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HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM

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The Vietnam war spread to Laos, and recently it came to spread even to Cambodia, and it has now become an "Indo-China war," which has turned the whole of Indo-China into a ~~xxx~~ battlefield. Although there is a point in common among the three nations in the Indo-China war ~~that~~ in the meaning that non-communist forces are directly fighting the North Vietnamese and the NLF forces, the causes, nature and form of the "Indo-China war" in the three nations are all respectively different. Furthermore, as these differences are considered to have big effects on the way the war will develop in the future in these nations, we will roughly sum up the points of differences and the points in common, in order to grasp clearly the essential nature of the Indo-China war.

I. Points of Differences

1. ~~xxxx~~ Causes for the Arising of War

1) Vietnam

Basically, the Vietnam war is a war between the Vietnamese people, between ~~the~~ North Vietnam and the NLF, which belong to the communist camp, and South Vietnam, which belong to the free world. And, the communist and the free forces are respectively giving aid to the two sides.

ix In regard to the period up until the ending of World War II, there were two currents, historically, in the independence movement of the Vietnamese people, aiming at liberating Vietnam from a French colony. One current was a nationalist, anti-French independence movement, which stemmed from the royalist movement, aiming at ~~restoring~~ the restoration of the Annam Dynasty, which was then under the control of France. The other current was an anti-French resistance movement, whose main body was communism, and this came to form the Viet Minh in 1941. Furthermore, these two movements did not have mutual relationship. Rather, these two movements confronted each other, and in the last stage of World War II, the former group approached Japan, while the communist side sought the assistance of the Allied Forces.

After the end of World War II, with the defeat of Japan, the position of the leaders of the non-communist nationalist side, which had co-operated with Japan, came to be greatly weakened. Taking advantage of this situation, the Viet Minh expanded its foundation, and came to grasp the supreme banner of a national independence movement. It thus succeeded in establishing a government in North Vietnam. However, although the right and left-wing forces had no choice but to co-operate with each other temporarily, due to the situation of France's return to Indo-China after the War, and to fight against France, the two groups, which differed in ideology, split in the end, even during the process of the war of resistance against France. Some nationalists, who were affiliated with the royalist movement, established the ~~the~~ Bao Dai Government, which is the predecessor of the South Vietnamese Government of today, through negotiations and compromise with France, and confronted

the North Vietnamese Government.

The anti-French war in Vietnam ended with the Geneva Conference. However, as a result of the unified election, ~~which~~ provided for in the Geneva Agreement, ~~being~~ rejected by South Vietnam, North Vietnam, which lost the political means of securing South Vietnam through the means of an election process, organized the NLF in South Vietnam in 1960, utilizing the people's dissatisfactions with DIEM, who succeeded to the Government, after Bao Dai. ~~It~~ It planned a unification of the North and the South through ~~maxim~~ an armed revolution in the South, using the NLF as its political means. This is the cause of the present Vietnam war.

In this way, ideological confrontation played a big role in the Vietnam war from the very beginning. Also, unlike the cases of Laos and Cambodia, it is a war between the Vietnamese people themselves. It is in this point that the ~~diff~~ difficulty lies.

(2) Cambodia

On the other hand, the present fighting in Cambodia is not basically caused by struggles between the Cambodian people, ~~different~~ from the case of Vietnam. Using the opportunity of the political change in Cambodia, the Cambodian Government demanded the withdrawal of North Vietnamese and NLF Forces, which were utilizing Cambodian territory as ~~sanctuaries~~ sanctuaries for the carrying out of the Vietnam war. This led to the ~~spread~~ spreading of the fighting between the Cambodian Government Forces and the North Vietnamese and the NLF Forces to the whole Cambodian territory. The expulsion of Prince SIHANOUK, which is a situation created by the Cambodian people themselves, provided the opportunity of bringing the Vietnam war into Cambodia. Nevertheless, the war itself was not

started at the initiative of the Cambodian people. Furthermore, although Cambodia is a means for the Vietnam War for North Vietnam, it is not the objective.

Cambodia, which had been given the status of a protectorate under French rule, was different from Vietnam, and the forces of nationalists were so negligible as to be almost non-existent. Also, there were hardly seen any movements in resistance to France.

