in Order to Actively Contribute to Defeating U.S. Aggression."

Present at the conference, said Quan Doi Nhan Dan, were "comrades representing the offices of the High Command, the military zones, the provincial military commands, institutes and schools, military science academies, military technological institutions, military medical institutions, etc... (sic) and a number of other organs [agencies]."

The following two days, October 30 and 31, both Quan Doi Nhan Dan and Nhan Dan, the Lao Dong Party daily, published Giap's speech in two parts. Hanoi Domestic Service broadcast the address in three installments on October 30, 31, and November 1. This text is a translation of those identical texts. The format is an

(1) The occasion may have been a meeting of "ranking officers and delegates of heroic units and heroes" which took place in Hanoi on September 2, 1970, the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Republic. Radio Hanoi that day carried a tape recording of a "statement" by Giap to that meeting, which reads as though it was meant for general dissemination, and was not his principal address to the meeting. See Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 85. "The DRV's 1970 Celebration of Its August-September Anniversaries," pp. 52-55.

adaptation of the one used in Quan Doi Nhan Dan. Indented passages were printed in small bold-faced type; those underscored with a single line were italicized; and those underscored with a double line appeared in large bold-faced type.

The avowed purpose of the speech was to introduce a Central Military Party Committee [sic] resolution on tasks related to military science and to announce the decision "to establish a Military Science Organ and a Military Science Council." The text of the resolution has not been published.

Another objective of Giap's may have been to emphasize the fact that: "The war has now spread throughout Indochina. This requires an increasingly close combat coordination among the armed forces and people of Viet-Nam, Cambodia and Laos. This new situation also has raised new problems for the tasks related to military science."

The tone of this speech is more sober than that of some of Giap's earlier speeches and articles such as Big Victory, Great Task, written in 1967. In it Giap described the "past two anti-U.S. national salvation years" as "violent fighting and testing years" during which "our people . . . achieved very great and glorious victories."⁽²⁾ The tone is somewhat similar to his mid-December 1969 treatise on "The Party's Military Line,"⁽³⁾ which dealt systematically with the Party's military theory, strategy and tactics. It remains the most definitive of his recent expositions of his military theories.

(2) Vo Nguyen Giap, Big Victory, Great Task, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1968, pp. 46-47.

(3) See Document No. 70 Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes, for this text.

General Giap, in announcing the institution of the new military science "organ", did not specify whether it would come directly under the Central Military Party Committee or report to it through the Ministry of Defense, (4) Nor does Giap indicate whether or not he himself sponsored the resolution.

Giap states that the "major and complex" problems of military science must be studied and past experiences recapitulated "on a permanent basis" in order that plans may be drawn up "for organs, field command posts, military services and branches, military zones, provincial command headquarters, and so forth." To accomplish this:

" . . . An organ must be set up to help the Central Military Party Committee recapitulate experiences and study general problems. Moreover, it must help the Central Military Party Committee in leading the military science task in the entire army and organizing a distribution of labor, coordination, and an exchange of experiences among the various branches and echelons. These are the duties of the military science organ." To be of "help" to the Central Military Party Committee "the military science organ must be streamlined."

As he does in all his major pronouncements, General Giap stressed the necessary dominance of the Party:

"Viet-Nam's military science must study the Party's general theory on uprising and war, on armed struggle, on building of the armed forces, and on the consolidation of national defense in our country; it must study the theory on the Party's leadership over uprising and war, in general, and over the people's armed forces, in particular . . . and must properly solve every dialectical relationship between the military and political . . . between the

(4) General Giap is the DRV Minister of Defense and the Secretary of the Central Military Party Committee. He is also a Vice-Premier of the DRV, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party, Vice Chairman of the National Defense Council, and Commander-in-Chief of the Viet-Nam People's Army.

armed forces and the political forces." Giap also quoted Lao Dong Party First Secretary Le Duan: "To build up one's power, one must have a correct political line and a correct military science,"⁽⁵⁾ (Emphasis is Giap's).

