

**DIRECTIVE OF ASSEMBLING THE REVOLUTIONARY
FORCES, IDENTIFYING, TRANSFORMING AND SEIZING THE
OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE BACK THE POWER INTO THE HANDS OF
THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF VIETNAM PERIOD
1939 - 1945**

ABSTRACT

The August Revolution in 1945 was an event of immense historical significance in the historical process of Vietnam's revolutionary struggle and national liberation. The success August Revolution and taking back power into the hands of the people is the result of the influence of many factors, of which assembling forces, identifying, transforming and seizing opportunities were the most important tasks of the Vietnamese communists in 1939 - 1945. The research was carried out to provide an overview of assembling forces, identifying, creating and seizing opportunities of the Communist Party of Vietnam from 1939 to 1945. With methods of analysis, synthesis, and historical research methods, research has demonstrated the importance of assembling revolutionary forces and issues related to timely opportunities in Vietnam in 1939-1945.

KEYWORDS: *assembling, revolutionary forces, opportunities, taking back power into the hands of the people.*

INTRODUCTION.

1939 to 1945 is considered a rather eventful period with significant fundamental changes in Vietnam's historical process. Ending that period was a unique, widespread and far-reaching historical event that extended far beyond the borders of Vietnam - The August Revolution of 1945. To attain that victory, the Vietnamese had to endure difficult times mixed with blood and tears. Having risen

from hundreds of years of oppression and exile to make significant changes to life, the Vietnamese have written a new historical page - of great changes based on great solidarity, sovereignty, and genuine nationalism.

With the aim of clarifying the role of assembling revolutionary forces, identifying, transforming, and seizing opportunities and maximizing their potential, as well as becoming an uprising force that breaks all shackles of oppression, the article has analyzed the factors affecting the change of directives in the assembling of revolutionary forces in the new period (1939 - 1945) of the Communist Party of Vietnam; at the same time analyzing and evaluating issues related to opportunities in The August Revolution of 1945.

CONTENTS

1. Assembling revolutionary forces in the national liberation movement in Vietnam (1939-1945)

In addition to the issue of revolutionary direction, assembling the revolutionary forces is considered the central and fundamental task of each uprising. In Vietnam, revolutionary forces were formed and developed rapidly during the challenging years of campaigning to seize power. It was a creative and persistent process that reflected vividly and truthfully the efforts of many revolutionaries in Vietnam.

In the early years of the twentieth century, in the international communist movements, there still were prevailing views and harsh assessments in the left-wing direction of the revolutionary ability and spirit of the landlord class, the bourgeoisie, patriotic educated from the upper classes in colonial countries. In early 1930, the Communist Party of Vietnam was born (October 1930, renamed The Indochinese Communist Party), creating a turning point and a breakthrough in the patriotic movement of Vietnam. With *The First political program, February 1930*, Vietnamese communists overcame the barriers of ideology and subjective views of the Communist International (Comintern) to classify and evaluate the attitudes of each class in the class division of Vietnamese society at

the end of the 19th century, the beginning of the 20th century, to thoroughly resolve ethnic and class issues.

Right from its inception, the Communist Party of Vietnam had recognized the necessity and importance of gathering powerful revolutionary forces in the revolutionary cause: "The proletariat leading the bourgeois civil rights revolution in Indochina, without organizing the entire populace into a large and confidential force, the revolution would hardly succeed." [1]. Therefore, in the spirit of gradually harmonizing the interests of the revolutionary classes, the Communist Party of Vietnam had determined the goal of "bringing under the majority of the Vietnamese classes, making the Vietnamese class to lead the people..." [2]; at the same time, "must bring under the majority of peasants and rely on them to become the revolutionary land to defeat the landlords and feudalists" [3]. Those foundational ideas motivated the Vietnamese communists to mobilize and enlighten the people, gathering revolutionary forces on the basis of promoting genuine nationalism - the great and only driving force in life their social life at the time [4].