After World War II, there were seen some anti-French resistance movements by some left-wing factions and some right-wing factions, but the independence of Cambodia was realized, after all, in a form tantamount to ~~its~~ its being given from above, so to speak, through Prince SIHANOUK's negotiations with France. Of course, it is clear that the independence of Cambodia through such peaceful means was recognized partly because of the fact that it was necessary for France, which had been faced with fierce resistance in Vietnam, on the occasion of its return to Indo-China, to consolidate the areas surrounding Vietnam, and partly because it was necessary for France to secure its own colonial interests by ~~us~~ using the existing royal system, at least in Laos and Cambodia. Also, France probably agreed to give independence to Laos and Cambodia in such a form partly because the importance of ~~French~~ French interests in these two regions was less when compared with the case of Vietnam.

(3) Laos

In Laos, which had been given the status of a protectorate (the Luang Prabang Kingdom) and a colony (the remaining Laotian territory, excluding the Kingdom) under French rule, there were seen hardly ^{any} anti-French resistance movements.

The Anti-French movement carried out by Prince SOUPHANOUVONG's faction (the Pathet Lao) in opposition to France's return to Laos, after World War II, had a coloring of an independence movement, in regard to its origin, though small in scale. However, it later came to be taken advantage of by North Vietnam, which was trying to establish its influence in Laos, and it has now been turned entirely into a puppet of North Vietnam.

The fighting now going on in Laos reflects the North Vietnamese people's ambitions, aiming at extending their influence to Laos. Conflicts among the Laotian people themselves are not the cause of the present fighting in Laos.

2. Form of War

(1) Vietnam

The first reason for the fact that the war in Vietnam has been continuing for a very long time lies in the point that the essential nature of this war lies more in the political field than in the military field. This stems from the fact that this war developed from the ideological conflicts among the Vietnamese people themselves, as already stated in 1-(1). In other words, it stemmed from the extremely deep-rooted conflicts among the Vietnamese people themselves, and it came to be expanded in scale and became internationalized, with the two sides respectively receiving aid and support from outside forces. This essential nature of the Vietnam war is entirely different from the wars in Cambodia and Laos.

The second reason lies in the point that the above-mentioned conflict between the Vietnamese people is extremely deep-rooted, as a struggle between the general masses, who have no relations to ideology, and that it is not limited to some of the leaders alone. A big reason for this lies in the land system in Vietnam. In other words, a strict tenant farming system has been enforced in Vietnam from before, and this had been the root of very strong dissatisfaction among the farmers. The Viet Minh took advantage of this dissatisfaction, in the days of the war of resistance against France, and by promoting farmland reform in areas it controlled, succeeded in winning the sympathy of the farmers. This feeling of affinity with the ~~MLR~~ Viet Minh was shifted to the NLF later. The sense of hostility toward the central government created by the mal-administration and exploitation by government officials under the DIEM Administration, which was no greatly different from the days of French rule, still remains as a ~~marked~~ sense of distrust in the central government, even after DIEM. And this, coupled with the farmers' dissatisfaction with the tenancy system which continued in areas controlled by the Government, became a big factor which led the farmers to co-operate with the NLF. Of course, the DIEM Administration promoted land reform ~~work~~ in the early days of its government, and President THIEU is also making efforts to expand the land reform law, which was recently passed by the National Assembly. However, even if this law is carried out fully, 43 percent of farmland under cultivation in South Vietnam will still remain under the tenancy system.

The third reason is that, in addition to the fact that the topographical conditions of Vietnam, in which a large part of the termi-

tory is mountains and jungles, make the country suitable for guerrilla war, there is the above-mentioned dissatisfaction against the tenant-farming system in the farm villages, which are the hot-beds for the guerrillas. These factors, coupled with the complicated national characteristics of the Vietnamese people, make are making guerrilla activities easy.

(2) ~~Khmer~~ Cambodia

In regard to the Cambodian war, it is different from the case of Vietnam, in the point that the origin of the war itself lies more in the military aspect, rather than in the political aspect, as stated in 1-(2).

In other words, the present situation in Cambodia is not a war which is based on the differences among the Cambodian people ~~about~~ over their judgment on political values. It is rather a military battle with the Vietnamese people, who are a different people.

