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MARXIST-LENINIST VIEW OF VIETNAM WAR EXPLAINED

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[Article by Thanh Son: "Understand the Significance of the Anti-U.S. Resistance From a Marxist-Leninist Viewpoint"]

[Text] Since the founding of our country the Vietnamese people have built a 4,000-year history.

✓ In this 4,000-year history our people and nation have developed their creativity and have written many brilliant and glorious pages of history.

Indeed, few people in the world have had to fight foreign aggression as the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese people have fought continuously for 12 centuries. Especially in the 13th Century the Vietnamese people scored many extremely brilliant victories in their golden history. Our people three times defeated the Mongol aggressors, who had attacked and conquered many countries, even great ones, and thus played a considerable role in driving Mongol imperialism, which was the greatest power of the time, to disintegration.

Vietnam's history is an epic of unsubmitive struggle against foreign aggression. Nevertheless, it is not only a history of struggle against foreign aggression. The Vietnamese people are not only good fighters. In the history of their nation they have achieved great innovations in labor productivity and in country building. At the very founding of the country (which was called Van Lang and then Au Lac), with their exceptional abilities the Vietnamese people created the famous "Dong Son culture" which spread its light throughout Southeast Asia and which up to this day continues to be praised as a brilliant civilization.

Today, under the leadership of our party, founded and led by President Ho, our people are continuing the 1,000-year task of building and defending the country of their ancestors, are continuing to write the greatest and most brilliant pages in the history of our nation and have created extremely great moral values.

In 1945, under encirclement by imperialism, the small Vietnamese nation arose in a successful general uprising and founded the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia. The success of the August revolution in our country, a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country, awakened millions of people suffering under the yoke of colonialist imperialism, and opened a new capability and a new era for the liberation struggle of oppressed people throughout the world. Our country was one of the first countries to defeat old colonialism.

Then came the resistance against the French colonialists who returned to invade our country. Our people's resistance against the French colonialist aggressors took place under extremely difficult conditions. We can say that we started to fight the French, an imperialist power, with our empty hands. In the first years of the war our country was encircled by imperialism. In the following years we not only fought the French, but also had to cope with the ever greater intervention of the U.S. imperialists. Despite these difficulties our people developed to the utmost their strong vitality and great creativity to fight and defeat the French colonialist aggressors and the U.S. interventionists. The success of this resistance not only opened a new and extremely glorious page of history for the Vietnamese people, but also set a shining example for the liberation struggle of other people of the world, thus helping open a new phase, the phase of collapse and disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism. Since then, our small country, Vietnam, which was almost unknown, has attracted the praise, affection and admiration of the world. Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, and Dien Bien Phu have become very beautiful names, the symbol of the unsubmitive fighting spirit.

As soon as the anti-French resistance was ended our people again had to cope with aggression by the U.S. imperialists, the richest, strongest and most reactionary imperialist ringleader. The anti-U.S. national salvation resistance marks the greatest and most glorious evolution in our national history. Never in our national history has there been a resistance as heroic, brilliant and resourceful, as difficult, complicated and protracted as our people's present anti-U.S. national salvation resistance.

The U.S. imperialists' war of aggression against our country is the biggest war since World War II. It is also the biggest and longest war in U.S. history and is an important part of their counterrevolutionary global strategy.

The U.S. aggressors have poured into Vietnam a huge number of bombs and shells, wealth and lives of the American people. Speaking of bombs and shells the U.S. imperialists have hurled on Vietnam more than 10 million tons of bombs and shells, or twice the number used in World War II and more than 11 times the number used in the aggressive war against Korea. Never in any war have so many means and modern weapons been used as are being used by the Americans in the present war. This alone clearly reflects the great fierceness of our people's anti-U.S. struggle.

Despite all the enemy's schemes, plots and reckless acts and despite all their most barbarous crimes, our people have defeated and are defeating the U.S. imperialists, the most cruel and dangerous enemy of progressive mankind.

Our people have scored very great victories.

These victories not only have a life-or-death significance for the future of our nation, but also have a far reaching and great significance for the revolutionary struggle of the world's people. We can say that in the process of the anti-U.S. national salvation struggle our people, our present generation, are creating a new era, and this era will mark great progress not only in the immediate future but also in the distant future for our fatherland. In other words, our people are creating great moral values, and these values are the premises and motive force for the strong development of the Vietnamese nation and people in the future. At the same time, these moral virtues also encourage progressive mankind in the revolutionary struggle.