With the above goals, the ideology and views of the Communist Party of Vietnam on assembling revolutionary forces show the suitability and creative application of Marxism-Leninism to the practical conditions of Vietnam. However, the creative thought of Vietnam had not yet found widespread consensus and support; it even created an ideological contest on the issue of *ethnicity and class* that was quite fierce between some leaders of the Communist International III and part of the Communist Party of Vietnam leadership and Nguyen Ai Quoc (the person to draft *The first political program, February 1930*). Nguyen Ai Quoc was criticised as a "rightist", "heavy nationalist", "lightweight on class struggle", etc. Eventually, the revolutionary experience of Vietnam and the world had confirmed that the point of maximizing the gathering of forces stated in *The first political platform drafted by Nguyen Ai Quoc* was appropriate, necessary and correct in the conditions of colonial countries.

Consistent with the goal of "freedom for my people, independence for my country" [5], The Communist Party of Vietnam wisely neutralized the antagonisms between classes, promoting the spirit of nationalism and patriotism, realizing the union of the people, concentrating the will for the overall interests, independence and freedom of the nation.

On September 1, 1939, despite all efforts against the war, to protect the peace of mankind, especially the Bolshevik Party and the people of the Soviet Union; finally, the Second World War had still begun. For the Vietnamese revolution, the Second World War had a strong and direct impact, it posed many new problems in terms of strategy and tactics, especially the policy in gathering all forces of people, including transient forces.

Analyzing World War II, the Indochinese Communist Party determined: "There is no other way for the survival of the Indochinese peoples than overthrowing the French empire, fighting of all the foreign invasosn, whether they are white or yellow, to gain independence"[6]. The Party considers each person to "have a sense of the national survival and the close relationship of the nation's fate with their own personal interests; putting the national interests above other interests, unifying the national forces" [7] is the essential condition, the only way to overthrow the French colonialists, gaining independence for the nation, and free the people of Vietnam.

With the advantage of "being the most powerful party, having the most solid foundation among the masses, fighting most resolutely to defend the interests of the people and fight for freedom and independence for the nation"[8], the Indochinese Communist Party advocated mobilizing and promoting the internal strength of the nation through the great unity of the whole populace. Since 1939, with the birth of the Indochinese anti-imperialist National Unity Front (November 1939), it had marked the shift in the strategic direction of the Indochinese Communist Party in the new era and the issue of combining revolutionary forces in the national liberation movement.

In 1941, the world and Vietnam went through many rapid changes (in June 1940, the French government surrendered to the German fascists; in September 1940, the Japanese fascists invaded Indochina; in the summer of 1941, the German fascists invaded the Soviet Union), the favourable opportunity for the Vietnamese revolution had come. Facing the aforementioned situation, Nguyen Ai Quoc returned to Vietnam to convene and chair the 8th Central Conference (May 1941). The conference decided to change policies, raise the flag of national liberation, and smoothly settle the issue between the anti-imperialist revolution and the land ownership [9].

Setting the task of gathering all its strength to gain independence and freedom for the nation, the Indochinese Communist Party concentrated "revolutionary forces throughout Indochina, regardless of workers, farmers, landlords, and people"[10], with the only criterion: patriotism and love for the nation. Solidarity is strength, division is weakness – *on the one hand*, the Indochinese Communist Party tried its best to call on the people to unite with one heart to join hands for the cause; *on the other hand*, the Party were properly assessing the attitude of different political forces in society to have the policy of solidarity, gathering, "more friends, less enemies".

In order to gather forces more widely and efficiently accordingly to the changing situation, the Indochinese Communist Party advocated the establishment of the League for the Independence of Vietnam (Viet Minh). The birth of the Viet Minh in Vietnam represents a flexible method of gathering forces to unite all ethnic groups, unite all classes, parties, and national liberation parties in order to jointly fight against the colonial empire for survival and peace, to realize complete independence and the right to self-determination for the Indochinese peoples.