The Red Khmer, who had been taking an anti-Government stand before the political change, are not showing any systematic resistance to the Lon Nol Government. It also seems that the persuasion activities toward the farmers by the National United Front of Kampuchea, which is led by Sihanouk, are not making any progress at present. In this way, the situation in Cambodia has not become a political problem among the Cambodian people, at least for the present, and operations toward the North Vietnam and farmers by/the Sihanouk faction are also not making ~~much~~ progress. This is thought to be for the following reasons:

(a) In the war this time, the other party to the war is an alien people, that is, the Vietnamese people, toward whom the Cambodian people have ~~hostile~~ hostile sentiments from their historical tradition. Apart from their being forcibly pulled in, it is hardly inconceivable that the Cambodian masses will voluntarily co-operate in a war being fought by an alien people.

(b) Different from the situation in Vietnam, the Cambodian masses' political consciousness is at a low level. Furthermore, there do not exist any sentiments of hostility toward the Central Government, created, for example by the farmland problem (in Cambodia, the farmers all cultivate their own land, except ~~for~~ for some areas in Battenbang Province).

As against the Vietnamese people's very strong sense of suspicion, stemming partly from such internal factors as serious confrontation arising from religious differences and by regions from which they come, the Cambodian people respect their royal family. They are also simple and naive Buddhists, and there are few factors for internal confrontation.

(c) Communist elements within the country had been completely annihilated in the Sihanouk days.

If the North Vietnamese and the NLF side were to work upon the refugees, ~~and~~ who appeared throughout the whole country, and upon the farmers, who account for the large majority of the people, in the future, and if it succeeded in fostering the feeling among them that all problems will be settled if Sihanouk returns to the country, as well as

to educate and organize the farmers politically, then there may be room for the military struggle in Cambodia expanding into a political struggle. However, if the Lon Nol Government were to handle the economic problems properly, there will be little possibility of the communist side's rallying the Cambodian farmers into an anti-Government force, despite its efforts, and in that case, the Cambodian problem will remain a military struggle and not develop into a political struggle.

Secondly, except for the provinces in the northeast, which are covered with ~~the~~ jungles, and the mountain jungle regions of the southwest, a large part of Cambodia is plains and rice-paddies, and the topographical conditions are not suited to becoming the hotbeds for guerrilla forces and for the strengthening of their power. There is, furthermore, the circumstance that, because of the Cambodian people's traditional hostility toward Vietnam, it will be extremely difficult for the North Vietnamese and the NLF forces to secure the co-operation of the Cambodian masses for their guerrilla operations.

Comprehensively judged from the above factors, it can be considered that the Cambodian war is a military struggle against outside armed forces and that it will remain a military fight even in the future.

(3) Laos

In the case of Laos, too, it is the ~~the~~ same as in Cambodia, and there does not exist the land problem, and the majority of the people are simple and naive Buddhists, strongly revering their royal family. There are few factors which could give rise to internal confrontation. Furthermore, in Laos, the parties concerned are all

maintaining the position of ~~xxxx~~ maintaining the framework^k of the three-faction coalition, based on the Geneva Agreement of 1962. Even the Pathet Lao side is not thinking of overthrowing the neutral PHOUMA Government. Consequently, there are no factors to drive the essentially simple and naive Laotian people into a civil war. The present civil war was brought into Laos in the interests of North Vietnam. Moreover, ~~xxxx~~ whatever the origin of the Pathet Lao in Laos, it has now actually become a North Vietnamese army, in actual substance. Therefore, even though it takes the form of a civil war, its nature is more military than political.

Of the territory of Laos, ~~xxxxxx~~ northern Laos is like a lifeline for North Vietnam, and it has been continuing efforts to foster the Pathet Lao forces and has been engaging in political operations for many years. North Vietnam cannot easily give up this area, even from the standpoint of the defense of North Vietnam itself. On the other hand, the HO Chi Minh Trail, unlike the northeastern part of Laos, has been maintained as a means for the prosecuting of the war in South Vietnam. For North Vietnam, this is not the objective. In the light of the topographical conditions, the ~~xxxxxx~~ northern part of Laos, which is adjacent to North Vietnam, ^{is} are mountain jungles, in most part, and may appear to be suited for ~~xxxxxxx~~ guerrilla activities, at first glance. However, in actual reality, the areas of rule by each side in Laos are considerably ~~xxxxxx~~ clearly divided, and there are hardly seen any Pathet Lao guerrilla ~~xxxxxxx~~ activities in areas controlled by the Government side. This is considered to be largely due to the fact that there is little room for the North Vietnamese side to take advantage of in Laos, because of the traditionally strong ~~xxxxxxx~~ anti-Vietnam

sentiments among the Laotian people, the development of self-farming of self-owned land in Laos from the past, and the lowness of the ~~Laotian~~ Laotian people's political consciousness.

