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TENTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM*
(September, 1955)

On September 2 of this year the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam became ten years old, and the Vietnamese people who are from now on free on the greater part of their territory are commemorating this glorious National Day with indescribable enthusiasm and joy.

Right from the first days of colonial aggression and for nearly one century, the Vietnamese people unceasingly struggled against the invaders, evincing extraordinary gallantry and heroism. The guerrilla activities of Truong Cong Dinh and Truong Quyen in Nam Bo (1867), the Resistance movements in 1874 and especially in 1884, the twelve-year-long struggle under the leadership of Phan Dinh Phung (1884-96), and following it, the fighting led by Hoang Hoa Tham until the eve of World War I, the movement of struggle in Trung Bo (1907), the Bien Hoa uprising (1914-15), the insurrection in Hué (1916), the Thai Nguyen uprising (1917), etc., give evidence of the fierce struggle waged by the Vietnamese people for freedom and national independence. But at that epoch the Court and the feudalists, who were still responsible for national interests, car-

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ried out the criminal policy of constant betrayal of the people's aspirations, which consequently could not materialize.

The great October Revolution had given a new impetus to the struggle of the oppressed peoples. The prompt settlement by the young Soviet power of the question of former Czarist colonies and its giving back freedom to the peoples in those places had a strong repercussion in all the colonies and semicolonies in Asia. Victorious Marxism-Leninism has pointed out to all nations the road to self-liberation. A Marxist-Leninist Party was born in Viet-Nam in February, 1930. While in the Yen Bai uprising (February, 1930) the bourgeoisie lost all its influence on the national liberation movement, the working class and the toiling peasant masses reorganized their political party, which became the only leader of the anti-imperialist revolution. In September, 1930, the first people's power was set up in three districts in North Trung Bo. This movement was repressed by imperialism with unprecedented barbarity.

However, as early as 1940, many armed uprisings were organized in North, Center, and South Viet-Nam against the French colonialists and Japanese imperialists. Although repressed, these insurrectionist movements were sparks and sparkles which, five years later, were to flare up into a revolution smashing to pieces the foreign rule in Viet-Nam.

In May, 1941, the Viet Minh National United Front was founded, and this was the broadest united bloc ever known in the national liberation movement of our country. The National Front, with the Party as its main force, mobilized and organized guerrilla groups that fought throughout World War II on the side of the Allies against fascist aggressors.

The victories of the valiant Soviet army over Hitler Germany and later over Japanese imperialism greatly contributed to the success of the General Insurrection on August 19, 1945, and on September 2 the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam was founded.

Thus, owing to the defeat of fascism, the world situation became favorable and the August Revolution was successful because it possessed the three conditions that cannot be absent in any anti-imperialist revolution in a colonial country. These are the leadership of the working class, the setting up of a broad anti-imperialist national front, and the armed insurrection.

Thenceforward, the history of our country has opened a glorious

page. The Vietnamese people were freed. The August Revolution has liberated them from the colonialists' yoke, from any other enslavement of the imperialists, and from the mandarinism.

The toiling people have for the first time become masters of themselves and of the destiny of their country. They set to work to drive away the dreadful specter of famine, which had killed 2 million people in the last months of imperialist rule (from late 1944 to 1945). They strove to heal the devastating wounds left behind by the dirty enslaving system, whose practice continued until the middle of this century of successful revolutions. The toiling people elected the National Assembly, began to build up people's power, and carried out various measures rapidly to wipe out illiteracy and ignorance left behind by the colonialists' rule.

However, the French colonialists still dreamed of the possibility of reestablishing their oppressive regime in our country. They regarded our peaceful attitude as a weakness. Encouraged by the British-American reactionary forces and in collusion with the Chiang Kai-shek clique, on September 23, 1945, they attacked the Vietnamese people in Saigon, then sought to penetrate the North. Afterwards, trampling on what they had pledged in the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1946, and the *modus vivendi* of September 14, 1946, the colonialists perpetrated a massacre in Haiphong, occupied Lang Son, and staged repeated provocations until December 19, when the Resistance War of our entire people against the invaders began.

In response to the appeal of the Party and the Democratic Government, our entire people rose up as one man to defend the Fatherland and the achievements of the August Revolution.

The national salvation war began in material conditions unfavorable to the Vietnamese people: famine was rife; the henchmen of French colonialism and Japanese imperialism were still swarming while the People's Army could only be set up later in the course of the fighting. Therefore, in the prevailing situation, the French Expeditionary Corps seemed to hold military supremacy, and the enemy took advantage of all our difficulties, believing that these difficulties would help them to triumph swiftly over our young army and annihilate our democratic government. But the situation developed completely contrary to their expectation and proved that they were utterly mistaken.