With the policy of "unifying all patriotic populace, regardless of rich and poor, young and old, boys and girls, regardless of religion and political stance"[11], the Viet Minh front quickly gained the support of almost all social classes, from the working class, peasants to the national bourgeoisie, monks and

nuns, clergy, and Buddhists, etc. The property owners contributed money and rice, bought Viet Minh bonds, secretly donated gold coins and bought guns for the Viet Minh front. The progressive educated class supported the Viet Minh by actively propagating the national language script. Following the call of the Viet Minh front, many famous educated participated in the revolution. The clergy, fellow Christians and other religions helped the Viet Minh print documents, communicate, and transport officials. From North to the South, a sense of national salvation developed strongly, and national unity was unprecedentedly strong. From the revolutionary point of origin in the jungle to the plains of the country, in a short time, revolutionary bases and forces were quickly built throughout the country, creating a qualitative breakthrough for the cause of people's liberation.

While taking advantage of the situation of consensus and unity of all resources in society, the Indochinese Communist Party focused on developing the party members, the seed for the future victories of the Vietnamese revolution. By the end of 1939, the number of Party members reached 2,300 members with nearly 300 branches. By 1943, the number of party members was 2,850; Special branches and party members increased rapidly in the Cao - Bac - Lang base area, accounting for 20% of the increase of the whole country. In 1944, it increased to 3,150 with 400 branches, and when the August Revolution was successful (August 1945), the number increased to 5000 party members [12]. With the number of party members constantly increasing over the years, along with the support of the majority of classes in Vietnam, the Indochinese Communist Party had gathered a large number of people, bringing out the full power of the whole nation, advancing to the revolution to take back power into the hands of the people.

Regarding the assembling of the revolutionary armed forces, the Central Committee of The Indochinese Communist Party decided to maintain the Bac Son armed forces and advocate the establishment of guerrilla teams to operate in dispersed activities, using armed forces to defend the people, while developing the revolutionary base to establish the headquarters using the Bac Son and Vu Nhai regions as the center. At the end of 1944, when the day of the uprising was

approaching urgently, the Indochinese Communist Party established an armed force as a lever for the nationwide revolutionary climax to erupt. Choosing among the ranks of the Cao - Bac - Lang guerrilla teams the most enthusiastic cadres and team members, as well as gathering a large part of their weaponry to form the main team, The Vietnam Propaganda Unit of Liberation Army was founded in December 1944. A few days after its establishment, The Vietnam Propaganda Unit of Liberation Army made two resounding victories against the Phai Khat's fort (December 25) and the Na Nang's fort (December 26).

Along with consolidating the main force, the Indochinese Communist Party directed to maintain the armed forces in the local regions - these two forces cooperated and helped each other by all means. The main army had the task of guiding the armed forces of the localities, assisting in training and supporting weapons, and making sure the local armed forces quickly grew.

Therefore, The Indochinese Communist Party consistently implemented the policy of cooperation between revolutionary forces in the struggle for national liberation. The Party were aware of the important objective reality which was specific to the colonies and completely unlike in Europe: Imperial oppression weighed heavily on the heads of every citizen; Regardless of social background or class, the colonists had to live in a very oppressive atmosphere of slavery and injustice. Therefore, despite having different social status, economic and political interests, in Vietnamese colonial society there weren't a metaphysical class outside the nation. Although the invading empire had colluded with a small part of the feudal landlord class and its henchmen to oppress and exploit the nation, the main enemy and most dangerous enemy was still the invading empire.

From the scientific perspective, the strategic task of the national liberation revolution in Vietnam has the following outstanding features: Focusing the main spearhead of the revolution on the colonial empire; duties must always adhere to the anti-imperialist tasks. It was also the basis for the strategy of thoroughly isolating the empire forces, dividing and conquering the exploiting class, and neutralizing forces that had not yet united. In the development history of the world

communist movement, many organizations and leaders have made serious mistakes when dealing with ethnic and class relations forming a narrow nationalism or making the revolution isolated. Inheriting the tradition of national unity and promoting the true national spirit to assemble the necessary forces for the Total Revolution, the Indochinese Communist Party overcame the precedent of a division of the people. The victory of the August Revolution is convincing proof of the above statement.