In studying our anti-U.S. national salvation resistance it is extremely important for us to see its significance and magnitude in the experience it has provided and in its contributions to the world people's revolutionary struggle. To this end, we must base ourselves on Marxism-Leninism. That is, we must be imbued with ardent patriotism combined with noble proletarian internationalism and firmly grasp our party's lines of independence and sovereignty.

In analyzing this problem it is possible to make mistakes due to lack of a correct stand and viewpoint.

--If we look at it from the viewpoint of the national bourgeoisie or petit bourgeoisie, regardless of the fine words and terms we use, we will not be able to understand the scientific content of the experiences and contributions to the struggle made by the Vietnamese, and we will even play them down. If we look at it from a nationalistic viewpoint, we will not be able to see the entire magnitude, and great international significance of the anti-U.S. national salvation struggle.

--If we do not have correct pride in our national spirit and do not think according to our party's independent, sovereign and creative line, we will also fail to understand fully and correctly the significance of our resistance.

Many people, regardless of their different positions, have contributed to this common creative undertaking, but they fail to see everything they are doing or to understand the content, value and significance of their undertaking. In their opinion, it seems somewhat too much to say that our anti-U.S. national salvation resistance has been creative; the experiences they apply to this resistance are learned from other countries.

They argue that wherever a party exists, there is party leadership, strategies, policies, revolutionary methods and so forth; they say that because we are forced to carry out the resistance, the best thing we can do is apply Marxism-Leninism correctly. They do not understand our national creativity and our creativity in party leadership guidelines.

Of course it is true that our party leadership guidelines are Marxist-Leninist and our party's leading concept is based on Marxism-Leninism. Our party has never ceased learning from the experiences and failures of our brotherly parties and countries to improve their revolutionary leadership ability. However, Marxism-Leninism serves as a guideline for our actions, not a dogma. Regardless of the validity of the experiences of the world revolutionary movement, these experiences cannot be strictly applied in Vietnam without considering the concrete conditions in the country. Every success of the Vietnamese revolution is the result of a correct and creative application by our party of Marxist-Leninist principles and the experiences of the world revolutionary movement to the concrete situation and conditions in Vietnam. In Marxist-Leninist theory and in the world people's revolutionary struggle movement, there are no ready-made strategies, policies, formulas or solutions to our anti-U.S. national salvation resistance.

Among the people of the type mentioned above, there may be some who, because of lack of knowledge, believe that nearly all problems in our country are different than those in other countries. There may be also others who, because of their idolizing of foreign experiences, are "modest" to such a degree that they have an inferiority complex; they see great things only in foreign countries and fail to recognize great, creative things in their own country. They think simplistically that because our country is small, it is difficult to find great, creative things here.

In fact our country is not large and its people are not very many, but this does not prevent them from performing heroic deeds. It is not necessarily true that big countries can achieve great, creative things.

The USSR is a big country. The October Revolution was a great event opening a new era for all mankind.

China is a big country. The Chinese revolution was a great event following the success of the October Revolution.

The United States is a big country. However, all the U.S. imperialists' barbarous, brutal and cunning aggressive acts in implementing their scheme of world domination are bad criminal deeds that dishonor U.S. prestige.

Cuba is a small country. However, the Cuban revolutionary undertaking and socialist construction are great things, shining examples of the revolutionary movement in Latin America.

--It is impossible for us to understand the great significance of the anti-U.S. national salvation resistance if we do not have a collective mastership spirit and the attitude of a vanguard, who care for the destiny of the fatherland and who share the worries of the fatherland and the burden of the people. If they have an objective attitude they will fail to understand fully and keenly problems that may be basic to the resistance, to analyze correctly subjective and objective conditions and to realize that our people have undergone numerous difficulties and trials to achieve the present great undertaking.

Our people's anti-U.S. national salvation resistance is taking place under very difficult conditions, particularly at a time when the world situation is going through extremely complex developments.