3. War Purposes

In regarding the wars in Cambodia and Laos, the point worth the greatest attention among the points of differences between these two wars and the Vietnam war, is the fact that the HO CHI MINH TRAIL and the war in Cambodia, are only the means for the ~~the~~ "liberation" of South Vietnam, which is the original objective of North Vietnam.

As against the fact that northeastern Laos is an area which must be absolutely secured, in actual substance, whatever the form may be, on the part of North Vietnam, for the security of its own country, and Cambodia southern Laos/which constitutes the Ho Chi Minh Trail ~~and Cambodia~~ Cambodia, the means for the war in South Vietnam. ~~Therefore~~ Therefore, although it may not be possible for North Vietnam to relinquish these means so long as it does not abandon its ultimate goal, some kind of compromise may be possible for North Vietnam, if such means are ensured. (For example, if, in regard to Cambodia, footholds for supplies and attacks are secured within Cambodian territory, it is considered that the presence of the ~~the~~ Government itself will be acceptable to ~~the~~ North Vietnam.)

~~III~~ II. Points in Common

As explained in the foregoing, the wars in the three ~~Indo-Chinese~~ Indo-Chinese countries have their respective characteristics. At the same time, however, there are also points in common. That is that the

Vietnam war spread to Laos and Cambodia, and that, as a result, all of Indo-China came to be embroiled in the fighting, and that the main actor on the one side in all three cases is North Vietnam.

III, Effects of the Points in Common and the Points of Difference on the Indo-China Situation in the Future

(1) As the situations in Laos and Cambodia are the results of the spreading of the war in South Vietnam, and also in view of the fact that the principal party to the conflicts in these three areas is North Vietnam, final settlement in Laos and Cambodia cannot be attained so long as the Vietnam war ^{is} ~~is~~ brought to an end in a form which is satisfactory to the parties concerned, including North Vietnam. Only when North Vietnam accepts co-existence with South Vietnam will a final settlement of the Indo-China ^{problem} be attained. In other words, final settlement of the Vietnamese, Laotian and the Cambodian questions should be considered in a package. In the case of the Vietnam question being settled in such a form, it is considered that, even though North Vietnam will probably continue to aid the national liberation struggles in Laos and Cambodia, there will be little possibility of the struggles in these two countries developing into political struggles, in view of the fact that the situations in these nations are not political struggles between their own peoples, and it is considered that aid from North Vietnam will also be limited to material aid and assistance from the side.

(2) Also, even if some compromise is arrived at in regard to Vietnam, if the settlement measures were to be extremely unsatisfactory for North Vietnam, and if it were to leave the amalgamation of South Vietnam to the future, it is full/conceivable that North Vietnam will

will try to maintain its means in Laos and Cambodia. In that case, it is considered that the situations in Laos and Cambodia will continue to retain fluid aspects, even after a tentative compromise is reached on the Vietnam question.

(3) On the other hand, there exist situations in Laos and Cambodia respectively, which are different from those in Vietnam. Therefore, it is probably possible to separate the talks in these countries among the parties directly concerned, from the question of Vietnam, within the limit that the disputes in these areas do not directly hamper the war objectives in Vietnam, and it is probably possible to reach provisional settlement. The boiling down of problematical points as much as possible through the holding of such talks will make it easier to achieve peace in Laos and Cambodia, at the stage when peace is attained in Vietnam. It is also thought that this will create, at the same time, an environment which will promote the peaceful settlement of the Vietnam question itself.

Consequently, although the Indo-China question must ultimately be settled in a package, in the light of the points in common and the mutual inter-relationship among the wars in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the form of settlement will inevitably be slightly different for each one, in the light of the points of differences in these three nations, and talks among the parties directly concerned must be held, respectively. In this meaning, the recent moves in Laos for peace talks are welcome. It is hoped that there will be developments at the Paris talks, with the appointment of United States Chief Delegate BRUCE and the return to Paris by North Vietnamese Delegate Xuan THUY. In Cambodia, too, it is hoped that talks between the persons directly concerned will be held, or that contacts will be started, at least.