

VÕ NGUYỄN GIÁP

**VIET NAM PEOPLE'S WAR
HAS DEFEATED
U.S. WAR OF DESTRUCTION**

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

I*N their resistance from 1945 to 1954 the Vietnamese people defeated the aggressive war waged by the French colonialists mainly with ground troops. This time they have worsted the U.S. war of destruction conducted chiefly with air and naval forces. In two speeches at military meetings by mid-1969, General Vo Nguyen Giap, Defence minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Viet Nam People's Army, analysed the factors of this latter victory and threw light upon some problems pertaining to both the fighting and production fronts at a historical stage of the Vietnamese people's struggle, problems from which fundamental experiences can be drawn.*

We present to our readers the full translation of General Vo Nguyen Giap's speeches.

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*Speech by General VO NGUYEN GIAP at the
Emulation Congress of the anti aircraft and
air forces held in early June 1969*

Dear comrades,

It is very gratifying for me to convey the warm greetings of the Party Central Committee, the Government and President Ho Chi Minh, the Central Military Committee and the High Command to this Emulation Congress of the anti-aircraft and air forces, to the representatives of the heroic units, heroes, determined-to-win fighters and emulation fighters, to all delegates to this Congress, and, through them, to tend my cordial greetings to all cadres and fighters, workers and personnel in all units as well as to the people in all localities.

1. A VICTORY OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

Together with the emulation congresses of our forces in the various war zones, in the various arms and services since early spring, this Emulation Congress

of the anti-aircraft and air forces marks a tremendous victory of our people in their resistance against U.S. aggression, for national salvation. This is a *triumph of people's war in North Viet Nam over the U.S. imperialists' air and naval war of destruction*. Along with the resounding successes on the South Viet Nam theatre it is a *victory of great consequence, of strategic significance*.

Four years ago, when their "special war" strategy in South Viet Nam was facing complete bankruptcy, the U.S. imperialists, with the utter obduracy of an international gendarme and counting on their economic and military potentials, made the most serious strategic and political mistake in the history of their aggressions. To make good their failure, they launched a large-scale "limited war", committed masses of expeditionary troops to an aggression against South Viet Nam, and at the same time started a piratical air and naval war of destruction against North Viet Nam — an independent and sovereign state, a member of the socialist camp.

On the South Viet Nam theatre, they mounted one major counter-offensive after another during two successive dry seasons, which all came to grief. But the heavier their setbacks, the more frantically they stepped up the aggressive war, deploying ever-bigger ground, air and naval forces which soon far exceeded the strength originally intended for a "limited war".

In the North they carried out frenzied raids and continually escalated the war as their reverses increased, extending their attacks up to the 19th and 20th

parallels, then to the Northwest, Northeast and Viet Nam — China border, and finally to Hanoi, our capital, and Haiphong, the biggest port in North Viet Nam.

They mustered a fairly big modern air force based in Thailand and on aircraft carriers, together with artillery of various types onboard Seventh-Fleet units, and of the infantry forces operating south of the demarcation line. They mounted nearly 100,000 strikes against our beloved North Viet Nam, using more than one million tons of bombs and shells. They tried all kinds of hardware in their arsenal such as bombs and shells, rockets, steel-pellet bombs, napalm and magnetic bombs, and all the other most up-to-date and murderous weapons at their disposal short of nuclear ones.

The U.S. imperialists thought that with their modern air and naval forces and the huge amount of bombs and shells which they believed nothing would resist, they could easily achieve their strategic objectives and finally subdue our people and bring to fruition their scheme of neo-colonialist aggression.

But the U.S. imperialists were grossly mistaken.