U.S. imperialism is the greatest and most powerful ringleader of the imperialist camp. Since World War II, as other imperialist countries have seriously weakened, only U.S. imperialism has become a strong and prosperous imperialist "superpower." The United States is the creditor of all the capitalist states. U.S. industrial output is nearly half of the entire world's. The U.S. scientific and technical level is higher than that of other capitalist countries. Moreover, the United States has nuclear weapons. With its aggressive, bellicose and reactionary nature and with its material strength, the United States has for more than a decade successively followed many counterrevolutionary global strategies--the Truman strategy, Eisenhower's "massive retaliation" strategy, Kennedy's "flexible reaction" and the present "Nixon doctrine"--designed to gradually weaken and destroy the socialist countries and oppose and sabotage the peoples' liberation movement and all other patriotic, progressive and revolutionary movements of various peoples and nations. In recent years the U.S. imperialists participated, directly or indirectly, in the bloody repressions of patriotic struggle movements in the Dominican Republic and of the Indonesian Communist Party and patriots and incited and assisted the Israeli reactionaries in invading many Arab states. They have clamored that in its history of nearly 200 years the United States has never been defeated(?). Relying on its great, strong economic and military potential and on its nuclear weapons, U.S. imperialism has constantly advocated a position of strength from which to solve all problems the U.S. way and to subdue other peoples. Although the United States has uttered flowery words and tried to show its good will, all its designs, policies and actions lead to this logical conclusion: All nations in the world may choose between two paths: Submit to the United States or "taste" U.S. nuclear strength. A typical example of the U.S. design is the U.S. imperialists' insolent threat in the Caribbean crisis in 1963.

Compared with the United States, Vietnam is a very small country. The area of the United States is 28 times larger than that of Vietnam. The population of the United States is seven times greater than that of Vietnam. The U.S. economy is 700-800 times greater than North Vietnam's economy. Vietnam's military potential cannot be compared to the huge U.S. military potential. Vietnam fought a protracted war against the French invaders. It is clear that in many aspects, the balance between Vietnam and the United States is greatly unequal.

This gives our people an extremely serious choice: Submit to the United States or yield.

To yield to the United States means that we resign ourselves to losing South Vietnam to the U.S. imperialists and consent to the perpetual partition of our country. But the matter will not stop there. With their counterrevolutionary global strategy that is being tested in Vietnam, if the U.S. imperialists succeed in taking over South Vietnam and turning it into a U.S. neocolony and military base, they will attack North Vietnam, oppress the socialist camp, repress the movement for peoples' liberation and prepare a new world war.

On the basis of its Marxist-Leninist stand, our party has pointed out that the United States has its strong points as well as its basic weaknesses. The period when the U.S. imperialists ruled the roost is over.

The present era is an era of socialist revolution and revolution for peoples' liberation, an era in which imperialism has collapsed, the colonial network has been destroyed, many nations are advancing toward socialism, and socialism and communism are triumphing all over the world. With a proper revolutionary line and method, and enjoying the sympathy and support of fraternal socialist countries and progressives in the world, our people are fully capable of frustrating all dark schemes of the U.S. imperialists.

This basic guiding thought of our party is a basis from which our people have been advancing toward victories in the struggle against the U.S. imperialists' aggression.

The situation in 1965-1966 was particularly serious.

To salvage their serious setbacks in South Vietnam, in 1965 the U.S. imperialists introduced 200,000 U.S. expeditionary troops into this country to wage a local war of aggression. At the same time, they waged an extremely savage air and naval war of destruction against North Vietnam.

In 1966 they sent more than 300,000 additional U.S. troops to South Vietnam and escalated and intensified the war against North Vietnam.

On this small land of South Vietnam with a population of about 16 or 17 million, there were more than a half-million U.S. troops and more than 1 million Saigon puppet and satellite troops.

The U.S. imperialists and our enemies joyfully thought that this time the United States could "smash" the Vietnamese people's resistance in the south as well as in the north.

Even people who sympathize with and had good will toward our resistance were filled with misgivings and consternation. They knew that the Vietnamese people are very heroic and that Vietnam's national salvation undertaking is very just, but they were afraid that the Vietnamese nation, small in size and with its economy still poor and underdeveloped, would be unable to confront the United States.