Backed by the U.S. reactionary circles, the enemy launched an all-

out war against the Vietnamese people. But under the leadership of the Party and the Government, the Vietnamese people united their efforts and unremittingly fought the enemy. They stepped up and spread guerrilla warfare in enemy-occupied areas. They succeeded in consolidating their rear and enthusiastically built their own People's Army. In coordination with the guerrillas, the People's Army valiantly fought and annihilated the enemy troops in many campaigns: in Viet Bac in autumn–winter, 1947; on the Viet-Nam–Chinese border in the last months of 1950; in the Midland and Red River delta, in Hoa Binh, Ba Vi, and on the Da River in 1951; in South Viet-Nam in 1952; in Lai Chau in 1953; and finally, on May 7, 1954, it won the decisive victory at Dien Bien Phu. The Dien Bien Phu victory, which was won right on the eve of the opening of the Geneva Conference, exerted a great influence on the proceedings of the Conference and contributed to the signing of the Geneva Agreement guaranteeing the restoration of peace in Indochina upon the basis of recognition of the national rights of the peoples of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Laos.

At the same time, all political schemes of the colonialists and imperialists, namely “feeding war by war, using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese,” the “independence” and “democracy” farces to mislead our people, and the imperialist-patterned “land reform,” turned bankrupt.

Throughout that period, the Party and the Government also paid attention to the building and development of the economy, finance, and culture of the Democratic Republic. First and foremost, the land reform on the principle of “land to the tiller” began to be carried out. As a result of the efforts made to maintain and expand the indispensable branches of small industries and handicrafts, our people and army were supplied with more consumer goods. Growing of rice and subsidiary crops as well as all work for the improvement of irrigation and for flood-fighting were encouraged. Transport and communications were developed to an adequate extent. The state sector in the national economy—national bank, trading concerns—came into being and grew steadily; national education, the education given to the peasantry and the army, and the struggle against illiteracy obtained extraordinary results in spite of difficult conditions.

Thus, in all military, political, and economic spheres, our young Democratic Republic has victoriously stood the tests and trials of the war in which, according to Lenin, all the virtues of a people must be given full expression.

The ardent patriotism and the ideological and political unity of our people and army around the Party and the Government helped us to weather unimaginably difficult ordeals and create political, economic, and military conditions for victory.

Their unshakable confidence in the success of their just cause inspired our people and increased their bravery.

The virtues and combativeness that our armymen, guerrillas, and cadres succeeded in learning in the particularly rich history of the national liberation movement helped our young army score historic feats of arms and tinge its banner with an eternal glory.

The bright example of the Soviet and Chinese armies and peoples continuously inspired our people and fighters and contributed to the tempering of our heroes. The French people and all peace-loving people in the world gave us invaluable support. They were on our side in the most critical moments of the Resistance War and shared joy with us when peace was restored.

The Democratic Republic has won a glorious victory because this is the victory of the oppressed over the oppressor, the victory of freedom over slavery. Our people have escaped re-enslavement, and the achievements of the August Revolution—peace, unity, independence, and democracy—are safeguarded and strengthened.

Peace has been restored in Indochina on the basis of recognition of the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Viet-Nam, Laos, and Cambodia; peace has been brought to us by the 1954 Geneva Conference. It cannot be consolidated as long as our country remains partitioned by the provisional demarcation line at the 17th parallel. Moreover, the attitude of the southern authorities and their sponsors is a serious threat to peace, which has been restored for only two years.

Indeed, although the first step, i.e., the military stage stipulated in the Geneva Agreement, in general ended satisfactorily, as the whole territory of North Viet-Nam has been liberated, the second step, i.e., the stage leading to the reunification of Viet-Nam through general elections to be held in 1956, cannot as yet be started as a result of Ngo Dinh Diem's deliberate hindrance.

The southern authorities savagely massacre our compatriots and all patriotic and peace forces in the South. Within only one year, they committed more than 3,000 crimes and violations of the Geneva Agreement. At least 4,000 patriots were killed or wounded and over 19,000 arrested. In addition to these terrorist acts, the Diem adminis-

tration also feverishly carried out the U.S. political line with a view to turning South Viet-Nam into a U.S. colony and military base, which would be permanently incorporated in the sphere of activity of the South-East Asian aggressive organization (SEATO). Despite these deeds, Ngo Dinh Diem shamelessly boasted of being a "fighter" for peace, democracy, and the independence of Viet-Nam.