They thought that our determination would be shaken within a few weeks and our people would give in. But, contrary to their expectation, the fiercer their strikes, the deeper our people's hatred for the U.S. aggressors and the firmer the resolve of our entire army and people to defeat them. True, the aggressors had made careful and comprehensive calculations, banking heavily on the effectiveness of their

modern armoury. However, there was one hard reality they had failed to take into account, that is: *the Vietnamese people are a heroic people who have since time immemorial never bowed to any invader and who have in less than three decades defeated Japanese fascism and French imperialism one after the other, and are now staunchly fighting and keeping in check the U.S. imperialist aggressors.*

The U.S. imperialists believed that with the force of their weaponry they could within a short period of time destroy all our land and water communications, completely sever North from South Viet Nam and realize their dark design of preventing the North Vietnamese from fulfilling their sacred duty to their Southern kith and kin. But reality has completely baffled their plans. The more their raids intensified, the warmer the militant solidarity between North and South, the closer the North Vietnamese stood by their beloved countrymen in the South, and the more zealously they fulfilled their duty as the great rear area toward the great fighting front. *Viet Nam is one country, the Vietnamese are one nation; no force can drive them apart.*

In the "All for defeating the U.S. aggressors" and "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" spirit the North Vietnamese people have constantly turned their thoughts toward their Southern kindred, and have discharged with merit their sacred duty toward the liberation cause in the other half of their beloved country.

The U.S. imperialists expected that with the formidable destructive power of their modern air and

naval forces, they could promptly bring our people's economic and cultural life to a standstill and cause serious damage to our national defence potential and our socialist construction. But what happened upset their calculations. In the flame of the fighting and in the flush of its victory over the war of destruction, North Viet Nam grew ever steadier and stronger. Agricultural and industrial production has remained stable and even developed. Communications and transport keep rolling. Cultural, educational and medical activities have increased. The national defence forces have consolidated and grown considerably. Even in war time, the people's life has continued unperturbed and the army's needs have been adequately met. The moral and political unity of our entire people has become stronger than ever before. With the above marvellous achievements in the fighting and in production the socialist regime has unmistakably proved its superiority and great vitality. The North has brought into full play its role as the base of the revolution for the whole country and as the great rear area for the great fighting front.

In combat, the North has grown ever steadier than ever before and has really become a steel rampart. This we can rightly take pride in. Friends from foreign countries who visited it were astonished by the strong vitality of our nation and the miraculous revolutionary optimism of our people. Such a nation, such a people, under a socialist regime, will surely defeat any enemy.

The main goal of the U.S. imperialists' war of destruction against the North was to effectively

co-ordinate actions with their expeditionary troops in the South Viet Nam theatre of operations and realize their aggressive design there.

After years of U.S. intensified aggressive war in both parts of our country, big changes have occurred in the South Viet Nam situation. The more the U.S. imperialists stepped up their aggressive war, the heavier their failures; the more our people persisted in their resistance, the greater their victories. Especially since early spring 1968, under the banner of the National Front for Liberation, the heroic people and Liberation Army in the South have been mounting wave after wave of widespread offensives and uprisings against the enemy, springing powerful, continual and all-round attacks—military and political—in towns and country, in the plains and hill-forest areas; the liberated areas have been expanded and people's revolutionary power set up throughout South Viet Nam. *The generalized offensives and uprisings have won tremendous, all-round and unprecedented successes, upsetting the strategic battle array of the enemy, rocking their rear area and obviously shaking their aggressive will.* They have forced the U.S. imperialists to put an end to the stage of counter-offensive of their "limited war" on the South Viet Nam theatre, switch on to the defensive and the "clear and hold" strategy, and muster the major part of their forces for the defence of the towns and important bases.

In early spring this year, at the very moment the Nixon administration, which had just assumed

office was at a loss to find a solution to the Viet Nam problem, the armed forces and people in the South staged new and well-timed violent onsets, striking hard at the U.S. aggressors in many skilfully prepared and highly efficient actions. *These repeated assaults prove that the longer they fight the stronger the South Viet Nam armed forces and people become, and spell out the great ability of South Viet Nam—the bulwark of the fatherland—to deliver powerful and continuous blows, and its determination to press its attacks till final victory.*

Turning our thoughts to the heroic South we warmly hail the great victories of our fourteen million beloved countrymen, of the heroic Liberation Armed Forces, the pride of our entire people.