Standing firmly on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, our party again pointed out: The U.S. imperialists had to send their troops continuously into the south and to conduct the war of destruction in the north because they were being painfully defeated in the south and the revolution there was achieving great victories. Though the U.S. imperialists had massive forces in the south, they were in a losing and passive position. Even if the United States frenziedly and recklessly expanded the war, it could not escape even heavier defeats. The southern revolution and the people's war in the south must firmly maintain and develop their strategic offensive position. In continuing the offensive strategy, our people would certainly defeat the U.S. imperialists' aggression.

Our party also made clear that, faced with a situation in which the U.S. imperialists were expanding the war throughout our country, the anti-U.S. national salvation undertaking presented a sacred obligation to the people of the entire nation. The south is the great frontline and the north is the great rear. The north must at the same time defeat the U.S. imperialists' war of destruction, continue the building of socialism in accordance with the wartime situation, satisfactorily fulfill its obligation of supporting the great frontline and insure victorious fighting of the frontline.

At the same time our party continued to accelerate implementation of its external policy to win stronger sympathy and support and greater aid from the fraternal socialist countries, the fraternal parties and progressive people all over the world, including the American progressives, for our great and lofty struggle.

Because of the party's thoroughly revolutionary stand and its correct, creative lines, because of the great sympathy, support and aid from the brothers and friends all over the world and because of the marvelously brave fighting spirit of both the south and the north, our people have successively defeated the U.S. imperialists' intensified limited war of aggression in the south and their extremely fierce destructive war in the north and have defeated and are defeating the U.S. Vietnamized war.

If the world situation were not facing such complex changes as it is now, our success would certainly have been even greater.

Although the war in Vietnam has not yet ended, the trend of the war is now, through its victories, more discernable than ever: Vietnam will certainly win, the U.S. imperialist aggressors will certainly be defeated. All realistic people in the world, including those in the United States, admit this. Wherever Nixon goes--to the east or the west--and no matter what expedients and tricks he may resort to, he absolutely cannot reverse this trend of the war nor save the "Vietnamization" strategy from complete failure.

The success of the anti-U.S. national salvation undertaking is the greatest and most brilliant success in the Vietnamese people's 4,000-year history of national construction and defense. This success has opened a new era for the Vietnamese people, an era of everlasting independence. To a nation, nothing is more radiant, glorious and civilized than this success. President Ho taught us that "nothing is more precious than independence and freedom."

The success of the Vietnamese people's anti-U.S. resistance is also a success for the revolutionary peoples of the world. The Vietnamese people's struggle is a solution to this great problem of the era: U.S. imperialism is not frightening and all U.S. aggressive schemes can be completely defeated. The Vietnamese people's struggle not only shows the possibility of triumphing over U.S. imperialism to mankind and to all nations, but has also stayed many designs of this giant devil in his counterrevolutionary global strategy, thus helping advance the revolutionary undertaking of other nations.

U.S. imperialism is a mortal enemy of the Vietnamese people and also the number one and most dangerous enemy of the revolutionary people of the world. In defeating U.S. imperialism in Vietnam we have dealt a heavy, effective blow to the most dangerous enemy of the world and weakened him in every respect.

Because they are aware of the role and great significance of Vietnam's anti-U.S. national salvation resistance, many states, nations and peoples in the world highly value our people's struggle.

So far, progressives all over the world, including genuine Americans, have praised Vietnam's anti-U.S. national salvation resistance and the Vietnamese as a heroic, great and unsubmitive people.

Many personalities of various professions and political tendencies have said that "Vietnam is the hope of the world," "the conscience of the era" and "the honor of mankind."

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While the world situation is as complicated as it is now, the fact that our resistance is so praised by widespread world opinion can be considered very special and a great encouragement and pride for our Vietnamese people.

Aware of the role and great significance of the anti-U.S. national salvation struggle, our entire party, army and people are determined to implement President Ho's sacred testament: "The anti-U.S. resistance may drag on. Our compatriots may make more sacrifices in resources and human lives. But we must be resolved to fight the U.S. aggressors until total victory."

For the fatherland's independence and freedom and for their obligations toward other peoples, our people are determined to persist in and step up the anti-U.S. national salvation resistance to liberate the south, protect the socialist north, advance toward peacefully reunifying the country and make worthy contributions to the world revolution.