This situation has determined the tasks of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, which has set itself as primary objective the strict and correct implementation of the Geneva Agreement; that is, immediately to hold the consultative conference between the North and the South, the first step toward the holding of free general elections to reunify the country. Thus, peace and national reunification are our main demands for the time being.

Besides, we have to heal the war wounds, gradually raise the people's living standard, and build up a genuinely free and democratic new life in our country. To do so, we have, on the one hand, to rehabilitate our national economy: agriculture, handicraft, transport, and industry. Since they can enjoy peace, our people have enthusiastically entered this road. But greater efforts still have to be made to cultivate the land laid fallow, repair dikes to prevent floods, and build up an irrigation network to do away with drought and famine, as these two calamities are inseparable. On the other hand, the welfare of the Vietnamese toiling people must be raised gradually on the basis of increased labor productivity.

The above-mentioned tasks are really heavy and complicated as a result of the war, colonialism, and the feudal system. However, thanks to the assistance of the brother countries, we have greater and greater possibilities and can have confidence in a successful future. Indeed, after the talks in July between the Vietnamese Government Delegation and the leaders of the Soviet Union and of the People's Republic of China, these two countries decided to grant us aid totaling 1,530,000 million dong* in the coming years. The other democracies also give us priceless assistance in our work of rehabilitation. This

** This is in old currency, now 1,530 million dong, or \$434.2 million. According to a recent study by Albert Parry ("Soviet Aid to Viet-Nam," The Reporter, January 12, 1967), Soviet economic aid to North Viet-Nam totaled \$350 million in the period 1954-64, and \$74.8 million in 1965. During the latter year North Viet-Nam also received \$555 million worth of arms. In a conference held in Moscow in October, 1966, the Soviet Union and its East European allies promised to provide \$1 billion in goods and services to North Viet-Nam; of this amount, \$800 million would come from the U.S.S.R.—ED.*

aid is carried out in the form of supply of equipment, machines, and technicians. Many economic and cultural sectors of Viet-Nam benefit by this assistance.

This selfless and unconditional aid, beneficial to the people, is completely different from the "aid" conceived by the imperialists. Through their "aid," the imperialists always aim at exploiting and enslaving the peoples. The Marshall Plan, which has gradually encroached upon the sovereignty of the recipient countries, is eloquent proof of this.

In its relations with other countries, the policy of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam is clear-cut and transparent: It is a policy of peace and good relationship. This policy is based on the five great principles put forth in the Sino-Indian and Sino-Burmese joint declarations, which are: mutual respect for territorial integrity and national sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Particularly the Bandung Conference* has shown that these principles are supported by broad circles of public opinion in Asia and Africa.

We particularly urge the maintenance of peaceful relations with our neighbors, namely Cambodia and Laos. As regards France, we continue to advocate that we can establish with it preferential economic and cultural relations in conditions of complete equality and mutual benefit, first of all, and of mutual confidence and sincere cooperation.

On this tenth anniversary of the National Day, looking back to the past, we can rightfully be proud of the path traversed. But we also—and chiefly—turn to the future and are aware of what is still to be done. We still have to carry out a hard, long, and intricate political struggle. However, if we are persevering, resolute, and vigilant, if our Party and the National Front continue to apply the tested principles of criticism and self-criticism—we have every reason to believe that our Party and the National Front will continue to apply them—we will certainly win complete success.

In the past ten years, the camp of peace and democracy has made big progress. The Soviet Union has triumphed over the fascist invaders and since then has obtained many important achievements in

* The Afro-Asian Conference, held from April 18 to 24, 1955, in Bandung, was attended by twenty-nine Afro-Asian countries. The Conference approved a declaration on the condemnation of colonialism and worked out several measures to strengthen the economic and political relations among the Afro-Asian countries. It issued a statement on the ten principles of peaceful and friendly coexistence among these nations.

the building of Communism as well as in its policy of struggle for peace and international relaxation of tension. The people's democracies have also been strengthened in the political and economic spheres. The successful Chinese revolution has liberated 600 million people, who are advancing hand in hand to happiness. With the brotherly support of the Chinese Volunteers, the Korean people have driven back the Syngman Rhee clique and the troops under the shadow of the U.N. banner. The Vietnamese people have won victory in the war started by the French colonialists and wrested back peace at the Geneva Conference. The peace forces are growing stronger and succeed in consolidating their position. All these great achievements have brought our people a boundless confidence in the magnificent future of our Fatherland and in the certain victory of our cause.

Though still meeting with difficulties and obstacles, we are going forward with the confidence and enthusiasm of the victors!