Having bitterly failed in their war effort and confronted with innumerable difficulties not only on the Viet Nam battlefield but also at home and in the world, the U.S. imperialists were forced to reconsider their unjust war condemned by all progressive mankind. They had to enter into talks with the delegates of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. This was something they had not envisaged when they massively sent aggressor troops to our country. This was one more aspect of their political passiveness in the face of the radiant justice and great strength of our nation. Recently the N.F.L. put forward its ten-point overall solution to the Viet Nam problem together with very sound and serious principles which further aggravated the U.S. imperialists' and their flunkys' embarrassment.

The U.S. imperialists attacked the North in the hope of extricating themselves from their predicament in the South, but they met with bitter setbacks in both parts of our country. *On the South Viet Nam theatre the heroic people and Liberation Armed Forces inflicted reverse after reverse upon 1,200,000 troops of the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen. This marvellous exploit was a telling blow at the U.S. imperialists' scheme of aggression and a very important contribution to defeating their war of destruction in North Viet Nam.* The aggressors were driven to unconditionally cease their bombardments in the North. It was the failure not only of the war of destruction but also of an important part of the "limited war" strategy and of this strategy itself. It is safe to say that have now tacitly admitted the bankruptcy of their "limited war" strategy and are forced to consider an "honourable" settlement and of "de-Americanizing" the war. Is "de-Americanization" a new manoeuvre? Surely the, U.S. imperialists have not forgotten that they have once used non-American forces — the puppet army and administration — in the "special war", and having failed miserably, they had, out of passiveness, to take the decision to "Americanize" the war. Now that the "limited war" has gone bankrupt, they hope to turn the tide by resorting to the old trick of "de-Americanizing" or "Vietnamizing" the war. Both the U.S. and puppets have failed to gain a position of strength and have sustained more setbacks in the process. Yet they now want to put into effect a plan for "phased withdrawal" of U.S. forces, with a view to replacing them by

puppet troops and securing a position of strength. It is clear that they are plunging deeper into an impass, a quagmire and a losing position.

Our people are determined to continue foiling all their new schemes and keep up our resistance till final victory. And this war against U.S. aggression, for national salvation — the biggest in our nation's history against foreign aggression — will dash to the ground the myth of U.S. invincible military and economic strength. Our people's war is beating off and will surely defeat completely the neo-colonialist aggressive war of the U.S. imperialists.

2. SHINING EXAMPLES OF REVOLUTIONARY HEROISM

Dear comrades,

Under the leadership of our Party headed by our beloved and venerated President Ho Chi Minh, the people's armed forces in the North have upheld the tradition of resolute fighting until victory, of loyalty to the Party and devotion to the people, and have gloriously fulfilled their duty of crushing the American imperialists' war of destruction so as to make a worthy contribution to the great victory of our nation.

The anti-aircraft forces of our three kinds of armed forces in all localities, from the militia or self-defence member holding the plough or the hammer in one hand and the gun in the other, or fighting on a permanent basis in the battlefields, to the anti-aircraft and air-force

units have achieved very brilliant exploits and, together with the entire army and people, shot down nearly 3,300 * American planes, got the better of the modern air force, and sunk or burnt hundreds of warships and commando boats of the topmost imperialist power. These are most glorious feats of arms. At this congress, *it is very gratifying for us to commend all cadres and fighters of our heroic people's armed forces, of the anti-aircraft, infantry, artillery, engineer, transport, signal, naval and other units on the collective exploits achieved.*

We all warmly congratulate our anti-aircraft artillery and missile units, air force, radar and other units of the anti-aircraft and air forces for their very important part in the victory over the U.S. air force. They have displayed revolutionary heroism, their resolve to fight and win, their splendid courage, great vigilance, intelligence and creative power; they have constantly improved their technique and tactics and devised skilful fighting methods to foil the perfidious technical tricks of the American aggressors and shot down nearly all types of their most up-to-date planes.