2. Identifying, transforming and seizing the opportunity to take back power into the hands of the people.

The August Revolution in 1945 was one of the greatest turning points of the Vietnamese nation and the national liberation movement in the world. The revolution of the Vietnamese people under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party not only had the characteristics of national liberation (ending nearly a century of colonial rule by the French colonialists (1858 - 1945), five years of Japanese fascism (1940 - 1945)) but also had a profound democratic meaning (ending the thousands of years of feudalism, bringing the people from slavery to the authority of the country). This victory is the crystallization of many different factors. Besides the assembling of the revolutionary forces, the opportunity of the August Revolution played a fundamental role in the swift victory happening in the whole country of Vietnam. The subject of opportunity in the August revolution is a logical chain from identifying, transforming and courageously seizing opportunities.

In war, timing is a key issue. Understanding the opportunity, grasping the role, the special importance of the opportunity and knowing how to use it flexibly will have the effect of turning and reversing the entire situation of the war. While discussing seizing opportunities during the August Revolution, many scholars approached it from different angles. However, approaching from any angle, it is necessary to affirm that the August Revolution of 1945 is exemplary of the art in seizing and taking advantage of revolutionary opportunities.

Opportunity is a combination of objective and subjective factors to create the most favourable conditions for revolution to break out and its victory. Therefore, recognizing and seizing opportunities always has special significance in a revolutionary struggle. Right from its inception, the Indochinese Communist Party has focused on the subject of opportunity and identifying them. In the “*Entreaty on the occasion of October Revolution Day anniversary in the USSR*”, dated November 1, 1930, the Indochinese Communist Party asserted: "If the imperialists declares war, we must stand up and start a revolution, the imperialist war must be turned into a war of liberation" [13]. That idea represents the creative application of the slogan "turning imperial wars into revolutionary civil wars" of V.I. Lenin in terms of a feudal colonial country like Vietnam.

While developing a view on armed insurrection and the revolutionary situation of Marxism-Leninism, Nguyen Ai Quoc and the Vietnamese Communists raised their opinions on the opportunity for revolution: *Firstly*, the colonial government was shaken to a great extent, they could not sit still and maintain their position as before. *Secondly*, the populace, who were extremely hungry and hated the colonialists to the extreme, saw the need to unite and revolt to overthrow the colonial empire's domination, because everyone understood that if they stood still they would die. *Thirdly*, there was a revolutionary political party capable of organizing the masses to revolt in accordingly to an appropriate plan, ensuring victory for the Total Revolution [14].

In 1941, when the situation of the World War II expanded in scale and became fiercer, Nguyen Ai Quoc quickly returned back and convened the 8th Conference of the Central Committee of the Party (May 1941) and predicted: "If the last imperial war gave birth to the Soviet Union, a socialist country, then this war will give birth to many socialist countries, which will result in many countries successful revolutions" [15]. This prediction marked the completion of the strategy and specified the identification of opportunities for the Vietnamese revolution by the Indochinese Communist Party.

After the Japanese fascist coup d'etat to oust the French colonialists for Indochina monopolization (March 9, 1945), the Indochinese Communist Party wisely analyzed the situation, and made a judgment call that the conditions to start the revolution is not yet ripe. Favourable conditions for the implementation of a Total Revolution were when the Allies were coming into Indochina, advancing deep into Vietnam to fight of the Japanese fascists. After which, the Japanese pulled their forces to the front to prevent the Allies, creating a "gap" behind them. Another one was when "if the Japanese revolution breaks out, and the revolutionary government of the Japanese people is established, or if the Japanese invaders lose their homeland like France did in 1940, resulting in the loss of moral of the Japanese expeditionary army, then even before the arrival of the Allied forces, the Total Revolution would still end up victorious" [16].

So essentially, until the August Revolution in 1945, the Indochinese Communist Party as well as the Vietnamese Communists had identified the revolutionary opportunities in a concrete and thorough manner. It was a process of arduous practical struggle and continuous theoretical conclusion, on the basis of the creative application and development of the Marxism-Leninism theory, and the traditional fighting spirit of the nation. Identifying opportunities is considered the spearhead for all revolutions, however, one does not know how to transform and promote opportunities to quickly seize them will not create a victory for the revolution.