The speech indicates that a lack of properly collated analytical reporting prompted the conference on the development of "Vietnamese Military Science," and that this deficiency must be quickly corrected:

" . . . It should not be assumed that we can put off the study of military science until after the anti-U.S. struggle is over. The study of military science is aimed at expeditiously recapitulating the experiences acquired and at finding out the laws governing leadership over the war in order to avoid moving along a circular path and to vigorously advance the war toward victory, instead of compiling volumes of documentary data. "

Giap therefore supports a new procedure which will "enable us to fulfill our duties most satisfactorily, with the highest efficiency and quality. . ." Although these tasks are not new, they have been neglected by some cadre. " . . . Some comrades have not carried out these tasks in a self-conscious fashion," he declared. "These comrades are like some people who assume that they would not be able to practice writing literary compositions until after they have attended cultural classes." (In asking officers to carry out the "military science tasks" in a more "self-conscious fashion" (khong tu giac) Giap meant that they should develop a greater understanding of the lessons that can be derived from their own experiences and a greater sense of responsibility for reporting them. The phrase frequently appears in Vietnamese Communist texts.)

(5) The Le Duan speech referred to may have been one he made in early August 1970 when the Party First Secretary "spoke intimately with high ranking cadres of the entire military." See Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 85 "The DRV's 1970 Celebrations of Its August-September Anniversaries," pp. 35-37.

The reason for the creation of the new "military science organ" seems to be to give General Giap, and the Party, more meaningful access to military data. Recognition of a need for it at this time may have resulted from "striking and complicated problems" raised by "the present struggle to liberate the South," "new problems" raised by "the present task of protecting the, North," and the "new situation" in Indochina.

Concerning the "new situation" in Indochina and in light, perhaps, of logistical problems brought about by operations in Cambodia and the continuing effect of superior allied firepower, General Giap stressed the superiority of the "proletariat's military science" over other theories of military science. The strength of the "proletariat's military science" stems from the nature of imperialism and proletarian revolution. The military science of imperialism is based on the waging of "unjust" wars of "foreign aggression." The "origin of the power of Vietnamese military science," on the other hand, is the "just cause of the uprisings and wars waged by our people under the leadership of our Party." Therefore, Vietnamese military science can take advantage of "popular support" and "develop our people's absolute superiority in the political and moral fields . . . in order to defeat the enemy who enjoys only superiority in the field of military numerical strength and technical equipment."

While acknowledging the importance of "military technology" and "logistics," Giap's references to them are subordinated to his ideological thrust: Set-backs at the hands of the allies "having much greater economic and military potentialities," must be overcome by developing firm confidence in the future of the revolution.

"To settle this problem. . . our military science does not principally rely on the regular military strength and on the material and technical bases in order to provide for a source of strength, (6) but primarily and essentially on the advantageous position of a people who unanimously fight the enemy with courage, heroism, stalwartness, intelligence, and creativeness. (Emphasis is Giap's).

(6) Giap does not treat the question of military training equipment so lightly in The Party's Military Line. See particularly pp. 24-28.

In discussing the nature of "military science tasks," which will lead to a more effective performance of duty, General Giap said that "a problem of decisive character consists of strengthening the leadership of the Party committees and unit commanders of all echelons." He does not seem to be concerned with the quality of their technical knowledge, but feels the scope of their understanding of the revolution must be broadened. Throughout this speech, as in all his major pronouncements, he emphasizes that the "ideological basis of Vietnamese military science is Marxist-Leninist science."

However, an appeal to nationalism is also made. The Party has applied Marxism-Leninism to the circumstances of Viet-Nam, according to Giap, and has "inherited and developed the valuable military traditions and legacies of our nation to a new degree and a new quality."

Giap concludes:

"The circumstances of our people's continuous and fierce struggle against one imperialist after another possessing far stronger material and technical bases, especially the U.S. imperialists. . . constitute objective conditions that require that the Vietnamese military science develop constantly and be always creative."

He then directed the delegates to study the resolution of the Central Military Party Committee and, to "take positive and practical measures with a view to satisfactorily fulfilling your tasks."