Promoting their spirit of "aiming right at the enemy", many *anti-aircraft gunners and units* have recorded outstanding achievements. They are the heroic Company No 1, the Hong Linh unit credited with the highest record of 200 planes downed, the Xung Kich unit which fought with extraordinary perseverance

* Up to June 5, 1969 when the speech was delivered, 3,294 U.S. planes had been downed. (*Pub.*)

and courage on the strategic communications front. Many comrades such as chief gunner Nguyen Huy Hong who, seriously wounded, continued to fight heroically, chief gunner Bui Xuan Chien who rushed into the flames to keep up the fighting. These comrades have set shining examples of revolutionary heroism.

Our young but heroic missile force has grown rapidly to maturity. Many units and operators recorded great feats such as the heroic Section No 61, the Section No 64 which grounded the highest number of American aircraft (over 40), the Song Da unit with 137 planes downed to its credit, the Nam Trieu and Ha Long units with a score of over 100 aircraft each, army hero Nguyen Tuyen and others who have ceaselessly improved their scientific and technical levels thanks to their revolutionary ardour.

Our nascent but heroic air force, true to its tradition of winning every battle has scored valiant exploits: The heroic Company No 1 downed over 60 aircraft, Company No 2 over 50, Sao Do unit over 100. Besides heroes Tran Hanh, Nguyen Van Bay and Lam Van Lich, many other comrades fought most valiantly and skilfully, and performed brilliant feats such as Nguyen Van Coc who blasted 9 planes, Ha Van Chuc who broke into an enemy formation of 36 aircraft and grounded the leading one manned by a colonel, thus checking the attack.

Our radar operators, courageous and constantly vigilant have never ceased to improve their technical level and proved capable of spotting the enemy "from

afar, rapidly, accurately and thoroughly"; they have fought tirelessly by their oscilloscope and recorded ever greater achievements; among others we can mention such distinguished units as Companies Nos. 11 and 19 and such able operators as Pham Si Yeng, Do Ngoan, Nguyen Van Giang and Tran Vinh Quang.

Signal, engineer, transport, armoury and other support units, offices and schools have displayed great combativeness and efficiently served the fighting, making an important contribution to the common victory.

Our heroic anti-aircraft and air forces have accomplished the task entrusted them by the Party and the people with splendid success and earned the confidence and love of our armed forces and people.

We are very proud of our fellow-countrymen who have spared no effort and even sacrificed their lives in helping the armymen and, together with them, in taking part in the fighting. They have spent millions of work-days to build defence positions and roads to haul guns, carry ammunition, and tend the wounded. Without the wholehearted assistance and encouragement of the population, of Party organizations, government bodies and mass organizations of various localities, and of people of various nationalities, it was impossible for our army to perform such outstanding exploits.

The victories won by our armed forces are closely associated with the success of *anti-air-raid precautions* taken by the *civilian air defence*. Our compatriots have dug millions of anti-air-raid shelters and tens of thousands of kilometres of communication trenches; by

efficiently organizing an alert system and a thorough dispersal they reduced the losses caused by the enemy to the minimum. Thus, highly favourable conditions were created to fight the adversary and foil their objectives.

The successes of our armed forces and people are closely associated with our achievements in *production, transport and communications, in the cultural, medical and other branches*. In *production*, our people displayed courage and perseverance, unceasingly improved their technique and increased their labour productivity, overcome natural calamities and the havoc wrought by the enemy and satisfied all the requirements of our resistance. More particularly, as of late the enemy concentrated their attacks on the *communication lines*, and as a result the fighting unfolded most fiercely. With the spirit "to mend the roads immediately after the enemy destroy them" and "when the vehicles cannot pass, even houses are dismantled to repair the road", the forces in charge of transport and communications and the population have fought very heroically and gloriously carried the day. Thanks to the valiant struggle and strenuous efforts of our people in all branches, organs and localities to repel enemy raids and overcome difficulties and hardships in order to win on all fronts, we have recently recorded great and all-sided successes.

Once again, *we warmly hail and praise the tremendous achievements of our people in all localities and on all fronts. We express our profound gratitude and respect to them who, under the leadership of our Party, have given us added strength to defeat the enemy.*