Eventually the new destiny for the Vietnamese revolution had arrived. On August 15, 1945, the Emperor announced the surrender to the Allied forces, the Japanese commanding ranks in Indochina were split to the extreme, the Japanese soldiers divided, demoralized, and the pro-Japanese Vietnamese were panicking. The moment the revolutionary opportunity appeared is also when all of Vietnam's preparations in terms of forces, directives and tactics of combat were completed, the Party and people were determined to seize the opportunity to take back power: "Now is the time for the Total Revolution to begin! A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Vietnamese army and the people to take back the country's

independence... We must act quickly, with a great spirit of courage and extreme caution! ... A complete victory will definitely be ours!" [17].

Thus, the Indochinese Communist Party, accurately identifying opportunities and transforming them, contributed to promoting the rapid progress of opportunities by launching the "National Salvation fever resisting Japan" as a premise for the Total Revolution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. And when the opportunity arose, the Party seized the right moment of the revolution, by determining the right time and scope to conduct it. Regarding the timing of the revolution, it was when the Japanese fascists had just surrendered to the Allied forces. That was when the direct enemy of the Vietnamese revolution, the Japanese fascist, had completely lost their combat ability, and the Allied forces had not yet entered Indochina. It was the time to compare which force was the most beneficial to the Vietnamese revolution. Regarding the scope of the revolution, the scale was on the national level. It was the the result of a simultaneous uprising in all parts of the country, from the mountains to the plains, from the battle zones to the cities, that created the total revolutionary power to crush all resistance of the enemy their forces. With the principle of unity, concentration, and opportune time, it was necessary to immediately capture the places where victory was certain, regardless of the city or the countryside; military and political forces must be coordinated; destroying the enemy's morale before fighting is a must. At the same time, setting up the Vietnam National Liberation Committee, i.e. the Provisional Government right before the revolution was necessary. The committee was chaired by comrade Ho Chi Minh, ready to take over and lead the country when the revolution became successful to avoid letting a power gap appear. All those careful preparations became the signal the "change of destiny" for the Vietnamese people: "The decisive hour for our nation's destiny has come. All compatriots, please stand up and use our strength to liberate ourselves... We must act with no delay"[18].

Under the leadership of the Indochinese Communist Party, from August 14 to August 25, 1945, the Vietnamese revolution quickly changed from the Total

Revolution to an enormous victory happening all over the country. Red flags with yellow stars fluttered in all places from North to South, marking the complete victory of the August Revolution in 1945.

CONCLUSION

The victory of the August Revolution in 1945 in Vietnam is one of the few revolutions in the world that was able to be won quickly, neatly, with little loss of life for all parties. It is an exemplary case of the patience, thoughts and comprehensive preparations of the political organization in terms of policies, guidelines and assembling of revolutionary forces. In addition, the August Revolution of 1945 is considered as a symbol of the art of creating, identifying opportunities, transforming, accurately grasping opportunities, and courageously taking them to mobilize the entire people to carry out a military campaign to take back power into the hands of the people.

Considering the Vietnam's national liberation movement (1939 - 1945) into the revolutionary movement for national liberation and world proletarian revolution, as well as in the context of a colonial country, when the Communist International didn't have a general consensus on the viewpoint of "nation and class", the August Revolution in 1945 was considered a miracle in the history of the national liberation movement in the world. That victory was the result of assembling the forces of the whole nation, creating unity of the whole populace and the true national spirit - these factors have always been the universal values of the whole nation. It has become the national identity of Vietnam and is a sharp weapon of the people in the struggle for independence and freedom. Vietnam's August Revolution of 1945 was a shining symbol of the people's uprising, which took place across the country, creating "10 days that shook the world" (counting the time of the August Revolution, which began on the 19th in Hanoi and ended on the 28th in Ha Tien), , which in its own way promoted colonial imperialism to decline and collapse.

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